



Geographical Names standardization in Africa: Challenges and constraints

TASK TEAM FOR AFRICA

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Geographical Names standardization in Africa: A decade of actions

By Brahim Atoui: Convenor of Task Team for Africa



HISTORY

- Brief history :
- African Countries : Precursors in the establishment of structures for the standardization of geographical names:
- Liberia: 1955- Botswana: 1965-Cameroon : 1968 - Malawi 1971- Zambia 1979- Tanzania 1981-Tunisia : 1983.



HISTORY

- The UN Group of Experts on the Standardization of Geographical Names, aware of the African specificity in toponymic matters whose languages are mainly derived from unwritten languages, was concerned at its first conference on toponymic issues in Africa.



TASK TEAM for AFRICA

- Establishment of a Task Team for Africa at the 23rd Session of GENUNG:
- Make a diagnosis
- Revitalizing a toponymic activity in Africa
- Suggest appropriate solutions for the promotion of geographical names
- Initiate appropriate actions.



DIAGNOSTIC

- Financial problems
- Distance from meeting venue,
- Lack of training of African skills in this field.



Very low participation in the GENUNG's work

| conferences | Number of participating countries |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1st Conference | 9 |
| 2nd conference | 4 |
| 3rd Conference | 6 |
| 4 th Conference | 10 |
| 5thConference | 6 |
| 6 th Conference | 10 |
| 7th Conference | 15 |
| 8 th Conference | 8 |
| 9 th Conference | 16 |
| 10 th Conference | 13 |



Participation by country

(From a total of 56 countries)

- 7 countries participated only once.
- 7 countries 2 times
- 6 countries 3 times
- 5 countries 4 times
- 3 countries 5 times



Countries with toponymic management structures

Only 17 of the 56 countries in Africa have a structure in charge of toponymy management. They are often not very active and have very little human or material means.



Linguistic-Geographical Divisions

- Africa is divided into four linguistic-geographical divisions :
- The Eastern Division, the Central Division, the Western Division and the Division of South Africa.

It should be reminded that Resolution No. 4 of the Second UNGEGN Conference made Africa a single Division

Resolution 26 of the 3rd Conference reconfigured Africa into 3 Divisions :

- The Western Division, regrouping 16 countries
- The Central Division, regrouping 11 countries
- The Eastern Division, regrouping 14 countries
- By Resolution One of the 6th Conference, a fourth Division was added to that of South Africa.



North Africa Division?

- That of North Africa, which should include the Arab and Sahelian African countries, a homogeneous group with similar ethnic, cultural, linguistic and toponymic similarities, Does not yet constitute a division despite the aspiration of the countries of the region of the need for it.



North Africa Division?

- This action could not be materialized by the incomprehensible opposition of some new experts belonging to the Arab Division.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **25 th Session of the GENUNG in Africa, 2009**
- **Internship of Tunis 2007:** Internship Organized with the assistance of the African Organization for Cartography and Remote Sensing and the Regional Center for Remote Sensing of the States of North Africa and the Tunisian National Center for Remote Sensing, under the aegis of the UNGEGN Training Working Group. It took place in Tunis with over 70 participants from 11 countries in Africa and the Arab world.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **Internship in Ouagadougou**, from 4 to 8 August 2008, brought together trainees In particular from West African countries
- **Internship in Nairobi**: for East African Countries was also held in Nairobi from 1 to 3 May 2009 at the CRMCD on the margin of the 25th Session of UNGEGN;



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **Internship in Yaounde / Cameroon:** Training workshop on the standardization of geographical names, held in Yaoundé from 22 to 27 November 2010 with the collaboration of the GENUNG, thus allowing the revival of the Commission of Toponymy of Cameroon
- **Internship of Antananarivo:** held in Madagascar from 11 to 21 June 2013, with the collaboration of GENUNG, which also encouraged the dynamism of the Commission of toponymy of this country.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **Second Internship in Tunis:** Another internship in Tunis from 12th to 16th January 2015 for the benefit of members of the newly created Tunisian National Committee of Toponymy.
- **Internship in Oran / Algeria:** Another seminar held in Oran, Algeria, for the benefit of Algerian researchers in Toponymy of the National Center for Research in Social and Cultural Anthropology, officials and communal administrators in charge of naming the places.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **Meeting of Constantine / Algeria:** important scientific meeting was held in Constantine / Algeria, which saw the participation of all the countries of the Sahel (Mali, Chad, Niger, Burkina Faso) During which a recommendation was adopted by participating African countries, supporting the creation of a North African Division within UNGEGN.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- **Another meeting is also planned in Algiers** during the next International Book Fair where an national toponymy day has been celebrated for more than 3 years, with the participation of Experts in toponymy of South Africa as Country 'guest of honor' of this Fair and of Burkina Faso: the theme of this day will be devoted to the toponymy Arab-Berber-African.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- Finally, two international competitions were organized by the Task Team for Africa for the benefit of the African countries, which saw an important participation of applicants from different African countries and prizes were awarded to the winners.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- In addition to these activities, the Task Team has continually sensitized African organizations to promote the standardization of geographical names. His actions were crowned by the organization of a meeting of African countries under the aegis of the ECA / UN in Gaborone / Botswana, With the participation of UNGEGN, During which an ambitious plan of action called 'GAP' was adopted.
- This plan aims at a better management of toponymy in Africa and contains several recommendations.



Activities of the Task Team for Africa in order to boost toponymic activity in Africa.

- Moreover, through awareness-raising efforts of the Task Team for Africa, several Commissions have been reactivated and others have been created;
- This is particularly the case of: Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Mali, Benin and; soon; Niger with a very significant contribution from the Commission of French toponymy and IGN FI,



Despite his efforts , there is still a long way to go and several questions are current:

- What are the best mechanisms to put in place to increase the dynamism of the toponymic activity in Africa?
- How to activate different African geographical and linguistic divisions?
- How could the Economic Commission for Africa be further involved in the promotion and coordination of toponymic activity in Africa ?
- How to implement the provisions of the GAP?
- What can UNGEGN do for Africa?
- How to ensure cooperation between the Task Team for Africa and UN-GGIM Africa?
- What could be the contribution of GGIM Africa to the promotion of geographical names in Africa?



Despite his efforts , There is still a long way to go and several questions are current:

- If important results have been achieved, further reflection will have to be carried out within the UNGEGN and the Task Team for Africa in order to achieve better Leading to other salutary initiatives.
- Despite these modest but nevertheless positive results, which remains beyond the expectations of our continent, we have to double our efforts and we have great hope for the support of the GENUNG at the TASK TEAM FOR AFRICA for more results.



