

Creole Water Supply:

States, Neoliberalism, and Everyday Practices
in a secondary African city

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I, Susana Neves Alves, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the evolution of water provision in Bafatá, Guinea-Bissau, between 2006 and 2014, including the role of state and non-state actors, policy models and everyday practices in shaping the city's piped supply scheme. The overall aim is to use perspectives from a small African city to evaluate understandings of urban water infrastructure circulating in the fields of geography and urban studies. Based on ethnographic work in Guinea-Bissau involving 11 months of participant observation and 94 interviews with state officials, workers in international organisations and the city's water operator, and water users, this thesis argues that the dominance of critiques of neoliberalism and the limited theorisations of the state prevailing in current analyses are key limitations for service provision in small cities in poorer contexts. To address these weaknesses, this thesis adopts an analytical framework that combines the concepts of 'variegated neoliberalism' and 'assemblages' with an attention to the 'everyday', in order to develop an understanding of a 'creole' mode of governance characterised by its intermixing of influences. In addition, it draws on anthropological explorations of the state that examine state practices and interactions with non-state actors without fixing these in pre-conceived analytical categories. This thesis shows that the state has shaped water provision in Bafatá not through following policy and regulatory frameworks, but through the decisions and practices of governmental officials and their interactions with non-state organisations. It also demonstrates that development interventions have significantly influenced water provision in Bafatá. However, policy models circulating in the city have been routinely assembled with and reshaped by alternative logics, motivations and practices, and therefore transformed beyond their original agendas. Lastly, water provision is analysed from the perspective of everyday water practices, demonstrating the multiplicity of factors shaping access to water, including perceptions of quality of water, and the simultaneous disruption and continuity of ingrained sharing practices through the introduction of meters.

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– ONE –

Introduction

In March 2010, I moved to Bafatá – a small city in Guinea-Bissau, West Africa – as an employee of the Portuguese NGO TESE, to contribute to the implementation of a development project, *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (Guinea-Bissau Creole for ‘Bafatá Wants/Needs Water’). Not surprisingly, during the one year I spent in Bafatá working on this project, my views concerning cities in Africa, urban infrastructure, everyday water practices and development were time and again turned on their head. For instance, while I found myself becoming increasingly critical of international development practices, I also tried to make sense of the multiple contradicting perspectives meeting in Bafatá – including those of practitioners, beneficiaries and various ‘subordinated’ actors who insisted on the benefits of development interventions. Simultaneously, I started rethinking my own long-held assumptions that cost-recovery and private sector participation in service provision were straightforwardly ‘bad’.

As time went by, I also became mindful of the striking divergences between the ways things unfolded on the ground and the discourses and policy models disseminated by NGOs. There seemed to be a constant tweaking of ongoing practices as they were written or talked about. It looked like debates that filled reports, meetings and conversations in the development world had little to say about the motivations, logics and practices of those involved in water supply in Bafatá on a daily basis, or the ways water was actually supplied and used in the city. Gradually, I articulated these thoughts into various questions. What if we told the story of water supply not from the viewpoint of development discourses and practices, but starting from the motivations and practices of those working and living in Bafatá? What if the variety of motivations and practices emerging around the piped supply scheme became part of circulating discourses and perceptions? What if, instead of comparing the reality of Bafatá to

supposedly ‘right ways’ of doing things, we drew on the experiences of this city as a valid way of doing things? What if we even drew lessons from Bafatá that can help us understand and improve water provision in other cities?

This thesis engages with some of these questions. It examines the evolution of water provision in Bafatá, between 2006 and 2014, including the role of state and non-state actors, policy models and everyday practices in shaping the city’s piped supply scheme. Notably, Bafatá is one among the large number of small secondary cities in Africa which, although commonly neglected by urban researchers, house a significant proportion of the urban population in Africa. Crucially, these cities experience not only chronic shortages in service provision but also specific challenges related to their political and economic subordinate positions, their lack of resources and the weakness of state institutions. Thus, the aim of this thesis is to use perspectives from a small secondary African city to evaluate and expand understandings of urban water infrastructure circulating in the fields of critical geography and urban studies. Taking these cities as sites of theory making, it contributes to more global understandings of urban infrastructure.

Based on ethnographic work in Guinea-Bissau, this thesis argues that conventional understandings of urban infrastructure in African cities and elsewhere, notably political economy and political ecology perspectives, display an over-commitment to critiques of neoliberalism. This is a key limitation for investigations of small secondary cities in Africa, where other forces and processes are visibly shaping water provision. Academic researchers have (to a certain degree) adopted nuanced and situated views of neoliberalism and, following postcolonial critiques of urban studies, produced a range of contextualised analyses of the neoliberalisation of water in cities across the world. However, there are significantly fewer investigations looking into how policy models are adapted, transformed and assembled together with alternative logics as they are introduced into different socio-institutional contexts, but also translated into practice. In particular, most existing investigations of community-management and public-private partnerships – the policy models most frequently

circulating in small cities – tend to narrowly focus on the processes of marketization and commodification of water, without looking into alternative drivers and processes beyond neoliberalisation. This thesis argues that rather than being taken for granted, the analytical relevance of neoliberalism should be turned into an object of inquiry when investigating numerous cities across the global south. What other logics and motivations and modes of governance are shaping water supply in small African cities? What happens to circulating policy models when they land in these cities? Excluded from private investments in water supply, how are these cities supplying and using water?

In addition, this thesis claims that analyses of water provision have typically adopted flawed theorisations of states based on western idealisations, which have curtailed their ability to make sense of the ways in which states shape urban water supply. On the one hand, the policy literature has frequently relied on ideas of neutral, well-functioning bureaucratic states that have little relation to the lived realities of states. On the other hand, seeking to de-naturalise states, critics of policy views have based their analyses on notions of the state inspired in the historic experiences of a small core groups of countries. Therefore, this thesis argues for more nuanced views of the state that move beyond Western idealisations of what states should be and take into account the multiple histories and trajectories of states. This means that existing analytical categories such as ‘state’ and ‘society’ should also be turned into objects of empirical inquiry in investigations of water supply.

To address weaknesses relating to the predominance of critiques of neoliberalism, this thesis adopts an analytical framework that combines the concepts of ‘variegated neoliberalism’ and ‘assemblages’ with an attention to the ‘everyday’ (Baptista, 2013; Lawhon et al., 2014; McFarlane, 2011; Parnell and Robinson, 2012; Simone, 2011). It uses these analytical and methodological tools to propose an understanding of a ‘Creole’ mode of governance. Here, the term Creole refers to the emerging product of “reciprocal activity, a process of intermixture and enrichment” (Ashcroft et al., 2000) of the multiplicity of actors, motivation, practices and logics converging around the city’s piped supply scheme. Thus, this thesis

suggests that while development discourses and practices have fundamentally shaped water provision in Bafatá, policy models have been assembled and re-shaped in such ways that new meanings and effects have been generated. Often, this has resulted *not* in the hybridisation of neoliberal policies but in the whole reconfiguration of original agendas according to the motivations and practices of various actors.

To tackle limitations relating to flawed theorisations of the state, this thesis draws on anthropological explorations of states and investigations of state practices (Gupta, 1995; Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Nugent, 2007; Painter, 2006). These perspectives, it is argued, can open the analytical view to more nuanced understandings of states and water provision, including the multiple modalities and practices shaping water provision. This thesis, then, uses these perspectives to demonstrate that the state has shaped the evolution of water provision in Bafatá in significant ways not through enforcing policy and regulatory frameworks, but through the decisions, practices and interactions of government officials. In particular, it shows the importance of state practices beyond formal bureaucracies. It also demonstrates how the state acts in a relational way, through its interactions with non-state organisations. The state, then, can be neoliberal, developmental, predatory, benevolent and absent all at once.

Lastly, this thesis argues that investigations of everyday water practices can enhance understandings of urban water, challenging totalising critiques of neoliberalisation focusing on access, control and inequality. It shows that, contrary to what is commonly assumed, access – defined in terms of distance from source and ability to pay – is not the only, or inevitably the most important, factor shaping users' practices. In Bafatá, perceptions of quality of water and convenience were revealed to be essential in shaping the ways residents navigate different sources and technologies. In addition, this thesis demonstrates that although narratives of marketization and commodification could be used to discuss dynamics provoked by the adoption of cost recovery principles alongside the use of meters in Bafatá, there are other more important processes to consider. These include the disruption of practices of sharing water at

the neighbourhood level, but also the collectivisation of water provision with re-distribution taking place at the central management level. These processes are essential for the possibility of a piped supply scheme in a city where resources are extremely scarce.

Call for research on small secondary cities in Africa

A call to focus on small secondary cities in Africa does not aim, in any way, to ignore the multiplicity and diversity of such cities across the continent. Rather, it is based on three key postulations: the demographic significance of small secondary cities in Africa; their political, economic and social specificities, which shape their urban condition; and, the challenges these cities face in relation to water provision.

The problematic of urban service provision in African cities, and elsewhere in the global south, has typically been associated with the growing rates of urbanisation witnessed in these urban areas. Urban growth has exacerbated the need for investments in service provision in contexts where resources are commonly scarce, and state institutions routinely lack the capacity to manage or induce a more equitable form of urban development (Parnell and Pieterse, 2014). In this context, mega-cities where population growth was most obviously visible have become the main object of attention. Much less attention has been paid to smaller cities (Jaglin et al., 2011). Bafatá, with a population of approximately 30,000 inhabitants and holding the title of second city of Guinea-Bissau, hardly fits the category of mega-cities thriving and imploding under the pressures of urban and economic growth, on the one hand, and the urbanization of poverty, on the other (Parnell and Pieterse, 2014; Véron, 2010). Yet, it belongs to another group of smaller cities that are increasingly recognised as housing a significant proportion of the urban population on the continent.

Recent surveys show that Africa, alongside Asia, registers one of the highest rates of urbanisation in the world. Its urban population is expected to increase from 40 per cent in 2014 to 56 percent by 2050, therefore crossing the 'magical' 50 per cent threshold along the way (Parnell and Pieterse, 2014; UN, 2014). In particular, West Africa, the region where this

thesis' case study is located, is proclaimed to be the fastest urbanising region in the African continent after East Africa, and its population is projected to rise from 44.9 percent in 2011 to 49.9 per cent in 2020 and 65.7 per cent by 2050 (UN-habitat, 2008). Crucially, and despite the attention drawn by mega-cities, the latest UN population estimates for the continent also reveal that most urban dwellers in Africa, about 54 percent, live in cities and towns with fewer than half a million people, rather than in mega-cities. This is expected to remain the case in the next few decades as projections show that most population growth will occur in smaller towns and cities (UN, 2014; UNFPA, 2008). And, according to UN Habitat (2008), a particularity of the West African region is precisely that urban growth will be mostly driven by the expansion of secondary cities (even if the concept of secondary cities remains rather vague in this report).

Scholars reflecting upon population projections in the African continent, such as Potts (2009, 2008) and Bocquier (2004), have also claimed that most forecasts have overestimated urbanization rates. They argue that in some countries urban growth is now equivalent to national population growth, suggesting a decrease in the rates of growth of urban areas and lower migration trends into these areas. Most importantly in the context of this research, Potts (2009) claims that in some countries, like Ghana, the high levels of urbanization can only be explained by the vigorous growth of small and very small towns. Thus, despite the attention given to mega-cities, and rightly so, it is also undeniable that smaller cities have enough demographic significance to draw considerably more interest than they have to date.

The notions of 'small' and 'secondary' cities remain vague and ambiguous (Jaglin, 2014; Jaglin et al., 2011; Véron, 2010). Different countries adopt very distinct criteria to distinguish between urban and rural regions (Wisner et al., 2015). Likewise, scholars adopt distinct definitions, which place variable emphasis on size of the population, function, administrative arrangement, and local economy (Satterthwaite, 2006; Véron, 2010). As suggested by Wisner et al. (2015) and Satterthwaite (2006), this thesis will refer to small cities to denote those urban centres with populations between 20,000 and 100,000 inhabitants. Most cross-country

estimates use the 0.5 million mark to refer to small cities and, therefore, it is difficult to know what proportion of the population currently lives in these smaller settlements. Nevertheless, Bafatá is one of the 893 urban centres with populations between 10,000 and 100,000 people in West Africa, this compares with 109 cities with over 100,000 inhabitants in the same region (UN-habitat, 2008).

Apart from their demographic significance, another important factor justifying this call for research focusing on small African cities relates to the specificities of these cities (Jaglin et al., 2011; Véron, 2010). In fact, these specificities are at the heart of this thesis' aim to use perspectives from a small African city to evaluate and expand existing theorisations of water infrastructure to address issues of water provision in these cities. As in the case of small cities, there are a number of definitions for secondary cities (Roberts, 2014; Smith and Ruiters, 2006; Yacoob and Kelly, 1999). I adopt the term 'secondary' to denote the specific position of these cities within the urban hierarchy. This includes the consideration of their function and role as urban centres revealed, for example, in the occupations of the population, or their role as main centres for accessing markets, health, education as well as other services (Satterthwaite, 2006). For instance, despite being a small city, Bafatá is known as the second city of Guinea-Bissau. It is an important centre for trade, education, services, government offices and transport. Also, unlike smaller centres, it houses an extremely diverse population, mixing different ethnicities, religions, languages and nationalities. But, most importantly, the use of the term 'secondary' entails acknowledging the particular position of these urban centres in relation to larger political and economic hubs, and the related specific challenges they face concerning service provision (Jaglin et al., 2011; Véron, 2010). Véron (2010) uses the notion of 'triple challenge' to convey the limited financial and human resources and lack of political power, which characterises these cities. This 'triple challenge' is perhaps best understood, in the context of African cities, in light of the phenomenon of urban primacy (Myers, 2011; Pieterse and Parnell, 2014; UN-habitat, 2008). The concentration of population, economic opportunities, employment and access to services in one single large city, typically with a

population several times larger than the second most populated city, routinely causes the neglect of smaller urban areas, with impacts on the resources mobilised to these cities.

As argued by Robinson (2006), once it was established that the majority of the world's urban population lived in cities of the global south, urban theory, which continued to base its essential theoretical constructs in a core group of cities based in the West, faced the risk of becoming irrelevant, unless it engaged in a real effort to reinvent itself and work to capture, explain, and theorise from cities of the global south. It is thus the argument of this thesis that it is now time to focus also on small secondary cities in the African continent. These are cities where a significant proportion of the urban population in Africa lives, and is expected to continue to live in the next few decades, and where drivers of urban change, which take into account the specificities of these cities, remain under-investigated. Thus, while engaging in a detailed analysis of one small African city, this research also constitutes a wider call for more research on small cities in general. Hopefully, in a few years, researching a small city will be accepted as providing an opening to analytical conversations about a wide range of other cities without having to justify why this matters. At the time I am writing this work, it remains a rather difficult task.

Thus, examining water provision in Bafatá, and seeking to expand existing analytical devices in such ways that they can capture the multiple logics and processes at work in this city, this thesis is not only relevant to those, like me, with personal connections to this city. It is also relevant to those with an interest in cities in Africa more generally. Whilst not claiming validity across all small secondary cities in Africa, the aim of this research is to contribute to a wider agenda focusing on these cities as sites of theory-making. What can these cities add to our understandings of current neoliberalisation strategies in water provision and, more generally, our conceptualisations of neoliberalism? What do these cities tell us about alternative drivers, outcomes and processes influencing water provision? Can we find new ways to think about these alternative driving forces across diverse cities?

Omissions: Development, Gender

There are two obvious omissions in this thesis. The first one concerns the lack of engagement with debates on the politics of development. As you read through this thesis, it will become apparent that international development projects have played a key role in the evolution of water infrastructure in Bafatá. Furthermore, many of the processes I explore could have been framed in terms of the successes and failures of these development projects. For example, David Mosse (2005), Mosse and Lewis (2006) and Rossi (2004a, 2004b) have developed some extremely interesting ethnographies of development aid and practice highlighting and explaining the multi-layered disjuncture between policy and practice. And, like this project, they have adopted ethnographic approaches to seek more nuanced evaluations of the ways in which policies are translated into practice. Whilst acknowledging this work and, in fact, drawing on their contributions concerning the potential of ethnographies and the consideration of agency in the translation of policies into practice, I consciously chose not to frame my research around development research. This is not because I don't think this would be a relevant approach but because I was not investigating development projects but urban water provision. In other words, I wanted to explore Bafatá as a city with its own dynamics and processes rather than focusing on how it had developed in relation to development discourses, policies and practices. For this reason, I have chosen to frame my research within the field of urban studies and, consequently, to view development aid and practices as part of, but not the fundamental, discourses, agendas and practices shaping the urban condition of Bafatá. This has enabled me to consider the ways in which urban space in Bafatá is produced through the intertwining of multiple spatialities, whilst maintaining the focus on urban water provision in Bafatá, and including a multiplicity of drivers and forces that include but also exceed development projects, discourses and practices.

The second important omission relates to gender. In line with broader development discourses, interventions on the piped water network of Bafatá were typically infused with gender discourses. In addition, gender relations in general and in relation to water provision

in particular were important topics throughout my fieldwork, permeating many conversations with many women and men. For instance, out of the almost 50 water users I interviewed, the great majority were women. This choice reflected women's role collecting water for the household. Yet, a considerable number of those involved in the management of water infrastructure were men. Section 2.5. below discusses how feminist approaches have informed studies of water provision. As suggested by Truelove (2011), gender relations are an important dimension of the social relations regulating water provision in the city, and political ecology perspectives have routinely ignored the reproduction of water inequalities along gender lines. O'Reilly (2006) and Harris (2009) also demonstrate how development projects advocating women's participation in water provision have negatively affected women's livelihoods, rather than fostering their empowerment. In addition, Page (2005) argues that the role of women in the production of water has routinely been ignored. These scholars demonstrate that gender is an important theme in studies of water provision. On the one hand, the exclusion of a detailed analysis of gender relations from this study can be related to my concerns about the ways in which gender is dealt with in mainstream development projects. These interventions typically reproduce discursive constructions of women "as *stati loci* of eternal suffering, [and] a privileged recipient of First world concern" (Radcliffe, 1994, p. 26). On the other hand, this omission is also explained by an understanding that, as suggested by Madge and Raghuram (2006), my own wish to counter development discourses should not simply reproduce Eurocentric views of women. Thus, an engagement with gender would require an approach that avoids easy assumptions regarding notions of gender relations in Guinea-Bissau. This would be a different, and important, project in itself. Nevertheless, during this research I was careful in seeking multiple – complementing and contradicting – perspectives relating to understandings of water provision that crossed gender divisions.

Thesis outline

The remainder of this thesis is organised into 8 chapters. Chapters 2 and 3 illustrate the theoretical constructs at the heart of this research, and introduce the analytical frameworks developed to investigate water provision in Bafatá. *Chapter 2* argues that political economy and political ecology approaches present important limitations for understandings of water provision in small secondary African cities. Related to this, it calls for the need to adopt more nuanced views of neoliberalism, as conceptualised in the notion of variegated neoliberalism. But, it also calls for the need to examine alternative drivers, processes and outcomes. This means engaging in a postcolonial post-neoliberal optic and discontinuing the over-commitment to critiques of neoliberalism in this literature. Here, policy debates on urban water can offer some guidance. *Section 2.2.* examines key shifts in international water policies in recent decades. It explores the consecutive privatisation waves, demonstrating the ongoing emphasis given to market approaches, private sector participation, as well as the growing importance given to the role of the state, as regulator and enabler. Concerns related to state weaknesses and the financial constraints faced by many cities are two crucial issues emerging from policy analyses, which are often neglected by scholars adopting political economy/ ecology perspectives

Section 2.3. turns to political economy and political ecology investigations of water provision. It starts by stressing the rich contributions of this body of work, involving analyses that bring forward complex understandings of the processes and impacts associated with the neoliberalisation of water. This section then engages with postcolonial critiques of this work, which have demonstrated the provincialism of some of the key theoretical constructs underpinning such analyses. In particular, it examines how scholars have challenged the ‘modern network city’ as an assumption at the heart of understandings of water infrastructure, and questioned straightforward associations between neoliberalisation and the splintering of urban infrastructure. Lastly, this section argues that conventional political economy/ ecology approaches have been menaced by an over-commitment to critiques of neoliberalism, which

have hindered the consideration of the variety of factors, motivations and agendas shaping water provision in small African cities.

Section 2.4., then, discusses calls for postcolonial perspectives and ‘post-neoliberal optics’ in urban studies. In particular, it discusses how the notion of ‘variegated neoliberalism’ can support more nuanced analyses of water provision and neoliberalisation. In addition, it examines the concept of assemblages and the focus on the everyday as analytical and methodological tools that can extend existing analytical frameworks centred on neoliberalisation and capture processes that escape existing analytical registers. *Section 2.5.* examines a recent body of work exploring everyday water and sanitation practices in investigations of urban infrastructure. It discusses how these approaches have expanded and complicated conventional political ecology approaches, namely understandings of water inequality and of the ways in which states become involved in everyday practices. *Section 2.6.* summarises the key arguments of this chapter and proposes an analytical framework for the analysis of water infrastructure in secondary African cities. This analytical framework combines the consideration of variegated neoliberalisms and the use of the notion of assemblages, alongside explorations of the everyday, to explore and theorise the variety of processes and factors shaping the urban condition.

Chapter 3 argues that views of the state currently circulating in the literature focusing on water provision cannot adequately capture the myriad of ways in which state institutions and actors shape water provision in small secondary cities in Africa. This chapter begins with a discussion of the divergent, but also similar, views of the state underpinning policy analysis and academic research on water provision. It also contrasts these views of the state with empirical investigations of African states to demonstrate the flaws of these theorisations of the state in the context of small secondary African cities, and even elsewhere. *Section 3.2.*, then, explores theorisations of the state in Africa, which have tended to draw on the problematic concept of neopatrimonialism. Whilst accounting for important dynamics, such as the informalisation of

state power and patron-client relationships, these conceptualisations continue to rely on idealised and reified notions of the rational-bureaucratic state.

Thus, *section 3.3.* turns to anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday state practices. It argues that these theorisations of the state can open investigations to the variety of ways and modalities through which states shape water infrastructure in secondary African cities and, at the same time, can expose the ways in which these processes relate to broader processes of state formation. Notably, investigations of everyday state practices make visible a range of processes previously hidden from analytical view, including a variety of fragmented practices which surpass policy and regulatory frameworks but which cannot simply be dismissed as deviations from the normal functioning of the state. Instead, they should be drawn on to inform more nuanced theorisations of the state that allow for the heterogeneity and contradictions inherent in these apparatuses. Explorations of everyday state practices allow for state presence to be acknowledged, as it is, without jumping to conclusions or relying on pre-existing theorisations concerning the nature of the state. This is in contrast to views of the state as a unified, coherent entity, which tend to produce analyses that overgeneralise from specific agendas and fail to conceptually allow for the multiple modalities of the state. *Section 3.4.* discusses the work of scholars adopting more nuanced views of the state in their investigations of urban infrastructure. It demonstrates the insights these investigations have brought to understandings of the ways in which states shape water infrastructure, involving attention to the multiple modalities of the state. Finally, the conclusion explores how such theorisations of the state can be mobilised for the study of water infrastructure in secondary African cities.

Chapters 4 and 5 provide the reader with background information for the empirical chapters which follow. *Chapter 4* presents a discussion of the research methods adopted, which included over 90 interviews with a range of different actors involved in water provision, and participation observation in different locations – such as wells, hand pumps and standpipes – and with different organisations – including Bafatá’s water operator, the Regional Offices of

the Water Resources Department and the National Water and Sanitation Group. This chapter also explains the rationale underpinning the ethnographic approach adopted in this study and it includes a discussion of data collection and the process of interpretation and writing. In addition, it explores how issues of positionality and reflexivity were dealt with throughout the research process.

Chapter 5 introduces the reader to the case study used in this research. First, it provides a brief overview of processes of democratisation and economic liberalisation in the country and it discusses the dependence of Guinea-Bissau on foreign aid and the normalisation of political instability. This is followed by a discussion of institutional multiplicity in a context where the presence of the state has remained elusive throughout the colonial and postcolonial eras. In addition, chapter 5 describes current water policy and regulatory frameworks in the context of Guinea-Bissau and the evolution of water infrastructure in Bafatá between 1974, the year Guinea-Bissau became independent, and 2006. The period after that will then be explored in the following chapters. Here, the neoliberal turn in national water policies, the dependency on foreign aid and the piecemeal development of water infrastructure in Bafatá are highlighted. Throughout this chapter, the research questions guiding this thesis are presented.

Chapters 6, 7 and 8 examine water provision in Bafatá and illustrate the arguments developed in previous chapters. *Chapter 6* argues that state weaknesses followed by the heavy presence of international actors do not simply equate to an absent or neoliberal state in the realm of water provision in Guinea-Bissau. It demonstrates how the state works in relational ways, through its relations and interactions with non-state organisations. In addition, this chapter shows that the state has shaped water provision in Bafatá in significant ways, through the autonomous decisions, practices and interactions of government officials.

Nevertheless, *Section 6.2.* shows that understandings of the role of the state in water provision in Guinea-Bissau cannot be isolated from discourses of state weakness circulating at all levels and across all sectors, or the lack of financial and human resources available to the state. In the light of long-term state weakness, including its dependence on international donations to

finance the sector, this section also demonstrates that in Guinea-Bissau, seemingly neoliberal policies concerning the role of the state have acquired new meanings. Moreover, whilst neoliberal ideas are an important feature of national policies, they are not the ones producing the most visible effects.

Section 6.3. then examines the relational ways in which the state has shaped the sector in a context where state institutions depend on international organisations and NGOs for financing interventions. It demonstrates that the state is not only dependent on non-state organisations for the implementation of national policies but that it also depends on these organisations' willingness to at least symbolically acknowledge the role of state institutions as enablers, supervisors and regulators of the sector. Thus, on the one hand, the expansion of state presence in the sector is often hindered by the proliferation of non-state organisations. On the other hand, the state itself is constituted through the subtle and informal recognition conferred on it by these actors.

Turning to the ways in which state institutions influenced water provision in Bafatá in recent years, *section 6.4.* shows how various state officials based in the city have been consistently involved in water provision in the city. Yet, these state actors have mostly operated in ways that exceed policy or regulatory guidelines. It is thus argued that although the state has been unable to enforce policy and regulatory guidelines, it has not been absent. In addition, the various motivations and agendas behind state practices allude to the multiple modalities of the state. Finally, *section 6.5.* explores the contradictions inherent to the concession contract signed between the state and the city's water operator in 2012. It demonstrates that the legal and policy facets of the state do not regulate social life but can serve as devices that conform to international NGOs expectations. Overall, this chapter shows that by opening the analytical lenses to the multiple modalities and practices of state actors, we can contribute to understandings of the various ways in which states shape water provision.

Chapter 7 examines water governance in Bafatá, focusing on the agency of the practices of a variety of actors and their role in re-inventing, appropriating, ignoring and contesting policy

models circulating in the city. It is thus argued that the current model adopted in Bafatá represents a *Creole* mode of governance. The term *Creole* expresses the processes of localisation and transformation of circulating models and ideas as well as the ways in which this model combines a range of practices, motivations and agendas. *Section 7.2.* explores the period between 2006 and 2010, before the launch of the first development intervention targeting directly the city's piped water network. It shows that the evolution of water governance during these years must be understood in the context of the indirect and unintended outcomes of development interventions. It also demonstrates how various actors appropriated the presence and goals of development interventions, according to their motivations: to improve access to water, to access training and income opportunities, and to raise the profile of ASPAAB¹ (a local organisation and water operator) as a development actor. In addition, this section traces the materialities of the system, the lack of resources, the unstable patterns of investments, and the ongoing engagements of ASPAAB in a broad range of activities and improvisations as the main factors shaping the operation of the network during this period. This was an assemblage that sought (and eventually succeeded) to extend possibilities within prescribed socio-political configurations.

Section 7.3. explores the ways in which ASPAAB, with the support of state officials, re-invented, appropriated and contested models disseminated by international NGOs and, in this way, engendered a *Creole* mode of governance. First, it shows how the concession contract signed between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources was appropriated and given new meanings that served the needs and motivations of local actors and transcended the original agendas. Second, it demonstrates how local actors contested models, ideas and knowledge promoted by international NGOs, ignoring the findings of a series of technical studies calling for a change in the water tariff. Lastly, it traces the multiple practices re-shaping the supposedly 'strict rule of the meter', and it examines these practices as a process of embedding of the water governance model in place in existing social relations and institutions. This

¹ Associação de Saneamento Básico Protecção da Água e Ambiente

section also highlights the agency of the practices of subordinated actors. Thus, this chapter demonstrates that more nuanced views of critiques of neoliberalism and an attention to alternative factors, motivations and agendas can in fact contribute to understandings of water provision in small African cities.

Chapter 8, the last empirical chapter, explores water provision in Bafatá from the perspective of everyday water practices. *Section 8.2* investigates the variety of factors shaping the ways in which Bafatá's residents navigate multiple water sources and technologies. It demonstrates that despite the emphasis given to access and control in political ecology perspectives and policy analyses, there are many other factors shaping water practices. In Bafatá, perceptions of quality of water as well as the convenience associated with other sources were revealed to be key factors in people's decision to not rely on the piped water supply. The continued reliance on a multiplicity of sources is seen as a process of 'splintering from below' (Bakker, 2010). Thus, it is argued that understandings of water supply in small cities should recognise the multiplicity of sources and alternatives at the heart of everyday water practices.

Section 8.3 examines the transformations engendered by the introduction of meters on all standpipes and home connections in terms of a transition from 'private-collective' to 'collective-individualising' modes of supply. Private-collective modes of supply prevailing in Bafatá demonstrate that particularistic solutions, such as wells or home connections, can become collective infrastructure through ingrained sharing practices. The use of water meters, on the other hand, has provoked an incipient transition, where collective-individualising modes of supply – entailing the individualisation of use of a collectively provided service – have come to co-exist with already existing modes of provision. Although narratives of commodification and marketization could be applied to explain this transition, this section demonstrates that there are alternative and more significant processes. These include an increase in water revenues and the substitution of sharing practices at the neighbourhood level with re-distribution at the central management level, which are both key in a city where

resources are so scarce. Thus, this chapter illustrates how everyday water practices can complicate, complement and add nuances to current analyses of water infrastructure.

Lastly, *chapter 9* provides a conclusion of the main findings of this research, highlighting some of the advantages and limitations of the analytical framework adopted. It also explores some avenues for future research. In particular, it discusses how future research adopting more nuanced views of the state would be essential to generate better understandings of the role of states in service delivery and to inform policies that can improve access to water in cities. It also examines the ways in which research across a variety of cities would be required in order to develop finer understandings of the factors and drivers shaping the production and use of water in small cities across Africa, especially those dynamics escaping neoliberal analytical frameworks. In addition, this chapter highlights the need for further research focusing on everyday practices and acknowledging the multiplicity of sources and technologies used in delivering water in cities. This research would contribute to better understandings of how people manage and use these alternative sources, how these alternatives relate to centralised services, and therefore contribute to more accurate conceptualisations of water provision. Turning to the specific case of small secondary African cities, empirical research exploring a variety of case studies would be essential in devising ways to think about the variety of forces, processes and outcomes shaping water provision across these cities. This is a research agenda that can have great policy outcomes. Therefore, lastly, this chapter discusses some policy implications relating to the findings of this research. These include, for example: the need to reconsider the roles of the state and legality at the core of policy models; and, the need to acknowledge the multiplicity of sources used in cities and therefore follow investments in piped supply schemes with investments in public health campaigns and alternative sources.

Urban infrastructure has been an important topic within the fields of urban studies and geography, driving, and contributing to, heated debates on various themes, including the configurations of power and forces shaping urban processes; the production and reproduction of inequalities and injustice; the challenges faced in moving towards the construction of more

just urban spaces equipped with adequate infrastructure; as well as the constitution, and disruptions, of everyday life. Whilst acknowledging the rich insights produced by this literature, this thesis argues that existing approaches still present important limitations. More specifically, it demonstrates how existing conceptualisations of water infrastructure require some critical scrutiny if they are to be useful for the analysis of water provision in small secondary African cities. Whilst comprising small populations when considered in isolation, together these cities house a large proportion of the population currently living on the continent. Recent studies also predict that population growth in the African continent will be concentrated in these smaller urban centres (Potts, 2009; UN, 2014; UNFPA, 2008). In addition to this, small cities in Africa present their own specific challenges related to water provision, given their subordinate positions in relation to national and international political and economic centres, the “chronic shortage of facilities” (Jaglin et al., 2011, p. 120) and a stark lack of resources . Attending to the diversity of secondary cities across the continent and their distinctive challenges, opens up a research agenda for understandings of water provision that can be enriched with research from multiple ‘elsewheres’. Thus the aim of this research is to use the perspective of a small secondary city in Africa to engage with current debates in urban studies and geography. This thesis therefore proposes an analytical framework for the analysis of water infrastructure in urban regions in Africa, and more generally.

– TWO –

Theorising urban water infrastructure from secondary cities in Africa: Neoliberalism, Assemblages and Everyday Practices

2.1. Introduction

This chapter establishes the broad theoretical content for the thesis. It argues that conventional political economy and political ecology approaches, which have dominated debates on urban infrastructure, present various limitations for understandings of water infrastructure in small secondary cities in poorer contexts. Notably, the pervasiveness of critiques of neoliberalism, discussed in this chapter, and the views of the state adopted in these analyses, discussed in more detail in chapter three. This chapter thus argues that analyses of water provision in small African cities call for both the adoption of more nuanced views of neoliberalism, and a post-neoliberal optic that seeks to situate and theorise alternative forces shaping the urban condition (Parnell and Robinson, 2012). It develops an analytical framework that combines the concepts of ‘variegated neoliberalism’ (Brenner et al., 2010) and assemblages with an attention to the everyday to propose an understanding of a ‘Creole’ mode of governance, characterised by the intermixing of influences.

The evolution of mainstream water policies in recent decades exposes the ongoing emphasis upon market approaches and private sector participation in urban water supply, followed by the prominence of the role given to the state as enabler and regulator. Where neoliberal rationales are evident in policy analyses of water provision, these debates also engage with two crucial themes – state weakness and the financial constraints faced by many large and small cities – which are often ignored by political economy/ecology perspectives centred on critiques of neoliberalism. This is discussed in the next section, *section 2.2.*

Political economy and political ecology analyses of water provision in cities across the globe have responded to the evolution of water policies, and particularly the emphasis given to private sector participation, with detailed analyses of the (frequently negative) processes and outcomes constituting the neoliberalisation of water. The important insights developed by scholars adopting these approaches are discussed in *section 2.3*. In addition, this section discusses how conventional political economy/ ecology approaches have been criticised for the provincialism of some of their key assumptions. In particular, it focuses on critiques of conceptualisations of the ‘modern networked city’ as a generalised phase and of the splintering of infrastructure as an inevitable consequence of neoliberalisation. In this way, scholars investigating a range of cities in the global south have demonstrated the need for more situated analyses of urban infrastructure that take into consideration the different trajectories of cities, namely the diversity of processes and outcomes characterising neoliberalisation strategies. Whilst observing the important questions raised by postcolonial critiques of analyses of urban infrastructure, this section ends with a discussion of the extent to which critiques of neoliberalism have dominated analyses of water infrastructure. It is argued that the emphasis upon critiques of neoliberalism has hindered the consideration of the variety of forces and processes constituting water provision in small cities.

After setting out in some detail the limitations of approaches centred on critiques of neoliberalism, this chapter then reviews current debates in urban studies calling for a postcolonial turn in the discipline and, more recently, debating the need for a post-neoliberal optics (Baptista, 2013a; Parnell and Robinson, 2012). Inspired by this literature, it discusses the notion of variegated neoliberalism as an adequate tool to make sense of the ways in which small cities are inserted in circulations of neoliberal policies. It is argued that the concept of variegated neoliberalism establishes the possibility to analyse how neoliberal policies and ideas are transformed and adapted, or hybridised, as they are appropriated and situated in specific contexts (Peck et al., 2009).

Nevertheless, this chapter also argues that the concept of variegated neoliberalisms does not adequately capture the multiplicity of processes shaping water infrastructure in secondary African cities. First, this theoretical construct does not account for the transformation of global policies and models in such a way that their neoliberal ethos might be, at least partially, replaced by new meanings, rationalities and motivations. In other words, it does not provide us with the conceptual tools necessary to make sense of the processes through which neoliberal policies might become instantiated as ‘something else’, something other than ‘neoliberalism’. Second, a neoliberal framework does not offer insights into the range of forces and social relations shaping water supply in many cities, including small secondary African cities. Although critiques of neoliberalism have largely dominated debates and shaped scholarly imagination, their analytical purchase in numerous cities across the global south cannot be assumed and should rather be turned into an object for empirical inquiry. In other words, in the context of many secondary cities in Africa the predominance of capitalist relations, or the specific form of capitalism called neoliberalism, in shaping urban processes should not be taken for granted but needs to be investigated and considered alongside other forces shaping the urban condition. Urgently, these other forces need critical analytical attention.

Thus, to find new registers of analysis and produce distinctive analytical devices that can account for the experience of secondary African cities (Lawhon et al., 2014), this chapter examines the notion of assemblages combined with an attention to the everyday. *Section 2.4* discusses how this concept has been used by scholars as both an analytical and methodological tool to expose the variety of motivations, rationalities and logics shaping urban processes (McFarlane, 2011b, 2011c; McGuirk and Dowling, 2009; Rankin, 2011). In particular, it explores how this notion has been used by African urbanists to make sense of those processes that seem to escape existing analytical registers (Parnell and Pieterse, 2014; Pieterse, 2008; Simone, 2011, 2004a, 2004b).

Recently, scholars have started turning to investigations of everyday practices and micropolitics in their analyses of urban infrastructure (Anand, 2011b; Birkenholtz, 2010;

Desai et al., 2015; McFarlane et al., 2014; Truelove, 2011). *Section 2.5.* discusses the contributions of this body of work, namely the ways these analyses have complicated understandings of the social relations reproducing water inequalities. These investigations have also enabled the consideration of a range of factors and practices previously neglected in analyses of water supply, and highlighted the multiple and contradictory ways in which residents experience the state.

Lastly, I discuss the analytical framework adopted in this thesis, which combines the concepts of variegated neoliberalism and assemblages with an attention to the everyday to propose an understanding of a 'Creole' mode of governance. The term 'Creole' is adopted to illustrate the evolving product emerging through the intermixing of a variety of influences. Here, I argue that the notion of assemblages associated with an attention to the everyday constitutes an appropriate methodological and analytical tool to make sense of the multiple processes and dynamics characterising, and shaping, water infrastructure in small Africa cities and which escape existing analytical devices. Adopting an assemblage approach to the study of water infrastructure, accompanied by investigations of everyday practices, allows for consideration of a range of sites, forces and practices, which have been neglected using a neoliberal analytical framework. In addition, this approach captures the specific modes of governance that result from the ensemble and intertwining of diverse agendas, actors, practices and institutions around water infrastructure, and that come to constitute multiple motivations, discourses and rationalities.

2.2. Water policies, private sector participation and the state

Debates relating to private sector participation have dominated policy discussions on urban water supply, and current water policies reflect previous experiences and failures associated with private sector participation in water supply in various cities across the globe (Pierce, 2015). Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, during the first wave of privatizations, cities of the

global South witnessed successive attempts to increase private sector participation in the water sector. According to its proponents, including influential organisations such as the World Bank, and in line with neoliberal policies circulating at the time, private sector participation would solve inefficiencies inherent to state management, and open the possibility for new private finance streams that would then be used in the expansion of services to new areas and groups, most prominently the poor (Brookshire and Whittington, 1993; Clarke et al., 2002; Franceys, 1994; Winpenny, 1987). In addition, the adoption of market logics would facilitate the allocation of a scarce resource avoiding the excesses attributed to previous management models. Yet, by the early 2000s, it had become evident, not only to those critical of privatisation² and commercialisation³ initiatives but also to their advocates, that efforts towards the increase of private sector participation in the water sector during the previous decades had not produced the predicted outcomes. A World Bank report states, “during the 1990s, the Bank group became more reluctant to lend to government for infrastructure, and more willing to support private investment. But getting private participation in infrastructure (PPPI) to work well has also proven technically difficult – and politically contentious” (Irwin et al., 2005, p. 3).

For proponents of privatisation, the limitations of the first endeavours to stimulate private sector participation in urban water supply were particularly evident in: the documented inability to significantly expand coverage to low-income areas; the reduced amounts of private investment mobilised to lower-income countries; the rife popular protests; and, the declining interest of private companies to invest in these locations (Berthelemy et al., 2004; Irwin et al., 2005; Izaguirre and Hunt, 2005). In sum, as stated in a report published by the World Bank, “The experimentation of the last 15 years introduced various forms of private participation in

² Privatisation is conventionally used to refer to a number of different processes comprising different degrees of private sector participation. For an insightful discussion on the different processes included under the label privatisation see Bakker (2003a). In this text, privatisation will be used in its broad sense referring to the transfer of all or part of the responsibility for the management of public services to private actors, thus, moving away from “the assumption, more normative than factual, that the state has a primary duty to provide their citizens with sufficient public options to access the above [welfare and primary-good-supporting services] services” (Cordelli, 2012). Private actors include for-profit companies but also private non-profit associations, such as NGOs, community organisations, and also small ‘informal’ providers.

³ In this text, the term commercialisation refers to the adoption of market principles and logics (e.g. Full cost recovery) in water supply management both by public and private actors. The key point about commercialisation in this sense is that it does not require privatisation. You can have the practice of the private sector, but the ownership models of the public sector.

water and sewerage, but the frequent (not inevitable) result was popular protests, dissatisfied governments and unhappy investors” (Irwin et al., 2005, p. 22). These limitations relating to past experiences with privatisation coincided with the beginning of a second era in the privatisation of water supply, which Pierce (2015) has called the ‘strategic retreat’. In effect, after reaching a peak in 1997, private sector investment in the sector started declining. This was partially explained by the failures of numerous contracts, involving the withdrawal of transnational water companies and the cancellation of contracts by national governments (Hall, 2003; Hall et al., 2004; Kjellén, 2006; Pierce, 2015). For instance, after its dramatic withdrawal from Argentina, Suez – which, according to Goldman (2005), at a certain point together with Vivendi controlled an estimated 70% of the world’s water market – stated that it would withdraw from most activities in developing countries where risks were considered to be too high (Hall and Lobina, 2004). Simultaneously, private companies in general claimed that subsidies would be required if they were to operate in lower income countries (Budds and McGranahan, 2003).

At the same time, the realisation of the limitations of past initiatives for private sector participation in the water sector in the early 2000s caused the reopening of debates concerning the role of the public and private sectors in water supply, prompting policy shifts. Whilst not renouncing privatisation, this new set of policies overtly accepted the vital and, in all likelihood, continuing role of the public sector (Berthelemy et al., 2004; Irwin et al., 2005). This renewed interest in the public sector was supported by at least four main assumptions, which demonstrate how certain forms of state activity can be reconciled with neoliberal ideals in particular contexts. These included: first, the implausibility of private sector participation materialising in lower-income countries in the short- and medium-terms; second, and related to the first, the prospect of water systems remaining “substantially in public hands” (Irwin et al., 2005, p. ii); third, the accepted need for public subsidies in order to enable the expansion of water to poorer, and formerly excluded, areas and to maintain tariffs at affordable levels for those on lower incomes; and, lastly, the need to create supportive environments -

adequate, efficient and legible legal and juridical systems – where the private sector could operate (see, Irwin et al., 2005). Related to this, a report published by the OECD in 2004 also claimed that “a credible regulatory framework, backed by a strong political commitment, is also crucial to improving access in the power and water sectors. In the absence of proper regulation, profit-maximising behaviour has led privatised companies to keep investments below the necessary levels, with the result that rural communities and the urban poor were further marginalised” (Berthelemy et al., 2004, p. 105).

In line with the above, following the failures of the first wave of privatisations in many countries and cities, measures were adopted to promote the efficiency and financial sustainability of public-run water supply systems, a process often described as the ‘corporatisation of public services’ (Boag and McDonald, 2010). On the one hand, several case studies have demonstrated that processes of corporatisation and internal reforms can result in more effective water services (Biswas and Tortajada, 2010; Boag and McDonald, 2010; Mugisha and Berg, 2007). On the other hand, such measures typically signalled the consistent deployment of market approaches to service provision and are depicted, by both sides of the privatisation debate, as preparing the field for future privatisations (Berthelemy et al., 2004; Boag and McDonald, 2010; Irwin et al., 2005).

Where some scholars, such as Bakker (2013) and Bayliss (2014), perceive recent changes in the strategies of privatisation of urban water supply as mere extensions of earlier phases, Pierce (2015, pp. 119–120) argues that there have been “substantive changes in the strategy’s trajectory (...) in terms of its geography, its governance forms, and its constituent stakeholders”. Hereby, he argues that we are currently in a new era of privatisation that he titles ‘shallow expansion’. In this new era, “many cities and firms have moved from a position of strategic retreat to one of shallow expansion by incorporating different governance arrangements and actors” (Pierce, 2015, p. 124). On the one hand, strategies similar to those adopted in previous waves of privatisation can still be found in certain locations. For example, this was the case in Greece and Portugal where the recent privatisation of water utilities was

imposed by the EU as part of broader austerity measures imposed in these countries (Pierce, 2015). On the other hand, there are also new trends emerging. These include the rise of negotiations taking place at the city level without involving national governments and, most importantly, the increasing role of domestic and small-scale companies in privatization initiatives. In this way, a growing number of public-private partnerships entailing small-scale providers and emerging in cities across the globe, including small cities, are also included in broader understandings of privatisation trends in water provision (Anderson and Janssens, 2011; Pierce, 2015).

Nevertheless, despite the attention given to private sector participation by researchers focusing on urban water supply, most cities and towns have remained sheltered from such endeavours. This was particularly the case during the first waves of privatisation, since international companies have centred their activities on a restricted number of cities. For instance, in Africa, private corporations have tended to concentrate their efforts on large cities with populations above 1 million inhabitants and with significant higher-income populations (Budds and McGranahan, 2003). Simultaneously, in many of the cities neglected by the private sector, the corporatisation of public services has also not been an option, since state institutions have not been involved in the direct provision of water.

In effect, from the start of the privatisation agenda, and even before multinationals started withdrawing from cities across the global south, it was recognised that it would be hard to mobilise private sector participation (by international companies) in smaller cities, towns and rural areas with very low-income populations. The same way the unattractiveness of lower-income and smaller cities was recognised so was the inability of the public sector to meet demands for water services in these locations (Irwin et al., 2005). Consequently, in these areas, international organisations, such as the World Bank and the United Nations, have centred their programmes around the promotion of community-based management models and, more recently, public-private partnerships entailing small-scale private providers. Underlying these initiatives are still the devolution of responsibilities for service delivery to non-state

organisations, even if these are different kinds of organisations, alongside the consolidation of state capacities to regulate and enable these organisations. This is apparent in the multiplicity of decentralisation initiatives, aiming to strengthen local government institutions (see: Jaglin et al., 2011; UN Millennium Project 2005, 2005; UN WATER, 2015; World Bank, 2004).

Recently, there has been a move away from community-based models in favour of small-scale private providers (Golooba-Mutebi, 2012; Hoang Gia and Fugelsnes, 2010; Jaglin et al., 2011). This has followed the failures of previous experiences with community management, namely in terms of expectations related to the accountability of these models and, most importantly, their efficiency and effectiveness. For example, in a review of piped water schemes in small towns across different countries in West and Central Africa, Hoang Gia and Fugelsnes (2010) claim that failures in performance by community-based organisations have led these countries to concentrate on public-private partnerships, including small private companies, still accompanied by attempts to improve state's regulation and support. In addition, this turn to the role of small private actors in water provision is also apparent in the increasing attention given to informal small-scale private providers, which constitute important solutions for water provision in many cities, and in subsequent attempts to formalise, and regulate these (Ahlers et al., 2013). Again, these initiatives focus on the benefits of private management when associated with an effective regulatory role for the state and, as argued by Pierce (2015), they have become an important feature of the more recent wave of privatisation. In this way, private sector participation, even if involving a different set of actors, can be seen to be expanding to smaller cities and towns. Simultaneously, these processes of devolution of service provision in small cities to non-state organisations can also be linked to broader initiatives seeking to free both national states and private actors from these loss-making liabilities and allowing them to focus on larger (more profitable and politically significant) cities.

Neoliberal rationales have undeniably been at the core of international water policies advocating the benefits of market approaches and of private sector participation in water

provision. The next section, focusing on critiques of the neoliberalisation of water, makes explicit the links between mainstream policies in the water sector and the neoliberal project, questions assumptions at the core of neoliberal project and highlights the manifold negative social, political and economic impacts of such policies. Nevertheless, policy analyses do focus on some important issues that are largely neglected by political economy/ecology approaches. This is apparent in the attention given to the role of the state, and the related emphasis upon the impacts of state weaknesses on water provision. Paradoxically, while arguments related to state failures have frequently been used to justify the privatisation of service provision, these discussions have also developed some important arguments concerning state weaknesses and the impacts of this on water supply. In fact, as will be demonstrated for the case of Bafatá, the weakness of state institutions, revealed in the lack of resources but also in their limited technical knowledge or administrative capacity, fundamentally affect the ability of state institutions in the sector. Notably, although critiques of neoliberal water policies often argue for public water services, they routinely fail to account for the technical, administrative, and resource limitations of many states, which complicate their involvement in water provision. The same could be said about the attention given to the scarcity of resources witnessed by many cities across the world, with vital impacts on infrastructure, and which is rarely discussed in critiques of neoliberalism.

However, as chapter 3 will explore, the state being imagined in international policies is a rational, bureaucratic state, backed by adequate legal frameworks and effective juridical systems, which shows little relation to the historical and situated trajectories of different states.

2.3. Political economy and political ecology explorations of water infrastructure

“The conclusion of this experience has to be that clean water and adequate sanitation to the poor cannot be provided on market terms, but does require a public or socialised response, such as, for example, systematic and structural support or targeted subsidies, greater solidarity and a political insistence of socio-ecological equality.” (Swyngedouw, 2013, p. 830)

Transcending society-nature binaries, urban water supply and the neoliberalisation of nature

Scholars adopting political ecology perspectives, and seeking to transcend modernist society-nature binaries, have eloquently conceived urbanisation as a set of socio-ecological processes guided by unequal social relations. In this way, this body of work has fundamentally shaped the ways in which we think about nature, water and urban space. For instance, seeing urbanisation as a process of socio-ecological transformation has led scholars adopting political ecological approaches to extend their investigations of urbanisation processes to those regions beyond the limits of urban regions and which are profoundly transformed as a consequence of processes of urbanisation (Swyngedouw and Kaika, 2014). For example, researchers have explored the impacts of infrastructures, such as dams, reservoirs and aqueducts, routinely built many kilometres away from cities with the sole aim of providing water to urban dwellers. Often, these projects have considerable impacts in these far away regions that have to be understood in light of processes of urbanisation and unequal social relations. Thus, this perspective highlights the necessary connections between different locations through the flows of water and uneven social relations, it calls for researchers to think the relations between cities and elsewhere.

In Bafatá, like in many other cities across the globe, people use various sources and technologies, including artisanal sources such as wells, in order to meet their water needs. Nevertheless, urban growth will inevitably impact on the availability of artisanal modes of

water provision. This can happen through the contamination of ground and surface water, the extension of property rights that preclude users from accessing water in previously open sources, and the expansion of legal frameworks aiming to regulate water resources for environmental, social and political reasons. What this means is that urban growth drives the need for piped supply schemes, and therefore processes of exclusion are not restricted to a lack of access to a piped supply but also to a lack of access to previously available alternative sources. In these circumstances, the decline of alternative sources alongside the lack of access to a piped supply symbolises the ways in which some urban dwellers are suffering the consequences of urbanisation, whilst not sharing its benefits. As suggested by Bakker (2010, 2003b), processes of urbanisation drive the need for a piped supply scheme and therefore engender shifts from artisanal to industrial modes of production of water. This transition is necessarily accompanied by significant transformations in the social, political and cultural configurations of power shaping water supply and use. These configurations are essential to understand who benefits from processes of urbanisation.

As argued by Swyngedouw and Kaika (2014, pp. 462–3), adopting an urban political ecology perspective, they are “not so much concerned with the question of nature *IN* the city, but rather with the urbanization *OF* nature, i.e. the process through which all types of nature are socially mobilized, economically incorporated (commodified), and physically metabolized/transformed in order to support the urbanization process.” Such perspectives highlight the fact that hydraulic infrastructures constitute “socio-physical constructions that are actively and historically produced” (Swyngedouw, 2009, p. 56). Thus, researchers have sought to tease out what they claim to be the, frequently hidden, “human labour and social power relations involved in the process” (Kaika and Swyngedouw, 2000, p. 123) of the production of water infrastructures and the multiple ways in which infrastructure reproduces economic, social and cultural inequalities in capitalist regimes. In this way, a range of investigations have been produced of the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental configurations of power framing discourses, materialities and the production of infrastructure (see Gandy, 2005,

2003; Heynen, 2013; Heynen et al., 2006; Kaika, 2005; Kaika and Swyngedouw, 2000; Swyngedouw, 2006, 2004, 1999; Swyngedouw et al., 2002; Swyngedouw and Kaika, 2014).

Seeking to scrutinise the links between capital accumulation, the interests of the dominant classes and urban infrastructure, and focusing on the current era, political economy and political ecology perspectives frequently situate their analyses in processes of neoliberal restructuring and the concomitant privatisation of water. In this vein, Swyngedouw (2013, p. 828) argues that “[the global water problem] is primarily the result of the fusion of the dynamics of water with the power of money in highly uneven ways”. Borrowing David Harvey’s (2005) terms, he depicts water privatisation as a form of ‘accumulation by dispossession’ driven by capitalist relations in a neoliberal era, which is inciting the enclosure of the commons (Swyngedouw, 2013, 2009, 2005, 2004) but also the private appropriation of public goods generated and paid for by states (Bakker, 2013). In these circumstances, scholars scrutinise how the immersion of water infrastructure in tactics of capital accumulation and its increasing financialisation is shaping access to water in cities around the globe. More broadly, these authors scrutinise evolutions in water infrastructure in light of broader processes entailing the neoliberalisation of nature, which depict the neoliberal attempt to find solutions to environmental, efficiency and equity problems by resourcing to market mechanisms (Castree, 2008a, 2008b, 1995).

Related to the above, critical geographers and urban researchers adopting political economy and political ecology approaches have responded to the successive waves of privatisation and marketization of urban water supply with a rich body of work, mostly critical of these trends, producing “a flurry of scholarship on the privatization of water over the last decade” (Anand, 2011a, p. 426). Indeed, engaging in geographically and historically contextualised empirical research, scholars have produced an extensive literature, which excavates the multiple environmental, social, economic, political and cultural impacts of neoliberal reforms in the water sector in various cities across the globe (see, for example: Ahlers, 2010; Bakker, 2013, 2010, 2007, 2003b, Bayliss, 2014, 2003, 2001; Bayliss and McKinley, 2007; Birkenholtz,

2010; Bond, 2004; Budds and McGranahan, 2003; Castro, 2008; Hall et al., 2005; Hall and Lobina, 2004; Haughton, 2002; Loftus and McDonald, 2001; Smith, 2004; Swyngedouw, 2005, 2004).

Bakker (2003b), Birkenholtz (2010), Jaglin (2002) and Smith (2004), among others, have demonstrated that private sector participation and the adoption of market mechanisms in urban water supply have typically resulted in the consistent exclusion of the poor from mainstream services, and also led to the prevalence and expansion of 2-tier services in many cities. What this means is that private sector participation alongside state disinvestment in water infrastructure has created double standards in water provision, which reflect users' differential economic and political powers to both finance, under cost-recovery principles, and demand water infrastructure. Thus, where advocates of private sector participation focus on the mobilisation of private sector investments to finance the expansion of water services to the poor and the benefits of market rules in the allocation of scarce resources (Franceys, 2008; Whittington, 2003), critics highlight that the main outcomes of such policies have been inequality and the consistent exclusion from service provision of the poorest groups in society.

Proponents of privatisation have often justified the withdrawal of public investments in water infrastructure by claiming they amounted to a form of subsidy to the middle-classes and elite groups, who tended to be the only ones served by this infrastructure (Franceys, 2008; Whittington, 2003). However, opponents of privatisation have rightly noted that privileged groups in society have continued to benefit from infrastructure that was already paid for by the public sector, whilst poorer groups are being asked to pay the full-price. In addition, they argue, state disinvestment will only exacerbate inequalities and necessarily fail to improve access for the poor, since, on the one hand, the private sector will not invest where it won't make profits (unless subsidised by the state). On the other hand, where wealthier sections of society can withdraw from public infrastructure and devise their own solutions, the poorer groups will just be left with inadequate provision (Bakker, 2010; Jaglin, 2002).

Hall and Lobina (2004) and Swyngedouw (2005) have also challenged those advocating the market's ability to regulate the allocation of resources and therefore reduce environmental excesses. These scholars revealed the ways in which the private sector's demand for growth and short-term profits regularly results in the adoption of strategies which promote increases in production and consumption, with obvious negative environmental impacts. Yet another concern of various scholars has been the imbalance in bargaining interests between private and public actors underpinning many contracts, which frequently hinder states' ability to impose their demands (Bayliss, 2001; Birkenholtz, 2010; Smith and Ruiters, 2006).

Academic researchers have also explored the impacts of privatisation and marketization trends on state citizen relations. Stating the increasing role of multinational companies in water provision, Swyngedouw (2005) describes the major shifts in the choreographies of social and political power associated with privatisation, involving the increase of private power and the concomitant reduction in the ability of citizens to shape water infrastructure. He argues that private sector participation has brought the increasing integration of water in global financial circuits and therefore tied water provision to investment and financial risks. In other words, decisions to invest in water networks, for example to expand coverage, have come to be influenced and dictated by fluctuations in global markets or the profit seeking strategies of private companies rather than by the needs and demands of urban dwellers.

Still related to changes in state citizen relations in the context of private sector participation in water supply, there are a large number of studies by geographers and urban researchers examining the politics of infrastructure in South African cities, where processes of neoliberalisation were perceived to be at the core of recent transformations. In one of the few academic investigations of water in secondary cities in Africa, Smith and Ruiters (2006) explore the evolving power relations between the state, service providers and users in two South African cities, where public-private partnerships have been designed for water delivery. They argue that in these urban settlements the devolving of responsibilities to private, and therefore apolitical and external, actors have coincided with attempts to de-politicise the

delivery of services. Crucially, Smith and Ruiters (2006) also establish that being locked in political controversies in situations where the state has lost capacity in favour of private actors significantly contributes to the decomposing of state institutions' governance capacities, with repercussions on service delivery to the poor. However, these scholars demonstrate that efforts to de-politicise water provision have been undermined by political contestation and popular resistance, most often enacted through the inability and refusal to pay for water. Particularly relevant for this research is the ways in which these scholars perceive everyday water practices as forms of resistance that can undermine stated policies and goals, and therefore allow for (some) agency in everyday practices.

Also working on South African cities, Loftus and Lumsden (2008) and von Schnitzler (2008) examine how the introduction of water schemes in two townships reconfigured relationships with the state by forging links between previously marginalised spaces and local and national state institutions. In particular, they explore how these schemes became instrumental in the attempts of the post-apartheid South African state to establish a neoliberal consensus. For example, von Schnitzler deploys a governmentality approach to neoliberalism to explore the introduction of pre-paid meters which she describes as an attempt to produce calculative rationalities, providing citizens with "the ability to calculate and engage with cost/benefit analysis" (Von Schnitzler, 2008, p. 354). Hereby, she explains how the introduction of meters engendered reconfigurations of notions and practices of citizenship and how these devices became the terrain in which tensions relating to shifts from citizens, entitled to water, to customers, buying their water, were played out. The use of pre-paid meters served to de-politicise this transition.

Whilst a popular topic within the development literature, there are fewer case studies exploring community-based management, and other smaller-scale arrangements such as small-scale private providers, among urban researchers and critical geographers. Typically, they are loosely mentioned in reference to the cherry-picking strategies of transnational companies, the production of 2-tier systems or the exclusion of the poor from centrally

managed networks, but there are few in depth investigations of these arrangements. Yet, community-based management and public-private partnership involving small-scale providers are not only being promoted in rural areas but also in many smaller cities or even parts of larger cities and peri-urban areas.

Nevertheless, researchers adopting political economy approaches and exploring community-based water management in a diversity of rural and urban contexts have also noted the ways in which these solutions follow market approaches to service provision and neoliberal policies. For example, several studies have examined the coupling of community management with cost-recovery principles, the expansion of commercial water services to new territories and the commodification of water (see: Cleaver, 2000; Cleaver and Toner, 2006; Corbridge et al., 2005; Jaglin, 2002; Mosse, 1997; Page, 2005b, 2003; Harris, 2009). For instance, Jaglin (2002), in her very nuanced analysis, traces the increasing use of community-management approaches in urban areas in light of efforts to finance secondary networks. In this way, they are seen as a form of contracting out and externalising infrastructural and management costs to users. These models are also a way to bring distinct areas into the dominant water management system and progressively expand commercial water services. Ahlers (2010), Cleaver (2000) and Mosse (1997) have also established that community management systems adopting cost-recovery principles can not only be critical in the creation of water markets but also in the replacement of traditional norms and customs guiding the distribution of water. Yet another important critique of community-based management models has been their reliance on romanticised conceptions of community, which overlook local wealth and power inequalities that are then reproduced (Bakker, 2008; Cleaver and Toner, 2006).

Thus, political economy and political ecology investigations of water infrastructure have produced a broad range of analysis that have contributed to our understandings of the impacts of neoliberal reforms in water provision, namely highlighting the impacts of private sector participation and the concomitant commodification and marketization of water. In this way, they have provided an alternative view from that being promoted by policy analyses.

However, as mentioned earlier, conventional political economy and political ecology perspectives present some limitations for the study of water infrastructure in secondary African cities. The next section explores a body of work drawing on postcolonial urban studies and comparative urbanism debates to point to some of these limitations and call for more nuanced and situated approaches to the study of infrastructure in cities of the south.

2.3.1. Postcolonial perspectives and urban infrastructure

Swyngedouw (2005, 2004), one of the key voices in political ecology, states that “most international studies demonstrate that the organisation of urban water supply systems can be broadly divided in four stages” (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 84). Each stage encompasses time-specific cultural, social, political and economic understandings of water and urbanisation with repercussions extending from the domestic realm – notions of hygiene and cleanliness – to the role of the state in the water sector. Very briefly these stages are: (1) the period up to 1850s dominated by for-profit private operators providing water to restricted groups in cities; (2) the phase of ‘municipal socialism’ during which universal coverage took precedence over profit and the state took over the role of direct provider in Europe; (3) the period entailing the ‘nationalisation’ of water associated with Keynesian modes of production; (4) the current age marked by the successive waves of privatisation and commercialisation of water associated with the transition to post-Fordist or flexible modes of production.

This is not to say that Swyngedouw does not recognise that this periodization is situated in the global north, in fact he carried out extensive research in Guayaquil, Ecuador. For instance, referring to the period connoted with ‘municipal socialism’, he writes, “large cities in the developing world developed their water systems at a rate that was comparable with and occasionally even faster than those for comparably sized cities in the developed world” (Swyngedouw, 2004, p. 39) as “countries and cities in the developing world began to emulate this model” (Swyngedouw, 2005, p. 84). Or, turning to the current period, marked by waves of privatisation and commercialisation of water supply, he argues that this shift was

particularly felt in the developing world through structural adjustment programs, which forced governments to dismantle states and engage in privatisations (Swyngedouw, 2005, 2004). On the one hand, in line with political ecology perspectives, this analysis accurately demonstrates how water infrastructures and institutions are profoundly connected to political, economic, social and cultural shifts at the local, national and global levels. On the other hand, this narrative generates questions concerning the ways in which cities in the South, particularly secondary cities in Africa, are situated in this account. Notably, the storyline is based on the evolution of a small group of Western countries, whose experiences are referred to in order to define the four stages. The rest of the world is simply positioned in relation to this main narrative. Can the experiences of ‘the rest of the world’ transcend these explanations? The answer to the latter question is obviously ‘yes’. And, scholars adopting postcolonial approaches to the study of urban infrastructure in cities of the south have pointed out, precisely, the ways in which key theoretical constructs conventionally used in analyses of infrastructure are rooted in the North.

A rapidly growing body of work on postcolonial urban studies and comparative urbanism has dissected the roots of urban theory, emanating from a small core group of cities in the global north and denounced its ‘parochialism’. Relatedly, scholars have critiqued prevalent analyses of cities of the global south for adopting developmentalist approaches focusing on what these cities lack rather than what they are; for the hierarchical categorisation of cities according to their perceived development stages; and, for their assumption of path-dependent, determinist visions of change. Instead, these scholars call for a more international urban field, which takes all cities as sites of theory making and accounts for the multiple material and analytical linkages between cities (Enwezor et al., 2002; McFarlane, 2010; McFarlane and Robinson, 2012; Parnell and Oldfield, 2014; Parnell and Robinson, 2012; Pieterse, 2008; Robinson, 2016, 2011, 2006; Roy, 2005; Watson, 2009).

Drawing on this thrust of literature, Bakker (2010), Kooy and Bakker (2008a, 2008b), Zérah (2008) and McFarlane (2008a, 2008b) have unveiled some ways in which various theoretical

constructs deployed in theorisations of urban infrastructure are essentially rooted in the North and therefore not representative, or adequate tools for the investigation, of the diversity of cities. Crucially, Kooy and Bakker (2008a, 2008b) and Bakker (2010) claim that investigations of urban infrastructure continue to “assume the prevalence of the ‘modern networked city’ as a generic phase or stage of urban development” (Bakker, 2010, p. 24). In this way, these analyses continue to neglect the mismatch between the primacy of a public-private dualism in most of the water literature and the “dizzying array of non-conventional and often officially unrecognised means such as informal operators, privately operated wells, gifts from neighbours, rainwater harvesting and clandestine connections” (Allen et al., 2006, p. 334), which compose water infrastructure in most cities and seem to rarely fit neatly within either the public or private categories (Allen et al., 2006; Anand, 2011b; Bakker, 2010, 2003b; Budds and McGranahan, 2003). This weak postulation of the universality of the ‘modern networked city’ can also explain why opponents, just like enthusiasts, of privatisation have consistently focused their attention on the reasons behind the failure of this supposedly universal, standardised networks, even if they were never a reality in many cities across the world. In addition, it is often presumed that infrastructure in urban areas has become ‘hidden’ (Gandy, 2004; Kaika and Swyngedouw, 2000). However, this is evidently not the case in Bombay (McFarlane, 2008a), Kinshasa, Maputo or Bafatá, where infrastructures constitute vital parts of national and urban politics and the production of water is an essential and very visible component of everyday lives. In line with postcolonial debates, such assumptions concerning the ‘modern networked city’ and the disappearance of urban infrastructures from visual sight can be seen as over-generalisations originating from a small core group of Western Cities. Furthermore, they can be associated with developmentalist approaches focusing on what cities lack in relation to a supposed ideal. Crucially, these assumptions have curtailed analyses of ongoing processes and dynamics concerning the multiple ways in which people access water. McFarlane (2008a), Zérah (2008), Kooy and Bakker (2008a, 2008b) and Gandy (2006) further elaborate on the impacts of the prevalence of a ‘modern networked city’ ideal in analyses of

urban infrastructure, by questioning the relevance of the splintering urbanism thesis in a variety of cities (Graham and Marvin, 2001). This thesis sets the fragmentation – splintering – of urban infrastructure as the key outcome of neoliberal reforms. Related to this, they investigate urban infrastructures in Mumbai (McFarlane, 2008a; Zerah, 2008), Jakarta (Kooy and Bakker, 2008a, 2008b) and Lagos (Gandy, 2006) and demonstrate that the fragmentation of urban infrastructure in these cities is not a recent phenomenon and cannot, should not, be easily associated with neoliberalism. Instead, it should be seen as an enduring characteristic of infrastructure throughout the colonial and post-colonial eras resulting from governing regimes that have systematically favoured particular groups within these urban regions. For example, Kooy and Bakker (2008a) demonstrate that neoliberalisation has not engendered a greater degree of splintering of infrastructure in Jakarta. Instead, they trace the continuous differentiation characterising water infrastructure in this city to the successive ‘rationalities of rule’, which have reproduced the socio-spatial fragmentation of different urban populations.

Whilst challenging the modern network city and the splintering urbanism thesis, these analyses focusing on urban infrastructure in cities of the south raise two key questions. The first one, which will be further explored in subsequent sections, is the need to investigate the wide range of forces and processes shaping water provision in cities of the south, which are not necessarily tied to neoliberal reforms. But also, the need to extend analysis from the discourse to the everyday level. For example, Kooy and Bakker explore the ‘rationalities of rule’ but the evolution of urban water supply can also be related to processes of state formation, decentralisations and democratisation (Baptista, 2013a; Jaglin et al., 2011; Parnell and Robinson, 2012). In McFarlane’s words, “The historical view from many cities in the South indicates that casting a more international lens on infrastructures demands different narratives of distribution and fragmentation” (2008a, p. 417). The second question, which will be explored below, concerns the identified need to transcend associations between neoliberalisation and the fragmentation of urban infrastructure and, therefore, more broadly,

to unveil the specificities of the processes and impacts of neoliberal restructuring in the reshaping of urban infrastructure in a diversity of urban regions.

For instance, shifts in the role of states in service delivery in the context of neoliberal restructuring have been conventionally framed as de-regulation – i.e. withdrawal of the state in favour of the private or community sectors –, re-regulation – i.e. the role of the state changes from that of provider to that of regulator and enabler of the private sector –, or a combination of both (Swyngedouw, 2005, 2004). However, multiple case studies in distinct cities of the global south have demonstrated that this is not necessarily the case. Bakker (2003b) examines instances of privatisation and commercialisation of water supply in diverse cities illustrating how these often coincided with the transition from artisanal, community-controlled, to industrial, corporate-controlled modes of production. In these situations, she argues, neoliberal reforms typically entailed the expansion of state control, even if only as regulator, to areas formerly beyond its (formal) sphere of influence. Hilgers (2012, p. 80) developed a similar argument claiming that “whereas in Europe the co-production of public services is often the sign of the decline of the social state, in Africa co-production has sometimes, but not always, led to greater efficiency”. Where state-delivered social services were for the most part non-existent, the restructuring of state institutions under neoliberal reforms necessarily followed a different trajectory from that of Western countries with consolidated welfare states. This is not to deny or diminish the dramatic effects of structural adjustments and subsequent neoliberal programmes. Instead, it indicates that “conceptions of the state in the neoliberal age are deeply shaped by the specificities of the state that they study” (Hilgers, 2012, p. 80). The case of Bafatá also demonstrates that in some circumstances, where state presence has been elusive, structural adjustments programmes involving considerable cuts in the state apparatuses do not result in de facto changes in the role of the state in water supply. In fact, in this context, policies introducing shifts in the role of the state from provider to enabler can be situated within aims to expand the presence of the state in water provision.

In fact, it should be noted that in writing about neoliberalisation, scholars have often taken for granted concepts such as that of the state and citizenship. However, these concepts need to be turned into objects of inquiry (Baptista, 2013b; Gupta, 1995), especially in contexts, such as that of secondary cities in Africa, where distinctions are blurry and notions of state and citizenship must be foregrounded in the specific histories and trajectories of state formation. As will be discussed in chapter 3, and resembling what was previously discussed for policy makers, academic researchers have often adopted ahistorical views of the state, which fail to take into consideration the specific historical trajectories of different states.

To summarise, the operationalization, effects and impacts of the neoliberalisation of nature need to take into account the specificities and pathways of different contexts. For example, there is a significant body of literature examining decentralisation and water governance across Africa. Here, as will be discussed in the case of Bafatá, the lack of resources, state weaknesses, the need to create management bodies from scratch and ongoing competition between management bodies are all key issues that need to be considered when evaluating the roles of states and the evolution of water provision (Danert et al., 2003; Golooba-Mutebi, 2012; Jaglin et al., 2011).

Exploring the evolution of urban infrastructure in diverse cities, scholars have ‘provincialized’ prevalent hypothesis included in theorisations of neoliberal restructuring and the concomitant reshaping of infrastructures. In this way, they have unveiled how neoliberal policies produce different outcomes in diverse cities, an important theme of wider debates on neoliberalism, which consider the heterogeneous geographies and pathways of neoliberalisation and embrace ideas of hybridisation (Brenner et al., 2010; Brenner and Theodore, 2002). Scholars have also challenged the relevance of already made analytical frameworks, for example, questioning interpretations of fragmentation or the withdrawal of the state from service provision as being the results of neoliberal policies. What this means is that there is the need for more situated understandings of the articulations between neoliberalism and urban infrastructure but also to think beyond neoliberalism. The following sections explore this in

relations to actually existing alternative analytical approaches seeking to expand existing registers of analysis.

2.3.2. Framing the need for a post-neoliberal optics

I have argued that besides the need for more nuanced and situated analyses of urban infrastructure and neoliberalism, there is also a need to go beyond neoliberal analytical frameworks in explorations of the forces driving the production and use of water infrastructure. Related to this, and to understand the degree to which critiques of neoliberalism have come to dominate analyses, this section looks at how some scholars have framed alternatives as well as forms of resistance to the privatisation and marketization of water.

Karen Bakker (2010, 2007) claims that the successes of anti-privatisation movements and protests have been limited, and she questions whether there are any instances where the retreat of the private sector can be attributed to anti-privatisation campaigns or other forms of resistance, rather than to private companies' cherry-picking strategies. In her analysis of anti-privatisation movements and the related search for alternatives to neoliberalisation, Bakker exposes vital limitations within strategies framed around human rights. This is because, she argues, human rights are not incompatible with private sector participation and market approaches to water management, as revealed in the recognition of water as a human right by international organisations, such as the World Bank or the United Nations, and even private companies. This is also apparent in the ways the recognition of water as a constitutional right in South Africa has been followed by the adoption of market approaches. Therefore, claiming water as a human right, even when it has been translated into legal rights, does not preclude privatisation. In addition, focusing on alternatives based around the notion of the commons, most often substantiated in some form of community management, and alluding to romanticised ideas of communities, she claims "commons, in other words, can be exclusive and regressive, as well as inclusive and progressive" (Bakker, 2007, p. 446).

Moreover, Bakker adds that community-management models, entailing the devolution of responsibilities to communities, often reinforce fragmentation and result in the expansion or prevalence of 2-tier services in cities, reflecting different resource levels among communities and differentiations ignited by cherry-picking techniques by private companies.

More recently, Bakker (2013, p. 258) argued against “using the term *postneoliberal* to frame [a range of alternatives to privatization, which include both state and community-led water supply initiatives]”. Crucially, writing about the retreat of the private sector from the water sector in many cities of the global south, the recognition by proponents of privatisation – such as the World Bank – of the limits of private sector participation and the increasing role granted to the public sector as well as alternatives – including community or state management and PPPs –, she argues that these trends are “better understood as a mutation of neoliberalisation, in which spatial variegation is an expression of the refinement of profit-seeking opportunities” (2013, p. 256). Thus, for Bakker, all alternatives are ultimately a product of neoliberal strategies.

In contrast, in their study of two public-private partnerships (PPPs) in two South African secondary cities, Smith and Ruiters (2006) note that political ecology perspectives have frequently failed to account for the ways in which users responses to marketization and privatisation can affect their implementation. They argue that non-payment and illegal connections constitute a form of resistance of the poor and that “the poor themselves also play a major part in forcing the partial decommodification of services” (Smith and Ruiters, 2006, p. 195). Thus, everyday practices can have repercussions in attempts to extend neoliberal policies and, they argue, might in fact explain the failure to achieve cost-recovery and the marketization of water in many cities across Africa. In this way, these scholars hint at the weaknesses of ‘actually existing neoliberalisms’ (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Lawhon et al., 2014). However, as argued by Lawhon et al. (2014), the limits of such resistances are also emphasised in an analysis that, adopting a Marxist critique of capitalism, implicitly calls for systemic change. In other words, these processes are not considered beyond a neoliberal

analytical framework, that could open the analytical view to other factors and processes affecting the ways in which these policies are translated into practice.

What emerges from Bakker, Smith and Ruiters' analysis is that neoliberalism, as a specific form of capitalism, remains a key obstacle to the emergence of any more progressive alternatives. Concerns relating to equity, capitalism and, more specifically, neoliberalism are referred to make sense not only of private sector participation in the sector, or even the adoption of market approaches, but alternatives are also framed through this same lenses, without openings for alternative factors. This emphasis upon neoliberalism has had vital impacts: first, it has deterred investigations that identify and explore alternative drivers of infrastructure development. For example, there is little research exploring state weaknesses that are, in fact, a crucial factor affecting service provision across Africa. In addition, as argued by Budds and McGranahan (2003), the prominence awarded to private sector participation raises questions as to whether debates about public versus private provision might be overlooking important dimensions and factors that are not linked to services being either privately or publicly managed. Such a narrowing of concerns also excludes a vast range of cities, or parts of cities, for consideration where these categories do not easily capture the multiple arrangements in place (Allen et al., 2006; Budds and McGranahan, 2003).

Second, it has resulted in the systematic exclusion of various locations from the research agenda, where the impacts of neoliberalism might not be so easily observed. In fact, an overemphasis on the evolution of capitalist societies, the neoliberalisation of nature, and its operationalization and impacts on urban water infrastructure might partially illuminate the unwillingness of academic debates, until very recently, to explore a range of both policy-driven and informal arrangements that make up water infrastructure in cities across the globe. Indeed, urban scholars exploring water supply have paid considerably less attention to community-based management or smaller-scale public-private partnerships (PPPs) which have been at the core of mainstream water policies in various urban regions, large and small, but have become dominant in secondary cities where both public and private sectors have

been deemed unable or unfit to secure water supply. Finally, it has originated an over-reliance on neoliberalism as an analytical framework leading researchers to over-emphasise its reach, sometimes being too quick to link processes on the ground to the circulation of neoliberal policies without considering alternative logics and motivations (Castree, 2008a).

This is not say that analyses of neoliberalism and the evolution of water provision in cities across the world are not relevant for the study of water infrastructure in secondary African cities. First, focusing on neoliberalism and the evolution of water provision, these studies articulate the extremely disadvantaged position of smaller urban centres, especially in lower-income countries. They reveal how the systematic exclusion of poor and small urban settlements from private investments is an inevitable result of the 'spatial variegations of neoliberalism'. In this way, they highlight the inequalities inherent in visions focusing on private investment to support the development of water infrastructure and, therefore, the spatial inequalities which result from such policies.

Second, even community-management of water supply and public-private partnerships implemented in cities, or parts of cities, ignored by the private sector, are not shielded from market approaches and neoliberalism. For example, Benit-Gbaffou et al. (2012) note how investigations of neoliberalism in the African context, where local levels of state are often weak, have tended to focus on structural adjustments and its impacts on the state as whole. In fact, international organisations and states have been deeply involved in the promotion of community-based arrangements in secondary cities, and have contributed to the infiltration of global policies resembling a neoliberal ethos. Thus, drawing on recent developments in theorisations of neoliberalism, namely views dissecting how neoliberal technologies of rule and policies travel in heterogeneous, piecemeal packages, this research claims that it is essential that we perceive secondary cities in Africa as constituents of wider circulations of global policies. However, it is also vital that we explore the meanings global policies take when adapted to specific local contexts as well as the ways in which they are transformed in the process of operationalisation. And, analyses should be open to the emergence of new

meanings, and interpretations, which exceed a neoliberal framework, and to the consideration of what may be positive outcomes

In addition, the over-emphasis placed on neoliberalism as an analytical framework leaves uncovered a large range of arrangements, processes and practices that are at the heart of water delivery in secondary cities in Africa. For example, whereas the weakness of state institutions is often at the core of policy debates and researchers adopting different approaches, it is rarely mentioned in analyses of water framed around neoliberalism. Paradoxically, whilst insisting on the role of the public sector, academic debates have invested little research in studies of the complexities of state weaknesses, their implications for service delivery or, in fact, for the ways in which states currently shape water infrastructure. Just as importantly, accounts of neoliberalism do not capture the range of forces shaping water infrastructure in these cities. In fact, the role of capitalist relations, and therefore often neoliberalism, in shaping the urban condition in the context of many secondary African cities should be turned into an object of enquiry rather than taken for granted.

In capitalist societies, the production of urban space, and water, will inevitably be linked to capitalist relations. And, scholars have meticulously enunciated the impacts of neoliberalism, as the contemporary form of capitalism, in the water sector. However, there has been a tendency to solely adopt neoliberal analytical frameworks in investigations of water, and consequently, ignore that which is beyond. This is revealed in the fact that an overwhelming majority of investigations of water infrastructure examine private sector participation or the marketization and commodification of water. Furthermore, it is apparent in the ways in which neoliberalism continues to be called upon to explain water infrastructure even in those places where the links between capitalist relations and the production of water infrastructure are not so evident.

2.4. Thinking within and beyond neoliberalism: variegated neoliberalism, assemblages and everyday practices

So far, it has been argued that political economy and political ecology approaches have shown an over-commitment to neoliberalism, which limits our ability to understand the multiple processes and forces shaping water infrastructure in secondary African cities. In addition, these approaches would also benefit from more nuanced views of how neoliberalisation plays out in a diversity of cities. This section explores debates scrutinising the over-emphasis given to neoliberalism as an analytical framework in urban studies and grasping alternative analytical trajectories. Related to this, and building on the argument developed in previous sections, it is argued that critiques of neoliberalism have emerged from perceptions of the political, economic, social and cultural transformations of a core group of countries, but have come to dominate debates and shape scholarly imaginations. Thus, their analytical purchase in numerous cities across the global south should be turned into an object of inquiry. In other words, in the context of many secondary cities in Africa the predominance of capitalist relations, and therefore neoliberalism, shaping urban processes should not be taken for granted but investigated alongside with other forces shaping the urban condition. Locating these debates within the aim of this research, to investigate and theorise water infrastructure in African secondary cities, this section also discusses the concept of assemblages, thick description and explorations of the everyday as helpful methodological and analytical tools to make sense of urban processes that remain beyond the reach of existing analytical apparatuses (Simone, 2011).

Provincializing neoliberalism

In the past decade, there has been a growing thrust of literature engaging with debates on postcolonial urban studies and comparative urbanism, calling for “the need to integrate diverse urban experiences into wider theoretical reflections” (Parnell and Robinson, 2012)

and to consider all cities as sites of theory-making (see: Chakrabarty, 2007; Comaroff and Comaroff, 2012; McFarlane, 2010; McFarlane and Robinson, 2012; Nijman, 2007; Parnell and Robinson, 2012; Peck, 2015; Robinson, 2011, 2006, 2002; Ward, 2010; Watson, 2009). Related to this aim to foster a more international urban theory, more recently, various scholars have questioned the prevalence of critiques of neoliberalism in analysis of contemporary urbanism (Baptista, 2013a; Collier, 2012; Ferguson, 2010; McGuirk and Dowling, 2009; Parnell and Robinson, 2012). Hereby, Baptista (2013a) identifies “two pressing meta-analytic concerns: the *status* and the *sites of epistemological production* of ‘neoliberalism’ as a theoretical concept and as an analytical framework” (Baptista, 2013a, p. 594). Discussing the issue of *status*, Parnell and Robinson (2012) indicate that critiques of neoliberalism pervade most investigations of the urban condition, and provokingly claim that they have become a ‘ready-made interpretative framework’ in contemporary urbanism. These scholars, like Baptista (2013a) and Ferguson (2010), then alert us to the fact that the emphasis given to critiques of neoliberalism in urban studies might be obfuscating our ability to grasp other drivers of urban change, and preventing us from engaging with other more relevant debates.

Parnell and Robinson (2012) illustrate their argument with an analysis of anti-poverty policies in South Africa. Here, they note the adoption of notions of the right to the city in processes of policy-making and identify challenges relating to the contours of local governments and processes of state formation, which cannot be reduced to their connections with capital accumulation. Baptista (2013a) follows a similar argument in her empirical analysis of the processes leading to the formation and implementation of a European funded urban rehabilitation and environmental improvement programme in Portugal initiated in 2000. She cautions against the straightforward adoption of neoliberalism as an analytical framework, which while unveiling useful processes, would have excluded the consideration of other matters. For example, in a political environment committed to the construction of a ‘European-standard’ welfare state, debates on decentralisation and devolution in efforts to democratise and modernise a society still marked by the remains of an almost 50-years

dictatorship replaced concerns with capital accumulation and urban entrepreneurialism at the heart of local preoccupations and politics. On a similar register, Ferguson (2010) questions whether the attention given to critiques of neoliberalism might be hindering our ability to actually scrutinise the challenges facing urban regions but also to imagine and propose more progressive forms of urbanism.

Idalina Baptista's (2013b) investigations of everyday practices emerging through the use of pre-paid electricity meters in Maputo constitutes an example of the insights that can be generated through analysis of infrastructure that are not framed solely around neoliberalism. Baptista does not discard theorisations charting how prepaid meters can serve neoliberal policies – such as cost recovery – (McDonald and Ruiters, 2005) or, adopting a governmentality lenses, work towards the disciplining and subjection of citizens as customers (Von Schnitzler, 2008). However, her research explores other forms of sociability and political interaction emerging with the introduction of prepaid meters. It examines everyday practices and demonstrates how the calculative rationale of these meters actually allows lower-income groups in the city to access and manage electricity according to their needs and desires and without entering in conflictual, uncertain and unbalanced relationships with providers. In this way, her research allows for “a more positive outlook of prepayment, while remaining critical of it” (Baptista, 2013b, p. 22).

Turning to discussions relating to *the sites of epistemological production of 'neoliberalism'*, researchers adopting a postcolonial lenses have brought out questions around the sites of theory production and their implications for urban theory. The point is that critiques of neoliberalism, linking urban processes to broader processes of capital accumulation and the domination of ruling classes, have arisen from a restricted group of Euro-American cities, where political, economic, social and cultural evolutions, namely related to the industrialisation of these countries, generated unprecedented links between the production of the urban and capitalism. Looking at cities outside this core, it is not sufficient to consider the multiple pathways of neoliberalism, it is also necessary to search for 'other-than-neoliberal

trajectories' (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009, p. 175), which account for the weaker links between urban elites and capitalist elites, or the role of traditional authorities and informality (Parnell and Robinson, 2012). As suggested by Lawhon et al. (2014, p. 506) "there are recurrent examples of the inability of state and capital to structure African residents and their cities". To summarise, in some circumstances neoliberalism might provide a partial lenses or, in fact, "not apply at all" (Parnell and Robinson, 2012, p. 596).

As discussed earlier, Bakker (2010) has convincingly argued that at the heart of prevalent understandings of infrastructure are flawed assumptions regarding the 'modern networked city' as a general phase or stage, which have implicitly framed analysis. However, inspired by debates seeking to go beyond critiques of neoliberalism in analysis of the urban condition, I argue that political economy and political ecology investigations of water infrastructure are also limited by their over-commitment to critiques of neoliberalism. The result has been not only the omission of alternative forces or interpretations but also, as in the case of various secondary cities in Africa, a flawed insistence on the links between infrastructure, capital accumulation and dominant classes, in contexts where they hardly apply or apply only loosely. In fact, critiques of neoliberalism emerging from perceptions of the political, economic, social and cultural transformations of a core group of countries have largely dominated debates and shaped scholarly imagination; yet, their analytical purchase in numerous cities across the global south should be turned into an object of inquiry.

Granting a critical eye to urban political ecology (UPE) perspectives, Lawhon, Ernstson and Silver (2014) have developed a similar critique, discerning the ways in which they perceive UPE to be limited by its "current narrow theoretical scope" (Lawhon et al., 2014, p. 497). Thus, they draw on insights from African urbanism in order to precisely draw attention to themes that have been neglected by analyses centred on the production of urban space in the context of capitalist relations. Such a conceptual move, they argue, is essential for situated analyses of African cities.

The truth is that in practice in many secondary cities in Africa, water infrastructure has hardly been linked to processes of capital accumulation or the specific evolutions of state institutions in the context of shifts from Keynesian to neoliberal regimes. In addition, in these urban regions, challenges related to water provision are often more related to the weakness of state institutions rather than their connections to processes of capital accumulation and the pursuit of the interests of ruling elites. In addition, inequality along the lines of class is often not a prevalent or relevant characteristic. An over-emphasis on critiques of neoliberalism can obfuscate some of the vital challenges facing these cities: how to create adequate governance systems that relate to the specificities of processes of state formation in these contexts? How to secure the long-term sustainability of water systems in contexts where resources, at all levels, are extremely scarce and where low-income populations cannot afford tariffs that reflect full-cost-recovery or, for that matter, enough revenues to secure the long-term maintenance of systems?

Again, this is not to say cities of the global south or, more specifically, secondary cities in Africa are excluded from neoliberalism's circuits or that this analytical framework should be at once dismissed. As discussed in the previous section, and acknowledged by most, if not all, scholars calling for a post-neoliberal optics, debates on neoliberalism have provided nuanced analytical tools to explore the pathways of neoliberalism in diverse contexts. For instance, in the context of Guinea-Bissau, the World Bank persistently worked with the state company managing water supply in the capital city, Bissau, seeking to bring different forms of private sector participation. In fact, different transnational water companies have been employed in the process. At the same time, the same institution has stayed away from other urban centres in the country, such as Bafatá, where alternative arrangements have been adopted. Simultaneously, several international organisations have, at different times and in different ways, been involved in water supply in this city bringing with them neoliberal policies circulating among these actors. Notions of circulating and variegated neoliberalism (Brenner

et al., 2010) can usefully be adopted to explain these selective interventions and the resulting alternatives.

Earlier conceptualisations of neoliberalisation processes examined the ways in which market rule, as a governing logic, was re-shaping places in the capitalist core as well as those locations influenced by this core (Baptista, 2013a). In this way, neoliberalisation processes were seen to emanate from the core and subsequently expand to other locations, “that is as a replication of Anglo-American models” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 191). Brenner et al. (2010), on the other hand, in their conceptualisations of circulating and variegated neoliberalisation account for the multiple directions and trajectories. What this means is that neoliberal strategies and modes of governance travel are recognised to travel in multiple directions. From this perspective, Bafatá, or any other small city in Africa, is not a mere recipient of policies and strategies but also an active constituent in the ongoing transformation and evolution of these.

Considering the circulations of neoliberal modes of governance, Brenner et al. (2010) highlight the *hybridity*, *incompleteness* and *unevenness* of neoliberalisation processes and the multiple pathways these processes take as they are embedded in and joined within diverse development trajectories and social processes. What this means is that neoliberalism takes different forms in different locations, both processes and outcomes vary according to local settings. Where such an analysis is extremely important to account for the diversity of processes and outcomes engendered by neoliberalisation processes in a diversity of cities, these scholars’ approach allowing for hybridisation and variegation is also too encompassing. Not only do they not account for a range of alternative forces, as discussed before, but they also do not account for processes of transformation of circulating policies in such ways that they actually transcend their original logics, that is they become something else.

The everyday in assemblages and African urbanism

Recent debates on critical urbanism and assemblages partially mirror these concerns with the *status* and *sites* of epistemological production of neoliberalism and echo the tensions around

the place of critiques of neoliberalism in urban studies. Indeed, the concept of assemblages has been both implicitly and explicitly mobilised by numerous scholars seeking to extend political economy analysis in urban studies (Baptista, 2013a; Robinson, 2016). Brenner et al. (2011, p. 233) caution that specific uses of assemblages run the risk of moving urban theory away from its critical “questions regarding the broader (global, national and regional) structural contexts within which actants are situated and operate – including formations of capital accumulation and investment/ disinvestment; historically entrenched, large-scale configurations of uneven spatial development, territorial polarizations and geopolitical hegemony; multiscalar frameworks of state power, territorial alliance formation and urban governance; and the politico-institutional legacies of socio-political contestation around diverse forms of dispossession, deprivation and discontent”. Yet, this research contends that a narrow focus on Brenner et al.’s questions, on the other hand, leaves unattended the range of sites, forces and practices which assemblages approaches bring into view and that are at the core of urban processes in cities across the globe.

In reality, the concept of assemblage has been put to use in multiple ways. While not the focus of this thesis, this section briefly explores debates on critical urbanism and assemblages (see: Brenner et al., 2011; McFarlane, 2011a, 2011b; Rankin, 2011; Simone, 2011). The aim is to examine the ways in which scholars have used the notion of assemblage to “make more use, better use, of all that exists in urban life” (Simone, 2011, p. 356) and uncover urban multiplicities (McFarlane, 2011b); and, to situate detailed inquiries of embodied social and everyday practices in wider analytical interpretations of the urban condition.

Katharine Rankin discusses the potential of the concept of assemblage to “probe articulations of political economy and everyday life” (Rankin, 2011, p. 563). She argues that “the concept of assemblage has a particular role to play in emphasizing thick description of everyday urban life and in countering politically paralyzing pictures of the unity of capital with notions of a more open social field” (2011, p. 564). Thus, focusing on assemblages and thick description as methodological tools that emphasise embodied social practices, she explores their potential

to capture the necessary messiness of the encounters between capitalist relations and everyday lives, but also to unveil contradiction, resistances and potential alternatives. Applying these ideas to her work on business improvements areas in Toronto, Rankin does not forget the ways in which these schemes are allied with neoliberalisation. Yet, scrutinising the multiple everyday practices of officials involved in these schemes she analyses these “as an assemblage of related but distinctive and sometimes contradictory projects” (Rankin, 2011, p. 566). Following Latour’s proposition of the researcher as the assembler, and claiming that some assemblages are more progressive than others, Rankin sees her position as a researcher as being not only to document but also to foment new forms of assemblage. McGuirk and Dowling’s (2009) also refer to the notion of assemblages to expand their analysis of masterplanned residential estates in Australia beyond neoliberalisation. In this way, they “illustrates the assemblage of political projects enacted in the production and governance of these urban spaces” (2009, p. 175), which both refer to and exceed neoliberal ideas. According to these scholars, this assemblage of political projects is the result of the situated assemblages of actors, practices and institutions emerging around these spaces, which logics, ways of doing, rationalities and motivations are crossed producing specific, and messier, processes and outcomes.

African urbanists, such as Filip De Boeck, Garth Myers, AbdouMaliq Simone and Edgar Pieterse have turned to explorations of everyday practices of city-making in their attempts to “reorient theory-making and stabilize a different image of the city” (Lawhon et al., 2014, p. 507). In contrast to analyses that simply grapple with processes of marginalisation and exclusion of residents from urban life, these scholars seek to unveil the urban multiplicities within African cities, including the multiple practices through which urban dwellers sustain urban life.

AbdouMaliq Simone (2004; 2015, 2011, 2008) in his investigations of diverse urban sites across the global south, such as Jakarta, Johannesburg, Pikine (Dakar) or Douala, routinely evokes the work of Deleuze and Guattari and the concept of assemblage. In his contribution

to contemporary debates in urban theory concerning the use of the concept of assemblage, he writes: “the impetus to think about assemblages as a modality through which the urban instantiates itself seems to reflect a desire to make more use, better use, of all that exists in urban life. (...) It reflects recognition that there seems to be so much that takes place that isn’t seen or said, but yet exerts a force on all other acknowledged existences” (Simone, 2011, p. 356). Thus, Simone deploys the notion of assemblage to trace the multiple (prescribed) possibilities that emerge through collaborations, alignments, affiliations and formations with distinct spatio-temporalities to compose urban life. Their relevance is justified by the fact that it is essentially through these that people access income opportunities, develop and access infrastructure, and establish ‘welfare’ safety nets in times of hardship. Moreover, although the possibilities are ‘prescribed’, i.e. framed within broader political economic configurations that set strict boundaries, these are also spaces of innovation that articulate the unfolding of everyday urbanism, exceeding, contesting and realigning such configurations. Finally, as also noted by Li (2007), these enquiries into these multiple formations also reveal the ‘gaps’ between what is intended and what takes place in practice.

At stake here are also deeper questions concerning understandings of power and matters related to agency. Political economy approaches investigate how power operates in the production of urban space by scrutinising processes of capital accumulation and resistances to these processes. Capital emerges as the primary force shaping the urban condition, including social and cultural transformations (Lawhon et al., 2014). The deployment of the concept of assemblages and a focus on everyday practices does not entail neglecting capitalist relations but can draw attention to the ways power operates in a diffuse manner and is enacted everywhere. Such an understanding has a vital influence on how we perceive agency and the urban condition. It allows for more detailed understandings of how urban dwellers follow, contest, ignore, perform or adapt to rule and how a diversity of identities develops through multiple interactions at distinct levels with numerous actors.

To summarise, the concept of assemblages and the emphasis given to thick description of the everyday open the field to analyses that grasp nuances and gaps neglected by political economy and ecology perspectives. In addition, they allow for urban multiplicities accounting for diverse unfoldings; and, at the same time, constitute analytical and methodological tools to make sense of that which cannot be captured with reference to existing analytical planes. Moreover, through understandings of power as distributed and relational, everyday practices regain agency. This is particularly important in contexts, such as that of Bafatá, dominated by emergent and ephemeral forms of power.

2.5. Ethnographic explorations of everyday practices and urban infrastructure

This last section of the chapter explores a growing body of work by researchers examining everyday practices in their investigations of infrastructure, and it traces their contributions in light of the arguments being developed.

In recent years, an increasing number of scholars studying urban infrastructure, particularly water and sanitation, have adopted different theoretical orientations in attempts to extend and, in Lawhon et al.'s (2014) words, generate 'more heterogeneous' political ecology perspectives (Anand, 2011a, 2011b; Baptista, 2013b; Birkenholtz, 2010; Desai et al., 2015; Harris, 2009; Lawhon et al., 2014; McFarlane et al., 2014; McFarlane and Desai, 2015; O'Reilly, 2010; Page, 2005a; Truelove, 2011). Investigation of everyday practices and the micropolitics of water and sanitation have emerged as crucial themes in this work.

For instance, Truelove (2011, p. 143) argues that urban political ecology analyses "have been more inclined towards analysing the production of class and distributional dimensions of inequality on a city-wide scale rather than illuminating how multiple social differences are (re)produced in and through everyday water practices". As a result, these approaches

“inadvertently sideline additional dimensions, scales and spaces of water-related inequality” (2011, p. 145). Thus, she demonstrates how feminist political ecology can elucidate understandings of water inequality and expand conventional urban political ecology perspectives. In doing so, Truelove (2011) shows that everyday water practices are not only produced by but also produce social power relations, most notably gender inequalities but also class. In this way, she demonstrates that access and control, the focus of political ecology perspectives, are not the only factors shaping water-related practices and inequalities. Simultaneously, she shows that a focus on everyday can help to unveil these multiple iterations of social power relations.

Still related to water practices and gender inequalities, Harris (2009) and O’Reilly (2010) investigate women’s everyday practices in diverse locations to demonstrate that development interventions promoting women’s participation in the implementation of projects and water management often result in the over-burdening of women, therefore sustaining or even reinforcing gender inequalities. Thus, they argue, attempts to empower through participation, which are now part of mainstream policy models, can equate the devolution of responsibilities to the most marginalised members of society. In this way, these scholars call for more detailed investigations of everyday practices that can question the foundations of policies linking participation to empowerment. From a different angle, Page (2005a) indicates that calls for women’s participation in water supply are, in fact, disempowering because they deny the vital roles women have continuously played not only in the consumption but also the production of water. Looking at the case of Tombel, a town in Cameroon, he argues that “by using historic forms of protest (such as nudity) [women] have articulated their demands in an effective way despite having no formal control over decision-making. (...) there are established rituals of resistance” (2005a, p. 4). Thus, it is necessary to expand understandings of the production of water in order to unravel the already existing and powerful practices through which women shape these processes.

Birkenholtz (2010) examines everyday water practices in Jaipur (India) in order to tease out the impacts of the expansion of the city's water network, which has been followed by the adoption of full-cost recovery principles. First, he notes that policy and regulatory frameworks adopted in the city do not reflect the diversity of practices on the ground. In his words, "policy reforms do not address the series of local, informal adaptive practices and institutions to access drinking water with which people are engaging, particularly in poorer areas of the city" (2010, p. 2244). Second, charting the multiple practices behind the adaptive strategies adopted across different neighbourhood – including slums, working-, middle- and upper-class areas –, he demonstrates the ways in which these strategies produce new social and spatial differentiations, which vitally reproduce social power relations at the city-level.

Desai, Graham and McFarlane (Desai et al., 2015; McFarlane et al., 2014) contend that "critical urban and geographical research lacks understanding of the micropolitics through which infrastructures are differently made, unmade and experienced" (Desai et al., 2015, p. 98). Like Birkenholtz (2010), they argue that not enough attention has been paid to the improvised, adaptive strategies put in place to secure access to water and sanitation. Thus, in their detailed enquiry of everyday sanitation practices in two different settlements in Mumbai, they describe the multiple factors and dimensions shaping people's everyday practices, from gender and crime to social and political relations, materialities, perceptions of disgust, and privacy norms. In this way, these scholars construct a complex picture of the micropolitics of sanitation in the city, which goes well beyond policy and legal frameworks or governing regimes, and exposes a complex scenario of multiple inequalities.

Crucially, McFarlane and Desai (2015) suggest that entitlements secured through everyday practices should not be interpreted as simply struggles of the marginalised to secure inadequate access but as the 'lived geographies of rights'. In their own words, "we refute any easy separation of abstract principle – such as the right to sanitation and water – and messy everyday context and struggles. (...) Rather than seeing context as the 'micro' and principles of entitlement as the 'macro', we contend that it is impossible to think about one without the

other” (2015, p. 2). These scholars also insist that understanding how entitlements are produced at the micro-level is vital for understanding how rights to water and sanitation might be delivered in the future.

Likewise, Anand (2011a, 2011b) claims that it is politically and theoretically important to move beyond simplifications resulting from political economy narratives of water supply. Therefore, he wants to show “how, despite tremendous odds, those marginalised by the state and the market actually make their homes and stay in them through what Asef Bayat calls ‘the quiet encroachment of the ordinary’” (2011b, p. 544). Through ethnographic research conducted in Mumbai’s settlements, he describes the multiples ways in which settlers access water from the city’s network or, when they do not succeed at that, create alternative systems relying on groundwater. Here, he develops two crucial arguments. First, he argues that access to water in Mumbai is “mediated as much by capital as social connections” (2011b, p. 543). He illustrates his argument by pointing out the ways in which residents secure access to the water network through personal connections with politicians, engineers, plumbers, community organisations and NGOs. In fact, for Anand, connections with elected local councillors appear as much more effective than legal or policy entitlements to water, as epitomised in his account of how one resident, “called each new pipe after a particular elected official” (2011b, p. 549). This theme also emerges in the Bapat and Agarwal’s (2003) interviews with pavement dwellers in the same city.

Second, Anand points to “how water is not entirely encompassed by powerful political regimes and also to the multiple ways in which diverse settlers are able to manage and establish themselves in the city” (2011b, p. 547). Interestingly, he links this incompleteness of central political regimes to the co-existence of multiple regimes of water supply, which need to be captured in understandings of urban water. Anand also illustrates that investigations of everyday practices can show how settlers adopt a myriad of strategies that allow them to be seen as a deserving public. In addition, exposing the multiple relations and claims that produce

water infrastructure in Mumbai, Anand contradicts the idea of a 'denuded public realm' (Gandy 2008).

While the focus of the next chapter, yet another important aspect explored by several scholars looking at everyday water and sanitation practices is the ways in which the state appears in these daily routines. Examining everyday water and sanitation practices in Mumbai, Bapat and Agarwal (2003), Truelove (2011), McFarlane and Desai (2015) and Anand (2011a, 2011b) bring to the surface the multiple strategies used by residents to tap into the city's piped water network. By connecting to the water scheme, these residents also enter into diverse relations and interactions with the city's water company and the state. Thus, delving into these interactions between residents and different state actors, these researchers demonstrate the multiple and contradictory ways in which residents experience the state, which largely surpass policy and legal frameworks. They also show how everyday state practices contradict ideas of an autonomous, distant state. For instance, Anand (2011a, 2011b) perceives the boundaries between state and society as inevitably blurry. Pointing out the multiple interactions between different state actors and those involved in water provision, he opens the possibility for these adaptive, compensatory, informal arrangements to become constituents of governing regimes. They are not merely the practices of the poor, beyond policies and legal frameworks and therefore the state. Instead, admitting the intrinsic blurriness of state and society, these practices can be seen as constituent parts of the state apparatuses. This indicates that both practices and the state are shaped through these interactions. As will be discussed below, these views contradict political ecology/ economy views of the state as unified and autonomous entities.

To summarise, this expanding thrust of literature exploring everyday practices in urban water infrastructures demonstrates how these analyses can contribute to more nuanced understandings of how people navigate the city to secure access to water. It complicates analysis of water inequality teasing apart ways in which water practices are both produced by, and produce, social power relations that are not only related to access and control but extend

to gender and other social relations. Moreover, it contributes to more nuanced analysis of the state and the ways it shapes, and is shaped by, water practices beyond policy and legal frameworks. Finally, ethnographic approaches allow concepts that are normally taken for granted, such as the state or citizenship, to become objects of enquiry therefore allowing for more situated analysis of these cities.

2.6. An analytical framework for the study of urban water in small secondary cities in Africa

There is a vast literature within the fields of geography and urban studies exploring the processes and outcomes engendered by increases in private sector participation, and the adoption of market approaches more generally, in water provision. The overwhelming majority of this work has discussed these processes in the context of neoliberal reforms and the neoliberalisation of water. This extremely diverse and rich body of work has produced important insights. Nevertheless, this chapter also argued that it has produced an over-commitment to interpretations based on neoliberal analytical frameworks. The extent to which critiques of neoliberalism have become all-encompassing in analyses of water provision is perhaps best seen in the ways protests, resistance and alternatives to private sector participation have been portrayed in this literature. In this chapter, I identified three main limitations emerging from a narrow focus on the neoliberalisation of water. First, the over-commitment to critiques of neoliberalism has led to ‘fast’ interpretations without careful scrutiny of the degree to which specific urban processes fit into such frameworks. Second, it has diverted researchers’ attention from other matters or led scholars to insist on explaining certain phenomena with reference to neoliberalism that might have benefited from different angles of interpretation. Finally, it has either led to an over-emphasis on the role of capitalism in the production of the urban in contexts where looser analysis might be required or to the exclusion of case studies that seem to complicate attempts to apply such frameworks.

Whilst not discarding neoliberalism, this research adopts an analytical framework which embraces critiques of neoliberalism alongside alternative analytical devices that can encapsulate other forces and processes shaping the urban condition. Critiques of neoliberalism can help to situate small secondary cities in Africa in global circuits, which fundamentally shape water governance in these locations. As suggested by Bakker (2013; see also Page, 2003), governance models adopted in small cities and towns in poorer contexts – such as community-based management or public-private partnerships involving domestic and small-scale private providers – should certainly be understood in the context of the current neoliberal era and the spatial variegations of neoliberalism. These outcomes can be seen as a consequence of ‘cherry-picking’ strategies embraced by multinational water companies, emerging precisely where large corporations are unwilling to invest. In fact, as will be suggested in Chapter 7, rather than simply being seen as the residualised outcome of private sector profit-making strategies, models emerging in small cities can also be perceived as outcomes of development interventions. At least in Bafatá, development interventions have vitally (and often unintendedly) shaped the motivations and practices emerging around the city’s piped supply scheme. In addition, sophisticated conceptualisations of variegated neoliberalisms (Brenner et al., 2010) can account for processes of hybridisation and unpack the ways in which neoliberal ideas and technologies of government are transformed and adapted according to specific institutional contexts. In this way, it is possible to grasp more precisely how circulating policy models come to affect the evolution of state institutions, the development of policies and projects and water governance models in particular situations, including in poor secondary cities in Africa.

I have also established that the notion of assemblages and investigations of everyday practices can help investigations of water infrastructure in a secondary city in Africa. The use of the concept of assemblages, as both an analytical and methodological tool, marks an attempt to grapple with what this research will term *creole* modes of water governance. The term *creole* captures the intermixture of a variety of influences, practices, rationalities, motivations, which

results in vernacular modes that are locally constructed through multiple spatialities and temporalities. A *creole* mode of water governance is thus perceived to emerge through the ensemble of diverse agendas, actors, practices and institutions joined together around water infrastructure. Together they produce a situated mode of governance that results from the ongoing ‘reciprocal activity’ (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 58) between different elements, and which comes to encompass multiple and evolving motivations, ways of doing, discourses and rationalities. At the heart of this *Creole* mode of governance are processes of *appropriation* and *re-invention* that engender not only variegations of neoliberalisation processes but also their transformation into ‘something else’, endowed with diverse logics, meanings and effects.

Scrutinising how different actors, institutions and practices come together and explaining their interactions provides a lens to see how specific modes of governance emerge, what they achieve, and how they produce water infrastructure. For example, in Bafatá, the case-study of this research, cost-recovery principles, which have been frequently associated with neoliberal rationales, have been embraced by various actors and managerial and technological procedures for its implementation eagerly adopted. However, as will be shown in chapters 7 and 8, the meanings and logics relating to this principle have also been appropriated and re-invented by the different actors involved. In addition, the practices associated with its implementation at different levels, from the standpipe to the offices of the water operator, have also engendered significant transformations. Everyday practices actively contribute to the re-shaping of governance models.

In this study, then, thick description and a focus on everyday practices will complement, critically extend and add nuances to political economic analysis of water inequality and processes of commodification. For example, through the vital consideration of the multiple social relations shaping water inequality (Truelove, 2011) or through accounts of the micropolitics shaping the use of water infrastructure (Desai et al., 2015). Nevertheless, the aim is also to find new registers of analysis and engage in theory-making, to produce distinctive

analytical devices that can account for the experiences of secondary cities in Africa (Lawhon et al., 2014; Pieterse, 2008; Pieterse and Parnell, 2014; Watson, 2009).

– THREE –

The state in urban water:

Insights from ethnographic explorations of state practices

3.1. Introduction

In the brief discussion of water policy debates developed in the previous chapter (section 2.2.), it was shown that current policies targeting the devolution of water provision to the community and private sectors have been accompanied by a mounting interest in the role of the state by international organisations, such as the World Bank, the United Nations or the European Commission. In line with neoliberal ideas, this renewed interest in the state has focused on the role of these apparatuses in securing a supportive environment where non-state organisations, including private companies, can operate. As a result, in recent years we have witnessed a proliferation of programmes and projects promoting the development of efficient legal and policy frameworks and supporting the expansion of rational-bureaucratic institutions that can enforce and implement such frameworks. In fact, this trend is not specific to the water sector as revealed in the numerous programmes focusing on ‘good governance’ and cross-cutting all sectors. Drawing attention to the state, and subsequently channelling investment into the strengthening of state institutions, policy makers have touched on a real challenge related to the impacts of state weaknesses on water provision. As will be discussed for the case of Bafatá, the shortage of administrative, technical and financial resources available to state institutions is at the core of challenges related to the sustainable provision of water in this city and the country in general. However, as suggested by Hansen and Stepputat (2001), the images of the state adopted in these policy briefs are founded on views of the state as institutions endowed with the capacity to perform a set of activities, rather than as political entities with specific historical trajectories. States’ functions are privileged over their form and

historicity. In other words, in these discussions, “the state and its institutions remain strangely ahistorical entities, a set of functional imperatives of regulation arising from society but devoid of distinct characters and different historical trajectories” (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001, p. 1). Therefore, it appears that policy makers are set to engage in an impossible task, i.e. to create hopefully effective but neutral and ahistorical state apparatuses, which are devoid of contextual specificities.

In contrast, scholars adopting political ecology approaches have frequently adopted Marxist and post-Marxist accounts of states, which denaturalise the state and refute the technicist and apolitical views dominating neoliberal perspectives or Weberian conceptions of neutral states. Thus, academic researchers have examined the role of states in assisting elite visions of, and demands for, infrastructure, and have sought to grasp how states have continuously facilitated capital accumulation through their involvement in urban water supply. These researchers portray the state as “a set of organisational resources through which other agents (such as classes or elites) act” (Painter, 2006, p. 756), as opposed to views disseminated through neoliberal policies which see the state as “an organisational actor in its own right” (Ibidem). Interestingly though, as suggested by Hansen and Stepputat (2001) and Painter (2006), despite their divergent political agendas, both policy analysts and Marxist-inspired commentators frame states as unified entities or, as Painter observes, “in both cases the state is seen as consisting of a more or less coherent matrix of institutions” (2006, p. 756).

Paradoxically, numerous researchers critiquing the neoliberalisation of water have taken for granted relations between state and capital and therefore have also envisaged and endorsed ahistorical views of the state. In contrast to what is frequently assumed in Marxist and Gramscian inspired notions of the state, the primacy of the productive interactions between the state and capitalist classes is not a universal reality. Instead, the social relations at the core of state power should be empirically verified. In certain contexts, such as that of Guinea-Bissau, other social relations might supersede or compete with capitalist relations in orchestrating public agendas. More generally, Michael Mann (2012), in his discussion of the

‘sources of social power’, rejects the primacy given to economic power by Marxists and argues that economic power should be considered alongside ideological, political and military powers.

In addition, proclaiming the benefits of publicly-owned systems and the vital role of the state as regulator and redistributor, scholars often rely on normative postulations of the state that have little reference to the social, economic and political reality of, for example, many African secondary cities. For instance, critical scholars seldom take into account the impacts state weaknesses can have on public service provision. Also, these researchers routinely fail to consider how state weakness affects these apparatuses’ ability to impose or adopt neoliberal agendas. Critiques of private sector participation and the concomitant support for public sector provision are often based on the situated historical experiences concerning the role of states in service provision in specific (core) cities. In addition, these commentators frequently adopt situated notions of the state and understandings of the relations between service provision and citizenship, which are not necessarily relevant in poorer and smaller cities.

This chapter therefore argues that understandings of water infrastructure in African secondary cities require more nuanced views of the state, which can open the analytical view to the multiple ways in which state institutions and actors affect water supply in small African cities as well as to the myriad of ways in which different groups influence the state. Contrasting the policy and Marxist views of the state with empirical investigations of these apparatuses in Africa, the gap between the two becomes evident. This gap indicates the need for empirical investigations that are attuned to the realities of the state in Africa. It also suggests that there is something to be learnt from a broad literature on the African state. Thus, the next section, *section 3.2.*, explores theorisations of the state in Africa, which have frequently been centred around the notion of neopatrimonialism. Here, it is argued that whilst providing ways to account for the informalisation of state power and patron-client relationships, these narratives remain based on idealised notions of the rational-bureaucratic state, and therefore on notions of the state as cohesive, unified entities.

More generally, this thesis argues that imagining states as cohesive, unified entities constitutes one of the main impediments concerning analyses of the role of states in water infrastructure. Thus, *section 3.3.* examines anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday state practices, which enquire reified understandings, that is notions of the state as coherent unified entities. In this way, this section makes explicit the theorisations of the state underpinning this research. Scholars adopting these perspectives engage in investigations of the state without any preconceived ideas regarding the coherence of the state, and therefore make visible a range of processes previously hidden from analytical view, including a range of fragmented everyday state practices fundamentally shaping everyday lives. Just as importantly, in these discussions, these fine grained analyses of practices that often surface in extremely fragmented manners are not dismissed as deviations from the normal functioning of the state. Instead, they are drawn into more nuanced theorisations of the state which allow for the heterogeneity, complexity and contradictions inherent to these apparatuses and render visible the variety of modalities of states. This is in contrast to notions of the state as a unified entity originating analyses that overgeneralise from specific historical experiences or policy agendas and fail to conceptually allow for the multiple modalities of states.

Section 3.4. discusses the work of scholars who have adopted more nuanced views of the state in their investigations of urban infrastructure. Here, it is shown how scholars have accounted for a number of state practices that are essential to understandings of the ways in which states shape water infrastructure but also to processes of state formation. Lastly, *section 3.5.* discusses the relevance of such theorisations of the state for the study of water infrastructure in secondary African cities, including the consideration of state practices and interactions in contexts of state weakness.

3.2. Neopatrimonialism and theories of the state in Africa

“The discussion, as habitually engaged, is primarily concerned, not with comprehending the political in Africa or with producing knowledge in general, but with social engineering. (...) The criteria that African agents accept as ‘reasons for acting’, what their claim to ‘act in the light of reason’ implies (as a general claim to be right, avoir raison), what makes their actions intelligible to themselves: all of this is of virtually no account in the eyes of analysts.” (Mbembe, 2001, p. 7)

Delving into investigations of the state and power structures in Africa and Asia, scholars have developed profound critiques of the field of ‘state theory’, with contents that echo postcolonial critiques of urban theory. Notwithstanding their different approaches to the study of states, numerous scholars have acknowledged the fundamental gap between the ways in which states operate and the theories and concepts normally deployed to analyse these apparatuses (Bayart, 2009; Chabal, 2002; Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Gupta, 1995; Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Herbst, 2000; Mamdani, 1996; Mbembe, 2001; Meagher, 2012; Reno, 1997; Young, 2004). Are African or Asian states inadequate deviations from what a state should be? Or, do we need to “turn the question around and inquiry into the theoretical adequacy of the concepts” (Gupta, 1995, p. 384)? As argued by these scholars, the inadequacy is perhaps easily explained when we consider that most concepts currently used in political science have been generated excluding the African and the Asian continents. Investigations in the field have failed “to recognise African societies as historical and political entities in their own right” (Bayart, 2009, p. 2). In Hansen and Stepputat’s (2001, p. 6) words, “In the eyes of politicians, rebels, planners, and social scientists, the history of European state formation continues to provide powerful images of what a proper state should be”. Thus, in order to go beyond analyses that simply grapple with what states in Africa or Asia lack and their continuous failure to build rational bureaucratic states, academic debates need to recognise and surpass “the imperialism of the Western conceptual apparatus” (Gupta, 1995, p. 393).

Since this thesis focusses on secondary cities in Africa, it makes sense to look at the ways researchers have engaged with the African state. And, in fact, there is an extensive literature devoted to the analysis of states in Africa. Among these are functionalist theories of the state, which have explicitly distanced themselves from prevailing notions of state failure and have argued for analyses that are not founded on teleological views based on Weberian conceptions of the state (Bayart, 2009; Chabal and Daloz, 1999; Di John, 2010; Reno, 1997). Jean-François Bayart advances the notion of ‘politics of the belly’ to convey the predatory quest for resources, which through varied social relations involves extensive segments of society including rich and poor, and constitutes the mode of governance of African states. He also refers to the notion of the ‘rhizome state’ to capture the working of state institutions. In his words, “[the postcolonial state] functions as a rhizome of personal networks and assures the centralisation of power through the agencies of family, alliance and friendship” (Bayart, 2009, p. 261) and “it is rather an infinitely variable multiplicity of networks whose underground branches join together scattered points of society” (Bayart, 2009, p. 220). In this analysis, the generalised corruption observed across African states is not an indication of state failure but the reflection of social, political and economic structures that are rooted in the evolution of African societies. Thus, he claims, these states are not, as it has often been argued, disembedded from society. Instead, institutions inherited from colonialism have been adapted, appropriated and transformed giving rise to indigenous states. One fundamental inference from Bayart’s analysis is that African states have a double political life, one ‘legal’, with which international institutions interact, and one ‘real’, where power is actually exercised.

On a similar register, Chabal (2002) and Chabal and Daloz (1999) perceive the exercise of neo-patrimonial power as the key to African politics. Neo-patrimonialism refers to the circulation of power in the informal sector, a system where, instead of neutral institutions, personal relations between leaders and subject mediate and maintain political relationships (Pitcher et al., 2009). This generates states with two faces: the formal, rational, bureaucratic institutions of the state (the neo) and the networks through which elites seek political support

in exchange for various favours (deGrassi, 2008). From the viewpoint of Patrick Chabal and Jean-Pascal Daloz, in such regimes, political accountability rests on meeting the expectations of particular groups of clients. Furthermore, such flows of power indicate that states are not emancipated from society, “in the sense that the exercise of central political power has not been emancipated from the overriding dominance of localised and personalised political contexts” (Chabal and Daloz, 1999, p. 1). Thus, Chabal and Daloz argue that these states have not been institutionalised, and they find a clear indication of this in the generalised perceptions of bureaucrats not as neutral civil servants but as links to clientelist networks.

There are important differences between Bayart’s and Chabal and Daloz’s analyses. For example, Chabal and Daloz have been criticized for their essentialist understandings of culture, which consider the ways culture can shape politics but not the opposite, how politics can shape culture. Bayart, on the other hand, is perceived to assume a more complex understanding of the continuous processes of hybridisation of culture (Meagher, 2006). However, they also present some important similarities. Most importantly, they both adopt functionalist views of the state, and focus their analyses on “how political authority and capital accumulation are reproduced in the context of neo-patrimonial politics” (Di John, 2010, p. 18). In fact, as noted by DeGrassi (2008) and Pitcher et al. (2009), neo-patrimonialism has been widely deployed to explain the character of the African state.

Grasping the importance of informal institutions and channels in African politics, notably the intricate ways in which society permeates the state and the multiple social relations constituting these apparatuses, the extensive literature on the African state shows the striking gap between these dynamics and calls for rational-bureaucratic states to deliver a set of core functions in a neutral manner or conceptualisations based on Marxist understandings of states as inevitably linked to (capitalist) class interest. Furthermore, Bayart’s analysis, for example, demonstrates the relevance of patron-client relationships in understanding broader relations between state power and social relations. Nonetheless, the deployment of concepts such as

neopatrimonialism and patrimonialism to describe the nature of African states presents severe limitations.

Although it is beyond the scope of this research to engage in detailed discussions on the African state in general, it is important to highlight some of the limitations related to the widespread usage of the concept of neopatrimonialism, since this has influenced the search for alternative theorisations of the state. First, the notion of neopatrimonialism has often resulted in analyses that appear to be based on limited understandings of social relations and the sources of social power (Mann, 2012). As argued by DeGrassi (2008), literature on neopatrimonialism and the African state tends to draw on anecdotal evidence across a few countries to produce generalisations concerning the African state. This could be explained by the real difficulties in accessing reliable information. However, the aim to engage in meso-level analysis of states should also be taken into account as a vital factor. On the one hand, this has led to overgeneralisations of the African state as a uniform phenomenon, which do not take into account the multiple variations across the continent or, at least, lack empirical evidence to support such generalisations. On the other hand, such theorisations fail to consider uneven geographies within countries. When neopatrimonialism is said to be at the core of state politics, does it mean it pervades the entire territory? Does it encompass national and local governments? Is it a trace of variations in society and culture (deGrassi, 2008)? In addition, focusing on function, studies deploying the concept of neopatrimonialism tend to neglect the diverse histories underlying the evolution of patrimonialism, they “conceal rather than explain the ways everyday Africans have adapted to the nation-state and international systems” (Pitcher et al., 2009, p. 127).

African essentialism, mostly evident in views of neopatrimonialism as something inherent to African societies, is another important critique of the use the concept. These conceptualisations inadvertently rely on evolutionary interpretations of “Weber’s categorisation of charismatic, patrimonial and bureaucratic authority, invariably associating rational-legal authority with ‘progress’ and with Western developed countries” (Pitcher et al.,

2009, p. 149). For example, Chabal and Daloz (1999) infer from their analysis of neopatrimonialism, which exposes the blurriness of state-society boundaries, that states in Africa have not yet emancipated from society and been institutionalised. Furthermore, in their analyses they inherently locate the patrimonial in African traditions that are encroaching on 'imported' rational-bureaucratic institutions. Such interpretations implicitly suggest a comparison with ideal types, where emancipation and institutionalisation have happened. Related to this, deGrassi (2008, p. 113) argues that "the dualism between 'neo' and 'patrimonial' echoes the much criticised dichotomies of modernity and tradition". Thus, despite Bayart, Chabal and Daloz's claims to move beyond conceptualisations of the African state enacted through comparisons with their Western counterparts, their analyses continue to be rooted in and, possibly to further nurture, idealisations of the Western state (deGrassi, 2008; Pitcher et al., 2009). Just to give an idea of alternative lines of interpretation, Gupta (1995) looking at the blurriness between state and society revealed in lower-level bureaucrats' operations in Indian villages, argues that "those categories [state and civil society] are descriptively inadequate to the lived realities that they purport to represent" (p. 384). And, he relates the inadequacy to these concepts to their rootedness in European states.

Critics of neopatrimonialism have also demonstrated that these analyses both overestimate patrimonialism in African nations and underestimate it in their western counterparts (deGrassi, 2008; Pitcher et al., 2009). Furthermore, these accounts neglect to consider that "patrimonial leaders [can] be held accountable by the collective". Or, that "a mutually constitutive relationship [can exist] between the personal and the public" (Pitcher et al., 2009, p. 149). Here, Pitcher et al.'s (2009) study, breaking the inevitable chains between patron-client relations, state failure and economic stagnation, is particularly relevant. These scholars question whether assumptions concerning the relations between neopatrimonialism, economic development and democracy at the heart of most analyses of the state in Africa should be taken for granted. Referring to tendencies to downplay patrimonialism in western societies and drawing on their analysis of patrimonialism, legitimacy and socio-economic

development in Botswana, they claim that, in fact, in many societies “significant elements of patrimonialism survive and thrive today without decisively undermining democratic processes or economic development” (2009, p. 127). They insist that “informal institutions such as patron-client relations or personal ties can complement and even reinforce formal institutions associated with democracy and rule of law while remaining distinct from them” (2009, p. 44). Thus, contrary to what is often assumed, Pitcher et al. (2009) show that patron-client relationships are not incompatible with functioning bureaucratic states, neither do they necessarily obstruct economic development or the emergence of democratic institutions.

In addition, like a range of neo-Weberian and neo-Marxist analyses of the state, studies of the neo-patrimonial state frequently reduce investigations of the state to a set of limited processes and functions. In Painter’s (2006, p. 753) words they are founded on “the idea that the state constitutes or occupies a distinct and identifiable segment of the social whole (‘the sphere of the state’), which then ‘interacts with’, ‘intervenes in’, ‘depends upon’ or ‘regulates’ other distinct social spheres such as ‘the economy’, ‘civil society’, ‘private life’ and so on”. This is evident in the ways in which Chabal and Daloz (1999), for example, perceive African states to have not yet emancipated from society. Related to this, and most importantly in the context of this research, such conceptualisations of the state do not provide us with the analytical tools necessary to make sense of a range of everyday state practices through which people experience the state. Thus, this research turns to alternative theorisations of the state, which question such reified views of the state and investigate everyday state practices. The next section discusses how these theorisations of the state and investigations of state practices allow for analyses that take into consideration the ways in which everyday, embodied state practices can inform both conceptualisations of the state and the everyday lives of people. Moreover, it demonstrates how ethnographic explorations of states facilitate the task of bringing diverse states into the same conceptual plane without falling into hierarchical categorisations.

3.3. Ethnographic approaches to the study of states

In his investigation of state practices in rural India, Gupta (1995, p. 375) hints at a crucial paradox querying, “does the ubiquity of the state make it invisible”? On the one hand, he is faced with the extent to which the state has become imbricated in everyday life, as detected, for example, in the intense debates and gossips about the state thriving in daily conversations. On the other hand, he is faced with the scarcity of analysis exploring the ways in which these everyday state practices, at the heart of daily dialogues, affect the lives of people. Crucially, this paradox also touches the core of understandings of urban water infrastructure. Analyses of water provision in urban areas have shown the multiple ways in which poor neighbourhoods are excluded from water systems managed or regulated by different types of state entities, rightly highlighting exclusionary state practices and discourses. However only recently have researchers started looking into the multiple ways in which residents of these neighbourhoods nonetheless routinely interact with state actors in attempts to secure access to water.

This absence of analyses focusing on the various ways in which everyday state practices shape everyday life can be traced in the prevalence of theorisations of the state that cannot capture or comprehend these practices. And, this is because these theorisations rely on a priori notions of unified, coherent states. Since these views of the state cannot perceive and interpret the lived ways in which states both affect the everyday lives of people and are constructed through these interactions, they are relegated to the domain of informality or read as deviations from the normal functioning, and strategies of the state. In this way, they are not considered relevant for either wider understandings of the state or investigations of the ways in which states shape everyday lives. Yet, there is an expanding body of work critiquing reified notions of the state and exploring everyday state practices as ways to work towards richer notions of the state. These understandings of the state not only propose richer starting points for theorisations of the state, which are more relevant to a diversity of urban situations, but they

also allow us to meaningfully analyse everyday state practices in investigations of water infrastructure.

In effect, there is now a relevant body of literature inspired by Foucauldian understandings of governmentality and knowledge/power, defying reified understandings of the state (Abrams, 1988; Corbridge et al., 2005; Ferguson and Gupta, 2005; Gupta, 1995; Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Mitchell, 1991; Mountz, 2003; Nugent, 2007; Painter, 2006, 1995; Rose and Miller, 1992; Valverde, 2011). Mitchell (1991, p. 94; see also, Abrams, 1988) argues, “the state needs to be analysed as such a structural effect. That is to say, it should be examined not as an actual structure but as the powerful, metaphysical effect of practices that make such structures appear to exist”. What emerges from this analysis is the idea of the state as a symbolic entity with real effects, an entity that cannot be separated from society and that largely supersedes its designated organisations and mechanisms, which are in any case impossible to delimit. Having established the elusiveness, porosity and shiftiness of the state-society boundary as an essential characteristic, “the uncertain yet powerful distinction between state and society” (Mitchell, 1991, p. 78) that produces the ‘structural effect of the state’ is perceived to result from the practices of numerous state and non-state organisations, rather than merely those of a limited number of state organisations. In Painter’s (2006, p. 758) words, “statization can be defined not as the growing control of society by a separate sphere called the state, but as *the intensification of the symbolic presence of the state across all kinds of social practices and relations.*” This perspective challenges distinctions between state and society, which perceive the state as an autonomous entity above society. It also challenges notions of the state as a unified set of institutions, since it perceives its effects as the result of numerous practices enacted by both state and non-state organisations.

Focusing on ethnographic explorations of everyday state practices, Mountz (2003), Painter (2006), Hansen and Stepputat (2001) and Gupta (1995) have further extended critiques of abstract theorisations of states, and somewhat totalising Foucauldian inspired views of modern governing techniques, exposing the necessary gaps, contradictions and unintended effects of

state practices. As argued by Painter (2006), if the state emerges through the imbricated practices of both state and non-state organisations, then it follows that understandings of the state require detailed investigations of these practices. Related to this, he develops the notion of prosaic geographies of stateness. The notion of prosaic refers to the “unsystematic, the indeterminate and the unintended” (Painter, 2006, p. 763) which, he rightly argues, is missing from perspectives adopting governmentality approaches. For example, turning to the simple act of writing and passing a legislation, he highlights the multiplicity of actions and actors involved and suggests that their mundane practices vitally influence the process in ways that should be accounted in theorisations of the state. In this way, Painter highlights the heterogeneity, complexity and contradictoriness of state institutions and, consequently, naturalises the gaps between intentions and implementation, which are at the heart of state practices but are rarely mentioned and accounted for in state theory.

On a similar register, Mountz (2003) scrutinises how investigations of everyday state practices can generate new insights, and more nuanced views of the ways in which the state is constituted. In her analysis of cross-institutional responses to human smuggling in Canada, she describes the contradictory responses by different institutions of the state, highlighting the different agendas and interests, which co-exist within this apparatus. But, Mountz also excavates another layer through which the messiness of state practices materialises in the ways policies are enacted: she demonstrates how policies are necessarily mediated through social relations and the experiences, subjectivities and emotions of state bureaucrats. Thus, she claims “it is through the feminist strategy of embodiment that the actual power of the state materialises in daily practice” (2003, p. 623).

Gupta’s (1995, p. 376) analysis of everyday state practices in rural India constructs an image of a fragmented state encompassing multiple institutions and actors revealing little coordination between them. In addition, he demonstrates the fluidity between the public and the private, or state and society apparent in the operations of bureaucrats. This is most obviously apparent in the ways in which state officials work from the private space of their

home. However, rather than opposing such fragmentation and fluidity to a supposed coherent notion of the state, Gupta rightly argues “we should leave open the analytical question as to the conditions under which the state does operate as a cohesive and unitary whole” (1995, p. 392). Thus, rather than compare this multiplicity of the state with a supposed coherent and unified apparatuses, scholars should investigate and make sense of this multiplicity of state actors and institutions whose practices consistently navigate, and undermine, the public and private divide. How do these practices shape the everyday lives of people? What do they tell us about the state?

Mariana Valverde (2011, p. 280) explores the inevitable multiplicity and contradictions underlying modern states and government techniques, and excavates the necessary “internal contradictions that develop within the seeing like a state gaze”. Dialoguing with Scott’s (1999) influential notion, ‘seeing like a state’, which describes the rise of the modern state in the form of centralised management based on expert knowledge, she demonstrates that “governing urban disorder through embodied, experiential, and relational categories is a *necessary* component of contemporary urban governance” (2011, p. 280). Valverde also suggests that “cities’ efforts to replace subjective, aesthetic, relational categories by hard-and-fast, objective, seeing like a state rules constantly undermines itself” (2011, p. 280). Grappling with the failures and contradictions implicit to modern governing techniques, Valverde draws attention to the necessary persistence of subjective, embodied logics in state practices. These, she argues, are not to be perceived as deviations, failures or in the process of disappearing but as inbuilt characteristics of the state, since they can never be eliminated and they vitally affect processes and outcomes. In fact, they should be seen as revealing the necessary blurriness of the state society boundary and the embeddedness of states.

An essential contribution emerging from this body of work has been the devising of analytical and methodological tools that make it possible to bring diverse states – namely African, Asian, European, Latin American – into the same conceptual plane whilst appreciating their necessarily distinct historical trajectories and specificities. Ethnographic approaches focusing

on the mundane and everyday practices of states reject views of the state as coherent autonomous entities and highlight the contradictions inherent to all states and the necessary blurriness between state and society. Anthropological explorations of state thus dismiss some of the idealisations of Western states, which have contributed to placing African and Asian states in special categories highlighting their failures (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Mitchell, 1991; Mountz, 2003; Nugent, 2007; Painter, 2006, 1995; Valverde, 2011).

Related to this, Hansen and Stepputat (2001) suggest that, in order to move beyond conceptualisations of postcolonial states as flawed replicas of Western states, researchers should focus, first, on teasing out the ways in which the idea of the modern state became universalised and, second, on how ‘languages of stateness’ – i.e. “a bundle of widespread and globalised registers of governance and authority” through which states are continuously constructed (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001, p. 5) – have travelled to infiltrate diverse contexts in different ways, being transformed, adapted, re-invented in the process. Notably, in this view of the historical trajectories of states, the languages of stateness are not only transformed and adapted in diverse places but, importantly, they do not necessarily emanate from the West. In this way they propose a range of ethnographic sites from which to investigate the diverse languages of stateness in different contexts, an approach that contrasts with general abstractions on the nature of states.

However, the most important idea emerging from this literature in the context of this research, is that views of the state focusing on a broad range of practices by both state and non-state actors allow for the consideration of what might appear as culturally specific, disjointed, fragmented practices in light of processes of state formation. On the one hand, these perspectives account for the ways in which different organisations and institutions become extended arms of the state (Hilbrandt et al., n.d.; Painter, 2006). On the other hand, and perhaps more relevant for theorisations of water infrastructure in Bafatá and many other secondary cities in Africa, they devise ways to allow “the state to be disaggregated... without prejudging their unity or coherence” (Gupta, 1995, p. 375). This means that multiple,

diverging state practices can be scrutinised without jumping to conclusions regarding the nature of the state. Instead, they are taken as indicators of the various modalities of the state. Going back to Pitcher et al.'s (2009) account of patrimonialism in Botswana, it allows, for example, for analyses of patrimonialism at different levels in different institutions without proposing generalisations of neopatrimonial power as the form of the African state or suggesting the exceptionality of these states. It enables one to view and consider the state as violent and benefactor, neoliberal and developmental all at once. This is in contrast with notions of state as a unified coherent entity which result in analyses that focus on one specific agenda and fail to account for the multiple modalities of the state. At the same time, such an approach enables researchers looking at everyday state practices to consider these not as deviations from a supposed unified, coherent state but as the lived geographies of states, part of the ways in which all states shape everyday lives and ideas of the state are constructed.

This is not to simply say that local accounts are sufficient or, in any case more important, to make sense of states (Gupta, 1995). Instead, it means that an attention to everyday state practices can generate more nuanced views, which can influence the ways in which we interpret reality. For example, Mamdani (1996) and Bayart (2009) have criticised structuralist theorisations for their tendency to concentrate solely on the weak integration of African nations in international economic circulations and their manipulation by external actors, therefore reducing the evolution of African societies to externally driven transformations and eliminating any possibilities for African agency. Such views, they argue, activate external periodizations, which overemphasise the impact of Western nations at the expense of vernacular processes. As argued by Bayart (2009), Herbst (2000) and Chabal and Daloz (1999), the colonial period constituted an important episode but it did not amount to a total re-making of African structures. For instance, as Bayart suggests, “the colonial moment, apprehended in terms of its historicity, is an encounter with other dynamics, equally endowed with their own historicity, which no amount of military occupation, political repression, civilising mission, evangelisation or economic development can effect” (Bayart, 2009, p. xvi).

What emerges from these considerations is the necessity to investigate African states in relation to the specific histories of the diverse African nations. This involves considering, for example, how states co-exist with, incorporate, extend or replace alternative political structures, such as customary authorities. But, it also entails accounting for the ways various actors adopt, transform, ignore and contest international influences and impositions.

Here, investigations of the everyday practices of states and non-state organisations involved in policy-making and implementation can reveal some of the ways in which international policies and impositions are adopted, transformed and contested. In fact, as discussed before, policies, laws and projects are not mere abstractions implemented in coordinated ways. Thus, focusing on the practices that lead to the adoption and guide the implementation of policies promoted, or imposed, by international organisations can shed light on the multiple ways in which different actors, inadvertently or advertently, adopt, transform, perform, avoid or reject such interventions. Focusing on the embodied practices can prevent overgeneralisations concerning the reach of specific agendas while shedding light on how multiple actors, through their situated practices framed by structural limitations, defy specific projects and open up possibilities for alternatives. Rather than working with a priori generalisation, the motivations and rationalities underpinning state practices are turned into an object of enquiry that allow for analyses of the various modalities at play within different states.

3.4. Ethnographic explorations of state practices in investigations of urban infrastructure

This section examines investigations of urban infrastructure adopting more nuanced views of the state, notably in the African and Indian contexts (Anand, 2011a, 2011b; McFarlane and Desai, 2015; Truelove, 2011), and explores their contributions to understandings of water infrastructure and state practices.

In his detailed account of the variety of strategies adopted by urban dwellers to secure access to water in Mumbai, Anand (2011a, 2011b) identifies multiple meaningful interactions between settlers and distinct state actors. In particular, like Bapat and Agarwal (2003), he demonstrates how settlers successfully liaised with elected councillors to secure access to a piped supply in neighbourhoods that were not legally entitled to services, whilst other areas of the city with a legal entitlement to services continued to struggle to enact these. Most importantly, Anand notes that the ways in which urban dwellers mobilised the support of councillors demonstrate that whereas legal and policy frameworks matter, informal relationships with state actors can also result either in the practical achievement of legal rights or in their consolidation. In this way, he suggests that legal entitlements and formal policies and interventions are not enough to explain the ways in which states influence access to water. For Anand, the blurriness between public and private, state and society becomes evident in the ways patron-client relationships are mobilised to secure access to the water system. Thus, these operations challenge theorisations of the state and politics that draw on artificial distinctions between state, society and markets. On a similar register, McFarlane and Desai (2015) explore sites of entitlement constructed through everyday sanitation practices in Mumbai. In their analysis these practices of entitlement are produced through a variety of social relations of which the state is an inevitable part. Thus, they argue, “ethnographic studies reveal the state not as an entity ‘up there’, above society, but as constituted by a multiplicity of actors, sites and practices that permeate and are reshaped through society and everyday life” (McFarlane and Desai, 2015, p. 5).

Emerging from these investigations are therefore insights into the ways in which everyday water and sanitation practices are shaped by states and, conversely, how these practices shape the state. In this way, these scholars rely on, and contribute to, more detailed and nuanced understandings of the state. In no way should these studies detract from investigations of the ways in which national policies and regulations drive the exclusion of certain groups and areas (Graham et al., 2013; McFarlane, 2008a; Roy, 2005). However, neither should these

mundane practices be ignored as they constitute both the ways in which systematic exclusions are materialised and the broader ways in which state practices shape everyday lives and legal, abstract principles are enacted. As argued by McFarlane and Desai (2015), but also Gupta (1995) and Rankin (2011), these practices also open possibilities for political actions and effective improvements in access to urban services.

Ethnographic explorations of states are particularly important in the context of African cities, and especially small secondary cities. For instance, Fourchard (2011) and Lindell (2008) have demonstrated the ways in which state practices, which cannot be framed within formal institutions, policies or legal frameworks, vitally shape urban processes in Lagos and Maputo. Fourchard establishes that well-circulated portrayals of urban services in Lagos as self-regulatory systems developed by the people to overcome the lack of state investment on urban infrastructure amounts to a misconception of reality. Instead, he argues, these systems unveil a multiplicity of complex power relations and connections among different individuals, associations, political parties and the state. Focusing on the particular cases of markets and transport, he renounces simplistic understandings, which depict these as operating within the informal domain, and points out the multiple ways in which the state is actually involved in shaping these sectors. He argues that these dynamics should, in fact, be positioned within processes of state formation in Nigeria. Lindell (2008) develops a similar argument critiquing views of the hollowing out of the state in urban governance caused by a narrow focus on policy-making and implementation. Examining an informal vendor association in Maputo, she demonstrates that, whilst government bodies might lack the ability to implement policies or deliver services, they exert significant influence on urban processes. She claims, “[urban] governance should be seen to encompass a wider range of activities or practices through which the state and other actors steer the economy and society. (...) In fact, [these practices] might go against existing politics or even break the law” (Lindell, 2008, p. 1883). Thus, both these scholars highlight, on the one hand, that diverging state practices are essential to the ways in which urban processes play out and, on the other hand, that these practices should not be

perceived as outliers of the normal functioning of the state but are inherent to processes of state formation.

Overall, these scholars demonstrate the multiple and contradictory ways in which residents experience the state and the relevance of everyday state practices which often exceed policy and regulatory frameworks. These investigations focusing on everyday state practices contradict ideas of an autonomous, distant and unified state and, crucially, identify how both everyday lives and the state are shaped through these interactions. Where some scholars, like Anand (2015, 2011a, 2011b), have started to re-think broader understandings of the role of the state in water provision in light of these everyday practices, there is the need to expand these analyses, particularly in the context of small African cities.

3.5. Conclusion

Anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday state practices applied to studies of water provision can generate more nuanced and detailed understandings of the multiplicity of ways in which states shape water provision in cities. Crucially, these perspectives allow for the analytical consideration of the ways in which state institutions, practices and power routinely transcend pre-conceived state-society boundaries when shaping water provision. Related to this, these notions of the state can open the analytical view to the multiple modalities inherent to the workings of states and to a range of practices which have frequently been ignored in research on urban water supply.

Ethnographic approaches to the state are especially significant in contexts such as that of Bafatá and other small cities in Africa where the weakness of state institutions often results in speculations concerning its absence or in a narrow focus on the violent, predatory modalities through which the state is often experienced. Investigations of everyday state practices can instead demonstrate the multiple, contradictory ways in which states shape water infrastructure in these cities, and can be instrumental in helping to 'locate' the distinct

modalities of the state. This includes a broad range of states practices that take place beyond formal bureaucracies. In contexts where bureaucratic institutions and legal and policy frameworks are often hardly perceptible, anthropological explorations of states allow for state presence to be acknowledged, as it is, without jumping to conclusions or relying on pre-existing theorisations concerning the nature of the state. In addition, ethnographic explorations of the state allow for detailed considerations of the weaknesses affecting state practices from the perspective of its current operations rather than in relation to ideal notions. These approaches also allow for investigations of how states, among and in concert with other actors, shape water infrastructure. Thus, ethnographic explorations of states can overcome some of the limitations related to theorisations of the state underpinning water policies and political ecology/ economy approaches.

A focus on everyday state practices shaping water delivery can also provide clues to processes of state formation and promote the regrounding of theorisations of the state. Scholars have reflected upon the statisation of society and how state effects are produced in multiple sites across the porous state-society boundaries. Yet, in contexts such as that of Bafatá, the case-study of this research, state and non-state practices in the water sector have to be understood in the context of the ongoing competition between different actors and broader discursive constructions fostering images of a weak, corrupt and incompetent state. This context can affect processes related to the statisation of society. However, the reduced symbolic presence of the state in the sector should not be equated with the state's inability to shape water infrastructure. As will be demonstrated in chapter 6, the state has shaped water provision in Bafatá in significant ways not through enforcing policy and regulatory frameworks, but through the decisions and practices of various state actors, routinely acting beyond formal bureaucracies. In addition, it has also influenced water supply in relational ways through interactions with non-state organisations.

– FOUR –

Research methodology:

an ethnographic approach to the study of urban infrastructure

4.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews the research methods undergirding this project, and grapples with questions inherent to the research process concerning the production of knowledge about urban infrastructure in a small city in Africa. The next section, *section 4.2.*, discusses epistemological, ontological and methodological questions related to this project's choice of a qualitative methodology and, more precisely, an ethnographic approach. Such an approach is in line with the analytical framework proposed in previous chapters. But, it also enabled the themes of this research to emerge through my interactions in the field, and allowed for a longer and ongoing process of negotiation of identities. Then, *section 4.3.* gives the reader an overview of data collection and scrutinises the methods adopted for collecting data, namely interviews and participant observation, as they unfolded during fieldwork. Finally, *section 4.4.* turns to the stages of data analysis and writing. In line with the methodological approach adopted, questions of positionality and reflexivity are addressed throughout the chapter. Here, I discuss my positionality as a white European researcher and development worker and the ways in which I often became not only involved but also part of processes I was investigating.

4.2. A qualitative methodology, an ethnographic approach

This research adopts a qualitative methodology to assemble a narrative of how water infrastructure is being shaped, governed and used in a small secondary African city, in an

analysis that extends across the conceptual, discursive and everyday levels. In line with widespread contemporary critiques of positivist research paradigms, this study takes knowledge to be situated, partial and constructed from the intersubjective encounter between researcher and researched (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012; Limb and Dwyer, 2001a).

Postcolonial and feminist scholars have sought to unravel depictions of the researcher as a neutral figure ‘finding out’ about the social world and to incite debates on representations of the ‘other’. Alternatively, these scholars have produced an extensive and diverse literature articulating the ways in which positionality, of both researcher and researched, and the dynamic and intersubjective encounter between the two shape, and must be taken into account during all stages of the research (Haraway, 1988; Ley and Mountz, 2001; Nagar, 2002; Pile, 1991; Radcliffe, 1994; Raghuram and Madge, 2006; Rose, 1997; Sidaway, 1992; Smith, 2001). Fundamentally, what emerges from this thrust of literature is that the researcher can no longer claim her invisibility. Reflexivity has become an essential component of any project adopting qualitative methodologies in the construction of knowledge. Hereby, reflexivity can be understood as the process through which the researcher makes sense of her own positionality (e.g. gender, race, nationality, age), the micro and macro power relations framing the research encounter and the dynamic identities at play during fieldwork interactions but also in the processes of interpretation and representation.

Having situated this research project within postcolonial critiques of urban studies creates an added obligation for a careful consideration of my positionality, and related debates concerning interpretation and representations of the ‘other’. I am a white, middle-class, Portuguese woman completing a PhD in a British University. And, I’m studying Bafatá, a Guinea-Bissauan city. Guinea-Bissau gained full independency from Portugal just over 40 years ago, in 1974. Reflexivity, as the ongoing and multi-dimensional process through which I reflected on my positionality, was an essential labour throughout the entire research process. It entailed an appreciation of how intersecting macro and micro relations of power affected my subjective research encounters and subsequent interpretations. It required a constant

questioning of how my interpretations were driven by dominant discursive constructions or, conversely, by my reactions to these discourses. Yet, I agree with Gillian Rose (1997) when, inspired by Gibson-Graham (1994) and Butler (2006), she argues that identities are performed in each moment, rather than fixed and discoverable. Reflexivity can never fully account for the ongoing processes inherent to the transformation of subjectivities. I will discuss this further below.

Reflexivity is not enough. Postcolonial and feminist interventions have also scrutinised the politics of research. As argued by Radcliffe (1994, p. 29), “we’ must act to make use of the authority inherent in our positions to challenge global relations of patriarchies, racisms and colonialisms”. In fact, just as the production of knowledge was intimately linked to the colonial project promoting specific interventions, contemporary academic research is necessarily constitutive of particular geopolitical and economic structures (Nagar, 2002; Radcliffe, 1994; Raghuram and Madge, 2006; Sidaway, 1992). Thus, reflections on global circulations of knowledge and the ways it is linked to particular configurations of power must be at the heart of any research project. Our role as researchers is to seek to reconfigure these relations. This entails recognising political engagement as part of the research process.

Related to this, Raghuram and Madge (2006, p. 271) call for a “radical reconstruction of history and knowledge production demanding attention to a diversity of perspectives and priorities”. In previous chapters, I discussed some of the implications of postcolonial critiques for urban theory. Naturally, there are also fundamental methodological implications resulting from postcolonial calls for the reconstruction of knowledge. For instance, considering how often a researcher from the North travels to the South on fieldwork to then engage in theoretical debates that remain locked in the North, scholars have argued for collaborative encounters through which research questions, themes and even theoretical constructs are defined through dialogical and participative processes between researcher and researched (Radcliffe, 1994; Raghuram and Madge, 2006; Sidaway, 1992). For example, Nagar (2002) shared her findings with those she carried out her research with and discussed the ways in

which they suited their political engagements. These are strategies to make research more accountable and to create knowledge that relates to the debates and motivations of the researched. In Nagar's words the "Western' / 'Northern' academy cannot choose to remain silent (...) simply because there is a messy politics of power and representation involved in the fieldwork encounter. Rather, they should accept the challenge of figuring out how to productively engage with and participate in mutually beneficial knowledge production about those struggles" (Nagar, 2002, p. 181).

Within qualitative methodologies, an ethnographic approach, including interviews and participant observation as methods for data collection, was considered to be the appropriate method to accumulate multiple perspectives, meanings and understandings of everyday practices related to the production, governing and use of water infrastructure in Bafatá. Denzin and Lincoln (2012) suggest that the use of different methods – such as different types of interviews, informal conversations and participant observation in the case of this project – allows not only for verification but also for in-depth analysis. "Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy for validation, but an alternative to validation" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012, p. 5). Thus, the agglomeration of multiple perspectives and empirical material not only results in added rigor but it also generates complexity and richness. It generates questions, it challenges temporary assumptions and it induces further reflection.

Simultaneously, doing an ethnography, I engaged in "an ongoing attempt to place specific encounters, events and understandings into a fuller, more meaningful context" (Tedlock, 2000, p. 455). I sought not only to make sense of people's varied perspectives and understandings but also to look at "how people do 'things', how they make the world as it goes along, as it becomes" (Smith, 2001, p. 23). Such an approach allowed me to explore how social forces are apprehended and enacted by agents in their everyday lives (Herbert, 2000) but also how everyday practices both reproduce and transform social processes (Crang and Cook, 2007a). As Clarke (2012, p. 227) argues, "ethnography can make visible the unfinished

character of governing”. Engaging with the messy everyday practices, ethnographic accounts set the tone for investigations that move beyond reified, united and cohesive accounts of governing. Instead, processes of domination are examined from the multiplicity of practices through which these are sustained, repaired and reconstructed.

4.3. Research sample: overview of data collection, interviews and participant observation



Figure 1. Map of Guinea-Bissau

I carried out my research activities in Guinea-Bissau, between the cities of Bafatá – where I was based – and Bissau, the capital – where I occasionally visited (see Figure 1 above), over a period of 11 months, between May 2013 and April 2014. The aim was to compose a ‘montage’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012, p. 4), comprising a cumulative and broad range of perspectives, understandings and everyday practices attached to the production, governing and use of water

infrastructure in the city of Bafatá. Methods for data collection included interviews and both active and passive participant observation. In-depth interviews provided a way to gather information on informants' perspectives and understandings. Participant observation enabled me to explore how people did things rather than how they talked about them and to gain knowledge of the context I was studying (Smith, 2001; Valentine, 2001). In addition, ethnographic research constituted a way of telling and presenting that which remained unspoken and was not revealed in interviews, as well as a way of engaging with the *unfolding of events* (Back, 2013). Such an approach also allowed me, and others, to negotiate positions and encounters over time.

A total of 94 interviews were conducted with a range of different informants from water users in Bafatá to high rank state officials in Bissau. Ethnographic research with the city's water operator, ASPAAB, NGO TESE, the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá, and the Water and Sanitation Group of Guinea-Bissau complemented these interviews. Table 1 below gives an overview of my data collection including: brief descriptions of the organisations I interviewed and/or carried participant observation with, a list of interviews conducted, and a summary of the nature of the participant observation carried out. A complete list of interviews can be found in Appendix I.

	Description	List of Interviews	Participant Observation
ASPAAB	<p><u>ASPAAB - Associação de Saneamento Básico, Proteção da Água e Ambiente de Bafatá</u> Non-governmental organisation, operator of Bafatá's water network since 2006, 5-years concession contract signed in 2012 between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water Management Unit personnel • Association Management personnel • Animators • Waste Management Unit personnel • Members <p>Total: 9 interviews (a few informants held more than one position within the organisation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Hanging out'⁴ in association's offices several times a week over a period of 11 months; • Informal conversations with personnel and members of organisation; • Accompanied Water Management Unit technical personnel in their routine activities, such as revenue collection, repairs or routine meetings; • Attended a number of internal meetings; • Collaborated in the elaboration of project proposal and funding application to donors and in the organisation of events; • Accompanied and/or participated in various activities under <i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i> project (see below); • Attended a number of events organised by the organisation.
STATE	<p><u>Department of Water Resources (Water Resources)</u> Department of the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources; entity responsible for sectorial policy and for monitoring the management of water resources and water supply in urban and rural areas;</p> <p><u>Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá (Regional Offices):</u> Representative of Water Resources in the region of Bafatá;</p> <p><u>Governor of Bafatá:</u> (non-elected) representative of the state in the region of Bafatá.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State officials (and ex-personnel) from Regional Offices • State officials from Water Resources • Governor of Bafatá <p>Total: 8 interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Hanging out' in offices of the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá several times a week over a period of 11 months; • Informal conversations with state officials; • Several visits to the Department of Water Resources in Bissau and informal conversations with state officials.
Traditional authorities	<p>Customary authorities are not part of the administrative apparatuses of the state. However, they are well recognised institutions in the city and country. The 'regolado' of Bafatá extends beyond the limits of the city but it does not cover the entire region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood chiefs • 'Regolo' <p>Total: 3 interviews</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended meetings led by neighbourhood chiefs to raise awareness of projects being implemented.

⁴ I use the term 'hanging out' to refer to the time I spent in different locations, and with different people, immersed in their everyday, routine activities. During these times, I observed what was going on and engaged in informal conversations relevant to my research.

	Description	List of Interviews	Participant Observation
Unicef	Unicef Water and Sanitation Programme	1 Interview (1 staff member)	
European Commission	Delegation of the European Union to Guinea-Bissau – Infrastructure Programme Major donor for both projects: <i>Bafatá Misti Iagu</i> and <i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i>	1 Interview (2 staff members)	
SNV	SNV Netherlands Development Organisations is an international development non-profit organisations promoting capacity development of local organisations in three sectors, agriculture, renewable energy, water, sanitation and hygiene. <i>“Unlike many other development actors, SNV does not offer funding, but specialises in supporting the resourcefulness of development actors. Together we develop local capacities, strengthen governance systems, and make markets work for the poor.”</i> (SNV Website) ⁵ <i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i> Project partner	1 Interview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended project meetings where representatives of the organisation were present; (see below for list of activities developed within the scope of this project)
TESE	<i>“Non-Governmental Development Organisation (NGO) that uses the concept of social innovation as an anchor in its operations in Portugal and in developing countries. We investigate, create, implement and raise awareness, building a cycle of socially innovative and sustainable solutions in response to traditional and emerging needs.”</i> (TESE’s website) ⁶ <i>Bafatá Misti Iagu</i> and <i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i> : head project promoter		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informal conversations with 8 staff members over period of 11 months; • ‘Hanging out’ in organisation’s offices, with regular visits; • Attended several events and meetings under project <i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i> headed by this organisation (see below for list of activities developed within the scope of this project).
GAS	<u>Water and Sanitation Group (GAS)</u> – National forum bringing together international organisations, NGOs and associations (national and international) and state representatives. This group is presided by the Department of Water Resources. The aim of this forum is to coordinate activities within the water and sanitation sector at the national level.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended monthly meetings over a 7-month period (6 meetings). A complete list of meetings attended can be found in Appendix II.

⁵ In: <http://www.snv.org/> | Last accessed: 18-03-2016, 14h55 (GMT-8)

⁶ In: <http://tese.trtcode.com/en/index.php/who> | Last accessed: 18-03-2016, 14h38 (GMT-8)

	Description	List of Interviews	Participant Observation
Water Users	Women, from different neighbourhoods in the city, responsible for collecting water for the household.	49 Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Hanging out’ on various standpipes on a regular basis from opening to closing (2/3 hours); • ‘Hanging out’ on various hand pumps and wells on a regular basis; • Informal conversations with users as they waited and fetched water; • Informal conversations with city’s residents.
Standpipe Operators	Standpipe operators are typically nearby residents that take over responsibility for opening, closing, cleaning and collecting revenue at standpipes. They keep 20% of the revenues collected at the respective standpipe. In some cases, these operators are not nearby residents but people appointed by ASPAAB management.	9 interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Hanging out’ on various standpipes on a regular basis from opening to closing (2/3 hours); • Accompanied revenue collection from standpipe operators by ASPAAB water management unit; • Informal conversations with standpipe operators on various occasions over a period of 11 months.
Hand Pump Managers	These are individuals responsible for opening, closing, cleaning, charging for water (when that happens) and ensuring repairs and maintenance are carried out.	11 interviews (see Appendix I for details)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Hanging out’ on various hand pumps on a regular basis; • Informal conversations with users and managers.

Table 1. Overview of data collection, including description of organisations, list of interviews and description of activities carried out under participant observation

4.3.1. Data collection in Bissau: Department of Water Resources, international organisations and GAS

Interviews were conducted with state officials from the Department of Water Resources (Water Resources) in Bissau and staff members of international organisations working with this state department in order to engage with multiple perspectives and understandings of the discourses framing problematic and priorities for the water sector at the national level, as well as the ways in which the city of Bafatá fitted in these. Contacts with state officials from Water Resources were established through personal connections and during the Water and Sanitation Group (GAS) meetings, held monthly in Bissau.

Between March 2010 and March 2011, before starting my PhD, I worked for NGO TESE in the implementation of *Bafatá Misti Iagu*, an internationally funded project targeting water infrastructure in Bafatá (see table 3 below for more details). During this period, I was based in Bafatá, but often travelled to Bissau for work meetings with state representatives and donors. Thus, most of my informants at the Department of Water Resources were people I had previously met in a professional capacity. Whereas my previous development worker ‘hat’ might have shaped our dialogues in vital ways, it also proved instrumental in opening access. It was extremely difficult to interview higher rank state officials when there were no previous connections, or gatekeepers with whom I had well-established personal relations. Moreover, going through my interviews with state officials and considering how I often referred back to my previous experience to demonstrate knowledge of the context and the sector, it becomes clear that I strategically used my credentials as a former development worker in the country to add ‘credibility’ to my study. Rather than being solely a researcher, my previous title allowed me, in some instances, to become an ‘insider’.

Staff members from international organisations based in Bissau were recruited for interviews during GAS meetings. Some informants were initially rather distrustful, pointing out

researchers' unconstructive critiques of development and development organisations, and how these simply curtail any possibility for action. Yet, on some occasions, this initial hesitance actually stimulated insightful discussions, especially when informants were open about their reluctances. Also here, my previous experience as a development worker proved helpful. On the one hand, I was able to demonstrate inside knowledge of the sector in the country. On the other hand, by sharing some of my own personal reflections regarding my experience as a development worker in the country I was able to engage in a more balanced conversation than they had perhaps anticipated.

My interviews with staff from international organisations were also affected by personal and institutional conflicts and informants' perceptions of my position within those. Where I felt that my links to specific organisations and assumed friendships were influencing my research encounters, I repeatedly reiterated my current position as a researcher and stressed that my goal was precisely to engage with different perspectives and understandings. I also reminded informants that interviews were confidential and anonymous.

In addition to the interviews conducted with informants from Water Resources and international organisations working with this department, I attended six meetings of the Water and Sanitation Group (GAS), over a period of 7 months. GAS meets monthly bringing together representatives of international and national organisations as well as state institutions working in the sector. Carrying out participant observation with this group provided an alternative platform from which to engage with perspectives and understandings of the problematic and priorities for the sector. By attending these meetings, I witnessed everyday practices and interactions between state and non-state actors, and how perspectives and discourses were negotiated, contested, transformed and constructed in the process. I observed the unfolding of events. These meetings not only helped me identify themes for my interviews but also continuously challenged my interpretations and understandings of their contents.

In general, I adopted a passive role during these meetings. However, for one of the meetings I was asked to prepare a brief presentation of my research. I describe this episode as it

illustrates, first, the ways in which my positionality shaped research interactions; second, and relatedly, how my research became embedded in prevailing tensions between state and non-state organisations, a key theme in my research.

I presented at a GAS meeting that took place at the UN headquarters in Bissau. As I finished my presentation, one of the state representatives present at the meeting intervened. He claimed that until that moment, he and, most importantly, Water Resources had not been aware of the research I was conducting in Bafatá. Second, and related to the first point, he mentioned that I should have notified this department about my intentions to conduct research in Bafatá. Finally, given that my research focus was on water supply, he was surprised that I had not found it necessary to speak with the Department of Water Resources, which is responsible for water supply in the country. In my response, I mentioned that I had been working closely with state representatives from the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá, who were informed of my intentions; and that, in fact, I was extremely pleased that the Department of Water Resources was willing to receive me, I knew they were busy people. I added that I had not approached them before because I wanted to allow some time for preparation beforehand.

The state representative's comments, and my response, must be understood in the context of the ongoing tensions between state actors and non-state organisations. These tensions, perceptible during my interviews and at the GAS meetings I attended, were articulated, for example, in conflicts concerning the ways in which the role of state institutions versus non-state organisations in the sector were understood or in clashes over who dictated the terms of specific events. My presence at the GAS meetings played into these tensions. The Water and Sanitation group was supposedly led by the Department of Water Resources. Yet, I was a European researcher/development worker and I had been invited to attend and present my work at these meetings by staff from international organisations. When I was invited to attend these meetings I did not reflect on how the way I had gained access to the meeting could influence how members perceived my position. Thus, underlying my response and my future

interactions there was an implicit concern to demonstrate my respect for state institutions. I tried to make explicit that my research sought to move beyond pre-conceived ideas of the ‘incompetent’ state rather than feeding discourses of non-state organisations taking over state’s responsibilities. This tension, in which I was directly involved, turned out to be a vital theme in all my interviews with state representatives and staff from international organisations. Whilst becoming a participant in these tensions, the combination of participant observation during GAS meetings and interviews with informants allowed me to understand these conflicts and negotiations as they were experienced and understood in the everyday lives of people living them out (Crang and Cook, 2007b).

4.3.2. Data collection in Bafatá: ASPAAB, Regional Offices and TESE

Bafatá is a small city. This made it possible for my research activities to include all the city’s neighbourhoods (see Figure 2, below). Nevertheless, my research activities were purposefully concentrated in central neighbourhoods and, particularly, in those areas served by the network (see Figure 3, below). Rather than adopting criteria based on a set distance, I followed users’ views to define which areas were, or were not, served by the water network. I have no appropriate means to translate this information onto a map. Instead, figures 3 and 4 below show the location of the public standpipes and of the water network mains working at the time of my fieldwork. In these maps, the parts of the network in use at the time of my fieldwork are represented in white and those inactive in pink. For the sake of clarity, I have not included public standpipes in those areas where the water network was not working. Figure 5 displays the location of existing home connections.



Figure 2. Map of Bafatá – neighbourhoods (Source: produced by author using google maps)



Figure 3. Bafatá – central neighbourhoods (Source: produced by author using googlemaps)



Figure 4. Bafatá piped water network: mains and standpipes in 2014 (Source: produced by authors based on information collected from ASPAAB and TESE)

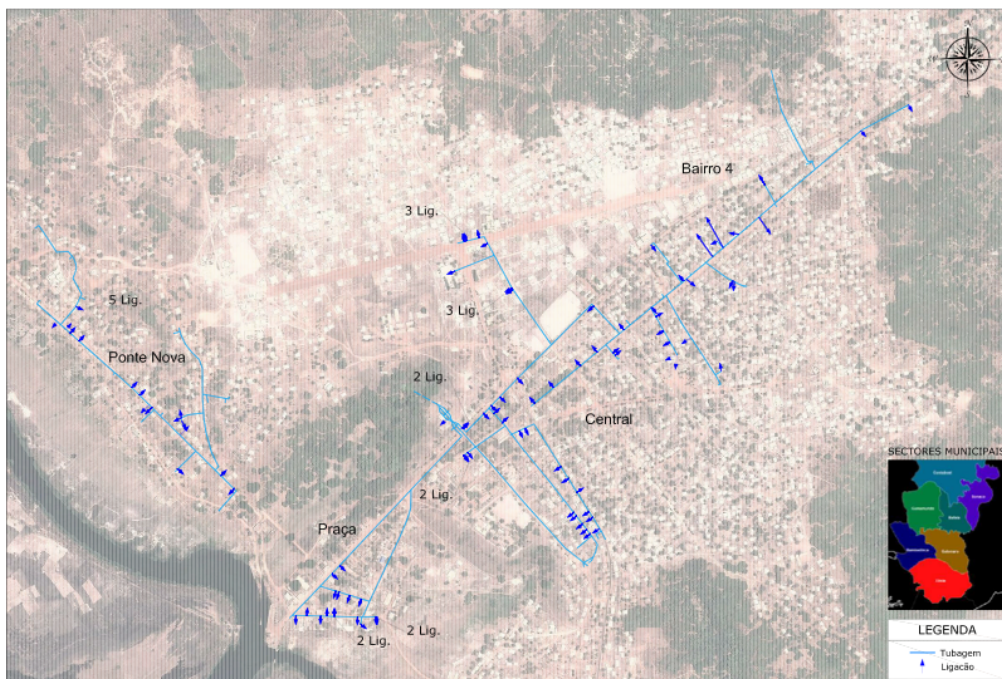


Figure 5. Bafatá piped water network: home connections (Source: Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu)

In Bafatá, participant observation and informal conversations, “characterised by a total lack of structure or control” (Bernard, 2006, p. 211), constituted key methods for data collection with the water operator (ASPAAB), and the Regional offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá (Regional Offices). These research activities provided me with a complex picture of the everyday practices through which these actors were involved in the production, governing and use of water infrastructure, as well as their perspectives and understandings.

My previous experience in Bafatá, employed by NGO TESE as a local project manager in the implementation of the project *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (see table 3 below for details) necessarily shaped my interactions during my fieldwork. Between March 2010 and March 2011, I was not only a staff member of TESE, an organisation that remains a key player in the sector in the city, but I also worked closely with ASPAAB and the Regional Offices. One advantage coming from my past involvement was that the close relationships I had previously established with informants from these organisations vitally facilitated access. In addition, I started my fieldwork with considerable knowledge of the city and the sector. However, the fact that I had been involved in a project implemented by TESE might have limited informants’ predisposition to speak freely about both the project and the organisation I had worked with. The relations of trust I developed with several informants were essential to overcome this possible limitation. In other cases, to minimise such effects, I tried to emphasise my role as a researcher and took the initiative to share my reflections about the project I had been involved in and the role I played in it.

At the time of my fieldwork, ASPAAB and the Regional Office shared the latter’s premises, while ASPAAB’s new offices were being built a few meters away. Over a period of 11 months I frequented this office on a regular basis, normally several times a week and in some instances on a daily basis. ‘Hanging out’ at the offices I learnt very much about these organisations everyday practices and gradually became immersed in their projects, activities, politics and sociability (Parr, 2001). I became familiarised with the regular as well as the unpredictable routines relating to the operation of the water network, the small and big crises which at times

jeopardised the working of the network, and the practices related to the management and payment of personnel, revenue collection and accounting.

Sitting outside under the shade of the trees planted in front of the office building, people came and went, sat, slept, prayed and chatted (to the point that, when one state official arranged for the trees to be pruned, significantly reducing the shade provided by these trees, several people complained). 'Hanging out' in the office, I progressively grasped the social relations being maintained and created. These offices, it surfaced, were not a mere work place but a location where people sought and maintained meaningful social relations. I became aware that for many being part of and/or participating in the activities of ASPAAB constitutes an important aspect of their identities, a means to establish social relations, seek independence, gain skills and search for income opportunities. Women in particular often talked about how being part of this organisation had influenced their ability to socialise outside their families, to express their opinions and feelings in public, to improve their confidence. In this way, new meanings related to the governing of water emerged.

Seeking to productively (and politically) engage with the organisations I would be researching with (Nagar, 2002; Raghuram and Madge, 2006), at the beginning of my fieldwork in a meeting with ASPAAB management, we established a list of activities I would be carrying out with them. However, it turned out that the people I was supposed to work with were already very busy – working in ASPAAB, organising and participating in activities under the project BMMI (see table 3 below for details), teaching in local schools, attending classes in the evening, caring for their families. Thus, eventually, I ended up engaging with the organisation activities as we went along. I collaborated in the production of reports, in the writing of a project proposal, helped with IT (not always with much success), participated in the organisation of events, meetings and discussions. For a period of time, I collaborated with the Water Group of PONGAB (Platform for NGOs and Associations of the Region of Bafatá), which was led by ASPAAB. In addition, as I will explore in more detail below, I engaged in consultancy work, acting as a mediator for the elaboration of the Water Plan for the city of Bafatá.

Over a period of 11 months carrying out participant observation with ASPAAB and the Regional Offices, at times my presence became uneventful, at other times it became evident and noticed. In particular, I was apprehensive about the ways in which my position as a white, European researcher/development worker, with links to NGO TESE, might translate into an authoritative voice. My attempts to attenuate/transform this voice were sometimes clumsy. For example, I attended a few training sessions for ASPAAB members involved in the implementation of a survey of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices related to water use in Bafatá. At some point, the workshop facilitator, my housemate at the time with whom I had often discussed the contents of the training session while he was preparing them, invited me to participate with my insights on a particular topic. I surreptitiously refused, implicitly insisting on my passive role. Reflecting about this event later on, I decided that this refusal had been a mistake. I had been driven by a mix of personal anxieties related to public speaking but also by a misplaced concern that this invitation to speak during a training session would reinforce my position as the European/ white/ researcher/ development worker with an authoritative voice amongst members of the organisation. However, what I came to realise later was that negotiations related to our identities were ongoing as I spent time with ASPAAB members. A much better approach would have been to expose myself, the same way they were being asked to expose themselves. In fact, my 'quietness' and distance, as opposed to my participation, reinforced my exteriority. This could be perceived as an attempt to produce a unilateral gaze without creating space for dialogue, for mutual exposition (Denzin and Lincoln, 2012). Learning by doing, I became more active yet always seeking to sense when my presence and comments were welcome or, on the contrary, inappropriate, invasive or resulting in fatigue.

Besides participant observations and numerous informal conversations with staff from the Regional Offices and ASPAAB management and members, I also conducted interviews with informants. These interviews were, for the most part, carried out during the last three months of my fieldwork. In this way, they were strongly shaped by the months of ethnographic

research. They provided opportunities for covering a range of issues that had emerged from my previous research activities and for more structured dialogues on the perspectives and understandings of informants.

I also conducted ethnographic research and interviews with standpipe operators. With the exception of two, they were normally nearby residents, and not necessarily ASPAAB members. Spending time at the standpipes made me familiar with the everyday practices of these operators and it also enabled me to build relationships that facilitated our dialogues. My interviews gave me insights concerning their perspectives and understandings of their roles and the implications for the governing and use of this infrastructure. These interviews also contrasted with those conducted with members of ASPAAB's management team or users, providing me with yet another perspective.

TESE, a development NGO based in Lisbon but with offices in Bafatá, has been working closely with ASPAAB and the Regional Offices since 2010, when their first project in Bafatá, BMI (see table 3 below for details), started. Since then, they have become an important player in the water sector in the city, mobilising significant resources and influencing governance models, ASPAAB, the Regional Offices and the reshaping of water infrastructure. During the time I worked for this NGO, before my PhD, I became familiar with the vision and ways of working of this organisation and its projects. During my fieldwork I also established relations of trust and friendship with a number of staff working in the implementation of a second project, BMMI. These relationships allowed for numerous informal conversations with staff from TESE, which contributed to my understanding of water infrastructure in Bafatá, and its recent evolution. Together with my engagement with the everyday practices of the organisation, these conversations gave me good and complex views of the perspectives of those involved in the implementation of BMMI and working closely with ASPAAB and the Regional Offices. In this way, I became aware of the ways they conformed to, contested, and transformed the organisation's and project objectives. I also witnessed how they perceived, and, sometimes, sought to reconfigure their professional relationships with project partners,

such as ASPAAB and different state institutions. Given the depth of the informal conversation I had throughout my fieldwork with staff from TESE, I chose not to carry out formal interviews, which would end up being repetitive and bothersome for those being interviewed. I believe I had reached the point of *theoretical saturation* (Crang and Cook, 2007a).

4.3.3. Data collection in Bafatá: water users

Interviews with water users followed a sustained period of participant observation in various locations where people came to fetch water, including standpipes, hand pumps and wells. Hanging out in these locations observing everyday practices, allied to numerous informal conversations with users, made me familiar with water routines and different perspectives and meanings attached to these. This familiarity was essential for the interviews I then carried out. Whereas informal conversation taking place at the source typically involved several people, I chose to carry out interviews away from those places in order to secure some degree of privacy and one-to-one interactions. This proved to be a fruitful approach as informants were more open about, for example, conflicts at the source. In private I was also more comfortable to point out discrepancies between what was said and done and people, in general, were more willing to discuss these.

My social circles in Bafatá included mostly people related to ASPAAB or, in some way, the water sector. For this reason, I chose to seek informants (water users) outside my social networks. The majority of water users were recruited by approaching people while walking around in the neighbourhoods, and carried out in the ‘courtyards’ of those interviewed. As I approached potential informants, I explained the theme of the interview and its purposes and asked for consent. My gender, race and nationality necessarily influenced my dialogues. Despite my attempts to introduce myself as a researcher, rather than a development worker, it was clear that people often associated me with development organisations. This was visible in comments such as “*we need water, make them [NGOs] bring us water*” or in answers that

attempted to conform to messages being circulated around water quality. Nevertheless, interviews with a significant number of informants resulted in productive conversations about their practices, meanings and understandings around water. Being an outsider, I was also more willing to be surprised and informants more accepting of my often naïve questions. These interviews gave me a good insight into the practices of those interviewed as well as the meanings associated with those practices. Table 2 below lists interviews by neighbourhood and Figure 6 provides an overview of the sources used by those interviewed. Of those interviewed, 37% were served by the piped water network (this means that they were considered to be close to a public standpipe or have a home connection) but only 22% got at least some of their water from the water network on a regular basis (see Figure 6, below). Nevertheless, the proportion of informants stating they were relying on the piped network to collect at least some of their water is still higher than the estimated 12% of the population of Bafatá which, under a survey carried out by ASPAAB and TESE in 2013, was found to have access and use the water network on a regular basis. This is because my research activities, whilst not aiming to be statistically representative, did give more attention to the central neighbourhoods of the city, where changes created by the introduction of the water network were most obvious.

Neighbourhood	Served by network?	% pop.	Number of interviews
Iussi	No	10.33	5
Ponte Nova	No	11.83	5
Caibara	No	9.68	4
Bairro 3	Yes	6.99	4
Palhota	No	1.12	1
Sintcha Bilali	No	5.81	2
Sintcha Adulai	No	3.15	1
Bairro 4	Yes	13.20	5
Tunturum	No	5.65	2
Siberia	No	6.86	4
Bairro Polícia	No	5.01	2
Bairro Nema	No	4.51	2
Bairro Binalu	No	2.46	1
Praça	No	0.85	1
Bairro 2	Yes	2.96	3
Rua Porto	Yes	7.99	6
Bairro Coburnel	Yes	1.59	1
Total			49

Table 2. Bafatá population and interviews with water users by neighbourhood ⁹

⁹ See Appendix II for more details. INE Census 2009, neighbourhoods regrouped by ASPAAB from 21 to 17. No information was found concerning the reliability of Census data in Guinea-Bissau.

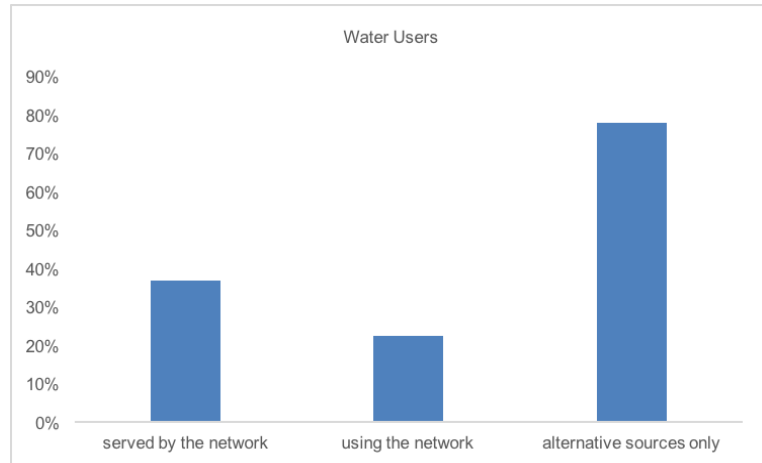


Figure 6. Water Users: sample distribution by source

For statistically representative data, I relied on the survey carried out by TESE and ASPAAB during my fieldwork. Although I was not formally involved in this survey, I closely followed the process and discussed my findings versus their findings throughout the process. Whereas my sample is not statistically representative, it provided me with a good qualitative understanding of the ways in which residents of the city navigated different water sources. It complemented quantitative data I had access to. Interviews with water users focused on themes related to water sources used throughout the year and the motivations, reasons and explanations to why users navigated these different sources. In particular, I tried to explore the ways in which residents of the city perceived the piped supply system in terms of the service provided and the changes it brought to the ways people used water in the city. Using NVivo to analyse these interviews, I identified key justifications routinely mentioned to opt for different sources— such as distance, reliability, quality of water, payment, conflict —, and the frequency in which they appeared in these interviews. Appendix III provides a more detailed overview of interviews conducted with water users and the process of data analysis.

4.3.4. Data collection: *Bafatá Misti Iagu* and *Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu*

Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu (BMMI) and *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (BMI) were two internationally funded projects, which significantly transformed water infrastructure in the city and the ways in which this infrastructure is used and governed. BMI was implemented between 2010 and 2012 and had already terminated by the time I started my fieldwork. BMMI was in the phase of implementation while I was on fieldwork. My research activities included various project activities. Table 2 below provides a brief description of each of these projects as well as a list of research activities I conducted during the course of these projects.

Whilst BMI had already terminated by the time I went on fieldwork, I drew on reflections from my previous experience working in the implementation of this project. This involved looking back at emails and diaries I had kept while living and working in Bafatá but also reading and analysing project reports and other related documentation. Furthermore, I often discussed this project with other individuals who had also been involved in the project, including TESE's staff, ASPAAB members and state officials.

Project Description	Participant Observation
<p><u>Bafatá Misti Iagu</u> (Creole for ‘Bafatá Wants/Needs Water’) (BMI)</p> <p><u>Project duration:</u> 30 months, it started in January 2010 and terminated in June 2012.</p> <p><u>Project Partners:</u> Project led by TESE, development NGO based in Lisbon. ASPAAB was both partner and beneficiary of this project, whilst the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá and EPAL were both associates of the project. EPAL is the Portuguese state-owned company that manages water supply in Lisbon.</p> <p><u>Project donors:</u> This project was funded by the European Union, the Portuguese Development Agency (IPAD) and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.</p> <p><u>Overall Objective:</u> The overall objective of this project was to improve access to a sustainable and improved water source. It adopted an approach focused on sustainability rather than mere construction of new infrastructure and, therefore, besides the refurbishment of infrastructures, it focused on the definition and implementation of water management model that would allow local partners to secure the operation of the system in a sustainable and viable manner.</p> <p><u>Expected results:</u> (1) an optimised water supply management model that secured access to water for 75% of the population in a sustainable manner adopted and implemented; (2) local actors in the water sector capacitated and able to implement the adopted water supply management model; (3) water network infrastructures refurbished to supply safe water; (4) an awareness raising campaign on the themes of water, hygiene, environment and the user-payer principle implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project was completed before I started fieldwork in April 2013. However, I necessarily drew on my experiences working in Bafatá in the implementation of this project between March 2010 and March 2011 as an employee of NGO TESE. • My duties and responsibilities were varied but included, for example, liaising with project partners, including ASPAAB and state officials, donors and TESE coordination team; organising, facilitating and attending events with the community to raise awareness about the project and to inaugurate the awareness raising campaign on water; and, identifying institutional and policy settings in place. • My reflections on my previous experiences were necessarily crucial for the ways in which this research project unfolded and my interactions during fieldwork.

Project Description	Participant Observation
<p><i>Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu</i> (Creole for ‘Bafatá Wants/Needs More Water’) (BMMI)</p> <p><u>Project duration:</u> 30 months, from July 2012 to December 2014.</p> <p><u>Project Partners:</u> Project led by TESE, development NGO based in Lisbon. ASPAAB was both the main partner and beneficiary of this project, the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá, EPAL (Portuguese state-owned company that manages water supply in Lisbon), and SNV were also partners.</p> <p><u>Project donors:</u> This project was funded by the European Union, and co-funded by Camoes Mission – Institute for Cooperation and Language, EPAL – Empresa Portuguesa de Aguas Livres, SNV – Netherlands cooperation Institute, TESE and ASPAAB.</p> <p><u>Overall objective:</u> to maximise and build on the results of the previous project BMI and, in this way, to improve access to an improved water source in the city of Bafatá in a sustainable manner.</p> <p><u>Expected results:</u> (1) Water Plan for the City of Bafatá complete and adopted; (2) Human and institutional capacity of ASPAAB reinforced in order to guarantee the sustainability of the system and its autonomy and leadership in water supply in Bafatá; (3) Refurbishment and expansion infrastructure for water supply in Ponte Nova, Bairro 5 Caibara and Bairro 3; (4) positive shifts in the attitudes, knowledge and practices related to hygiene, public health and payment for water through an awareness raising campaign.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultancy work under objective 1 related to the elaboration of a Water Plan for the city of Bafatá. My role was that of mediator between technical consultants developing surveys, assessments and investments plans and local actors, namely ASPAAB and Regional Offices. During this period, I engaged in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Field survey of existing infrastructure; – Project partner’s meetings; – Regularly met with ASPAAB, Regional Offices and TESE project team to discuss survey and investments plans being developed. • Attended multiple events organised under this project; • Accompanied development and implementation of Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices study and awareness campaign; • Accompanied implementation of diagnostic of ASPAAB’s management model; • Attended several training events; • Numerous informal conversations with different actors involved in the project.

Table 2. Overview of data collection during the course of *Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu* and *Bafatá Misti Iagu*, including participant observation and my involvement, on a professional capacity, in both projects.

Between October 2013 and February 2014, I worked as a consultant under the project BMMI and collaborated in the elaboration of the Water Plan for the city of Bafatá. My role was that of mediator between the international consultant employed by the project to draft the Water Plan and local actors, namely ASPAAB and the Regional Offices. The aim was to ensure that, first, technical assessments of existing infrastructure and operation and maintenance procedures were embedded in local understandings; and, second, to guarantee that proposals for future investment in infrastructure conformed to social, political and economic priorities defined by local actors and to expected financial, technical and management capacities.

Within the scope of this consultancy, I participated in a survey of existing infrastructure. Walking around for days surveying the existing water infrastructure accompanied by ASPAAB, the Regional Offices, TESE and the international consultant, provided me with a much deeper understanding of the complexities involved in the operation of the network. My role also entailed participating in several meetings where multiple aspects of the future expansions of the network in the short and long-term were considered. In this way, I participated in various insightful conversations concerning the idiosyncrasies of the network and its operation, I contributed to interactions and negotiations between different actors as they happened, and discussed priorities and visions for future expansions to the network. For a while, I became immersed in ongoing discussions concerning the production, governing and use of infrastructure.

This opportunity proved vital for my engagement with the different organisations I worked with during my fieldwork. On the one hand, my participation demonstrated my willingness to get involved and contribute to the work of the different organisations. Moreover, the fact that my position was that of mediator between local actors and international consultants also contributed to the consolidation of my relationships with ASPAAB and the Regional Offices. From the beginning it was clear that my aim was to make sure that the Plan being developed conformed to their needs and priorities. On the other hand, this opportunity helped me with

my own anxieties related to my presence in Bafatá and the time and support I was requiring from my informants.

The survey of existing infrastructure required that I travelled on several occasions to the Department of Water Resources in Bissau to search for technical specifications. In this way, I interacted with different bureaucrats and followed the workings of this department. For example, in one of my visits to Bissau to collect information from Water Resources, I had to extend my visit for several days because there was no electricity in the offices of this department. These experiences certainly expanded my understandings of the everyday workings of the state.

As a consultant working on the project, I was also invited to project meetings bringing together all partners. These meetings provided essential platforms to witness negotiations and discussions concerning the priorities of water infrastructure and the goals of the project. They also constituted an important platform to witness and understand how power relations between different actors played out. Several of these events provided interesting platforms on which to base later discussions, namely related to the contrasting views of water infrastructure and the ongoing negotiations between local and international organisations.

Apart from the activities falling within the remit of the consultancy I carried out, during my fieldwork I also attended and participated in several of BMMI's activities that were not related to this work, including several training sessions.

Finally, it is important to mention that consent was obtained before all interviews. I also explained to informants that they did not have to answer questions they did not feel comfortable with and that they could withdraw at any moment. All interviews were recorded apart from a few cases where informants asked me not to. In those cases, I took brief notes during the interview and expanded them afterwards. In order to guarantee the anonymity of those interviewed, all names have been changed. While carrying out participant observation, I was consistently open about my position as a researcher. I kept a research diary where I took notes on a daily basis, including descriptions of events and conversations intertwined with

personal and sometimes more emotional reflections. My fieldwork diaries have been particularly helpful in inciting reflexivity in my interpretations and representations. I have cited my own notes where I used information included in these diaries.

4.3.5. Language

Portuguese is my mother tongue and the official language of Guinea-Bissau, but creole is the de facto language of the country, and a significant proportion of the population does not speak or understand Portuguese. My knowledge of creole was sufficient to effectively communicate with my informants. Interviews and informal conversations with staff from international organisations were conducted in Portuguese and Creole, according to informants' preferences (and mine and their language skills). Interviews with higher rank state officials were conducted in Portuguese. Interviews and informal conversations with ASPAAB members, water users and state officials based in Bafatá were mostly conducted in Creole. In some cases, when the informant felt comfortable speaking Portuguese, we naturally shifted from one language to the other.

All interviews were transcribed by myself in the language of the interview, Portuguese or Creole. Only excerpts of interviews quoted in this text were translated and, again, I did the translations myself. While the process of translation inevitably shapes the material, I tried to be as faithful to the original text as possible. In fact, where I found that no English word could encompass the meaning of a specific word in Creole or Portuguese, I kept it in the original language, with footnotes to explain its meaning.

4.4. Data analysis and Writing: From data to theory to data...

In this research, I adopted different analytical strategies to move between empirical data and theory. Grounded theory has been widely adopted among scholars using ethnographic

approaches (Limb and Dwyer, 2001b). This analytical strategy adopts an inductive approach to data analysis. The aim is to ensure that empirical data shapes the analysis and that pre-existing theoretical constructs do not lead the researcher into forcing data into preconceived categories. Rather than seeking theory verification, researchers look for theory construction from the social phenomena being observed (Charmaz, 2012; Glaser and Strauss, 1999). As Charmaz (2012, p. 510) has argued, “constructivist grounded theory celebrates first hand knowledge of empirical worlds”. I started data collection with a series of research questions but without pre-defined hypothesis to test. Thus, to a certain extent, my research was designed to be inductive, with theory construction emerging from the empirical data.

However, the truth is that empirical work is necessarily shaped by the theoretical orientations of the researcher (Crang, 2001; Timmermans and Tavory, 2012). In addition, the strict adoption of grounded theory methods has often led to over-descriptive work that does not invoke abstraction or to generalisations with little theoretical innovation (Burawoy, 1998; Timmermans and Tavory, 2012; Wacquant, 2002). Thus, abductive analysis, as suggested by Timmermans and Tavory (2012), best describes the analytical strategy adopted. This strategy involves an iterative process of basing hypothesis and theoretical innovations on surprising research evidence. Empirical work requires an open mind, but one with a set of theoretical constructs at the background. In this way, researchers do not seek to produce generalisations from particular empirical instances. Instead, assuming that theories enable us to understand and relate instances both within and between studies, “abductive analysis specifically aims at generating novel theoretical insights that reframe empirical findings in contrast to existing theories” (Timmermans and Tavory, 2012, p. 174). Empirical work extends the complexity inherent to different instances and speaks back to theory, seeking to improve the latter ability to account for the dynamic character and heterogeneity of social forces (Clarke, 2012).

The first step towards data analysis and writing included the transcribing of all interviews. Once the process of transcribing interviews was concluded, I started coding all the material, including interviews and fieldwork notes. Research materials were coded using Nvivo

qualitative data analysis software and excel. Through a close reading of transcripts, fieldwork notes and reports I selected themes and developed codes, which emerged through my immersion in the empirical material. Initially, codes were fundamentally descriptive, focusing on the actions and concerns of the participants (Cheung Judge, 2016) – e.g. ‘mobilising resources’, ‘selecting water sources – conflict’. Then, through an iterative, and at times messy, process, which required the continuous revisiting of materials, I reassessed codes and sought links to broader ideas. Throughout this process, theoretical questions and empirical material blended together in my mind. Deductive thinking imposed questions on the material, inductive thinking generated questions from this material. This process coincided with writing during which I continued to seek relations between codes and to engage with broader theoretical constructs.

4.5. Conclusion

Overall, my research activities originated a productive accumulation of perspectives, understandings, meanings and practices associated with the becoming of water infrastructure in Bafatá. Yet, to the end of the research process, I kept being surprised by new meanings, interpretations and understandings of the ways water infrastructure is shaped, governed and used in Bafatá. Learning was at the heart of a great number of people I interviewed and engaged with during my research. In particular, ASPAAB’s members in their pursuit to grow and to continue to improve the water supply service in the city were consistently seeking alternative ways to learn. Learn to operate a water system, learn to manage an organisation, learn to implement a project, learn accountancy, learn... It is their thirst for knowledge, and obsession with learning, that makes me believe that, by the time I’m writing these words, many changes will have already taken place. The same way learning has been at the heart of most people I engaged with during my research, “It is in this spirit of learning (McFarlane 2010) that the thesis proceeds” (Mosselson, 2015, p. 88).

– FIVE –

Guinea-Bissau:
the political and economic context, water policies, and
infrastructure in Bafatá

5.1. Introduction

This chapter provides the reader with some background information on Guinea-Bissau and Bafatá, focusing in particular on the political economic context, the postcolonial state and the evolution of water policies and infrastructure. Section 5.2. explores key political and economic developments in the country over the past few decades, including the processes of economic liberalisation and democratisation inaugurated in the late 1980s and early 1990s, respectively. It also examines the normalisation of political instability since the 1998-1999 civil war. In addition, it traces the inability of the postcolonial state to expand its influence and concomitantly the multiplicity of institutions which have consistently shaped and governed everyday life in this country.

The second part of this chapter, section 5.3., discusses the evolution of water policies and infrastructure in Guinea-Bissau and Bafatá. In particular, it examines policy shifts relating to the role of the state in water provision in the context of a weak state with very scarce resources and where international organisations are heavily present. Focusing on the specific case of the city of Bafatá, this chapter then introduces the case study and provides an overview of the various ways in which people currently access water in the city. Furthermore, it discusses the piecemeal expansion of the piped water network over the years, which reflects also the piecemeal inflow of investments. Throughout, the research questions framing the empirical chapters of this thesis – chapters 6, 7 and 8 – are elaborated.

5.2. Guinea-Bissau: an overview

5.2.1. An introduction to Guinea-Bissau

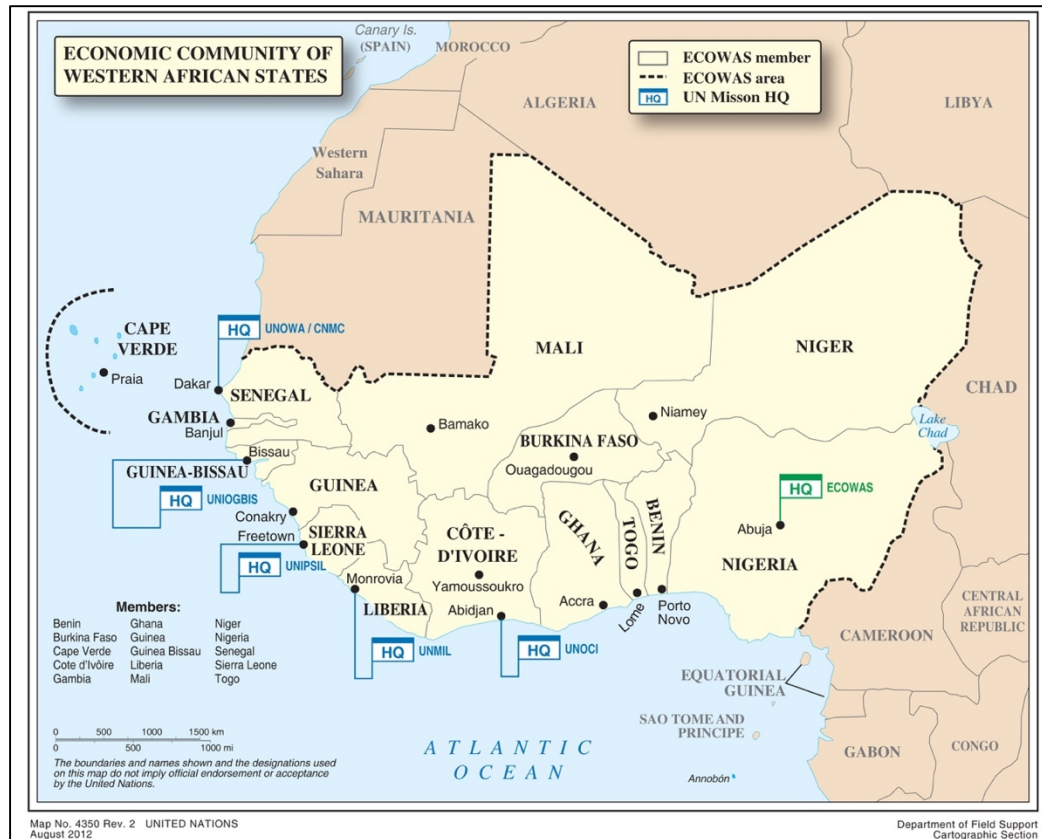


Figure 7. Map of Economic Community of Western African States

The case study of this project is the city of Bafatá, in Guinea-Bissau. Located in West Africa, Guinea-Bissau is bordered by Senegal to the North, Guinea to the East and South and the Atlantic Ocean to the West. Guinea-Bissau is a member state of the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS), a 15-members regional group created to foster economic cooperation among member states. It is also the only non-Francophone country in the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA), a customs and currency union between 8 countries (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Niger, Senegal and Togo).

With a population of approximately 1.746 million¹⁰ and over 20 different ethnicities living within its territory, Guinea-Bissau is a small but extremely diverse country, even for Western African standards (Davidson, 2004). The largest ethnic groups are the Fulani, at approximately 28.5% of the population, the Balanta, around 23%, the Mandingo, 14.7%, and, finally, the Papel, comprising around 9% of the population (INE, 2009). The country is also religiously diverse, including large Muslim, Christian and Animist populations. This religious diversity distinguishes Guinea-Bissau from its neighbouring countries, such as Senegal or Mali (Davidson, 2004). For example, Davidson (2004, pp. 417–8), having travelled to Guinea-Bissau after the 1998-1999 civil war to investigate the rise of a Muslim society, came to realise that, “no one set of cultural and religious norms would be imposed easily on this ethnically and religiously diverse population, even if driven by military might. Pluralism was alive and well protected vigilantly on both micro and macro scales”. And, despite the growth in both Muslim and Christian populations witnessed in the past few decades, followed by a decrease in the number of people declaring themselves to be animists, religious syncretism, where people combine rituals from several religions and beliefs, constitutes a vital feature of Guinean spiritual life. The country’s diversity is also reflected in the multiple languages spoken across the country and, particularly, in its main cities. For example, it is estimated that over 75% of those living in the capital city, Bissau, speak two or more languages. These include different ethnic languages, Creole, which is the de facto common language in the country and is spoken by 90.4% of the population (INE, 2009), Portuguese, the official language, which is only spoken by 27.1% of the population (INE, 2009), and French, the official language of neighbouring countries, among others (Borges, 2004).

Guinea-Bissau is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 178 out of 188 in the 2015 UNDP Human Development Report (UNDP, 2015). According to this same report, life expectancy at birth is 55.2, average years of schooling remain at 2.8, and the gross national income per capita is \$1,362, compared with, for example, \$2,188 in Senegal, \$5,431 in

¹⁰ UN data. Available at: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=guinea-bissau>. Last accessed on: 04/04/2016, 11.36 am (GMT-8)

Nigeria or \$12,122 in South Africa. According to the Second Document of the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction in Guinea-Bissau published in 2011 (MEPIR, 2011a), between 2000 and 2010, the Human Development Index (HDI) of Guinea-Bissau registered an average annual growth rate of 0.9%, compared with an average of 2.1% for Sub-Saharan African countries and 1.68% for countries with very low HDI. The two main factors contributing to this very low HDI in Guinea-Bissau are seen to be generalised poverty, apparent in the very low incomes of a large share of the population, and life expectancy, a consequence of the lack of access to and quality of health services. In fact, a survey on poverty levels in the country showed that 69.3% of the population is poor (living on less than \$2/day) and 33% is extremely poor (living on less than \$1/day) and demonstrated that poverty levels grew between 2002 and 2010 (MEPIR, 2011b).¹¹

The economy of the country is mostly based on farming and fishing. In 2007, the agricultural sector was estimated to employ 80% of the population (Gacitua-Mario et al., 2007). Agriculture also represents approximately 60% of the national GDP and amounts to over 98% of the national exports (MEPIR, 2011a). In fact, cashew-nuts exports alone represent over 90% of the overall exports of the country and amount to approximately 17% of the state revenue. This means that the economy is highly susceptible to fluctuations in the price of this crop. The private sector is overwhelmingly dominated by the informal economy and, in 2009, there were only 75 registered private companies (MEPIR, 2011a).

The state of Guinea-Bissau remains dependent on foreign aid to finance public expenditure, including operating expenses. In 2008, foreign aid represented approximately 12% of the GDP and funded 96% of public investments (Embaixada de França na Guiné-Bissau, 2008). Political instability has affected the flow of external aid in recent years since key external donors have imposed sanctions on the country. In 2010 it had decreased to 9.7% of the GDP and in 2012, it went down by almost 40% to 6% of GDP. This drastic reduction in external

¹¹ Data published by different organisations presents considerably diverse scenarios, where possible I have chosen data published by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau rather than international organisations.

donations was not followed by an increase in internal revenues and, in 2012, 95% of public investments were still funded through foreign aid (EU and World Bank, 2014).



Figure 8. Map - cities in Guinea-Bissau (available in: <http://www.ezilon.com/maps/africa/guinea-bissau-road-maps.html>. Last accessed in: 2 August 2016, 14h34 (GMT-8))

Between 2010 and 2015, the average population growth rate, was 2.4%. During the same period, population growth in urban areas was above the national average, at 4.1%¹² and, in 2014, 48.6% of the population was designated as urban¹³. In Guinea-Bissau, settlements with populations larger than 5,000 inhabitants are considered urban areas. The population of Bissau, the capital city, more than doubled between 1991 and 2012, from just under 200,000 to over 400,000¹⁴ in 2015. During the same period, the urban population in the Region of Bafatá, rose from just below 30,000 to over 40,000¹⁵. According to the 2009 census, the city of Bafatá, capital of the region, counted approximately 30,000¹⁶ inhabitants. With a small

¹² UN data. Available at: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=guinea-bissau>. Last accessed on: 04/04/2016, 11.36 am (GMT-8)

¹³ UN data. Available at: <http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=guinea-bissau>. Last accessed on: 04/04/2016, 11.36 am (GMT-8)

¹⁴ INE Guiné-Bissau. Available at: <http://guineabissau.africadata.org/pt/DataAnalysis/>. Last access on: 15/04/2016, 1.52 pm (GMT-8)

¹⁵ INE Guiné-Bissau. Available at: <http://guineabissau.africadata.org/pt/DataAnalysis/>. Last access on: 15/04/2016, 1.52 pm (GMT-8). In Guinea-Bissau those settlements with populations over 5,000 inhabitants are considered urban areas.

¹⁶ INE Guiné-Bissau. Available at: http://www.stat-guineabissau.com/publicacao/RGPH_2009.pdf. Last access on: 15/04/2016, 2.47 pm (GMT-8)

population, in the context of Guinea-Bissau, Bafatá holds the title of second capital, and constitutes an important urban centre in the country. Nevertheless, Gabu with a population of approximately 40,000 inhabitants, and strategically situated to the East of Bafatá and closer to the borders with Guinea-Conakry and Senegal (see Figure 8, above), is now the city with the second largest population in the country. The concentration of population in the capital city, which is followed by the concentration of investment and economic opportunities, suggests that, like elsewhere in the continent (Myers, 2011; Parnell and Pieterse, 2014), the phenomenon of urban primacy is an important characteristic of Guinea-Bissau.

Whilst the predominant ethnicities in the East are the Mandingo and the Fulani, Bafatá, like the rest of urban areas in Guinea-Bissau, includes a diverse population, including people from different ethnicities as well as communities from several neighbouring states, such as Guinea, Mauritania, Gambia or Senegal, and elsewhere, such as Brazil, Lebanon and China.

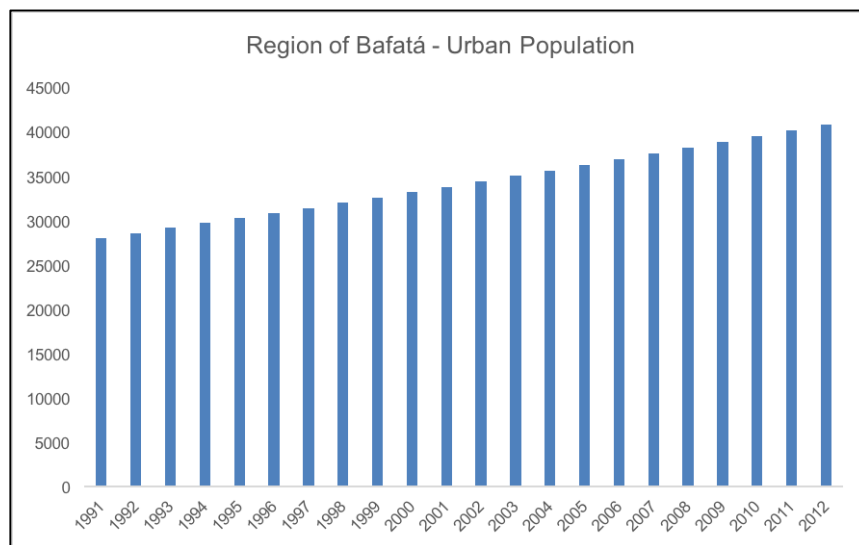


Figure 9. Urban Population Bafatá Region (Source: INE, Guinea-Bissau) (In Guinea-Bissau, settlements with populations larger than 5,000 inhabitants are considered urban areas)

According to data collected for the Second Document of the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction¹⁷, published in 2011, only 66% of the population in the country has access to safe drinking water. Another study published a few years later in 2014 suggests that 10.1% of the

¹⁷ MEPIR (2011) Segundo Documento de Estratégia Nacional de Redução da Pobreza da Guiné-Bissau (DENARP II – 2011-2015). Ministério da Economia, do Plano e Integração Regional. República da Guiné-Bissau.

population have access to a piped supply, 46% rely on protected wells and boreholes and 32.1% on unprotected wells and/or springs (INE-GB and Ministério da Economia e Finanças, 2014). Waterborne diseases are one of the main causes of morbidity, particularly among children under 5 years old (MEPIR, 2011b; MINSAP, 2008). Nevertheless, these numbers cover a considerable disparity between urban areas, where 84% of the population is believed to rely on safe drinking water, and rural areas, where only 53% of the households were estimated to be using safe drinking water. Thus, despite urban growth and the related burden placed on service provision, access to safe drinking water is better in cities than in rural areas. Here, it is important to note that improved water sources, which are equated with safe drinking water, include a range of sources and technologies, such as: piped water into dwelling or to yard/plot, public tap or standpipes, tubewell or borehole, protected dug well, protected spring and rainwater.¹⁸¹⁹²⁰ Notably, whereas for example a piped supply is considered an improved water source, the use of such technology is a not guarantee of safe drinking water. This will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8.

5.2.2. From African Socialism to democratisation and the liberalisation of the economy

Guinea-Bissau became independent in 1974 after an 11-year liberation war against the colonial power (see Dhada, 1993 for very detailed analysis of PAIGC struggle). The rates of economic and infrastructure development at independence reflected decades of colonization and economic extraction and, related to this, the relatively low status of Guinea-Bissau – as a colony governed through another colony, Cape Verde – in the economically, politically and socially decaying Portuguese empire.

¹⁸ This is according to WHO/ Unicef Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation. Available in: <http://www.wssinfo.org/definitions-methods/watsan-categories/>. Last accessed on: 30th May 2016, 15h15 (GMT-8).

¹⁹ WHO/UNICEF Water Supply Statistics, 2015. Available in: <https://knoema.com/WHOWSS2014/who-unicef-water-supply-statistics-2015?location=1001920-guinea-bissau>. Last accessed on: 30th May 2016, 15h15 (GMT-8).

²⁰ Different surveys present considerably different scenarios for population growth, urban population and access to safe water in Guinea-Bissau. Here, I have used reports published by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau where available and data published by international organisations otherwise.

After independence, following African socialist ideologies, Luís Cabral – the country’s first president (and the brother of Amílcar Cabral, a key figure in the struggle for the independence of Portuguese-speaking African countries who was murdered in 1973) – and his party, the PAIGC²¹, adopted a state-led economic model based on two main pillars: modernisation of agriculture and industrialization. This was a rather ambitious programme which aimed to transform the country at the political, economic and social levels, but that is now recognized to have failed to achieve its goals (Chabal, 1986a, 1986b; Forrest, 2005; Galli and Jones, 1987).

In 1980, Nino Vieira led a successful coup d’état against Luís Cabral’s regime and became the second President of Guinea. Multiple accounts of these events have attributed the success and popularity of this coup precisely to the widespread discontentment with the outcomes of failed economic policies as well as perceptions of prevalent corruption among state officials. In addition, the increasing antagonisms against Cape Verdean descendants perceived to have benefited the most since independence, the rising factional struggles between different groups within the party, and the centralization and personalization of power as well as the consequent increase in repression and censorship are also considered important factors (Cardoso, 2004; Carvalho, 2006; Chabal, 1986b, 1983; Forrest, 1987; Galli and Jones, 1987; Galli, 1990).

Nino Vieira’s regime did bring some change. As a result of both internal and external pressures, measures entailing the liberalization of the economy started being adopted in 1983. This was followed by the adoption of structural adjustment programmes (SAP) beginning in 1986 in attempts to deal with a large deficit created by a disarticulated economy in which consumption was consistently greater than production (Galli, 1990). In addition, in 1991 the democratisation process was initiated with the recognition of multiple political parties and other forms of association, including traditional authorities (Forrest, 2005). The process of liberalization of the economy and the concomitant opening of the markets is seen to have initiated some important transformations in the economy of this country. This included a more regular and diversified supply of products and, relatedly, a significant increase in market

²¹ PAIGC – Partido Africano da Independência da Guiné e Cabo Verde (African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde)

activities, even if this is seen to have happened mostly in the informal sector (Lourenço-Lindell, 2004, 2002). Furthermore, besides the significant increase in the number of private enterprises, such as large private plantations, the amount of cash crops being traded through state channels is believed to have increased by approximately 50% in the period following the liberalization of the economy (Forrest, 2002).

Resembling similar programmes adopted in other African countries, the fundamental elements of the SAPs in Guinea-Bissau included the strengthening of the private sector, currency devaluations, and the reduction of public expenditure through significant cuts in both the number of public sector workers and social services, cuts in food subsidies and increases to producer prices (Forrest, 2002; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Monteiro, 1996). And, similarly to what happened in other countries, one important consequence of these programmes was a drastic reduction in the number of public sector workers, the main formal employer in the country, and therefore in formal employment (Borges, 2004). This dismissal of a significant number of public sector workers, alongside an increasing irregularity in the payment of public sector wages, drove a growing number of people to search for alternative sources of income in the informal sector leading to an increasing informalisation of the economy (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002).

Reductions in the level of and lack of affordability of social services, most notably school and health centres, are perceived as another important consequence of liberalisation reforms. This deterioration in the level of the services provided by the state has been linked to an increasing demand for services provided in the informal and traditional spheres. For example, Lourenço-Lindell (2002) traced the emergence of multiple associations, such as Koranic schools and traditional healers, and the re-ignition of traditional forms of authority in Guinea-Bissau to the aftermath of SAPs. In fact, this is in line with broader trends in the continent, where the collapse of state institutions has been linked to an increasing reliance on ethnic based associations or religious institutions. Finally, SAPs have also been blamed for high inflation

and the subsequent rising costs of basic necessities, such as rice, the main staple in Guinea-Bissau, with dramatic consequences for people's livelihoods (Forrest, 2010).

Simultaneously, liberalisation policies and the concomitant informalization of the economy seem to have benefited a small elite within the country. This minority includes a group of people that used either their position within, or their links to, the state, banks and international institutions to accumulate resources and "occupy dominant positions in informal trade" (Lourenço-Lindell, 2004, p. 91). In these circumstances, Forrest (2005) and Lourenço-Lindell (2004) suggest that the increasing informalisation of the economy has been followed by a widening gap between private traders with connections to or positioned within formal institutions and the majority of the population. This gap is revealed in the striking power imbalances within the informal sphere between the majority of very small scale informal traders and those few benefiting from beneficial loan conditions for their own personal purposes.

Parallel to the liberalisation of the economy, Nino Vieira's regime propelled important political changes. These included replacing the dominant Cape Verdean elites within state structures and promoting a discourse that contrasted the Creole's elite's ideas of the modern nation-state with what was perceived to be the authentic Guinean culture based upon traditional forms of authority and ethnic identities. Related to this, traditional authorities were once again recognised as significant actors in political life, even if there are no formal links between traditional authorities and the state. This endorsement of local kingdoms and chiefdoms was followed by attempts to expand state power through these structures (Forrest, 2005) and, during the democratisation process, traditional authorities became key instruments used by political parties to gather votes in different constituencies.

The democratisation process, which started in 1991, culminated in parliamentary elections in 1994 and the election of Nino Vieira in the first presidential elections held in 1995. However, the shift to a democratic multiparty system did not result in an opening of the political sphere. Instead, following the elections, processes of centralisation and personalisation of power

seemed to accelerate with the president becoming increasingly distant from the population, detached from his own army and isolated within both the party and the government. In Forrest's (2005, p. 256) words, "Nino Vieira grew increasingly 'bonapartistic' – flagrantly intervening in other government and civil society institutions, removing perceived opponents from the government, and proving intolerant to criticism".

In 1998, 18 years after Nino Vieira first became president of Guinea-Bissau, a series of events would eventually lead to a civil war fought between two factions of the army, one led by president Nino Vieira and the other by Ansumane Mané, his Army Chief of Staff. This war lasted approximately one year, ending in May 1999 with the victory of Mané's faction, while Nino Vieira escaped first to the Gambia and then to Portugal. The war was for the most part confined to the capital city Bissau, driving a large number of the city's residents to temporarily take refuge in rural areas and other cities in the country as well as neighbouring countries. Nevertheless, the impacts of this war have been felt in the entire country for many years after, in the form of migration, damage to agricultural production, destruction of infrastructure and increasing poverty (Barry et al., 2007a). For example, GDP per capita is estimated to have dropped by 30% during the war and in 2005 was still below pre-war levels (Creppy and Wodon, 2007; Forrest, 2010). Agricultural production, trade and services were severely disturbed for a number of years and damage to the infrastructure during the war were still felt in 2010 (Barry et al., 2007b; Forrest, 2010). Barry and Wodon (2007) also refer the loss of human capital due to emigration as an important consequence of the war. Moreover, they mention that economic recovery has been extremely slow after the conflict; the economy went into recession in 2001 and stagnated in both 2002 and 2003.

5.2.3. Political instability as normality

Since the 1998-99 civil war, political instability has become the norm in the country, as demonstrated, for example, by the fact that between 2004-2009 the term of the successive governments did not exceed six months (MEPIR, 2011a). In these circumstances, political

instability is normally blamed for the slow, or even relapsing trends in social and economic development, the striking dependence on international funding as well as the inability of the state to expand its influence. The table below summarises key events since 2000 and demonstrates the succession of coup d'états and violent political events that have marked this country's recent political history.

President	Year	Events
Kumba Iala (PRS) (2000-2003)	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kumba Iala dissolved parliament and continuously postpones date for next election
	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coup d'état led by General Verissimo Correia Seabra, Army Chief of Staff
Henrique Rosa (Independent) (2003-2005) (Acting president)	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interim President nominated by military junta led by Verissimo Correia
	2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parliamentary elections • General Verissimo Correia Seabra is murdered; General Tagme Na Wai appointed Army Chief of Staff
Nino Vieira (Independent) (2005-2009)	2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nino Vieira (former President) comes back from exile and wins presidential election
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very instable climate throughout his presidency, ongoing struggles between political and military factions.
	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bubo Na Tchuto, Navy Chief of Staff, flees the country following accusations of attempt to organise coup d'état • Failed coup d'état attributed to Kumba Iala • President dissolves parliament after withdrawal of PAIGC; Parliamentary elections: Carlos Gomes Junior is elected prime-minister • Rebellious soldiers attack president's home
	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Army Chief of Staff Tagme Na Wai, key rival of Nino Vieira, is murdered. A few hours later Nino Vieira is also murdered.
Raimundo Pereira (PAIGC) 2009 (Acting president)	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President of Assembly nominated interim president
Malam Bacai Sanha (PAIGC) (2009-2012)	2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malam Bacai Sanha wins presidential election
	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bubo Na Tchuto (previously Navy Chief of Staff) comes back from exile and takes refuge in UN headquarters in Bissau. In April, he is included in the US list of international drug lords. • Prime-minister arrested: deputy Army Chief of Staff, Antonio Indjai, frees Bubo Na Tchuto from UN while his soldiers arrest Prime-Minister Carlos Gomes Junior and Army Chief of Staff Zamora Induta. Prime-minister is released a few days later; Army Chief of Staff remains in custody. • Antonio Indjai nominated Army Chief of Staff, Bubo na Tchuto nominated Navy Chief of Staff. • In context of political instability, both the president and prime-minister leave the country for several months.
	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Malam Bacai Sanha dies in Paris from illness ; Carlos Gomes Junior resigns as prime minister in order to run in the presidential election

President	Year	Events
Raimundo Pereira (PAIGC) (Acting President)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round presidential elections: Carlos Gomes Junior and Kumba Iala go to second round • Coup d'etat against elected government; Carlos Gomes Junior and Raimundo Pereiara arrested by military and later freed and sent to Ivory Coast.
Manuel Serifo (Independent) (Acting President) (2012-2014)	2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manuel Serifo nominated acting president; Ibraima Papa Camara nominated Army Chief of Staff. He is included in the USA list of international drug lords.
	2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bubo Na Tchuto is arrested in international waters and taken to the United States for trial.
Jose Mario Vaz	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April: General elections following 2-year 'transition' period; Jose Mario Vaz elected President; PAIGC invited to form government, Domingos Simoes Pereira becomes prime-minister.
	– ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 2015: In a controversial move, highly criticised in public culture, President dismisses elected government; September 2015: New prime-minister resigns after only 20 days in the post, after the supreme court ruled his appointment violated the constitution.

Table 4. Some events illustrating political instability in Guinea-Bissau.

The causes of political instability are varied, complex and controversial, and are beyond the scope of this research. Conflicts between military, executive and legislative powers, the interests of political elites, ethnic conflicts, illegal activities, personal and factional struggles are intermittently named as the main causes (Adebajo, 2002; Barry et al., 2007b; L.I. Bordonaro, 2009; Cardoso, 2004; Cardoso, Carlos, 1996; Forrest, 2010, 1988; Kohnert, 2010; Koudawo, 1996; Temudo, 2009; Vigh, 2012). From the early 2000s onwards, perhaps taking advantage of the chronic political instability in the country, Guinea-Bissau has also become an important hub in international drug trafficking routes, linking Latin America, Europe and the United States. Political elites are recognised to have become deeply involved in this trade with further implications for political instability as well as for corruption and engagement in various illegal activities – several high rank officials have been included in the USA's list of international drug lords and Bubo Na Tchuto, previous Navy Chief of Army, is currently under arrest in the USA. The prevalence of drug trade in the country has led many to controversially refer to Guinea-Bissau as the 'World's first Narco-state' (see: Forrest, 2010; Kohnert, 2010; O'regan, 2012; Vulliamy, 2008). Notwithstanding the details, the succession of events

described in the table above and the current political situation in the country clearly demonstrate the extent to which political instability has pervaded the country.

My fieldwork period coincided with a 'transition period' which lasted for two years after the coup d'état of April 2012. Whereas this could have been seen as an exceptional phase, therefore compromising my research findings concerning state practices and actors, the transition period during which I carried out my research activities can be perceived as another instance of political instability, which has become the normality in Guinea-Bissau. In fact, the elections successfully held in April 2014, just after I concluded my fieldwork, were seen as key moment for the country, signalling the beginning of a new chapter. However, only a few months after this election, the recently elected President dismissed the recently elected prime-minister, a controversial move that marked the beginning of a new period of instability, which is still ongoing. My thesis thus explores the workings of state institutions in a context marked by routinized political instability, rather than the exceptionality of a specific period of political instability.

This is not to say that political instability does not produce vital consequences or hinder the working of state and non-state institutions. The 2012-2014 period was a tense moment worsened by a social and economic crisis to a large extent caused by political instability. In general, political instability has been at the heart of the reduction of foreign aid flowing into the country. For example, the April 2012 coup d'état resulted in sanctions from international organisations, which did not recognise the transition government and cancelled any assistance to state institutions. In a country heavily dependent on international donations, the impacts were severely felt across the country, namely through the delays in payments of public wages. In addition, between 2011 and 2013, Guinea-Bissau was also affected by the accentuated decline, by more than 40%, of the price of cashew nuts in international markets (IMF, 2015). As mentioned before, cashew nuts exports constitute a key source of income for households and the state.

The next section discusses the consistent elusive presence of the state in Guinea-Bissau and, related to this, explores the multiplicity of institutions shaping everyday life and service provision across the country.

5.2.4. The multiplicity of institutions in Guinea-Bissau

The inability of the postcolonial state to expand its influence in Guinea-Bissau and the concomitant presence of a multiplicity of institutions, such as traditional authorities and other looser formations, has been well documented. Researchers working in different areas of the country and on diverse topics have demonstrated that initiatives such as the SAPs have contributed to the informalisation of certain aspects of everyday life, namely through the reduction of formal employment (Lourenço-Lindell, 2004). Nonetheless, most researchers also acknowledge that the co-existence of a multiplicity of institutions shaping and governing everyday life, and service provision, has been a consistent and key characteristic of this society. The governance of water provision must be understood in light of this multiplicity.

At independence in 1974, the PAIGC banned traditional authorities, which were perceived as old allies of the colonial state but also as contrary to this party's ideas of social transformation and modernisation. To replace these and to consolidate the power of the newly independent state and in this way promote social transformation, village committees were created as a way to integrate villages into the state apparatuses. However, these committees were gradually sidelined from local political, economic and social life or appropriated by the old 'traditional' elites. Consequently, Forrest (1987) and Rudebeck (1988) suggest that rather than becoming integrated in the state apparatuses local structures grew increasingly independent from the central state over the years.

For example, Rudebeck's (1988) research examines how a group of villages located in Kandjaja grew increasingly distant from the state between 1976 and 1986 and, at the same time, how local organisations became gradually more autonomous. According to this scholar,

on the one hand, the progressive withdrawal of the state was evident in the decay of local schools and the eventual closure of health centres. On the other hand, the consolidation of local institutions, namely customary authorities, was revealed in the creation of a new local tax. For Rudebeck, material improvements and change in these village were consistently locally ignited rather than state induced. Gable (2009) research with Mandjaco youngsters living in villages in the 1980s also demonstrates the extent to which local organisations and institutions played a much more important role shaping their lives than the state. For this scholar, the postcolonial state, just as the colonial state before, remained largely irrelevant for these youngsters lives.

The vitality of a multiplicity of institutions governing everyday life continues to be a key feature of contemporary Guinea-Bissau, where a wide range of networks and associations oversee the allocation of resources, manage urban services and open access to income opportunities without any apparent state intervention or guidance (Forrest, 2003; Gacitua-Mario et al., 2007; Lourenço-Lindell, 2002; Temudo, 2008). In her research of informal markets in Bandim, a neighbourhood in Bissau, Lourenco-Lindell (2002) demonstrated that one of the impacts of SAPs in this urban areas had been the consolidation, and transformation, of pre-colonial institutions. She claims, “the relevance of this resilience of ancient [pre-colonial] structures in the face of external pressures is that they continue to provide points of reference for contemporary informal ways of provisioning and distribution of resources and food in the study setting today.” (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002, p. 49) Temudo’s (2008) detailed ethnographic work carried out in a rural area in the south of the country also illustrates the importance of long-lasting inter-ethnic forms of exchange and cooperation in production for this village survival strategies. Simultaneously, she stresses the role of local chiefs in resolving conflicts and promoting inter-ethnic cooperation.

Like elsewhere in the continent, traditional authorities in Guinea-Bissau have long-lived the pre-colonial and colonial periods and continue to play a key role governing everyday life (Lutz and Linder, 2004). In Bafatá, traditional authorities hold an important role in the regulation

of life and social order, being particularly involved in controlling access to land and dispute resolution. Their interactions with the state are complex, involving moments where these entities work together and moments of stark opposition. For example, it is normal for people to seek advice from the neighbourhood leader to solve disputes before going to the police. In addition, the police routinely send people back to the neighbourhood level or seek advice from leaders. At the same time, disputes relating, for example, to the use of land are not rare. When it comes to service delivery, and in particular water provision, customary leaders are seen to play an important part involving the population, seeking popular support for projects and interventions and disseminating public health messages. As explained by several actors involved in water provision in Bafatá, if you don't secure the support of neighbourhood leaders or if you antagonise them, it will make it very hard for you to work in that particular location. Nonetheless, customary leaders rarely take a leading role in securing access to water.

Overall, these researchers demonstrate the extent to which traditional authorities, pre-colonial formations have remained a key feature of contemporary Guinea-Bissau and have been followed by the emergence of more recent networks and formations. Thus, cities in contemporary Guinea-Bissau have to be perceived in this context of institutional multiplicity, bringing together the state alongside traditional and regional authorities as well as other social formations, which, together, govern everyday life. This project will discuss how water governance in Bafatá must be understood in this context of institutional multiplicity. Yet, this multiplicity and intertwining of institutions is also revealed, for example, in the ways the main state school of Bafatá has devised ways to overcome state weaknesses. Here, students are required to pay a fee that is administered by a school management committee which uses this extra income to pay an allowance to teachers and avoid the long strikes that have pervaded the school system in the country. The regional hospital in Bafatá has also put in place a self-governance system with the aim to manage income and maximise the services provided.

The low Human Development Index, the prevalence of political instability, the dependence of the state on international donations, the elusiveness of the state and the related presence of

alternative institutions governing everyday life in Guinea-Bissau are all essential factors for understandings of the ways in which water provision is governed in urban areas. In these circumstances, this research, focusing on the evolution of water infrastructure in the second city of the country, seeks to answer some crucial questions: How is water being used and supplied in urban areas in a context marked by political instability and a systematic lack of resources to invest in infrastructure development and maintenance? How is the elusive state of Guinea-Bissau shaping water infrastructure? What is the role of the state in service provision in this context of institutional multiplicity? How do different actors and networks come together in water governance? How can alternative social formations draw the financial, human and technical resources vital for the development and maintenance of water infrastructure? In what ways do they interact with state institutions?

In addition, political instability alongside the demonstrated elusive presence of the state, namely in service provision, have warranted the recurrent use of terms such as ‘failed’ (Kohnert, 2010), ‘fragile’ (Brinkerhoff, 2007, 2007, Forrest, 2010, 2003), and ‘shadow’ (L.I. Bordonaro, 2009) to describe the state in Guinea-Bissau. This thesis, on the other hand, without trying to engage with a general characterisation of the state explores how state institutions operate in a context marked by political instability and a chronic lack of financial resources. In what ways do different state institutions and actors affect the evolution of water infrastructure in the country? What are the logics and rationalities between these different practices? How do different institutions within the state relate to the causes and consequences of political instability?

5.3. Water policies and infrastructure in Guinea-Bissau and Bafatá

5.3.1. Water policies in Guinea-Bissau: devolution and cost-recovery

The Department of Water Resources, located in the Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources, is the state entity responsible for overseeing the water resources of the country and for managing water and sanitation in both rural and urban areas. Its responsibilities are defined in a series of policy documents, including a National Water Plan, and will be discussed below. The Department of Public Health also intervenes in the sector providing guidance on policies related to safe drinking water and collaborating, alongside the Department of Water Resources, in the dissemination of messages related to water and public health. There are also two state-owned companies, EAGB and ENAFUR, whose duties include the management of the piped water systems of Bissau and Gabu, respectively. In the National Water Plan adopted in 1992, it is stated that the EAGB should be responsible for managing the piped water network of Bafatá, but this never happened and the geographical area of this state company remained the capital city Bissau.

The role of the state, as well as the community and private sectors, in water provision is defined in a series of documents framing the policy and legal frameworks of the sector. Reflecting the dependency of the state of Guinea-Bissau on foreign aid, and of the water sector in particular, all these documents have been produced under projects financed by international organisations, such as the European Union (EU), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or the World Bank (Bank). This is indicative of a general tendency of the sector, where state investments barely cover the wages of public sector employees. In this context, national water policies drafted with the help of international organisations also appear to replicate international policies conventionally disseminated by international actors in lower-income countries and routinely associated with neoliberal ideas. These include the

devolution of management responsibilities to the private and community sectors, the adoption of cost-recovery principles as well as the corporatisation of public entities.

The *Código das Águas*, a legal act adopted in 1992, is the legal framework guiding the management, use, and conservation of water resources in the country, and establishing the institutional framework of the sector. This law defines water, in all its forms, as a public good, even though its use and management can be passed on, in the form of concessions, to other entities. Nevertheless, according to the water law of Guinea-Bissau, the state retains the right to control, monitor and plan the management of water as well as its rights of use. This legal act also establishes priority uses for water, which include the provision of safe drinking water to the population. Nevertheless, this legal framework is considered to be outdated and a new version is being drafted (Balde, 2015).

The National Water Plan adopted in 1992, alongside a revision from 1998, remain the main policy frameworks guiding water provision in Guinea-Bissau. These documents were drafted in projects promoted by the UNDP and the EU, respectively. A new version of this Water Plan was drafted in 2010, in partnership with the UNDP, but it is still to be completed and adopted. In addition, the ‘Plan of Action for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in the Water and Sanitation sectors’, drafted in 2010, and the ‘*Carta Sectorial sobre o Abastecimento de Água Potável e Saneamento*’, a policy brief published in 2009, provide further guidance regarding strategies being adopted in the sector. Both these documents were, once again, produced in collaboration with UNDP.

The strategy devised in the 1992 National Water Plan, and further elaborated in later documents, is based around four main principles:

- (1) To promote equitable access to water, namely through the extension of water services in Bissau and other urban centres.
- (2) Sustainability: To promote the organisation and participation of communities in the designing and operation of water services as a prerequisite for their long-term sustainability; the adoption of a water tariff based on cost-recovery that can guarantee

the financial autonomy of water services; to promote community and private sector participation in the management of water infrastructure; to promote capacity-building of all actors involved.

- (3) Institutional reform: strengthen and reorganise the institutional framework for water management, promoting a change in the role of the state, empowering communities, and exploring the potential of the community and private sectors for the implementation of sectorial policies
- (4) To promote the sustainable use and management of the water resources of the country.

Reflecting these broader principles, currently, the tasks of the Department of Water Resources include: (1) to produce policy and regulatory frameworks guiding water provision in the country; (2) to monitor water infrastructure and the organisations managing these infrastructures across the country; and, (3) to coordinate the actions of multiple actors involved in the sector. These tasks represented a change from those established in previous national policies and which entailed the direct involvement of state institutions in water provision. In other words, with the adoption of the 1992 Water Plan, the role of the state shifted from that of provider to that of enabler and regulator.

In addition, the strategy included in the 1992 Water PLAN also enacted key changes in the financing of the sector, namely through the adoption of cost-recovery principles, which came to be seen as a fundamental step towards the financial sustainability of the sector. Furthermore, these shifts at the policy level were followed by significant changes within the state. In line with wider efforts to reduce the state and cut public spending, between 1991 and 1995, the number of workers in the Department of Water Resources slumped from 400 to 120, whilst major reforms resulted in significant transformations in organisational forms. In 1992, the UNDP also oversaw the creation of an independent para-statal company, ENAFUR, with the aim of supporting private sector participation in the country.

Altogether, the reduction in the size of the state apparatuses, cuts in public spending, organisational reforms, the devolution of responsibilities for service provision to the community and private sectors, and the adoption of cost-recovery principles are all moves that suggest a neoliberal turn in the sector. A move most likely to happen considering the key role international organisations, such as the United Nations, the European Commission and the World Bank, played in the process.

Taking into consideration the apparent neoliberal ethos undergirding current water policies in Guinea-Bissau, alongside the routinisation of political instability and the elusiveness of the state, the following chapters of this thesis seek to answer a number of questions related to water provision in the country and the role different actors have played shaping and governing water infrastructure. For example, how were these policies perceived by state officials and other actors involved in the water provision in Guinea-Bissau? Or, in other words, how were they appropriated in the specific context of Guinea-Bissau? How did they relate to the de facto role of state institutions in a context where the elusiveness of the state is widely recognised? In addition, in a context where the state is heavily dependent on international donations, how are policies translated into practice? In a context marked by the multiplicity of institutions how is the state shaping service provision? In what ways is the state shaping water infrastructure in Guinea-Bissau? How are cost-recovery principles and the roles attributed to the public, community and private sectors being enacted on the ground?

Processes of decentralisation have produced important changes in the ways small African cities are governed. Specifically, the devolution of power to local state institutions has enacted legal and de facto transformations in the contours of institutions governing water supply in cities (Jaglin et al., 2011). However, in Guinea-Bissau, whilst decentralisation measures envisaging the creation of a locally elected tier of government have been legally adopted, they have not been implemented. For this reason, they are not discussed in this research. In fact, in Guinea-Bissau, the decentralisation process started in 1994 with the publication of a law allocating new decision-making, implementation and control functions to regions and sectors. However,

even this initial attempt to decentralise proved to remain strictly formal since neither regions or sectors were endowed with any resources to carry out their new functions. The powers of regional and sectorial levels of administration remain therefore extremely reduced. Nevertheless, this research demonstrates the ways in which these state departments continue to influence water provision.

These questions will be answered by focusing on the accounts and practices of multiple actors at the national level but, most importantly, through an investigation of the recent evolution of water provision in the second city of Guinea-Bissau, Bafatá.

5.3.2. Water infrastructure in Bafatá

The following empirical chapters of these thesis explore water provision in Bafatá between 2006 and 2014 or, to put it in another way, since ASPAAB – a local organisation formed by a group of teachers and students from local schools without previous knowledge of water management – took over responsibility for the management of the city's piped supply. The case study of Bafatá was chosen because of the perceived success of this organisation in mobilising the resources required to refurbish the piped network, strengthen the organisation and train their staff as well as their ability to put in place a governance model that seems to be working in the context of this city. In 2006, when ASPAAB started operating the water system there was only 1 standpipe and around 10 home connections in operation. By 2016, there were 23 standpipes in operation and the system served at least 104 home connections.

As in many other cities across the world, Bafatá's residents rely on various sources and technologies in order to meet their daily water needs and a relatively low number of households collect water from improved water sources. According to data collected by TESE (2010), in 2010, only 24.9% of the population of Bafatá was using water from an improved water sources. This included 19% relying on protected wells and hand pumps, 5.2% on public standpipes and 0.7% on home connections. In 2013, the situation had improved slightly and

29.2% were then relying on improved water sources. Between 2010 and 2013, the number of people relying on the piped water had increased by 6% to 12%, among these 11.8% opted for public standpipes and less than 1% used home connections. The remaining 88% of the population continued to use water from alternative sources, 70.8% relied on wells (both traditional and protected wells) and springs, 16.9% relied on hand pumps (TESE and ASPAAB, 2013a).

As noted by Borges (2004), Davila (1987) and Lourenço-Lindell (2002), during the colonial era, urban areas were spaces of colonial power where European lifestyles and modernity were emulated, where political power was concentrated and where social services and urban infrastructures, such as roads, water distribution networks, electricity grids and housing were built. Investments by the Portuguese colonial authorities were thus concentrated within clearly defined boundaries that delineated these urban areas. The 'native quarters', where the majority of the population lived, remained located beyond those boundaries and therefore lacked any major infrastructure at independence. Accordingly, at independence, the water piped network of Bafatá served only the colonial city where the European and creole populations lived; and, the responsibility for the management of the existing piped supply of Bafatá, the Praça sub-network, was granted to the Regional Offices of the Department of Energy.

The current contours of the piped water network in the city are the result of a series of piecemeal extensions, mostly funded by a myriad of different international organisations. The first documented expansion to the network of Bafatá after independence happened in the late 1980s. It was implemented under a project funded by the Netherlands Development Organisation and it sought to expand the network to Bairro 1, one of the central neighbourhoods, in what would become the Boma sub-network. However, as the project came to an end, the newly installed distribution network had not been connected to a water source and some of the pipes installed had not been connected to the rest of the network.

Thus, the new water network remained out of use. This would remain the case until 2008, when British NGO Plan international funded the completion of the works.

The next significant investments in the water network happened during the 1998 -1999 civil war, when the UN and Unicef financed the construction of two new independent sub-systems, in two distinct neighbourhoods, Ponte Nova and Bairro 4. The Ponte Nova system was designed to serve 12 public standpipes and the Bairro 4 network served 9 standpipes. These systems were financed under an emergency fund, which sought to deal with sudden population growth resulting from the influx of war refugees to Bafatá running away from armed conflict in other parts of the country.

Whereas at the time the other piped water sub-networks in the city – Boma and Praça – remained under the management of the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources, the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of the newly built water infrastructure was granted to residents' committees created for the purpose. This management approach reflected both the policies of the organisations involved in the construction of these sub-systems but also national policies, as established in the 1992 Water Plan, which had not yet been implemented in Bafatá.

By the early 2000s, the Ponte Nova system was out of commission, because of technical, financial and management difficulties, and the Bairro 4 network continued to work but only very intermittently. Both the Boma and Praça sub-system were by that time also out of commission. Thus, when ASPAAB, a local association, took over the management of the Bairro 4 sub-system in 2006, replacing the previous residents' committee, this was the only active part of the piped supply of the city. And, within this network, only one standpipe was in working order.

Since 2006, the piped water network of Bafatá has undergone substantial transformations. In 2014, both the Boma and Bairro 4 sub-networks were active, serving 13 public standpipes and 53 home connections, and the system operated on a daily basis for approximately 3 hours. By 2016, therefore after the end of the research period of this thesis, all the four sub-systems were

working and the system served a total of 23 standpipes and 104 home connections. The following chapters trace precisely these transformations, focusing on the role of various actors, including international organisations, and policy models, but concentrating particularly on the active role of state actors as well as local organisations shaping water provision. This study also discusses the ways in which the changes happening in Bafatá relate to the implementation of national policies. Lastly, as stated earlier, Bafatá's inhabitants continue to rely on multiple sources and technologies to access water. Chapter eight delves into everyday water practices in the city to dissect the factors and motivations behind these practices and the ways they relate to evolutions in the piped water network.

States, policies and the piped water network in Bafatá



Figure 10. Standpipes in Bafatá (pictures taken by myself in 2014)

6.1. Introduction

The images above show recently refurbished standpipes in Bafatá. On these a talented artist has painted, in minute detail, the logos of the European Union, Portuguese NGO TESE, and ASPAAB, a local association and the operator of the water network. Notably, the logo of the owner of this infrastructure, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, was left out. Why? Is this an instance of a stereotypically weak and absent West African state, accompanied by the concomitant rise of non-state organisations, taking into their own hands the responsibility for service provision? Is this just another example of rampant neoliberalism, where the state has withdrawn from service provision, devolving its responsibilities to the private sector or, where corporate businesses are unwilling to invest, to the community sector? This chapter provides a counter-argument to such assumptions. Situating policies and interventions in the specific trajectories of the state in Guinea-Bissau, it suggests that policy models influenced by or resembling neoliberal logics have taken on new meanings as they were adopted in and adapted to this specific context. It also shows that the state has shaped water provision in Bafatá in significant ways not through enforcing policy and regulatory frameworks, but through a

variety of decision, practices and interactions by government officials. In this way, this chapter highlights the importance of practices beyond formal bureaucracies and illustrates how the state works in relational ways, through its interactions with non-state organisations. It also demonstrates how states can be neoliberal and developmental, violent and benefactor all at once.

This chapter draws on anthropological investigations of the state and explorations of everyday state practices. This literature challenges any preconceived notions related to the cohesiveness of states, and therefore opens the analytical field to the consideration of the multiple agendas, practices and modalities through which states shape water infrastructure (see, for example, Gupta, 1995; Mitchell, 1991; Painter, 2006).

Discourses of state weakness pervade academic, policy and everyday representations of the state in the water sector in Guinea-Bissau and these weaknesses have been framed as one of the key challenges in securing the sustainable provision of water across the country. The next section, *section 6.2.*, starts by situating perceptions of the state in the water sector in the context of broader discursive constructions of the state in Guinea-Bissau, which consistently highlight its weakness and even exceptionality. It then focusses specifically on the water sector, demonstrating the extent of the lack of financial and human resources available to the state, and exploring the implications of this for our understandings of state weakness. The difficulties related to policy-making and implementation and the heavy presence of international organisations and NGOs in water provision must be understood in this context. Yet, these weaknesses do not necessarily mean that the state is absent. Instead, state presence is revealed both in relational ways, through relations with non-state organisations, and through practices that routinely escape formal bureaucracies.

The discourse of state weakness in the water sector pervades contemporary representations of the sector, but it also frames understandings circulating at all levels of the evolution of the sector in the past decades. Considering this long-term feature of the state in Guinea-Bissau, this chapter suggests that the apparent neoliberal turn in water policy in 1992 (see chapter 5),

involving the withdrawal of the state and the adoption of cost-recovery principles, did not translate into significant de facto changes in the role of the state in water provision. Instead, it argues that policies fostering the involvement of non-state organisations managing water infrastructure and seeking to create links between these organisations and state institutions must be viewed as pragmatic attempts to improve access to water in a context marked by a stark lack of resources. These policies also constitute efforts to extend the responsibility of the state in water provision. In this way, the content of national policies is seen to largely transcend a neoliberal ethos. This is not to say that policies circulating in Guinea-Bissau have not been deeply shaped by international policies, or that neoliberal models are not a part of extant policies, but that the outcomes and meanings of these policies must be explored and understood in light of the specific context of Guinea-Bissau.

Moving on to investigate the variety of practices and interactions through which the state shapes water provision, this chapter notes that in Guinea-Bissau, policy-making and implementation initiatives are mostly funded through international donations, and developed in partnership with international organisations and NGOs. Thus, the ability of state institutions to shape water provision is necessarily linked to the relations between the state and international organisations as well as international and national NGOs. *Section 6.3.* discusses the role of the state in policy-making and implementation by exploring the interactions between national-level state actors and non-state actors, that is by examining the relational ways of the state. Nevertheless, it suggests that the ability of the Department of Water Resources to shape interventions remains extremely dependent on non-state organisations' willingness to be shaped, regulated and controlled by this state institution. Despite stated goals of strengthening state institutions, the reality is that development interventions often bypass, replace and ignore the state. State weaknesses hinder attempts by state institutions to perform roles defined in national policies. These weaknesses are then further reinforced by this state institutions' inability to shape, control and regulate the work of a range of non-state organisations which both fund and implement most interventions in the sector. As a result,

interventions in the sector happen in disjointed ways which partly reflect the Department of Water Resources inability to enforce its role governing the work of non-state organisations leading interventions in the sector.

In this chapter, in line with theorisations of the state discussed in chapter 3, I use the notion of ‘state effects’ to describe the ways in which everyday practices by both state and non-state actors come to be perceived as being part of the state, and therefore contribute to the expansion of the symbolic presence of the state (Mitchell, 1991; Painter, 2006). Related to this, scholars have reflected upon the statisation of society and the production of state effects within multiple sites across the porous state-society boundaries (Painter, 2006). This chapter demonstrates that in contexts such as that of Guinea-Bissau, interventions by state and non-state organisations can contribute *not* to the statisation but also to the de-statisation of society. That is, rather than strengthening the role of the state in the sector, non-state organisations often compete with the state and contribute to the weakening of its symbolic (and actual) presence. This is in line with Jaglin et al.’s (2011) findings relating to competition between different actors in water provision in small towns in Benin, Senegal and Mali, and the subsequent impacts on the state’s ability to improve its capacity and enhance its role in the sector.

Shifting from the national to the local level, *section 6.4.* explores the everyday ways in which state actors have shaped the evolution of Bafatá’s piped water supply in the past decades. It demonstrates that national policies and regulations have not been driving the evolution of water infrastructure in this city. However, different state actors have significantly shaped this infrastructure over the years. This has happened through local step-by-step negotiations that exceed any policy and regulatory frameworks or project interventions, but during which state officials have used their position within the state to make claims related to the piped supply of the city. Thus, this chapter argues that whereas state weaknesses have hindered policy-making and implementation processes, these weaknesses should not be equated with the total absence of the state. In addition, the variegated motivations and agendas underpinning state practices

suggest that the state of Guinea-Bissau adopts multiple modalities when shaping water infrastructure in Bafatá.

Lastly, *section 6.5.* examines the concession contract signed in 2012 between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural resources, which formalised the role of ASPAAB as water operator in the city. It suggests that despite the attempts of the Department of Water Resources to extend its remit to the realm of water provision in Bafatá, this department remained unable to exercise the same influence that local state officials, alongside non-state actors, managed to achieve through local negotiations. Then, as we will see, the legal and policy facets of the state play quite a different role than anticipated – rather than amounting to devices that regulate social life, serve as devices that conform to international NGOs expectations to carving the appropriate legal languages of stateness.

In sum, this chapter traces the multiple ways in which state institutions and actors seek to, and actually do, shape water infrastructure in Bafatá. In this way, it illustrates the vitality of state practices escaping formal bureaucracies and policies, and therefore the disjuncture between the everyday state practices through which state actors shape water infrastructure and processes of policy making and implementation. In addition, it also demonstrates that the state is far from a coherent entity following one specific agenda or motivation. This is revealed in the variety of motivations underpinning the practices of state actors as well as the multiple modalities adopted when shaping water provision. Thus, in order to understand the ways in which the state shapes water provision we need to consider the different modalities, agendas and, perhaps most importantly, the vitality of processes that largely exceed policy or regulatory frameworks.

6.2. States weaknesses and the water sector

6.2.1. The exceptional weakness of the state in Guinea-Bissau

Representations of the state among actors working in the water sector are constructed in, and influenced by, a broader landscape of perceptions of the state, produced and reproduced across multiple levels. For example, Gupta (1995) discusses how images of the state in rural India were constructed through everyday interactions with state bureaucracies but also through discussions of these practices in public culture at multiple levels. Before moving on to the analysis of the specificities of the state in the water sector, I will briefly illustrate how ideas of state weakness pervade assessments of the state at all levels and across all sectors. In addition, I will demonstrate how there is a widespread notion of the exceptional weakness of the state in Guinea-Bissau. The ongoing assumption is that these perceptions affect perceptions and practices related to water provision. But, this analysis of state weaknesses pervading all sectors also illustrates the dependence of state institutions on international donations, and therefore the extent to which state presence in water provision depends on the relations and interactions between state and non-state actors, which are then analysed in section 6.3. and section 6.4.. In other words, it illustrates the relevance of the relational ways in which the state seeks to influence water provision.

Reports and policies produced by international actors are one site where the discourses of state weakness can be seen circulating. In a report published in 2013, the IMF ascertains the relative, but also absolute, weakness of state institutions in Guinea-Bissau by looking into tax revenues in the country, and establishing a comparison with other countries in the region. According to this report (see Table 5, below) in 2011, Guinea-Bissau collected the equivalent of 8.76% of its GDP in taxes, registering the lowest tax revenue performance not only among countries of the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), but also when compared with any other sub-Saharan African country. Guinea-Bissau also registered the

lowest tax effort, measured in % of collected taxes in relation to potential tax revenue²²; and the second highest tax gap, measured in the difference between the potential and collected tax. The very low tax performance levels are, at least according to this report, a clear indication of the lack of bureaucratic capacity of state institutions (IMF, 2013a, 2013b, 2013c).

TABLE B4. WAEMU Countries: Actual vis-à-vis Potential Tax Revenue in 2011				
Ω	Tax Revenue (A, % of GDP)	Estimated Potential Tax Revenue (B, % of GDP)	Tax Gap (A-B, % of GDP)	Tax Effort (A/B, %)
Benin	15.53	24.19	8.66	64.18
Burkina Faso	14.47	24.29	9.81	59.57
Cote d'Ivoire	13.14	25.14	12.00	52.27
GUINEA-BISSAU	8.76	20.69	11.93	42.34
Mali	14.87	23.32	8.45	63.75
Niger	14.07	22.60	8.52	62.27
Senegal	19.08	25.71	6.62	74.21
Togo	17.1	23.90	6.72	71.87
WAEMU	14.63	23.73	9.08	61.30
1/ Simple mean of eight WAEMU countries				

Table 5. WAEMU countries: actual vis-à-vis potential tax revenue in 2011 (source IMF 2013, p. 37)

The emphasis given to tax revenue and the connections established between low tax revenues and state weakness are in line with contemporary development policies circulating across the African continent, which stress the improvement of tax collection efforts as a way to consolidate state institutions (c.f. Juul, 2006). In this sense, there is nothing exceptional about the dissemination of these discourses in and about Guinea-Bissau. At the same time, this document is also one example of an extensive number of reports published by various organisations, building similar cases for state weakness whilst studying different sectors and portraying Guinea-Bissau as an extreme instance within cases of state weakness.

Nevertheless, discourses related to the exceptional weakness of the state in Guinea-Bissau also circulate through the everyday practices of staff from international organisations with offices in Bissau. These perceptions were reiterated in their accounts of their experiences in the country and, more specifically, their experiences working with state institutions. For example,

²² According to this report, the inferior potential tax revenue, in relation to other WAEMU countries, can be linked to Guinea-Bissau remaining the only country in the region not having fulfilled its obligation to adopt VAT.

João²³ worked for the EU Delegation to Guinea-Bissau. In a dialogue about the EU Budget, pertaining to EU funds allocated to development cooperation, which directly funds the national state's budgets, João highlighted the exceptionality of Guinea-Bissau:

*“Guinea-Bissau is a particular case because Guinea-Bissau does not even have the resources to pay public sector wages, for this reason we have to support the general budget. But, in other countries, where they have the resources, for example, they have a general budget and, for example, one sector that was not well supported, or that it is not included for that year or the next, I don't know, in that case the European Union can intervene and decide to support the sector...”*²⁴

Related to the above, Michel²⁵, who worked for a Pan-African Intergovernmental Agency delegation to Guinea-Bissau, openly disclosed his desperation and lack of motivation. He had worked for the same organisation in other countries in the region – including his native Benin –, but, for him, Guinea-Bissau was a peculiar place. As he explained:

*“Guinea[-Bissau] has no problems, 1.6 million people and plenty of water. I've never seen a country like this, there are no problems, just politics. (...) Guinea-Bissau is very different from other countries I worked in, Benin and Niger. The state here, it can do nothing. There, it wasn't like that.”*²⁶

Whilst not focusing on the exceptional weakness of the state in Guinea-Bissau, representations of the weak state also punctuate policy documents and strategies published by different state entities. Just to give an example, the Second Document for the National Strategy for Poverty Reduction (DENARP II), published in 2011, scrutinises the impacts of state weakness on poverty and it establishes the consolidation of state institutions and the rule of law as the first main prerequisite to reduce poverty in the country (MEPIR, 2011a). Here, it should be noted that this document, like most policy and strategy briefs in Guinea-Bissau, was funded by an international organisation, in this case the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and written

²³ Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

²⁴ Interview International Organisation *2. Translated from Portuguese, my own translation.

²⁵ Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

²⁶ Interview International Organisation *4. Translated from Creole, my own translation.

by international consultants. On the one hand, the key role of international organisations in the elaboration of policies further reinforces perceptions related to the weaknesses of the state in Guinea-Bissau. On the other hand, it suggests that the current focus of international development discourses on state weakness and the consolidation of states institutions is likely to have influenced the contents of these documents, partly explaining the emphasis given to state weakness in this document. Therefore, it raises pertinent questions concerning the extent to which the focus on the consolidation of state institutions can be explained by the influence of international discourses.

Most notably, not only do views of the weak state circulate in policy discourses and among workers for international organisations, they also circulate within state institutions themselves. Such views of the weak state emerged in the accounts of various state bureaucrats working at different levels and narrating their experiences. Institutional weakness was routinely drawn on to explain the poor performance of various state institutions and to point out the limitations these bureaucrats faced in their routine activities. In scrutinising participants' incomplete sentences, intonations and body gestures recorded in my fieldwork diaries and interviews, I became aware of the degree to which assumptions of a shared understanding of state weakness, as well as corruption and incompetence, permeated my encounters. The quotes below are just a few examples of such assumptions from interviews with state officials:

*“but, now because of the institutional weaknesses, as Susana knows...”*²⁷ (Water Resources, Bissau)

*“The state... no one trusts the state, you know that...”*²⁸ (Water Resources, Bissau)

*“but later the project came to a halt, things ended up staying in the hands of the state, you know how it is, our state, the state it is in...”*²⁹ (Regional Office, Bafatá)

²⁷ Interview State *7. Original in Portuguese, my own translation from Portuguese.

²⁸ Interview State *6. Original in Portuguese, my own translation from Portuguese.

²⁹ Interview State *3. Original in Creole, my own translation from Creole.

In fact, most of the state officials I interviewed worked in the water sector. However, these consistent allusions to the incompetent state largely exceeded the workings of the state in this specific sector. These accounts hinted at broader notions circulated in public culture, including the media and, most importantly, everyday conversations. They also reflected their wider experiences, both as state officials and citizens of Guinea-Bissau.

Related to this, narratives and anecdotes illustrating the incompetent state were a common theme in everyday conversations and casual encounters between strangers in Guinea-Bissau. For instance, my conversations with people regarding the role of different state institutions in water supply in Bafatá often provoked comments like the ones below:

“State? What state? That is cansado³⁰! Here, the state can’t hold its own head, and you want to hand it your belly? The state! It can’t hold its own head!”³¹

“The state doesn’t help at all (laughs)! We, we don’t expect anything from the state almost (laughs). The state doesn’t help at all! It just disturbs!”³²

Perceptions of state weakness in the water sector do not emerge in a vacuum, they reproduce broader discursive constructions of the state. Most investments in the water sector in the past few decades have been financed by international donations, channelled through state institutions as well as international and national NGOs – reflecting the broader dependence of the state of Guinea-Bissau on foreign aid. Typically, these investments in infrastructure have been accompanied by substantial funds for activities related to state reform and the capacity-building of state institutions, and have been complemented by a stream of reports presenting solid cases for state weakness. Although these reports and analyses discuss weaknesses specific to the water sector, this discourse of state weakness in the water sector in Guinea-Bissau must be understood in relation to wider discursive constructions of the state in this country. It must also be situated within contemporary development discourses, including

³⁰ Cansado (Guinea-Bissau Creole) – literal translation is tired. However, this term is used in many other ways, like here. It is often used to refer to things that complicate your life, or that do not work properly. Places can be cansado, for example, if Guinea-Bissau is cansado, it means that life is hard there, things are not easy and are not working properly. If someone is cansado, it means that they are not ok, they are stressed, nervous, and/or hard to deal with.

³¹ Interview Water User *1. Translated from Creole, my own translation.

³² Interview Water User *2. Translated from Creole, my own translation.

the current emphasis upon ‘good governance’ (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Jacobsen et al., 2013). State practices relating to water provision and representations of these practices are both shaped by and contribute to broader discursive constructions depicting the weakness, and the exceptional weakness, of Guinea-Bissau’s state. Yet, as will be seen below, perceptions of state weakness in the water sector also emerge through the everyday experiences of actors involved in the sector.

6.2.2. State weaknesses in the water sector: the lack of human and financial resources

This section discusses perceptions of state weakness in the water sector, exploring reports and particularly the accounts of diverse actors’ experiences working with and for the state. It examines the extent of the lack of financial and human resources available to the Department of Water Resources, how this is perceived to affect this state institution’s ability to intervene in the sector, and how it engenders this department’s dependence on international organisations. Discourses of state weakness in the water sector circulating in policy documents and reports frequently establish that capacity-building of state institutions is an essential requirement to improve access to water in Guinea-Bissau. However, as will be seen below, this emphasis upon training and capacity-building should not hide the lack of financial and human resources faced by the Department of Water Resources – the main state institution working on water provision in Guinea-Bissau – and their impacts on the ability of this state institution to intervene in the sector. In addition, given the stark lack of financial and human resources, policy-making and implementation is commonly funded by international organisations and the Department of Water Resources depends almost entirely on foreign aid. One important consequence of this dependence on non-state organisations is that state presence is mostly produced in relational ways. In other words, state presence depends on the relations and interactions between the state and international organisations. Section 6.3. and section 6.4. below explore precisely how the ongoing relations and interactions between state institutions and non-state organisations foster and hinder state presence in the water sector.

The Department of Water Resources, whose responsibilities include policy making and implementation and the monitoring of water infrastructure across the country, is supposedly the key state institution shaping water provision in Guinea-Bissau (see chapter 5 for more details). Yet, according to a panoply of technical reports, as well as the accounts of state officials and staff from international organisations and NGOs working in the sector, the Department of Water Resources struggled to perform at least three of what were assumed to be its key tasks, as defined in national policies:

- (1) to monitor water infrastructure and supervise and support organisations managing these infrastructures across the country;
- (2) to regulate the sector through the elaboration and implementation of clear policy and regulatory frameworks;
- (3) to coordinate the activities of the different actors involved in the sector, namely national and international NGOs and organisations.

For instance, in the evaluation report for a Netherlands-funded project implemented between 1994 and 2000, Sawa (2000, p. 46) already expressed concern regarding the Department of Water Resources' ability to perform "the activities typical of the state, like the planning and regulation of the sector, the monitoring of construction works, the monitoring and control of the infrastructure and training". The difficulties related to the elaboration of policy and regulatory frameworks are quickly revealed in the outdated National Water Plan and the Water Law, both dated from 1992. They are also visible in the multiple inconsistencies pervading different policy briefs and the inaccurate assessments of the governance models adopted in the country. For example, in these plans it is stated that Bafatá's piped water network is managed by EAGB, the state company that manages water and electricity in Bissau, even though this is not, and never was, the case. Different plans and sectoral documents also present inconsistencies in their categorisations of locations as urban, semi-urban and rural and consequently the type of infrastructure and governance models to be put in place in these locations. In fact, there are multiple newer versions of several of these plans

and regulations but they have not been approved and adopted. The difficulties related to the approval and adoption of revised plans can partially be explained by political instability and its impacts on the normal functioning of state entities, such as the parliament, or the hindering of political decisions.

Considering the significant role played by international organisations as well as international and national NGOs, the inability of the Department of Water Resources to coordinate, control and supervise projects and interventions promoted by these organisations was routinely cited as another key issue in the sector.³³ Here, it is important to briefly mention the manifold consequences of the lack of coordination and control. The first clear impact was that it often led to the overlapping of interventions both geographically and thematically. For instance, a member of staff from an international NGO told me that once her organisation had literally bumped into another international organisation as they were both getting ready to start work on the construction of a borehole and hand pump in the same area.³⁴ Second, it resulted in the proliferation of interventions that did not conform to sectoral policies and strategies and did not meet required standards. For example, state officials often mentioned that a frequent issue was that NGO's projects did not install state-approved types of hand pumps that had been selected in order to facilitate the purchase of spare parts and, therefore, future operation and maintenance. Third, it gave rise to interventions which contradicted both policies and each other in content. For example, those actors seeking to put cost-recovery systems in place often complained about others who just 'gave' infrastructure away for free, and therefore undermined their efforts to promote a 'culture of payment' within the community. Finally, it undermined the Department of Water Resources' role as the entity responsible for supervising, monitoring and controlling interventions and projects in the sector. For instance, without knowing what projects were implemented and where, this state

³³ Interview state *7

³⁴ Fieldwork notes

institution struggled to identify needs and priorities for the sector. NGOs routinely failed to inform the state about their activities or even their presence in the country.³⁵

The erratic ways in which international organisations and NGOs intervene in the country is not a recent concern. A report published by the International Water and Sanitation Centre and the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) in 1995 already claimed: “[External Support Agencies (ESAs)] often implemented their projects in isolation and introduced different technologies and different ways of communicating with the beneficiaries. They trained staff to different degrees and had their own views about institutional development” (van der Weff and Visscher, 1995, p. 15).

In this context, resembling many other reports published by myriad organisations, the ‘Millennium Development Goals Action Plan for the Water and Sanitation sectors’, published in 2010 by the Department of Water Resources, states, “in Guinea-Bissau, capacity-building [of state institutions] is an essential requirement for the long-term sustainable development of the water supply sector” (DGRH, 2010, p. 75).³⁶ However, despite the emphasis given to capacity-building in circulating policies and reports, weaknesses in the sector – revealed in the difficulties state entities face in the elaboration, implementation and enforcement of policy and regulatory frameworks – must also be understood in the context of the extreme lack of financial and human resources available to the state, which became evident in the accounts of actors working with and for the state. Capacity-building should not detract attention from the lack of resources faced by state institutions.

The lack of financial resources available to the Department of Water Resources was staggering. The quotes below, extracted from interviews with a state official and a worker of an international organisation, illustrate typical accounts relating to the lack of resources available to the Department of Water Resources:

³⁵ Fieldwork notes, including notes on conversations with state officials and staff from different NGOs and international organisations.

³⁶ Original in Portuguese, my own translation from Portuguese.

*“Buuu, state budget, state budget... State budget, Susana, is just wages and even that... even that... We [the Department of Water Resources] developed several monitoring programmes, they were delivered to the minister [of Natural Resources] but the resources are not there, we know that, there is no money, no funds, the budget only covers wages. Unfortunately...”*³⁷

“the Department of Water Resources doesn’t have the financial resources, it has vehicles, we donated two cars. (...) they lack the budget to cover routine activities, they do little more than we [international organisation] send money to do...”

In a situation where the state budget covers only wages, the Department of Water Resources is forced into a position of complete dependence on international donations to carry out any activities. Some international organisations, like Unicef and the European Union, have multi-year programmes which fund a range of activities to be implemented by this department. However, these programmes are not sufficient to cover the costs of the entire range of tasks those working in the sector might expect the department to deliver. Therefore those activities which are not encompassed in internationally funded projects or agreements are simply not implemented.

Political instability has not only contributed to the steady decline of foreign aid over the years (see chapter 5), it routinely starves state departments of consistent influxes of foreign aid. This was apparent at the time of my fieldwork, when sanctions imposed by various international organisations, following the coup d’état of April 2012⁴⁰, considerably reduced the financial resources available to this already starved department. For instance, the EU had suspended any direct support to state institutions, and Unicef had postponed the beginning of a new multi-year programme of works with Water Resources until after the election. These suspensions had severe impacts at multiple levels including the basic functioning of this department.

³⁷ Interview State *6. Original in Portuguese, my own translation from Portuguese.

⁴⁰ Several international organisations did not recognise the government rising to power after April 2012 coup d’état

The offices of the Department of Water Resources are based in the building of the Ministry of Natural Resources. On one occasion, when I visited these offices to conduct interviews, they had been without electricity for over a week. Interviewees also mentioned they were unable to secure even basic office supplies and equipment. Another time, after visiting this department looking for data within the scope of the consultancy work I carried out during my fieldwork, I only managed to get access to this data when the state official I had been in contact with eventually visited Bafatá, where, working from the offices of an international NGO we had electricity and access to the internet. The president of Enafur, a state company working in the water sector, also explained that sanctions leading to the suspension of most internationally-funded projects in the country had deeply affected the workings of this company, which was then struggling to pay the wages of its employees. Thus, it is apparent that the lack of financial resources severely affects the everyday functioning of the Department of Water Resources and consistently undermines any attempts by officials in this state department to carry out their jobs.

If the Department of Water Resources in Bissau struggled with a drastic lack of resources, its Regional Offices faced even more severe situations. As representatives of the Department of Water Resources in the different regions, the key tasks of these regional offices were professed to be monitoring water infrastructure, as well as supervising and supporting the organisations managing this infrastructure in the different regions. However, some offices were severely under-staffed and depleted of resources, and others had simply closed down for lack of staff. In at least two regions, the Regional Director, often the only member of staff, had moved away from the region, to Bissau or other cities, in search of additional work to complement their incomes. These cases were well-known and accepted (by other state officials, staff from international organisations remained very critical), as the low wages and the lack of adequate conditions to conduct their jobs were consensually recognised.

The lack of communication between Regional Offices and Water Resources was also staggering. In these circumstances, those located in the Department of Water Resources in

Bissau had little idea of what was happening in the Regional Offices and, vice-versa, those working in the offices spread out across the different regions had also little knowledge of what was happening at the central level. This situation changed when there were projects funded by international donors in place, as will be discussed below.

The quotes below are typical accounts of the frustrations around the challenges faced by regional offices, and illustrate the extent of the lack of resources and the ways in which it affected the presumed activities of these state departments:

*“.. at the minimum, a regional office should have a complete, fully-bodied structure: it should have director, it should have at least one technician, it should have an administrator, it should have... a complete structure...”*⁴¹ (Vasco, Water Resources)

*“The Regional Office is supposed to monitor, to monitor the various water sources, follow the workings of the management committees and associations, but if there are no resources, how can they do their work? They are going to sit! (...) Suppose you know of a specific problem somewhere, how can you write a report and send it to Bissau if you don't have the equipment? There is no electricity, there is nothing... The Department of Water Resources gives nothing to its regional offices. Only wages. But wages also, they are worth nothing. You can't use that money for petrol to go around visiting villages and infrastructure.”*⁴² (Malam, Regional Office)

Thus, despite the fact that the Regional Offices were considered to be essential structures within the Department of Water Resources, in charge of monitoring existing infrastructure and organisations managing this infrastructure, in actuality, they lack financial resources or the conditions necessary to perform any activities. Indeed, the lack of financial resources has to be seen as a central factor in explaining this state institution's inability to actually influence water supply in the country. Training and capacity-building are certainly important priorities, but they cannot make up for the lack of financial resources. In fact, government officials were often employed by private companies and NGOs suggesting that they had the skills and

⁴¹ Interview State *6

⁴² Interview State *1. Original in Creole, my own translation from Creole.

qualifications required for their jobs. Thus, the lack of resources available to the state has to be considered before, or side-by-side with, capacity-building when evaluating state weaknesses.

Notwithstanding the emphasis upon the lack of resources that undermined the workings of state institutions and of the many state officials with the right qualifications, according to state officials and others working in the sector, the second main difficulty faced by the Department of Water Resources and its Regional Offices was the shortage of qualified human resources. Manuel, employed by the Department of Water Resources, and Teresa⁴⁴, working in an international organisation, explained:

*“We lack qualified personnel, there are few young people deciding to study these disciplines nowadays, and those that do, when they finish their studies, they come back and, then, the public sector is not recruiting new people, it’s very hard.”*⁴⁵

*“There is the need to strengthen the human resources available in the ministry. Because, right now, the number of staff is too small and they also need more technical capacity and more... more vision for the future. All this needs to be dealt with.”*⁴⁶

Here, Manuel and Teresa identify two key underlying issues, which were also discussed with other informants: the state freeze on new admissions until the administrative reform of the state is completed (unknown date) and the lack of people with adequate training. Here, it should be noted that adequate training is often equated with studying abroad. Most of the current civil servants in Water Resources studied outside the country, mostly in Cuba and countries of the ex-Soviet Union. More recently, in a programme promoted by Unicef and Water and Sanitation for Africa (WSA), in 2014, there were ten Guinea-Bissauans sponsored to study related disciplines, such as engineering and hydrology, in Burkina Faso. However, low wages and bad working conditions were also associated with an unmotivated workforce, which did not help the Department of Water Resources achieve its goals. Those with more

⁴⁴ Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

⁴⁵ Interview State *5

⁴⁶ Interview International Organisation *2. Original in Portuguese, my own translation from Portuguese.

qualifications often opted for jobs with international organisations, which were typically better paid.

Thus, the lack of financial and human resources are essential factors underpinning state weaknesses in the water sector, hindering the ability of the Department of Water Resources to carry out its expected role and commanding its dependence on international donations and non-state organisations. The emphasis upon capacity-building should not obfuscate this scarcity of resources.

Before moving on, I would like to briefly note the ways in which political instability was perceived in relation to state institutions working in the water sector. Although sanctions targeted all state institutions, those working in the water sector in the country consistently perceived that the Department of Water Resources was separate from political instability. This is not to say that political instability was not mentioned or not perceived to affect the workings of the Department of Water Resources, it clearly did. As mentioned earlier, informants often associated the lack of financial and human resources with political instability. However, for those who have been working in the country for a while, it was obvious that the state is not a coherent whole which can be easily categorised. Different departments operating at various levels employ distinct people, secure distinct resources and relationships to political elites, access distinct amounts and forms of international donations, and work in distinct ways. In fact, within the Department of Water Resources, members of staff, including the General Director, had not seen their positions within the state change as a result of political instability. They appeared to survive political upheavals. In fact, acknowledging this separation between state institutions, some individuals working for international organisations attempted to circumvent the decisions dictating the suspension of projects with Water Resources, following the April 12th coup d'état.⁴⁷

Below I briefly discuss the meanings and effects of supposedly neoliberal policies in the context of long-term state weakness. Then, section 6.3. examines the role of national level state

⁴⁷ Interview International Organisation *1, *2

institutions in policy-making and implementation in a context where state institutions are almost totally dependent on international donations. The role of the regional office of the department of water resources and other state officials in Bafatá will be discussed in more detail in section 6.4.

6.2.3. State weaknesses, the neoliberal turn and the de facto roles of the state

In line with what has been called the ‘neoliberal turn’ in water policies adopted in 1992 (see chapter 5), it is apparent that the role imagined for the state in the water sector in Guinea-Bissau resembles neoliberal models prescribing the role of the state as the enabler and regulator of the community and private sectors. This is perhaps not surprising considering the involvement of international organisations in policy-making in Guinea-Bissau. For example, the quote below, extracted from an interview with a state official, illustrates well the key role played by international organisations in the formulation of national policies adopted in 1992:

“[referring to policies establishing the devolution of water management to the community and private sectors] I honestly think that the idea came from the outside and it was well received by us. At the time there was a project, the project for the maintenance of rural water that started the implementation of that policy. So, it was at the time of the elaboration of the first Water Plan, a policy document of 1991 or 1992 that people started reflecting... they [international organisations] advised us to change policies saying ‘ok, projects finish and you are not going to have the capacity to maintain so many water points. So, you should withdraw and give away that component to the private sector, work to strengthen the private sector on that.’ And, well, the state kept only the monitoring, regulation and policy-making, those things.”⁴⁸

Thus, as suggested this government official’s reflection upon the Water Plan of 1992, national policies adopted in Guinea-Bissau have been heavily influenced by international actors, and

⁴⁸ Interview State *6

neoliberal policies advocating both the devolution to non-state organisations and the adoption of market approaches in water provision.

However, in a context marked by an extreme lack of financial resources and the consistently elusive presence of the state in water provision, shifts in policy concerning the role of the state in the water sector, even when heavily influenced by neoliberal policy circuits, necessarily produce divergent outcomes and assume new meanings. For instance, in Guinea-Bissau, these policies did not amount to a de facto change of the role of the state on the ground, since the state was already very loosely involved in water provision. Instead, fostering the role of the state as a regulator and enabler, these policies can be seen to represent an attempt to expand the role of the state in the sector.

Likewise, the emphasis upon market approaches has to be understood in light of a context where it remains hard to associate water infrastructure, especially outside the capital city, with profit making, privatisation, the rule of the market and marketization. In the accounts of state's workers involved in water provision, there was rarely a mention of the creation of markets or the realisation of profits in the sector. The key concerns were state weaknesses and the need to overcome these by relying on external capacity, whilst supporting and regulating the community and private sectors.

The consistency of state weaknesses in Guinea-Bissau in the past few decades reveal why policies envisaging shifts in the role of the state from provider to enabler did not amount to de facto changes, or did not engender the withdrawal of the state from service provision. On the one hand, the elusive presence of the state in service provision can be understood in the context of broader investigations of the state in Guinea-Bissau. The inability of the postcolonial state to expand its influence has been well established (see chapter 5). On the other hand, there are also testimonies of the specific absence of state institutions in water provision prior to 1992 (the year the new Water Plan was adopted), which challenge views associating the weak presence of the state in water provision with the neoliberalisation of water. Just to give two examples, in a report published in 1995, but referring to the period

before 1992, by the International Water and Sanitation Centre and the Netherlands Development Organisation, it was stated, “the official agreement was that the government would take responsibility for maintenance, but in practice, projects secured spare parts and repaired systems. Upon completion of the projects, systems were handed over to the government, which did not really have the capacity and the infrastructure to organise the maintenance” (van der Weff and Visscher, 1995, p. 1). Similarly, in a policy brief published by the Republic of Guinea-Bissau (República Guiné-Bissau, 2009), the degradation of infrastructure built between 1974 and 1999 and financed by several international projects is attributed precisely to the lack of monitoring by local state entities, which is seen as a consequence of the lack of financial and human resources. In this context, as suggested by Hilgers (2012) for Burkina-Faso, it appears that shifts in policies concerning the role of the state in the sector did not amount to de facto changes on the ground. In other words, there was not a ‘real’ withdrawal of the state from direct provision.

As discussed in chapter 5, structural adjustment programmes implemented from the late 1980s onwards resulted in dramatic cuts to the public sector, including within the Department of Water Resources. Discussing the dramatic reduction in personnel in the Department of Water Resources as well as its Regional Offices under the structural adjustment programmes, several state officials lamented the impacts on the livelihoods of those previously employed by the state. At the same time, these state officials also noted that, before the SAPs, the state already lacked both the resources and the capacity to intervene in the sector. In addition, they also recognised that the excessive number of state workers was unjustified given the lack of work and the cost for the state. For example, Antonio⁴⁹ and Malam⁵⁰ recollecting their experiences working for the Regional Office in Bafatá, claimed:

⁴⁹ Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

⁵⁰ Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

*“From the beginning, the state did nothing, the state contributed with nothing. Only when there were projects there would be vehicles, petrol, oil, things to do. The state doesn’t pay anything, only wages.”*⁵¹

*“The state let people go because it was costing too much money to the state. Because there were too many people working for the state and not that many projects to work on. Well, those workers were there doing nothing and the state was paying.”*⁵²

Although cuts in the public sector had significant impacts in Guinea-Bissau, including on formal employment and the availability of certain services (Lourenço-Lindell, 2002), it is not clear that the impacts in the water sector, particularly outside the capital city, amounted to a significant decrease in the capacity of the state to secure water provision. Instead, for some state officials, the real turning point in the Department of Water Resources had been the 1998-99 civil war, which deeply affected international donations and projects. For example, Manuel explained:

*“this department, I must say, lost a lot of its memory during the 7th June War⁵³. To this day, we haven’t recovered. A lot of materials, documents, things got lost. We lost a lot, a lot, a lot of documents. This department was the most well-organised department (...) Lots of work had been done, lots of studies, and we had a lot of projects as well, ex-pats were here training people. For example, I was working on a project from the French Cooperation, on databases, to create and organise data. But, after the war... we tried to recover but... with all the difficulties, it’s very hard...”*⁵⁴

Besides the civil war which had naturally dramatic impacts on the country as a whole, political instability and the associated impacts on foreign aid and the social and economic development of the country are also perceived as key factors affecting the role of the state in the sector.

⁵¹ Interview State *2

⁵² Interview State *1

⁵³ The 1998-9 civil war is commonly called the 7th June War, in reference to the day in which the escalation of events propelled the beginning of the war. This war lasted approximately one year, having lasting impacts on the social and economic development of the country.

⁵⁴ Interview State *5. Translated from Creole, my own translation.

Thus, given the consistent stark lack of resources available to the state as well as the lack of capacity to intervene in the sector, shifts in policies concerning the role of the state in the sector did not amount to de facto changes on the ground. In these circumstances, promoting the management of water infrastructure by non-state organisations and seeking ways to create links between these and different state institutions can be perceived as attempts to improve access to water and to extend the responsibilities of the state, which transcend the neoliberal ethos. In a context marked by the multiplicity of institutions governing most spheres of social life, finding ways for the state to build on this multiplicity and to support existing formations can certainly be equated with developmentalist goals. This is not to say that policies and the definition of the 'supposed' role of the state have not been heavily influenced by international policies, or that neoliberal models are not a part of current policies, but that the consequences and meanings of these policies have to be understood in the specific context of Guinea-Bissau. The adoption of these policies must be understood, and interpreted, in light of the specific circumstances of Guinea-Bissau and the particular trajectories of states. New meanings emerge if such a route is taken.

This section examined the prevalence of discourses of state weakness circulating at all levels in Guinea Bissau as well as perceptions of state weakness in the water sector. Here, the stark lack of resources available to the state and the ways it is perceived to affect the workings of the Department of Water Resources were demonstrated. One important consequence of this lack of resources is the almost total dependence of state institutions working on water provision on foreign aid and international organisations and NGOs. Thus, the next section will explore how the state sought to intervene in the sector through their relations and interactions with non-state actors.

6.3. The search for state effects:

state practices, non-state organisations and policy-implementation

In Guinea-Bissau, most investments in infrastructure derive from international donations and the elaboration of policies by the state is typically funded by, and carried out in partnership with, international organisations. In addition, the Department of Water Resources also depends almost entirely on foreign aid. In these circumstances, the ability of state institutions to shape water provision is inevitably linked to the relations and interactions between the state and international organisations as well as the international and national NGOs which implement projects in the sector. This section looks at the ways in which the state acts in relational ways to dissect how these practices and interactions translate into the presence of the state in the sector. In particular, it explores how these relations and interactions between state and non-state organisations foster or hinder state presence in policy implementation, or, in other words, generate ‘state effects’. This is perhaps particularly relevant if we consider that, in line with contemporary development policies, international organisations and NGOs working in the country unanimously declare their commitment to work with and strengthen state institutions. Unless, of course, there are sanctions in place.

6.3.1. Competing for a role in policy implementation

All state bureaucrats interviewed acknowledged the role of international organisations in the elaboration of sectoral policies and strategies in terms of both funding conditionalities and the use of international consultants in the drafting of policies. At the same time, these same state officials insisted that extant policies did not amount to mere reproductions of global policies circulated through international organisations. Civil servants insisted on their ability to direct investment, and to shape programmes according to their own priorities. For example, this is evident in Carlos’ account of the ways World Bank’s programmes were set in place:

“World Bank staff come in missions during which they query the government, through the adequate ministries, about its needs and the projects are mere responses to those needs. Following these identification missions, the project is still reviewed several times by government offices and it has to be approved by the government before it is approved by the WB.”⁵⁵

In addition, state officials consistently claimed that international consultants working in the drafting of sectoral policies never truly led the formulation of national policies. Instead, these consultants worked under terms of references approved by the Department of Water Resources and were integrated in teams including national specialists. In addition, each single draft produced was circulated for comments and approval. For example, recollecting the various external consultants with whom he had worked over the years, Manuel emphasised the good working relationships he had established with several of them. Conversely, stressing this department’s ability to shape and control the work of these external consultants, he gave the example of a particular consultant, who had been employed under a European Union funded project to draft a policy brief, and who had been replaced at the request of the Department of Water Resources. They had demanded his substitution when they realised he lacked the necessary knowledge and competencies to carry out the work assigned to him.

This is not to say that state officials did not recognise pressures to adopt certain policies, namely in light of urgencies related to the need of financial resources. Still, even in these circumstances, civil servants often counterposed these pressures with the state’s ability to subsequently overturn them. For example, one government official stated:

“Any donor that comes can help in the elaboration of policies, but who eventually approves those policies is the government. Well, it can happen that due to the needs, urgencies sometimes faced, the state... hmmm, hmmm... accepts. But then these policies can be reviewed...”⁵⁶

Whilst recognising the presence and influence of international organisations, state officials routinely noted that ultimately it was the state who decided which policies were adopted. From

⁵⁵Interview state *8. Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

⁵⁶ Interview State *7. Translated from Portuguese, my own translation.

the perspective of those working for the state, the lack of financial and human resources did not emerge as important factors affecting their capacity to influence policy-making. This is perhaps natural since admitting the prevalence of global policies would amount to admitting their own shortcomings and inability to shape policies. Thus, whilst acknowledging the influence international organisations and actors had on the crafting of national policies, state officials also emphasised the role of the staff of the Department of Water Resources discussing, accepting and adopting policies according to their own views and priorities.

Views were rather different when it came to the Department of Water Resources' ability to control and monitor project interventions, and therefore promote the implementation of national policies. At times, these shortcomings could be related to conflicts within the state. It was common for decision-makers to ignore technical advice by civil servants and request the implementation of projects that were seen as not fitting the departments goals and priorities. For example, Vasco explained:

“Now and again, they do not listen to technical advice, the opinion of technical staff. Therefore, often, a donor comes and they [political appointees] look only for the financial benefits, the money that they can get, personally, that’s not a secret for us, and they do not listen to us down here. You, down here, you are forced to implement. These are things that can happen.”⁵⁷

Thus, conflicting interests and motivations co-existing within the state apparatuses sometimes hindered the Department of Water Resources' ability to follow their priorities and select projects accordingly. However, the failures of the Department of Water Resources in monitoring and controlling interventions in the sector were most commonly associated with its inability to oversee international organisations, and especially international and national NGOs. Related to this, Matilde's comments below illustrate a number of key issues:

⁵⁷ Interview State *6. Translated from Portuguese, my own translation.

“We try to involve our partner [the Department of Water Resources] at all stages. Our relation with Water Resources is very good, very good. There are other organisations, like XXX that... seem to hide their projects... but we produce annual plans, they [Water Resources] know what activities are included. We also do micro-planning every three months... we define activities and we transfer the funds to Water Resources so that they can do their part. But, on the other hand, often we reach a point that they didn't manage to do what they were supposed to do, for lack of clarification, for lack of planning on their part, sometimes. But we don't exclude them, we don't.”

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Whilst claiming that her organisation worked closely with state institutions, Matilde also hinted that this was not always the case for other organisations working in the country. In fact, NGOs routinely failed to inform the state about the projects they were involved in, neglected the input of the state, or simply bypassed the control and supervision supposedly attributed to state institutions. By not informing and involving the state in their projects, despite their proclaimed commitments to work with state institutions, these organisations not only avoided state control and guidance but also neglected and undermined the role of the state in the sector as supervisor and regulator. In some ways, they could be seen as taking advantage of state weaknesses to carry out their activities beyond the grasp of any state supervision.

At the same time, alluding to the fact that the Department of Water Resources regularly failed to carry out the works agreed for ‘lack of clarification and planning’, Matilde touches on another key issue. In fact, the incompetence of the state was often called upon by NGOs to justify their neglect or attempts to circumvent the state. These claims were frequently justified with basis on previous experiences where state actors had been slow or failed to complete the tasks expected. Thus, non-state organisations often justified their neglecting of the state on the basis of the need to ‘get things done’.

Although Matilde claimed to have a *very good* relationship with the state, the tensions between her, as a representative of an international organisation, and some state officials became

⁵⁸ Interview International Organisation *1

evident during meetings of the Water and Sanitation Group (GAS). These tensions surfaced in conflicts regarding their role in the meetings, and the role of the institutions they were representing in the sector. In fact, GAS⁵⁹ meetings provided an interesting platform to explore the everyday practices and interactions shaping the relations between government officials and staff from non-state organisations. GAS emerged as an attempt to promote coordination among different organisations, including international organisations, local and international NGOs, and state institutions working in the sector. Any organisation working in the sector can ask the Department of Water Resources to join this group. GAS holds monthly meetings, the agenda of these meetings is agreed in the previous meeting and, in a recent effort to distribute tasks more evenly, the chair rotates. Supposedly presided over by the Department of Water Resources, this group also represents an attempt to establish the role of this state institution as the rule maker.

Below, I refer to two particular instances taking place in two different GAS meetings to illustrate how interactions between state officials and representatives from non-state organisations oscillated between competition over their roles in the meeting and in the sector and performances concerning the role of the state in the sector. Most importantly, these moments demonstrate the extent to which the role of the Department of Water Resources in the sector is dependent on non-state organisations' willingness to at least symbolically allow for that role. On the one hand, these episodes illustrate the process of 'de-statisation' of society engendered by the strong presence of non-state organisations alongside the weakness of state institutions. On the other hand, they demonstrate how state presence is constituted through the subtle and erratic recognition bestowed on it by non-state organisations.

In a meeting held in 2013, Dílio⁶⁰, the water specialist of an international NGO, delivered a presentation in which he summarised the main projects implemented by the organisation in the country. This presentation highlighted the achievements of the organisation he

⁵⁹ During my fieldwork I attended six GAS monthly meetings over a period of 7 months. I also analysed the minutes of the meetings I attended as well as those of meetings held before I arrived in the country.

⁶⁰ Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

represented, emphasising the positive impacts of its projects, and occasionally mentioning flaws that had promptly been tackled in subsequent projects. This desire to create a good impression on those present at the meeting is easily understood. After all, in this social world, both the organisation he was representing and his own professional future were to a great degree dependent on this impression. State officials, representatives from international organisations, and staff from international and national NGOs present at this meeting are not merely partners working in the sector. Rather, interactions in these meetings have to be understood in the context of multiple cross-cutting donor-recipient relationships as well as professional reputations and ambitions in a context where employment options are scarce.

Throughout the presentation, whilst describing the organisation's projects, Dílio mentioned the ways in which different non-state organisations – both national and international – present at the meeting had been involved in and contributed to their projects. For example, he controversially claimed a key role in the creation of ASPAAB, at the time perceived as a particularly successful local NGO amongst members of GAS. He also noted how they had shifted the approach to their sanitation projects following conversations with Unicef representatives in Bissau, and pinpointed the benefits of the new approach. Moreover, discussing his organisation's intentions to expand to new regions of the country, Dílio reassured those present that, unless subcontracted by the EU or Unicef, they would not intervene in areas where these two organisations were already present. They would restrict themselves to other regions.

Dílio's account of their engagement with state institutions carried a different message. Rather than showing a real engagement with state institutions, he only superficially mentioned that this organisation had met one of the requirements for the projects: to work with state institutions. For example, describing a project implemented in the region of Bafatá, and coming to a slide with a picture of a member of the organisation standing next to a state representative, he merely stated, "*Yes, because projects have to be done in collaboration with the state.*"

⁶¹ Notably, not even at this moment was there an explanation concerning the ways in which the state had been involved or how this project fitted the state's policies. The slide with the picture appeared as a mere 'box ticking' procedure. In this account, the state emerged as a symbol, a picture. But one that rather than having a definite presence, or an effect, was simply alluded to as a requirement by those with real effects, i.e. donors.

The response of Cristovão, a civil servant in the Department of Water Resources, to this presentation expressed an effort to affirm the state as a protagonist in the sector. Starting by reiterating the state's commitment to improving access to water in the country, he then identified NGOs as the effective agents to achieve this goal in a context marked by state weaknesses. In this way he reminded those present that, in a context of state weakness, NGOs do not replace state institutions but help them achieve their goals. In other words, it is not NGOs that act but the state that uses them to act. If Dílio's intervention was illustrative of the ways in which international NGOs tacitly undermined the role of the state in the sector, Cristovão's response was also demonstrative of the ways in which representatives of the state attempted to reconfigure representations of their roles and that of state institutions. Thus, Dílio and Cristovão's interaction during this meeting illustrates the ongoing competition between international NGOs and state institutions for a role in the sector, which often came to the surface in these meetings.

In another meeting held a few months later, the General Director of Water Resources (DG) introduced a topic for discussion, World Water Day. He explained that in normal circumstances, the Ministry of Natural Resources would give a speech on national television and the Department of Water Resources would organise a central event. However, he continued to explain that, given the 'transition period' and the impacts on the normal functioning of state institutions, that year these events were compromised. At this point, the representative of an international organisation suggested that the 'central event' could overlap with their own celebrations, which would take place in the South of the country and coincide

⁶¹ Fieldwork notes.

with the inauguration of a recently refurbished and expanded piped water network. The suggestion was welcomed by all present at the meeting. The DG then suggested the creation of an independent committee, which would work on the planning of this event, and he announced that he would appoint a civil servant to come to the first meeting of this committee with a proposal for a programme of activities.

This event, which did eventually take place, was in fact promoted and financed by an international organisation. During this meeting, state officials and representatives from NGOs performed their expected roles, allowing the state to play the role of the main actor: the decision-maker. This was not necessarily reflective of its real role. Yet, independently of who organised the event, how it was organised and who decided on what happened, both the international organisation and the state benefited from this performance. The state managed to have a role in an event celebrating World Water Day, and also asserted its role in the sector and in the development and implementation of a new water system in the country. The international organisation, on the other hand, demonstrated its commitment to work with the state and to strengthen its role in the sector, in line with its vision and with broader development discourses. At the same time, given the prevalence of state weakness discourses, the international organisation would in fact remain understood as the main protagonist.

The dynamic in this meeting was very different from the tense dynamic described before. In the first instance, the representative of the state justifiably felt compelled to reiterate the position of the state and to compete for state effects, which were not sufficiently represented during Dílio's presentation. In this second instance, both representatives of the state and international organisations collaborated in a performance of state effects, granting the state the prospect of becoming a protagonist in the celebrations of World Water Day and the opportunity to at least *appear to* lead this event which was in fact being organised by an international organisation.

These two episodes illustrate how state representatives and staff from international organisations both competed for a role in the sector and also entered into performances aimed

precisely at granting the state the appearance of a role in water provision. Nevertheless, what emerges is that the Department of Water Resources remains dependent on non-state organisations not only to intervene in the sector through implementing projects, but also to monitor and to be granted a role in these projects. On some occasions, NGOs recognise and support the role of the state as supervisor and regulator. In other instances, they neglect and undermine this role. Yet, it is apparent that interventions in the sector are de facto led by non-state organisations and that the latter hold the ability to decide when to recognise or evade the role of the state.

At this point it is important to note that whilst these meetings represented an attempt to enhance the capacity of the Department of Water Resources to monitor interventions in the water sector, Regional Offices – supposed to be responsible for monitoring water provision in the different regions – were not included in this group. Logically, by side-lining regional state structures from these meetings, which specifically sought to enhance the ability of the state to monitor the sector, Water Resources' reliance on NGOs not only to intervene but also to monitor the sector was further intensified. Excluding its local representatives in the different regions, the Department of Water Resources had very little way of knowing what was happening elsewhere. This further reinforced its dependence on NGOs to communicate their presence and the scope of their projects. It also meant that the Department of Water Resources had to accept NGOs' narratives of events.

The commissioning of reports and policy briefs from non-state organisations or the devolution of responsibilities for service provision to non-state actors in Guinea-Bissau per se is nothing exceptional. There is an increasing scholarship detailing how the state largely surpasses the workings of state institutions (Painter, 2006; see chapter three). However, in Guinea-Bissau, the dominance of non-state actors associated with state weakness undermines the process through which both state and non-state practices come to be perceived as being within the realm of the state. On the one hand, non-state organisations advertise their aims to work with and strengthen the state and, in fact, invest a considerable amount of resources seeking to

meet these aims. On the other hand, non-state organisations consistently undermine the role of the state and prevent the expansion of the presence of the state in the sector. This means that the ongoing competition between state and non-state organisations allied to state weaknesses can actually hinder the production of 'state effects'. In other words, the practices of non-state organisations and the ways in which the interactions between state and non-state organisations are unfolding are contributing *not* to the statisation of society but to the de-statisation of society. At the same time, depleted of resources, the Department of Water Resources actually depends on international organisations and NGOs to claim a presence in the sector. And this presence is in fact constituted through the subtle and erratic recognition conferred by non-state organisations on the state.

6.3.2. Imposing the role of the state in the sector

In bids to show the relative influence of the Department of Water Resources, civil servants routinely referred to a number of events, displaying the assertiveness of the state. Notably, this assertiveness was used to demand a continued recognition of the role of the state in the water sector and to avoid what were perceived as attempts to sidestep the Department of Water Resources. Simultaneously, these occurrences reiterated their efforts to separate the Department of Water Resources from other state institutions more caught up in political instability. Several civil servants routinely mentioned two particular events related to the EU's suspension of all projects involving direct support to the state following the April 12th 2012 coup d'état.

In the first episode, a representative of the EU Delegation to Bissau requested that two vehicles funded by his organisation, and recently donated to two different Regional Offices, were returned. He argued that, given the suspension of all donations to state institutions after April coup d'état, these offices would lack the resources to operate and maintain these vehicles. Despite the insistence and threats of the EU representative, the Department of Water Resources refused to return these vehicles. Eventually, they responded to EU's demands by

presenting them with the legal contracts that had already been signed by both parties. Various state bureaucrats referred to this episode to demonstrate their expertise and ability to protect the interests of the Department of Water Resources in negotiations with international organisations. This episode was confirmed by staff from the EU in Bissau.

The second event also took place in the aftermath of the coup d'état in April 2012. This time the EU Delegation to Guinea-Bissau received instructions from Brussels to suspend or cancel all projects, or components of projects, involving direct support to state institutions while maintaining those classified as direct support to the population. Under the European Development Funds being implemented at the time there was a project in the water sector, which included two main components. The first one entailed the rehabilitation and construction of water infrastructure and was assessed as direct support to the population. Therefore its implementation was continued. The second component entailed institutional support to the state, including the revision and elaboration of sectoral policies, and was therefore suspended.⁶²

In an attempt to overcome this suspension, the European Union Delegation to Bissau investigated the possibility of transferring this second component, which was originally to be implemented with and by the state, to an international NGO. If this option were to go ahead, an international NGO would take over the elaboration of sectoral policies and the project could therefore continue, since it was no longer perceived as direct support to the state. In these circumstances, the EU delegation to Guinea-Bissau entered in negotiations with an NGO which they thought would be able to carry out the task. However, in what some informants described as a rather tense situation, the Department of Water Resources fiercely opposed the idea. Eventually, a different solution was found and the budget initially allocated to the institutional component of the project was added to the infrastructural one, and the latter expanded.

⁶² Personnel from EU in Bissau, staff from the international NGO and state officials provided several accounts of this episode.

In these events, state bureaucrats successfully contested endeavours to set aside the Department of Water Resources, alongside all other state institutions, following the events of April 2012. Claiming their right to keep the two cars previously donated, they were not only looking to keep these vehicles but also contesting international organisations' attempts to neglect, and further weaken, this state department. Likewise, by fiercely opposing the handover of a project including the elaboration of sectoral policies, which they considered to be a task to be performed by their department, to an international NGO, this department once again contested and resisted attempts to dismiss this state institution. In both these instances, state officials were asserting their right to govern and to preserve their role in the sector.

At the same time, in these instances, state officials from Water Resources contested the association being made between this state department and the so-called illegitimate government, and they refused decisions that would lead to the 'collapse' of this particular state institution. In fact, as discussed earlier, the multiplicity of and contradictions between state institutions were not only recognised by state officials. Several representatives of international organisations which had adopted sanctions calling for the suspension of all support to state institutions also tried to find ways to go around these sanctions and to continue working with the Department of Water Resources, which they understood to have nothing to do with the ongoing instability and judged to be a mere victim, just like the general population.

Exploring everyday practices and interactions alongside informants' accounts of the relationships between state and non-state actors, this section has highlighted the complicated nature of the relationships between state and non-state actors. The interactions at the heart of the relational ways in which the state seeks to influence the sector are marked by moments of competition, performance and assertiveness. Nevertheless, in most cases the decision to obey or evade state guidance remains in the hand of non-state organisations. In some instances, non-state organisations recognise the role of the state, on other occasions they neglect or bypass state institutions. This means that policy-making and implementation is effectively led

by non-state organisations. Arguably, the exclusion of the Regional Offices from GAS meetings further contributes to this dependency of the state on non-state organisations by eliminating those state structures with actual proximity to projects and interventions.

The next sections move from the national level to the city level. In line with what has been argued, it is shown how water provision in Bafatá has evolved regardless of national policies. But, focusing on everyday state practices the following sections also demonstrate the multiple ways in which state actors have shaped water infrastructure in this city, whilst acting beyond state policies, regulations or guidelines and shaping the work of non-state organisations.

6.4. Local state practices and the piped water network in Bafatá

This section explores the ways in which different state actors have shaped the piped water network of Bafatá. On the one hand, it demonstrates that this infrastructure has evolved regardless of extant policy and regulatory frameworks and that it has also escaped the control and supervision of the Department of Water Resources in Bissau. On the other hand, this section traces the multiple ways in which various state officials based in Bafatá have fundamentally shaped water infrastructure in Bafatá. It thus becomes apparent that although policies and regulations have not been driving the evolution of water infrastructure in Bafatá, ongoing step-by-step negotiations – happening largely outside legal and regulatory frameworks – between state and non-state actors continue to be essential in shaping water provision in the city. Thus, the apparent absence of policies and regulatory frameworks does not amount to a total lack of state intervention at the local level.

Furthermore, the investigation of state practices in Bafatá demonstrates how these practices challenge attempts to analyse the state using any unitary logic, and it stresses the importance of considering everyday embodied state practices in analysis of water infrastructure. In this way, in line with the work of McFarlane and Desai (2015; 2015), Anand (2011a, 2011b), Lindell (2008) and Fourchard (2011) this section notes the importance of considering the

multiplicity of ways in which state actors influence urban water infrastructure, and the multiple logics underpinning such involvements.

The one-storey building housing the Regional Office of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá, and temporarily hosting ASPAAB, the operator of the city's water network, is an isolated construction located at the top end of a large pot-holed avenue, which connects the sleepy old colonial city to the lively upper part of the town. Walking away from the building, taking the opposite direction from the large boulevard, after a climbable steep slope, at a lower level, is Boma, a spring. From here, spring water is pumped to the main water tank in the city, an imposing concrete structure standing close to the Regional Office's building. A few meters away, visible during the dry season and hidden by vegetation during the rainy season, the new headquarters of ASPAAB are being built. This building, when finished, will dwarf the modest installations of the state department now hosting them.⁶³

Besides the workplace of the Regional Office, this building also houses the living quarters of the Regional Director, which are located in one corner of the building. Like most buildings in Bafatá, surrounding the front part of the house is a veranda. And, not so commonly, in one of the pillars there is a tap, where people get water to drink, pray, wash, and so forth. Right in front of this veranda there stand three trees, precious sources of shade for those gathering here on a daily basis. It is here, between the offices and the shade of the trees, that the everyday life of this regional office and now ASPAAB takes place. It is here that the personnel of this state department, ASPAAB's members and associated networks meet, *djumbai*⁶⁴, work and pray. What could be another sleepy state office becomes alive with people, activities, and talk of water and politics.

The slightly unconventional liveliness of this Regional Office can be traced back to May 2006, when responsibility for the management of the water network was transferred to ASPAAB, a

⁶³ The construction works terminated in 2015 and ASPAAB has now moved to this new building.

⁶⁴ Guinea-Bissau creole, term used to describe conversations, meetings between people, exchanges of ideas and thoughts, socialising.

local association. An inconspicuous occurrence at the time, this transfer eventually engendered profound transformations in the water infrastructure of the city. The changes in the piped water network will be discussed in more detail in chapters 7 and 8. But just to give an overview of the extent of these transformations: in 2006, when ASPAAB started operating the system, there was only one standpipe and around 18 home connections in operation. The system worked irregularly, every 2 to 3 days, with long periods during which there was no water supply. By 2015, there were 23 standpipes in operation and the system served 104 home connections. Water was supplied on a daily basis and interruptions were dealt with much more expediently. Despite the still small scale of the system, the improvements were indisputably significant.

Whilst this handover of the responsibility for the management of the water piped network of Bafatá to ASPAAB appears nothing exceptional – it conformed with national policies adopted in 1992 and policies disseminated in development interventions –, in fact, this transfer materialised independently of any specific policy guidelines and without the direct intervention of international organisations. However, despite exceeding formal procedures and regulations, state actors were still key in this process. This transfer resulted from a verbal agreement between ASPAAB and the Regional Director of the Regional Office in Bafatá (Regional Director).

The ways in which this transfer happened demonstrate the argument laid out before about state weaknesses. Taking place without the intervention or knowledge of the Department of Water Resources in Bissau, it reiterates this department's inability to monitor and control the work of its Regional Offices and to oversee the management of infrastructure. This transfer also demonstrates the argument of this chapter regarding the astonishing lack of financial and human resources available to Regional Offices. By 2006, the year the transfer took place, the Regional Office in Bafatá employed only two staff members – a regional director and a secretary – and operated with no budget. The offices were equipped with some furniture and computers but had no electricity. A car and a motorbike, bought with funds provided by

international organisations under past projects, were only used on a private capacity since there were no budget allowances to buy petrol or to secure maintenance and repairs. In general, it was agreed that the responsibilities of this Regional Office included monitoring water infrastructure in the region, supervising and supporting committees created to manage these infrastructures but also, in this specific case, to monitor as well as manage and operate parts of the water network in the city of Bafatá. However, with limited staff, an inadequate skills' pool and without a budget, this Regional Office, like others in the country, struggled to perform its key tasks. Yet again, the lack of financial and human resources dictated the redundancy of this state department. Like any other Regional Office from the Department of Water Resources, the Regional Office in Bafatá remained reliant on internationally-funded projects to carry out any activities. In the words of Antonio, a state official in the Regional Office:

*“the Regional Office relies on projects (...) since independence, water resources relies for the most part, over 90%, on projects. (...) Only when there is a project, then there will be a car, there will be petrol, there will be oil, there will be things to do, there will be everything, the state doesn't pay anything, only wages.”*⁶⁵

However, as well as illustrating the arguments about state weakness, this handover also shows the ways in which local representatives of the state continue to have an influence, despite the state's stark scarcity of resources. In particular, the then Regional Director played a particularly important role in shaping water provision in the city of Bafatá. This government official trained as an engineer in Cuba and moved to Bafatá in 2000 as director of a project being implemented by the state under a European Development Fund in the region of Bafatá.⁶⁶ While he was still based in Bafatá as director of this project in the water sector, the previous Regional Director left his position to work in the private sector, and he was appointed to replace him. Thus, when the project terminated in 2004, he remained in Bafatá as Regional

⁶⁵ Interview State *2

⁶⁶ EDF – European Development Fund; they are the main fund from the European Union allocated to development cooperation. It typically funds projects in different sectors, which are implemented by receiving states through a project cell created for the effect.

Director.⁶⁷ Now heading a state office without a budget and very limited staff, this state official whilst seeking ways to circumvent this department's lack of resources got involved in the creation of ASPAAB, and later in the transference to this association of the responsibility for the management of the city's network. In fact, this devolution of responsibilities cannot be separated from the active role of this state official.

The quote below, extracted from an interview with one of the founding members of ASPAAB, illustrates typical accounts of the role of the Regional Director in the creation of ASPAAB.

*“the creation of ASPAAB relied on a group of young people from here. It had only the support of the Regional Director who, in fact, motivated us and continuously encouraged us, ‘you should create it, you should work hard, you should commit to create the organisation’.”*⁶⁸

In fact, the Regional Director actively participated in the foundation of ASPAAB. In his own words: *“I participated in the foundation of ASPAAB, here [Regional Offices]. I was right here, sitting on this chair. There were five people present and I was there...”*⁶⁹ Moreover, he was also a member of the association at the very beginning. He eventually left because of the perceived conflict of interests between his role as Regional Director and being a member of ASPAAB.

ASPAAB was created in the last trimester of 2005. Only a few months later, in May 2006, the Regional Director granted ASPAAB the responsibility for the management of the water network. Mamadu's, a member of ASPAAB's management team, reflection upon this event highlights this organisation's desire to take over the management of the piped supply scheme. It also reveals their belief that they could do a better job than the current operators and therefore provide a better water service.

“There was the management committee, which was managing the water system, that management committee was not working properly. Thus, we thought that since there were infrastructures – a water tank, standpipes, a generator – in place, even if they all worked with faults, why wouldn't

⁶⁷ Bacar Sissé was the Regional Director between 2000 and 2014.

⁶⁸ Interview ASPAAB *4

⁶⁹ Interview State *1

*the Regional Director give us the management so that we prevent water being distributed one or two days, and then stop for one or two months... we discussed that with him.”*⁷⁰

Thus, behind this agreement, lay ASPAAB's members aspirations to operate the water system. In reality, once this organisation took over they were able to modestly improve the service, by relying on the volunteer work of many members, raising funds from parallel activities and entering in partnerships with international organisations and NGOs. Yet, this agreement would not have been possible without the participation of the Regional Director, as recognised by Mamadu, when he explained what happened after they first discussed the transfer option.

*“Well, he [Regional Director] said, there is no problem but... he needed to see... and for a period of time he monitored the work of ASPAAB, what it was doing. Then, later, when he gained trust, he said, OK!”*⁷¹

Like ASPAAB's members, the Regional Director also trusted that the handover to ASPAAB would result in improvements in the water service being provided in this city, and therefore further his department's key aim, i.e. to improve access to water in the region of Bafatá.

*“before, the Ministry of Natural Resources managed and monitored water infrastructure, but that did not work so they created management committees. These were not legalised associations, just groups that were created and told to manage water, like here in Bafatá. But, as I realised that the management was not working well, I took away the responsibility for managing this infrastructure from this group, I organised ASPAAB, and I gave them the responsibility for managing water infrastructure. (...) I gave them the management responsibility because the only place with water was there in Bairro 4, that water tank, this one here, it did not work. So, I passed them the management.”*⁷²

The quote above illustrates not only the motivations of the Regional Director but also hints at the ways in which this transfer happened beyond any specific policy, regulatory or institutional guidelines. In this account of the transfer, there was no mention of this transfer

⁷⁰ Interview ASPAAB *4

⁷¹ Interview ASPAAB *4

⁷² Interview State *1

ever being discussed with the Department of Water Resources in Bissau, which in fact it was not. Although a specific development intervention was mentioned in accounts relating to the creation of ASPAAB, this intervention did not plan the transfer process, it only indirectly influenced it. Thus, the accounts of the transfer demonstrate that ASPAAB and the Regional Director were the active and key participants in the process. And, even if this transfer resembled national and international policies, these actors acted autonomously from any policy or legal frameworks and without any institutional support from the state. The devolution of responsibilities and the ongoing relationships of mutual support were propelled by the motivations of ASPAAB and the Regional Director. Crucially, whilst using his position within the state to enact this transfer, this official acted autonomously. Thus, if the Department of Water Resources was unable to enforce its policies, and neglected to invite Regional Offices to GAS meetings, state officials nevertheless continued using their position within the state to influence water provision.

After the transfer, the Regional Director remained deeply involved in the workings of ASPAAB and the management of the piped water network, monitoring their work and supporting them as he could, and as he perceived to be his role as Regional Director. For example, Fatumata, a member of ASPAAB's management, explained:

*“we have a good relationship [with the Regional Office], because, as you can see, we are here [using their offices] and we don't pay rent or anything. Also, he [Regional Director] helps us with advice, anything we need he is there for us, he gives good ideas/advice.”*⁷³

The Regional Director also used his position and contacts within the state to mobilise resources. For example, at a certain point he brought a generator from a nearby city to Bafatá in replacement of another that had broken down. On another occasion, when asked to identify locations for the construction of boreholes and installation of hand pumps, he worked closely with ASPAAB to discuss the possibility of using this opportunity to add another source to the water network. Moreover, he routinely mobilised ex-employees of the state, who possessed

⁷³ Interview ASPAAB *3

detailed knowledge of the city's infrastructure, to help the organisation in surveys and assessments of existing infrastructure. He was also profoundly involved in ASPAAB's attempts to mobilise funding through international NGOs.

Nevertheless, the Regional Director of the Regional Office of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá was not the only state official influencing ASPAAB and water infrastructure in Bafatá. For example, Fatumata's account of how the governor of Bafatá and the local administration helped ASPAAB with land transfers required for the installation of solar panels provides an illustration of the ways in which different state officials influenced water provision:

“That time, that thing related to the space down there, the panels, we talked with them, and they gave land to the land owners [where the panels were being installed]. That place where the panels were installed, in Bairro 4, that land belongs to someone. When we told them we wanted to install the panels there, they did not accept that. But then, they told us to give him another piece of land. They told us that we should give him another piece of land. We spoke with the governor, the local administration and they showed us a piece of land, we then showed it to those people. Then, there were some more complications with this new piece of land, there were other people there, we went to speak with the governor again, he told us to not worry, he would sort it out, and he did. I think he did.”⁷⁴

Again, in this situation, state officials crucially enabled the evolution of water infrastructure in Bafatá, in this case by securing a place for the solar panels required to produce energy for one of the pumps used in the system. Notably, like in other instances, interactions with representatives from the state in Bafatá were mostly described in terms of step-by-step negotiations between different actors rather than justified with reference to legal documents and policies.

At the same time, state officials were not always so supportive. On the contrary, they were perceived time and again to use their position in the state to make claims, whose legitimacy

⁷⁴ Interview ASPAAB *3

was questioned and which were not seen as beneficial to the operation of the water system and ASPAAB. For instance, in 2013, ASPAAB acquired a piece of land next to the building of the Regional Office and initiated the works for the construction of its own independent installations. A few months later, the works were suspended by order of the local administrator, allegedly because ASPAAB had not applied for a construction license. Describing the succession of events, Mamadu, one of the members of ASPAAB's management, explained that the organisation acknowledged the legal requirement to obtain such a license. However, they objected to this state officials' demands for two key reasons.

First, given the role of the organisation as operator of the city's network, they saw themselves as partners of the state, helping the state achieve its goal of providing water to the population. Thus, rather than obstructing their work or claiming taxes, they expected state institutions to support them and exempt them from taxes. In fact, Mamadu went even further, claiming that even though ASPAAB had bought the land where they were building their offices, this land should have been allocated to them by the state. The second issue related to the amount requested for obtaining this license. Whereas ASPAAB had been charged over 500,000 CFA (762.38 Euro), Mamadu claimed that the real cost of the license should be around 50,000 CFA (76.24 Euro). Eventually the matter was settled after Mamadu – accompanied by Demba, a fellow member of ASPAAB, and the Regional Director – met the administrator and managed to negotiate the value of the license to what they considered to be a fair amount.

The *comite de estado*⁷⁵ (local administration) was also routinely blamed for interfering with works related to the operation and maintenance of the water infrastructure, in their practice of demanding a tax for the right to dig on public roads and streets. Also on these occasions, Mamadu and Demba disputed not only the value of the taxes being claimed but also their legitimacy. Whereas ASPAAB was actively operating and maintaining an infrastructure which was in fact owned by the state, the roads and streets of Bafatá were hardly maintained by the

⁷⁵ The legislation for decentralisation, and the creation of local elected authorities, has been adopted but not enforced. Thus, Comité De Estado are local administrative apparatuses nominated and controlled by the central state.

local administration or any other state institution. Again, these disputes were solved through lengthy negotiations, in which both the value and legitimacy of the taxes were on the table.

As described by Demba, a member of ASPAAB's management, the relations between ASPAAB and local representatives of the state were 'informal' and involved ongoing negotiation.

*“If I am the local authority, I should help you, I should do certain things, and, we, as a local association, we should also take on our responsibilities and do our things. However, the relations are... informal (laughs), it is not formal, it is informal. So, it's on these terms that we work. Sometimes we get approval, sometimes we don't (laughs). The relation is not formal. We negotiate every step of the way”*⁷⁶

Even without resources, and barely following legal and policy frameworks, different state officials continuously influence the work of ASPAAB, the organisation managing the water network and the water infrastructure of the city. For ASPAAB to be able to operate in the city, they continuously engaged in negotiations with different state officials. Notably, even when ASPAAB disputed the legitimacy of the claims of different government officials, they did not challenge their authority. They engaged in negotiation and sought agreements that satisfied both parts. Notably, these 'informal' negotiations at the level of the city, as described by Demba, prevailed not only while ASPAAB's role as operator of the network remained based on a verbal agreement but also after its official recognition as operator of the city's water network in 2012 when ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources signed a concession contract.

The ways in which different state officials in Bafatá used their positions within the state to make claims related to the workings of the water network and ASPAAB demonstrate that the state is not absent in Bafatá. In contrast to state officials in the Department of Water Resources in Bissau, state officials based in Bafatá regularly influence water infrastructure in the city.

⁷⁶ Interview ASPAAB *5

However, they consistently act beyond policy and legal frameworks. As argued by Lindell (2008) in the case of Maputo, to understand state practices in the context of Bafatá, it is essential that we do not focus on policy and legal procedures. We must take into consideration the multiple ways state actors influence what happens beyond prescribed policies but whilst using their position in the state to legitimate their actions. Also here, it was clear that state actors routinely and significantly influence water provision in relational ways, that is through their interactions with non-state organisations.

6.5. Fragmented states: between legality and international donations

In 2012, ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources signed a contract which formalised the role of ASPAAB as the operator of the piped water network of Bafatá. This legal contract, the initiative of an international NGO working closely with ASPAAB, was drafted in order to overcome regulatory weaknesses. It aimed, firstly, to define and fix ASPAAB's position as the operator of the city's water network; and, secondly, to delineate the capacities, duties and responsibilities of both parties.

Contrary to international NGOs' expectations, this contract did not necessarily result in more clarity concerning the roles and responsibilities of different actors. For instance, according to the contract ASPAAB is only responsible for ongoing maintenance and minor repairs – major investments remain the responsibility of the Department of Water Resources. Nevertheless, the state routinely fails its contract obligations, and this clause was included in the contract when both parties knew that, in practice, ASPAAB would have to mobilise funds for all investments. Neither did this contract situate ASPAAB's practice in a legal and regulatory framework. This was apparent in ASPAAB's ongoing negotiations with different state officials, which were largely unsupervised by any legal or regulatory frameworks. Interactions between ASPAAB and local state actors in Bafatá continued to rely on ongoing negotiations, which consistently escaped any strict policy or legal framework.

Still, this contract was perceived as an important tool for the organisation. In Mamadu's words:

“If anyone [international donors] wants to finance you, if they know you do not hold a contract, a concession to operate the network, with the government, they might think twice before investing in you. The contract creates a guarantee for them in this way. (...) Also, I think that at the national level, it does not happen that often, with local organisations. Thus, if ASPAAB did it, you think it's a good thing.”⁷⁷

Thus, for ASPAAB, the legal contract constitutes an important device for negotiations with international NGOs, which draw security and legitimacy from this kind of legal document. Also, it represents a validation of ASPAAB's work, an appreciation of their 'good work'.

At the same time, this contract between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources signalled the extension of national-level state institutions, namely the Department of Water Resources, who had previously been largely uninterested and unaware of what was happening in the city, to the realm of water infrastructure in Bafatá. Here, it is important to remember that this contract was largely the result of the initiative of an international NGO, suggesting once again the dependence of this department on international NGOs to extend its influence.

The implications of this expansion of national level institutions to the realm of water provision in Bafatá became evident in a rare visit of staff from Water Resources in Bissau to Bafatá in 2013.⁷⁸ Following a visit to the city's recently refurbished water infrastructure, the president of ASPAAB presented the new water management model adopted in the city, which together with the refurbishment of the infrastructure had been funded under a project led by Portuguese NGO TESE and funded by international donors. In response, a civil servant in Water Resources, noted that the competent authorities in Bissau had not approved the model being presented, questioning its validity and legitimacy. The Regional Director, his subordinate, then noted that, in fact, there wasn't an actual working model validated in the

⁷⁷ Interview ASPAAB *4. Original in Creole, my own translation.

⁷⁸ I did not attend this event, which took place before I arrived for my fieldwork. The information presented here is based on descriptions of the event in minutes of the meeting and on discussions with informants present.

country for the organisation to follow. A representative of NGO TESE then asserted that a manual including the adopted management model had been submitted to the Department of Water Resources in Bissau in October 2012 for their consideration. To this day, they were still waiting for a reply. In addition, he added, a legal contract formalising the concession of the water system to ASPAAB had been signed with the Ministry of Natural Resources. Nevertheless, the bureaucrat from Bissau insisted that the legality of this management model needed to be further considered.

Where previously the Regional Office in Bafatá and ASPAAB were in fact isolated, almost independent, from the Department of Water Resources in Bissau, the NGO TESE fostered a new link between the Regional Director and ASPAAB in Bafatá, and the Department of Water Resources. This new link brought ASPAAB and the Regional Office onto the radar of the Department of Water Resources and it exposed them to their attempts to assert their influence. As noted by Luisa, a member of staff in TESE, ASPAAB is probably one of the only organisations in the country holding a legal contract with the ministry and, therefore, legally entitled to run the water network system. Thus, the Department of Water Resources was questioning the legality of the most legal of organisations. In fact, it can be said that the question was not about the legitimacy of ASPAAB or the model they had adopted. Instead, this intervention by a civil servant from the Department of Water Resources in Bissau can be understood in terms of what has been discussed before as the search for ‘state effects’. This civil servant was not actually worried about the legality of ASPAAB or the content of the management model. Instead, he was worried about the ways in which the Department of Water Resources had, or had not, been involved in the process and the ways in which the role of the state in the process was being narrated. This was especially the case as Bafatá and ASPAAB became increasingly framed as the success story in Guinea-Bissau.

Still, ASPAAB members were not particularly concerned by this increased exposure and visibility. They trusted that state weaknesses would prevent the state from taking any dramatic action such as taking over the management of the water network. Again, in Mamadu’s words:

“Now, while there are no elected local authorities, I know that it is difficult for the government to say ‘no, I’ll take over [the management of the water network] and do it’. Why? Because the Department of Water Resources has water technicians that have knowledge of the water problematic, they know that the state cannot manage to do it, it cannot.”⁷⁹

This extension of Water Resources into the realm of water supply in Bafatá also illustrates the differences between this department and local representatives of the state, and the ways in which they influenced water supply in Bafatá. Local state representatives’ practices were routinely considered illegitimate and typically exceeded any legal or policy frameworks. Notwithstanding this, they propelled responses and negotiations which affected the workings of ASPAAB and the water infrastructure in the city. The extension of Water Resources to the realm of water in Bafatá also produced effects. These were visible in this department’s questioning of the legitimacy of the management model. However, this episode did not propel any further negotiations and ASPAAB did not seem threatened by these claims. The effects of the legal contract were most apparent in ASPAAB’s recognition of its value mobilising international donors. Notably, it is not the legality of the contract that is valued, since it is recognised that this legality will not be translated into practice, but the appearance of legality that it creates among international donors. The legal and policy facets of the state are not valued for their roles governing social life but for the ways they are valued by international donors.

6.6. Discussion

Going back to the picture of the standpipe in Bafatá at the beginning of this chapter, it can now be argued that the notable absence of the logo of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, alongside those of the European Union, NGO TESE and ASPAAB, should not be simply

⁷⁹ Interview ASPAAB *4. Original in Creole, my own translation.

understood as symbolic of an absent state. Neither should it be merely interpreted as indicative of a neoliberal state. State actors influenced water infrastructure in Bafatá in significant ways, and the various logics and motivations behind their practices cannot be summarised in terms of a neoliberal ethos. To unveil these various state practices and its multiple logics and motivations, it was necessary to disaggregate the state, opening the analytical lenses to the multiple agendas, levels and agencies characterising the state and state actors; and to focus on modalities of the state that exceed conventional state-society distinctions.

The role of different state actors and institutions in water provision cannot be separated from state weaknesses and the stark lack of financial and human resources faced by these institutions, which vitally affect the possibilities of state actors to influence water provision in Guinea-Bissau. Crucially, these long-term state weaknesses also translate into the need to reinterpret the outcomes and meanings of neoliberal policies. In the context of Guinea-Bissau, the neoliberal turn did not amount to a *de facto* change in the role of the state in water provision, or to public disinvestment from the sector. In fact, in the context of Guinea-Bissau, these policies can be interpreted through developmentalist goals, including aspirations to expand the role of the state within the possibilities of state institutions. This is not to say that neoliberal models, focusing on, for example, the benefits of market rule, are not part of the rationalities underpinning water policies in Guinea-Bissau. Instead it means that neoliberal logics are not the most important feature or the one with the most visible effects, especially outside the capital city. The need to overcome state weaknesses and to improve access to water by building on the strengths of a range of non-state organisations continues to be at the top of the agenda. And policies promoting the role of the community and private sectors are mostly framed within these aims. Thus, this chapter suggests that the meanings and effects of policies influenced by neoliberal logics need to be analysed in light of the specific circumstances and the particular trajectories of states in a diversity of contexts. New meanings emerge if such an approach is taken.

One important consequence of state weaknesses in the water sector in Guinea-Bissau is the almost total dependency of state institutions on foreign aid and non-state organisations, funded almost entirely through international donations. The state depends on non-state organisations to intervene in water provision. It depends on non-state organisations to foster policy implementation. And, lastly, it also depends on non-state organisations' willingness to acknowledge at least symbolically its role of enabler, supervisor and regulator of the sector. This means that the relations and interactions between state and non-state organisations are key in shaping state presence in water provision, that is the state constitutes itself in relational ways. Nevertheless, although on some occasions non-state organisations, in line with organisational policies to support and strengthen state institutions in the sector, recognise and work with the state, in many other instances these organisations neglect and undermine state institutions. In fact, non-state organisations often compete with state institutions for a role in the sector. On the one hand, the immediate result is that state institutions have a rather limited ability to control and monitor the work of non-state organisations, which translates into a limited capacity to control and monitor water provision through policy and regulatory frameworks. On the other hand, this also means that state presence in the sector is simultaneously undermined and constituted through its interactions with non-state organisations. The case of Guinea-Bissau also suggests that in contexts of state weakness the practices of both state and non-state organisations might *not* engender 'state effects', or the expansion of the symbolic presence of the state, but simply reinforce the symbolic presence of non-state organisations. Thus, rather than the statification of society, we witness the de-statisation of society.

Delving into the everyday practices of the state and the ongoing interactions between state actors and ASPAAB in Bafatá, it becomes apparent that state actors have significantly influenced the evolution of the city's piped supply scheme. However, this has mostly happened in ways that exceed any policy and regulatory frameworks or project interventions. This is revealed in the various ways different state officials based in Bafatá have used their positions

within the state to encourage water associations, but also to make claims related to the piped water network of the city. Thus, although, in line with notions of state weakness discussed earlier, state institutions have been mostly unable to enforce policy and legal guidelines, this cannot be interpreted as the total absence of the state. In addition, the multiplicity of motivations behind state practices suggests that the state of Guinea-Bissau adopts many different modalities when affecting water infrastructure in Bafatá.

The contract signed in 2012 by ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources formalising the role of ASPAAB as water operator provides an interesting platform to consider the different modalities of the state. This contract did entail an extension of the realms of policy and regulatory frameworks and of the national-level state to the domain of the piped water network of Bafatá. Here, it is particularly relevant that this expansion was initiated by an international NGO, revealing once again the dependency of state institutions on non-state organisations for it to expand its influence when it comes to the elaboration and enforcement of policy and regulatory frameworks. At the same time, this contract did not amount to a change in the everyday interactions between state and non-state organisations involved in governing the piped water network. In other words, ASPAAB's interactions with different state officials in Bafatá remained based on step-by-step negotiations that largely exceeded the enforcement or interpretation of this legal contract. In this way, these modes of interaction remained an essential feature of how the state shapes water infrastructure in Bafatá. However, this contract was still valued by various actors, not because of its legal effects, but because it was perceived as a key device to attract international donors. This suggests that the legal and policy facets of the state, rather than functioning as devices that regulate social life, can serve as devices that conform to the international NGOs' requirements to engage with the appropriate legal languages of stateness.

Finally, political instability has become the norm in Guinea-Bissau and has affected all state institutions. This is most obviously apparent in the extreme lack of financial and human resources, especially after the 2012 sanctions. Nevertheless, in this chapter it was shown that

state institutions in the water sector, consistently distance themselves from the causes and upheavals related to this political instability. In fact, this autonomy from the causes of instability is recognised by non-state actors and was most visible in the attempts of staff from international organisations to work around organisational sanctions. Thus, although understandings of state institutions in Guinea-Bissau cannot be separated from political instability, different departments, entities and institutions must be understood to have different histories, logics, motivations and interests at their core.

Adopting ethnographic understandings of the state and everyday state practices, this chapter demonstrates the multiple ways in which states shape water provision, highlighting the importance of looking into those practices that exceed policy and regulatory frameworks. At the same time, it illustrates the multi-layered modalities of the state which cannot be conveyed under any single unitary logic. Such an approach allows for the consideration of the multiplicity of roles that state practices can play in water provision. In particular, it opens the analytical view to the roles states play in local level governance through ongoing negotiations with a multiplicity of actors. As the conclusion of this thesis will suggest, rather than being ignored or dismissed as 'informal', the multiple state practices involved in governance systems at the local level should be acknowledged and considered in progressive imaginations of water provision.

– SEVEN –

Creole water governance: Neoliberalism, assemblages and the piped water network

7.1. Introduction

This chapter examines the multiplicity of actors, practices and logics shaping water provision in Bafatá, which have not only promoted the hybridisation of neoliberalisms but also engendered processes and outcomes that, it is argued, cannot be captured using a neoliberal analytical framework. Thus, the notion of assemblages alongside ethnographic descriptions of the everyday are used to develop an understanding of a ‘Creole’ mode of governance, producing situated, and messier, processes and outcomes than those characteristically considered under the analytical label of ‘neoliberalism’ (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009; Rankin, 2011). The notion of Creole is called upon precisely to depict the evolving product emerging through the intermixing and reciprocal transformation of motivations, logics, agendas and practices.

The piecemeal expansion of Bafatá’s piped water supply over the past decades has to a large extent followed the rhythms of international donations and development projects, and the governance models put in place have often resembled the evolution of circulating policy models. In an analytical move that seeks to decentre the role of international policies in understandings of water supply, this chapter perceives international development practices as part of, but not the determinant of, agendas and practices shaping water provision in Bafatá. In this way, the motivations and practices of a variety of actors are considered and the agency of these practices highlighted. In particular, this chapter explores the Creole governance model in place in Bafatá with reference to both attempts to improve access to water in the city and to generate training and income opportunities through securing the support of

international NGOs. In addition, this chapter examines the role of gaps – emerging as policy models are translated into practices on the ground – in shaping water provision. Related to this, it explores the role of various actors *appropriating, re-inventing, ignoring* and *contesting* policy models circulating in the city, and therefore shaping water provision in ways that defy easy associations with international policies or “any straightforward coding as” neoliberalisation of water (McGuirk and Dowling, 2009, p. 184).

The remainder of this chapter is divided in three main sections. The next section, section 7.2., explores water governance in Bafatá between 2006 and 2010, including the factors and practices leading to the creation of ASPAAB and the devolution of responsibilities for water management to this organisation. Then, it explores the mode of operation of the piped supply scheme between 2006 and 2010, which is termed ‘persistent irregularity’. This term captures both the irregularity of the service provided at the time and the persistent efforts of ASPAAB and the Regional Director to keep the system running.

Section 7.3. then explores water governance in Bafatá between 2010 and 2014. This period coincided with the implementation of two international development projects and the consistent presence of international actors, in particular the Portuguese NGO TESE. It explores some of the ways in which ASPAAB and the Regional Director have *appropriated, re-invented, ignored and contested* policy models circulating in the city to demonstrate how these policies have been consistently transformed in such a way they have often become ‘something else’. In addition, it shows that even processes and outcomes resembling neoliberal logics might have other agendas at their core.

This chapter argues that the mode of governance adopted in Bafatá is thus better understood as an assemblage of multiple actors, agendas, rationalities and ways of doing that together produce a situated – *Creole* – mode of governance that cannot be understood in relation to any single element of the assemblage. Nevertheless, processes of appropriation and re-invention – *creolisation* – of policy models in accordance with the needs, priorities and possibilities of those actors involved in the governing of water infrastructure should be seen as key in shaping this

model. These processes of appropriation and re-invention drive not only the hybridisation of neoliberal policies but also their transformation in ways that come to exceed original agendas. In other words, they become ‘something else’. In this way, this chapter also demonstrates the agency of a range of practices, including those of subordinate actors.

7.2. Re-launching the piped water network: local aspirations, development and unintended outcomes

This section traces the evolution of Bafatá’s piped supply scheme between 2006 and 2010. This was the four years period prior to the launch of two international development projects, which coincided with major investments and transformations in the city’s piped water network. Sub-section 7.2.1. below examines a variety of factors and motivations driving the creation of ASPAAB and the subsequent devolution of responsibilities for water management to this organisation in 2006. It demonstrates that these events can be seen as unintended outcomes of development interventions and discourses that both comply with and exceed original agendas, and which have been ignited and appropriated by a variety of actors. Thus, it is argued that targeted development interventions, rather than residualisation produced by cherry-picking strategies of private sector entities, might be key forces shaping alternative models emerging in small cities. Sub-section 7.2.2. then explores the multiple actors, practices, motivations and agendas shaping water provision between 2006 and 2010. These are analysed as a situated assemblage emerging around Bafatá’s piped water network that sought (and eventually succeeded) to generate new possibilities within prescribed social, political and economic configurations (Simone, 2011). The materialities of infrastructure, the uneven patterns of investment and the motivations and practices of ASPAAB are shown to be key elements in this assemblage.

7.2.1. The beginnings of ASPAAB – an unintended outcome of development interventions?

In chapter 6 it was argued that the transfer of responsibilities for water management to ASPAAB cannot be traced in national or international policies. Neither can it be directly linked to planned ‘development’ interventions. Instead, this transfer should be seen as the result of the initiative of ASPAAB’s members alongside that of the Regional Director, who negotiated this transfer outside the remit of institutional, policy or regulatory guidelines. Nevertheless, delving into the motivations of those actors involved in the devolution process, it is also evident that both ASPAAB and the Regional Director were deeply influenced by the manifest presence of development interventions and discourses in the country. In this way, the devolution of responsibilities for water management to ASPAAB can be understood as an unintended outcome of development interventions – a localised response to the weighty presence of development interventions in the country, which both reflects and challenges policy models circulated by international organisations and NGOs through projects.

Workers in British NGO PLAN international often claimed a role in the creation of ASPAAB. However, in the accounts of ASPAAB members, this international NGO “*had nothing to do with the creation of ASPAAB. The creation of ASPAAB relied on the initiative and work of the young people that were there, and had only the support of the Regional Director.*”⁸⁰ In a context marked by the presence of development projects and discourses, international NGOs’ claims for a part in the creation of ASPAAB can be situated in their broader attempts to validate their projects and assert their position as development actors in the country, often at the expense of the agency of other organisations (Mosse, 2005). Likewise, ASPAAB’s attempts to assert its own agency can be interpreted as a form of resistance to international NGOs’ narratives that neglected or diminished their role, but also in the light of ASPAAB’s own attempts to assert its role as a development actor. As will be seen in the course of this chapter, the evolution of ASPAAB in

⁸⁰ Interview ASPAAB *4

recent years has to a great extent coincided with its consolidation as a development actor in Bafatá and, more widely, in Guinea-Bissau.

Yet, the birth of ASPAAB could also be seen as an unintended consequence of PLAN's interventions. In 2005, a group of volunteers participated in a city-wide cleaning and hygiene campaign implemented by PLAN in partnership with the Regional Office. After this event, motivated by the success of this activity, this group of volunteers, which included mostly teachers and also some students from a local school, decided to create an organisation, ASPAAB.⁸¹ The quote below, extracted from an interview with one of the founding members of ASPAAB, illustrates typical accounts linking ASPAAB's member participation in this project to the creation of the organisation.

“we evaluated the impacts of the works we carried out with PLAN, we realised we had done a good job, it was at that point that the idea to create an organisation, which is ASPAAB, emerged, as a way to continue those works began with PLAN, so that the city could remain clean. It was then that the idea to create an organisation emerged.”⁸²

Thus, as suggested by Mamadu and other founding members⁸³, even if indirectly, PLAN actually played a role in the creation of ASPAAB. It contributed with funds for the initiative that generated the momentum which eventually resulted in the birth of ASPAAB. Furthermore, channelling funds to certain activities and contributing to the identification, and construction, of specific problems, PLAN also influenced the themes and areas of intervention of the new organisation being created. In fact, reflecting the themes of the activities they had been previously involved in, ASPAAB's initial focus was only on sanitation, only later did it extend its area of intervention to water provision. As Mercer and Green (2013) argue, the subcontracting of local associations by international NGOs to implement activities often generates impacts well beyond their projects and planned goals. Conflicts over representations and interpretations of events can hide the more nuanced ways in which different actors are

⁸¹ Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *5, Interview State *1

⁸² Interview ASPAAB *4

⁸³ Interview ASPAAB *5

involved in processes. Therefore, the birth of ASPAAB can be perceived as an unintentional outcome of an international NGO's project. An outcome that was led by the initiative of ASPAAB's members but deeply influenced by PLAN's projects in the city.

Taking this argument further, the creation of ASPAAB and the subsequent devolution of responsibilities for water management to this organisation can be traced in the propagation of development interventions and discourses in the country (Bordonaro, 2009)⁸⁴. For example, reflecting upon ASPAAB's members' motivations and aspirations during the early years of ASPAAB, Demba also illustrated the influence development interventions had on them.

“when I was a student I was a member of an organisation in Bissau. When I moved here, because I always like this thing of being in an association, I joined CEL 21. CEL 21 is an NGO, well, it is a grassroots association like ASPAAB, but which works on forest management. (...) When they started with the idea of creating ASPAAB, I thought the idea was interesting, you see. Also, the majority of my close friends, they were all there, so I eventually joined... (...) at that time, no one had any experience, overall there was the desire to volunteer and to contribute to the development of the city. (...) At the beginning, the motivation of members was essential for the association to develop and to engage with activities with the hope, you see, the hope that one day the association would have funds, its own funds to contribute. Because we thought that if there was no involvement if there were no small activities, if we only waited for someone to come, give us money and ask us to do an activity... we thought that engaging in small activities was a way to keep our cohesion, to keep members involved, we got to know each other, we created friendships and... we survived for a long time...”⁸⁵

Stating that he *“always like[d] this thing of being in an association”*, Demba echoed the views of other members of ASPAAB.⁸⁶ This motivation to be part of an organisation was routinely explained by a *“desire to volunteer and to contribute to the development of the city”*. For some, it was also

⁸⁴ See Bordonaro (2009) and Temudo and Abrantes (2013) for investigations of the generalised circulation of development interventions and discourses in Guinea-Bissau.

⁸⁵ Interview ASPAAB *5

⁸⁶ Interview ASPAAB *1, Interview ASPAAB *2, Interview ASPAAB *3, Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *7, Interview ASPAAB *8.

an important way to make friends outside the house or neighbourhood.⁸⁷ But, in a city where employment and training opportunities are extremely limited, being part of an association was also perceived as a key chance to gain skills and access training as well as income opportunities.⁸⁸ In this context, the motivations of ASPAAB's members must be understood both in terms of their desires to contribute to the development of the city and their expectations relating to training and (paid) job opportunities. When Demba says that their hope was that the association “*would have funds, its own funds to contribute*”, he is actually referring to their own project money, and therefore their hope to be recognised as a development actor and secure funds from international donors. This means that expectations relating to the desire to contribute to the development of the city and to opportunities for training and (paid) jobs were also profoundly linked to aspirations to attract funds from international donors, and therefore become involved in development interventions.

Demba also mentions ASPAAB's involvement in a wide range of *small activities* in attempts to maintain and strengthen the organisation. In this way, he hints at the fact that ASPAAB's involvement in the management of the water network started as one among a list of other activities that ASPAAB engaged with in the expectation of raising funds, strengthening the organisation and, eventually, becoming a recognised development actor and attracting foreign aid. ASPAAB was not created with the intention to work on water provision. Instead, it started operating the piped supply scheme, the same way it got involved in a number of other *small activities*, whilst seeking to attract international donations. Thus, the creation of ASPAAB and its involvement in the operation of the piped supply scheme can once again be traced in aspirations to eventually attract international donations and therefore to the manifest presence of development interventions in the city.

Likewise, the Regional Director – the state official that allowed the transfer of responsibilities to ASPAAB – also mentioned that one of the key benefits resulting from this transfer was ASPAAB's ability to raise funds from international donors, since donors were more willing to

⁸⁷ Interview ASPAAB *6, Interview ASPAAB *7

⁸⁸ Interview ASPAAB *1, Interview ASPAAB *3, Interview ASPAAB *5

work with NGOs than with the state.⁸⁹ He also noted that aid given to the state was unlikely to get to Bafatá. Thus, whilst escaping specific development interventions, the motivations and aspirations of both ASPAAB's members and state officials involved in the process were profoundly shaped by the prevalence of development interventions and discourses in Bafatá, in particular the ways international funds are channelled in the country. This reflects views arguing for the importance of the unintended consequences of development projects but also for the considerations of the autonomous spheres of actions that are inevitably created within (and beyond) development interventions (Mosse, 2005).

Although the creation of ASPAAB and the subsequent devolution of an urban service to this organisation can be seen as only *unintended* outcomes of development interventions, these instances were nonetheless in line with development interventions' policy models – to promote the devolution of urban services to the private and community sectors. This means that the ways in which development agencies are channelling funds to non-state organisations are fostering their aims even beyond the scope of planned interventions.⁹⁰ However, the process of devolution to ASPAAB also produced outcomes that exceeded, and even contradicted, policies disseminated through projects. In particular, the benefits of market approaches were never mentioned by either ASPAAB or the Regional Director. There were also no expectations concerning the financial viability of organisations involved in water management. On the contrary, guiding the transfer of responsibilities to ASPAAB were expectations related to the mobilisations of international funds. These funds were seen as essential to subsidise the operation of the piped water network and to raise funds for ASPAAB and its members. Thus, contrary to their policies and goals, development interventions did not reproduce market approaches but provoked the birth of an NGO that expected to mobilise subsidies from international organisations and NGOs both to operate the water system and to secure its existence. In this way, ASPAAB and the Regional Director can be

⁸⁹ Interview State *1

⁹⁰ Yet, as discussed in chapter 6, in a context where state institutions are depleted of resources, it is not clear how these processes fostering the role of non-state organisations in service delivery are contributing to the strengthening of the role of the state regulating and monitoring the work of these organisations – another stated goal of development interventions.

seen to have appropriated the presence of development interventions and discourses, and to have shaped outcomes according to their own aspirations and motivations. In the process, they transformed meanings and processes.

The personal relationships nurtured between the Regional Director and the most active members of ASPAAB are another important factor explaining how ASPAAB came to be involved in the operation of the city's piped water network. Queba, an ASPAAB member and close friend of the Regional Director, suggested that this state official's involvement with ASPAAB was linked to him being an outsider:

“Hmmm, it could have happened with someone else, if he [Regional Delegate] wasn't there... Maybe, in his place, that other person could have done it, but I am not so sure... For example, he didn't have, when he got here at that time, he didn't have any friends, a friend, I don't know what, he was all alone... But with ASPAAB, with the foundation of ASPAAB, he made friends, he became more transparent, open, more like a person. When he got here, he was alone, he had come from Cuba [where he trained as an engineer]...”⁹¹

For Queba, the Regional Director's involvement in the creation, and later in the workings of ASPAAB is explained by his aspirations to establish new relationships in the city and to expand his social networks. In fact, this in line with views expressed by various ASPAAB's members, who mentioned new friendships as one of the key benefits of being a member of the organisation. Nevertheless, the personal relationships and trust established between ASPAAB members and the Regional Director were key in facilitating the exchange of knowledge and ideas and therefore in driving the process of devolution and subsequently the evolution of the city's piped water supply. In fact, the close and routine rapport between the Regional Director and ASPAAB members was widely recognised as one of the major strengths of ASPAAB and the water governance model established in the city.⁹²

⁹¹ Interview ASPAAB *1

⁹² Fieldwork Notes, Interviews with ASPAAB and staff from international organisations.

Mountz (2003) and Rankin (2011) have reflected upon the relevance of everyday embodied practices and social relations in understandings of the ways in which policy models or state agendas are translated into practice. In the context of water provision in Bafatá, the embodiment and social relations of those actors involved are essential to explain why the devolution of responsibilities to ASPAAB happened in this particular place and at this particular time.

Thus, the birth of ASPAAB and the subsequent transfer of responsibilities for the management of the piped supply scheme can be seen as unintended outcomes of development interventions, which influenced the strategies adopted by those actors involved in the process. But, these events must also be seen as being mediated through the subjectivities, emotions and social relations of those involved. Financing a range of activities implemented by non-state organisations, international actors influenced the unfolding of events. Nevertheless, these events were fundamentally shaped by ASPAAB's and the Regional Director's own aspirations – to contribute to the development of the city, to improve access to water, to secure subsidies for the operation of the piped water scheme, to raise the profile of ASPAAB as a development actor, and to access income and training opportunities. In this way, ASPAAB and the Regional Director both conformed to and escaped policy models disseminated through development projects. At the same time, the embodied practices – the desire to make friends, “to be a person” – and social relations of those involved are also vital in understanding the ways in which the creation of ASPAAB and the devolution process took place.

Paradoxically, despite the emphasis given to market approaches and recently to public-private partnerships in global policies, the ways in which international organisations and NGOs channel funds seems to be fostering the emergence of NGOs and associations that are created in attempts to mobilise subsidies⁹³ that can fund urban services but also create training and jobs opportunities – rather than delivering market-driven, private and economically viable

⁹³ These subsidies are a necessity if piped water schemes are to exist in cities such as Bafatá.

solutions. Thus, more than the outcome of private companies' cherry picking strategies, the 'alternative' water governance model in place in Bafatá can be seen as the unintended outcome of development interventions in the country.

7.2.2. The ‘persistent irregularity’ of Bafatá’s water piped network between 2006 and 2010

Following the devolution of responsibilities for water management to the organisation in May 2006, ASPAAB inherited a very limited and run-down water network. Of the four existing sub-systems – Boma/Central, Bairro 4, Praça and Ponte Nova – only Bairro 4 was operative and even this sub-system presented severe faults with only one out of nine standpipes in use (see figures 11 and 13 below). The remaining eight public hydrants either lacked taps or were without water because of leaks and lack of pressure in the network. In addition, the pumps used to power the system suffered frequent breakdowns and consumed a high volume of financial resources (in repairs and fuel) which continuously threatened the viability of the system. Whilst Bairro 4 sub-network had been designed to include only standpipes, home connections had been added to the network and, therefore, ASPAAB also inherited at least 28 identified home connections (see figure 12 below). These unplanned home connections significantly affected the pressure in the system.



Figure 11. The one standpipe in operation in 2006 (picture taken in 2010)



Figure 12. Home connection active in 2010 (before refurbishment works). The residents excavated a pit to overcome water pressure issues.

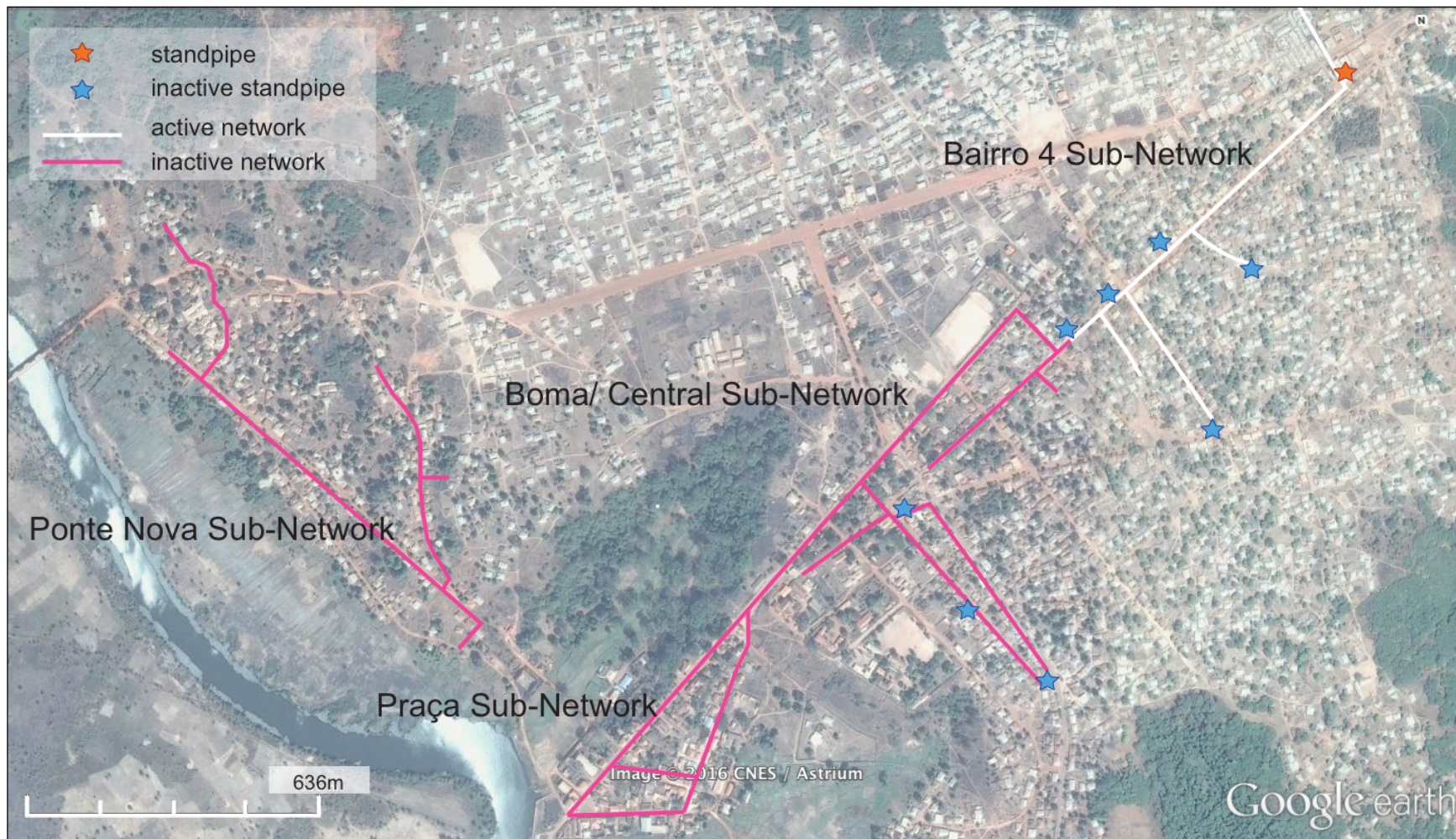


Figure 13. Bafatá Piped Water Network in 2006. Out of four sub-systems - Bairro 4, Ponte Nova, Praça and Boma/Central - only one - Bairro 4 - was in operation. (Source: google earth, produce by author)



Figure 15. Pump installed in Bairro 4 in 2008



Figure 16. Motor-pump installed in Boma in 2009

Between 2006 and 2010, the materialities of infrastructure were a critical element within the overall assemblage of actors, institutions and practices emerging around the city's piped supply scheme, which profoundly shaped the possibilities of ASPAAB and the Regional Director operating the system. For example, this is apparent in the ways in which the pumps used to power the system continuously disrupted the operation of the scheme and consequently dictated the activities of those actors involved in its operation. After taking over the management of the water network, ASPAAB invested the organisation's own sparse resources in the refurbishment of two standpipes and the restoration of the generator used to supply energy to the system. And, as illustrated in figure 14 above, during the following months, this association succeeded in keeping the system running without any major interruptions. However, on May 24th 2007, almost exactly one year after ASPAAB took over the management of the system, the electric pump used to send water from the borehole to the water tank feeding the distribution network burnt out as a result of an electric short-circuit. At this point, ASPAAB managed to gather the money required to buy a new electric pump to replace the old one. But, during the installation, this new pump also broke down and, without any further resources to invest in yet another pump or repair the existing ones, the entire system remained inactive for over one year. Eventually, in June 2008, a new electric pump was found and installed (see Figure 15, above). However, in yet another demonstration of the extreme vulnerability of this system, and the impact pumps had on its overall functioning,

only one month later, in July 2008, this pump also stopped working, when lightning struck it during a storm.

In the meantime, the Boma sub-system, out of order in 2006 when ASPAAB took over the position of water operator, started working in February 2009.⁹⁴ This followed the refurbishment of the Boma/Central water tank and the installation of a new motor-pump for this sub-system (see Figure 16, above), under a project funded by British NGO PLAN International and the Department of Water Resources. Once the refurbishment works were completed the system operated with only minor interruption for the following three months. However, in May 2009, the system stopped operating when, in another demonstration of the idiosyncrasies of technology, this new motor-pump broke down. A local technician eventually fixed this motor-pump, and the system started working once again in November 2009.

The successive breakdowns of the pumps, which commanded the regular shut down of the entire system, illustrate the extent to which the materiality of infrastructure dictated the overall operation of the system. Here, the regular interruptions to the water service resulting from technical difficulties also show that ASPAAB and the Regional Offices lacked the technical capacity to operate the system and struggled to find spare parts. This is revealed in the difficulties associated with repairing pumps but also, for example, in the fact that one of the pumps actually got damaged during installation. Most importantly, the constant breakdowns demonstrate that in order to operate the network ASPAAB required a significant amount of investment, investments which were beyond the financial capacities of ASPAAB or the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá. In this way, the materiality of infrastructure engendered the constant juggling of efforts by those involved in the operation of the piped scheme to maintain, repair and operate the system.

In fact, practices related to the multiple attempts to mobilise the resources required to operate, maintain and repair the network should be seen as another key element of the piped supply

⁹⁴ At this time ASPAAB connected the Boma and Bairro 4 sub-systems. This meant that they could supply water to both distribution networks using only one pump and water tank.

scheme at this time. They too shaped the ‘persistent irregularity’ of the system. These practices also illustrate the continuous search to generate possibilities within prescribed social, economic and political configurations. One strategy adopted by ASPAAB was to secure the support of different entities, such as NGOs and different state departments, through step-by-step negotiations. Where ASPAAB was sometimes successful in securing the support of different entities, the times taken to conduct repairs or replace equipment also indicate that negotiations not only took a long time but also required several attempts, including liaising with different entities. For example, the water service was out of commission for one year before a new pump was installed in June 2008. This new pump was actually a second-hand equipment found in a town located close to Bafatá and which the Regional Director managed to bring to the city. When this new pump also broke down, it took ASPAAB another almost two years to mobilise the resources required to fix the problem. This time the materials required, including electric cables and post, were donated by the Department of Energy and Guiné Telecom. But, before securing the support of the Department of Energy and Guiné Telecom, ASPAAB and the Regional Director had tried and failed to mobilise resources from a number of other entities. In 2009, it was PLAN, an international NGO, that funded the installation of a new motor-pump. When this new motor-pump also broke-down, the Regional Director was also not so successful in his negotiations. This new motor-pump had been installed by ASCON, one of the largest contractors operating in the country and included a guarantee. However, the Regional Director failed to get this private company to replace or repair the equipment as established under this equipment’s guarantee.

Besides seeking contributions from international NGOS, various state departments and large corporations, ASPAAB also engaged in numerous alternative enterprises in attempts to mobilise the revenues required to operate the water system. For instance, from the very beginning, ASPAAB sought to increase water revenues flowing from the sale of water. For this, they surveyed all existing home connections and disconnected those customers who

consistently failed to pay their water bills. Although without much success⁹⁵, ASPAAB also started installing meters in home connections. Furthermore, the purchase of the meters itself became a strategy to raise extra-revenue for the organisation, as some ASPAAB's members travelled to Senegal to buy meters more cheaply and then attempted to sell them with a considerable profit margin. Crucially, these efforts also demonstrate that cost-recovery was already at the core of ASPAAB's strategy during these early years. Yet, rather than being based on ideas relating to the benefits of market approaches or the advantages of perceiving water as an economic good, cost-recovery emerged as a pragmatic response in a context marked by an extreme lack of resources.

At this point, the persistent irregularity of Bafatá's water service appears to be shaped by the failing materialities of infrastructure, and the uneven patterns of investment resulting from the successes and failures of the multiple negotiations and enterprises ASPAAB engaged in whilst seeking to mobilise the resources required to operate the network.



Figure 17. Sporting Club of Bafatá Swimming Pool. ASPAAB managed this swimming people for a short period of time between 2006 and 2010.

However, ASPAAB's activities were not all linked to the operation of the water network. On the one hand, these other activities can be situated in ASPAAB's strategy at the time, which involved engaging with a wide range of initiatives in attempts to strengthen the organisation, optimise its chances of mobilising funds from international donors and maximise training and

⁹⁵ Users refused to pay for (buy) meters and, at this time, ASPAAB also lacked the ability to enforce the 'rule of the meter'.

income opportunities for its members. On the other hand, these activities profoundly shaped the evolution of ASPAAB's involvement in the operation of the piped supply scheme. For example, ASPAAB participated in several interventions focusing on rubbish collection and cleaning the city, for which they occasionally mobilised funding from the community, market traders, local state institutions and international NGOs. Furthermore, PLAN International also continued to fund different activities being implemented by ASPAAB, including several sanitation and water safety campaigns. The revenues raised through these activities would cover mostly the costs of food for the volunteers. Nevertheless, these activities were also very important in securing ASPAAB's members' – who played a key role operating the network – active commitment and in raising the profile of organisation in the city.⁹⁶

For a while in 2008, ASPAAB also ran the swimming pool of the Sporting Club of Bafatá (see figure 17 above). Part of the profits was handed in to the club but another was kept by the organisation. In addition to charging entrance, ASPAAB also sold drinks such as juices, beers and red wine in an attempt to raise some extra-money⁹⁷. Demba also remembers some members using their own private resources to fund ASPAAB's activities.⁹⁸ These revenues were at times invested in the operation of the piped supply scheme. Thus, these parallel enterprises also generated resources essential for the water service being provided. In this way, they were also a key dimension of the piped supply scheme.

In fact, between 2006 and 2010, efforts to operate the water network went hand in hand with attempts to maintain the organisations' members together by engaging in different activities; find multiple ways in which to raise income; and, raise the profile of the organisation. ASPAAB's aim was to improve the city's water service but also to work towards securing international donations for the organisation. And, in fact, these undertakings, including the role of the organisation operating the piped supply scheme, contributed to the development of ASPAAB as an organisation. They resulted in the growing recognition of ASPAAB as a

⁹⁶ Interview ASPAAB *5, Interview ASPAAB *4

⁹⁷ ASPAAB gave up the management of the swimming pool when someone drowned and died. This event shows once again the vulnerability and unpredictability of the context.

⁹⁸ Interview ASPAAB *5

valuable development actor among various actors in the city, and eventually culminated with its participation in two international development projects that fundamentally reshaped the organisation and Bafatá's piped supply scheme. It can therefore be argued that ASPAAB not only sought but also succeeded in creating possibilities within prescribed socio-political configurations.

Tracing the evolutions of ASPAAB as an organisation and water provision in Bafatá between 2006 and 2010, it emerges that the workings of both organisation and infrastructure rested on a continuous juggling of different people, organisations, financial resources, practices and equipment. The persistent irregularity characterising the operation of the piped water network at this stage can be seen as a product of an assemblage, which fundamental elements included: the materialities of the system; the joint efforts of ASPAAB and the Regional Director to operate the network; the instable pattern of investments sustained by step-by-step negotiations; as well as the motivation and aspiration of ASPAAB's members to strengthen the organisation. This assemblage sought the multiple possibilities that emerged through collaborations and alignments within a prescribed social, political and economic configuration. Where they only barely managed to keep the system working during this period, ASPAAB and the Regional Director actually succeeded in extending possibilities. ASPAAB went from a provisional arrangement to a more permanent organisation involved in service delivery. It was their work and commitment during these years that enabled the major transformations that took place from 2010 onwards, when ASPAAB became partner and beneficiary of a major international development project targeting the piped water scheme of Bafatá.

Whilst outcomes, such as the devolution of water management to the community sector or the adoption of cost-recovery principles, can resemble international policies and planned development interventions, this section demonstrates that the evolution of water provision in Bafatá between 2006 and 2010 was not directly shaped by neither of these. Nevertheless, water provision evolved mostly in line with the motivations, agendas and practices of

ASPAAB's members and the Regional Director which were influenced by the heavy presence of development interventions. Still, both these actors appropriated development interventions and discourses in accordance with their aspirations.

The next section explores the sedimentation of a new governance model between 2010 and 2014, a period that coincided with the implementation of two major international projects. It focuses on the ways in which ASPAAB appropriated, re-invented, contested and ignored global models and policies and continues to engage in a range of practices that largely exceed these policies.

7.3. Creole water governance: development interventions and the appropriation and re-invention of policy models

Bafatá Misti Iagu (BMI, Guinea-Bissau Creole for 'Bafatá Wants/Needs Water') and *Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu* (BMML, Guinea-Bissau Creole for 'Bafatá Wants/Needs More Water') – the two international development projects implemented in Bafatá between 2010 and 2015⁹⁹ – resulted in profound transformations in the city's piped water network. Table 6 below summarises key information concerning these two projects, including the duration, expected results and main achievements of these projects. Table 7 and figures 18 and 19 below illustrate the fundamental changes in the piped water network undertaken in the course of the implementation of these interventions. If in 2006 only Bairro 4 sub-network was in operation, by 2014 there were two active sub-networks and by 2016 all four existing sub-networks were in operation. In addition, between 2006 and 2016, the number of active standpipes rose from one to 24 and the number of home connections went from 18 to 104. Here, it is also important to point out that, where between 2006 and 2010 the system worked irregularly, by 2014 water was supplied on a daily basis for approximately two to three hours. By then, eventual

⁹⁹ The second project finished 2015 a few months after I completed my fieldwork.

disruptions to the service were also typically solved in a matter of few days, compared with the previous situation where it could take months or even years to deal with breakdowns.

As noted in table 6 below, both development interventions, BMI and BMMI, highlighted the long-term sustainability of the water system in Bafatá. In these circumstances, the definition and adoption of an adequate water governance model, the training and capacity-building of local actors and the strengthening of ASPAAB and relevant state institutions emerged as key components of these projects. These components were visibly influenced by mainstream international water policies and development discourses and, related to this, these projects tried to recreate a model similar to a public-private partnership entailing a small-scale provider, ASPAAB.¹⁰⁰ For this, these projects formalised the role of ASPAAB as the water operator of the network, created a separate and financially independent water unit within ASPAAB and engaged in attempts to professionalise this unit. In addition, detailed management procedures were also put in place to guide all levels of the operation of the network and the water unit of ASPAAB. The influences of neoliberal ideas were evident not only in the model adopted, that of a public-private partnership, but also in the attention paid by TESE, the projects' lead promoter, to cost-recovery principles and the strengthening of legal frameworks (see chapter 2 for discussion of neoliberalism and water provision).

This section explores the ways in which ASPAAB and the Regional Director negotiated the transformations towards the adoption of this new governance model. Sub-section 7.3.1. analyses the shifting contours of the relationship between ASPAAB and TESE. It shows the ongoing uneven power relations between these two organisations, which nevertheless did not prevent ASPAAB from significantly shaping projects' outcomes and processes. It also demonstrates the variety of motivations and practices co-existing within TESE and the evolution of ASPAAB as a development actor. Sub-section 7.4.2. explores some of the ways

¹⁰⁰ ASPAAB is a non-profit association, rather than a private company, but the model in place is still closer to that of a public-private partnership than to a community-management model. Where ASPAAB claims to be a grassroots organisation, there were never attempts to put in place a system that enabled the active participation of the community in the governance of water provision. In addition, the internal reforms of ASPAAB, including the creation of a separate water unit, have resulted in the transformation that approximate this organisation management approach to that of a private entity.

in which ASPAAB and the Regional Director have *appropriated, re-invented, ignored and contested* policy models circulating in the city to demonstrate how these policies have been consistently transformed in such a way they have often become ‘something else’. In addition, it shows that even processes and outcomes resembling neoliberal logics might have other agendas at their core. In doing so, it examines the meanings and effects associated with the legal concession contract signed in 2012. It demonstrates how the meanings and effects granted by ASPAAB to this legal tool – related to its utility as a means to mobilise international donations – surpassed those originally planned by policy models – that is to strengthen policy and regulatory frameworks. Furthermore, this sub-section describes how ASPAAB and the Regional Offices, whilst embracing cost-recovery principles, successfully ignored and contested a range of technical studies relating to the definition of a water tariff. Instead, the findings of these technical reports were manoeuvred in order to comply with the aims of ASPAAB and the Regional Offices. Here, it is also shown that despite the fact that ASPAAB and the Regional Director embraced cost-recovery principles, this resulted from a pragmatic attempt to raise revenues to operate the system rather than beliefs related to the benefits of market rule. Thus, where ASPAAB and the Regional Director have been actively involved in development interventions, they have triggered the transformation of policy models in such a way that they conform to the aspirations of these actors, and often exceed original (neoliberal) agendas. Lastly, sub-section 7.4.3. examines how the governance model in place in Bafatá has been continuously re-shaped by a range of practices at various levels, including those of users and standpipe operators. This is analysed as a process of embedding the model in existing social relations, a process essential for ensuring its ability to govern the city’s piped water network. In this way, this section also demonstrates that everyday practices and the ways in which policies are translated into practice are endowed with the agency of various actors even in contexts where power relations remain highly unbalanced. In addition, it traces how different motivations, agendas and ways of doing came to be at the heart of the governance model put in place.

Project Description

Bafatá Misti Iagu (Creole for ‘Bafatá Wants/Needs Water’) (BMI)

Project duration: 30 months, it started in January 2010 and terminated in June 2012.

Project Partners: Project led by TESE, development NGO based in Lisbon. ASPAAB was both partner and beneficiary of this project, whilst the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá and EPAL were both associates of the project. EPAL is the Portuguese state-owned company that manages water supply in Lisbon.

Project donors: This project was funded by the European Union, the Portuguese Development Agency (IPAD) and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Expected results:

- (1) an optimised water supply management model that secured access to water for 75% of the population in a sustainable manner adopted and implemented;
- (2) local actors in the water sector capacitated and able to implement the adopted water supply management model;
- (3) water network infrastructures refurbished to supply safe water;
- (4) an awareness raising campaign on the themes of water, hygiene, environment and the user-payer principle implemented.

Summary of main Achievements:

- Infrastructure: 53 home connections and 13 standpipes in operation and with meters installed; Bairro 4 and Boma/ Central sub-systems refurbished with one new water source (borehole) added to the system and solar panels installed in two locations;
- Service: water supplied daily
- Management: significant improvements in management and increases in cost-recovery

Project Description

Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu (Creole for ‘Bafatá Wants/Needs More Water’) (BMMI)

Project duration: 30 months, from July 2012 to December 2014.

Project Partners: Project led by TESE, development NGO based in Lisbon. ASPAAB was both the main partner and beneficiary of this project, the Regional Offices of the Department of Water Resources in Bafatá, EPAL (Portuguese state-owned company that manages water supply in Lisbon), and SNV were also partners.

Project donors: This project was funded by the European Union, and co-funded by Camoes Mission – Institute for Cooperation and Language, EPAL – Empresa Portuguesa de Aguas Livres, SNV – Netherlands cooperation Institute, TESE and ASPAAB.

Expected results:

- (5) Water Plan for the City of Bafatá completed and adopted;
- (6) Human and institutional capacity of ASPAAB reinforced in order to guarantee the sustainability of the system and its autonomy and leadership in water supply in Bafatá;
- (7) Refurbishment and expansion infrastructure for water supply in Ponte Nova, Bairro 5 Caibara and Bairro 3;
- (8) positive shifts in the attitudes, knowledge and practices related to hygiene, public health and payment for water through an awareness raising campaign.

Table 6. Description of BMI and BMMI, two international development projects

Sub-system	2006	2014	2016
Bairro 4	Working	Working	Working
Boma/Central	Not working	Working	Working
Praça	Not working	Not Working	Working
Ponte Nova	Not working	Not Working	Working

Table 7. Condition of water sub-networks in 2006, 2014 and 2016

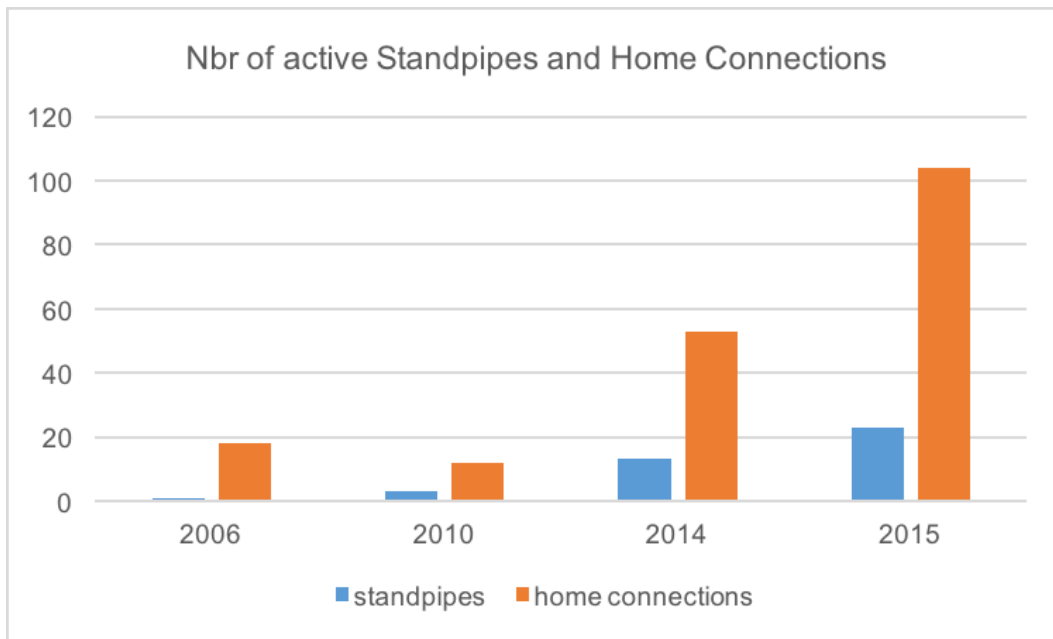


Figure 18. Number of active standpipes and home connections: 2006, 2010, 2014, 2015



Figure 19. Bafatá piped water network 2014

7.3.1. The contours of the relationships between ASPAAB and international NGOs

Before moving on to the analyses of the Creole Water Governance model adopted in Bafatá, this sub-section examines the evolution of the terms of the partnership between ASPAAB and international NGO TESE – the main promoter of BMI and BMMI. The aim is to demonstrate that even in contexts where power relations remain extremely unbalanced, subordinated actors still maintain agency and autonomous spheres of everyday action. Underlying this sub-section is also the evolution of ASPAAB's as a recognised and knowledgeable development actor. In addition, this sub-section complicates local-non-local binaries by showing the variety of motivations and practices co-existing within TESE.

The beginning of *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (BMI) coincided with the start of the consistent presence of Portuguese NGO TESE in Bafatá and, in particular, with their regular involvement in the management of the piped water network. In these circumstances, the relationship between TESE and ASPAAB became an important part of the assemblage of actors and practices emerging around the water system, influencing the ways in which the project was implemented and its outcomes, as well as the ongoing governing of water infrastructure. Furthermore, the presence of TESE corresponded to the dissemination of development discourses and international policies and models, which became key elements in the governing of water infrastructure. Thus, the relationship between these two organisations also influenced how these models travelled between the two organisations and were translated into practice.

Between 2008, when ASPAAB and TESE first started working together on the first funding application, and 2014, a time when BMI had already been implemented and BMMI was more than halfway through its implementation period, the terms of the partnership between the two organisations swayed considerably. These variations denoted the unequal power relations between the two organisation and, despite the noticeable growth in ASPAAB's capacity to make demands, how they persisted over time.

TESE's evaluation of the partnership between the two organisations for the duration of the first project, BMI, was extremely positive. It highlighted ASPAAB's enthusiasm and active participation in all project activities and the interest of the organisation in continuing the partnership with TESE.¹⁰² On the other hand, ASPAAB's appraisal was less optimistic and raised some fundamental issues. In fact, in 2014, with the benefit of hindsight, one member of ASPAAB's management team cited the partnership between the two organisations as the weakest point in the first project.¹⁰³ This is not to say that ASPAAB members did not value or recognise how much their organisation, and the water infrastructure of the city, had benefited from this project. During my interviews, most members of ASPAAB mentioned the fantastic increase in the human resource and institutional capacities of the organisation as the most important consequence of BMI.¹⁰⁴ For example, Mamadu noted:

*“Training was the most important thing during the project [BMI], that contributed to most changes in the organisation. ASPAAB had human resources because its members are mostly teachers and students but there was no prior knowledge of project management. (...) Before the project ASPAAB had no written registers, archives or accounting. There was no control, no flexibility and no skills and knowledge to do things, this changed with the training in business administration, business and financial management, accounting, marketing, internal auditing, etc.”*¹⁰⁵

In fact, they did not only recognise these benefits but also linked their ability to evaluate their partnership in the terms discussed below to their involvement in the implementation of BMI, and their growing ability to understand and negotiate the terms of the partnership.¹⁰⁶

In the accounts of ASPAAB's members, the first crucial dispute concerning the relationship between the two organisations touched on the distribution of project resources between the two partners. For example, Mamadu¹⁰⁷ and Demba¹⁰⁸ described how, for the entire duration

¹⁰² Fieldwork notes

¹⁰³ Interview ASPAAB *4

¹⁰⁴ Interview ASPAAB *2, *3, *4, *5

¹⁰⁵ Interview ASPAAB *4

¹⁰⁶ Interview ASPAAB *5

¹⁰⁷ Interview ASPAAB *4

¹⁰⁸ Interview ASPAAB *5

of BMI¹⁰⁹ as well as the initial months of BMMI¹¹⁰, ASPAAB's members' participation in project activities was done mostly on a voluntary basis. This means that its members did not get paid for any of the work they undertook for the project. Furthermore, they pointed out that at a certain point during the implementation of BMI, some of the associates of ASPAAB started suffering cuts in their teachers' wages, since they were missing classes in order to perform project activities. They raised this issue with TESE who agreed to include stipends for four ASPAAB members into the overall project budget.¹¹¹ However, these stipends were so low that, despite accepting them, some ASPAAB's members felt ashamed and insulted. In Mamadu's words:

“The total stipend was 95,000 CFA [per month] (€144.85), to be divided between four people... (laughs) So 95,000 CFA divided by four, I received 30,000 CFA (€45.74), which was considered to be my wage, Demba 25,000 (€38.12 Euro), Samba 25,000 and Fanta, who was the secretary at the time, 15,000 (€22.87). Well, at the beginning I even wanted to say no, I don't need that ... that [little] money. But then, I thought, since I'm missing classes, I'll do it, I'll take the money”^{112,113}

Related to the above, whereas project resources were used to acquire the materials, equipment and wages TESE needed to implement the project, these resources did not reach ASPAAB. The materials and equipment that ASPAAB might have needed had not been entered in the overall project budget and during BMI, ASPAAB even used its own scarce resources to buy materials for the implementation of project activities. For example, Mamadu noted how they had contributed some of the material needed for the awareness-raising campaign implemented during BMI.¹¹⁴ TESE's project coordinator¹¹⁵ perceived the volunteering and the contributions to project activities as ASPAAB's own input to the project, similar to TESE's

¹⁰⁹ *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (1st Project)

¹¹⁰ *Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu* (2nd Project)

¹¹¹ Interview ASPAAB *4, (TESE and ASPAAB, 2011a): ASPAAB's Water Management Model Manual – Appendix IV: Diagnosis of the existing water management model in Bafatá

¹¹² Interview ASPAAB *4

¹¹³ Employed by the Portuguese Development Agency and TESE to work on the implementation of the same project, BMI, I got a monthly wage of approximately 1,700 Euro.

¹¹⁴ Interview ASPAAB *4

¹¹⁵ At the time I was part of the local project team and responded to the project coordinator who was based in Lisbon. This information is based on our conversations at that time.

financial contribution demanded by the EU, the chief donor. In addition, it constituted a way to avoid the unsustainable dependency of a small organisation like ASPAAB, through the flooding of resources that would disappear as soon as the project finished. On the contrary, ASPAAB's members claimed this only happened because ASPAAB was a small organisation with little means; other organisations in the country with more resources would have never accepted this kind of partnership. They claimed TESE was taking advantage of ASPAAB's fragilities and their dependency on TESE for accessing international donors.¹¹⁶ As will be discussed below, this view was shared by some of TESE's staff who recognised the unequal distribution of resources between the two partners.¹¹⁷

The second issue concerned TESE's reluctance to negotiate some key aspects of the project and the need to further involve ASPAAB in decision-making processes relating to both technical issues and project budgeting in future initiatives. For example, ASPAAB's members anticipated that their potential involvement in the formulation of the second project, BMMI, presented an important opportunity for them to learn how to formulate projects and produce funding applications, which they considered an essential step towards their autonomy as an organisation. However, as often happened at this time, ASPAAB was only superficially involved in the process. For example, ASPAAB participated in the definition of the areas for future extensions of the piped water network during a visit by the project leader, then based in Lisbon, to the city. Nevertheless, they were never invited to join in the actual formulation of the proposals, including the financial component. Their role was relegated to that of collecting data and sending it to Lisbon where the project was being formulated. Also, ASPAAB never had access to any of the project's budgets. These events surrounding the formulation of the second project, BMMI, were just one example of the ways in which ASPAAB's members perceived TESE to have systematically failed to involve them in key stages of the projects and to share processes of decision-making. For ASPAAB, notwithstanding TESE's talk about helping ASPAAB to become an autonomous organisation

¹¹⁶ Interview ASPAAB *4

¹¹⁷ Fieldwork Notes

that could lead water supply in the city, the fact that they did not give them the resources they needed or integrate them in fundamental stages of the project undermined their ability to become autonomous and independent.¹¹⁸

The relationship between the two organisations improved considerably at the beginning of the second project, BMMI, during the last trimester of 2012. The first factor evidently shaping this shift in the contours of the partnership between the two organisations was the change in TESE's project team, which entailed the transfer of the entire project team to Bafatá, followed by the appointment of new staff, including a new project coordinator with visibly distinct visions of development. For Luisa, the new project coordinator, the chief aim of BMMI was to build the capacity of ASPAAB and to contribute to the consolidation and autonomy of this organisation, rather than to directly improve the water supply system. The improvements in the water supply service, which had been the main focus of the first team, would flow from the renewed capacity of local institutions.¹¹⁹ Following her vision, and her acknowledgement of ASPAAB's viewpoint regarding the extremely unbalanced distribution of project resources, Luisa initiated key alterations in the project. These alterations required a lot of internal fights within TESE but were eventually adopted.¹²⁰ They included wages for ASPAAB's members involved in the delivery of project activities, a new budget to be managed by ASPAAB to implement project activities, and the formal inclusion of ASPAAB in all dimensions of the project, in an attempt to share decision-making processes.¹²¹

Crucially, the different approach of the new project team employed by TESE was also revealed in the ways ASPAAB's role was portrayed, not only among those working on the implementation of the project, but also more generally among actors in the sector. For example, the previous TESE project coordinator did not recognise ASPAAB's right to be a member of GAS, the national water and sanitation group. Instead, they invited members of the organisation to occasionally participate in GAS meetings as "*a way to recognise their good*

¹¹⁸ Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *5, Fieldwork Notes

¹¹⁹ Fieldwork Notes

¹²⁰ Fieldwork Notes

¹²¹ Fieldwork Notes

work".¹²² Conversely, the new project team claimed that as the operator of the piped water network of Bafatá, the second city of Guinea-Bissau, ASPAAB was entitled to be a member of GAS, whose aim was precisely to bring together actors working in the sector from across the country. In fact, this recognition of ASPAAB as an actor in its own right, rather than a mere goodwill local association, translated into significant changes in the ways the organisation was perceived by other actors in the sector. This transformation of ASPAAB from a small, well-intentioned association doing the best they could to a successful organisation implementing a model that could be reproduced elsewhere became evident in the ways in which different actors in the sector referred to the organisation during GAS meetings.¹²³ It became particularly evident when, in 2013, Unicef invited ASPAAB to train an organisation being created in another city to manage a piped water network.

ASPAAB's appraisal of the partnership between the two organisations clearly demonstrated how they perceived the changes in TESE's project team. ASPAAB stated that "*the new project team shows the willingness to support ASPAAB unconditionally*".¹²⁴ This was revealed in the sharing of opinions and decision-making processes for all activities and results of the project. Related to this, ASPAAB's members routinely praised the new project team, stressing how much things had changed and how much they had learnt since their arrival. Furthermore, ASPAAB's members constantly recalled the fact that they had started getting paid for their work and that their organisation had secured its own budget to run an office equipped with materials and equipment, such as laptops, printers, Internet, and electricity to use all these.¹²⁵

This is not to say that all conflicts disappeared. The share of project resources and the distribution of work within the project remained contentions, as witnessed in some of the events that took place under the new management. These tensions also reflected conflicts

¹²² Fieldwork notes

¹²³ GAS Meeting *1, GAS Meeting *2, GAS Meeting *3, GAS Meeting *4, GAS Meeting *5, GAS Meeting *6

¹²⁴ Fieldwork notes

¹²⁵ Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *5

within TESE, with the new project team often disagreeing with the wider organisational approach.¹²⁶

Besides the changes in TESE's project team, another important driver in the evolution of the partnership between ASPAAB and TESE was ASPAAB's increasing knowledge of, and co-optation into, development discourses and the working of internationally funded projects, as noted by ASPAAB's members themselves. In fact, ASPAAB's associates recognised that when they first started the partnership with TESE, they had never been involved in that kind of partnership before and, therefore, did not know either what to expect or what to demand. It was only towards the end of BMI that they started realising the many problems related to the partnership between TESE and ASPAAB.¹²⁷ As ASPAAB gained more experience of the development world they came to understand that whilst ASPAAB needed TESE in order to access funding from international donors, TESE also needed ASPAAB, as a local partner, to access these same funds. Dependency was, to a certain extent, mutual. Simultaneously, they became increasingly aware of the meaning and objectives of partnerships between local and international organisations in development projects and, consequently, became more critical of the existing asymmetries in the relationship between ASPAAB and TESE.

The unequal division of project resources and decision-making abilities between the two organisations during the early stages of their partnership was a good indicator of their unequal power to dictate processes and outcomes within the project. Shifts which altered some of these imbalances suggest that ASPAAB's influence increased over time and that shifts were partly a result of ASPAAB's own development. Nevertheless, the arrival of Luisa, a new project coordinator with a different vision of development projects seems to have constituted the most important factor in the materialisation of change. On the one hand, the role of this project coordinator and the ongoing conflicts between her and TESE's management suggest that individual's perspectives and approaches can considerably affect how projects unfold on the ground. As suggested by Mountz (2003), the subjectivities and experiences of actors involved

¹²⁶ Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *5, Fieldwork Notes

¹²⁷ Interview ASPAAB *4, Interview ASPAAB *5

are important in shaping outcomes. Related to this, as Luisa left TESE in March 2014, it is not clear how much of, and for how long the changes ignited by her will last. In fact, in informal conversations with some ASPAAB associates just after the appointment of a new project coordinator, it emerged that they were concerned and not very positive about the new TESE staff member. They were particularly worried about the ways in which he was already excluding ASPAAB from project meetings and decision-making. Once again, this hints at the extent to which the shifts in the relationship depended on the vision of TESE's project coordinator rather than on ASPAAB's own ability to make demands.

Thus, despite the changes in the terms of the partnership and in ASPAAB's abilities to make demands, the reality was that ASPAAB remained the weak party, depending on TESE's concessions to their demands to be more involved in the project and in decision-making processes. Nevertheless, as will be discussed below, the patterns of this partnership were not necessarily emulated in the ways the projects were implemented or the piped water infrastructure governed. ASPAAB continuously rejected, adapted, and transformed ideas, models and policies advanced by TESE. In fact, the consolidation of ASPAAB's role as a recognised development actor suggests the progressive co-optation of this organisation within development discourses but also an increasing ability to negotiate and enact its own motivations and agendas. At the same time, TESE, as an example of an international NGOs, is not a coherent non-local entity. Instead, as shown above, it includes and engenders many motivations and practices that largely transcend local-global binaries. This means that often TESE is also involved in processes of transformation of policy models introduced by themselves.

7.3.2. *Appropriating and Re-inventing* policy models I: legal contracts and cost-recovery principles

This sub-section explores how different policies and models promoted by international NGOs were appropriated, re-invented, ignored and contested as they were put into practice and appropriated by different actors. In doing so, it examines the process of appropriation of the concession contract signed in 2012 between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Then, it explores how ASPAAB and the Regional Director successfully ignored and contested financial analyses developed under BMI in attempts to re-define the water tariff. In this way, it shows how processes of appropriation and re-invention, which profoundly re-shaped circulating policy models, resulting in a creole model of governance. This model has its own logics, ways of doing, rationalities and motivations, which despite being influenced from many directions, also transcended any particular influence.

Re-inventing legal frameworks – appropriating the concession contract

As discussed in chapter 6, in 2012 ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources signed a contract, which formalised ASPAAB's role as the operator of Bafatá's piped water network. The contrasts between the logics and motivations underpinning TESE's¹²⁸ initiative to elaborate this contract and the meanings and effects that ASPAAB attached to this legal tool illustrate some of the ways in which various actors appropriated and re-invented policy models circulating in the city.

The need for a legal concession was established through a series of 'participatory' assessments carried out by TESE under BMI and involving ASPAAB, the Regional Director and, occasionally, representatives of other organisations. Among these assessments were: a SWOT analysis of ASPAAB to assess the internal dynamics of the organisation and its members¹²⁹; a

¹²⁸ Here, it is important to note that I mention TESE and not TESE's staff. TESE, as an organisation, included a number of staff that clearly transcended the local versus global binary. This means that TESE's staff was often part of the process of appropriation and re-invention. Thus, I use TESE to refer to views of the organisation, as stated in reports and official documents, rather than individual views of its staff members.

¹²⁹ (TESE and ASPAAB, 2011b): ASPAAB's Water Management Model Manual – Appendix II: ASPAAB SWOT – Analysis Final Results

comprehensive diagnosis of the water management model then adopted and implemented in Bafatá¹³⁰; more general assessments of three different models adopted in other secondary centres of the region¹³¹; and, the compiling of a bibliography on water supply management models and best practices in small cities across the world.¹³² Eventually, the conclusions of these assessments were summarised in reports and included as appendices in ASPAAB's Water Management Manual (TESE, 2010; TESE and ASPAAB, 2013b, 2011a, 2011b, 2011c, 2010).

Overall, these analyses illustrated a commitment to 'rational' decision-making and the mobilisation of 'scientific', measurable knowledges to justify solutions and decisions. They therefore represented an obvious move away from the 'ad-hoc' decision-making processes and pragmatic responses which prevailed between 2006 and 2010. The ways in which both the need for and the findings of these multiple studies were framed also illustrate TESE's reliance on mainstream policies and development discourses. This is revealed in the participatory methodologies adopted, the focus on cost-recovery and the emphasis given to the strengthening of regulatory and policy frameworks. In addition, these studies demonstrate TESE's reliance on the effects of specific languages and modalities of the state, including legal and policy tools.

One key finding emerging from the above analyses was the lack of adequate policy and legal frameworks guiding water governance in the city, as widely suggested by World Bank analyses of similar contexts (see chapter two). According to TESE's analysis, the inadequacy of regulatory, legal and policy frameworks was revealed in the lacunas and contradictions detected in existing policies, the ambiguities concerning the adoption and implementation of new and existing policies and the confusion relating to the roles and responsibilities of different actors in the sector. For example, while new policies and legislations were supposedly being

¹³⁰ (TESE and ASPAAB, 2011a): ASPAAB's Water Management Model Manual – Appendix IV: Diagnosis of the existing water management model in Bafatá

¹³¹ (TESE and ASPAAB, 2011c): ASPAAB's Water Management Model Manual – Appendix III: Sessions for the analysis of the management models adopted in the Region of Bafatá – Final Report

¹³² (TESE and ASPAAB, 2010): ASPAAB's Water Management Model Manual – Appendix I: Review of bibliography on models and best practices for water management in small cities

drafted under the 10th European Development Fund¹³³, it was unclear which direction those policies would take and whether, or when, they would be adopted and implemented. Furthermore, the management model adopted by the state for secondary centres envisaged a National Water Fund, which had not yet been created hindering the adoption of the new management model by operators of water systems like ASPAAB and leaving them without guidance. Crucially, in this context, the informality of ASPAAB (at the time without any legal contract defining its role as water operator) was also perceived as an important flaw, threatening the security of ASPAAB as water operator and generating ambiguities in the distribution of duties and responsibilities between this organisation and the multiple state institutions.

In these circumstances, the contract signed between ASPAAB and the Ministry of Natural Resources was drafted as a way to overcome existing weaknesses. In the impossibility of transforming national regulatory, legal and policy frameworks, the contract signed appeared as a way to overcome the perceived policy and legislation vacuum. Thus, this contract defined the duties and responsibilities of different actors and the terms of the governance model to be put in place, protecting ASPAAB from not only inconsistencies but also eventual or sudden changes in policy¹³⁴ and securing ASPAAB's position as the operator of the water network of the city. Here, it becomes obvious how, for TESE, legal, policy and regulatory instruments were seen as essential to govern social order. This reflects, on the one hand, their reliance on international models and, on the other hand, the extent to which their images of what a state should be were based on Western models (see Chapters 3 and 6).

Yet, the views of those actors involved in the management of the piped water network were rather different. Their views reflected their understandings of weaknesses relating to the rule of law and the implementation of national policies in the country. In particular, although supporting the drafting and signing of the contract, ASPAAB's members did not expect or

¹³³ This fund included a project entailing revisions of national water policies and the national water law (Codigo Nacional das Aguas)

¹³⁴ This contract included a clause to secure a transitional period in case of policy changes or the adoption of a different model for urban centres such as Bafatá.

attempt to rely on the legality of this document in their operations. They did not expect this contract to change the ways in which they interacted with different state actors and institutions. They also did not expect it to de facto clarify the roles of different entities converging in the governance of water supply. For example, they knew from the start that the role attributed to national-level state departments in this legal document – including taking responsibilities for major repairs and expansions to the network – would not be translated into practices on the ground. ASPAAB’s members also looked more into state weaknesses rather than this contract in order to secure their position as Bafatá’s water operator. However, as illustrated in the extract of an interview with Mamadu below, the legal contract represented an important tool for ASPAAB:

“Because they [international NGOs] think that they will invest their funds and then, at any time, the government can take over and trust the management to someone else. (...) the contract creates a guarantee from them in this way. And, for us, well... it’s a kind of recognition from the state, the state recognised our work, the service we did, and gave us the network. That’s good for us.”

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In fact, when Mamadu says that this contract created security for those international NGOs wishing to invest in ASPAAB, he is also saying that, besides the recognition of their work by the state, this contract also serves one of ASPAAB’s key aims. For ASPAAB’s members, the legal contract represented a vital tool they could use in their search for international donations, since international donors frequently seek the security of legal language when engaging in different projects. The contract might not enhance the regulatory and policy frameworks in which the organisation operates but it works to satisfy the requirements of international donors working in the country, and therefore it increases ASPAAB’s chances to mobilise foreign aid. Thus, pragmatically embracing this contract as a key tool to mobilise funds from international donors, ASPAAB endowed this legal device with new meanings and effects. It was re-invented in accordance with ASPAAB’s motivations and practices. Rather than complementing policy

¹³⁵ Interview ASPAAB *4.

and regulatory frameworks or defining relations and interactions between ASPAAB and other institutions, the legal contract is being used as a tool to mobilise international funds. The original logics and effects have in this way been dramatically re-invented and therefore transformed into ‘something else’.

Contesting and ignoring tariff analyses – appropriating cost-recovery

The endeavours to introduce cost-recovery principles into the management model constitute another example of the ways in which models and policies were transformed as they were introduced in the specific context of Bafatá. In this case, it shows how various actors successfully ignored and contested policy models introduced during a development intervention. For TESE, a key requirement for the long-term sustainability of the system was the financial viability of the enterprise, which would rest on the adoption of strict cost-recovery principles. As TESE observed, in the management model adopted in Bafatá before the beginning of BMI, the water tariff being applied – 1000 CFA/m³ (€1.52/m³) at public standpipes and 600 CFA/m³ (€0.91/m³) for home connections – was not based on any tariff or viability surveys. Simultaneously, this tariff did not reflect either the cost, or the quality of the service delivered nor consumer’s willingness to pay for an improved water service. Thus, in line with the overall aim of BMI of guaranteeing the long-term sustainability of the water system of the city, TESE completed two important studies: a “Study of the socio-economic characteristics of the population and its willingness to pay for improved water services in Bafatá” (WTP) and a “Water Tariff and financial analysis”.

The Water Tariff and Financial analysis followed specific criteria and principles in order to identify a tariff that would guarantee the recovery of operation and maintenance, replacement and small investments costs.¹³⁶ The WTP study, on the other hand, was conceived as an important tool that would support the definition of a water tariff by adding information about consumers’ willingness to pay for different levels of service in different areas of the city.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ (TESE and ASPAAB, 2013b)ASPAAB’s Water Management Model Manual – Appendix V: Tariff and Financial analysis

¹³⁷ (TESE, 2010)

Notably, whereas the results of the WTP survey showed that people's willingness to pay was higher than tariffs in place at the time, the final results of the water tariff and financial analysis proposed tariffs 7% lower in the case of home connections and 67% lower in the case of standpipes.

Once again, the methodologies, assumptions and analyses carried out by TESE reflected this organisations reliance on broader international policies and development discourses advocating cost-recovery principles and alluding to the poor's willingness, and (hidden) ability to pay for water. However, in spite of all the activities related to the implementation of an adequate tariff, by 2014 the tariff remained exactly the same as before BMI was launched. When the results of the WTP survey, the first study being completed, were presented to ASPAAB and the Regional Director, it became clear that both entities were reluctant to accept any significant, or even minimal, changes to the tariff adopted.¹³⁸ Nevertheless, in the final report of the water tariff and financial analysis the choice of a volumetric linear tariff, as opposed to a rising block tariff or other models considered in the analysis¹³⁹, was justified on the basis of the criteria¹⁴⁰ and principles¹⁴¹ adopted in the calculation of the tariff rather than any inertia in the system. Even if this amounted to continuing with the same type of tariff. In terms of the levels of the tariffs, by the end of BMI, TESE announced that the tariff structure was being checked and validated by a senior economist from the International Water and Sanitation Centre for future implementation.¹⁴² At the same time, the final report of this same project stated that an external evaluation carried out showed that by the end of the project, revenues from the sale of water covered 2/3 of the operation and management costs and that it was expected that this would rise to 100% of the costs in the near future. Here, there was no mention to changes in the tariff.

¹³⁸ Fieldwork Notes

¹³⁹ The types examined were single tariff, linear volumetric tariff, rising block tariff and decreasing block tariff.

¹⁴⁰ The criteria adopted were: (1) Financial (secure cost recovery); (2) Economic efficiency (costs must equal marginal costs); (3) Equity (consumers pay the equivalent of the company's costs); (4) Justice (consumers pay according to their possibilities). Cross-subsidisation between different consumers is considered and therefore the criteria of economic efficiency relaxed in favour of those of equity and justice.

¹⁴¹ The principles adopted were: (1) Conservation; (2) Applicability (utility should be able to efficiently implement tariff adopted); (3) Just (respect consumers' ability to pay); (4) Simple (easy to understand by consumers).

¹⁴² (TESE, 2012): Bafatá Misti Iagu Final Report

Considering these same events from a different angle, one could maintain that TESE's attempts to change the tariff were never taken into real consideration by ASPAAB and the Regional Director. In the end, the exercise was more one of TESE seeking a 'rationale' that could explain the existing tariff rather than the tariff adapting to the rationale introduced by TESE. In fact, not only did the tariff remain the same despite the conclusions of the studies developed but also the value being charged at standpipes remained higher than that charged for home connections (1000 CFA/m³ versus 600 CFA/m³). From the perspective of TESE's first project team, opting for a higher price at the standpipe prevented poorer households from accessing water from this system and, therefore, was unjust. In addition, it seemed irrational to demand a higher price for a lower service. This was reflected in the final proposal included in the tariff and financial analysis, which foresaw that the price for m³ of water for home connections would ultimately be set at almost double that of standpipes. ASPAAB and the Regional Offices had a different view. According to them, the price of home connections was lower in order to create an incentive for users to build these, and to compensate for the fact that users had to cover the costs of all the materials and work needed to connect them to the grid. In addition, it was actually cheaper for ASPAAB to sell water using home connections, which were paid for by users, than using standpipes, which were paid for by ASPAAB and required a paid contractor for their operation.

Thus, the current tariff highlights the ability of ASPAAB and the Regional Offices to dictate the final tariff, despite the attempts, supported by various technical appraisals, by TESE to change it. In addition, it also illustrates the inability of these technical documents to relate to contexts such as that of Bafatá, and account for the vulnerability and specificities of the infrastructure in question. This was, perhaps, because they remained models, they did not adapt to capture or fit the reality of Bafatá. TESE claimed that the structure of the tariff was linked to the infrastructures being constructed since only in this way could it reflect the real costs of the operation and maintenance of the system, the production of water and of

substitutions and new investments.¹⁴³ However, the lower tariffs arrived at are the result of a theoretical exercise conducted by TESE's team in Lisbon and are unlikely to represent the real costs of such enterprises in Guinea-Bissau, where the shortage and higher costs of materials and equipment, the lack of technical staff and the extremely hot and humid weather conditions result in much higher costs. Thus, ASPAAB and the Regional Director successfully ignored and contested standard models being disseminated and backed by 'scientific' appraisals, which validity they did not recognise.

At this point, it is important to notice that this resistance to changes in the tariffs did not amount to a resistance to the adoption of cost recovery principles by local actors. In fact, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the emphasis on cost recovery was in line with this organisation's pragmatic approach and at the core of ASPAAB's management from the moment the organisation took over responsibility for managing the water system. Thus, similar to what was described for the devolution of responsibilities for the management of the piped water network to ASPAAB, the initial adoption of cost-recovery principles in Bafatá cannot be easily linked to national or international policies, neither can it be attributed to TESE's, or any other international organisation, direct influence. The adoption of cost-recovery principles in Bafatá was first initiated by ASPAAB and the Regional Offices as a pragmatic response to local possibilities, rather than based on assumptions concerning the benefits of market rule.

In fact, cost recovery was a real concern for ASPAAB, since they were more than aware that the organisation actually depended on water revenues to survive. Also, during BMMI, it emerged that ASPAAB was de facto more committed to the needs of cost-recovery than its partner TESE. Included in the initial programme of work to be carried out under BMMI, was the extension of the distribution network in the upper parts of town (Bairro 4 and Central/Boma systems) and the construction of 5 new standpipes to serve these new areas of the city. ASPAAB was extremely concerned about the impacts of these activities on the quality

¹⁴³ (TESE, 2012): Bafatá Misti Iagu Final Report

as well as the operation and maintenance costs of the service. On the one hand, since there were no programmed increases in the production of water or storage capacity in the system, the extension of the distribution of the network, and the consequent increase in water usage, would result in a reduction of the system's operating times (which were already down to 2h30 during the dry season). On the other hand, increasing the number of standpipes would result in a direct increase in the O&M costs since there would be more standpipe operators that would have to be paid. Since the volume of water being sold would remain the same, the revenues would remain constant but the costs of running the system would go up. Interestingly, this was a major concern of ASPAAB since it would have an impact on their revenues and it was something that, apparently, had been missed out by TESE, despite their focus on cost recovery. This shows once again how ASPAAB's pragmatic, and grounded, approach was considerably more attuned to the needs and possibilities of the system in Bafatá. Policy models had to be transformed if the system was to operate in Bafatá.

Thus, ignoring and contesting tariff analysis, ASPAAB and the Regional Director did not reject cost-recovery principles. In fact, ASPAAB enthusiastically embraced managerial and technical innovations proposed by BMI and BMMI that facilitated revenue collection. Instead, this contestation can be seen as the process through which ASPAAB and the Regional Director ensure that it remained in line with their own goals, priorities and ways of doing. In this way, they selectively appropriated a well-travelled principle – cost-recovery – according to their own aspirations. This episode also illustrates the ability of subordinated actors to both embrace and contest knowledge.

7.3.3. *Appropriating and Re-inventing* policy models II: cost-recovery, everyday practices and processes of embedding

In line with efforts towards cost-recovery, BMI financed the installation of meters on all public standpipes and home connections. This investment in technology was accompanied by the

adoption of apparently extremely strict measures in the measurement of and payment for water use. The deployment of this ‘strict rule of the meter’ affected interactions between users and the piped water network (as will be discussed in more detail in chapter eight) but it also required a new approach to the work and routines of standpipe operators, whose activities would now be monitored by the meters. This sub-section examines how the everyday practices of various actors emerging around the use of water meters re-shaped the governance model in place. It shows how these practices fostered the embedding of the model in the social fabric of the city. Thus, these practices are seen to represent not only further appropriations and re-inventions of standard models but also crucial steps towards the embedding of institutions in social relations (Clever, 2000).

In 2012, after meters were installed, standpipe operators’ wages were set at 10% of the revenue raised at their respective standpipes. In addition, in order to ensure that operators embraced the rule of the meter, any inconsistencies between the revenue handed in to ASPAAB and the meter reading would be deducted from the operators’ wage.¹⁴⁴ However, a few months following the adoption of the above measures, ASPAAB was struggling to find operators, as operators’ wages were considered to be too low. This was particularly the case for those operators who had already worked before the installation of meters and who witnessed a significant reduction in their incomes. For instance, Malam, a standpipe operator, claimed that after meters were installed he lost interest in the job, precisely because of the low wage he was getting.¹⁴⁵ This contrasted with his previous situation, in which operators could keep what they considered to be the fair amount for their work, as ASPAAB had no way to check revenue handed in by operators against the volume of water sold.

Realising that the low wages being paid to operators were affecting their ability to find people willing to take over these positions, ASPAAB raised operators’ percentage to 20%. In addition, it also allocated a daily 500 CFA (€0.76) food subsidy to those operators working on standpipes open all day (two in total). Nevertheless, the operators’ profit margins remained extremely

¹⁴⁴ A small allowance for inevitable water losses was included in the model.

¹⁴⁵ Interview ASPAAB *1

low¹⁴⁶, inconsistencies between meter readings and revenues handed in by operators to ASPAAB were widespread and conflicts resulting from the persisting inconsistencies were also quite common. For example, according to the father of one ex-operator, his daughter had given up her position because ASPAAB repeatedly failed to pay her. They believed that ASPAAB was taking advantage of her. ASPAAB's version was that the amounts being handed in by this operator were so low that, even after not having paid her, they were still not able to recover their 80% share of the revenue. This episode illustrated what ASPAAB perceived to be a key problem concerning the work of operators, who typically did not understand the payment system, and therefore believed that ASPAAB was not paying them the amounts they were entitled to. This was creating mistrust and conflicts between operator and ASPAAB's management team, and also undermining the functioning of standpipes.

ASPAAB's efforts to work within the social fabric of the city were reflected in the ways they tried to respond to the difficulties related to the operation of standpipes. Increasing the wages of standpipe operators was not an option because of the impacts it would have on the financial sustainability of the system. Instead, and rather than seeking to solve this problem through the elaboration of 'legal' contracts for operators as suggested by some TESE's staff, they sought different ways to motivate operators. One important component of ASPAAB's strategy was the ongoing effort to raise awareness amongst operators focusing on the details of their jobs and their role in the operation of the system. Other components focused on improving the working conditions of operators. For example, in October 2013, ASPAAB implemented a survey to identify the main difficulties faced by operators and to work out solutions that could facilitate their everyday work. The measures devised, which had not been implemented by the time I left fieldwork, included giving operators a 25 litre basin they could use as a measure, supplying operators with gooses to make it easier filling up heavy containers, or fixing and replacing taps.¹⁴⁷ In addition, ASPAAB created a prize, which was initially granted once every year and then once every 3 months, for the best performing operator. This prize of 10,000

¹⁴⁶ Interview ASPAAB *2, Interview Standpipe operator *1,2,3,4(CHECK)

¹⁴⁷ Fieldwork Notes

CFA (€15.25) was seen to create competition among the operators and motivate them to do a good job.¹⁴⁸ And, according to Queba, it was working: Aminata, an operator famous for her very little revenues, had recently handed in the right amount and won the prize.¹⁴⁹ Thus, ASPAAB consistently sought to adapt procedures in place to the practices of standpipe operators.

Nevertheless, inconsistencies between meter readings and revenues being collected were also perceived to be the results of operators' dishonesty. Despite ASPAAB's efforts to find people they could trust, it was hard for ASPAAB to avoid backhanders. For example, Malam admitted that he often handed in a little less money than expected because he would take money to buy cold water to drink or, sometimes, to give his wife to buy food for the house.¹⁵⁰ In fact, according to Malam, most of the inconsistencies verified were due to the fact that operators 'ate' the money.

The persistent backhanding and inconsistencies between meter readings and revenues handed in to ASPAAB can be understood in the context of operators' motivations. But, the practices of these contractors also illustrate the extent to which the model was progressively embedded in existing social relations and institutions. Standpipe operators would mention different reasons for taking over the job and they would often state that it was a way to contribute to the city and the neighbourhood in particular. However, it was also obvious that, in most cases, being an operator was one of many enterprises undertaken by individuals in order to raise their incomes. For example, Virginia¹⁵¹ worked in the standpipe in the morning, sold *fole*¹⁵² from her house during the day and mangos and fried fish on the high street in the evening. At last, she also got a cleaning job.¹⁵³ Some operators also found ways to gain an extra income. One of the operators would leave his wife on the standpipe and go around delivering water

¹⁴⁸ Interview ASPAAB *1, Interview ASPAAB *2

¹⁴⁹ ASPAAB Interview *1

¹⁵⁰ Interview ASPAAB *1

¹⁵¹ Interview Standpipe Operator *XX

¹⁵² Fole is a fruit

¹⁵³ Fieldwork Notes

from the standpipe to people's houses, charging them 25 CFA (€0.04) for the transport of each container.¹⁵⁴

The arrangement between Bacar and Queba is also an example of the ways in which the operation of standpipes become immersed in multiple social networks and strategies devised to seek income and security in a context of vulnerability. Bacar, the operator of one of the all-day standpipes, combined this job with another one running the television salon located just in front of the standpipe. In reality, he had been sub-contracted by Queba, the individual contracted by ASPAAB. The arrangement between the two was that Bacar would keep the daily 500 CFA food subsidy, which he took home since he got food from the TV salon where he was working simultaneously. Moreover, Queba would also give Bacar a small share of his 20% share of water revenues. Queba justified this arrangement in several ways. Firstly, he perceived it as compensation for all the efforts and sacrifices he went through when the standpipe was not profitable at all and ASPAAB asked him to stay there since no one else would. Secondly, he framed it as a favour to Bacar who had to be there anyway because of his job in the salon and, in this way, earned an extra income. Thirdly, he also pointed out how sometimes when he was struggling for money he would like to stay himself at the standpipe, in order to get the 500 CFA food subsidy, but he didn't do it because he knew Bacar needed the money. Instead, he would find other ways to raise money, like betting on his mobile. Finally, he avoided accusations of exploitation by referring to moments when he actually helped Bacar. For instance, he explained that Bacar's wife had needed a C-section at the hospital that cost 50,000 CFA (€76.24) and Queba had helped him raise the money. He spoke with the president of ASPAAB who lent them 20,000 CFA (€30.50), Queba's uncle lent another 10,000 CFA (€15.25) and like this, bit-by-bit, they raised the money Bacar needed.¹⁵⁵

While perhaps not aware of the details of these arrangements, ASPAAB's management team was often aware that they were in place. The same way they were aware of the backhanding among standpipe operators. In fact, ASPAAB's management team was also involved in their

¹⁵⁴ Interview ASPAAB *1

¹⁵⁵ Interview ASPAAB *1, Fieldwork Notes

own strategies and social networks. However, perhaps one of ASPAAB's best qualities was the fact that they seemed to be aware that in order to secure the functioning of the piped water network, rather than creating brand new, rational, bureaucratic institutions, they had to be embedded in existing social relations.

The flexibility of ASPAAB's management team and their ability to adapt to local conditions was also reflected in their approach to collecting revenues from home connections. All home connections were required to have meters installed and also in this case ASPAAB had become stricter when it came to payment. Customers failing to pay their bills for more than one month in a row were disconnected from the network. If, after paying the amount owed, they wanted to re-activate their connection, they would have to pay a 15,000 CFA (€22.90) fine. Notwithstanding this apparently stricter approach, there was still a fair amount of flexibility within this system. For example, Didier pointed out that, in order to avoid being disconnected, people often came to ASPAAB's office asking for more time to pay their water bills.¹⁵⁶ In addition, Bubacar, who was responsible for collecting payments from home connections, also explained that he routinely visited each house several times before collecting payment.¹⁵⁷ In general, talking to ASPAAB members it became evident that personal relations and trust were very important in the application of the strict measures announced. They would be applied when they did not believe people would pay their bills but they would be relaxed when they understood someone was going through a difficult period but would eventually pay.

The multiple enterprises and arrangements emerging around standpipes and home connections illustrate the ways in which the piped water network and ASPAAB are deeply imbricated in local economies and social relations. Whilst trying to control backhanding, and other strategies which result in the loss of revenue, ASPAAB also relies on the multiple existing formations within the city which are at the heart of people's survival strategies. In fact, the system depends on the multiple small economies co-existing in the city as its financial viability depends on the availability of people willing to take jobs for very little money. Related to this,

¹⁵⁶ Interview ASPAAB *2

¹⁵⁷ Interview ASPAAB *3

this section also highlights the importance of everyday practices shaping governance arrangements. Here, it was shown that the practices of standpipe operators, and particularly their resistance to ‘the rule of the meter’, engendered a set of reactions that re-shaped the model in place. In this way, the governance model adopted by ASPAAB is a Creole model of water governance that is also characterised by its embeddedness in the social fabric of the city. Simultaneously, these arrangements and collaborations around standpipes and home connections are an example of the ways in which the new governance model in place, which was definitively influenced by the implementation of BMI and BMMI, kept some of the traces of its previous mode of operation. This is revealed in the ways standpipe operators and ASPAAB members created new possibilities within existing social, economic and political configurations. These possibilities were often exploitative but they were, nevertheless, at the core of the operation of the piped water network.

7.4. Discussion

This chapter demonstrated that the evolution of water provision in Bafatá has been closely tied to the flows of foreign aid and the discourses of development interventions. Nonetheless, it also showed that the aspirations, motivations and ways of doing of supposedly subordinate actors – most significantly ASPAAB and the Regional Director – have remained crucial forces shaping water provision in this city. On the one hand, the practices and motivations of these actors have profoundly shaped the ways in which infrastructures have been governed. On the other hand, ASPAAB and the Regional Director have successfully appropriated, re-invented, ignored and contested policy models disseminated through development interventions. The governance of water provision in Bafatá is thus better understood as *Creole* mode of governance which involves multiple, overlapping agendas, practices and motivations but also multifaceted processes of appropriation and intermixing of different logics according to the needs and possibilities of those actors involved in governing the city’s water piped network. It works as

an assemblage of actors, practices and agendas producing specific, and messier, processes and outcomes, which cannot be easily associated with any individual element of the assemblage.

Water governance models emerging in small secondary cities in Africa have frequently been explained in relation to the ‘spatial variegations of neoliberalism’ and the related cherry-picking strategies of private sector entities, residualizing water provision in poorer urban contexts (Bakker, 2013). Yet, this chapter suggested that the manifest presence of development interventions and discourses in these cities does not only shape the motivations, aspirations and practices of various actors involved in the management of water supply, but also results in the dissemination of specific policy models and engenders particular possibilities. Thus, in the context of small African cities, development interventions and discourses might be more important factors shaping water governance models than private sector strategies.

The power relations inherent in development interventions and discourses and the frequent subordinate positions of small local NGOs and state institutions have been discussed at length in the development literature (Escobar, 1995; Goldman, 2005; Kothari, 2005; Lewis et al., 2003; Li, 1999; Mosse, 2005; Rossi, 2004a). This chapter showed that in contexts marked by uneven power relations, subordinate actors still “create everyday spheres of action autonomous from the organising policy model” (Mosse, 2005, p. 10). This agency was revealed in the practices leading to processes of appropriation of international policies and models, but also in everyday practices, for example those of standpipe operators, that were seen to significantly re-shape the model in place. Thus, everyday practices can generate more nuanced understandings of the ways in which policies are adopted in a diversity of contexts as well as the ways in which these policies are translated into practice (Lawhon et al., 2014; Pieterse, 2008).

Related to the above, this case-study demonstrates that neoliberal modes of governance are not only hybridised but also deeply re-shaped as they are adopted in a diversity of contexts. What this means is that the meanings and effects of policies are shifted in such ways that their original agendas and rationalities are transcended. Thus, in order to understand the variety

of factors and processes shaping water provision in small African cities attention needs to be given to the ways in which apparently neoliberal policy models are transformed into 'something else'. In Bafatá, it was shown how motivations and practices relating to desires to improve access to water coupled with aspirations to gain access to training and income. These motivations and practices, alongside a pragmatic approach in a context where resources are extremely scarce and unpredictable, fundamentally shaped water provision.

From the analysis of the case of Bafatá, it also became apparent that the operation of the city's water network between 2006 and 2010 was significantly shaped by ASPAAB's attempts to create possibilities within a specific socio-political and economic context, possibilities for the water service but also for the organisation and its members. In this case, ASPAAB's efforts materialised in their success in attracting foreign aid, which was at the centre of the strategy the organisation adopted. In this way, the example of Bafatá also shows that ephemeral coalitions and improvisations create the foundations for and do have the possibility of becoming something more permanent and consequential. Even, if the permanence of the model of water provision in Bafatá is not guaranteed.

The *creolisation* of the governance model adopted in Bafatá was essential for its success in governing water infrastructure in the city. This raises important questions concerning the potential effectiveness of the wider circulation of policies. ASPAAB is now training a similar organisation working elsewhere in the country. What is being shared? Abstract policy models or strategies of appropriation and re-invention of these models? The conclusion to this thesis will review these issues and implications of the study for policy debates.

– EIGHT –

Everyday water practices and the piped water network

8.1. Introduction

This chapter examines water provision using perspectives from everyday water practices in Bafatá. In particular, it discusses the changing practices of users provoked by shifts in the piped water network discussed in previous chapters. This chapter complicates conventional political ecology perspectives which, focusing on access and control in the production of water inequalities, have neglected other factors shaping water-related practices and inequalities (Truelove, 2011). It does so by illustrating multiple social relations shaping, and being shaped by, water practices. Simultaneously, it shows that these micropractices influence management practices, shape the possibilities of governance models, and reveal how infrastructures are governed.

Delving into the ways in which water practices have been affected by changes in the piped water supply scheme, this chapter shows that lack of access to a piped supply – defined in terms of distance from the source and ability to pay – is not the only relevant factor influencing water-related practices in the city. Instead, there are multiple factors – including perceptions of quality of water, distance, waiting times, convenience and the availability of free sources – shaping people’s choices of sources, and therefore users’ complex water practices. This chapter also notes that access to safe water does not necessarily equate the use of the piped supply scheme. In this context, the use of multiple sources, that is processes of ‘splintering from below’ (Bakker, 2003b), emerges as a key feature of water provision in Bafatá. These processes are shown to complicate notions of access but also to significantly shape the possibilities of a piped supply scheme that relies on users’ contributions.

Focusing on the transformations ensuing from the introduction of the 'rule of the meter', this chapter discusses how the deployment of these new technological and managerial devices has affected sharing practices. The disruption of sharing practices is explained in terms of a transition from 'private-collective' to 'collective-individualising' modes of water supply. Private-collective modes of supply, which have typically characterised water use in the city, entail the collectivisation of private water sources, such as wells and hand pump, through sharing practices. These modes of supply show that particularistic solutions, such as wells or home connections, can become collective infrastructure through ingrained sharing practices. Collective-individualising modes of supply, on other hand, entail the individualisation of use of collectivised systems through the use of meters and the disruption of micro-sharing practices.

Situating this shift in the broader analysis of water infrastructure, this transition resembles processes of commodification and marketization of water, and the associated re-constitution of subjectivities (Von Schnitzler, 2008). However, this chapter shows that in Bafatá the transition from 'private-collective' to 'collective-individualising' modes of supply remains nascent and, instead, water gifts at the micro level co-exist with other more individualistic practices. Furthermore, water markets have long existed in the city and water has long been both an economic and common good. In addition, whereas the enforcement of the 'rule of the meter' has resulted in the disruption of ingrained sharing practices, and the exclusion of poorer groups, it has also produced positive outcomes. These include allowing users to monitor and regulate their consumption according to their possibilities and needs, which would not be possible under a flat rate fee; and helping ASPAAB, the water operator, to ensure that water revenues remain within the system. It has also enabled processes that whilst disrupting practices of sharing at the neighbourhood level have also ensued a collective system, centrally-managed, and where redistribution, and therefore 'sharing', is centralised. These are essential outcomes in a context where resources are extremely scarce. Thus, narratives of commodification and marketization are not enough, or even the most important, when

accounting for the evolution of water provision in Bafatá. The practices of users and concerns of local providers can illustrate other equally if not more relevant processes.

8.2. Splintering water infrastructure from below

In a study of the Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) of water users carried out in 2013 in Bafatá¹⁵⁸, it was estimated that over 70% of the population of this city continued to collect all their water from wells, springs or ponds. Approximately 17% of the city's residents fetched at least some of their water from hand pumps, installed on wells and boreholes; and, less than 12% collected at least some of their water from standpipes (11%) or home connections (1%). In this KAP study, access was conceived in terms of both distance, i.e. people being located within acceptable distance of the network, and financial resources, i.e. people having the resources to pay for water. And, lack of access was pointed out as the main factor explaining why only 12% of the population collected water from the network in Bafatá. Delving into the rationales and motivations of those responsible for this KAP study and adopting an ethnographic approach to the investigation of everyday water practices, this section demonstrates how access, as defined in this survey, cannot alone explain why consumption from the network remains so low. Related to this, it also complicates prevalent political economy and political ecology analyses, which tend to overemphasise access and control in understandings of water inequality (Birkenholtz, 2010; Desai et al., 2015; Truelove, 2011).

¹⁵⁸ (TESE and ASPAAB, 2013a): KAP study elaborated by ASPAAB and TESE under project titled *Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu* (BMMI, Creole for 'Bafatá Wants/Needs More Water'). This project was promoted by TESE in partnership with ASPAAB, and funded by the EU, Instituto Camoes, SNV, EPAL, TESE and ASPAAB.

8.2.1. The contradictions of the piped water network: public health, infrastructure and cost-recovery

National policies in Guinea-Bissau define the type of water infrastructure deemed appropriate for different locations. In the Water Plan adopted in 1992, it is stated that investments in water infrastructure in urban areas should focus on the construction, expansion and maintenance of piped water networks, including public standpipes and home connections. In the context of a small secondary city, like Bafatá, where alternative water sources and technologies co-exist, the benefits associated with a piped supply could entail: improved public health, through securing access to an improved water source¹⁵⁹; the ease and comfort associated with these systems, when compared with alternative improved water sources, such as hand pumps and protected wells; and, transport, i.e. the ability to safely transport water to areas of cities where limited access to alternative sources results in significant efforts by residents in order to access water, especially during the dry season.

In 2014, water from the piped scheme in Bafatá was sold for 1,000 CFA/m³ (€1.52/m³), i.e. 25 CFA/25 L (€0.04/25 litres), on standpipes, and for 600 CFA/m³ (€0.91/m³) on home connections. However, according to a survey conducted in 2009, 33% of the population living in the region of Bafatá was extremely poor (living on less than 1\$/day), and as much as 75% of those living in this region were considered to be poor (living on less than 2\$/day).¹⁶⁰ In this context, and considering that resources in the sector are extremely scarce, discourses justifying the need for, and promoting the use of, the piped water network in this city focused essentially on public health and transport, whilst neglecting the ease and comfort associated with this infrastructure. Ease and comfort became a luxury in a context where people had to strategically decide where to invest their very limited resources, and water competed with

¹⁵⁹ “An ‘improved’ drinking-water source is one that, by the nature of its construction and when properly used, adequately protects the source from outside contamination, particularly faecal matter.” WHO/ Unicef Joint Monitoring Programme for water supply and sanitation (JPM) In: <http://www.wssinfo.org/definitions-methods/watsan-categories/>. Last accessed: 05/05/ 2016, 18:06 (GMT-8).

¹⁶⁰ In: <http://guineabissau.africadata.org/pt/DataAnalysis/>. Last accessed: 02/05/2016, 10:23 (GMT-8).

many other necessities, such as food and education. Maimuna's¹⁶¹ account below is illustrative of how people situated water in relation to other needs:

“Between water, school, electricity and other things, water is the first thing in life, isn't it? But water, you can go to the well and you don't pay anything. Education, school, that you have to pay for. Electricity you have to pay for. But people don't mind, even if you don't pay for electricity, you will pay for your children to go to school. School is the first thing, because electricity, if you don't have it you can get a candle. School and water, those are essential things. School, I don't play with it, it is essential. Education is the most important thing!”

In addition, mirroring the scarcity of resources in the sector and the related requirements for cost-recovery to secure the financial sustainability of the system, messages being disseminated also focused on the user-payer principle.

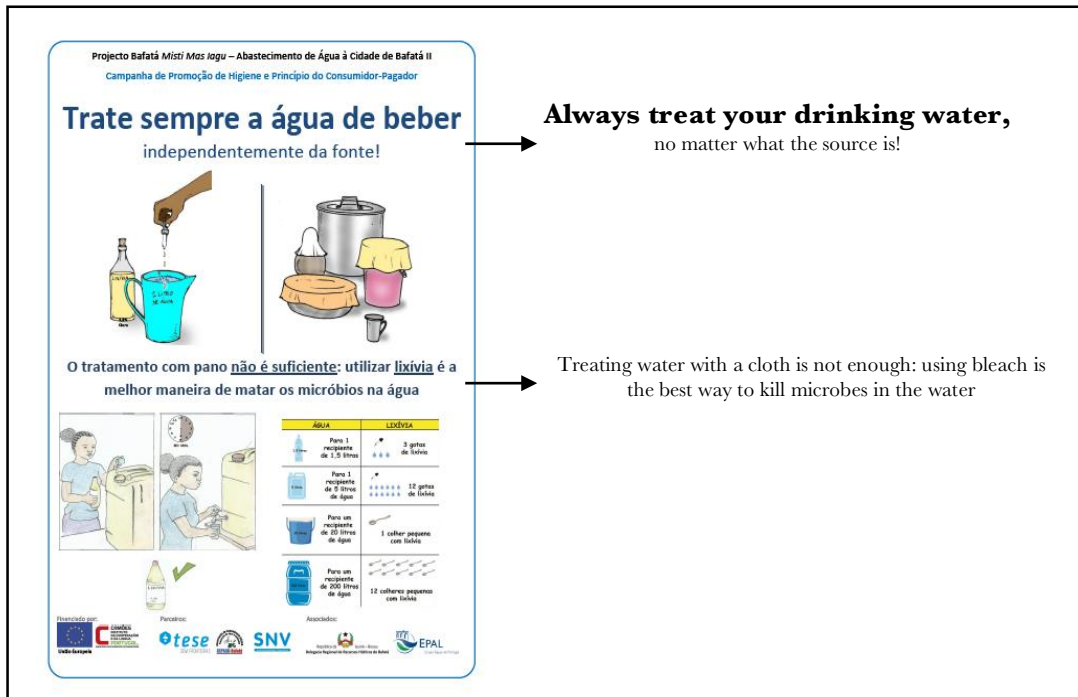
Despite the emphasis given to public health, and the importance given to the piped supply as an improved water source, Bafatá's system lacked adequate centralised treatment. In other words, the water being supplied through this network was not adequately treated and therefore not safe to drink. This was still the case after the completion of the refurbishment works carried out under the two internationally funded projects discussed in the previous chapter. In addition, the supply remained intermittent. This meant that positive pressure was not maintained at all times resulting in increased risks of water from the outside contaminating the piped supply (Shaheed et al., 2014). Thus, whereas according to Unicef and the World Health Organisation (WHO), piped water into dwellings or to yards/plots and public taps and standpipes constitute improved water sources, this is not always necessarily the case when there is not central treatment or the supply is intermittent (Shaheed et al., 2014). Thus, in Bafatá, as with water from other sources, water from the piped scheme is not safe for consumption and should be treated in the home.

Since taking over responsibility for the management of the city's water system in 2006, ASPAAB has also assumed an important role raising awareness in matters related to water

¹⁶¹ Interview Water User *40. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

and hygiene, becoming a recognised actor for the communication of health messages in the sector. Accordingly, this organisation has concentrated significant efforts on campaigns to raise awareness about water and hygiene. For example, for a while, the president of this organisation participated in weekly debates on topics relating to water and hygiene on the local radio. In addition, ASPAAB implemented several awareness raising campaigns in the city, including door-to-door visits, activities in schools and various public events, such as theatres. These campaigns were typically funded by international organisations and, therefore, also reflected development discourses in the water sector in the country.

In line with public health concerns, which dominate interventions in the water sector in the country, these campaigns promoted by ASPAAB, adopted messages targeting users of the multiple water sources in use in the city. These messages focused on the relations between water and disease, listed the various ways in which contamination could occur, and provided advice related to procedures to adopt in the collection, transport, storage and treatment of water at home. Recognising that wells remained the most used source in Bafatá, these campaigns also targeted measures to protect and treat water from wells. In addition, acknowledging that the water from the piped scheme was not potable, ASPAAB also sometimes alerted residents in the city to the need to always treat water, from all sources, as shown in the figure below.



Always treat your drinking water,
no matter what the source is!

Treating water with a cloth is not enough; using bleach is
the best way to kill microbes in the water

Figure 20. Poster from Awareness Raising campaign implemented under project Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu (BMMI) (Source: BMMI Final Report)

However, whilst the need to treat water from the network was included in some public campaigns, the emphasis given to the quality of the water from this system, when compared to other sources, often obfuscated such recommendations. This was revealed in various users’ comments, referring to water from the standpipe as good because it was ‘treated’, when this was not the case. In addition, in the accounts of the members of ASPAAB’s management team, it often became evident how they assumed that whereas water from wells should be treated, that was not the case with water from the piped scheme. For example, Fatumata explained:

“When raising awareness, you tell people to go fetch water from the standpipe. But, at the same time, you make people aware that, if the standpipe is too far, if they get water somewhere else, they should treat water...”¹⁶³

¹⁶³ Interview ASPAAB *3

In fact, messages being disseminated in the city often promoted the use of the piped scheme, stressing the qualities of the water from this system: whereas people were alerted that “*the water from the well has bugs*”, they were also taught that “*the water from the standpipe is healthier*”. And, the discussion of everyday water practices in Bafatá below demonstrates that these campaigns were having an important effect on people’s perceptions and, to a lesser extent, on their practices.

On the one hand, the emphasis given to the water network reflected beliefs that the water from this system, which was classified as an improved water source, was, in fact, healthier. And, these notions actually resembled various international organisations, such as Unicef and WHO, definitions of improved sources.¹⁶⁴ In this way, promoting the use of the network was equivalent to promoting public health. On the other hand, promoting the use of the water network has become an important priority for those involved in the management and operation of the system, in a context where these infrastructures have to compete with a wide range of alternative water sources and technologies, many of which are free and, according to some users, provide water with superior taste, colour and temperature. This is because the long-term sustainability of this system, under cost-recovery, depends on the monetary contributions of users. Increases in the number of users will not only secure the ongoing operation and maintenance, but also allow for the expansion of the network and, perhaps eventually, the central treatment of water. In addition, ASPAAB’s capacity to secure international donations also depends on their ability to demonstrate the need for such infrastructure. Related to this, a higher number of users presupposes a greater need, and the possibility to frame scarcity of water as a key problem in the city.

According to Luisa¹⁶⁵, a water specialist employed by TESE in Bafatá, the emphasis given to infrastructure in public health reflected a wider problem in the country which, according to her, was related to international policies and standards, as well as the working of international

¹⁶⁴ See website for the WHO/Unicef Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) for Water Supply and Sanitation: <http://www.wssinfo.org/definitions-methods/watsan-categories/>

¹⁶⁵ Fieldwork Notes *10

NGOs. Public health concerns have been at the heart of investments in infrastructure across the country seeking to reduce the prevalence of waterborne diseases by improving access to safe drinking water. Naturally, strategies have changed over the years. However, the emphasis has consistently remained on the building of infrastructure. As mentioned earlier, the WHO and Unicef define improved water sources in terms of the technology adopted. In this way, public health messages have tended to associate different types of infrastructure with distinct levels of water safety. For example, water collected from hand pumps is commonly conceived as better than that from wells, and water from piped networks as better than that collected from hand pumps or wells. However, according to Luisa, these links established between type of infrastructure and quality of water are often flawed, for many reasons that include deficiencies in operation, maintenance and repairs. Or, more precisely, in Guinea-Bissau, there was typically a lack of evidence to support such claims. For example, referring to an experiment carried out in a village, she noted how, after testing the water, they established that the quality of the water collected from wells and a hand pump were basically the same. They both required treatment before drinking.

If public health is the main concern related to water supply in the country, the focus should be on adequate treatment and handling of water, which involves consistent public campaigns. Instead, the continuous investment in infrastructure reflects funding schemes, which make it much more profitable for organisations to be involved in infrastructure projects rather than just being involved in training and dissemination of health messages. This is not say that investments on infrastructure are not required, but that they should be followed by adequate testing and monitoring of water, and ongoing investments in campaigns on how to handle and treat water.

However, even if the water being supplied by the piped water network in Bafatá is not safe for drinking, the piped water supply system still provides an important service in the city. It provides a more reliable source than unprotected wells, which are more prone to contamination with faecal matter. Wells are often not very deep, protected in appropriate

ways, or built within a safe distance from latrines. Also, considering ASPAAB's evolution in recent years, it is likely that the monitoring of the quality of water will improve as the system expands and this organisation's technical knowledge grows. In 2013, they had already started cleaning water tanks on a regular basis and adding bleach to water stored in tanks. Centralised treatment will necessarily depend on the availability of resources in the next few years. Furthermore, transport and ease and comfort are also important factors, as will be demonstrated in the discussion of everyday water practices in the city below. Finally, water safety relies on many factors, which are not only confined to water source used. Shaheed et al. (2014) claim that contamination during transport and storage at home are key variables when evaluating the risk of water-related diseases.

Therefore, the piped network provides an improved service but it does not replace the need for public health campaigns. However, the importance of public health campaigns, alongside measures seeking to facilitate water treatment, and the use of safe water is rarely mentioned in discussions of urban water supply. In small secondary cities, such as Bafatá, where residents rely, and will continue to rely, on multiple water sources and sources located outside the house, investments in public health campaigns remain as important as investments in infrastructure in securing access to safe water and improving the livelihoods of urban dwellers. The multiplicity of sources needs to be acknowledged and the focus shifted to how to secure safe livelihoods in these contexts.

The next section explores everyday water practices in Bafatá, including both those of users relying on the piped water supply and those of people relying on alternative sources. On the one hand, it shows how awareness-raising campaigns promoting the use of the piped supply have had an effect on people's perceptions of quality of water and, to a lesser extent, on people's water practices. On the other hand, it demonstrates that, in fact, access to a lower-risk or apparently more comfortable source is not enough to guarantee its use. Water practices are extremely complex and combine an array of different factors, which largely exceed those

commonly analysed in conventional political ecology perspectives relating to access and control.

8.2.2. Everyday water practices emerging around the use of the piped water network

Like in many other secondary cities of the global south, in Bafatá, the piped water network constitutes one among many alternative sources and technologies available to access water. Reflecting this range of alternatives, residents often navigate the various sources and technologies available in order to meet their water needs, for example, selecting different alternatives according to the use for the water they are collecting (drinking, cooking, washing, etc.), or according to the time of the year (dry or rainy season). The most frequent sources and technologies used in Bafatá included: wells (traditional and improved, see Figure 24, below); hand pumps (installed on wells or boreholes, see Figure 24, below); springs and ponds; as well as standpipes (see Figure 23, below) and home connections (see Figure 21, below). The river was also used to bath (by a small minority), and to wash clothes and vehicles (see Figure 25, below). In addition, some organisations, such as Hotel Triton and the Catholic Mission (see Figure 26, below), had their own private piped supply, and donated or sold water.



Figure 21. Home connection



Figure 22. Public standpipe



Figure 23. Hand pump



Figure 24.. Traditional well



Figure 25. River Geba



Figure 26. Catholic mission



Figure 27. Water transporter

From the accounts of water users I talked to in Bafatá¹⁶⁶, seven main factors emerged in people's explanations of their water practices. These factors included: perceptions of quality of water, payment, conflict, distance, effort, reliability and waiting time. Hereby, perceptions of quality of water emerged as the most often mentioned factor, when selecting a specific water source. This was followed by payment and distance to the source, and then waiting time. Among those interviewed, conflict was routinely mentioned but given less weight on decisions to use a specific source.¹⁶⁷

In Bafatá, it was common, among those collecting water from public standpipes, or with access to a home connection, to continue to rely on alternative water sources. Resembling both public campaigns promoting the use of the piped water network and understandings of access included in the KAP study mentioned earlier, perceptions of quality of water and payment

¹⁶⁶ For more details on sample of interviews and ethnographic work, see methodology of this study in chapter four and appendix XX. The sample, while not statically representative, provides a good qualitative account of users' experiences.

¹⁶⁷ These factors were deducted from interviews with water users. Using Nvivo, I coded these different factors as they appeared in interview transcripts and fieldwork diaries. I then looked at their prevalence in terms of sources and references.

were most commonly mentioned to justify this reliance on multiple sources. For example, Aissatu¹⁶⁸ lived in *Bairro 2*, a central neighbourhood, in a house standing a few meters away from a public standpipe. In her house, drinking water was collected from the standpipe. As for the remaining water, they fetched it from the well bored by the neighbours living in one of the adjoining houses. She explained that they combined the well and the standpipe in order to avoid the crowds gathering around the public tap, therefore reducing time spent collecting water, and also to save money. Yet, during the dry season, as most of the wells in the area dried out, they collected all their water from the standpipe. Aissatu's routine echoed that of many other residents using the piped scheme in these central neighbourhoods, and where perceptions of the quality of water, payment and waiting times appeared to dictate water practices, entailing the combined use of standpipes and wells.

Since only a restricted area of the city was served by piped water supply, there were a number of transporters (see Figure 27, above), typically men with donkey carts, charging a fee to transport water from the standpipe to people's houses. For example, Mamadu¹⁶⁹, who lived in *Praça*, had the phone number of different people owning donkey carts, who he contacted every time he needed water in the house. One of them would then come around to the house collect the empty containers and return them later filled with water from the standpipe. He was charged 100CFA for each container, 25CFA for the water and 75CFA for the transport. In addition, people often used bikes or (more rarely) cars to transport water from the standpipes to other areas of the city, or just carried the containers themselves. Once again, perceptions of quality of water were essential for those seeking alternative ways to extend this piped water network to new areas. For example, Fatumata¹⁷⁰ also lived in *Praça*, the sleepy old colonial district situated on a gentle slope on the foothill of the new postcolonial city centre. Once the only neighbourhood served by the piped network, the system was by then

¹⁶⁸ Interview Water User *43

¹⁶⁹ Fieldwork notes. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁷⁰ Interview Water User *40

inoperative in this location.¹⁷¹ They collected most of the water used in the house from a well dug in their yard or, during the dry season when it dried out, from other wells in the vicinity. As for drinking water, Fatumata's children filled the 20 to 25 litre containers from the standpipe installed up the hill and carried them down on their bikes. Instead, Carla¹⁷², her neighbour, collected all her water from the standpipe and used her car to carry the containers back and forth. Marietto¹⁷³ resided in *Bairro Nema*, a neighbourhood located quite far from any standpipe in working order. Following doctor's recommendations she walked up the hill to the nearest standpipe to fetch drinking water for her youngest child. But, because the standpipe was far, only her child drank water from the standpipe. The remaining members of the household drank water from a nearby well. For Fatumata and Marietto, their perception of the quality of the water being provided by the piped network justified the added effort. However, both the distance they had to overcome and the fact that they had to pay for the water from the standpipe, influenced their decisions to only fetch a small portion of the water needed from the piped water network.

Nonetheless, in some users' accounts, the ease and comfort associated with the piped network were particularly stressed. For example, Cecília lived in Bairro 1, close to a public standpipe. She typically collected all her water from this standpipe because:

*"It's much easier! They say that this water is safer but also it makes it much easier in terms of collecting water."*¹⁷⁶

Cecília further explained that she only used water from the well, when, for some reason, there was no water in the network or she was late and the standpipe was already closed. Still, Cecília pointed out that she didn't remember the last time she had drunk water from the well, because *"it makes it easier but also the water is safer."* Thus, while emphasising the ease and comfort

¹⁷¹ The refurbishment of the water network in Praça was included in the works of the project Bafatá Misti Mas Iagu. The works were completed in 2015 and this network is now operational. ASPAAB newsletter sent out in May 2016 announced 19 new home connections in this neighbourhood.

¹⁷² Fieldwork notes. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁷³ Interview Water User *24

¹⁷⁶ Interview Water User *25

associated with the standpipe, when compared with other technologies, Cecília still pointed out her perception of quality of water as a key factor.

Elizabeth's¹⁷⁷ explanation resembled that of Cecilia. Elizabeth had access to a home connection, with a tap installed in her internal patio. In her household, they used water from the tap to drink, cook and bath but, for the remaining uses, they fetched it from a well dug in their outer yard. They had installed a home connection in order to reduce the effort and time required to access water, but they continued to use the well in order to lessen water bills. In this case, the ease and comfort associated with the home connection emerged as the key reason justifying the investment in the installation of a home connection and its subsequent use. Payment, on the other hand, determined that water from the well continued to be used for specific purposes. At the same time, the uses given to the water from the piped scheme versus the water from the well, also suggested that they perceived the network to be providing safer water, which they used for drinking and cooking. Unlike Elizabeth, Mona¹⁷⁸ and Mohamed¹⁷⁹ stated that in their homes they only used water from their respective home connections. For them, the ease and comfort were the main benefits associated with the home connections, since before they used to get what they considered to be good quality water from the Catholic mission.

Water scarcity during the dry season was another factor driving people to use the piped supply, and consumption of water from the piped scheme actually increased significantly during this time of the year. As alternative sources started drying out, people that did not use this infrastructure during other times of the year started gathering around standpipes and, simultaneously, those, like Aissatu, who combined the piped scheme with other sources during the rainy season, started progressively collecting more and more water from the network. For example, *Bairro Iussi* is one of the fastest growing neighbourhoods in the city, and it is also a barren, flat hilltop lacking in trees, shade and water. Water scarcity has increasingly become

¹⁷⁷ Interview Water User *45

¹⁷⁸ Interview Water User *46

¹⁷⁹ Fieldwork notes.

a problem due to increases in population. Here, wells dry earlier than anywhere else in the city and the few sources that provide water all year round get extremely busy during the dry season. Thus, a significant number of residents leave the neighbourhood to search for water. Some rely on the works of 'transporters', others find other, cheaper means to bring water to their homes. In these instance it was the lack of alternative sources, improved or unimproved, rather than the quality of the water from the piped scheme or ease and comfort, which drove people to use water from the network.

The accounts of these users of the piped scheme demonstrate that perceptions of quality of water and payment heavily influenced people's decision to use water from the piped scheme. In fact, whereas ease and comfort were often mentioned as key advantages deriving from the use of the network, these rewards were frequently combined with perceptions of quality of water. These accounts support conventional viewpoints linking access to an improved source with its use and, therefore, water safety. Furthermore, they suggest the efficacy of campaigns promoting the quality of the water from this scheme. Simultaneously, these users' practices demonstrate that payment, whilst driving people to collect only part of their water from the network and to continue to rely on alternative sources, did not prevent these users from collecting drinking water from standpipes or home connections. The fact that people outside the catchment area of the piped scheme devised means to extend the network further supported ideas concerning lack of access, and suggested an existing need to expand the water system to areas where users were spending effort and money to access the network.

8.2.3. Splintering water infrastructure from below

The truth is that the water users cited above were amongst the mere 12% estimated to collect at least some of their water from standpipes and/or home connections. The remaining 88% of the population continued to rely on alternative sources, including improved and unimproved sources, for all their needs. Whilst a great part of these 88% would be living outside the catchment area of the piped scheme, a significant proportion lived nearby public

standpipes. For instance, in *Bairro 4*, a central neighbourhood served by the water network, the influx of users to standpipes outside the dry season remained extremely low. In fact, at some point during my fieldwork, three standpipes located in this neighbourhood (out of a total of 13) were inactive due to the lack of users.¹⁸¹ Comparing *Bairro 1*, where there was a good influx of people to standpipes and a higher number of home connections, with *Bairro 4*, where the number of people using the piped scheme remained lower than expected, several ASPAAB's members pointed out that, crucially, it was the lack of alternative sources in *Bairro 1* that forced people to opt for standpipes.¹⁸² Thus, they suggested, it was not the lack of access to the piped scheme that was driving people to use alternative sources, but, on the contrary, the lack of access to alternative sources that persuaded people to rely on the piped water network. There were several reasons why people continued to prefer alternative sources.

Surely, the fact that many of the other sources were free, associated with the lack of money were often mentioned as key factors driving people away from the piped scheme. In particular, I spoke with two women who mentioned that after the death of their husbands, they had not been able to use the standpipe anymore.¹⁸³ Nevertheless, there were many households that preferred to invest their scarce resources on other things. For example, Aua explained:

*“We rarely go to the standpipe. We are used to the water from the well. There you have to pay 25 CFA (€0.04). You always have to pay 25 CFA. If you don't have that money all the time, you have to go to the well. It is better for you. Or, is it not?”*¹⁸⁴ (Aua, Water User)

Thus, the water tariff did result in the exclusion of the poorest. Furthermore, in a context where a large percentage of the population is poor, or extremely poor, people often explained that, since they had the possibility to access water for free, they preferred to invest their scarce resources in other basic necessities, such as education, food or power.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹ Interview ASPAAB *1; Fieldwork Notes

¹⁸² Interview ASPAAB *1; Interview ASPAAB *5

¹⁸³ Fieldwork notes.

¹⁸⁴ Interview Water User *6. My own translation from Creole.

¹⁸⁵ Interview Water User *40, Interview Water User *44

Nevertheless, waiting times, conflicts and the lack of reliability resulting from too many people gathering around standpipes also emerged in the accounts of some users, particularly in *Bairro 1* where the system was used by a greater number of people, as significant reasons for opting for other sources:

“Do you see the standpipe there, with all the containers standing around? Often, one doesn’t manage to get water there, there are a lot of people. On this side of the road, everyone gets their water from these standpipes. There are also people coming with donkey carts [to take water elsewhere]. So, you just stand there, you waste your time and, in the end, you don’t find water... If you come to the well, it’s better. You fetch your water quickly, then you are done, you can go ahead with your day.”¹⁸⁶

“there are a lot of people there [at the standpipe]. Sometimes you don’t find water, sometimes people get into fights, people insult each other. I don’t want problems.”¹⁸⁷

However, for a significant number of people I talked to wells remained the most convenient source, notably, for reasons that included perceptions of quality of water. They actually preferred water from the well for drinking. Mariama¹⁸⁸ is an ASPAAB member, who participated in the KAP study carried out in 2013, conducting door-to-door surveys and facilitating workshops with focus groups. In addition, in that same year, she was part of a team created by ASPAAB to investigate precisely why the influx of users to some of the standpipes in *Bairro 4* remained so low. She explained how people often said they did not go to the standpipe because of the taste of the water:

“We went door-to-door, speaking to people, to find out what’s happening in those standpipes, which are not very well used. (...) In some of the houses we visited, people mentioned money, they can’t pay for water. But, in many other cases, they said they didn’t like the taste of the water

¹⁸⁶ Interview Water User *39

¹⁸⁷ Interview water User *9

¹⁸⁸ Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

from the standpipe, they say that water from the wells tastes better. In many of the houses we visited, that's what we were told.” (Mariama, ASPAAB member)¹⁸⁹

Notably, whereas perceptions of quality of water were essential for many of those using the network, the taste, colour and smell of the water was also driving people away from the network. For example, Victória¹⁹⁰, Alimato¹⁹¹ and Djenabu¹⁹² all lived in *Bairro 4*, in close proximity to standpipes, and they all drew water from wells dug in their yards or close by in surrounding houses. This is not to say that they never went to the standpipe. Djenabu exchanged the well for the standpipe during the dry season when water in the nearby wells got murky or, even, non-existent. And, Victória, despite getting all the water needed in the house from the well excavated in their yard, still walked to the standpipe two or three times per week. There, she bought water to re-sell on the street in small plastic bags that she filled with water and placed in buckets with ice.

On the one hand, Victória echoed the explanations given by other women when she claimed that the well was actually more convenient:

“If you have a well in the house, there is no reason to go outside. If you don't have a well in the house then, instead of going elsewhere you might go to the standpipe. There, it is easier, you don't need to pull the bucket, you just stand and wait, you don't get tired.”¹⁹³

Whilst recognising the ease associated with getting water from the standpipe, these women would not conceive going to the hydrant when they had wells, and free water, readily available at all times in the immediate vicinity. Even if women often complained from pain in the chest, which they attributed to pulling buckets when fetching water, the ease and comfort associated with the tap did not compensate for the distance, limited opening hours, waiting times and conflicts associated with the standpipe.

¹⁸⁹ Interview ASPAAB *7. Original in Creole, my own translation. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁹⁰ Interview Water User *7. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁹¹ Interview Water User *8. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁹² Interview Water User *10. Name has been changed to preserve informant's anonymity.

¹⁹³ Interview Water User *7.

On the other hand, perceptions related to the taste of the water were perhaps the most important factor for these women. When asked about quality of water, these women enthusiastically asserted that the water from the wells “is very good!” Referring to water from the standpipes, these women, echoing messages disseminated by ASPAAB, stated, “The water from the tap is healthier”. Nevertheless, they insisted that they preferred water from the well, including for drinking. And, they admitted that their preference was related to taste:

“Because if you get used to this water [from the well], you put water from the tap in your mouth, you can’t swallow!” ¹⁹⁴

Mariama’s¹⁹⁵ comments, who lived close to a standpipe but in *Bairro1* resembled those of Alimato:

“This water [from hand pump] is cleaner, that water [from the standpipe] is not very clean, sometimes the water comes out red, sometimes is dirty. (...) for this reason, we prefer coming to the hand pump. Also, this water tastes better. We come here not because we have to pay 25CFA to get water from the standpipe but because the water tastes better. Even if this pump is heavy.”

Aissatu¹⁹⁶, who lived in *Bairro 3* in close proximity to a standpipe, said she preferred to get water from a hand pump located close to her house, and compared the colour of the water from the piped water network to the black trousers of a passer-by:

*“the water there [at the standpipe] often comes out black. As black as the trousers of that girl!
The water from the hand pump is always good and that borehole never dries out.”*

These women were used to and preferred water from the well. Referring to water safety, they also claimed that neither them nor other people in their households had been sick because of this water. In addition, they noted that the water from the tap often came out with a strange colour. Indeed, ASPAAB explained that the water of the piped scheme often came out reddish, because of an excess of iron in one of the sources supplying the network.

¹⁹⁴ Interview Water User *8.

¹⁹⁵ Interview Water User *30. Name has been changed to preserve informant’s anonymity.

¹⁹⁶ Interview Water User *11

In fact, I came across at least one household that opted to collect all water from the standpipe, except for drinking water. I met Maimuna and Mona, on several occasions, at one of the standpipes where they claimed they went on a daily basis to collect water for their large household. But, I also bumped into them at a privately owned well equipped with a hand pump, located farther away from their house than the standpipe where I usually met them. As indicated by the containers with lids they were carrying, they were there to collect drinking water. And only then, they admitted that, in fact, whilst using water from the standpipe for all other purposes, they collected drinking water from this well. This was because they believed the water was better. It was fresher, it tasted better and it was pristine, which was often not the case with the water from the piped scheme, which came out reddish, warm and with a strange taste.¹⁹⁷ Their reluctance to openly disclose their water practices in the first place, suggests that they were acquainted with messages claiming that the water from the network was 'healthier', and safer.

Kooy and Bakker (2008b) have discussed the contradiction between different parameters used to measure 'quality' of water in the context of Jakarta: Traditional assessments are based on the sensory qualities of taste, smell and colour; modern assessments are founded on scientific knowledge that replaces sensory with scientific considerations focusing on the 'invisible', and potentially threatening, characteristics of water. According to these scholars, the adoption of modern assessments of water was closely associated with projects of piping and networking (some parts) of Jakarta. And, simultaneously, the modern-traditional binary associated with these two assessments of water became a fundamental part of divisive and exclusionary discourses advocating, and shaping, different types of infrastructure for different parts of the city.

In Bafatá, discourses behind the construction of infrastructure were typically framed around notions of public health and water safety, as defined according to scientific principles. Even if often interventions could not guarantee the safety of the water being provided, these discourses

¹⁹⁷ Fieldwork notes

supported investments in infrastructure targeting precisely those groups without access to safe water, which were commonly associated with the poor. This is revealed in many reports from international organisations financing infrastructure, which consistently included the poorer groups of society as their target groups, even if cost-recovery principles then boycotted their stated aims. Furthermore, this is reflected, for example, in the distribution of Bafatá's infrastructure, which does not reflect any socio-spatial differentiations within the city.¹⁹⁸

Everyday water practices, on the other hand, illustrate the ways in which these two understandings of water were combined in everyday practices. The women I interviewed did not reject one perception or the other outright. Claiming, "The water from the tap is healthier", these women willingly demonstrated their acquaintance with 'modern' perceptions of water quality. And, to some degree, they also acknowledged that the water was safer. Notably, whilst they claimed that the water from the wells was good, they never attempted to say it was healthier. This could be indicative of their respect for the scientific assessment of water quality, which they tacitly accepted was not the one they were mobilising for their appraisal of the water from the wells. However, these women continued to found their water practices on perceptions based on taste, smell and colour. After all, they had always done it and never had any problems. In these ways, they both acknowledged and contested messages related to quality of water being disseminated.

At the same time, whilst it was apparent that some users did not perceive any advantages in collecting water from public standpipes, often these same users had different ideas concerning home connections. Having a tap in the house was commonly perceived as the best solution, compared to any other available in the city. And, for example, Alimato, who preferred the taste of the water from the well, claimed that she would even drink water from the piped supply if she had a home connection. After all, she said, it was supposed to be better for your health. Here, the lack of resources was the only factor preventing households from connecting

¹⁹⁸ I could not find any data relating to socio-economic characteristics of the population of Bafatá, or their spatial distribution within the city. This assessment is based on my understanding developed through conversations and my experience living in the city.

to the water network. The connection tax charged for new domestic connections was, in 2014, 20,000 CFA (€30.50). New customers were also expected to buy their own meters which cost 18,500 CFA (€28.21) and to pay for the work and materials required to build their connection to the mains. The price of the last item varied from situation to situation but averaged 121,500 CFA (€190.61). Thus, even if the water tariff was cheaper for home connections, the initial investment was beyond the means of most people living in the city. Thus, despite the added public health benefits associated with home connections, since they reduce the risk of contamination during collection and transport, they were unaffordable for most of the population. At the same time, because they are private, they are not financed by international projects.

Everyday water practices in Bafatá are complex. Most people rely on multiple sources and technologies and juggle different factors in their water routines. Whilst the price of water is excluding some people from accessing water from standpipes, it is apparent that there are also many other factors affecting people's water practices. Namely, perceptions of quality of water and convenience continue to drive people to use alternative sources. As suggested by Shaheed et al. (2014), based on a study carried out mostly in Cambodia, access to lower-risk water sources is not enough to guarantee that they are used. At the same time, in a context where poverty is widespread, it is likely that people will continue to opt for free sources, where and when they are available, and to invest their scarce resources in satisfying other basic necessities. This is likely to happen independently of the price of the water. Opting for alternative sources, people in Bafatá engage in what has been called 'splintering from below'(Bakker, 2010). Here, this splintering refers to a reliance on multiple un-networked water sources but also to the impacts these practices have on the expansion of piped water supply systems in poorer contexts, where systems rely, to a great extent, on users' contributions.

At the same time, most users perceived home connections to offer a much better alternative than public standpipes, which would allow them to avoid distance, conflicts and waiting times.

In addition, home connections provide public health benefits by reducing the risk of contamination during the collection and transport of water. However, home connections remain expensive and beyond the possibilities of most residents in Bafatá.¹⁹⁹ Investigations of water provision in urban areas have mostly focused on access to a piped supply, often considered as the only form of adequate access by researchers focusing on urban water provision. Related to this, there has been little mention of the importance of alternative sources or public health campaigns in guaranteeing the use of safe water. In the context of small secondary cities, such as Bafatá, people rely, and will most likely continue to rely, on multiple sources. It is thus crucial that researchers take into account this diversity of sources, and the ways in which they play a role in meeting people's water needs. Whereas investments in infrastructure, including piped supply schemes are unarguably a priority, these should not replace the need for investments in public health campaigns that focus on the diversity of sources people use and the need for facilitating ways to access safe water through these alternative sources. The progressive contamination and enclosure of alternative sources, resulting with processes of urbanisation, is also an important ongoing process that needs to be taken into account in these contexts.

8.3. The incipient transition from 'private-collective' to 'collective-individualising' modes of water supply

Despite the 'splintering from below', recent improvements in water provision have resulted in an increasing number of people opting for a piped supply in Bafatá. And, numbers are expected to grow as the network expands and messages promoting the use of the network consolidate. This section discusses the differences between *private-collective modes of water supply*, which emerge around wells and hand pumps and entail the sharing of resources, and *collective-*

¹⁹⁹ Home connections also depend on the capacity of the system. In 2013, before the completion of the works programmed under BMMI, the second project, ASPAAB was not accepting any new connections because of the impacts it would have on the overall system.

individualising modes of water supply, which have arisen around metered standpipes and home connections and entail the disruption of sharing practices and water gifts. First, it is shown that the transition between these modes of water supply is incipient, despite the increasing number of people relying on the network. Instead, these modes co-exist in the city. Second, this transition is discussed in relation to debates around the commodification and marketization of water. Here, it is shown that the introduction of meters, and the associated shifts in modes of supply, amount to transformations that exceed the commodification and marketization of water. In line with Baptista's (2013b) work focusing on prepaid electricity meters in Maputo, it is suggested that meters can introduce positive changes that cannot be framed under neoliberalism, such as allowing people to control use according to their needs and possibilities. In addition, in a context like Bafatá, where resources are so scarce, meters prove essential for the operation and maintenance of the system.

8.3.1. Wells, pumps and (unmetered) home connections: private-collective modes of water supply

Wells and hand pumps remain the most prevalent technologies for extracting water amongst residents in Bafatá. Wells are widespread throughout the different neighbourhoods of the city, and include many different types, from traditional to protected wells, entailing different levels of investment and water safety. Regardless of the type, wells typically result from individual, private ventures: not only are they excavated on private property, but also their construction, ongoing maintenance and eventual repairs or piece replacement are financed by individuals or particular households. However, in striking contrast to the private and individual practices framing the investments in, and management of, these infrastructures, access to these water points is free and open to all.

Whereas wells can be built and maintained at a relatively low cost – hand dug wells, for example – the drilling of a well or borehole followed by the installation of a hand pump

necessarily involves a significant investment. For this reason, most hand pumps in the city were in fact installed with funds from international donors, and are currently managed (or supposed to be) by management committees, comprising nearby residents. In addition, contrary to the case of wells, where maintenance and repairs do not typically require significant resources, the maintenance of hand pumps is costly, mostly due to the prices of spare parts. The costs and complexity related to the maintenance of hand pumps are mirrored in the large number of such pumps, supposedly managed by committees of residents, which are out of order due to the lack of resources to carry out necessary repairs. Nevertheless, a number of hand pumps in the city were also the product of the private initiative of individuals or households, who financed not only the installation of this infrastructure, but also, as in the case of wells, their ongoing maintenance and repairs. Still, access to these privately owned infrastructure is typically free and open to all.

Before meters were installed, it was also common for people to share the costs of private home connections and to make these available to neighbours. For instance, in 2010, Fanta, Djenabu and Djau²⁰⁰ shared the costs of a home connection, which consisted of a tap next to Fanta's house. Since, at that time, the system only worked an average of two days a week for approximately two hours, the tap was always left open and once the water started running these women would fill as many containers as they needed. After they finished, their neighbours were welcome to collect water free of charge. In effect, as will be discussed below, even after meters were introduced practices involving giving water for free to neighbours prevailed. The introduction of meters, did not automatically or necessarily disrupt practices entailing the sharing of private sources.

These practices entailing the collectivisation, through sharing, of private sources can be traced to prevailing social norms. In fact, people seem to struggle to explain why they shared all these resources. For example, I asked Mariama, the owner of a well, why she opened her well to

²⁰⁰ Information collected between March 2010 and February 2011.

everyone and, since she did it, why she did not ask for contributions towards the maintenance costs. She explained:

*“Nothing!!!! Because... hmmm... you know, the Fulani people say, ‘if you want a better life in the other world, you have to work for it in this one’. That’s it!”*²⁰¹

Related to this, Aissatu, who collected water from someone’s else well, claimed:

*“They do it for themselves. They are seeking goodness.”*²⁰²

Fatumata²⁰³, Djenabu²⁰⁴, Adama²⁰⁵, and Ramatu²⁰⁶ explained the sharing of water resources in light of broader norms of reciprocity. To express this, they relied on a Creole expression “*anos ke sinta djunto*”²⁰⁷, denoting interdependence, neighbourliness and reciprocity. This interdependence is revealed in Aua and Victoria’s explanations to why they opened their wells to their neighbours without charging them anything:

*“No, we can’t [deny water], we can’t, that’s wrong! (...) Because... it is our well, you can go ask someone to contribute [towards repairs and maintenance], now imagine it happens they can’t, they will worry... They will say: ‘they charged us, we didn’t pay, for us now to go fetch water there, we can’t.’”*²¹⁰

*“[we give water] because of goodness, of propinquity...everyone needs the support of their companions, isn’t it? This is why we do it...”*²¹¹

For hand pumps, if you were to privately install one, it meant that you had the resources to do so, and, therefore, it was your duty to share with your neighbours who could not afford to do so.²¹² Thus, in Bafatá, if you have a water point, whilst you are entirely responsible for its construction and maintenance, you are also expected, and expect to, share it with your

²⁰¹ Interview Water User *38. My own translation from Creole.

²⁰² Interview Water User *1

²⁰³ Interview Water User *19

²⁰⁴ Interview Water User *5

²⁰⁵ Interview Water User *13

²⁰⁶ Interview Water User *16

²⁰⁷ The literal translation would be: we sit together

²¹⁰ Interview Water User *23

²¹¹ Interview Water User *7

²¹² Fieldwork notes

neighbours. The sharing of private water points – wells, hand pumps or home connections – is deeply ingrained in the water practices of the city’s residents.

Therefore, whereas wells, hand pumps and, to a lesser extent, home connections constitute individual and privatised endeavours engendered by the city’s inhabitants to satisfy their water needs, they turn into collective ventures when, through sharing practices, their access becomes free and open to all. They constitute private-collective modes of water supply, whereby private investments in technologies to access water are made collective through deeply-ingrained norms and practices of sharing that secure typically private infrastructures are open to all.

In a context such as Bafatá, these practices entailing the sharing of water resources are essential for urban dwellers seeking to meet their water needs. And, they are not exceptional, they are one dimension of an urban fabric where reciprocal gifts are essential survival strategies. Considering the elusive presence of the state of Guinea-Bissau in what concerns the delivery of urban services in Bafatá, these private-collective modes of water supply are essential for the city’s residents’ ability to live in the city and to access basic services.

These private-collective modes of water supply cannot be framed as commons (Ostrom, 1990). They are recognisably private and, whereas access is generally open, the responsibility for the management and maintenance remains in private hands. They also cannot be adequately framed within narratives of privatisation, commodification and circulation of capital. They are private but they are not profit-oriented and water is not sold. In fact, they are particularistic solutions that seek to meet the demands of private individuals where there is no collective service provision. Yet, they do not hint at collapsing, fragmented public realms (Gandy, 2006) as demonstrated in the ingrained practices of sharing resources. On the contrary, they enable what Anand (2011b, p. 545) termed hydraulic citizenship, “a form of belonging to the city enabled by social and material claims to the city’s water infrastructure.”

In Bafatá, they are possible for several reasons. First, because the small size of the city translates in a relative abundance of water that it is not severely contaminated (as far as we know). Second, and still perhaps related to the small size of the city, social relations based on

reciprocity and sharing of resources enable, and in fact motivate, the sharing of private water points. These water practices are part of broader social relations and institutions, which include looser formations but also traditional and religious authorities, that stress neighbourliness, propinquity and companionship as vital characteristics of the urban fabric.

8.3.2. From private-collective to collective individualising modes of water supply: beyond commodification and the evil rule of the meter

Not long after taking over the responsibility for the management of the water piped network in 2006, in an attempt to increase revenues and nurture a culture of payment amongst users, ASPAAB sought to install ‘the rule of the meter’, but without much success. In 2012, by the end of *Bafatá Misti Iagu* (BMI) – the first project implemented by Portuguese NGO TESE in partnership with ASPAAB – the juxtaposition of two important events allowed this organisation to go one step further towards these goals. First, BMI financed the installation of meters on all standpipes and home connections. Second, ASPAAB was now better equipped, and also more determined, to build on the discipline allowed by the introduction of this technology to achieve ‘cost-recovery’. The deployment of this novel combination of technological and managerial devices profoundly affected the ways in which users interacted with the system and the way in which the system operated as a whole. It enacted the emergence of collective-individualising modes of water production.

This is not to say that attempts to closely monitor users of the piped water network through the use of meters have not met widespread resistance. In fact, an on-going struggle over enforcement and evasion of this strict rule of the meter ensued. Nevertheless, the deployment of the ‘rule of the meter’ has signalled a change and started to sow the seeds for what might become decisive shifts in the multiple social relations and institutions shaping the urban landscape. In this section, they are discussed in terms of the transition from a private-collective to a collective-individualising mode of supply. In contrast to the private-collective modes of

production discussed before – which entailed the collectivisation of private water points through sharing practices – collective-individualising modes of production, which are associated with the use of meters, entail the disruption of ingrained sharing practices, resulting in the individualisation of the use of a collective system, the piped water network. Instead redistribution happens at the central management level.

The introduction of meters has resulted in significant changes to practices around the use of home connections. Before meters were introduced, users with home connections paid a monthly flat rate and, in line with private-collective modes of water supply, home connections were frequently shared and neighbours welcome to help themselves. With the introduction of meters this started to change as people started to refuse water to their neighbours, or at least, to tightly control the amounts being given. This was reflected, for example, in the installation of multiple devices on taps, in attempts to control access to these. The figures below show some examples of home connections with meters where devices to lock taps have been installed in attempts to prevent uncontrolled use.



Figure 28. Home connections with meters and different devices to lock taps

Elizabete²¹³ and Indja²¹⁴ living not far from each other in *Bairro 1* openly admitted not to give water to neighbours. Elizabete, who also has a well from where neighbours are welcome to draw water, explained:

²¹³ Interview Water User *45

²¹⁴ Interview Water User *46

“we don’t give water [from the tap] because we have to pay for the water we give. (...) The water from the well is mine, I can give it away. The water from the tap I pay for.” (Elizabeth, Water User)

Nevertheless, Elizabeth still admitted she gave water to at least one elderly neighbour. Binta²¹⁵, on the other hand, continued to give water to neighbours. At the same time, she complained about the extremely high water bills they were getting, and how she kept trying, and failing, to prevent people from using their tap. Papis, her son, claimed that it was not that they didn’t want people to use the tap, 10 litres or so per person would be fine. They preferred to pay a bit more and make sure their neighbours didn’t get sick. However, according to Binta and Papis, the neighbours seemed to be using the tap not only to get their drinking water, but also for other purposes. Mohamed, a Mauritanian who has been living in Bafatá for over 20 years, also gave water to his neighbours, but only a limited amount, for drinking. Again, this gift was explained in terms of a responsibility for the health of his neighbours.

Although not representing a complete break with the past, the introduction of water meters clearly disrupted social relations mediating practices of sharing water resources. Where previously home connections financed by private individuals or households were open to neighbours, with the introductions of meters these same individuals and households have started denying or at least attempting to control water gifts. In many cases it might be that their water bills are now lower than the flat rate they used to pay. But now they can quantify the gift to their neighbours. Simultaneously, the introduction of water meters came with users’ ability to monitor use. This might have enabled people that would not be able to pay a fixed flat rate to have a home connection, if they are able to mobilise the one off payment required to install this connection.

As with home connections, interactions at the standpipe were also affected by the installation of meters. The ‘rule of the meter’ profoundly affected both the ways in which operators worked, and the ways in which users interacted with standpipes and their operators. After

²¹⁵ Interview Water User *48

meters were installed on all standpipes, ASPAAB started comparing revenues handed in by operators against meter readings, and any inconsistencies between the cash handed in to ASPAAB and the meter reading would be deducted from the operators' wage. Thus, in order to secure conformity between revenues and meter readings, standpipe operators were required to change their interactions with users, in order to minimise the loss of non-charged water. Notwithstanding the heterogeneity in both size and form of containers brought to the hydrant, in order to secure the conformity between meter readings and revenues, operators had to make sure that these containers were filled with the right amount of water, 25 litres for 25 CFA. A task that often resulted in protests from users, who saw their containers half empty. Furthermore, the washing of containers at the water point, an adopted and accepted practice, should also be forbidden, even if this contradicted public health campaigns disseminating messages about the importance of washing and cleaning water containers. Finally, the tight control of water revenues prevented water gifts at all levels. This included giving water for free to those claiming not to have the money to purchase it or even those promising to pay in the future. But, it also targeted practices encompassing water gifts to passersby requesting water to drink, which were also common, especially in those standpipes located near schools or mosques. Used to more relaxed rules and still surrounded by wells where water was given away for free, adjusting to the tight control of the standpipe required a change in people's perceptions of the value of the water they were getting.

In addition, before meters were installed, ASPAAB had no means to check revenue handed in by operators against volume of water sold. Operators would hand in what they stipulated as an adequate amount. Queba's narrative illustrates how things worked then:

“In those days, standpipes had no meters installed. Operators sold water and then, from the revenues collected, they handed in whatever they wanted. On my first day I raised something like 12,000 CFA (€18.30) or 13,000 CFA (€19.82) selling water at the standpipe. I raised that and I handed in ASPAAB something like 12,000 CFA and I kept 1,000 CFA (€1.52) for myself. I only kept 1000 CFA because I was scared of keeping the money, I was afraid of getting

into trouble. I was not sure if they would be able to find out. So, I decided, 'I'll keep 1000 CFA and I will hand in 12,000'. But, it turned out that, the other people that had been working on the same standpipe before me, they were handing in only 3,000 (€4.57) to 4,000 CFA (€6.10)!!! They were keeping all the rest. Thus, ASPAAB called me and told me to stay working on the standpipe. (...) well, I regretted it. I thought, 'Well! In the end, the other operators got something and I got nothing!'"²¹⁶

Therefore, the 'rule of the meter' profoundly affected the work of operators, as ASPAAB started comparing revenues handed in by operators against meter readings, and in this way controlling operators' wages. On the one hand, the introduction of meters resulted in drastic reductions to operators' income, which were eventually set at 20% of the water revenue at the respective standpipe. As a result, according to Queba, some operators simply gave up their jobs in search of more profitable opportunities. On the other hand, it helped ASPAAB control the work of operators, guaranteeing that cash paid for water remained within the system. The wages of operators are low but also related to the resources available and, supposedly, fair among different operators.

Contrasting the practices resulting from the scrupulous following of the requirements of the meter with those described above emerging around the well or the hand pump, the differences are evident. The meter appears as a device that could effectively disrupt sharing and gift norms, which have fundamentally characterised water practices in the city. However, the continuing sharing of home connections with neighbours, the perennial inconsistencies between meter readings and cash handed out to ASPAAB by operators and the refusal of people to work as operators all indicate ways in which this rule of the meter is resisted and contravened. In fact, operators continue to give water to passersby, especially those located next to schools or mosques, to fill in containers more than the stipulated 25 litres and to allow people to pay tomorrow. Likewise, ASPAAB was finding it harder and harder to find people willing to work on standpipes. This is because the payment is bad but also because the job is

²¹⁶ Interview ASPAAB *1

hard and this hardness is to a great extent related to all the requests resulting from the introduction of meters. Considering the lack of employment opportunities in Bafatá and the high levels of poverty, it becomes clear the precariousness of these jobs. The difficulties in finding people willing to work at the standpipe meant that ASPAAB had to keep working with people that consistently handed in much less money than the amounts registered in meters and, sometimes, even plead with these people not to give up working at the standpipe. In fact, ASPAAB members often used their social position, as teachers and members of the water operator, to persuade people to work on standpipes by claiming that it was their duty to contribute to the city and the well-being of their fellow residents. At the same time, relying on extremely low-paid work, ASPAAB was de facto accepting backhanding and resistance to the rule of the meter.

Yet, the continuous efforts of ASPAAB to enforce the rule of the meter are also proving effective. According to ASPAAB's²¹⁷ technicians, operators lacked rigor and control in their work. Some operators often went to do other jobs leaving the standpipe unattended or in the hands of someone without experience. Some went to sit in the shade and did not control users adequately. In fact, several standpipe operators complained about standing under the hot sun and claimed that ASPAAB should build sheds next to standpipes, as one of the operators had done himself.



Figure 29. Standpipe with shade

²¹⁷ Interview ASPAAB *2

Even Virginia, the most exemplar operator, had recently gotten a job cleaning in the mornings. For this reason, her standpipe was now often unattended since her son, who she had asked to take over, would often not bother to be around. Nevertheless, members of ASPAAB management team believed that efforts to raise awareness amongst operators were showing results and the situation was improving. At the same time, ASPAAB recognised the difficulties the job entailed and the low incentive created by the extremely low revenues. Thus, as discussed in the previous chapter, they tried to find ways to motivate operators and to enforce the rule of the meter. For example, they created a system of prizes that established competition amongst operators.

In some way, the introduction of meters subverts private-collective modes of water supply. Instead, it inaugurates what can be perhaps termed a collective-individualising mode of supply, collective in the ways it is managed but individualising in its use. Without wanting to go into discussions relating to whether water is, or is not, a public good, it is clear that the piped water supply service being provided in Bafatá is framed as a public utility providing a social good. In line with its public utility character, the ownership and, supposedly, the regulation and monitoring of water provision remains in the hand of the state. Related to this, the goal of the piped supply scheme is to provide access to an improved water source, with effects on public health, and to expand this service to as many people as possible. In other words, this system can be seen as an attempt to devise a collective solution to secure access to safe water, replacing a multiplicity of sources of unknown quality. In order for such system to work, in the context of Bafatá, users have to pay into the system. Their contributions are then re-distributed at the management level: they are used to maintain and operate the system but also to expand the network to new areas and users. The payment of water, which engenders the individualisation of use, is therefore essential for this collective solution to be in place. In this way, the piped water supply scheme, a collective enterprise, can be seen to incentivise individualistic modes of provision, which disrupt deeply ingrained sharing practices at the neighbourhood level, whilst enabling re-distribution at the central management level.

On the one hand, the transition from private-collective to collective individualising modes of production suggests a disruption of sharing practices, and water gifts, which could in fact be equated to a fragmentation of the public realm, visible in the disruption of reciprocal survival strategies which are at the heart of the urban fabric. In addition, the introduction of meters, which is associated with the enforcement of cost-recovery, hints at the commodification and marketization of water. In fact, a new market, where water is being sold and bought, was created.

On the other hand, this transition has also enabled the operation of the piped water supply system in a context where resources are extremely scarce. As highlighted in contemporary debates concerning the use of prepaid meters, the introduction of ‘ordinary’ meters in Bafatá spurred transformations – in users, managers and technicians – that involved the creation of spaces of calculation and the learning or adoption of calculation in daily water practices. Schnitzler’s (2013; 2008) work on the use of prepaid meters in South African cities has highlighted the role of these technological devices in the creation of particular neoliberal subjectivities. She also notes how technologies become embedded in particular rationalities but also how they turn into sites of political struggle. Schnitzler herself recognises that it’s not the meter itself but the context, which shapes these outcomes. Meters can mediate different meanings in different places. Baptista’s (2013b) work on the use of prepaid meters by electricity providers in Maputo suggests precisely the relevance of alternative meanings, which transcend interpretations around neoliberalism. Instead, she highlights how the introduction of meters is creating new possibilities for users, who are now able to control and monitor their spending according to their possibilities and desires.

The case of Bafatá demonstrates how, like in the case of prepaid meters, the introduction of ‘ordinary’ meters can also result in reconfigurations of practices and subjectivities related to these practices. Neoliberal and governmentality based conceptual frameworks could enable narratives of commodification of water or disciplining of subjects in Bafatá. The introduction of meters is certainly igniting changes at several levels, changes that amount to more precise

measurements that facilitate the payment of water and to a certain degree amount to the commodification of water.

However, these might not be the most important phenomena happening here. The introduction of meters in Bafatá inaugurated a process of learning: Learning how to manage, learning how to work and learning how to consume water with the meter. And, these renovated procedures to enforce payment for water allow ASPAAB to control standpipe operators and users guaranteeing that cash paid for water remains within the system; they too permit consumers to control their consumption according to their means opening the possibility for people that would not be able to pay the flat rate to connect to the network. In addition, whilst disrupting sharing practices, these procedures also allow for the collectivisation and centralisation of re-distribution. Surely, the meter enacts important changes to water consumption practices. Perhaps those changes are required if a water piped network is to operate in a city with such scarce resources.

8.4. Discussion

The investigation of everyday water practices in Bafatá shows that, as suggested by Truelove (2011), access and control, the focus of political ecology perspectives, are not the only factors shaping water practices and inequalities. Instead, in the case of Bafatá, perceptions of quality of water, as well as the convenience associated with different water sources revealed fundamental in people's decisions *not* to rely on the piped water network. Inspired by Bakker (2010), the phenomenon resulting from this continuous reliance on multiple water sources has been termed as a form of 'splintering from below'. These practices shape ongoing attempts to operate and extend the piped scheme, in a context where resources are extremely scarce. But, they also should shape understandings of water provision in these cities, which must account for the multiplicity of sources used without referring to path dependent trajectories assuming its inevitable substitution by a piped supply. The residents of Bafatá rely, and are

likely to continue to rely on multiple water sources, many of which provide a level of water security similar to that of the piped supply scheme. As will be discussed in the conclusion of this thesis, this has important implications for investments in public health campaigns in order to secure safe access to water.

The introduction of the rule of the meter initiated significant changes in the ways water was used and supplied in Bafatá. These shifts have been described in terms of the partial, ongoing and contested transition from private-collective to collective-individualising modes of water use and production in the city. The transformations associated with this transition could be interpreted within a neoliberal framework, focusing on processes of commodification and marketization of water, as well as the exclusion of the poorest from accessing water under cost-recovery conditions. These are certainly important phenomena. However, this chapter demonstrated that they might not be the most relevant. The rule of the meter has also been essential to secure the viability of the piped water scheme in a context where resources are extremely scarce, and where people continue to rely on alternative sources. Moreover, the meter, while preventing gifts and the sharing of water at the neighbourhood level, has enabled redistribution at the central management level. Water revenues have enabled ASPAAB to secure the operation and maintenance of the network, but also to invest in the construction of new infrastructure, such as standpipes. As suggested by Baptista (2013b), meters can also enable households who could not afford monthly flat rates to invest on home connections and monitor their use according to their possibilities and needs. Furthermore, in context of widespread poverty, where users have to carefully choose where to invest their money, it appears that as long as there are free alternative sources, people will continue to rely on these. At the same time, in a context where resources are so scarce, someone has to pay for this system, and it will likely be users. In small secondary cities, like Bafatá, water provision has to be understood in relation to the multiplicity of sources that are essential in securing safe access to water.

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Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore how water infrastructure is being produced, governed and used in Bafatá, a small secondary African city. Related to this, it sought to evaluate the relevance theoretical constructs currently circulating in urban studies can have for understandings of water provision in cities like Bafatá, and to set out ways to conceptualise water infrastructure in the context of small cities in poorer countries. It was argued that, whilst providing important insights, conventional political economy and political ecology perspectives cannot encapsulate the multiplicity of processes and outcomes shaping the evolution of water provision in cities like Bafatá. In particular, two main limitations were identified in these approaches: the prevalence of critiques of neoliberalism and the reliance on flawed theorisations of the state. The concepts of variegated neoliberalism and assemblage coupled with an attention to the everyday were thus adopted as analytical and methodological tools to expand these perspectives. The analytical framework adopted sought to capture a variety of logics that, I argued, should not be straightforwardly interpreted with reference to critiques of neoliberalisation. In addition, this thesis drew on anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday state practices in order to propose more nuanced and empirically based understandings of the roles of the state in water provision.

In line with critiques of neoliberalism at the heart of political economy/ ecology perspectives, the features of water governance models adopted in smaller urban centres – such as community-based management, public-private partnerships and a multiplicity of informal arrangements – are often portrayed as second rate solutions, which reflect these cities' inability to attract private sector investments. In this way, they are seen as further evidence of uneven development trajectories in the context of neoliberal reforms (Bakker, 2013). Certainly, the spatial variegations of neoliberalism, which result in the exclusion of these cities, with smaller

and poorer populations, from global circuits of capital, can be seen as an important factor explaining the models emerging in these cities. At least, they illustrate why transnational water companies have not been seen to be part of water provision solutions in these locations. However, these accounts say very little about the specificities of the alternative models emerging in the cities. They also rely on path-dependent views, which assume the ‘modern networked city’ as a general phase for all cities.

This is not to say that scholars have not looked into alternative models, similar to those adopted in smaller cities. Community management and public private-partnerships, which have become widespread in small cities across Africa, can be, and have been understood in the context of broader neoliberalisation processes (Bakker, 2010; Jaglin, 2002). Cost-recovery and user participation are not only at the heart of these models but they are also commonly justified on the basis of the benefits of markets regulating access to urban services and of the inevitability of state failures. However, this thesis demonstrated that ‘fast’ interpretations based on assumed neoliberal frameworks cannot account for the multiplicity of logics, motivations and practices shaping water provision in Bafatá, and probably in many other small cities in poorer contexts. They also do not account for the ways in which the logics of circulating policy models are adapted and transformed so that new meanings and effects, which transcend original agendas and logics, emerge. In addition, current analyses of water infrastructure have not properly investigated the ways in which everyday water practices influence water provision, and therefore do not properly account for these in conceptualisations of water infrastructure.

In response to the flawed theorisations of the state at the heart of current understandings of water infrastructure, this thesis has argued that views of the state underpinning the policy literature rely on idealisations of neutral, bureaucratic states that have little to do with the reality of states on the ground. Although views adopted by academic researchers seek to de-naturalise the state and challenge its neutrality, these analyses continue to rely on notions of the state that do not take into account the specific histories and trajectories of different states.

These views are still based on idealisations of western states, and on the situated experiences of a small core group of states. Thus, this thesis argued that in investigations of water delivery in small African cities, states should be turned into objects of empirical inquiry. It suggested that anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday states can open the analytical view to the complex and heterogeneous ways in which states shape, and are shaped by, water provision in small cities in Africa. By making the state an empirical object of investigation, these conceptualisations also allow researchers to bring states across the North/South and East/West divide into the same conceptual plane, whilst acknowledging their diverse histories and trajectories.

Below, I summarise the main findings and contributions of this thesis within the three themes introduced above, including a discussion of topics for future research and some of the policy implications of my findings.

9.1. States and water provision

One of the most significant insights generated by this study concerns the role of the state in water provision. I argued that one important flaw at the core of current understandings of water infrastructure relates to the ways in which states are theorised, and subsequently understood to shape water provision. Related to this, I also claimed that views of the state in analyses of water provision should be turned into objects of empirical inquiry. This is essential if these approaches are to capture the reality of states in a diversity of contexts and to take into account the specific, and diverse, trajectories of states (Hansen and Stepputat, 2001). Contrasting current understandings circulating in academic and policy analyses of water provision with empirical investigations of the state in Africa constituted an easy and efficient way to convey the inadequacy of the former. Typically, theorisations of the state at the core of analysis of urban infrastructure continue to be defined in relation to Western/Northern ideals of what states should be. In addition, notions of the state adopted have tended to view

these apparatuses as reified and cohesive entities, and therefore commonly failed to acknowledge the multiple agendas and modalities of states and the evident blurriness of the state-society boundary.

This research suggested that anthropological explorations of states and investigations of everyday states (Abrams, 1988; Gupta, 1995; Hansen and Stepputat, 2001; Mitchell, 1991; Mountz, 2003; Painter, 2006) provide more nuanced theorisations of states that can better capture the multiplicity of ways in which state institutions and actors shape water provision. Rejecting views of the state as coherent, unified and autonomous entities, these approaches allow the consideration of what appear to be disjointed, fragmented practices in light of processes of state formation. First, such an approach empowers researchers to consider a broad range of everyday state practices not as deviations from a supposed unified and coherent state but as the lived geographies of states, and therefore intrinsic to the ways in which all states shape everyday life and relevant to how ideas of the state are constructed. As argued by Gupta (1995, p. 384) if “[state officials] are seen as thoroughly blurring the boundaries between ‘states’ and ‘civil society’, it is perhaps because those categories are descriptively inadequate for the lived realities that they purport to represent”. Second, this means that multiple diverging practices can be explored without jumping into generalisations related to the nature of the state – as absent, violent, neoliberal, and so forth. Instead, they are seen as indicators of the variety of modalities of the state. It enables views of the state as violent and benefactor, neoliberal and developmental all at once. In addition, Foucauldian views of the state as a symbolic entity with real effects generated through the practices of both state and non-state actors also open the analytical view to the notion of ‘state effects’ (Mitchell, 1991) and processes of statisation of society (Painter, 2006). In other words, such views of the state call for investigations of the processes through which a range of practices by state and non-state organisations come to engender the expansion, or *not*, of the symbolic presence of the state, and therefore the expansion of state influence. This has important implications for understandings of states practices in contexts of state weakness. Delving into the embodiment

of both state and non-state actors and exploring how social relations and the experiences, subjectivities and emotions of these actors influence practices, scholars have developed more nuanced views of policy-making and implementation processes (Mountz, 2003; Rankin, 2011).

Applying the above concepts to the study of water provision in Bafatá, this thesis demonstrated that in a context marked by state weaknesses and the heavy presence of international actors, the state was not simply absent or neoliberal. It still influenced water provision in Bafatá in important ways that largely transcended neoliberal logics. Given the prevalence of discourses of state weakness, the stark lack of resources and the dependency of the state of Guinea-Bissau on foreign aid, the relations and interactions between state and international actors were shown to be essential to examine the role of the state in the water sector, or in other words the relational ways in which the state influences water provision. Nevertheless, it became evident that the state not only depends on non-state organisations to foster policy implementation, but also that the state is dependent on these organisations' willingness to at least symbolically accept their role as enabler, supervisor and regulator of the sector. In line with what Jaglin et al. (2011) demonstrated in their study of small towns in Benin, Mali and Senegal, the ongoing competition between state and non-state organisations emerged as a key feature of the interactions between state and non-state organisations. What this means is that the practices of state and non-state organisations in the water sector are not producing 'state effects' or the expansion of the influence of the state. We are witnessing *not* the statisation but the de-statisation of society. In Guinea-Bissau the broad range of state and non-state practices seems to be contributing to the expanding influence of non-state organisations. This has important impacts on discourses of state weakness circulating at all levels, but also on the state's ability to perform the expected tasks. It also goes against most non-state organisations' stated goal of working to strengthen state institutions in the country.

In these circumstances, the most significant ways in which the state influenced water provision in Bafatá involved state actors using their position within the state but acting beyond any

evident regulatory, policy or institutional guidelines. For instance, this was shown in relation to the role of the Regional Director of Bafatá in the devolution of water management to a local organisation. As Lindell (2008) demonstrated in her analyses of markets in Maputo and Fourchard (2011) in his analysis of urban infrastructure in Lagos, in order to understand the ways in which states shape water provision, or the urban context more generally, researchers need to go beyond investigations of formal bureaucracies. These state practices are not simply deviations from the ways in which states work, but are an intrinsic part of these apparatuses and of the ways in which states shape water provision. Another important characteristic of state practices in the context of water provision in Bafatá was the variety of motivations, agendas and approaches which were reflected in a multiplicity of modalities of the state: the state could be absent, benefactor, predatory, neoliberal, developmental, and incompetent all at once. As McFarlane and Desai's (2015) showed in their study of everyday sanitation practices in Mumbai, these various modalities of the state could only be captured by adopting an ethnographic approach – they are at the core of everyday experiences of the state and service provision. And, I would add, they are inherent to the ways in which states work. These findings challenge understandings endowing state apparatuses with unitary, coherent agendas and modalities.

Future Research

This research used perspectives from a small African city to demonstrate the multiple and complex ways in which states shape water supply, and the ways these practices can inform broader understandings of states. In recent years, a number of urban researchers have adopted ethnographic approaches in their investigations of water and sanitation, focusing on everyday users' practices but also everyday state practices (Anand, 2011b; McFarlane et al., 2014; McFarlane and Desai, 2015; Truelove, 2011). However, there are still few indications of how these investigations challenge current understandings of the role of the state in the production of water circulating in urban studies. Where researchers have explored the impacts of

everyday state practices on the ways people experience the urban, there have been fewer attempts to link these practices to broader conceptualisations of states and water provision. The aim should be to conceptualise these everyday practices as an intrinsic part of the state, rather than see them as deviations, or merely micropractices. Thus, more research focusing on different case studies of everyday state practices could inform and develop our understandings of states and water provision. Especially important would be to insist on the potential for contributing to wider theoretical insights based on these studies.

In the context of small secondary African cities, often characterised by the presence of a multiplicity of institutions alongside looser and emerging social formations, there is still little research on the ways in which states carve their path in these institutional landscapes and the implications of this for service provision and processes of state formation. More case studies across different cities could create an engaging and important discussion with wide relevance for general understandings of states and urban service provision.

Policy implications

This thesis' research findings suggest that policies targeting water provision in small secondary cities in Africa need to take into account the specificities and trajectories of states in these locations. This involves recognising the weakness of legal and regulatory frameworks as well as the multiple alternative ways in which states shape water provision, particularly at the local level. It also requires an understanding of the role of the state in a context of institutional multiplicity, therefore recognising how the state works in relational ways. At the same time, the impacts of the competition between state and non-state organisations needs to be properly assessed. Policy-makers should focus on building synergies across different institutions and sectors, whilst seeking progressive combinations of forces to aid implementation. Working to enhance the role of the state, rather than undermine, particularly at the local level, within these collaborations is crucial and it could be better based on the actual roles of state actors, rather than informed by a pre-given view of expected bureaucratic institutional practices.

In Guinea-Bissau, initiatives such as the National Water and Sanitation Group should be assessed in terms of their impacts on different level state institutions, including the Department of Water Resources in Guinea-Bissau and its Regional Offices. The integration of different level state institutions – national and regional –, namely through the presence of Regional Representatives in the National Water and Sanitation Group could strengthen the role of the state supervising and monitoring the sector, informing relevant actors as well as supporting the capacity of these state officials to perform their roles at the local level. Yet, it could also complicate local experiments. Capacity-building and training so often mentioned in policy and government reports should not obfuscate the stark lack of financial resources, which is one of the main challenges faced by state institutions in the water sector. In the specific case of Guinea-Bissau, there is also a need to perhaps re-think how sanctions are applied, the impacts they have on different sectors as well as their wider impacts of political instability. It is unlikely that boycotting the working of departments like the Department of Natural Resources sanctions will have a positive effect on political instability. This might simply undermine remaining capacity and resistance within the state.

9.2. Neoliberalisation, Assemblages and Creole modes of governance

Inspired by calls for postcolonial and post-neoliberal perspectives in urban studies (Baptista, 2013b; Parnell and Robinson, 2012), I argued that the prevalence of critiques of neoliberalism is a key limitation of current analyses of water provision. This does not mean that neoliberalisation analytical frameworks should simply be discarded. In line with postcolonial critiques of urban infrastructure (Bakker, 2010; Kooy and Bakker, 2008a; McFarlane, 2008a; Zerah, 2008), this thesis invoked the notion of ‘variegated neoliberalisms’ (Brenner et al., 2010; Brenner and Theodore, 2002) as a way to engage with more nuanced understandings of processes entailing the neoliberalisation of water. This notion accounts for the variety of directions and trajectories of neoliberal policies and modes of governance, as well as the

different pathways these take as they are introduced in and shaped by diverse urban contexts. But, it was also argued that critiques of neoliberalism, which have emerged from analyses of core cities in the west, should not be taken for granted. And, the impacts of neoliberalisation should be turned into an object of empirical inquiry in investigations of small cities in Africa. Thus, inspired by the work of African urbanists (Lawhon et al., 2014; Myers, 2011), this thesis adopted an ethnographic approach as a way to find new registers to understand, explain and theorise policy innovations in African cities. It was argued that ethnographic approaches, coupled with the concept of assemblages and attention to everyday practices, can contribute to more complex understandings of the variety of agendas, factors, rationalities, motivations and ways of doing that come to be realised in the production and governing of water provision. Together those both encompass and transcend neoliberal logics.

Relatedly, this thesis has argued that the governance model emerging in Bafatá is better described as a *Creole* mode of governance. The term Creole was used to refer to the intermixing of the multiplicity of motivations, practices and logics converging in water governance in Bafatá. In particular, this term conveys the ways in which various actors *appropriated, re-invented, ignored* and *contested* policy models circulating in the city. This was visible, for example, in the ways in which managerial and technical devices to improve cost-recovery and the legal concession contract were strategically embraced, and yet also endowed with new meanings and effects. For instance, the legal contract is used as a key tool to mobilise international donors, rather than as a legal tool governing social relations or as a way to strengthen regulatory frameworks. Also, it was shown that the adoption of cost-recovery principles, which in fact preceded circulating policy models, is based *not* on beliefs of the benefits of market rule, but on the desire to improve access to water in a context where resources are scarce. The ways in which tariff analyses were ignored, and therefore contested, are further examples of how policy models were transformed as they were adopted. Lastly, the term Creole captures the ways in which the everyday practices of, for example, standpipe operators, re-shaped the model and promoted its embedding in local social relations and institutions.

In this way, this research has shown that water provision in Bafatá has to be understood in relation to the complex intertwining of the logics, motivations and practices of various actors. It was also demonstrated that even as neoliberal models are adopted, they acquire new meanings and motivations that exceed a neoliberal ethos. In other words, it was argued that besides processes of 'hybridisation', researchers also need to take into consideration the processes through which neoliberal policies become something else. Related to this, it also demonstrated that apparently neoliberal models can be traced to alternative motivations and agendas rooted in the local context, reflecting distinctive priorities and attempts to extend possibilities within prescribed social, political and economic configurations. For instance, the case of Bafatá indicates that cost-recovery principles can be pre-determined as an outcome of neoliberal policies, but they also represent the pragmatic attempts of various actors to improve service delivery or are a necessary tool to finance water systems in contexts where financial resources are extremely scarce. This is not to say that these policies do not result in water systems that are dependent on the users' capacity to pay, or the mobilisation of international donation, as is clearly the case in Bafatá. Neither does it preclude the fact that payment for water can result in the exclusion of the poorest. However, at least in Bafatá, the adoption of cost-recovery principles was rarely associated with a neoliberal ethos focusing on the benefits of market rule.

Another important finding concerning the governance model emerging in Bafatá relates to the role of development interventions, rather than the 'cherry-picking' strategies of the private sector, shaping water provision in this city. These included both planned interventions and unintended outcomes of development interventions. This thesis has argued that the creation of ASPAAB and the process of devolution of responsibilities for water management to this organisation, two vital events shaping the current condition of water provision in the city, were unintended outcomes of development interventions, which vitally shaped the motivations and practices of those actors involved. Thus, having in mind the role of both planned and unintended outcomes of development interventions, it was suggested that development

strategies and discourses, rather than private sector entities' cherry-picking strategies, were key in shaping the models emerging in Bafatá.

Future Research

This research suggested that, rather than being the result of the cherry-picking strategies of private sector entities, formal infrastructure systems put in place in small cities are better understood as outcomes – both expected and unintended – of development interventions and discourses. Research in other small cities would be necessary to assess if this is the case elsewhere. In chapter seven, I suggested that ASPAAB and the Regional Director sought (and succeeded) to create possibilities for expanding the formal piped supply scheme within prescribed socio-political configurations. Research in a diversity of cities could enhance our understandings of the various factors and processes explaining why, and how, some ephemeral attempts become more permanent modes of service provision, while others simply disappear. This is in line with research seeking to build on urban multiplicities and the everyday practices through which residents secure their lives in the city.

Where researchers have devoted considerable attention to the circulation of water policies, much less attention has been given to the multiplicity of ways in which these policies are transformed, adopted, appropriated, ignored and rejected as they are translated from policy documents into practice. These processes, which are beyond the focus on the travels of neoliberal policies, are essential to understandings of water provision in small cities. More research on different cities, including small cities frequently neglected by urban researchers, would provide an essential platform to develop understandings of water provision.

The significant improvements in Bafatá's piped supply scheme have, among other factors, relied on the inflow of resources throughout the duration of two development interventions. Where ASPAAB has improved its ability to collect revenues, it seems unlikely that water revenues will be sufficient to cover the costs of maintaining, repairing and expanding this infrastructure. This means that there is an uncertainty concerning the evolution of the piped

supply scheme of Bafatá now that these projects are finished. Will ASPAAB and the Regional Director mobilise more funding? Will they be able to maintain and improve the system with only water revenues, until they secure more funds? Further research is needed to secure policy implications of the study.

Policy implications

One of the key factors influencing the governance model adopted in Bafatá is the role of various actors re-inventing, appropriating, ignoring and contesting globally circulating models, ideas and policies. There are two key policy implications resulting from this argument. The first one relates to the ways in which best-practices have been circulated across cities. Policy-makers should consider balancing the focus between the models being circulated and processes of translation of policy into practices, analysing the implications of these for models being devised. The second suggestion, which flows from this, is the importance of working with grounded organisations. What this means is the need to work with institutions that are not mere re-creations of abstract institutional forms (or supposedly neutral) but that are carefully understood within local power configurations and therefore able to mobilise influence and resources.

The development of the governance model adopted in Bafatá has taken place hand in hand with evolving processes of learning and capacity-building. Despite the fact that there have been considerable improvements, policy-makers need to be aware that processes of learning, training and capacity-building take much longer than the duration of projects.

This research also demonstrated that the ways in which international donors are channelling funds to non-state organisations is not only promoting the devolution of urban services away from the state but also negatively affecting states' ability to perform their supposed role as regulator of the sector. In this way, international donors are undermining one of the stated goals of most interventions – to strengthen state institutions. This means that development interventions not only need to take into account the actual roles of the state, but also to

evaluate how the ways they channel funds through or beyond the state affects the governance of water provision. Creative ways to ensure these are well used to capacitate effective actors will benefit, too, from close attention to the actual practices of specific institutional actors, associations and users.

9.3. Everyday water practices

In line with what has been implied by Truelove (2011) and Anand (2011b), this thesis suggested that investigations of everyday practices can substantially enhance our understandings of patterns of access to water, and expand our comprehension of the social relations and factors shaping water inequalities in small secondary African cities. Crucially, looking into water practices relating to the use of the piped water scheme in Bafatá, it was shown that we are witnessing a process of ‘splintering from below’ (2010) in this city. What this means is that water users continue to opt for alternative sources and technologies. Related to this, it was also demonstrated that access – define in terms of ability to pay and distance – to an improved water source, such as a piped supply network, does not equate use. Instead, water practices entail a complex juggling of factors, including decisions concerning the use of scarce incomes, waiting times, reliability of sources, conflict, ease and comfort, and, perhaps most importantly, contradictory perceptions of quality of water. Although access was an important factor excluding poorer groups from using the piped water network, perceptions relating to the taste, colour and smell of water were also found to play a key role in people’s decisions to rely on alternative sources. Thus, this research suggests that there is the need to recognise that in contexts such as that of Bafatá, where multiple sources are available, people will continue to rely on these. Notably, alternative sources can also represent affordable and secure access to safe water; piped water might not be better quality water. Although urban researchers have tended to focus on piped water supply schemes as the only adequate form of water provision, alternative technologies and sources should be included in these analyses,

without a priori assumptions concerning its quality or inevitable substitution. Public health campaigns, alternative sources and technologies and piped supply schemes are all key in securing access to safe water in the context of Bafatá.

This thesis also examined how explorations of everyday water practices can enhance understandings of the social relations emerging around the use and supply of water. In particular, it discussed the changes enacted by the introduction of a piped water network alongside the use of meters and the adoption of cost-recovery principles. It was suggested that wells and hand pumps produce what I called ‘private-collective modes of water supply’ in Bafatá. This mode of water provision entails the collective use of privately owned and maintained sources through ingrained norms dictating the sharing of water resources. Thus, the case of Bafatá showed that particularistic solutions, such as wells or home connections, can become collective infrastructure through ingrained sharing practices. This is in contrast to considerations of the fragmentation of the public realm in contexts of infrastructure breakdown (c.f. Anand, 2011b; Gandy, 2006) and suggests the need for more careful investigations between infrastructure breakdown and social fragmentation in these cities.

The introduction of the ‘strict rule of the meter’ has provoked significant transformations in the ways the piped supply scheme is used and managed in Bafatá. This thesis discussed these changes in terms of a transition from ‘private-collective’ to ‘collective-individualising’ modes of water provision. The term ‘collective-individualising’ was used to describe the individualisation of users’ practices, through the disruption of sharing norms, when they use a collective system that adopts the ‘strict rule of the meter’. In line with what has been suggested by Von Schnitzler (2008), the introduction of meters has definitely changed interactions between water managers and users and initiated what could be seen as a process towards the production of calculative neoliberal subjectivities. However, on the one hand, this transition from private-collective to collective-individualised modes of water provision remains incipient suggesting the prevalence of sharing practices alongside the adoption of more individualistic approaches when it comes to water that is paid for. On the other hand,

these changes in the ways people relate to water, including the payment for water, are a necessary requirement if the piped water network is to operate in the context of a very poor city, like Bafatá. This suggests that changing subjectivities and practices around water user in Bafatá might not only entail the creation of calculative subjects but also amount to a necessary change related to the transition from alternative sources to a piped water network, where distribution happens not through established practices of sharing at the source but forms of collectivisation at a central level.

Future Research

Research carried out elsewhere has demonstrated the importance of other factors beyond access in patterns of use of water infrastructure (Shaheed et al., 2014). Nevertheless, there is still little acknowledgement of the ways in which everyday water practices can be at the core of splintering infrastructure in urban studies literature. More research in other cities would be needed to verify if this tendency identified in Bafatá is common to other cities with similar population sizes and, maybe even slightly larger populations (Bakker, 2010). If this is the case, conceptualisations of infrastructure need to be expanded in order to take into account these dynamics. In addition, acknowledging the co-existence of multiple sources and technologies in cities, without assuming the inevitable (path dependent) substitution of those by a piped supply scheme, raises questions about the ways in which the production and governing of water is conceptualised. How are these alternatives governed? Are these governance practices sustainable at a larger scale and as the water system changes? In what ways do they relate to other forms of governance? How do processes of urbanisation influence access to these alternative sources and technologies? To what extent do these secure access to safe water? Who is affected, and how, as alternative sources become unavailable?

Lastly, as suggested by Truelove (2011), Birkenholtz (2010), McFarlane and Desai (2015), a consistent attention to everyday practices can enhance our understandings of water inequalities and the multiple strategies through which residents access water in urban areas.

Related to this, this research suggested that Bafatá is undergoing an incipient transition from a mode of provision where distribution happens through established practices of sharing to one where these ingrained sharing practices are substituted by forms of collectivisation at the central level. The implications of a changing balance between these approaches requires further investigation, specially as piped supply schemes expand and the number of alternative sources diminishes.

Policy Recommendations

On the basis of the case of Bafatá, this research suggests that public health campaigns, focusing on the safe handling and treatment of water, need to be delivered side by side with investments in infrastructure. Public health campaigns for water safety in cities like Bafatá can have the most substantial impacts when it comes to public health. In addition, it was demonstrated that home connections meet important needs and should be considered in interventions in the sector. Despite the adoption of the ‘strict rule of the meter’ in efforts to achieve cost-recovery, in contexts like Bafatá it is unlikely that water revenues will be enough to cover the costs of all repairs, maintenance and expansion to the network. At the same time, the state will also not be in a position to invest in the sector in the short- to medium-term. This suggests that foreign aid will continue to play a key role subsidising and supporting these systems. This should be recognised by policy-makers, rather than remaining an ‘unintended outcome’ of wider development interventions – in Bafatá, this was evident in the motivations of actors to create NGOs and seek funding from international donors, instead of seeking to create private, and financially sustainable, companies.

One of the key contributions of this thesis for debates on urban infrastructure is the concept of ‘creole urban infrastructure’. This concept explores urban infrastructure by combining critiques of neoliberalism with a focus on the everyday. In this way, it unveils the multiplicity of logics, motivations and practices converging in the production of forms of infrastructure

provision that cannot be easily associated with any one single agenda, even if shaped in circumscribed political and economic conditions. The term creole is used to refer to the “reciprocal activity, and the process of intermixture and enrichment” (Ashcroft et al. 2000, p. 35) of different forces, logics, motivations and practices converging in the production of urban infrastructure. Recognising that in many parts of cities across the world the state and capitalist relations are not the key agents shaping urban processes, the aim is to allow for the consideration of neoliberalisation processes alongside alternative motivations and logics. In addition, this concept conveys that policies and procedures that appear to follow a neoliberal ethos can not only be appropriated in the context of local institutions but also contested and transformed in such ways that they acquire new motivations and meanings. They become creole, that is something else.

Another key implication of the idea of ‘creole urbanism’ developed in this thesis is the ways in which we understand states in analyses of urban infrastructure. Challenging conventional approaches, I refused notions of the state as a coherent and autonomous entity and turned to conceptualisations focusing on the ways in which states are produced and experienced through a myriad of practices by state and non-state actors. Adopting such a perspective opens the analytical field to the lived geographies of states and the consideration of the multiplicity of ways in which a range of state actors shape infrastructure in cities. This involves the consideration of the multiple and often contradictory modalities of the state, enacted through policies and projects but also outside the formal channels of states institutions. It also involves allowing for the multiple and often contradictory agendas, modalities and practices of state actors. Crucially, the aggregate of these practices is not considered as a deviation of state’s norms and practices but as the ways in which states shape infrastructure. This has impacts on understandings of the ways in which states are perceived to influence infrastructure across cities, generating more nuanced analysis beyond exclusion/inclusion.

Thus, the notion of creole urban infrastructure developed here constitutes a conceptualisation that seeks to both consider the important of broader forces and relations and the agency of a

multiplicity of actors and practices. The aim is to provide an analytical concept to explore arrangements in those places often merely described in terms of ‘neither market nor state’ and to trace possibilities emerging in these places.

9.4. Conclusion

This thesis suggested that small secondary cities in Africa matter. These cities matter because they house a significant share of the urban population in Africa, but also because they experience specific challenges related to their size as well as their subordinated political and economic positions. Like any other city, these urban areas should be taken as sites of ‘theory-making’. Building on perspectives from one small city located in West Africa, this research argued that in order to understand water provision in small cities, scholars need to engage with the multiple motivations, logics and practices shaping these infrastructures, which were demonstrated to simultaneously contain, resemble and exceed neoliberal logics. It also showed that more nuanced theorisations of the state are required in order to move beyond western idealisations of states and make sense of the heterogeneous ways in which states (everywhere) shape water provision, and how these practices are related to processes of state formation.

Nevertheless, this research can only be seen as a small contribution and much future research is needed. First, being based on only one case study, this thesis can only make tentative claims regarding the relevance of the research findings in the context of other small secondary cities in Africa. Research on a variety of case studies would be required in order to better understand the ways in which these cities’ specific positions and trajectories influence the forces, processes and outcomes shaping water provision, and therefore the challenges faced by those seeking to improve service delivery. In particular, comparative analyses involving a variety of case studies would be essential in finding new ways, beyond a neoliberal analytical framework, to think about processes and outcomes shaping water provision in small secondary cities. Such a line of work is essential if we are to understand water provision in small cities in poorer contexts

and to make contributions that can improve access to safe water in these urban areas. This is a particularly important contribution if we consider that a significant share of the urban population in Africa lives in small secondary cities.

Inspired by the work of African urbanists, this thesis adopted an ethnographic approach in order to capture processes and practices that continue to escape current analytical registers. Nevertheless, throughout the research process, I constantly struggled to make sense of a range of practices and processes that seemed to be essential in shaping water provision but continuously exceeded existing analytical concepts. Urban researchers and geographers should insist on the task of finding ways to make sense of these empirical realities. The aim should be to develop conceptualisations responsive to the empirical realities of cities, and move beyond perceptions that frame pervasive processes, outcomes and practices as irrelevant or deviations from existing understandings of urbanisation. Likewise, policy makers and practitioners should turn their attention to the actual roles, practices and interactions of existing actors – including associations, states and users – and seek progressive alternatives and alignments that can build on these. This does not mean to build on the hidden entrepreneurial potential of the urban poor but to accept and value a broad range of rationales, motivations and practices currently sustaining service provision in urban areas.

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Appendix I

1. Complete List of Interviews

	Type of Interview	Name	Date
1	Interview State *1	Malam	
2	Interview State *2	António	
3	Interview State *3	Domingos	
4	Interview State *4		12/02/2014
5	Interview State *5	Manuel	
6	Interview State *6	Vasco	
7	Interview State *7	Cristovão	03/12/2013
8	Interview State *8	Carlos	21/01/2014
9	Interview International Organisation *1	Matilde	
10	Interview International Organisation *2	João	
11	Interview International Organisation *2a	Teresa	
12	Interview International Organisation *3	Bioff	
13	Interview International Organisation *4	Michel	
14	Interview ASPAAB *1	Queba	12/03/2014
15	Interview ASPAAB *2	Didier	17/03/2014
16	Interview ASPAAB *3	Fatumata	17/07/2013
17	Interview ASPAAB *4	Bacar	
18	Interview ASPAAB *5	Demba	
19	Interview ASPAAB *6	Maimuna	
20	Interview ASPAAB *7	Mariama	25/02/2014
21	Interview ASPAAB *8	Mamadu	25/02/2014
22	Interview ASPAAB *9	Aladje	

	Type of Interview	Name	Date
23	Neighbourhood Chief *1	Kumba	25/03/2014
24	Neighbourhood Chief *2	Mamadu	24/03/2014
25	Regolo		

	Type of Interview	Name	Date
26	Standpipe Operator*1		
27	Standpipe Operator*2		
28	Standpipe Operator*3		
29	Standpipe Operator*4		
30	Standpipe Operator*5		
31	Standpipe Operator*6		
32	Standpipe Operator*7		
33	Standpipe Operator*8		
34	Standpipe Operator*9		
35	Hand Pump Manager *1	Buba	17/03/2014
36	Hand Pump Manager *2	Quemo	20/02/2014
37	Hand Pump Manager *3	Sambel	17/03/2014
38	Hand Pump Manager *4	Maimuna	26/02/2014
39	Hand Pump Manager *5	Malam	
40	Hand Pump Manager *6	Mariama	24/02/2014
41	Hand Pump Manager *7	Mussa	13/03/2014
42	Hand Pump Manager *8	Iaia	21/02/2014
43	Hand Pump Manager *9		
44	Hand Pump Manager *10		
45	Hand Pump Manager *11		

	Type of Interview	'Name'	Date
46	Interview Water User *1	Aissatu	17/03/2014
47	Interview Water User *2	Aminata	13/03/2014
48	Interview Water User *3	Adja	26/02/2014
49	Interview Water User *4	Fatumata	13/03/2014
50	Interview Water User *5	Djenabu	14/03/2014
51	Interview Water User *6	Aua	20/02/2014
52	Interview Water User *7	Victoria	14/03/2014
53	Interview Water User *8	Alimato	14/03/2014
54	Interview Water User *9	Binta	20/02/2014
55	Interview Water User *10	Djenabu	14/03/2014
56	Interview Water User *11	Fatumata	23/01/2014
57	Interview Water User *12	Aissatu	17/03/2014
58	Interview Water User *13	Adama	17/03/2014
59	Interview Water User *14	Iero	14/03/2014
60	Interview Water User *15	Siratu	26/02/2014
61	Interview Water User *16	Ramatu	26/02/2014
62	Interview Water User *17	Sunka	21/02/2014
63	Interview Water User *18	Aissatu	24/02/2014
64	Interview Water User *19	Fatumata	20/02/2014
65	Interview Water User *20	Sali	13/03/2014
66	Interview Water User *21	Binta	15/03/2014
67	Interview Water User *22	Maimuna	15/03/2014
68	Interview Water User *23	Aua	13/03/2014
69	Interview Water User *24	Marietto	15/03/2014
70	Interview Water User *25	Carla	24/02/2014
71	Interview Water User *26	Dina	26/02/2014
72	Interview Water User *27	Cinco Kila	26/02/2014
73	Interview Water User *28	Djau	14/03/2014
74	Interview Water User *29	Fanta	21/02/2014
75	Interview Water User *30	Aissatu	24/02/2014
76	Interview Water User *31	Djenabu	13/03/2014
77	Interview Water User *32	Iero	21/02/2014
78	Interview Water User *33	Fatumata	26/02/2014
79	Interview Water User *34	Leonor	13/03/2014
80	Interview Water User *35	Mariama	14/03/2014
81	Interview Water User *36	Domingo	21/02/2014
82	Interview Water User *37	Celeste	21/02/2014
83	Interview Water User *38	Mariama	17/03/2014
84	Interview Water User *39	Olga	21/02/2014
85	Interview Water User *40	Fatumata	10/10/2013
86	Interview Water User *41	Salimatu	14/03/2014
87	Interview Water User *42	Aminata	
88	Interview Water User *43	Aissatu	
89	Interview Water User *44	Maimuna	30/10/2013
90	Interview Water User *45	Elizabete	29/01/2014
91	Interview Water User *46	Indja	29/01/2014
92	Interview Water User *47	Alzira	29/01/2014
93	Interview Water User *48	Adama	27/01/2014
94	Interview Water User *49	Mohammed	11/12/2013

2. List of GAS Meetings Attended

	GAS Meetings	Location	Date
1	Meeting 1	Unicef Offices Bissau	26/09/2013
2	Meeting 2	Unicef Offices Bissau	31/10/2013
3	Meeting 3	NGO PLAN International Offices Bissau	28/11/2014
4	Meeting 4	Offices of the Department of Water Resources Bissau	30/10/2014
5	Meeting 5	Offices of the Department of Water Resources Bissau	27/02/2014
6	Meeting 6	Offices of NGO Raje Bissau	27/03/2014

APPENDIX II – Data analysis: Interviews with water users

- The tables below illustrate how I organised data in order to produce the pictures and analysis included in chapter 8 of this thesis.
- In order to identify the different factors affecting people's choices of different water sources and technologies, I analysed interview texts using Nvivo. First, I went through all interview texts and coded them using the following codes: reliability, distance, payment, conflict, perceptions of quality of water (CHECK). The initial codes were generated during a first round of analysis, and then perfected during consecutive rounds. I then used Nvivo to analyse the frequency with which these factors were mentioned by interviewees. Nevertheless, the ways in which different users referred to the different factors was also considered in the analysis, rather than just the frequency with which they were mentioned.

Water Users	Neighbourhood	Close to standpipe	WATER SOURCES USED DURING 'RAINY SEASON'								
			Well	standpipe	Hand pump	Well 2	Well LR	Standpipe LR	Standpipe transport	Home connection	>1
*1	Bilale	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*2	Tunturum	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*3	Palhota	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*4	Caibara	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*5	Siberia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*6	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*7	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*8	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*9	Bairro 2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*10	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*11	Bairro 3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*12	Policia	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
*13	Policia	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
*14	Siberia	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*15	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*16	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*17	Iussi	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*18	Coburnel	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

Water Users	Neighbourhood	Close to standpipe	Well	standpipe	Hand pump	Well 2	Well LR	Standpipe LR	Standpipe transport	Home connection	>1
*19	Bairro 4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*20	Tunturum	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*21	Nema	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*22	Binalu	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*23	Caibara	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*24	Nema	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*25	Rua Porto	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
*26	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*27	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*28	Siberia	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
*29	Iussi	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*30	Rua Porto	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
*31	Caibara	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*32	Iussi	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*33	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*34	Caibara	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*35	Siberia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*36	Iussi	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Water Users	Neighbourhood	Close to standpipe	Well	standpipe	Hand pump	Well 2	Well LR	Standpipe LR	Standpipe transport	Home connection	>1
*37	Iussi	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*38	Bilale	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
*39	Rua Porto	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*40	Praca	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
*41	Bairro 3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*42	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
*43	Bairro 2	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
*44	Bairro 3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*45	Rua Porto	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
*46	Rua Porto	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
*47	Rua Porto	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
*48	Bairro 3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
*49	Bairro 2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
TOTAL		18	41	4	11	2	2	1	1	6	19
%		37	84	8	22	4	4	2	2	12	39

WATER SOURCES USED DURING 'DRY SEASON'												
WaterUsers	N	CS	Same sources	spring	Different well	Well	standpipe	Standpipe transport	Hand Pump	Hand Pump LR	Mission	Home connect
*1	Bilale	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*2	Tunturum	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*3	Palhota	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
*4	Caibara	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*5	Siberia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*6	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*7	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*8	Bairro 4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*9	Bairro 2	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
*10	Bairro 4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
*11	Bairro 3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*12	Policia	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*13	Policia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*14	Siberia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
*15	Ponte Nova	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

WaterUsers	N	CS	Same sources	spring	Different well	Well 1	standpipe	Standpipe transport	Hand Pump	Hand Pump LR	Mission	Home connect
*16	Ponte Nova	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*17	Iussi	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
*18	Coburnel	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*19	Bairro 4	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*20	Tunturum	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*21	Nema	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
*22	Binalu	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*23	Caibara	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*24	Nema	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
*25	Rua Porto	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*26	Ponte Nova	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*27	Ponte Nova	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*28	Siberia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*29	Iussi	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*30	Rua Porto	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*31	Caibara	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
*32	Iussi	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
*33	Ponte Nova	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

WaterUsers	N	CS	Same sources	spring	Different well	Wel 1	standpipe	Standpipe transport	Hand Pump	Hand Pump LR	Mission	Home connect
*34	Caibara	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*35	Siberia	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*36	Iussi	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0
*37	Iussi	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*38	Bilale	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*39	Rua Porto	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
*40	Praca	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
*41	Bairro 3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*42	Bairro 4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
*43	Bairro 2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
*44	Bairro 3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
*45	Rua Porto	1										
*46	Rua Porto	1										
*47	Rua Porto	1										
*48	Bairro 3	1										
*49	Bairro 2	1										
TOTAL		18	25	3	13	1	4	2	6	2	0	1
%		37	51	6	27	2	8	4	12	4	0	2

Appendix III – Interview Themes

Below I list key themes explored in interviews with different informants. These are only illustrative since my interviews were mostly unstructured. This means that although I had themes I wanted to explore, I was also open to new topics introduced by interviewees. When possible I tried to explore the themes I was interested in by focusing on reflections upon specific events and interactions.

State officials

- The role of the department they worked in and their role within it;
- Department's key projects;
- Major challenges of the department and how they affected water provision in the country;
- Major changes since they had started working: changes in policies, civil war, political instability;
- Participation in elaboration of policies and projects, description of specific projects and how they perceived the role of different actors involved;
- Relations/ interactions with other state departments
- Relations/ interactions between state and non-state organisations in different projects;
- GAS (National Water and Sanitation Group);
- major challenges related to water provision in urban areas; role of state, community and private sector
- Evolution of water provision in Bafatá;
- Participation in projects related to water provision in Bafatá;
- Role/Involvement in water provision in Bafatá;

International Organisations/ NGOs

- Aims of the organisation
- Projects of the organisation (related to water provision)
- Interviewees role in the organisation
- Participation in projects: description of project; relations with other non-state organisations, users and the state; achievements and short-comings

- Development sector in Guinea-Bissau: limitations and benefits
- Political instability
- Challenges related to interactions with the state; description of specific projects
- GAS
- Project funding

ASPAAB

- role in the organisation; description of duties/ activities
- motivation to join/ be part of the organisation
- benefits of being a member of the organisation
- founding members: description of events leading to creation of ASPAAB, motivations, actors, reflections
- members involved in the operation of the network: description of their roles, routines, major factors influencing operation, challenges;
- Major challenges relating to water provision in Bafatá;
- Development interventions: description of projects, role of ASPAAB, achievements, benefits and limitations, relation with other actors involved in the project
- Relations/ interactions with different state organisations
- Changes since 2006: human resources, organisation, water provision

Water Users

- Sources and technologies used
- Water routines
- Water treatment
- Factors explaining choice of technologies and sources
- Water provision/ piped supply scheme: role of ASPAAB, state, customary authorities
- Water sharing practices, water gifts
- Paying for water