



The Gender Inequalities in the Process of Decentralization in Togo

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines gender inequalities in the process of decentralization in Togo. Although women represent 51.4% of the Togolese population (GCPH, 2010), they are poorly represented in decision-making. The goal of this research is to analyze the impact of decentralization on women's involvement and inclusion as development actors in the national and local spheres. Through a documentary review and interviews, we were able to collect necessary information regarding the decentralization process and women's inclusion in Togo. The findings revealed women are poorly represented in decision-making bodies. The results of municipal elections, which are supposed to make decentralization effective, showed considerable imbalance between the number of women and men elected. This revealed the low inclusion of women in Togo's decentralization process. Thus, so that women can better participate in the decentralization process, it is important that the Togolese government adopt policies that promote access for elected women to executive positions and promote, through training and awareness-raising workshops, female leadership in schools, universities and rural areas

KEYWORDS: Decentralization, Election, Gender equity, Local community, Women inclusion

INTRODUCTION

For decades, in West African countries and particularly in Togo, women have been confined to the home, doing household chores and caring for the family's well-being. Now, beyond her contributions to the home, women have proved that if given the same tools and opportunities as men, they can actively contribute to the socioeconomic, political, and cultural development of the country. In Togo, women represent more than 51.4% of the population (GCPH, 2010). They play a key role in the national development process through their invaluable participation in the socio-economic development of the country.

However, national statistics have shown that despite the increasingly preponderant role of women in the various areas of activity in the rural and urban sector, the participation of women in national decision-making processes, at local and national levels, and the participation of women in public and political life are far below expectations (Koffi Eli ATRI, 2008). The decentralization is important on strengthening and promoting the role of women in council procedures (TW Aid, 2005). There are three reasons why it is important to examine the process of decentralization in Togo. First, for a better management of state affairs Second, for better governance and finally, to promote the development of all regions of the country"

At the international level, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in September

2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda, define 17 priorities for socially equitable, environmentally and economically secure development. prosperous, inclusive and predictable by 2030. Achieving gender equality and women's empowerment through the fifth SDG is an integral part of each of these 17 goals and demonstrates the need for inclusion women in all development sectors and also in decentralization. The gender approach has thus become one of the main priorities in the implementation of Togo's National Development Program (NDP) which runs from 2018 to 2022.

Many claims are made in favour of decentralization, ranging from the democratising potential of increased scope for participation and accountability through to poverty reduction and improved service delivery (Mark Robinson, 2007). Since the 1990s, decentralization has become the form of administrative organization of most African states because it embodies hope (Amlalo Mensha SEDO, 2007). The history of relations between the central level, the local level and the implementation of decentralization represents a major issue in Togo. Since the constitution of October 14, 1992, Togo has opted for a reform of the administrative organization based on the principle of decentralization. The development of the country will be all the more strengthened through the decentralization process made effective by the local elections of June 30 and that of August 15, 2019, enshrined in the constitution and supported by law n ° 2019-006 of June 26, 2019. amending Law No. 2007-011 of March 13,



2007 on decentralization and local freedoms, as amended by Law No. 2018-003 of January 31, 2018. This organization revolves around a dual process aimed at correcting the excessive centralization of power. This is on the one hand deconcentration and on the other hand decentralization. These two systems, far from being antagonistic, complement each other for the management of national and local affairs throughout the national territory. The system of centralized administration set up by the colonizer is attenuated by deconcentration, now coupled with decentralization (Amlalo Mensha SEDO, 2007).

It is therefore necessary to know that decentralization takes place within a very specific legal framework, with local authorities, actors and devolved skills. Decentralization therefore reinforces women's better accessibility to resources, institutions and positions of power. Its conditions both participatory local developments, the fight against poverty, bringing public services closer to citizens and good administrative governance, and in this context, women obviously have a leading role to play.

Compared to the study and research of many authors, decentralization is a multidimensional concept. Moreover, Prud'Homme (2003) underlines the ambiguity of the term "decentralization" by asserting that this term refers to both the "system" and the "process". Some authors such as Brody (2009) stress the importance of taking women into account in local governance, which is, among other things, a component of decentralization. Thus, decentralization is a process of empowering local communities which is carried out with players and devolved skills. It will now be an integral part of the standard recipe for good governance. This interest is based on the idea that decentralization will further promote participatory democracy, introduce a more responsive service delivery system, and advance citizens' rights.

The populations of decentralized local communities are made up of more than 50% of women, yet the gender parity index in 2011 is 0.72 with an enrollment rate of 41% for girls against 58% for boys. In addition, according to 2018 statistics reported by the SDG 5 targets document in Togo, only 24% of national parliamentarians were women in November 2018 against 11.3% in 1995. According to the WDI database of the World Bank, in 2018 in Togo, the gender equity index was 3 and the social inclusion index was 3.4. Even if the effort is there, inequalities persist (BEIJING, 2016).

It is therefore believed that decentralization will promote gender equality and benefit women who, underrepresented in political bodies, had little participation in the local governance process. Indeed, they are found more in the animation of groups than in the spheres of political decision-making, although they represent more than half of the population. Gender relations are often more unequal at the local level than the national level and the political culture frequently does not allow women to participate.

The persistence of relations of inequality, the lack of equity between men and women and the limited involvement of men in programs for the promotion of women and their rights in many areas, are still a brake on sustainable development of the country.

The gender approach is poorly integrated into development policies, strategies, programs and projects. Several studies have revealed economic, legal, social, cultural and political obstacles to the effective and effective participation of Togolese women in public and political life. Little room is given to the authority and representativeness of women.

