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## **‘I’d rather see a sermon than hear one...’: Africa/Heaven and Women of the Diaspora in Creating Global Futures and Transformation<sup>1</sup>**

Jahlani A. H. Niaah\*

### **Abstract**

This article focuses on the case of the Rastafari, a grassroots, male-dominated pan-African religio-political movement, which for almost a century has driven the Caribbean Diaspora to dialogue and action on issues of repair and redevelopment of the continent. Though often criticized as patriarchal, since the mid-1970s the Rastafari has increasingly seen women emerging, playing a leading role in globally coordinated initiatives. Indeed, it could be argued that relative to the wider society Rastafari has made more significant advances with regard to gender parity and the advancement of women, as this is facilitated by the ongoing dialogical and grounded processes of ‘reasoning’ that provide ventilation and strategic solutions for contending ideas. Women within the Movement are therefore ironically over-represented relative to their numbers in positions of international leadership and the general administration of the community. This phenomenon has grown especially over the past two generations, as the role of the Rastafari Empress, or the lioness as she is sometime referred to, has evolved to situate itself seated among the lions as a primary component within the ‘works’ of Rastafari. The article seeks to develop a historiography of the evolution of the Rastafari family and its construction of a global politics that offers the potential for black women’s empowerment ; a point recognized by *womanist*-oriented females who take on leadership within the Movement.

### **Résumé**

Le présent article est consacré au cas du Rastafari, un mouvement populaire religio-politique panafricain, dominé par les hommes, qui depuis près d’un siècle a incité la diaspora des Caraïbes au dialogue et à l’action sur les questions de réparation et de relance du continent. Bien que souvent critiqué comme patriarcal, depuis le milieu des années 1970, le mouvement Rastafari a de

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plus en plus vu les femmes émerger, jouer un rôle de premier plan dans des initiatives mondialement coordonnées. En effet, on pourrait avancer que, par rapport à la société dans son ensemble, le mouvement Rastafari a fait des progrès plus significatifs en ce qui concerne la parité des sexes et le progrès des femmes, ce qui est facilité par les processus dialogiques et fondés de « raisonnement » qui fournissent un cadre de confrontation d'idées pour trouver des solutions stratégiques. Les femmes au sein du Mouvement sont donc ironiquement surreprésentées par rapport à leur nombre dans les postes de direction au niveau international et de l'administration générale de la communauté. Ce phénomène s'est développé surtout au cours des deux dernières générations, puisque le rôle de l'impératrice rastafari, ou de la lionne comme on l'appelle parfois, a évolué pour figurer parmi les lions en tant que composante principale dans les « œuvres » rastafari. Le présent article cherche à élaborer une historiographie de l'évolution de la famille rastafari et de sa construction d'une politique globale, afin de déterminer les leçons à tirer de diverses approches au cours des quatre dernières décennies relatives aux initiatives ciblant l'Afrique et visant un impact sur les objectifs durables ainsi que les besoins de développement du continent.

### Introduction: 'I'd rather see a sermon than hear one...'

*I'd rather see a sermon than hear one any day;  
I'd rather one would walk with me than merely tell the way.  
The eye's a better pupil and more willing than the ear,  
Fine counsel is confusing, but example's always clear;  
And the best of all the preachers are the men who live their creeds,  
For to see good put in action is what everybody needs.*

(lines from Mama Blossom, a Nyahbinghi matriarch inspired  
by Edgar A. Guest's poem "Sermons we see")

The Rastafari movement has been viewed as an acephalous organization driven by 'leading administrators' but lacking centralized leadership figures. The Movement also offers varied *praxis* and philosophical cohesion; however, it is unified around the veneration of the last Emperor of Ethiopia, His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I, who especially after his November 1930 coronation became viewed as the fulfilment of a messianic vision for African redemption. Notwithstanding its marginal, anti-social and for some myopic<sup>1</sup> rhetoric, the Movement has grown and is now recognized as an African-centred worldview with religio-politico undertones having made key contributions to the process of the Columbian African-American post-colonial reconstruction. Rastafari has been descried as millenarian and holds repatriation to Africa as a central part of the ultimate objectives for its dispersed community. Critical

is the issue of the Rastafari operational approach in a fast-changing world particularly given the *nativist* leanings that have shaped the core philosophy of the worldview. Described as a word-driven faith (Homiak 1998; Pollard 1994; Chevannes 2006), the Rastafari movement is by virtue of cosmology, ontology and epistemology a 'travelling culture' (Yawney 1995) fashioned out of various displacements with a central narrative of 'relocation' or return to an original homeland – the mythic or real Africa/Zion, imagined as Heaven relative to the Caribbean, the latter rendered by some as the pits of hell (Howell 1935). It is also increasingly the 'travelling community' of priests and attendants who are negotiating the global development of the central vision and orthodoxy of the worldview. Further, as the Rastafari community has grown and matured it has provided an organic understanding of the inner logic of religious community/communion fabrication. Through the Rastafari emergence, the elaboration of the principles and signifiers of religio-political catharsis can also be put under the microscope, to observe the construction and fulfilment of a type of distributive justice through this redemptive narrative centred on returning to Africa. Emerging from a state of nature fashioned in colonialism, Rastafari is able to reinvent freedom, but this freedom is also located in the exegesis of the Christian Bible as it is also firmly located in the persistence of traditional Africa played out for example through the mischief of the trickster, West African folklore hero Anansi (Chevannes 2006), and a religio-naturopathic approach to healing. Rastafari emerges as an African-Jamaican hybrid worldview that mimics and builds on the meta-narrative of Christianity, African/*myaalist*<sup>2</sup> tradition, and Hindu culture as well as embraces aspects of the modern; thus availing itself a springboard, or what has been described as 'a quantum leap', from which to advance its contemporary reparatory campaign. To this extent Rastafari is a reflection of, as well as a critique of, the colonial Jamaican society and its own Judeo-Christian patriarchal biases. However, the demographics of the Movement place women in a grim minority with numbers well below twenty per cent (20%) of the membership in Jamaica.<sup>3</sup> With regard to gender, Rastafari curiously enough offers the potential for Black women's empowerment, a point recognized by *womanist*-oriented females who take on leadership within the Movement. We are reminded by the womanists that the Black woman was always equal to her male counterpart in the toil that was expected of her as she was also in the sugarcane field and exposed to the same conditions of labour (Montague FUSE November/December 1982).

It is perhaps at the level of leading *praxis* that Rastafari seemingly offers women potential because of its openness and lack of central leadership. One Rastafari woman contextualizes the potential as follows:

...it is not just a Rasta problem, but a human problem. People like to throw off the responsibility for self and community unto another person. And that is why leaders have existed.... and why you will have them in the future. One of the things that I really check for in Rasta is that too much emphasis is not on leaders and with the exception of the 'Twelve Tribes' and a few up-and-coming people. *Anybody with initiative can do what they think should be done – just move forward* (my emphasis). (Yard Roots April/May 1981 – Interview: Rastawoman as Equal!)

In this regard Rastafari might also be seen as a route towards the liberation of women from the ubiquitous effects of white patriarchy which limits their engagement to primarily domestic affairs. This potential for female liberation is somehow ignored by much of the critiques of Rastafari but is underscored by Sis. Ilaloo, and by extension females who see the Movement as a potential for revolutionary pan-African liberation (Harris 1982).

Rastafari operates explicitly on the principle of gender separation and has likewise centred its work and administration, ritual and domestic practice largely in this way. This paper outlines in brief the major tenets of the Rastafari faith identifying the rationale of its gender representation and its day-to-day utility within the faith. I then account the traditional approach to leadership through a patriarchal system that used to dictate that the way for females, described by some Rastafari as the 'weaker vessel' (Homiak 1986), to this faith was through the tutelage of the guiding 'king-man', her 'groom' so to speak, within conventions of Christianity; and the king-man was thus the source of the Movement's agenda setting, inner logic and objectives, and the management and globalization of the same (Yawney 2001). I seek to address an ongoing debate within the Rastafari movement about its politics as it relates to its *modus operandi* as a religious community in the face of a fast-changing world. It plays on an implicit tension within the Movement about thought and practice and the idea that the 'lion', the king-man is engrossed in ritualized thought through reasoning, while the lioness, empress or 'dwata', contends with the practice of managing the arduous struggles before the now global family. The paper brings into focus the idea of *epistemic performance*<sup>5</sup> brought to light through issues of ritual practice and gender taboo, as it examines the key modalities of organization explored by the administrators of the Movement. These issues are of greater significance as Rastafari seeks to consolidate its now global culture and community within an African diasporic bid held towards achieving repatriation to Africa, explicitly philosophized by the Movement over the past fifty years. Through a focus on specific international events from the 1980s to the present, I attempt to review the impact and specific achievement of these ventures particularly as related to the African programmatic agenda for development.

This research is derived from twenty years of field work examining leadership within Rastafari and the materialization of the Movement as a global pan-African community.

### **The Nyahbinghi Ritual of Redemption**

The manifestation of salvation or the path to unburdening and renewing the 'soul-case' that embodied slavery in the Caribbean has seen many intentions played out as ritual words and deeds to provide catharsis and rejuvenation for the crippled beings that inhabit these spaces. The Haitian Revolution has narratives recounting the use of oath-taking rituals as preparation for action. Consistently, the actions of the change-makers have been inspired by rituals developed by the leaders to raise levels of confidence and commitment. For Rastafari the Nyahbinghi,<sup>6</sup> an adaptation of an Eastern African religio-militia resistance medium, is the key collective ritual, but this is also buttressed by Judeo-Christian influences such as Sabbath keeping, fasting, chanting, praying, also chalice smoking, dancing and silence/meditation, as well as supplication of the flesh through various abstentions within a system of understanding directed at manifesting visions attributed to divine inspiration. It is within the administration of the Nyahbinghi ritual that there is the most evidence of organizational structure. With this ritual comes stringent and the widest community application of the separation aspects of the organization and this is somewhat universal within the various permutations of the Movement, that is the various 'tribes' or 'mansions' as the multiplicity of Rastafari doctrinal congregations are described. To this extent one might say that the ontological criteria or leadership norms of ritual solidarity all militate against female influence. Further, it could be argued that an analysis of the preoccupation with enforcing codes of separation can be employed to Rastafari in determining the position along a continuum that variously demonstrates the strategic location within each mansion as it relates to Christianity and modernity, Western cultural influences, and the application of the Bible mores.<sup>7</sup>

For the purpose of the Nyahbinghi ceremony, menstruating females are barred access to this space in principle until they are beyond the eight to fourteenth day (or in some instances twenty-first day) of their cycle. In congregations the language of 'free' or 'not-free'<sup>8</sup> is often used for women who have been separated or returned to the congregation (or in some instances family). Specifically, the separation is considered important for 'priests' and males post-adolescence, and in the case of the Ethiopia Africa Black International Congress (EABIC) or Bobo Shanti, it involves up to twenty-one days of separate dwelling. Females who visit this community before they are

afforded access are required to undergo an interview conducted by an empress (a Bobo female) at times with the aid of a calendar to determine if they may be permitted into the camp. Noteworthy too in the Bobo congregations is that even when women are 'free', separation is still maintained in relation to seating, as well as there is generally non-gendered avoidance of touching (hand-shaking, hugging/embracing etc.); in its stead salutations are usually accompanied by lowering of the head and torso in a bow often with a dipping of the knees. There are also other gendered norms as related to aesthetic features regarding covering of the head, shoulders and the length and fit of dresses. Further, women are routinely not allowed to wear trousers or play ritual drums, and originally could only sing, dance, and play shakers and tambourines at ceremonial occasions, that chiefly being the Nyahbinghi. They were not allowed to bring 'the word', pray or read/interpret the word or 'Bible'. Some of these traditions are changing as is the sentiment of woman as a 'Delilah' with the ironic capacity To 'cut your nature' or to sap a man's strength. Generally there is resistance to changing the taboo regarding contact with the drum for women in rituals and in some instances completely after puberty.<sup>9</sup> In response to questions from women directed at the elders as to why couldn't they play drums, a leading elder Bongo Twaney said, 'From I have been coming to Binghi I've never seen that!' To this extent the idea still seems to be unthinkable by the elders of the faith. For some the 'purpose' of the Nyahbinghi ceremony necessitated that its essence should not be tampered with. An elder female, supportive of the tradition, responded that the drum embodies the female and that the magic and harmony of this ritual required the playing of 'her', the drum, by males for its mystical purpose to be fulfilled.<sup>10</sup> Particularly because the Nyahbinghi is performed continuously over several nights, from one to as many as twenty-one, these grounds become carefully structured whether permanently or through makeshift arrangements into celebration space generally referred to as the Tabernacle with fire-key. 'Man' and 'daughters' dormitory facilities are separate (the male in close proximity to the grounds of the ceremony) with a collective kitchen and bathrooms (Homiak 1994). The tabernacle is the key ritual portal for the duration of the Nyahbinghi ceremony and generally circulation within this space between males and females flows freely, while observing the taboo regarding the drums. The tabernacle serves as the ultimate threshold for separation of the desirable and the undesirable within the ritual space, and the latter are wittingly and unwittingly told that there will be consequences for breaking the taboos and they will be judged by the mystic omniscient Power. 'Death to oppressors – black and white', 'know thyself', and 'truths and rights' are among the chants voiced while the congregation percussively beats along with the drums' 'do good, do good, do good' heart-beat rhythm stamping away the evil and elevating righteousness.

Fire is a most important aspect of performing the Nyahbinghi, as there is a requirement for a purging flame to burn unceasingly for its duration. Drumming usually occurs mostly at night-time and is maintained without interruption until daylight. By way of its logic and execution the Nyahbinghi sermon compliments the practice of a patriarchal modality, both explicitly and implicitly by way of the subtle taboos and administrative practices. Women are arguably invisible structurally and even in relation to conventional ideas of meal preparation and overall nutrition; these matters are completely dominated by male operatives.

The logic for this adherence to separation is centred on a philosophy that eschews the 'carnal' and particularly sexual activities in the ritual space. Leonard Howell, the man reputed to have brought the knowledge of Rastafari in the early 1930s to Jamaica, had been preparing the followers to elevate themselves from the level of animals and to see the women as more than bitches (Howell 1935) and further constructs a theory about carnal indulgence and perversions as a reason for the decadent state of the world and especially the black body/ and the Black male, now completely diminished into a stud against knowing himself as the 'father-provider', leader and patriarch. One view as far as revealing the logic of eschewing carnal indulgences is that in the 'wait' or anticipation of 'Zion' through repatriation, there can be no undue focus on the flesh. This is the primary purpose for which this, the oldest formally incorporated Rastafari mansion, was designed by its founder, King Edward Charles Emmanuel in 1958. Hence as elaborated within the Bobo Ashanti, allegedly the most acetic of the mansions, there is a requirement for twenty-one days of physical separation between couples from the start of the woman's menstrual flow, thereby reducing the incident of pregnancy and keeping the population increase to a minimum (that is, given the normal fertility period usually at or around fourteen days in the menstrual cycle).

This population control interest is not universally practiced and the converse philosophy with a strong 'pro-life' and a procreation ethos also pervades within the Movement. The pro-life or creation principle is vested in nature, a contest of the natural logic of the coming together of 'alpha' (man) and 'omega' (woman) to create the sons, male and female. The king should thus seek after the queenly, even as she is embodied in the character of the virtuous woman, not swayed by material things and vanity, but who through her faith and her modest devotion becomes a personification of the mother of creation, performing accordingly with the natural cycle. The patriarch of the Movement, Leonard Howell, gave them this example as well as he advised them of the virtuous Queen Omega as the Balming Mistress, alluding that she too was an important factor in the process for redemption (Howell 1935).

Howell preached that the African exemplar had emerged and he directed his congregation to focus their attention on him, the King of Kings. The Emperor at his coronation in 1930 demonstrates a new regard for the feminine principle, as he departed from the tradition of separate coronation ceremonies to crown his Empress within the same ceremony. This was to depict a balancing of the scales of power and responsibilities. Subsequently Empress Manen undertook to engage with her stately functions, pioneering women's socio-economic advancement supporting various charities and building schools and churches across the country in seeking to bring development to the people, especially the women of Ethiopia. This model of the female complement to the King-man was the direction that Howell sought to guide his followers. Howell taught that King Alpha and Queen Omega provided 'the healing plough of the repository transplanted' and 'rebuilds our very soul and body without fail' (Howell 1935). Consecrated men and women were thus necessary; this could be achieved through the balm-yard, endowed with power that they command and handle to deal with the infirmities of the nations. In this regard Howell was interested in the restoration of the human – male and females – 'as vessels of divine honour' (ibid). This is performed with a rhythm that views children as blessings, natural gifts, the fruits of man and woman loving interaction. The location of female within this design is somewhat complex and often inconsistent. Nurture and care-giving though the domain of females is variously shared between males and females. Women largely appear in traditional domestic roles; however, often through better education and jobs/employment opportunities they are more gainfully occupied away from the home than their male counterparts, and the latter are thus seen, more often than in the general population, in role reversal and serving as the primary care-giver, and generally responsible for nature and many of the domestic chores (Nettleford 2013).

It is noteworthy too that in the mid-1970s and towards the 1980s the 'womanist' movement emerged in the Caribbean led by a progressive, liberal pan-African oriented set of women. These individuals largely sought to insert female leaders/leadership and their agenda more clearly within the Rastafari movement. Sister Ilaloo explains:

I don't think the traditional Rastaman coping very well with this. They probably don't fully understand what is happening. But as the woman dem come into their own, in terms of one of the most outstanding thing that I see really happening to the Rasta culture is the arrival of the Rasta woman. In the sense that you never use to have a Rastawoman; you use to have a Rastaman woman... (ibid:6)

The Queen Omega energy as females are often described has been in an uphill battle to assert itself and Planno, one of the central post-independence leaders, takes credit for helping to break down some of the traditional barriers. As a young Planno took on the day-to-day care of his offspring bringing within his circles and nursing with a bottle his young, months-old daughter in the early 1960s was one such step. Planno as a leader always appeared unconventional, he admits that his own intellectual transformation as to the equality of women came, when he dismissed his wife Rosaline's 'vision' or dream of him (Planno) playing a central role at the time of the visit of the Emperor several years later. He had been told by her of a dream wherein the Emperor had called on Planno. She had effectively foreseen the Emperor's visit and his calling on Planno to assist with restoring peace to the multitude which became frenzied upon his plane's landing in Kingston. Although Planno originally dismissed her vision, he understood it to have been fulfilled on 21 April 1966, and he admits that after this he better accepted the abilities of females to be equally divinely inspired to contribute to this work of Rastafari. It was Planno who a few years later was to further push the taboo when he entertained and developed strong linkages with white female researcher Carole Yawney, then a hyperbole of contradictions. He brought her into the inner sanctums of urban Rastafari hardcore leader sanctuaries. She was effectively the first female 'outsider' to be initiated and was a part of the male ritual chalice circle space.<sup>11</sup>

The 1960s saw the opening up of the Movement beyond its then primarily urban margins; with this came increased participation from the middle classes and brown mixed populations. As the Movement moved out of its strict grassroots and 'Dungle' (the urban garbage dump) wastelands in the 1970s, the current of Black Power found favour in Rastafari and increasingly women of educated middle class orientation also started to cleave to the Movement. And with these surprises in the way the Movement was expanding and crossing boundaries came paradoxes. As the 1970s unfolded, Miss World, the acme of the pro-British establishment's aesthetics of beauty and comeuppance, clashed in a love saga with the 'beast',<sup>12</sup> the top Rastafari warrior priest Bob Marley. Bob Marley a boy from rural Jamaica of African and European ancestry who went to live in Trench Town had grown to become one of the first superstars from the Third World as reggae king, and the leading Rastafari emissary. The Movement by the mid-1970s had become an international African liberation fraternity, reflecting the journey Rastafari and some of its leading adherents in intersecting the society at multiple levels. Miss World and Bob Marley in 1976 signalled the peaking of the Rastafari penetration and for some a reflection of a double standard, the leading Pan-African vocalist arm-in-arm

with an iconic symbol of the system he sought to fight against. Marley had seemingly reversed the proclivity for colour, class and gender separation through this move. The 1970s was a mushrooming of Rastafari in Jamaica and its politico-economic diversity: reggae music rising, free education as a state-supported, democratic socialist gift for all students up to tertiary level, and a thriving informal ganja economy resonating locally. These provided discursive media when converged within Jamaica's history and facilitated by the University of the West Indies as a regional institution, in the analysis of some the Rastafari revolution was in full flight.

Also the period reflects the absorption of Afro-feminist debates with increasingly women challenging the stereotypes regarding their coming into the faith and asserting their capacity, right even, to 'sight' (or spiritually discern and embrace) Rastafari and move to the faith without the need for induction through a male (or having been 'grown'/trained as a 'daughter', the traditional language to account for the process of initiation, socialization and grooming at the hands of males). This also in reality meant that some women would come to the faith and, in rejecting the masculine stereotypes, simply just choose to avoid associating explicitly with any mansion (or organised congregations). A Rastafari female pioneer provides the following insights:

...I remember like '71 and so.... [t]here was no such thing as a Rastawoman. There were cultural daughters and sisters primarily. Then all of a sudden about '72 or '73 all the little West Indian daughters in the high schools start wrapping up dem head and chant Rasta an militantly a seh Rasta fi demselves, and independently of any man. I have to confess though that it was motivated by the large amount of young males in the school system that was turning Rasta. It was...just like wearing the clothing which would get you what you want kind a thing....

But from there it really moved into a situation where the daughters were checking out what is this Rasta thing and quite independent of any attempt to get a man. It was getting into the belief system and finding out what was in it that made sense and could make sense for them. And after a while woman started making commitment to Rasta independent of man. (Yard Roots April/May 1981 – Interview: Rastawoman as Equal!)

This space arguably created a basis for female-led Rastafari associations such as the Queen Omega Foundation (a highly visible professional association within the past twenty years) to tackle issues that fall outside the cracks of male-centred ritualistic community activities (many of which restricted the participation/fullticipation of women). The Rastawoman as opposed to the Rastaman's woman had now arrived. Effectively it took four decades for the Rastafari woman to emerge from the rib of the King-man and within a

decade of her separation she stood on her own in the faith and started to make her indelible contribution, arguably her prowling priority the global family imperatives.

The ritualistic celebration of Nyahbinghi is primarily a Theocracy Reign Order of the Nyahbinghi (TRON) venture and its hosting is the fullest convention of the community group, which mobilizes its dispersed family across the landscape, individuals engaged in various sectors but largely self-employed, under- or unemployed. The Nyahbinghi organization is the largest single community and its membership is indeterminate because of their loose administration. What this means however is that for the organization, Nyahbinghi TRON, to effectively function it requires the modality of committee, councils, associations, conferences, as key insertions for effective international community administration. EABIC and the Twelve Tribes of Israel (TTI),<sup>13</sup> the other two dominant mansions, tend to operate more effectively through the central mansion's administration which exercises higher levels of command over the membership's initiatives embarked on in the name or identity of the organization. Among the established mansions of Rastafari the EABIC has taken a less aggressive global agenda where projects and activities in relation to its global and African interests are concerned. Notwithstanding this it has managed to be one of the most visible global representations of the faith, with members in North & South America, Asia and Africa all established with measures of directions from Jamaica.

### **The Nyahbinghi Abroad: Defender of the Rastafari Faith (1982 – 2014)**

By far the most globally dispersed administratively is the TRON and perhaps resulting from this there has been a greater orientation toward refining its global administration, image and operations. In fact, as the Movement globalizes the proclivity for establishing organizations within the mansions is best maintained by the Nyahbinghi which self-appoints/self-identifies as the de facto ecumenical Rastafari mansion (Montague 1984 & Homiak 1994). This has been systematically developed over the last four to five decades resulting in what is now a global community with transcontinental management systems. Though the TRON has been routinely described as the loosest in its administration, it has spawned highly elaborate systems of patriarchal leadership, within an acephalous context, and cohorts of elders/patriarch have emerged within this congregation since the 1950s, as a result of which the mansion singularly brags having the largest concentration of elders, generally and especially of males who have been within the faith for over fifty years. Among these are individuals spanning three to four generations of leaders with globally revered names such

as: Bongo Porro, Shadrak, Meshak and Abednego, Bongo Twaney, Bongo Watto, Bongo Rocki, and Bongo Shephan. The list goes on of who are described within Rastafari lore as 'ancients', many of whom were formally illiterate, but nonetheless were the pillars around whose thoughts the doctrine and philosophy of the faith was constructed. These individuals were joined by a vibrant set of urban youth, individuals such as Mortimo Planno, Sam brown, Bongo Tyme, situated across the inner-city terrain, teaching Rastafari faith and constructing significance around a system that argued itself as a representation of the return of a prophesied Messiah to establish a 'theocratic' government. Within this team of leaders, the Nyahbinghi immediately cleaved into various communities of interest, the theocratic as the dominant association pooled the 'preacher' leader interest whereas the political and advocacy activism tending towards the 'teacher' leader. Crudely, this divide resulted in the establishment of liturgical constancy within the ceremony of Nyahbinghi whereas the advocacy/political work seems to have been fodder for the development of a critical thought, a meta narrative exemplified in reggae music but also pervasive within the overall *conscientization* process meted out on the society through its pro-Rastafari vernacular/idiom and critical consciousness. This has made the Nyahbinghi, perhaps in the widest sense, the most socially interactive and engaged Rastafari grouping, resulting from the acephalous leadership system and its 'unfocussed' mission regarding how to approach its repatriational objectives. Nyahbinghi adherents in this regard were conforming to what Gayatri Spivak describes as 'strategic essentialism', to refer to presenting themselves while pursuing and negotiating strong differences with collaborators while amongst themselves engaging in continuous debates towards agreements on 'essentialize' terms and conditions.<sup>14</sup>

By the mid to late 1970s the Nyahbinghi had grown beyond the shores of Jamaica into an international community directed largely by implementing the learnt 'orthodox' modalities of the Jamaican congregations from visits, recordings, texts as well as through their own parochial idiosyncrasies, mystically and independently guided. Regionally the University West Indies (UWI) tertiary schooling system facilitated the exchange of students, workers and goods including literature, music and ganja, considered by some of the key regional Rastafari leaders as an important step in the process of transfer of the faith into the wider English-speaking Caribbean. Earlier, after the end of the Second World War, migrants from Jamaica had taken the ideology of the Rastafari into the United Kingdom, establishing connected branches of the faith in London, Manchester and Birmingham. A decade later similar movements saw thousands of Jamaicans moving into cities along the eastern seaboard of the United States. Later in the 1970s and 1980s, Europe, Japan and Africa became connected to the consciousness of the Movement through mostly the message of the faith depicted in reggae music. The globalization of

the Rastafari faith resulted in the need for a global ministry and subsequently a global administration and agenda. It is in this space that I will situate the remainder of this paper, examining the development of international work and the modality for achieving the same mindfulness of the issues of separation and patriarchy as two implicit operational features.

The impulse for embarking on international proselytizing 'missions' and 'trods' became necessary initially to provide correction to the bad publicity the community was receiving through Hollywood and other sensational media accounts (Homiak 1994). At the same time members of the emerging Rastafari diaspora had made inroads into and confronted obstacles within their new societies and in this regard, like the highly visible British based Jamaican born scholar Stuart Hall the intellectual cannon on 'representation',<sup>15</sup> individuals began to organize and engage in conversations about strategies to correct and consolidate the globalizing Jamaican/Rastafari image.<sup>16</sup> At the same time the consolidation recognized the increased responsibility of the Nyahbinghi family to pioneer global Rastafari management in general.

The 1980s presented an international crossroads or what Yawney (1998:59) describes as a 'critical density' on the global stage for Rastafari and in particular the Nyahbinghi emissaries. This was occasioned by the void left when Thatcherism took root, eliminating radical currents in the West, and Bob Marley's passing which, while seemingly achieving the victory of awakening the minds of the formerly enslaved was coupled by the decline of the two best managed Rastafari mansions TTI and the Ethiopian Zion Coptic Church, allegedly infiltrated and destabilized. This counter revolution to cultural awakening and *conscientisation* emanating from the region, by some accounts deliberately removed Bob Marley<sup>17</sup>, Maurice Bishop and Walter Rodney, contemporaries who together had been shaking the Caribbean Basin, ultimately necessitating overt actions such as the 1983 United States of America led invasion of Grenada, as a reminder of whose backyard the Caribbean is considered.<sup>18</sup> Across the Caribbean political landscape the 'window of vulnerability' which stood in the region was partially that of the ascension of the Rastafari identity, and epistemology, in the face of deliberate campaigns to criminalize the image of the Movement being styled, cultic, urban drug cartels and savage gun touting gangsters.<sup>19</sup> Rowe (2012) also reminds us that the year 1980 was the Golden Jubilee of the coronation of Emperor Haile Selassie I, and during the reflections/reasonings of this celebration the role and place of the female in the trod became central within the discourse in the Movement, 'as daughters began asking more what they could do for Rastafari' (Rowe:188), suggesting a critical moment for activation of a collective consciousness practice in the faith. By the 1980s in Jamaica Rastafari had, despite social prejudices, established itself as a genuine spiritual

movement which eschewed violence in favour of its salutations of 'peace and love'. There was an established orthodoxy within the Rastafari by now, thus a group of Nyahbinghi elders were facilitated on touring missions to the United States, England, Canada and the Caribbean region, and eventually these missions began to be drawn into Africa through the emergent congregation: South Africa, Ethiopia, Malawi and elsewhere on the continent. This was deliberately undertaken within efforts to raise the profile of affirmative black cultural expressions that were being vilified in the media, and wittingly or unwittingly this served to consolidate the international Rastafari community and strengthened networking.

Missions were variously facilitated by women, the earliest (1982) completely initiated and executed by women administrators, tapping into institutional agencies such as York University in Canada. These missions evolved within a context of showcasing the core spiritual values of the Movement by having the elders of the faith participate in exhibitions and lectures. This recognized first assembly of international Rastafari spawned the need to include Jamaica as the site for a follow-up assembly. This Jamaican meeting (1983) saw participants from the Caribbean-wide region, North America and the United Kingdom, and resulted in the consolidation of the Jamaican eldership and the resultant priesthood that had emerged before an international assembly. This assembly also produced one of the first comprehensive assessments of the central concerns which faced the community internationally while affirming the importance of advocating for reparation, and specifically repatriation to Africa. Immediately following this conference this cadre of Nyahbinghi officials made journeys across the Caribbean and beyond, sharing their testimonies and delineating the faith. Between 1984 and 1988, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States saw various high-level Rastafari elders' delegations facilitating globally coordinated proselytizing ventures designed as extended trods, festivals, and cultural exhibitions. A new international women's executive was being established as a global network, and among the names were Mansani Montague, Nanna Farika Birhan, Desta Meghoo, Eleanor Wint, Rita Marley, and more latterly, Queen Mother Moses, Ijahnya Christian. Collaborators were varied; for example, what Tafari Ama (2012) identifies as the 'new age Rasta', that is, outspoken and radically-minded males such as Ras Junior Manning (Ama 2012) and Ras I-Ration-I both of whom championed the advancement of respect for female voices to receiving a hearing within the Rastafari assemblies and even to take leading roles (usually, if and when called on). Such brethren help to foster a new tendency especially among younger males to 'acknowledge the validity of woman power rather than previous practices of silencing' all females. Key links also developed in the person of Carole Yawney and Jake Homiak (both

outsiders working closely with the community) providing access for Rastafari to Canadian and American ports, while community members arranged the supportive travel and accommodation logistics. In the UK the Movement had grown its own partners from within and these were able to incorporate official government assistance in staging a major festival called 'Rastafari Focus'. The leap forward in the visibility of women, especially within the international context was supported by the new demographics of North American and British socialization and citizenship where women were in some cases the pioneers and in greater numbers in the inward migration from the Caribbean, and further were now situated in environments where they had often secured more latitude socially and in some instances, stood better chances than their Rastafari male counterparts of being incorporated into the formal job market. The traditional social position of women in these locations changed somewhat especially in relation to their male counterparts and this also affects the ideas as to what was orthodox for females. In some cases women jettisoned the conventions of long-dresses, even the idea of personal aesthetic idiosyncrasies concerning covering of head and wearing of make-up, as well as thinking which frowned on trousers wearing, often incorporating them with longer skirts to bolster their resistance especially to cold weather (Ama 2012). This also meant a less strict adherence to some other ideas about separation, use of technology and the general idea of dealing with the 'Babylon system' of codes and regulations. Women were generally more prepared to become key facilitators in these new spaces. Eventually this resulted in two key North Atlantic nodules for international Rastafari administration, Washington DC/Atlanta and London/Manchester.

Visitations from large groups of Nyahbinghi elders from Jamaica in some instances were akin to the meeting of different worlds, often with clashes of culture, and thus tactically the community sought to convene the most rounded delegation. The need for high levels of representation, with respect for the faith's canons, clarity of message, conceivable with the real epistemic competence and performance now needed to be balanced with the ability to document and initiate and follow-up correspondence; in total the capacity of the team often meant inclusion of a secretary/scribe/translator on missions and most often these role was assigned to the better educated female congregants. Arguably this vantage point placed women largely within central aspects of communication recording, continuity and ultimately the initiation of actions as far as international communication was concerned. Since the early 1980s there have been three to four major international conventions of Rastafari each decade, with this tendency increasing significantly since the dawn of the twenty-first century with international gatherings occurring several times per year and incorporating wider locations such as Central and South America,

the eastern Caribbean and Africa. This has resulted from the Movement's growth and transcultural migration as well as its indigenization in its various locales including its spread to Africa, where in counties such as Kenya and Tanzania<sup>20</sup> it expressed the youth antisocial pensions and in South Africa and Zimbabwe it bolstered the fight to liberate the society from apartheid. Rastafari therefore by the dawn of the twenty-first century had become localized and a reference point within a black (increasingly human) index for articulating resistance. With these developments have come set agendas which now are focused beyond merely the proselytization mission and are oriented at the issues related to governance particularly as relates to repatriation to Africa as well as dealing with the challenges of settlement and development of the continent among other things.

The centenary of the birth of the Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I (23 July 1992) was one such occasion where Rastafari in the diaspora used this as momentum for achieving a systematic focus, especially within the TRON, on repatriation to Ethiopia. The 1992 Centenary Trod to Ethiopia as it was called marked the first International Assembly of Rastafari in Ethiopia, coordinated by a committee for Rastafari based in London. This saw the participation of large delegations from the Americas and Europe converging on the Ethiopian Highlands in celebration of an event made more possible by the fall of the Derge regime, the administration that had removed the Emperor almost two decades previously. This trod saw the participation of a substantial contingent from Jamaica and the United Kingdom and resulted in the deepening of the TRON-related activities in Ethiopia, ultimately facilitating the commencement of building and settlement projects under the coordination of teams of Nyahbinghi members around the globe. This afforded that mansion the framework to fundraise for building one of its largest Rastafari tabernacles in Shashamane and the development of the related infrastructure to facilitate the repatriation of members of its congregation<sup>21</sup>. Various Rastafari women, particularly in the United Kingdom and United States, have been inspired to mobilize their talents in nursing and general healthcare, teaching and social work to begin active service on the ground in Ethiopia in their field of training and expertise. Out of such efforts medical clinics, specialist hospices for the critically ill, water-harvesting facilities and schoolrooms have been constructed in Shashamane.

Perhaps the most ambitious iteration of this broad objective of Rastafari towards reparatory development for Africa and its diaspora was developed by the Bob Marley Foundation in 2005 when it staged an Africa Unite concert in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The Foundation was established in 1986 by Marley's widow, Rita Marley and managed by a largely female international network, as a protracted expression of Bob's life purpose designed as a means

of supporting at-risk communities and their youths in social and cultural development. It used the opportunity of Marley's sixtieth birthday to set before more than half a million spectators a themed concert in Addis Ababa meant to inspire African youth into greater solidarity and higher levels of cooperation for achievement. Appended to the concert were a series of workshops and outreach projects related to health and homeless children, projects which initiated more permanent work through the agents of the Bob Marley Foundation now based in Ethiopia. Effectively the concert ramped up the administrative capacity of the Movement in Ethiopia and established a path for the future coordination of Rastafari activities in that region. Perhaps not surprisingly the thrust of the Marley coordination in Ethiopia was a TRON or Nyahbinghi-supported and administered venture, that is: the key players identify as such, even though admittedly the Bob Marley Foundation has ecumenical appeal and is an ardent supporter of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, and the latter was largely ceremonially engaged in the activities during the Addis concert. Since then there have been yearly activities in celebration of Bob Marley's birthday which see Marley-branded activities taking place across the continent, straddling the role of social worker and edutainment provider with regular and key activities in Ethiopia, Ghana and South Africa. In this regard the Bob Marley Foundation demonstrates the core desire of the Rastafari movement which is to be enabled to return to the continent to make worthwhile contributions towards its future development. Before the Bob Marley Foundation, the Rastafari history of such developmental ventures saw the membership of the Ethiopian World Federation performing similarly from as early as the 1960s, with the Twelve Tribes of Israel, the most active branch of the Federation which eventually became autonomous, anchored and actively working in Ethiopia since the early 1970s; see Niaah (2012) for more regarding this period.

By the start of the new millennium, Rastafari had somewhat of a critical mass on the African continent and at this juncture a mode of operating was discernible, whereby Rastafari, a chiliastic worldview as they have been described, had travelled over 'land and sea' in seeking to actualize its words, reparation and repatriation. It had however done this by carrying the word 'Rastafari' as signifier of change and repair, as the elders used to sing: 'Telling out King Rastafari doctrine across the whole world (Planno 1996)'. In 2014, the Rastafari through its Ethiopian anchor coordinated the first international gathering around exhibiting the life of the last Emperor, the first of its kind, entitled 'Ras Tafari, the Majesty and the Movement', at the Ethiopian National Museum in Addis Ababa. In this instance the world had come to the home of the king to have these 'strange'<sup>22</sup> Rastafari people teach of this significant king by way of an exhibition. Appended to this exhibition were

symposia and outreach particularly in Shashamane, the site of a multinational settlement (with over 20 different nationalities) constituting of a repatriated Rastafari community. These programmes have been spearheaded largely by females working closely with Mrs. Rita Marley as well as Ethiopian officials and members of the local Rastafari community in Ethiopia.

### **Conclusion: 'A Roaring Lion Kills No Prey'**

Today Rastafari stands as a known pan-African champion and a worldview that has crossed boundaries to now have a global presence. It has moved from a merely male-dominated patriarchal frontier to now exist as a global community often identified as the Rastafari global family. The intention of this article was not to ignore the issues of gender contestation and disquiet as they exist within the Rastafari, but instead to view the evolution of the practice of the faith and the reality of gender in action over the past thirty years, even despite the norms espoused. Over the past three to five decades the community has globalized clinging to the cosmological foundations, but with seemingly greater sensibilities towards the role of the Rastawoman.

Dispersal of Rastafari has not eliminated Africa from the meta-narrative, rather it has made Africa central, envisioned as rebirth and renewal, the present and the future and anticipated as the core direction within the organization practice. Given the seminal role played by Jamaica in constructing this faith there has been a universal link which keeps the Movement connected to the Jamaican Rastafari community. From this community cohorts of elders, 'ancients', priests, administrators/coordinators/facilitators and *de facto* leaders have emerged to steer the family, as the congregation became multiplied, scattered and the doctrine dispersed far and wide around the world. In the public domain the Rastafari are collectively labelled and perceived, and even though in actuality it is composed of various often disparate mansions, internationally one key mansion, the TRON, has responded to issues of Rastafari representation thus taking on the mandate of defending the 'faith' in various international fora over the past thirty years. This has been melded through a process of outward migration of individuals and the doctrine that has seen the rise of the Lioness or Rastawoman, within a movement that circumvented her on grounds of gender particularly as it related to issues of leadership and theocratic doctrine. Notwithstanding this, the Lioness has emerged as a key facilitator, interlocutor even, within the international rise of Rastafari. Perhaps within the construct of securing the homeland and pinning down the repatriational vision, Rastafari women had to have been highly visible as key operatives within the reality of resettlement of families in Africa. The Movement, I would here suggest, is operationally very much within the

construct of its totemic symbol, the all-pervasive symbolic conquering lion, preachers and teacher males roaring theocracy as the lioness learnt silence, patience and stillness while manoeuvring in Babylon hunting, in search of prey. The story is often told of how Bob Marley had to take unto himself three women, the now famed I-Threes, and depart from the company of the 'Wailers', the two founding male band members, in order to take the Rastafari message to the world through international reggae music concerts. The other founding males (Peter Tosh and Neville 'Bunny Wailer' Livingston) were reluctant to take on the strategic essentials that North American and European touring often entailed<sup>23</sup>. In truth Bob Marley had pioneered a system of Rastafari ministries, and by his passing in 1981 the awakening to the Rastafari message was well advanced and now the elders could move forward to preach and teach and bring their unique testimonies. They were enabled by the dialogical pension ritualized in the form of 'reasoning', a process which facilitates the ventilation and contestation of contending ideas; women within this ritual though marginalized with respect to the degree to which and as to when they may be present have been consistently negotiating boundaries beyond their ritual participation and have been key in international agenda development and execution. Partially whereas this participation of women might be linked to educational attainment, employment capacity and connections, increasingly their participation is recognized as being best suited in total at the level of *epistemic performance*, and in such instances gender become only a plus as increasingly the community's leadership seeks to assert the example of Emperor Haile Selassie appearing with Empress Manen demonstrating of the importance of balance and the need for sharing the tasks and administration, including international representation. There is also the fact that after more than eight decades there are a few generations of women who come from within the Movement being born to Rastafari families without the need for a groom as an adult in the way of the earlier years before the rise of the Rastafari woman. That being the case, some women now stood within the community who had more experience in the Rastafari faith than some older males who were just entering the Movement as adults. The additional impact of Marley's death, but more so the rise of his widow Mrs. Rita Marley as controller of the Marley enterprises, Reggae Queen (Queen Mother Nanna Rita), in her own right and heiress to a significant legacy, provided the capacity for her to be her own exemplar and this provided additional thrust for female-coordinated and administered initiatives, as she has been connected to most of the international assemblage ventures since 1982.

The period 1980-1992 coincides with that period of strong political repression in the fizzling out of the Cold War politics and saw the commencement of international conversation within the Rastafari community about forward strategies for global objective; since 1992 and more so since the 2007 Ethiopian millennium there has been more heightened and systematic planning with regard to approaching repatriation to Africa as well as the engagement of programmatic development within the continent.

Rastafari women have had to systematically negotiate their contribution; the push and pull of outward migration from Jamaica into North America and Europe has also buttressed the pace of the incorporation of women's contribution, often located within small associations formed among themselves to pursue specific issues and concerns. This has privileged networks of women who have demonstrated great resourcefulness and skills in moving the global project forward often without explicit budgets. Over the past three years the Jamaican Rastafari community has gone one step further as it has appointed for the first time in its existence a female chairperson over the relatively newly established ecumenical/umbrella Rastafari organization, the Rastafari Millennium Council, as well as the administrative chairperson over one of the oldest and certainty patriarchal TRON. Both these developments may have been unheard of a decade ago and certainly even five years ago could not have been anticipated. These developments critically position Rastafari as a rejuvenating liberatory framework with seemingly an enduring vision for Africa, its ultimate frontier, for the twenty-first century.

## Notes

1. The quoted line in the title is taken from the poem delivered by a Nyahbinghi matriarch Mama Blossom at a celebration of Rastafari martyrs, considered by me to represent a pithy summary of different strategic approaches to ritual engagement as voiced by women versus the way of the males.
2. Some such as Horace Campbell hold this view, suggesting that Rastafari because of its failure to strengthen in strategic and politico-economic terms has suffered a type of anachronism (offered in personal conversation August 2013); also see Campbell (1984).
3. *Myaal* is considered to be the genesis of Afro-Jamaican syncretic religious tradition thought to have emerged in the mid-18th century.
4. The 2011 Jamaican census places the number at approximately 15%, however I would argue that the demographics may be more balanced in certain locations across the Rastafari Diaspora, for example in Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom for example where I have observed ratios suggesting it ranges between 20-30%.
5. This comes from Spivak and gets to the heart of the convergence of issues at play in this patriarchal knowledge system which I have argued elsewhere is a male facility

towards delivering Ethiopian-centred pedagogy. Further it triggers the sense of gnosis or the interiority of the knowledge of life or the place from which 'livity', the core essence of the Rastafari culture, is performed.

6. Nyahbinghi is a term that has been appropriated by Jamaican Rastafari since the late 1930s/early 1940s derived from the Eastern African name of the spirit medium Queen Nyahbinghi who was a major force in the resistance against British colonialism in Uganda at the turn of the twentieth century. In the Jamaican context it grew to refer to the largest and in some accounts the oldest congregation of the Rastafari movement, somewhat of an ephemeral community, convened around 'holy-days': sacred or significant pan-African celebration (i.e. African Liberation Day, 25 May, HIM Emperor Haile Selassie I's coronation and birthday on 2 November 2 and 23 July respectively). They constituted 3 to 4 generations of Rastafari cohered around the divinity of His Imperial Majesty Haile Selassie I with the dominant ethos of never bowing to white supremacy (Jake Homiak personal communication 21 August 2014). For discussions about the African connection and origins of the Nyahbinghi see Hopkins, E. (1970) 'The Nyahbinghi Cult of Southern Uganda' in R.I. Rotberg (ed.) *Protest & Power in Black Africa*, Oxford University Press.
7. This sentiment was shared by Homiak in August 2014 in personal communications. To this extent the liberal, more Western positioning within the faith such as seen in the Twelve Tribes of Israel are sometimes regarded as a compromise based on greater levels of incorporation by Babylon; the Nyahbinghi and the Bobo Ashanti are seen to be at the other end of the spectrum as more African-oriented.
8. There is also the use of the term 'polluted' or 'unpolluted' for the same context – however perhaps because of the implicit offensive suggestions the more popular term I have heard is 'free'.
9. Recently an informant (August 2014) told me that Ma Shanti, a female Nyahbinghi elder, used to play the drums in the official ceremony. There are younger voices challenging the denial of women, in this way. Rastafari Village in Montego Bay, a Rastafari-owned and inspired eco-tourism resort in St James affords ones the freedom to break this taboo.
10. Information gathered from field notes/Nyahbinghi Global Consultation, Scots Pass, July 2008.
11. See Homiak (2013) for more about Yawney's link to Rastafari.
12. This was the argument presented by former Miss World Cindy Breakspere, at the University of the West Indies (UWI), Institute of Caribbean Studies' 18th annual Bob Marley Lecture, February 2014 UWI, Mona Campus.
13. The TTI and its administration have been on a progressive and consistent agenda from the late 1960s for African repatriation. Through strong charismatic male leadership, complex committees were developed to administer this agenda over the last forty years, the executive and active organizational membership reflecting more so than any other mansion the demographic shifts of the 1960/70s with a large congregation of women, brown, educated elite youth joining the ranks. Administration within TTI was made to reflect the logic of astrology with the convergence around the number twelve as represented by the twelve months of the year and expressed through the selection

of twelve men and women to reflect this expression of mind/body completion; determined by an individual's time of birth, gender as well as entitlement through years of membership. The members were socialized towards leading their lives in preparation for repatriation to Africa and so some have designated this as their retirement objective. From 1972 to 1981 this was actively pursued through exploring missions, sponsored settlements and various other initiatives resulting in the resettlement of several scores of its membership at a crucial time, thus paving the way for future settlers which has continued. These initiatives had active participation from committees reflecting mixtures of different skills and interests and ages, which by far seem to be the most constructive and systematic planning and implementation. The achievement of the TTI include a significant settlement in Ethiopia, in some instances spanning three generations, and also notably a school in Shashamane that has been operational for almost twenty years (Niaah 2012).

14. The latest manifestation of this has been the recently concluded 'Rastafari Rootz Festival/High Times World Cannabis Cup 2015, where an internationally recognized white cannabis advocacy syndicate partnered with key leaders of the Nyahbinghi community to host an annual ganja celebration event. See: <http://www.billboard.com/articles/business/6730953/high-times-inaugural-cannabis-cup-rastafari-rootz-jamaica-exclusive>.
15. See Niaah (2014) for a discussion of Hall and this connection.
16. Advancing individual rights, for example the right for their children to wear their hair in locks while attending school.
17. Yawney among others offers this suggestion; see Yawney (1984) 'Who Killed Bob Marley? Review of Bob Marley: Reggae King of the World' by M.L. Whitney, in *Canadian Forum*, December 1984, Toronto: Williams-Wallace publishers, pp. 29-31.
18. At the 1980 celebrations for the independence of Zimbabwe, Rodney and Marley were among the specially invited guests, given their global stature as pan-African revolutionaries.
19. Rastafari was targeted, it is believed, as a radical and violent international drug trading community, a part of that 'window of vulnerability' which took hold of the Third World in the 1970s under the 'softer' Carter administration.
20. In the case of Tanzania this indigenous community made serious linkages with their Jamaican counterparts; in 1985 for example, the Universal Rastafari Improvement Association of Tanzania sent a 'fact-finding' mission to Jamaica, 29 December 1985 to 28 January 1986.
21. Most recently a second Tabernacle has been developed in Shashamane under the initiative of a matriarch Mother Earth, and the site is named appropriately Mother Earth's Taba where she indirectly presides over weekly celebrations. Thanks to Ijahnya Christian for providing this updated information.
22. See E. Macleod (2014) *Visions of Zion: Ethiopians and Rastafari in the Search for the Promised Land*, NYU Press for a discussion of the reactions of Ethiopians to the presence of Rastafari culture in Ethiopia.
23. The Wailers as they were called evolved away from this position and developed international reputations and subsequently individual touring engagements.

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## **Engineering our Own Futures: Lessons on Holistic Development from Muslim Women's Civil Society Groups in Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania**

Adryan Wallace\*

### **Abstract**

Muslim women's organizations in East and West Africa have cultivated successful strategies to mitigate the varied domestic economic and political outcomes produced by globalization. Although China and the other BRICS countries are providing multi-polar development models, their results may not differ significantly from their western counterparts if groups that are often left out of the decision-making processes are not included. There is an urgent need for social scientists to make the experiences of African women as designers of development the central point of theorizing in order to inform how we conceptualize economic and political participation and measure inequality. This paper will utilize case studies from local women's non-governmental and community-based organizations in Kano, Nigeria, Tamale, Ghana and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to help develop mechanisms for sustainable economic growth and substantive representation which, I argue, can help generate state institutions that are more responsive to the needs of their citizens. Mainstreaming gender as an analytical frame is essential because it interrogates privilege, illustrates how it is distributed among and between women and men and provides insights into partnerships that can be forged across genders. Furthermore, the institutional linkages of women's organizations both within and across national contexts strengthens the ability of African countries to look internally and share their development best practices through sub-regional entities and the African Union. Finally, civil society needs to be redefined and contextualized using the perspectives of citizens at the grassroots level to produce holistic policy recommendations for all three tiers of governance (domestic, sub-regional and regional).

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## Résumé

Les organisations de femmes musulmanes en Afrique de l'Est et de l'Ouest ont mis au point des stratégies efficaces pour atténuer les divers effets économiques et politiques internes de la mondialisation. Bien que la Chine et les pays BRICS fournissent des modèles de développement multipolaire, leurs résultats pourraient ne pas différer considérablement de ceux de leurs homologues occidentaux si les groupes qui sont souvent laissés en rade dans les processus décisionnels ne sont pas inclus. Il est urgent que les spécialistes des sciences sociales fassent de l'expérience des femmes africaines en tant que conceptrices du développement le point central de la théorisation afin d'éclairer la façon dont nous conceptualisons la participation économique et politique et mesurons l'inégalité. Le présent article se fondera sur des études de cas d'organisations non gouvernementales et communautaires locales de femmes à Kano, au Nigeria, à Tamale, au Ghana et à Dar es-Salaam, en Tanzanie, pour aider à développer des mécanismes de croissance économique durable et de représentation substantielle qui, je soutiens, peuvent permettre de générer des institutions étatiques plus réactives aux besoins de leurs citoyens.

L'intégration du genre comme cadre analytique est essentielle car elle interroge le privilège, illustre la façon dont elle est distribuée entre les femmes et les hommes et donne un aperçu des partenariats qui peuvent être forgés entre les sexes. De plus, les liens institutionnels des organisations de femmes à l'intérieur et à l'extérieur des pays renforcent la capacité des pays africains de se pencher sur les questions internes et de partager leurs meilleures pratiques de développement par le biais d'entités sous régionales et de l'Union africaine. Enfin, la société civile doit être redéfinie et contextualisée en tenant compte des points de vue des citoyens au niveau local pour produire des recommandations politiques globales pour les trois niveaux de gouvernance (national, sous régional et régional).

## Introduction

Over the last two decades Muslim women's civil society organizations (CSOs) in Africa have become increasingly more engaged in development work, specifically in the areas of gender equality, economic inequality, education, health and political participation. Local Muslim women's organizations in East and West Africa have cultivated successful strategies to mitigate the varied domestic economic and political outcomes produced, by globalization. By placing women at the centre of economic production they become the designers of development rather than being designated as the recipients of development programmes. Additionally, the women's organizations that were the focus of this study further illustrate the importance of being able to create independent and new constructs of development that are contextualized within

national contexts and communities. More specifically these CSOs, including non-governmental (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs), also focus on addressing the needs of groups that are often excluded from decision making, in particular women. Finally, these CSOs work with a cross-section of women ensuring that privileged voices are not the sole shapers of development narratives and programming suggestions (Wallace 2014). The strategies of Muslim women's groups illustrate that it is possible to devise sustainable mechanisms of economic, social and political inclusion while challenging the current international development paradigms. Although China and the BRICS countries have the potential to provide multi-polar development models, their results may not differ significantly from their western counterparts if groups that are often left out of the decision-making processes, i.e. local Muslim women's organizations, are not included.

There have been several critiques of development approaches, specifically economic growth, defined by the Washington Consensus which tend to 1) prioritize economic growth using purely quantitative measures, 2) create definitions of development and associated metrics based on the perspectives of western countries, and 3) rely on neoliberal models which can serve to inculcate vulnerable populations into global economic systems of governance (Mkandawire 2014; Mama 2001; Adedeji 2004; Cornwall 2003). Furthermore, groups such as 'Fifty Years is Enough' and others critique the ineffectiveness of the current neoliberal development models arguing that the WB, IMF, USAID and others have failed to attain their articulated economic and social goals. There is a long tradition of African scholars that have criticized normative development models (Mkandawire 2014; Mama 1996, 2001; Adedeji 2004; Imam 1997). Dambisya Moyo in her work *Dead Aid* further contextualized these problems, highlighting the fact that after almost one trillion in aid dollars travelling from western countries to Africa, the average citizens on the continent are less economically secure and inequality persists as a result of growth rates that are unsustainable (Moyo 2009). Additionally, Moyo touts the aid cycle as one of the key reasons that low growth rates persist, corruption continues and local markets tend to atrophy. She instead suggests that providing more foreign direct investment in the form of capital flows to governments, which can in turn make funds available to entrepreneurs in African countries, will create a stronger domestic private sector, sustainable growth and a more equitable distribution of revenue (2009).

Moyo's critique is critically important to our understandings of the relationship between FDI and development aid as it is currently implemented and financed. I would argue further that cultivating a robust domestic private sector also requires that all stakeholders including women who often comprise

a significant portion of small-scale local vendors, etc. are included in the discussions regarding how to distribute and access capital. These factors are critically important and groups that are economically marginal are often not part of the process. While economic independence through investment rather than dependence on aid is the ideal model, Moyo's solution subverts the instruments of global governance present in international development organizations yet promotes neoliberalism in her efforts to use external FDI to generate growth in the private sector. It is important to note that the economic contributions that women make through domestic labour, wage employment, and volunteer work are often not included in aggregate economic data (Kabeer 2005). More specifically, their development work is similarly overlooked (Wallace 2014). Their contributions through NGOs and CBOs should be viewed as a central component of development; however, it is important to recognize that their significance can be undermined if local women's organizations are unable to mitigate the influences that international development groups often wield in shaping development discourses and policies.

Several feminist works have explored the relationship between domestic women's organizations and international donors in detail. Microcredit in particular which has often been touted as a way for women to be involved in small-scale trading and other activities can increase their profit margins in addition to securing financial stability. The Gareem bank in particular is often hailed as an example of the success of these models. Feminist scholars have explored the ways in which microcredit can be problematic for women who are often most economically vulnerable because they also use the same neoliberal modes of economic development. For example, Christine Keating, Claire Rasmussen, and Pooja Rishi (2010) disrupt narratives of microcredit that claim to enhance women's economic status and thereby increase their political and economic bargaining power. While their critiques are important, it is at the same time problematic to assume that local NGOs invariably integrate women into the neoliberal economic systems in ways that make them additionally vulnerable. Local Muslim organizations, which are the focus of this study, rely on multiple sources of domestic funding and are therefore often able to avoid participation in neoliberal models of microcredit provision (Wallace 2014).

There is an urgent need for social scientists to make the experiences of African women as designers of development the central point of theorizing in order to inform how we conceptualize economic and political participation and measure inequality. This paper will utilize case studies from local women's NGOs and CBOs in Kano, Nigeria, Tamale, Ghana and Dar es Salaam, Tanzania to help develop mechanisms for sustainable economic growth and substantive representation, which I argue, can help generate state and regional institutions

that are more responsive to the needs of their citizens. Mainstreaming gender as an analytical frame is essential because it interrogates privilege, illustrates how it is distributed among and between women and men and provides insights into partnerships that can be forged across genders. Furthermore, the institutional linkages of women's local organizations both within and across national contexts strengthens the ability of African countries to look internally and share their development best practices through sub-regional entities and the African Union. Finally, civil society needs to be redefined and contextualized using the perspectives of citizens at the grassroots level to produce holistic policy recommendations for all three tiers of governance (domestic, sub-regional and regional).

## Methods

This article captured the experiences of Muslim women's local civil society organizations (NGOs and CBOs) groups in Kano in Nigeria, Tamale in Ghana and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania to illustrate their ability to define, develop and establish mechanisms for sustainable economic growth and substantive representation, which I argue can help generate state, sub-regional, and regional institutions that are more responsive to the needs of their citizens. This is critically important as Africa as a region continues to engage with the BRICS to address development goals. I drew primarily on feminist and interpretivist ethnographic methods to create a textured picture of the dynamics and interactions among women and between women and the state (MacDonald 1995; Callaway 1987; Mikell 1997; Kleinmon 2007, Nager and Geiger 2007; Kubik 2009). By centring the experiences of Muslim women I was able to utilize their perspectives to speak back to the existing statistical data on labour and policy prescriptions for development and women generated by the state. This approach provided empirical data about women's economic and political activities and revealed gaps present in quantitative data on the economic and political contributions of Hausa women (Pittin 1991; Mama 2001). Using qualitative research methods across disciplinary boundaries helps redress data limitations (McDonald 1995; Debusscher and Van der Vleuten 2012). In the field, I opted to maximize rich descriptions of the activities and perspectives of a representative cross section of NGOs, CBOs, and Muslim women.

My methodological approach also allows me to showcase the agency and perspectives of Muslim women, including how they define development, how they situate their work within the context of Islam, and their mobilization strategies around gender which at times includes engaging political structures. Three key factors are captured: 1) maintaining autonomy through funding

strategies, 2) creating an inclusive approach to development cutting across social locations, and 3) utilizing religion and cultural identities toward contextualizing development goals. Using a mixed-methods approach including semi-structured interviews (Leech 2003) provides insights into the ways in which gender and production roles are linked to and vary from prescribed development goals – as I elaborate below.

The groups that have been the focus of this study are local Muslim women's organizations where the leadership is not economically dependent on the revenue from the group for their economic security. This, coupled with their multiple streams of funding spanning domestic and international and local community and religious leaders sources, allow them to be discerning about which partners they work with on which projects, thereby preventing their vitality from being externally dependent or susceptible to grant cycle shocks and to remain viable during programming cycles (Wallace 2014). The CSOs that were selected for this study are as follows.

I focused on two NGOs in Kano, Nigeria to illustrate their ability to advance diverse sets of policy interests exemplified by the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations in Nigeria's (FOMWAN) work on the maternal health bill and the emphasis on making grassroots women the primary accountability partners for the local Ministry of Health's delivery of goods and services, which the Grassroots Health Organization of Nigeria (GHON) facilitated during the programmes they conducted in four local government areas to increase the access of local communities to healthcare facilities. These organizations 1) focus on development issues, 2) assist vulnerable populations, and 3) have connections with community-based organizations. FOMWAN is a membership group including CBOs.

I relied on participant observation to analyse how the women in these organizations related to one another, for example at programmes conducted by GHON, the primary focus of this study, as well as their NGO and CBO networks. I observed the first initiative focused on increasing access to healthcare facilities of communities in four local government areas (LGAs) conducted in partnership with Pact Nigeria and the Kano State Ministry of Health, which was funded by the Nigerian government. Observing GHON, given the breadth of its development work and the different women that come together through the organization, revealed the ways in which privilege is constructed and contested by Hausa women and the variety of ways in which they conceptualize development on their own terms.

In Tamale, Ghana, I observed Enterprising Women in Development (EWID), an NGO that focuses on advocacy in health, policy, politics and development for women. The executive director is also the head of the Federal

Organization of Muslim Women in Ghana (FOMWAG). FOMWAG is a national association for Muslim women. Much of their work centres on hosting workshops that inform Muslim women about critical issues and policy developments that will impact them. Finally, I interviewed one of the members of the elders' council of women cooperatives in the Hausa Zongo community. The women of the Zongo have formed a series of trading cooperatives in order to support each other and increase profits. Islam plays a central role in the lives of each participant with particular emphasis on being self-sufficient in their different capacities.

Sahiba Sisters is the organization that I selected to focus on in Tanzania, given that it is independent from the state in contrast to the Tanzanian Muslim Council (BAKWATA). The BAKWATA tends to be overrepresented in the literature (Tripp 2012). Sahiba Sisters serves as an umbrella organization for over forty-eight local Muslim women's NGOs and CBOs that are often unregistered. Sahiba Sisters operates in thirteen regions in Tanzania including Mwanza, Manyara, Morogoro, Dodoma, Iringa, Mbeya, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam, Lindi Town, Tabora, Kigoma, Songea, Zanzibar (Unguja and Pemba). Accessing the perspectives of these women's organizations is critical because they illustrate the interests and priorities of organizations that are often marginal to the state and the international development community.

### **Development for Whom?**

The debate on how development is defined, who has the right to define it, and how attaining development goals is monitored and evaluated is extensive. Mkandawire's recent piece 'The Spread of Economic Doctrines & Policy-making in Post-Colonial Africa' provides key insights into the ideological assumptions implicit in economic development approaches in Africa (2014). He argues that the materialist approach to African development often reflects the foreign interests of western countries and the resulting policy frameworks emphasize socially constructing these materialist frames. Furthermore, his work chronicles the shift from the structuralist-developmental or neo-Marxist approach of the sixties and seventies, to the neoliberalism of the eighties and nineties, and the contemporary emphasis on growth and welfare through poverty reduction and income redistribution (Mkandawire 2014). He posits that instead of focusing on the interests of actors and institutional constraints that development theorists should prioritize the cultivation of ideas capable of 'helping us understand any society' (Mkandawire 2014:179). In other words, the key is being able to conceptualize the ways in which the intersections of the political, cultural, economic, social, and historical factors serve to shape societies within national contexts. Academics in

particular are charged with this task given the influence that the scholarship we produce has on policy outcomes. In an effort to heed this call, this article will explore the ways local Muslim Women's organizations in East and West Africa have cultivated successful strategies to advance their own definition of development, work across lines of privilege, and mitigate the varied domestic economic and political outcomes produced by the globalization of development paradigms.

Development aid acquired from the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and other international donors is usually under the control of the state. Therefore, in many cases, the implementation of programmes resourced with these funds can function as a form of global governance because they monitor and regulate women's economic activity. Consequently, the constraints imposed by donors have the potential to affect women – if women's organizations un-reflexively conduct programming by circumventing the international donor exclusivity they are able to mitigate the negative costs (Campbell and Teghtsoonian 2010). In *Women's Studies and Studies of African Women* During the 1990s, Amina Mama writes that economics tends to be built upon masculinist distinctions between the formal and informal economy and the biological rather than social reproduction (1996). Macroeconomic analysis is based on 'maternal altruism' rendering women's economic contributions invisible. African women's labour invalidates the formal and informal binary because in many ways the income-generating activities are extensions of their domestic labour, posing an interesting critique of the public and private binary. Furthermore, the extensive trade networks and financial transactions that women engage in using the market dismantle the nuclear depiction of kinship networks. Mama raises some critical critiques of economics and state and society; however, they need to be contextualized within the experiences of Muslim women in Nigeria, Ghana, and Tanzania.

Historically, the shifts in development paradigms from Women in Development (WID), to Women and Development (WAD), to Gender and Development (GAD) reflect the expansion of theoretical models to address structural impediments and attempt to attain gender equality through organizations (Rathgeber 1999; Nikkhah et al. 2012). NGOs transform individual levels of empowerment into collective efforts to challenge gendered power dynamics, and cultural and institutional constraints through programmes and awareness campaigns (Desai 2005; Nikkhah et al. 2012). Furthermore, these groups can function as sites to reconstitute new gender norms by mainstreaming concerns of women into development approaches and policies and increasing their presence in public spaces (Cornwall, Harrison and Whitehead 2004; Moser and Moser 2005; Alvesson and Billing 2009). While NGOs can potentially deconstruct gender hierarchies

domestically, relationships between international and local organizations are also capable of re-inscribing privilege given differentials in the ability to influence development agendas (Ruwanpura 2007). The level of impact of globalization and on domestic political and economic systems depends in many ways on the amount of inclusion women and other vulnerable groups have on decision-making frames as they relate to national production goals and associated policy priorities. The Millennium Development goals showcase the importance of thinking about gender empowerment as 'the ability to make choices' (Kabeer 2005). She elaborates further that it is essential to see gender equality and women's empowerment as 'an intrinsic rather than an instrumental goal, explicitly valued as an end in itself rather than as an instrument for achieving other goals' (Kabeer 2005). In other words, not only is it important that there are other options available but they also need to be visible and accessible in order for agency to be exercised.

The BRICS have the potential to incorporate the agency of excluded actors through the cultivation of a multi-polar approach to development and consequently global governance which has been highlighted by several scholars (Armijo 2007; Glosny 2010; Gammeltoft 2008; Hau et al. 2012; Purushothaman 2003). BRICS have generated new opportunities and forums for international engagement with other actors that are essential to both domestic and regional trends. More broadly the members of the BRICS focus on natural resource acquisition, expansion into new markets and identifying investment sectors in emerging markets (Hau et al. 2012). The interaction with Africa is not based solely on economic interests. Instead the BRICS frame their relationship with Africa in the context of a mutual interest in being free from western exploitation and imperialism (Schoeman 2011). Brazil attempts to draw the connection along the cultural connections stemming from the legacies of the slave trade and India underscores their mutual colonial experiences with the UK (Schoeman 2011). Although there is potential, there are also ways in which the divergent national interests of member countries can serve to constrain bilateral relationships with Africa (Glosny 2010; Sharma 2012). They can emphasize trade in natural resources in the energy sector which comprise approximately 67 per cent of exports to Nigeria, Angola, and Sudan (Schoeman 2011). In an effort to break out of this model Souza highlights Brazil's cooperation approach to development as a partnership with African countries including technical cooperation-knowledge and technology, humanitarian cooperation via agriculture, and social development in health and education (2014). India has also attempted to branch out into health, education, information communication technology and automobiles (Kimenyi & Lewis 2011). The recent establishment of the BRICS development bank and contingency fund illustrates that development

is a key priority of the BRICS. It is therefore essential that the BRICS invite Muslim women's organizations to the table, allowing them to utilize their institutional knowledge to help ensure that the BRICS new development bank does not repeat the same mistakes as the Washington Consensus models.

The political engagement and development work of African Muslim women through their organizations captures their agency in successfully resisting externally constructed monolithic definitions of Muslim women by some conservative men within communities and by foreign development organizations (Oyewumi 1998; Imam 1997; Adamu 1999). Understanding how women are negotiating these tensions in their labour and mobilization choices and strategies, in addition to levels of institutionalization and affiliation, provides direct evidence of women negotiating the 'double-edged' sword (Adamu 1999). Adamu highlights the constant tension African Muslim women experience as they are exposed simultaneously to more conservative forms of Islam and the hegemony of Western feminists, both of which they resist to create their own autonomous conceptualization of development (Narayan 1997). Much like Chandra Mohanty's disruption of the construction of non-Western women as a passive monolithic group, my study analyzes the varied experiences of Muslim women as development actors to illustrate their use of economic agency to challenge intersecting social and political power structures (Mohanty 1988). Mainstreaming gender as an analytical frame is essential because it interrogates privilege, illustrates how it is distributed among and between women and men and provides insights into partnerships that can be forged across genders. The Muslim women's organizations that are the focus of this study are using their civil society organizations to represent the interests of women in development and public policy

The works of Amina Mama and Ayesha Imam provide insights into how African Muslim women conceptualize their multiple identities and negotiate between what can at times be viewed as competing sets of interests with material, social and political consequences (1996, 2003). It also provides a context to understand the relationships of identity, interests, and the formation of organizations to attain outlined goals. In addition to Islamic identities, socioeconomic status, lineage, level of Islamic and secular education, age and other factors also impact women's perspectives. Muslim women's CSOs illustrate a focus on different development issues and strategies utilized to address them. African Muslim women actively resist externally constructed definitions of Muslim women by their male counterparts and western approaches to development (Oyewumi 1997 & 2003, Ogundipe-Leslie 1994, Adamu 1999, Lemu 2007, Jamal 2007, Alidou 2005, Kabir 2011) Adamu uses the phrase 'double-edged sword' to highlight

the constant tension African Muslim women experience as they are exposed simultaneously to more conservative forms of Islam (that they often resist) and the hegemony of Western feminists (1999). While Muslim women are framing gender equality and development on their own terms, they are also able to partner at times with international organizations and at times provide substantive feedback to government ministries. The ability to cultivate these connections is directly related to the social locations of women within the organizations. The political significance of Islam and experiences of Muslim populations are varied particularly with respect to national context. Therefore, I am arguing that through careful analysis of the structures of NGOs and CBOs in addition to their institutional relationships with each other and interactions with political institutions, it is possible to map forms of gender privilege as it relates to identity categories. Additionally, depending on their structures, NGOs and CBOs are potentially equipped to represent multiple interests of women in ways that differ from female legislators and ministers because they function outside of the institutional constraints of the state and are active on the ground.

### **Muslim Women's CSOs as Designers of Development**

There are a myriad of perspectives of Muslim women on development; however, I want to begin this section with two quotes that illustrate women's ability to interpret their own roles in Islam in ways that are consistent with, not in conflict with, their NGO and CBO activities.

Haj. Auy, a member of the Muslim Sisters Organization, which plays an advisory role to FOMWAN, highlights the ability of Muslim women to define their own roles in development and their contributions to their family, community, and country:

In terms of there [allegedly] being a conflict between western education and being a Muslim woman...[it is possible] that you could be educated in the western sense but you could still uphold your values of being a traditional Hausa Fulani woman. Ah uh still be able to carry out those roles...So and I am allowed to engage in economic activities which do not compromise my position as a wife and mother and a Muslim woman. I provide job opportunities for over 100 people, which I feel I am contributing something to the economy of the country. To the people around me and also no matter how small it is, it is pushing the wheel of progress forward (interview with Adryan Wallace).

Haj. Hadiza, the director of GHON, echoes a similar sentiment about the synergy between Islam and education for women:

Women should be educated...Because from what I know of my religion Islam tells me, it doesn't deprive any woman from attaining education (interview with Adryan Wallace).

Both Haj. Auy and Haj. Hadiza demonstrate that women are resisting critiques from men in their communities that their work is in conflict with their Islamic identities and resisting the approaches to development championed by western feminists, which often reinforce global economic hierarchies that use constructs of gender equality based on neoliberal assumptions. They see promoting women's empowerment and development as part of their identities and roles as Muslim women. Both women are very privileged; however, it is precisely their social location that allows them to engage in development work without being financially dependent on it (Wallace 2014). As I examine the activities of NGOs below, the importance of mainstreaming the diverse interests of women and these strategies are highlighted.

### **FOMWAN & GHON-Kano, Nigeria**

Since 2001, Kano State has offered free maternal health services, but there was no existing policy plan or law to regulate the terms and delivery of services. FOMWAN drafted a maternal health bill, in collaboration with other CBOs and groups, to help ensure that obstacles impeding all women from having equal access to state maternal health services are remedied. FOMWAN has offices in thirty-four states and connections to over five hundred women's organizations, both registered and unregistered groups. FOMWAN's direct efforts to maintain connections to CBO groups helped integrate concerns from grassroots women that are often excluded. These efforts are reflected in the ways the organizations facilitate collective exchanges. Given the organizational structure of FOMWAN, members of NGOs and CBOs are selected to represent the interests of their respective groups and in turn work together in committee, based on consensus (*shurah*), to devise the organizations' larger platform. Even when services may be available, it is imperative that there are guidelines to ensure equal access and it is important that grassroots women are able to actively participate in this element (Wallace 2014). FOMWAN, through proposing the maternal health bill, created a space for women in NGOs and CBOs to devise legislation that mainstreamed elite and grassroots women's priorities through consensus to include issues related to transportation costs and other hidden fees, level of comfort communicating their needs to the staff, food security and other concerns. FOMWAN has also been able to collaborate with international organizations giving women from community-based organizations (CBOs) access to stakeholders that the CBOs would not be able to acquire independently.

GHON, unlike FOMWAN, used another approach. GHON is a development organization, working to ensure that the health needs of grassroots women defined by local CBOs were addressed at the local level. Additionally, GHON equipped women in development CBOs with connections to the formal LGA political institutions capable of resolving issues they face related to accessing healthcare facilities. These local women's groups are now able to engage the relevant political institutions to address their concerns regarding the improvement of health factors and other areas, if they choose to do so. In addition to areas such as health, GHON highlights the broader contributions women can make to society in the areas of development. Under Sharia, in this particular Islamic context, delineating between the public and the private is not pronounced; therefore, changes in any one sector have direct implications on the other. Sadia, an employee of GHON, states that historically women were

...considered to be more at home or their work must be involved [in] home and the family. They are not recognized in the educational, health and everything to do outside. But as time goes on our people were able to identify that women [have] roles to play even in the outside society (Haj. Sadia, interview by Adryan Wallace, Kano, Nigeria, 11 November 2011).

Hausa women are successfully translating their needs associated with domestic activities into political claims particularly in the areas of health (Imam 1997): 1) they feel more empowered to advocate for their own interests; 2) having an affiliation with GHON made their communities take them more seriously when they were requesting support from local political authorities and community leaders; and 3) GHON facilitated relationships with officials who can assist them in accessing resources, for example, local hospital officials. GHON's work with the health facility clearly indicates the ways in which inclusive politics can be sustainable (Wallace 2014).

### **EWID-FOMWAG & Elder-Youth CBOs – Tamale, Ghana**

EWID is a member of the Coalition of NGOs in Health, which attempts to develop a symbiotic relationship with the ministries of health in their respective districts. Haj. Hajara the executive director of EWID established the organization in 2004. EWID was created to ensure that Muslim women in northern Ghana are fully integrated into society particularly as it relates to protecting their rights, civic responsibilities and ability to advocate for development policies that are geared toward addressing gender inequalities in health, education and other sectors. Since 2004, EWID has conducted a myriad of activities; however, I will highlight two of their most recent programmes. The first is increasing women's participation in decision-making and the second is working with the network of NGOs in health to streamline

activities, increase partnerships and decrease duplication of efforts. In 2008, they conducted a preliminary assessment of the knowledge that women in five local communities had about their roles in decision making at the community level. The following year they travelled to seven communities to conduct similar programmes. Subsequently in 2010, they conducted a two-day workshop with twelve female aspirants for the National Assembly in eight electoral areas: Gindabour, Tuna, Sawla, Nakwabi/Blema, Kalba, Sangyeri, Kperibayiri and Jentilepe. The workshop focused on addressing concerns and challenges posed by the female candidates and strengthened their leadership qualities, assertiveness, public-speaking skills, advocacy and lobbying skills. The elections in December resulted in the historic election of two women to National Assembly in the Sawla and Nakwabi districts respectively. EWID continues to monitor the impact of their workshops in the local communities. They partnered with IBIS on this project.

In addition to her work with EWID, Haj. Hajara Telly is also the president of the Tamale branch of FOMWAG. The impetus of FOMWAG began in Nigeria after FOMWAN was established. In Ghana, FOMWAG primarily focuses on workshops and programmes for its members to raise awareness about issues that impact their lives and relevant legal and policy reforms. In January 2011, FOMWAG members attended the conference on marriage registration held in Tamale. The other meeting was held in Accra, the south. There have been difficulties regarding compliance with marriage registration regulations and FOMWAG members were able to provide critical insights for their non-Muslim counterparts about how to improve the process and increase the number of Muslims that register their marriages. FOMWAG was also invited to attend the constitutional review conference and selected the three areas as a focus: National Development and Planning, Decentralization and Local Government, and Human Rights. In February 2011 FOMWAG participated in the national anti-corruption action plan regional consultations. Haj. Telly went specifically in her capacity as president of the FOMWAG Tamale in order to raise the visibility of Muslim women and ensure that their interests are being included and mainstreamed in the national agenda. There are approximately thirty members of FOMWAG in Tamale that are Hausa, only a few of which are actually from the Hausa zongo. The organization does intend to more directly invite more women from the Hausa zongo to join.

The Zongo community of Hausa in Tamale is primarily a self-contained unit. They do not receive direct support from NGOs or local state offices. Less than five women from the cooperatives in the zongo trade in any of the primary markets in Tamale. Instead women have set up mini stores and markets within the community. The primary economic activities of the

women involve trading. They have established over thirty trading cooperative groups organized according to the products being sold. The majority of items include food stuffs and beads. The groups meet once a week to discuss any obstacles and provide support to each other. In addition to trade, there are small numbers of women that act as intermediaries between buyers and sellers of recycled gold. In addition to the trading groups there is also an elders group that meets once a week to discuss more macro-level issues that are impacting the women and community. The head of the Elder CBO teaches Quranic classes for adult women because she views having a strong religious foundation as essential to anything else an individual produces. The ages of women in the cooperatives range from sixty to thirty, with the majority of women in their 40s and 50s.

In Tamale FOMWAG has members from different levels of society and everyone works together with the only stratification being the board, which is comprised of individuals elected to leadership positions. There are approximately thirty Hausa women that are members of FOMWAG Tamale, with a total membership of over four hundred women. There are many Muslim women of different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds; however, the Hausa women specifically from the zongo writ large do not comprise a large percentage of the Hausa women that are members of FOMWAG. FOMWAG is in the process of reaching out to establish more formal linkages with the Hausa women in the zongo who appear to be more insular than their other Muslim counterparts in the North.

In addition to conducting programmes centred upon increasing the number of women elected to public office, EWID also plans to have capacity-building workshops for female politicians so they are able to make tangible impacts in terms of policy and physical infrastructure if elected to office. This approach stands in stark contrast to the Hausa women in Kano who were more circumspect about the role of women in politics and directly engaging them to push their own development agendas.

### **SAHIBA – Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**

SAHIBA Sisters, an organization established as a trust in 1997, is 'a development network whose mission is to enhance the leadership and organizational capacity of women and youths community actors, as individuals or in groups so as to facilitate their informed engagement in civil society'. They are active in the following thirteen regions in Tanzania - Mwanza, Manyara, Morogoro, Dodoma, Iringa, Mbeya, Kilimanjaro, Dar es Salaam, Lindi Town, Tabora, Kigoma, Songea, and Zanzibar (Unguja and Pemba). The organization is supported through volunteer work and

is an informal NGO with links to other smaller groups. In particular they focus on mainstreaming the perspectives of a diverse range of women into development processes because they are often left out of key discussions. Their key constituents include Muslim women, elderly women, young women, women lacking formal education or facing geographical barriers to political participation. Sahiba has chosen a holistic institutional approach by working at the national, local and community levels. In particular, efforts to increase the participation of young women is viewed as essential. Furthermore, Sahiba argues that 'professional women's organizations' that 'viewed poor women as objects needing salvation and not as subjects with agency' served to further marginalize rather than empower women. It is important to highlight that none of the organizations selected for this study are 'professional women's organizations' because the leadership is not dependent on revenue from their development work for their own financial security (Wallace 2014). Sahiba also criticizes religious leaders for echoing the tactics of 'professional women's organizations' when they advocate conservative interpretations of Islam casting women as submissive rather than active agents of political change capable of advancing their own agenda. By operating as a trust Sahiba avoids the global governance of development donors and instead advances their self-defined conceptualization of development and associated programming with a social justice focus.

They function as an umbrella organization for NGOs and CBOs that are often unregistered, including 200 members of women and men that want to contribute in their capacities as individual actors. A true grassroots effort was undertaken in establishing their network through attending local mosques, women's organization, meetings, etc. There are over 48 member organizations. Just as my work illustrates that Muslim women's groups in West African use religious and cultural frames to promote gender equality and inclusive development, Maoulidi echoes a similar sentiment for Muslim women in East Africa (Wallace 2014; Maoulidi 2002).

### **African Muslim Women's Development Approaches – Lessons for The BRICS-Regional and Sub-regional Integration**

There are several key features of the BRICS' new efforts towards development aid specific to Africa as a region. The recent establishment of the BRICS 50 billion USD New Development will serve as a

...feasible and viable [means] for mobilizing resources for infrastructure and sustainable development projects in BRICS and other emerging economies and developing countries, to supplement the existing efforts of multilateral and regional financial institutions for global growth and development (BRICS 2014:11)

The Contingency Reserve Agreement (CRA) totalling 100 billion USD will address immediate or short-term liquidity problems, which can enhance economic stability. Their key regional priorities include the development of physical and development infrastructure consistent with the framework of the African Union's (AU) New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Regional Economic Communities, a BRICS-AU Commission-NEPAD Planning and Coordinating Agency (NPCA) as technical arm. Finally, the establishment of an African-BRICS transnational/cross-border infrastructure development fund that assists with the implementation of projects and conducts feasibility studies was recommended (Guimei 2014).

While these efforts are laudable, there are three areas in which the BRICS approach to development re-inscribes existing neoliberal paradigms. I argue below that these issues can be addressed by the BRICS development model learning from the successful strategies of local Muslim women's organizations in Nigeria, Ghana and Tanzania in designing their own development aims, mainstreaming diverse perspectives, and improving policy recommendations and evaluation.

First, they are attempting to increase their participation and influence in existing international and multinational development institutions while also attempting to develop their own development bank so their loyalties are split (Esteves et al. 2014). The result can culminate in the employment of similar goals, emphasis on growth and the current neoliberal models, given that they are attempting to advance their positions in those institutions. In other words, rather than fundamentally changing the global economic systems, they are advocating for equal participation. The Muslim women CSOs in this study take different approaches to addressing these challenges. All of the organizations have eliminated any exclusive dependence on external aid structures or financial revenues that afford them the autonomy required to focus on the needs of marginalized and grassroots women. Sahiba Sisters is functionally a trust and therefore solely utilizes volunteer work for day-to-day operations. They prioritize their sets of interests rather than focusing on changing international development organizations. The fact that they are able to conduct development programmes that are not exclusively dependent on external funding from the west groups means that they select programming based on their own inclusive agenda. The programmes do have an impact on development discourses because they represent a different type of engagement but their perspectives are not always mainstreamed.

The second limitation of the BRICS approach to development is that there is no institutional place for CSOs to help design development agendas, shape policy or engage in monitoring and evaluating the success of programmes. This

omission could provide a space for local Muslim women's organizations to fill this void. Each of the organizations mentioned has relationships with grassroots CBOS, including FOMWAN, FOMWAG, Sahiba Sisters and GHON. The first three are membership organizations while GHON serves to place CBOs in a position to provide direct feedback to the state and political institutions regarding the government's ability to successfully deliver goods and services. The CBOs that each of the larger NGOs works with vary in size and amounts of privilege. Some are registered with the state and some are not, illustrating that women engaged in CBO work are often more economically vulnerable than their NGO counterparts (Wallace 2014). The direct connection to the grassroots could provide the BRICS with the ability to centre women's voices in development, have CSOs shape policy frameworks and programmes and provide accountability mechanisms which can identify bottlenecks on the ground and spearhead their resolution. These are capacities that the BRICS are lacking.

Finally, the lack of coordination of regional AU, sub-regional COMESA, SADC, ECOWAS, and EAC are concerns that have been raised (Souza 2014). This challenge also speaks to a more fundamental problem of negotiating the competing interests of the members of BRICS in addition to the national development goals of other emerging markets that might seek funding from the new development bank. The institutional linkages of women's organizations both within and across national contexts strengthens the ability of African countries to look internally and share their development best-practices through sub-regional entities and the African Union state level-national-provincial/state-local, sub-regional (COMESA, ECOWAS, EAC). FOMWAN and FOMWAG have an institutional connection and Muslim women's organizations that are not treating development as a business would be able to collaborate because although their strategies may vary, their goals are the same. They are also able to translate a myriad of women's interests into policy i.e. the maternal health bill and constitutional reform. I would recommend that the BRICS establish an advisory role for local Muslim women's CSOs that function similar to groups that were the focus of this study and task the CSOs with also streamlining development and economic policies of the sub-regional groups to create consistency with the BRICS-African Union through the NEPAD initiative. The result would be transformative because the women's CSOs are active in multiple sectors including human rights, which gives them institutional experience working with sub-regional and regional policy and legal instruments (see Table 1 below, which outlines the links between BRICS development goals and Muslim women's CSO development programmes). These efforts can provide much needed synergy among these regional and sub-regional groups and the goals of the BRICS and replace the tendency to use neoliberal frames with cooperative ones.

## Conclusion

Development agendas and programmes often reflect the priorities of the state and political administration. During the last twenty years Muslim women in West Africa have become more involved in development (education, economic, health) work through the establishment of non- governmental (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs). There are four specific best practices utilized by the women's groups in this study that could be adopted to generate a new approach to holistic development practices.

First, in addition to conducting programming, women have also become involved in shaping the discourses around development and impacting decision frameworks used by the state to distribute the resources. Social categories such as the category woman are very diverse and often contentious. Therefore, this work captured the dynamic relationships among Muslim women, which reflect the ways that divergent interests of Muslim women are represented to the political system. Furthermore, centring the experiences of African Muslim women obviates tendencies to homogenize interpretations of women and politics in Islamic contexts, and instead illustrates the myriad of perspectives which exist. Some scholars employ Islam as a variable to measure the constraining affects that traditional cultural perspectives have on the political participation of women. By working at the intersections of politics, economics, identity, culture, religion and gender, the agency exhibited by these organizations can be illustrated.

Next, I selected CSOs that consist of non-governmental organizations and community-based groups in an effort to underscore the efforts of each organization to mainstream and advocate the intersecting interests of women from the grassroots and women that are more affluent. By illustrating this range, given their own social locations serves to create a definition of development that is inclusive by representing the breadth of perspectives and not treating women and their development needs as monolithic. Muslim women's organizations in this study have managed to work across socio-economic strata and social location largely because of their institutional structure and their commitment to an inclusive and holistic conceptualization of development. They have also been able to use religion and culture to create progressive development frames that emphasize gender equality.

Third, this ethnographic study revealed how varied perspectives within and across Muslim groups are translated into different strategies to mainstream gender equality into development and policy discussions. The ability of national umbrella Muslim women's groups like FOMWAN and FOMWAG to at their own discretion decide to collaborate with international organizations, demonstrates how to successfully navigate what could be perceived as divided

loyalties between ‘western’ and ‘local’ definitions of development. Additionally, the strategies of these groups to maintain autonomy while asserting inclusive models of development could benefit the new BRICS development bank and avoid neoliberal economic models.

Finally, I argued that using the examples of these CSOs and making them a central part of the policy process, trade negotiations, and by monitoring and evaluating processes, the BRICS, AU, and sub-regional bodies and the national governments could exercise agency and employ a method of disruptive and changing development discourse. Local Muslim women’s groups should hold a formal advisory role to the BRICS development bank. This would ensure that the true designers of development are no longer marginalized and are instead progenitors of a new approach to inclusive sustainable development.

**Table 1:** Examples of local Muslim women’s NGOs & CBOs’ development agendas and programmes in Kano in Nigeria, Tamale in Ghana, and Dar es Salaam in Tanzania

Name	Country	Development Work	Institutional Affiliations
Federation of Muslim Women’s Associations in Nigeria (FOMWAN)	Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Maternal health bill</li><li>· Polio vaccines</li><li>· Community health outcomes</li><li>· Monitoring elections</li><li>· Building schools</li><li>· Girls’ education</li></ul>	Trading CBOs Community CBOs
Grassroots Health Organization of Nigeria (GHON)	Nigeria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Increasing access to healthcare facilities</li><li>· Clean water &amp; sanitation</li><li>· Women’s reproductive health</li><li>· HIV/AIDS</li><li>· Training courses for women’s trading cooperatives, business development, micro-credit</li></ul>	Trading CBOs TBA CBOs Community development CBOs
Enterprising Women in Development (EWID)	Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Civic rights training courses</li><li>· Elections</li><li>· Workshops with female aspirants for national assembly</li><li>· Health</li><li>· Women’s and girls’ education</li><li>· Decision-making role in community training courses for women</li></ul>	Coalition of NGOs in health Community-based groups

Federation of Muslim Women's Association in Ghana (FOMWAG)	Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Human rights in Islam trainings</li><li>· Constitutional Review Conference</li><li>· National Marriage Registration</li></ul>	Umbrella network for Muslim women across ethnicities
Sahiba Sisters	Tanzania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>· Young Women's Internship program</li><li>· Leadership &amp; governance</li><li>· Reproductive &amp; health rights &amp; HIV/AIDS</li><li>· Women's human rights</li><li>· Adult education</li><li>· Gender-based violence</li><li>· Resource</li></ul>	Over 48 registered and unregistered NGOs & CBOs

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## **Women's Land Rights and Working Conditions in Large-scale Plantations in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Lotsmart Fonjong\*

### **Abstract**

Women's land rights are fundamental for women's economic empowerment. Increasingly, the nationalization of customary land and the current growth in private land ownership and commercial farming are exerting strong pressure on land and are a threat to women's usufruct land rights. The discourse over land reforms in most poor African countries like Cameroon is embedded in the evolutionary models where customary landholding systems are changing into state land ownership with greater market integration. These changes are taking place within limited state protection of communal and women's land rights in the process of land registration. This article discusses the evolution, actors and activities involved in large-scale land acquisitions in the sub region within the framework and women's rights to land and working conditions in the plantations. Through simple mapping from an in-depth desktop review and some level of field observations and conversations with some of the actors involved in affected localities in Cameroon, the article highlights women's experiences as customary communal land is transferred into private ownership. In fact, wherever land has been taken up for plantation agriculture, women's access to land has reduced, making them more vulnerable to hunger, poverty and poor working conditions. This is because women's land rights have not evolved with the customary evolution into private tenures. Current processes of large-scale land acquisitions should therefore create conditions for women's participation through a fair degree of equal opportunities, transparency, and accountability to communities, and relevant institutions.

### **Résumé**

Les droits fonciers des femmes sont fondamentaux pour leur autonomisation économique. De plus en plus, la nationalisation des terres coutumières et la croissance actuelle de la propriété foncière privée et de l'agriculture commerciale exercent une forte pression sur les terres et constituent une menace pour les droits d'usufruit fonciers des femmes. Le discours sur les réformes foncières

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dans la plupart des pays africains pauvres comme le Cameroun s'inscrit dans les modèles évolutifs où les systèmes fonciers coutumiers se transforment en propriété foncière étatique avec une plus grande intégration du marché. Ces changements se produisent dans le cadre d'une protection limitée de l'État sur les droits communaux et les droits fonciers des femmes dans le processus d'enregistrement foncier. Le présent article traite de l'évolution, des acteurs et des activités en matière d'acquisition de terres à grande échelle dans la sous-région ainsi que des droits fonciers des femmes et leurs conditions de travail dans les plantations. Grâce à une cartographie simple faite à partir d'une revue documentaire approfondie, d'observations sur le terrain et de conversations avec certains des acteurs impliqués dans les localités touchées au Cameroun, cet article souligne les expériences des femmes face à la transformation des terres communales coutumières en propriété privée. En fait, partout où la terre est utilisée pour l'agriculture, l'accès des femmes à celle-ci a diminué, les rendant plus vulnérables à la famine, la pauvreté et aux mauvaises conditions de travail. C'est parce que les droits fonciers des femmes n'ont pas évolué au rythme de la transformation des terres coutumières en tenures privées. Les processus actuels d'acquisition de terres à grande échelle devraient donc créer des conditions propices à la participation des femmes, par l'équité des chances, la transparence et la reddition de comptes par les communautés et les institutions concernées.

## **Introduction**

Local communities in sub-Saharan Africa, more than anywhere else, are fast losing their land to exogenous investors through the contentious process of large-scale land acquisition (LSLAs). These communities are confronted by a new phenomenon driven by the search for alternative energy and food security in which large parcels of their land previously exploited under customary practices are taken over by foreign companies (mostly from the global north and Gulf States countries), governments, and a few powerful elites for commercial agriculture. AWID (2013) reports that sub-Saharan Africa has the lion's share of the estimated 227 million hectares of land acquired by governments and foreign companies within the last 10 years. While these African communities continue to lose thousands of hectares of their land every year, there seems to be no visible improvements in their standards of living from the promised development of investors. Rather, many more people, particularly women, are trapped in poverty without a sustained means of subsistence as they no longer have access to basic human rights and needs such as food, water, fuel wood, which they used to get from the land. Since women in the sub region are socially constructed to assume the above traditional roles in the family, LSLA deprives them of accessing these common resources, thus making them more vulnerable and most affected (Lappin 2012; Gobena 2010; Kachika 2009).

What is obvious is the fact that it is in the agricultural domain that the battle against rural poverty, hunger and miseries in sub-Saharan Africa will be won or lost and small-scale agriculture cannot be completely sacrificed. Agriculture has for decades dictated rural employment and livelihoods in the region leading to a dependent and harmonious relationship between the land and its users. This is because land is combined disproportionately with other factors of production in the process. The close relationship between land and the population can be carefully traced from pre-colonial times, where land was considered so sacred, collectively owned, and private ownership unthinkable (Kenfack 2012:7). As noticed in this and other authors, the structural changes so far witnessed by these economies have also brought about changes in the status of land, and undue shocks in the relationship between communities and their land, as most of the land transformation has not been accompanied by any real changes in rural livelihoods, particularly among women. Thus, while each country in the sub region is unique, they all, nonetheless, share similar socio-cultural and economic features. For example, their economies are based on agriculture and other land-based production, which is the product of a common history. Within such an economic context, rights to land and landed resources are also crucial for survival, social change and growth.

In tenure terms, countries in sub-Sahara Africa have also endured a similar colonial legacy, whether mediated through Francophone, German, Anglophone, Anglo-American or Roman-Dutch strategies (Alden 2012). With one or two notable exceptions (Ghana, and in Liberia until the 1950s), African land rights were uniformly suppressed, deemed no more than rights of access and use, and even in this form only used at the whim of the colonial state (Alden 2012). Alden further contends that ownership of all wildlife, forest, and waters resources, including surfaces hitherto extracted traditionally, were also designated by colonial states as their personal property, although described as public belongings. Thus, toward the end of colonialism in the late 1940s and 1950s, land tenure policies continued to be structured around globally-fashioned commercial interests which by then were heartily supported by local national elites (Alden 2012) partly for selfish political ends.

The over-centralization of state powers via one-party politics and dictatorship from 1960-1990, left political power, social power, and economic hegemony in the hands of a small elitist class (Alden 2012). Alden further contends that this hegemony was upheld by purposefully sustaining the colonial norms of resource ownership that vested ultimate ownership of all land and resources in the State. For example, in the 1970s, Sudan, Malawi, Uganda, and Somalia all passed laws which made rural populations more or less tenants of the State, and also in Francophone Africa (Alden 2011). Similar land legislations that were passed throughout the continent during

the 1960s and 1980s narrowed the scope of customary access and use rights. Customary land became reclassified to state land through the use of the state's right to eminent domains, which enable involuntary expropriation of customary land for a 'public purpose' (German *et al.* 2011).

Building upon colonial tendencies, post-independent states can claim ownership of all technically 'unoccupied' forest, water and rangeland resources; a situation that is devastating for the vast rural majority using this land and operating under customary norms. Conservatively, over half a billion rural Africans are customary land holders (Alden 2012) and not more than 10 per cent of the total land area of the sub region is subject to formal statutory entitlement. Women constitute the majority of these land users whose access to land is customarily regulated. Unfortunately, customary land tenure is not secured, thereby putting their rights over such lands on the balance. Moreover, it is the vast expanse of land under customary tenure and considered by external forces as 'unused and underexploited' that is at the centre of current LSLAs and without due consideration to those whose livelihoods have for ages depended on it. New LSLAs therefore raises issues like: what happens to especially women who used to live and depend solely on these lands? It is along this line of thinking that this paper traces emerging trends in LSLAs and its implications on the activities of women – both as key actors on the land and wage labourers – but who are often forgotten in the process.

### **Methodology and Conceptual Framework**

A huge amount of scholarly and advocacy works exist on women's land rights and the impact of LSLAs on women in Africa. Most of the analysis is drawn from desktop reviews on the phenomenon and complemented with field observations and experiences from Cameroon. Although focus is on published articles from peer review journals, the reports of international organizations, government, and non-governmental organizations interested in the subject, including some social blogs and internet sites were also consulted. These diverse sources aided in enriching the diversity and reliability of information collected.

Evolutionary theories of landholding make a number of common assumptions about the transformation, from 'traditional' to market landholding systems. Ingrid (2002) notes that those that emerged, derived from the 'Boserupian' thesis, have gained prevalence over the 1990s in debates over tenure reforms in Africa. The thesis explains how the shift from 'traditional communal systems' of land holding towards 'modern individualized systems' begins spontaneously under conditions of growing land scarcity, associated with growing population densities, advances in farming technology, and the

emergence of agricultural markets (Boserup 1965; Feder & Noronha 1987:143; Ingrid 2002). As land value changes with scarcity, landholders seek tenure security and assert more individualized land rights, which cannot be protected under the customary system (Ingrid 2002). This leads to disputes over land and rising litigation costs, causing inefficiencies in the rural economy (Ingrid 2002). The state institutes land titles as an attempt to protect emerging private rights and end costly litigations, since titling provides tenure security and incentive to invest on, and/or transfer land (Ingrid 2002). Titling stimulates new markets in land, which increases production as inefficient producers are forced to sell up their land to efficient ones (Feder et al. 1988; World Bank 1989; Platteau 1996). However, this has not readily been the case. Titling has not improved the productivity of production systems in sub-Saharan Africa, and it is now widely regarded as unnecessary and even harmful in the African context (Atwood 1990; Bruce & Migot-Adholla 1994; Platteau 1996; Deininger & Binswanger 1999; Toulmin & Quan 2000, Ingrid 2002). Bruce and Migot-Adholla (1994) in particular contend that customary tenure can provide sufficient tenure security to allow farmers to take a long-term interest and invest in their land. Nevertheless, the belief in evolutionary development has not changed, as landholding systems are now considered to be spontaneously evolving with greater market integration, even without state-sponsored protection of private land rights (Ingrid 2002).

The rapid growth in demand for agricultural land in this case through LSLAs is putting pressure on property rights systems, particularly where the vast majority of land is under customary tenure (Ingrid 2002). Proponents of the evolutionary theory of land rights see property rights evolving toward more formalized systems due to increasing competition and demand within the system. They argue that formal land rights allow collateralization of land and efficient credit markets to develop and increase security of tenure, resulting in greater confidence by landowners to undertake capital improvements that will lead to improved agricultural productivity and welfare (Demsetz 1967; Otsuka and Place 2001; Platteau 2008; Ingrid 2002).

Perhaps, what is obvious is that much of this evolutionary theory is based on assumptions of relatively gradual, endogenous change, which does not necessarily hold with many of the changes now taking place. Today, the pace of the change is more rapid, the scale of land deals is much larger, and demands are largely from outsiders and not from current land users. Even domestic investors are usually not from the communities themselves. Moreover, large power imbalances exist between those seeking to acquire land now and the current landholders, who shape the nature and outcomes of any deals. This necessitates a reassessment of tenure security under both statutory and customary tenure systems.

## Overview of the Origin of Large-scale Land Acquisitions

In Africa, the process for dispossessing ethnic land was both the basis and the result of capitalist colonialism (Mbembe 1996). At the beginning of colonial installation in Cameroon, the German administration, by 1836, legally eliminated all the customary legal systems regulating land (Rudin 1938). This created a situation in coastal areas like Limbe and Kribi, where the local communities were irremediably deprived of their historical land rights and, in some cases, evicted from their land (Oyono 2004; Oyono 2013). Consequently, all of Cameroon's coastal land was annexed to the German Crown (Mveng 1985). With the defeat of the Germans during the First World War (1914-1918), the imposition of a French-British joint mandate systematically augmented the disappearance of collective property, previously protected by a customary legal system (Anyangwe 1984). Huge units of customary land became state land (Oyono 2013). As Diaw and Njomkap (1998) put it, after independence, all the legal instruments relating to land governance simply affirmed the hegemony of the state over land and forest, in a legal unilateralism. The first determinant of these transformations in land ownership was highly political; occupation and territorial annexation with legal, material and symbolic state violence, and total domination as the key driving forces (Oyono 2005; Oyono 2013; Nquiffo *et al.* 2008).

By distributing African countries among western powers, the Berlin Conference (1884-85) is arguably considered the first founding framework of the dispossession of customary land in the country (Mveng 1985; Oyono 2013). During the German presence in Cameroon, a series of decrees were issued, legalising the colonial empire's property claims on customary lands and forests, which according to them were 'lands without masters' (Rudin 1938; Oyono 2013). The decrees of 1893, 1900 and 1913 were some of the early tools of the German's legal instruments for occupying and controlling land in Cameroon (Oyono 2013). Oyono (2005) again notes that the primary objective of these decrees was to ensure that there was maximum concentration of land in the hands of the German Crown and European private agro-industrial companies. These three decrees thus set into motion the historical process of customary land dispossession in coastal Cameroon (Oyono 2013).

The establishment of land concessions for agricultural purposes was an effective way that the German colonial administration used to grab customary lands and forests, install and consolidate a trading system based on the great capital (Mbembe 1996; Oyono 2005; Oyono 2013). In the

1890s the Germans launched the process of creating large agro-industrial plantations with the creation of West & Sudkamerun Gesellschaft and the Westafrikanische Pflanzungsgesellschaft Victoria, respectively in 1894 and 1896 (Rudin 1938; Oyono 2013). Vast plantations of rubber, tea, cocoa, banana and oil palm spread throughout coastal Cameroon, and elsewhere in the hinterland, installed on customary land by the two German companies (Rudin 1938; Etoga 1971; Oyono 2013).

As co-colonial administrator of Cameroon, the British creation of the Cameroon Development Corporation (CDC) in 1947 in coastal Cameroon represented an important milestone in the process of large-scale land accumulation by the state and its foreign partners (Berdeman 1968). After combining all the plantations left by the Germans, the land concession attributed to CDC covered the land around Mount Cameroon, and a good portion of the useful land of the southern part of British Cameroon in 1960 (Berdeman 1968; Oyono 2013). In the 1980s, the whole part of Coastal Cameroon west of Douala was occupied, notably the land of the Bakweri ethnic group of the area (Etoga 1971; Oyono 2013). In French Cameroon, vast plantations of oil palm were equally installed in the coastal areas (Konings 1993; Oyono 2013).

The British, who governed Southern Cameroons under the UN mandate, reproduced the same spirit of the legal instrument developed by the Germans to transfer customary land to agro-industrial plantations (Berdeman 1968). In this part of Cameroon, the Freehold Lands Acts of 1927, 1937 and 1948 converted customary land into Crown land (Ardener 1956; Oyono 2013), before leasing large units to private companies' land (Bakoume *et al.* 2002; Oyono 2005; Oyono 2013). The dispossession of customary land was not limited to British Cameroon (Anyangwe 1984) as the French colonial administration did not act differently in French Cameroon and Gabon (Oyono 2005; Oyono 2013; Alden 2012). Here, the French introduced decrees on land and forest land (1920, 1925, 1926, 1935, and 1946), copied from the French Civil Code and made similar to those of the Germans and the British to acquire native land.

Oyono *et al.* (2012) noted that this legal machinery drawn from the Roman law is so vigorous that more than 50 years after independence, it is still predominant in all the official tools relating to land and forest governance in post-independence Cameroon. Land is currently governed by orders No. 74-1 and No. 74-2 of July 1974, whose key word is 'state supremacy over land' (Oyono 2013:5). Similarly, Cameroon's current forest legislation of 1994 is fully organised around the 'ideology' of state hegemony over forest. The situation is not very different in Cameroon's neighbour, Gabon.

Gabon endured the dispossession of their lands and resources, both in law and in practice (Alden 2012). In 1899, France declared itself owner of the Gabonese soil. Virtually the entire country was then allocated to French logging companies. Having established their first colony around the Libreville estuary in the 1840s, the French did not question the ownership of the land, but simply introduced a law (1849) to regulate how Africans should sell their lands to immigrants (Alden 2012). The pretence that Gabon was 'empty of owners' only came later, when France sought to expand its control to the entire country. With local elites increasingly party to the benefits and integral to political dominance, it is perhaps not surprising that independence in 1960 did not bring with it liberation of majority land rights (Alden 2012). Today, and as Alden further remarked, the only way land ownership may be secured outside the tiny private sector transactions is through grant or sale of parcels by the government. The process is sufficiently inaccessible, politically-advantaged, complex, expensive, and demanding of demonstrated development that only a minority of urban and even fewer rural inhabitants have completed it since 1902.

It is important to note that though customary land rights were dispossessed from the local people from the colonial era, some African nations still recognise customary rights. In Ghana for example, land ownership can be classified into two broad categories: that under customary ownership (constituting 78% of the total land area) and that controlled by the state (20% of the total land area), with the remaining area under some form of shared ownership (Deininger 2003). The Ghanaian Constitution of 1992 forbids the sale of customary land, only allowing for temporary alienation through leasehold titling (German *et al.* (2011). Cabral and Norfolk (2016) also observe that Mozambique has one of the most progressive land laws in Africa. In addition to protecting land use rights acquired under customary law or through 'good faith' occupation, the 1997 Land Law is widely seen as striking an effective balance between protecting customary rights and enhancing land access for investors. However, this protection is short-lived because all land in most of Africa without a tenure system is considered state land. Usually, the state determines what 'public purpose is' and this sometimes leads to the violation of the indigenous rights. Constitutional provisions in many countries provide for both the protection of private property rights and the power of the government to acquire land without the willing consent of the owner (German L. *et al.* 2011). But to what extent are these provisions effective, especially in the face of powerful capitalist-driven LSLAs?

**The Current Situation of Large-scale Land Acquisitions in Sub-Saharan Africa**

The quest for alternative sources of clean energy by most western powers has encouraged the growth of jatropha, oil palm, sugar cane and sweet sorghum for biofuels (see Table 1).

**Table 1:** Some of the Current Trends in Large-Scale Land Acquisition in SSA

Country	Project	Year of deal	Ha	Country/investors	Crop planted
Ghana	Prairie rice project, Lower Volta	2008	1,250	Joint Prairie Rice of Texas, USA and Ghana Commercial Bank	Rice
Liberia	Atlantic Resources	2010	840,000	Samling Global of Malaysia	Oil palms
Mali	Malybia Irrigated Rice Project (Segou Region)	2009/2010	100,000	Libya	Rice
Mozambique	proCana Sugar Cane Project	2007	30,000	Mozambican ProCana and British BioEnergy Africa	Sugar cane
Sierra Leone	Addax Sugar Cane Plantation	2010	20,000	Addax Bioenergy owned by Addax&Oryx Group of Switzerland	Sugar cane
Tanzania	Sun Biofuel Miombo Woodland Project	2009	8,211	Sun Biofuels Tanzania Ltd affiliated to a UK company	Jat-ropha
Tanzania	AgriSolAgric Business Model Project	2009	80,000	AgriSol Energy a branch of US-based AgriSol	Multiple
Cameroon	SG SOC Oil Plantation project	2009	20,000	Sithe Global Sustainable Oils Cameroon owned by US Herakles Farms	Oil palms

Source: Compiled from various sources as cited in the references.

The introduction of such energy-green economies has fueled the land grab phenomenon. Conceptualized as it is today, where investments in land and water are geared towards export at the expense of local communities, Tendo (2012) believes the green economy agenda puts a commercial value on a supposedly priceless nature in an effort to promote global, corporate interest. This means that land is not considered in the greater sense of the public, common. In so doing, large-scale land acquisition neglects customary rights and promotes the eviction of communities and women from ancestral land. Women as greater victims lose even the usufruct rights enjoyed under the customary land tenure system.

### **Women's Land Rights in Africa**

Most customary tenure systems in Africa favour men, allowing women's rights primarily through a father, husband, brother, or son (Lastarria-Cornhiel & García-Frías 2005; IFPRI 2011; Fonjong *et al.* 2012). Despite the fact that statutory land-rights systems in many countries allow women to own land, titling programs do not automatically improve women's land tenure security. Evidence has shown that women loose out in the processes of formalization, particularly in land titling programs (Lastarria-Cornhiel 1997; IFPRI 2011) since many cannot afford the process of land registration. Efforts now should target women's land rights in new land registration and formalization programs (Global Land Tools Network 2008). Since most of the reforms are recent, the evidence to date is fragmentary, and focuses more on women's security of tenure vis-à-vis localized challenges to property rights from within the family, rather than on external challenges (IFPRI 2011).

There is a huge debate on whether customary or statutory systems are more gender equitable or gender inequitable (Ik Dahl *et al.* 2005; Jackson 2003; Whitehead and Tsikata 2003). Of course, rather than debating the point based on the preferences for one system or another, it is important to understand current land tenure patterns by gender (IFPRI 2011). The increasing demand for agricultural land in recent years by foreign and domestic investors brings a different context, and increases the urgency of considering how to make land tenure more secure for women (IFPRI 2011).

There is consensus in the literature on large-scale land deals (Cotula 2010; Cotula *et al.* 2009; Smaller and Mann 2009; Von Braun and Meinzen-Dick 2009; Wiley 2010; World Bank 2010; IFPRI 2011) that those with customary and common property are particularly vulnerable to losing their land and livelihoods (IFPRI 2011). In some countries, the state has the right to claim ownership of the land with the justification of development, and negotiate with the potential investors. This negotiation, as in the case of Herakles

farms in Cameroon is done without (even) consulting local land users and customary rights-holders. Even if these deals are considered legal under national laws, they are often not considered socially legitimate, particularly where stakeholders, especially customary landholders, were not consulted or did not consent (IFPRI 2011).

Comparatively, very little thought has been given to the gender implications of land deals. Behrman *et al.* (2011) point out that the strength and distribution of land rights is one of the most important factors influencing who will sit round the negotiation table over LSLAs and the subsequent claims to any benefit streams. Unregistered and undocumented land rights that may hardly be recognized by the state and by outsiders are especially vulnerable to expropriation (IFPRI 2011), because they are considered 'unused'. But the rapid pace of LSLAs is outstripping the efforts to register customary land rights, and especially women's land rights (IFPRI 2011). This is mostly problematic when the external investors bring their own lens through which they view land rights and gender roles in agriculture. Most often, they recognize only titled landownership and fail to accept the existence of a wide range of property rights, and the complexity of men's and women's roles with independent and interdependent rights and responsibilities (IFPRI 2011).

### **Women's Land Rights in LSLAs**

The benefits and costs of large-scale land acquisition are not felt equally within community members. Negative impacts are likely to affect not only those who are over-dependent on land, but mostly women, who are socially and economically the most disempowered. The effects of such power differentials within communities are most significant and widespread in gender, especially intra and inter household gender relations. Several case studies expose the propensity for women to suffer disproportionately from such impacts. Mutopo (2012) and Mutopo & Manase (2014) describe the example of women from Mwaanga Village in Mozambique, who were adversely affected when their land was illegally grabbed by the ZAMBEEF Company, although they had farm permits that were legal under the Zambian law. The loss of this land led to loss of security, most especially women's voice in the domestic sphere, and increased violence against women. There were also inadequate safety nets which made the women to be more vulnerable as they are the ones who have to look for food alternatives for their families (Mutopo 2012; Mutopo & Manase 2014).

According to an ILC study that focused specifically on gender (Daley 2011), the vulnerability of women arises from different factors. It arises through the constraints and systemic discrimination that women generally face in relation

to their access to ownership of, and control over land, including the level of legal protection of their land rights. Mutopo *et al.* (2013) also add that it is as a result of women's lack of knowledge on corporate investments and its effects on their livelihoods. In fact, Kameri-Mbote (2013) sums up these vulnerabilities by stating that women's rights in Africa have been affected by a convergence of government policies related to the current shift towards greater commercialisation and competition for land to discriminatory customary laws.

The challenges confronting rural women in the context of LSLAs have their roots in the legacy of widespread land acquisition during the colonial era and patriarchy. Then, land held in common was grabbed mainly for the production of export crops on large estates (Oxfam 2013). In a greater part of Africa, the farming of commercial crops, whether on plantations or small farms, fell to men – women played just a supporting role, assisting through sowing, weeding, harvesting, and carrying out menial tasks (Oxfam 2013). Small-scale food production was pushed on to marginal lands and left almost entirely to women, with minimal support or infrastructure to strengthen the sector or women's roles within it (Federici 2009; Kevane and Gray 2008; Oxfam 2013). Also, land was mainly controlled by male household heads, with the assumption that the rights are held in trust for all in the household. Women are relegated to a subordinated position in accessing land grounded on husbands, fathers, uncles, brothers and sometimes sons (Kameri-Mbote 2013).

Today, these gender roles are still practised, though two comprehensive trends point to significant changes. One of which is the growing feminization of the lowest rungs of agricultural labour on commercial farms. While employment may doubtfully strengthen women's economic independence, it does not necessarily equate to their social or political empowerment. As farm labourers, rural women hold less bargaining power than their male colleagues and have few opportunities to work their way out of poverty (Oxfam 2013).

Scholars are consistent that crops in many parts of Africa are considered to be either women's or men's. Married men and women have distinct responsibilities and activities, including separate crops, agricultural plots, tasks, and sources of income. Experience has proved time and again that women lose control over the crops they grow as soon as these become commercialized (Oxfam 2013). When a crop shifts from being a traditional subsistence crop managed by women to one for sale in formal markets, the share of income received by women tends to drop (Njuki *et al.* 2004). This shift is no exaggeration. Scholars like Njuki *et al.* (2005) maintain that when a crop becomes commercial, it changes gender and becomes a man's crop, as it is men who control its production, marketing, and, most importantly,

the use of income accruing from its sale. This has serious implications for crops that women grow for food, such as cassava, which is currently being considered for its potential as a source of biofuel (Holt-Gimenez & Shattuck 2008). Furthermore, as more land is planted with cash crops, such as soy, maize, eucalyptus or jatropha, less land is available for vegetables, pulses, and other women's crops common to mixed farming.

Summarily, LSLAs take away women's customary land rights and increases their burden. In the latter case, research by AWID (2012) and other scholars has shown that LSLA go along with water grabs which affect communities' access to water. Water provision is the primary responsibility of women at household-level in the sub-continent. As more land is being forfeited to commercial agriculture, so is the communities' ability to sustain food resulting to food insecurity. Hunger and food crisis were recently reported in the village of Fabe, South West Cameroon when SG-SOC or Herakles Farms took much of their lands and began a commercial oil palm nursery in 2010. In Lipenja, another nearby village, local authorities confirmed that food shortages resulted from the fact that most farmers abandoned their farms for employment offered by the company's oil palm nursery in the village. Generally, food insecurity, of course, has two implications on the burden of women as they will bear the brunt of feeding the family as home managers on the one hand, and suffer a fall in income derived from the cultivation for food crops on the other hand. Even where compensation is made for the loss of community land, women are left out to the benefit of men who as head of households may participate in land deal negotiations (AWID 2012).

There is a widespread evidence of long hours, poor housing, low wages and health risk for most plantation workers around the world today. Rates of pay vary in gender and tasks performed. This is as a result of the perception that women are not supposed to work outside the home or are believed to be less capable of performing at the workplace. However, most widows and single mothers are drawn into plantation labour by poverty or landlessness (Smalley 2013). Many women are pushed into plantation agriculture by poverty, tenure insecurity and lack of options. Generally, rural women are often less educated, fewer are skilled labourers and often do worst jobs on the farm than the men, thus a great mass of female wage workers in rural areas exercise little real choice in their employment and marital conditions (Cramer *et al.* 2008).

Studies in Kenya, South Africa and Zambia also indicate that women have temporary, seasonal and casual jobs while men hold the fewer permanent jobs. Thus women are more often unemployed during the winter months than men and women's employment is usually characterized by longer

hours, no social protection, job insecurity and poor working conditions (Dolan 2001). Furthermore, FAO, UNO, IFAD, and ILO, (2010) research in the tomato export industry in Senegal shows that there appears to be some gender bias in the allocation of permanent positions in favour of men. Twenty-eight per cent of men have permanent jobs as opposed to only 2 per cent for women. Similar examples have also been reported in some plantations of Cameroon amongst skilled workers where women are mostly found among medical and clerical personnel while men do construction, electrical work, truck and tractor driving and mechanics which are usually higher paid jobs (FAO 2010).

Significant gender divisions of labour and wage discrimination exist in plantation agriculture. Women are preferred for certain tasks in horticulture, which is very significant for the distribution of income and labour within the household. However, they still earn less than men, even though some of the women who work on large-scale farms may be heads of households. A review of agricultural labourers on a range of farm types in Mozambique confirms this as it revealed that 37 per cent of the female workers were divorced, separated or widowed (Smalley 2013). In some of the banana plantations in Cameroon, women perform lighter tasks such as packaging, because investors believe that bananas have to be handled carefully. Bruised bananas are priced lower in the world market. Men, on the other hand, perform jobs considered to be heavy, tedious and demand a lot of physical strength, including pruning, drainage, harvesting, bagging and propping, holing, chopping and cable maintenance, and loading (Banana Link 2014). Asea and Kaija (2000) reported that women in plantation agriculture are involved in planting, harvesting and farm grading while their male colleagues occupy managerial positions in Tanzania.

The transportation conditions of plantation workers are devastating and with no special attention to the biological differences between men and women. A number of studies including FAWU (2012) have observed that over 90 per cent of plantation labourers use company trucks to and from the plantations. This transportation system poses all forms of challenges to women. The trucks are overcrowded, with men trampling upon younger and older women without equal physical strength. Heavily pregnant female workers are most vulnerable in the scramble for standing space in the trucks which are not adaptable to their conditions. Where they are unable to board the trucks as is sometimes the case in the Delmonte plantation in Tiko, Cameroon, they are forced to leave their homes as early as 4:30 am to travel 5-8 km. Occasionally these women arrive at the plantations late and are marked absent, forcing them to trek the same distance home in vain.

Gender differences also exist in opportunities for capacity building among workers in agro-companies. Opportunities for training and promotion are more common among male-dominated technicians, management and administrative staff (Dolan 2001). Few training opportunities for women have been observed in Uganda where female flower workers were provided with the chance of learning about fumigation and grading and how to tackle pests and diseases (Asea and Kaija 2000). Female employment in plantations is typically characterized by discrimination, violence and sexual harassment. Reports in Kenya and South Africa suggest that most women working in plantations are often exposed to sexual and verbal abuses from their male bosses who sometimes immediately dismiss them if they refuse sexual advances from these bosses (Asea and Kaija 2000). Others do not enjoy the rights to adequate health as in Cameroon where female workers in banana plantations reported that medical staff do not consider pregnancy to be an ailment. Consequently, the belief that pregnant women should not be treated any differently leads to frequent cases of miscarriages and salary deductions for arriving late (Banana Link 2014).

## Conclusion

The current situation of large-scale acquisitions in the continent looks like a re-enactment of the colonial rush for Africa. The sole difference today is that the process includes local capitalists and is done with the complicity of most states, in violation of local legal frameworks and the rights of indigenous communities. It thus thrives mostly in corrupt countries where the level of transactions, transparency and land regulation is poor and the rule of law weak. As such, local people in general and women in particular do not participate in the land negotiation process. This paper thus highlights the fact that the underlying evolutionary models as they apply to landholding differ in practice as conceptualized. The decisions driving the evolution of landholding systems are taken by men, who are the idealized 'heads of households' (Ingrid 2002). Women exist only as the wives of household heads; their actions are considered secondary or unimportant to the changes that landholding systems undergo (Ingrid 2002). Evolutionary models and the policies therefore render women's land claims and the forms of tenure insecurity that they face, invisible. Meanwhile, gender is central to understanding the organization and transformation of landholding, and shaping women's differential experiences of tenure insecurity as gatherers, users and conservers of land.

Investors' claims that agro-plantations will improve the socio-economic wellbeing of women who are the greatest victims of land grabbing through off-farm employment remain a fallacy. The working conditions of female labourers and the extremely low wages leaves these women worse off.

Article 15 of the ACHPR recognizes the right of 'every individual' to work under equitable and satisfactory conditions and to receive equal pay for equal work. Non-discrimination in training and equal opportunities to work including women's freedom to choose their occupation, equality in access to employment, and equal remuneration for jobs of equal value are affirmed in the Draft Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa. Unfortunately, rural women are often unaware of their legal rights and the laws protecting women's labour rights are often not automatically implemented either by investors or local state officials respectively because of economic and selfish interests, thereby devaluing the benefits often overstated for women, as a result of losing their land to large-scale agro-investments.

But, for how long will rural women and other vulnerable groups in Africa continue to endure neglect, discrimination and hardship, as a result of internally induced externalities that have forced them out of their ancestral land and livelihood? African women and other indigenous groups have to reclaim their space rather than continue to wait on space that will be ceded to them by the state, which is unlikely to come. The case of Benin where the people established a local institution 'Synergie Paysanne' (SYNPA) to protect their interests against the rush on farmlands by government and political elites (Nonfodji 2013) is a good example in the right direction. As observed in this paper, the promised non-farm employment, social change and development expected by affected communities from commercial farming communities is an illusion.

LSLAs in its present form do not hold any better promise for Africa. The practice disregards both the written and living law and is sustained through political power, rather than community-based legitimacy, and by so doing, violates the rights of local communities and vulnerable groups. It compounds an already bad situation for women who are customarily denied land rights, and to an extent, creates landless peasants and agricultural wage laborers (IDRC 2012), whose travail fall short of slavery. The future of local communities and women in particular in the current context of LSLAs lies in the political will of rethinking the practices and processes involved in land deals in the sub region. It needs to be checked by promoting transparency in land transactions, and recognizing that local communities should play a central role in deciding the future of their land, and also that women who are the pillars of these societies cannot be neglected.

Land reforms that seek to formalize land rights must intentionally consider the economic, social, environmental and political dimensions of property rights to ensure that women are not left worse off by the process. At the same time, to be effective in the long term, the reforms must consider the social, as well as legal, legitimacies of the change they seek. Their implementation and

enforcement must be tested against undue economic interest and prejudices against women. True change needs a concerted effort and the diligent implementation of positive land laws to benefit the women, and this is where the utmost challenge lies.

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## **A Mulher guineense como sujeito e objecto do debate histórico contemporâneo: Excertos da história de vida de Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>1</sup>**

Patrícia Godinho Gomes\*

### **Resumo**

A luta armada conduzida na Guiné-Bissau provocou mudanças profundas na estrutura social, nomeadamente em termos culturais e de edificação de novas estruturas administrativas e sociais (educação, saúde, justiça). Todavia, a construção de uma nova sociedade ficou muito aquém das reais expectativas do povo guineense no período que sucedeu à independência. O presente estudo procura discutir, com base no método de estudo da história oral, os primeiros resultados de uma pesquisa mais alargada sobre uma das figuras femininas bissau-guineenses que encarnam a atuação prática do pensamento de Amílcar Cabral, Teodora Inácia Gomes, a partir de alguns excertos da sua história de vida, da análise de alguns discursos de Amílcar Cabral sobre a condição feminina, de documentos produzidos pelo PAIGC sobre a situação das mulheres na sociedade bissau-guineense e na luta armada assim como de diversa literatura sobre o tema.

### **Abstract**

The armed struggle conducted in Guinea-Bissau promoted profound changes in the social formation, particularly in terms of cultural, social and administrative structures (education, health and justice). However, the building of a new society fell far short from the real expectations of the Bissau-Guinean people after the independence. Based on the method of oral History, this study discusses the first results of a wider research on one of the Bissau-Guinean Women figures who embody the practical application of Amílcar Cabral's thought, Teodora Inácia Gomes. The research make use of some fragments of Teodora's life history, of the Amílcar Cabral's discourse on Women condition, of the PAIGC's documents and of the literature on the subject.

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## Introdução

Nos anos sessenta do século XX, na senda do movimento de liberalização da cultura africana, surgiu uma importante corrente internacional de estudos que abria o caminho a um novo debate historiográfico sobre o passado africano, procurando sobretudo alternativas às visões obscurantistas sobre o continente que tinham dominado boa parte da literatura sobre África. A essa corrente pertenceram eminentes historiadores como Lucien Fèbvre (1953), Joseph Ki-Zerbo (1972) e Jan Vansina (1977). Estes estudiosos defenderam a possibilidade da reconstrução do passado de sociedades sem escrita e admitiram que, embora os documentos escritos fossem fundamentais para a reconstrução histórica dos povos e das civilizações, a “engenhosidade da história deve permitir a todos fabricar o próprio mel” (Fèbvre 1953:428). Neste sentido, Ki-Zerbo (1972:98-99) argumentou sobre a necessidade de construir uma história considerando múltiplas fontes. Por outras palavras, a diversidade de condições de vida e das atividades humanas no tempo e no espaço pressupunham, *a priori*, um olhar diferenciado em relação ao meio estudado, fato que deveria inevitavelmente levar o historiador a realizar um exercício de escolhas teóricas e metodológicas indispensáveis à boa condução da pesquisa.

Entre os historiadores verificou-se um interesse crescente na busca de figuras africanas com passados gloriosos, entre as quais perfis femininos.<sup>2</sup> No entanto, a literatura deste período sobre a história das mulheres africanas era inexistente. Entre 1970 e 1985, a literatura tendeu a ignorar as vozes das principais protagonistas. A maior parte das publicações privilegiaram fontes de arquivo e muito raramente testemunhos orais, com algumas poucas exceções.<sup>3</sup>

No entanto, e como sugere Margaret Jean Hay,<sup>4</sup> apesar das lacunas evidentes em termos da literatura produzida (em particular temas como as mulheres e a educação formal, o impacto das instituições coloniais e pós-coloniais na vida de mulheres e homens africanos, o acesso das mulheres às instituições da justiça), muitos avanços se verificaram em termos teóricos. A obra colectânea de Claire Robertson e Iris Berger<sup>5</sup> publicada em 1986 é, nesse sentido, um importante contributo para a análise do tema. A obra chama a atenção para o facto de que os sistemas coloniais, de forma geral, tenderam a favorecer e a perpetuar formas de discriminação de género e a subestimar o estatuto socioeconómico das mulheres africanas. Neste sentido a análise do tema deveria partir de um discurso de inclusão das forças culturais endógenas e considerar os modelos pré-coloniais de relações de género.

O tema da participação das mulheres na luta anticolonial pressupõe uma abordagem diferenciada tendo em conta os contextos específicos em que ocorreram os processos. No caso dos países africanos de língua oficial portuguesa, a génese dos movimentos femininos esteve estritamente ligada aos

movimentos de libertação desses países (Angola, Cabo Verde, Guiné-Bissau, Moçambique e São Tomé e Príncipe). Verificou-se a participação das mulheres tanto na esfera político-ideológica como nas frentes de guerra e nas diversas atividades no âmbito da organização das áreas libertadas.<sup>6</sup>

Na Guiné-Bissau, o processo de independência foi bem sucedido graças ao suporte e à atuação popular por um lado, e à capacidade de liderança do PAIGC<sup>7</sup> e de Amílcar Cabral,<sup>8</sup> por outro. Nesse contexto, a contribuição das mulheres foi importante e permitiu alcançar objetivos em termos da organização das instituições nascentes. No seu Programa de Ação, o PAIGC estabeleceu a igualdade entre os homens e as mulheres, afirmando que “os homens e as mulheres gozam dos mesmos direitos na família, no trabalho e nas atividades públicas”.<sup>9</sup> Se se considerar o contexto político sociocultural da época, estas palavras traduziram-se numa verdadeira inovação em relação ao estatuto da Mulher na esfera pública.

Os objectivos da luta de libertação na Guiné-Bissau foram muito para além da expulsão do colonialismo português em África, tal como defendeu Basil Davidson.<sup>10</sup> Nesse processo de emancipação, as mulheres guineenses tiveram destaque em alguns domínios,<sup>11</sup> tendo a componente feminina do movimento de libertação contribuído de forma positiva para a mudança de mentalidades sociais, sobretudo nos meios rurais em que a resistência à presença das mulheres em lugares de decisão era mais evidente.<sup>12</sup>

O respeito pelos direitos das mulheres dependia em grande medida da consciencialização de que a sua emancipação e liberdade dependiam, antes de mais, delas próprias e da sua vontade em lutar contra os obstáculos ao seu desenvolvimento e que conduziam à subordinação em relação aos homens. São exemplos os casamentos precoces, os casamentos forçados, a maternidade na adolescência, a excisão feminina, a desigualdade em termos dos direitos sobre os filhos, do direito à herança e à posse da terra.<sup>13</sup>

Os anos subsequentes à independência da Guiné-Bissau viram as mulheres relegadas a uma posição subalterna na sociedade e nas esferas de decisão, e uma acentuada descontinuidade em relação aos objectivos fixados pelo Programa Maior do PAIGC de 1966, nomeadamente nos campos da educação e da saúde (Urdang 2013:273-278). Merecem destaque alguns aspetos positivos gerados no âmbito desse processo.

Algumas mudanças promovidas no contexto da luta de independência permitiram criar as condições de base para o surgimento de uma nova mentalidade cultural e de uma prática política capaz de favorecer o resgate das culturas endógenas e de colocar os interesses coletivos acima das vontades individuais no seio do movimento de libertação. A transformação social subjacente favoreceu não apenas a melhoria da condição de vida de uma parte

significativa das populações, mas também lançou as bases para a criação do movimento político feminino guineense. Este quadro geral iria sustentar o ideário do movimento de libertação sobre os direitos das mulheres, favorecendo a luta contra a discriminação de género e facilitando o surgimento de uma nova formação social guineense, como analisado em trabalho precedente (Godinho Gomes 2010).

A construção de uma “nova sociedade” com base na equidade de género tal como estabelecido no Programa de Ação do PAIGC, deveria ter constituído a base para edificar as estruturas do novo Estado e garantir o funcionamento das instituições com base no equilíbrio de género dando deste modo continuidade às ações iniciadas durante a luta armada. No entanto, olhando para o seu percurso desde a independência (1973-74), em que o país atravessou várias crises políticas, económicas sociais e militares, e perante a decadência das instituições do Estado, devemos interrogar-nos sobre as razões porque o Estado guineense não conseguiu encontrar as vias para a perenização das conquistas da luta e conduzir o país ao desenvolvimento durável. Que motivos estiveram na base da descontinuidade em relação ao princípio da igualdade de oportunidades entre homens e mulheres estabelecidos no contexto da luta armada e da participação de ambos em igual medida na vida política, social e cultural do país? De onde recomençar para reconstruir uma nova sociedade com base na equidade, na justiça social e na irmandade, respeitando as diferenças internas? Como poderão as mulheres guineenses contribuir de forma contínua e eficaz para este processo à luz do percurso efetuado e das experiências regionais, continentais e mundiais?

O presente estudo analisa os primeiros resultados de uma pesquisa mais alargada sobre uma das figuras femininas guineenses que melhor encarna a atuação prática do pensamento de Amílcar Cabral, Teodora Inácia Gomes,<sup>14</sup> partindo de alguns excertos da sua história de vida, da análise de discursos de Amílcar Cabral sobre a condição feminina, de documentos produzidos pelo PAIGC sobre a situação das mulheres na sociedade guineense e na luta armada e da análise da literatura sobre o tema. Sem quaisquer pretensões de responder às questões acima colocadas, o tema desenvolvido procura discutir algumas questões fundamentais relativas à evolução da condição feminina na Guiné-Bissau e, possivelmente, contribuir para o debate sobre a necessidade de uma reinterpretação do processo histórico da luta de libertação, no âmbito do qual se impõe questionar sobre o lugar da Mulher na sociedade guineense, num discurso mais alargado sobre a recuperação da memória coletiva.

À luz da experiência política de Teodora Inácia Gomes, o estudo procura compreender, por um lado, o contributo efetivo das mulheres guineenses ao processo de mudança sociocultural que iria culminar com a transformação da

Guiné Portuguesa, uma colónia, no Estado independente da Guiné-Bissau, e, por outro lado, o lugar que lhes coube na sociedade guineense na época sucessiva à independência e o contributo específico que deram na redefinição do discurso político e do movimento feminino no contexto do monopartidarismo (1974-1994) e do pluripartidarismo (1994-hoje). Enfim, a finalidade do artigo é a de equacionar o papel da Mulher guineense como sujeito e objecto do atual debate sobre a história da libertação da Guiné-Bissau, procurando compreender a sua historicidade.

### Questões de método

Nas ciências sociais, o método das histórias de vida<sup>15</sup> pode ser definido segundo dois principais pontos de vista: as histórias de vida *stricto sensu* e a forma como elas são narradas e utilizadas. Na pesquisa que aqui se apresenta, optou-se por analisar o aspecto do método qualitativo, um método não estatístico sem objectivos de sondagem, através do uso da história de vida recolhida por meio de uma entrevista livre de carácter narrativo, com base no método de pesquisa da tradição oral.<sup>16</sup> Deste modo, a questão que se põe não é a da utilização de questionários, mas da transcrição de textos a partir de gravações vocais em língua kriol (que no caso específico duraram cerca de 10 horas), língua nacional da Guiné-Bissau.<sup>17</sup>

Jeja Pekka Roos (1991:1-2) e Susan Geiger (1986:339-340) definem história de vida como sendo “uma história ou biografia baseada na narração do percurso de vida de uma determinada pessoa na qual essa pessoa é o sujeito da história (...)”, que no caso das biografias femininas permite informar e corrigir a narrativa histórica androcêntrica prevalecente. Nessa perspectiva foi conduzida a entrevista com Teodora Inácia Gomes, figura central da pesquisa e cuja história de vida serviu de base para a abordagem da trajetória política e social das mulheres “da luta” na Guiné-Bissau, assim como a compreensão de algumas importantes transformações socioculturais ocorridas. Deixou-se o sujeito livre de definir os aspectos sobre os quais se concentrar, de acordo com o quadro geral do argumento da pesquisa,<sup>18</sup> isto é, a recuperação da memória coletiva do período da luta armada relatada segundo as vozes dos seus protagonistas.

A qualidade dos resultados numa pesquisa deste tipo também depende do tipo de relações que se estabelecem entre o entrevistador e o entrevistado. Respeito mútuo, estima, confiança recíproca são indispensáveis para levar a cabo com sucesso um estudo com estas características. Os encontros com Teodora Inácia Gomes assumiram um carácter de grande intercâmbio entre a entrevistadora e a entrevistada, facto que acabaria por enriquecer significativamente o quadro reflexivo e analítico do trabalho realizado.

A análise crítica e a interpretação dos dados constituem uma parte fundamental do trabalho de um historiador na utilização de fontes orais, uma vez que contêm elementos que servirão para a reconstrução histórica. Como todos os outros documentos, as fontes orais requerem do historiador uma crítica atenta, que deve ser tanto externa como interna (Thompson 1992). No primeiro caso o pesquisador põe em evidência a relação entre os dados recolhidos e outras fontes históricas a fim de estabelecer a linearidade ou a fragmentação da transmissão das informações. No segundo caso, ele procura estabelecer a conformidade da narrativa, isto é, a sua validade (Pekka Roos 1991; Thompson 1992). Os excertos da história de vida de Teodora Inácia Gomes serviram como fonte primária na presente análise. A técnica de entrevista adotada foi a da “entrevista de tipo narrativo”, também chamado estudo biográfico (Gayibor 2011). São os casos em que o entrevistado pode narrar os factos de forma relativamente livre sem uma série de questões específicas pré-estabelecidas. Uma entrevista narrativa pode ser composta por duas partes: uma primeira parte na qual o sujeito descreve a sua história de vida livremente e, uma segunda parte, em que a entrevista pode ser completada com perguntas mais específicas. Este aspecto também correspondeu à escolha feita pela autora. As duas partes foram precedidas por uma fase explicativa em que a entrevistadora procurou descrever à entrevistada as razões e os objectivos do trabalho, de forma a que o sujeito da pesquisa se pudesse sentir motivado e envolvido no trabalho.

A motivação do sujeito estudado é fundamental por vários motivos, entre os quais evitar um “contrato” demasiado específico no âmbito do qual ele conta a sua história apenas do ponto de vista da pesquisa. Para se alcançarem resultados com valor científico numa pesquisa de tipo qualitativo com estas características é necessário em primeiro lugar encontrar exemplos capazes de fornecer um quadro social abrangente da realidade em estudo.

No caso concreto da escolha de Teodora Inácia Gomes, ela orientou-se considerando fundamentalmente os seguintes elementos:

- a) interesse em escutar a uma protagonista da história contemporânea guineense num contexto de fragilidade cultural, em que evocar o carácter matrilinear da sociedade poderá ajudar na tarefa de reapropriação do conceito de *ermondadi*<sup>19</sup> que esteve na base do processo libertador guineense;
- b) mulher conhecedora das suas tradições e respeitada no seu meio sociocultural, capaz de representar a ponte de ligação entre as mulheres do mundo rural e as da realidade urbana;
- c) o seu desempenho político na luta pela independência;
- d) funções exercidas no contexto da luta armada: organização da juventude (pioneiros Abel Djassi mais tarde Juventude Africana Amílcar Cabral),

enfermeira socorrista nos hospitais das áreas libertadas, professora nas escolas das áreas libertadas, comissária política nas frentes de combate sul e leste;

- e) contributo na redefinição da estrutura da organização política feminina nacional, a UDEMU.

### **Alguns aspetos da vida de Teodora Inácia Gomes**

Teodora Inácia Gomes, familiarmente conhecida por “Obono”<sup>20</sup> nasceu em 13 de Setembro de 1944, em Empada, região de Quínara, sul da Guiné-Bissau, no seio de uma família de tipo “alargada”. Filha de Inácio Pedro Gomes, de Bissau, de etnia Manjaca e de Nhanha da Silva, de etnia Bijagó, Teodora foi educada de acordo com valores da cultura cristã e professava a religião católica tal como todos os membros da sua família. Ainda muito jovem, o seu pai foi para Portugal, cidade do Porto, levado por um amigo do avô paterno que lhe tinha garantido instrução e formação na “metrópole”. Homem de grande prestígio, Inácio Pedro Gomes foi dos poucos africanos que tinham recebido uma educação com moldes ocidentais e que tinha tido a possibilidade de estudar fora da colónia. Exerceu diversos cargos de prestígio na Guiné colonial, entre os quais o de Juíz dos “indígenas”<sup>1</sup> em Bolama, nos anos quarenta do século vinte. Conheceu diversos nacionalistas ainda antes da criação do PAIGC, nomeadamente Rafael Barbosa e colaborou de perto com Amílcar Cabral na fase da organização da luta anticolonial e mesmo nos primeiros anos da ação armada. Teve importantes contactos com o Partido Comunista Português, organização política que combatia o regime fascista em Portugal e aliado dos movimentos nacionalistas das então colónias. No seu depoimento, Teodora sublinha a importância que a relação com seu pai teve na sua formação política, tendo sido ele o responsável pela sua mobilização para a luta armada, em 1962, aos 18 anos de idade.

A mãe de Teodora Inácia Gomes, Nhanha da Silva, pertencia à etnia Bijagó, cuja organização social é fundamentalmente de tipo matriarcal. Era doméstica. Casou com o pai em segundas núpcias e tiveram quatro filhos. Tal como o marido, Nhanha militava no PAIGC e juntos participaram na luta armada, tendo dado auxílio a muitos dos combatentes que transitavam de Conacri para as zonas de guerra. Sendo uma família poligâmica, a relação entre mães e filhos pressupunha não apenas o cuidado dos filhos de sangue como também dos filhos das outras esposas. No caso concreto de Teodora, a figura materna não era apenas a da sua mãe de sangue; verificava-se uma convivência materna entre ela e as outras esposas do pai, as “madrastas”.

Em 1964, já nas fileiras do PAIGC e após a morte do pai<sup>21</sup>, Teodora recebeu uma bolsa de estudo para Kiev, Ucrânia, na então União das Repúblicas

Socialistas Soviéticas-URSS. Desiludida com a forma como o pai fora assassinado e de como estava sendo conduzido o processo de independência, concordou em ir para a ex-União Soviética estudar como forma de se “afastar” das atividades da luta. Na diáspora, como estudante do PAIGC em Kiev, Teodora teve a oportunidade de participar em movimentos sociais, em particular juvenis e contribuiu para desenvolver atividades políticas difundindo os ideais e objetivos do movimento de libertação e da luta armada junto das organizações juvenis e movimentos femininos.

### **O discurso de Amílcar Cabral e a luta pela emancipação feminina**

Ainda que de forma circunscrita, afigura-se importante para fins do presente estudo abordar o tema da participação das mulheres na luta anticolonial e armada nesta secção para uma correta leitura do processo. Nestes termos, torna-se necessário analisar o discurso político de Amílcar Cabral em relação à emancipação feminina, central para a compreensão da dinâmica.

A herança cultural e intelectual de Amílcar Cabral traduziu-se num contributo concreto ao desenvolvimento do nacionalismo, não só na Guiné-Bissau e em Cabo Verde, como também nos demais territórios africanos sob colonização portuguesa e em países africanos sob o regime de apartheid e outras formas de discriminação. Os pressupostos teóricos e a prática política nos quais assentaram o seu pensamento determinariam, em boa medida, o sucesso da luta armada conduzida pelo PAIGC.

A partir do conceito de “democracia revolucionária” (Cabral 1976; Davidson 1979; Chabal 2003), isto é, a inclusão das populações no processo de tomada de decisão sobre questões de interesse comum, Cabral abordou a questão de forma dialética, procurando mostrar que a opressão do regime colonial constituía um importante fator de bloqueio estrutural e psicológico que impedia os africanos de se autogovernarem e que as capacidades deviam ser construídas durante o processo revolucionário e não após o mesmo. Eram necessárias, portanto, estruturas de apoio e de capacitação e capacidade de tomada de decisão. Por outro lado, Amílcar Cabral chamou a atenção para a questão da liderança individual e coletiva e teorizou o papel da liderança individual como parte de um todo, aplicando a sua tese ao contexto guineense (1976:154). Afirmou a propósito que :

o nosso Partido é dirigido colectivamente, não é uma pessoa só que dirige. Em qualquer nível, na ação política ou nas Forças Armadas, na segurança ou na instrução, em qualquer lado há sempre uma direcção colectiva, a vários níveis. Mas a tendência de alguns camaradas é de monopolizar a direcção só para eles, eles é que decidem tudo, não consultam a opinião de ninguém (...). Isso não pode ser porque duas cabeças valem sempre mais do que uma cabeça (...).

Esta abordagem mostra como deveria ser conduzida a liderança e qual deveria ser a postura dos dirigentes cuja perspectiva tinha necessariamente que assentar numa visão partilhada da luta armada. A máxima de Cabral, “tell no lies, claim no easy victories” (Manji, Fletcher Jr. 2013), traduziu a sua prática política, baseada na humildade, na avaliação honesta da situação e na integridade humana.

Ao teorizar sobre a luta armada na Guiné-Bissau, Amílcar Cabral evidenciou o papel fundamental das mulheres na revolução e no processo de reconstrução nacional. O sucesso de qualquer tipo de transformação social, segundo a sua análise, consistia “em constatar de que forma a mulher participa no mais amplo processo de libertação da sociedade (...). A nossa revolução nunca será vitoriosa se não conseguirmos a plena participação das mulheres”.<sup>22</sup> Tal como discutiu Oyéronké Oyèwùmì (2005:3-22, 2010) qualquer que seja a análise sociológica de uma determinada comunidade ou sociedade, ela exige antes de mais a devida contextualização e a consideração das especificidades no sentido de alcançar resultados relevantes. E foi na mesma perspectiva que Amílcar Cabral entendeu a construção da nova sociedade guineense. Tal atitude se torna ainda mais necessária nos casos em que as sociedades foram submetidas a processos de colonização, como é o caso da Guiné-Bissau, onde se tornou imperativo descortinar as complexidades subjacentes à subalternidade das populações e as relações de género construídas no contexto do colonialismo. Sendo a posição das mulheres bastante diferenciada, mas fundamentalmente de dependência, impunha-se um trabalho profundo de mudança de mentalidades, sem, no entanto, criar contrastes e fracturas sociais. A esse propósito, Cabral (1976:132) afirmaria:

no começo os homens não queriam reuniões com as mulheres. Passo a passo, não forçámos, enquanto noutras áreas as mulheres entraram logo nas reuniões, sem problemas. Nós temos que ter consciência da realidade geral da nossa terra, das realidades particulares de cada coisa, para podermos orientar a luta corretamente.

As mulheres guineenses aderiram à luta ainda na fase da sua organização, agindo clandestinamente. Nos centros urbanos, realizaram tarefas de ligação, cedendo as suas casas para reuniões do PAIGC. Prepararam e distribuíram material de propaganda, cozinham para muitos militantes que se encontravam na clandestinidade, esconderam em suas casas perseguidos políticos que procuravam despistar a PIDE<sup>23</sup> e serviram de ligação entre as diversas “células” clandestinas espalhadas pelo território e na diáspora. No entanto, as atividades acima referidas reproduzem *in toto* os papéis sociais de género e os estereótipos sociais através dos quais se perpetuaram as desigualdades de género, mesmo após a independência (Ly 2014). A participação das mulheres nas atividades políticas verificara-se a nível da mobilização das populações rurais para a luta armada em que eram as mães, esposas e irmãs a convencerem muitos dos jovens

a aderir aos ideais da luta. Em termos da sua participação política nos órgãos decisores ou em posições de destaque, poucas mulheres estiveram efetivamente presentes.

A partir do discurso produzido por algumas mulheres consideradas figuras históricas do PAIGC, deduz-se que foi sobretudo contra o sexismo e a mentalidade patriarcal que elas tiveram de lutar, luta na qual mostrar-se-ia fundamental o apoio do Partido de Cabral. Neste sentido é interessante o testemunho de Cármen Pereira, uma das mulheres “do Partido”, que assumiu cargos políticos destacados durante e após a luta armada. A propósito da mudança de mentalidades e comportamentos no seio dos sistemas sociais tradicionais, afirmou que (Pereira 1978:63).

(...) a posição das mulheres era de grande atraso. Para cumprimentar o marido, ela chegava ao ponto de se ajoelhar diante do marido. Enquanto trabalhava nos campos, o marido ficava em casa. Ela trabalhava até ao pôr do sol, regressava a casa, preparava e servia-lhe a refeição, ia buscar água para o marido se lavar. Era bastante submissa. O Partido lutou contra todos esses aspetos negativos da nossa tradição e conseguiu eliminar muitos deles. Agora já há homens a trabalhar juntamente com as mulheres nos campos. No passado os homens de religião muçulmana recusavam que as esposas participassem em reuniões do Partido. Recusaram-se uma, duas, três vezes mas à quarta tiveram de aceitar porque as mulheres insistiram. Elas estavam interessadas em ouvir e saber o que se passava. Agora as mulheres fazem parte dos comités de “tabanka”.<sup>24</sup> e chegam a ser eleitas presidentes desses comités. Os homens já aceitam que as mulheres participem em reuniões e compreendem a importância e porque é que o Partido insiste nessa questão.

A transformação cultural e a melhoria da condição feminina deveriam seguir um processo de mudança de mentalidades a nível social tendo em conta as realidades étnicas mais ou menos estratificadas com as próprias regras e os próprios códigos culturais. Por outras palavras, o sucesso da libertação guineense dependia em boa parte da capacidade de o PAIGC conseguir consensos e partilhar ideias e projetos sem quaisquer imposições, numa perspetiva inclusiva.

Não obstante os sucessos alcançados, a estrutura partidária do PAIGC apresentava fraquezas evidentes. Esta situação conduziria, num dado momento do processo a abusos de poder por parte de determinados chefes militares que atuavam de forma arbitrária em algumas regiões libertadas, submetendo as populações às próprias vontades e não aos princípios que tinham sido delineados pelo PAIGC. Como referiu Lúcio Soares,<sup>25</sup>

Foi bom que tivesse acontecido a reunião de Cassacá. Foi orientador. Muitos comandantes tinham perdido o controlo e estavam a cometer erros. Na minha

perspetiva muita gente que naquela altura tinha assumido o comando não tinha preparação para o fazer e não sabia o que estava a fazer. Outros sabiam. Os que não sabiam cometiam os mesmos erros que os portugueses cometeram durante o colonialismo. Muitos pensavam nestes termos “se ele era chefe de posto, agora eu é que sou o chefe de posto e se ele agia daquela forma agora eu posso também agir da mesma forma (...)” isso levou muitos a cometerem atrocidades (...).

Neste quadro, a experiência de vida de Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>26</sup> é particularmente significativa. A propósito da morte de seu pai refere:

(...) Era hábito irem buscar o meu pai para ir até Conacri (onde estava sediado o Secretariado do Partido) para ajudar a fazer relatórios sobre a luta. Em 1964 ele ficou lá cerca de dois meses, e foi quando começaram a dizer que iam ter de eliminar feiticeiros. (...). Acusaram o meu pai. Foi isso que levou à morte do meu pai, acharem que ele era feiticeiro! (...) mas quem atirou no nosso pai até hoje não sabemos, mas de algum sítio esse tiro saiu !(...) Perguntei-me a mim mesma afinal onde estavam os ideais da luta? Todo o mundo conhecia só Cabral, falava de Cabral. Mas então onde é que estava Cabral? Essa é a luta que ele disse que queria fazer e as pessoas andavam a matar os próprios irmãos? Fiquei muito decepcionada (...) o meu pai tinha feito tanto pela luta! Mas também sei que a ignorância era um problema e o meu pai já dizia isso. Por isso mesmo é que ele nunca quis sair para parte alguma e preferiu morrer mas combater e ajudar os seus! (...)

Esses desvios refletiram-se em vários domínios, nomeadamente no que se refere à participação das mulheres nas questões políticas, aspecto que encontrou impedimentos e oposição por parte dos homens e das comunidades de pertença de uma forma geral (Ly 2014:29-32).

A libertação das mulheres guineenses de algumas práticas tradicionais prejudiciais ao seu avanço constituiu um dos elementos centrais do discurso político de Amílcar Cabral e do PAIGC (Ivi: 28-29). Num dos vários encontros de mobilização que Cabral mantinha habitualmente com as populações rurais da Guiné-Bissau, referiu, em 1966, numa comunidade da região sul do país (Chaliand 1969:93):

Depois da guerra as mulheres e as meninas voltarão para as aldeias como enfermeiras e professoras ou então trabalharão no comércio ou integrarão as milícias (...). Deixarão as nossas bases mas ninguém pense que estas meninas estão prontas para serem “dadas” em casamento. Casar-se-ão se o desejarem mas não haverá mais casamentos forçados. Aqueles que continuarem a incentivar esta prática estarão agindo pior do que os portugueses colonialistas (...). O nosso Partido é também o partido das mulheres.<sup>2</sup>

Apesar dos muitos obstáculos, as mulheres guineenses souberam usar as condições objectivas criadas para dar início a um processo de emancipação, que se previa irreversível. Em 1963, antes da morte de seu pai e do Congresso de Cassacá, Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>27</sup> foi transferida para a base militar de Cam (no sul da Guiné-Bissau), onde assumiu funções fundamentalmente políticas:

(...) na base de Cam a minha função continuou como orientadora política. Efectuava reuniões com as populações e militares sobre o motivo que levou o PAIGC a desencadear a luta armada na Guiné Bissau, ensinando princípios e normas que regiam os estatutos e programas do Partido sobretudo o Programa Maior e o Programa Mínimo do PAIGC. Nesta base de guerrilha eu dirigia 95 raparigas sob a orientação dos Comandantes de Base João “Colontche” e Fernando Badinca, e do Instrutor Militar Pedro Nanque. Para além da actividade política e militar, tinha a responsabilidade de orientar um grupo em várias actividades tais como cozinha, descasque e transporte de arroz, transporte de água, lavagem de roupa, transporte de material de guerra. Na perspectiva da criação de grupos femininos de guerrilha, as jovens recebiam instrução militar (...).

A maior parte das funções exercidas pelas mulheres correspondia aos trabalhos socialmente considerados como tipicamente “femininos” no quadro da divisão sexual do trabalho. Todavia, houve um esforço notável no sentido de integrar as mulheres nas estruturas políticas já numa fase mais avançada do processo. A formação política e técnica das meninas era uma das formas consideradas importantes para alcançar tal objectivo. Esse objectivo foi, em certa medida, conseguido. A partir de 1972, algumas mulheres passaram a fazer parte dos órgãos políticos do PAIGC e dos tribunais populares como membros de júri.<sup>28</sup>

Houve vários outros domínios em que as mulheres se distinguiram: nas operações militares, a partir de 1966 com a intensificação da guerra, como milícias e parte integrante dos corpos militares nas frentes.<sup>29</sup> O sistema de educação que então nascia nas zonas libertadas da Guiné-Bissau contou com o apoio fundamental das mulheres em todos os seus aspectos e níveis. Nos comités de gestão das escolas entre os representantes dos estudantes as raparigas eram representadas em número igual ao dos rapazes (3 raparigas e 3 rapazes), para além do representante dos professores e do representante político.<sup>30</sup> As conquistas foram importantes, sobretudo no que se refere à presença de mulheres como professoras e gestoras dos institutos e escolas das áreas libertadas. Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>31</sup> referiu quanto ao seu desempenho:

em 1966 voltei para a URSS e finalizei o Curso de Pedagogia e Psicologia Infantil no Instituto Gorca de Kiev (...); depois do exame final de Estado, voltei para Conacri, onde continuei as minhas actividades como professora dando aulas no Jardim Escola de Ratoma (Instituto Amizade), tendo sido nomeada mais tarde para directora do Jardim Escola do Instituto Amizade. Isto entre 1969 e 1971.

Felizmente consegui pôr em prática os meus conhecimentos, tive sorte. Fui dirigir uma instituição com 300 a 400 alunos, onde pude mostrar as minhas capacidades em termos de pedagogia (...). As minhas atividades traduziam-se em dar aulas, preparar professores, organizar os programas escolares e organizar a escola, dar formação em termos de educação sanitária e primeiros socorros. Tive a oportunidade de trabalhar com crianças com deficiências, pus em prática os meus conhecimentos e consegui ajudar algumas delas a obter bons resultados (...). Em resumo o meu trabalho era coordenar os monitores e os professores”.

A valorização dos recursos humanos e da organização do trabalho mereceu particular atenção nesta fase. Existiam os núcleos de monitores que iam às regiões, aos sectores e às secções organizar os pioneiros dentro das escolas, e daí eram escolhidos os representantes dos grupos dos pioneiros que iriam representar os jovens no PAIGC. Por outro lado, havia o Grupo de Controlo das escolas, órgão responsável pela coordenação das atividades escolares (programas, orçamento, gestão de estudantes), formado por 4 membros, sendo 2 homens e 2 mulheres. Este facto adquiriu um significado importante se se considerar que tradicionalmente o papel social das mulheres se limitava à dimensão doméstica e familiar. Não menos importante, foram os avanços no âmbito do sector da saúde.<sup>32</sup>

### **A UDEMU: em busca de uma organização política feminina**

Em virtude da necessidade de reforço da componente feminina foi criada em Conacri, em Junho de 1961, a UDEMU-União Democrática das Mulheres da Guiné e Cabo-Verde, ainda antes do início da luta armada. A UDEMU tinha como principal tarefa a mobilização das mulheres e o seu enquadramento político no processo. Nesta primeira fase da sua existência, para além do trabalho interno, a organização projetou-se no plano externo através das suas atividades, em particular no plano das relações diplomáticas com a finalidade de captar recursos financeiros fundamentais para o avanço da luta de libertação. A perspectiva de género traçada por Amílcar Cabral e apoiada pela classe dirigente do PAIGC constituiu sem dúvida uma importante “arma” de luta. No entanto, esta visão não tinha encontrado uma base sustentável de apoio no seio do próprio movimento de libertação. Tendencialmente, os homens “do Partido” nas relações estabelecidas com as mulheres “do Partido”, reproduziram as mesmas atitudes e os mesmos comportamentos sociais baseados nas estruturas familiares patriarcais e hierárquicas de pertença, procurando as justificações na fragilidade física das mulheres (Ly 2014:29). Enquanto uma elite dirigente partilhava os mesmos objetivos em relação à visão emancipatória de género, uma parte substancial da sociedade parecia não estar suficientemente preparada

para entender e aceitar a pretendida mudança nas relações de género, visto mais como um desafio que ameaçava os fundamentos das identidades socioculturais locais através dos quais os homens procuravam mostrar a própria condição de chefes de família.

Em razão destas contradições, por um lado, e da progressiva exigência em integrar mulheres nas diferentes atividades que a própria dinâmica da luta armada ia gerando nas zonas libertadas por outro, a UDEMU acabaria por se extinguir em 1966, apenas cinco anos após a sua criação. Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>33</sup> referiu a esse propósito que:

“A UDEMU foi criada em 18 de Junho de 1961, em Conacri. Mas eu não estava presente. Quem estava presente era a Francisca Pereira, a Cati Turpin, a falecida Meta. Mas mais tarde veio a ser suspensa. Há diversas versões acerca disso, mas penso que a sua suspensão teve que ver com o pouco contributo na altura das mulheres, das que lá estavam. Não as da frente de luta” (...).

Na perspetiva de Teodora Inácia Gomes, a razão fundamental pela qual a UDEMU não sobreviveu nessa primeira fase deveu-se, sobretudo, ao facto de que as mulheres com melhor formação política não estarem engajadas na organização, encontrando-se a maior parte delas nas frentes de luta e integradas em várias outras atividades paralelas. Da mesma forma, Carmen Pereira (1978:66) refere-se à falência inicial da UDEMU como resultado de a maioria das mulheres experientes estarem empenhadas nas três frentes de luta, o que teria levado à ausência das mulheres dentro da organização e, portanto, a não se apropriarem do projeto. Afirmou a este propósito:

“No início da luta, o Partido criou a União Democrática das Mulheres da Guiné- UDEMU mas não tínhamos quadros suficientes para manter a organização. Todas as mulheres experientes estavam nas frentes de combate, como militares, fazendo trabalho político e não podiam estar na organização. Agora que a guerra terminou, o Partido criou um Comité formado por responsáveis quadros e militantes que deverá organizar as mulheres do Partido.”

A equidade de género na fase pós-independência deveria ter em conta, antes de mais, estratégias de luta pela autonomia das mulheres dentro das estruturas familiares patriarcais. Esta tarefa deveria primeiramente ser sustentada por políticas de formação e de inserção das mulheres na vida política e administrativa do Estado. No entanto, o que se verificou foi uma evidente discrepância entre os princípios defendidos pelo PAIGC em termos de equidade de género e a prática política, marcada fundamentalmente pela ausência de engajamento em relação a certas questões sociais (Urdang 1979). Os novos dirigentes estavam mais preocupados em assegurar os próprios privilégios do que propriamente em apoiar a causa das mulheres. Neste sentido e como referiu Joshua Forrest (2003:127), a Comissão Feminina do PAIGC parecia “mais um clube social

com a sua sede em Bissau” do que propriamente uma iniciativa política com ambições de reorganizar o movimento feminino guineense.

A referida Comissão, criada em 1975, tinha por objetivo analisar a condição das mulheres guineenses e cabo-verdianas, as suas problemáticas e os seus interesses a fim de elaborar programas de ação para enfrentar os novos desafios a nível nacional e tendo em conta a questão da etnicidade. Impunha-se assegurar a integração política e social das mulheres no novo contexto de Estado independente. Em Junho de 1979, a recém-formada Comissão Nacional das Mulheres da Guiné, cuja finalidade era dar continuidade ao trabalho iniciado pela Comissão Feminina do PAIGC, procedeu a uma reestruturação interna que culminaria com a decisão da realização do primeiro Congresso Nacional das Mulheres, em Novembro de 1982.

O primeiro Congresso das mulheres guineenses realizado em Fevereiro de 1982 sob o lema “A UDEMU renasceu”, teve como objectivo fundamental a redefinição da estrutura da UDEMU, que desde meados dos anos 60 tinha deixado de funcionar, como já foi anteriormente referido. A “nova” UDEMU tinha como finalidade mobilizar e organizar as mulheres na luta pela emancipação e desenvolver nelas uma atitude política. Deveria contribuir “para a construção de uma sociedade democrática em que todos os cidadãos tenham os mesmos direitos e deveres, sem discriminação de cor, sexo, religião ou origem social, uma sociedade onde esteja garantido o exercício das liberdades e direitos fundamentais do homem”.<sup>34</sup>

No Programa de Ação da nova organização, foram sublinhados os vários obstáculos e as dificuldades que as mulheres guineenses enfrentavam e os aspectos em relação aos quais era fundamental intervir, entre os quais:

- consciencialização das mulheres sobre a importância do seu papel no esforço produtivo nacional, levando-as assim a se comprometerem de forma responsável no trabalho, favorecendo deste modo o combate à discriminação de que são vítimas;
- sensibilização da sociedade em geral, visando a promoção: do reconhecimento da importância do papel da mulher como elemento criador de uma parte da riqueza nacional; de uma melhor e mais justa distribuição da riqueza nacional na base da capacidade produtora dos indivíduos e não em critérios baseados no sexo; da participação das mulheres na superestrutura dirigente de forma a garantir a sua inclusão nos processos de tomada de decisão que afectam a sociedade e o seu desenvolvimento; da capacitação das mulheres em termos políticos, culturais, literários, técnico-científicos e profissionais, com vista ao seu melhor enquadramento e participação efetiva nas estruturas partidárias e estatais.

A UDEMU, pelo seu carácter extremamente ideológico, ficou limitada em termos de capacidade de resposta às novas exigências próprias de um contexto de Estado independente, em que deviam ser incluídas não apenas as mulheres que “do PAIGC”, mas todas as cidadãs guineenses do novo Estado. Por outras palavras, era necessário alargar o âmbito de actuação da organização e proceder à sua reforma interna e à sua despartidarização.

### **A participação nos postos de decisão**

Após a independência, o tema da emancipação feminina pressupôs, antes de mais, um esforço no sentido da compreensão das dinâmicas relacionais entre a condição das mulheres e as velhas práticas sociais que tinham contribuído a gerar novas hierarquias sociopolíticas com base na etnicidade. A nova realidade social exigia uma análise das relações de poder fundamentalmente assimétricas geradas no contexto colonial que tinha criado, em traços gerais, uma contraposição mais ou menos evidente entre a elite política e administrativa dominante de origem cabo-verdiana e descendentes dos portugueses (crioulos) considerados privilegiados e a maioria das populações (na sua maioria rurais), que tinham sofrido as maiores injustiças do sistema colonial português (Mendy 1999).

Em termos políticos, a evolução da participação das mulheres nos órgãos de soberania não teve uma continuidade ascendente, apesar dos esforços realizados no sentido de garantir a sua participação. A presença das mulheres na Assembleia Nacional Popular desde a independência é nesse sentido um interessante elemento de análise:

**Tabela 1:** Presença de mulheres na Assembleia Nacional Popular da Guiné-Bissau

Legislatura (período)	Mulheres	Homens	% Mulheres
1973-1976 (I)	10	110	8,3
1976-1984 (II)	19	131	12,6
1984-1989 (III)	22	128	14,6
1989-1994 (IV)	30	120	20
1994-1999 (V)	9	91	9
1999-2004 (VI)	7	95	7,8
2004-2008 (VII)	13	87	11

*Fonte:* Assembleia Nacional Popular da Guiné-Bissau-ANP.

Em termos absolutos o número de mulheres no parlamento aumentou de 10 para 30 entre a I legislatura (1972 -1976) e a IV legislatura (1989-1994). Por outro lado é importante verificar que na IV legislatura (1989-1994) a percentagem de mulheres alcançou o mais alto valor desde a independência (30 mulheres em 150 deputados, equivalente a 20% do total), enquanto na VI legislatura (1999-2004) a presença feminina no parlamento conheceu o seu mínimo histórico (7 mulheres em 102 deputados, equivalente a 7,8%), fato que teve na sua origem, de entre outros fatores, a instabilidade causada pela guerra civil de 1998-99. Na fase do monopartidarismo, os deputados eram escolhidos entre conselheiros regionais eleitos em assembleias populares, o que certamente permitia que se ponderasse a presença das mulheres na ANP através do sistema das quotas. O sistema eleitoral favorecia a escolha de mulheres no sentido de garantir a sua participação nos órgãos de soberania. Contrariamente, o período multipartidário foi caracterizado por uma competição entre várias listas eleitorais em que cada um dos partidos procurou tirar vantagem do carisma ou da popularidade dos próprios membros nos vários círculos eleitorais.<sup>35</sup> Neste novo cenário político, a estratégia passou a assentar, sobretudo, na possibilidade de convencer o eleitorado, apresentando uma figura conhecida e respeitada em quem se pudesse confiar. Nestas circunstâncias, as mulheres foram penalizadas, uma vez que não eram popularmente conhecidas e não tinham meios (materiais e financeiros) suficientes que lhes permitisse competir. Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>36</sup> apontou para a necessidade de uma maior união entre as mulheres e de acesso aos meios financeiros. Afirmou a propósito:

(...) as dificuldades existem, e elas residem sobretudo na falta de condições financeiras das mulheres para suportarem a própria candidatura a um lugar político ou de decisão. Três motivos a apontar: o primeiro é que elas não estão financeiramente bem posicionadas; em segundo lugar elas não são unidas; e em terceiro lugar, nos momentos importantes em que é preciso apresentar candidaturas nas estruturas partidárias elas estão muitas vezes mais envolvidas com as campanhas dos próprios partidos e de outros candidatos do que com elas mesmas. Quando as pessoas estão a fazer reuniões para reestruturar, para apontar candidatos para os lugares, a maior parte das mulheres está ausente, ficam nos fogões de casa a cozinhar em vez de estar a fazer política! (...)

A dinâmica participativa das mulheres da luta de libertação foi um fator importante de mobilização política. O esforço realizado no sentido de educar e formar as mulheres como uma das prerrogativas do desenvolvimento, ficou a dever-se, sobretudo, à clarividência de Amílcar Cabral e do seu movimento de libertação, que tinha compreendido, à luz de experiências locais, regionais e internacionais, a importância da inclusão das mulheres no processo de transformação cultural como sujeitos da própria história e objeto de debate na sociedade. No entanto, para que tal acontecesse teriam que ser as próprias mulheres a dar o primeiro passo.

Todavia, apesar do seu protagonismo no processo de independência, a posição das mulheres no período posterior à independência ficou muito aquém do pensado e projetado. Raramente as mulheres assumiram posições de destaque em termos de liderança.

Apesar de o discurso oficial produzido ter sublinhado a igualdade de género, de facto poucas mulheres alcançaram a condição de emancipadas após a independência. Por um lado esse discurso foi estrategicamente utilizado para desacreditar a propaganda fascista na luta anticolonial e foi um instrumento político eficaz que permitiu ao PAIGC ganhar apoio das próprias mulheres consolidando a sua posição interna e a nível internacional. Por outro lado, a luta armada consubstanciou um período de crise, não tendo os valores então adquiridos resistido à prova dos anos, particularmente evidente com o regresso das mulheres às próprias comunidades de origem, reassumindo muitas delas os papéis que tradicionalmente lhes eram reservados e, deste modo, continuando a reproduzir as divisões sexuais do trabalho e formas de discriminação nos meios rurais em que dominava o patriarcado.

Apesar da instabilidade crónica em que a Guiné-Bissau tem vivido, importantes conquistas foram alcançadas nos 40 anos que se seguiram à independência: em termos da educação e da formação das mulheres, nos meios urbanos e rurais; a nível da emancipação económica e do associacionismo; a nível da presença feminina nas instituições políticas, mesmo se neste último caso se tenha verificado um decréscimo sobretudo após o conflito militar de 1998-99.<sup>37</sup> São inúmeros os desafios a enfrentar para que se possa alcançar a equidade de género na Guiné-Bissau. Sobre o percurso político e as vitórias alcançadas no que toca aos direitos das mulheres, a reflexão de Teodora Inácia Gomes<sup>38</sup> é particularmente interessante:

no passado as mulheres não tiveram liberdade suficiente para participar em reuniões em que pudessem ser escolhidas para as atividades partidárias. Mas já foi feito muito trabalho nesse sentido. Já há consciência das mulheres em apresentar candidaturas. As candidaturas são normalmente apresentadas pelas próprias organizações ou pela estrutura partidária na qual trabalham. Como muitas das nossas mulheres trabalham a nível das estruturas dos partidos, é lá que elas são escolhidas. Mas o que é fundamental é entender que nós estamos a fazer um trabalho importante de sensibilização das mulheres para as enquadrar nas estruturas dos partidos para elas estarem prontas a serem escolhidas logo que surgir uma oportunidade, no parlamento, no governo, nas estruturas regionais, nos institutos, ou nos tribunais, porque não existe só parlamento, há outras estruturas. Já há muitas mulheres que neste momento estão conscientes do facto e assumem que querem ser escolhidas voluntariamente para ir trabalhar numa das estruturas que acabei de referir.

A nível parlamentar muitas batalhas foram ganhas pelas mulheres e pelas organizações de carácter feminino, nomeadamente a aprovação da lei da saúde reprodutiva, da lei do planeamento familiar e da lei contra a mutilação genital feminina (MGF) em 2011.<sup>39</sup> Neste contexto, Teodora Inácia Gomes foi uma das protagonistas femininas. Durante a sua presença no parlamento como deputada da República e enquadrada no seu grupo parlamentar apresentou várias propostas de lei a favor das mulheres, algumas das quais já se encontram aprovadas. Como referiu a mesma em entrevista:<sup>40</sup>

como deputada da Nação e no âmbito do grupo parlamentar do PAIGC apresentei diversas propostas de lei, algumas das quais foram aprovadas e outras ainda estão por aprovar. Por exemplo, as leis sobre selos de combatente da liberdade da pátria, a lei sobre a saúde reprodutiva, a lei sobre o tráfico de menores, a lei sobre o planeamento familiar e a lei sobre a violência contra as mulheres, mesmo se esta última não foi até ao momento aprovada no parlamento. Este é o nosso desafio hoje!

Resta ainda muito por realizar, sobretudo em termos da luta contra a violência de género (violência sexual, violência económica, violência doméstica). Enquanto não se criarem e não forem aplicados mecanismos legais que regulem estas matérias, não haverá meios para julgar e punir esse tipo de crimes. Mas, devem ser as próprias mulheres a lutarem contra esses fenómenos, unidas e constituindo redes de trabalho com organizações femininas a nível da sub-região da África Ocidental e do continente africano de forma geral.

Na minha interpretação, as conquistas que as mulheres “da luta” deixaram às gerações sucessivas foram: educação, consciência política e autonomia económica. E este é, na minha perspectiva, o ponto do qual repartir para refletir sobre o tema da reconciliação nacional na Guiné-Bissau. Como já referi algures (Godinho Gomes 2013:145-146),

o país precisa de se reconciliar consigo mesmo para exorcizar definitivamente os fantasmas do seu passado recente, tão marcado pela falta de diálogo, pela intolerância e pela violência. É preciso que os guineenses se sintam bem consigo mesmos e uns com os outros, no seio de uma nação plural em construção, integrada por todas as suas etnias e por crioulos (...). Como proceder a essa reconciliação, caberá à sociedade guineense, na base de um diálogo inclusivo, decidir (...).

## Notas

1. Uma primeira versão do presente artigo foi apresentada na conferência internacional realizada na cidade da Praia (Cabo Verde) sob o tema “Por Cabral, sempre”, 18-20 de Janeiro de 2013. Agradeço o colega Cláudio Alves Furtado, professor de História da África na Universidade Federal da Bahia (Brasil) pelos úteis comentários à versão inicial do texto, que permitiram melhorar a estrutura e o quadro analítico do trabalho.

2. Foi o caso do estudo conduzido por David SWEETMAN, *Women leaders in African history* Portsmouth, NH, Heinemann, 1986. Contudo, um estudo elaborado anteriormente sobre a mesma figura descreve de outra forma a rainha do reino de Matamba. Trata-se do trabalho do historiador Joseph Miller no qual analisou a controversa figura da rainha Ginga de Angola, normalmente referenciada como mulher que combateu o poder colonial português. Miller descreve Ginga como uma monarca que em algumas circunstâncias teve comportamentos que podem ser considerados pouco “heróicos”, tendo mesmo chegado a colaborar com o poder colonial português (Miller J. “Nzinga of Matamba in a new perspective”, *Journal of African History*, vol.16, n.2, pp. 201-216).
3. Entre eles o de Kinsman M., “Beasts of burden: the subordination of southern Tswanawomen, ca. 1800-1840”, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, vol.10, n.1, pp. 17-39; Gaitskell, D., ‘Housewives, maids or mothers: some contradictions of domesticity for Christian women in Johannesburg’, 1903-1939», *Journal of African History*, vol. 24, n. 2, p. 241-257.
4. Hay, M. J., 1988, ‘Queens, prostitutes and peasants: historical perspectives on African women, 1971-1986’, *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, vol. 22, n. 3, pp. 430-447.
5. Robertson, C., Berger, I., (Eds), 1986, *Women and class in Africa*, New York, Holmes and Meier.
6. Sheldon, K., Feo Rodrigues, I., 2008, “‘Outras vozes’: Women’s writings in Lusophone Africa”, *Africa and Asia Studies*, n.7, pags. 423-445, em particular 425-26. Algumas autoras problematizaram o tema, trazendo uma visão inovativa sobre o uso das histórias de vida de mulheres como método de pesquisa: Marcia Wright, *Woman in peril: life stories of four captives*, Lusaka, NECZAM, 1984; Robertson, C., 1984, *Sharing the same bowl: a socio-economic history of women and class in Accra*, Ghana, Bloomington, Indiana University Press; Geiger, S., ‘Womens’s life histories: method and content’, *Signs II*, pp. 334-351.
7. Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde, criado a 19 de Setembro de 1956, em Bissau, capital da então colónia da Guiné Portuguesa. Esse partido, inicialmente constituído por seis jovens (Amílcar Cabral, Luís Cabral, Elisée Turpin, Aristides Pereira, Fernando Fortes e Júlio Almeida) como movimento de libertação, foi criado com a finalidade de dar resposta à precária situação sociopolítica e económica dos guineenses e dos caboverdianos gerada por um regime político fundamentalmente opressivo e que se tinha deteriorado nas últimas décadas da colonização portuguesa (Godinho Gomes, P., 2010, *Os fundamentos de uma nova sociedade: o PAIGC e a luta armada na Guiné-Bissau (1963-1973)*, L’Harmattan Italia, p. 35).
8. Sobre a biografia de Amílcar Cabral veja-se, entre outros, Chabal, P., 1983, *Amílcar Cabral: revolutionary leadership and people’s war*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press; Lopes, C., 2005, ‘Special issue on Amílcar Cabral’, *African identities*, London, Routledge; Soares Sousa, J., 2011, *Amílcar Cabral, vida e obra de um revolucionário*, Lisboa, Vega.
9. PAIGC, *Rapport sur le role politique-social et économique de la femme en guinée et aux îles du cap vert*, Conakry, 1972, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, Praia (Cabo verde); *Sowing the first harvest. National reconstruction in Guinea-Bissau (interview to Carmen Pereira:*

- woman revolutionary), Oakland, CA, LSM Information Center, 1978, pp.61-66 (Centro de Informação e Desenvolvimento Amílcar Cabral, Lisboa, cota-GW-H I-10; Cabral, A., 1976, 'Os princípios do Partido e a prática política', in Andrade, M. (Org), *A arma da teoria-Unidade e luta (Obras escolhidas de Amílcar Cabral)*, vol. I, Lisboa, Seara Nova, p. 117-188.
10. Veja-se Davidson, B., 1969, *Liberation of Guinea: aspects of an African revolution*, London, Penguin Books. Sobre o mesmo tema veja-se também Chaliand, G., 1967, *La guerre de guerrilla*, Paris, François Maspero.
  11. Em particular nos âmbitos da educação e da saúde, as mulheres guineenses não só tiveram a oportunidade de serem alfabetizadas e de melhorar o próprio nível de formação, como também participaram elas próprias no trabalho político de mobilização, como formadoras e ainda como membros dos tribunais populares das zonas libertadas. São interessantes neste aspeto os depoimentos de Manuel Boal, médico angolano, responsável pela organização da saúde do PAIGC entre 1970 e 1974, de Dulce Almada Duarte, linguista caboverdiana, professora na Escola Piloto (Conacry) entre 1968 a 1973 e de Teodora Inácia Gomes, professora na Escola de Ratoma, em Boké (Guiné-Conacry), responsável pela organização da juventude durante a luta armada-os pioneiros Abel Djassi- e mobilizadora política (GODINHO GOMES, P., p.260-304; entrevista conduzida pela autora com Teodora Inácia Gomes, Lisboa, 25 e 26 de Novembro de 2012.
  12. PAIGC, *Programa do PAIGC-Programa Maior*, Conacry, 1965, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, Praia (Cabo verde), p. 2.
  13. O discurso de Amílcar Cabral sobre a posição das mulheres na luta aponta, por outro lado, para uma responsabilidade delas próprias na situação de subordinação política em que se encontravam, sendo que as mulheres em muitas situações não conseguiam fazer-se respeitar e defender o seu lugar, não assumindo certas responsabilidades sem quaisquer preconceitos (Amílcar CABRAL, *op.cit.*, p 152). Veja-se sobre o mesmo tema: URDANG, S., 1979, *Fighting two colonialisms: women in Guinea-Bissau*, New York; os relatórios da Comissão Nacional das Mulheres da Guiné e o relatório da União Democrática das Mulheres (UDEMU): Comissão Nacional das Mulheres da Guiné-CNMG, *1º Congresso das Mulheres, Bissau-Congresso da organização para o enquadramento da mulher no desenvolvimento*, 3 a 7 de Novembro de 1982, Centro de Informação e Desenvolvimento Amílcar Cabral-CIDAC, Lisboa, cota-GW M I-2 dossier; Comissão Nacional das Mulheres da Guiné-CNMG, *1º Congresso das Mulheres- mulher e a reconstrução nacional*, Bissau, 3 a 7 de Novembro de 1982, CIDAC, Lisboa, cota-GW-MI-2 dossier; UDEMU, *IIº Congresso-A mulher na família*, Bissau, 4 a 8 de Dezembro de 1988, CIDAC, Lisboa, cota-GW M I-7 dossier.
  14. A autora está atualmente envolvida num projeto de pesquisa mais amplo subordinado ao título "«As outras histórias»: percursos biográficos de mulheres nos processos de emancipação e independência nos PALOP: Os casos da Guiné-Bissau, Angola e Moçambique" (do qual faz parte o tema analisado neste artigo), aprovado em Janeiro de 2014 pelo Programa Multidisciplinar em Estudos Étnicos e Africanos da Universidade Federal da Bahia coordenado pelo professor Valdemir Zamparoni da mesma universidade.

15. Existem vários métodos de recolha das histórias de vida, sendo os principais a técnica de entrevista narrativa e a recolha de biografias escritas diretamente pelo protagonista. Existem também outros métodos como por exemplo a entrevista “a tema” em que o entrevistador procura controlar a condução da entrevista com a finalidade de manter uma coerência externa relativamente ao entrevistado (Thompson, 1992).
16. Vansina, J. 1977., Gaybor, Théodore N., 2011, *Sources orales. Histoire africaine*, Paris, L'Harmattan.
17. O trabalho desenvolvido com Teodora Inácia Gomes teve início em 2010, antes da gravação da entrevista em Novembro de 2012. Desde essa data a autora vem mantendo conversas informais com a protagonista do estudo, conversas essas que se revelaram importantes na definição do quadro geral da entrevista e consequentemente, das questões discutidas.
18. O interesse da autora pelo estudo do tema da luta armada na Guiné-Bissau e da condição das mulheres teve início no âmbito dos seus estudos doutorais em que se dedicou à análise das fontes históricas e orais para o estudo do tema da formação do Estado guineense.  
Jeja Pekka Roos, “Biografie, autobiografie, vite reali: il metodo delle storie di vita”, *La Critica Sociologica*, n.99 (ottobre-dicembre 1991), pp.1-14
19. *Ermondadi* é o termo na língua nacional da Guiné-Bissau *kriol* que significa a partilha de uma herança cultural e consanguínea no seio de uma comunidade.
20. “Obono” significa fome em algumas línguas da Guiné-Bissau (Pepel, Manjaco, Mancanha). De acordo com Teodora Inácia Gomes, esse nome foi-lhe atribuído por uma tia por ela ter nascido na época em que ainda decorria a Segunda Guerra Mundial e havia muita fome. Esse é o nome com que Teodora é conhecida entre os seus familiares e a nível das suas relações de amizade.
21. O pai de Teodora Inácia Gomes morreu em 1964, assassinado. As trágicas circunstâncias sua morte nunca chegaram a ser esclarecidas (veja-se um excerto do seu depoimento na secção 4 deste artigo).
22. PAIGC, *Rapport sur le role politique-social et économique de la femme en guinée et aux îles du cap vert*, Conacry, 1972, p.5, Fundação Amícar Cabral, Praia (Cabo verde).
23. Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado-PIDE foi criada em 1954 em Lisboa (Portugal) com o principal objectivo de reprimir todas as possíveis formas de manifestação dos africanos contra o poder colonial, tanto nas colónias como na metrópole. A partir de 1957 foram abertas delegações da PIDE em todas as colónias africanas, transformando-se num verdadeiro instrumento de controlo da informação (sobre a ação da PIDE veja-se Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais/Torre do Tombo, Direção Geral dos Serviços de Censura, 1 livro, 337 maços, auxiliares de pesquisa: L602/5).
24. Tabanka é o termo em língua kriol que significa aldeia. Os “Comités de Tabanka” eram os órgãos responsáveis pela gestão das comunidades das áreas libertadas.
25. Entrevista a Lucio Soares, realizada pela autora, 16/6/2015, Bissau (a partir deste momento será citado apenas o nome e a data). Lúcio Soares foi comandante na região norte da Guiné-Bissau durante a luta armada. Dirigiu importantes ações em Morés e Candjambari e trabalhou com alguns entre os mais destacados chefes de guerrado PAIGC como Osvaldo Vieira e Francisco Mendes “Tchico Tê”.

26. Entrevista a Teodora Inácia Gomes realizada pela autora, 25 e 26 de Novembro de 2012 ((a partir deste momento será citado apenas o nome e a data).
27. Ivi.
28. Foi o caso de Carmen Pereira, primeira Comissária Política eleita e primeira mulher vice-presidente da Assembleia Nacional Popular-ANP (veja-se Stephanie Urdang, “Women in contemporary national liberation movements”, in Hay, M. J. e Stichter, S. (Eds), 1984, *African women south of the Sahara*, London/New York, Longman, p.156-169.
29. Patrícia Gomes, “A importância das Forças Armadas Revolucionárias do Povo (F.A.R.P.) na luta pela libertação da Guiné-Bissau”, *Poiésis*, vol. 3, n. 6, 2010, pp.121-139, disponível em <http://www.doaj.org/doi?func=openurl&issn=21792534&genre=journal>.
30. PAIGC, *Regulamento interno dos internatos das regiões libertadas*, Conacri, 1971, Fundação Amílcar Cabral, Praia (Cabo-Verde).
31. Entrevista a Teodora Inácia Gomes, 26/10/2012.
32. O número de mulheres com um nível de formação média e superior passou de 6 em 1964 para 132 em 1972. As mulheres foram conquistando progressivamente uma posição importante na gestão dos serviços sanitários que nasciam (veja-se Patricia Godinho Gomes, *op.cit.*, p. 106-121).
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## **Dé-mondialiser le secteur minier pour développer l'Afrique**

Emmanuel Mungongo Kasongo\*

### **Résumé**

Le terme de « dé-mondialisation » développé par Walden Bello, largement récupéré par Arnault de Montebourg comme thème de la campagne présidentielle en France, n'a pas semblé trouver large écho dans le monde académique et pourtant, c'est au sujet du redressement de l'économie française qu'il l'envisageait. Les entreprises multinationales ou transnationales font partie du paysage économique depuis de nombreuses décennies, mais l'ordre économique mondial actuel privilégie la libéralisation commerciale et la mondialisation de l'économie et considère de plus en plus les pays hôtes comme des lieux d'extraction des matières premières, tandis que la transformation et tous les bénéfices liés à l'exploitation des ressources minières servent les pays d'origine. Dans un sens courant, la dé-mondialisation est un concept prônant une nouvelle organisation de l'économie mondiale. Elle prend en compte l'augmentation des interdépendances humaines dans le monde, mais s'efforce de les soustraire à la domination de la globalisation financière et du libre-échange. Elle vise à rendre plus juste, sociale et écologique l'organisation économique mondiale grâce à de nouvelles règles endiguant les effets néfastes du libre-échange et du néolibéralisme. Elle tend à mieux articuler la décision prise dans le cadre civique à l'action au niveau international. Nous envisageons la « démondialisation » dans un sens beaucoup plus nuancé pour évoquer la déconstruction du cycle économique de l'exploitation des minerais en Afrique en général et particulièrement en RDC. Il ne s'agit pas de combattre la mondialisation qui, par nature, se caractérise par l'intensification des échanges internationaux et l'apparition d'une sphère financière globale. Il se trouve nécessaire de faire une critique de la mondialisation par rapport à ces effets séculaires dans les pays d'extraction des ressources minières. Cela est d'autant plus difficile lorsqu'il s'agit d'un pays où la structure a été longtemps analysée partant de l'image d'une trinité composée de l'Administration, de l'Eglise et des grandes sociétés (Crawford Young 1965:12).

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## Abstract

The term “de-globalization” developed by Walden Bello, largely used by Arnault de Montourg as a theme of the presidential campaign in France, did not seem to be widely echoed in the academic world, yet, it is about the recovery of the French economy that he envisaged. Multinational or transnational corporations have been part of the economic landscape for many decades, but the current global economic order, which favors trade liberalization and the globalization of the economy, and increasingly considers host countries as places of extraction of raw materials while the processing and all the benefits associated with the exploitation of mineral resources serve the countries of origin. In a common sense, de-globalization is a concept advocating a new organization of the world economy. It takes account of the increase in human interdependence in the world but strives to shield them from the domination of financial globalization and free trade. It aims to make the world’s economic organization fairer, more social and ecological through new rules containing the negative effects of free trade and neo-liberalism. It also seeks better articulation of decisions taken in the civic framework with actions at the international level ([http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki, Kinshasa, le 13: 2014](http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki,Kinshasa,le13:2014)). We consider “de-globalization” in a much more nuanced sense to evoke the deconstruction of the economic cycle of mineral exploitation in Africa in general and particularly in the DRC. It is not about combating globalization which, by its nature, is characterized by the intensification of international trade and the emergence of a global financial sphere. It is necessary to criticize globalization in relation to its secular effects in countries of mineral resource extraction. This is all the more difficult when it is a country where the structure has long been analyzed from the image of a trinity made up of the Administration, Church and large corporations (Crawford Young 1965:12).

## Introduction

Pour Arnaud Montebourg, la principale solution aux effets négatifs de la mondialisation est de mettre en place un protectionnisme aux frontières de l’Union européenne. Non pas le « protectionnisme haineux et revanchard de l’extrême droite », mais un « protectionnisme européen à la fois vert et social » pour « sauver l’Europe du mal qui la ronge : la mondialisation libérale ».

Nous nous accordons d’entrée de jeu avec ce que Samir Amin et François Houtart (2002:125) déclarent à travers les condensés du Forum mondial des alternatives : « depuis son intégration dans la mondialisation, l’Afrique subsaharienne traverse une crise structurelle grave. Le sous-continent n’a pas basculé dans la modernité ni pris en main son destin ». Philip Fremaux (2003) parle ainsi de ce jugement qui « présume que la mondialisation

est un processus nécessairement heureux, qui permettrait à chaque pays, via le développement des échanges commerciaux et des flux de capitaux, d'accéder au développement et à la modernité, dans l'ordre qu'on voudra. Toute l'histoire du continent nous raconte pourtant une autre histoire de la mondialisation, moins angélique, une histoire qui illustre combien l'Afrique est depuis des siècles tout sauf oubliée par le reste du monde ».

Olivier Blin (2004:8) ne s'est pas trompé lorsqu'il évoque l'idée de la pause imposée par les circonstances sur la libéralisation des échanges. Dans le même ordre d'idées, Philip Delmas et Christoph Guillemin (1983) reconnaissent que la stabilisation des prix des matières premières est un dialogue manqué. Ces auteurs reconnaissent en passant que le Tiers-Monde n'est ni le premier producteur ni le premier exportateur de matières premières, mais celui qui est le plus touché par l'instabilité de leurs marchés.

La crise dont souffrent ces pays, et la RDC en particulier, serait en partie liée à ce manque d'adaptation au système économique mondial dont les origines ne datent pas d'hier. Certains la font remonter à la traite des Noirs, en passant par la colonisation pour finir dans cette nouvelle forme de domination économique couverte par le concept de mondialisation. Cependant, la prépondérance de l'Afrique dans les échanges économiques mondiaux est faible. Mais le continent ne reste pas pour autant à l'écart de la mondialisation. Pour le meilleur comme pour le pire.

Ainsi, comme le précise Louis Cartou (1994:53-57), si l'histoire de l'Union européenne est la résultante de trois communautés : la Communauté européenne du charbon et de l'acier, la Communauté économique européenne et la Communauté européenne de l'énergie atomique, l'Afrique se doit aussi, dans cet élan de communautarisme amorcé il y a quelques décennies, d'intégrer les accords concernant les minerais et toutes les matières premières, qui la placent potentiellement au sommet des classements mondiaux.

Partant de l'idée que la mondialisation a été implémentée et soutenue par les motivations protectrices des ressortissants des pays riches où le consommateur a accès à un éventail plus large de biens (diversité) à un prix plus faible que s'ils étaient fabriqués dans le pays même, les États africains et la RDC en particulier fourniraient des efforts pour avoir la maîtrise des minerais, base de tout développement.

La conception unitariste de la mondialisation (village planétaire) ne se réalisera pas dans un contexte mondial marqué par la concurrence des sociétés multinationales, dont les rivalités au sujet des matières premières créent des conflits, surtout en Afrique et en RDC. Tenant compte du fait que la multinationalisation des firmes répond, selon Charles-Albert Michalet (2007), à cinq déterminants principaux, dont la recherche d'un accès direct

aux matières premières, la mondialisation, pour les pays africains, restera pour longtemps unidirectionnelle : exploiter les minerais en Afrique, les exporter dans les pays développés, qui les revendent aux Africains au prix du marché. La conclusion de Michalet concerne la situation des minerais d'Afrique : « Les états-nations n'existent plus sur plan économique, face à des entreprises dont la nationalité n'est plus qu'anecdotique. »

Kibanda Matungila (2013:91-129), au cours du symposium de Kinshasa sur les ressources minières, avait déjà eu l'occasion d'introduire une perspective historique sur l'objectif ultime des multinationales au Congo. Il soulignait en particulier la continuité dans le cadre de la poursuite de l'objectif de privatisation des entreprises publiques détentrices des concessions minières depuis les Programmes d'ajustement structurel, de la guerre entre multinationales pour accaparer les contrats miniers.

Le Rapport sur les ressources minérales et le développement de l'Afrique de l'Union africaine (UA 2011:12) le confirme : « La course pour l'exploitation et le contrôle des sources des matières premières, notamment les minéraux, était l'une des principales motivations de l'invasion, puis de la partition coloniale de l'Afrique durant le XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle ». Ce système séculier qui a fait la pluie et le beau temps des pays colonisateurs n'a pas changé. Bien au contraire, il a été renforcé par la mondialisation et la financiarisation de l'économie mondiale.

Déconstruire cette logique coloniale et néocoloniale consiste, à notre avis, à donner aux Africains les moyens de transformer les minerais en Afrique.

Une analyse de ce genre ne peut mettre fin à toutes les controverses que suscitent les relations économiques internationales inégalitaires imposées par les plus forts. Mais elle peut y aider si on admet dans leur relativité les paradigmes qui la sous-tendent.

La question que nous nous sommes posée est celle de savoir si, dans le contexte actuel de la mondialisation de l'économie, l'exploitation des minerais africains peut contribuer au développement de la RDC et de l'Afrique. La réponse négative à cette question est relativement partagée par tous. La dé-mondialisation du secteur minier nous semble être une alternative appropriée pour remettre les produits du secteur au service du développement de la RDC et de l'Afrique.

Les données contenues dans le développement ci-dessous ont été récoltées grâce à la technique documentaire. Les documents officiels nous ont fourni l'essentiel des informations relatives au secteur minier de la RDC. Les difficultés logistiques nous ont cependant empêché de réaliser des entrevues avec les acteurs nationaux et internationaux du secteur. La subdivision de l'étude est simple et comporte, outre la présente introduction et la conclusion, trois points : la pertinence de la dé-mondialisation (I), les paradoxes des scandales miniers et de la pauvreté (II) ainsi que les différents scénarii de la dé-mondialisation (III).

## **Pertinence de la dé-mondialisation du secteur minier**

Nous allons à travers les lignes qui suivent développer un argumentaire en faveur de la « dé-mondialisation » du secteur minier en RDC, en prenant comme appui la controverse portant sur la richesse et la pauvreté de ses habitants afin de soutenir les propositions pouvant permettre à l'Afrique de s'approprier ses ressources minières pour son développement.

L'Afrique, en effet, ne se retrouve pas dans la danse de la mondialisation telle qu'orchestrée par le libéralisme, qui serait devenue, d'après Thierry de Montbrial (2002:349), une organisation économique fondée sur le marché. Dans cette marche, on voit bien qu'il n'y a pas de perspectives économiques meilleures pour l'Afrique sur ce marché mondial où elle ne fait que subir les effets du commerce mondial.

Quant à la RDC, les ressources minières ont de tout temps constitué la base de l'économie, à telle enseigne que son géant minier de l'époque du monopole fut qualifié de « poumon économique » de la nation. Et les ressources financières générées par le secteur minier constituaient le stimulant et le moteur des autres secteurs connexes de l'activité économique nationale qui gravitaient autour des industries minières.

De nos jours, étonnamment, le secteur minier n'est que l'ombre de lui-même, car, malgré la quantité des investissements enregistrés à son profit, l'apport au budget de l'État se situe toujours en dessous des estimations ; en 2014, ainsi que le déclarait le directeur général de l'ITIE (2014:12 août/à 23 heures) sur la Télévision nationale au cours d'un débat télévisé, « les Régies financières ont aligné 214 entreprises minières dont le paiement à l'État a été fixé à 854 000 000,00 \$ ». Chacune de ces entreprises ne contribue en moyenne que pour près de 3 000 000 \$. L'exercice peut être simplifié davantage quand on fait référence à la part du secteur au budget de l'État qui est passée de 116,5 à 161,07 millions USD entre 2007 et 2012 (Sénat 2013:45). La divergence d'intérêt qu'évoque la Commission économique pour l'Afrique de l'Union africaine (2011) est éloquente : « En Afrique, on a pendant longtemps considéré comme allant de soi qu'il y a toujours des gagnants et des perdants dans l'exploitation minière. »

Malheureusement, c'est au sein de ce secteur que les effets de la mondialisation sont le plus difficilement vécus. Ceci d'autant plus que le retour de la RDC sur le marché, après des décennies d'isolement suite aux mesures de nationalisation des années 1963-1964, des pillages de la décennie 90 et des guerres conduites par les rébellions rebaptisées mouvements politico-militaires, ne s'est opéré qu'au travers des *minings*. Philippe-Alexandre Sondji Mulanza Kating (2014:7) le résume bien : « La Banque mondiale et le Fonds monétaire international décidèrent – après avoir rompu toute collaboration

depuis les années 1990 – de mettre la relance du secteur minier au cœur de la stratégie de développement du Congo. » Pour atteindre cet objectif de la mondialisation du secteur, un nouveau code minier favorable à l'implantation des « minings » a été adopté avec ses avantages fiscaux, dans un pays laminé par autant d'années de violence sous toutes ses formes : colonisation, dictature, insurrections et rébellions.

Dans cette nouvelle législation, le rôle de l'État en tant qu'opérateur minier est réduit au strict minimum, poussé à faire de la régulation dans un secteur où il était au four et au moulin il y a peu.

En effet, la structure des sociétés multinationales étant caractérisée par l'existence de centres mondiaux et régionaux, de technostructures assez outillées, il y a fort à parier que les services d'impôts seront souvent plongés dans le pétrin, si bien qu'au lieu de maximiser le profit de l'État régulateur, ils se fourvoieront dans des négociations improductives et des redressements fiscaux qui conduisent à la corruption et finissent par faire perdre des ressources à la nation.

Parce que ce nouveau Code minier a été « imposé » comme condition de l'aide bi et multilatérale, il est tout à fait naturel que les multinationales partenaires des Institutions de Betton Woods, véritables véhicules de la mondialisation de l'économie, avec leurs pays d'origine, participent à la fixation des prix et, éventuellement, à la décision sur les circuits mondiaux de l'extraversion. Passer de la délocalisation de l'exploitation à la relocalisation des avantages liés à la transformation des produits miniers demeurera pour nous le principe de la dé-mondialisation pour l'Afrique.

La dé-mondialisation requiert aujourd'hui un effort de la part des penseurs africains afin de lutter contre les mécanismes de domination avec une meilleure vision de la réalité que celle qui, il y a cinquante ans, avait alimenté toutes les recettes proposées pour générer le développement (Bongeli 2011:14).

La dé-mondialisation du secteur minier pour l'Afrique en général et la RDC en particulier, devient plus qu'importante lorsqu'on examine le paradoxe de la richesse du sous-sol et de la faible contribution de ce secteur aux ressources publiques.

En effet, si le programme d'ajustement structurel impliquait l'établissement de prix justes, la garantie de la concurrence, la privatisation et la création des institutions de soutien au marché issues de cette stratégie ont mis en évidence l'inefficacité des recettes développementalistes préparées pour l'Afrique et tous les PVD.

Suite à l'expansion de l'ajustement structurel de 1985 à 1990, la Banque mondiale et le FMI ont eu tendance à exiger des réformes plus ou moins précises et largement semblables pour plusieurs pays engagés dans ce programme.

La vision africaine des mines adoptées par les chefs d'État et de gouvernement en février 2009 est un effort pour inverser la situation de la pauvreté et le grave déficit infrastructurel de l'Afrique ainsi que la faible voix du continent dans les négociations portant sur les contrats miniers (UA:2011). Cette position deviendra beaucoup plus confortable dans le contexte de la dé-mondialisation.

## **Le paradoxe des scandales miniers et de la pauvreté**

### ***RDC scandale minier***

Selon maints auteurs, si la RDC est un scandale géologique, c'est notamment parce que ses potentialités minières se présentent de la manière qu'indiquent le rapport de KFW Entwicklungsbank et l'Institut fédéral allemand des sciences de la terre et des matières premières (2007). Le Congo démocratique dispose, dans l'état actuel des connaissances, de 34 pour cent de réserves mondiales en cobalt, 6 pour cent en cuivre, 7 pour cent en étain, 25 pour cent en diamant, 25 à 65 pour cent en tantale, ainsi que d'un potentiel important en or, uranium et manganèse. D'autres minerais sont également considérables : le chrome, le zinc, le fer et plusieurs d'autres. Ces ressources minières se répartissent sur toute l'étendue du territoire national, avec une forte concentration, dans le Katanga, du cuivre et du cobalt, dans le Kivu, de l'or et du coltan, et dans le Kasai, du diamant.

Il est à noter que les réserves réelles du pays en ressources naturelles sont nettement supérieures à celles connues jusqu'aujourd'hui, car difficilement évaluables.

Les réserves en diamant sont immenses, quoique leur ampleur soit incertaine. Selon les estimations d'United States Geological Survey, les réserves de la RDC en diamant s'élèvent à 500 millions de carats. La part destinée à la joaillerie dans les réserves possibles de la MIBA s'évalue à peine entre 5 et 8 pour cent. En revanche, elle représente 85 pour cent dans les gisements exploités de manière artisanale dans la province du Kasai occidental.

Dans la province du Katanga, les teneurs en cuivre et en cobalt des gisements se montent en moyenne à 3,5 pour cent de cuivre et 0,35 pour cent de cobalt, un niveau 2 à 8 fois supérieur à celui enregistré généralement dans les gisements sud et nord-américains. Dotée de ressources en cuivre d'environ 70 millions de tonnes métal, la RDC possède les deuxièmes plus grandes réserves mondiales, directement après le Chili (88 millions de tonnes). En ce qui concerne le cobalt, la RDC occupe la première place avec 5 millions de tonnes, suivie de Cuba (1 million de tonnes) et de l'Australie (0,7 million de tonnes).

Le potentiel de la RDC en pétrole est limité. Les réserves de pétrole brut sont estimées à 25 millions de tonnes. Par rapport à d'autres pays africains producteurs de pétrole, les réserves pétrolières de la RDC, autant que le niveau

de leur extraction, sont faibles, car elles ne représentent qu'un million de tonnes par an. À titre de comparaison, l'Angola exploite chaque année 61 millions de tonnes de pétrole (2005), ses réserves se montant à environ 1 300 millions de tonnes. Encouragée par les récentes découvertes de pétrole en Ouganda, la RDC s'efforce actuellement de prospector de nouveaux gisements de pétrole à l'est du pays, le long de la frontière ougandaise. Les réserves de gaz naturel sont également insignifiantes du point de vue économique.

La RDC dispose d'importants gisements de charbon. Si les réserves de charbon dur se montent à 88 millions de tonnes, le total des réserves possibles est nettement supérieur : 720 millions de tonnes. À titre de comparaison, les réserves de charbon de l'Allemagne s'élèvent à 183 millions de tonnes. Le charbon, dont les gisements se concentrent dans la province du Katanga, est utilisé essentiellement comme source d'énergie pour la valorisation et le traitement des minerais bruts.

L'industrie minière et métallurgique, dont les besoins en énergie sont immenses, recourt également à l'énergie hydraulique, et ce, déjà depuis l'époque coloniale.

La RDC possède également d'immenses ressources forestières. Les 135 millions d'hectares de forêts qui couvrent près de 70 pour cent de la superficie du pays représentent plus de 25 pour cent du massif forestier africain. Outre une extraordinaire biodiversité, ces forêts représentent un véritable potentiel économique : près de 60 millions d'hectares de forêts peuvent être exploités commercialement. Selon le ministère congolais de l'Environnement, entre 6 et 10 millions de mètres cubes de bois, dont le bois précieux, pourraient être durablement exploités chaque année.

La RDC dispose d'un potentiel énergétique important et très diversifié, constitué de ressources renouvelables, non renouvelables, et en eau.

Les potentialités hydroélectriques sont estimées à 106 000 mégawatts dont 42 pour cent sont concentrés dans le site d'Inga dans la Province du Bas Congo. Ce potentiel équivaut à 30 millions de tonnes de pétrole par an. En dehors de l'hydroélectricité, les autres sources, notamment thermiques et solaires, ne sont ni totalement inventoriées ni suffisamment exploitées. Cette analyse, qui du reste demeure non exhaustive, suscite depuis toujours une compétition des fortunes mondiales. Colette Braeckman note que le Congo se trouve au centre d'une véritable compétition pour les matières premières :

Une compétition implacable pour l'accès libre et exclusif aux dernières ressources naturelles non encore exploitées de la planète met aux prises les Américains et leurs alliés sud-africains, avec des concurrents, parmi lesquels les Allemands et les Français. Mais des nouveaux venus s'engagent aussi dans les courses : la Chine, la Malaisie qui se montre de plus en plus désireuse d'investir en Afrique (Braeckman 1999:160).



Malgré cette richesse naturelle du sous-sol, la mauvaise qualité de gouvernance du secteur et les rôles dysfonctionnels des institutions chargées du suivi et de l'évaluation des activités minières ainsi que l'incohérence des politiques publiques en la matière en RDC ont fait que l'exploitation des gisements miniers n'a pas rompu le cycle de la pauvreté au sein de la majorité de la population.

### ***RDC, scandale de la pauvreté***

Ainsi que nous venons de le présenter, le sous-sol de la République démocratique du Congo abrite d'énormes gisements de minerais. Malgré cette richesse, la majeure partie de la population des habitants vit dans une extrême pauvreté. Le PNUD n'a pas eu à fournir beaucoup d'effort pour classer, dans son *Rapport sur le développement humain* pour l'exercice 2013, la RDC au 186<sup>e</sup> rang sur 187 pays dont les données étaient disponibles.

Les perceptions de la pauvreté en RDC englobent des dimensions multiples, si bien qu'on préfère parler de pauvreté généralisée, englobant la perception selon le milieu de résidence, la perception selon les provinces et la perception selon les groupes sociaux spécifiques (DSCR P DRAFT 3:2011 ). Selon le DSCR P DRAFT 3, le profil de la pauvreté en RDC se révèle à travers divers éléments.

La pauvreté sévit davantage dans les ménages dont le chef est apprenti (80,25 %), suivis de ceux dont le chef travaille à son propre compte dans l'informel agricole (75,52 %) et de ceux dont le chef est employé/ouvrier semi-qualifié (71,47 %) ; elle s'avère toutefois moindre chez les aides familiaux, les manœuvres, les agents de maîtrise et les cadres.

Quel que soit le milieu de résidence, la taille des ménages pauvres est plus grande que celle des mieux nantis et le nombre de personnes qu'ils ont à charge y est souvent plus élevé.

Quant au seuil de la pauvreté, les estimations de la ligne de pauvreté alimentaire, sur la base des données de l'enquête 1-2-3, ont évalué celle-ci à 123 070 FC par personne et par an en milieu urbain, soit 307,88 USD, suivant le taux de change moyen de 399,74 USD en 2004 et à 82 755 FC par personne et par an en milieu rural, soit 207,02 USD.

La somme des lignes de pauvreté alimentaire et non alimentaire donne une situation globale de pauvreté évaluée à 153 265 FC, soit 387,42 USD par personne et par an en milieu urbain et 97 655 FC, soit 244,30 USD par personne et par an en milieu rural.

L'incidence globale de la pauvreté pour l'ensemble du pays (71,34 %) est très élevée si on la compare à celle d'autres pays d'Afrique centrale. Il en est de même pour l'évaluation de sa profondeur (32,23 %) et de sa sévérité (18,02 %).

Les développements ci-dessus interrogent donc la conscience nationale en RDC (et l'africaine en général) sur la pertinence de l'exploitation minière pour l'Afrique. Cela donne à penser que l'exploitation des minerais africains est destinée au développement des pays exploitants.

La dé-mondialisation que nous préconisons s'inscrit dans une dynamique qui met en valeur les potentialités managériales dont dispose le continent et la RDC en particulier, par l'appropriation de savoir-faire dans ce domaine. Cette démarche implique, pour les Africains, le fait de se forger la volonté politique et socioéconomique de rompre avec le cycle infernal de l'économie mondiale, de se transformer en communautés de pensées et d'actions stratégiques de manière à faire adhérer les autres. Car, comme le précise Mova Sakanyi (2001:293), « La référence à l'espace permet d'affirmer que les grands peuples sont ceux qui ont le sens de l'espace. Leur esprit s'y déploie et le valorise en fonction de leur dynamique ».

Le débat autour de la notion de la mondialisation se cristallise ; tantôt présentée comme une panacée capable de résoudre les problèmes du monde, tantôt comme un spectre menaçant les emplois, engendrant les crises et touchant gravement à la souveraineté des peuples et des nations (Encarta 2009). Avec les modèles de développements appliqués en RDC et en Afrique depuis les indépendances, copiés et conçus de et par l'extérieur, on atteint le degré-zénith de l'inefficacité (Mova 485) ; la mondialisation de l'économie, avec les grands véhicules que sont les sociétés multinationales, ne pourra pas constituer une solution pour le développement de l'Afrique. C'est l'occasion pour nous de soutenir les scénarii de la dé-mondialisation que nous essayons d'esquisser ci-dessous.

## **Différents scénarii de la dé-mondialisation**

Contrairement à Arnaud Montebourg (2011), notre démarche pour la remise en cause du libre-échange prend en compte des scénarii tels que la renationalisation, la prise de participation majoritaire, la rencontre des milieux d'affaires africains, le développement d'un capitalisme africain, la création des bourses africaines des minerais et autres matières précieuses, le développement d'un leadership politico-économique capable de négocier avec le reste du monde.

### ***La renationalisation***

Étant donné que l'Afrique a déjà expérimenté la nationalisation des entreprises d'économie mixte ou celles appartenant autrefois aux portefeuilles des colonisateurs, la renationalisation des entreprises dénationalisées avec

l'envahissement du libre-échange et du tout-puissant capitalisme mondial deviendrait une alternative à la domination de la mondialisation économique. Si les nationalisations des années 1970-1974 avaient opéré sous l'égide des pouvoirs dictatoriaux (comme c'est le cas de la RDC), la prochaine étatisation des structures économiques en général et celle du secteur minier en particulier auraient eu l'avantage de se réaliser dans le contexte de régimes démocratiques naissants, où les lois de renationalisation auraient été votées par des Parlements légitimes, expression de la volonté du peuple. Les pays africains, à l'instar des Russes pour le pétrole et des Chinois pour bien des ressources, auront contrôle et décision quant à l'orientation des ressources minières.

Les structures de la société civile, qui ont déjà une longue expérience en la matière, veilleront à ce qu'on ne tombe pas dans les nationalisations/renationalisations nomenclaturistes. Le retour à un tel système, dans le contexte de démocratisation de la RDC et de l'Afrique, ne sera jamais comparable aux décennies 70-80, quoiqu'en ce temps déjà la part des entreprises publiques des pays comme le Sénégal, le Ghana, le Maroc et la Côte d'Ivoire ait représenté respectivement 14 pour cent, 36,5 pour cent, 19,5 pour cent et 11 pour cent du produit intérieur brut de ces pays. Pour la République démocratique du Congo, elle représentait plus de 12 pour cent (Chitou 191). Cela démontre à suffisance que si on y met du sérieux, on peut désormais faire des entreprises appartenant au secteur public de véritables leviers des économies africaines.

Cependant, il importe de prendre en considération les causes de l'échec des politiques de nationalisation. En effet, plusieurs de ces entreprises devaient prendre en charge le poids des actions sociales et elles dépendaient des orientations macroéconomiques de l'État tant en matière d'emplois que sous l'aspect de la jouissance des dirigeants politiques. En RDC, l'ex-Zaïre nous avait habitués au sponsoring des événements politiques par les entreprises publiques.

Considérant la médiocrité de la contribution du secteur minier au budget de l'État, particulièrement en RDC où il se situe à plus ou moins 2,51 pour cent (Sénat 2013:49) depuis près de cinq exercices budgétaires, il est malséant de laisser tout un pays qui dispose des ressources humaines susceptibles de gérer les entreprises ne dépendre que des redevances minières et droits de sortie fixés respectivement à 2 et 1 pour cent, au nom du laisser-faire et du rôle de régulateur de l'État imposé par les partenaires multilatéraux des institutions de Breton Woods.

L'étude du Sénat de la RDC que nous venons d'évoquer détaille le potentiel minier du pays et l'essor de l'industrie minière au vu des résultats des ventes enregistrés ces dernières années (2007-2012), révélant que la contribution

de 1,03 milliard des dollars américains réalisée ne représente que 2,51 pour cent (Sénat 51) ; notre argumentaire de la « démondialisation » du secteur minier en RDC et en Afrique trouve ainsi du réconfort, d'autant que les entreprises publiques du secteur, toutes proportions gardées, rapporteront tout ou partie de leurs ventes au Trésor public. Les poumons économiques de la nation ne saigneront plus de tous bords. La production des minerais par les entreprises de l'État n'a pas que ce côté néfaste que les tenants du libéralisme colportent. La RDC et les autres pays africains en général ont eu à réaliser des percées dans beaucoup de secteurs de la vie socioéconomique grâce à l'exploitation publique du secteur. L'Union africaine relève à ce sujet que la domination de la production mondiale par les entreprises publiques, qui a varié au fil des ans d'un métal à un autre entre 40 pour cent et 60 pour cent et qui du reste a considérablement reculé depuis 1990 (de 25 %), est loin d'avoir disparu (UA 2011:36).

On peut bien chercher les raisons de la perte du Trésor dans la mauvaise gouvernance des politiques publiques en matière de mines, mais il est surtout souhaitable de considérer la ruse des sociétés multinationales ainsi que l'opacité des relations économiques internationales.

### ***La prise de participations majoritaires***

À défaut de renationaliser tout ou partie du secteur, la notion de l'État fort, jadis évoquée pour caractériser les dirigeants dictatoriaux évoluant à l'abri des puissances des deux blocs (oriental et occidental), doit céder la place à celui des États stratèges. La RDC et les États africains doivent cesser d'être des citadelles à assiéger pour se transformer en oasis d'investissements.

De ce qui précède, il convient de rappeler que l'idée de l'État entrepreneur ne date pas de nos jours ; même s'il faut reconnaître le primat du libéralisme qui confine l'État au rôle de régulateur au nom du principe de l'État-minimum. Ce n'est pas le lieu ici de considérer un retour aveugle aux idées de Keynes. Mais étant donné qu'il considérerait que l'investissement des entreprises est déterminé par d'autres facteurs importants, comme les inventions, l'ouverture de nouveaux marchés, ainsi que d'autres facteurs indépendants du taux d'intérêt, sa pensée peut également être évoquée dans le cas de l'Afrique. Ces idées, qui fondèrent la théorie économique du dernier siècle, peuvent faire fortune pour l'Afrique qui continue à se rechercher. L'entreprise d'économie dans le nouveau contexte de l'émergence de la bonne gouvernance sera le creuset d'un actionnariat public éprouvé en faveur du développement de l'Afrique.

Sachant que les lois qui obligeront les sociétés multinationales à ouvrir leurs actions aux nationaux seront étouffées dans l'œuf, l'État s'emploiera à réaliser cette politique au travers des entreprises d'économie mixte.

### ***La rencontre des milieux d'affaires africains***

Cette rencontre favorisera le développement des idées africanistes dans le domaine des mines et de leurs dépendances.

Tenant compte du fait que l'Afrique regorge de nos jours d'hommes d'affaires fortunés évoluant dans divers domaines, principalement du commerce et de la petite et moyenne entreprise, il est possible de les fédérer autour de l'exploitation minière. Les petites entreprises ayant les capacités de prendre les risques que les grandes entreprises ne prennent pas, il y a lieu de sensibiliser les investisseurs africains à l'enjeu minier et à toutes les réformes en la matière.

Lorsque les présidents des pays développés se déplacent, leurs suites sont constituées des hommes politiques et surtout des investisseurs qui, en marge des meetings politiques, signent des contrats d'investissements avec les entreprises des pays hôtes. C'est ce que nous voulons aussi voir en Afrique et en RDC.

La rencontre des milieux d'affaires africains participe à la mise en place d'une triangulation gagnante impliquant le pouvoir, le savoir et l'économie. Le pouvoir se chargerait, comme toujours, des orientations, de la régulation et de l'appui, tandis que le savoir, renforcé par l'appui du pouvoir, se mettra au service de l'économie, en termes de recherche, d'exploration, d'inventivité et de main-d'œuvre qualifiée. L'économie, ne se limitant pas à l'utilisation des connaissances produites par le milieu scientifique, peut soutenir le pouvoir politique et la recherche scientifique. C'est cela, pour nous, un dialogue social productif.

### ***Le développement d'un capitalisme africain***

Parce qu'il y a des milliardaires africains, il convient de favoriser les initiatives qui les amèneraient à s'associer afin de créer des sociétés multinationales africaines. L'Afrique, en effet, ne manque pas d'hommes d'affaires et de cadres des entreprises. Ils sont nombreux à amasser des milliards de dollars. Le magazine *Forbes Afrique* ne cesse de les plébisciter dans ces différentes parutions. On peut croire, sans risque d'être contredit, que tous les pays africains, à l'instar de la RDC qui dispose d'une Fédération des entreprises du Congo, disposent aussi d'organisations patronales ; mais tout comme en RDC, beaucoup d'exploitants individuels évoluent en marge de ces structures combien importantes pour les investissements !

Au moment où l'Afrique tout entière vibre au rythme du « Doing Business », le climat hypermédiatisé des affaires et de l'Organisation pour l'harmonisation en Afrique du droit des affaires, l'OHADA, il serait absurde que les entreprises africaines restent en dehors d'un jeu qui se joue sur leur propre terrain. Au

lieu de se constituer en foule des supporters, il importe qu'un groupe d'élites financières entre dans le jeu de la concurrence mondiale.

En ce qui concerne l'amélioration du climat des affaires, la RDC, depuis le décret n° 065/2002 du 5 juin 2002 portant création d'une Agence nationale pour la promotion des investissements (ANAPI), est passée à la vitesse de croisière par la mise en place d'un Comité de pilotage pour l'amélioration du climat des affaires et des investissements (CPCAI) ainsi que par la création du Guichet unique (décret n° 12/045 du 1er novembre 2012).

Avec cette structure, la RDC a fourni un effort considérable pour faciliter la création des entreprises et réduire les formalités à remplir par les investisseurs, effort qui se décline en ces termes :

- interlocuteur unique ;
- regroupement de toutes les procédures requises au sein du guichet unique ;
- formulaire unique ;
- paiement unique ;
- accomplissement de toutes les formalités de création d'entreprise au guichet unique en trois jours maximum et à un coût de 120 USD.

Si le climat des affaires renvoie aux seuls avantages temporels et fiscaux accordés aux investisseurs étrangers, le processus, aussi attrayant soit-il, ne servira que les grandes entreprises multinationales étrangères. Or, ainsi que le soutiennent Mufungizi et Tiemann, les petites et moyennes entreprises sont la pierre angulaire de toute économie. Elles fournissent des emplois et des revenus aux individus et les revenus, à leur tour, rendent les services de base et la sécurité sociale abordable pour la population. Les PME sont importantes dans toute stratégie de réduction de la pauvreté, et en raison de nombreux liens, elles sont également centrales pour la restructuration d'une économie (Mufungizi et Tiemann:335).

Le capitalisme devra se nourrir, comme partout ailleurs, des efforts et expertises conjugués de tous (pouvoirs, haute finance internationale, banques d'investissements). L'insuffisance des capacités et expertises financières qui font défaut en Afrique jusqu'à ce jour peut être corrigée dans le feu de l'action.

Il sera possible d'encadrer les différentes formes d'accumulation à l'échelle continentale sans trop s'engager dans le débat sur la domestication du capitalisme mondial qu'auréole la mondialisation. L'Afrique étant subdivisée en plusieurs régions économiques, il y est assez facile, avec la détermination et le développement du leadership dans cet espace important du monde, de produire l'intégration économique. Comme ont su le rappeler François Kabuya et Omer Tshiunza (2010:13),

« tablant sur le modèle de l'Union monétaire européenne, plusieurs pays ont adopté des critères de convergence macroéconomique pour encourager les États membres à harmoniser davantage leurs politiques monétaires et budgétaires. Tel est le cas de CEDEAO, de la CEMAC, de l'EAC, de la SADC et de l'UEMOA ».

Du point de vue de sa situation géographique, du fait que la RDC partage la frontière avec neuf pays et se situe au cœur de l'Afrique, ses ressources minières, exploitées sur un mode de gouvernance publique ou privée, trouveront toujours des débouchés. Les produits issus de leur transformation serviront à l'Afrique tout entière. Les idées de l'étroitesse du marché et de l'incapacité d'absorption tomberont d'elles-mêmes devant la tempête de la demande. Car ce continent des brousses et des villages, des sentiers et des érosions a soif de modernité : villes, cités, chemins de fer, tramways, métro, infrastructures socioculturelles sont attendus, tant attendus. Ils ne peuvent pas être acquis dans le contexte économique actuel dont les origines sont plus vieilles que l'Afrique elle-même.

### ***La création des bourses africaines des minerais et autres matières précieuses***

La spéculation financière est de nos jours la nouvelle religion de l'économie du Nord et, dans une moindre mesure, du Sud aussi. Ses temples communément appelés places boursières sont devenus, de New York à New Delly en passant par Pékin, des lieux de rencontre des experts financiers qui enregistrent les cotations, exactement comme le font les fidèles/croyants lors du culte. On sonne à l'ouverture et à la clôture, puis les membres présents applaudissent.

L'Afrique ne se manifeste pas. Les raisons probables de cette absence sont, entre autres, comme l'annonçait Radio France internationale (RFI, Afrique matin 2014, 27 août, 7 h 45), le fait que « l'Afrique connaît une carence des experts financiers et comptables ». Du fait de cette carence, notre continent semble être quasiment exclu de la spéculation financière mondiale. Cependant, considérant les efforts de maîtrise des nouvelles technologies de l'information et de la communication observés dans la sous-région, il y a lieu de soutenir qu'on n'est pas si loin du bout du tunnel dans ce domaine. Abordant la question dans la même optique, Babacar Ndiay (2004:81) notait déjà que « l'Afrique subit cette spéculation outrancière sans réagir [...] il n'y a en Afrique aucun marché organisé de matière première, alors qu'elles y sont produites ».

### ***Le développement d'un leadership politico-économique capable de négocier avec le reste du monde***

Le leadership évoqué ici n'est pas celui qui consiste à donner des prix et titres honorifiques aux Africains qui excellent dans différents secteurs socio-économiques. Il consiste en un mouvement d'émancipation d'ensemble qui devra déboucher sur une prise de conscience des intérêts économiques africains. Les idées soutenues par les auteurs panafricanistes, en l'occurrence, celles d'Ali Mazrui (2005) sur l'essor, le déclin et la relance du panafricanisme, sont centrales dans la perspective du développement du leadership africain. Le leadership peut partir d'un pays pour couvrir les autres ou d'un groupe d'élites éclairées comme ceux des indépendances.

L'Afrique fait face à des défis uniques en matière de santé, d'environnement et d'agriculture, d'éducation, d'économie qui exigent des solutions africaines ; tout ce que nous avons envisagé dans cette modeste réflexion conduit à l'édification du leadership africain.

Engager toute une communauté dans un mouvement d'émancipation économique pour le développement n'est pas chose facile. La théorie développementaliste insiste sur les éléments qui profilent déjà dans bien des pays d'Afrique, à savoir la culture politique, la participation des citoyens à la vie politique, l'amélioration de l'appareil étatique, la répartition équitable des revenus.

Si l'Afrique avait parlé un même langage pour rompre avec la colonisation, bien que cette décolonisation ait pris des ampleurs tout à fait différentes d'une partie du continent à une autre, les opportunités de créer des structures, cadres de concertation et d'harmonisation des points de vue économiques face à la domination des acteurs de la mondialisation n'étaient pas absentes. Il suffira, à partir de travaux portant sur des cas concrets et localisés, de réfléchir sur les concepts, les acquis et les effets de la mondialisation en Afrique.

L'élite est au cœur de tous les événements fastes et néfastes qui arrivent en Afrique : « À toutes les époques, les malheurs du continent ont aussi tenu à la trahison d'une partie de ses élites. L'esclavage n'aurait pas été une industrie aussi florissante si les royaumes côtiers n'en avaient pas tiré profit » (<http://www.alternatives-internationales.fr/la-mondialisation-vue-d-afrique>) ; il est donc important de viser l'élite économique africaine, de l'associer aux activités du Codesria et aux autres forums économiques, mais surtout de la former. Autant les pays africains accordent des bourses d'études aux jeunes afin qu'ils constituent la crème intellectuelle à l'avenir, autant et du même coup les efforts devront être orientés vers le renforcement des capacités des hommes d'affaires, petits ou grands, associés et individuels.

Le développement du leadership africain ainsi que l'appropriation du secteur minier par les États africains au terme de la dé-mondialisation accroîtront à coup sûr la part de ce secteur dans les budgets nationaux et dans celui de la RDC en particulier. Ceci expliquant cela, le développement pourra être amorcé.

## Conclusion

Cette étude a consisté en une remise en question de la mondialisation du secteur minier en République démocratique du Congo et en Afrique. Nous n'avons pas voulu nous engager dans le débat anti/altermondialiste. Car cela nous amènerait à la sempiternelle question de l'ouverture des économies africaines.

Il ne s'agit pas non plus d'une remise en question totale des acquis de la mondialisation et de l'ouverture. Il nous a semblé opportun de réfléchir, sur les pas de Valden Bello et d'Arnaud de Montebourg, sur les voies et moyens d'appliquer la dé-mondialisation dans un secteur vital pour le développement de tous les pays d'Afrique et de la RDC en particulier.

Les arguments que nous avons développés dans le texte sont tout à fait relatifs à notre prise de position sur le secteur minier et, de ce fait, ne sauraient à aucun moment être considérés comme paroles d'évangile. Néanmoins, les inquiétudes soulevées quant au faible apport de ce secteur au développement des pays où se réalise l'exploitation sont vérifiables et peuvent constituer des motifs de soutien à la présente réflexion.

## Références

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## **Globalisation, Internationalisation and Higher Education in Mauritius: The Compromise of Quality**

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### **Abstract**

This article discusses the implications, risks and benefits of globalisation and internationalisation of higher education in Mauritius. Mauritius is one of Africa's success stories in terms of political stability, democracy, peace and development. Being a resource-poor country and because of the remoteness and small size of the island, diversity of the population and lack of indigenous culture, Mauritius has always been closely connected to the global economy and society. Given the absence of high-value natural resources, a key resource the country has had to rely on is human capital and Mauritius has invested heavily in education through the welfare state which provides free education at all levels. In order to widen access to higher education, the Mauritian government has opened up the sector to foreign higher education institutions. A growing number of Western and Indian foreign accreditation bodies offer courses in the country in parallel with the local tertiary institutions. The article shows that while Mauritius has been open to internationalisation to enable the higher education sector to grow, this is taking place at a substantial financial cost, which is to the detriment of the quality of education and also to local higher education and examination bodies. The sector has become riddled with corruption as politicians bypass regulations and quality for financial gain. Moreover, the form and direction that internationalisation is taking is highly imbued with a Western bias which is more expensive, does not encourage the development of local knowledge and also portrays an image that western academic certificates carry a higher value. Mauritius is also not linking up sufficiently with African higher education institutions, apart from a few South African universities.

### **Résumé**

Le présent article traite des implications, des risques et des avantages de la mondialisation et de l'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur à

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l'île Maurice. L'île Maurice est l'une des réussites de l'Afrique en matière de stabilité politique, de démocratie, de paix et de développement. Etant un pays à faibles ressources et en raison de l'éloignement et de la petite taille de l'île, de la diversité de sa population et du manque de culture autochtone, Maurice a toujours été étroitement liée à l'économie et à la société mondiales. Face à l'absence de ressources naturelles de grande valeur, le pays a dû s'appuyer sur le capital humain, une ressource clé, et investi massivement dans l'éducation par l'intermédiaire de l'Etat providence qui offre une éducation gratuite à tous les niveaux. Afin d'élargir l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur, le gouvernement mauricien a ouvert le secteur aux établissements d'enseignement supérieur étrangers. Un nombre croissant d'organismes d'accréditation étrangers occidentaux et indiens offrent des cours dans le pays parallèlement aux institutions locales d'enseignement supérieur. Le présent article montre que l'ouverture de l'île Maurice à l'internationalisation pour permettre au secteur de l'enseignement supérieur de se développer s'est faite à un coût financier substantiel, qui est au détriment de la qualité de l'éducation, mais aussi de l'enseignement supérieur et des organismes examinateurs locaux. Le secteur est maintenant gangrené par la corruption puisque les politiciens contournent les règlements et la qualité pour le gain financier. De plus, la forme et la direction que prend l'internationalisation sont fortement imprégnées d'un parti pris pour l'Occident qui est plus coûteux, ne favorise pas le développement du savoir local et donne aussi l'image que les diplômes universitaires occidentaux ont plus de valeur. En outre, l'île Maurice ne s'associe pas suffisamment avec les établissements d'enseignement supérieur africains, à l'exception de quelques universités sud-africaines.

## **Introduction**

Education on the African continent has been internationalised since colonial times and thus has a long history. Although Africa had its ancient indigenous academic traditions, these traditional centres of higher learning disappeared or were destroyed by colonialism (Teferra 2008:45). The bulk of higher education on the continent has therefore largely been a product of European colonialism and modelled on European university traditions and colonial languages have remained as central elements of internationalisation (Teferra 2008). Moreover, in terms of the number of academics holding a foreign degree, the numbers of graduates having a study-abroad experience and the amount of foreign knowledge and concepts that have been imported, Africa as a region has one of the most internationalised higher education systems in the world (De Wit 2012). With the emergence of an increasingly competitive knowledge society and global higher education market, African institutions have little choice but to participate (Jowi 2012). Indeed, in the current global economy and networked society, internationalisation of the higher education

sector and higher education institutions has become inevitable and a necessity on the African continent, more so with the crunch on state resources devoted to the educational sector.

African regional bodies have set up a number of initiatives specifically geared towards promoting internationalisation of higher education on the continent. The African Union Commission (AUC) for instance, is working on harmonising Africa's higher education system which is diversely structured along geographical, colonial, linguistic and structural lines. There has also been the implementation of the Pan African University (PAU), which was a step towards the implementation of the Arusha Convention and aims at harmonising academic programmes across borders to enable better collaboration, quality assurance, structural convergence, compatibility, recognition and transferability of degrees to facilitate mobility (Teferra 2012). The PAU reinforces the spirit of Pan-Africanism in higher education and has developed centres of excellence in higher education through collaboration and cooperation between African countries (Jowi 2012). The specialised regional centres have been set up in each of the five regions of the African continent. They focus on research and postgraduate training and are hosted in existing African universities (African Union 2008).

At the continental level, the Association of African Universities (AAU) provides a forum for consultation, exchange of information and cooperation among higher education institutions in Africa (Hoosen *et al.* 2009). Regional research networks and organisations such as the Organisation for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa (OSSREA) and the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) support local universities in joint research programmes, staff exchange and capacity building (Jowi 2009). Moreover, regional university organisations which foster intra-regional academic exchanges and partnership and promote internationalisation within the regions as well as amongst African universities have also been set up on the continent. These include the Inter University Council for East Africa (IUCEA) and the Southern Africa Regional Universities Association (SARUA). There is also the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Protocol on Education and Training which proclaims equal university fees for all citizens from the SADC region. Jowi (2012) nonetheless notes that the current low uptake of intra-Africa partnerships is largely due to the lack of funding and hence this calls for greater financial support in the higher education sector on the continent.

African universities have engaged in internationalisation primarily for academic purposes. The aim was to strengthen existing academic institutions and enhance research capacities as well as knowledge production (Teferra

and Knight 2008; Jowi 2010). Internationalisation is also expected to enable African universities to address resource challenges which have so far inhibited success as these universities would then be in a stronger position to compete for and benefit from global opportunities and resources. At the level of research, innovation and knowledge production, international collaboration would help African universities and promote scientific and economic development on the continent (Jowi 2012). Moreover, internationalisation through collaboration with foreign governments and established higher education institutions, carries the potential to contribute to training and capacity building for African universities, as well as to enrich research capacities, curriculum and teaching methods (Ogachi 2009; Jowi 2012). Internationalisation also brings the possibility for revenue generation, enhancement of institutional competitiveness and the development of strategic alliances which would enable African universities to make a more profound contribution to research and knowledge production (Jowi 2009).

### **Challenges of Internationalisation for Africa**

Despite the positive contribution, internationalisation also carries risks for higher education institutions on the continent (Teferra 2008; Jowi 2010). Internationalisation of higher education in Africa needs to be carefully planned and supported by the various actors and institutions concerned. Due to its turbulent history and political and economic instability, Africa's engagement with internationalisation comes from a much weaker position (Teferra 2008). In fact, African universities struggle to adequately respond to the demands for internationalisation due to weak and inadequate institutional structures and capacities for internationalisation, as well as poor planning and inadequate financial support. Internationalisation of Africa's higher education is also hindered by dependence on external forces and because the 55 countries on the continent lack a common system and culture and face different challenges and complexities (Teferra, cited in De Wit 2012). This renders the formation of a single African higher education system and a unified approach to internationalisation virtually impossible.

Since the 1980s, higher education in Africa has experienced reduced investment from both the state and international donor agencies, which resulted in a neglect of the higher education institutions on the continent (Hoosen *et al.* 2009). The major global initiatives for development and education, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education For All (EFA) have also ignored higher education, despite the fact that higher education represented a key factor for attaining the goals of these initiatives (Hoosen *et al.* 2009). Weak government structures, quality

concerns and poor regulatory mechanisms render Africa more vulnerable to global forces in the higher education sector (Sawyerr 2002). In fact, effective institutional quality assurance has been hindered by poor funding policies and lack of human capacity (Materu 2007). This state of affairs affects the recruitment of students and staff from overseas, which is an important component of internationalisation. The recruitment of foreign students and staff has not been vibrant in African universities largely because of the perceived low quality of academic programmes, institutional infrastructure and facilities, poor marketing of academic programmes, rising local demand, lack of credit transfer modalities and weak institutional support (Jowi 2009). African universities have also not adequately responded to curricula requirements for international students as the academic programmes have been mainly tailored for the national higher education requirements (Jowi 2009:269).

Internationalisation carries the risk of the brain drain being exacerbated by cross-border higher education and here Africa finds itself at a disadvantage because of historical, economic and political factors. Trade liberalisation with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) enhance the growing mobility of academics, professional and skilled workers, leaving African universities starved of critical human resources. In fact, the last two decades witnessed a rapid rise in student enrolments in parallel with a continued loss of intellectual capital or the brain drain and a major reduction in public financial resources allocated to higher education institutions on the continent. Globalisation and internationalisation have in fact magnified the brain drain from Africa, with a negative impact on quality as African universities have to do more with fewer resources at the level of infrastructure, staff, teaching and research facilities (Jowi 2012; Sawyerr 2002). The progression of graduate training, recruitment and retention of qualified academic staff has not kept pace with the increased enrolment (Mihyo 2008) and the brain drain has led to a lack of expertise in key sectors (Teferra 2008; Sawyerr 2002). Such a situation therefore renders it difficult for African countries to compete in the global knowledge economy (Hoosen *et al.* 2009).

Africa has also experienced an expansion in the numbers and types of providers of higher education. While this can be beneficial, it also presents several challenges in areas such as quality assurance, commercialisation and commodification, as well as relevance (Jowi 2009). New providers include private institutions and foreign universities which offer higher education through different modes, including distance learning, and rely particularly on the use of ICT for programme delivery. The new providers of higher education

are expected to work towards satisfying the growing demand for university education on the continent. However, according to Ogachi (2009:332), the establishment of foreign-owned private universities and programmes has taken place in a 'manner that assaults the working of previously existing public institutions and universities in carrying out their mandates'. African public universities therefore suffer negative consequences as a result of unequal partnerships, unfair practices and reduced funding.

The next section focuses on Mauritius, analysing the implications of internationalisation for the country as well as on the higher education sector in general, with particular emphasis on the University of Mauritius which is the oldest established public university.

### **Education in Mauritius: An Introduction**

Mauritius is a small island of 720 square miles, located in the south western Indian Ocean with a population of approximately 1.2 million inhabitants. It is one of the three small islands collectively called the Mascarene Islands. Mauritius lies on longitude 57 east of the Greenwich Meridian and its latitude ranges from 19 58' to 20 32' in the Southern Hemisphere, just north of the Tropic of Capricorn. The Island of Mauritius has experienced successive waves of colonisers from the Dutch to the French and finally the British in 1810. The Dutch and the French brought slaves from Madagascar and the African continent to work in the sugar cane fields. Following the abolition of slavery in 1835 under British rule, Indian indentured workers were brought from India to replace slave labour in the sugar cane plantations. At that time, a small number of Chinese immigrated to Mauritius. The latter were mainly tradesmen and merchants. The French played a highly significant role in the history and development of Mauritius, initially as settlers and then as a local dominant group. Mauritian society is plural and multi-ethnic with the population presently made up of different groups.<sup>1</sup> Class and ethnic divisions in the population of Mauritius are very pertinent and the different ethnic groups have preserved their cultures and customs. Mauritius, just like its neighbours on the African continent, experienced internationalisation in its education sector since colonial times. The strong colonial influence is indeed still very much visible with English and French being the languages of instruction in the country.

Mauritius gained political independence in 1968 and became a republic within the Commonwealth in 1992. Compared with most African countries, Mauritius has a long tradition of democratic governance since independence. Mauritius is indeed known for its sustained political stability and its ability to preserve basic democratic rights for every citizen in a society consisting of

different religions, ethnic backgrounds and languages. There has also been reference to the 'Mauritian Miracle' with Mauritius being considered as a model of development (Brautigam 1999a, 1999b; Alladin 1993). From the perspective of a small developing country endowed with limited resources, Mauritius has made commendable progress. Mauritius is ranked 64<sup>th</sup> in the 2015 Human Development Report with a Human Development Index (HDI) value of 0.781,<sup>2</sup> putting the country at 'high human development' level (UNDP 2016). Mauritius has maintained a democratic system of government and is now a republic within the Commonwealth. Mauritius is also a member of a number of regional African bodies, including SADC, COMESA and the African Union.

The post-independence government introduced a comprehensive welfare package that included free education and health services, universal pension and a subsidised food scheme. Since independence in 1968, the government embarked upon a strategy of widening access to education with the establishment of primary schools in remote areas and the construction of more girls' schools all over the island which increased access of education to girls. In 1976, the state decided to sponsor secondary education, thereby increasing the enrolment of students at secondary level. This policy had a significant gendered impact since most girls had been previously denied access to secondary education by conservative and low-income families. In 1988, university fees were abolished for full-time undergraduate courses at the University of Mauritius, which was the only state university in existence at that time. This policy measure rendered tertiary education more accessible to the lower income groups and to girls as well. Mauritius also resisted pressures from the IMF and World Bank to scale down welfare benefits in order to maintain social cohesion in its plural society. As such, unlike many of its African neighbours, free education was maintained in Mauritius despite the implementation of Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs). The maintenance of the welfare state enabled the country to almost eradicate illiteracy. The 2011 census showed that the literacy rate of the population aged 12 and above was 92.3 per cent for men and 87.3 per cent for women.<sup>3</sup>

### **Higher Education in the Mauritian Context**

The vision of the current government is to transform Mauritius into a regional knowledge hub to serve the region and as a multi-disciplinary centre for higher learning and excellence. For this vision to succeed, tertiary education will be required to play a major role. At present, two major state institutions oversee the higher education sector in Mauritius. These are: (1) the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education

and Scientific Research and (2) the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC). One of the visions of the Ministry of Education is to transform Mauritius into a knowledge-based economy by 2022. In line with the national priority of government, the Ministry of Education aims to widen access to quality tertiary education of international standards and promote research, science and technology in view of increasing competitiveness at country level. Many students have been missing out on university education due to limited space in the public tertiary institutions and universities. The Gross Tertiary Enrolment Ratio (GTER) rose from 20 per cent in 2003 to reach 45 per cent in 2011/12. The government aims to improve access to tertiary education to attain 72 per cent GTER by 2015 and to make tertiary education more widely available to the population by using the 24/7 concept to include late night and weekend classes.

The Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) has been mandated to promote, plan, develop and coordinate post-secondary education in Mauritius. It oversees the functioning of tertiary education institutions and is responsible for allocating public funds to the tertiary educations under its purview. The TEC also monitors the use of these funds to ensure accountability and optimum use of resources. Since 2005, the TEC has been given the task of implementing a regulatory framework which would ensure the quality of post-secondary education, as well as to determine the recognition and equivalence of post-secondary qualifications (Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources 2008). This has a direct impact on internationalisation as TEC registers private and foreign tertiary educational institutions and universities and accredits their programmes. TEC determines the equivalence of academic or professional qualifications obtained in or outside Mauritius, and also has the responsibility to ensure the establishment of internal quality assurance systems in all post-secondary institutions in Mauritius. In this regard, TEC has adopted a model for quality assurance that is commonly used internationally (Mohamedbhai 2008). Moreover, TEC advises the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research on policy issues pertaining to tertiary education. While the functioning of TEC is supposed to be autonomous, this institution has been subjected to a number of scandals recently, which led to the destitution of its director Dr Praveen Mohadeb in November 2012 because of conflict of interest and unethical conduct (Le Mauricien 28.02.2013).

Tertiary education and training in Mauritius is currently characterised by a multiplicity of providers and is diversified by mode of delivery, field and level of study. As at October 2012, Mauritius had a total of 74 tertiary educational institutions, both public and private. In addition to the publicly funded institutions, there were 64 private educational institutions and 76 awarding

bodies that delivered courses at tertiary level in the country. These courses were mainly concentrated in the highly demanded areas such as Information Technology, Law, Management, Accountancy and Finance. Whereas some provide all levels of tertiary education in a range of disciplines, others centred their activities on a few selected disciplines mainly at undergraduate levels. Within the public sector, the country has ten tertiary education institutions. These include four universities: the University of Mauritius (UOM), the University of Technology Mauritius (UTM), the Open University of Mauritius (OUM) and the Université des Mascareignes (UdM). The origins of the University of Mauritius (UOM) date back to British colonial times in 1924 with the setting up of the College of Agriculture. It became established as a university in 1965 and currently dominates the tertiary education sector locally. The UTM became operational in September 2000 and works closely with government, business and industry. The OUM, which was set up in July 2012 by the government, has taken over the distance education activities of the Mauritius College of the Air. It promotes access to tertiary education through a mixed mode of open and distance learning and face-to-face interaction, with the aim of providing opportunities for non-traditional learners as well as enabling lifelong learning for adults wishing to pursue further studies. The Université des Mascareignes (UdM) was established in May 2012, amidst much criticism from the opposition which argued that quantity was being promoted at the detriment of quality and there was a greater need to strengthen existing universities. The Institut Supérieur de Technologie and the Swami Dayanand Institute of Management were integrated into the UdM. So far, courses have been offered at diploma level.

The other tertiary education institutions in the public sector are: the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE), the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI), the Rabindranath Tagore Institute (RTI), Mauritius Institute of Training and Development (MITD), Mauritius Institute of Health (MIH) and the Fashion and Design Institute (FDI). The MIE was founded in 1973 and initially focussed on teacher training, education and curriculum development. It offers training to school teachers in programmes ranging from certificate, diploma and PGCE. The MIE also offers a Bachelor's degree in education (BEd) and Master's programmes in education in collaboration with the UOM and the University of Brighton, UK. The MGI was established in 1970 as a joint Government of Mauritius-Government of India venture to promote education and culture, with emphasis on Indian culture and traditions. It now runs certificate, diploma and degree-level programmes in Languages, Fine Arts and Performing Arts and Master-level programmes in Languages in collaboration with the UOM. The Rabindranath Tagore Institute was set up in December 2002 with a cultural vocation and works under the aegis

of the MGI. The RTI currently offers tertiary-level programmes in Arts and Craft. The MITD, previously known as the IVTB, was set up in 1988 to promote vocational education and training with the aim of supplying a trained workforce for the industrial, service and domestic sectors. From 1998 the MITD began offering tertiary programmes at the levels of certificate and diploma in selected areas such as Hotel Management, Fashion and Textile Design, Automation and Information Technology. The MIH was set up in 1989 to cater for the training needs of health professionals, local and regional. As per identified needs, it organizes courses and programmes, mostly at post-graduate level of short duration, for medical and para-medical personnel. The Fashion and Design Institute was set up in 2008. The Institute is now offering tertiary-level programmes such as Fashion and Textile, Graphic Design with Animation.

Apart from the UTM which charges tuition fees to students, the other publicly funded tertiary education institutions do not charge fees on the full-time programmes offered. The budget of these institutions is largely financed through the Government Recurrent Grants and the tuition fees that they charge for part-time courses carry a high subsidy element (Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources, 2008). Almost all of the state-funded tertiary educational institutions have links with overseas institutions, either for curriculum development, for the mobility of staff and students, or for advice on academic and administrative matters (Mohamedbhai 2008). However, none of these institutions had a well-structured international office and Mohamedbhai (2008:291-2) notes that generally no specific budget was allocated for internationalisation, although institutions like UOM made financial provision for the visits of external examiners and other short-term academic visitors.

In terms of enrolment, UOM and UTM had the highest numbers in 2011/12, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Student enrolment in public-funded tertiary institutions in 2011 /12<sup>4</sup>

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
University of Mauritius	11,239	24.4
University of Technology	4,370	9.5
Mauritius Institute of Education	3,903	8.5
Mahatma Gandhi Institute	597	1.3
Open University of Mauritius	664	1.4
Swami Dayanand Institute of Management	560	1.2
Institut Supérieur de Technologie	302	0.7

Mauritius Institute of Training and Development	507	1.1
Mauritius Institute of Health	122	0.3
Fashion Design Institute	152	0.3

The figures in Table 1 show that UOM has the largest student population and enrolment rate. It is the oldest and most established university in the country and its degrees have international recognition, as students with an undergraduate degree from UOM easily obtain admission to postgraduate studies in renowned universities overseas. Moreover, the quality of courses is monitored periodically and in this regard, external examiners are used. UOM has undoubtedly made a major contribution to progress and development of the country and was the main provider of tertiary education until the establishment of other state-funded institutions of higher education as from 1999, and the recent policy of allowing foreign higher education institutions to set up branches on the island.

The UOM has however been experiencing financial difficulties in recent years, which have affected its activities and strength as an institution. According to Mohadeb (2010), government spending on higher education accounts for only 25 per cent of total expenditure in the education sector. The government, through the TEC, has been restricting the availability of state funds to UOM, arguing that the university has been generating funds on its own (Ramtohl 2012). Government policy of increasing access to tertiary education in the country also compelled UOM to increase student intake, despite limited financial and infrastructural resources. Moreover, in 2007 UOM faced severe budgetary constraints which led to a policy of austerity requiring new arrangements for large cohorts of up to 300 students in certain lectures and a new policy for final year undergraduate students to undertake their dissertations as a group work instead of individual work, as had been the practice. The students' union and academic staff protested against these measures. The Vice Chancellor at that time, Prof Indur Fagoonee, explained that these changes were caused by the difficult financial situation of the university and the fact that the Ministry of Education had not permitted the university to introduce proper tuition fees. The lack of funding and overdependence on the state for funds put UOM in a tight situation, curtailing its autonomy and affecting the quality of research and teaching and ultimately, academic freedom through knowledge production and expression of ideas (Ramtohl 2012). This situation also affected internationalisation, collaborative research and outreach due to the shortage of funds. The university is not allowed to introduce tuition fees for its full-time courses as such a policy needs to be approved by government and for most politicians in

power, this would be an unpopular political decision. Moreover, the lack of funding, opportunities for research and autonomy has contributed to a 'brain drain' at the level of academic staff of UOM, especially those holding doctoral degrees. On this issue, Mohamedbhai (2008) highlights the fact that because of their government-regulated salary structure, publicly-funded institutions struggle to recruit highly qualified foreign academics who could help build new programmes, create an international culture within the institutions, and mentor younger academics. The low salaries also offer little motivation for highly qualified Mauritian academics to continue working for the public universities. Here, there is a need for universities to have greater autonomy in establishing their own salary structures so that they are more marketable in the international academic arena and able to recruit highly qualified and experienced academic staff both locally and from overseas.

Mauritius also has three higher education institutions that have a specific regional status. These include the Institut de la Francophonie pour l'Entrepreneuriat which was set up by the French university agency AUF and caters for students from the African region; the Sir Seewoosagar Ramgoolam (SSR) Medical College which is an Indian institution affiliated to the University of Mauritius and the Mauras College of Dentistry which is also an Indian institution affiliated to the University of Bhavnagar in India. The SSR Medical College and the Mauras College of Dentistry are owned by private Indian trusts and were set up to mainly serve students from India and the Indian diaspora in the African region, while also accommodating a smaller number (about 20%) of Mauritian students (Mohamedbhai 2008). The degrees of these institutions are awarded by the organisations with which they are affiliated – the UOM in the case of SSR Medical College and Bhavnagar University – India – in the case of Mauras College. Almost all teaching staff in these institutions came from India, although a few Mauritians were also employed on a part-time basis (Mohamedbhai 2008).

Most of the private institutions offering higher education in Mauritius are local branches of overseas institutions that offer programmes ranging from certificate to postgraduate, through a mixed-mode system which encompasses distance learning as well as face-to-face tutorials. For private institutions, fees are unregulated and students generally bear the full cost, unless they are on a scholarship. The press reports that tuition fees are to be paid in foreign currency as well (Le Mauricien 30.06.2012). Table 2 highlights the profile of the foreign awarding higher education bodies by country of origin operating in Mauritius at the moment.

**Table 2:** Awarding bodies of higher education by country of origin (2012)<sup>5</sup>

Country	Number of awarding bodies
Australia	3
France	8
India	8
Malaysia	1
Reunion Island	1
Pakistan	1
South Africa	4
Sudan	1
United Kingdom	26

Table 2 clearly shows the existence of a western bias in the provision of foreign higher education in Mauritius despite the fact that the island aims to become a regional provider of quality higher education. With the exception of India and South Africa, the majority of foreign providers of higher education are from the UK, France and Australia. Given the high value of the currencies of these First World countries vis-a-vis the Mauritian rupee, this situation represents a drain of financial resources and foreign currency from Mauritius, when quality tertiary education is available on the African continent as well, and at lower cost. This is an area which warrants greater exploration and more sustained cooperation in terms of internationalisation of higher education in the African region for the mutual benefit of all.

**Costs and Benefits of Internationalisation in the Mauritian Context**

Although until the beginning of the twenty first century Mauritius did not have an explicit policy on internationalisation of higher education, internationalisation has existed in the country since colonial times. Under British colonial rule in the 1920s, a post-secondary College of Agriculture was set up to primarily train technicians for the sugar industry. The best students of the college were then given scholarships to obtain a degree at the University of Reading in the UK or at Louisiana State University in the United States (Mohamedbhai 2008). The structure and mode of operation of the University of Mauritius was also largely designed on the model followed by British universities. The British government played a key role in the establishment of the University of Mauritius (UOM) and provided generous funding to establish linkages between the UOM and British universities. The setting up of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute (MGI) is also an example of

internationalisation with a 'cultural rationale' that took place immediately after independence (Mohamedbhai 2008:267). It was established in 1970 as a joint venture of the governments of Mauritius and India, with the mission to provide an academic and cultural basis for the promotion of Asia, (mainly Indian) cultural traditions in Mauritius. In fact, with its strong colonial links to France and Britain and its population of largely Indian origin, Mauritius belongs to multiple networks. These include those of Indian Ocean nations, Europe, India and Africa through its active membership in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) (Weeks 2008).

At the moment, in spite of 48 years of independence, Mauritius still follows the British educational system where Mauritian students attending state schools and private secondary schools that are subsidised by government write British exams, namely Cambridge 'O' Levels and 'A' Levels to complete their secondary education. The French educational system is also operational in the country in a few French medium educational institutions such as the Lycée Labourdonnais, Lycée des Mascareignes and École du Nord. Other private schools such as Le Bocage use the international baccalaureate as the examining and awarding body at the end of secondary education. The culmination of secondary education and step towards higher education for Mauritian students are therefore assessed and determined by foreign examination bodies. These foreign exams however tend to weigh rather heavily on the budget of Mauritian students and the government as examination fees need to be paid to the international examining bodies. The high examination fees also represent an external drain of financial resources and foreign currency from the country towards the industrialised countries that administer these exams. While these exams are internationally recognised and the certificates facilitate students' access to universities worldwide, Mauritius nonetheless does have competent local examining bodies such as the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and the University of Mauritius, amongst others. As such, local education and examination bodies need to be called upon to play a greater role in examinations and assessment in Mauritius. Such a step will save the country a considerable amount of financial resources and also boost the activities, credit and reputation of the local institutions. Internationalisation here needs to strengthen the local institutions such that they are able to offer such services in the region. Mauritius could also benefit from African expertise, which would be less costly than European examinations, for example from South Africa which has its own matriculation system.

Moreover, every year a number of Mauritian students go overseas for higher studies. Those who are scholarship winners are required to sign a bond to return to Mauritius to work after completion of their studies. Internationalisation is also highly visible in terms of the number of young

Mauritians going overseas to study in foreign universities. In 2011, 3,007 young Mauritians went abroad for university education, with the most popular places being Australia (29.5%), followed by the UK (28.7%), France/Reunion (17.8%) and India (8.9%) (TEC 2012). While many of these students are self-funded by their families, 30 receive scholarships from the government of Mauritius (the laureates) and others from foreign consulates. The laureate scholarships are very prestigious scholarships which are offered to the 30 best students (15 boys and 15 girls) and are sponsored by the government. The laureate scheme covers tuition fees, travel costs and living expenses. While the laureate scheme has had its merits, with quality higher education being offered locally at present, the heavy investment required by government to maintain this scheme is increasingly being questioned, more so because most of the laureates do not return to Mauritius after completion of their studies. There have been suggestions to offer such scholarships for postgraduate studies, which would be less costly as they are shorter in duration, than undergraduate study. Indeed, most students opt for higher studies in the UK, France and Australia, and given the high costs of living and tuition fees in these regions, this represents a drain of resources for Mauritius. On this issue, Mohamedbhai (2008:298) observes that the Mauritian government spends about US \$3 million every year on these scholarships whereas this figure represented approximately 25 per cent of the budget of the University of Mauritius in 2004-2005. He proposes supporting the studies of the best students in local universities and using the remaining funds to improve and strengthen the local universities (Mohamedbhai 2008:298). The high competition for these scholarships and the prestige associated with the laureate scheme somewhat portrays tertiary education offered locally as inferior to higher education overseas, which is not necessarily true. Therefore, there is a need to promote the goodwill and image of local higher education institutions as being of international standards.

Internationalisation of tertiary or higher education in Mauritius now features prominently on the agenda of government and one of the strategic goals of tertiary education during the period 2008-2020 is the internationalisation of tertiary education in Mauritius, although enhancing the quality of tertiary education to attain international standards has also been identified as a critical challenge to the sector (Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources 2008). The TEC, under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, organized an international conference on Internationalization of Tertiary Education in Port-Louis (Mauritius), from 23 to 25 March 2011. The aim was to bring together an international panel of tertiary education researchers and experts to discuss the impact of globalization on tertiary education. Through internationalisation, Mauritius is striving to become

the 'intelligent island of Africa in the global village' (Ministry of Education, Culture and Human Resources 2008:116). Furthermore, a report published by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research (2005) highlights the expectations of government, specifically stating that the UOM and UTM are expected to become reputable international institutions that will be able to attract foreign students. Although these universities would continue to receive state support, they are expected to generate their own funds (Ministry of Education and Scientific Research 2005). The government has also been encouraging renowned brand-name universities and institutions to establish branches or offshore campuses in the country, as well as the setting-up of high quality private universities which operate independently or in collaboration with overseas partners (Ministry of Education and Scientific Research 2005).

Furthermore, the Ministry of Education aims to attract 100,000 foreign students by the year 2020. These plans have however been critiqued as being too ambitious since the tertiary education institutions in Mauritius do not have accommodation facilities for foreign students and public transport becomes scarce after six in the evening, rendering it difficult for students to attend evening lectures. Additionally, there needs to be greater planning to upgrade existing infrastructure of the existing tertiary education institutions before increasing the intake of students substantially. Mohamedbhai (2008) also notes that given that entry to tertiary education in Mauritius requires the completion of 13 years of schooling as in the United Kingdom, students from Africa or Asia tend to have just 12 years of schooling. In order to increase the number of foreign students, Mauritius may need to introduce a preparatory year for foreign students who only have 12 years of schooling. Yet, so far, the branches and offshore campuses of foreign universities in Mauritius have been relatively more successful in attracting foreign students than the public universities in the country (News on Sunday 02.03.2012). In 2011, there was a total of 81 foreign students in four publicly-funded tertiary institutions, whereas the private institutions had 554 students (TEC 2012). This is an area which requires greater thought and planning as public universities could benefit from the revenue brought in by foreign students, but this is not happening. This state of affairs indicates that public universities are struggling to compete with the appeal offered by the private universities and offshore branches of foreign universities and therefore more needs to be done to upgrade the image of public universities in Mauritius. Also, fees and revenue paid by foreign students to public universities would remain in the country, whereas private universities which are offshore branches of foreign universities send the revenue and remittances back to their main institutions in the countries of origin.

Internationalisation at the level of universities and other institutions of higher learning in Mauritius has had significant benefits for the staff, students and institutions themselves. Indeed, Mauritius being a small and resource-poor country, regional and international cooperation, agreements and links with overseas institutions of higher education have enabled the country to benefit from foreign expertise and exchange of staff where there was a lack. Moreover, in disciplines such as medical sciences, internationalisation enables students to complete their medical degrees at overseas universities which have signed a memorandum of understanding with UOM. These include the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, University of Manchester, University of Cape Town and University of Bordeaux 2. There have been a number of degree courses which have been designed in collaboration with foreign universities (Mohamedbhai 2008). Such practices of internationalisation then strengthen existing universities and have a generally positive impact. On a regional level, Mohamedbhai (2008:27) notes that Mauritius has always been a keen and active supporter of regional cooperation. Yet, the steps that the country, as a signatory of the SADC Protocol on Education and Training, has adopted to implement the various clauses are not clear (Mohamedbhai 2008). He highlights the need for Mauritius to develop a strategy both nationally and institutionally for collaboration under this protocol.

Yet internationalisation also carries significant risks for existing public institutions in the country. Here Mohamedbhai (1998:295) highlights the problem Mauritius faces at the moment in the following statement:

‘It is important for the country to first establish, through a clear vision and plan, a strong quality, public higher education sector, properly funded and supported, before opening up its borders to private institutions, whether local or international’.

Indeed, both UOM and UTM currently face financial, infrastructural and resource constraints. The problems faced by the public universities were highlighted by the opposition in parliament, with the result that the Prime Minister announced an enquiry to be undertaken by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (UK) (Le Mauricien 15.04.2014). If fact, since 2009, UOM has had seven vice chancellors and at UTM, there have been several student complaints about political interference in university matters and management (Le Mauricien 15.04.2014). Government policy of opening up the market for higher education runs the risk of rendering the existing public universities weaker, unless they receive greater support which will enable them to compete on more reasonable grounds with existing established foreign universities that set up branches in the country. Similarly, Altbach & Knight (2006:31) also argue that although attracting foreign education

providers to support the education and training needs of the cyber island may stem the brain drain or even stimulate brain gain, this could jeopardise the local education institutions. At the level of research and development, the TEC website highlights the fact that research at tertiary level has so far been concentrated within the UOM and to a lesser extent at UTM. It is only slowly gaining ground in the private institutions with the introduction of postgraduate courses in the latter. This state of affairs therefore underlines the significant contribution to research in the country that is being made by public universities, especially UOM which is the most established one. Yet research requires funding and therefore, the importance of investment and allocating adequate funds to the UOM, or enabling it to charge fees for its courses to raise funds. The contribution of foreign universities to research and knowledge production is relatively negligible as most focus on offering fee-based courses with an economic initiative.

Mauritius has also experienced problems with regard to quality with some of the foreign universities that have set up branches on the island. Indeed, while the Ministry of Education has forged ahead with its policy of expansion of access to tertiary education, with foreign institutions as key players, in some cases, quality has somewhat been compromised, despite the existence of the TEC as a regulatory mechanism. A number of these universities have been sanctioned and lost authorisation to recruit new students. The number has risen from five in September 2013 to eleven in July 2014. Examples include the Eastern Institute and Integrated Learning Management University (EIILM), an Indian higher education institution which was set up in 2007 and the problems were even raised in parliament as there were controversies regarding its registration in Mauritius and the recognition of the certificates issued by this institution. Another case is that of the Birla Institute of Technology, a branch of Birla Institute in Ranchi, India, which informed students in May 2012 that it would be closing down due to restructuring. In such cases, students stand to lose the most. There is also the case of the Mauras College of Dentistry, an Indian institution affiliated to the University of Bhavnagar in India, which is facing criticism based on quality issues and non-recognition of its certificates by the Dental Council in Mauritius (*Le Défi Quotidien* 06.03.2013). Here the future of about 60 students remains in jeopardy. The latest scandal in the higher education sector is that of DY Patil Medical College, affiliated to DY Patil Worldwide, which did not meet quality standards and was engaged in illegal medical practice. Following this scandal, TEC did not authorise DY Patil Medical College to recruit foreign students on postgraduate medical programmes in 2014. Students are unfortunately the primary victims of these private universities because in most of the problem cases, the certificates are only recognised by

TEC and not by foreign universities. These students will therefore not be able to pursue higher studies overseas.

## Conclusion

The article has shown that Mauritius, like its neighbours on the continent, faces numerous challenges with regard to internationalisation of higher education. While internationalisation brings significant benefits to the higher education sector and institutions in the country, its implementation needs to be carefully planned and monitored. Indeed, given the smallness of the country and scarcity of resources, higher education institutions in Mauritius have no choice but to link up with foreign academic institutions in order to strengthen research collaboration, networking, staff and student exchange and quality assurance. Yet internationalisation should not be done at the expense of weakening existing public universities in the country. Sadly, this seems to be the situation in Mauritius, where there is a policy of opening up the higher education sector to foreign institutions while at the same time curtailing funding to public universities. Increasing foreign players and institutions in this sector also represents a drain on the financial resources and foreign exchange from the country. African countries, including Mauritius, therefore need to monitor internationalisation so that the local institutions are strengthened and stand to benefit from this global outreach and are not left weaker. Such a strategy will also contribute to growth and development nationally and revenue generation because stronger local institutions have a better chance of attracting foreign students and contributing to research and knowledge production.

## Notes

1. Mauritian society is composed of four ethnic groups and four major religious groups, namely, the Franco-Mauritians and Creoles who are Catholic; the Indian community, Muslim and Hindu; and the small Chinese community, either Buddhist or Catholic.
2. <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/MUS.html>
3. 2011 Population census - Main results. Available on: <http://www.gov.mu/portal/goc/cso/ei977/pop2011.pdf> - accessed on 22.05.2013.
4. Source: Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) website – [http://tec.intnet.mu/tesm\\_rvw.php](http://tec.intnet.mu/tesm_rvw.php) (accessed on 05.05.2013).
5. Source: Study Mauritius website - <http://www.studymauritius.info/Where.aspx> (accessed on 05.05.2013).

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## **Promoting Industrialisation in Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana: Lessons for the Future**

Theresa Moyo\*

### **Abstract**

The industrialisation agenda is a topical issue in debates on Africa's development. Evidence shows that since the 1990s, Africa has experienced de-industrialisation and consequently, the continent has the lowest Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) compared to all other regions in the world. This article argues that industrialisation must be a top priority on the agenda of development planning and management in Africa. The article is futuristic in that it focuses on strategies to promote industrialisation. It reviews and analyses the experiences of three African countries, namely, Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana. They are selected not because they have achieved the ultimate goal of industrialisation, but rather because they have taken major steps that promise to yield success in the future. The article is based on a review of secondary information such as government policy and strategy documents, published journals and other peer-reviewed literature. The analysis highlights the important role played by a strong developmental state, formulation and implementation of long-term industrial strategic frameworks, creation of effective institutions, re-introduction of industrial policies and incentives, and foreign direct investment. While recognising the historical limitations of FDI, it still recommends intensification of such investments albeit within a new framework in which governments have to negotiate better terms of engagement in order to ensure technology and skills transfer. The article also emphasizes that there is no one-size-fits-all and so each country has to develop industrialisation strategies which are appropriate to its own environment and context.

### **Résumé**

L'agenda de l'industrialisation est une question d'actualité dans les débats sur le développement de l'Afrique. Il s'avère que depuis les années 1990, l'Afrique connaît une désindustrialisation et, par conséquent, a la plus

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faible valeur ajoutée manufacturière (VAM) que toutes les autres régions du monde. Le présent article soutient que l'industrialisation doit être une priorité absolue dans l'agenda de la planification et de la gestion du développement en Afrique. L'article est futuriste dans la mesure où il met l'accent sur les stratégies visant à promouvoir l'industrialisation. Il examine et analyse les expériences de trois pays africains, à savoir l'île Maurice, l'Afrique du Sud et le Botswana. Le choix de ces pays est basé sur l'avenir prometteur suscité à travers les mesures importantes qu'ils ont prises et non pas parce qu'ils ont atteint le but ultime de l'industrialisation. Le présent article se fonde sur une revue d'informations secondaires telles que des documents de politique et de stratégie gouvernementaux, des revues publiées et d'autres publications revues par des pairs. L'analyse met l'accent sur le rôle important de l'État développementaliste fort, la formulation et la mise en œuvre de cadres stratégiques industriels à long terme, la création d'institutions efficaces, la réintroduction de politiques et d'incitations industrielles et l'investissement étranger direct (IED). Tout en reconnaissant les limites historiques de l'IED, l'article recommande toujours une intensification de ces investissements, mais dans un nouveau cadre où les gouvernements doivent négocier de meilleures conditions d'engagement afin d'assurer le transfert de technologies et de compétences. En outre, l'article souligne qu'il n'existe pas d'approche uniforme et que chaque pays doit élaborer des stratégies d'industrialisation adaptées à son environnement et à son contexte.

## **Introduction**

Evidence from studies by both the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) show that over the past decade, Africa has had the lowest Manufacturing Value Added (MVA) performance in relation to the rest of the world. They also show that the continent is still dependent on production and export of commodities and heavily reliant on imports for most of its manufactured goods (AU Commission 2013).

At the 10th African Union (AU) General Assembly held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in January 2008, an event which was devoted to Africa's industrialization, African heads of state and government affirmed that: 'No country or region in the world has achieved prosperity and a decent socio-economic life for its citizens without the development of a robust industrial sector'. This Assembly culminated in the adoption of the Action Plan for Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA).

The failure of most African countries to industrialise explains why they are still exporting primary commodities and importing manufactured goods. The global economic and financial crisis of 2009 adversely affected those

primary commodity producers and exporters as the fall in external demand led to declining export volumes, sales and revenues. Resource-dependent and primary-commodity exporters such as Namibia, Botswana, South Africa, Zambia, Congo DRC and Kenya, to name a few, are among those economies which were adversely affected by the crisis. The United Nations Economic and Social Council (UN ECOSOC), Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Union (AU) caution against the dependence on primary commodity production and exports because:

it exposes the continent to external demand shocks and leads to pro-cyclical fiscal spending in many resource revenue dependent countries. More importantly, the commodity-driven feature of Africa's economy poses serious questions about its long-term sustainability, as agriculture is subject to diminishing returns to scale due to land constraint while exploitation of non-renewable natural resources is limited by available reserves (UN ECOSOC, ECA and AU 2013:12).

The purpose of the article is to discuss innovative approaches to industrialisation in Africa within a futuristic framework. The article focuses on the experiences of Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana. They are considered here because they have made some significant progress with regard to industrialisation and diversification of their economies. It must be emphasized that their selection does not in any way suggest that they should be treated as 'role models' for the rest of Africa, particularly in view of the controversial nature of some of their strategic approaches. In addition, they themselves still have a long way to go in terms of implementing a comprehensive and diverse industrialisation agenda. However, their experiences may offer some useful lessons on innovations for industrialisation. The article argues that there are a number of factors behind the successes made by these countries in their industrialisation efforts. At the political level is the adoption of the developmental state as a guiding principle for economic transformation. This approach recognises that markets alone cannot deliver structural change for an economy and that, therefore, the state has an important role to play. The development and implementation of a long-term industrial development vision and framework has been key to the success. They have also established a strong institutional base to support industry. These include government ministries and agencies, private sector associations or networks, export promotion agencies, parastatals, development finance institutions and skills development and training institutions. The governments have invested significantly in infrastructure, trade logistics, and human resource development through a variety of skills development programmes. They have also taken measures to create an environment which attracts foreign direct investment to bring in the much needed technology and technical skills.

The article uses these experiences to reflect on a framework for a futuristic industrialisation agenda for Africa. Secondary data sources were used to present this qualitative piece of work.

### Theoretical Framework

Owusu and Samatar (1997:3) argue that the role of industrialization in development is very important, and the emergence of a dynamic manufacturing sector has typically marked a country's transition from low to intermediate income levels. A strong industrial sector also generates employment and enhances the development of backward and forward linkages in the wider economy. Naudé (2013:50) points out that manufacturing has a higher productivity impact compared to other sectors and it also contributes to economic diversity which is fundamental in reducing a country's vulnerability to negative external shocks. He also argues that industrialisation is key for structural change. Rodrik (2007:6) holds the view that 'development is fundamentally about structural change'. He explains structural change as a process which leads to an increase in the share of manufacturing in a country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). A strong argument in favour of manufacturing is that it is able to generate positive externalities. Naudé (2013:49) emphasizes that the manufacturing sector generates 'Marshallian' externalities due to knowledge spill-overs within the industry (technology diffusion), linkages (backward and forward) with the rest of the economy, dynamic economies of scale, and labour pooling.

Szirmai (2009) argues that there are powerful empirical and theoretical arguments in favour of industrialisation as the main engine of growth in economic development. Their econometric analysis of 90 countries over the period 1950-2005 confirmed that there was an *empirical correlation* between the degree of industrialisation and per capita income in developing countries. They also established that productivity was higher in the industrial sector than in the agricultural sector.

Industrialisation is not just an economic issue. It is ideological and political. Ideological in that, as demonstrated by historical experience, capitalist accumulation during the colonial era was made possible through exploitation of Africa's natural and human resources. Based on the Ricardian notion of comparative advantage, African countries were made to specialise in the production and export of commodities (raw minerals, agriculture and forestry resources) and to depend on imports for their need for capital goods and other manufactured goods. The story is well-known and need not be repeated here. The unequal terms of trade which characterised this pattern of specialisation have always disadvantaged African countries and that too

is on record. According to Hillbom (2012:193), neoclassical economists like Kuznets argued that in our time the end goal for any society is to reach 'modern economic growth' (MEG), thereby leaving the pre-modern growth process behind. This modernisation, which is the equivalent of development, is characterised by technological advances, high rates of growth, a rise in productivity, and structural transformation of the economy, society and ideology. Depending on its causes and characteristics, growth may be more or less likely to promote such processes of structural change, and societies can experience growth while staying pre-modern. Kuznets' analysis was in the context of capitalist accumulation. Hillbom (2012:193) argues that industrialisation should not be primarily for purposes of capital accumulation as an end game but rather, it should be a means to an end, enhancing value creation, reducing external dependency on primary commodities and therefore strengthening Africa's capacity to negotiate better terms.

That Africa remains largely unindustrialised is therefore not a coincidence but rather a reflection of the prevailing ideology which shapes the international division of labour and seeks to perpetuate the underdevelopment of the continent because that is an important pillar for capital accumulation for the more economically and politically powerful industrialised nations. Industrialising Africa therefore shall require a cadre of leadership who have vision and determination to reverse those ideological underpinnings which perpetuate Africa's position as a commodity producer and supplier and its continued dependence on the North for any manufactured goods. It calls for crafting of national visions and strategies for long-term development and structural transformation, and the commitment of human, financial, technological and other resources in order to systematically and effectively implement them.

Naseemullah and Arnold (nd), emphasize the importance of a developmental state because in their view, it is crucial for 'translating developmental state institutions into high value added industrial production. They give Korea and Taiwan as examples of states that played a key role in their industrialisation processes.

Naudé (2013:30-59) *speaks of the entrepreneurial economy where skilled entrepreneurs, equipped with appropriate technology*, create and offer new products and introduce new processes and makes some pertinent arguments regarding the importance of entrepreneurship and innovation in the quest for industrial development. He contends that because of the changing nature of the global manufacturing environment, no blueprint should be prescribed for any country's industrialisation path. He proposes that countries have to research into and discover new advantages which they can create and take advantage of

in their explorations of global opportunities in order to build their technological capabilities and manufacturing base. The situation therefore calls for industrial policies that foster innovation and entrepreneurship.

Other authors emphasize the importance of a comprehensive and integrated approach to industrialisation because so many issues require attention in order for industry to thrive. Zalk argues that:

Successful industrialization is not simply a matter of deploying 'microeconomic' instruments such as tariffs and fiscal incentives, however well designed. It also requires considerably greater integration across a range of economy-wide policies. These include provision of public goods such as reasonably priced modern infrastructure and skills development institutions that are aligned to industry needs. Most important is the need to ensure that relative prices and profitability favour investment in value-adding productive sectors of the economy rather than shorter term debt-driven consumption and speculative activities (Zalk 2015:352).

## **Literature Review**

A review of the literature highlights key factors that are important for the success of industrialisation. Some of the major studies are summarised in this review.

Ville and Wicken (2012:1-14) present the experience of Australia and Norway who took the path of resource-based industrialisation. By inventing new technologies and also partnering with foreign companies, they were able to diversify into new resource products and industries. Their success relied heavily on innovation, particularly in the context of close ties between resource-based industries and knowledge-producing and disseminating sectors of society. They also argue that the dynamic growth of America as a resource-based economy was linked to the establishment of an efficient innovation system or the creation of a development block.

Its ability to create new knowledge (learning) and to involve many parts of the society and economy in the development and implementation of relevant and useful knowledge and technologies was an important factor for success. This example aptly explains what innovativeness means. To further illustrate their point, the authors argue that:

The mining industries built links to universities and geological expertise. They collaborated with engineering firms in developing machinery and technology for improving productivity in the mines. New knowledge and technological investments created opportunities for the profitable extraction of lower grade ore. New infrastructure for the transport and distribution of minerals

improved the efficiency of commodity markets. Finally, financial institutions supported the large scale investments necessary for such developments in resource-based industries (Ville and Wicken 2012).

They also give the example of Norway's resource-based industries which were highly innovative in that they capitalised on domestic sources of innovation, technology transfer from foreign sources and Norway's universities and research institutes. New resource-based sectors often emerge not because new natural resources are discovered, but because new technologies create the basis for commercial production and marketing of a known resource.

Ville and Wicken (2012:10-16) also argue that the transformation of Norway's forestry industry from sawmill production to wood processing (pulp) involved close interaction with local engineering companies, in addition to foreign expertise. The emerging wood processing industry demanded water turbines and other sorts of machines. The manufacture of these products was a product of close interaction and collaboration with engineering firms, universities and other relevant bodies.

The ECA (2011:17) indicates that three features of the East Asian model made it successful. First, governments provided stable and predictable incentive frameworks that supported investments. Second, they had close and continuous, and, most importantly, 'strong' dialogue with the private sector. Indeed, as in all the other developing countries where they have been implemented, industrial policies in East Asian countries also created inefficient firms. However, different from what happened elsewhere, the State was able to withdraw support whenever a firm's performance was not satisfactory and imposed export-performance standards. Third, governments simultaneously used import substitution and export promotion policies, combining them in the most efficient way to serve the industrialization need.

Khaled (2007:5) explains that the key factors for the industrialisation success of the Republic of Korea (RoK) included proper planning which meant that government fixed a plan for deciding what, when, and how much to produce and what authority and support was granted to the *Chaebols* (large corporate groups). The RoK used successive five-year plans which were religiously implemented and industry development was always a central pillar of those plans. There was also a recognition of the shortcomings of a free market system and this led to a shift to government-driven capitalism (this was popularly referred to as 'guided capitalism'. The government prioritised and provided necessary policy and financial support for a self-supporting economy which placed its main focus on key industries, such as cement, fertilizer, steel, and oil refining. In later years, the government embarked on developing heavy industries: steel, nonferrous metal, shipbuilding, machinery, electronics and

chemicals. An important strategy was the massive expansion of vocational education, training of scientists, engineers, and other technologically skilled workers. There was also an export drive which boosted production. The downside of their strategy was the adoption of restrictive labour market policies which limited labour rights to strike or unionise.

There are different views with regard to path of specialisation which African economies should adopt. As explained in the literature review above, some scholars advocate Resource Based Industrialisation whereas others recommend the pursuit of specialisation based on competitive advantages. In other words, countries should seek to develop new comparative advantages which do not replicate historical patterns of commodity production. Through technological and skills development, it is possible for African economies to add value to their resources and therefore realise higher value from their resources. Based on a review of the literature, it appears that here is no blueprint as to what products to build an industry base on. Each country has to identify products in which it has competitive advantages.

Some examples illustrate the point. Under its Growth and Transformation Plan 2010-2015, Ethiopia selected agro-processing as one of its priorities for industrialisation. That is because 80 per cent of the population depend on agriculture. It is also a strategy which is geared to raise living standards among the millions of the population who are dependent on agriculture. United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA 2016:101-102). In the case of South Africa, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) introduced the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP), and under its 2014/2015-2016/17 Strategy, priority sectors for industrialisation were identified for government support. These include agro-processing, metal fabrication, wood and furniture, pharmaceuticals, clothing and textiles, leather and footwear, among others (UNECA 2016:72-104).

### **The Experiences of Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana**

The experiences of Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana were reviewed in order to highlight the key strategies and policies that have contributed to industry development. Even through these economies are declining with respect to the share of industry in manufacturing added value, there are some lessons to be learned from some of the policies and strategies which they adopted in order to promote industrialisation. As outlined by the World Bank (2012), except for 2012, the GDP growth rates in all cases (and including the projections for 2015-2016) were below the Sub-Saharan average. In terms of the structure of output, although the value of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has increased from 2000 to 2012, sectoral performance presents a different

picture. The share of industry in GDP has decreased in all cases. While the share is constant at 6 per cent for Botswana, it declined for Mauritius and South Africa. The share of agriculture remained constant in the case of Botswana and South Africa whereas it declined for Mauritius. Only services improved in all countries over the period 2000 to 2012. This explains why in their diversification strategies, these countries are putting more emphasis on services (World Bank 2012).

Mauritius is selected because it has moved to the status of high human development (according to Human Development Report 2013-2014). It has also been quite successful in diversifying its economy and in improving manufacturing added value. South Africa is one of the most industrialised countries in Africa. Although GDP growth has been low and stagnant in the last four years, the government has made some concerted efforts to develop industrial policies and expand the manufacturing sector. South Africa also offers some useful lessons. Since 2007, through the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the country has introduced one of the most comprehensive industrial development strategies and policies on the continent and these are likely to improve manufacturing added value in future. In terms of the size of the industry sector, Botswana perhaps may not warrant inclusion in this study. However, the government's commitment towards diversification of its economy and also the specific adoption of certain measures warrant some attention in terms of understanding strategic interventions to promote industrialisation in the future.

## **Mauritius**

Mauritius is one of the few African countries which have achieved a measure of success in the industrialisation and diversification of their economy. Most of this success is attributed to the adoption of the East Asian model of industrialisation where the state took an active role in the process, using state resources to fund industry infrastructure and a range of incentives to attract domestic and foreign investments into the sector. It was an export-oriented and, to a large extent, market-driven model. While pursuit of such a model contributed to industrialisation in Mauritius, its sustainability was brought into question during the global economic and financial crisis of 2008-2010 when economic performance declined. It is argued that it was the innovativeness and creativity of the government which made it possible to weather the crisis and to achieve further diversification and growth of the economy. According to Greig *et al.* (2011:159), in 1968 at the dawn of its independence, Mauritius was a sugar-based monoculture, with a stagnating GDP per capita of barely US\$200. Most of its arable land was almost entirely

devoted to sugar cultivation. Sugar refining was the only major secondary industry (Greig et al. op.cit). Agriculture made up 25 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP), and sugar alone accounted for over 90 per cent of total exports. Unemployment was rampant, estimated at 20 per cent. Today, the contrast is striking: the economic landscape is completely transformed. GDP per capita is estimated at slightly above US\$8,000, and the country has a diversified economic structure oriented towards services, with numerous contributing pillars. Agriculture accounts for less than 4 per cent, of which sugar barely accounts for a third of the sector.

The government realised the vulnerability posed by monoculture and that is what led it to embark on a path of economic diversification and industrialisation. As a result of the economic policies pursued by successive governments, real GDP growth has averaged more than 5 per cent since 1970 and real annual growth in per capita income, likewise, has been strong. GDP per capita increased more than tenfold between 1970 and 2010, from less than \$500 to more than \$6,000. Efforts at economic diversification have been successful, allowing the country to move from sugar to textiles to a broader service economy. In spite of being a small island, with a population of 1.3 million people of diverse racial and ethnic origins, Mauritius has enjoyed a high GDP per capita of \$13,172 and a low unemployment rate of five per cent (Hwedi 2001:20). Between 1990 and 1994, its GDP grew by a yearly average of 5.3 per cent compared to 0.9 per cent for sub-Saharan Africa (Hwedi 2001:20). The pace of growth has slowed down though since the global financial and economic crisis.

A number of factors have contributed to the success of Mauritius in the industrialisation and diversification of its economy. Brautigam (2005:77) argues that the country's economic success offers strong evidence that intelligent planning, making use of the global ties and networks found in one's own society, and creating a shared vision can help achieve national economic goals. The country has also developed democratic systems of government over time which are anchored on the principles of accountability and responsiveness to electorates. This has compelled successive governments to select appropriate economic policies for efficient allocation and utilization of resources, and to provide sufficient incentives to foreign investors to propel development. Successive administrations committed to a national vision of transforming Mauritius from a poor, low-income economy to a middle-income country. Although it has had its share of corruption, generally Mauritius is widely highly rated in terms of economic governance. It was ranked first in the 2007, 2008 and 2009 *Ibrahim Index of African Governance*. Citing the World Bank's (2009) *Doing Business Report*, (Greig et al. 2011:166)

rank the island as sub-Saharan Africa's best entrepreneurial environment. Mauritius has implemented macroeconomic policies which created a stable environment which attracted both domestic and foreign investors. They also implemented industrial development strategies which at the time were deemed critical to industrialisation, the shift from ISI to a more open and export-oriented approach. Mauritius adopted the 'developmental state' approach where government took an active approach in using its fiscal, monetary, and financial leverage to develop industry infrastructure and offer incentives to support exporters and Small and Medium Scale Enterprises.

Mauritius modelled its development on the East Asian countries in terms of export-led growth based on manufacturing complemented by generous tax incentives. The government also developed strong partnerships and networks, especially with Asian investors. The government actively wooed foreign investors mainly from China, Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. These arrangements were beneficial to the economy. Government leaders made numerous trips to Asia to court investors, and regulations were changed to facilitate investment. It is said that by 2000, Mauritius had concluded twelve treaties with Asian countries in order to avoid double taxation; among other sub-Saharan African countries, only South Africa came close to this total with five (Hwedi 2001:23). Between 1986 and 1993, three Asian countries joined the two former colonial powers, France and the UK, as the top five sources of foreign investment in Mauritius (Hwedi 2001:24). As argued by Brautigam (2005:66), while Asian business networks brought capital to Mauritius, they also brought ideas and transferred technology and know-how. In many cases local investors had been joint venture partners or had been employed by Asian firms located in the Mauritian EPZ. The knowledge they gained from close contact with experienced producers and from their marketing stood them in good stead when they launched their own firms, sometimes as subcontractors to their original employers. Mauritius benefited from trading and investment agreements which were instrumental in growth of its exports and other productive sectors. Examples include the American Growth Opportunity Act (AGoA) with the United States. The agreement provides free market access to Mauritian textile and clothing industry into US markets. In its early years of industrialisation, Mauritius benefited from preferential market access which was made possible under the Multi-Fibre Agreement (MFA) and the Lomé Convention. This attracted clothing entrepreneurs from Hong Kong who had reached the limits of their MFA export quotas into Europe. After the failure of ISI, the government adopted an export-oriented strategy, starting with the establishment of the Export Processing Zone (EPZ) in 1970. The aim was to attract export-oriented foreign direct investors and to rely on the potential benefits of FDI through spill-over and linkage effects. The Government

subsidized export companies with tariff-free access for productive inputs, and with tax incentive subsidies and relaxed labour market regulations in the export sector. It established export processing zones (EPZs) to export key manufacturing goods, mostly apparel and textiles.

Mauritius was able to unify its population around a common national vision which has sustained consensus around its long-term development goals. For example, the 'Vision 2020: The National Long-Term Perspective Study', which was formulated by two successive administrations (1994-1997) through a broad consultative process, centred on moving away from low-wage, labour-intensive exports to more skilled, high-value-added, knowledge-based ones. It constitutes a holistic development framework. In line with this development vision, the Government's Development Strategy aims at transforming Mauritius into a globally competitive economy by promoting five sectors: sugar, tourism, export-oriented entities (EOE), financial services and ICT. The strategy is articulated in four pillars: (i) enhancing competitiveness; (ii) consolidating fiscal performance and improving public sector efficiency; (iii) improving the business climate; and (iv) widening the circle of opportunity through participation, social inclusion and sustainability (AfDB 2009a:11).

Questions have been raised around the sustainability of the export-oriented and FDI-driven model of industrialisation. EPZs were exempt from full compliance with labour laws and consequently a serious indictment against them were the low wages which they paid to workers. The global economic and financial crisis demonstrated the fragility of the model when growth performance declined since 2009.

Mauritius has demonstrated capacity to adapt though innovative approaches in response to the changing circumstances, and over the past decade successive governments have sought to realign national development by laying the foundations of a 'knowledge economy'. The aim is to become a 'hub' linking Africa and Asia for ICT services, financial services, transportation and fishing (Greig *et al.* 2011:164-165). The state accessed a line of credit from India to establish a 'cyber city' at Ebene, adjacent to the University of Mauritius at Le Reduit. The government of India extended some strategic assistance to government in the form of a US \$ 100 line of credit facility. Part of the grant was to fund a Cyber City which will boost the ICT sector development (Oolin, Ramgolam & Dorasami 2012).

### ***South Africa***

Although South Africa is the most industrialised country in Sub-Saharan Africa, its manufacturing value-added (MVA) growth has been slower than

in peer middle-income developing and transition economies. Growth in average real MVA in local currency terms has been very modest at 2.7 per cent compound annual growth (CAGR) between 1994 and 2011. There have been net employment losses in formal manufacturing employment with a CAGR of “1.3 per cent over the same period (Zalk 2015:346). Globalization has meant a collapse of the tariff barriers that protected manufacturing, and the influx of cheap manufactured goods has led to the decline of local industries. The local shoe and clothing manufacturing industry, for instance, has been dramatically reduced as a result of imports from Asia. The decline of manufacturing has increased structural unemployment (AfDB 2013:8).

Like Mauritius, South Africa has adopted a developmental state approach where, although recognising the important role which private markets can play in the economy, it has prioritised government participation in industry. Since 1994 when the country achieved democracy, the government has integrated industrial development into its national development planning processes. In 2012, the Cabinet approved the National Development Plan, which is South Africa’s Vision 2030. The Plan has identified poverty, inequality and unemployment as the major problems facing the economy and has developed a number of strategies to address them. Thus, industrial development is viewed as a tool to solve the triple challenges indicated above. The Plan spells out specific strategies to promote the development of industry.

Since 2007, the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) has played a key role in the development of a comprehensive industrial policy framework in order to actively support various industry sectors. It introduced the National Industrial Development Framework which articulates government’s thinking on industry development. In order to operationalise the framework, March 2010, it launched the R100 billion Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP I and II), which aims to boost manufacturing capacity and to create jobs. The plans, which are being implemented by the DTI, are expected to run from 2012 to 2015 (Moyo 2013:38). These plans are significant because of their more comprehensive and integrated approach towards supporting industry. The aim of the government is to build South Africa’s industrial base in critical sectors of production and value-added manufacturing. It is also expected that they would contribute to the reduction of chronic unemployment. Priority sectors under IPAP II are the automobile and component manufacturing industry, agro-processing industry, wood and furniture, pharmaceuticals, mineral beneficiation and metals and metal fabrication. Implementation of IPAP II has already been integrated into the Government’s Medium Term Expenditure Framework (Moyo 2013:38). According to Zalk (2015:327), the government adopted a more active approach to industry development by

developing a range of industrial policies and sectoral strategies. These were aimed to reduce the many structural constraints and bottlenecks affecting industry. Zalk (2015:335) argues that there was no formal industrial *policy* until 2007 when the Cabinet approved the National Industrial Policy Framework (NIPF) in January 2007 and its first implementation blueprint, the Industrial Policy Action Plan (IPAP) later that year. The government's industrial policy framework seeks to promote a labour-intensive and more inclusive industrialisation agenda. That is because in previous dispensations, industry largely excluded the majority black population. It also aims to increase employment creation and to increase the participation of historically disadvantaged people (mostly blacks).

Some of the key factors contributing to improvement in industry development are:

a. Stable macroeconomic environment

Since achieving democratic change in 1994, South Africa has used monetary and fiscal policies to create one of the most stable macroeconomic environments in Africa, with inflation rates of below 5 per cent over most of the period 1994-2013. Economic growth in the first 10 years since democratic transition averaged between 4 and 5 per cent. However, since the global financial and economic crisis, GDP growth has declined and in 2013, it fell below 3 per cent (Statistics South Africa 2013).

b. Strong institutions

South Africa has developed strong institutions which function well and largely in the context of democratic values and principles. The constitution is one of the most comprehensive and democratic, upholding the rule of law and upholding protection of property rights. The legal system provides effective protection of property and contract rights; both are respected and enforced. The country ranks 20th and 27th out of 144 countries on intellectual property protection and property rights, respectively, (AfDB 2013a:124). Private ownership of property is guaranteed in the constitution. Both foreign and domestic investors are allowed to participate in all sectors without any discrimination. South Africa ranks first in the Southern Africa region in protecting investors (*e.g.* ease of shareholding, extent of direct liability). The country also has a vibrant and independent judiciary system ranking 27th in global competitiveness (AfDB 2013a:124). South Africa also performs relatively well on contract enforcement, ranking 81st out of 183 countries surveyed by *Doing Business*. In 2010, South Africa scored 73 out of 100 in law enforcement, particularly in

conflicts of interest, safeguards and professionalism of the legal system *which is also considered to be* very efficient in settling disputes (AfDB 2013a:125). Another strength is its very stable financial system because of an efficient regulatory infrastructure, well-developed financial markets and sound financial institutions.

c. Participation in Global Value Chains (GVCs)

South Africa's automobile and components manufacturing industries is one of the most developed on the continent. This is an industry which was established in the period before 1994 when the government of the time invested heavily in infrastructure development and attracted massive amounts of foreign investments. An attractive investment climate led to the establishment of production plants by subsidiaries of multi-national automobile companies such as Ford (United States), Chrysler and Mercedes Benz (Germany), Toyota (Japan), among others. These subsidiaries import car parts from the parent companies abroad and assemble vehicles for both the domestic as well as regional and global markets. The automobile sector is one of South Africa's largest industries which employs thousands of employees. However, a major issue is the dominance of multinational companies in the automobile assembly. The few local players tend to be in component manufacturing – an industry which is still small compared to automobile assembly. Since attainment of democracy in 1994, the government has introduced comprehensive measures in order to promote the growth of the automobile assembly sector. The policies are highlighted in the next section.

d. Industrial policies to support specific sectors

The Manufacturing Competitiveness Enhancement Programme (MCEP) has been created with an additional budget allocation of R5.7 billion (\$0.71 billion) over three years. Three groups of sectors received effective industrial policy support between 1994 and 2007, albeit in the absence of a formal industrial policy: automotives; clothing and textiles; and a range of upstream sectors, particularly steel, petrochemicals and aluminium (Zalk 2015:347). The automotive sector was promoted through the Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP) starting in 1995. Under the terms of the MIDP, exporters of automotive vehicles and components earned import rebate credits that could be used to offset import duties on components and vehicles not produced in South Africa. Vehicle tariffs declined from 80 per cent in 1999 to 30 per cent by 2007. This drove automotive original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) to rationalize platforms

and increase economies of scale. Vehicle production increased from 388,442 units in 1995 to 534,490 units in 2007, with exports increasing tenfold over the same period. Challenges remain, however. Imports of both vehicles and components remain substantial.

The focus of the next phase of automotive policy – as the MIDP gives way to the Automotive Production Development Programme (APDP) from 2013 through 2020 – is to address such issues as further increases in economies of scale (Zalk 2015:347).

The government also introduced the Clothing Textiles Competitiveness Programme (CTCP), which allows manufacturers to earn a value-added-based production incentive in the form of credits that can be redeemed only through investments in specific areas. The CTCP managed to stabilize employment levels in the sector by late 2011.

e. Industrial financing arrangements

The government also supports industrial development through the Industrial Development Corporation (IDC). The IDC has begun to respond to this challenge by re-prioritizing within its commercially funded balance sheet and making the important shift from acting as a private investment bank to a much greater emphasis on its development bank mandate. To this end it has identified lendable funds of around R102 billion (\$12.75 billion) over five years directed towards priority sectors, depending on economic conditions (Zalk 2015:343).

## ***Botswana***

- a. Robinson in ECA (2011:31) argues that the economic success of Botswana can be explained by the historical development of its political institutions. The peculiar historical evolution of the country created the conditions for a more stable and accountable government than elsewhere in Africa and the adoption of exceptionally good economic policies. The country has a well-functioning democracy that respects political rights and guarantees civil liberty and economic freedom (AfDB 2009b:1). The government has exhibited a consistent pattern of commitment to national development. Over the years, it has crafted development plans which it has implemented using its diamond revenues. The government has developed Vision 2016 to guide the long-term development of the country. A series of National Development Plans (NDP) have been implemented in order to promote broad-based national development. The NDPs prioritise diversification of the economy because for a long time Botswana has been a monocultural economy dependent on raw diamond production and exports. In view of the limitations resulting

from heavy reliance on diamonds for both export earnings and revenue, the government has embarked on strategies to diversify the production base of the economy. Some of the strategies taken by the government to promote industrialisation include, but are not limited to, the following: Good governance

- b. Botswana has one of the lowest corruption scores in Africa – and registered improvements in standings over the 2006-2009 period (World Bank 2012:36); according to the WBG Enterprise Survey data, the percentage of firms that expect to make informal payments to public officials to get things done is twice as high in South Africa as Botswana (15% and 7.3% respectively) (World Bank 2012:36).

Role of development planning and industry diversification strategies

At independence, Botswana was one of the poorest countries in Africa, ranking amongst the least developed countries of the world, with a per capita GDP of about USD 70. Thirty years later, Botswana had transformed itself into an upper-middle-income country. Mineral (diamond) discoveries and effective use of its revenues contributed to the country's status as one of the fastest growing economies in the world, with an average annual growth rate of about 9 per cent between 1966 and 1999 (AfDB 2013b:34). More impressive has been the investment of diamond revenues in social and infrastructural services with rapid expansion of education, health facilities, housing and roads in both rural and urban areas (Hillbom 2012).

A major innovation towards its industrialisation effort is the establishment of a diamond processing and jewellery manufacturing industry. After expert projections which showed that Botswana's diamond reserves will be depleted by 2020, transformation of the industry from being a commodity producer and exporter became a top priority. The decline in diamond exports as a result of the global crisis led government to embark on promoting manufacturing activities around the mineral. Diamond polishing and jewellery manufacturing companies have been established and these involve local entrepreneurs. The government has actively supported them through the provision of loans and infrastructure as well as skills training. The Botswana government jointly owns Debswana on a 50:50 basis with De Beers Pvt Ltd, a multinational company which has mined diamonds in Botswana, South Africa and Namibia for many years. De Beers' mining licence was coming to an end and the government used its position to demand new conditions for renewal of the licence. One of them was the insistence that the company should assist the government to establish a local diamond polishing and jewellery manufacturing industry where many nationals (known as the '*Batswana*') were employed. In 2005, in addition to the four companies cutting diamonds, the Government has

created other companies to polish diamonds in Botswana. It is estimated that this will result in the creation of about 3,000 jobs in the next five years. The biggest challenge is competition from India. In Botswana the cost of polishing 1 carat of diamonds is USD 30 while in India it is only USD12 (AfDB 2009b, Annex 7:x).

c. Institutional development

The Botswana government has established some institutions to support industry development (AfDB, OECD and UNDP 2014:75). Botswana Development Corporation (BDC) was established in 1971 to provide business support services such as provision of advisory services, identification of business opportunities, conduct of feasibility studies, building factory shells, provision of venture capital and facilitating linkages among investors. It also assists local businesses to enter into joint venture arrangements with foreign companies. The Botswana Export Development and Investment Authority (BEDIA) was established in 1997 as an autonomous private sector led organisation which is 'mandated to encourage, promote and facilitate the establishment of export oriented enterprises and selected services which will result in economic diversification, rapid economic growth and creation of sustained employment opportunities' (Zizhou 2009). Since its establishment, it has actively supported the growth of export-oriented enterprises. Botswana Textile and Small Business Owners Association (BOTSBOA) is the voice of small and micro citizen enterprises. It was established to promote the creation of business linkages among SMEs and large scale enterprises and to enhance their growth. The Botswana Confederation of Commerce Industry and Manpower (BOCCIM) is the recognised representative of commerce and industry. It represents the private sector during sessions of the High Level Consultative Council (HLCC), where the private sector discusses matters of mutual interest with government.

The Local Enterprise Authority (LEA) was set up in 2006 following the passing of the Small Business Act (2004) to spearhead the development and growth of small, medium and micro-enterprises (SMMEs) in agriculture, tourism and services (AfDB/OECD 2008:159).

d. Introduction and application of industrial policy

Industrial policy refers to the array of subsidies, tax expenditures, and other policies that constitute the incentives for private firms to engage in new productive activities. The major incentives in Botswana are subsidies to parastatals, to agriculture, and to investment promotion.

Botswana spends three per cent of its GDP on such policies. This amounts to about 7.5 per cent of government spending (World Bank 2012:8).

Industrial policy also includes fiscal measures such as the manufacturing tax concessions. A lower company tax regime (15%) for manufacturing enterprises is a way of diversifying productive activities away from the dominant diamond industry. These have been criticized by the World Bank on grounds that there has not been a noticeable impact on the growth of the manufacturing sector, whose share in GDP has fallen from 5 per cent in the mid-1990s to under 4 per cent (World Bank 2012:9). However, this should not be interpreted to mean that tax concessions are not effective. There could be other constraints such as infrastructure problems that limit the effectiveness of incentives. Botswana has an average effective tax rate of about 11 per cent of profits, lower than South Africa's 25 per cent and Namibia's 16 per cent, to say nothing of Chile's 19 per cent and China's 18 per cent (World Bank 2012:36).

Industrial policy also addresses specific sectoral issues. For example, the government has used sectoral policies to promote growth of particular industries. For example, Botswana has identified the motor industry sub-sector as a priority sector for economic diversification. Automobile assemblers benefit from a number of schemes such as low taxation rates and SACU's Motor Industry Development Programme (MIDP). The MIDP aims to improve regional competitiveness by encouraging export activities in the light vehicle and medium and heavy motor vehicle sub-sectors. Incentives are given in the form of concessional duties and rebates of customs duties.

The government also introduced a Reserved Sectors policy in 1982 to protect local entrepreneurs from competition from external investors in what are considered easy investment areas (such as small-scale mining, brick making, bread baking, and manufacturing of school furniture, uniforms and protective clothing, burglar bars and sorghum milling). The policy has now been relaxed to allow joint ventures between foreign investors and Botswana local businesses to be eligible. The data on impact of the policy was not available.

e. Local Procurement Programme

This utilises government procurement activities to foster local manufacturing and promote entrepreneurship. The main purpose of the programme is to reserve 30 per cent of Central Government purchases for local manufacturing companies. To qualify for the programme, companies must satisfy requirements relating to their size (annual turnover and productive machinery) as well as employment capacity (no more than 200 employees).

f. Trade agreements and partnerships

The Government has also used trade agreements to promote industry development. For example, Botswana's exports enjoy favourable access to the European Union (EU) by virtue of the Cotonou Agreement and since 1 January 2008, by virtue of the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) which has enhanced market access abroad. In addition, Botswana has preferential access to the United States' market under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). Botswana benefits under AGOA provisions for textiles and clothing which seem to have spurred exports in the sector (clothing is currently the third largest export sector).

Within SACU, Botswana has introduced a number of restrictions on trade to protect specific industries (such as poultry and UHT milk). Import restrictions have been in place for 31 years and have supported the emergence of a domestic poultry industry that has made the country largely self-sufficient, and has created about 4,500 jobs (World Bank 2012:9). Although such protectionism has been criticized by the Bank because of the higher prices that local consumers have to pay as a result, from a longer-term perspective the policy may still be useful if the poultry and milk industries grow and are well established to the level where they can also compete with other producers (local and external). In that case, prices should begin to come down.

g. Skills acquisition

The Botswana Training Authority (BOTA) was established in 2000 to oversee vocational training in Botswana. This organisation provides quality assurance, accreditation, policy advice, monitoring and evaluation within the National Vocational Qualifications Framework.

The Botswana Technology Centre (BOTEC) is a government-funded institution which promotes technology development and learning. In addition, the government has a policy for human capital development and for the diffusion of technology and innovation. The Botswana Bureau of Standards (BBS) was set up to enhance the quality and standards of domestic industries. The government also established an Auto Trades Technical College. The college was established in 1982 in order to support the growth of the automotive industry through the supply of skilled labour. It offers apprenticeship training in a variety of trades leading to national certificates. The School also runs the Entrepreneurship Development Programme in order to develop entrepreneurial skills particularly among SMES.

The Structured work-based learning (SWBL), the vocational training system being developed and implemented in Botswana, represents a new

concept of skills, knowledge and attitude acquisition for this country. This system has been benchmarked against the best in the world and includes quality assurance as a cornerstone. SWBL is vocational training that is based on requirements in the workplace and uses the workplace as a learning context. In this context, industry determines what learners and prospective employees need to know in order to be suitable for the working world. This involves various pathways employing mixes of on-the job and off-job learning and assessment (AfDB/OECD 2008:161).

h. Improvement of company registration processes

The introduction of an Industrial Development Bill, which was approved by Parliament in 2006, aims to improve efficiency in the registration of companies and issue of licences.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Industrialisation is an important agenda for the African continent. A review of theoretical perspectives on the importance of industrialisation revealed that there is consensus on the need for achieving that goal especially because of the vulnerability of most economies which depend on commodity production and exports. The experiences of the few countries in the developed world which were cited also underscores the economic and developmental importance for countries to use their natural resources to produce high-value-added manufacturing goods and services. The experiences of Mauritius, South Africa and Botswana were reviewed in order to identify some key strategies that some African countries are using to promote industrialisation. They show that although markets are important in an economy, they alone cannot ensure the shift from commodity production to high-value manufacturing. In all these cases, the state played an important leading role in six critical areas. Firstly, in crafting comprehensive long-term development plans in which the development of industry was one of the key priorities. Secondly, in establishing relevant institutions to support industrial sector development. Thirdly, by formulating and implementing regulatory macroeconomic policies in order to create a stable environment in which business could thrive. Fourthly, by developing industrial policies which included incentives to support industrial development. These incentive schemes appear to be most comprehensive in the case of South Africa where they played a key role in the growth of the automobile and components manufacturing industry, in textiles and clothing, agro-processing and pharmaceutical industries. Tax concessions and a wide range of trade policies in the form of tariff protection for infant industries were also part of the incentives that were used. Fifth was the important role played by foreign direct investment. Finally, trade

agreements and partnerships also contributed to the success, for instance, in the case of South Africa and Botswana, their membership in SACU and SADC, and with respect to South Africa, the membership of the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union.

It is also important to note that in these countries, the government made some efforts to ensure that industrialisation was inclusive. For instance, in South Africa, the Department of Trade and Industry has incentives for Small to Medium Enterprises in addition to those for large-scale businesses. In Botswana, the government established some agencies specifically to support SMME sector development.

Some of the measures used are not without controversy: for example, the export-processing zones which were so central to the industrialisation strategy of Mauritius. While those zones contributed to the country's success in export promotion, they were notorious for their exploitation of labour, mostly women who worked in those zones. Any future industrialisation strategy in Africa has to ensure that the establishment of industrial zones complies with international labour standards in terms of decent work and fair wages.

It is also important to point out that although FDI is important in terms of investment flows, technology and skills transfer, African countries have to avoid the pitfalls of the past where multinational companies were attracted through very generous investment conditions but did not transfer the technology and skills largely because of the failure of governments to negotiate agreement terms which were in the best interest of the continent. This implies that in developing policies to attract foreign investments into industry, governments have to avoid the adoption of the traditional approach to FDI policies and instead, negotiate terms and conditions that ensure technology and skills transfer to locals and also the promotion of joint venture arrangements.

As the evidence showed, although these countries have made efforts to design and implement some of the industrial policies used in the successful industrialisers in Asia, it is worth noting that actually their economic performance in general and the added value in manufacturing has been on the decline. That means that they need to intensify efforts to industrialise. South Africa for example, has experienced low GDP growth over the last few years but has developed some of the most comprehensive development and industry development policies on the continent. It will be important to facilitate their implementation in order to achieve more significant increases in value addition across all industry sectors. The same also applies to Botswana which has had a number of successive development plans and industry-specific interventions.

It will also be critical to increase investment in knowledge-based economies and in fostering partnerships with foreign investors in order to access the necessary technology and skills. African countries need to explore the opportunities which exist in the context of South-South Cooperation (for example, forging partnerships with the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, China and South Africa) which add value to each country's industrialisation agenda.

A major recommendation is that any futuristic industrialisation strategy for Africa must be driven by governments who should engage industry players in order to determine how best to expand that sector. Because the pace of industrialisation has been slow in many parts of the continent (despite the existence of many action plans both at continental as well as domestic levels), innovativeness implies that there should be a serious 're-think' on why past and existing strategies have had a limited impact. As argued in the literature review, the lack of requisite skills and knowledge as well as the technology required to build industry calls for a more radical approach to human resource development. A major challenge in most African countries is the lack of access to the technology and know-how for establishing and operating a sustainable industry. It therefore has to be admitted that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) will have to play a major role in the industrialisation agenda of the African continent. That is not to say FDI at all costs. A selective approach based on more mutually beneficial terms and conditions than in the past should be the pillar of innovative FDI partnerships where African countries can enter into contractual arrangements with multinational companies in order to access the much needed technology and skills. Botswana's diamond polishing and jewellery manufacturing industry in partnership with De Beers demonstrates the possibilities of a different role for MNCs. The experiences of Japan and the Republic of Korea, while they should not be treated as role models, could provide very useful lessons for Africa in terms of the urgency, rapidity and sheer scale of implementation of their industrialisation agenda.

This could be the basis for crafting more innovative approaches for an inclusive, comprehensive and sustainable futuristic industrialisation strategy.

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## **Strengthening Rural-Urban Interactions as a Contemporary Paradigm to Sustainable Development in Africa: The Case of Meme Division, South-west Region, Cameroon**

Agbortoko Ayuk-Nkem\*

### **Abstract**

The world's population is increasing by around 85 million every year – the equivalent of another Egypt or Mexico, and by 2025 most of the growth is expected to be within urban areas of developing nations. This implies a continuous supply and dependence on raw materials and other infrastructural developments. This study therefore seeks to examine the flow of people, finance through remittances as well as the flow of goods and services between rural and urban settlements in developing nations using the Meme Division of the South-West Region of Cameroon as a case study. The problem of most development theory and practice based on the dichotomy between rural and urban settlements is reflected through the division of policies along spatial and sectoral lines, with urban planners concentrating on urban nodes with less attention to the rural nodes. This has widened the development gap between rural and urban centres, thus accelerating rural-urban migration and a consequent increase in the rate of urban poverty and urban primacy in most developing countries. As its main objective, the study sets out to investigate the relationship between small and intermediate urban centres and their surrounding regions, with particular attention to spatial and sectoral linkages which constitute the basic tenets for a win-win development situation. To attain the objectives, both primary and secondary sources of data were utilized. The secondary sources constituted internet sources and available materials on rural-urban linkages while the primary data was principally from direct interviews and the administration of questionnaires. A systematic sampling technique was used to generate information from the sampled population and the Rank Size Rule was used to analyse the collected data to categorise areas of high linkages and their levels of development. The findings revealed that encouraging rural-urban linkages will constitute a contemporary approach in

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solving urban problems of increasing slums and urban poverty while reducing rural exodus. From the findings, it was recommended that planning should be done on a regional basis rather than dividing settlements into urban and rural as well as developing transport routes to ease communications between the two areas. The study concludes that regional development as a development option will go a long way in bridging the gap between the rural and urban areas, thereby accelerating regional integration and development as a whole.

## Résumé

La population mondiale augmente d'environ 85 millions chaque année, l'équivalent de la population de l'Égypte ou du Mexique, et la majeure partie de la croissance d'ici à 2025 devrait s'opérer dans les zones urbaines des pays en voie de développement. Cela implique un approvisionnement continu et une dépendance à l'égard des matières premières et le développement d'autres infrastructures. Cette étude vise donc à examiner le flux de personnes, le flux financier par les transferts de fonds ainsi que le flux de biens et de services entre les zones rurales et urbaines dans les pays en voie de développement, dans le cas du Département de Meme, dans la région Sud-Ouest du Cameroun. Le problème de la plupart des théories et pratiques du développement reposant sur la dichotomie entre les zones rurales et urbaines se reflète dans la division des politiques selon les lignes spatiales et sectorielles, les urbanistes se concentrant sur les nœuds urbains tout en accordant moins d'attention aux nœuds ruraux. Cela a creusé l'écart en matière de développement entre les centres urbains et ruraux, accélérant ainsi l'exode rural et l'augmentation conséquente du taux de pauvreté en milieu urbain et de la primauté urbaine dans la plupart des pays en voie de développement. L'objectif principal de l'étude est d'examiner la relation entre les centres urbains petits et intermédiaires et leurs régions avoisinantes, en accordant une attention particulière aux liens spatiaux et sectoriels qui constituent les principes fondamentaux d'une situation de développement gagnant-gagnant. Pour ce faire, l'étude s'est fondée sur des sources de données primaires et secondaires ont été utilisées. Les sources secondaires incluaient des sources Internet et des documents disponibles sur les liens entre les zones rurales et urbaines, tandis que les données primaires proviennent principalement d'entretiens directs et de l'administration de questionnaires. Une technique d'échantillonnage systématique a été utilisée pour générer de l'information provenant de la population échantillonnée et la règle rang-taille a été utilisée pour analyser les données recueillies afin de catégoriser les zones de fortes relations et leurs niveaux de développement. Les résultats ont révélé que le fait d'encourager l'établissement de liens entre les zones rurales et urbaines constituerait une approche contemporaine pour résoudre les problèmes urbains liés à l'augmentation des taudis et à la pauvreté urbaine tout en réduisant l'exode rural. Sur la base des résultats, il a été recommandé que l'urbanisation se fasse sur une base régionale plutôt que de diviser les communautés en zones

urbaines et rurales, ainsi que de développer des voies de transport pour faciliter les communications entre les deux zones. L'étude conclut que le développement régional en tant qu'option de développement contribuera grandement à combler l'écart entre les zones rurales et urbaines, accélérant ainsi l'intégration régionale et le développement dans son ensemble.

## Introduction

According to the United Nation's projections (2010), the world's population will grow to more than nine billion by 2050. The United Nations expects that between 1995 and 2025 the number of people living in urban areas will nearly double from 2.8 to 5.3 billion, and that 90 per cent of that growth will be in developing countries. This implies a continuous supply and dependence on raw materials and other services from the rural areas as urban areas keep reducing through housing construction and other infrastructural developments (Fombe and Balgah 2010).

Rural-urban linkages, according to UN-HABITAT (2010), include flows of agricultural and other commodities on the one hand from rural-based producers to urban markets to serve the needs of the urbanites and to the regional, national and international markets, and on the other hand in the opposite direction, flows of manufactured and imported goods from urban centres to rural settlements. They also include the flow of people between rural and urban settlements, either commuting on a regular basis, for occasional visits to urban-based services and administrative centres, or migrating temporarily or permanently. Financial flows include, primarily, remittances from migrants to relatives and communities in sending areas, and transfers such as pensions to migrants returning to their rural homes including investments and credit from urban-based institutions. These spatial flows overlap with inter-linkages between sectors both at the household level and at the level of local economies and include backward and forward linkages between the agricultural, manufacturing and service sectors (Mulongo *et al.* 2010). Most urban centres, especially small and intermediate ones, rely on broad-based demand for basic goods and services from their surrounding populations to develop their secondary and tertiary sectors (Takoli 2005). On the whole, synergy between agricultural production and urban-based enterprises is often a key to the development of more vibrant local economies and, on a wider level, to less unequal and more 'pro-poor' regional economic growth and integration (Lucatelli and Peta 2011).

In most developing countries and especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, the rate of urbanization is rapidly increasing (UNEP 2010). This can be largely attributed to the few available cities within the continent concentrated mainly along the coast. Colonial influence in Africa accounts for most of the city

development along the coast as the colonialists created transport routes for the evacuation of raw materials from Africa to European industries during the colonial era. In French colonial Africa especially, city development followed the pattern of creating major urban centres for development impulses to subsequently diffuse from the urban centres to its surrounding settlements. This, if properly implemented, will lead to regional integration and the growth of the nation as a whole. The trend has however not been effective as most of these cities like Dakar in Senegal, Abidjan in Ivory Coast, Accra in Ghana, Lomé in Togo, Lagos in Nigeria, Douala in Cameroon, Pointe Noire in Gabon, and Mombasa in Kenya among others have continued to grow as primate cities absorbing growth potentials from their surrounding settlements (Fombe and Balgah 2010). This constantly restricts the spread of development impulses into the surrounding settlements but rather promotes an increasing flow of resources from rural to urban areas leading to the increasing gap between urban and rural areas (Kjell *et al.* 2014).

Given the expected trends of rapid urbanization in Africa, it has become imperative to plan for such unprecedented urbanization by strengthening the connections between urban and rural environments, if humanity must live up to the expectations of sustainable urban development and regional equality.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Spatial integration calls for separate regions to interact through development impulses. According to this concept, there should be an easy flow of ideas, movement of people, goods and services and communication between the different parts. Considering Third World continents, identified regions such as countries, natural and functional should be capable of benefiting from the advantages of each other for a balanced and equitable development. Nonetheless, most regions of the world have little spatial integration due to a number of problems. Most developing economies especially in Africa, according to Abumese (1987), are dual. That is, a nation of haves and have nots i.e. an economy of supply and exchange (urban areas) and one of subsistence (rural areas). The primate cities of Africa all tend to absorb growth within them at the expense of surrounding rural settlements leading to their continuous growth and development.

Most development theories and practice are implicitly based on the dichotomy between rural and urban areas, populations and activities (Elbe and Middleman 2009). This is reflected in the division of policies along spatial and sectoral lines, with urban planners usually concentrating on urban nodes and paying little attention to rural-led development, while rural development planners tend to ignore urban centres and define rural areas as consisting only

of villages and their agricultural lands. This has widened the development gap between rural and urban centres.

The Kumba urban area is not an exception as development is concentrated entirely within the urban centre leaving its surrounding rural areas underdeveloped despite the fact that they contribute at least 75 per cent of total input in terms of agricultural raw materials and labour supply. These rural satellites suffer from the absence of basic social facilities such as health facilities, electricity supply, pipe-born water supply and the lack of storage facilities in cases where electricity is virtually unavailable. These situations have led to an increase in unbalanced development and a reduction in the rate of rural-urban interaction.

As cited in Fombe (2006), urban poverty is rural poverty transferred. That is, the lack of regional integration between rural and urban environments in most African states has necessitated the high rate of rural exodus leading to the prevalence of urban poverty in major cities of Africa. According to recent studies by UN-HABITAT (2013), the urban poor in most African cities live in conditions that are at least two times worse than their rural counterparts. There is therefore a need to redress this situation by providing a win-win situation for both urban and rural areas.

The main objective of this study is therefore to identify the missing links between the urban and rural areas as urban areas draw a lot from the rural areas with limited flow in the opposite direction. Also, the study examines the implications of these interactions in the light of regional integration and growth of the region. Using the Meme Division of Cameroon with Kumba as a major urban and primate city of the area, such missing links will be determined and policy options for the strengthening of regional integration suggested.

## **The Study Matrix and Methodology**

### ***The Study Matrix***

The Meme Division is a second-order administrative division and hosts the largest city – Kumba – in the South-West Region. It is located at longitude 9°20'E and latitude 4°50'N, sitting on an elevation of approximately 785 meters above sea level as illustrated in Figure 1. The division has an approximated population of about 300,000 inhabitants (2005 Census and 2010 estimate) with the major ethnic group being the Bafaw people. However, due to the cosmopolitan nature of Kumba, the division is host to different ethnic groups like the Bamelike, the Bayangs, the Bakossis', the Irokos' and, amongst others, the Igbo tribe from Nigeria. The major languages spoken within the region include English, French and Pidgin-English.

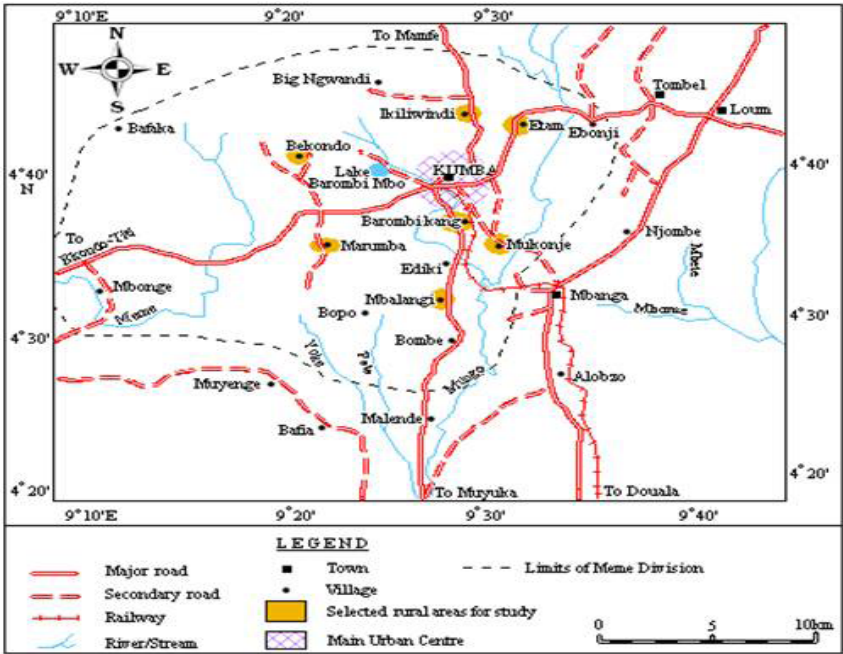


Figure 1: The Meme Division locating Kumba and its surrounding rural settlements

Source: Adapted from SW-R Administrative Extract (2012)

Methodology

This study was undertaken in the Meme Division of Cameroon. Kumba, the main primate city of the region, constitutes the urban area while seven surrounding settlements (Bekondo, Ikiliwindi, Mukonje, Marumba, Etam, Mbalangi and Barombi Kang) constitute the rural areas. These study sites were selected based on the role they play in terms of movement of agricultural goods and services, administrative and health services within the region. The methodology of the study involved the use of both primary and secondary data. The secondary sources were collected from published and unpublished materials from the Senior Divisional Office (SDO) Archives-Kumba, Kumba Regional Hospital inpatient and outpatient data, journals and articles amongst others. Primary data constituted direct interviews and a field survey as well as a questionnaire distribution and were collected through the use of stratified, systematic and random sampling techniques.

The population of study in the rural areas were stratified into three: the cash crop farmers, the food crop farmers and retailers, while for the urban areas the major areas of interest within the Kumba urban area were the urban market, cash

crop buyers, administrative functions and the hospital. Within each stratum of the rural area, the respondents were randomly interviewed to obtain information regarding where they sell their farm products, and where they go for health and administrative services. Also, rural retailers on their part were interviewed to know where they buy goods from and the quantity of products they can buy at a time. The urban market constitutes an avenue to understand where goods sold in the market come from. The Regional Hospital Annex in Kumba was also sampled to deduce the catchment of the hospital within the region.

A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to each of the stratum using a systematic random sampling pattern in the six rural settlements and the Kumba urban market. This was to reduce bias and save time during the field work. Direct interviews were made with some agricultural warehouse owners in Kumba who were noted to buy some cash crops like cocoa on a large scale from these rural areas. This was done to understand the respective rural areas they buy from, the problems faced in transporting the products and proposed measures to ameliorate the situation. The collected data was analysed using the Rank Size Rule method.

## **Conceptual View**

This study makes use of two main concepts – the Growth Pole and Growth Centre concept by Perroux and the Trickle Down and Polarization Effect by Hirschman. The Growth Pole and Growth Centre concept was used to show the current situation of primate cities in Africa and the Trickle Down and Polarization Effect was used as a way forward for regional integration and equitable regional development in Africa.

### **i. Growth Poles and Growth Centres by Perroux (1950)**

Perroux (1950) in this concept attempted to understand the mechanisms by which development impulses are transmitted through the whole economy. According to him, growth poles are centres or foci from which centrifugal forces emanate and to which centripetal forces are attracted. Perroux was not concerned with the geographical pattern of economic activity/growth, or intra – and inter-regional shifts, but as an economist in abstract economic areas. He stressed that a growth pole is an industry (firm) which is propulsive, having direct and indirect dominance over all other activities and enjoying oligopolistic concentration.

For the growth pole mechanism to be effective, it must have certain linkages: forward, backward and lateral (interaction between the various production sectors in an economy – primary, secondary and tertiary), and a 3-dimensional force needs to exist. The strength of a propulsive industry will depend on the use of growth inducements from primary to tertiary sectors and laterally by

interacting with other lateral industries within and outside of its sphere. The presence of the three linkages provides channels through which direct and indirect influences of development in Africa and Kumba in particular, the favoured growth poles tend to grow independently without spreading the impulse of development to its surrounding unfavoured areas. This further widens the gap between the haves and the have nots. However, the concept strives for trickle down and polarization of development impulses through integration of activities and spread of development indicators throughout the region in order to bridge the gap between the rural and urban settlements.

Results

*State of Rural-Urban Interaction in the Meme Division*

The state of rural-urban interaction in the Meme division can be viewed from two main indicators, firstly, the Kumba Main Market and secondly, the Regional Hospital Annex of Kumba. The data collected revealed the extent to which Kumba interacts with its surrounding rural settlements based on the origin of patients to the hospital.

*The Kumba Main Market*

The Kumba urban market seeks traders from different areas, amongst which are shop owners dealing mostly with manufactured goods and makeshift owners who are dealers of mainly foodstuffs produced directly from the farms. The traders come from different areas to sell and buy products for either retail sale or consumption in the destination areas. The major areas served by this market and type of goods bought by these traders can be seen in Table 1.

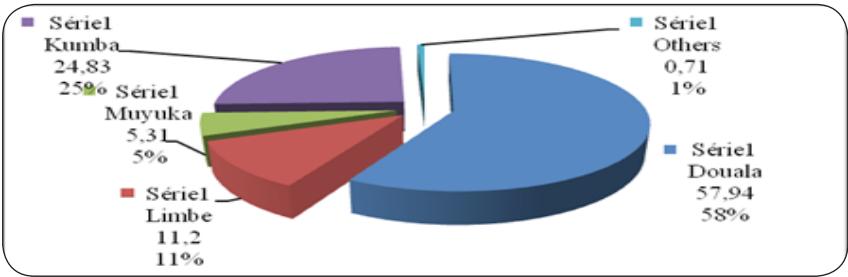
Table 1: Origin and destination of products from the Kumba urban market

Origin	Products from Kumba market	Vegetables (in bundles)	Plantains (in bunches)	Yams (in tubers)	Cocoyams (in bags)	Potatoes (in bags)	Total/destination	Percentage (%) / destination
	Destination							
Environ of Kumba	Douala	3,500	800	6,000	800	800	11,900	57.94
	Limbe	1,500	25	300	380	100	2,305	11.20
	Muyuka	600	20	400	30	40	1,090	5.31
	Kumba	2,000	1,000	1,500	200	400	5,100	24.83
	Others	30	20	55	20	20	145	0.71
	Total	7,630	1,865	8,255	1,430	2,700	20,540	100.00

Source: Field work (2014)

Table 1 illustrates that the highest destination area of products from the Kumba market is Douala (57.94%) followed by Kumba (24.83%), Limbe (11.2%), Muyuka (5.31%) and others (0.71%) like Ediki, Kake which are other smaller settlements around Kumba. Douala produces most of the food crops needed. This relationship can be seen in Figure 2.

Based on the relationship between the origin of farm produce and destination zones, the sphere of influence can be depicted. This shows the extent to which goods from the surrounding rural areas of Kumba can go and thus the need to strengthen rural-urban interactions for posterity.



**Figure 2:** Percentage distribution of products from the Kumba Market  
Source: Field work (2014)

Another major agricultural product from the surrounding rural areas is cocoa. All the rural areas surrounding Kumba are cocoa-producing areas and they sell their produce to major cocoa buyers in Kumba. These main cocoa buyers have been able to control the cocoa economy for the past decades within the region and they have been able to assist in the repair and maintenance of roads to ease accessibility between Kumba and its surrounding rural settlements.

*The Kumba Regional Hospital*

Data obtained for inpatients reveal the movement of patients from different destinations to the Kumba Hospital through a centripetal flow pattern, as seen in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Average movement of inpatients/day for a period of two months

Place of Origin	Total inpatients/ day	Percentage (%) flow of total inpatient/day	Point of destination
Ikiliwindi	17	9.83	KumbaGeneral Hospital
Etam	20	11.56	
Bekondo	15	8.67	
Marimba	14	8.09	
Mbalangi	8	4.62	
Mukonje	21	12.14	
Barombi Kang	4	2.31	
Kumba	74	42.77	
Total	173	100.00	

*Source:* Inpatient Department, Regional Hospital, Kumba (June to July 2014)

From Table 2, it is deduced that the Kumba urban area has the highest number of inpatients while Barombi Kang has the lowest. This limited number of inpatients from Barombi can be accounted for by the existence of health units in the village. However, out of the four patients, on average 2 or 3 are referred from these clinics to the Regional Hospital in Kumba. Irrespective of the number of patients going to the hospital daily, the sphere of influence produced by the hospital calls for better linkages and regional integration within the region.

On the other hand, the outpatient directory shows a centrifugal pattern of movement as patients after consultation and/or treatment move back to their various origins. Some of them are referred to other hospitals as illustrated in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Direction of Outpatients from Kumba General Hospital

Point of origin	Destination	Frequency of outpatient/day	% of outpatients/day
Kumba General Hospital	Douala	2	1.16
	Manyemen	8	4.62
	Limbe	3	1.73
	Ikiliwindi	16	9.25
	Etam	17	9.83
	Bekondo	13	7.51
	Marimba	12	6.94
	Mbalangi	7	4.05
	Mukonje	20	11.56
	Barombi Kang	4	2.31
	Kumba	71	41.04
	Total	173	100.00

*Source:* Inpatient Department, Regional Hospital, Kumba (June to July 2014)

Table 3 reveals that some of the patients are referred to specialists' hospitals in Manyemen, Douala and Limbe for further treatment. The other patients are either sent back home or admitted depending on the severity of the case. These movements show the extent of coverage of the hospital and thus the need to strengthen the links between the urban and rural areas of Kumba and Meme division as a whole.

### ***The Missing Link between the Rural-Urban Divide***

#### *Nature of the Roads*

Most roads linking the different neighbourhoods of Kumba are tarred. This eases the movement and circulation of goods and services within the town. However, none of the roads linking Kumba to its surrounding rural settlements are tarred. All of them are earth roads and seasonal in nature as seen in Figure 1. Based on field data, 98 per cent of the respondents confirmed the stress attached to transporting goods and people during the rainy season. Some of them take two or more days for a distance of about 70 to 105 km. This greatly reduces the rate of interaction and integration between the urban and rural settlements of the region. Also, most of the cars adapted to transport goods and services along these roads are in a poor state and always overloaded with goods and passengers. This inhibits movements between Kumba and its surrounding rural areas.



**Figure 3:** Poor nature of the roads during the rainy season connecting Kumba-Mbonge (a) and Kumba-Ikiliwindi (b)

*Source:* Agbortoko (August 2014)

It should be noted here that, within the selected rural areas of study, Ikiliwindi is the largest producer of cocoa and cocoyams, about 95 per cent of which are destined for the Kumba market.

### *Electricity Supply*

Besides Barombi Kang and Marumba, none of the other rural settlements have an electricity supply. The problem of electricity supply can be linked to problems of storage facilities. Data collected revealed that storage problems have led to the sale of agricultural products like vegetables amongst other perishables at lower prices to urban retailers who in turn sell them at higher prices in the urban market. A bundle of vegetable sold at 75 Frs CFA in a village settlement like Ikiliwindi, Bekondo or Etam sells at 300 Frs CFA within the Kumba urban market. Since the rural farmers lack the means to preserve their farm produce, they are forced to sell at lower prices for fear of them rotting.

### *Unbalanced Trade Relationship*

There is an unbalanced trade relationship between urban buyers and rural farmers that disadvantages the farmers. Most of the rural farmers are unable to purchase basic materials for agricultural production like pesticides and fertilizers. In such situations, the urban buyers move in to supply these farmers. According to field data, pesticides sold for 350 Frs CFA per pack in Kumba are given to these farmers for 700 Frs CFA in a business relationship termed '10 born 10'. This relationship continues to impoverish the rural farmers who engage in farming activities throughout the year only to receive half of what is being produced on their farms. This is a common exercise in

the cocoa trade within the Meme Division. It must be noted that Kumba in itself as an urban centre does not cultivate cocoa but that the major cocoa exporters are based in Kumba. This means they depend solely on the surrounding rural communities for cocoa.

Added to this, the price per kilogram of cocoa bought from these rural farmers is being determined by the urban buyers. Most often, the urban buyers complain of transportation costs which they always deduct from the buying price, which is still way below the actual price of cocoa per kilogram. The field survey indicates that the actual cocoa price per kg ranges from 1,200 Frs CFA to 1,800 Frs CFA but rural farmers often sell their cocoa at 800 to 1,100 Frs CFA. This unbalanced trade continues to impoverish rural farmers while the urban buyers become richer and richer.

*Administrative Functions*

The division is headed by a Senior Divisional Officer (SDO) while other development activities are controlled largely by the Government Delegate of the City Council. Most infrastructural developments like road construction and pipe-born water among others are controlled by the Government Delegate. The Lord Mayors of the different councils are all under the Government Delegate and so will implement any development activity according to the SDO's instructions. Based on the field data, roads for example have been developed within the neighbourhoods of Kumba while the roads linking the rural areas have been left seasonal.

Also, the seat of the Government Delegate remains within the urban environment and so will carry out development activities only within the urban milieu. This reduces the rate of interaction between the urban areas and their rural counterparts.

**Rank Size Rule Analysis**

From the collected data, the above was realized from the interaction of Kumba and its surrounding environs. Using an example from the inpatient records of the Regional Hospital Annex in Kumba, the following can be calculated:

**Table 4:** Rank-Size distribution of inpatients and outpatients from the Regional Hospital Annex, Kumba

Rural settlement	Inpatient records	Outpatient records	Rank (inpatient)
Ikiliwindi	17	16	3
Etam	20	17	2

Bekondo	15	13	4
Marimba	14	12	5
Mbalangi	8	7	6
Mukonje	21	20	1
Barombi Kang	4	4	7

*Source:* Field work (2014)

From Table 4, it is realized that Mukonje is ranked top, followed by Etam, Ikiliwindi, Bekondo, Marimba, Mbalangi and Barombi Kang. This can be explained by the fact that Mukonje is a very remote settlement with little infrastructural development. Medical centres are absent but it constitutes one of the major areas from which food stuffs especially cocoyams are grown for transportation to Kumba and other urban centres, as indicated in Table 1. Etam on the other hand is a road-side settlement along the major road linking Kumba and Mamfe (another major settlement). It is also lacking in social amenities and so will depend on Kumba for sales of products and use of its infrastructures amongst other services.

The above explains why Kumba as the main urban centre continues to grow at the expense of the surrounding areas. The top-ranked settlement (Mukonje) supplies most of the food stuffs to Kumba but lacks basic amenities to survive. This contributes to the increase in the rural exodus to Kumba and other neighbouring urban centres in the region.

## Discussion

In the background of rural-urban integration, the Meme division is greatly lacking as the link seems to be distorted due to poor roads, lack of social services and the concentration of activities within the urban environment. Against this backdrop, there is therefore the need to strengthen the rural-urban link to enhance sustainability.

The International Development Agenda is increasingly recognizing the potency of the rural-urban linkage development approach to sustainable development. UN-HABITAT for example considers this as having potential both for promoting rural-urban development benefits and for generating substantial employment and therefore contributing to poverty eradication as well as bridging the divide between the haves and have nots. Also, the Habitat Agenda (paragraphs 10, 99, 141 and 147) clearly makes the case for economic, social and environmental interdependence and for the need for balanced and mutually supportive development between rural and urban areas.

According to Okpala (2003), the old orthodoxy of a discrete and dichotomous approach to urban development as distinct from rural development no longer accords with reality, considering the complementary functions and flow of people, capital, goods and services, employment, information and technology between the two areas. Urban integrated development, rural areas' territorial development and the organisation of basic services in more remote rural areas are important elements to boost regional integration within different regions. This is seriously lacking in the study area as the poor trade relationship and poor roads, among others, have not been identified as important elements to enhance regional integration and sustainable development.

Public services and sustainable development have been recognized as the crucial functions to be considered in this action, highlighting the importance of public service upgrading in order to support regional growth (Barca 2009). Public services, accessibility and quality are crucial for territorial cohesion.

It can be drawn from the analysis that there is an increasing need to integrate rural and urban activities in order to enhance sustainable development. This rural-urban relationship can best be seen in the aspects of agricultural linkages. As pointed out by Naquo (1980), Ougnau (1981), Haji (1980), Minamino (1996), Jefferson (1985) all emphasized that no one urban centre has all the resources it needs to survive. They further added that the markets for agricultural products that can be found in most cities represent one example of such mutually beneficial relationships. However, the development of some roads like those linking Kumba with Mbalangi, Kumba with Barombi Kang as well as Kumba with Ikiliwindi indicates a way forward towards regional integration for the Meme region as a whole.

## **Conclusion**

Regional integration in Africa has not yet been realized, be it at local, national or international levels. Most of the urban areas have grown to a primate city state thereby absorbing growth potentials to themselves at the detriment of their surrounding rural counterparts. This study has been able to identify the different rural-urban linkages using the Kumba urban market and the Kumba Regional Hospital to illustrate the origin of people and their various destinations. It also brings out the missing link in their relationship and the need to enhance regional integration for sustainable development.

The concept of rural-urban linkage and regional integration stands as a way forward towards the reduction of urban poverty and regional development. By bridging the gap between the haves and have nots, improved trade relationships and road links among others must produce a

win-win situation for both parties. This does not however exist in African cities. Most of them like Lagos in Nigeria and Douala in Cameroon, among others, have absorbed growth potentials like the attraction of rural youths and agricultural raw materials, as well as distorting the rural lifestyle through the suburbanization process in situations of urban expansion. Rather than bringing regional development, these cities have increased the poverty gap between rural and urban areas. Thus, there is a need to curb such negative relationships by changing development strategies from urban-based or rural-based to regional development. Through this, the redistribution of resources and the general growth of regions can be envisaged. This falls in line with the UN-HABITAT Agenda towards bridging the development gap between urban and rural poverty.

### **Recommendations**

In order to bring about regional integration and development, there is definitely the need to strengthen rural-urban linkages between the said regions. This will inevitably lead to the merging of development ideas towards regional growth. To ensure this, the following recommendations have been posited.

Firstly, there is the need to change development patterns from rural-based or urban-based approach towards regional-based development. This can be achieved through the redistribution of resources as well as the transfer of industrial concentration from urban to rural areas.

Secondly, agricultural intensification through subsidies from the state and the regularization of agricultural products, as was the case with the defunct National Produce Marketing Board in Cameroon, will go a long way to reducing poor market relationships between urban buyers and rural farmers.

Finally, the need for infrastructural development in rural areas like roads, electricity provision and healthcare facilities among other basic social facilities will help reduce the rural exodus and a consequent reduction of the urban poor.

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