Thank you for your attention



Geographical Names standardization in Africa:

**Attempts of standardization in Tunisia,
Botswana, Burkina Faso and Madagascar**

By Naima Friha: UNGEGN vice chair



Case of Tunisia

Prepared by: Naima Friha





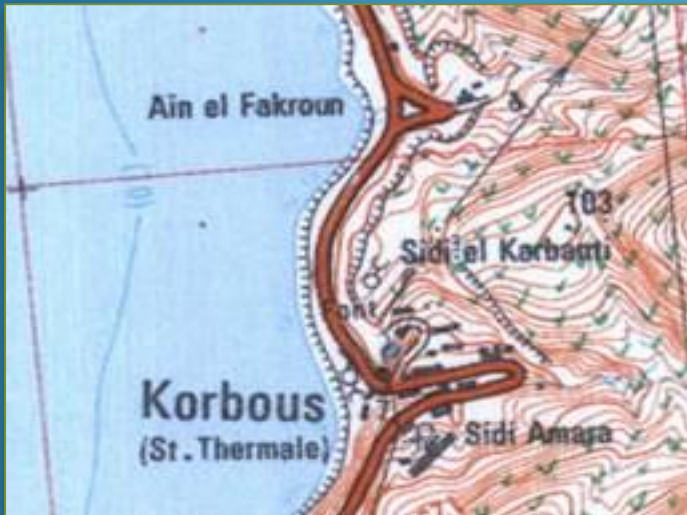
Toponymic landscape in Tunisia

- The toponymic landscape in Tunisia is very heterogeneous and reflects the three millennia history of the country where several civilizations have lived and ruled .
- Other factors that also contributed to this complexity are:
 - The bilingualism (the official use of the French language in parallel with the Arabic),
 - The diglossia between the official Arabic and the dialects,
 - The toponymy is generally twinned with the cartography which, in a high level, relies either on existing names inherited from colonial epoch or on the linguistically unskilled surveyors who collect the names from the field.



Examples of lack of standardization

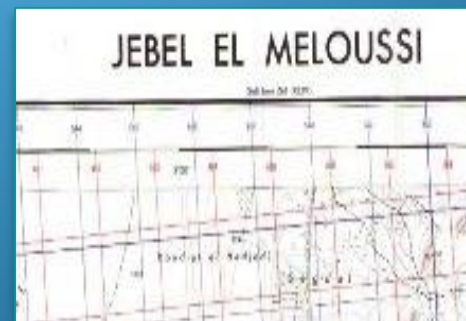
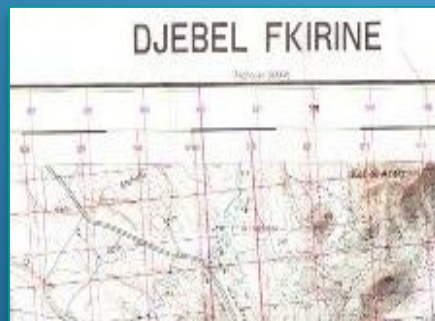
- Different transcriptions for the same toponym



Map of Korbous 1/25.000

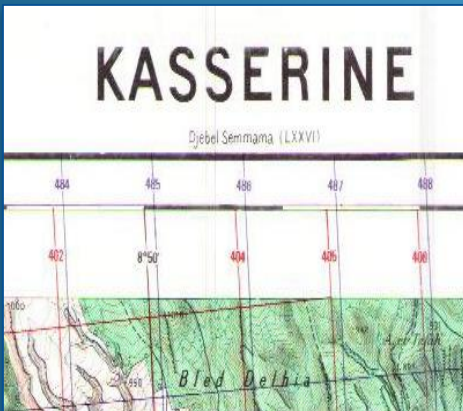


1/200.000 (Beirut system 72)

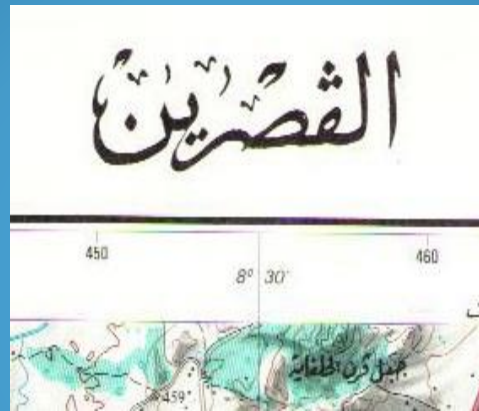


Examples of lack of standardization

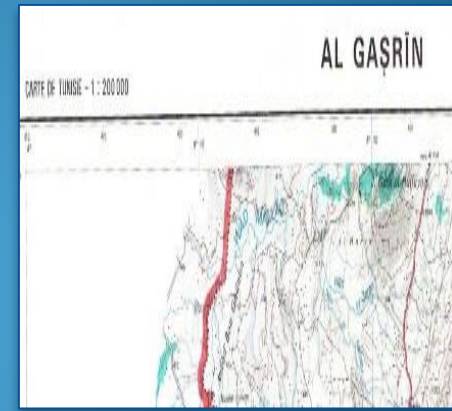
- Different transcriptions for the same toponym



Map of Kasserine 1/50.000



1/200.000



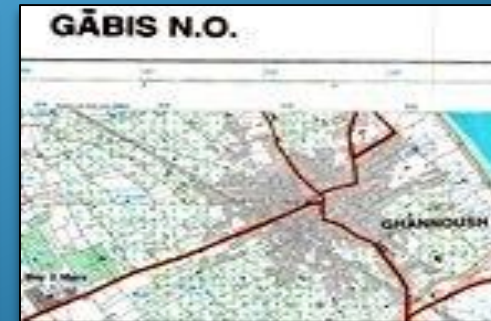
1/200.000



Map of Gabes 1/200.000



1/50.000



1/25.000

Examples of lack of standardization

- **Doubtful/Poor Translation of Street Names**



Examples of lack of standardization

- Commemorative naming' use



| Ancien nom | Nouveau nom |
|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Rue 61441 | Rue Colonel Tahar Ayari |
| Rue 61442 | Rue Lt. Kamel Chouaibi |
| Rue 61444 | Rue Adjudant Major Lazhar Kthiri |
| Rue 61445 | Rue Adjudant Major Ali Al Omrani |
| Rue 61446 | Rue Adjudant Marin Sofien Ben Jammala |





National standardization attempts

1. A unique system for the map production:

- The government tried since 1983 , through the ex-National Mapping Agency (OTC) to set up a unique transcription system for its mapping production plan.
- A restricted commission of toponymy composed of experts and linguists representing three ministries (Ministry of National Defense, Ministry of Equipment, and Ministry of High Education and Scientific Research) was then created to study the amended Beirut 1972' transcription system.
- The Beirut 1972' transcription system, endorsed by the UNGEGN was then implemented by the OTC with few changes according to the Tunisian dialect, but few years after its informal ways of transcription. implementation, the map users found this system complex and confusing. The system was thus abandoned letting place to several other transcription' systems.





