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INTRODUZIONE

Emanuele Fantini*, Caterina Pozzobon°, Guido Nicolas Zingari**

*IHE Delft - Institute for Water Education, e.fantini@un-ihe.org

°Università degli Studi di Torino, caterina.pozzobon@unito.it

**Università degli Studi di Torino, guidonicolas.zingari@unito.it

Care lettrici e lettori di JUNCO,

Nel 2023 si è tenuta a New York la United Nations Water Conference, la seconda conferenza internazionale delle Nazioni Unite interamente dedicata all'acqua, a quasi mezzo secolo di distanza dalla prima, svoltasi a Mar Del Plata (Argentina) nel 1977. Il commento viene spontaneo: quanta acqua, nel frattempo, è passata sotto i ponti! Da un punto di vista simbolico, l'organizzazione della conferenza nella sede delle Nazioni Unite a New York, ha voluto indicare il principio che l'acqua, bene comune per eccellenza, dovrebbe essere al centro dell'agenda politica mondiale e degli sforzi di cooperazione internazionale e multilaterale di tutti i paesi e popoli della terra. All'atto pratico, non sono peró mancate le critiche alla conferenza, in termini di risultati concreti, e di rappresentatividá e inclusivitá del processo. La conferenza si è conclusa senza una dichiarazione finale sottoscritta da tutti i governi; nel documento finale figurano invece una lunga serie di impegni non vincolanti assunti in maniera volontaria dai partecipanti alla conferenza (governi, settore privato, ong, accademia). Inoltre, il fatto di organizzare la conferenza in una città come New York, particolarmente costosa e difficilmente accessibile in termini di visti, ed il sistema di accreditamento piuttosto complesso, hanno limitato la partecipazione di rappresentanti del Sud Globale e di gruppi e organizzazioni con meno risorse a disposizione. I limiti e le critiche alla conferenza, sono tuttavia un indicatore di quanta acqua sia passata sotto i ponti rispetto alla Conferenza di Mar Del Plata, e della consapevolezza e del consenso attorno al fatto che il *business as usual* non è piú sufficiente per rispondere alle sfide che la crisi climatica pone alla gestione dell'acqua. Al tempo stesso, la UN Water Conference conferma la difficoltà di tradurre questa consapevolezza in meccanismi, processi e pratiche istituzionali, sulla scala globale come a quella locale.

Nel loro piccolo, gli articoli che aprono questo numero di JUNCO, offrono un contributo per muoversi in quella direzione, riflettendo su pratiche di ricerca e cooperazione che cercano di tradurre i principi di partecipazione e inclusivitá in politiche e progetti concreti di gestione dell'acqua.

Poiché il ciclo idrosociale dell'acqua abbraccia l'intero globo, la sua alterazione e la sua cura riguardano tutti i paesi, anche quelli che storicamente non hanno affrontato eventi meteorologici e climatici estremi come alluvioni e siccità, che stanno però diventando sempre più comuni. La natura indisciplinata dell'acqua, che non riconosce o rispetta i confini umani, unita alla sua vulnerabilità al metabolismo degli insediamenti umani hanno fatto sì che uno dei principali temi emersi dalla conferenza delle Nazioni Unite sia la necessità di promuovere

partnership e cooperazione nella gestione delle risorse idriche in modo trasversale come indicato dal titolo dell'ultimo "World Water Development Report: Partnerships and cooperation for water" pubblicato nel 2023 (https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000384655).

Il mondo della cooperazione internazionale in collaborazione con quello della ricerca hanno nel tempo sviluppato un estensivo *know-how* sulla gestione delle problematiche idriche soprattutto in contesti del Sud Globale. Questo è avvenuto e avviene attraverso strumenti e metodi diversi che mirano ad esplorare la connessione acqua-società e ideare progetti collettivi basati sulle conoscenze accumulate.

In questo senso, questa sezione tematica ha voluto creare uno spazio all'interno di JunCo in cui potessero trovare posto specifiche esperienze di ricerca e cooperazione riguardanti la gestione idrica. L'acqua scorre attraverso i diversi contributi del numero in maniera sfaccettata toccando e intrecciando diversi temi tra cui quelli ambientali, quelli legati all'accesso alla risorsa, e quelli della giustizia sociali, discutendo diverse metodologie utilizzate per studiarli.

"Participatory processes in water governance in Senegal: the case study of the Ecopass project" presenta e analizza il modo in cui il progetto di Ecopas promosso da un consorzio di ONG e università senegalesi e italiane abbia portato avanti un processo partecipativo per migliorare la governance idrica dell'area metropolitana di Dakar. L'articolo, scritto a più mani da Sergio Galletta, Hajare Mouhoub, Federica Viola, Cheikh Abdoul Ahad Mbacké Ba, Momar Diongue, Riccardo Mangione, William Foieni e Federico Perotti si concentra sullo strumento del dialogo strutturato come metodo efficace nella definizione delle linee guida in materia di acqua e servizi igienico-sanitari, dei temi e delle sfide della governance inclusiva delle risorse ambientali, del patto territoriale per la conservazione e la promozione dell'ambiente firmato dai comuni dell'area di intervento.

Il secondo articolo intitolato "The impact of the 2019 Water Supply and Sanitation Act on rural water management in Kongwa and Chamwino Districts, Tanzania" analizza i dati raccolti nel corso di diverse attività di cooperazione e esperienze di ricerca legate alla gestione comunitaria delle risorse in Tanzania centrale. In particolare, l'articolo si concentra su come la riforma del settore idrico del 2019, che ha portato a una ristrutturazione della governance idrica per quanto riguarda i servizi idrici per la popolazione rurale del paese, sia stata recepita e implementata nella zona di intervento della ONG.

Esmee van den Hoek nel terzo contributo "Tales of Water: a methodological perspective on the visualisation of negotiating water access by South Sudanese refugees in rural Uganda" riflette sul potenziale della ricerca visuale per rappresentare l'accesso all'acqua attraverso le esperienze dei rifugiati sud-sudanesi che quotidianamente negoziano tempo, spazio e genere nella ricerca dell'acqua in un campo profughi in Uganda.

L'articolo "The spatiality of the social response to water privatization: the case study of the Cochabamba water conflict (1999- 2000)" scritto da Matilda Prandini si focalizza sulla risposta sociale della popolazione boliviana di Cochabamba scatenata dagli effetti negativi delle politiche di privatizzazione idrica. L'articolo prosegue con una breve analisi dell'operato della ONG italiana "CeVI" nel progetto "Yaku al Sur" portato avanti nel contesto post conflitto idrico (tra il 2009-2012) insieme a una serie di organizzazioni locali che aveva l'obiettivo di supportare i sistemi idrici locali dei quartieri a duc della città.

L'ultimo contributo del numero scritto da Alessandra Bianco Prevot, Domenico De Luca e Manuela Lasagna è intitolato "La tutela delle acque sotterranee nell'area di Quetzaltenango (Guatemala) nell'ambito della cooperazione internazionale". Le autrici e l'autore presentano un progetto che si propone di approfondire la conoscenza e favorire la protezione delle risorse idriche sotterranee dell'area di Quetzaltenango, la seconda città del Guatemala sottoposta a una forte pressione antropica. L'articolo mostra come il progetto si inserisce in un lungo percorso di collaborazione tra diversi enti governativi e non governativi piemontesi e guatemaltechi, iniziato nel 1997 che ha permesso lo scambio di conoscenze ed esperienze in due contesti socio-economici distanti ma con punti in comune in relazione allo sfruttamento e alla tutela delle risorse idriche.

La seconda e parte del numero è invece una sezione miscellanea di contributi in cui trovano spazio articoli scritti da studenti e studentesse di diverse università che hanno condotto attività di ricerca in collaborazione con enti o su temi legati alla cooperazione internazionale in senso ampio. Questa sezione risponde alla volontà di JUNCO di creare uno spazio per valorizzare il contributo di giovani ricercatori e ricercatrici che muovono i primi passi nel mondo della produzione accademica. Qui, si trovano i contributi di Elisa Armando (Università di Torino), che ha messo al centro della sua ricerca l'uso degli orti comunitari come strumenti di riabilitazione per donne vulnerabili nel contesto post-conflitto in Uganda del nord. Dello studio della condizione e delle esperienze dei rifugiati nei campi profughi Sahrawi si occupa invece l'articolo di Gabriele Casano (Università degli Studi di Genova), seguito dal contributo di Amarilli Varesio (Università di Torino) che si concentra sulle pratiche informali di riciclo dei giovani rifugiati congolesi a Kampala, in Kenya. Infine, Daniele Vico (Universitat de Barcelona) scrive dell'evoluzione del pluralismo legale nella terra dell'oasi di Jemna in Tunisia e della contestuale emersione di una economia sociale e solidale tra la popolazione locale.

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PARTICIPATORY PROCESSES IN WATER GOVERNANCE IN SENEGAL: THE CASE STUDY OF THE ECOPAS PROJECT

Sergio Galletta[1], Hajare Mouhoub[2], Federica Viola[2], Cheikh Abdoul Ahad Mbacké Ba[3], Momar Diongue[4], Riccardo Mangione[5], William Foieni[6] and Federico Perotti[7]

[1]Project manager, Hydroaid, Water for Development Management Institute, Turin; sergio.galletta@hydroaid.it
[2]Master's students at Area and Global Studies for International Cooperation(AGIC), University of Turin; federica.viola754@edu.unito.it; hajare.mouhoub@edu.unito.it
[3] Lecturer in Human Geography/Planning, Cheikh Anta DIOP University, Dakar, Senegal /University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa; cheikh25.ba@ucad.edu.sn
[4] Assistant professor in Urban Geography, Institut de la Gouvernance territoriale et du Développement local, Cheikh Anta DIOP University, Dakar, Senegal; momar.diongue@ucad.edu.sn
[5] Independent Researcher; r.mangione@live.it
[6] Former Ecopas project coordinator; william.foieni@gmail.com
[7] Development expert, CISV; f.perotti@cisvto.org

Abstract

Giving that participation represents a crucial element in any model of environmental governance today, the article - after describing participatory processes, related to the management of water resources and to the international development cooperation, and introducing water governance in Senegal - deals with the features of the process implemented by the Ecopas project in four municipalities in the Dakar Metropolitan area. The field of application is the governance of environmental resources with a special focus on water resources. The participatory processes accompanied all the activities carried out by Ecopas and in particular they focused on the development of water and sanitation guidelines, the Atlas of issues and challenges of environmental governance, and the territorial pact for environment conservation and promotion, which was signed by the municipalities targeted by the project. The guiding approach was the structured dialogue, which promotes in an organised way the active participation of local communities and Civil Society Organisations (Cso), and their interaction with policy makers.

Essendo la partecipazione ormai un elemento cruciale in qualsiasi modello di governance ambientale, l'articolo - dopo un'introduzione sui processi partecipativi nella gestione delle risorse idriche e nella cooperazione internazionale allo sviluppo, e sulla governance dell'acqua in Senegal - analizza le modalità di realizzazione dei processi partecipativi nel campo della governance delle risorse ambientali e in particolare delle risorse idriche, a partire dal progetto Ecopas in quattro comuni della periferia di Dakar. I processi partecipativi hanno interessato tutte le attività svolte dal progetto Ecopas ed in particolare quelle riguardanti lo sviluppo delle linee guida in materia di acqua e servizi igienico-sanitari, l'atlante dei temi e delle sfide della governance inclusiva delle risorse ambientali, e il patto territoriale per la conservazione e la promozione dell'ambiente firmato dai comuni dell'area di intervento. L'approccio guida utilizzato è quello del dialogo strutturato, che promuove in modo organizzato la partecipazione attiva delle comunità locali e delle Organizzazioni della Società Civile (Osc) e la loro interazione con i decisori politici.

Keywords

Urban water governance, Senegal, participatory processes, international cooperation for development

Introduction

This article aims to present how the participatory processes in the field of the governance of environmental resources were implemented in the Ecopas project carried out in Dakar, Senegal. It is based on the work *Les Processus participatifs de gouvernance environnementale en Afrique: expériences locales pour des perspectives globales*[1], financed by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and which is the result of the collaboration of Hydroaid - Water for Development Management Institute, the Ngo Cisv (Comunità Impegno Servizio Volontariato), the University of Turin - Cisao (Interdepartmental Center for Research and Scientific Technical Cooperation with Africa) and the Cheikh Anta Diop University of Dakar - Igt (Institute of Territorial Governance).

This article shows how the method of structured dialogue was applied to initiate and support the participatory process in the Ecopas project. The implementation of this method has proved to be an effective way to improve the capacities of Civil Society Organisations (Cso) and local authorities, and enhance their cooperation in order to face the challenges arising from the water governance in a centralised system such as the Senegalese one.

Participatory processes in the field of water governance and international cooperation

The actual beginning of the application of participatory approaches to environmental governance dates back to the early 1970s, when the failure of the technology transfer approach, ideated in the 1960s, was clear (Grassini, 2019). The 1977 United Nations Water Conference, held in Mar del Plata, Argentina, was the first international water-focused initiative, and it was also the first context in which participation was proposed as a potential solution to water resource management problems (Woodhouse and Muller, 2017). The change of perspective began with the inclusion of communities in the decision-making process around water resources management, evolving in community management during the 1980s and the 1990s (Woodhouse and Muller, 2017; Grassini, 2019). Despite the fact the term community is a basic one in social sciences, its definitions are usually vague and varied, and sometimes they depend on the personal interpretation of the concept. The collective life and participation in common activities, reinforced by shared symbols, push us to define community in

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[1] Published in September 2021, it is available at
https://www.esteri.it/mae/resource/doc/2021/08/hydroaid_processi_partecipativi_nella_governance_ambiental e_in_africa.pdf

general terms as a group of people interacting in a defined geographic area, sharing common values, beliefs or behaviours and a common communication system (Morris, 1963; Brint, 2001).

Being a non-scientific and very general term, community in scientific contexts needs to be accompanied by other specific terms (Morris, 1963): for the purpose of our work, when we write about community we refer to its definition in the broader context of community involved in a participatory water governance approach.

In the early 2000s, community management became the standard approach for water resource management in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in rural areas. This approach is based on the strong inclusion of the involved community in the implementation of projects concerning the establishment of water supply systems, as well as on its responsibility for their operation and maintenance, and on its contribution to the systems' costs and the payment of the fees (Harvey and Reed, 2006). During this period, especially in the Second World Water Forum of 2000 held in The Hague, water started to be considered as a scarce resource requiring fundings, and therefore it began to be treated as an economic good. This consideration of water has enabled the application of market paradigms to water governance (Jaglin, 2002; Woodhouse and Muller, 2017). The market-based approach lacks the flexibility to find a fair compromise between the right to access drinking water and the principle of paying for a service; this led to the emergence of an informal water economy in several countries, prompting some communities to use water from unreliable sources, potentially dangerous for their health (Jaglin, 2002). According to the United Nations, to solve all these problems it is necessary to undertake actions at the community level (Un, 2019; Un, 2021), because the increase in funding alone is not enough to cover the costs of managing and developing water services. Indeed, in recent years, the Official Development Assistance (Oda) in the context of water resources has been low: over the period 1995-2008 the sector received less than 4.0% of Oda for sub-Saharan Africa (Salami et al., 2014). Recently, many governments in low-income countries have shifted funds to manage the Covid-19 pandemic, reducing funding for essential services and projects, including those in the Wash (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene) domain (Jmp, 2021).

Communities have been identified as a missing element in development and the failure of many initiatives has been attributed to the inability of actors involved to create and implement projects tailored to local problems (Hickey & Mohan, 2004). The idea behind this change was centred on the necessity to try to co-create effective systems to solve most of the problems related to water management, taking into account the specificities of each community. Governments and international organisations, operating in developing countries, have begun to model an approach that values the opinion and role of citizens, focused on their needs (Hickey & Mohan, 2004). This is an important change of mentality, replacing the passive intervention of international institutions and development

agencies, with the active involvement of beneficiaries participating in development projects. The Oecd adoption of the Principles on Water Governance in 2015 marked the definitive change of perspective in participatory water governance: the Principles underline that water-related crises are crises of governance and therefore water governance systems should be designed according to the challenges they are required to respond (Oecd, 2015) and draws attention to the importance of including stakeholders, especially communities, in all phases of water management processes (Oecd, 2015).

Today participation in the water sector is mainly based on the theory of social learning, according to which human behaviour is influenced by the interaction with others and the efforts to maintain a certain social image (Grassini, 2019). In this context, a participatory approach to water governance can increase and facilitate populations' access to infrastructures, but it can also be effective in the management of bad payers behaviour thanks to the sociological concept of 'face'. In addition, the inclusion of local communities in the management of water resources foresees that the projects' implementation is based on the local needs and traditions, since each community requires a tailored approaches to participation (Botting et al., 2010; Abelson, 2006). The main goal of participatory approaches is therefore to involve local populations in the development of projects intended for them, pushing them to actively participate in their own change: it is the process through which the involved stakeholders «influence and share control over priority setting, policy-making, resource allocations and access to public goods and services» (Tikare et al., 2001: 3). In other words, it aims to give communities a voice in their own development. In particular, the participatory approaches applied to water governance in sub-Saharan Africa have three main objectives: to meet the demand of the population more effectively, to promote a flexible method centred on social learning and, ultimately, to guarantee a long-term commitment of the populations in the management of the systems (Jaglin, 2004).

Although participatory governance offers the possibility of a transformative change, much remains to be studied about how these changes work, for whom, and with what social and ethical outcomes (Gaventa, 2004). Because of this, participatory approaches have been criticised from different points of view. Above all, participatory governance is community-based, and it demonstrated to be more effective with small groups of people; however, particularly in the context of water resources management, its purpose is to solve a problem that is widespread, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, and so participatory approaches are generally applied to larger contexts than small communities (Woodhouse and Muller, 2017). In addition, many people are engaged in other jobs, or they live far from the water supply system, and, consequently, they do not have the time or possibility to be involved in water resources management. Thus, the presence of a supply system does not necessarily encourage the community to fully engage in its conservation. Even the poverty rate of the community influences the success of participatory governance, as the provisioning systems must be controlled and maintained

over time also from an economic perspective (Harvey and Reed, 2007). In other cases, participatory governance has been used as a pretext to shift responsibility onto communities for mismanagement of resources, while decentralisation associated with community participation should improve their accountability, as it is a practice that empowers local governments and guarantee the efficiency of the offered services (Woodhouse and Muller, 2017; Harvey and Reed, 2007; Pozzobon, 2019; Gaventa, 2004; Jaglin, 2002; Foster, 2010).There is still an insufficient understanding of how power actually works within the framework of participation, and therefore on how affected communities can be empowered, because the largest part of development projects operators involved in social change see participation as a technical methodology rather than an accountability policy. Such a "tyrannical" approach to power could bring to a depolarization of the real problem, reducing it to the tendency of placing the blame for the malfunctioning of a project on the shoulders of the community (Hickey and Mohan, 2004).

Participatory approaches must be certainly studied deeper because of their complexity and their involvement at the social, political, and institutional level: beyond the many criticisms of participation, the inclusion of populations in the implementation of projects aimed at solving problems on the territory has been found to be effective and useful, by sowing a feeling of collaboration, ownership, and responsibility within the communities.

Water governance in Senegal

Senegal is a West African country, with a population of 16,705,608 in 2020 (RS/MEF/ANSD, 2020). More than half of the population (54,8%) resides in rural areas, with significant regional disparities. The Dakar Region sees a concentration of 23% of the population in an area that is 3% of the national territory (550 km^2).
The country has significant potential in both surface water and renewable groundwater resources. The freshwater resources used account for less than 10% of the available reserves. In 2020 service coverage was about 95% in urban and 75% in rural areas (overall: 85%) (Jmp, 2020).

As regards national water policies of Senegal, the International Drinking Water and Sanitation Decade of the 1980s determined a turning point. During that period, several institutional and legislative reforms were introduced to improve the governance of water resources and the quality of service. The current institutional setup is the result of a long process from the colonial period to the present day, where it is characterised by the privatisation of the urban water supply management system in 1996.

Significant results were achieved during the 2005-2015 decade, marked by the implementation of the *Programme d'Eau Potable et d'Assainissement du Millénaire* (Pepam, Millennium Drinking Water and Sanitation Programme) in terms of defining policies and strategies, mobilising financial support and building hydraulic infrastructures. However, these efforts have not yet made it possible to meet the needs for drinking water supply and service continuity.

The *Lettre de Politique Sectorielle de Développement* (Lpsd, Sectoral Development Policy Letter) is the most recent reference document of the Republic of Senegal stating its vision for the water and sanitation sectors for the decade 2016-2025. It is in line with the Dublin-Rio Principles, at the heart of the concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (Iwrm), and with the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration. Also, this policy framework takes into account the Un Agenda 2030 of Sustainable Development Goals (Sdgs), the guidelines of the West African Economic and Monetary Union and the *Emerging Senegal Plan* (Esp), providing the reference framework for the country's economic and social development (RS/MHA, 2016b).

In accordance with the main legislative sources regulating the sector, the central State is responsible for water supply and sanitation services. The legal status of water resources is provided by the *Code du Domaine de l'Etat* (State Property Code) of 1976, whereas the *Code de l'Eau* (Water Code) of 1981 sets out the conditions for the use, preservation, and protection of water. The latter is currently undergoing a review process aimed at promoting Iwrm and improving civil society participation in the sector. Besides, the organisation of the public service of drinking water and collective sanitation in urban and rural areas was established by the *Loi sur le Service Public de l'Eau Potable et de l'Assainissement* (Spepa, Law on the Public Drinking Water and Sanitation Service) of 2008. Finally, the regulatory framework is complemented by the *Code de l'Assainissement* (Sanitation Code) of 2009, which provides the specific tool necessary for sector management and allows the introduction of the *polluter pays* principle into the legislative framework. The Code has made it possible to systematise provisions scattered among the various laws previously regulating sanitation: Water Code, Hygiene Code, Environmental Code, Town Planning Code, Building Code (RS/MHA, 2016a).

Within this system, it is relevant to highlight the reunification of the Departments of Water and Sanitation within the same Ministry that occurred in 2012, which was a major initiative by the Government. It contributed to clarify how to manage public water services, collective sanitation, and how to strengthen Iwrm (RS/MHA, 2017). This initiative was also intended to support the definition and implementation of budgetary and financial reforms. The Ministry of Water and Sanitation is responsible for sector policy implementation. On behalf of the State, it performs the following functions: drafting the legislative and regulatory framework; defining the sub-sector performance

targets; seeking and mobilising funding; defining a pricing system that can guarantee financial viability and the allocation of water resources.

In Senegal, the water sector has two main components: rural and urban water supply. This distinction results in different management methods and institutional arrangements (RS/MHA, 2016b). In urban and peri-urban areas, which are the scope of this article, the new sector policies promote greater involvement of the private sector, with public service delegation contracts or management contracts for drinking water and sanitation services. It may be noteworthy to report that, until the late 1980s, the provision of drinking water in urban areas was based on the model of the national public enterprise (Jaglin, 2012). The State, as a custodian of the general interest, was the operator of public services. The reforms of the 1990s marked the transition towards delegation, and the State retained the role of encouraging and regulating the interventions of diversified actors (foreign operators, public-private partnerships, Ngos…).

Therefore, from the exclusive presence of Sonees (Société Nationale d'Exploitation des Eaux du Sénégal), the number of actors involved in urban water and sanitation provision has increased to three, each of them with specific responsibilities. Namely, there are Sones (Société Nationale des Eaux du Sénégal), a state-owned company (*société de patrimoine*), Sen'Eau, a company under Senegalese law with a majority Senegalese shareholding (55%), and Onas (Office National de l'Assainissement du Sénégal), another state-owned enterprise in charge of managing the sanitation sector. The latter has the status of a Public Utility Company (Epic: Etablissement Public à caractère Industriel et Commercial) (Pezon, 2018).

As for the relationships between the public authorities and the two above-mentioned companies in charge of urban water supply, they are inscribed in the scheme defined by a *concession* contract, a *leasing* contract (*affermage*), and a *performance* contract. *Figure 1* below represents the main contractual relations between the actors involved in urban water supply.
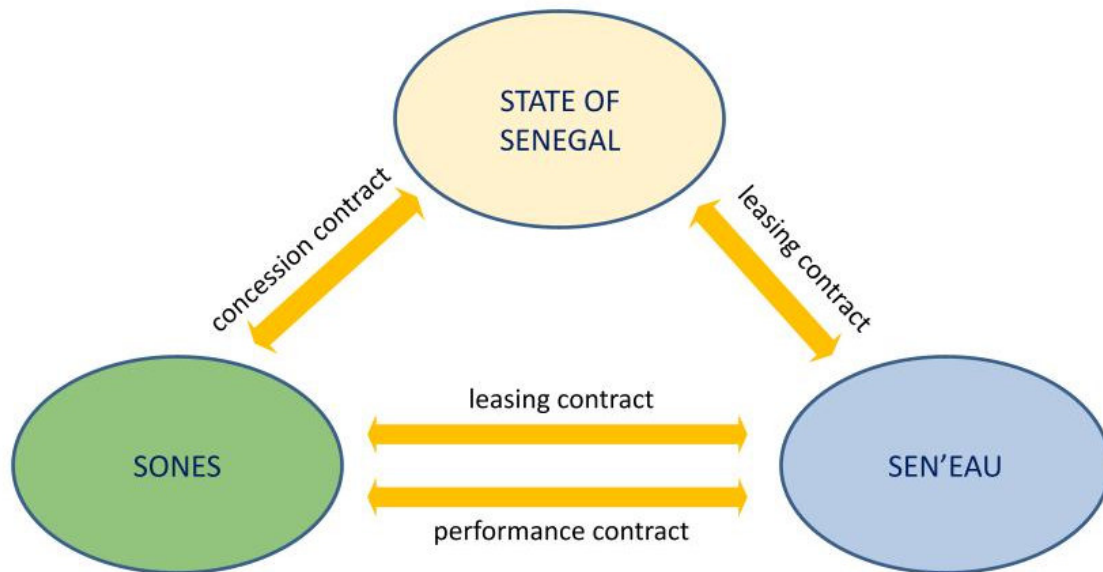
Figure 1. Contractual relations for urban water supply

Sones holds a concession by the State, dated 1996 and running until 2026, with the main obligation to manage supply assets and mobilise investments. The *leasing* contract binds the State of Senegal (leasing authority), Sen'Eau (leaser, *fermier* in French), and Sones (contracting authority for the installations). According to this agreement, Sen'Eau is the delegated private company responsible for operating the public water service (*service provider*). Moreover, a *performance* contract between Sones and Sen'Eau entrusts the former with regulatory functions, such as operations and service quality control, and both companies come under the supervision of the Directorate for Urban Water Supply. It should be noted that from January 2020 Sen'Eau has replaced the previous service provider, Sde (Sénégalaise des Eaux), which performed this function since 1996 (Guéyé, 2012).

Case study: the participatory processes in environmental governance in the Ecopas project

Project's general description

The notion of governance is increasingly used nowadays: applied to environmental issues, governance raises both the question of the mastery of time by the actors and that of the territory in which decisions are made. We can therefore consider that it involves a renewal of the organisation of time and space, political decisions, territories and the actors who inhabit them.

In this regard, a consortium of Senegalese and Italian[2] Ngos, thanks to the financial support of the European Union, implemented the *Projet d'Harmonisation des dynamiques périurbaines pour une Écologie Participative dans les communes de Sam Notaire, Ndiarème Limamoulaye, Wakhinane Nimzatt et Yeumbeul Nord – Ecopas* from April 2018 to April 2021. The four aforementioned municipalities in the departments of Guédiawaye and Pikine are considered the first suburbs of the Dakar Metropolitan area.

Ecopas partners promoted the participation and empowerment of Civil Society Organisations (Cso) through three main pillars: 1) participation and roles of civil society 2) integral ecology principles 3) territorial governance processes. From these three strategic elements, the project proposed a model of cooperation around environmental issues, which was based on the integration of three following main axes: 1) improvement of environmental governance 2) reforestation of 10 hectares on the northern coast of Dakar 3) support and promotion of 130 green micro-enterprises.

Structured dialogue was the approach used: applied with different modalities according to the typology of the actions, it characterised all the strands of the initiative. Developed by the EU, this method aims to improve the effectiveness of public policies by promoting dialogue with citizens and civil society in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of these policies, providing spaces for public exchange between all actors in society.

Structured dialogue is based on the concept of participatory process and on the philosophy of better organising existing spaces for debate and participation rather than creating new ones. It is foremost a method, which has been "institutionalised" at European level mainly in the youth field, but is transferable to any level and for any topic (meetings, conferences, consultations and events). These events promote the active participation of local communities and the Cso in democratic life and their interaction with policy makers.

The Cso panorama in the urban context of Senegal is lively and complex. It represents a crucial aspect of the Senegalese society because of its role as a bridge between the local population and politics. Many Cso are not really structured and active, despite being formally recognized. According to Ecopas experience, Cso leaders often found associations and activate them as soon as an opportunity arises to achieve personal interests or get into politics. Considering all these aspects, in the framework of the project defining the local community in scientific terms - as previously seen - is not an easy issue. For

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[2] The Non-Governmental Organisation (Ngo) Cisv (Comunità Impegno Servizio Volontariato) in partnership with Hydroaid - Water for Development Management Institute, Ipsia (Italian Ngo working in the suburbs of Dakar for economic and social justice), Fongs (Federation of Ngos in Senegal) and Sunugal (Socio-cultural association for the co-development of Senegalese immigrants in Italy).

this reason, Ecopas considered as final beneficiaries the local population of the 4 municipalities, while the target, intended as the direct recipients of the project activities, was made up of the leaders of the Cso involved.

In the Ecopas project, structured dialogue was implemented to achieve the first axis of the project, which aims at a territorial environmental policy designed in a participatory way.

The institutional actors and the Cso have undertaken a common path in order to exchange and provide recommendations on environmental issues of the territory, such as food demand and supply, land use, green economy, water resources and vegetation cover (first axis).

This same path also allowed them to plan the areas to be reforested, to sign pacts for monitoring and to commit future extension of the reforested areas with the aim of contributing to the territory protection and adaptation to the consequences of climate change (second axis).

In addition, the maintenance and development of green areas for market gardening was encouraged. This is very useful for the local food production in the framework of a healthy economy and for the conservation of an environment in balance with the needs of the population (third axis).

To achieve its results, and in particular to contribute to the improvement of environmental governance in the intervention area, Ecopas produced several tools and publications. In this respect, and considering the focus on water governance in this article, they will be presented in the following paragraphs: the water resources mapping, the water and sanitation guidelines, the Atlas and the Territorial Pact.

Preliminary actions for knowledge and analysis of the theme: Training and Mapping on Water and Sanitation

The structured dialogue on water resources management was supported by two preliminary phases: a) training on water governance and b) participatory mapping on the state of water resources.
Training on the governance of environmental and water services took place over 6 months (between January and July 2019) through an e-Learning course implemented by Hydroaid and on-site group work on a weekly basis. This activity enabled the Cso representatives, the intervening municipalities and the technical services to better understand the water issues in their municipalities.

In parallel, a study was launched to identify existing water resources and their use. The objective was twofold: on the one hand, the information collected was finalised in the elaboration of a water map, which was integrated in the *Atlas of the issues and challenges of inclusive governance of environmental*

resources in Dakar (Pettenati et al., 2021); on the other hand, this information collected allowed the deepening of the local context and the start of the process of elaboration of the *Water and Sanitation Guidelines*.

A total of 256 households were interviewed about the water issue in their respective municipalities. The survey used the participatory mapping approach, which allowed the emergence of endogenous knowledge and problems not covered by traditional field surveys.

The level of access to water is considered largely acceptable in the Dakar region according to official data, but it hides some disparities among the targeted municipalities.

The difficulty of supporting the Sen'Eau bi-monthly bills and the frequent water cuts have led the poor to resort not only to official connections but also to private water pumping devices. These are mainly *diambar* pumps, low cost hand pumps easy to be installed in shallow wells.

The current water price provides for a social tariff based on the volume consumed - equal to 60% of the full tariff and applied to all private customers up to 20 m^3 for 60 days of consumption - but which ends up penalising the social segment that should protect, i.e. the poorest. This is due to the average high number of members who make up poor households and the practical difficulties of installing sub-meters, which would allow the total volume of consumption of a building to be divided among its units; these conditions lead poor families to pay a higher unit price for water than rich families. The demographic pressure and the lack of equipment mean that the disposal of wastewater and rainwater is increasingly a real problem.

Among all the groundwater parameters analysed in this study, nitrate remains the substance with the most worrying proportions. The Who recommendation of 50 mg/l was set according to the risks faced by the most vulnerable populations, whereas we recorded up to 596 mg/l: this level, mainly linked to the water from septic tanks in the suburbs, is very dangerous for the health of the inhabitants who use the water even for domestic use.

In conclusion, the most urgent problems that emerged were related to the low rate of connection to the sewerage system, the vulnerability of groundwater due to increasing urbanisation and a very limited collective sewerage system, and the high price of drinking water.

Decision-making tools: the Water and Sanitation Guidelines and the Territorial Pact

Considering the situation in the four municipalities concerning water supply and, above all, sanitation, the issue of water and sanitation governance becomes relevant.

In the framework of Act III of decentralisation, water and sanitation sector, is not a transferred competence. In urban areas, this sector, as already seen, is managed by the central level via the Ministry of Water and Sanitation, Sones, Sen'Eau and Onas.

This institutional framework, although very productive from a global point of view, does not allow to fully operationalise the principles of participation at local level. Moreover, on several occasions, the population of targeted municipalities has expressed dissatisfaction about the quality of the service (low pressure, water cuts, high cost of water, lack of access to the network, presence of stagnant water, etc.).

Therefore problems persist due to the lack of a structured, effective and powerful framework to influence decision-making.

The structured dialogue was composed by four main phases: i) Preparation and framing (at the level of the project team); ii) Development of structured dialogue tools (individual interview guides and Pra[3] tools); iii) Implementation of the dialogue (4 focus groups and 4 municipal workshops); iv) Participatory validation of the guidelines (Discussion and pre-validation workshop; Development and finalisation; Final restitution and validation).

These phases are intertwined following the nature of this dialogue exercise. All the activities carried out enabled Cso, local elected officials and members of the administration of the municipalities where Ecopas intervened to interact directly with the Directorate of Water Resources Planning Management, the Directorate of Floods and Onas about the issues of water and sanitation governance. Through several meetings, they exchanged their opinions to reach a strong consensus on strategies to improve water and sanitation governance, starting from positions that were sometimes divergent at the beginning. Unfortunately, Sones and Sen'Eau were absent during the whole process.

The main outputs of this process were a) the diagnostic of the water and sanitation sector, key element for understanding the specific water resources context b) the Water and Sanitation Guidelines, a first basis for local authorities, technical services and Cso to plan in the water and sanitation sector. For more details, please refer to the document *Process and definition of water and sanitation guidelines in four municipalities in the Dakar suburbs*.

The tools produced and the process initiated by Ecopas played a central role in the proposal of the Territorial Pact, a document for action on the environmental policy of the departments of Guédiawaye and Pikine.

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[3]Participatory Rural Appraisal

The stakeholders involved (cities, municipalities, technical services and representatives of civil society associations) signed a mutual commitment agreement at the final workshop of the project (April 29, 2021). As a monitoring body for compliance with the pact, the parties agreed to set up a departmental environmental committee, which meets twice a month, to plan and assess environmental policies and commitments in the area. The signature of this Pact represents a good tool for the sustainability of activities and for a common vision: however it is recent and still fragile. The actual sustainability of the actions will be evaluated over time following the use that the different stakeholders will make of the products and methods proposed by Ecopas Project.

Considerations on the participatory methods adopted

As described, the Ecopas project has offered to the local stakeholders the citizen involvement in environmental governance, as suggested by the Eu and Senegalese policies, as a tool for dialogue and cooperation.

One year after the end of Ecopas, we note that the Cso have been continuing the work of monitoring reforestation, while the Water and Forestry Services, technical project partners and representative of the Senegalese Ministry of the Environment, have committed themselves with the City of Guédiawaye to take over the work carried out (in line with the Esp).

Nevertheless, a large part of the filaos strip (52 hectares) was downgraded by state decree on June 2, 2021, to make way for public utility constructions. More than 50 market gardeners who were accompanied throughout the project had to leave their production areas overnight, receiving compensation from the State. It must also be said that this decree was already in place before the start of Ecopas, but it was made operational just after the end.

This last element should not question the positive elements of the initiative.

An important element of sustainability will be the place of the Cso in public monitoring and decision-making spaces: this is evident when the target associations have asked their municipalities to give more space to the environment in their future[4] actions. The municipalities are ideal actors to continue the process of exchange with Cso because, on the one hand, they can take care of the expenses related to the organisation of the meetings and, on the other hand, they can also act as real enablers of the discussions and decisions taken.

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[4] In January 2022, communal elections were held in Senegal.

Access to the benefits of Ecopas seems affordable for the target groups in the long term; indeed, tools to facilitate territorial governance (maps, atlas, guidelines, etc.) are available on the web and from stakeholders; reforestation monitoring committees have the duty to ensure the maintenance of current and future plantations, and possibilities were opened to seek means to do so (from municipalities, cooperation, private sector, green micro-enterprises, etc.).

In this respect, the Departmental Council of Guédiawaye has used the Ecopas maps to revise the departmental urban plan, the municipalities have integrated the results of the mapping as well as the water and sanitation guidelines into their Communal Development Plans, while the environmental Cso are discussing with the other Cso of the municipalities of the department of Guédiawaye to expand the Environmental Committee set up by the Project at departmental level.

A central role will also be played by the Water and Forestry Services of Guédiawaye and Pikine who will continue to reforest the Ecopas intervention plots, as seen in these post-project months.

The green micro-enterprises now have more strength as companies but also as part of a network, the Réseau des micro-entreprises vertes de la Banlieue (Remeb, Suburban Green Microenterprises Network), and have the tools to continue to grow and develop, as well as to be a reference and an example for the rest of the population.

The implementation of the structured dialogue methodology made it easier for stakeholders to enter into the dynamics proposed by the project, to take ownership of it and to continue the process after its end. According to the final evaluation and the post-project interviews, this is one of the reasons for the success of the project, as all stakeholders felt that they were involved in the process, both in discussions related to the identified environmental issues and in the implementation of Ecopas actions - always discussed during the proposed dialogue meetings.

The participation of stakeholders in the processes of discussion, decision-making and action has been crucial for the development of the Ecopas project and is fundamental to continue the proposed actions, hoping that a real environmental citizens' movement can emerge also in Senegal, following the example of other important civil society actions appreciated in other parts of the world.

Conclusions

A brief review of the evolution of participatory processes shows that the implementation of participation in development projects have often been the cause of rigid approaches laid down by donors and focused exclusively on the results rather than on the actual needs of local communities.

However, participation can be a solution for Africa, helping communities to develop their own system for water services, but, for the moment, it is not the final solution to water management issues and obstacles.

On the other hand, local communities still face enormous challenges in accessing water services, both in terms of its affordability and financial resources available. As the case of Senegal showed, some shortcomings can also be identified at the government level: despite the different reforms undertaken in the water sector, which show a positive dynamism in public action, all the competencies remain assigned to the central State. This choice results in a severe limitation of participation at the local level, and determines an overwhelming role of the private sector.