The main concern is that women have always remained on the sidelines in decision-making bodies. This excludes or minimizes their effective participation in development. Faced with this observation, two major questions arise:

1. What is the role of women in the decentralization process?
2. How does decentralization help reduce disparities between men and women?

This article will contribute to the literature on the role of women in the socio-economic development of a country. The analysis of the inclusion of women in the decentralization process will allow better consideration of the gender aspect and more specifically of the condition of women in the different levels of decentralization. It presents, among other things, the efforts undertaken to eliminate gender disparities within the framework of the implementation of decentralization in Togo. This study has four goals. The first goal is to determine the impact of decentralization of Togo at the national and local level. The second goal is to reveal the procedures that minimize the development and decentralization in Togo. The third goal is to determine the role of women in the decentralization process in Togo. The final goal is to reveal the importance of decentralization to reduce gender disparities between men and women.

METHODOLOGY

The analysis involved a documentary review and data collection through interviews with staff from the Ministry of Territorial Administration and local authorities. There were two goals for this analysis. First, the information allowed us to evaluate decentralization in Togo. Second, the statistical data collected in the field allowed us to analyze the involvement of women in the process of decentralization in Togo.

HISTORY OF DECENTRALIZATION IN TOGO

Like most countries in the West African sub-region, Togo experienced a traditional form of administration before the colonial era. It was characterized by numerous ethnic groupings under the authority of traditional chiefs, these groupings were not organized under central power.

The management, in modern centralized form, of the territory and the populations dates from the colonial era.

The Colonial Period

With the German administration, on August 1, 1898, the Togolese colony was divided into seven constituencies. (Lomé, large popo, Missahohé, Atakpamé, Kété-kratchi, Sokodé and Mango). After the defeat of the Germans in World War I, Togo was split in two between the English and the French. With the French administration the German constituencies were renamed “circles” which are divided into “subdivisions”. At the time, village chiefs were responsible for collecting taxes, carrying out public works and settling local disputes. On November 6, 1929, the Governor (Bonnecarrère) signed an order allowing him to create municipalities. The commune of Lomé was created. Local elected officials were elites who limited themselves to giving an advisory opinion on taxes, benefits and licenses, on desirable public works and on hygiene issues. These elected officials report to the Governor of the colony (Handicap International, 2008).

The Post-Colonial Periods

Thus started, the process will continue after independence. The period from 1960 to 1981 is marked by two laws. The first law, referenced n ° 60-4 of February 10, 1960 relating to the administrative reorganization of the Republic of Togo, creates four (04) economic regions (Maritime, Plateaux, Centrale and Savanes) without giving them the status of local authorities. By decree n ° 65-148 of November 18, 1965 establishing economic regions and economic and social committees, their number was increased to five (05). These are the regions: Maritime, Plateaux, Centrale, Kara and Savannas. It should be noted that this is more about administrative deconcentration. However, this subdivision of the country into regions did not fail to accelerate the process of communal decentralization. The second law n ° 81-8 of June 23, 1981 on territorial organization creates in each economic region of the country, two (02) types of local authorities. These are municipalities and prefectures, as entities with legal personality. However, the prefecture remains, within the meaning of this law, a constituency, just like the region. From 1982 to 1992, there was a strengthening of the decentralization process. With law n ° 82-9 of June 16, 1982 creating full-fledged municipalities and ordinance n ° 84-18 of September 25, 1984 creating medium-sized municipalities and amending article 1 of law n ° 82-9 of June 16, 1982 creating full municipalities, several other municipalities were created. The national territory is thus divided into regions, prefectures, municipalities, sub-prefectures, cantons and villages. A region is made up of several prefectures and a prefecture is made up of several cantons.

The 1998 Reform

With article 141 of the constitution of October 14, 1992, decentralization became the cardinal principle of territorial administration. The government has retained decentralization among its priorities and has set the first milestone in a vast program of discussions and measures

by adopting Law No. 98-006 of February 11, 1998, on decentralization. This law establishes three levels of decentralized territorial communities (municipality, prefecture and region). It respects the main principles of decentralization. This law no longer recognizes fully-fledged and medium-sized municipalities, but rather urban and rural municipalities. However, a break came with a blockage from the socio-political crisis that rocked the country from 1990 to 1993. Togo then experienced an exceptional period. All elected bodies were dissolved and the administration of the municipalities was carried out by special delegations. This law was therefore only applied for the establishment of special delegations, but it ceased to be respected when the special delegations lasted beyond the 3 months provided for in the law (Handicap International, 2008).

The reform from 2007 to 2019

Law n ° 2007-011 of March 13, 2007 relating to decentralization and local freedoms is passed and repeals all previous provisions, in particular Law n ° 98-006 of February 11, 1998 relating to decentralization. It gives the local authorities (Municipality, Prefecture, Region) the free administration of their territory. It ensures that the territorial administration is provided in a complementary manner by the local authorities and by the decentralized services of the State. Law n ° 2007-011 of March 13, 2007 relating to decentralization and local freedoms was modified by law n ° 2018-003 of January 31, 2018 which itself will be modified by law n ° 2019-006 of June 26 2019. The latter, in its second article, stipulates that the national territory is divided into territorial communities that are the municipality and the region, the latter have legal personality and financial autonomy.

In addition, the proceedings of the national workshop on the National Program for the Consolidation of Decentralization (NPCD), supported by UNDP and the European Union (EU), which was adopted by the Togolese government in 2004; the development of the roadmap for the implementation of decentralization in Togo, which had its final report in 2012 and the law of March 13, 2007 on decentralization and local freedoms were only a theoretical contribution. It goes without saying that decentralization has not been effective in its implementation. However, there is hope since the local elections of June 30 and August 15, 2019, which represent a big step in the implementation of decentralization. In addition, the reform and emergence of Togo from its National Development Program (NDP), does not go without saying without decentralization (Togo, NDP, 2018/22).