National standardization' attempts

2. Academic and scientific studies:

- Mme Evelyne Ben Jaafar, Linguist and author of : « Les noms des lieux en Tunisie: Racines vivantes de l'identité nationale » -CERES 1985. In her book she identifies different aspects relevant to the geographical names through their evolution in the history like the standardization in a multilingual environment and with regard to ideological and political contexts .
- Mr Mohsen Dhieb, Professor at the University of Arts and Humanities of Sfax : Developing, in the frame of the establishment of the National Atlas of Tunisia, a methodology to transcribe, on a medium scale administrative map, the Tunisian toponyms with the least possible errors.





National standardization' attempts

3. Creation of the National Committee of Toponymy

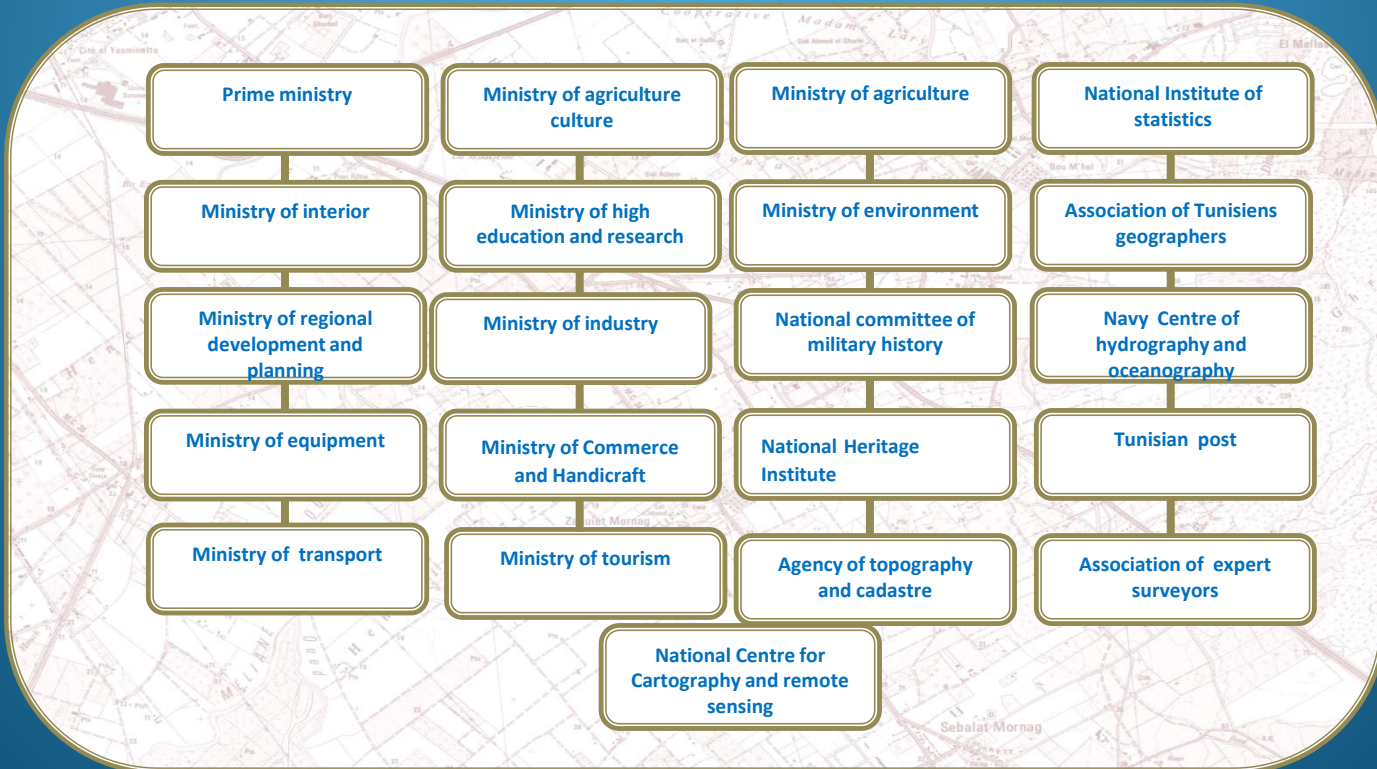
- As implementation of the UNGEGN recommendations and resolutions and to regulate the toponymic sector in the country, the Centre National de la Cartographie et de la Télédétection (CNCT) worked fully committed to bring forward the emergency of geographical names' standardization. The creation of a National Toponymic Committee (NCT) was then seen as urgent solution.
- On 26th February 2013, the NCT was created by the Decree 1299-2013 defining its composition, missions and functioning rules .
- Placed under the tutorship of the Ministry of National defense, the NCT is chaired by the minister of national defense and its secretariat is ensured by the CNCT





National Committee of Toponymy

1. Organizational chart :





National Committee of Toponymy

2. Missions:

- ✓ Collect, identify, control and correct geographical names.
- ✓ Control the translation of the names from Arabic to latin and their transcription and diffusion in particular on maps and road panels.
- ✓ Ensure the implementation of the Romanization' system endorsed by UNGEGN.
- ✓ Ensure studies and researches about the historical, socio-economic, cultural and religious origins and meanings of geographical names including the exonyms.





National Committee of Toponymy

2. Missions:

- ✓ Ensure the setting up of gazetteers, atlases and toponymic databases.
- ✓ Look after ensuring the publication and distribution of books, researches, studies and articles about geographical names and use different media to raise people' awareness about the importance of geographical names
- ✓ Ensure the necessary coordination between all bodies involved in geographical names
- ✓ Ensure the representation of the Republic of Tunisia at the regional and international events relevant to the field of geographical names.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities: training course

- Organized by the Centre National de la Cartographie et de la Télédétection (CNCT) in collaboration with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), The United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) essentially to train the newly appointed members of the committee, training course for the members of the committee covering a training session, a fieldwork and technical assistance to set a roadmap for the upcoming activities of the National Committee of Toponymy (NCT) was held from 12-16 January 2015 in Tunis.
- The training session included lectures about geographical names issues reinforced by examples about the experiences in the field from participating countries with a glance on some toponymic achievements in Africa.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities: workshop/training course

- 25 persons including 4 UNGEGN lecturers, 2 UNGEGN experts from Botswana and Burkina Faso and 19 members of the NCT, representing different ministries and national institutions attended the training .