Despite some difficulties in involving all the stakeholders of water governance, the Ecopas project achieved the goal of improving the capacity of Cso and local authorities to face the environmental challenges of a rapidly evolving context such as the metropolitan area of Dakar. Encouraging signals of project sustainability are emerging: Ecopas maps as well as the water and sanitation guidelines were integrated into the urban planning tools.

Acknowledgements

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List of acronyms

Cisv	Comunità Impegno Servizio Volontariato
Cso	Civil Society Organisations
Dgpre	Direction de la Gestion et de la Planification des Ressources en Eau (Directorate of Water Resources Planning Management)
Esp	Emerging Senegal Plan
Epic	Etablissement Public à caractère Industriel et Commercial (Public Utility Company)
Eu	European Union
Fongs	Fédération des Organisations Non Gouvernementales du Sénégal (Federation of the Non-Governmental Organizations in Senegal)
Jmp	Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene
Lpsd	Lettre de Politique Sectorielle de Développement (Sectoral Development Policy Letter)
Ngo	Non-Governmental Organisation
Oda	Official Development Assistance
Oecd	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
Onas	Office National de l'Assainissement du Sénégal (National Sanitation Office in Senegal)
Pepam	Programme d'Eau Potable et d'Assainissement du Millénaire (Millennium Drinking

	Water and Sanitation Programme)
Pra	Participatory Rural Appraisal
Remeb	Réseau des micro-entreprises vertes de la Banlieue (Suburban Green Micro-enterprises Network)
Sde	Sénégalaise des Eaux (former urban water utility)
Sdgs	Sustainable Development Goals
Sen'Eau	Eau du Sénégal (current Senegalese urban water utility)
Sonees	Société Nationale d'Exploitation des Eaux du Sénégal
Sones	Société Nationale des Eaux du Sénégal (National Water Company of Senegal)
Spepa	Loi sur le Service Public de l'Eau Potable et de l'Assainissement (Law on the Public Drinking Water and Sanitation Service)
Un	United Nations
Wash	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
Who	World Health Organisation

THE IMPACT OF THE 2019 WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION ACT ON RURAL WATER MANAGEMENT IN KONGWA AND CHAMWINO DISTRICTS, TANZANIA

Rizzi Italo*, Pozzobon Caterina**, Masawe Jastin***

*Lay Volunteers International Association (LVIA) – i.rizzi@lvia.it

**DIST - Interuniversity Department of Regional and Urban Studies and Planning (University of Torino and Polytechnic of Torino) – caterina.pozzobon@unito.it

*** Lay Volunteers International Association (LVIA) – lvia.tanzania@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper investigates the transformative impact of Act No. 5 of 2019, the "Water Supply and Sanitation Act" (WSSA), on rural water management practices in Central Tanzania. Supported by the Italian Civil Society Organization (CSO) Lay Volunteers International Association (LVIA) and funded by the 8x1000 grant from the Italian Prime Minister's Office, this research primarily focuses on the roles of Community Based Water Supply Organizations (CBWSOs) and the Rural Water and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA). The paper analyses data on community water management collected by the LVIA team in its field activities and by an ethnographic fieldwork undertaken in 2022 within a PhD research that included both quantitative and qualitative methods, namely focus groups, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, photo elicitation, participant observation and transect walks. The article shows how the 2019 reform had uneven implementation in rural Kongwa and Chamwino districts because of challenges in the allocation of adequate resources from the national government to the rural communities, in terms of skills, financial resources, and personnel. The paper offers an analysis of the relationship between community water management and gender dynamics. It shows how water policies and legislative framework have been tackling gender issues by indicating the importance of reinforcing women's presence and participation in formal water management. Therefore, there is space for new and creative ways to foster gender equality through community water management system through the more comprehensive framework of gender-and-development (GAD). In conclusion, systemic reforms like the 2019 one require time to be metabolised by the local

communities as they intersect with broader environmental, economic, and socio-political dynamics. Therefore, the results presented in this article need to be understood in an constantly changing situation.

Keywords

Community Water Management, CBWSO, Tanzania, Gender

Introduction

This study is part of the research activity implemented by the CSO Lay Volunteers International Association (LVIA) in Central Tanzania supported with funding from the 8x1000 grant from the Prime Minister's Office. The paper focuses on the impact of the most recent water and sanitation law reform, namely Act No. 5 of 2019 "Water Supply and Sanitation Act" (WSSA). Specifically, the research investigates how the implementation of the WSSA is affecting rural water management carried out by the two main appointed entities, namely Community Based Water Supply Organizations (CBWSO) and Rural Water and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA). The study gives continuity to a research path initiated in 2015 by the University of Turin and LVIA on rural water management issues. Such path was initiated by a study on the implementation of water management strategy through community organizations, private sector participation, and monitoring systems in Dodoma Region (Fierro & Nelaj, 2017). It was then followed by a research activity carried out in the Iringa Region with a focus on policy support to Community Owned Water Supply Organizations (COWSOs), their institutional and strategic role, and the main challenges in the provision of water access and services (Mangione, Pozzobon, & Rizzi, 2019). Those studies were integrated by two participatory action studies carried out in Kongwa District. The first focused on the functioning and management capacity of the Hogoro-Nyerere CBWSO (Forzano & Zingari, 2021). The second is an evaluation of environmental risk factors in 5 villages about the pollution of water resources with the elaboration of hazards and vulnerability territorial maps (Sanna, 2022). Underlining the different components of this rich research path, on the one hand, it shows the extent to which the knowledge referred to in this paper is rooted in long-term fieldwork. On the other hand, it provides a map of the research experiences whose results have informed the contents of this paper. Overall, these contributions have been a tool for analysis of and methodological support to the work conducted by LVIA in its water related cooperation projects.

The data on which this paper is based are a synthesis of those collected by the LVIA team and the ones coming from an ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2022 in the area of Kongwa and Chamwino districts, located in central Tanzania. This specific study area was chosen as it is where the water related projects of the NGO were carried out. Mixed methods (focus groups, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, photo elicitation, participant observation and transect walks) were used in order obtain a more multifaceted interpretation of the functioning of these entities in light of the recent sector reform.

The article is structured as follows. First, it presents the debates within the literature on community resource management that frame the research and that guide the reflection on the issues that have emerged. Particularly, the debates concern the ones about the ability of local communities to effectively manage natural resources and how to measure their performance, and how socio-cultural elements that are connected to water management such as gender issues are reproduced and tackled within these community entities. These debates are relevant as they represent the entry points that this paper uses to understand the impact that the systemic 2019 water sector reform had on LVIA's areas of intervention. The specificities of the Tanzanian context (particularly as far as the 2019 reform is concerned) are then presented in the following section of the article, which is followed by the description of the methodology, and then by the presentation and discussion of the results.

Framing Tanzanian community water management

In this section we place the research within the literature on the topic by relating it to the relevant scientific literature about community management of natural resources, such as water. At the base of the Tanzanian rural water governance structure there are the CBWSOs that relies on the participation at different scales and intensity of people and actors involved in the local use of the resource. Studying how local communities, especially in the Global South, act to manage and govern the natural resources they need finds in Elinor Ostrom the scholar who first investigated and systematised the success and failure factors of these collective models. In her work she isolated eight principles[I] (Ostrom, 1990) to effectively manage the commons collectively. Such principles include normative elements that refer to participation, accountability mechanisms, trust, and transparency. Over time,

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[I] 1.Define clear group boundaries.
2. Match rules governing use of common goods to local needs and conditions.
3. Ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules.
4. Make sure the rule-making rights of community members are respected by outside authorities.
5. Develop a system, carried out by community members, for monitoring members' behavior.
6. Use graduated sanctions for rule violators.
7. Provide accessible, low-cost means for dispute resolution.
8. Build responsibility for governing the common resource in nested tiers from the lowest level up to the entire interconnected system.

other scholars added on her work by addressing the criticisms that Ostrom's principles collected and suggesting more complex approaches in studying community management of the commons (Singleton, 2017). In this sense, Singleton (2017, p. 1001) effectively presented the main issues with Ostrom's principles that are connected first, to the fact that focus only on individual actors and this perspective could blind researchers to the influence of the macro-scales on the local ones (Peterson, 2010). Second, to the absence of attention towards "the web of social, emotional and power relationships" (Singleton, 2017, p. 999) between the people that are part of community management systems (Nightingale, 2011). From this debate, what emerges is the importance of considering both the strictly managerial and policy aspects that can measure and shape the performance of rural communities in tackling water issues on use and access including the different scales involved in the activity, and the more situated socio-cultural dimensions that contribute to its definition.

On the first aspect, in order to track the changes that have occurred since the 2019 WSSA reform and therefore look into the impact that such reform has had on local community entities, this paper has collected information on how CBWSO are keeping the water schemes functional, on their financial sustainability, on the internal composition of the CBWSO, and on their reporting activities towards RUWASA local offices. In this sense, the paper attempts to go beyond the focus on the micro scale alone by linking the day-to-day work of CBWSOs with how they are affected by the policies and legislative frameworks formulated at the national level. In particular, the paper aims to observe how the situation of CBWSOs has changed since a major sector reform affecting the management of water for human use in the country was defined, approved and implemented. This reform is relevant for CBWSOs because it has had a significant effect especially on the rural areas where they operate. The local scale dimensions that characterise the communities inhabiting the study area of this research were therefore intertwined with the dictates of a national law that regulates in detail the water life of rural communities. In selecting they type of information and data to consider, this paper has drawn from the previous research work that LVIA carried out over the years. Specifically, in 2015, LVIA together with the University of Turin in the framework of the UniCoo project - which allows Master's students to be involved in research projects co-designed by international cooperation NGOs and different University Departments - identified and designed a monitoring tool that could easily record the performance of rural water schemes. The specific literature on sustainability assessment of rural water development programs in Tanzania (Jiménez & Pérez-Foguet, 2010) (Giné & Pérez-Foguet, 2008) (Masanyiwa, Niehof, & Termeer, 2015) , together with the expertise of local water practitioners was key in selecting these dimensions to be included in the performance index. Specifically, this tool was based on three indicators designed to calculate their technical functionality, management stability, user satisfaction, and finally the effectiveness of communication both within the community

and between the community and higher administrative management bodies (Fierro & Nelaj, 2017). As effective as this tool is in operational terms, when the aim is to understand how CBWSOs are embedded in and interact with their institutional, socio-cultural and environmental context, triangulation of the information given by these indicators with other data sources is essential (Armitage, 2008). Including aspects such as power dynamics, modes of knowledge production, and the role of different members that hold different status within CBWSO is also crucial in order to understand on the one hand how to design actions that go to support community management of resources and on the other hand to improve the documentation of outcomes.

About the necessity to take into account relevant socio-cultural dimensions, the analysis was extended to also include the element of gender. This specific focus was chosen because it emerged prominently from the literature on water use and management in rural Tanzania (Adjei Adams, Juran, & Ajibade, 2018) (DeGraff, Levison, & Dungumaro, 2017) (Nelson & Stathers, 2009) (Masanyiwa, Niehof, & Termeer, 2014) (Venis, et al., 2022) as strongly intertwined with water practices. As a matter of fact, water governance have been defined as a "gendered, plural, multi-sited and complex field" (Hellum, Kameri-Mbote, & Koppen, 2015, p. 4). Moreover, the choice of gender as a focus, reflects the fact that its importance was recognised also at institutional level in the Tanzanian National Water Policy (NAWAPO) and then the 2019 reform. In fact, both documents identify this relationship as an entry point for tackling gender equality issues, especially as far as the empowerment of women is concerned. In this sense, even though the approach to gender issues in these documents is limited by its exclusive focus on the role of women, it indicates a willingness to use water as point of entry to address gender inequality issues (Fisher, Cavill, & Reed, 2017). Focusing on gender help us to understand the degree to which women and men are involved in community water governance and makes it possible to identify the type of participation, which often does not fall under the membership of formally established bodies such as CBWSOs but is no less relevant to community water management. Finally, it makes it possible to unveil practices, uses and knowledge that define how water and society meet and that go beyond the often technical approach to natural resource management.

Presenting the study area: mapping the location and the institutional framework of Tanzanian water governance

The study is based on direct data collection, analysis of official documents, and the consolidation of information provided by relevant administrative offices in the field in a study area that includes 8 villages in Kongwa District and Chamwino District (Dodoma Region). These two districts were

chosen as they are the places where LVIA has implemented its water-related projects about CBWSO and also where the NGO has an historical presence and deep knowledge of the context. The entire study area can be seen in Map 1. The area is characterized by a semi-arid climate, with unimodal rain season that spans from December to April.
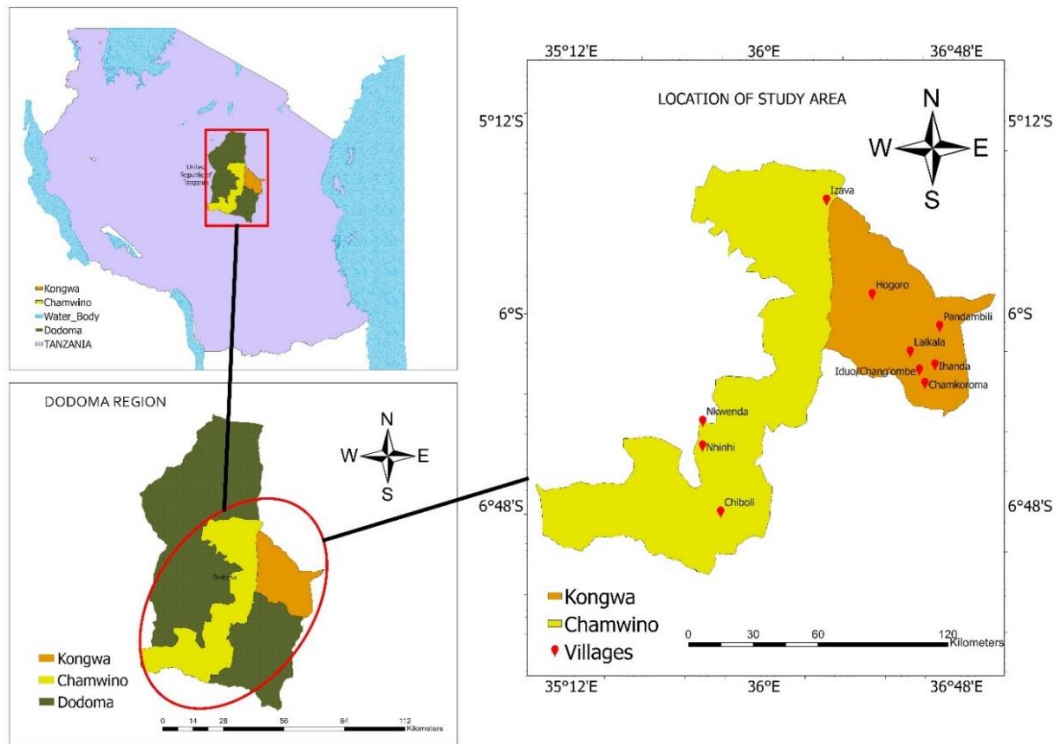

Fig. 1- Study area composed by the Districts of Chamwino and Kongwa in the region of Dodoma

In order to understand the water governance structure to which this research refers to, Figure 1 shows the institutional configuration that Tanzania has developed to govern and manage water access and services for its population.
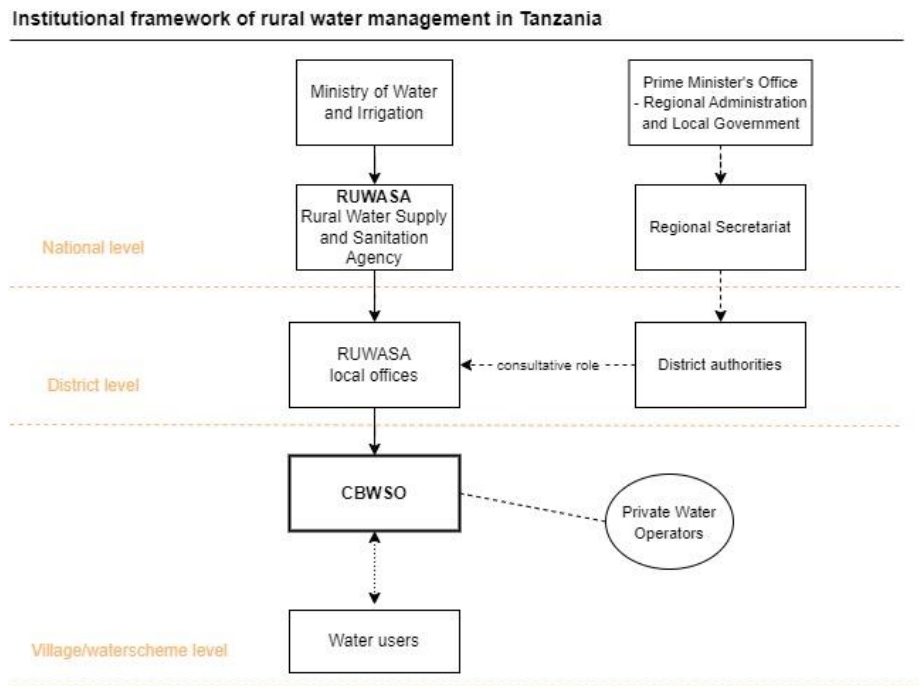
Figure 2 - Institutional map of Tanzanian water governance source: elaboration from (Mangione, Pozzobon, & Rizzi, 2019)

As visible from the figure, Tanzanian institutional framework of rural water governance operates within a multi-scalar structure, with key actors at national, district, and village scales. Its water governance structure is characterized by a decentralized structure, but it still holds some of the control in central institutions such as the Ministry of Water and Irrigation. In this sense, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, alongside the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) at the national level, play pivotal roles in setting the strategic direction, policies and guidelines for rural water management. In the form of its local district offices, RUWASA carries out governmental control over the decentralized water entities, as its main role is to oversee, coordinate and support the communities in their water management tasks. However, as emerged from the interviews with both RUWASA officers and CBWSO members, the local presence of RUWASA is limited because of constraints regarding lack of financial, human and skill resources. In fact, especially in more remote areas, the village communities are often left alone in managing their water schemes without the adequate support from RUWASA in developing the right competences to successfully ensure water access and services. In its work, RUWASA district local offices receive support from local district authorities under the umbrella of the Prime Minister's Office - Regional Administration and Local Government. At the village level, CBWSO are instrumental in the daily management of water infrastructure and rely on the active participation of community water users. Notably, CBWSOs have the autonomy to

engage in agreements with private operators for the delivery of water services, still retaining a supervision role. In this multi-scalar framework, the research has focused at village level and therefore on how CBWSOs function, perform and manage water access for their communities.

Overview of the 2019 Water Supply and Sanitation Act

As previously indicated, in 2019, Tanzania went through a deep institutional, legislative and policy reform process of the way it manages its water resources. Such changes were contained in the new Water Supply and Sanitation Act, 2019 that replaced the Water Supply and Sanitation Act approved in 2009. The reform represents the most recent evolution of a decentralized system, which when it comes to rural areas had designated individual village communities as theoretically self-sustaining units capable of managing basic services. After a series of policies, laws, and regulations passed over time, the 2019 WSSA was supposed to resolve the problems that persisted in rural water management, particularly the lack of unified coordination that could take a strategic overview of the overall situation and more effectively distribute financial, human, and technical resources to the different areas. In this direction, the main changes brought by the reform were those related to the reorganization of water management in rural areas such as the rural Districts of Chamwino and Kongwa that are at the centre of this paper.

The first substantial novelty was the creation of a new institutional body, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA), that acts as coordinator of water management in rural areas. Specifically, RUWASA's duties include the submission of plans and operational informative reports to full Councils and to Regional and District Administration forums. Second, it is responsible for carrying out monitoring and regulation of community organizations, requesting reports from the CBWSOs about their work, and providing guidelines on how to carry out these activities. Then, RUWASA is in charge of guiding the establishment process of new community organizations and evaluating the optimal size of such community organizations and, where necessary, to cluster them in a single entity. Finally, RUWASA supervises the arrangements between CBWSOs and private water service providers by checking and approving the terms of such agreements (Mangione, Pozzobon, & Rizzi, 2019). These tasks were previously carried out by other institutions at different administrative levels such as the District Water Department, the Regional Secretariat, the Local Government Authorities, the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, and the Prime Minister's Office in a fragmented way. Therefore, the rationale behind the creation of RUWASA was to create a specific and unique institution that could systematize water management in rural areas and make it more efficient.

The second significant innovation is the redesign of the internal governance structure of the Community Owned Water Supply Organizations (COWSO), which were reshaped into the new form of Community Based Water Supply Organizations (Figure 1). In this sense, the new version of management structure is characterized by the splitting of the former executive body (the Management Board) into two different bodies, one playing a strategic and political role (Community Water Committee), and the other vested with the task of carrying on the day-to-day operation of the water scheme (Community Water Management Team).
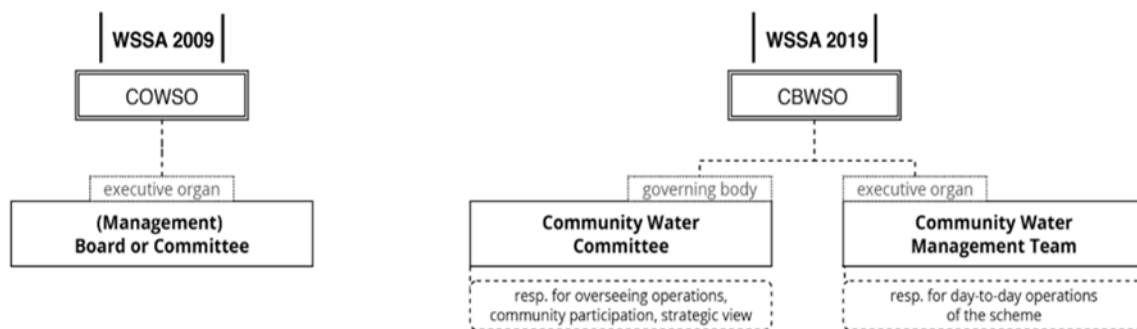
Fig. 3 - Changes in the internal structure of COWSO according to the 2019 WSSA source: (Mangione, Pozzobon, & Rizzi, 2019)

The purpose of this division of roles and responsibilities was to make local management more efficient and to separate strategic political and day-to-day management. On the one hand, within the CWC the reform sought to broaden the representativeness of the different actors and stakeholders in the area covered by the water scheme. On the other hand, according to the guidelines, the CWMT should ideally be composed by people with the appropriate level of skills proven with a diploma or certificate. Four years after the reform was passed, this paper seeks to ascertain how it is being implemented in the rural areas where LVIA works by focusing on both managerial and socio-cultural aspects that are relevant to the CBWSO work.

Methods

The data used in this paper come from two distinct data collection activities in the same study area. The first set of data was collected by LVIA staff, who conducted semi-structured interviews with District RUWASA Managers and Community Development Officers. These two institutions are key in the understanding of the CBWSO situation because they hold specific roles in the formation and

lifespan of these community entities. On the one hand, the District RUWASA Managers are responsible for the support and coordination of the rural water supply and sanitation services, and they constitute the main reference and regulator of the CBWSO. Community Development Officers, on the other hand, are the ones taking care of the administrative elements and they are responsible for the formation and registration of CBWSO. Survey interviews based on a questionnaire were conducted with the CBWSO Management Team and Water Committee members. This method allowed for the collection of specific data on the CBWSO activities. The questionnaire is divided into four sections exploring different aspects: i) Governance; ii) Technical iii) Financial Management and iv) Operational. Moreover, a set of Focus groups discussions (FGD) per village (8 Villages) was carried out with CBWSO members, women water users, men water users. A total of 116 persons from RUWASA offices (4), local authorities (16), CBWSO and Village members (96) participated in this part of the study that was conducted in November 2022.

The second set of data was collected by a PhD candidate collaborating with the NGO, through semi-structured interviews with members of community water management bodies, transect walks with community members, photo-elicitation with groups of women, and participant observation in the village's water practices. This part of data collection took place over an 8-month period (April to November 2022) in the district of Kongwa.

The combination of these two sources that were constructed both through qualitative and quantitative methods enabled the definition of a rich and in-depth analysis of local waterscapes and the different layers that make up community water governance in central Tanzania, specifically in reference to the changes that CBWSO have experienced and implemented after the 2019 reform.

Tracking the changes of the 2019 WSSA

This section of the paper presents and investigates the different changes that have occurred in the two district areas after the implementation of the 2019 reform in terms of the work. Before looking at such change, it is important to have an overview of the two districts in terms of type of management entities present under their jurisdiction.

From Table 1, we can see how there are still some villages in both districts that have not adapted to the new regulations by keeping a traditional form of the Village Water Committee, a COWSO management form, or rely on private operators. In this regard, according to RUWASA officers, these communities refused to accept to reform their water management system or otherwise they were not reached by the opportunity to do it. As for the number of communities that have engaged with the reform, there are substantial differences between the two districts. While for Kongwa most water schemes are managed by CBWSOs, Chamwino has a higher variety of management forms with

CBWSOs under the half of the total. Traditional WVC and COWSO forms are used in about 45 percent of villages, and in addition there is a minority but significant presence of private water operators.

District	Total Schemes	Under Village Water Committee (VWC)		Under Private Operators (PO)		Under COWSO		Under CBWSO	
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Kongwa	57	04	7.02%	00	00	13	22.80%	40	70.18%
Chamwino	128	20	15.62%	10	7.81%	36	28.13%	62	48.44%

Table 1- Type of management of the rural water schemes in Kongwa and Chamwino District

From this first glance into the two district water management situation, it is clear that the reform has still a long way to go before reaching all communities and therefore unleash its full potential. The next paragraphs will trace the path that the two rural districts have followed to reach this situation.

Supporting the transition towards the new CBWSOs

This first paragraph uses the data on the pace of transformation of COWSO into CBWSO collected at District level from both RUWASA and Community Development offices to understand the capillarity of the reform in the study areas and the ability of the new institution of RUWASA to perform its coordination, monitoring and supervision tasks over the community water organizations.

District	No of COWSOs	Reformed up to Nov 2022		Under Process	
		No	%	No	%
Kongwa	45	40	88.89%	05	11.11%
Chamwino	98	62	63.27%	36	36.73%

Table 2 shows how Kongwa district has almost completed the transition in that out of 45 COWSOs, 40 have been reorganized into the new CBWSO form. Chamwino on the other hand seems to struggle more in implementing the required changes. Thus, the two districts have only partially achieved the goals that the new water and sanitation law set out to achieve, which included reforming local management bodies within 2 years of the passage of the new law. According to the interviewed personnel of RUWASA, the slow pace of COWSO reformation is mainly due to challenges including a lack of financial and human resources in the RUWASA Regional and District Offices, and a lack of means of transport to facilitate the necessary field movements for the reformation and registration activities. So, even though the reform could have had a positive impact in terms of creating more adequate support to the CBWSO in their water management struggles, according to the people working in it this transition to the new governance system was not followed and sustained by adequate resources.

Investigating further into the matter of this lack of resources, a first component regards financial constraints. Data displayed in Table 3 show that before the New Water and Sanitation Act No. 5 of 2019 the yearly amount allocated to the District Water Departments for the formulation and registration of COWSO/CBWSOs was of 12.22% (Kongwa) and 13.33% (Chamwino) of the total budget for the rural water sector. According to the District officers, sometimes even the low requested budget was not provided both because of actual resources' scarcity and under-prioritization of rural water management in the broader national agenda. After the introduction of the new Water and Sanitation Act, and the creation of RUWASA, new emphasis was bestowed on the management of rural water schemes but the budget destined to the creation and support of CBWSO was only slightly increased to reach the 13.16% in Kongwa and the 19.41% in Chamwino. Financial constraints therefore appear as one of the causes of the delay in the implementation of the new governance structure, but not the main one as stated by some.

District	Before New Act (2018-2019)			After new Act (2021-2022)		
	Overall Budget	Allocated for CBWSO	%	Overall Budget	Allocated for CBWSO	%
Kongwa	180,000,000 TZS	22,000,000 TZS	12.22 %	190,000,000 TZS	25,000,000 TZS	13.16%

Chamwino	150,000,000 TZS	20,000,000 TZS	13.33 %	170,000,000 TZS	33,000,000 TZS	19.41%

Table 2 - Budget allocated to the CBWSOs registration out of overall budget before and after the 2019 WSSA. TZS stands for "Tanzanian schillings"

The second issue that affects the registration of the CBWSO is linked to the scarcity of "competent" human resources to be employed in RUWASA's offices. Since its establishment in 2019, RUWASA's district offices do not have enough personnel to reach all rural areas at least to the ward level for close follow up and monitoring of the rural water schemes. In 2019 RUWASA's office in Kongwa had a total of 9 staff members. However, due to the increase of RUWASA offices and duties both at District and National level, some District level staff members had to be transferred to different areas and at the time when this research was conducted Kongwa's office personnel was reduced to 6 units that include engineers, community development officers (responsible for the CBWSO formation), and administrative staff. As for RUWASA's office in Chamwino, in 2022 they were able to increase their staff up to 12 people, which represents an improvement, but it is still not enough to implement all the activities effectively and timely. The low number of people employed however it is not the only issue as what emerged from the field is that often the staff does not receive proper training to effectively support rural water management entities in the transition laid in the 2019 reform.

The evolution of CBWSO's work after the 2019 reform

This paragraph moves from the situation of the RUWASA district offices to the scale of the local CBWSOs. Comparing the new data with pre-2019 status information, the overall performance of rural water schemes in the study area from 2019 to 2022 has overall improved. This improvement covers several areas including economic sustainability of community management, infrastructure operation, transparency, and management effectiveness of CBWSOs and this could be a sign of positive impact of the novelties carried by the reform.

District	2018-2019	2020-2021
	Monthly Average collections per CBWSO	Monthly Average collections per CBWSO

Kongwa	300,000 TZS	800,000 TZS
Chamwino	400,000 TZS	1,000,000 TZS

Table 3 - CBWSO average revenue collections before and after the new water Act

Regarding economic sustainability, Table 4 shows that the average revenue of CBWSOs has increased more than twice in both districts' CBWSOs. This increased ability to collect and set aside revenues from water bills is extremely relevant as it allows individual CBWSOs to be able to cope with unexpected problems such as minor infrastructure breaks or malfunctions and to ideally expand the water distribution network in villages. In addition, saving money in a bank account accessed by a small number of CBWSOs has helped raise accountability and transparency of the way the local government operates at different levels. Some CBWSO however lamented the fact that the money raised through water management is tied to be used in the water sector. They perceive this limitation as a lost opportunity in the case there are other emergencies in the village such as the need to build or fix the school building, buy school supplies, expand the health centre... this is especially true for those villages whose water infrastructure is new and well functioning.

In connection with the issue of transparency, from what people interviewed reported, the sharing of information about the management of the water scheme has improved through the conduction of regular quarterly community assembly meetings and the posting of updates on village notice boards. Not only is this positive because it legitimizes the role of the CBWSO in the eyes of users, but it also reflects positively on the ability of CBWSOs to systematize information and carry out the reporting required by RUWASA.

District	Before 2019 New water and Sanitation Act				After 2019 New water and Sanitation Act			
	Number of water schemes	Functioning	Not Functioning	Under repair	Number of water schemes	Functioning	Not Functioning	Under Repair
Kongwa	47	45	02	00	57	55	02	00

| Chamwino | 128 | 92 | 36 | 00 | 128 | 125 | 0 | 03 |

Table 4 – Technical functionality of the district's water schemes before and after the introduction of the new Water and Sanitation Act No.5 of 2019

Another element that accounts for the average performance of the water schemes in the study area is the technical functioning of the water schemes and their adequacy with respect to the number of inhabitants using it. Table 5 displays the data of the water schemes present in the two districts and shows that, especially for Chamwino, at the time of data collection, the state of the water infrastructure is in better condition than it was before the 2019 reform. The two districts seem to have adopted two different strategies. Kongwa, which already had a far better level of functioning water schemes, has focused on building new schemes by increasing from 47 to 57. Chamwino on the other hand, has chosen to repair malfunctioning schemes without building new ones. In both cases, the result is increased functionality of the schemes that should increase the number of people with access to safe water. The data seem to show that the introduction of the WSSA reform has contributed to the improvement of the infrastructure situation in rural areas. Comparing this snapshot of the state of functioning of water schemes with the difficulties there are still in the formation, creation, and registration of CBWSOs seen in the previous section, we see how RUWASA has chosen to prioritize a technical approach over one geared toward supporting the creation of water management skills in village management committees.

However, data on the operation of schemes should be read with caution because considering the number of functioning water schemes present as the only information to assess the adequacy of rural water systems would be misleading. This is because there are cases where although the water scheme is functioning, its flow rate is not sufficient to provide safe and clean water to a fast-growing population such as Tanzania[II]. In addition, this classification of infrastructure as functioning or non-functioning does not consider the overall state of the water network, which often lies on a continuum between these two poles. Although a water scheme is classified as functional it often suffers from frequent malfunctions, leaks, interruption of parts of the scheme, and other problems that make it less effective than it would be. Another element to consider is water quality. Especially Kongwa District is characterized by the fact that most of its water schemes extract water from underground aquifers out of which many have chemical characteristics that make it "salty" (Elisante & Muzuka, 2017)

[II] According to the 2022 Tanzanian Census, the population grew at a rate of 3.2% passing from 45 million of 2012 to almost 62 million of 2022. Both rural and urban areas have shown this tendency to population growth and looking at the projections for the future, such trend is expected to keep going at a steady pace (The 2022 Population and Housing Census: Administrative Units Population Distribution Report, 2022).

(Shemsanga, et al., 2017). Such characteristics, even when the water quality is acceptable as per the Standard fixed by the National Guidelines, make this water unpreferred or unsuitable for some uses that people make of it. For example, salty water no can be used for cooking beans (one of the main foods for local people), washing laundry, or even drinking as it has an unpleasant taste. The result is that the piped water is less used especially during the rainy season, by part of local community which also for economic reasons still rely on less safe and uncontrolled alternative sources of water.

A final element that gives us information on how community management works since the reform is to check how the changes in the governance structure of the CBWSO, formerly COWSO, have been transposed in the communities. As seen in the section on explaining the key points of the reform, one of the major changes was the separation of policy activities, embodied by the Community Water Committee (CWC), from operational activities, performed by the Community Water Management Team (CWMT).

As for the CWC, it is composed partly of locally elected representatives and partly of people in senior positions in the community (such as the Village Executive Officer and Ward Executive Officer). From what emerged from the field, this dual composition demonstrated both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, the presence of people with respected positions who have expertise in drafting documents and have an overview of the socio-political situation in the area has led to improving the whole system of managing rural water scheme in activities such as the preparation of minutes of the meetings, the development of informed decisions in the light of the general situation of the village, and the drafting and presentation of the quarterly CBWSO reports for the RUWASA. About this last point, even though the reporting activities have improved, there is still a need to set standard monitoring procedures and data collection tools that can make reports more reliable and precise. In some cases, the CWC was effective in improving the relationship with local authorities that in this way were included in the decision-making process regarding water, and this resulted in the reduction of conflicts. On the other side, including relevant political figures in the committee resulted in internal power imbalances that prevent all the voices and opinions to be heard. As a matter of fact, "regular" members (meaning the elected community members) of the CWC reported not to feel comfortable in expressing their ideas and suggestions in front of such prominent members of the community. In addition, the majority of the interviewed CWC regular members affirmed that some Ward chancellors failed to differentiate their political position and role from their membership in the CBWSOs, hence disturbing the overall management of the water scheme.

As for the CWMT, responsible of the everyday water management activities, according to the 2019 reform it must be composed by competent staff including a Manager, a Secretary, a Technician, an Accountant and any other staff deemed to be necessary to run the water scheme. In order to be

appointed, the Team members are required to have specific qualifications and certificates that prove they are fitted for the position. Even though the rational behind the reform is understandable as it is aimed at achieving better and more efficient water management, what emerged in the study area is that more often than not communities struggle to find qualified people to be part of the CWMT within the village. As a result, the villages rely on people that over time have developed the necessary know-how in the different areas of expertise needed to run the water scheme. In this sense, on the one hand, the reform still has a long way to go to achieve a professionalization of the rural water sector. On the other hand, there is a clear gap between the definition of what it means to be a professional used in the reform's text and the ways in which knowledge, skills and know-how are traditionally built in rural villages. Training and education are expected to be the tools with which to fill this gap, and in this sense LVIA has developed in collaboration with the Tanzanian Vocational Education and Training Authority (VETA) and "Hydroaid - Water for Development Management Institute" a specific "Course for Rural Water Managers" which has shown good results. However, RUWASA still has to find an effective way to carry these activities out in a uniform and stable manner as still in several villages of the study the interviewed CBWSO members reported the inadequacy of the training provided by the RUWASA community development officers to manage the community water scheme.

Gender dynamics and community water management

This paragraph moves from the specific managerial issues regarding rural community water management and answers to the need of considering also the socio-cultural elements that are relevant in the way in which communities relate to their waters. The previous section has discussed to some extent the power issues at play within the CWC, that depend on the status of the people that are part of the committee. Here, on the other hand, the dimension of gender integrates the analysis in order to see how it intersects with such power dynamics and overall, with the way in which communities in Kongwa and Chamwino manage and use water. In the study area, women's and men's participation in the use, management, and knowledge of water runs along lines that trace often unequal socio-cultural dynamics. What often happens paradoxically is that even though women are the ones who have the most to do with water and the water scheme on a daily basis, and self-described as the ones who "*know more about water*," they are not actively involved in its formal management. What emerged from women's experiences through the research is a complex set of practices and values that include not only domestic and care activities, but also productive work such as running small businesses, conducting agricultural work, collecting water for other people,… Often it is them who are the ones that whenever a failure of the scheme occurs are the first to notice and the ones that notify the issue to the management entity. Also, they are the ones that over time have developed a deep knowledge of

the surrounding environment that include the alternative water sources to be used in the case of emergency or malfunctioning of the infrastructure. They know which water source has better taste, quality and availability and it is often upon them that falls the task of educating their sons and daughters on how to use water efficiently and safely.

It has been time and time established that without safely managed Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) services, women and girls are among the most vulnerable groups to abuse, attack and ill-health, and this affects their ability to study, work and live in dignity. This means that improvements to WASH at home, school, work and in public spaces is an essential point of entry in tackling - directly and indirectly - gender equality. This is why women and girls must be put in the conditions to play a central role in designing and implementing water solutions, so that services respond to their specific needs. This importance of the gender dimension in rural water management has been recognized also in the Tanzanian National Water Policy that states that "*In the rural areas women bear the burden of searching for water and guardians of the living environment. However, this pivotal role has seldom been reflected in institutional arrangements for the development and management of rural water supply and sanitation services*" (NAWAPO, 2002, p. 35-36). The policy then lists the three macro measures that the government choose to implement in order to promote gender equality within the rural water sector. The first aims at encouraging *"a fair representation of women in village water-user entities*" (NAWAPO, 2002, p. 36). The second principle states that rural water management "*shall be based on what both men and women in rural communities know, want, and are able to manage, maintain and pay for*" (NAWAPO, 2002, p. 36). The third and last point advocates for the creation of the conditions ensuring active participation of women *"at all levels (…) including decision making, planning, supervision and management.*" (NAWAPO, 2002, p. 36)

Looking at how these principles have been translated and strengthened into the water sector's legislative framework, the 2019 Water Supply and Sanitation Act states that at the higher administrative level of the RUWASA Board, a gender quota shall be adopted. Specifically, it is stated that a third of the board members should be women. Looking at how this gender perspective was legally recognized at the village level, such gender quota mechanism was not extended at CBWSO level and the law only states that there must be one "representative of women" in the Community Water Committee.

