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THE POLITICS OF URBAN RESETTLEMENT

Spatial Governmentality, “Soft Constraints”, and Everyday Life in Lomé, Togo

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Introduction

As is the case for many other cities in the Global South, Lomé, capital city of the West African nation of Togo, is witnessing a growth in the number of infrastructure projects that prompt urban resettlement as populations are displaced to make way for new buildings and other infrastructure. Research has shown that resettlement processes entail not only spatial ordering, but also processes of political (re)-ordering that alter the relationship between urban authorities and urban dwellers (Doshi 2013; Spire, Bridonneau, and Philifert 2017; Amedokpo 2019). Following this argument, this chapter investigates which forms of politics these resettlement operations entail for city dwellers and how power relations are altered. In line with this book's introduction, we consider urban resettlement as the combination of a destructive process (eviction) and a creative one (the construction of new houses), but we also insist on its *selective* nature in terms of urban political integration, as seen from a governmentality perspective developed by Foucault (2004).

Through a focus on urban resettlement, we here explore how the reordering of urban space reshapes how resettled inhabitants are governed, including both the perspectives of urban authorities and urban dwellers. We specifically address the following questions: how is urban reordering governed and maintained in the period following urban resettlement? How do inhabitants appropriate, contest, or reproduce the normative framework formulated by public policies? We argue that resettlement produces dispossession, as suggested by a number of scholars focusing on other geographical contexts (Navez-Bouchanine 2012; Gillespie 2016; Brickell, Fernández Arrigoitia, and Vasudevan 2017), but also a selective urban integration in cities characterised by strong segregation and inequalities, a still-incomplete democratic transition, and a weak civic space where poor people can organise collectively. We develop this idea by showing that this reordering process is led both by the urban authority and by the city dwellers

themselves through a form a “spatial governmentality” (Huxley 2008) that shapes the daily lives of the resettled people. We use the concept of governmentality in order to consider how the resettlement operates as a process that restructures the urban space and power relationships not only through domination, but also through self-control, discipline, and responsibility.

This research builds on several fieldworks in Lomé in 2015, 2016, and 2018, during which we combined observations and semi-structured interviews conducted with different stakeholders (representatives of ministries, international cooperation, companies, NGOs, etc.) and resettled residents. We conducted *in situ* observations at the old and the new sites, the latter called *la Cité de Djagblé* (“Djagblé City”) that was first developed in 2010 as a pilot resettlement program on the outskirts of Lomé. It follows the demolition of a range of homes in Kégué, Attiégou, and Dabarakondi due to the construction of a new bypass (Figure 3.1). The resettlement represents a transformation of the political and institutional framework as will be developed further in this chapter.

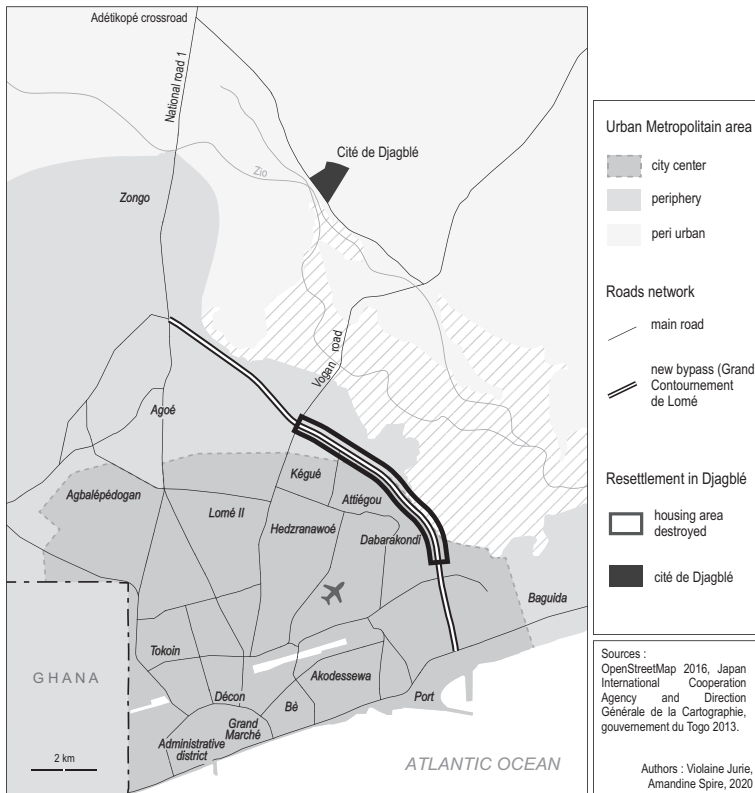


FIGURE 3.1 Djagblé : a pilot resettlement following the demolition of housing to make way for a new bypass

Source: Amandine Spire and Violaine Jurie.