Opening by the Minister of National Defense



Lecture room





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities: Fieldwork

- Moderated by Madame Elisabeth Calvarin, the field work was conducted in the region of Ghar El Melh, situated 50kms north of the capital and known for its prestigious historical heritage and natural wealth.
- Procedures about toponymic field collection have been taught by Madame Calvarin .





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities: Fieldwork

- Assisted by a team from the National Heritage Institute (Ministry of Culture), place names' origins, meanings and their evolution through centuries have been highlighted providing good opportunity to go in depth into the cultural heritage aspect of the area' place names.
- Examples of names on road panels and unnamed places demonstrated the lack of standardization and data inconsistency in the region that may affect sectors like the tourism' activity around those places.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities/achievements: *NCT' Road map*

- Official nomination of NCT members (Decision 26th January 2016): 21 members representing 12 ministries and 9 national agencies.
- Creation of 5 sub-committees (Decision: n°547 -15 April 2016):
 - Legislation and principles for naming,
 - Toponymy standardization and terminology'glossary,
 - Toponymic databases,
 - Communication/sensitization and publication,
 - International cooperation and capacity building.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. *Activities/achievements: NCT' Road map*

- **Principles about naming places:** Legal texts, names adopted by general use, historical names, linguistic forms and transliteration, use of persons' names, naming selection criteria, spelling, recurring names, generic terminology, names abbreviation etc... were defined.
- **Survey:** addressed to the ministries and bodies members of the NCT which objective is to scan the situation of GN names in the country and to get people' opinion about the importance of GN standardization in their application fields.
- with reference to Article3 of the decree of the NCT creation, A **Ministerial Circular** recalling the obligation to take the committee agreement before any place name attribution was issued by the Prime ministry to all ministries concerned by the nomination.
- Collection of legal texts related to places naming.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities/achievements: NCT' Road map

- **Logo of the NCT.**
- **Toponymic brochures (Arabic and french):** describing the importance of standardized geographical names, the role of UNGEGN in that and advertizing about the NCT and its role in preserving the GN as cultural heritage.
- **Creation of NCT website:** created under the portal of the Ministry of National Defense, it will serve notably as a communication' tool to set forth the GN issues, to report on the NCT activities and all related special events.
- **Toponymic database:** Based on 1/250.000 scale maps and existing data, it has as first objective to solve and correct GN spelling both in Arabic and French languages. At second step, it has to be enriched to cover bigger scale maps in order to be used, notably, as reference for the on-going NGII , a challenging national project conducted by the CNCT.





National Committee of Toponymy

3. Activities/achievements: NCT' Road map



Les noms géographiques :

Le groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour les noms géographiques définit le nom géographique comme « un nom propre de lieu ». C'est à dire toute nomination héritée ou créée pour tout lieu de la terre qu'il soit naturel ou construit par l'homme (les rivières, les montagnes, les coordonnées, les pays, les villes, les ruelles, les places...).



La Normalisation des noms géographiques :

La normalisation des noms géographiques est destinée à identifier les formats écrits, utilisables et homogènes avec les noms topographiques et leurs significations dans le monde entier. La normalisation commence au niveau national avec la mise en place de mécanismes unifiés pour l'écriture des noms, suivis par la normalisation internationale, qui repose sur les normes nationales de chaque pays.

Quels sont les avantages de la Normalisation ?

La normalisation des noms géographiques est considérée comme une condition nécessaire pour faciliter la communication entre les pays, dans le but de répondre aux besoins d'ordre économique, social, culturel et sécuritaire multiples et inter reliés, et ce dans le cadre de ce qu'on appelle « le village planétaire ».



De même, la réussite de certains projets et activités comme les statistiques, le cadastre, le recensement en cas de catastrophes naturelles, les mesures d'urgence, les opérations de sauvetage, la navigation, le tourisme, les stratégies de sécurité, la communication, les services postaux, la réalisation de cartes et de bases de données géographiques, les recherches, les livres, scientifiques et éducationnels... est tributaire de la bonne utilisation de noms géographiques précis et normalisés. Parmi les avantages de la normalisation, il y a la correction des distorsions survenant sur les noms des lieux et causées par la prononciation (comme Khoussir, qui n'est autre que Khat Kherr et Moulam, Om et Anas et Métaheur qui n'est autre que Om Estamr).

Autre avantage de la normalisation est la limitation de l'utilisation des acronymes comme La Goulette et Hamman Lf...



Le groupe d'experts des Nations Unies pour les noms géographiques :

Ce groupe a été créé en 1959 pour résoudre les problèmes liés aux noms géographiques et proposer des recommandations pour leur normalisation. Parmi ses grands projets, la recommandation de créer dans chaque pays un comité pour la normalisation des noms géographiques, l'encouragement à la formation dans ce domaine, la diffusion des noms normalisés à travers la publication de glossaires nationaux de terminologies toponymiques et la coopération internationale dans ce domaine.



<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/geonames/UNGEON/>

الجنة الوطنية للمسمات الجغرافية Commission Nationale de Toponymie

La Commission Nationale de Toponymie :

Elle a été créée, sous la tutelle du Ministère de la Défense Nationale, par le décret N°2013-1298 en date du 26 février 2013 la commission nationale de toponymie chargée de conserver et de développer le patrimoine toponymique national.

Elle a pour principales missions de :

- définir des normes nationales unifiées pour l'écriture et la gestion des toponymes, et participer à l'élaboration des projets de textes législatifs et réglementaires relatifs à l'organisation du secteur;
- collecter, inventorier et conserver les noms géographiques, traduire et valider leur écriture en arabe et en latin sur les cartes, les panneaux de signalisation des villes, des avenues des rues et des sites archéologiques;
- veiller à l'application du système de romanisation approuvé par le groupe des experts des nations unies pour la transmission des caractères arabes au latin dans l'écriture des noms géographiques;
- réaliser des atlas et des glossaires, terminologiques des noms géographiques tunisiens tout en indiquant leur signification et leurs coordonnées géographiques et la romanisation et le mode à jour d'une base de données toponymiques nationale ainsi que la mise en place d'une banque de données des noms géographiques y compris les acronymes, les emblèmes et les noms qui les remplacent;
- organiser des sessions de formation et contribuer à l'organisation des congrès et des fêtes nationales ou internationales sur les noms géographiques et suivre les évolutions du domaine sur le plan international et diffuser les ouvrages, les recherches les études et les articles relatifs au domaine.

Organigramme :

Par décision du Ministère de la Défense Nationale N° 1312-2015 en date du 23 octobre 2015, il a été créé sous l'égide de la Commission Nationale de Toponymie, cinq sous-commissions spécialisées, qui sont :



Le secrétaire de la Commission Nationale de Toponymie est assuré par Le Centre National de la Cartographie et de la Télésélection.