Even though the limited provisions contained in the reformed water and Sanitation Act No. 5 of 2019, and the WID approach that water policies and legislations seem to adopt, data from the field shows that since the introduction of the reform there has been an improvement on the formal involvement of women in the management and operations of rural water schemes in the study area. Such involvement can be seen from the increased number of women present within the CBWSO

Management Board, who are involved in decision making for the management of the rural water scheme. Looking merely at the numbers, in the 8 Villages where the Focus group have been conducted, out of 80 CBWSO members interviewed a total of 43 (53.75%) were women who were under the CBWSO Structure. Breaking down this number to look bat the types of position held by women in the local water governance, out of the 43 women present in the 8 CBWSOs, only 12 (28%) were part of the Management Team (which is responsible for the day-to-day operations), while 31 (72%) were in the Community Water Committee. This means that the everyday management is still largely in the hands of men but even though the number is low, there is an improvement comparing to the previous situation where the formal involvement of women in the Management Team was very close to zero. Overall, the results show that after the introduction of the 2019 reform the involvement of women in management and operation of rural water schemes has improved.

However, as promising these data can look, caution is needed in the interpretation of the actual impact on making the decision-making processes over water more equitable and gender sensitive. This is because often the formal participation of women within the CBWSO does not match an actual and active participation in the decision-making processes concerning water (Mandara, Niehof, & van der Horst, 2017). In fact, there are cases in which even though women are officially part of the CBWSO, they don't really have influence power over the decisions, and they don't feel free to speak up. Moreover, during fieldwork, some reported that they didn't really know what it does it mean to be the "representative of women" within the CBWSO. On the other hand, ensuring a formal presence within the CBWSO can have a positive effect in terms of increasing women's formal participation as it allows them to get exposure and knowledge about the possibility to be active at different scales. It is therefore key to encourage women to be able to access different relevant positions in order to be involved in decision making for the management and operation of the rural water schemes. This can be achieved through the definition of specific activities targeting women who are interested in gaining more skills in water management. The inclusion of both men and women in gender equality-oriented activities is key to ensure their sustainability and effectiveness. Moreover, women have shown to possess high practical knowledge about the local waterscapes and therefore it would be useful to find a way to unlock such knowledge in the perspective of improving community water management.

Looking back at the abovementioned NAWAPO principles about the importance to strive for gender equality through community water management, we can see how the efforts have been put into the first point about the representation of women in village water management entities. The other two principles that are equally important, have been somehow subordinated to the first one and require specific actions. In this sense, the promotion of skill building activities for both men and women who are already in the CBWSO could be a way to step up the quality of their participation that could

change from passive to active. Promoting exchange of practices and experiences among different CBWSOs where the presence and contribution of women is different could also represent an opportunity to achieve the objectives set by the national policy. The inclusion of both men and women in this kind of activities is central in ensuring the success of a gender mainstreaming approach within the water sector.

Conclusions

From what emerged in this study, the implementation of the 2019 WSSA in Kongwa and Chamwino District seems to have produced some relevant change in terms of improvement of rural water management. Most of the COWSO have been re-formed into CBWSOs which are performing better than before, though some efforts are still needed to make community water management more resilient and sustainable. The areas that appear to need strengthening are financial management, operation and maintenance, record keeping, setting and respecting clear roles and responsibilities in order to avoid (or at least minimize) the risk of political leaders taking over the decision-making processes. The overall performance of the rural water scheme has generally improved, especially looking at the increase of the average revenue collection, the use of quarterly meetings to share different information regarding the management of the rural water scheme and the functionality of water infrastructure. However, even though the work of RUWASA in fixing and constructing water schemes showed its results, there is still gap in the capacity to improve the water scheme management and governance. As for the gender dynamics linked to water management, even though the national level (through the NAWAPO and 2019 WSSA) recognises the importance of actively involving both men and women in the CBWSO system, what emerges is that there is still significant room for improvement in this direction. What often happens is that the presence of women in the room where decisions are made does not translate into an actual and active participation.

From this overview in the Kongwa and Chamwino districts, the issue of water management emerges as something extremely complex and intertwined with dynamics that go beyond the development of suitable technical knowledge or the more generous and effective allocation of resources of different types (financial, personnel, training). In this sense, the issue of skills development through the organisation of specific training is certainly of central value as demonstrated by projects such as the one carried out by LVIA together with the Tanzanian Vocational Education and Training Authority. In this sense, the development of specific skills relates to conducting field follow ups and monitoring, financial management, technical maintenance, and report writing.

However, how one shapes the conception of what it means to create the right competencies must take into account, on the one hand, the peculiarities and untapped resources that different communities

have within them. Indeed, in many of these areas, competence, particularly in the field of water, is built through a variety of different experiences rather than on qualifications formally obtained in educational institutions, and water knowledge circulates through informal channels that are not always intercepted by a purely managerial and technical view of water management. On the other hand, it is necessary to reflect on what are the most effective ways to transmit skills and stimulate communities to care for water within the framework of national policies and laws such as the 2019 WSSA. In this sense then, it may make sense to think of a knowledge-sharing construct that brings together a vertical approach from experienced water managers or cooperating agencies, to a horizontal one where different CBWSOs can come together and be enabled to learn from each other about best practices to improve the water situation in their communities. This approach would take some of the pressure off the RUWASA and make the communities more involved in understanding the best ways to manage water and interface with other actors in the area doing the same work.

Attention to the power dynamics that reproduce within CBWSOs and how they intertwine with the gender dimension also emerged as essential both for understanding the strong political dimension of water and as a starting point for imagining new and creative ways to foster gender equality through community water management system through the more comprehensive framework of gender-and-development (GAD). Tackling the inequal gendered issues affecting rural water management could benefit from actions that deal not only with activities aimed at fostering women's participation, but also addressing the inherent masculinity of water management structures in order to identify ways to fit a gender approach to water related projects that could effectively allow both men and women to be part of the change.

Systemic reforms such as the 2019 represent a great opportunity to improve water access conditions in a broad sense and to find new ways to do things. The long time needed for such significant changes to land, adjust and produce the expected effects in a fast-changing context such as Tanzania and the fact that water issues intersect with broader dynamics that pertain environmental, economic, political and socio-cultural aspects of the society, are creating spaces for change and putting novel emphasis of water access issues.

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List of Acronyms

CBWSO	Community Based Water Supply Organization
COWSO	Community Owned Water Supply Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWC	Community Water Committee
CWMT	Community Water Management Team
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
NAWAPO	National Water Policy
RUWASA	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency
WSDP	Water Sector Development Programme
WSSA	Water Supply and Sanitation Act

TALES OF WATER: A METHODOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE VISUALISATION OF NEGOTIATING WATER ACCESS BY SOUTH SUDANESE REFUGEES IN RURAL UGANDA

Esmee van den Hoek*

*Department of cultural anthropology, Utrecht University, Utrecht, esmee2661@hotmail.com

Abstract

Water access is being shaped by South Sudanese refugees on a day to day basis due to scarcity challenges in rural refugee camp 'BibiBidi', located in the north of Uganda. Understanding how this water scarcity is negotiated in different dimensions such as time, space and gender, provides some insight in temporary and less temporary challenges related to water inside the refugee camp. In the ethnographic fieldwork that led to this article, visual and participatory methods were used in order to demonstrate how water access is shaped by the constant negotiation of gender and other roles in experiencing time and space.

This article is mainly focused on a set of different methodologies that were used in the fieldwork e.g. walking with video (walking ethnography), story-mapping technique and life stories with video reflections. Visual techniques can be used as a way to analyse dimensions of spatiality and temporality inside a refugee settlement, the notion of suffering for water and the exploration of gender-water relations. The power of the visual provides an interesting perspective on shaping water access through the personal experiences of South Sudanese refugees, who negotiate time, space and gender on a daily basis in their quest for water.

Keywords

Visual techniques, water scarcity, refugees, gender-water relations, Uganda.

Tales of Water

A methodological perspective on the visualisation of negotiating water access by South Sudanese refugees in rural Uganda

Introduction – the power of the visual

It is May 2022; the war in Ukraine is not only devastating in itself, it also pushes devastating consequences in the Sahel Region 3.622 kilometres away. Some countries in the Sahel and Great Horn of Africa are facing the worst drought in a generation, while others are coping with dramatic flooding. The World Health Organisation states that the emergency is heightened across both regions by conflict and a sharp rise in global food and fuel prices, linked to the war in Ukraine. The situation is already dire and fast deteriorating. Without grain from Russia and Ukraine, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Guinea and Kenya will suffer after four years of persistent drought. After these four seasons of drought, sixteen million people extra from the Sahel region have become in need of dire help. Most African countries are considered Least Developed Countries (Ldcs) and they will suffer the hardest in the aftermath of Putin's war in Ukraine, especially Africa's poor. These countries have already suffered the consequences of drought and their already weakened positions will be exacerbated by the spill-over effects of Russian aggression in Ukraine, which will further exacerbate hunger and poverty in Africa[1]. In Uganda's case, based on projected population growth, the total renewable water resources of Uganda per capita are expected to drop to 1072 m3/year by 2030, on the brink of a regime of water scarcity- especially in arid and semi-arid regions[2]. The crisis in the Sahel has already displaced 7.5 million people of which 1.5 million are now refugees, additionally, the drought will cause a major influx again in Sudanese refugees to Uganda, which is already dealing with their own water scarcity challenges and extreme floods in rain season. WHO (2022) describes the situation as 'one of the fastest growing yet most forgotten crises in the world' [3].

Reading this introduction will most probably trigger some sort of shock reaction for most people, however, actually visualizing day to day life in crises like mentioned above, illustrates better what it means to (in the refugees their words) 'suffer for something basal as water'. During the course of ethnographic fieldwork in 2020, an attempt was made to capture refugees their notion of 'suffering for water'. In this same fieldwork, visual participatory research

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[1] Kohnert, Dirk. "Will Putin's Ukraine war provoke famine and upheaval in Africa." Available at SSRN 4083725 (2022)
[2] Ruettinger, Lukas, et al. "Water, Crisis and Climate Change in Uganda: A Policy Brief." (2011)
[3] ''Drought Crisis: Health Catastrophe in Sahel and Horn of Africa'', September 2022. The World Health Organisation.

methods where used in order to translate spoken words to an image that would not quickly leave the mind. The transformation of visual research and analysis results in an exciting new interdisciplinary approach of a broader influence in and outside the academic world.

Sarah Pink (2010), one of the leading researchers in visual anthropology, argues that the potential of visual methods can be harnessed by engaging visual anthropology with its wider contexts, including: · the increasing use of visual research methods across the social sciences and humanities · the growth in popularity of the visual as methodology and object of analysis within mainstream anthropology and applied anthropology · the growing interest in 'anthropology of the senses' and media anthropology and the development of new visual technologies that allow anthropologists to work in new ways[4]. New ways of visualizing ethnographic fieldwork were explored during the fieldwork that led to this article. The article describes different visual research methods such as walking with video, life stories and story-mapping technique. Visual techniques are not solely an interesting way of capturing lived experiences, since they can also be used to reinforce relevant information and insights to more traditional field research techniques considering broader accessibility of visual tools like photography and video.

Additionally, visual images are closer to the source; less information and data becomes lost in translation. Visual techniques are furthermore less perceptive to subjectivity, the images are directly presented to the audience and not translated first from image, to written words by the researcher. However, visual techniques should not completely replace traditional field research techniques, the research techniques rather have an opportunity to complement each other. According to Banks and Morphy (1997, 3), visual anthropology is not just about films and photography, it is more about seeing the visual as 'an important component of human cultural cognitive and perceptual process' that can be relevant to all areas of anthropology. When one considers visual anthropology in this way, the possibilities of the visual and traditional techniques complementing each other are endless. A sensory approach such as visual techniques can be used to zoom-in on human culture as it is lived and on how individuals are located in particular cultural contexts (Banks and Morphy 1997), for instance daily life of refugees struggling with water scarcity. To describe this layered and complex aspect of their daily lives by pen alone would fall it short. How a visual approach could reinforce traditional field research techniques depends on several components e.g. the personal preference of visual tools for the researcher, the (practical) options in the field and technological developments in

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[4] Pink, Sarah. "The future of sensory anthropology/the anthropology of the senses." Social Anthropology 18.3 (2010): 331-333.

visual tools. The next section will describe walking ethnography, or walking with video as a visual approach to the social aspect of walking together and sharing stories during those walks.

Walking ethnography: walking with video

Walking ethnography is one of the methods used in the fieldwork to study the role of water, or the lack of, in the daily life of South Sudanese refugees who are living in BidiBidi, a refugee settlement in rural Uganda. The challenges with water scarcity differ per place, time period and per gender. Therefore, visual research was used to analyse a spatial dimension, temporal dimension and gender dimension. Each visual method in this article provides a glimpse into personal experiences of refugees that are linked to these three dimensions. Capturing personal experiences of refugees can be a sensitive undertaking, and therefore it needs to be addressed that the goal of this fieldwork was to study **with** the refugees, rather than studying them. This is in line with Tim Ingold's (2008) suggestion that we should study with people instead of studying the lives of people. Walking with the refugees in order to collect data seemed like the most logical way forward.

Walking ethnography creates the opportunity to walk with the refugees and during their walk or struggle in finding water, the possibility was created to talk about the details of that struggle. Walking is profoundly a social activity; social relations are like steps we take in a walk and paced out along the ground- the human body in this case can be seen as an object to the collective subject which we call 'society'[5]. According to Ingold & Vergunst (2008) walking, practiced by the human body, can be seen as a way of thinking and feeling through which cultural norms can be generated. If we try to understand walking in a broader sense, we could also say that thinking and feeling are ways of walking and that relates more to what Maxine Sheets-Johnstone (1999) has called 'thinking in movement' and obliges us to understand that to think and feel is a way to make one's way through a world-information, a movement that is rhythmically intensified with the movement of others around us[6].

An ethnographic analyses of walking can help us rethink what being social actually means when we tend to forget that the human body itself is grounded in movement, movement that flows in water (Ingold & Vergunst 2008, 3). If the body itself is foundational to culture, one can see how

[5] Ingold, Tim, and Jo Lee Vergunst, eds. Ways of walking: Ethnography and practice on foot. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2008.
[6] " "

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water in that body and water in itself, is additionally foundational to culture (Ingold & Vergunst 2008, 3). Ingold & Vergunst's walking ethnography could be combined with Pink's phenomenological research method 'walking with video', and results in a visual representation of walking with ethnography. This combination provides the audience a glance in the effect of water scarcity on a person. Pink's walking with video is a method that attends to sensorial elements of human experience and place making (Pink 2007, 240). In a practical way, this means walking with and video-recording research participants as they experience, tell and show their material, immaterial and social environments in personally, socially and culturally specific ways (Pink 2007, 240).

Visual methods like walking with video are not something completely new; in contemporary anthropology a focus on the sense has become a key theme and several scholars have been arguing on this. David Howes (1991), for example, proposed a programme of comparison of the varying hierarchies or sensory 'orders' found in different cultures. More recently, Ingold (2011) criticizes Howes' approach when he calls for a re-focusing of a sensory anthropology on experience and perception. Ingold (2011) draws on the philosophy of perception and ecological psychology when he calls for an anthropology that understands learning and knowing as situated in embodied practice and movement. Even more so, neurologists suggest that an understanding of the senses as interconnected in human perception is necessary – the five senses do not travel along separate channels, but interact to a degree few scientists would have believed only a decade ago (Pink 2010, 332). An example might elaborate these theories: the following picture is a still of a 'walking with video' and the description demonstrates an observation of the effects of water scarcity in this refugee her life.

Figure 1 Woman walks water to her home

Notes from the field[7]: Figure 1 shows a picture of a woman walking towards her home in the refugee camp with a heavy bowl full of water. I wanted to capture this and James (key-figure, chief of the village) helped me with asking permission in her native language. It took a long time; the women were not really interested and just looking at each other, giggling in a shy way. They were asking James questions in their own language and looked at him, then looked at me, looked at the water and this continued for at least ten minutes. Just when I was about to give up, this wonderful lady volunteered to bring the water to her home while being filmed. Before I could grab my video camera, my local research partner Cathy Ayo already put a jerry can on her head so the women would have extra water as a 'reward' for the filming.

They started walking really fast so I almost had to run to keep up with them. I felt bad for my research partner and the refugee because it was really hot and the place we were walking to was far away. I offered several times to carry the jerry can but both women laughed at me, probably because I would not be capable of practicing this particular skill. This video demonstrates the distance women often have to cross to bring water to their homes, most of the times on the middle of the day, when the sun heat is at its highest. It takes a lot of their time every day but they also seem to take a certain pride in it, especially when they showed me how they carried the heavy bowl on their heads.

Pink (2007) suggests that walking with video is a research method that can produce empathetic and sensory embodied understandings of another's experience; it is itself productive of place in any one moment in time; it represents place at particular moments in time and communicates a sense of other person's emplaced experiences that might be interpreted empathetically by its audiences. One can only imagine how heavy it is to carry such jerry cans in excruciating heat, and why a person would take pride in being able to do this. However, when you are part of the process by filming this act and actually try it yourself, it makes more sense why someone would take pride in this act of carrying water.

At the same time, using a video device like a GoPro camera that is barely noticeable and creates a power image of the environment and the daily struggle of the refugees. When words are used, the audience tends to create their own image in their heads. When visual techniques are used, the audience gets a more realistic view of what is really happening on the ground. This resonates with Pink's (2007) idea that it invites research participants to define and represent their own embodied experiences and knowledge in ways that will benefit collaborative explorations. In this way, walking with video, can generate a more involved approach to the question of how place and identities are constituted[8], or in this fieldwork, how space, time and gender as dimensions are constituted. In the next section the method of life stories captured by video will be explained.

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[7] Observations by author in village thirteen, inhabitant of refugee camp BidiBidi, Uganda, 2020.
[8] Pink, Sarah. "Walking with video." Visual studies 22.3 (2007): 240-252.

Life stories captured by video

Another visual technique that can be used is called 'life stories'. The official term is life histories, however, in this fieldwork it was not just about the refugees their past. In the same way life story interviews are about dreams, ideas for the future and personal experiences in the present time. By using this method, refugees are invited to tell a story about the start of their process; fleeing from a conflict zone to Uganda and the role of water in different phases of that process. Refugees essentially provide a summary on how their life played out and the researcher tries to find what kind of role water scarcity has in different phases of their life.

Therefore, life stories are a representation of human experience: life stories draw in (viewers or) readers to the interpretive process and invite them to create meaning and form judgements based on their own perspective on the life story, since the (viewers or) readers perceive the life story through the lenses of their own reality[9]. Life stories are inherently complex because one's 'narration of the self' varies with circumstance, with discourse form and context and therefore one's self is less seen as an anchor and source of narration than a product of it; the self becomes discourse. The term life story means in a simple way that it is the story of someone's life. In this, 'story' does not connote that the narration is true or that the events narrated necessarily happened, or that it matter whether they did or not[10] . What truly matters in life stories is that their story sheds a light on their personal experience and the importance of the chance they get in telling their account of their personal experience. An example below of a life story supports this argument.

> *Notes from the field[11]: Tombo, a twenty-seven year old refugee narrates the following story. 'Refugees seem to be rejecting the idea that when a water source has to become permanent due to the permanency of the settlement, they would have to pay a certain fee. This mind-set is a problem and it relates to different generations of refugees. This mind-set results in a 'just wait' passive mentality, while at the same time BidiBidi is becoming more permanent, there is no way to avoid that. For many refugees it is also the first time inside a refugee camp, therefore it is difficult to understand how everything works and what they can expect. I can explain this by the flows of refugees that I know: the older flow in 1989 did not receive anything when they arrived from South Sudan in contrast to the more recent flow of 2016, who received a lot of service when they arrived. For them it is harder to adapt and they also came in big numbers.*
>
> *My life became very difficult when my father died in South Sudan and I had to start working and providing for my family. I was seventeen years old when I had to leave*

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[9] Cole, Ardra L., and J. Gary Knowles. Lives in context: The art of life history research. Rowman Altamira, 2001.

[10] Peacock, James L., and Dorothy C. Holland. "The narrated self: Life stories in process." Ethos Anthropology." International Journal of Applied Semiotics 1.1 (1999): 141-58.

[11] Interview with Tombo, inhabitant of refugee camp BidiBidi, Uganda, 2020.

school. The many issues here in the settlement results in the fact that the refugees from the recent flow of 2016 return to South Sudan, but the refugees that have been in a settlement before, take everything more simple and are able to stay"

Figure 2 Samuel, chief of village fourteen in an life story interview set-up

This paragraph is from a life story interview with Tombo and offers insight in what kind of information could be processed in life stories. The picture (Figure 2) illustrates the informal set-up that can be used in life story interviews. Samuel, the person in figure two, enjoyed sharing his life story in the comfort of his own surroundings and people. The picture represents the effects it might have when a refugee is being given the chance to share a story about how their lives unfolded in an unexpected way. In the following section the visual story-mapping technique will be addressed and how it can help in making sense of all the visual data collected.

Story mapping technique as data collection method

In order to get a understandable and structured overview of all this visual information, the technique of Story Mapping can be used. In this way, story mapping technique is a data processing method. Story mapping technique does what it says, it maps a story. It is a way of organising and visualising the material that is collected during the fieldwork. In order words, story-mapping is a systematic process of narrative building that attends to the construction and representation of spatial knowledge between researcher and participant (Molden 2019, 131). The goal of this technique is to synthesize the collection, analysis and representation of spatial, visual and textual information as a narrative, enable meaningful participation of research participants and generate a visually compelling product that facilitates dissemination (Molden

2019, 131). Story-mapping is a powerful and practical technique that enables summarizing collected data in a visual way, for example summarizing the life stories. Ingold (2011) states that the narrative is fundamental to knowledge and experience because we can only 'understand the nature of things by attending to their relations, or in other words, by telling their stories'. Telling stories is a way of finding meaning in an overwhelming crowded and disorder chronological reality[12]. Hence, story-mapping the experience of the refugees can be used as an alternative typology to reflect on how time and space are connected to life in the camps and in relation to water.
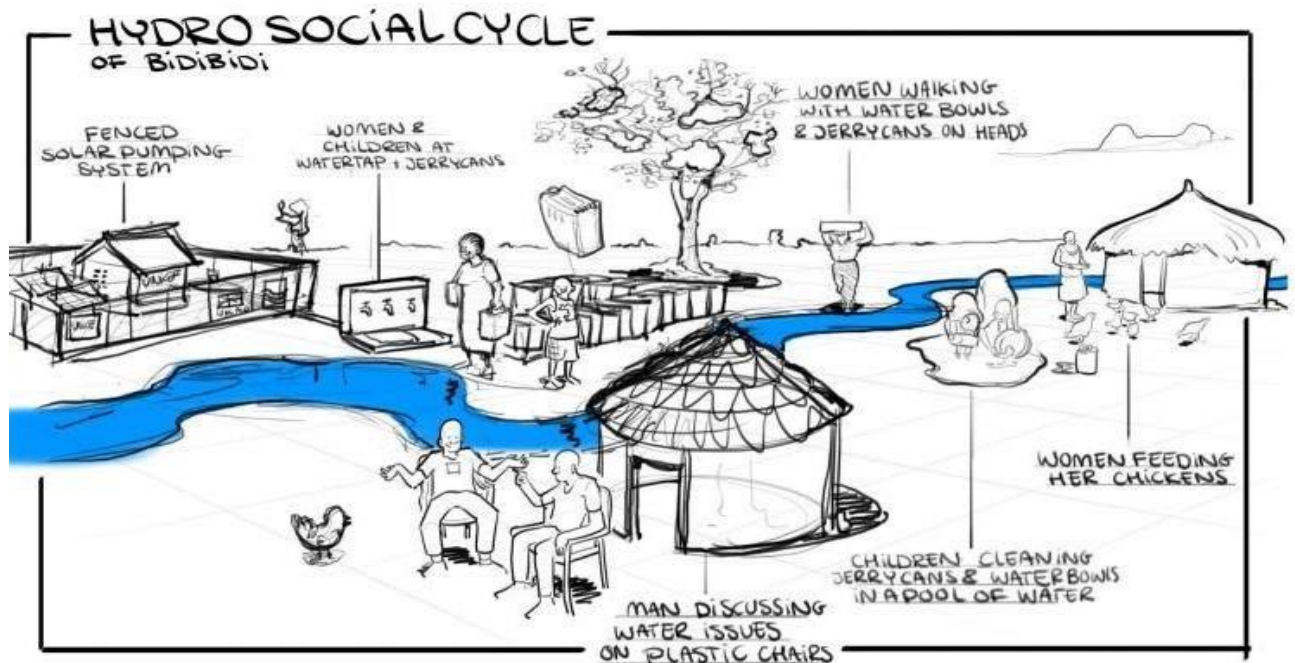

Figure 3 Map of daily life in the refugee camp

Figure 3 demonstrates one way of mapping a story; these kind of visual drawings can be used in the online Story-Map. The online Story-map used for this fieldwork is an interactive online tool, created by ArcGIS Story Maps[13]. The interactive map functions like an article, the only difference is that it is fully online and can contain videos, geographical maps, graphics and photos; an example of a story-map can be found in figure four. This online tool is one of the options available to capture the many complex layers of daily life inside a refugee camp, and the interactivity of the online map represents those layers in a comprehensive way. Using several visual techniques offers different perspectives and angles, however, focusing on one visual technique might allow to dive a bit deeper in one specific aspect of the observed situation.

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[12] Molden, Olivia C. "Short take: Story-mapping experiences." Field Methods 32.2 (2020): 131139
[13] Esri is a Dutch company that creates mapping software, ArGIS Story Maps is their storytelling tool. https://storymaps.arcgis.com/ last consultation 16/10/2023

Even more, story-mapping is also a way of presenting research without asking the general audience to go through many pages of information – in this way it might be a tool to reach a wider audience. Anthropology and ethnographic fieldwork is often received as very specific and possibly not very appealing to the general public, visual techniques like story-mapping might create a way for anthropologists to translate their data into a message that is more understandable and appealing for the non-academic world.
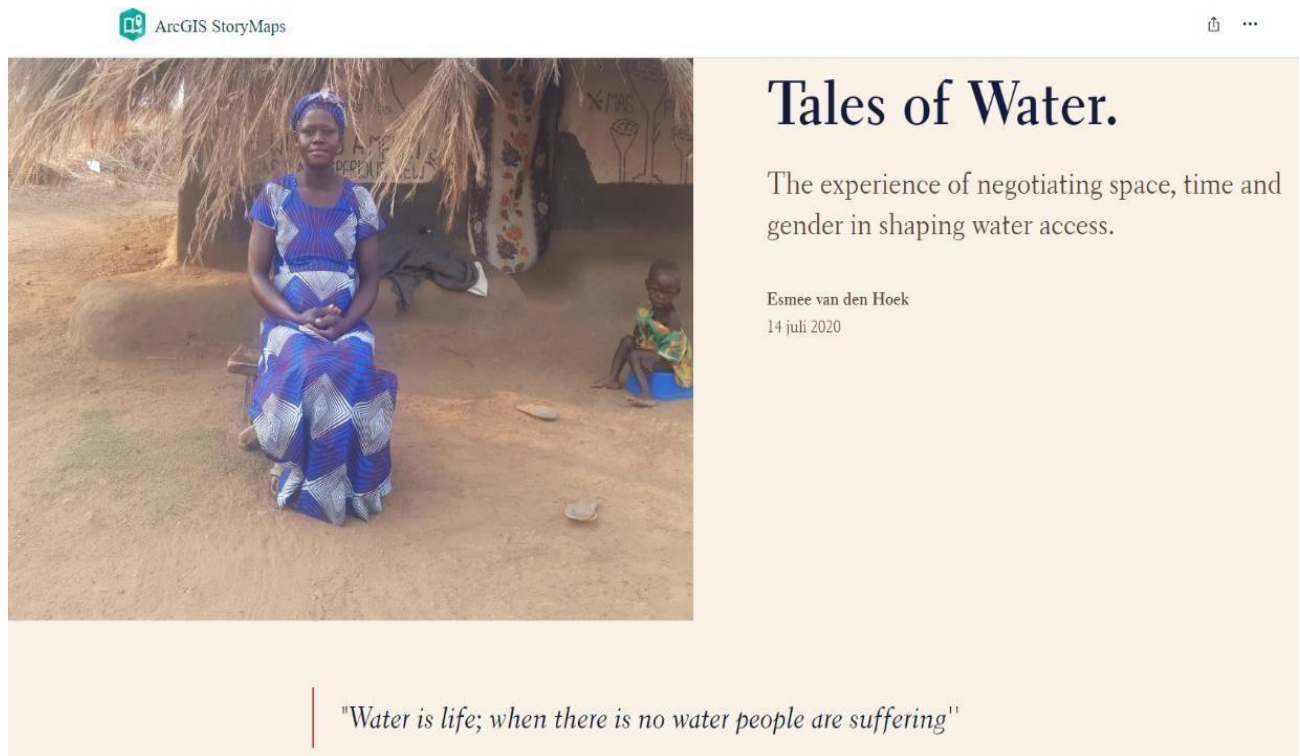
Figure 4 Example of online Story-Map

Conclusion – what is next?

In contemporary global climate, a shift in how refugees and planet earth should be treated is growing. Issues of climate change like droughts are inescapably interlinked with vulnerable groups like refugees that live in rural areas like North Uganda. Visual research into the hydro-social cycles on a global scale is now becoming more relevant than ever, in order to understand not only water crisis, but additionally a growing number of 'climate' refugees. 'Water is life' is a metaphor often used by the South Sudanese refugees, local Ugandan government employees, and non-governmental organisations (Ngo) employees, however, this metaphor should not be taken lightly. The power of water, or the lack of it, should not be underestimated since the social consequences of it are so immense. Water flows, and in this flowing it creates bonds of the social and natural together in particular ways, while simultaneously constructing precise

patterns of management, distribution, sociotechnical hierarchies and how this is all legitimized by moral and symbolic orders[14]. This research is not solely about the visible fact that the refugees are having trouble with water scarcity, it is more focused on how they experience these troubles and how everything in their lives seems to be related to that. The purpose of using visual techniques is to provide a bit more insight (and potentially evoke more empathy) in the visible and non-visible personal experiences that refugees have in their daily water struggles.

The future of visual anthropology and ways of translating data will become inherently more important when our everyday realities become increasingly distant and different from each other. In this development, different technological developments might play a crucial and exciting role in the future of visual anthropology; think about virtual reality technology, drone video technology, artificial (visual) intelligence , and other possible developments in mapping technology. In these developments, it will become more possible to lure the general public into the image that visual anthropologist are trying to capture. With hope, continuous confrontation with those growing differences in day to day reality will force societies to at least reflect on their own behaviour, and attempt to adapt. A future task for visual anthropologist is to develop ways of integrating visual and written texts in multimedia projects that might communicate both in ways that MacDougall (1998) suggest are transcultural. Transcultural multimedia projects might provide a deep cultural and analytical contextualisation that make communication about other people's experiences easier[15]. In complex challenges equal to water scarcity and fleeing from conflict, making the communication about those deeply personal experiences easier, sounds beneficial and necessary.

Furthermore, visual anthropology is an unique player in the field of interdisciplinary social science and therefore has a lot of challenges, yet also potential. Along this line, further research with visual techniques and methods in concepts like the hydro-social cycle and understanding of what it means to be a refugee, perhaps leads to more awareness, and how important it is to create a more just and equal world for vulnerable people like refugees. Simultaneously, visual techniques will continue to play a crucial role in the continues transformation of social sciences and humanities such as cultural anthropology.

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THE SPATIALITY OF THE SOCIAL RESPONSE TO WATER PRIVATISATION: THE CASE STUDY OF THE COCHABAMBA WATER CONFLICT (1999-2000)

Matilda Prandini*

*Università degli Studi di Torino, matilda.prandini@gmail.com

Abstract

This article is a critical discussion on the case study of the Cochabamba Water Conflict in 1999-2000. The focus is on the spatiality of the popular opposition which led various local organisations to join forces in order to oppose the privatisation, and the result was the creation of a social movement called "La Coordinadora", composed by both urban and rural associations. This movement was able to bring together protesters from all classes, ages, occupations, and ethnicities; it was capable of creating a sense of "us" and of belonging between the people, as well as the perception that their society was at risk. And, through this organisation, protesters sought to take and make place in a different way compared to the dominant one. The paper points out how social relations are spatially constructed and shape local people's decisions and how spatial relations are central in the dynamics of movements such as the *Coordinadora*. It relies mainly on secondary sources, backed by academic studies that investigated the theoretical debates surrounding social movements and the role of spatiality in social conflicts.

Questo articolo è una discussione critica sul caso studio del conflitto per l'acqua di Cochabamba nel 1999-2000. Il focus è sulla spazialità dell'opposizione popolare che spinse diverse organizzazioni locali a unire le forze per opporsi alla privatizzazione, creando un movimento sociale chiamato "La Coordinadora", composto da associazioni urbane e rurali. Questo movimento fu in grado di riunire manifestanti di tutte le classi, età, occupazioni ed etnie; di creare un senso di "noi" e di appartenenza tra la gente, nonché la percezione che la loro società fosse a rischio. E, attraverso questa organizzazione, i/le manifestanti cercarono di prendere e fare spazio in un modo diverso rispetto a quello dominante. L'articolo evidenzia come le relazioni sociali siano costruite spazialmente e diano forma alle decisioni delle popolazioni locali, e come le relazioni spaziali siano centrali nelle dinamiche dei movimenti come la *Coordinadora*. Si basa principalmente su fonti secondarie, supportate da studi accademici che hanno indagato i dibattiti teorici sui movimenti sociali e sul ruolo della spazialità nei conflitti sociali.

Keywords:

Water conflict, privatisation, Cochabamba, Bolivia, spatiality, social movements, spatial relations

Introduction

The city of Cochabamba is the third largest city in Bolivia, and it is located in a valley between the area of the Chapare and the *altiplano* (the Bolivian highlands). The city has a long history of problems linked to access to water. To worsen the situation, the expanding population and a drier climate in time turned Cochabamba's once lush valley into an increasingly arid environment. Problems with access to water were thus not new for the residents of Cochabamba. By 1997 the performance of the municipal company, the SEMAPA[1], was very poor. Only approximately 57% of the residents were covered (Dangl; 2007) and the losses due to leakages amounted up to 50%. Also, SEMAPA mainly focused on developing the water services in the richest neighbourhoods of Cochabamba (i.e., in the centre and in the north of the city), whereas the neighbourhoods inhabited by poorer residents (i.e., the south of the city) were almost completely neglected and had therefore solved the issue by creating a great number of "independent water committees" and, through these, the local people worked together in order to drill wells and find ways to obtain water.

When the so-called *Guerra del Agua* broke out in 1999, it had approximately 500,000 residents and the public water network only reached about 60% of the population of the city (Dangl, 2007). In 1999, the World Bank (WB) pushed the Bolivian government to open to the private sector in order to be able to obtain foreign debt relief and the investment required to restructure and further develop the water services system. Eventually, on September 3rd, 1999, during a closed-door meeting, the Bolivian government signed a forty-year contract to privatise Cochabamba's water system with Aguas del Tunari (AdT) - a multinational consortium led by the British firm International Water, a subsidiary of the United States Bechtel Corporation. This concession was supplemented by the adoption of the Law 2029 one month later with the aim of regulating the water sector through a set of rules. This regulation created the legal framework which authorised private-public partnerships (PPP) in the water field by enabling private firms to acquire legal responsibility for water sources and service provision (Choucri; 2015). Through the concession contract, AdT obtained exclusive rights of exploitation of water resources and provision of water services in the area and extendable to the adjacent valleys. These valleys were the settlement of a great number of associations of *regantes* (users of irrigation waters) and small communities. Therefore, this clause of the Contract ended up affecting the rights of all these people. Indeed, as a consequence, local citizens would have to pay for all sources of water, from raindrops to the water in community-built wells. As a matter of fact, there was a great variety of autonomous water systems. However, Law 2029 established that such systems were not legal in the territory subject to a privatisation contract and that only the company under contract could allocate water. Furthermore, the Act imposed limitations on the peasants, who could not build tanks in order to collect rainwater anymore but had to request permissions from the superintendent of water. Also, the *regantes* feared that water for irrigation would soon be charged. Local organisations instantly raised concerns over the scope of this Law and over the Concession Contract. It was a period during which neoliberalism was the prevailing economic strategy, yet it was being met with increasing opposition. Both with the Concession Contract and then with the Law 2029, the representation and the participation of the local people were very limited. And the privatisation only reduced popular participation and control even further. Furthermore, subsidies were eliminated, and the company increased prices also due to

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[1] Servicio Municipal de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado.

the need to reflect the real economic cost of the service. Peasants in the neighbouring areas were among the ones most affected by this regulation since they had to start paying for water used for irrigation that was previously free of charge. The measures implemented had significant impacts for citizens since 70% of the population lived below the poverty line (Choucri; 2015). Also, the Contract guaranteed to the licensee a return rate of 16%. Yet, in order to get this return rate, it was necessary to raise the tariffs. In January 2000, this charge was approximately 35%, but it also happened that it reached levels of 150%.

Despite the fact that in the course of its first months of activity AdT was able to successfully reduce the amount of leakage loss, it must be highlighted that approximately half of the population still remained without an access to the central water supply system. But the promise had been of lower costs, a more efficient management, and an improved distribution. However, in Cochabamba privatisation had the opposite effects: costs skyrocketed, distribution faltered, and the poorest citizens were hit the hardest (Dangl; 2007). All these factors eventually converged and led to the Cochabamba Water Conflict between 1999-2000 and to the creation of the *Coordinadora*, a heterogeneous rural-urban multiclass organisation, through which protesters sought to take and make place in a different way compared to the dominant one.

Methodology

This paper brings a critical discussion on the case study of the Cochabamba Water Conflict and aims to investigate how spatiality influenced the formation of the social movement of the *Coordinadora*, and the role that spatiality played in the social conflict in Cochabamba.

In addition to the examination of writings by key figures in the *Coordinadora*, such as its leader Oscar Olivera, the research methodology of this paper includes a range of secondary sources. These sources include scholarly articles, books, and reports that contribute to a multifaceted understanding of the Cochabamba Water Conflict and the social movement under consideration. By delving into the insights provided by social activists, the paper aims to uncover the historical context and motivations driving the opposition. Furthermore, it explores the organisational structure and dynamics of the social movement, shedding light on the intricate network of the people involved. The analysis extends beyond the immediate participants to consider the broader implications of the *Coordinadora*.

Moreover, the research delves into academic studies that investigate the theoretical debates surrounding social movements and the role of spatiality in social conflicts, providing a conceptual framework to interpret the *Coordinadora*'s significance. The investigation extends to explore the role of spatiality in social conflicts, examining how spatiality contributes to the creation and development of such social movements and highlighting how spatiality extends beyond mere physical geography as it encompasses the symbolic significance of places and thus their political meaningfulness. This multifaceted approach aims to enrich the understanding of the *Coordinadora* and contribute to the broader discourse on how spatiality influences the formation of social movements and their intricate dynamics.