After the presentation of the specific context of resettlement in Togo, we develop a critical framework to analyse the political dimension of the resettlement process, informed by the context of Lomé. We show that the state produces these new spaces through specific instruments that we define as characterised by a “soft constraint”, which is used to make the resettlement acceptable. In the last section, we explore two sides of the spatial governmentality that characterise the resettlement: the daily political reordering via the *comité de quartier* (“neighbourhood committee”) and the structuration of daily practices around access to urban services, namely water and electricity. These in particular reshape forms of control and responsibilities among residents and the diverse negotiations residents engage in with state agents. In conclusion, we stress the importance of focusing on resettlement in the production of new urban spaces as a possible way to reflect on techniques and logics of urban government.

Background: Governing the People Resettled in Togo

Togo is a country characterised by the dual presence of a strong authoritarian state and a proclaimed desire to open up the state to a process of democratisation (Toulabor 1999; Gervais-Lambony and Nyassogbo 2007; Biakouye 2014; Kohnert 2019). A dynastic party holds power within a highly centralised state that governs the capital city through a special delegation. Its power is highly contested by the majority of city dwellers of Lomé, who historically support the political opposition (Gervais-Lambony and Nyassogbo 2007). This paradoxical coexistence is also reflected in the urban resettlement devices that underwent transformation in 2010. On the one hand, a brutal reordering of urban space occurring in the name of “modernisation”, including new infrastructure and clearance operations, showcases the strong authoritarian nature of urban governance. On the other hand, the display of a desire for democratisation opens a window for citizens to negotiate and participate in the public sphere in a way that used to be strictly controlled. The state considerably changed the technique used to resettle city dwellers at the end of the 2000s in order to make the demolition of their homes “more acceptable” in light of the growing move to democratisation in Togo and elsewhere. Thus, a paradox can be observed that we analyse in this chapter by assessing whether greater participation in resettlement processes really can sit alongside strong state control of these processes, as the pilot program suggests.

The destruction of homes and slums in Lomé is not a recent phenomenon and reflects the history of a specific district of the city, the emblematic Zongo District. In fact, it is part of the Lomé’s memory in relation to the trajectory of Zongo, which has been home to Hausa and Muslim traders since the late nineteenth century (Agier 1983). As in many other West African cities in the twentieth century, the district’s population was evicted several times and resettled at the city periphery in an authoritarian way, with no coordination and poor, if any, compensation to resettled persons (Blot and Spire, 2014). Except for the emblematic role of Zongo, other modernisation projects that involved the destruction of homes did not

provide compensation until the 2000s. Yet, since then, the destruction of homes is no longer the sole reserve of the bulldozer that represents the brutal razing of homes through physical demolition. Some resettlements have been implemented through a new management system for evictions based on negotiation and compensation, signalling a move away from force. This change refers to the need of the municipality to respond to the demands of international donors for humane resettlement and compensation. Indeed, since the end of the 2000s, the government has encouraged an urban development where negotiating the value of a home is central, introducing with it ideas linked to “the entrepreneurial city” based on the increased role of private investments in the production of urban spaces, the multiplication of parastatal agencies, and the commodification of public spaces.¹

In this context, the year 2010 signalled the start of a new type of urban renewal that was considered necessary in order to retain access to the financial assistance of international donors, which had been put on hold due to a lack of transparency and the absence of participatory processes in the application of development aid. To restore its reputation, central and local governments worked together to make modernisation programs more “acceptable” when the destruction of settlements is involved. This includes compensation for resettlement and the construction of a resettlement site. Hence, in 2009, the Togolese government set up a specific Inter-Ministerial Compensation Committee (CII) that is in charge of compensation procedures for populations affected by development projects and resettled.² The CII is under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance. According to the Directorate-General of Infrastructure and Urban Equipment, the CII managed to compensate about 200 households between 2009 and 2017 for both rural and urban resettlement.³

Authorities consider these processes to be a “necessary cost” of development. In order to mitigate the adverse effects of these processes in the Global South, over the past 30 years the World Bank has made a series of recommendations and guidelines (in particular the Operational Directive [OD] 4.30 created in 1990 that became the Operational Policy [OP] 4.12 in 2001) for “involuntary resettlements”. These were first applied in megaprojects in rural areas and then theoretically implemented in any World Bank-funded project in urban areas (Cernea and Maldonado 2018). The main guideline stipulates that the state is to promote and distribute compensation payments for “lost assets”. Consequently, World Bank guidelines have helped set standards with which states such as Togo have to comply to in order to remain a recipient of foreign aid.

In this respect, the Togolese government provides compensation for each project funded by international financial assistance on a case-by-case basis. The compensation is based on a standardised procedure used by the CII in each resettlement project: collective information sessions (an awareness phase) are accompanied by a census of those eligible for compensation. This is followed by individual negotiations with each head of household in order to avoid the build-up of collective contestations. The losses caused by the destruction of the dwelling are calculated according to criteria established by the Ministry of Public Works. In 2009, the CII

introduced new rules for governing forced eviction resulting in resettlement. In Lomé, these new procedures are included in a pilot program in the Djaḡblé resettlement site, which we consider in this study. Before focusing on this novel urban resettlement, we would like to discuss the critical framework used for this research in order to unravel the political dimension of urban resettlement.

Critical Approaches to Urban Resettlement in Togo

A Focus on Dispossession ...