Les Noms Géographiques : entre Héritage et Normalisation



Pour de consulter le site de la Commission Nationale de Toponymie sur le Web : <http://www.defense.tn/> Contact : Le Centre National de la Cartographie et de la Télésélection Route de La Manar - Km 8 - 2040 - El Anasser - Tunis - 8100





National Committee of Toponymy

4. Constraints

- Ministerial changes (merging, division, creation of new ministries...) entailed some changes on the NCT members. Consequently, people who not any more belong to the ministries members in the NCT are not any more willing to contribute to the NCT activities, or there is total absence of representatives for the new created ministries.
- Lack of committment of the members because of their own workload,
- Lack of information about the NCT rules (place naming often continues without consultation with the NCT),
- Lack of resources to hold training sessions,
- Lack of financial resources for the NCT members to attend UNGEGN meetings.





National Committee of Toponymy

4. Recommendations/Perspectives

- Despite the several discussions, it was seen that the only solution about the ministerial changes, is that the Decree of creation of the committee get revised at each change and that the revision takes into account the NCT members who have participated to the NCT since its creation [*how? , how will this affect the work efficiency of the NCT?*].
- To facilitate interaction with the NCT members, the General Director of the Centre National de la Cartographie et de la Télédétection was appointed to act on behalf of the chair of the NCT for the majority of the NCT activities,
- An international workshop is planned for 2018.





Case of Botswana

Prepared by : Lucy Phalaagae

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History- Botswana Place Names Commission (PNC)

- Botswana is a large country with an area of about 582000 square kilometers. Botswana has experienced a diversity of different languages and dialects. Due to this diversity of languages, the Surveyor General in 1965 proposed the establishment of a Place Names Commission.
- The Surveyor General was following precedence set by Survey Departments all over the world who had realized the need for an authoritative source of Place Names.
- This was to assist in publishing correct names and spellings of all topographic features in the country

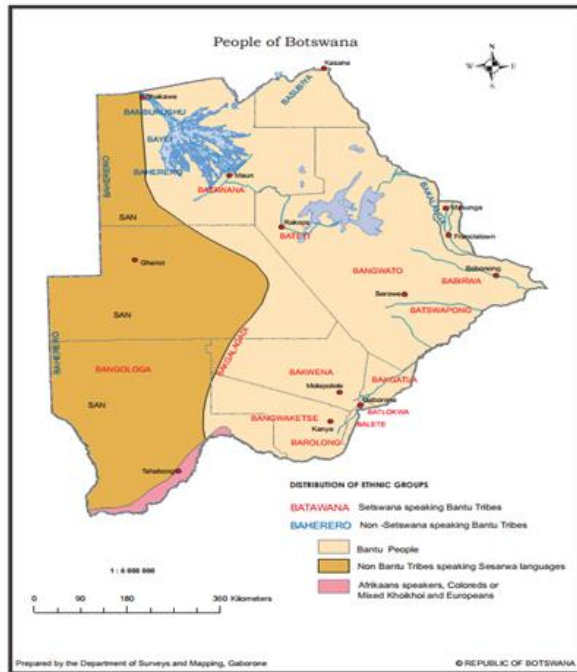


Fig 2. Map of Botswana showing distribution of ethnic groups. Setswana speaking groups entered the country about the 13th century from Transvaal South Africa Setswana speaking groups are dominant in the eastern, central and Ngamiland regions



Fig 2. Participants of the Botswana geographical Names Committee (i.e. representation from Water Affairs, University of Botswana, Wildlife, National Museum, Arts and Culture, Statistics, Surveys and Mapping) and South African Geographical Names Council attending a training workshop on standardization of Geographical Names in Gaborone Botswana.



PNC Composition- Terms of Reference.

- Seven members from different parts of the country was appointed by the Minister of Local Government and lands.
- Appointment was based on their knowledge of South African linguistics, history of Botswana and Geographical Names of the country.
- A criteria on the examination of names was set to check local pronunciation, recognized meaning, etc.
- Meetings were broadcast by radio Botswana, through the **kgotla (ward)**, district commissioners, tribal authorities and through village elders.



PNC Composition- Terms of Reference.

- The commission visited various villages to get first hand information on names.
- Visits triggered a lot of criticism on derivation and spelling of names.
- Young graduates from villages demanded to know more on why names on their villages were spelt wrongly.
- Disputes arose from other tribes who also felt their names were spelt wrongly.
- Due to these disputes PNC started negotiating for the enactment of an act.



New approaches - PNC

- The Department of Surveys and Mapping a national mapping agency has been the main coordinator of the PNC. The secretary and chairperson since 1990, became more involved by organizing meetings with relevant authorities.
- Meetings covered awareness on the consistent use of accurate place names.
- The secretary proposed to government that any meeting held they should be invited to talk about standardization of place names.
- Names were compiled and sent to various districts for correct spellings. The response has been positive.
- Names have been collected waiting for new committee to recommend.