The *Guerra del Agua* (1999-2000) and the *Coordinadora*

As a protest to Law 2029, in November 1999, the FEDECOR[2] blocked the highways that led in and out of the city for one day. Afterwards, the Federation of Irrigators met with Oscar Olivera, the president of the FDTFC[3] and, in a meeting with a group of people consisting of farmers, industrial workers, etc., it was discussed that a unified mobilisation – both rural and urban – was necessary against the government's aim to control irrigation water and to impose rate hikes on the water users. The result was the creation of the Coalition for the Defence of Water and Life[4], or *Coordinadora*, through which this group of people started to organise themselves for collective action (Schultz; 2008). As argued by Schultz (2008), this organisation arose not only as a direct reaction to the Concession Contract and Law 2029, but its members considered it as a response to local institutions which should have protected the public's interest but completely failed to do so.

The *Coordinadora* was led by the charismatic figure of Oscar Olivera, shoe-factory labourer and president of the FDTFC, as its president and by Omar Fernández, the president of FEDECOR, as its vice-president. This composition allowed the organisation to have an important rural-urban dimension. The headquarters of the organisation were located at the FDTFC, which had a strategic position since it stood on a corner of the colonial central square of the city, Plaza 14 de Septiembre (Assies; 2003). Soon, a red banner appeared outside the headquarters of the Coordinadora (see fig.1) and it read: "*¡El agua es nuestra, carajo!*" (The water is ours, damn it!).

Figure 1 – The Banner *"¡El agua es nuestra, carajo!"* (The Water is Ours, Damn It!) at the Headquarters of the *Coordinadora* (source: *Coordinadora*)

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[2] In the 1990s, there were a series of conflicts (wars of the wells) which led local rural-based organisations to join together into a defence committee, which, in the mid-1990s, transformed into the FEDECOR, the Federación Departamental Cochabambina de Organizaciones de Regantes - The Cochabamba Department Federation of Irrigators' Organizations.

[3] The Federación Departamental de Trabajadores Fabriles de Cochabamba - Departmental Federation of Factory Workers of Cochabamba (FDTFC) is noteworthy for its attempts to try and find a creative response to the crisis that affected the Bolivian trade-union sector in the mid-1980s. Ever since, the FDTFC has tried to keep the population informed about labour conditions through the media and has tried to enhance the organisation of unions also in smaller factories and shops (Assies; 2003).

[4] The *Coordinadora por la Defensa del Agua y la Vida*.

In January 2000, the people connected to the municipal water supply system received their first water bills with severe raises in the tariffs – it happened that these also reached 150%. This was met with angry reactions by the affected users. A great number of people turned to the FDFTC in order to express their discontent about the water charges. The *Coordinadora* was thus able to receive some media coverage, through which it asked to refuse to pay the fees. The reaction of AdT came from its manager, Geoffrey Thorpe, who warned that, in case of non-payment of the bills, water would not be supplied to the users (*ibidem*; 2003). On January 10th, 2000, the *Coordinadora* organised a meeting. A great number of people gathered for the meeting: upset citizens, professional figures attacking the flaws of the Concession Contract, members of various organisations (e.g., FEDECOR, trade unions, etc.). The result was the decision to close down the city from January 11th. As a matter of fact, Cochabamba was successfully immobilised: the various organisations involved were able to close strategic roads and set up some barricades. On the following day, despite the end of the strike, in the rural areas and the periphery, the roadblocks still continued (*ibidem*; 2003).

On January 13th, the government invited the *Coordinadora* to meet their delegation at a specific time, however the latter arrived late, making the protesters who had gathered in the city square even angrier. There was tumult in the city: after the start of the negotiations, the police began to throw tear gas against the crowd. The outcome of the meeting was an agreement in which the delegation committed to revising the Concession Contract and Law 2029 and creating a commission to analyse the water tariffs (Olivera and Lewis, 2004; Assies, 2003). However, there was a refusal to revise the rate hikes (Olivera and Lewis; 2004). Yet, it was agreed that private water systems (e.g., wells) in the area subject to the Concession Contract would not be under AdT monopoly (Assies; 2003). According to the agreement, the government had a period of three months in order to respond to these points. Meanwhile, the *Coordinadora* organised an assembly in order to consult the people about the agreement, and the decision was to organise a peaceful demonstration for February 4th, 2000, in order to encourage the government to comply with the agreed points. The inhabitants of the city called this peaceful march "*la toma de Cochabamba (the takeover of Cochabamba)*" (Olivera and Lewis; 2004, cit. p.32) and it consisted in the symbolic occupation of the central plaza of the city, Plaza 14 de Septiembre, as a demonstration of the opposition of the citizens to the government and to AdT. However, on February 4th, the day of the march, soldiers had been positioned on the cardinal points of Cochabamba (where the marchers were grouped together) as government officials and the local business élites feared this "takeover" (as the protesters called it). The soldiers soon repressed the crowd of marchers with tear gas and violence. In spite of this, the marchers were able to get closer to the central square of the city and were soon joined by many local citizens. Eventually, the clashes ended on February 5th, with the "Cochabamba Agreement" to revise the tariffs and open negotiations on proposals for changes to the No. 2029 Act.

Towards the end of February, there was a stagnation in the negotiations. In March 2000, the *Coordinadora* organised a "*consulta popular*" (popular referendum) and, beginning on March 26th, for three days, activists set up throughout Cochabamba to ask local people about their opinion on the water tariffs and the water law. More than 50,000 people participated on a voluntary basis, and 90% of the voters were in favour of the annulment of AdT's contract (Schultz; 2008).

At the end of March 2000, the *Coordinadora* declared that they would launch a civil strike with roadblocks on April 4th and that it would continue until their main demands were carried out by the government. Their demands were the following: the annulment of the Concession Contract and the abrogation of the Law 2029. On April 4th, the so-called "*Última Batalla*" (Final Battle) began and the city was closed down by the protests. On April 8th, a "state of siege" was declared in the country for 90 days. Despite this decree, the protesters gathered in the central square and in the streets, but tear gas was fired at them. In order to avoid the diffusion of the news, the military forces cut the power supply to several news stations in the area. Meanwhile, the clashes in Cochabamba intensified: cars were burnt, municipal offices were attacked and Plaza 14 de Septiembre was occupied once again.

Eventually, on April 9th, there was the official announcement of the withdrawal of AdT. And, on the following day, the "state of siege" was finally revoked (Bustamante; 2004).

The spatiality of social movements: analysing the *Coordinadora* and the *Guerra del Agua*

Spatiality holds a crucial role in the genesis and mobilisation of social movements (Nicholls *et al.*; 2013) and the *Coordinadora* serves as a compelling case study, offering insights into the multifaceted ways in which spatial dimensions contribute to the creation and development of social movements and shape the decisions of local communities.

Leitner *et al.* (2008) have argued that there are five spatialities that shape and form contentious politics: scale, place, networks, positionality and mobility. In their analysis, "scale" refers to the varying levels at which political action occurs, from the local to the global. "Place" emphasises the significance of specific locations in shaping political conflicts, considering the unique characteristics and meanings attached to different spaces. "Networks" involve the interconnected relationships among actors, both individuals and groups, that contribute to the formation and dynamics of social movements. "Positionality" underscores the importance of the relative position of individuals and groups within social structures, acknowledging how power differentials impact participation in contentious politics. Finally, "mobility" recognises the fluid movement of people, ideas, and resources, emphasising the dynamic nature of political action. In the case of the Water Conflict of Cochabamba, these spatialities have played a big role. The notion of "scale" is evident as the conflict involved actors at various levels, from local communities to international organisations (e.g. the WB). Indeed, political and economic structures were scaled in order to both legitimise and to challenge the power relation between the government and the residents of Cochabamba. The concept of "place" is fundamental in understanding the symbolic importance of the specific locations in Cochabamba where the most crucial moments of the social conflict took place. As a matter of fact, it is possible to identify four moments during the conflict when the objective of the mobilisation was to disrupt social order through the control of space: the "*bloqueo indefinido por la dignidad civil*" (11th January), "*la toma de Cochabamba*" (4th February), the "*consulta popular*" (3rd March) and the "*Última Batalla*" (4th April). In particular, the appropriation of Plaza 14 de Septiembre represented a major issue in the conflict (Uhel; 2019). The strategic

importance of the main square is explained by the presence of buildings that reflect relations of economic, political and ideological domination, extending the symbolic charge accumulated by this site since the city's foundation (Montano and Marina; 2003). This square is the location of political and military (City Council, police and army headquarters), economic (Chamber of Commerce, banks) and ideological institutions (cathedral and church). It also housed the FDTFC headquarters, which served as a meeting and decision-making place for the *Coordinadora* (Uhel; 2019).

The concept of "networks" comes into play as diverse groups and individuals, including social activists, local communities, and international supporters, came together and formed interconnected alliances to advocate for their water-related concerns. Indeed, the protesters came from all classes, ages, occupations and ethnicities and they were united in their resistance towards the privatisation (Simmons; 2016). Indeed, the *Coordinadora de Defensa del Agua y de la Vida* was a rural-urban multiclass coalition that became an organisation on November 11th, 1999. It was composed by various groups with a heterogeneous background: the FEDECOR, which consisted of local professionals, including engineers and environmentalists - the first ones to raise concerns over the scope of the Water Law 2029; a federation of peasant farmers who relied on irrigation; and the FDTFC led by Oscar Olivera, one of the main leaders of the protests against the privatisation of water. As Olivera himself (2004) pointed out, the intention of the organisation was to "*call upon the whole population to join the struggle*" (*ibidem*; 2004, cit. p.28) with the main aims of cancelling the Concession Contract and modifying the Law 2029. And it is important to highlight how, despite the heterogeneity of its participants, the *Coordinadora* succeeded in constructing a political alliance around a common demand, i.e., water. Indeed, it became the core of the opposition to the policy (Otto and Böhm; 2006). "Positionality" is evident in the power dynamics between different stakeholders, such as the government, multinational corporations, and grassroots movements. Indeed, in this struggle, many different scales were involved. Indeed, the IMF and the WB were responsible for pushing the Bolivian State to privatise water, and this led to a response from civil society. Global forces were able to position themselves in the middle, between national and local spaces, and this secured them the ability to maximise their influence on both spaces (Nicholls *et al.*; 2013). Lastly, "mobility" is evident as ideas and strategies for resistance and advocacy have traversed various spaces, contributing to the dynamic and evolving nature of the Water Conflict of Cochabamba.

Morevorer, "*place is often attributed symbolic meaning that constitutes the basis for the memory, identity, and ideology construction*" and "*although the spatial form of a community is socially constructed and reflects socio-economic relations, once it is formed, it can functionally act as a social structure and its impact on social actions cannot always be reduced to socio-economic relations*" (Zhang & Zhao; 2018, cit. p.99). In this regards, the *Coordinadora* used slogans such as "The Water is Ours, Damn It" and "The Water is of the People" (Simmons, 2016; p. 44), which were capable of creating a sense of "us" and of belonging between the people, as well as the perception that their society and their home was at risk (*ibidem*; 2016). As a matter of fact, protests are surely a way of resisting power, but they should not only be seen as symbolic or direct confrontations with power because the protesters also seek to take and make place in a different way compared to the dominant one (Anderson; 2015). The protest activities carried out by sub-groups of the *Coordinadora* consisted of arranged roadblocks and programmed strikes. Also, open town meetings as well as weekly information journals were organised. Therefore, the

decision-making process was based on a deep sense of involvement and participation (Otto and Böhm; 2006). Through this, they were able to encourage people to think that change was possible. The heterogeneous members developed strong ties among each other, and by attaining from common symbolic frames, they successfully activated collective action and emotions against AdT and the Concession Contract.

Since, as already mentioned, the organisation consisted of various groups and identities, it can be considered as a network-based organisation (Juris; 2005) which deployed many different strategies and ways in order to organise itself. As a matter of fact, common identities and interests are forged through struggles and relational exchanges, and they are not always prior to power struggle (Nicholls *et al.*; 2013). And, in this case scenario, the concept of water assumed the role of "empty signifier" (Laclau; 1996) because it incorporated in itself a plurality of demands and diverse interpretations. According to Laclau, it is important to start studying a movement from its smallest component – its demand. The demand develops the identity of the faction, which in turn is essential to unify "the people". It must arrive to a variety of different actors so that they can join forces, eliminating their dissimilarities. This is obtained through what Laclau and Mouffe have defined as an "equivalential chain" (Laclau and Mouffe; 1985, p. 130). The subjects involved erase their dissimilarities so as to be represented by means of a specific demand. In the case of Cochabamba's water struggle, the common demand of the movement was water and the annulment of the concession contract with AdT. Despite their varied concerns and identities, the members of the *Coordinadora* found common ground in the overarching demand related to water rights. In this process, the "equivalential chain" functioned as a mechanism for solidarity, allowing individuals and groups to transcend their differences and unite under a shared cause in a relation of interdependence (Lilian; 2021). The demand for water became a symbolic rallying point, fostering a sense of collective identity and purpose within the *Coordinadora*. Moreover, the *Coordinadora* may be considered as structured through what Tarrow and McAdam (2005) have defined as the 'brokerage' mechanism, namely the proliferation of mobilisation due to the creation of links among different actors who were formerly unconnected. This mechanism sheds light on how the movement gained momentum and expanded its reach by creating connections among previously unconnected actors. The 'brokerage' mechanism, in this context, facilitated the proliferation of mobilisation by establishing links between various social groups and individuals with distinct identities and/or concerns. The strength of this kind of mechanism is that it greatly increases the potential effect of any kind of collective action, even in cases in which the mechanism is more fragile since the actors possess weaker instruments of social integration owing to the fact that different identities may exist within a same group. Within the *Coordinadora*, diverse actors with differing backgrounds and interests were brought together through this 'brokerage' mechanism, allowing the movement to harness the collective power of previously disparate groups. The creation of links among these actors played a crucial role in broadening the scope of the movement, enhancing its capacity for mobilisation, and enabling a more comprehensive and impactful collective action. This complexity, instead of hindering the movement, contributed to its resilience and adaptability.

In the introduction to their work, *Conceptualizing the Spatialities of Social Movements*, Nicholls *et al.* (2013) have asserted how social relations are spatially constructed and shape local people's decisions, and how spatial relations are central in the dynamics of movements. Also, each spatiality

(e.g., place, space, territory, scale, networks, etc.) influences the formation of social movements and their specific characteristics. Each of the spatial dimensions contribute uniquely to the formation and characteristics of social movements. For instance, the concept of "place" may influence the symbolic and cultural aspects of a movement, while considerations of "scale" can reveal the movement's reach and impact. Indeed, social movements have a multifaceted nature and spatial dimensions intricately shape the dynamics, strategies, and specific features of movements within the broader socio-political landscape. This is clearly demonstrated by the formation of the *Coordinadora* with its specific characteristics. Nicholls *et al.* (2013) have also asserted how it is of great importance for social movements and for the State to be able to control and regulate the flow of resources. Indeed, the creation of territory may be the basis for the construction of a territorial identity and a sense of solidarity in collective movements. This particular scenario may be perceived as what Harvey (2001) has defined as a 'place in itself', i.e., the empowering effect of place-based relations that are able to create a cohesive movement – initially made up of dispersed and unconnected individuals – for social and political transformation. As a matter of fact, the traditional strategy of the States to penetrate places and to hamper them before they can evolve into anti-systemic movements did not succeed in Cochabamba. Indeed, as claimed by Perreault (2006), the organisation and its protests "*became a venue for the expression of manifold frustration on the part of the people with its long history of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation, marginalization and poverty*" (*ibidem*; 2006, cit. p.151).

Last but not least, it is important to highlight that water is a common-pool resource (CPR)[5], and therefore the privatisation of water may be seen as an inequality in itself. And these issues also relate to power: indeed, through the privatisation, global companies could gain the opportunity to profit at the expense of the residents of Cochabamba. As Massey (1991) has argued: "*[...] the mobility and control of some groups can actively weaken other people. Differential mobility can weaken the leverage of the already weak. The time-space compression of some groups can undermine the power of others*" (*ibidem*; 1991, cit. p.4). Moreover, power tends to be unequally distributed, and it is through cultural acts that places are taken or made. Indeed, as stated by Anderson (2015), "*when individuals and groups act, there are always geographical consequences. Traces are made, orders issued, and borders constructed. It is through geography – through taking and making place – that power is exercised, made visible, and has effects. The struggle for place is therefore both the manifestation of cultural struggle and the medium of that struggle, it is in place that power is constituted and played out*" (*ibidem*; 2015, cit. p.54). Power is both domination and resistance, and it is through these two types of acts that traces, places and meanings are fought over, as the case of the Cochabamba Water Conflict has clearly demonstrated.

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[5] Common-pool resources are natural (or man-made) goods that share characteristics with both public and private goods: indeed, they are shared but also have a finite nature. This type of goods may be affected by congestion and overuse as, very often, individual and collective interest may clash – for this reason, some scholars argue that these goods tend to be subject to the "tragedy of the commons" (with each person trying to obtain the biggest benefit for himself without thinking about the rest).

Conclusion

During the scenario of the water conflict, the *Coordinadora* played a fundamental role against the privatisation process. According to Laclau, it is important to start studying a movement from its smallest component – its demand. The demand develops the identity of the faction, which in turn is essential to unify "the people". It must arrive to a variety of different actors so that they can join forces, eliminating their dissimilarities. This is obtained through what Laclau and Mouffe have defined as an "equivalential chain" (Laclau and Mouffe; 1985, p. 130). The subjects involved erase their dissimilarities so as to be represented by means of a specific demand. In the case of Cochabamba's water struggle, the common demand of the movement was water and the annulment of the concession contract with AdT. Moreover, the *Coordinadora* was a rural-urban multiclass organisation that succeeded in bringing together protesters from all classes, ages, occupations and ethnicities. The *Coordinadora* used slogans such as "The Water is Ours, Damn It" and "The Water is of the People", which were capable of creating a sense of "us" and of belonging between the people, as well as the perception that their society was at risk (Simmons; 2016). And it constructed a political alliance around a common demand, i.e., water. Through this organisation, protesters sought to take and make place in a different way compared to the dominant one (Anderson; 2015) and, eventually, they were successful in their struggle against privatisation.

In the organisation and development of resistance, spatial relations are central (Nicholls *et al.*; 2013) and this resistance, through mobilisation, transforms into social movements (Wolford; 2004), such as the *Coordinadora*. The dynamics of putting together a great number of different subjects and groups (each one of them with a personal opinion and political imaginary) for defiant actions of spatial appropriation not only highlight how these groups use political modalities of action that are horizontal and democratic, but also show how these modes of actions are backed by ingenious spatial strategies. The decision-making process inside the *Coordinadora* was based on a deep sense of involvement and participation (Otto and Böhm; 2006). Through this, they were able to encourage people to think that change was possible.

The physical layout of urban environments, resource distribution, and access to public spaces are pivotal factors shaping the dynamics of social movements. The creation of strong ties between members of a social movement is enhanced by place and the unpredictability of high-risk mobilisations is diminished by this kind of relations between members of a movement. Hence, place is fundamental as it enables the creation of strong relations, which are necessary to ease mobilisations. Also, places offer the common symbolic frames from which militants attain in order to activate collective action and emotions. The *Coordinadora*'s formation and trajectory are intricately linked to spatial configurations, with contested spaces becoming arenas for dissent and negotiation. Moreover, the role of spatiality extends beyond mere physical geography as it encompasses the symbolic significance of places and how they become imbued with political meaning. Spatial dimensions and the complex dynamics of collective action are deeply interconnected and are central in the dynamics of movements, which is clearly shown by the dynamics of the *Coordinadora* during the *Guerra del Agua* in Cochabamba in 1999-2000: its heterogeneous members developed strong ties among each other, and they successfully activated collective action and emotions against AdT and the Concession Contract.

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List of acronyms

AdT – Aguas del Tunari

CPR - Common-pool resources

FDTFC - Federación Departamental de Trabajadores Fabriles de Cochabamba (Departmental Federation of Factory Workers of Cochabamba)

FEDECOR - Federación Departamental Cochabambina de Organizaciones de Regantes (Cochabamba Department Federation of Irrigators' Organizations)

IMF – International Monetary Fund

PPP - Private-public partnerships

SEMAPA - Servicio Municipal de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado

WB – World Bank

LA TUTELA DELLE ACQUE SOTTERRANEE NELL'AREA DI QUETZALTENANGO (GUATEMALA) NELL'AMBITO DELLA COOPERAZIONE INTERNAZIONALE.

Alessandra Bianco Prevot*
Domenico De Luca°
Manuela Lasagna°

* Dipartimento di Chimica, Università di Torino, Italia alessandra.biancoprevot@unito.it
° Dipartimento di Scienze della Terra, Università di Torino, Italia domenico.deluca@unito.it
manuela.lasagna@unito.it

Abstract

Il progetto si propone di approfondire la conoscenza e favorire la protezione delle risorse idriche sotterranee dell'area di Quetzaltenango, la seconda città del Guatemala sottoposte a una forte pressione antropica. La pianificazione di una rete di monitoraggio delle acque di falda, finora inesistente, la realizzazione di alcuni punti della medesima, l'esame quali-quantitativo dei campioni ivi raccolti, l'analisi del sistema dal punto di vista normativo e della governance, l'opera di sensibilizzazione nei confronti della popolazione intendono non soltanto colmare una lacuna conoscitiva, ma soprattutto consentire la preservazione e il futuro utilizzo di quella che rimane la principale fonte di approvvigionamento idrico per le 500.000 persone che abitano nell'area.

Abstract

The project aims to deepen the knowledge and to promote the protection of groundwaters in the area of Quetzaltenango, the second largest city in Guatemala and subjected to strong human pressure. The planning of a groundwater monitoring network, which does not yet exist, the creation of some points of such network, the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the water samples collected there, the analysis of the system from a regulatory and governance point of view, the work to raise awareness among the population intend not only to fill a knowledge gap, but above all to allow the preservation and future use of groundwaters, that remain the main source of water supply for the 500,000 people who live in the area.

Keywords: protezione delle acque sotterranee; Guatemala; cooperazione

Background

La preoccupazione da parte della comunità internazionale per i problemi idrici, considerati in una prospettiva mondiale, è notevolmente aumentata negli ultimi decenni e nel 1996 è stato istituito il "World Water Council" allo scopo di promuovere la consapevolezza delle criticità nel settore idrico e promuovere l'avvio di azioni per affrontare e risolvere tali crititicità. Tra le risorse idriche, le acque sotterranee rivestono un ruolo fondamentale in quanto alimentano sorgenti e pozzi, ma anche i corpi idrici superficiali, garantendone l'esistenza insieme alle precipitazioni stagionali. Le acque sotterranee sono considerate più resistenti alla siccità rispetto alle risorse di superficie, quindi più affidabili e costituiscono la maggiore riserva per gli usi idropotabili, ma sono anche ampiamente utilizzate in

ambito agricolo e industriale. Grazie all'effetto filtrante dei suoli, le acque sotterranee presentano generalmente una migliore qualità rispetto alle acque superficiali, richiedendo generalmente meno trattamenti per la rimozione di inquinanti preliminare al loro utilizzo. Le acque sotterranee costituiscono inoltre un'importante risorsa per gli ecosistemi acquatici, contribuendo così alla protezione della diversità biologica.

Negli ultimi decenni nei paesi industrializzati c'è stata una crescente attenzione alla qualità dell'acqua per uso umano insieme a una crescente preoccupazione per le fonti di inquinamento puntuali e/o diffuse, legate alle attività umane. Parallelamente, molta attenzione è stata dedicata alla caratterizzazione degli acquiferi e alla realizzazione di reti di monitoraggio, supportate da un'adeguata normativa per la protezione delle acque sotterranee (Ritter et al. 2002; Loaiciga et al. 1992).

Nel contesto europeo è presente un'ampia legislazione che definisce politiche specifiche sulla protezione delle acque superficiali e sotterranee dall'inquinamento e dal deterioramento (Direttiva 2006/118/CE 2006). In Italia le Direttive Europee sono state recepite nel D.Lgs. 152/2006 e successivamente nel D.Lgs. 30/2009. In questo contesto normativo le Regioni sono state deputate alla definizione e all'attuazione dei piani di tutela e monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee.

La Regione Piemonte ha approvato nel 2007 il Piano di tutela delle acque (PTA), uno strumento per il raggiungimento della qualità dei corpi idrici e più in generale per la tutela delle acque superficiali e sotterranee in Piemonte. Il PTA contiene interventi generali volti a:

• prevenire e ridurre l'inquinamento e realizzare la bonifica dei corpi idrici inquinati;

• migliorare la qualità dell'acqua e individuare adeguate protezioni per le acque destinate ad usi particolari;

• perseguire un uso sostenibile e duraturo delle risorse idriche;

• mantenere la naturale capacità di autodepurazione dei corpi idrici, nonché la capacità di sostenere comunità animali e vegetali ampie e ben diversificate (diversità biologica).

La disponibilità di acqua per uso umano e la conservazione della qualità dell'acqua, sono peraltro di primaria importanza anche nei paesi in via di sviluppo dove, spesso, il contesto idrogeologico è poco conosciuto e non c'è una politica di controllo della qualità "globale" dell'acqua (dando in generale la priorità al controllo volto a minimizzare le emergenze microbiologiche). Spesso non c'è una politica di tutela delle risorse idriche e di intervento in caso di inquinamento. Nonostante in molti di questi Paesi le acque sotterranee possano essere di buona qualità, uno scenario di scarsa conoscenza e controllo limitato comporta rischi significativi di compromettere, in una prospettiva di medio/lungo termine, l'approvvigionamento di acqua di buona qualità, soprattuto in presenza di una aumentata pressione antropica.

Tale scenario può però essere visto come un'opportunità per valutare criticamente ciò che è già stato sperimentato nella gestione delle acque sotterranee nei paesi industrializzati e per stabilire una proficua cooperazione con i paesi in via di sviluppo per comprendere driver e barriere rispetto alla protezione delle acque sotterranee e per sostenere la ricerca e le buone pratiche in questa direzione.

Sul tema della ricerca sulle risorse idriche, l'Università di Torino (UNITO) è attivamente presente in contesti internazionali, attraverso relazioni bilaterali anche con Paesi in via di sviluppo, in particolare con il Guatemala, la cui seconda città, Quetzaltenango (Xela), è gemellata con Torino dal 1997. L'accordo impegna le due città a lavorare per il rafforzamento delle istituzioni locali e il consolidamento del processo democratico.

Nell'area di Xela è stata attivamente presente una rete di lavoro piemontese, strettamente collegata con le Istituzioni locali: l'Università di Torino (UNITO) ha collaborato con l'Università San Carlos del Guatemala (CUNOC) attraverso attività di formazione sulla caratterizzazione e protezione delle acque ; la Regione Piemonte, attraverso un team di Organizzazioni non Governative (ONG) italiane, ha sostenuto la locale Autorità di Bacino e la Città di Torino ha insediato a Xela il primo laboratorio pubblico del Guatemala operante per il controllo dei parametri microbiologici e chimici di base delle acque destinate al consumo umano, presso la sede EMAX (Empresa Municipal Aguas de Xelajú) e con il supporto di SMAT (Società Metropolitana Acque Torino s.p.a.) che opera nel settore dei servizi idrici integrati. In Guatemala è stata inoltre istituita la Mancomunidad Metrópoli de los Altos, istituzione che dal 2005 riunisce nove municipalità dell'area di Quetzaltenango e si occupa, tra le altre responsabilità, della gestione degli ecosistemi e della prevenzione dell'inquinamento e dei rischi ambientali. Tutte queste Istituzioni svolgono un ruolo rilevante nella tutela delle acque sotterranee, in termini di sviluppo scientifico e tecnologico, di educazione, di impegno pubblico finalizzato alla cittadinanza attiva.

Il bacino idrografico di Xela si trova in un'area di straordinaria bellezza naturale e di grande interesse geologico. La città di Xela è alimentata da una serie di sorgenti ubicate nella zona montana, costituita da vulcani, e da pozzi situati all'interno della pianura dove giace la città (S. Bonis 1964). Tale falda è potenzialmente esposta alla contaminazione da attività agricole ed estrattive in prossimità delle sorgenti e da insediamenti con scarichi civili non depurati. Esistono inoltre discariche non controllate potenzialmente in grado di contaminare le acque sotterranee attraverso percolati che rilasciano sostanze chimiche tossiche.

Esistono importanti somiglianze tra il Piemonte e l'area di Xela: in entrambe le località oltre il 95% dell'acqua destinata al consumo umano proviene da falde acquifere e in entrambe le aree esiste una forte e verosimilmente crescente pressione antropica sulle falde acquifere legata agli utenze domestiche, industriali e agricole. Tuttavia, mentre in Piemonte il problema della gestione delle acque

è stato affrontato con il PTA, nel bacino di Xela la protezione delle falde è un problema emergente, di cui le Autorità locali e la popolazione hanno iniziato a prendere coscienza. Pertanto, è emersa da Xela la necessità di migliorare la formazione scientifica e le competenze tecniche sulla caratterizzazione, protezione e trattamento delle acque sotterranee, al fine di garantire l'accesso all'acqua potabile a tutta la popolazione, non solo come "bisogno umano fondamentale" ma come "diritto umano". come riconosciuto nel 2010 dalla risoluzione dell'Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite (General Assembly GA/10967, United Nations 2010).

Alla luce delle considerazioni di cui sopra, il presente lavoro affronta alcuni temi rilevanti riguardanti la caratterizzazione e la tutela delle acque sotterranee, nel contesto di un Paese in via di sviluppo.

Oltre alla caratterizzazione idrogeologica dell'area di Xela, aspetto rilevante ai fini dell'ottimizzazione della captazione idrica e della definizione di un piano di tutela delle acque sotterranee (Debernardi et al. 2010, Foster et al. 2002), nel presente lavoro si prevede un focus sulla rilevanza di un approccio integrato che coinvolga la cittadinanza dal punto di vista educativo, per aumentare la consapevolezza della necessità di preservare e proteggere le risorse idriche sotterranee. Un ulteriore contributo dal punto di vista istituzionale è rappresentato dal partenariato della Regione Piemonte per la legislazione in materia di interventi di pianificazione del monitoraggio e della tutela delle acque sotterranee, atti a rafforzare la capacità dell'ente guatemalteco di migliorare la propria politica di gestione delle acque. I risultati di tale attività di cooperazione potrebbero essere trasferiti nuovamente in Piemonte, in contesti peculiari (es: aree rurali), con un impatto socio-economico positivo.

Allo stesso tempo, questa esperienza potrebbe diventare un punto di riferimento, nell'ambito della cooperazione internazionale con i paesi in via di sviluppo, per le questioni relative alla gestione delle acque sotterranee, affrontate con un approccio che integri aspetti scientifici, tecnologici, educativi e legislativi.

L'area di studio

Il lavoro si concentra sulle acque sotterranee in quanto rappresentano la principale risorsa idrica per Quetzaltenango e per gli altri Comuni dello stesso bacino idrologico. L'area di studio è stata quindi individuata nel settore superiore del bacino del Rio Samalà, uno dei principali corsi d'acqua del Guatemala sudoccidentale. L'area, con un'estensione di 850 km^2, è densamente popolata; nel 2002 vi abitavano più di 500.000 persone. Il territorio è suddiviso in una ventina di Municipalidades, che ricadono quasi interamente nel Departamento di Quetzaltenango.

L'alto bacino del Rio Samalà, in particolare, è una delle regioni del Paese centroamericano a più alta densità di abitanti e attività produttive. Molti problemi ambientali e sociali sono legati alle risorse idriche: eterogeneità delle reti di approvvigionamento tra aree metropolitane e aree rurali,

esaurimento delle risorse idriche sotterranee, degrado qualitativo delle falde acquifere e dei corsi d'acqua derivanti dalle attività umane.

Le caratteristiche climatiche e geologiche dell'area garantiscono un elevato potenziale idrico sotterraneo e superficiale: la ricostruzione del modello idrogeologico evidenzia infatti la presenza di acquiferi in grado di ospitare grandi quantità di acque sotterranee. I problemi di accesso alle risorse idriche sono quindi connessi alle reti di approvvigionamento e distribuzione, che non riescono a coprire integralmente i bisogni della popolazione, soprattutto nelle zone rurali. Nell'area di Quetzaltenango esiste anche un concreto rischio di impoverimento sia qualitativo che quantitativo della falda, causato dall'elevata concentrazione di captazioni presenti; tuttavia, i dati disponibili non sono sufficienti per stabilire una tendenza all'abbassamento del livello della falda in tutto il bacino superiore del Rio Samalá e per un periodo di tempo sufficientemente lungo.

Per quanto riguarda gli aspetti qualitativi, i dati disponibili relativi all'acqua utilizzata per uso potabile non hanno finora evidenziato criticità significative, anche se vi sono indicazioni della presenza di settori a rischio di contaminazione da attività agricole e scarichi fognari. Ciò è compatibile con diverse situazioni di potenziale rischio presenti sul territorio, rappresentate da aree di sfruttamento agricolo intenso e incontrollato, dall'assenza di reti fognarie nei centri abitati e da una gestione inadeguata dei rifiuti solidi.

La missione svolta a Quetzaltenango dal 12 al 15 luglio 2010 ha permesso di approfondire la conoscenza tra UNITO e CUNOC e, insieme ad EMAX, di evidenziare alcuni punti fondamentali relativi al tema della qualità, gestione e tutela delle risorse idriche, con particolare attenzione alle acque sotterranee.

Le acque sotterranee sono presenti nel sottosuolo all'interno di rocce permeabili sature d'acqua (acquiferi) e, a seconda della loro profondità rispetto alla superficie terrestre, possono essere suddivise in acquiferi superficiali e acquiferi profondi. Le acque provenienti da falde profonde vengono normalmente captate perché teoricamente meno esposte a contaminazioni antropiche (infiltrazioni di composti chimici tossici da percolati di discarica, infiltrazioni di fitofarmaci, ecc...) che invece inquinano più facilmente le falde più superficiali. In realtà non è raro che anche l'acqua captata in falde acquifere profonde possa essere contaminata, anche attraverso flussi idrici provenienti da falde superficiali a loro volta inquinate.

Per questo motivo emerge con chiarezza la necessità di tutelare l'acquifero nella sua interezza, preservandolo da un degrado qualitativo e/o quantitativo. Affinché tale tutela delle risorse idriche possa essere attuata è necessaria un'adeguata caratterizzazione del bacino idrogeologico e della qualità delle acque in esso presenti.

Il bacino di Quetzaltenango si trova in un'area di grande bellezza naturale e di grande interesse idrogeologico. La città di Quetzaltenango è alimentata sia da una serie di sorgenti che da pozzi. Le sorgenti si trovano nella zona montana, costituita da vulcani, alcuni dei quali ancora attivi. I pozzi si trovano invece nella zona di pianura dove si trova la città. Queste risorse idriche sotterranee, che rappresentano l'unica fonte di approvvigionamento idrico, sono vulnerabili a possibili contaminazioni in quanto il territorio non è soggetto a vincoli atti a preservarne la qualità. Sono inoltre presenti attività antropiche, anche in prossimità delle sorgenti, che potrebbero causare un degrado qualitativo delle risorse idriche sotterranee quali attività estrattive, presenza di discariche incontrollate, agricoltura, insediamenti umani con rifiuti civili non trattati.

In un quadro generale di questo tipo, una più approfondita conoscenza del punto di vista idrogeologico del Bacino di Quetzaltenango costituisce un requisito essenziale, preliminare ad ogni attività da intraprendere per la protezione delle acque sotterranee, al fine di ottenere informazioni qualitative e quantitative sulle risorse idriche attualmente esistenti.

Immediatamente a seguire, è necessaria una caratterizzazione del bacino rispetto alla distribuzione degli insediamenti umani e di tutte le altre attività antropiche in relazione alla localizzazione dei punti di captazione delle acque, così come dal punto di vista quantitativo è importante poter conoscere ed eventualmente regolare il prelievo di acqua da sorgenti e pozzi.

Una volta disponibile, un quadro di questo tipo non è da considerarsi come un punto di arrivo bensì come punto di partenza. Fornisce infatti informazioni sullo stato di salute delle acque sotterranee e sulla loro vulnerabilità e, come tale, può essere utilizzato per programmare interventi di protezione ed eventualmente, ove necessario, di bonifica; deve però essere utilizzato in modo dinamico, aggiornato regolarmente con periodicità prestabilita, in modo da essere in grado di evidenziare situazioni problematiche in tempo utile per poter intervenire prima che l'intero acquifero sia compromesso.

Sulla base delle osservazioni condotte durante la missione, una situazione particolarmente delicata è risultata essere quella delle sorgenti che concorrono all'approvvigionamento dell'acquedotto di Quetzaltenango.

Forniscono infatti acqua di ottima qualità e si trovano in un'area ancora relativamente poco antropizzata. Dal punto di vista costruttivo sono costituite da una serie di cunicoli che drenano una falda libera incastonata in rocce vulcaniche (conglomerato di pomici piroclastiche.)

Tuttavia, sono state evidenziate una serie di potenziali criticità che dovrebbero essere affrontate per tempo per evitare un futuro degrado quali/quantitativo delle acque estratte.

Analogamente dovrebbe essere continuamente monitorata la portata di queste sorgenti e le captazioni dovrebbero essere regolamentate, se possibile, in modo da evitare fenomeni di sovrasfruttamento che

potenzialmente comportano il rischio di abbassamento del livello della falda e il conseguente prosciugamento delle sorgenti. La presenza di un fiume potenzialmente contaminato soggetto a frequenti esondazioni suggerisce inoltre di adottare strumenti di protezione dei punti di raccolta delle acque e, ove presenti (es. muri di contenimento), di verificarne periodicamente lo stato di conservazione. Non sono inoltre presenti canali di scolo e fossati a monte delle sorgenti; non sono state adottate aree di salvaguardia sufficientemente estese e nelle zone limitrofe sono in corso una serie di attività estrattive che mettono seriamente a rischio la qualità della falda.

Nell'ottica di un'efficace strategia di tutela/prevenzione della qualità delle risorse idriche captate dalle sorgenti, sarebbe auspicabile istituire un'area protetta di salvaguardia (ad esempio un'area parco) che comprenda sia i pozzi che le sorgenti, sia pubbliche che private, esistenti nel bacino.

Simili situazioni di rischio riguardano anche i pozzi sfruttati da EMAX che sono per lo più ubicati in un'area fortemente antropizzata. Molte sono inoltre le perplessità sulla presenza di una grande discarica per rifiuti urbani e non urbani non attrezzata e incontrollata nell'area di ricarica delle falde acquifere.

Rete di monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee

La realizzazione di una rete di monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee può avere finalità e caratteristiche diverse a seconda della scala e del contesto in cui viene realizzata; è quindi possibile avere reti di monitoraggio a scala generale e locale.

Le reti di monitoraggio a scala generale hanno la funzione di fornire una valutazione dello stato quali-quantitativo delle acque sotterranee a scala regionale e sono costituite da più reti di monitoraggio sovrapposte relative ai singoli sistemi acquiferi. Le reti generali si dividono inoltre in una rete di monitoraggio qualitativo (caratteristiche idrogeochimiche naturali delle acque ed eventuali fenomeni di contaminazione) e una rete di monitoraggio quantitativo (controllo delle variazioni nel tempo delle risorse del sottosuolo in funzione del bilancio idrico e dei prelievi).