The literature on forced evictions in urban locales devotes ample attention to power relations between authorities and poor urban dwellers in the production of outcomes such as urban exclusion or dispossession (du Plessis 2005; Brickell, Fernández Arrigoitia, and Vasudevan 2017; Deboulet and Lafaye 2018; Dupont 2018). Accordingly, resettlement following eviction is read as an operation that accentuates socio-spatial inequalities (Navez-Bouchanine et al. 2012; Ninnin 2014) and the dynamics of relegation. This is well known in the context of the implementation of major international events such as the Olympic Games, where urban authorities negate the needs of marginalised city dwellers and make these “undesirables” invisible (Dupont 2013; Watt 2018; Magalhães 2016). The aim of these programs is to select, move, and replace inhabitants in order to present a competitive global metropolis. Much of this literature focuses on the asymmetry of power relationships between urban governments and city dwellers facing a build-up of dispossession processes (Harvey 2008). From this perspective, power is exercised *by* urban authorities, including public action and private actors, *over* poor, minority, or “undesirable” social groups. This is the destructive side of eviction that helps to commodify the central and most prestigious spaces of large metropolitan areas.

In a similar vein, other works have emphasised the resistance capacities of the urban poor facing forced evictions: how poor people can organise themselves and resist the neoliberal drive, even withstanding forced eviction (Bhan 2009; Crensil and Owusu 2018). Influenced by a human rights framework, the analysis of mobilisation reveals how the poor and otherwise affected can defend their own rights to claim better compensation and even the right to remain on site (Afenah 2010; Farouk and Owusu 2012). If resistance is impossible and the balance of power too asymmetrical, then urban dwellers targeted by evictions experience a process of impoverishment and exclusion characterised by forms of dispossession in terms of jobs, education, transportation, and so on (Cernea 1997).

But Also Selective Inclusion through Governmentality

Assuming a different perspective, recent literature on forced eviction in the Global South has also highlighted the tension between resettlement processes and selective inclusion (Doshi 2013). This literature investigates resettlement from the perspective and experiences of the evicted themselves and not from a macro-economic

perspective. Based on the subjectivity of those evicted who consent or contest displacement, Doshi (2013: 845) identifies a process of “accumulation by differentiated displacement”, because urban development gives rise to an increase in the economic differentiation of displaced people. This differentiation helps to strengthen the social logic of land markets and the “ideologies of belonging” (Doshi 2013: 844). It embraces both the destruction and reconstruction of urban space dialectically, which enables the analysis of the political effects of such urban transformations in the mid to long term.

Similarly, the critical approach developed by Rogers and Wilmsen (2019) is useful for understanding the political dimension of resettlement beyond dispossession. They consider resettlement “a governmental program with multiple logics, one that seeks to render people and space more governable” (3). They also argue that the practice of resettlement does not only rely on the state, but engages “complex networks of agents” (10) – from international donors to local authorities. This increased governability is facilitated by specific instruments such as social evaluation and compensation. Social evaluation, including measuring, modernising, and enumerating, facilitates state intervention by making resettlement predictable and calculable. Green and Baird (2016), for example, show how compensation in Laos helped the development of capitalist social relations through new market relationships for land, goods, and even natural resources. From this critical perspective, transformation in the implementation of resettlement programs reflects techniques and logics of urban government.

Following Roy’s (2009) study of civic governmentality in Beirut and Mumbai, we discuss how resettlement can mean the creation of new power relationships through techniques of government facilitated by a selective urban political integration. Roy considers that the basis of regimes of civic governmentality are how “the urban subject is simultaneously empowered and self-disciplined, civil and mobilized, displaced and compensated” (Roy 2009, 161). From Roy’s dialectic perspective, resettlement becomes a tool for urban governments to reconfigure their power and reorder urban space along other lines. Using this notion of governmentality first developed in Foucault’s seminal work, with some precautions we can elaborate on how people in Lomé reshape their relationship with the state *through* resettlement processes. This political dimension of resettlement is characterised by an exercise of power based on “soft constraints” instead of physical coercion, manifested through the granting of compensations as counterparts to the forced eviction.

The Production of “Soft Constraints”: Secured Tenure and Integration in Land Markets in Djangblé

Resettlement in Djangblé offers a specific turn for discussing the urban transformation and the process of selective political inclusion in Togo. With the creation of counterparts, the CII’s mission marks a turning point in redefining how the Togolese state intervenes in daily urban lives. In fact, through the resettlement

procedures, the relationship between the state and poor city dwellers is directly redefined. Instead of using its direct force of constraint, the central government regulated counterparts in order to integrate city dwellers into the project. This process of adhesion is not the result of acceptance or the cessation of resistance. The “soft constraints” are not imposed by force, but by the promotion of new norms defined on the basis of the promise of land ownership and market value.

Before being displaced, most of the poor city dwellers did not have formal land tenure, but occupied land according to customary rules. The demolished houses were built on land with a precarious status. However, despite occupying land but not having land titles,⁴ these city dwellers were eligible for compensation according to customary rules (Agetur et al. 2012). In the case of resettlement to Djagblé, the majority of the displaced city dwellers left the houses they built themselves and had turned into homes over time. These houses, called *chez* (“at”) in Togolese French have strong affective and social dimensions: they evolve over time with the socio-economic trajectory of their owner (Marguerat 1989; Biakouye 2014). The demolition, however, rapidly transformed the *chez* into an economic product. In fact, the compensations for the demolition contributes to standardize the value of the *chez* according to the economic value defined by public authorities.

To integrate this exchange value, the budget allocated by the Togolese government for Djagblé’s resettlement operation is exceptionally large. Under given conditions, the government was able to propose the terms of departure to the head of each household. The compensation included both a parcel of land at the resettlement site (Djagblé) equipped with water and electricity connections, and a sum of money equivalent to the estimated value of the *chez* lost through resettlement, with the amount ranging from 300,000 to 3.5 million CFA provided for the self-construction of new house (Figure 3.2). The compensation was reserved for those considered to be landowners, and tenants were *de facto* excluded from the process. According to the CII, in the case of the Djagblé resettlement, of the 312 households eligible for compensation, 258 had received it, which came to imply the monetisation of every aspect of the home. The evaluation of the value of ceded houses covered every conceivable physical and descriptive component of the



FIGURE 3.2 “Djagblé City” under construction in 2016, five years after the resettlement. Source: Photo taken by Authors, 2016.

dwelling: the land surface area, fencing, number of rooms, building materials, number of trees, and access to utility networks.

As early as 2009, the central government was using a newly developed administrative and political tool called the *certificat d'entente* ("certificate of understanding") to assess the level of compensation required for any demolition taking place as part of an urban project resulting in resettlement. This document includes a written agreement between the head of the household and the central government (Figure 3.3). For the Djagblé resettlement, the agreement stipulated that the head of the household was to vacate the original site within five months in order to receive compensation, as defined by local authorities. The compensation would cover the losses generated by the demolition of certain houses located at the site of the new bypass. The document is edited by the CII following an individual meeting with each head of household eligible for compensation. The relocated person must also pay a tax stamp of 200,000 CFA. Each person that benefits from the relocation receives a copy of the certificate of understanding, which is safely stored (see Figure 3.3). During the interviews, this document was sometimes presented to us in order to explain the origin of their installation at the resettlement site, but also to demonstrate the new sense of security of land tenure this document entails. In fact, the official nature of this document reveals the recognition of a specific and quite secured land tenure for the resettled and shows how documents serve as important mediators in the relationship between marginalised city dwellers and the state (see Pilo' 2020).

The use of the certificate in the Djagblé resettlement embodies the growing importance of individual property characterised by the increased significance of its exchange value that quickly becomes market-driven. The document thus determines the distribution of plots of land at the resettlement site and marks the transition from the status of *displaced person* to that of *resettled owner* of a plot of land whose value is thereafter determined by the market. The *certificat d'entente* is similar to a land title: it defines ownership of the plot in the resettlement area and illustrates one aspect of the transformation and the consolidation of the resettled into "landlords", the term used in the *certificat d'entente*. Transforming the resettled into landlords creates a new relationship between property and political subjectivity under neoliberal urbanism (Lund and Deslaurier 2013; Hilgers 2013). The document signifies security of tenure and boosts the market-driven value of the plot in a part of the city, Djagblé, where the logic of occupation before the resettlement was based on the collectively owned land of communities and customary authority-governed land transfers. In Djagblé, this logic has not disappeared, but instead has been refined and transformed. Different strategies confirm the growing importance of a market-driven rationality with speculative practices. Five years after resettlement, land prices had increased threefold, and strategic investments had even been made by city dwellers who were not resettled by government, but who decided to move to and invest in this new area.

Many of those resettled sold their plot of land within a few months of resettlement because of the insufficient financial capacity to build a new house or because

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉCONOMIE
ET DES FINANCES
SECRETARIAT GÉNÉRAL
COMITÉ INTERMINISTÉRIEL D'INDEMNISATION

REPUBLICQUE TOGOLAISE
Travail - Liberté - Patrie

CERTIFICAT D'ENTENTE

N° / du

ENTRE :

Le Gouvernement de la République Togolaise représenté par le Ministère de l'Économie et des Finances à travers le ci-après désigné « le Gouvernement »

d'une part,

ET

M., Mme ou Mlle
Né (e) le à Commune.....
Résidant habituellement à
Préfecture
Pièce d'identité Carte d'identité nationale n°
Du Délivré à
Profession
Téléphone
Ci-après désigné (e) « Personne Affectée »

d'autre part,

Il est exposé ce qui suit :

Le Gouvernement Togolais, dans ses choix stratégiques pour le développement du pays notamment dans le domaine des infrastructures routières, envisage de construire, de réhabiliter, de renforcer, d'entretenir les voies urbaines, les ponts, les routes nationales et les routes nationales inter Etats, d'élargir ou de doubler les tronçons sur les grands axes d'accès à la capitale. Le résultat attendu est le développement du réseau routier.