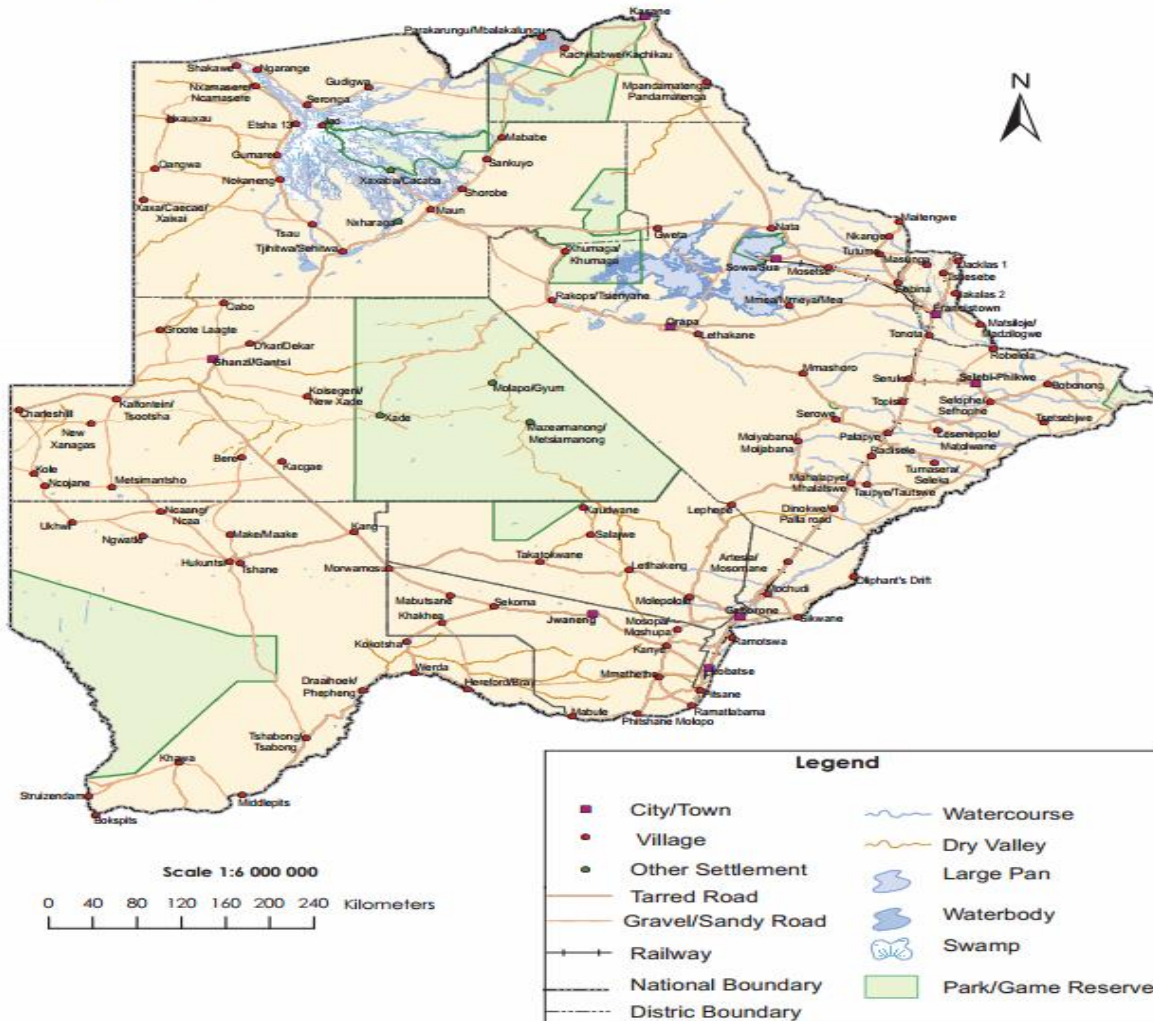


Achievements in resuscitating the PNC

- The geographical Names Committee continues to pursue government to recognize that Presidential Directive does not carry much weight, an Act of Parliament will assist in enforcing requisite provisions.
- Committee has organized trained sessions to other government organizations on the importance of standardization of names.
- A draft cabinet memo has been compiled including proposed guiding structures.
- To give legislative authority to carry out mandate.
- All these achievements by the committee have been communicated to government.



Geographical Names Standardization_Botswana Settlements



Geographical Names Standardisation.

| Location | Name of Settlements | 2 nd Name |
|-------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Central District | Rakops | Tsienyane |
| | Sowa | Sua |
| | Moiyabana | Moijabana |
| | Mahalapye | Mahalapswe |
| | Taupe | Tautswe |
| | Lesenepole | Matulwane |
| | Mmea | Mmeya/Mea |
| Southern District | Moshupa | Mosopa |
| Ghanzi District | Kalkfontein | Tsootsha |
| | Mazeamanong | Metsiamanong |
| Chobe District | Pandamatenga | Mpandamatenga |
| | Parakarungu | Mbalakalungu |

These are some examples on the map of settlements which have two or three names of the same place.



Expectation/Recommendation

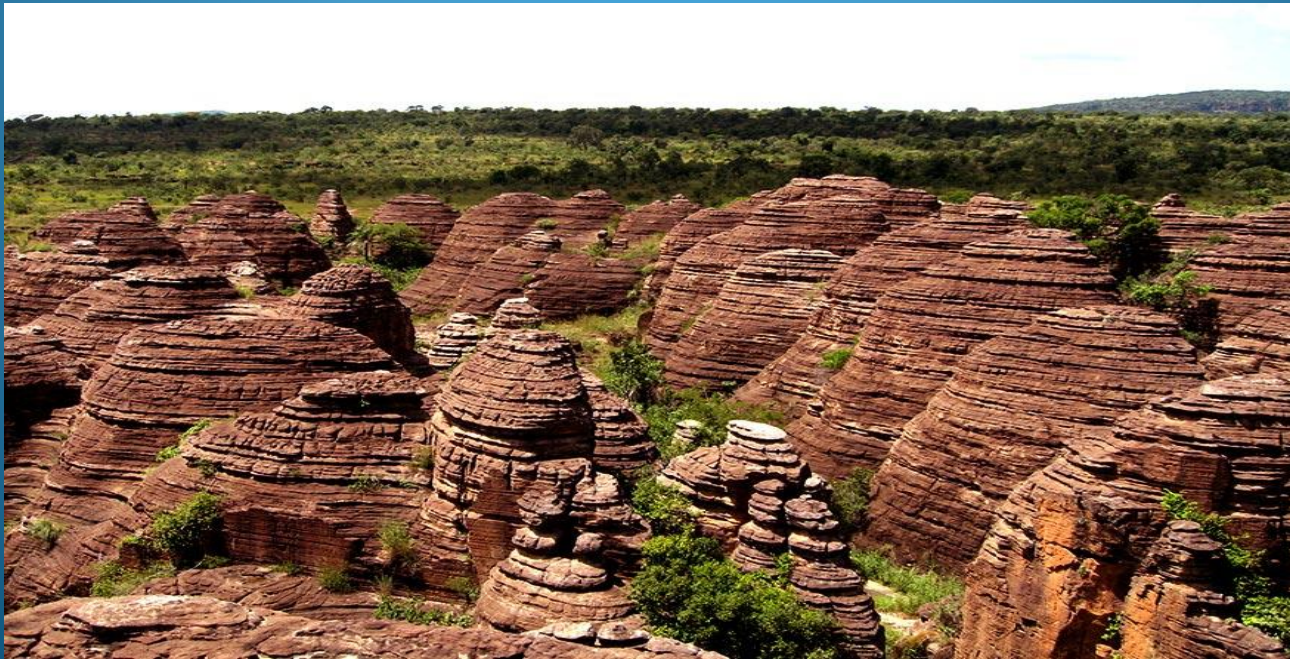
- Botswana Geographical Names committee to recommend to government correct spelling of all geographical features in the country.
- Efforts by University of Botswana on spelling of Setswana names.
- Documentation on the collected names during Botswana's 50th anniversary .
- Publication of names to give other organizations and general public on the use of official names.