Legal and Institutional Framework for Decentralization

Decentralization in Togo is part of a legal framework set out in the constitution of October 14, 1992 and supplemented by Law No. 98-006 of February 11, 1998 on decentralization in Togo. Law n ° 98-006 of February 11, 1998 on decentralization in Togo was replaced by law n ° 2007-011 of March 13,

2007 relating to decentralization and local freedoms which recognizes three levels of decentralization: the municipality, the prefecture and region. The latter only existed in the texts and has not known any effective implementation since its creation. As seen above, law n ° 2007-011 of March 13, 2007 relating to decentralization and local freedoms has undergone several modifications. In this section we will mainly talk about the new provisions of law n ° 2019-006 of June 26, 2019 modifying law n ° 2007-011 of March 13, 2007 relating to decentralization and local freedoms modified by law n ° 2018 -003 of January 31, 2018. We will also discuss the institutional framework for decentralization in Togo.

Local Authorities

Article 2 of Law No. 2019-006 stipulates that the national territory is divided into local communities with legal personality and financial autonomy. These local authorities are the municipality and the region. They have the free administration of their territory. Local authorities are governed by councils elected by universal suffrage in accordance with the provisions of the law. The organization and functioning of local authorities (municipality; region) are based on the same principles. There are two types of bodies which intervene in the management of local authorities: legislative bodies and executive bodies.

The Deliberative Bodies

A distinction is made between the regional council for the region and the municipal council for the municipality. These bodies derive their basis from Article 47 of the 2019 law which provides that decentralized administration is provided within the framework of local authorities. It is distinguished by the free administration of communities distinct from the State, managed by elected councils with legal personality. City councilors are elected for a five-year term, renewable once. At the level of each type of community, the number of councilors depends on the number of inhabitants (art 86 and 87 of law n ° 2019-006). The municipal council regulates the affairs of the municipality, it plans and implements the development of the municipality taking into account national guidelines.

Executive Bodies

The executive bodies of the region and the municipality are respectively:

- The executive office of the regional council
- The executive office of the municipal council.

The region's executive board is made up of a president; a vice-president; and a rapporteur. At the municipal level, the executive board is made up of the mayor and deputies elected within the municipal council.

The formation, powers and functioning of the organs of the municipality are governed by articles (art 85 to 165) of law n ° 2019-006. Those in the region are also governed by

articles (art 235 to 295) of the 2019 law. In addition, legality control is exercised by the prefecture on acts taken by the municipality (Reforms on decentralization in Togo 2018).

Institutional Framework for Decentralization

Regarding the institutional framework for decentralization, the government has set up the Ministry of Territorial Administration of Decentralization and Local Communities with the creation of a department responsible for decentralization and local communities. A national decentralization monitoring committee led by the Prime Minister was also created. Certain institutions such as GIZ and the European Union, which are technical and financial partners, also contribute, through their actions, to the implementation of decentralization.

In addition, the main and secondary actors of decentralization are: The State, local elected officials, political parties, grassroots development committees, civil society, chiefdom, citizens, businesses and development partners. According to the legal framework, women participate as citizens in the same way as men in the implementation of decentralization.

Governance and participatory local development. Decentralization is a process which covers several aspects such as the legal and institutional framework, local governance, transfer of competence, citizen participation, participatory local development and the free administration of local communities. The purpose of decentralization in Togo is to ensure the balanced development of the territory through the existence of efficient local administrations, greater mobilization and citizen participation and the enhancement of local development potential. In this part we will look more at local governance and participatory local development (Togo/Ministry of Decentralization and Local Government, 2019).

Local Governance

Decentralization is based on a new concept: local governance. This “feeds on the hopes placed in the closest proximity of powers and actors from different horizons who will come together to make collective choices”. It allows the proximity of powers and actors and the advent of local control over public choices (Kombate Soguibabe, 2019). Decision-makers are expected to be guided by these inputs, and accountable to stakeholders for the decisions they make and how they are implemented through the management of public affairs and expenditures. Indeed, local governance “refers to that of local development and is situated in the historical context of the growing involvement of local-private, public and associative actors in the dynamics of development” (Leloup et al, 2003: 322).

Thus, local governance is a management process, led by public actors, at the municipal level, which brings together local actors including resource holders, informal power holders, local representatives of central government as well

as those of international donors. These actors intervene at the different levels of public action: they act at the level of initiative taking, at the level of resource research or resource holders, and finally, these actors act at the level of the development of projects and programs. in accordance with municipal planning. At the local level, governance is not only at the level of local government offices, but also within community and family decision-making processes. Decentralization of governance functions is believed to be a way to achieve double objective of economic growth and democracy. "Democratic decentralization" allows authorities at lower hierarchical levels to have more responsibilities and less bureaucratic tasks (Crook and Manor 2000) and is accompanied, in some countries, by the development of formal spaces and informal organizations for citizen engagement in decision-making processes related to governance.

Decentralization is also seen as a way to achieve greater efficiency because decisions can be made more quickly and be more adapted to local needs, and helps improve transparency and ownership (ibid.: 23). Seven principles of governance are fundamental to the basic goals of social justice and equality. These are accountability, transparency, responsiveness, fairness, inclusion, advocacy and respect for the rule of law (Alyson BRODY, 2009).

In Togo, local governance takes shape through the local or municipal elections of June 30 and August 15, 2019. This will allow better management of state affairs at the local level through elected councils, in particular the mayors and their deputies. Decentralization should, if implemented in a serious way, bring about a significant change. It should have strong structuring effects on local modes of governance. The main question that arises from this is to know, how the state functions will be performed by the municipalities?

Local Elections

The local elections of June 30, followed by those of August 15, 2019 are the first since those of 1987. The local councils were dissolved in September 2001 because of the crisis between them and the prefects in managing their prefectures. The political crisis of the 1990s had a direct influence on the way in which local authorities are managed. Special Delegations (SD) were installed in 2001 for a period of 3 months, but finally the crisis and the delay in the organization of local elections forced the SD to manage for more than eighteen years, according to a legal provision. which extends this mode of management of local affairs, local problems in an imprecise institutional environment and without financial means. From November 2001 until today, local communities in Togo were under the regime of Special Delegations. Under the supervision of the prefects, these SD have been led to assume the responsibilities of local authorities without financial means, without technical skills and without support-advice teams at the central level. They have tried to adapt to financial and institutional constraints and to the

demands of the populations who perceive this situation as an abandonment of the local level by the State (Final report on decentralization in Togo, 2012).

The Exclusively Legal Dimension

Decentralization texts and the weak national leadership in the conduct of the decentralization process, have enabled neither the political system, nor the organizations of civil society and technical ministries to have a common vision of the decentralization project in terms of economic issues and local governance. Local elected representatives are the main players in local authorities. However, the local elections of June 30 and August 15, 2019 constitute an objectively verifiable indicator of the outcome of the decentralization process of which they constitute a decisive stage. The inhabitants participated in their choice through the elections and see through the candidates, their various representatives. Out of 11,447 candidatures registered by the National Independent Electoral Commission (NIEC), a total of 1,542 municipal councilors were elected. In their turn, these councilors nominate by vote the mayors of the 117 municipalities as well as their deputies. Local elections embody the effective exercise of the powers of local authorities by elected executives. Togo's financial partners who were awaiting the organization of these local elections will be able to effectively engage in the decentralization process. Several clarifications are expected, in particular on the operational mechanism of supported funds for local authorities (SFLA), the strategic options for taking the rural world into account in the process of communalization and the integration of decentralization into the reform of public administrations. Until then we were always at the level of the legal framework. However, the organization of local elections makes the law on decentralization fully functional.

Roles of Local Elected Officials

The role of local elected representatives is to:

- Organize and manage the affairs of local authorities through two organs: the deliberative body and the executive body;
- The deliberative body is the decision-making body, it takes all decisions relating to questions of economic, social, cultural development etc. in order to meet the needs of citizens; represents the community in its relations with third parties;
- The executive body implements, applies or enforces the decisions taken
- Report regularly to the populations on their management: explanation of decisions, information to relays within the population;
- Inform, sensitize and organize populations to carry out development programs (Amlalo Mensah SEDO, 2007).

The elected mayors have more extensive power, in particular: to coordinate development actions, to ensure the collection of taxes, fees and municipal duties, to determine, in agreement

with the municipal council, the mode of execution of municipal works, to manage the revenues and organize the life of these local communities.

Participatory Local Development

Empirically, reformers in sub-Saharan Africa have associated decentralization with local development. In particular, in the case of developing countries, the mechanical link between decentralization and local development is established in a context where international donors have conditioned their interventions on the execution of structural adjustment programs and the redevelopment of powers and administrations in favor of subnational public authorities. Decentralization will notably allow better participation of citizens in the development of their locality and better coordination of state affairs at the local level (Kombate Soguibabe, 2019).

The ambition of the Togolese authorities by 2030 is to make Togo an economically, socially and democratically middle-income nation that is solid and stable, united and open to the world. Togo will thus be a structurally transformed country where all stakeholders including local communities participate substantially in strong, sustainable and inclusive economic growth. Thus, the acceleration of decentralization to encourage local development of proximity, based on greater mobilization and citizen participation as well as the enhancement of local development potentials has become essential (NDP-Togo, 2018/2022). Local development is also about involving as many community members as possible, mobilizing as many local resources as possible to have a certain autonomy and therefore room for maneuver in relation to donors. It is also the players' desire to take control of their future, to have more influence over decisions that affect them. For the participation of the population to be strong and regular, the objectives must be motivating; that everyone is there and that the actions taken are effective. Local development must establish relationships with the environment and not isolate itself in its corner (Amlalo Mensah SEDO, 2007). Advocates of decentralization reforms make many arguments. They argue that decentralization would allow actors to increase access to information on people's needs, conditions and development priorities. These elements would then be incorporated into local development planning. In the same order of ideas, decentralization would make it possible to locate the place where the power of action and decision is concretely located and we would finally know which actor has the capacity to implement projects and translate plans into action programs) (Kombate Soguibabe, 2019)

At the level of the communes of Togo, grassroots development committees have been set up. These are neighborhood development committees, township development committees, village development committees. These committees coordinate the actions of development of their places, bring

the populations to mobilize all the essential resources for the well-being of all.

Finally, decentralization would allow actors to increase the amount of available resources and in particular, financial resources. It must be said about the latter that theoretically, several opportunities are available to local actors. They can increase their financial envelope by creating new sources of revenue, improving the collection of existing taxes, facilitating contributions from the general public, and finally, reducing the cost of providing services (Bardhan, 2002; Ribot, 1999 ; Conyers, 2007; Robinson, 2007).

Female representativeness in the decentralization process in Togo

According to specialists, the political decision calls for public functions. Thus, any intervention in the public sphere is political. How then do Togolese women participate in the public life of their community? Statistical data reveal a higher female activity rate than that of men (63% against 37%) due, among other things, to the early arrival of girls (10 to 24 years old) on the labor market. Because of their multiple roles in production, reproduction and community life, Togolese women are at the heart of development. Yet all indicators show that they occupy overwhelmingly marginal positions. They have poor access to the means of production, resources and economic and social opportunities and have difficulty accessing social redistribution on par with men. Do the statistics show a disparity against them? Indeed, according to data from ProCEMA, "as early as 1956, women and men obtained the right to vote and to be eligible in Togo. However, from 1958 until 2007, out of the 855 deputies elected in the various legislative elections, there were only 44 women against 811 men, or 5.14% of the total. At the level of masters and heads of cantons, there are respectively, 11.11% and 0.38% of women. More specifically, women are poorly represented in decision-making bodies. Thus, in the government we have respectively 6 women out of 26 ministers (2019); 15 women out of 91 deputies (2019); 2 women out of 41 prefects; 2 women out of 41 mayors (2018); 3 women out of 30 general secretaries (2018); 2 women out of 29 cabinet directors; 6 women out of 6,387 traditional leaders" (Republic of Togo, 2019).

The proportion of women deputies to the National Assembly, however, rose from 11.1% in 2013 to 18.7% in 2015. In government, in 2018, women ministers represented 23.07% against 76.93% of male ministers. and in 2019 we have 6 women ministers out of a total of 26 ministers. According to the public administration workforce analysis report (2017), female civil servants constitute 19.30% against 80.7% of male civil servants (NDP-Togo, 2018/2022). Togolese women, like their African sisters, face a multitude of obstacles on the way to autonomy and equality due to stereotypes and socio-cultural constraints. However, some have been able to overcome these disparities. According to ProCEMA data,

this is the case for Rwanda, which has the largest number of women parliamentarians in the world (64%); from Senegal, South Africa and Namibia which have over 40% of women parliamentarians each (The Program for the Consolidation of the State and the Associative World (Pro-CEMA), 2018/20).

The desired change requires structural transformations in relation to the status and roles of women and men in the family and in society. To this end, the exercise of democracy and responsible citizenship of all actors with their full participation and their equitable enjoyment of the fruits of development makes it possible to improve the condition of women and men in the decentralization process in Togo. In Togo several activities are carried out to varying degrees to facilitate the involvement of women in political and public life. This is the case of multifunctional platforms managed by women in communities, women leaders of associations, groups, grassroots development committees in neighborhoods, villages and townships.

Individually or collectively, women have always played a role of scouting, awakening awareness, mobilizing their colleagues through information, training, the development of training manuals, the organization of the local elite. (paralegals for example). This, thanks to the capacity building, training and awareness sessions they benefit from through organizations in charge of the advancement of women (decentralization in Togo, 2018). In the area of decentralization, several women's associations or collectives of women's groups have taken the initiative to organize the training of their members and provide them with teaching aids. At this level, the struggle for female participation is almost permanent. For its part, the government has inserted in the electoral code an article which halves the number of guarantees for female candidates in legislative and local elections. This allows women to be able to apply for elective positions. He also revised the family code to allow women access to land and other productive resources. The same is true for the law on the financing of political parties which also provided for a bonus for political parties which have made efforts to promote the candidacy of women. The policy of parity between men and women in elected positions advocated by the government has not yet been felt on the ground. Hence the need for continued efforts for the effective participation of women.

Through the National Development Program (NDP), the government aware of the persistence of gender inequalities which do not favor the full contribution of all social categories, particularly women and young people to the creation of national wealth, is commits to pursue actions aimed at: (i) enhancing the social position and potential of women in the family and in the community, (ii) increasing the productive capacity of women and their level of income, (iii) improving the " equitable access for women and men to social services, (iv) ensure equitable access for women and men to means of production and economic opportunities, (v) ensure equal exercise of civil and political rights for women and men, (vi)

strengthen national capacities to fight against gender-based violence (Togo/NDP,2018/22).

We can also mention the development and implementation in 2011 of the National Policy of Equity and Gender Equality with the aim of strengthening the integration of gender in the management of development. Also, the National Strategy for Equity and Gender Equality adopted in 2018 after a series of regional consultation workshops and which runs from 2019 to 2028 also contributes to strengthening the government's will to reduce disparities. man Woman. In addition, since January 2019, Yawa Djigbodi Tségan, the "President of parliament assembly and member of the Union for the Republic party has been elected head of the national assembly. To date, she becomes the first woman to hold this position. The National Human Rights Commission is also chaired by Ms. Nakpa Polo.

In addition, several projects and activities including the fifth edition of the women's rights fair, which took place from August 21 to 23, 2019, launched at the Hédzranawé market under the theme "let's innovate for a better participation of women for development "organized by the Thinking Group and Action of Women for Democracy and Development (TGAW2D) and the flagship project of the civic education program for women of TGAW2D through the" Training Academy for Women and Girls in Political Leadership "launched on May 15, 2019 in Atakpamé , aim to promote decentralization, local development and the role of women and girls in politics. Some technical and financial partners in Togo also support state and civil society actors in their awareness-raising efforts to encourage female candidates when job openings are made with a view to involving women in the management of the country's affairs. However, despite all these efforts, the involvement of women in public activities remains limited. Decentralization is also an essential lever for their effective involvement in the management of local and public affairs.

Imbalance in the Representation of Women in Local Governance

"Until parity is achieved in governance, women cannot really be equal to men in any area. The absence of women's perspectives in shaping the most basic policy instruments (...) has ensured that gender inequality is maintained "(Banerjee and Oquist 2000). Among the actors who are often excluded or forgotten in local governance, there are women. In local governance, three things are essential for good participation in decision-making, knowledge, ownership, and power.

Unfortunately, women don't always have these three things. This prevents their effective participation in the development of their communities.

"Any transformation requires a change larger than simply increasing the power of influence of previously excluded groups." (Waylen 2008: 255). When adopting a 'gender'

perspective, it is essential to involve, as institutions of governance, households or ‘families’ as well as communities - where many manifestations of gender inequality occur. Governance cannot be effective if it does not advance gender equality, respect women’s rights and fail to involve women and men equally in decision-making. Although the drafters of the Constitution of the Fourth Republic, the fundamental law of Togo, affirmed the equality of all citizens before the law without discrimination on the basis of sex, Togolese women still have great difficulty today. In all areas of life, discriminatory treatment disadvantaged women and girls. This discrimination, which has its roots in our customs and traditions which consider women to be inferior, does not allow them to give the best of themselves. This difference made between men and women rather maintains the persistence of certain practices which are however prohibited by the legislator or induces attitudes harmful to all of society at the level of life family and professional life. The marginalization of women even today is reflected in their very low representation in political, economic, administrative decision-making spheres, in local, national and international bodies.

Decentralization offers a close match between the needs of citizens, their aspirations, the services and support of the administration, while promoting the possibility of

participatory democracy and empowerment of women at the local level. As the majority in the Togolese population, women must become politically involved in order to make their contribution to improving governance and bringing new experiences to the dynamics of inducing change. She must be elected to influence decisions by recalling the consideration of the interests and specific needs of women in politics. Elected women become examples for other women. Women in decision-making positions can help remove some of the structural barriers to electing women. Locally elected women are more likely to advocate for projects for greater social inclusion.

We end with this quote which states that “Today more women are showing more courage to enter politics or decision-making positions, because there have been precedents, role models who are admirable. So that means a new generation is thinking if this or that gets there, why not me? “. According to Sheila Kawamara-Mishambi, former Ugandan parliamentarian, personal communication, the challenge that awaits us so far is to improve the quality of the women who enter it. Statistically, the number of candidates in local elections is 11,447 and the number of locally elected officials is 1,542 for 117 municipalities with the number of women elected which is 191 (Official Journal Togo, 2019).

Table 1.1. Statistics on the Number of Mayors and their Deputies

	Mayor	Percentage%	Deputy Mayor	Percentage%
Men	106	90.60%	159	90.35%
Women	11	9.40%	17	9.65%
Total	117	100%	176	100%

Source: Representation of women in the municipality in Togo; Local Election results, DDCL 2019).

This table shows the number and percentage of women and men who hold the positions of mayor and deputy mayor following the elections of June 30 and August 15, 2019. Out of 11,447 candidates for municipal elections, 1,542 councilors were elected for 117 municipalities. The councilors then proceeded to elect the mayors and their deputies, who are respectively 117 mayors and 176 deputy mayors. Among the 117 mayors elected, only 11 women were elected represented 9.40% of the total; and out of 176 deputies to the mayor, 17 women or 9.65% of the total were elected. This shows the considerable gap between men and women in participation in decision-making bodies at the local level. Even if the effort is being made for more integration of women in the development of Togo, there is still a lot to do to allow women to get involved and assert themselves in positions of responsibility. In addition, the government has imposed 30 women as general secretaries in municipalities across the country.

Contribution of Women to Local Development

The country’s vision in terms of equity and gender equality

which is to make Togo an emerging country, without discrimination, where men and women will have the same rights, the same chances and opportunities to participate in its development and to enjoy the benefits of its growth, has resulted in various measures. Decentralization being linked to local economic development, local authorities while fully assuming their roles and responsibilities must work to create jobs and income for women. The contribution of Togolese women to national development through their multiple roles in production, reproduction and community life is undeniable. 74.6% of women of working age (15-64 years) are active against 79.1% for men. They are predominantly in agriculture and represent 51.1% of the agricultural population. They are very present in the trade at a proportion of 24.2%.

However, women have limited productivity and limited access to income since they have little access to the more profitable and more remunerative formal sector. This is, moreover, due to the fact that they are poorly educated. According to the 2013-2014 DHST demographic and health survey, less than a

third of women have secondary school while more than half of men have this same level. In addition, the proportion of men with a university level is 3 times higher than that of women as shown in the graph below (NDP-Togo, 2018/2022).

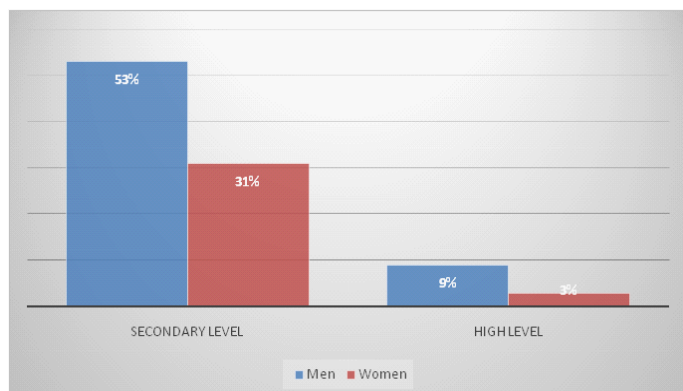


Figure 1.1: Proportion of those enrolled in secondary and higher education

Source: National Institute of Statistical and Economic and Demographic Studies (NISEDS), DHS III (Demographic and Health Survey, 2013-2014).

Moreover, the limited accessibility and the factors of production necessary for profitable entrepreneurship (notably land and finance, technology) also affects their productivity and their contributions to the production of wealth. They work and undertake mainly in the informal sector. According to the DHS (2013-2014), only 20% of women between the ages of 45 and 49 own land. Women's access to credit, especially banking credit, is very difficult due to the lack of guarantees and the risky nature of the informal sector. According to the survey carried out by NISEDS in 2015 (see graph below), women mainly use microfinance (a category of financial services targeting individuals and small businesses who lack access to conventional banking and related services.). This mainly finances groups and can only cover micro-projects at often too high effective interest rates.

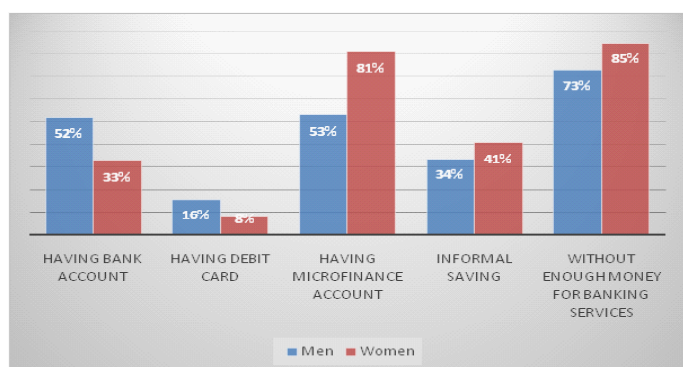


Figure 2.2. Access to finance for women and men

Source: NISEDS (2015), Mobile phone survey: NDP-Togo 2018/2022

In view of the situation described, policies to reduce gender disparities and inequalities go through strengthening the access of populations, especially women to national

solidarity mechanisms, strengthening national capacities in the field of literacy and non-formal education, and improving the participation of women in the development process by empowering them economically and encouraging their leadership.

Citizen Participation of Women in Development

As citizens, women should:

- Participate in the choice of their leaders (be voters);
- Pay their taxes;
- Participate in the development of the community;
- Position yourself for elective positions (be a candidate in local elections);
- Ensure the control of the management of the affairs of the local authority (citizen control);
- Inform and train.

Limits of the Involvement of Women in Decentralization

In the specific case of decentralization, it is a question of knowing what slows down or is likely to slow down the participation of women in the decentralization process. These limits are among others: the problems of inequalities between men and women due to the socio-cultural constraints that prevail in Togolese society, in each local authority, in all sectors of social, cultural, economic and political life, in management of local affairs. For example, stereotypes such as "women do not have the right to speak in public". Analysis of all levels (individual, family, associations, community and national) reveals sectors where women are strongly represented but do not have decision-making power. These include, among others, education / literacy, health, economy, agriculture, crafts, employment; the participation of women in decision-making (household, associative, community and political sphere); the fight against gender-based violence.

In this research, it was a question of carrying out a situational analysis of the condition of women in decentralization in Togo. Even if several efforts are being made to allow the full involvement of women in decentralization, in particular the promotion for the occupation of positions of power in political and public life, there is still a long way to go before achieving gender parity in decision-making bodies in Togo.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Like lessons about this study, Togolese women are at the heart of development through their multiple roles in production, reproduction and community life. They are in marginal positions and have poor access to the means of production, resources, socio-economic opportunities and particularly have difficulty accessing equitable or equal redistribution with men. However, they are taken into account in the legal and legal framework even if this framework suffers from effective application. They are also likely to make the most of decentralization, which gives them important opportunities to express their views and use their influence on the decision-

making process at the local level. Through this research, we realised that decentralization therefore promotes the empowerment of women and promotes gender equality.

This research aimed to determine the impact of decentralization on the involvement and consideration of women as development actors at both national and local levels. It was first necessary to define the notion of decentralization, to go back to the history, procedures, characteristics and other components specific to the implementation of decentralization in Togo, then secondly to the outcome; data and research results, analysed the involvement of women in the decentralization process in Togo. Even, if several efforts are being made by the Togolese government and other institutions, both national and external to Togolese territories, the involvement of women in the decentralization process remains limited and insufficient. Togolese women are more numerous in the informal sector and in the animation of small groups than in decision-making bodies at both national and local levels. The results of the local elections of June 30 and August 15, 2019 show a considerable imbalance between the number of women and men elected in the Togolese municipality. There are more men than women and sometimes not even a single woman among municipal councilors in the country's municipalities. Despite the fact that the populations of the communities are made up of more than 50% of women, the weight of tradition, the lack of will and several other stereotypes and obstacles related to the status of Togolese women prevent their full contribution and participation in decision-making bodies.

The theoretical training received and the professional experience acquired during the internship allowed me to be sufficiently equipped to adapt and face the difficulties in the field when the opportunity arises to assume the position of development planner or agent. of local development. The theoretical knowledge received such as the data collection course saw their concrete application during the internship and were the subject of a synthesis for the development of the document. However, our study was limited by the absence of certain statistical data due to the fact that decentralization is still in its development phase and is therefore not fully implemented on Togolese territory.

In this study, we have focused more on governance and local development in relation to gender. However, decentralization covers several other aspects such as the transfer of powers and the free administration of local communities. These aspects may also be the subject of study or in-depth research

The recommendations of this research are addressed to the government and to all authorities relating to decentralization and gender.

- Promote effective participation of elected women; Promote access by elected women to executive positions and to occupy non-stereotypical positions; Promote, through training and awareness-raising workshops,

female leadership in schools, universities and in rural areas and Promote a non-sexist working atmosphere;

- Organize working time to promote the articulation of life times;
- Recast the paradigms of local public policies through the integration of gender in public policies;
- Development of gender equality indicators;
- Encourage the participation of women in the public consultation process;
- Organize information sessions to understand the role of elected officials;
- Promote young girls to get involved in politics;
- Raise public awareness of women's political participation and gender equality;
- Development of indicators of decentralization and local governance.

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APPENDIX

Annex 1: Summary table of elected women and men during the municipal elections in Togo, June, 2019

REGION		Municipalities	Local elected	Females elected	Males elected
Large Lome	1	AGOE NYEVE 1	23	7	16
	2	AGOE NYEVE 2	11	2	9
	3	AGOE NYEVE 3	11	2	9
	4	AGOE NYEVE 4	11	1	10
	5	AGOE NYEVE 5	11	2	9
	6	AGOE NYEVE 6	11	1	10
	7	GOLFE 1	23	4	19
	8	GOLFE 2	19	3	16
	9	GOLFE 3	19	4	15
	10	GOLFE 4	23	5	18
	11	GOLFE 5	23	2	21
	12	GOLFE 6	19	3	16
	13	GOLFE 7	19	3	16

MARITIM REGION	14	AVE 1	15	1	14	
	15	AVE 2	11	1	10	
	16	BAS MONO 1	15	1	14	
	17	BAS MONO 2	11	0	11	
	18	LACS 1	11	1	10	
	19	LACS 2	11	2	9	
	20	LACS 3	15	1	14	
	21	LACS 4	11	1	10	
	22	VO 1	15	2	13	
	23	VO 2	11	1	10	
	24	VO 3	15	2	13	
	25	VO 4	11	0	11	
	26	YOTO 1	15	1	14	
	27	YOTO 2	11	1	10	
	28	YOTO 3	15	2	13	
	29	ZIO 1	23	2	21	
	30	ZIO 2	26	3	23	
	31	ZIO 3	15	1	14	
	32	ZIO 4	11	2	9	
	PLATEAU REGION	33	AGOU 1	15	2	13
		34	AGOU 2	11	1	10
		35	AKEBOU 1	11	0	11
		36	AKEBOU 2	11	0	11
		37	AMOU 1	11	1	10
		38	AMOU 2	11	2	9
		39	AMOU 3	11	2	9
		40	ANIE 1	15	4	11
		41	ANIE 2	15	1	14
		42	DANYI 1	11	0	11
		43	DANYI 2	11	1	10
		44	EST-MONO 1	11	3	8
		45	EST-MONO 2	15	3	12
46		EST-MONO 3	11	4	7	
47		HAHO 1	19	3	16	
48		HAHO 2	15	2	13	
49		HAHO 3	15	2	13	
50		HAHO 4	11	1	10	
51		KLOTO 1	19	2	17	
52		KLOTO 2	11	0	11	
53		KLOTO 3	11	2	9	
54		KPELE 1	11	0	11	
55		KPELE 2	11	1	10	
56		MOYEN MONO 1	11	0	11	
57		MOYEN MONO 2	11	1	10	
58		OGOU 1	15	4	11	
59		OGOU 2	11	0	11	
60		OGOU 3	11	1	10	
61		OGOU 4	11	0	11	
62		WAWA 1	15	3	12	
63		WAWA 2	11	1	10	
64		WAWA 3	11	1	10	
CENTRAL REGION	65	BLITTA 1	15	3	12	
	66	BLITTA 2	11	2	9	
	67	BLITTA 3	11	1	10	
	68	MO 1	11	1	10	
	69	MO 2	11	0	11	
	70	SOTOUBOUA 1	11	1	10	
	71	SOTOUBOUA 2	15	2	13	
	72	SOTOUBOUA 3	11	0	11	
	73	TCHAMBA 1	15	3	12	
	74	TCHAMBA 2	11	1	10	
	75	TCHAMBA 3	11	1	10	
	76	TCHAUDJO 1	19	2	17	
	77	TCHAUDJO 2	11	0	11	
	78	TCHAUDJO 3	11	3	8	
	79	TCHAUDJO 4	11	1	10	

KARA REGION	80	ASSOLI 1	11	1	10
	81	ASSOLI 2	11	3	8
	82	ASSOLI 3	11	2	9
	83	BASSAR 1	11	1	10
	84	BASSAR 2	11	2	9
	85	BASSAR 3	11	1	10
	86	BASSAR 4	11	3	8
	87	BINAH 1	11	1	10
	88	BINAH 2	11	1	10
	89	DANKPEN 1	15	2	13
	90	DANKPEN 2	11	2	9
	91	DANKPEN 3	15	1	14
	92	DOUFELGOU 1	11	2	9
	93	DOUFELGOU 2	11	1	10
	94	DOUFELGOU 3	11	1	10
	95	KERAN 1	11	3	8
	96	KERAN 2	11	1	10
	97	KERAN 3	11	0	11
	98	KOZAH 1	19	6	13
	99	KOZAH 2	11	1	10
	100	KOZAH 3	11	4	7
101	KOZAH 4	11	2	9	
SAVANA REGION	102	CINKASSE 1	11	1	10
	103	CINKASSE 2	11	1	10
	104	KPENDJAL 1	11	2	9
	105	KPENDJAL 2	11	1	10
	106	KPENDJAL OUEST 1	11	1	10
	107	KPENDJAL OUEST 2	15	1	14
	108	OTI 1	11	2	9
	109	OTI 2	15	2	13
	110	OTI SUD 1	15	1	14
	111	OTI SUD 2	11	1	10
	112	TANDJOARE 1	15	1	14
	113	TANDJOARE 2	15	0	15
	114	TONE 1	19	3	16
	115	TONE 2	11	0	11
	116	TONE 3	11	0	11
	117	TONE 4	15	0	15
	TOTAL			1542	191

Source: Togolese Republic (2019). Final results of the municipal elections of June, 2019 and August, 2019. Official journal 64th year n° 17 of 07/19/2019 and n° 18 of 09/06/2019

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