Pour améliorer la circulation des gros porteurs quittant le Port de Lomé à destination des pays de l'hinterland et assurer la fluidité du trafic dans la ville de Lomé, il s'est engagé à aménager et à bitumer la voie du grand contournement CIMTOGO – NOEPE : tronçon CIMTOGO – GOLF CLUB D'AGOENYIVE (20 km).

Les études ont indiqué que ces travaux auront des impacts négatifs sur le milieu humain, notamment la démolition de certaines maisons.

Aussi le Gouvernement a-t-il préparé un Plan d'Action de Réinstallation pour faciliter les opérations d'indemnisation et de réinstallation des personnes affectées par le projet.

1

FIGURE 3.3 The *certificat d'entente*: an original agreement between the state and the resettled in Togo.

Source: Authors, 2014.

of the distance from or lack of transport connecting Djagblé to the city centre or workplaces. Resettlement therefore does not really meet the expectations of all displaced city dwellers and presents new difficulties for the urban poor in their daily lives to remain in the city. In fact, Djagblé is far away from central urban spaces and thereby from employment and commercial centralities. As a result, commuting becomes time-consuming, more difficult, and more expensive. The use of the personal vehicles of the few equipped households in the neighbourhood is beneficial in case of emergency. The rest of the time, reaching the city centre begins with walking up to four kilometres to reach the main road where motorcycle cabs and cabs assemble. Moreover, the purchase of a motorcycle is often the most appropriate response to these new constraints, which puts a strain on household budgets. Many households have thus changed their mobility practices following

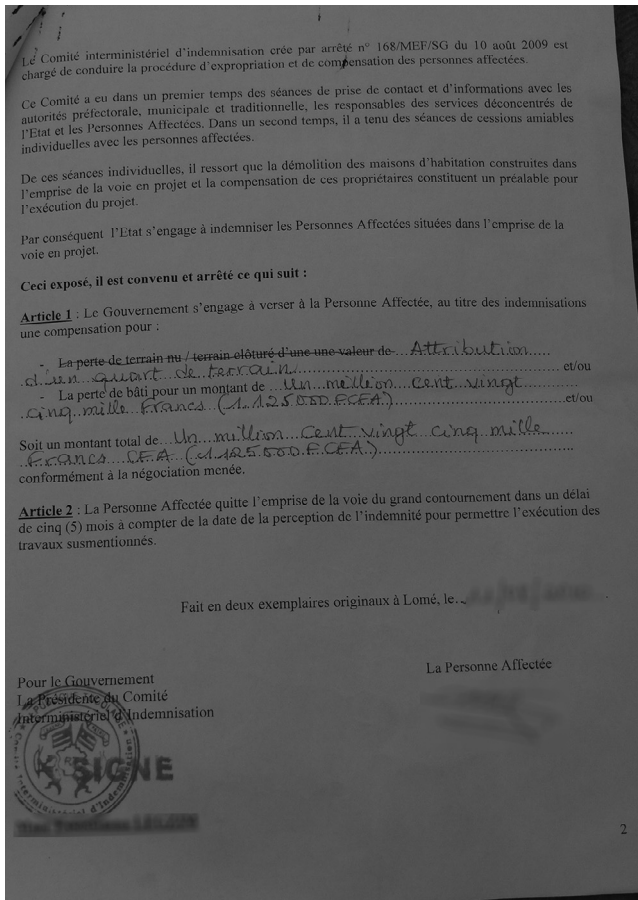


FIGURE 3.3 (Cont.)

their arrival in Djagblé: freedom of movement when the purchase of a motorcycle is possible, reduced social and family interactions outside the place of residence.

However, at the same time, other city dwellers living in the city centre have been looking for an opportunity to purchase such secure plots of land. The certificate ensures that the lot has been allocated to a single occupant, which is not always the case in Lomé, particularly on the outskirts of the city where some members of the communities subdivide property, leading to protracted and widespread family conflicts. In addition, the strong advantage of the site is not only the security of tenure, but also the connection to the electricity network and the water supply service, which opens up a way to redefine a new kind of social contract (see below). We can argue that the resettlement in Djagblé reinforces the grounds for a selective political urban inclusion based on a combination of market rationality and

economic and political contractualisation. This transition to the “status” of resettled people leads city dwellers to formulate requests for state intervention. The property and the market-based value reflect the state’s implementation of soft and flexible constraints for urban dwellers to adhere to new social norms and urban transformations without strong coercion. We argue that these transformations pave the way for the implementation of a spatial governmentality. The resettled are governed through logics of responsibility and control that we suggest should be explored through a focus on two aspects of daily life: political leadership and access to urban services.

Governing Everyday Life

The political dimension of the resettlement emerges from the intertwined promise made by the state (the provision of land and urban services) and the reshaping of power relations at the local level. New power relations emerge through the structure of *le comité des affectés* (“community of affected people”) and the everyday official and unofficial practices of accessing urban services. Both aspects contribute to the implementation of discipline and control to rule daily interactions.