Case of Burkina Faso

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Toponymic Landscape in Burkina Faso

General observation : toponyms or geographical names in Burkina Faso are characterized by a lack of homogeneity reflected in:

1. Broken links between old and current toponymic documents

| PROV | COMM | Nom_MATDS | CT 500k | CT 200k | CT 50k | Autres sources |
|---------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| COMOE | DAKORO | Lemagara | _ | Lomagara (1960) | _ | _ |
| COMOE | DOUNA | Monsonon | Mossonon | _ | Moussono (1984) | _ |
| MOUHOUN | BOURASSO | Diamasso | _ | Zémasso (1960) | _ | _ |
| SANGUIE | ZAWARA | Ividié | _ | Ifidié (1960) | Evidié (1984) | _ |
| SISSILI | SILLY | Koubounga | _ | Koubouin (1960) | _ | _ |

2. Need for clarification between official language (French) and local languages,

Ouagadougou → Wogodogo (authentic name from the local language "mooré")

SECACO → Name given to the agglomeration formed around a former wood manufacturing company that no longer exists ...





Toponymic Landscape in Burkina Faso

3. Probable misunderstanding of the transcription principles introduced since the 1960s :

Adopted at the Bamako Conference (1963)

Proposed to GENUING in 1967 (1st Conference)

Simplified in 1996 (Franco-African Seminar UNESCO - Paris)

Revised at the Ouagadougou toponymy workshop in 2008

Faced with this situation, actions have been undertaken leading to :

- ❖ The creation of a first NTC in 1986 which has practically not functioned for reasons related to the inadequacy of national resources and expertise in the standardization of geographical names;
- ❖ Revitalization of the NTC's activities as part of the National Mapping Project at scale 1/200,000 with :
 - capacity-building and
 - **creation of a new NTC by decree n° 2012-1015/PRES/PM/MID/MATDS/MEF - December 30th, 2012**





Missions and Organization of the Current NTC

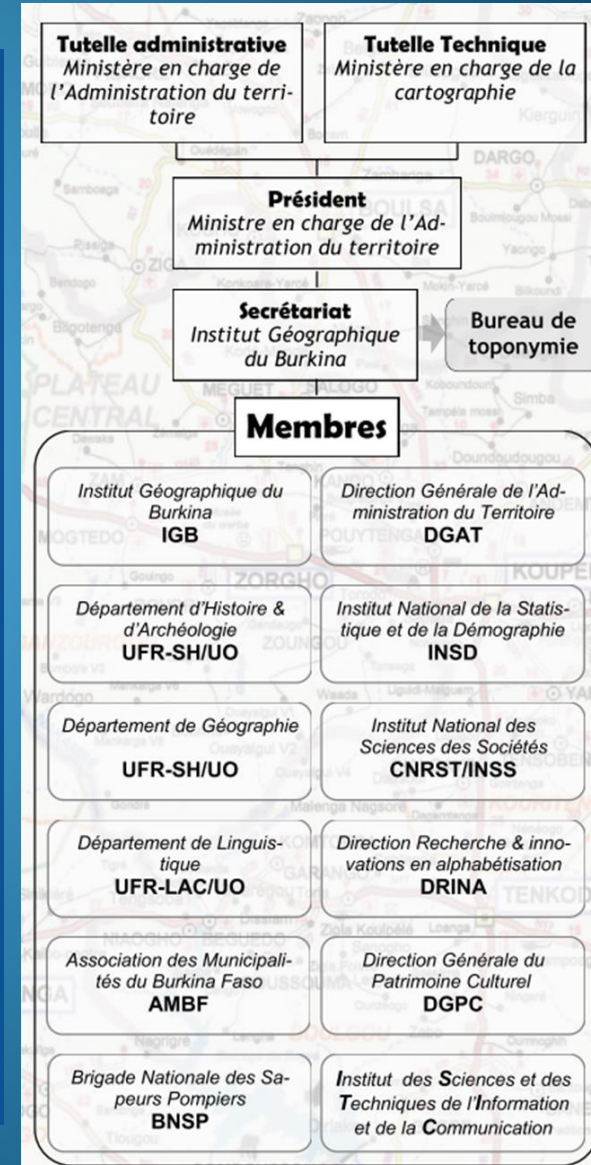
- **Missions of the current NTC**
 - Conduct an inventory and preserve place names;
 - Adopt for each place name its official linguistic form;
 - Develop the principles, methods and rules for the writing of all place names;
 - Set criteria for the selection of the names to be assigned to places throughout the national territory;
 - Disseminate the toponyms of Burkina Faso at national and international levels;
 - Participate in international works on the preservation or reclaim the identity of the national toponymic heritage, a living fact of culture and language;
 - Participate in international meetings and conferences on toponymy on behalf of Burkina Faso.





Missions and Organization of the Current NTC

- The current NTC is composed of 13 statutory members and resource persons. It meets twice a year ;
- The NTC is under the supervision of the Minister in charge of Territorial Administration (Presidency) and the Minister in charge of mapping (secretariat) ;
- The secretariat is assisted by the Toponymy Office housed within the Geographical Institute of Burkina Faso;
- Members of the NTC were officially installed on March 15, 2013





Achievements of the NTC

- These achievements can be summarized as follows:
 - Capacity building through :
 - Holding of a regional toponymy workshop in Ouagadougou (2008) with input from UNGEGN experts ;
 - Training of NTC's members on harmonization and standardization of toponyms (2012), as part of the National Mapping project at scale 1/200,000,
 - Adoption of tools for the treatment of place names
 - Harmonization tools
 - Decomposition of place names (use of a glossary sketch in constant improvement)
 - Charter of toponymy (upper case - lowercase / diacritical marks / hyphen / generic terms (glossary of terms in different languages
 - Other rules (pronunciation - meaning /
 - Simplification ("i" instead of "y") / Uniformity / Normal
 - Standardization tools
 - General principles of transcription into French language (Origin: Bamako Conference in 1963 – toponyms of the French speaking countries in Africa)
 - Some specific rules





Achievements of the NTC

- Adoption of specific rules for place names derived from Arabo-Berber languages for the names of the Sahelian zone :
 - The groups "el" and "èl" have the same pronunciation. Given the coexistence of these groups in the leaf toponyms of the Sahel region. (Diguel, Gorèl, ...)
 - The use of terminals t, m, ..., avoiding the addition of a mute "e", which makes it possible to avoid contradictions in certain cases. (Tasmakat, Gorom-Gorom, ...)
- Adoption of a sketch of a glossary of terms used in the main languages of Burkina Faso (to be updated continuously).





Achievements of the NTC

- ~ 15000 toponyms (localities, hydronyms, oronyms, ...) of the topographic map 1/ 200,000 reviewed and validated between 2012 and 2014;
- Names of Administrative Entities (Region - Province - Municipality / Department : reviewed and validated;
- Orders taken by authorities and adopting official toponyms;
- Consideration of validated toponyms in the updating of the directory of administrative localities in Burkina Faso;
- Consideration of the achievements in the treatment of toponyms in the process of erecting agglomerations into administrative localities.