Le reti a scala generale, essendo generalmente costituite da un insieme misto di opere (pozzi e piezometri) non sempre espressamente progettate a tale scopo, sono generalmente costituite da reti di monitoraggio qualitativo e quantitativo non del tutto sovrapponibili; pertanto possono esistere punti con funzioni di controllo solo qualitativo o solo quantitativo unitamente a punti che svolgono entrambe le funzioni.

Le reti di monitoraggio locale svolgono generalmente funzioni di controllo connesse ad attività antropiche in corso o passate, legate alla produzione, ai servizi o allo sfruttamento delle risorse del sottosuolo; le modalità di installazione di tale rete sono, ad oggi, solo parzialmente regolamentate dalla normativa.

Nel dettaglio le reti locali si suddividono in:

• reti di controllo in corrispondenza di potenziali fonti inquinanti;

• reti di salvaguardia in corrispondenza delle captazioni di acqua potabile;

• reti di caratterizzazione dei siti contaminati.

Le reti locali sono generalmente costituite da punti di monitoraggio appositamente realizzati (piezometri) che consentono generalmente di valutare sia aspetti qualitativi che quantitativi.

L'approccio metodologico

Il tema della tutela delle acque sotterranee è emerso durante gli scambi tra docenti e tecnici delle istituzioni a Xela ed i loro corrispettivi a Torino. L'approccio del confronto e della condivisione è stato seguito per tutta la durata del progetto, consolidando rapporti di reciproca fiducia anche attraverso scambi di visite che hanno permesso di approfondire la conoscenza dei reciproci territori e di entrare in contatto, a Xela, con la popolazione, soprattutto adulti nelle zone rurali e studenti universitari nella città di Xela.

Dopo aver individuato nell'importanza della tutela delle risorse idriche (in particolare delle acque sotterranee) un nucleo di notevole rilevanza ambientale e sanitaria, il tema è stato oggetto di presentazione a docenti e studenti nel corso di seminari tenuti presso il CUNOC, nonché a rappresentanti dei comuni della Mancomunidad de Los Altos.

Allo stesso modo, la realtà torinese è stata oggetto di studio da parte di delegati delle istituzioni guatemalteche, per conoscere l'approccio alla gestione delle risorse idriche e alla loro tutela, sia per gli aspetti impiantistici e legislativi, sia per gli aspetti educativi a livello universitario.

La reciproca conoscenza, la condivisione di problematiche e criticità legate alla gestione delle risorse idriche hanno favorito lo sviluppo di un rapporto di reciproca fiducia che ha favorito la realizzazione delle attività progettuali previste.

Il progetto

La rete di monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee da realizzare a Xela è stata progettata come una rete di monitoraggio generale con una duplice funzione: controllo del livello delle acque sotterranee (rete quantitativa) e monitoraggio dei parametri di qualità dell'acqua (rete qualitativa).

Il progetto intende creare le basi per lo sviluppo di una rete di monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee con una logica modulare. In tal senso, una prima tranche di attrezzature e strumenti è stata installata e messa in funzione presso l'area beneficiaria di Xela e, parallelamente, è iniziato un primo coordinamento tra le istituzioni locali e le strutture pubbliche, deputate alla gestione del primo modulo della rete.

E' stata di primaria importanza l'individuazione dei dati pregressi utili alla costituzione della rete di monitoraggio quali-quantitativo (punti di monitoraggio, analisi chimiche, misure di livello delle acque sotterranee...) e la loro trasmissione a UNITO. Sulla base di queste prime informazioni fornite dagli enti guatemaltechi, è stato possibile procedere ad una prima progettazione della rete di monitoraggio quali-quantitativo e sono stati presi i contatti con gli enti locali per la predisposizione di un piano operativo delle attività, in occasione della prima missione tecnica.

Per quanto riguarda la rete di monitoraggio quantitativo, è stata verificata l'idoneità dei punti individuati dagli enti guatemaltechi e potenzialmente idonei al monitoraggio dei livelli piezometrici (sostanzialmente pozzi non più utilizzati). Alcuni punti di controllo sono stati strumentati per misurare i livelli idrici e valutarne l'evoluzione nel tempo. Con le autorità locali è stata valutata anche la possibilità di installare piezometri di controllo, che devono sopperire all'attuale mancanza di punti di monitoraggio del livello piezometrico. In particolare è stato realizzato un nuovo piezometro che è stato dotato di sonde di livello (microsub) per il monitoraggio e la registrazione in continuo del livello piezometrico. Infine è stata installata una stazione termopluviometrica per la misurazione di alcuni parametri utili al calcolo del bilancio idrologico. La raccolta periodica dei dati di livello e termopluviometrici e la loro trasmissione è di competenza degli enti guatemaltechi, i quali sono stati formati durante la seconda missione.

Per quanto riguarda la rete qualitativa, al fine di valorizzare al meglio le infrastrutture già presenti in sito, questa sarà costituita principalmente da captazioni pubbliche (pozzi e sorgenti) già presenti nell'area. L'individuazione e il censimento dei punti di monitoraggio è stata accompagnata da una valutazione delle loro caratteristiche e idoneità a far parte della rete di monitoraggio. Definito un primo nucleo di punti di monitoraggio qualitativo, sono state effettuate campagne di campionamento delle acque di falda. In dettaglio, il laboratorio UNITO-CHIM ha effettuato le analisi sui composti inorganici (ioni principali e metalli), mentre i laboratori CUNOC ed EMAX hanno effettuato le analisi microbiologiche, che devono necessariamente essere effettuate in loco per problemi di conservazione dei campioni. Grazie alla collaborazione con i laboratori SMAT sono state invece eseguite analisi sui COV (Composti Organici Volatili), alcuni pesticidi utilizzati in Guatemala e concordati con EMAX, e TOC (contenuto di carbonio organico); su un numero limitato di campioni è anche stata effettuata la ricerca degli idrocarburi policiclici aromatici (IPA). Si tratta di prove che difficilmente possono essere effettuate in loco, a causa della limitata dotazione del laboratorio di analisi EMAX, e che invece sono potenzialmente di grande interesse, in considerazione delle caratteristiche rurali prevalenti nel territorio della Mancomunidad (in particolare per i fitofarmaci) e la presenza di un buon numero di attività industriali nell'area di Quetzaltenango (per COV e PAH).

La rete di monitoraggio progettata segue, nelle sue finalità, l'impianto generale della rete di monitoraggio presente nella Regione Piemonte. Verranno poi analizzate le problematiche normative e gestionali, con il supporto della Regione Piemonte, al fine di fornire gli strumenti più idonei alla gestione amministrativa delle attività connesse alla costituzione e al mantenimento della rete di monitoraggio. Sarà inoltre condotto un confronto con gli operatori guatemaltechi sui temi affrontati e verrà proposto un adeguamento della normativa esistente alla luce della realtà guatemalteca.

Parallelamente alle attività tecniche di progettazione e realizzazione della rete di monitoraggio, il lavoro prevede la realizzazione di un'attività di sensibilizzazione della popolazione per la quale il CUNOC e la Mancomunidad potrebbero svolgere un ruolo importante. È importante che la popolazione sia consapevole e bene informata su quanto verrà realizzato, che vengano fugati eventuali dubbi sui possibili "effetti collaterali" di tali interventi (appropriazione di pozzi privati, inquinamento, diminuzione delle risorse disponibili). A tal fine è stato predisposto materiale divulgativo affinché la popolazione sappia cosa si intende misurare e come questo avrà un impatto positivo sul territorio. L'attenzione all'accesso alle risorse idriche garantite in termini di qualità e quantità è un tema molto sentito ed è importante che ogni azione intrapresa in questo campo sia condivisa in modo trasparente e comunicata efficacemente alla popolazione. In collaborazione con CUNOC, Mancomunidad e Comune di Quetzaltenango, sono stati organizzati seminari sul tema rivolti sia alle comunità locali e alle associazioni cittadine, sia alle istituzioni universitarie e non.

Oltre alle attività di disseminazione a Quetzaltenango, i risultati e le prospettive di ulteriore sviluppo del progetto sono stati comunicati attraverso l'organizzazione di una giornata informativa presso l'Università di Torino.

Conclusioni e prospettive future.

L'attività collaborativa svolta in un contesto di cooperazione internazionale ha permesso lo scambio di conoscenze ed esperienze in due contesti socio-economici distanti ma con punti comuni in relazione allo sfruttamento e alla tutela delle risorse idriche.

La multidimensionalità in termini di istituzioni coinvolte ha consentito un approccio da più prospettive, utile per una visione più ampia e articolata del problema. Dal punto di vista scientifico, l'attività svolta sul campo anche da studenti universitari che hanno partecipato attivamente al progetto svolgendo tesi di laurea e dottorato, e successivamente nei laboratori di analisi di Xela e di Torino, ha portato alla pubblicazione di un lavoro qualitativo del bacino del torrente Samalà (Bucci et al. 2017). Questa prima caratterizzazione chimica dell'area potrà essere utilizzata sia dai ricercatori per ulteriori studi sia dagli stakeholders per la gestione delle acque sotterranee, ponendo le basi per lo sviluppo di una rete di monitoraggio delle acque sotterranee.

Per quanto riguarda la tutela delle risorse idriche, sono state poste le basi della rete di monitoraggio. Grazie ad un approccio modulare, questa rete si presta ad uno sviluppo progressivo regolato anche dalla disponibilità di finanziamenti e da una maggiore conoscenza della distribuzione delle attività umane sul territorio. Resta da risolvere il problema della continuità dell'azione collaborativa che dipende dalla disponibilità di finanziamenti che attualmente non sono strutturali.

Ringraziamenti

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VULNERABLE WOMEN'S RECOVERY PATHS: A QUALITATIVE INQUIRY OF COMMUNITY GARDENS IN POST-CONFLICT NORTHERN UGANDA

Elisa Armando*

*Università di Torino, elisa.armando@unito.it

Abstract

In the Northern Ugandan post-conflict scenario, marked by the consequences of the civil war, women still find themselves in a vulnerable condition. In this setting, community gardens - open to the whole community or specific groups to cultivate them - seem to play a significant role in women's empowerment and post-conflict reintegration. Through the analysis of the life stories of two Ugandan women, it has been possible to investigate the social role of community gardens, their effectiveness, and their benefits for the women who take part in them.

Nel contesto post-conflitto nord ugandese, segnato dalle conseguenze della guerra civile, le donne si trovano ancora oggi in una condizione di vulnerabilità. In questo scenario gli orti comunitari - aperti alla comunità o specifici gruppi perché chiunque voglia possa coltivati - paiono svolgere un ruolo significativo per l'empowerment femminile e il reinserimento sociale post-conflitto. Attraverso l'analisi delle storie di vita di due donne nord ugandesi è stato possibile indagare il ruolo degli orti comunitari, la loro efficacia e i benefici per chi vi partecipa.

Keywords

Community gardens, Northern Uganda, post-conflict reintegration, structural violence, vulnerability.

Introduction

This paper is based on a research I conducted in 2020 as part of the excellence program in "Government and Human Sciences" at the Scuola di Studi Superiori Ferdinando Rossi (Turin, Italy). It is a qualitative study that can be theoretically inscribed within the strand of development anthropology. Through the analysis of the life stories of two research participants, it centers on post-conflict Northern Uganda and the role of Slow-Food sponsored community gardens in supporting women who are vulnerable due to conflict.

In fact, acknowledging that the Ugandan Northern war has left a strong footprint on women's physical and psychological wellbeing (Kinyanda *et al.* 2010), the purpose of my research has been to inquire how and in which measure community gardens help vulnerable women in the context of post-conflict fragility and complexity, and which are the aspects (psychological, economic, health) in which the gardens are most beneficial for their participants. In this regard, although there are studies on community gardens in various areas of the world and their effectiveness at the social level (*see* Gruber 2015), I could not find any academic studies specifically on their effectiveness in post-conflict settings on vulnerable groups.

The article is structured in eight sections. The first section provides a historical background of the Northern Ugandan civil war; the second section is dedicated to the theoretical framework of the analysis. The third section is devoted to the methodology, while the fourth section delves into community gardens in Northern Uganda. The fifth and sixth sections are dedicated to recounting and analyzing the life stories of the two research participants; the seventh section provides an analysis and reflection on the findings. Finally, I present my conclusions.

The Ugandan Northern Conflict

According to the World Health Organization, "complex emergencies" can be defined as follows:

> Situations of disrupted livelihoods and threats to life produced by warfare, civil disturbance and large-scale movements of people, in which any emergency response has to be conducted in a difficult political and security environment (2002: 4).

Between 1986 and 2006, due to the so-called Northern War, Northern Uganda has been deeply affected by a long-lasting complex emergency. The region was torn apart by a civil conflict fought by Lord's Resistance Army (Lra) rebels and government troops (Finnström 2008). During the conflict, the population was severely affected, particularly women (Baines 2017). The majority were forced to live in the so-called Internally Displaced People (Idp) camps in "atrocious conditions" (Allen *et al.* 2021: 3). In fact, in the Idp camps the ordinary rules of social life were subverted, alcoholism, violence, and sexual promiscuity were rampant. Additionally, women were constantly threatened by the rebels: they were habitually kidnapped either to be made soldiers or, more often, to be given as "forced wives" to the Lra combatants and thus undergo sexual violence (Carlson and Mazurana 2008). From 2006 onwards, they started returning from the Idp camps or the bush. Women who came back to their families and communities oftentimes faced several difficulties: those who were former abductees were blamed and stigmatized, and many were rejected and refused land to cultivate (Nokrac 2012). Most of them had not attended school in over two decades, and they had hardly gained any skills or education. Several endured persevering health problems due to bullet wounds, rape, or Hiv infections (Woldetsadik 2018).

To the present day, Northern Uganda has been affected by a long-lasting, deep-rooted structural violence (Finnström 2008), namely, violence that "is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances" (Galtung 1969: 170; *see* Farmer 2004). Structural violence takes the form of unequally distributed resources, inaccessible medical services, and lacking education. In Northern Uganda, structural violence has bent the population economically, socially, physically, and psychologically. Therefore, it is a context in which the violence of the conflict is compounded by a whole range of other strains that constitute what I have named a condition of

"vulnerability," which we shall analyze in the following paragraph, that still pervades part of the population.

Theoretical Framework

Development Anthropology: Reintegration Programs and Grassroots Initiatives

The present work fits within the development anthropology strand (*see* Crewe and Axelby 2013), focusing on post-conflict women-dedicated reintegration programs. So far, the criticisms leveled at international humanitarian interventions and development programs have been numerous: they are disparaged for their usual ineffective long-term dependency approach, for failing to acknowledge local customs and individualities, and for overlooking the needs of marginalized groups (Calhoun 2010; Crewe and Axelby 2013). Scholars have also critiqued the prevalent top-down approach by stating that it generally neglects the local population's needs and habits (Chambers 1983). Alternatively to "conventional [top-down] development" (Crewe and Axelby 2013: 15), many scholars started voicing the importance of "putting people first" (Cernea 1985), thus recognizing local populations as development protagonists, especially in reintegration programs (Popoola 2020). Consequently, emphasis has been placed on grassroots initiatives made by local civil societies (Lederach 1997). Indeed, despite their shortcomings (*see* Ramsbotham *et al*. 2011), grassroots civil society organizations have been praised as effective in post-conflict settings due to their attention to local necessities and practices (Pearson 2001). Moreover, amid the debate over post-conflict interventions and reintegration, a strong emphasis has been placed on gender sensitivity and women's inclusion.

Post-Conflict, Gender, and Reintegration

In warfare, indeed, women usually face severe and regular violations of their rights, including rape and sexual violence, psychological and gynecological problems, economic restraints, stigma, and rejection (Ochen 2017). In post-conflict settings, they tend to be left aside and excluded during peacebuilding and community-building processes. Recently, scholars have criticized how international post-conflict peacebuilding and reintegration programs often do not "effectively involve and embrace women, or their views" (Ochen 2017: 17). Therefore, many scholars advocate for the consistent use of a gender perspective in post-conflict reintegration initiatives to engage women and address their needs (True 2013). Furthermore, they underscore the need to investigate and examine women-dedicated post-conflict programs (Greenberg and Zuckerman 2009) and the importance of bolstering grassroots, women-focused initiatives at the local level (The Huairou Commission 2010).

Thus, the present work fits this investigation strand and contributes to the scholarship on grassroots women-dedicated reintegration programs.

Post-Conflict, Gender, and Vulnerability

It is not infrequent for women in post-conflict settings to be named "vulnerable" (Sjoberg 2010); in this study as well, I have chosen to employ the etic category of "vulnerability" to define the two research participants. As Cunniff Gilson (2016) states, the concept of vulnerability is complex and has been extensively critiqued. In fact, as vulnerability is deeply gendered, particularly in conflict and post-conflict settings, it is frequently associated with victimhood (Aolain 2011). This narrow pair of vulnerability and victimhood has disgraceful consequences: on women's self-representation and self-narratives; the creation of external dependency relations; the media portrayal and public opinion on women's role in conflict (*see* Sjoberg 2010). Additionally, vulnerability is often simplistically conceived as "relatively immutable" (Cunniff Gilson 2016: 74), while, as Baines states, "meaning one's vulnerability [...] does not define the person as *ever* vulnerable" (2017: 14, *my emphasis*).

Given this, within this article, the definition I employ of vulnerability is as follows: "The probability of a "system" undergoing a negative change due to a perturbation" (Naudé *et al*. 2009: 184; *see* Gallopin 2006). The system can be, for instance, a household or a person (Naudé *et al*. 2009; Óskarsdóttir *et al*. 2016). This definition figures the women I interviewed as systems that have moved from an initial stability state and whose condition has worsened due to external "disturbances." Thus, it does not envisage vulnerability as immutable, nor does it deny the complexity of women's life histories, agency, and responsiveness to events (*see* Baines 2017). Instead, it depicts their unstable condition in a precise moment due to a "disturbance": the war in the North, its aftermath, and the structural violence associated with it.

Methodology

To undertake this inquiry, I conducted qualitative research with a sample of two Northern Ugandan women who fall into the "vulnerable" category and work in a community garden, whom I contacted via snowball sampling.

My primary research methods were qualitative interviews held in English: I conducted four interviews with the two research participants between November and December 2020. All interviews were based on in-depth, one-on-one, open-ended questions. I also interviewed another person: Edward Mukiibi, Slow Food Uganda Executive Director, in December 2020 and January 2022. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions at the end of 2020, all the investigation was conducted remotely via computer methods.

I followed stringent ethical guidelines throughout the process, with the utmost consideration for the interviewees' sensibility and privacy. At the start of each interview, the study's purpose, information storage protocols, and personal data protection procedures were explained. Research participants' personal data were anonymized, and all related information was saved in password-encrypted cloud storage before being deleted at the conclusion of the study.

This was the methodological basis for my inquiry, which I shall outline in the following sections.

Northern Ugandan Community Gardens: An Overview

Multiple international organizations, both during and after the Northern Uganda civil war, intervened to support the local population, many focusing on women and their needs (Compton 2014; Muldoon *et al*. 2014). In this regard, there has been no shortage of criticism towards international aid agencies' presence in the field in Uganda (Armstrong 2008; Branch 2009). Along with the external interventions, there have also been numerous grassroots reintegration and women-focused support programs founded by the local population (Omach 2014). Among these, my research focuses on grassroots, Slow Food-sponsored community gardens.

Slow-Food Sponsored Community Garden

"Community gardens are not new in Uganda as in other African countries,"[1] explains Edward Mukiibi, Executive Director of Slow Food Uganda and Vice President of Slow Food International. These gardens belong to the whole community, where anyone can work and share the harvest. There are many types, with different purposes and various access criteria. In Uganda, Slow Food partners with over 100 community gardens throughout the country. What makes them unique is that they are all born grassroots. Local engagement, networking, and community ownership set them apart: they come from the community, and Slow Food only plays a facilitating role.

Within them, the community acquires manual techniques, carries out income-generating activities, and grows crops. Moreover, gardens can be targeted to a specific category of beneficiaries (for example, Hiv-positive women) and promote the development of networks of mutual support and counseling relationships. Alongside, the gardens mitigate the problematic issue of land access. Indeed, some groups (widows, single mothers) are often precluded from accessing family land (Layolo 2018). Community gardens moderate this problem by giving unrestricted access to land to those who would not customarily have it.

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[1] Interview with Edward Mukiibi, Slow Food Uganda Executive Director, online, January 28, 2022.

In general, Edward explains:

> For a community garden there's this kind of sense of community. People working not only to manage their garden but also to talk about things that affect their community like things that affect nutrition, childbearing, and also building solidarity among women, among youth in the community to learn how to work together, how to live together.[2]

Concluding this overview of community gardens, we may turn to the study's central module: the life stories of two research participants, Susan and Mary[3].

Susan's Lifepath[4]

Susan is a woman who is nearly forty years old, living in Northern Uganda in the Acholi subregion. Since childhood she has grown up alone with her mother, who her partner had abandoned; there was a solid bond between the two. When she was around ten years old, economic difficulties began, and she had to leave school because her mother could no longer pay her school fees. Then the conflict ensued: the two were forced to live in an Idp camp. About that period, she comments twice: "The war affected us all so much." While still in the Idp camp, with no fixed employment, she met a man with whom she began a relationship, but he "deceived me: I gave myself to him, he impregnated me, and then he left me," "I was traumatized." She even thought about committing suicide. According to her, her life underwent a fundamental change following the unwanted pregnancy and the man's abandonment in a condition of uncertainty and precariousness such as the Idp camp: one could represent this as the perturbative element in Susan's lifepath.

Once the conflict was over, she left the Idp camp and returned to her home village. She kept enduring strains: she had not completed her education and could not find employment. She did not own a piece of land to cultivate. Furthermore, she had to take care of her daughter financially, which she barely could.

Then in 2016, she met a woman, Grace, with whom she shared her condition, and Grace encouraged her greatly:

> Grace saw how hard it was for me, she counseled me, she told me her life story too, she encouraged me I could still make it in life. And I was not alone, there were people with my same problems.

Leaving her home due to the conflict, living in the Idp camp, the relationship she had there and then her man's abandonment, having to raise a daughter alone: all of this had greatly impacted her. So it

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[2] Interview with Edward Mukiibi, Slow Food Uganda Executive Director, online, January 28, 2022.
[3] The names of the research participants and critical features have been altered to ensure anonymity and privacy protection.
[4] Interview with Susan, garden participant, online, November 14, 2020, November 25, 2020.

was that, on Grace's advice, she began attending weekly meetings for people who needed to share their experiences, and she soon realized that "everyone close [to her, *ed.'s note*] was traumatized." By acknowledging that other group participants had suffered as well, she became aware that many other people had faced difficulties similar to her own. In parallel to these group meetings, she also started working in a community garden dedicated to women with difficulties, where her group planted "cabbages, onions, tomatoes, greens."

She discloses her work in the community garden, saying that it helped her to acquire new personal skills:

> I was able to know that after doing harvest, you can get your money thanks to selling things, and you can do new things. I also realized that I was also a bit lazy, but then joining the group I understood laziness was bad. Do not beg, do not sleep: work! I overcome laziness.

Along with gaining practical and theoretical skills in farm work, garden participants also receive training on using and investing money. As Susan explains, "They train you so that you get a minimum knowledge on how to properly run a business." Additionally, Susan expresses that working in the garden with other women, each with their background, helps build supportive relationships and friendships:

> Working together is good, it helps strengthening relations… The group contained widows, child and single mothers, Hiv positive, former abductees. In the group, we became friends, we shared our stories, we interacted, […] farming groups kept us occupied and helped to look ahead.

The size of her group, however, was too large in her opinion. She explains that this prevented people from both getting to know each other thoroughly and doing the activities they wanted to:

> When people are in a group, there are some who want things done a certain way, some who don't. Working in large groups is not easy. Working together is good but it would be better if groups were smaller. […] Sometimes we had discussions.

The reason for this, according to Susan, is due to lack of funding:

> I feel like they don't have enough resources. Then people haven't done a lot of things because they don't have enough; they're all together in one group.

When she felt too cramped within the group and sensed she had matured enough, she decided to leave. She thought she could employ the experience she had gained in a space where she felt more independent. Overall, however, she states that the garden experience has been very positive for her. Today, she does not own her own land plot, since being both her and her mother separated, they have not been allocated any piece of arable land: "The land has been given to my mum's brothers, land is given to boys, not to a woman." She, however, cultivates a piece of land in her garden: "I am doing farming on my own, thanks to that advice. I have planted beans, corn." Thanks to the greens she

cultivates, she has opened her own small business: a grocery shop where people go back and forth all day long to buy products.

Her life story ends with a mention of the conflict - where it all began. She states that "the trauma of war is still here. People are still traumatized, and they still need help."

According to her, "farming, having animals, having a business, can help overcoming war-related trauma. It will help because when you're lonely then is nothing good."

The Role of the Garden in Susan's Lifepath

Although there was no shortage of friction and discord, the garden was critical in Susan's wellbeing. First, she created new social bonds with her peers: they shared their past experiences and confronted each other about their life paths. Manual labor was also helpful for Susan to keep busy while "looking ahead." Additionally, she gained practical agricultural and business management skills. She emphasizes her economic independence with pride: "You are full of joy, and when you grow vegetables for yourself […] at the end of the day you are happy and proud."

Susan benefited from the garden in four dimensions: economic empowerment, psychological support, capacity building, and agricultural skills. On the other hand, it negatively impacted from a relational standpoint due to disagreements with other project participants.

Mary's Lifepath[5]

Mary is a woman in her forties, living in the Acholi subregion. She is part of a local community garden, where her group grows traditional food. As soon as we start talking, she sighs deeply and reveals: "My life is a long story, if I have to share with you."

Growing up in a large family, Mary had five siblings and wanted to become a hairdresser from an early age, which eventually she did. The conflict started when she was a child and ended when she was a woman. During the war, she and her family had to move to an Idp camp, where she grew up. She recalls how tense the conflict era was for her and her family, characterized by a shortage of food, work, and personal space.

To add to conflict-related hardships, which made every day "exhausting," she was also diagnosed with Hiv positivity: "I went for a blood test and I resulted Hiv positive." She couldn't credit it: "I couldn't believe in the machine, I thought the machine is deceiving me, the result was incorrect." There was no medication, no counseling, no Hiv sensitization: "You thought you were going to die

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[5] Interview with Mary, garden participant, online, November 16, 2020, December 1, 2020.

straight away." Mary declares a miracle occurred: her health was rapidly declining when it unexpectedly recovered and has stayed steady since: "So, I am still alive and still under treatment." Once the conflict was over and she returned home, she was faced with difficulties that added up to each other: on the one hand, the conflict and its heavy impact on her finances, her mental and physical wellbeing, and her nearly halved family. On the other, Hiv positivity. To cope with this situation, she decided to participate in a group support project and became involved in the community garden's activities. The group she is part of is composed of thirty women and is bound for Hiv-positive women only. She discloses the activities that are practiced in the community garden:

> We have a variety of traditional food. We learn how to plant it and to organize the manual work: we do not need big things. So, we plant local varieties. We are all women living with Hiv. We are planting different varieties of greens.

The vegetables she and her group plant ensure them a daily vitamin intake:

> We as group grow this kitchen garden so that we have at least a diet and we grow these veggies to improve our nutrition. […] I changed my diet and improved my nutrition.

Thanks to the skills she acquired working in the community garden, Mary also has her own kitchen garden at home:

> Now, in my home, I have a small plot which helps me, I have different varieties. If there is no rain, I water it… and this all helps me. […] This year, I have grown peanuts, and then sunflowers. I did an acre of sunflowers, it is not ready yet. […] I also have grown cotton in front of my house. By January, February [2021, *ed.'s note*] I will prepare the land or the garden for another crop.

When her attention focuses on her garden group and the dynamics elapsing within it, she states:

> Our group is unique. […] You know, we share the info among us, mainly about Hiv and Aids: most of our friends, unfortunately, have died. So, we have launched sensitization activities, for example we organize movies and drama. People's lives are transformed, people come out thanks to those sensitization activities. We are also getting counseled so that we take away people from trauma: through counseling we are supported. Not only war has affected us, but also Hiv: we need counseling, and we also try to counsel each other […]

Since the word "trauma" spontaneously arises in her speech concerning the relief provided by life in the community garden, it occurs to me to ask her what "trauma" means to her. She responds as follows:

> Trauma for me is the condition when something has gone wrong with you and it does not give you peace of mind, you get drained completely and you don't want to live anymore, you don't know what to do. […] The rebels come, you have to go in the camps, you wait for food from the Wfp. That is when you now you have nowhere to go […]. You talk to people, and while the Lra is no longer there, you are home, you still have lost your father, your mother, your relatives,

you don't have anyone anymore. It is terrible, it confuses your mind, you get traumatized, you get mad. Your mind doesn't work. You need to look for help. People were abducted, […] you go through a lot of challenges. I have to thank God for being alive.

Mary's definition of trauma is firm and impactful, vibrantly reproducing the post-conflict condition in Northern Uganda and providing a stark picture of the violence-permeated scenario.

Into this trauma-related picture comes the support provided by the community garden itself, according to Mary:

As we work, we talk to one another and this makes you forget about the past. When the crops are doing well, you have again hope that thing will be better. You get hope, you feel strong in what you do. When you're alone, you hardly recover from trauma, because you think that trauma will come again. It takes you time to do things alone, and this also traumatizes you. Because a work you would do in one week working with other people, if you are alone it can take also one month. When you come back home, and again you have nothing to eat, you feel bad. Together you chat, you laugh, and plan what to do.

Mary's support from the garden extends beyond the psychological satisfaction that working and being in a group can provide. Indeed, she emphasizes the importance of cultivating vegetables that ensure her subsistence without going to go the market and obtaining high-quality food that provides her with the vitamins she needs:

The community garden has helped me a lot, actually I have many tools, I grow my own vegetables. I don't go to the market, I have everything home. It provides me to get vitamins. For example… when you have a problem with your eyes, you have to eat those vegetables! […] The most important thing the garden has given me is that it has provided me a food with vitamins. I changed my diet and I have improved my nutrition.

The garden is also a source of income that allows her to gain economic independence:

And the garden is also a source of income, women come and buy my veggies and that is really an income for me. That is another one from the good things I got from the garden.

Mary ends her story by delving into her companions in the garden: they are at the same time workmates, sometimes buyers from her garden, support figures. This does not mean, however, that relationships are always undisturbed. In fact, Mary points out that it is not infrequent for friction, "misunderstandings in the group." It habitually happens to some of her fellows to start an argument. What she does is counsel them: "In a situation where people lose their dear ones, they feel relieved if I just talk to them."

The Role of the Garden in Mary's Lifepath

Mary's life has been heavily impacted by conflict and Hiv. The garden has played a primary role in her recovery. In this regard, Mary often repeats the importance of growing and eating healthy, nutritious food to provide her with a daily vitamin intake. The economic independence provided by

working in the community garden seems to play an equally crucial role. Mary is proud to say that she is now wholly independent of the market and can take care of her needs and nutrition on her own. On the negative side, she points out that internal discord often arises among garden participants.

The garden positively supports Mary in these five dimensions: economic empowerment, psychological support, capacity building, agricultural skills, health, and nutrition. On the other hand, it has had a negative impact from a relational perspective, as arguments often arise in the group.

Dealing with Vulnerability

From these two life stories it is possible not only to draw considerations about community gardens, but also to contextualize vulnerability in a post-conflict society, resulting from a complex emergency. Indeed, in Northern Uganda the emergency can currently be thought of as over, but the complexity has unquestionably remained (*see* de Coning 2018).

In this regard, we can set the Northern Ugandan society within the syndemic social comorbidities framework (Xavier Hall and Evans 2020). This framework takes its cue from the definition of syndemic, which is "the adverse synergistic interaction of two or more diseases or other health conditions promoted or facilitated by social and environmental conditions" (Singer and Rylko-Bauer 2021: 491). A syndemic is an accumulation of at least two biological or health diseases, which interact and worsen their adverse effects. Within this research, we can apply the syndemic framework to the Northern Ugandan scenario, but since there is primarily an overlapping of social conditions, we may talk about "social comorbidities" (Xavier Hall and Evans 2020).

The combination and intertwining of different social comorbidities have reinforced each other and caused one to find fertile ground for its spread into the other. The conflict was compounded by additional hitches, that have emerged from Mary and Susan's narratives: unwanted pregnancies, single parenthood, lack of education, land inheritance issues, and high Hiv incidence[6]. Together with conflict, violence, and displacement, these issues intersected and spread, generating a profound condition of vulnerability and disruption.

The persistence of vulnerability and the need for support from some social groups impacted by conflict also emerge from Allen and colleagues' research (2020; 2021). Post-conflict Northern Uganda today is marked by a peace to which, according to Denov and Lakor (2017), many prefer war. Indeed, the lives of those we can define as "vulnerable" because of conflict are still permeated by "social and moral stress" (Finnström 2008: 220), rejection, stigma, and violence. The consequences of the "dirty war" (Finnström 2008: 13) intensely affect today's society.

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[6] Hiv positivity rates in Northern Uganda are 2.5 times higher than national estimates (Katamba *et al*. 2020).

Within this collapse of society, community gardens have proved to be a liminal space of mediation between life "before" and life "after" the conflict. The gardens have given women a chance to improve in these dimensions: economic empowerment; psychological support; capacity building; health and nutrition; agricultural skills. In a world that is slowly overcoming a complex, long-standing emergency, but still represents a complex scenario, community gardens are a comprehensive tool that curbs and connects vulnerabilities.

Conclusions

By retracing and analyzing the life stories of two so-called "vulnerable" women, Susan and Mary, my research set the primary objective to understand whether community gardens can be a viable support to women dealing with vulnerability and livelihood difficulties in a post-conflict setting. What emerged from their stories is that community gardens have proven to be positively supportive. The core dimensions in which the community gardens supported Mary and Susan were primarily economic and psychological. In fact, both have acquired new business and management skills, developed practical agricultural skills that allow them to earn a living, and have molded personal relationships with whom they have shared their life experiences.

A weakness of the gardens has emerged from both narratives, related on the one hand to a lack of space and resources, and on the other to internal discord. In particular, the relationship between beneficiaries is seen on the one hand as valuable psychological support, on the other as a source of quarrels.

From this investigation, community gardens appear overall as an effective support tool for vulnerable women in a post-conflict scenario. They represent a good blend of local and international actors' cooperation, with a substantial grassroots component, and they appear to be able to make the beneficiaries independent in the long run. Overall, this study represents an investigation of community gardens as a potential tool for post-conflict community reintegration, which should be implemented through an anthropological perspective considering the specific gendered needs and dynamics of post-conflict settings.

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Acronyms

Aids	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
Hiv	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
Idp	Internally Displaced People
Lra	Lord's Resistance Army
Wfp	World Food Program

SAHRAWI REFUGEE CONDITION AND CAMPS EXPERIENCE: UNDERSTAND THEIR EXCEPTIONAL NATURE

Gabriele Casano*

*Università degli Studi di Genova, csn.gabriel@gmail.com

Abstract

Today's situation in Western Sahara and its increasing relevance in the international context hide a long-term human displacement condition and a protracted political gridlock. Numerous studies have described the complexity and challenges in refugee camps contexts and a fair number of studies have addressed the Sahrawi's political and humanitarian condition from various perspectives. Nevertheless, it seems necessary to consider Sahrawi's political status and refugee camps experience as exceptional according to different points of view. This paper intends to partially describe why it is possible to distinguish several forms of 'state of exception' while considering Sahrawi people's condition in refugee camps.

L'attuale situazione nel Sahara Occidentale e la sua crescente rilevanza nel contesto internazionale nascondono una condizione di human displacement di lungo termine e un protratto stallo politico. Numerose ricerche hanno descritto la complessità e le sfide nei contesti dei campi profughi e un discreto numero di studi ha affrontato la condizione politica e umanitaria dei Sahrawi da diverse prospettive. Tuttavia, secondo diversi punti di vista, si può considerare lo status politico dei Sahrawi e l'esperienza dei campi profughi come eccezionale. Questo articolo intende descrivere parzialmente perché è possibile distinguere diverse forme di 'stato di eccezione' nel contesto dei campi rifugiati Sahrawi.

Keywords

Western Sahara, Sahrawi, State of Exception, Refugee camps

Introduction

The current geopolitical situation of Western Sahara is characterized by an escalation of tensions between Morocco and Algeria, with a Polisario Front that sees more and more thinning chances of a referendum that legitimizes its claims on the former Spanish colony. The recent declarations of Spain regarding the presumed sovereignty of Morocco over the disputed territory further destabilize the fragile existing balance and complement similar declarations made by the United States and Israel. Since late 1975 most of the Western Sahara territory is *de facto* occupied by Morocco with military forces and it hosts thousands of Moroccan settlers (Mordi, 2015). Since that time, dozens of thousands of Sahrawi inhabitants are forced to live in the refugee camps of Tindouf. This massive displacement occurred under the protection of the Polisario Front. Soon after, the independent Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (Sadr) had been proclaimed and the Polisario Front started to organize itself for

the armed resistance against the occupation backed by Algeria (Zunes & Mundy, 2010). This latter started putting Sahrawi independence amongst the priorities of its relations with the neighbours.

Several authors have spread the discourse about Sahrawi in Tindouf as the '*perfect refugees*' underlying the good practices implemented in the camps. Nevertheless, according to other points of view, it seems quite inappropriate (e.i. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2014). Thus considered, it remains the fact that in Tindouf camps it had been applied a self-management strategy with an exceptional limited control by the host state, Algeria, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Unhcr) (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Protracted Sahrawi displacement: Challenges and opportunities beyond encampment, 2011). Mainstream camp and refugee studies have stressed the characteristic of a 'state of exception' (Agamben, 2005) or the widespread political and legal *terra nullius* status for all refugee situations and camps, often described as a spatial bio-political technology (Minca, Geographies of the camp, 2015). In order to be able to distinguish several forms of 'state of exception' in the Sahrawi's refugee condition and camp life, it is necessary to investigate the power relations existing between the Sahrawi socio-political community and the international system[1].

Methodology

Having regard to the inherent difficulties in reaching the area and the conjuncture with the Covid-19 pandemic, this study could not take place directly in the field. Nevertheless, the vantage point of being part of the Italian Embassy in Alger, between January and March 2020, was decisive for data collection of primary sources. The participation in several discussion moments with NGOs and United Nations personnel working in that context and with Algerian scholars was eye-opening for the following investigations rooted in the literature and scholarly debates in the field of camp geography, refugees, and humanitarian assistance. Multiple interviews were conducted, both in semi-structured and free form, with humanitarian stakeholders working in the camps near Tindouf. The set of data thus collected, considered in the light of the existing literature, was interpreted through a theoretical lens, that of the 'state of exception'. Thanks to the concept of 'state of exception', theorized by Carl Schmitt (Schmitt, 2003, c1950) and then revived by Giorgio Agamben (Agamben, 1998-2005), it seems possible to enlighten most of the factors that are at issue, without neglecting both international aspects and placed-based ones. The 'state of exception' could be outlined as "*a technical term to define this no-man's land between the legal order and the political fact and between the law and its*

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[1] For a wide collection of the existing knowledge about Western Sahara and Sahrawi population see, for example: (Ojeda-Garcia, Fernández-Molina, & Veguilla, 2017) and (Pazzanita, 1996).

suspension" (Agamben, 2020). Thus, we illustrate that Sahrawi refugee camps are 'state(s) of exception' both considering the humanitarian context and the refugee camp's ordinary conditions. This qualitative analysis would reveal why the current Sahrawi condition could be considered a unicum in the international panorama.

According to the author, even if most of the literature on camps' geography has described cam ps as 'space of exception'[2], the Sahrawi's ones could reveal something more, as it has been demonstrated, for example, by Ramadan in the Palestinian camps in Lebanon (Ramadan, 2012). Sahrawi's socio-political context is a key element to understand the reasons why it is possible to affirm that. The aim of this paper is to deconstruct the Sahrawis' universally accepted rhetoric as mere encamped seekers of national recognition, to enrich the current discourse about refugees and the impacts of humanitarian assistance in protracted refugee situations.

Content

Sahrawi socio-political context

The Polisario Front can be described as an in-exile-government[3], settled in refugee camps in Algeria and whose population is protected under the umbrella of the refugee status. It is crucial to inscribe the Polisario Front, and consequently the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (Sadr) government, in the framework of the decolonization process, underlighting that the Sahrawi people represented by the Polisario Front are self-determination seekers from several points of view[4].

This legal backing for self-determination provides the Polisario Front with substantial legitimacy both in the internal and domestic fields. Furthermore, this position is strengthened by the International Court of Justice (Icj) opinion about Western Sahara (ICJ, 1975). This statement and all the support obtained directly or indirectly by the United Nations resolutions and African Union have helped the Polisario in collecting significant amounts of tacit and explicit support.

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[2] "*The camp is a piece of land placed outside the normal juridical order, but it is nevertheless not simply an external space*" (Agamben, 1998, p. 170).

[3] For further investigation about the concept of in exile government see: *Shain, Y., The Frontier of Loyalty: Political Exiles in the Age of the Nation-State (1989)* and *Shain, Y., Governments-in-Exile in Contemporary World Politics (1991)*.

[4] First, since its constitution in 1973, the Polisario has always presented itself as a liberation movement and the legitimate representative of the Sahrawi population living in the former Spanish Sahara and the Algerian camps fighting for the independence of Western Sahara. Secondly, the Polisario Front was included as the Sahrawi population's legitimate representative during all the negotiations' stages to end the conflict and allow the referendum.

The Polisario Front has governed the camps near Tindouf for around 45 years mainly because the host state, Algeria, had in practice ceded its stewardship to this political and military actor. The Polisario Front has erected several institutional buildings and approved the Sadr constitution, which is the source of law to which all the refugees living in the camps are subjected to (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, Protracted Sahrawi displacement: Challenges and opportunities beyond encampment, 2011). In a very simplistic way, we can summarize the complexity of Sadr's situation as follows: it is a government only partially recognized, with limited sovereignty over the territory claimed since its declaration of independence, and whose population is mainly settled in refugee camps based in a foreign country.

If we move from the expression of sovereignty in the typical sense, the most evident expression of Sadr sovereignty is the organization and management of the camps, and the complex set of practices linking humanitarian assistance and political authority. Moreover, it is crucial to underline that Sahrawi people living in Tindouf have to be considered in a protracted refugee situation:

> Refugees can be regarded as being in a protracted situation when they have lived in exile for more than five years, and when they still have no immediate prospect of finding a durable solution to their plight by means of voluntary repatriation, local integration, or resettlement (Crisp, 2002).

It is possible to affirm that there are several exceptions considering the refugee condition of the Sahrawi population and the political authority expressed by the Polisario Front/Sadr in administering the refugee camps. In order to examine deeply these exceptions, it is fundamental to benefit from the concepts of 'state of exception' and 'bare life' proposed by Giorgio Agamben, but also from his analysis of the camp.

Overview of the 'state of exception', 'bare life' and camp concepts in Agamben's perspective

In Agamben's perspective, the 'state of exception' establishes the principles by which we distinguish law from its application, but also this condition produces a topological relationship between the inside and outside of law such that they become indistinguishable. Indeed, we assist in the production and diffusion of a so-called 'zone of indistinction'.

> The exception is a kind of exclusion. (…) But the most proper characteristic of the exception is that what is excluded in it is not, on account of being excluded, absolutely without relation to the rule. On the contrary, what is excluded in the exception maintains itself in relation to the rule in the form of the rule's suspension" (Agamben, 1998, p. 17-18).

The definition of the concept of 'state of exception' in Agamben's perspective - based upon Foucault's works about power and governmentality and Schmitt's statements about sovereignty's capacity to ordering space - is not purely juridical, but it also offers a topological understanding

(Minca & Rowan, 2017). In other terms, sovereignty "*performs a juridical and territorial ordering at the same time as it demarcates a specific spatio-temporal order, the space of the exception*" (Belcher et al., 2008, p. 500).

Furthermore, according to the Italian philosopher, the 'state of exception' has become the protagonist of modern sovereignty, and this shift has affected sovereignty subjects. Precisely because the exception has become the norm or rule of contemporary politics, it is common to find subjects abandoned by the law, living in a condition of exception. In this condition, it is possible to detect the 'bare life', one of the main concepts presented by Agamben. 'Bare life' does not simply refer to natural life, but it is the politicization of this latter. It is the result of the natural life that is subjected to the sovereign power and can be defined as 'life exposed to death' (Agamben, 1998). The 'state of exception' manifests when, within the political order, 'bare life' is at once excluded from it and captured by it.

Figures like the refugees are shreds of evidence of the threshold between political life and bare life. Moreover, they are often trapped in conditions suitable for the materialization of 'state(s) of exception' that might persist and shift from a transitory situation to a 'normalized' one. Protracted refugee situations and refugee camps are evidence of this process, and we assist to the imposition of the 'state of exception' as "*the taken-for-granted structure of dominance, as (normalized) spatial and social ordering*" (Minca, 2005, p. 410).

The philosopher states the camp is the space crafted when the exception becomes the rule or the normal situation: the camp has become "*the hidden matrix and nomos of the political space in which we are still living*" (Agamben, 1998, p. 166). According to him, the concentration camp, better than anything else, holds the capacity to incorporate all the aspects above presented. Even if theoretically the 'state of exception' is an essentially temporary suspension of the juridico-political order, "*now becomes a new and stable spatial arrangement inhabited by the bare life that more and more can no longer be inscribed in that order*" (Agamben, 1998, p. 175). There is a shift from "*an order without localization*" [the state of exception in which law is suspended], to "*a localization without order*" [the camp as a permanent space of exception]. The camp represents the territorialization that precedes the normalization of the 'state of exception' (Agamben, 1998). Following Agamben's suggestion, we must learn to recognize the camp's structure in all its metamorphoses into 'zones d'attentes'.

Seeking the 'state of exception' and 'bare life' concepts in refugee and refugee camps analysis

Before analysing our case study, it is necessary to illustrate two essential issues: the possibility to depict the figure of the refugee as a 'state of exception' in the nation-state system and considering refugee camps as a 'state of exception' in the frame of the humanitarian crisis response.

In the chapter 'Biopolitics and the Rights of Man' (Agamben, 1998), the Italian philosopher starts with Hanna Arendt's analysis of the refugee's problem in order to understand the links between modern nation-states and human rights' fate (Arendt, 1979). She shows that the refugee figure does not embody men's rights as theoretically should, and by contrast, the refugee loses his quality excepted from the fact that he is human. Thus, according to Agamben, the refugee must be conceived as "*a limit concept that radically calls into question the fundamental categories of the nation-state*" (Agamben, 1998, p.134). It is evident that human rights are completely preserved only for full-fledged citizens (Agamben, 1998).

Refugees are depicted as mere recipients of welfare, condemned to a life of waiting and dependence on others. Refugees represent the 'nomadic excess' that states seek to capture and normalize through panoptic confinement, mainly through their refugee camps' settlement (Diken & Laustsen, 2005). Refugees' condition and the nexus existing between state and citizen, human rights and citizenship, exclusion and inclusion have also been described by scholars like Malkki, Haddad, and Betts[5], to cite a few.

Considering the international community's response to addressing refugees' situations, several criticisms have been raised. Most of them were directed against the Unhcr's principles of international protection of refugees. In particular, the identified solutions have been rooted in the idea of reinserting refugees within the same state-system that has created them, and despite the intent of providing international protection to refugees on a non-political and humanitarian basis, it has not always been the case.

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[5] See (Malkki, 1995), (Haddad, 2008) and (Betts, 2009). According to them, refugee situations are not only the state system's product, but they took part in the reinforcing and legitimating process of the sovereign states-system, too. Thus, the states-system itself has created precise notions of insider and outsider and has fashioned the refugee as an 'other', which can be offered a form of quasi-citizenship before being reintegrated within the 'normal' logic of the state system.

The core principle of the refugee regime is non-refoulement, and the Unhcr recognizes that refugees' international protection activates with securing their admission to a country of asylum, the grant of asylum and respect for their fundamental human rights, and, finally, it ends only with the attainment of a durable solution (UNHCR, General Overview of the Functions of UNHCR, 2002). However, too often, Unhcr's last duty does not materialize. That is another evidence of the reality of the pervasive production of 'state(s) of exception'. Thus, even if the international refugee's law ensures the right to a durable solution, this latter is *de facto* suspended. The main consequence is that we assist in several cases of 'protracted refugee situations' that, in most cases, materialize the 'state of exception' of their condition in the shape of refugee camps.

It is necessary to consider that refugee camps result from several events concerning displaced people, states, and humanitarian stakeholders. Thus, the forms and outcomes of these spaces could be very variable according to the context. Camps are considered humanitarian spaces and should be managed following humanitarian principles and international procedures. Nevertheless, camps are not always a guarantee for improving the conditions and rights of people living inside, nor a successful means to reduce risks lining at the heart of the phenomena determining the refugees' emergence. The role of the humanitarian sector in the management of camps is crucial. Humanitarian actors do not only intervene to organize and provide assistance, but they participate in the cycle of life of the camp itself.

Refugee situations and mass displacement go often hand in hand; thus, refugee camps are perceived to be the 'solution' to ensure these displaced people's protection and survival. They constitute the materialization of the 'state of exception' embodied by the refugee status and by the failures of the principle of non-refoulment and repatriation procedures, nevertheless, their continued use has led to its legitimation and affirmation as a standard practice (Janmyr, 2014).

The existence of refugee camps is supposed to be exceptional and temporary; nevertheless, year after year it turns into an 'everyday experience' (Agier, 2008). Refugee camps result from a 'necessity' that allows the appearance of unusual practices and activities bending the rules in order to respond to emergencies more quickly (Hailey, 2009). Furthermore, if we consider that camps have never been conceived as an internationally recognized means of managing refugees from the international legal point of view, it seems adequate to affirm that refugee camps are thus 'in-between places'.[6]

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[6] Camps as "*in-between spaces, based on land ceded or leased by the host state to the temporary jurisdiction of the international community, generally represented by the UNHCR*" and refugees are "*subject to the same authority, to rhythms and conditions of life that they have not chosen but were imposed on them*" (Agier, 2008, p. 63).

By segregating their inhabitants, camps serve both humanitarian and political goals. Even if, at first glance, they are perceived as spaces of humanitarian protection and empathy, they might serve the political goal of keeping foreign populations outside 'normal' social spaces (Agier, 2008) and under control (McConnachie, 2016). Refugees in the camps do not participate in the common political arena and are 'normalized' as part of the margin in which rules and life do not follow the same paths as the outside (Ek, 2006). Turner defines this situation as a 'limbo'; refugees "*live in a time pocket in relation to lives that are lived outside the camps*", and this limbo has "*no promise of an ending*" (Turner, 2016, p. 4).

For our research purpose, it is necessary to show the international principles adopted in camp management, the responsibilities, and the actors involved so as to have the necessary tools for comparing the hypothetical good practices with the reality of our case study.

Based on national and international laws and standards, camp coordination and management activities and approaches require the camp community's involvement. The standards in this field have been frequently updated in the last years. Today it is possible to affirm that the approaches are more people-centred and less top-down oriented. Camp coordination and camp management (Cccm) is the name given to standardized coordination mechanisms applied to refugee operations. The crucial objective is to ensure that displaced people's needs are met and that there are no gaps or overlaps in responsibility or response (UNHCR, 2021). According to Cccm, several functions take part in camp management and coordination. Regardless of whether it is a national or international Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) or national authority that takes responsibility for the camp management, the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and operational independence represent the ethical foundation for stakeholders carrying out humanitarian work in emergencies (OCHA, 2012), avoiding every political commitment or military support.

Furthermore, the main role of coordination and monitoring should be provided by the hosting state which is the exclusive actor in charge of what happens in the camps. In some exceptional cases, when the hosting state cannot fully comply with its duties, the Unhcr sustains its efforts. Effective host states' response to a refugee crisis spreading from a conflict should include the separation of militants from refugees, the protection of aid supplies from theft, the securitization of the borders, and the disarming and reintegration of willing militants into the civilian population.

This theoretical control over the camp and the effort of maintaining the humanitarian scope of refugee camps is a complex task, especially when the camps are a space where political and military groups

have settled and/or where they carry on their activities of recruitment, propaganda, supply and feeding of their components. Too often, the ideal-type camp presented above and promoted by the Unhcr and partners is far from being reproduced in reality.

The above-presented perspectives explain why it is possible to conceive the refugee camp as a sovereign power device, organizing humanitarian assistance and trying to overcome the state system's weaknesses. The camps embody a territorialized condition that simultaneously expresses a dynamic of transit and rest, but also a change in the juridical status and everyday life practices of their inhabitants. This mixture of political and humanitarian elements reinforces the condition of the exceptionality of refugee camps. Nevertheless, it is necessary to offer a more complex vision of the exception, and the Sahrawi camps offer a fertile field for the analysis of these dynamics.[7]

The Sahrawi camps as 'state(s) of exception'

Located in a desert area far from most of the hosting society's social heart, the refugee camps of Tindouf are the crucial hub for the Sahrawi population's socio-political and humanitarian activities. Although these camps are formally a temporary and humanitarian space, they are organized with due respect for social relations and urban/administrative divisions, and they host not only residential units but also administrative structures of Polisario/Sadr and cultural spaces.

The refugee camps of Tindouf are also called Wilayas[8]: Laayoune, Awserd, Smara, Boujdour, and Dakhla. Each Wilaya is divided into Dairas (districts) for a total of 29 Dairas. In Laayoune and Awserd camps there are six Dairas for each; in Smara and Dakhla they are seven for each; finally, in Boujdour there are only three Dairas. Each Daira is subdivided into barrios (quarters) with an almost equal population, for a total number of 116 barrios. Four Wilayas have a hospital, and each Daira has a primary health center (29 in total). A Central Hospital is based in Rabouni where Sadr has its administration headquarters (UNHCR, CISP, WFP, 2019).

According to several scholars, the Sahrawi camps cannot be conceived only as provisional settlements; instead, they are more similar to cities than other humanitarian and temporary spaces (Rossi, 2014). Nevertheless, the constraints due to the persistent lack of services and material resources, alongside the dependence on external humanitarian aid and the precarious living

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[7] Herz states that "Maybe more so than any other contemporary refugee situation, the Sahrawi camps expose the dilemmas and tensions between the original notion of the camp, intended as a temporary setup, and the reality on the ground, which has developed into a quasi-permanent situation." (Herz, 2013, p. 387).
[8] The camps were named after the towns located in Moroccan occupied territory to express that Sahrawi refugees do not lose the hope of the return (Besenyő, 2009).

conditions, resize these spaces into an unusual form of refugee camps extremely well-organized and almost autonomously administered (Campos-Serrano & Rodríguez-Esteban, 2017) (Ojeda-Garcia, Fernández-Molina, & Veguilla, 2017).
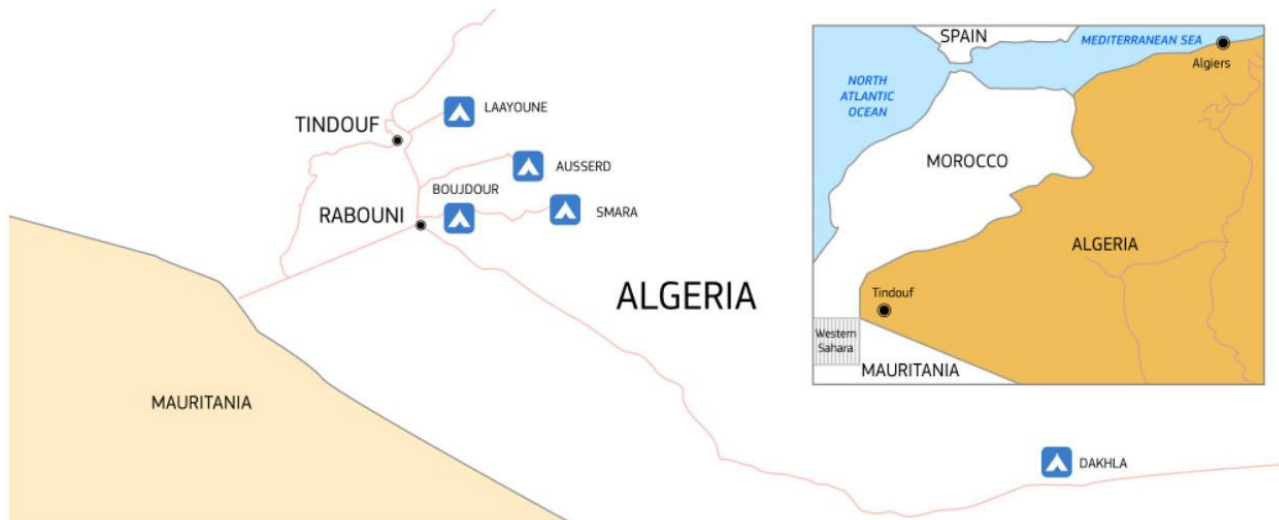

Figure 1. Saharawi Camps in Algeria - European Union/ECHO (https://ec.europa.eu/echo/where/africa/algeria_en)

As it has been explained, it is impossible to dissociate camps' life from the political project of the Sadr. In fact, the camps' aim was not only to provide temporary shelter to the displaced civilians but also logistical support to the Sahrawi Liberation Army (Sla) and the basis for the construction of the new Sahrawi subjectivity shaped under the political scheme promoted by the Polisario Front since 1973. The Sahrawi population in the camps was able to establish itself as a political community, exactly when, in theory, it was losing all rights of citizenship to join the indistinct mass of displaced people (Farah, 2009) (Rossi, 2014).

The refugee camps have reached an high level of education (literacy rate reportedly at 90 %), primary school is mandatory, and it has to be understood as the Polisario/Sadr strategy to boost youth's sense of belonging and compliance with the national Sahrawi identity, despite the distinction between tribes (Metelits, 2018). These cultural, political, and organizational elements reflect the necessity of the Polisario Front to exploit the 'blank space' represented by the refugee camps to "*write a new historical narrative based on the desire of an independent nation-state*" (San Martin, 2005, p. 569). Even if it is possible to perceive positive elements in the condition reached in these camps, it is necessary to moderate the enthusiasm, several grey zones still exist (Freedom House, 2020).

As of 31 December 2017, 173,600 Sahrawi refugees reside in camps in Tindouf (UNHCR, 2018). The figure only captures those residing in the refugee camps. The Sahrawi refugee population is almost equally divided between males and females, with 49% female and 51% male. A little over one-third of the population (38%) are under 17. According to the data of the most relevant UN agencies involved (UNHCR, CISP, WFP), only 58% of their combined overall needs for their 2020 regular programs were financed, this permanent and chronic lack of resources is a matter of concern for the whole UN System (United Nations, 2020).

According to the United Nations' perspective, the Sahrawi refugee community has managed the five camps near Tindouf for more than four decades, implementing their own activities, managing their own partnerships, and advocating for resources domestically and internationally (no references to the relations between Sahrawi leadership and Polisario representants or the Sadr government). It would be more correct to suggest that, departing from the UN position, the camp's management has been the Sadr government's space of action. This latter has always collaborated with the humanitarian actors involved in the camps[9], albeit maintaining a high degree of independence.

The Polisario/Sadr has reinforced its position as the Sahrawi representative and camps management responsible through the development of its own constitution, religious and legal systems[10], a camp-based police force and its army (Human Rights Watch, 2008). Several ministries have been appointed with specific operational competencies and they play a fundamental role in managing all the funds received by the camp community. This is almost a 'unicum' in the international system of governing humanitarian camps.

The in-exile community's strategies and efforts have contributed to the camps' representation as to the materialization of a sense of normal condition within an immense abnormality: the denied self-determination of the Sahrawi people and the in-exile status (Herz, 2013). This process of 'normalization' could be described as a dynamic of sedimentation and routinization of what is determined by the in-exile condition, alongside the consciousness of a Sahrawi political identity fostered by the desire to overcome the current restrictive circumstances (San Martin, 2005).

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[9] Humanitarian actors coordinate all programs with the Sahrawi leadership, the refugee community, and the Sahrawi Red Crescent at all levels. The management of the camps and humanitarian resources is based on a consolidated participatory approach where communities in the camp manage the camp themselves. There are sectoral working groups in the Health, WASH, Protection, Livelihoods, Food and Education sectors, led or co-led by UN agencies and/or the relevant Sahrawi refugee community departments. Furthermore, the activities are closely planned with the support of the Government of Algeria and the Algerian Red Crescent (GCR-UNHCR, 2020).

[10] Islam is the state religion.

As presented above, several forms of 'state(s) of exception' could materialize in the refugee camp as a humanitarian space separated from the rest. While considering the Sahrawi context, it is necessary to take into account that refugee camps are run directly by the Polisario/Sadr, while the usual practices presented under the label of Cccm require the supervision and direct management of the hosting state or an international/non-governmental organization, according to hierarchical roles and duties. In the Sahrawi case, Algeria and the entire humanitarian sector involved have almost totally derogated those principles. Thus the Polisario/Sadr is the only authority with which camp residents have regular contact and it is almost independent with regard to camps' population management and organization of social systems. Such a high degree of self-management and the Polisario/Sadr's d*e facto* control over the Algerian territory upon which the camps have been built distinguish the Sahrawi camps from most refugee camp contexts worldwide (Human Rights Watch, 2008) (Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2011).

According to this analysis, the first of many 'state(s) of exception' that could be found in Sahrawi camps is the 'typical' one already presented, referring to the dynamic of a protracted situation that has become the rule, despite the intended temporary and emergency character. The Sahrawi camps were already built 45 years ago and, because of the political impasse, no sustainable and acceptable durable solutions have been already found. Nevertheless, the camps' population living conditions are always precarious, and the transitory shape of these camps has not changed.

The second form of 'state of exception' that has been here described in Sahrawi camps is the one concerning the fact that the Polisario/Sadr has taken the office of camp management instead of humanitarian actors and the hosting state, reducing the external interferences, including the UN agencies and NGOs. The Polisario/Sadr, and its relief organization, the Sahrawi Red Crescent, are the only organizations operating in the camps without restriction. Thus, project implementation has been possible only once foreign organizations have obtained the Polisario/Sadr permission to access the camps. This derogation to the international norms about camp management and international responsibility for refugee populations represents a substantial 'state of exception': the international rule is suspended and normalized in time, allowing the *de facto* Polisario/Sadr full control of the camps.

The Sahrawi condition, just described, might be perceived, in some way, as a challenge to Agamben's vision of the refugee and the camps as mere shreds of evidence of 'state of exception' conditions. In fact, Sahrawi refugee camps, like some Palestinian camps, are spaces of agency and struggle, not only areas of complete disempowerment and bare life (Ramadan, 2012).

Conclusion

Common Agambian perspectives about refugee camps as a 'space of exception' in which political life is suspended and 'bare life' manifests itself at its highest level must be softened when considering the Sahrawi context. Sahrawi people have been able to shape their own political space in the refugee camp context. The hosting state does not fully realise the suspension of the law in Tindouf camps as, instead, it has been usually demonstrated in numerous studies on refugee camps. Indeed, Algeria's absence introduces an empty political space where the Polisario/Sadr political actors have established themselves. This peculiar case study overcomes, in some ways, the usual conception of the refugee camp as the mere materialization of the 'state of exception' understood as "*a piece of land placed outside the normal juridical order*" (Agamben, 1998, p. 170), nor the manifestation of one of the most evident 'bare life' conditions.

In the Sahrawi case, it is possible to describe the camps as spaces where social formations, traditions, and practices from the homeland are reassembled, sustained, recreated, and performed in exile. In other words, Sahrawi camps are spaces of agency and struggle, not merely tools of international agencies, nor spaces of biopolitical domination or anonymous terrains of conflict and not even spaces of complete disempowerment. Nonetheless, the real problem remains, not the existence of those 'state(s) of exception', but rather their persistence and normalization. The Sahrawi case brings to light the constant breach existing between the definition of the law and its application, especially in the international context and in marginal situations.

In the Sahrawi camps, the process leading to overcoming the condition of relegation produced is probably the result of the political organization and the national identity construction established from the very first, and it is also due to the softness and acquiescence of the hosting state politics of control. Nevertheless, in a near future, the political impasse of the conflict with Morocco and the absence of suitable solutions to change their refugee situation may participate in reducing the positive process of overcoming the condition of 'bare life' that has been developed to retain the hope to come back to their land.

Despite these apparent successes in 'living' the camps, even if the condition of Sahrawi people might be considered better than that of other refugees, according to several points of view (from camps management to health and education), this long-term condition risks becoming unstainable because of the frustration of more than 30 years of international indifference and not honoured commitments.

In the last years, the absence of political successes and the camps' harsh life conditions have represented a serious matter of concern for the Sahrawi population and authorities; moreover, the deterioration of relations between the stakeholders involved in the dispute, mainly Algeria and Morocco, is a further problematic element.

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INFORMAL RECYCLING OF CONGOLESE REFUGEE YOUTH IN KAMPALA

Amarilli Varesio*

*Università degli studi di Torino, amarillivare@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores the informal recycling of young Congolese refugees based in three neighborhoods of Kampala: Kamwokya, Nakulabye, and Lungujja. Livelihood experiences of Congolese youth related to the waste picking is identified as an important asset to navigate the everyday exclusion of the city. If the right-allocating mechanism positions refugees in stratified membership around certain rights, in Uganda those who chose to settle in cities independently are not eligible of humanitarian aid and, therefore, most of them remain in precarious conditions. Congolese youth' urban hustle highlights the importance of strengthening local and national knowledge about forced migration in urban settings.

Questo articolo esplora il riciclo informale dei giovani rifugiati congolesi che vivono in tre quartieri di Kampala: Kamwokya, Nakulabye e Lungujja. Le esperienze dei giovani congolesi legate alla raccolta dei rifiuti sono identificate come una risorsa importante per navigare l'esclusione quotidiana della città. Se il meccanismo di assegnazione dei diritti posiziona i rifugiati in un'appartenenza stratificata intorno a certi diritti, in Uganda coloro che hanno scelto di stabilirsi in città in modo indipendente non hanno diritto agli aiuti umanitari e, quindi, la maggior parte di loro rimane in condizioni precarie. L'economia informale dei giovani congolesi evidenzia l'importanza di rafforzare le conoscenze locali e nazionali sulla migrazione forzata in ambiente urbano.

Keywords: Uganda, Congolese, refugees, recycling

Introduction

This article is based on data collected during ethnographic research conducted between March and August 2021 in Uganda and designed to explore and compare the informal recycling practices of internally displaced persons in Gulu and urban Congolese refugees in Kampala. In this case, I focus on the conditions of Congolese refugees in Kampala and the survival strategies, such as informal waste recycling, of youth, in an attempt to highlight how experiences of displacement and extreme marginalization in urban space influence the production of recycling-related livelihoods.

The article is structured as follows: an initial section which compares classical refugee management to the self-relience strategy implemented in Uganda. Secondly, urban refugees' opportunities and challenges in Kampala are discussed. Finally, the agency of young Congolese refugees and their participation in the informal economy related to waste recycling is explored.

International and Ugandan approach to refugees

The images of desperate migrants sailing in deflated dinghies has become the symbol of African migration and reinforced the idea that this South-to-North movement is what all African migrants want to achieve. Dismantling the media's sensational narrative and conventional belief, new evidence reveals instead that not only is migration conflict-induced, but it mostly occurs crossing land borders, not seas. According to UNHCR (2020), Africa hosts more than one third of the world's refugees[1], about 7 million, plus 12.5 million internally displaced persons living in their own country of origin[2]. Roughly 80% of African refugees remain within the continent[3], moving primarily within their own country or neighboring countries. The states that host the largest number of refugees and asylum seekers are Uganda (1.4 million people, mostly from South Sudan) and Sudan (1.1 million), followed by DRC, Ethiopia, Kenya, Chad, and Cameroon[4].

The international management of refugees and the design of interventions dedicated to them often take the form of huge settlements directed by international humanitarian agencies. This mode of refugee management is usually linked to a prolongation of the emergency phase in the absence of long-term solutions. But the structural restrictions of settlement life for those without income or trade make this type of solution unsustainable to them in the long run. In addition, the financial, physical, and psychological consequences for refugees are exacerbated by the departure of international organizations once attention wanders to the next "crisis" after a few years. Hence, the alternative proposed by scholars has been to change the approach to the problem of refugees by extending the area of competence to development policy and not only to the humanitarian sector (Betts et al., 2012). In addition, to overcome the refugee camp model, some states started implementing autonomy-oriented policies through the self-reliance model. One of the African countries in which the self-reliance system has become more widespread is Uganda. Self-reliance was introduced by the government in 1998. There are no refugee camps organized according to the classical humanitarian model of aid distribution. Instead, there are settlements based on self-reliance strategies. Refugees have access to a plot of land, of a size proportionate to the size of the family unit and are supplied with the necessary materials to cultivate it. The food aid plan foresees a progressive reduction of rations over the years, ideally replaced by the agricultural production of the refugees themselves, in theory until complete self-sufficiency. They should also be guaranteed the possibility of starting a

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[1] unhcr.org/5f85726a4.pdf (accessed on the 8th January 2022).
[2] https://www.un.org/africarenewal/news/forced-displacement-we-can-learn-africa. Accessed on the 8th of January 2022.
[3] https://reliefweb.int/report/world/african-migration-trends-watch-202. Accessed on the 8th of January 2022.
[4] https://www.unhcr.org/5f85726a4.pdf. Accessed on the 8th January 2022.

commercial activity, sometimes supported with professional courses and small financing, and of working both inside and outside the settlement. Nevertheless, Ugandan laws relating to the right to work are unclear, as stated by Zetter & Ruaudel (2016). If the necessary permits are obtained, refugees are free to move around the country. The Ugandan's Refugee Act 2006 establishes refugees' rights to live, work, move freely and own land in Uganda, but these rights are often not available in the urban setting. Limits of the Refugee Act 2006 have been deeply explored by the Refugee Law Project (2006). In fact, the right of free movement, established in Article 30, "is subject to reasonable restrictions", meaning that refugees need special permission to go a significant distance from the settlement, e.g., to the next town. If a refugee wishes to live outside the settlement, he must apply for permission. Those who decide to leave the settlement are not in a position of illegality but have no more access to food and assistance.

Thus the self-reliance approach introduces substantial new features, but it does not automatically translate into equally different results in the lives of refugees, as pointed by Hovil (2007). The author claims that the concept of settlements or camps are interchangeable, as the logic remains the same: to separate refugees from the rest of the population by making the possibility of receiving assistance contingent upon remaining in limited areas. By presenting the findings on self-settled refugees, the author challenges the settlement structure, arguing that local integration in the host community is a better alternative. The problems associated with settlements, such as the absence of security, economic integration (due to isolation), self-sufficiency, and freedom of movement, are confirmed by the increasing number of refugees who try to find independent accommodation in the urban centers of the host country, sometimes avoiding registering as asylum seekers.

Self-settled urban refugees: from settlements to cities

As indicated by Madhavan & Landau (2011) flows of refugees and rural migrants contribute to the rate of urbanization and expansion of African cities. The newcomers are distributed differently in the city depending on family ties, social networks already present, nationality, period of arrival, and level of economic and social success achieved. The presence of thousands of refugees in the suburbs of the capital city of Uganda was formally recognized by UNHCR only in 2009[5]. Prior to that time, reports from 2005 indicated the small number of 210 refugees residing in the capital city due to relocations, medical problems, or personal security concerns (Sandvik, 2011). A decade later, in 2017, Kampala was hosting 94,958 refugees and asylum seekers (Monteith et al., 2017). In 2020, around 40.000 were

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[5] https://www.unhcr.org/protection/hcdialogue%20/4ab356ab6/unhcr-policy-refugee-protection-solutions-urban-areas.html. Accessed on the 16th of January 2022.

Congolese refugees (Gusman, 2020). Since the early 1990s, the ongoing violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DCR) caused the death of about four million people and another four million displaced (Lyytinen, 2015). Many Congolese fled during the First Congo War (1996-1997), the Second War (1998-2003), the military violence of 2008, post-election conflicts in 2011, and 2014 fighting between the government army and the M23 rebels. But an ongoing eruption of deadly clashes between armed militia groups is at the root of a constant back and forth movement that takes people from one side of the border to the other. In June 2020, within two days, about 3000 Congolese reached Uganda in order to escape a militia attack in Ituri province, after being stuck at the Ugandan border, closed to contain the spread of the pandemic.

For some refugees, the city is not the end of the road, but just another stage on the way to another destination. For the Congolese refugees in Kampala, the hope to emigrate to North America or to another European country collides with the complexity and uncertainty of a process which may never come true, and plunges refugees into the "present of waiting" (Gusman, 2018). This is the great suffering in which refugees cannot find a sense of belonging and adopt a religious experience which gives meaning to their being "stuck" in the city. This condition is believed to be caused by the evil mechanism of the "blocage" which doesn't allow refugees to obtain resettlement (*ibid*.).

New evidence from Kampala shows that urban refugees, such as the Congolese, are the ones most in need of protection (Silberman, 2020). Many of these refugees live in dire conditions, without access to basic needs. They often settle on the margins of the city or in the most marginalized areas, such as slums, characterized by poor sanitation and high levels of poverty. These groups of urban refugees contribute to expanding informal or semi-informal settlements and compete for the scarce resources available with the host community. They often face xenophobic attitudes and spark intercommunal violence. They have no access to assistance from international agencies and, because of their lack of documentation or their foreign status, they face discrimination in access to housing, employment, education, and health care.

Congolese refugees in Kampala

Opportunities

The following section is based on qualitative data collected among individuals and families of Congolese refugees in June 2021. Manu, a 23-year-old Congolese refugee, provided great assistance in the process of understanding how life trajectories for refugees are characterized by a high level of internal variability, as they take complex decisions dictated by the circumstances in which they live and the more or less wide margin of choice available.

I met Manu at the Ghetto Research Lab (GRL), a CBO that develops innovative projects to deal with environmental concerns in the impoverished neighborhood of Kwamokya. Manu often visited GRL to exchange ideas and collaborate on different projects. He also used his sewing machines to sew pieces of fabric that he interwove with his hand-made paper beads, creating necklaces that he could sell. He arrived in Kampala in 2013 with his mother and sisters, after the first had been injured by the M23. As a young boy in the city, he lived in the streets because there was too little space in the house. During the day, he used to collect plastic bottles and metal to get some small income. His sisters turned to prostitution as the ultimate survival option. After 5 years of the hardship in the city, Manu's family moved to Nakivale[6] settlement where at least some food, water and shelter were provided by international agencies. There, through different types of youth training with "Opportunigee", a non-profit organization, Manu's life changed.

> I discovered myself. I did mentoring, nonviolent conflict resolution courses, and more. I was curious and wanted to learn, so people liked me. I got many foreign friends (29/06/2021).

His proactive attitude and acquaintance with some Americans gave Manu some informal work opportunities for a few years, but when the Americans left, he was forced to look for opportunities in Kampala. Manu didn't lose hope of finding work and "rendered entrepreneurship a survival mechanism" (Thieme, 2010), very useful to low-income communities in urban contexts. He can sew, make crafts by collecting used paper and pieces of kitenge fabric to make necklaces, and often offers dance and theater workshops to local NGOs. Currently, his main project is the creation of water purifiers made of recycled plastic for use in refugee camps.

> Mostly I am an ecologist now, I do upcycle activities. My vision is to see people getting old and being free. Science and technology can help (29/06/2021).

Manu's adoption of humanitarian and global environmental goals is a powerful tool in context of displacement as "a chance of transferal of symbolic capital over borders" (Manuylov, 2017). In fact, the power of framing practices in the direction of donors can help urban refugees to survive and have a chance to get financial assistance as their main difficulty stems from the economic deprivation suffered from lack of formal assistance.

Manu's friend is called Peace, he is 23 years old. For him, the most obvious reason for moving to the city was the concentration of formal and informal economic opportunities. The urban context, in fact,

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[6] Based in the South-West part of Uganda. It was established in 1958 and it is one of the oldest refugee settlements in Africa.

offers more chances to find employment compared to the rural environment of the refugee settlements (Jacobsen, 2004).

> I was able to get a driving license here in Kampala and work as a chauffeur, but with the lockdown, I lost money and nowadays am unable to rent the car, so I am jobless now (29/06/2021).

Peace stays in the neighborhood of Nakulabye and lives in a room with his father, mother, and 5 brothers and sisters. In 2014, Peace's family came straight to Kampala, declining refugee in the settlement. They passed by the Nakivale Settlement but did not stop. Some of their family members reside there and had told them about some unpleasant aspects of life there:

> People look unkempt: many smoke cigarettes, take marijuana, drink. Also, for young people it is difficult, there is no work in the settlement (29/06/2021).

The fear of being the subject of a witchcraft attack was another reason why the family did not move into the settlement. Living very close and in small spaces, in an environment with few opportunities, according to Peace is what leads people to be jealous and change mindset and hurt their loved ones.

> If you are rich or intelligent, they have to bewitch you. Witchcraft is the biggest problem there, but the government says it doesn't believe in it. If you don't have a proof, it's not there. The police are not going to arrest who does witchcraft. The people in settlement want everybody to be at the same level. If they see you want to step forward, they can kill you. In camp, you know each other. Witchcraft is family thing (Peace, 01/06/2021).

Peace's statement on witchcraft recalls how intimacy is threatening because the most dangerous aggression comes from the closest people, from family members and neighbors (Geschiere, 2013). Therefore, the most intimate areas of sociality are not structured by generalized reciprocity, a common assumption of classic anthropology, but by violence, jealousy, and exploitation. In light of these considerations, Peace's family decided to try to live in the city, with all the "struggle" that come with it, as "Ugandans don't even want to know about you even if you are in the same compound" (Peace, 01/06/2021). Sometimes, the anonymity of the city may allow the urban refugees to assume new identities which can provide physical security. Even more in this case, the urban anonymity has the benefit of protecting them from the dangerous world of witchcraft and providing hope to survive in a difficult present.

Hardship

Despite the increasing displacement of refugees from camps to cities, refugee conditions in urban settings defy the widespread belief, typical of humanitarian agencies, that urban refugees represent the most "resilient" individuals, while the weakest and most vulnerable remain in camps, where they can more easily receive assistance (Landau, 2004).

> Since we reached Kampala in 2014, they never gave us a hand for anything, not even food or rent. You have to fight, even though you cannot breathe, you can't give up (Peace, 01/06/2021).

The Congolese Pentecostal church was the only institution that helped Peace's family, giving them a place to sleep for a month once they reached Kampala. In the urban context, despite considerable needs, newcomers receive almost no help from international agencies, whether those registered as refugees or asylum seekers or undocumented. Often, as suggested by Bernstein and Okello (2007), the difficulties faced by self-settled refugees in Kampala stem from the widespread ignorance of city authorities about the presence of refugees and their belief that settlements are the only place where they can be found. In addition, acquiring official documents to gain refugee status is one of refugees' biggest challenges. The opaque bureaucratic process to obtain documents, and the consequent difficulty in finding a livelihood, exacerbate their vulnerability. The procedures to access legal entitlement are considered lengthy, costly, and confusing, as reported by Agora in 2018[7] from interviews with refugees in nine vulnerable urban neighborhoods. The study highlights how 20% of refugee respondents reported lacking the identification card.

Mary[8], Peace's friend, arrived in Kampala in 2020, during the first Covid lockdown. At that time, the Office of the Prime Minister[9] offices were closed. They told her to go to a settlement for the documents, but she had no money to travel. In such situation, Mary is not able to work.

> Also, for washing clothes they don't trust you if you don't have your ID. So, you are literally no one. Police can arrest you, I am afraid to go out of my house. And if someone want to send you money, you cannot get it, because you cannot even get a sim card (02/06/2021).

The process to get the documents is long: first, the statement to the police. Secondly, registration at the OPM office. Afterwards, the interview, and if they believe the story, an ID card and family certificate is issued, and eventually a refugee should have the same rights as a Ugandan citizen. When Mary arrived in Kampala, she believed that registration for refugee status was free. But after a year of waiting while living like a "ninja", the woman has decided to bribe the officials. Now, Mary is trying to put money aside to pay a Congolese middleman to take her to the right office and get her ID card. In addition, the path to acquire official documents passes through a long bureaucracy and the evaluation of the narrative of the refugee's memories by the bodies established for granting international protection. The narrative judgment puts additional pressure on refugees who are required to recount a particular story (Monteith & Mirembe, 2021), a story that should be plausible in the eyes

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[7]https://www.kcca.go.ug/media/docs/Kampala%20Urban%20Refugees%20And%20Host%20Community%20Needs%20Report.pdf. Accessed on the 14th of October 2021.
[8] This is a pseudonym.
[9] The office is responsible for all the refugees matters in Uganda.

of the committee, with no interruptions, no time gaps. Personal history often becomes the basis for the decision whether or not to grant refugee status. The lack of tangible evidence attesting to the truthfulness of the applicant's statements has led to the "credibility assessment" of the story as an alternative to the production of certifying documents (Sorgoni, 2019).

Mary decided to go to Kampala and settle in Nakulabye because of the high concentration of Congolese refugees. The neighborhood is characterized by poor access to water, poor sanitation, overcrowded housing, poor waste management. The poor quality of basic services is exacerbated by the challenge of physical insecurity and gender-based violence, as feared by Peace's mother, Aisha, and his sisters, Sadda and Alice. The girls were born in Congo and arrived in Kampala as 10- and 12-year-olds. They claim how their biggest fear is rape as, sometimes, they get back home very late after washing clothes. Schooling is too expensive, and the girls must work to help the family. So, Aisha states, often early marriage and pregnancy is seen as the only way to escape poverty.

In addition, the English language is a significant obstacle to Congolese refugees who are easily recognized as foreigners and thus exposed to episodes of discrimination and xenophobia. Ugandans often accuse Congolese refugees of stealing jobs from locals, of voting for the President and of being privileged compared to Ugandan citizens, given the measures taken to help them, such as the practice of resettlement in Europe or America.

> They say that when President Museveni will go away, Ugandans are going to kill all Congolese: they are keeping the pangas (machete) for us (Peace, 01/06/2021).

In conclusion, lack of access to financial and legal assistance, discrimination from both the State and the Ugandan population are some of the barriers which inhibit refugees' rights and make finding formal or gainful jobs difficult.

Recycling and Congolese urban refugee youth

"Getting by and getting organized"

The international agencies' official discourse depicts refugees and, above all, refugee youth, as helpless victims. This approach tends to simplify the complexity of daily and long-term survival strategies of refugee youth. Many organizations follow the definition of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which considers every human being under the age of 18 to be a child, but there is no official chronological age defined for the category of "youth" (Clark-Kazak, 2009). Researchers have highlighted how classifications of childhood, youth and its meaning are highly variable in different social, geographical, and historical contexts (Burman, 1994). If chronological age in the definition of

youth is highly arbitrary, it is better to use the concept of social age to refer "to the socially constructed meanings and roles ascribed to different stages in the life course" (Clark-Kazak, 2014).

Informed by these analytical tools, young people's everyday strategies in the context of migration can be explored by employing Ruth Lister's conceptual approach to agency (ibid.). The "getting by" and "getting organized" forms of agency are employed by young Congolese refugees in Kampala in the process of decision-making regarding their material dimension of well-being. The first analytical frame of "getting by" refers to the daily material actions that make Congolese youth "reproductive actors" as they engage in the informal economy. In 2018, Peace's cousin, Akim (now an 18-year-old boy and the firstborn of his family) convinced his family to move to Kampala from Kyaka settlement[10].

> After 5 months, after getting the registration in the camp, we ran away because of hunger. In Kampala, getting money and paying rent is a big issue. But it is better in the city than in the camp, at least we can find small hustles here: we can collect plastic bottles. You can get 5000 UGX[11] every day. In camp, there is no way to collect bottles (Akim, 04/06/2021).

Akim's younger brothers and sisters are the family breadwinners. They show agency by contributing "to collective livelihood strategies in inter-generational families and household" (Clark-Kazak, 2014:5). The family is very big: there are 8 boys and 2 girls. The parents are both sick due to the violence experienced in Congo and the children are the ones that go to look for money. "We boys go out and look for collecting bottles, while girls go to wash clothes" (Akim, 04/06/2021).

In order to cope with material basic needs and structural challenges of living in urban setting, young Congolese refugees engage in everyday survival strategies by acting collectively and "getting organized" (ibid.:7). In 2021, wandering around the city looking for bargains, Akim had noticed people picking up bottles and speaking in Swahili. They were Congolese as well and had told him that this was a quick way to make money. So, soon after, Akim gathered his brothers and cousins to start collecting plastic bottles together. They usually start walking at 4 am, when it is still dark, and come back home at 10 pm, when the sun is already down. The average of the kilometers that they cover every day is approximately 25. After a few months, they discovered that changing neighborhoods in the city daily was a good strategy for not running out of plastic. Competition is very high, and you can't always find the bottles in the same places. By now, they know the whole capital, in which places to go and when. Bottles are found in stores, restaurants, bus parks, water drains. The spoiled ones are sold to scrap dealers who in turn resell them to local plastic recycling factories.

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[10] Refugee settlement established in 2005 in Kyegegwa District in South-West Uganda.
[11] 3945,22 UGX is equivalent to 1 euro.

Instead, the good bottles are traded with businesswomen who clean them at the roadside and resell them to people who fill them with juice or peanut butter.

> A kilo of plastic bottles is 200 UGX, while hard plastic like water bucket, is more expensive. With my brothers and cousin, we always move together (Akim, 04/06/2021).

The group uses a saving system. The people names are written on a list and every Sunday, someone receive some money from the whole group. The collective organization of ''economically active poor'' represents the will to be part of the city despite extremely difficult daily realities.

The hustle's coping strategies

When external factors threaten their enterprise, the group strategically adjusts. If recycling companies decrease the price of plastic, or stop buying bottles, as happened during the lockdown because some companies closed temporarily, the group changes hustle. They collect leftover cassava and bananas at markets, dry them and sell them. But when the price goes up, they go back to plastic. The informal workers' coping strategies also involve the organization of a strict daily schedule. Starting early in the morning allows Congolese youth to pick up bottles before the city cleaners and other people who manage to survive off of garbage. "Many other people do this plastic business, most of all Ugandan street kids. So, you must be sharp" (Akim, 04/06/2021). To avoid physical harassment in public by police and street kids, the group moves together. They separate sometimes in order not to fight for bottles, but always keep each other in sight. Waste work allows the refugees to avoid discrimination in the local marketplace and to get a daily income. In 2020, Akim tried to participate in a cooking course organized by a local NGO, but after a few months he stopped because the family needed the money: "When you go to school, you don't work, people at home are hungry" (Akim, 04/06/2021). Later, he tried to apply for catering, but many people told him they didn't want to work with Congolese refugees. Plastic is not the only business for the boys. Metal soda cups and metal sheets are sold for 1000 UGX per kilo. This is the only item collected as a group, the income from which is also divided equally among everyone, while the other recyclables are collected and sold individually. Roughly, each boy is able to earn between 10,000 and 20,000 UGX a day when they work. But during the rainy season, the work decreases, while during the dry season, it increases, since people use a lot more water bottles.

In contrast to the advantages of such work, there are many hardships to endure and threats to physical security. The group walks all day long, making the work very tiring. The risk of catching diseases is high, as the bottles are often collected in drainage ditches, where the water flowing is always polluted. Another source of danger comes from competition with street kids. Young Congolese have reported

that they are often attacked by gangs of street children who take them away the collected bottles. In addition, youth are often treated badly by residents who mistake them for thieves while they are looking for recyclable materials. In fact, it happens that they mistakenly pick up someone's buckets or plastics, and when the owner notices it, they often react violently. "Yesterday, some people chased me and hurt me with a knife" (Samson, 05/06/2021). At the time of the interview, Samson was still recovering from the injury. Even though that unforeseen accident was caused the loss of the boy's minimal savings, it was "mentioned with relative acceptance, if not pride" (Thieme, 2013). This case demonstrates how the concept of a hustle economy encompasses both the acceptance of risk and the freedom inherited from it. These livelihood strategies face the uncertainty in the absence of secure formal employment by creating new structures of opportunity and forms of adaptations. In a context where "employment is scarce but "work (beyond industrial labour production) is everywhere" (Thieme, 2018), the analytical frame of the "hustle" economy can be useful to research urban precarious environments. The uncertain futures navigated and shared by young people of the Global South and Global North shows the positive dimension of the hustling as a productive activity and a way of employing "skills, agencies, and resourcefulness that are constantly being carved out in times of adversity and scarcity" (ibid.:15). The proximity to waste of some groups, which allows the daily re-production of the urban space, reveals the condition of marginality and exclusion of some social groups in urban contexts (Bauman, 2007). But this marginal condition in relation with waste shows also, not only what is lacking in informal economies, but also what is working for the urban poor: the "business of waste" (Thieme, 2010).

From the findings of my research, informal recycling provides employment and a livelihood for a portion of young Congolese urban refugees. Giving visibility to this activity could expose the difficulties of urban refugees and create the opportunity to formalize the structure as a business, as dreamed by Manu. The emergence of these forms of informal economy could allow many undocumented urban refugees to be registered through the recognition of the community service they provide in the absence of a public and heterogeneous one.

> Those people take the recycling as a business, not as a mission, not because they want to save the environment. But this can help us. The authorities should recognize Congolese are doing this job and give some help" (29/06/2021).

Conclusion

The essay presents the difficulties for the socio-economic integration of Congolese refugees in Kampala. Lack of documents, the opaque bureaucratic process to obtain them, and the difficulty in finding employment exacerbate the vulnerability of Congolese refugees. If the anonymity of the city

allows them to assume new identities which can provide physical security and engage in different types of economic activities compared to the rural location of settlements (Fábos & Kibreab, 2007), all these difficulties restrict the rights of refugees in Uganda, whose hosting model is commonly known as one of the most progressive in the world. In the urban context, refugees become marginal objects on the global stage, whose mobility and capacity for action is restricted as an unconceived presence in the national refugee policy organization. Despite their precariousness, young Congolese refugees bring complex daily and collective survival strategies into play, such as the recycling of items. Young people's agency in the context of migration, contributes to the collective livelihood of households, in the attempt of carving out new spaces of participation in social and family life. Their condition shows the importance of strengthening local and national knowledge about forced migration in urban settings, activating local communities for advocacy, and recognizing the need for humanitarian category formation.

Acknowledgements

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List of acronyms

CBO   Community-based organizations

GRL   Ghetto Research Lab

IDP   Internally displaced persons

OPM   Office of the Prime Minister

THE EVOLUTION OF LEGAL PLURALISM IN THE LAND CONFLICT OF JEMNA OASIS, TUNISIA: TWO CENTURIES OF CO-EVOLVING LEGALITIES AND THE EMERGENCE OF SOCIAL AND SOLIDARITY ECONOMY AS NEW PARADIGM

Daniele Vico*

*Facultat d'Economia i Empresa - Universitat de Barcelona, danielevico.dv@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper analyses the evolution of the dynamics of power and legitimacy in the land conflict of Jemna Oasis (Tunisia) from pre-colonial times to present, with particular emphasis on the post-revolutionary phase of negotiation between the State and the locals. From a socio-legal perspective, it reflects on the interactions of the different "legalities" in play. It points out the role of "revolutionary rights" and of the principles of Social and Solidarity Economy in shaping the political discourse in favour of the collective experience. The paper relies mainly on journalistic sources, backed by semi-structured interviews to relevant stakeholders involved.

Questo articolo analizza l'evoluzione delle dinamiche di potere e legittimazione nel conflitto per la terra dell'oasi di Jemna, dall'epoca precoloniale a oggi, con particolare enfasi sui negoziati tra lo Stato e la comunità locale successivi alla rivoluzione. Attraverso un approccio socio-giuridico, l'articolo riflette sulle interazioni tra le diverse "legalità" in gioco, mostrando il ruolo della "legalità rivoluzionaria" e dei principi dell'Economia Sociale e Solidale nell'orientare il discorso politico in favore dell'esperienza collettiva di Jemna. L'articolo si basa principalmente su fonti giornalistiche, supportate da interviste semi-strutturate a attori rilevanti coinvolti nel conflitto.

Keywords

Land conflict, Jemna, Tunisia, Legal Pluralism, Social and Solidarity Economy

Introduction

In the centre-south of Tunisia, between the lake of *Chott El-Jerid* and the Sahara Desert, there is a small town called Jemna. Part of the *Gouvernorat de Kébili*, it is at the centre of the homonymous oasis. This oasis is surrounded by palm trees, producing dates of the variety *Deglet Nour*, one of the main productive activities of the local economy. In recent years, the Oasis gained national attention because of the tug-of-war between the Tunisian State and the inhabitants of Jemna over the property of the land and the right to exploit it. The local population has always had property claims over the lands surrounding the oasis and has occupied the palm plantation in the chaotic aftermath of the Revolution of 2011. On the other side, the State stresses that the land belong to it since its nationalisation after Tunisian independence[1]. But the land conflict fought by Jemna's locals has much older roots than the occupation of 2011, revealing many facets and socio-legal layers involving pre-

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[1] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

colonial, colonial, State, customary and even revolutionary law. The aim of this paper is to investigate the evolution of the interaction between different sources of law in the context of the land conflict of Jemna's Oasis since the pre-colonial age, with particular attention to the post-revolutionary developments.

The case of Jemna is particularly relevant because it offers an additional perspective from the North of Africa to the literature on the legal pluralism, underlying concept of many land struggles in the continent. Furthermore, it provides an opportunity to develop an analysis that goes beyond the usual dichotomy between customary law and State law, through a complex network of interactions between several different types of legality, some older, some newer or "renewed" through modern practices of conflict. The case of Jemna, although it has been loudly covered by the press in recent times, lacks proper academic coverage, especially in the field of law and society and generally of social studies. This research paper aims to contribute to fill the gap in the literature by providing an interesting case study to animate the academic debate.

The conceptual core of this paper is the theory of legal pluralism as it has been applied to Africa by Berihun Gebeye (2017) in his "Decoding legal pluralism in Africa". Additionally, the analysis made by Lund&Boone (2013) of land politics in Africa was of great help, especially their classification of different forms of tenure and transactions. As explained above, due to the lack of research on the specific issue (at least up to 2020), I exploited the academic literature mainly to draw information on the general context of Tunisia. To draw a picture of the more recent developments concerning the land conflict, I had to rely mainly on journalistic sources of different sorts, found on the web. It is important to note that most of the sources I found are ideologically/politically connotated: this forced me to pay more attention to the validity and to the variety of the sources. However, this helped me to better understand the socio-cultural instances behind the different positions involved in the conflict. Furthermore, my analysis is based on primary sources that I personally collected: to better frame the position of the different parties involved, I conducted two semi-structured interviews to two persons directly and deeply involved in the recent negotiations between the State and the locals.

The core of my contribution lies first of all in the attempt to take the *affaire* of Jemna out of the journalistic narrative, by providing a case study that attempts to systematically describe its historical evolution and the interaction of different legalities in the conflict. Secondly, it offers an example of the increasing complexity of legal pluralism in post-colonial Africa, beyond the reductionist dichotomic framing of customary law vs State law. Jemna struggle involves many other different legalities, sometimes coexisting, often conflicting.

The first section of the paper provides a brief overview on the recent history of Tunisia, focusing mainly on the Revolution of 2011. The second section outlines the history of the land of Jemna, starting from the first "expropriation" by the French coloniser until today's negotiations between the State and the local community. The third section draws on the previous two to analyse the evolution of the interactions between different legalities over time in the conflict, introducing the concept of "revolutionary legality" and the role of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) in shaping the legal discourse at the national level in Tunisia.

The recent history of Tunisia (El Houssi 2018) and the Revolution of Dignity

The geographical area today corresponding to Tunisia had been under the influence of the Ottoman Empire since the end of XVI century, but the authority over the country was delegated to the local aristocracy of Tunis, who was expressing a *Bey* (king), via dynastic succession. After the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, Tunisia became a French Protectorate in 1881. In 1956, it became independent through a pacific transition negotiated with the French *Metropole*. A year after, the country became a Republic, by deposing the *Bey* (still formally in charge during the colonial period). The first elected president was Habib Bourguiba, leader of the nationalist party *Néo-Destour*, that closely after Independence began to follow a socialist orientation and changed its name in Desturian Socialist Party in 1964. Bourguiba remained in power until 1984, when he was overthrown through a coup by Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali, after implementing some minor political liberalisations, changed the Constitution to remain in power. He remained at the head of the country until 2011, developing what the Tunisian social geographer Habib Ayeb (2011, 468) calls "an absolute dictatorship with a modernist face", built on "a real organised economic mafia", a "very effectively performing and technically modern police system" and a "systematic and clientelistic policy of selective redistribution of resources".

In 2011, the Arab Spring inflamed the whole north African region. The first episode happened precisely in Tunisia: on December 17th, 2010, the street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi sets himself on fire in Sidi Bouzid, a marginalised region of the country, after being prohibited to carry on his economic activity (Ibid). He, as thousands of other people in the country, was making a living out of its activity as street vendor. When he was prevented from doing this, he protested that the authorities should let him work and live honestly. Through his extreme gesture, "he showed everyone that his dignity was […] a line that should not be crossed by others" (Ibid, 472). The protests lit in Sidi Bouzid and rapidly spread in the other small cities of the area. By the beginning of January, the whole centre of Tunisia was shaken by violent protests, that police tried to bloodily (and unsuccessfully) repress. Bouazizi's claim for Dignity, heeded by the protestors, became an open challenge to the regime. The

protest movement spread all over the country, following two directions: from the centre to the south and to the north, "and in the small towns […] peripheral to the coastal metropolis" (Ibid, 474), where most of the inhabitants came from poor or marginalised regions of Tunisia. When the protest reached the big cities of Sfax and Tunis, the student "elites" and the urban middle classes joined the movement, adding a claim for freedom and political participation. Ben Ali left the country on January 14th, and a process of democratisation of the country began.

Ayeb's analysis of the revolution is very interesting. He identifies one of the major causes of the protest in the huge regional divide that there was (and still is) between the north-east and the south-west of the country. The first area, closer to the sea, has the largest concentration of infrastructures and investments and it presents very high levels of socio-economic development. The second is characterised by an extractive economic system focused on transferring resources to the north of the country and to international markets. This resulted, over the years, in the progressive depletion of the natural and human resources and therefore in the increasing marginalisation of the region (Ibid, 471-472). The Revolution started from a marginal area of the centre, and the identification with Bouazizi was immediate among the people of the south and the west and among the internal migrants living in peripheral areas of the big cities of the north. Named "Revolution of Dignity", it implied the importance of a dignity based on basic socio-economic rights such as employment, food and end of marginalisation. Indeed, the main claim of the Revolution was for socio-economic rights, paired with a revendication for civil-political rights only in the final phases of the protest, through the involvement of the urban middle class (Ibid, 474). This interpretation is fundamental to understand the instances involved in the land conflict of Jemna.

The history of Jemna's land

It was difficult to identify the owners of the lands surrounding Jemna before French colonisation. Some sources describe the oases of the desertic region of Jerid as composed of a multitude of gardens, owned in majority by a local elite, the *Šorfa* (Battesti 2013, 10). Another source generally underlines how a large part of the agricultural land of the country was considered "indivisible" and "community managed".[2] According to Tahar Etahri, President of the *Association pour la Protection de l'Oasis de Jemna*[3] (APOJ), there is a document dated 1856, signed by a notary of the *Bey* of Tunis, which proves that the land belonged to the tribe of *Hnaien*.[4] In 1886, the colonial authority imposed a land registry,

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[2] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

[3] The association established in 2011 by the local community to manage the occupied land, which will be better describe later in the paragraph.

[4] From my interview with T. Etahri, conducted in January 2020. All the citations of Etahri present in the paper come from this interview.

individualising the property of agricultural land to facilitate the access to settlers.[5] In the region of Jerid, the best parcels of land were confiscated and assigned to French settlers or to people from Algeria (Battesti 2013, 10). This was the destiny of the land of Jemna, dispossessed in 1912.[6] In 1937, the French family of Maus de Rolley settled in the town and set up a palm plantation. This expropriation, imposed without compensation, remained stuck in the collective memory of the population.[7]

With the advent of the independence, Bourguiba's socialist government nationalised the land (1964) (Ibid) and pursued a modernist model of intensive agriculture.[8] Etahri explained that, in 1964 and 1965, the local population "sent two letters to the political authorities of the time, claiming the land back". In the same period, according to an officer of Ministry of Agriculture involved in the issue since 2016, that I interviewed, the people of Jemna made an agreement with the Tunisian Government, to get the land back and to purchase to the State the palm trees planted on the land since the French occupation. The government set the price at 80.000 dinars and many families of Jemna contributed to the first tranche of payment (half of the amount). However, the government did not fulfil its promise and gave to the families, instead, some shares in other public enterprises in the region, without any land property shift[9]. "We payed 40 thousand dinars with our money. The governor built a hotel in Gabès, launched an import-export company and a transport company. We are shareholders of these companies, willing or unwilling", told me Etahri. Furthermore, in 1980 they received an answer to their letters by the governor of the region, "refusing to give back the oasis". After the socialist developmentalist policies of the 60s/70s, when the plantation was managed through state-owned cooperatives, the 80s were characterised by progressive economic liberalisation and by Structural Adjustment Programs imposed by the International Monetary Fund[10]. The plantation was managed by the *Société Tunisienne des Industries Laitières* (led by two entrepreneurs close to Ben Ali), that went bankrupt in 2002. At the beginning of 2011, it was managed by a *societé de mise en*

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[5] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

[6] https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/jemna-in-tunisia-inspiring-land-struggle-in-north-africa/

[7] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

[8] https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/jemna-in-tunisia-inspiring-land-struggle-in-north-africa/

[9] From my interview with the officer of the Ministry of Agriculture, conducted in January 2020. All the citations attributed to them present in the paper come from this interview.

[10] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

valeur et de developpement agricole (SMVDA), a type of private sector organisation foreseen by the Tunisian law.

Then, the Revolution began, and it spread to Jemna.

> During the Revolution, the institutions belonging to the State were occupied and sometimes set on fire by the young protesters. In Jemna, the police station was set on fire and in the same day, on the 12 of January 2011, the young people took back what they always considered the property of their ancestors. The palm plantation represents for them the power, the dispossession, the malversation, the corruption and also a form of tyranny experienced by their parents. They took back the land and expelled the keeper that was in that place, and from that moment on, the investors have never put their foot on our land anymore (Etahri).

The young people mentioned by Etahri in his chronicle of those days were part of the *Comité Revolutionnaire de Jemna*, one of the several local committees that were set up during the Revolution. On January 14th, Ben Ali fled the country. The first thing that the Committee did, in agreement with the local community, was to establish the *Association pour la Protection de l'Oasis de Jemna*, with the aim to manage the agricultural production in a collective way and for the benefit of the entire community[11]. According to Etahri, since 2011 the economic situation of the plantation significantly improved: the number of locals hired rose, the increasing annual profits are entirely devolved to the local community through the construction of infrastructures and the implementation of social projects. Every decision is taken in assembly in the main square of Jemna, involving the whole community, and then implemented by the APOJ.[12] "Our activity fits in the framework of Social and Solidarity Economy", proudly says Etahri.

Between 2011 and 2016, the APOJ carried on its activities smoothly, without interferences from the State.

> [The] conflict was declared much after 2011, because the Tunisian State between 2011 and 2016 was not interested in proving its rights. This because it was a weak State […] that wanted to avoid the confrontation, because […] [it] did not consider Jemna as an important problem (Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture)

The government, laboriously established after the Revolution, was initially too focused on the constituent process of the renewed nation to take care of an occupied land at the periphery of the country. A new government was elected in 2016.

> [The new government] was more stable. The Ministry of the State Properties [and of Land Affairs] was someone who knew the issue, and so he got interested in Jemna, also because Jemna was really starting to generate interest […]. Economic interests, because it was starting

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[11] https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/north-africa-west-asia/jemna-in-tunisia-inspiring-land-struggle-in-north-africa/

[12] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

to generate large sums of money. But also political interests, because the new government started to position itself in the south regions (Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture).

According to the officer, under the pressure of the former renters of the plantation, in 2016 the Ministry of the State Properties and of Land Affairs[13] sent inspectors to Jemna to analyse the situation, and then notified to the APOJ to stop the exploitation of the oasis. The Association refused and, in Autumn 2016, it organised the annual public auction to sell the date harvest. The auction was initially blocked by the Ministry, but it was reorganised and carried out some days later. The Ministry reacted by asking the Central Bank to freeze the bank accounts of the Association and of the purchasers or the dates. The accounts got blocked, and this generated a huge wave of solidarity both in Tunisia and abroad[14]. Many inhabitants of Jemna, followed by other people from all around the country, threatened to withdraw their money from the bank and to shut down their bank accounts, putting a lot of pressure on the authorities.[15]

Eventually, the Ministry of State Properties outlined a proposal to the APOJ: they could continue to carry on the productive activities, but they had to set up an SMVDA, with participation of the state with 49% of the shares, and the remaining 51% owned by the Association. The property of the land was still not under discussion. The APOJ was not convinced, and it refused the proposal[16]. Then, the Government decided to appoint the Ministry of Agriculture to seek a solution.

> We were not part of the conflict. […] we deal with everything that concerns agricultural production. […] So there was the intervention of the Ministry of Agriculture just because [the Government] adopted a more social, politically leftist, approach. […] As it supported Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE), it reoriented toward this approach (Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture).

As the officer explained, in September 2017, they reached an agreement to make a transition toward a different organisational form of exploitation which can fulfil the State's demand for legality, while preserving the experience of SSE created by the Association. The agreement was built in the context the national debates on SSE, that later resulted in the adoption of the National Law on SSE in June 2020[17]. The agreement comprised four clauses.

I.   The Ministry of Agriculture is the guarantor of the transition phase toward the legalisation of the exploitation of the Oasis.

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[13] Hereinafter referred to as "the Ministry of State Properties"

[14] http://www.tunisiainred.org
/tir/?p=6825

[15] Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture

[16] ibid

[17] https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_749012/lang--
en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20bill%20on%20social%20and,objections%20and%20only%20one%20abstenti
on.&text=The%20adoption%20of%20this%20laws,long%20process%20of%20tripartite%20consultations

II.   The bank accounts of the purchasers and of the Association will be relieved.

III.   During the transition phase, the association will continue to manage the plantation, with the technical support of the Ministry of Agriculture.

IV.   There will be a revision of the law on UCPA[18] of 1984, to add a clause that will put more power on the Committee of Control over the General Assembly of the cooperatives.

The agreement, that was still in force when I collected the interviews in early 2020, was expected to terminate in the moment of the release of the SSE law and of the emendation of 1984 Law on UCPA.

As explained by the officer, who was involved in the negotiations, the will of the parties was to meet the State demand to respect the Law while at the same time preserving the spirit of SSE of the experience of Jemna. The first proposal of the Ministry of Agriculture was to set up an UCPA, very common organisational structure among small farmers and very close to the collective management implemented by the APOJ. The APOJ refused this option because the main governing body of the UCPA is the General Assembly, which is formed by all the *cooperateurs* (the members of the cooperative). This means that, ultimately, they have the power to decide how to invest (or distribute) the profits of the cooperative: this did not guarantee that the experience of Jemna would remain fully collective and community-oriented. This is the *rationale* behind point IV of the agreement: the Committee of Control of the UCPA is a body formed by organisations and persons outside the cooperative (i.e. the APOJ, the Municipality or other local groups or individuals). Giving it more power can provide an effective tool to preserve the experience of Jemna. Still, this implies to create a new form of cooperative, option that can be discussed only within the framework of the SSE law. The SSE law proposal, advanced by Tunisian trade union UGTT in 2017[19], has been revised by the Government and has been adopted by the Parliament in June 2020.[20] As of 2020, the agreement was, slowly, being implemented, and both the parties were committed to it. "I want to underline" Etahri said "that the contribution […] of the Ministry of Agriculture is great and that they tried to find a fair solution to the problem".

The different legalities in play

Retracing the different phases of the conflict for land in the history of Jemna reveals the enrooted presence of legal pluralism. According to Lund&Boone (2013, 2) "normative and institutional

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[18] The UCPA is the *Unité Cooperative de Production Agricole*

[19] https://africanmanager.com/51_leconomie-sociale-et-solidaire-est-un-mecanisme-important-pour-lemploi-et-la-discrimination-positive-entre-les-regions/

[20] https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/cooperatives/news/WCMS_749012/lang--en/index.htm#:~:text=The%20bill%20on%20social%20and,objections%20and%20only%20one%20abstention.&text=The%20adoption%20of%20this%20laws,long%20process%20of%20tripartite%20consultations

pluralism" in land issues is "prevailing in […] most African societies, [meaning] that people struggle and compete over access to land by referring to competing principles of tenure". In this article, I refer to legal pluralism in the conception identified by Gebeye (2017, 2): "In Africa, legal pluralism is and has been the application of customary, religious and statutory laws in the same social field with either state recognition (weak legal pluralism) or without it (deep legal pluralism)". In Jemna's case, specifically, we can say that the most recurrent expression of legal pluralism has been the "deep" one, because in most of its history the relation between different legalities has been conflictual.

During the pre-colonial period, sources say that the land of Jemna belonged to the tribe of *Hnaien*, who was living in the region, according to what Lund and Boone (2013, 6) frame as "customary or communal rights", namely ownership based on the membership to a community. This customary right was acknowledged and reinforced by the central authority of the time, the Bey, through the legal document of 1856.

With the advent of colonisation, the land was "expropriated" by the French authorities, in a perfectly legal fashion, thanks to the Berlin Conference, that "established the legal basis for the scramble for Africa" by setting European legal systems "as superior legal orders in colonial Africa" (Gebeye 2017, 238). The prevailing principle of tenure, in that period, was that of the "government allocation", granting the land "to settlers who had no prior claim […] on the basis of ancestry, use, established occupation of the land or sweat equity, or market principles" (Lund&Boone 2013, 8). The population of Jemna could only rely on the memory of customary property right which was completely unrecognised by the French.

The destiny of customary rights in post-colonial African states was varied and had mixed success (Gebeye 2017, 242). While many countries recognised them and relied on them to manage and control local jurisdictions, this was not the case of independent Tunisia. After independence, the customary-backed claim was ignored and, as sometimes happened in some African countries, "portrayed as an obstacle to agricultural modernisation" (Lund&Boone 2013, 6). The only valid principle under Bourguiba and Ben Ali was again "government allocation", this time granting the land "to members of the political élite" (Ibid, 8). Despite the attempt to use the economic lever to re-purchase their land, the local population remained powerless until the beginning of 21st century.

The Revolution marked a turning point in the balance of power between the different legalities. The temporary impotence of the State allowed the customary claim to be effectively established, on the

basis of the claim of Jemna's families to be the descendants of the *Hnaien*[21]. In this context, the customary property right blurred with another legality, that was established through the Revolution:

> The point of view of the APOJ is based on another legality, namely the 'revolutionary legality' of 2011, which says that the framework in which labour was organised before have to be changed, in order to answer to a need and to another dynamic of development (Officer of the Ministry of Agricolture).

This "revolutionary legality" answered the quest for dignity and socio-economic rights stemmed from the Revolution, and brought forward the idea that the production system of Jemna could be changed, and that it was right to do so (ethically but also legally speaking). This idea goes beyond the simple claim for ownership, also involving that of exploitation of the land. According to Ayeb[22], the *Comité Révolutionnaire de Jemna* contacted the national revolutionary authorities in the immediate aftermath of the occupation, to get to solve the issue of the property (the revolutions are usually a factor of ceasing of the previous legal systems (Gebeye 2017, 242). However, they did not manage to resolve the issue in their favour[23]. Instead, the new democratic State of Tunisia, after recovering the necessary stability, tried to reassess its authority over Jemna's land playing two legal "cards". One is that of the government allocation: the land is state-owned, and the occupation is therefore an illegal act. The second stems from government allocation principle, but it concerns the status of the APOJ: according to the Law 21 of 1995 on the exploitation of state-owned land by private organisations, an Association cannot legally carry on economic activities[24]. Therefore, even if admitting the possibility to let the productive experience started in 2011 continue (which is the position of the State since the agreement of 2017), it must be put back on the tracks of legality through a change in the organisational status of the organisation. Additionally, it is worth noting that "jurisdiction over land is lodged in institutions, but perhaps not a single set of institutions. Central governments may claim overall control" (Lund&Boone 2013, 4), but within the State there can be different competing actors over the same jurisdiction. This is clearly our case, where we witness an initial strong intervention of the Ministry of Land Properties, seeking a confrontation backed by the government allocation principle, and then an orientation toward a compromise solution through the intervention of the Ministry of Agriculture. This strategy shift reflects the changed balance of power due to the effective national and international support to the cause, and the increased attention to social stability paid by the Government.

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[21] T. Etahri.

[22] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

[23] https://habibayeb.wordpress.com/2016/10/03/jemna-ou-la-resistance-dune-communaute-depossedee-de-ses-terres-agricoles/

[24] Officer of the Ministry of Agriculture.

Finally, it is worth analysing the role of the SSE "philosophy" in orienting the action of the actors involved in the issue. Based on the values of social equity, redistribution of profit and democratic management of the economic life (Borzaga&Galera 2014, 17), SSE perfectly matches with the quest for socio-economic rights, ultimately for dignity, rising from Revolution. Therefore, it provides an answer to the need for a change in the organisation of labour which is embedded in the "revolutionary legality" mentioned above. We could even talk about an "Sse legality" which is recognised, accepted and promoted by the community of Jemna, not reflected in the juridical system of the State until 2020. This caused the frictions occurred in 2016, but the balance of power leaned in favour of the SSE legality, which was increasingly recognised everywhere in the country. Therefore, it was not the people of Jemna that had to adapt to the State legality, but it was the State that had to catch up with something which is now considered to be right (again, ethically but also morally speaking). This new balance of power was reflected in the agreement of 2017: by adopting a law on SSE, the State reasserted its role, and only then it could compel the APOJ to align to a proper legal status to carry on the economy activity, within a framework that was created to legalise experiences such as Jemna's.

Conclusion and final remarks

The land conflict of the Oasis of Jemna is a conflict that has ancient roots, but it took an unexpected turn only in recent years. Since the expropriation conducted by the French invaders during colonisation, the local community of Jemna had not been able to assert its customary right to own the land of its ancestors for almost a century. Then, the Revolution led to an acceleration of Jemna's struggle, by giving them the opportunity to occupy the land and to enforce the never forgotten customary right. However, this paper shows how such right did not stand still in time, but it evolved through the years, and it was further reinforced by other sources of legality, coming from the national level and even from the international level. The "revolutionary legality" claiming socio-economic rights and dignity, arisen in Sidi Bouzid, and spread throughout the nation, was localised in Jemna through the claim to have a say in the management and exploitation of their lands for their benefit. Furthermore, the Social and Solidarity Economy, an ensemble of theories now internationally recognised, provided a good answer to the demands of Jemna's citizens, and offered a framework perfectly in line with the quests of the Revolution, therefore spreading in the country as a new "SSE legality". The sum of these factors overturned the balance of power in the conflict and put the State legality in a position of disadvantage, forcing the government to negotiate a softer resolution of the conflict, seeking for a compromise that will probably permit to the people of Jemna to preserve what they built, and to let it strive.

Before concluding, a final question must be posed: what about the property of the land? The agreement still does not question the ownership of the land itself, that remains property of the State. The APOJ accepted this compromise, and apparently they are not considering to continue with that battle at the moment.[25] This withdrawal probably happened because Jemna's community had to focus on preserving the experience that they built over the years, and to establish a legal framework to continue to exploit the land. Furthermore, in my opinion, there has been a shift in the focus of the conflict, from the ownership itself toward the exploitation rights, and toward the model of exploitation to be pursued on that land. After roughly 150 years of individualisation and profit-oriented commodisation of the land in Tunisia, in Jemna we observe an attempt to set up a model based on collective management and social impact. And this is probably the most important victory.

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[25] Ibid.

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List of acronyms

Apoj	Association pour la Protection de l'Oasis de Jemna
Sse	Social and Solidarity Economy
Ucpa	Unité Cooperative de Production Agricole
Ugtt	Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail

AGRICULTURE FAMILIALE ET ECONOMIE SOCIALE. FORMES ET DYNAMIQUES DE L'ENTREPRENARIAT AU SÉNÉGAL

Amadou Ndiaye*, Carlotta Fiorino°, Marta Mosca**

*Université Gaston Berger de Saint Louis

°Coordinatrice projet PAISIM

**Université de Turin, CISAO (Centre Interdépartemental de Coopération et Recherche Technique et Scientifique avec l'Afrique)

Abstract

Le développement de l'agriculture familiale s'était plus focalisé sur les spéculations, les filières et les chaines de valeurs en négligeant l'entreprenariat paysan. Cette étude a été mené pour catégoriser les formes d'entreprises paysannes et déterminer la dynamique entrepreneuriale dans trois régions du Sénégal. Les résultats ont permis de caractériser deux grandes formes d'entreprises paysans: l'exploitation familiale paysanne et ses variantes d'une part et d'autre part le regroupement paysan et ses variantes à travers le projet entrepreneurial, les valeurs sociales, la gouvernance, l'occupation de l'espace publique et l'encastrement politique. La détermination des interactions des dimensions économique, sociale, politique et technico-environnementale a permis de caractériser l'entreprenariat paysan sénégalais comme une forme d'entreprenariat social selon les termes de la charte africaine de l'entreprenariat social. Il serait aussi déterminant l'analyse de l'entreprise paysan dont les fondamentaux pourrait être la finalité, la viabilité économique, la relation finalité/ viabilité et la gouvernance.

L'agricoltura familiare si è spesso concentrata sulle filiere, trascurando l'imprenditorialità contadina. Questo studio è stato condotto per classificare le forme di impresa contadina e analizzarne le dinamiche imprenditoriali in tre regioni del Senegal. I risultati hanno permesso di caratterizzare due principali forme di impresa contadina: da un lato l'azienda agricola familiare e le sue varianti, dall'altro le associazioni contadine e le loro declinazioni attraverso il progetto imprenditoriale, i valori sociali, la *governance*, la presenza nello spazio pubblico e il radicamento politico. L'analisi delle interazioni tra dimensione economica, sociale, politica e tecnico-ambientale ha permesso di caratterizzare l'imprenditoria contadina senegalese come una forma di imprenditoria sociale secondo i termini della Carta africana dell'imprenditoria sociale. Sarebbe inoltre decisivo analizzare l'impresa contadina, i cui fondamenti potrebbero essere lo scopo, la sostenibilità economica, il rapporto scopo/sostenibilità e la *governance*.

Keywords

Agriculture familiale, plan d'action, entreprenariat paysan, économie sociale, interaction

Introduction et problématique

En ces temps de bouleversement économique, écologique et climatique, les mouvements sociaux veulent des actes forts qui leur permettent vraiment de changer d'échelle et de répondre pleinement aux enjeux. Le concept d'économie sociale et solidaire cherche à intégrer le projet économique au projet social et vice-versa.

L'Etat du Sénégal, à travers la Direction de l'encadrement économique, social et solidaire, a annoncé sa volonté de faire l'Economie solidaire «un moteur de développement et un moyen de lutte contre la vulnérabilité des femmes et des jeunes». L'entreprenariat sociale notamment dans le domaine agricole devrait contribuer à l'éradication du chômage. Ce dernier s'établit en 2016 à 20, 5 % dont 29, 9 % pour les femmes et 12, 6 % pour les hommes. Occupant près de 70 % de la population active (Faostat 2013), le secteur agricole continue de jouer un rôle primordial dans l'offre d'emplois à la population. Les entreprises agricoles emploient 1 % de la population active alors que l'essentiel (70%) de la population active se retrouve dans l'agriculture familiale. Cette dernière qui continue de jouer un rôle important dans l'occupation/emploi et l'économie sénégalaise, a un faible taux de personnel salarié temporaire (6%) ou permanent (2,4%) selon Ba et Hathie (2014). Elle fonctionne à travers une bonne dose de dimension sociale: recours à une main d'œuvre familiale, aux groupes d'entraide et aux regroupements mutualistes (Ndiaye 2013). La problématique de développement de l'agriculture familiale ne saurait ignorer sa spécificité tendant à intégrer le social à l'activité économique de production. En tout cas, le plan d'action de la décennie (2019-2029) de l'agriculture familiale, adopté en Mai 2019 par la Fao et le Fida, détermine sept piliers. Ces derniers sont en rapport avec le genre (accès des jeunes et femmes aux ressources), la gouvernance (participation à la prise de décision), l'inclusion socio-économique, la durabilité des systèmes agro-alimentaires résilients, la multifonctionnalité de l'agriculture, la création d'un environnement favorable et enfin le renforcement des capacités des producteurs agricole. Alors, ce plan d'action cherche -t- il à promouvoir l'économie sociale au détriment de celle administrée ou libérale centrée sur le produit (spéculation, filière ou chaine de valeurs)? Cette question est d'autant plus pertinente qu'on peut trouver une correspondance entre les piliers de ce plan et les critères de l'économie sociale dont le potentiel reste peu exploré et les conditions de développement peu connues. Les nombreux travaux (Ba et Hathie 2014; Bosc 2014; Diao 1999; Diao 2003; Kanouté 2003; Kleene 1994; Ndiaye 2014; Orsini et al.1985; Sarr et al. 1987) sur les exploitations familiales (Ef) et les organisations de producteurs (Op), n'ont pas fondamentalement systématisés comme objet d'étude les combinaisons « projet entrepreneurial, finalité sociale, lucrativité limitée et gouvernance démocratique ».

En Europe, certains auteurs (Say 1972; Le Play 1872; Fourier,1882) ont identifié des valeurs et principes fondateurs de ces regroupements dans les mouvements associatifs locaux. Ces grands principes communs fonderaient l'unité du champ de l'économie sociale instituée et de l'économie solidaire. Ils sont en général reconnus et codifiés par les lois et la réglementation sous divers formes juridique (les coopératives, les mutuelles et les associations). Aujourd'hui, l'économie sociale et solidaire associe le projet économique ou entrepreneurial, la finalité sociale ou sociétale, la faible ou

l'absence de lucrativité et la gouvernance participative (Paisim 2018). Peut -on appréhender cette dynamique entrepreneuriale dans l'agriculture familiale africaine ?

Selon Ndiaye (2016), l'économie sociale serait consubstantielle à la tradition paysanne africaine à travers les formes d'entreprenariat que sont l'exploitation familiale et l'organisation paysan. Sauf que les orientations volontaristes des politiques agricoles sont concentrées plus sur les quantités de production et les rendements que le développement de l'entreprenariat paysanne. L'économie rurale administrée ou libéralisée s'est plus souciées du rendement, de la productivité, de la rentabilité maximale, dissociant l'économie et le social. Même dans le cadre de la mise en place des coopératives agricoles et Groupement d'intérêt économique (Gie), ce sont les spéculations, les filières et les chaines de valeurs qui ont été mises au centre des préoccupations. Alors, comment saisir ces formes d'entreprises dans l'agriculture familiale africaine? Que préfigurent la dynamique entrepreneuriale?

Objectifs / Méthodologie

Cette étude se fixe comme objectif de faire une analyse de l'entreprenariat paysan en agriculture familiale. Plus spécifiquement, elle se propose de décrire les formes d'entreprises et de caractériser la dynamique entrepreneuriale. Pour ce faire, une importante revue bibliographique a été réalisée. Car la bonne saisine des formes et dynamiques entrepreneurial en agriculture familiale va au-delà des critères (projet économique, finalité sociale, faible lucrativité et gouvernance démocratique) de l'économie sociale. Elle prend en compte les théories scientifiques sur la paysannerie (Redfield 1956), sur l'exploitation familiale (Servolin 1972; Tepitch 1973; Cattin et Faye 1982; Debouvery 2007; Ndiaye 2018) ainsi que sur les regroupements mutualistes (coopératives, Gie, classes d'âge, associations de développement). Les données de terrain, qui ont été collectées, proviennent essentiellement d'entretiens individuels et de focus group menées auprès des producteurs agricoles dans les trois régions d'intervention du Paisim Sénégal (tableau I).

Tableau 1 - Nombres d'entretien auprès des producteurs agricoles

	Nombre d'Entretiens individuels	Nombres de focus group
Saint Louis	16	4
Louga	15	3
Thiès	10	2
Total	41	9

Ces entretiens ont été faits selon les principes du ciblage, de la triangulation, de la saturation de l'information et de l'échantillonnage séquentiel. Ils ont porté sur les critères (Statut, Finalité,

Activités, Gouvernance, Ressources, Rémunération du capital, Échelle des salaires, Usage des excédents, Ancrage territorial et Innovations) de l'entreprise.

En plus, des entretiens informels ont été menée avec les membres de l'équipe du Caper Sa, les responsables et les équipes locaux du projet Paisim ainsi que les responsables de Asescaw, de Fapal et de Sunugal. Les résultats ont été discutés successivement à travers une approche descriptive et analytique puis systémique pour mieux déterminer les formes d'entreprenariat paysan et les dynamiques entrepreneuriales enfin de les caractériser.

Résultats et discussions

Cette étude permet de décrire les formes d'entreprises et de déterminer les dynamiques de l'entreprenariat dans l'agriculture familiale au Sénégal.

Formes d'entreprises

Selon Fontan (2011), le terme « entreprendre » ou encore les notions « d'entrepreneur » ou « d'entreprise » utilisées pour qualifier une activité sociale à vocation économique. Pour lui, Say est le premier économiste à en donner une définition précise: «l'entrepreneur d'industrie, (est) celui qui entreprend de créer pour son compte, à son profit et à ses risques, un produit quelconque».

Say (1972) distingue trois types d'activités sociales: (1) celles permettant la création de richesse économique et qui relèvent de l'entrepreneur d'industrie; (2) celles qui permettent la création de richesse sociale, lesquelles sont prises en charge par des organisateurs de l'entraide ou de la culture par l'entremise des organisations de développement social ou culturel et enfin (3), celles qui produisent de la richesse politique, donc des actions mises en œuvre par des acteurs de la sphère politique publique ou par des promoteurs d'actions collectives (mouvements sociaux). Plus simplement nous retenons que l'entreprise est une unité autonome, organisée pour produire des biens ou des services. Dans cette perspective, l'agriculture familiale au Sénégal compte deux grandes formes d'entreprises. Il s'agit de l'exploitation familiale et du groupement paysan. Pour chacune de ces deux formes des variantes ont été identifiées.

L'exploitation familiale paysanne et ses variantes

En tenant compte de la théorie de la paysannerie de Redfield (1956), et des typologies de Debouvery (2007) et Ndiaye (2013). L'exploitation familiale paysanne (Efp) domine dans l'agriculture familiale au Sénégal à côté de ses variantes que sont l'exploitation familiale agricole (Efa) et l'entreprise individuelle familiale (Eif). Au Sénégal, les membres de l'Efp s'activent dans plusieurs activités du secteur de la production agricole (production végétale et animale, sans être forcément dans l'intégration), du secteur de la transformation (transformation de produits agricoles et artisanat) et du

le secteur des services (petit commerce, transport hippomobile, migrations saisonnières, …). Ainsi, l'Efp est composée de plusieurs unités de revenu (agricole, transformation et services) qui entretiennent des relations avec l'unité de consommation (Gningue 2015; Ndiaye 2016).

Le projet entrepreneurial est ainsi caractérisé par la pluriactivité dont la finalité est la prise en charge les besoins des membres de l'unité de consommation à travers divers revenus. Dans cette logique pluriactive, la rémunération du capital est peu prise en compte. La recherche d'une rentabilité est minimale pour chaque activité (Debouvery 2007). Pour la rémunération du travail, la main d'œuvre familiale dans les champs et troupeaux n'est pas rémunérée. Il s'agit là d'une forme de solidarité intra générationnelle caractéristique de la dimension sociale de l'Efp permettant les prises en charge des besoins de son unité de consommation (alimentation, habit, habitat, santé, éducation, et argents de poche). Cette solidarité interne peut être complété par une solidarité externe à travers les cotisations pour le fonctionnement des structures communautaires (mosquée, école, manifestation religieuse, inondation, Dara etc.) ou l'appui à des individus (maladie, alimentation, rupture d'argent, etc.). Il s'agit là de la dimension sociétale de l'Efp permettant de faire appel de faire souvent appel gratuitement aux groupes d'entraide. Le recours à une main d'œuvre non familiale rémunérée, est exceptionnel. Le poids de la tradition est encore très présent dans la gouvernance et la mise en place des ressources. L'accès au poste de gestionnaire se fait par processus de dévolution (Debouvery 2017). Le mode de prise décision est gérontocratique traditionnelle (fondée sur l'âge et le sexe).

Ces Efp font preuve d'une grande autonomie vis-à-vis des intervenants pour le développement. Les partenaires sont considérés comme source de revenus supplémentaires. Cette liberté de vision et d'action est fondée sur une capacité d'observation et d'innovation (sociale, économique et technique) des membres qui n'ont pas, en général, reçu une formation de base (Faye 2019). Ce fondement entraine une capacité d'adaptation permettant une intégration de la cohérence économique et environnementale, d'une part, ainsi que, d'autre part, des principes économiques et des principes de la solidarité. Les Efp ne sont pas visible directement dans l'espace publique même si elles constituent le vivier de beaucoup de leaders paysans. Elles se « cachent » derrière les organisations de producteurs qui expriment souvent des doléances communautaires et orientent les activités de production en fonction des résultats (intrants, équipements, subventions, dons et bonus crédits) de leurs contacts avec les intervenants pour le développement.

Les exploitations familiales agricoles (Efa) quant à elles se concentrent sur une activité bien définie (production rizicole ou production avicole, transformation agroalimentaire, etc.). Ici le projet économique agricole est dominant et clairement défini même si les Efa peuvent faire de la diversification (Sangharé 2015). L'autonomie de ces Efa dépendent de la rentabilité de ce projet

agricole. Cette rentabilité doit assurer au maximum les besoins de la famille à travers l'autoconsommation et surtout la commercialisation du produit brute ou transformé.

Le projet entrepreneurial est caractérisé par une activité principale (avec des une diversification possible) dont la finalité est la rentabilité financière et économique (Debouvery 2007). Dans cette logique de rentabilité, la rémunération du capital est importante. Même si elles utilisent encore une main d'œuvre familiale non rémunérée, l'utilisation des sourgha (main d'œuvre non familiale) rémunérés est presque systématique dans les régions à St louis et Thiès. Ainsi, ces Efa, dans la rémunération du travail, sont créatrices d'emplois même si des études (Ndiaye 2013a) montre que le salaire des sourgha, non encadré formellement, est limité de fait.

A l'intérieur de l'Efa, la solidarité intra générationnelle est présente. Elle est doublée d'une solidarité extra générationnelle pour pérenniser les acquis. En effet, il a été noté trois cas d'Efa qui ont payé la formation professionnelle de leurs jeunes membres dans une école publique de formation de techniciens agricoles. Ces derniers tentent de gérer à travers des visions clairement définies. En outre, le projet social de l'Efa est aussi dans la complémentarité de son unité de production et de son unité de consommation. L'Efa se met au service de la communauté à travers la mise à la disposition d'équipement (motopompe, véhicule ou matériel agricole) propres pour résoudre des problèmes d'inondation, de transport ou des travaux de champs communautaires. Elle participe aux cotisations pour le fonctionnement des structures communautaires (mosquée, école, manifestation religieuse, inondation, Dara etc.) ou des individus (maladie, alimentation, rupture d'argent, etc.). La gouvernance démocratique se met progressivement en place au détriment de la mode de prise décision est gérontocratique traditionnelle. On note une évolution dans l'accès au poste de gestionnaire; les jeunes qui ont été formés prennent des responsabilités.

Beaucoup d'Efa se sont construites en capitalisant progressivement des ressources mis à disposition par les intervenants. Pour beaucoup, leurs positions de leaders ont permis d'acquérir des bonus crédit ou des fonds perdus ou parfois des superficies aménagées (St Louis). Par rapport à l'Efp, il est noté une perte d'autonomie vis à vis des projets de développement mais une meilleure capacité d'innovation avec la possibilité d'intégrer les problématiques globaux (agroécologie, changement climatique, etc.) tout au moins dans le discours. La visibilité des Efa n'est pas encore évidente. Elles fournissent néanmoins, la majorité de leaders locaux qui occupent l'espace publique. Ces leaders expriment les doléances communautaires et négocient avec les projets de développement. Leur encastrement politique leur permet de bénéficier des discriminations positives pour l'accès aux intrants, équipements et financements à travers les subventions, dons et bonus credits.

L'Entreprise Individuelle Familiale (Eif) est caractérisée par les volontés de certains nouveaux acteurs de mettre en place d'emblée une entreprise personnelle à travers des ressources propres. Il

s'agit en général d'émigrées de retour (Louga) ou d'anciens agents de développement à la retraite (Thiès et St Louis). En général, plusieurs processus sont observés sur le terrain.

Les immigrés de retour cherchent d'emblée à détacher leurs entreprises de l'exploitation familiale mais les réalités locales les rattrapent. D'une part, l'entreprise personnel se met à utiliser les ressources familiales (foncier, matériel, main d'œuvre gratuite) et, d'autre part, elle met ses revenus à la disposition du ménage. Tout en gardant son statut, l'entreprise personnel devient de fait l'unité de production et source de revenu du ménage qui joue le rôle d'unité de consommation. Dans ces conditions, elle se mettent au rythme de l'agriculture familiale et cherche le partenariat avec les intervenants pour le développement. L'entreprise personnel se transforme et devient de fait une Eif.

Pour les anciens fonctionnaires (agent de développement en retraite), deux processus sont observés. Certains élaborent un business plan et utilise leurs économies pour monter une affaire agricole (production avicole, maraichage). D'autres retraités rentrent d'emblée dans l'exploitation familiale d'origine et profite de leur statut de doyens pour tenter de transformer l'exploitation familiale une entreprise au sens propre du terme. Mais dans les deux cas, la réalité de l'agriculture familiale fait évoluer les projets d'entreprise en Eif.

Ainsi, l'Eif épouse les mêmes caractéristiques que l'Efa quant à l'autonomie, le projet entrepreneurial, la finalité et la logique économique, la rémunération du capital et du travail (avec l'utilisation de sourgha car les enfants vont à l'école ou sont resté en ville), La dimension sociétale est très prononcée; elle pèse beaucoup sur le projet entrepreneurial préalablement élaboré et l'oriente plus vers l'entreprenariat social. La volonté initiale d'autonomie vis-à-vis des projets de développement se rétrécie progressivement dans beaucoup de cas. La capacité d'adaptation et d'innovation est à l'image de ce qui se passe au niveau des Efa. Il en est de même pour l'occupation de l'espace publique et l'encastrement politique. La gouvernance qui se veut démocratique est porteuse d'autocratie ou de de gérontocratie selon les cas.

Le regroupement paysan et ses variantes

Il est important d'apporter d'emblée une différence entre le regroupement paysan et le regroupement agricole. Le regroupement agricole (Ndiaye 2013) en général de type coopératif réunit, non des personnes, mais des entreprises agricoles qui se mettent ensemble pour créer des économies d'échelle dans l'approvisionnement (coopérative d'achat), dans la commercialisation (coopérative de vente) et dans la mise en œuvre des activités agricoles (coopérative d'utilisation de matériel agricole). Dans l'agriculture familiale sénégalais, le regroupement paysan dominant côtoie le sous-groupement paysan et le groupe des relais. Le regroupement paysan est en général une association de femmes (mbootay), de jeunes, de villages (Association villageoise de développement), des membres d'aménagement hydro-agricole (union hydraulique). Les associations (femmes, villages ou jeunes)

agissent solidairement à partir de cotisations mensuelles ou hebdomadaires. La solidarité peut épouser la forme du fonds mutuels (prêt et crédit revolving) dominant, la forme d'épargne (retrait suivant l'échéance) et/ou la forme de fonds d'assurance (appui individuel en cas maladie, intempérie, décès, etc.). Ainsi, les cotisations sont mises alternativement (à un taux d'intérêt nul ou faible) à la disposition des membres, pour les permettre de financer des activités économiques. Chaque membre détermine librement son projet entrepreneurial à travers le choix de son activité économique. En général, les bénéfices de cette activité constituent des revenus supplémentaires de l'unité de consommation de l'exploitation familiale.

Cependant, il arrive à ce regroupement de travailler avec un fonds mis à disposition par une projet de développement. Le cas, échéant les membres bénéficiaires sont liés quant à la nature et la modalité (individuel ou de groupe) de dérouler l'activité économique. A Saint louis, cette solidarité communautaire est utilisée par les unions hydrauliques pour solliciter les financements des campagnes agricoles auprès de la Cncas. Le financement obtenu globalement est réparti entre les différents membres pour l'approvisionnement en intrants. A la fin de la campagne, chaque membre rembourse à hauteur du montant emprunté. A Thiès, le respect des «conditionnalités» des intervenants a permis la migration progressive vers la production agroécologique et la percée des unités de transformation de produits agroécologiques. Ainsi, le regroupement paysan de l'agriculture familiale fait preuve d'innovation et d'adaptation.

Cette capacité d'innovation a permis au groupement paysan d'acheter des biens matériels (chaines, bâches, marmites, bols, etc.) qu'ils louent lors de fête de famille (mariage) ou manifestations communautaires (religieux). Cette location, au-delà de sa dimension sociale, contribue à l'amélioration de l'enveloppement financière au profit du crédit revolving. Si chaque membre est responsable de la rentabilité de son crédit, le projet entrepreneurial est construit à travers la solidarité avec une logique de service aux membres et accessoirement à la communauté tout en garantissant plus la rémunération du capital que celle du travail au sein du groupement. Sa finalité est sociale. Ainsi, le regroupement paysan est une association de personnes liées par le terroir, le genre ou l'activité et dont les membres s'entraident volontairement.

Le regroupement paysan est très présente dans l'espace publique qui constitue pour elle un lieu de médiation et de négociation avec le pouvoir public et le projet de développement pour elle- même et pour l'exploitation familiale. Il fait l'objet de discriminations positives à cause de leur genre (femmes ou jeunes) et du nombre important des membres (économie d'échelle).

La nature démocratique de la gouvernance du regroupement paysan n'est pas avérée pour beaucoup d'acteurs. Les décisions ne sont pas de prise de manière démocratique. La rétention d'informations

se généralise et les renouvellements des instances exécutives ne se font pas. Pour beaucoup d'acteurs, cette dérive démocratique est à l'origine de la naissance du sous-groupements paysans.

Le sous- groupement paysan est une forme de scission non assumée du regroupement paysan. En effet, à l'intérieur des regroupements surtout de femmes, certains membres créent des sous-groupements autonomes qui peuvent faire les mêmes activités que le regroupement paysan. Plusieurs facteurs sont à l'origine de ce phénomène.

Ces facteurs sont en rapport avec la gouvernance et la rémunération (capital et travail) du regroupement paysan d'une part ainsi que, d'autre part, des modalités d'intervention des projets de développement. Le non renouvellement des instances, la rétention d'informations et les modes de prise de décision sont généralement désignés. Alors que la pluralité des intervenants permet à des sous-groupes dont les cotisations n'auraient pu faire jouer les économies d'échelle pour un fonds mutuel, de bénéficier de financement en mettant en place des sous-groupement. Mais aussi, certains membres qui ont une certaine confiance à leurs compétences techniques pensent avoir fait preuve de beaucoup de bénévolat au service du regroupement paysan sans une valorisation de leur engagement. En général, les sous-groupements paysans se veulent plus démocratique et tente de mettre en place un projet entrepreneurial fondé sur la rémunération du travail avec des ressources provenant des intervenants. Il arrive même que ce sous-groupe paysan épouse les limites d'une exploitation familiale du point de vue de sa composition même si son positionnement est public. Ainsi, les sous-groupements paysans se positionnent comme des concurrents importants du groupement paysan qui semble perdre du terrain.

A côté du sous-groupement, une autre variante a été identifié dans la région de St louis. Il s'agit de groupement de relais qui résultent du système d'intervention pour le développement et la nature paysannal des exploitations familiales. En effet, les projets de développement a permis l'émergence d'autres types d'acteurs. Il s'agit pour les acteurs des relais de santé (agent de santé communautaire, matrone, sensibilisateur, etc.), d'agriculture (paysan formateur, relais agricole, etc.) et d'élevage (auxiliaire d'élevage, vaccinateurs, etc.). Face au faible nombre de techniciens, ces relais volontaires appuient l'activité du secteur (santé, agriculture, élevage, …) dans leurs localités (Ndiaye 2016). En général, ils s'organisent en associations (groupement de relais) pour mieux coordonner leurs activités mais aussi pour faire preuve de solidarité entre eux.

Mais, il a été observé des groupements de relais qui vont au-delà de la coordination d'activités. Ils mettent en place des activités économiques. Dans la région de saint louis, il a été identifié une association d'animateurs de santé et une association de membres du comité de gestion des écoles (Cge) dont les membres ont mis en place respectivement des activités d'élevage et de riziculture. Pour l'association des animateurs de santé, les bénéfices sont redistribués aux membres en parts égales.

Les jeunes adultes qui la composent, doivent apporter leurs contributions à la prise en charge des besoins de l'unité de consommation de l'exploitation familiale. Pour l'association de membre du Cge, les bénéfices sont mis à la disposition de la cantine scolaire pour appuyer la scolarisation universelle. Le projet entrepreneurial est centré sur la promotion de rentabilité économique mais repose sur une logique de solidarité interne (membres) d'une part et, d'autre part, de solidarité communautaire (envers les élèves). Ainsi, le groupe de relais sont des regroupements de personnes liées par l'engagement volontaire au sein de sa communauté. Il mobilise les ressources externes tout en cherchant la rémunération d'un travail. La prise de décision sont qualifiées de démocratique.

Le groupement de relais est présent dans l'espace publique qui constitue pour lui un lieu de médiation et de négociation avec les pouvoirs publics et les projets de développement.

L'exploitation familiale et le regroupement paysan ainsi que leurs variantes constituent les formes d'entreprise paysanne au Sénégal. Leurs interactions, en rapport avec les intervenants (structures publiques de développement, institutions de financement, Ong et projets de développement, etc.) déterminent la dynamique de l'entreprenariat paysan dans l'agriculture familiale au Sénégal.

Dynamique de l'entreprenariat paysan

L'entrepreneuriat paysan est régi par la dynamique des acteurs et la dynamique entrepreneuriale.

Dynamique des acteurs

Dans l'agriculture familiale sénégalaise, la dynamique des acteurs est entretenue par les valeurs de solidarité au profit de l'unité de consommation, l'émergence de nouveaux acteurs et le niveau d'intervention des acteurs. L'interaction de ces éléments favorise un jeu nécessitant un ajustement constant des acteurs.

La solidarité dans l'agriculture familiale, prédétermine la pluriactivité et la diversification qui d'ailleurs se confondent aisément (Sangharé 2015). Les membres de la même famille migrent d'unité de revenu à une autre pour satisfaire les besoins alimentaires ou non de la famille, avec en bandoulière les valeurs sociales (Say 1972; Le Play 1872, Fourier 1882). Chaque membre de la famille a, en plus de l'activité agricole commune, une autre activité qui lui permet d'apporter personellement un revenu de plus dans l'unité familiale et de cotiser dans le regroupement paysan. Ces cotisations régulières (hebdomadaire, mensuel) développement la mutualité (prêt et crédit revolving pour dérouler des activités économiques), l'épargne (retrait suivant l'échéance) et l'assurance (appui individuel en cas maladie, intempérie, décès, etc.). La solidarité sous forme d'épargne et d'assurance, bien que peu ciblée de manière consciente, est importante pour des populations qui ont souvent des problèmes de trésorerie pour assurer la dépense quotidienne. Au-delà, cette solidarité permet un investissement

dans le capital humain à travers la prise en charge du développement des compétences dans des structures de formation agricole.

Ces valeurs prolongent la mobilité des acteurs qui s'engagent dans la communauté à travers des regroupements paysans et la médiation (relais) entre les intervenants et les populations. Ainsi l'espace publique grouille d'acteurs qui décident de participer plus ou moins volontairement à la gestion des ressources. Ce système, confondant diversification et pluriactivité, apparait comme un frein du passage d'un système paysanal à un système agricultural (Ndiaye 2013). Fondamentalement, il favorise l'émergence de nouveaux acteurs.

Les nouveaux acteurs étaient surtout des jeunes et des femmes qui étaient favorisée par la discrimination positive de « l'approche genre » des projets de développement. Ces acteurs sont rejoints par les immigrés et les retraités de la fonction publique et des Ong. Les immigrés bénéficient aussi de la discrimination positive de certain projet de lutte contre l'immigration alors que les retraités se repositionnent en prétendant valoriser leur expérience. Ainsi, plusieurs acteurs plus ou moins insaisissables L'émergence de ces nouveaux acteurs participe, au-delà de conforter l'appréhension négative de la notion de retraite, est caractéristique du jeu des acteurs.

Ce jeu de l'agriculture familiale est aussi caractéristique d'acteurs qui agissent au niveau du terroir et au-delà. Beaucoup parmi eux militent au niveau national voire international dans des mouvements paysans qui cherchent à avoir une influence réelle sur le terroir. Souvent, plusieurs projets de développement utilisent comme relais un même animateur d'une organisation paysanne (Fapal, Asescaw, …) qui se positionne comme « coutier du développement » selon la terminologie d'Olivier de Sardan (1995). Ce phénomène est un élément déterminant dans le jeu des acteurs (producteurs et intervenants) de l'agriculture familiale.

La dynamique de ce jeu permet aux producteurs de faire preuve d'une autonomie relative du paysan. Pour Servolin (1972), cette possibilité est dû au fait que le paysan ne compte pas son temps de travail, il ne s'attribue pas de salaire, il utilise solidairement la main d'œuvre familiale dans l'exploitation. Dans ce cas, la pluriactivité, l'absence de retraite, le positionnement local et national et le rôle de relais, interagissent pour déterminer les comportements des uns et des autres.

Certains auteurs (Chia et al. 2014) parlent de théorie de comportement adaptatif des agriculteurs (Tca) qui permet de faire correspondre leur décision à la l'atteinte d'objectifs précis en tenant compte des contraintes. Sauf que selon les mêmes auteurs, la Tca n'apparait pas vraiment appropriée pour rendre compte au mieux des transformations sociales affectant l'agriculture familiale même si elle permet de comprendre les difficultés de passage d'un système paysanal à un système agricultural. Alors, la Tca apparait insuffisant pour avoir une appréhension plus opérationnelle du plan d'action de la décennie (2019-2029) de l'agriculture familiale.

Dynamique entrepreneuriale

La dynamique entrepreneuriale dans l'agriculture familiale pourrait appréhender à travers les interactions entre les dimension économique (rentabilité ou utilité), sociale (solidarité interne), sociétale (solidarité avec la communauté) politique (gouvernance) et technico-environnementale (agroécologie) des formes d'entreprenariat paysans (exploitation familiale, regroupement paysan et leurs variantes). Sur le plan socio- économique (utilité, surtout), l'interaction de ces dimensions permet de mettre en place simultanément des activités primaire (agricole) secondaire (transformation de produits) et tertiaire (service).

Cette approche socioéconomique de l'entreprenariat paysan ne favorise pas la rémunération du travail. Le recours à une main d'œuvre non familiale rémunérée, n'est pas de règles sauf pour certaines activités. La main d'œuvre essentiellement familiale ou communautaire n'est pas rémunérée. Mieux l'approche entrepreneuriale socio-économique favorise la solidarité à travers la redistribution et la mutualité. La redistribution permet de mieux prendre en charge les besoins de l'unité de consommation (alimentation, habit, habitat, santé, éducation, et argents de poche) de l'Ef. La mutualité permet contribue à la prise en charge des besoins financiers (prêt, épargne, assurance) et non financiers (chaises, bâches, marmites, etc.) des membres du groupement paysan.

La dimension sociétale de l'entreprenariat paysan sénégalais est aussi déterminée par la solidarité traditionnelle à travers les groupes d'entraide. Aujourd'hui, c'est l'entreprise paysan (Ef ou regroupement) qui répond aux sollicitations des individus (maladie, alimentation, rupture d'argent, etc.) et de la communauté (mosquée, manifestation religieuse, école, dara, inondation village, etc.). Cette dimension est aussi fondée sur une valeur religieuse à travers l'impôt sur les récoltes (azaka) qui semble être systématique à St louis et Louga. Cette dimension sociétale est en rupture avec la Petite Production Marchande de type précapitaliste qui permettent leur insertion dans l'économie marchande Servolin (1972). A la limite, nous sommes en présence des valeurs sociales (Say 1972; Le Play 1872; Fourier 1882).

Sur le plan politique, la gérontocratie et la démocratie se bouscule à l'intérieur de l'Ep et du regroupement paysan. La gouvernance reste encore dominée par le poids de la tradition. L'accès au poste de gestionnaire se fait par processus de dévolution mais dans le processus de prise de décision les choses sont plus complexes (Debouvery 2007). Pour l'Ef, le mode traditionnelle (fondée sur l'âge et le sexe) de dévolution du poste de gestionnaire apparait idoine pour une meilleure gestion des ressources notamment foncières pour éviter son éclatement en petits lopins. Il perpétue l'entreprenariat paysan qui est fondé par une répartition impersonnelle des ressources, rendant difficile la naissance de nouvelles Ef tout favorisant la pluriactivité ou la diversification. Cette forme de gestion politique des ressources favorise le retour des émigrés et retraités entraine la transformation

des entreprises personnelles en Eif. La gérontocratie est l'Ef en lui donnant une dynamique démocratique. Pour le groupement paysan, la gouvernance démocratique est mise à rude épreuve par la rétention d'information et l'absence de renouvellement des instances. On assiste ainsi à la démultiplication de sous groupements. La conséquence est que d'une part les nouveaux regroupements ont un faible niveau d'adhérents et il y'a une démultiplication des sous- groupes dans les zones qui sont apparaissent massivement dans l'espace publique. En fait ces sous-groupes constituent le vivier de beaucoup de leaders paysans. Cette volonté de devenir leader font même que certains sous-groupements, à travers la possibilité de se légaliser en Gie tout initiative entrepreneuriale (exploitation ou regroupement), ne sont composé que de membres de leur Ef. Ainsi, l'exploitation familiale se positionne dans l'espace publique qui était le lieu de prédilection de l'organisation paysanne. Le niveau de positionnement dépend de la capacité de membres à négocier une discrimination positive au profit de leur Ef transformée en sous-groupement paysan.

Par ailleurs, l'autogestion est un élément clé de la dynamique entrepreneurial paysanne. Le statut de membre d'un regroupement ou le fait d'être un relais d'un projet n'entame en rien l'autonomie de gestion fondée sur l'interaction solidaire entre les unités de l'Ef et du regroupement paysan. La fragmentation en unités et l'autonomie de gestion sont renforcées par le fait que l'apprentissage de l'entreprenariat se fait sur le tard à travers une rationalité empirique (Hyden 1985).

La dynamique entrepreneuriale dans l'agriculture familiale permet de s'engager dans la production mais surtout dans un travail socialement nécessaire. En réalité, l'entreprenariat paysan fait preuve de capacité d'adaptation permettant l'intégration des principes économique, sociale, sociétal et politique à travers l'équilibre entre rémunération du travail et du capital, l'équilibre entre ressources et revenus, la solidarité interne et externe, l'interaction entre démocratie et gérontocratie. Cet entreprenariat paysan intègre aussi par endroit la cohérence technique et environnementale (agroécologie). Fondé sur la solidarité, il consacre la prédominance de réseaux sociaux (soutien, solidarité, communication, interaction) entre groupe définis structurellement par le sang, la parenté ou, la communauté (théorie de l'économie de l'affection).

Par conséquent, l'entreprenariat paysanne (familiale ou de groupe) peut bien être qualifié d'entreprise sociale car en phase avec au moins le premier trait fondamental de la charte africaine de l'entreprenariat social. «Le premier est la primauté de la finalité sociale sur la rentabilité optimale, finalité exprimée par une mission sociale et une vision d'avenir. Cette primauté affecte toutes les dimensions de l'entreprise, sa stratégie, ses opérations, sa gestion. La seconde dimension de l'entrepreneuriat social concerne son fonctionnement interne qui repose sur le principe de la démocratisation participative».

Conclusion

La mise en place d'un plan d'action de la décennie de l'agriculture familiale a permis d'interroger la réalité de l'entrepreneuriat paysan sénégalais à travers le prisme de l'économie sociale. La problématisation découle de la volonté de faire l'Economie solidaire «un moteur de développement et un moyen de lutte contre la vulnérabilité des femmes et des jeunes» d'une part et, d'autre part de la conviction du rôle important de l'agriculture dans l'éradication du chômage, la sécurité alimentaire et le développement. L'analyse de l'entreprenariat paysan en agriculture familiale au Sénégal a permis de décrire deux (2) formes d'entreprises et leurs variantes ainsi que de caractériser la dynamique des acteurs et la dynamique entrepreneuriale.

La première forme d'entreprise est l'Exploitation familiale paysanne dont le projet entrepreneurial (pluriactive) intègre l'utilité économique et la solidarité pour une meilleure prise en charge des besoins de l'unité de consommation dont les membres sont liés par le sang. Ses deux variantes (Efa et Eif) ont un projet entrepreneurial plus économique (rentabilité, rémunération du capital et du travail) tout en l'associant aux principes de solidarité sociale (prise en charge solidaire des besoins de la famille) et sociétale (solidarité avec les membres de la communauté). Ils font preuve d'une occupation de l'espace publique et d'un encastrement politique mitigé. Leur gouvernance est dominée par la gérontocratie même si les germes de la démocratie sont perceptibles.

La deuxième forme d'entreprise est le regroupement paysan qui une association de masse de personnes liées par le terroir, le genre ou l'activité et dont les membres les membres travaillent bénévolement pour améliorer la rentabilité. La mobilisation des ressources est interne (cotisations et bénévolat) et externes (structure de développement et institution financière et même politique). Ses variantes sont le sous-groupement paysan et le groupe de relais. Le sous-groupement apparait généralement comme détachement du regroupement pour une plus grande visibilité dans l'espace publique tout en restant dans le même projet entrepreneurial. Le groupe de relais est une association de personnes liées par l'engagement volontaire au sein de sa communauté. La prise de décision qui se veut démocratique est mis à rude épreuve.

Le jeu des acteurs est dominé l'émergence continue de nouveaux acteurs qui, de par leur positionnement local et national, contribue au développement d'une dynamique qui peut être appréhender à travers la Tca. La dynamique entrepreneuriale est régie par les interactions entre les dimension économique (rentabilité ou utilité), sociale (solidarité interne), sociétale (solidarité avec la communauté) politique (gouvernance) et technico-environnementale (agroécologie) permettant de mettre en place simultanément des activités primaire (agricole) secondaire (transformation de produits) et tertiaire (service). Cette dynamique ne favorise pas la rémunération du travail mais

favorise l'engagement social et sociétal de l'entreprise paysanne. Les modes de gouvernance tendent à perpétuer les structures existantes au détriment de la création d'autres tout en favorisant la pluriactivité ou la diversification.

L'ensemble de ces caractéristiques permettent de qualifier l'entreprenariat paysanne (familiale ou de groupe) comme un entreprenariat social. Ainsi, il apparait nécessaire de construire un modèle d'analyse prenant en compte la dynamique entre rémunération du travail et du capital, entre ressources et revenus, entre solidarité interne et solidarité externe, entre démocratie et gérontocratie et enfin entre technique et environnement. Pour ce faire, l'outils d'analyse de l'entreprenariat sociale paysanne pourrait être élaboré à travers 4 points:

- Finalité: à travers le choix d'une activité de production (agricole, transformation et services) pour répondre aux besoins social (familiale ou de groupe), sociétal (communauté) et environnemental (techniques de production en phase avec la gestion durable des ressources naturelles).

- Viabilité économique: à travers l'origine et la mise en place des ressources financières, matérielles et équipements d'une part et, d'autre part la rentabilité de l'activité, du travail et du capital.

- Relation Finalité/ viabilité: à travers l'organisation du travail et la logique socio- économique.

- Gouvernance: à travers les modalités de prise de décision, le partage ou la rétention d'information, le renouvellement des instances, l'intégration des jeunes et des femmes.

Cette approche de construction de ce modèle d'analyse permettrait de mieux prendre en compte la majorité des sept piliers d'action de la décennie (2019-2029) de l'agriculture familiale en rapport avec l'inclusion socio-économique, la durabilité des systèmes agro-alimentaires résilients, la multifonctionnalité de l'agriculture, la création d'un environnement favorable, le genre (accès des jeunes et femmes aux ressources), la gouvernance (participation à la prise de décision) et enfin le renforcement des capacités des producteurs agricole.

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