Shaping Authority and Asserting Control through the Local Committee

The arrival of displaced city dwellers at the new resettlement site rapidly transformed the local organisation of Djagblé, whose direct surroundings were already occupied by rural communities, elites, and local chiefs. The latter are witnessing the arrival of a new political and social form of organisation that may seem to compete with that which prevailed before the resettlement. In fact, CII state leaders encouraged a new kind of local social organisation in Djagblé immediately after resettlement, *le comité des affectés*. Its role is mainly to act as mediator in neighbourhood conflicts or between the different social groups living at resettled sites, and it generally ensures compliance with the rules prescribed by the state: respect for the demarcation of plots, the non-occupation of land reserves (reserved for future public facilities), and the provision and access to urban services. The daily organisation created by the leader of the special committee helps increase the acceptability of the logic of the state’s actions among the resettled. A representative of the state sometimes visits the head of *le comité des affectés* in order to support their authority. Thus, daily affairs in the resettlement site are governed through negotiation, discipline, and control that transform socio-political hierarchies.

Resettled city dwellers are consequently subject to a new framework of authority set up by an intermediary who is well-anchored in the context of Djagblé daily life. The committee is chaired by a relatively young male welder (under the age of 40) who was resettled at an early stage. His relatively young age contrasts with that of traditional authorities that prevail in the district at large. This new leader directly represents the state and is in charge of ensuring respect for government rules in Djagblé. For example, the state had initially banned agricultural

activities on vacant land (reserves in the initial plan) intended for the potential future development of community facilities. However, many resettled people started to cultivate the vacant land due to the lack of available land or alternative sources of livelihoods. The local representative then began a process of negotiation between the resettled people and the state to obtain a framework that would allow some of the inhabitants to cultivate this land, based on more or less clientistic relations. Thus, in general, the head of the committee is mobilised to control and find ways out of the many conflicts that arise around the use of land resources. Maintaining the initial plan or modifying it under certain conditions remains a key issue for the CII in order to keep control of the resettlement site from a distance. The role of the committee is therefore to contain tensions in a resettlement site marked by an increasing number of inhabitants and newcomers who have chosen to settle in Djagblé and are not older people affected by the past eviction. In 2017, encouraged by the CII, the committee became a neighbourhood development committee (CDQ), that is, a common intermediate level of government that mediates the relationship between the state and urban city dwellers in Togo. The CDQ is a common form of organisation at the district level in Lomé (Aholou 2008). This shift reveals the normalisation of the authority this committee wielded.

In Lomé, CDQs have developed not without difficulty and in various forms depending on the neighbourhood since the beginning of the twentieth century. In all cases, even if they constitute a participatory space, they are strongly controlled by the central authorities. The CDQs are supposed to guarantee “social peace” by formulating a series of rights and duties, providing a framework allowing for certain “citizen” actions such as the cleaning of public spaces. Thus, every Saturday morning, the Djagblé CDQ invites residents to pull up the weeds that grow along the district’s unpaved roads or to clear the reserved land in the public domain (vacant spaces earmarked for the collective facilities – markets, schools – that residents are still waiting for). When the Saturday morning “gong” rings, one of the CDQ members scrupulously notes the people present at each meeting in a register. This register makes it possible to know which city dwellers are volunteers and to value responsible residents in future arbitrations. CII officials, or any other representative of the district’s external authority, may consult this register. This type of operation, which is quite common in Lomé, indicates to Djagblé the implementation of control and discipline by the residents themselves in a post-resettlement context. The local political reorganisation in Djagblé contributes to consolidating the social contract that imposes respect for specific rules and responsibilities. The supply of water and electricity is another important illustration of this dynamic of responsabilisation, as we show below.

Reconfiguring Local Relations and Responsibilities through Urban Services

Urban services are recognised as enabling a specific re-ordering process that links government intervention, urban rights, and everyday practices (see Pilo’ 2017). In Djagblé,

the delivery of urban services definitively helps to construct a post-resettlement order characterised by new forms of responsibility among residents themselves that are facilitated in particular by heterogeneous forms of accessing these services.

Djagblé's water supply is delivered through water fountains located in different parts of the settlement, individual household connections, and wells that are increasingly being drilled in residents' yards, since this is the cheapest, albeit least safe, way to access water. A water tower is an integral and symbolic part of the resettlement site and has supplied water to the neighbourhood since 2012 (Figure 3.4). It is managed by the "water tower management committee" (*comité de gestion de l'eau*), formed by three young, resettled residents with a basic level of education and expertise in the domain in order to task some residents with the sound functioning and maintenance of the service, but also for cost recovery, since they are in charge of billing those residents who have an individual connection. This committee is consequently a mediator between the water company and water users, checking and controlling the correct technical and commercial functioning of the system.

In 2016, however, individual connections were still an exception. Only 20 households out of around 100 had a private connection, according to a member of the water committee. In fact, individual connections are still quite expensive and not everyone can afford one.⁵ Consequently, most residents buy water from vendors at one of the seven water fountains in the settlement when they do not have a borehole in their yard. These are run by vendors who pay a monthly bill to the water committee and resell water at a higher price per litre. These fountains, equipped with meters, are generally installed underground and locked with a chain when the vendor is not present in order to avoid theft. In both cases, access to



FIGURE 3.4 The water tower, a symbol of the resettlement site.
source: authors, 2017

water is shaped by the market and respect for the rules enforced by the presence of a water committee and the protection of the infrastructure itself.

In contrast to the water service, the electricity is distributed through a more hybrid system formed by official and unofficial (but tolerated) practices. The grid was installed in 2012, and the residents generally have access to electricity, with the exception of traditional communities who had already lived on the outskirts of Djangbé before others were resettled there. Most of them could not afford a connection (Amedokpo 2019), which contributes broadly to the creation of inequalities between those residents who resided there before and newcomers. Beyond these more evident forms of exclusion, other types of inequality are reproduced mainly through the official and unofficial distribution system.

In the official system, households are equipped with a (prepaid or post-paid) individual meter. It is very common, however, that other meters (called sub-meters) are connected to the main meter. Sub-meters “distribute” and measure electricity consumption to other neighbours who may live inside or outside the same compound where the main meter is installed. This electricity supply sub-system complies with the electricity provider’s rules, and residents who have a sub-meter are customers of the electricity company (and receive separate bills). These generally offer more electricity and are cheaper than a main meter. However, a third type of meter widely used in Lomé, called an *additionneuse*, is not official. The *additionneuse* is directly connected to the main meter and is generally used to measure the consumption of tenants who live in another part of the house, within or nearby the same compound. While the resale of electricity is not officially permitted, it is generally tolerated by the *Compagnie Energie Electrique du Togo* (CEET), the country’s sole electricity provider.

The installation of a main electricity meter seems to depend on three main elements: the physical possibility of installing it – the house must be within 100 meters from an electrical pole; the financial means, since it is more expensive than the other meters; and the occupancy status – owner or tenant. In general, only owners have a main meter, while tenants are considered temporary and generally do not wish to invest in one because of the price and the responsibility involved. *Responsibility* is a term that often emerges in residents’ discourse associated with the main meter and is generally associated with the idea of homeownership. Thus, taking responsibility for a main meter seems to be a goal of homeowners. Although access to electricity was not new among relocated residents, resettlement has generally changed their position on the electricity supply sub-system. The formal and informal relations created by this hybrid electricity distribution system helped reshape power relations between residents along the lines of an owner-tenant structure, but also between neighbours, helping to stabilise norms governing conduct and solidarity.

Residents often describe the difference between the official system (main meters and sub-meters) and the “unofficial” system (*additionneuse*) in terms of *dependence* and *independence* among neighbours and by referring to the owner-tenant relationship. The term *independence* refers above all to having or not having an electricity supply that depends on the goodwill of a neighbour, in

contrast to the *additionneuses* system, where dependence takes the form of an informal commercial relationship that ties whomever has the main meter to the person with an *additionneuse*, who is considered in the debt of the former. This hybrid electricity system seems to make the management of the commercial relationship more flexible in terms of resolving problems (technical or commercial), but it is also the product of increased control directly related to physical proximity. Thus, for example, during a daily control of an *additionneuse*, the owner of the main meter realised that one of the *additionneuses* had stopped measuring consumption. He immediately encouraged the tenant to replace the *additionneuse* as quickly as possible, which took one week. In order to calculate the amount for non-registered consumption, both parties agreed to install a new *additionneuse* and to refer to the consumption recorded for 24 hours to estimate daily consumption, and subsequently to multiply this number of kWh by seven (fieldnotes, Pilo' 2016). Actually, when it is a matter of disconnection due to non-payment, some residents explained that the reasons are generally discussed before they are disconnected or disconnect others. At the same time, there is also a strong form of control, as is visible in the modes of problem-solving in the *additionneuse* system.

The physical location of meters also helps structure forms of control, responsibility, and trust in these relations. For example, the installation of *additionneuses* in the owner's home should minimise attempts at illicit manipulation of the meter by the tenant. This is also likely to be infrequent in a system where the control of the meters is effective and carried out on a daily basis. The installation of prepaid meters is often considered as enabling the reinforcement of these forms of control in the sub-distribution system. Power relations within this system also emerge, particularly when it comes to power cuts. In fact, in a context in which electricity supply is often unstable, electricity can be a rare good. It is not uncommon for the owner of the main meter to temporarily disconnect the *additionneuses* in order to maintain his or her own supply. This situation can be interpreted as an extreme manifestation of network control.

The study of electricity and water provision in the post-resettlement period clearly indicates unequal access to urban services depending on power relations amongst neighbours and mediated by different socio-technical configurations. To conclude this article, we would like to focus on two ordinary situations demonstrating relations of dependence and control between neighbours through the electricity service.

Three Portraits for Illustrating the Resettlement-induced Transformation and the Consolidation of the Market Value

Some residents interviewed had installed a main meter for the first time in their lives after resettlement. Previously, they had accessed electricity via a sub-meter or an *additionneuse*, but they have now become "re-sellers" of electricity. For example, Kekeli installed a three-phase main meter and a sub-meter that supplies a

neighbour whose home is one kilometre away. Since her resettlement in 2011, Kekeli had to leave her job because of the distance from Lomé and needed to find a new way to secure an income. In 2016, she sold juice and ice cream and was also a member of the water committee, where she worked once a week. Because of her work, she needed a freezer, which is why she installed a more powerful three-phase meter when the CEET decided to install an electricity pole next to her house. The installation of a main meter enabled her to start up a commercial activity and to have her own water supply, since she needed an electric pump to extract water from a well in her courtyard. Electricity access seems to partially offset the negative effects of having lost her job after resettlement. Similarly, Mawussi and his family had the opportunity to install a main meter in Djagblé. The short distance to an electricity pole – the last one on that side of the resettlement site – helped make his position particularly strategic. In fact, neighbours living beyond that point had to rely on him to access electricity or developed “cobwebs” – a system of informal grid extensions that is unsafe and built for limited extensions of the network (Biakouyé 2014). Thus, both these residents, Kekeli and Mawussi, upgraded their status in the electricity sub-distribution system thanks to a combination of homeownership and proximity to electricity poles. Mawussi installed two sub-meters in his house and three *additionneuses* in order to provide electricity to neighbours and tenants in his compound. Whereas the redistribution of electricity can be considered an act of solidarity (“We are in need together”, Kekeli, February 2016), it also creates new relations in the form of unofficial commercial relationships.

Since payment is essentially based on a compromise established between the two parties, it can also create conflicts. Isaac, for example, decided to switch from a main post-paid meter to a prepaid meter, since several tenants receiving electricity through the *additionneuses* system stopped paying their bills. The prepaid meter was an optimal solution to avoid his growing debt, enabling him to step up the control of his neighbours’ consumption and check the behaviour of his employees. Isaac had several apprentices and the prepaid meter allowed him to check whether they were using the electrical tools when he was not present. By installing the prepaid meter, Isaac sought to minimise the risk of debt, to manage the business relationship more effectively, while continuing to deliver electricity to two neighbours and to the only private school of the resettlement that could not afford to install a main meter. By deciding to provide the private school with electricity, Isaac helped with the functioning of an important social institution in the settlement, which is a form of responsabilisation.

The cases of Kekeli, Mawussi, and Isaac, together with those of other residents, illustrate how the experience of networked services in the resettlement site creates forms of dependency and responsibility among neighbours, which are reinforced by the general adherence to market logics required to access these services.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the process of selective political inclusion produced by urban resettlement programs in Lomé. It has analysed urban resettlement as a specific site where both the role of state and of city dwellers in defining a spatial

governmentality characterised by soft (but real) constraints can be explored. Focusing on a pilot resettlement program and the Djagblé resettlement in particular, this chapter has analysed a rather emblematic experience in the Togolese political context. In fact, through this pilot, for the first time, the Togolese government compensated evicted city dwellers with the purported aim of creating a certain level of support for the ongoing urban transformations. The provision of compensation is illustrative of the increased implementation of logics of individualisation, economic rationality, and negotiation in metropolitan government practices. Urban authorities chose not to assert their traditional coercive power, rather employing “soft constraints” through different forms of compensation. These in return created new logics of self-discipline and control in regulating the everyday lives of those living at the resettlement site. This example helps shift the perspective from the dimension of exclusion and dispossession to the dimension of an uncertain and selective (reversible?) inclusion, based on the granting of individual property and formalised access to urban services.

In fact, resettlement was not only negotiated on the basis of landownership and financial means, but also on the basis of a promise of access to formal urban services such as water and electricity. Thus, different instruments, such as the creation of a specific document (*certificat d'entente*), the creation of a local organisation (*comité des affectés*), and the installation of urban services, contributed to the creation of a post-resettlement order characterised by the construction of mechanisms of control and self-responsibility among residents. The political effects of resettlement examined in this chapter highlight the recent transformation of a West African metropolis. Francophone Sub-Saharan African cities are not very visible in current international debates on resettlement. Thus, our analysis contributes to these debates, building on a relatively unexplored reality – that of West African cities. Yet, our argument, based on the emergence of a new relationship between the authorities and the “governed” through a new post-resettlement order grounded in everyday life, is not confined to Togo. In fact, we consider that resettlement – as a type of space – opens up possibilities to reflect on how city dwellers become more governable as their interactions with governments reconfigure forms of subjectivity.

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Notes

- 1 Consider, for example, the historical Fréau Jardin Square, which in the 2010s was transformed into a privatised leisure space in a bid to modernise and reorder the heart of the city.

- 2 Created by decree n°168/MEF/SG of August 10, 2009.
- 3 Interview with the head office of the *Direction Générale des Infrastructures et des Équipements Urbains* [Directorate-General of Infrastructure and Urban Equipment], 13 April 2018.
- 4 Only a small portion of city dwellers hold an official land title in Togo. In fact, official land titles are very rare and expensive to obtain in Togo because of a lack of resources to process them. Thus, the land tenure system is characterised by a legal duality, expressed as the coexistence of customary and modern practices (an “in-between”).
- 5 Households have to pay 1,500 CFA for the connection and 25,000 CFA to install the water meter.

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