Participants in the 1st session of the NCT on February, 11th 2014 in Fada-Ngourma (East region of Burkina Faso)





Main Difficulties

- **These difficulties can be summarized as follows:**
 - The authorities' lack of commitment to assume financial responsibility for the NTC's activities - after the closure of the project, which enabled the revitalization and regular holding of sessions, the NTC has not been able to hold its regular sessions since 2015 ;
 - Relative instability of NTC's members, which poses the need for continuous training in toponymy to ensure standardization of activities;
 - Weak knowledge of the NTC and its missions at the national level, which does not favor its action in the long term ;
 - Weak internal organization of the NTC, which does not promote its effectiveness on the ground.





Expectation/Recommendation

- Continuation of the activities to be included in the program of the Ministry in charge of Territorial Administration (NTC Presidency);
- Ongoing capacity building of the NTC's members;
- Organization of regular information and awareness campaigns on the NTC's missions and actions;
- Adoption of the NTC rules of procedures, specifying, among other things, the setting up of working groups;
- Capitalization on the achievements through the creation of a toponymic database and the updating of the Gazetteer of the country;
- Continuation of the standardization of the country's toponyms.





Case of Madagascar

Prepared by : Nivo Ratovoarison

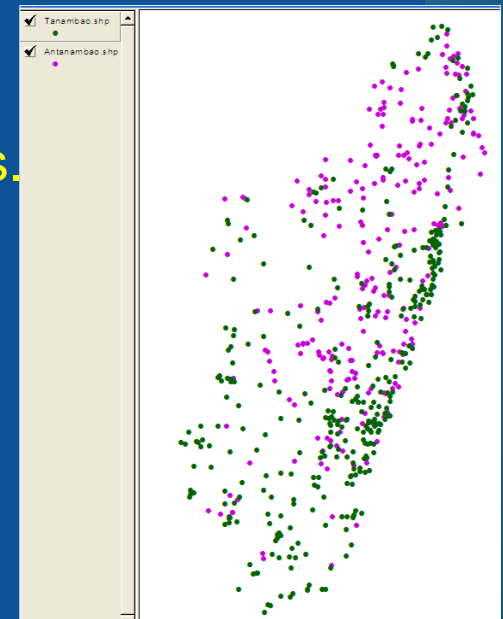
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Toponymic landscape in Madagascar

- Before 1973, the Geographical Service and then the National Institute for Geography and Hydrography (**Foiben-Taosarintanin'i Madagasikara - FTM**) ensured the work on geographical names as a part of its mission.
- It consists on review of names included in 1:100 000 and 1:50 000 topographical maps through discussion with local authorities and experts.
- Obvious necessity of regulation in place naming:
 - ✓ Some names are duplicated so many times that they cover the entire country
ex of the 2 names with same meaning:
"New Town" { *Tanambao* (362)
Antanambao (251)
 - ✓ Some places have many names, bilingual or not, litigation related to history or culture.





A typical case: In a same map, 4 names for 1 place



- Fort-Dauphin
- Taolagnaro
- Tolanaro
- Faradofay





Creation of the National Committee of Toponymy

- After the United Nations Conference attended by the Director General of the FTM in Geneva in 1967, Madagascar began the challenge in implementation of recommendations and resolutions on geographical names standardization.
- The long procedure for creating a national committee on geographical names was then initiated.
- Thus the **Komitim-Pirenena Miandraikitra ny Anarantany (KPMA)** was established in 1973 by decree 73-157 15/06/73, amended by decree 2001-235 21/03/2001.
- The KPMA is headquartered within the FTM.





Composition of the KPMA

- On the requests of existing ministries at that time, their 28 representatives joined 14 experts and linguists from University, Library, Archives, Academy ... to compose the 42 members of the KPMA . They are appointed by decree 14 382/05, 09.22.05.
- The KPMA chair is the Ministry of Land and two vice-chairs are the Ministry of Interior and the Director General of the National Institute for Geography and Hydrography (FTM). The secretariat is assured by a representative of the FTM.
- The permanent bureau is composed by 8 persons: the Chair, the 2 Vice-chairs, the secretary, 4 members elected by the committee.
- The KPMA may request assistance from personalities with special expertise in toponymy as observer.





Main functions of the KPMA

- The KPMA is assigned to:
 - study on the standardization of geographical names within the national territory and the procession of all questions related to geographical names that appear on all official publications and in maps in particular;
 - contribute to the conservation and development of toponymic heritage;
 - develop draft texts necessary for coherent and consistent actions in this domain





Work Process of the KPMA

- Make a prioritized list of ambiguous names to be standardized, frequently used in national and international communication (main towns, touristic places, capes, ...)
- Carry out various researches: documentation, maps comparison, fieldwork including meetings with elected officials and local elders, with inhabitants when the name is subject of intense debate that is broadcasted eventually by local radio and recorded on a tape and moreover on paper signed by all the stakeholders.
- Compile an explanatory note including historical background and the reason guiding to the choice of each name.
- Launch a test through media, maps. If there is any critic, make more investigation
- Finally, the KPMA proposes a single name to the ministerial council.





Achievements of the KPMA

- 27 geographical names are standardized by decree 2001-263, 28 March 2001.
- An International Training for Trainers has been organized in Antananarivo, 17-21 June 2013. 5 countries from East Africa have been represented and 28 persons received the knowledge.
- A first version of Toponymic Guidelines for Map and Other editors for International Use is to be presented during UNCISG 2017 .
- Toponymic documentation is available for the public at KPMA headquarter.
- Brochure and directive drafts are compiled and are waiting for validation.





Constraints of the KPMA

- Madagascar is a large country (4th largest island in the world, 586760 km²) thus,
 - ✓ many existing names are duplicated, some are ambiguous,
 - ✓ the KPMA is no corresponding entity in provinces, therefore, new places naming are not under control.
- The FTM was temporarily the main source of funding. Since 1995, financial problem occurred stopping:
 - ✓ further standardization,
 - ✓ further dissemination of standardized names.
- Change of government, retirement or transfer of members who then become out of touch, means new nomination that lead to long and repetitive procedure.





Expectation/Recommendation

Government effective involvement in assistance of the KPMA in its duty :

- Funding meetings, researches, fieldtrips...,
- Facilitate cooperation between governmental services in provinces to ensure naming control,
- Facilitate preservation of achievements by:
 - ✓ continuous and large dissemination of standardized names,
 - ✓ decree application.





THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION