



The Potential for Decentralization to Promote Local Development in the Municipalities in Mozambique

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Abstract

From early 1990s, the quest for local development has increasingly generated debates and spurred up the interest of international donor agencies, academia and think tanks, supporting decentralization in developing countries as part of public administration reform. This is also evidenced by the case of first 33 municipalities in Mozambique created in 1997 under the Law 2/97. For the quest on local development over the last 20 years (1998-2018), the main question Mozambicans ask is: why decentralization without local development? In terms on methodology, a literature review, exploratory studies and field work were carried out from 2017 to 2021, whereby key informants were interviewed bringing up the voices of citizens, mayors, local businesspeople, ministers, students, academics, parliamentarians, journalists and public servants across the first 33 municipalities in Mozambique. In terms of theoretical and conceptual framework this paper uses theories of public administration, development studies and concept of developmental state. To analyse the quest for local development as a contribution of decentralization, this paper is framed under three aspects: the understanding of what local development is, determining factors, and who and how local development can be promoted and, why this is important for decentralization process. This paper argues that local development can be met when decentralization takes a holistic approach, whereby factors such as endogeneity (cultural, values), incremental planning for targeted investment in economic sector, territorial integration, institutional articulation and developmental elites constitute the foundational block for creating an enabling environment for the local government to play developmental politics. It concludes that local development at municipality level is the fulfilment of the promises of decentralization, namely, efficient governance, institutional equity, citizen participation and provision of basic services in quality.

Keywords: *Decentralization; Local Development; Developmental State; Development Politics*

I. Introduction

The debate on local development and the conceptualization of the term “local development” is not new and has been directly or indirectly linked to the expected results that decentralization should produce in the municipalities. Expressions and interpretations, such as, "local development" as an indispensable ingredient of public policy in a geographical space (Perry, 1987); "local economic development" (World Bank, 2003), "development from below", "endogenous development", "community development", "participatory rural development" (Polese, 1999; Chamber, 2000), reflect the general idea of how local development can be done. Looking at the case of Mozambique, decentralization would contribute to local development. Although this debate is still alive, during the first 20 years (1998-2018) of municipal decentralization, Mozambique disconnected decentralization from promoting local development in municipalities. This article presents the results of this disconnection by the case study of the Municipality of Tete from 1998-2018 and it argues that decentralization can be one of the appropriate vehicles to promote local development in municipalities in Mozambique.

Objective of the Study

The main objective of the paper is to demonstrate how decentralization is a powerful potential vehicle to promote local development in the municipalities in Mozambique. This could have taken place in the first 33 municipalities, during the last 20 years, from 1988 to 2018). Specifically, the paper presents the debate about local development by highlighting different meanings, expressions and how decentralization can be a best vehicle to promote local development at municipal level in Mozambique and why. The paper draws its conclusions from the findings informed by two inter-related analytical domains: local governance authority and local development. The disconnect of these two have produced perverse results, such as absence of local development, to the municipalities in Mozambique. This paper posits the view that decentralization should promote local development for it to fulfil the promises of decentralization, namely, efficient governance, institutional and procedural equity, participation of citizens in decision-making processes and provision of services and goods. In view of this, decentralization should contribute to local development as part of a national strategy to consolidate democracy and strengthen State institutions.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

For the theoretical and conceptual framework, the paper uses two main theories and four key concepts whose underlying assumptions provide the analytical basis for the relationship between decentralization and local development. For the two theories inform the analysis, the first is the theory of public administration whose premisses are based on the understanding that main objective of the State reform under decentralization, is to ensure efficient governance and promote socio-economic development of citizens. The second is the theory of development that sustain the premisses that socio-political and economic transformations require the intervention of both, the State and the private (Stiglitz, 2003). These two theories complement to each other, and they are used in this paper to establish the linkage between the decentralization, understood as public policy reform with the local development at municipality as a positive consequence of decentralization.

II. Methodology and Material

In terms of methodology, this is a qualitative case study for the municipalization in Mozambique and it adopts Interpretive Social Sciences approach (Neuman, 1994, pp. 61-66). This approach is important because it orients the reasoning and helps to triangulate different sources of collected

information, process them and make intelligible the discussion on the relationship between decentralization and local development. This approach also permits to make profound analysis of the situation per se and the context (Yin, 1989), in which decentralization is implemented at municipal level, whereby local development is presented as the main effect of decentralization.

This study is part of the PhD research from 2019 to 2022. It is a product of 10 days exploratory field study in 2019, 3 months research field work, interviews and focus group discussion carried out in 2022. The exploratory field study comprised two moments. Firstly, it consisted of site visits, such as water systems, health and school facilities, shop and markets, roads, municipal buildings to access municipal library and documents. Secondly, random and semi-structured interviews were conducted for 15 people, among whom public servants, journalists, women selling in the city markets, businesspeople and student from the Catholic University in Tete. The exploratory study helped to refine the questionnaire for semi-structure interviews to 36 people and three focus group discussion with the youth in 2022. The data collected under this methodology and approach allowed, on one hand, to capture socio-political and economic dynamics about the creation of the first 33 municipalities and the implementation of decentralization at municipal level from 1998 to 2018. And, on the other, it permitted to identify the nature of relationship established between decentralization and local development in the Municipality of Tete in those 20 years of the first cycle of decentralization in Mozambique.

In addition, this paper relies on literature review, official documents and adapted two inter dependent analytical frameworks: the local government authority (LGA) (Hooghe et al., 2008) and local development (LD) (Romeo, 2015). While the domain LGA covers multiple dimensions of authority, such as institutional autonomy, public policy arena, fiscal autonomy and representation in a municipal territory, the LD helps to verify the fulfillment of the promises of decentralization, which are: government efficiency, participation in decision-making, provision of goods and services, and equity of the redistribution of resources. The analysis is framed with two main decentralization laws: decentralization (Law 2/97) that lasted 20 years until the approval of the new decentralization law (Law 6/2018).

This article is divided in six parts. The first is comprised of this introduction where, succinctly, the subject matter and objective of the study, theoretical framework are presented. The second presents the methodology, approach, tools and techniques used to collect, process and analysis of the data. While in the third part offers the literature review, the fourth part presents the main findings of the study followed with the analysis done in the fifth. The sixth part is the conclusion.

The Understanding about Local Development

Over the last 50 years, the general idea about local development has been given various expressions, such as "local development" as an indispensable ingredient of public policy that can produce profound socio-economic and political transformations in each geographical space (Perry, 1987); "local economic development" (WB, 2003); "bottom-up development", "endogenous development", "community development", "participatory rural development" (Chambers, 2000). Also, expressions of French origin, such as milieu or milieux innovateurs (Maillat, 1992; Pecquer, 1989; Perrin, 1991) reflect this general idea of local development.

It was in the 1980s and 1990s that the term "local development" emerged with some prominence in the international arena crafted as Local Economic Development (LED) (WB, 2003; Rogerson, 2011). For example, in the 1980s, the International Financial Institutions (IFIs), then defenders of the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAPs), in the light of the Washington Consensus tenets, after recognizing the failures of the SAPs, introduced changes in the way development was financed in Developing Countries (DvC). This meant moving from an approach based essentially on economic growth to one that considered social and local aspects in order to solve the problem of underdevelopment, with emphasis on

unemployment and poverty reduction, in several countries around the world. Holding firm the economic growth essentials as the basis of the assumptions for reducing unemployment and poverty, the IFIs popularized the idea of LED in the 1990s, encapsulating two main approaches: the sectoral one advocated by the World Bank, UN-Habitat (2003) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), and, the territorial one defended by Meyer-Stamer (1999); OECD (2000); Kay (2003); Boschma (2004); Kay (2003) and Romeo (2015). The article presents these two approaches in a specific section below. For now, the article focuses on the concept of local development.

Local Development: Operational Definition

To define "local development" requires distinguishing two grammatical words that the concept contains. First, the word "development" is a noun. In the field of development studies, the term "development" is described as a process of socio-economic transformation (Stiglitz, 2003). Second, the word "local" is an adjective that qualifies the noun, in this case "development." Based on this combination of words, this article contextualizes the adjective "local" through five possible interrelated meanings, namely, the geographical, the political-administrative division, the cultural-identity, the public administration and the social capital. These meanings respond to the ideal of local development, the primary reason for reforms in the light of decentralization in a State.

As for the first meaning of the term "local", to be considered, it is geographical, because to speak of a place it is indispensable to appreciate the question of the scale of the territory. On the territorial scale, a certain physical space is geographically located, and its size is assessed, which can be relatively larger or smaller than the another. In terms of scale, the site can be an area circumscribed to the municipality, district or province, whose dimensions are relatively smaller in relation to each other vis-à-vis a territory of a country. It is at the level of this smaller geographical scale that local needs and problems are best identified and consequently respond to local demand to satisfy the ideal of the effectiveness of government action, in terms of efficiency in the provision of goods and services. In this meaning, the local is highlighted and valued as a territorial reference, a passive sense of the local (Vasco, 1994; Martins, 2002).

The second meaning of the term "local" is related to the political-administrative division. The simple territorial scale, or a smaller size of a certain place in relation to a larger one, gains political and administrative significance because, in the territory of the same country, certain geographical spaces can be administratively designated as region, province, district or locality. Depending on the political-administrative attribution regulated by law, socio-economic and cultural transformations, that is, development, can occur in these spaces defined by law.

The third meaning attributed to the term "local" is related to the cultural-identity issue, from which the level of personal and institutional interrelations is situated. At the level of personal and institutional interrelations, the "local" captures the imaginary about everyday life that produces its own unique experiences in a given territory because of an identity that has been forged in an imaginary identity space, or in it this imaginary is constructed in response to its own socio-cultural and economic dynamics. Therefore, the place can be identified through ethnic identity, for example, land of the *Makua* or *Makonde*¹ culture and others, or cultural practices such as land of *nyau*, land of *timbila*, *utse* or *marrabenta*². From this point of view, the place incorporates an active ingredient and gains meaning because of the social representations and human practices in its uniqueness and that highlights the place

¹ Makua and makonde are two ethnic groups in Mozambique. Makua is the largest ethnic group that is found in the four provinces in the northern Mozambique. Makone is another ethnic group, though small its culturally known by its mapiko dance.

² Nyau, a goni dance in Tete (central Mozambique); timbila is xylophone txopi in Inhambane (southern Mozambique); utse is Sena dance (central Mozambique) and marrabenta also a dance rhythmic practiced in the southern Mozambique.

as a condition and factor of socio-cultural and economic transformation by becoming a factor of innovation and not a mere locus of innovation or experiments.

The fourth meaning derives from one of the reforms in public administration, particularly decentralization. In the light of decentralization, the "local", although it is part of a territorial circumscription, regulated by law, which may be a province, municipality or district, the "local" refers to the form and type of territorial administration, that is, the qualification of governance based on the transfer of competences, functions and resources different from the central or national government. This meaning includes governance dynamics such as institutional autonomy, public policy scope, fiscal autonomy and representation, presented in the section of study findings.

The fifth meaning attributed to "local" revolved around the notion of social capital. Given the potentialities and challenges that exist, the "place" is characterized by an interactive scenario of events, where natural and human phenomena occur and produce their effects. This scenario is also associated with people's daily lives, neighborhoods, co-presence, cooperation and conflict, all of them guided by practices of interdependence in the sharing of the common environment, institutions for production of goods and services, companies and public institutions. From this point of view, the "local" results from the potential that people have to count on the actions of other people for co-operation, co-presence, conflict and interdependence. Therefore, the "place" becomes the space shared and identified by a social and community consciousness that offers people the materiality, through the known and familiar appearance of the elements that make up the place, such as houses, streets, neighborhoods, companies, public institutions, but transcends it to offer socio-spatial facts (Santos, 1996b; Martins, 2002). It's not enough to make definitions. So, how do you do local development? The article attempts to answer below.

How and by Who Local Development is Done?

Two main approaches have been advanced: sectoral and territorial. In both approaches, and for the purposes of this article, the legal-institutional framework, society and the market are interconnected because none of them can exist and function in isolation from the three in the system of governance in a state.

Sectoral³ Approach to Local Development

Three institutions, namely the World Bank, UN Habitat and the International Labour Organization (ILO) advocate the use of sectoral approach, that is, economic sector to make local development happen. In essence, the sectoral approach derives from the experience of socio-economic transformations that have occurred in industrialized countries since the end of the eighteenth century, inspired by the model of economic growth (Rostow, 1961). This model assumes that "economic development will be inevitable and geographically uneven" (Rogerson, 2011, p. 11760; BM, 2009). However, some sector of the economy must instigate socio-economic transformations, thus producing positive externalities such as job creation, increased GDP and improved well-being. From this point, the World Bank (WB) argues that LED can be inclusive, as good public policies can allow the integration of backward geographic spaces to become more dynamic and economically viable, through industrialization, infrastructure, maximization of geographic contiguity, and decentralization (World Bank, 2009). Specifically, the WB defines "local development" with reference to local economic development as:

"the process from which the public, private and NGO sectors work collectively as partners to create better conditions for economic growth and job creation. The purpose is to improve the quality of life (WB, 2003, p. 7).

³ Em determinadas literaturas a abordagem sectorial é denominada como abordagem ortodoxa de desenvolvimento local (Cunningham and Meyer-Stamer, 2005; Pike et al., 2006, 2007; Rodriguez-Pose, 2008a)

For the UN-Habitat, it defines "local development", also with reference to LED, as:

"A participatory process where local people from all sectors work together to stimulate local business activity so that it becomes resilient and sustainable. It helps create decent jobs and improves the quality of life for all, including the poor and marginalized" (UN-Habitat, 2003a, p. 1).

And, finally, the ILO conceptualizes LED by encapsulating seven structuring elements, namely: territorial diagnosis, institutional mapping, awareness-raising, creation of a local forum, design of the LED strategy, institutional coordination, creation of implementation structures (local economic development agency (ALED) and implementation of the LED strategy. In this approach, the notion of public-private participation and independent administration status is introduced, which gives ALED political, institutional, financial and programmatic links with various state institutions at all levels, including the representation of CSOs and the market because of the private nature of their management (Cunningham and Meyer-Stamer, 2005).

Territorial Approach to Local Development

The territorial approach highlights the interdependence between urban and rural spaces/localities, cities and towns, municipalities, metropolitan areas and regions, always with reference to the multi-scalar nature of local development, calling for reflection on the critical implications that it must promote it. It also highlights the importance of holistic local development and spatial orientation to integrate physical, environmental and socio-economic infrastructure considerations and to overcome the fragmentation of policy formulation and implementation based on a purely sectoral approach to development.

Authors such as Romeo (2015; 2014; 2011); Pratchett (2004) and Wolman (1990) explain that "local development" does not refer only to what happens in a given geographical space as a consequence of certain actions emanating from the central government or even the local body. Rather, it refers to the comparative and competitive advantages that drive socio-economic transformations in the structural context of certain spaces based on the mobilization of their political, human, natural, economic and social resources. In other words, the question of the place "where" takes on another meaning when seen from the perspective of "how and who" makes a place have socio-economic, political, environmental and cultural relevance.

For LD to occur, it is essential to understand the dynamics of the spatial integration of the territory in two directions. First, more specifically, "territorial" refers to the spatial integration of development between multiple sectors guided by a spatial vision of a desirable and achievable future through investment in physical infrastructure and management of spaces and the natural environment. That is, the capitalization of territorial contiguity through the development of infrastructures, investments in goods and services, and even twinning agreements in the case of municipalities. The second, more neutral, "territorial" sense refers to the development of a specific portion of a country's territory, which may be province or district, city or town, coastal or mountainous areas, but with reference to small jurisdictions that make up a whole of a country. *In fine*, any space can be defined as local depending on the observer's point of view. Regardless of the observer's position, the expression territorial development, used in a broader and more neutral sense, configures what is called local development at any scale (Romeo, 2014; Bilbao, 2015; Guambe, 2019).

Study Findings from Municipality of Tete

The results of the study show that one of the ways that decentralization can contribute to local development is to combine and operationalize two domains, namely: the Local Government Authority

(LGA) (Hooghe, et al., 2008) and the Local Development (LD) (Romeo, 2015). These domains complement each other. While the LGA covers multiple dimensions of authority over those living in a territory of autarchic jurisdiction, its independence as a LGA from the control of the central government, and, above all, in the realm of decision-making, the LD refers to the position from which the fulfillment of the promises of decentralization can be verified, which are: governance efficiency, participation in decision-making, provision of goods and services, and resource redistribution equity (Schou, and Haug, 2005). These promises of decentralization are materialized by the LGA, using the four essential elements of LD, namely: endogeneity, incremental, territorial integration, institutional interaction. In the following sections, the study presents first the results of the analysis of the data about the LGA domain and then followed by the those about the DL domain. The focus is, on one hand, to demonstrate from the data how Mozambique decentralization was disconnected local development, and, on the other, to point out that decentralization can contribute to local development at municipal level when the two domains are combined in the reform.

Results and analysis on the Local Government Authority Domain

To collect, compile and process the data, the LGA domain was established consisting of four (4) dimensions, which are: institutional autonomy (IA), scope of public policies (SPP), fiscal autonomy (FA) and Representation (Rp). These dimensions characterize the institutional framework of municipal decentralization, which, in turn, is measured by a total of twenty (20) questions distributed among these dimensions. The 20 questions are operationalized on a scoring scale ranging from 0 to 10 points. From 0 to 4, the absence of dimensions in the LGA is scored. From 5 to 7 the position of neutrality is scored, and from 8 to 10, the confirmation of the dimensions is scored, as illustrated in the results in Table 1.

Table 1: Results and Analysis of LGA Domain

Domain	Dimensions	Absence (0-4)	Neutrality (5-7)	Confirmation (8-10)	Average	Gobal Average
Local Government Authority (LGA)	Institutional Autonomy (IA)	6.7%	93.3%	0%	6	4
	Scope of Public Policy (SPP)	93.3%	6.7%	0%	4	
	Fiscal Autonomy (FA)	0%	96.7%	3.3%	6	
	Representation (Rp)	100%	0%	0%	1	

Source: Author, 2022

Institutional Autonomy

In the way in which decentralization was implemented in the municipalities in Mozambique from 1998 to 2018, the issue of institutional autonomy (IA), although legally established, analyzed on a scale of 0 to 10, the score of the perception of the interviewees stands at 6.7% of those who confirm that there is IA and the rest of scores are closer to the first third, that is, from 0 to 4. The data indicates that there was no IA from local bodies in the municipalities due to the prevalence of informal practices. That is, decentralization in Mozambique was based more on the informal rules of the game defined by the Frelimo party first and, then by the Renamo party. Rather than using formal State rules, such as laws and regulations approved by the Parliament and available to both central and local governments and other institutions, these formal rules were ignored as illustrated in Table 1.

The results on IA find explanation from the political-legal context of the municipal decentralization process because its implementation faced the challenges of institutional appropriation of the decentralization process itself, which was a new form of exercising political power in Mozambique after the conflict of the 16-year war (1976/77-1992). It was during this period that the consolidation of

political power was sought by Frelimo government after national independence in 1975. What further aggravated the institutional non-appropriation of decentralization was the context of successive electoral violent conflicts in 1999, 2004, 2009, 2014 and 2015. Therefore, the process of municipal decentralization that began in 1998 was guided by the logic of the exercise of power in a decentralization type characterized by the post-armed conflict and successive violent electoral conflicts.

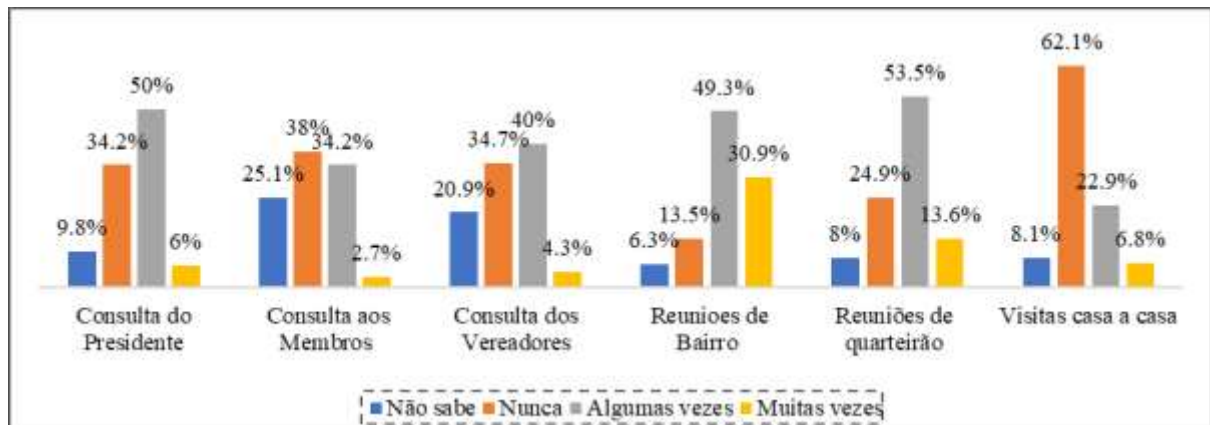
Scope of Public Policies (SPP)

The data in Table 1 show 93.3% of SPP absence, thus showing a trend towards the first third, from 0-4 as a score. There are notable exceptions to this point. The municipal executive bodies, like any other organ of a municipality, participate in national meetings convened by the Ministry of State Administration, which is the supervisory body. Likewise, the mayors participated in the meetings organized by the National Association of Municipalities of Mozambique (ANAM) and participated in meetings convened particularly to the mayors representing the municipalities administered by the candidates of the Frelimo Party. However, these meetings convened by the initiative of either the Frelimo Party, the MAEFP or ANAM were more of meetings of an accountability nature from the mayors to these central government bodies, or, these central bodies used these meetings to transmit their directives. Therefore, they cannot necessarily be confounded with institutional interaction (II), discussed in the Local Development domain later in this study.

One aspect raised by the interviewees is related to the fact that there have never been public consultations by the city council or the members of the Municipal Assembly on rules and norms to be approved for the municipality. For example, citizens, councilors and journalists in the municipality of Tete say that citizens have often been gathered to receive visits from the mayor and during the meeting the space was opened for people to present the concerns they have in the neighborhoods. Generally, when the mayor visits a neighborhood, the councilors already feed him with information about the problems of the neighborhoods. He knows the problems that he did not solve during his mandate and therefore he is better prepared to respond with the aim of ensuring re-election, as these types of meetings are more frequent in the last years of mandates and serve for re-election processes for the following elections.

Likewise, the results of perceptions of the 2017 Municipal Governance Barometer (IESE, 2017) offer a good reading on perceptions that allows us to capture certain socio-economic dynamics to appreciate how the institutional articulation of municipal initiative was faced during the 20 years of decentralization in the Tete City Council, as illustrated in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1: Public Consultation and Meetings in Municipality of Tete



Source: Barômetro (IESE, 2017), adapted by the author, 2022.

The data in Graph 1 show a score of 50% of respondents who say "sometimes" the mayor makes consultations and 34.2% say they have never made consultations. A similar situation is punctuated in 38% of the members of the Municipal Assembly, 34.7% of the Councilors, 49.3% and 53.5% of meetings sometimes taking place in neighborhoods and Blocks and 62.1% of never having visited the homes of the citizens.

Fiscal Autonomy

From the data processed, 96.7% of the interviewees confirmed the absence of fiscal autonomy, as shown in Table 1. However, this study clarifies that the absence of fiscal autonomy alone is not a problem for the Municipality of Tete to have access to a robust budget for operation and investment and, thus, boost local development. The problem lies, firstly, in the central government's failure to define realistic criteria for disbursements on the real needs of the municipality in terms of the financial package: budget for operations and investment. Second, the financial package to be transferred and the disbursement period must be constitutionally fixed and complied with by the central government (Chomera, 2022). The central issue is not who should define, collect taxes and fees, but rather predictability and the availability of financial resources in a timely manner that respond to the needs of the municipalities in a planning framework that considers the incremental factor, the details of which are presented in the Local Development domain.

Likewise, the interviewees confirmed that during the first 20 years of decentralization in Mozambique, it was often avoided to discuss fiscal decentralization publicly and, with some depth, because decentralization focused on power-sharing, political accommodation of the interests of the Frelimo and Renamo parties. This situation reconfirms that Mozambique has implemented municipal decentralization, diverting all attention of fiscal issues from decentralization and confounding discussion about the financial and fiscal autonomy of local bodies. For example, at the central level, the debate on fiscal decentralization has rarely brought together the Ministries of State Administration and Civil Service (MAEFP) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF). "Decentralization has always been discussed without the financial component. The MEF has always been silent about this" (MAEFP, 2021⁴).

In a unitary state like Mozambique, without institutional coordination at the central level, between the MAEFP, the ministry responsible for municipalities, and MEF in matters of finance for municipalities, it becomes incoherent to talk about the fiscal autonomy of municipalities. Without fiscal decentralization, it is also difficult to generate local income and make investments in productive sectors of the economy and social sectors. And without investment, there can be no local development when central government avoids discussing municipal finances and prevent signaling the role of local elites with a developmentalist vision. And this avoided debate was extended to the entities representing citizens in the National Parliament, the Provincial Assembly and the Municipal Assembly (MA), as presented in the following sub-section.

Representation (Rp)

The study captured bottom-up dynamics, over the last 20 years, to assess whether the MA in Mozambique had ever issued an invitation to the National Parliament to participate in any reflection on the implementation of decentralization or whether it had taken the initiative to send legislative

⁴ Numa reunião do Grupo de Trabalho de Descentralização que composta pelo Banco Mundial, UNDP, UE, Cooperação Alemã, Cooperação Suíça, OSC (IMD, MASC), realizada dia 6 de Dezembro 2021, uma funcionária Senior que chefiava a delegação do MAEFP respondia a uma pergunta da Cooperação Alemã quando perguntada sobre a coordenação entre o MAEFP e MEF sobre os investimentos dos órgãos descentralizados e, também, da ausência do pessoal do MEF naquela reunião que o MAEFP ia apresentar a lista de necessidades para o financiamento no âmbito da governação descentralizada.

contributions to the National Parliament. Or, taking advantage of the visits of the Members of the Parliament (MPs) to the municipalities, the members of the Municipal Assembly requested meetings between the Members of the Parliament and Municipal Assembly, or, if they scheduled the MPs to talk about decentralization or local development. On the other hand, the study sought to capture top-down dynamics to understand the extent to which the matters related to decentralization approved in the National Parliament included discussions with the participation of representatives of the Municipal Assemblies (MA), in two ways: either as guests or, as requested to send contributions, even if they are written contributions for the National Parliament to see.

In both situations, either from MA to Parliament and/or from Parliament to MA, interviewed for this study: the MPs, the ministers and members of the MA, who held positions during the period under study; the mayors of Beira, Quelimane, Moatize and Tete, stated that it was never practical to coordinate or interact either institutionally or between MPs and members of MA on legislative matters, claiming that the LGAs are autonomous and independent and that the central state should not interfere in the affairs of the municipalities (Impissa, 2021; Chomera, 2022), thus emphasizing that both the Parliament and the municipality had their own problems to solve, each at their own level. The percentage of 100% shown in Table 1 confirms the absence of representation.

The interviewees stated that what happened were informal meetings between the MPs themselves on visit according to party affiliation and talking about decentralization in informal spaces. A similar scenario was observed at the provincial level. For example, the MPs for the Frelimo Party interacted with Frelimo mayors. Those MPs of Renamo and/ or those MPs of the Democratic Movement of Mozambique (MDM) proceeded in the same way, considering that the visits of the Mps to the constituencies, constituency of Tete Province, in particular, focused their visits on the supervision of the activities of the central government and not of the LGAs, although the Planning and Budget Commission of the Parliament has this competence within the scope of its supervisory role.

Results and analysis on the Local Development Domain

For Local Development (LD), four dimensions were established, comprising four determining factors, namely: endogeneity factor (E), which seeks to understand how the LGA capitalizes on the local potential it has in terms of the human, cultural, technical and local resources that the municipalized territory has in the pursuit of decentralization; incremental factor (IF), from which the LGA planning and budgeting process are analyzed, in view of prioritized investments in economically productive sectors based on the purchasing and competitive advantages of the municipality; territorial integration (TI) factor, from which it is analyzed the prospect of strengthening institutional coordination and strategic management in social, cultural, economic, spatial planning and territorial management areas to mitigate, prevent and eliminate fragmented development in municipalities with contiguous territorial spaces; institutional interaction factor (II), from which multiple levels of formal and informal interactions of the central government (CG) and LGA, elites, private sector and CSOs on accommodation of interests and prioritization of developmental objectives are observed.

To illustrate the results, the study defined a total of 15 questions distributed among the four factors. Likewise, the 15 questions are operationalized on a scoring scale ranging from 0 to 10 points. From 0 to 4, the absence of LD factors is scored. From 5 to 7 scored the position of neutrality and from 8 to 10 scored the confirmation of the position, as described in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Results and Analysis of LD Domain.

Domain	Dimensions	Absence (0-4)	Neutrality (5-7)	Confirmation (8-10)	Average	Global Average
Local Development (LD)	Endogeneity (E)	96.7%	3.3%	0%	3	2
	Incremental Factor (IF)	100%	0%	0%	2	
	Territorial Integration (TI)	100%	0%	0%	1	
	Institutional Interaction (II)	100%	0%	0%	2	

Source: Author, 2022.

In this study, the four dimensions characterize the "how, where, and who" to make LD occur during the implementation of decentralization, as presented below.

Endogeneity

In the Table 2, the study sought to capture subtleties on the understanding of the endogenous nature of the place, with examples from from the Municipal City of Tete, in order to assess the extent to which the successive local governments that took power in the municipality from 1998 to 2018 internalized the institutional legal framework and appropriated the promises of decentralization, taking into account the potential of the city of Tete, capacities, local knowledge and what conditions, in line with the local reality, have been created to promote local development.

On a scale of 0 to 10, the maximum score was 96.7%, which indicates the absence of a sense of institutional internalization and appropriation of the decentralization process. This score is closer to the first third, that is, from 0 to 4, than to the remaining thirds, as shown in Table 2. Therefore, the data indicates that there have been no signs of internalization and appropriation of the institutional framework, meaning lack of observance of the formal rules for the functioning, management and accountability of the LGA based on the context, participation and local demand, as well as no signs of appropriation of the promises of decentralization. These denote the absence of a sense of endogeneity in the exercise and performance of LGA in the Municipality of Tete in the last twenty years of municipalization.

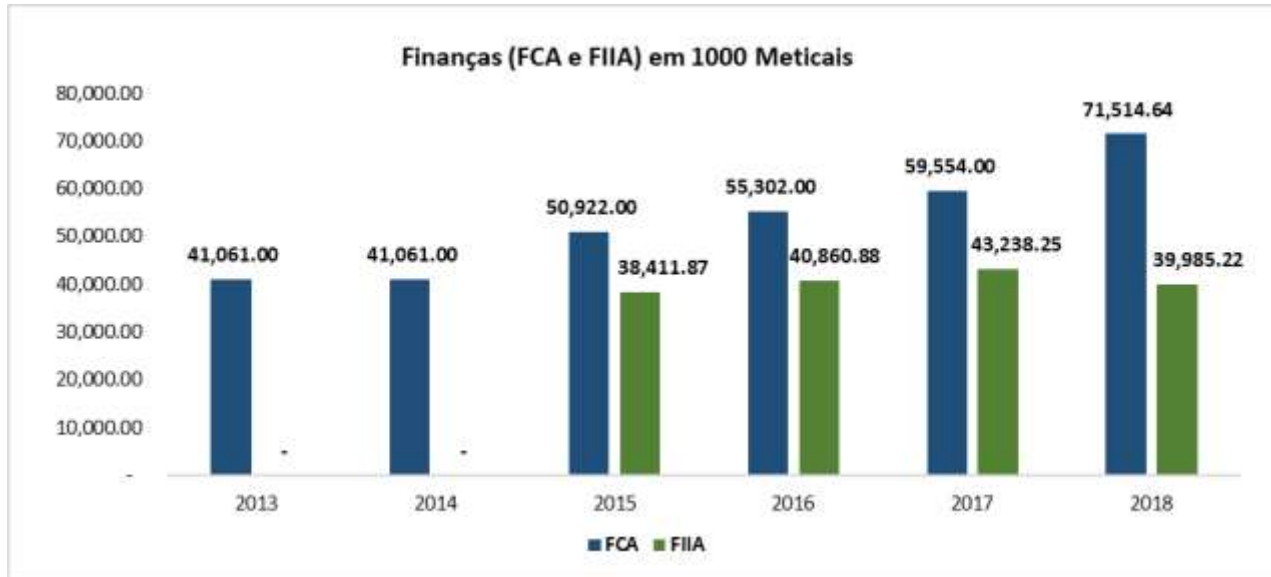
Several reasons were pointed out by the interviewees as being at the origin of the absence of the sense of endogeneity of LGA in the Municipality of Tete. The study highlights three critical reasons. First, municipal decentralization was implemented in the 16-year post-conflict period and during successive violent electoral conflicts from 1999-2018. Mozambique began the implementation of decentralization in 1998 in a post-armed conflict context that had opposed the Government and Renamo since 1976/7, which ended with the signing of the General Peace Agreements (GPA) in Rome on 4 October 1992.

From the national independence in June 25, 1975, Frelimo had not yet consolidated the power of either the government or the State in the entire national territory, and from June 1975 to 1977 only two years had passed from independence day, the new war broke out. After the end of the war in 1992, the first multi-party general elections were held in 1994 and then the first municipal elections in 1998. The post-armed conflict context of the 16 years and the external and internal pressure for State reforms did not detract from the Frelimo government's ideal of consolidating power. And Frelimo could only ensure the consolidation of government power by identifying and appointing trusted candidates to lead the

municipalities, even if the appointed candidates for mayors did not have the profile to carry out the promises of decentralization at the municipality.

Second, the lack of initiative of municipal bodies influenced by the dependency mechanisms, on one hand, created by the legal framework on fiscal decentralization, as the State is the primary guarantor of the functioning of LGAs via monetary transfers, such as the Municipal Compensation Fund (FCA), Municipal Initiative of Investment Fund (FIIA), as illustrated in Graph 2.

Graph 2: Transfers of FCA e FIIA



Source: Celeste Banze (2019), adapted by the author, 2022.

In terms of principle, these funds should be used to reinforce and not to be the basis for the survival of the municipalities because that, without a time limit laid down by law, stifles local initiative. Also, and in line with the first reason, the LGA bodies in the municipalities were designed already amputated so that they do not have local initiatives. On the other hand, the lack of initiative of the mayors was influenced by partisan political interests, from which the central organs of the political parties sought more to spy on the obedience of the mayors to the central organs of their respective parties than to encourage an attitude of compromise with the exercise of power based on the fulfillment of the promises of decentralization, that is, that it reflected the socio-economic performance of the municipalities.

Finally, the third reason has to do with the obsession with political power and access to economic facilities of the mayors. This obsession follows the logic of centralized governance that gives primacy to the control of power but disconnects local development based on local potentialities and resources in the Municipality of Tete.

Incremental Factor

On the scale from 0 to 10, the score was maximum of 100% and it was in the first third, that is, from 0 to 4, as shown in Table 2. Therefore, the study interviewees pointed out that there was no coordinated planning between the executive and legislative branches of the Municipality of Tete. This lack of coordination in planning was partly influenced by the weak capacity of the members of the MA. Most of the members of MA during 1998-2018 are of low education, ranging from Grades 6 to 10 and

exceptionally bachelor's degree holders. These had little mastery of the processes of planning and identification of priorities. What interested them most in the presentations of the municipal executive's plans was whether their salaries are paid in time or not (Councilor at Municipality, 2020).

Due to the lack of technical capacity to analyze the plans, the members of the MA were easily co-opted or instructed to approve the plans or even forced to agree because without approval they would not have their salaries, or they ran the risk of seeing their names excluded in the following electoral ballots. What happened was that the municipal executive body identified and prioritized the interventions to be carried out and the members of the MA approved them.

To point out, only, the lack of capacities of the members of the MA of the Municipality of Tete is a too simplistic explanation. From the study's analysis of the perception of the interviewees, the lack of capacities of the members of MA is related to two structural problems of decentralization in Mozambique. First, there is the question of the party nomination to be on the list of those who part of the MA will be. During the period under study, no member of MA or even a candidate for the mayor of the municipality, as a rule, did so of their own free will. They all depended on the will of their parties, without which one can be neither a member of the MA nor the mayor. That is, there is a process of nomination at the party level of who can be on the list for MA.

Second, probably most importantly, the State has not yet established the profile or the qualifier of who should be a member of the MA with technical capabilities for the functions that MA requires. The same applies to mayors. Political affiliation and trust have been the most important criteria. Without a qualifier from the State or a profile of individuals with basic technical capacities for the purposes for which the municipalities were created, or the members of the MA must do and leave, for example, to depend exclusively on the councilors of the City Municipal council to plan, assess, approve and implement the plans and budgets, it becomes difficult to have locally coordinated planning, solely relying on learning, identification of market opportunities, investments, comparative and competitive advantages. As a result, it is difficult for these members of MA to conceive of incremental planning.

Territorial Integration

On a scale of 0 to 10, the interviewees' score was also a maximum of 100% in the first third parameter, that is, from 0 to 4, as shown in Table 2. Therefore, the literature review and consultation of the legislation on decentralization in the period from 1997 to 2018 shows the absence of any explicit guidance on the value of spatial integration for the local development of municipalities that share territorial contiguity. The municipalities of Maputo and Matola in Maputo province, the municipality of Tete and Moatize in Tete province are the examples in point. However, there is a reference to some interaction between the municipalities of Maputo and Matola but we did not find documentary support on territorial integrity (CMM, 2020).

During the interviews carried out between May 2019 and July 2021, the study interviewees in the municipalities of the cities of Tete and Moatize said they do not know if the two municipalities work together because neither in the roads nor in the water supply, we see joint work. One of the interviewees stated with conviction that "each one does its own job in their municipality because that is the law" (Councilor A, 2019).

Other informants pointed out the issue of arrogance of the leaders of the municipalities who did not seek to explore coordination and collaboration to better capitalize on the opportunities for investments, installation of companies, resettlements and others that arose in the cities of Tete and Moatize from 2009 and subsequent years. For example, when the interviewees were asked the reason why

there was no twinning agreement between the municipalities of Tete and Moatize, one of the interviewees peremptorily said:

"The successive mayors of the Municipality of Tete considered themselves more important than those of the Municipal of Moatize... and, that they did not need the other mayor because they were closer to power at the provincial level. A similar attitude was observed on the side of mayors of Moatize that the local authorities were comfortable with the privileged access to the financial resources they received from the mining companies, such as Vale Moçambique, Nkondezi Mining and others, with operations in the Municipality of Moatize (Senior Advisor to the Government of Tete, 2021).

There are several implications that the study points out since there was no explicit guidance and parameters for the territorial integration of municipalities with proximity and geographical contiguity. The study highlights the following implications:

The first implication, in the context of decentralization in Mozambique, has to do with the isolation and fragmentation of interventions, whether in social and economic activities, provision of goods and services of municipalities that share territorial contiguity. There is a strong reference to the centralized power of the mayors in the municipalities, which is a replica of the centralizing logic of the central government. Moreover, the LGA in the municipalities tend to wait for central guidelines rather than taking local initiatives with some autonomy, either under the law or as the local experience of exercising power presents itself and demands, thus conforming to the ideal of decentralization.

The second implication is the loss of opportunities for the municipalities of Tete and Moatize to capitalize on investments and economic activities to cement territorial integration. The municipalities of Tete and Moatize missed opportunities to be priority interlocutors for the development of local infrastructures and services such as housing, roads, water and sanitation, energy, health and education. For example, during the process of resettlement of the populations in the mining company Rio Tinto for the people in Capanga in the years 2013 to 2014, classified as urban type resettlement, the populations of the Capanga neighborhood who lived about 2 km from the dividing line that separates the Municipality of Tete and about 200 meters from the Municipality of Moatize, had to be considered for resettlement in Mboza, Moatize district, approximately 30 km from the city of Tete, and 10 km from the municipality of Moatize because there was the claim that there was no longer space in the municipality of Moatize to resettle people. The key issue is that both mayors of the two municipalities did not think of territorial integration, as the Municipality of Tete had enough land to settle more than 800 households.

The third implication is the self-infusion of fear into a presumed central power that stifles the mayors to take local initiatives. The self-infusion of fear, concerning territorial integration, by the mayors of Tete and Moatize was manifested in 2013, first on the resettlement processes already mentioned in this study and second, during the feasibility study for the transfer of Chingozi Airport in Tete to another location. During the process of institutional consultations for the selection of sites for the new airport, the mayors of Tete and Moatize did not comment the proposed sites and they referred the questions about the selection of the locations for the new airport to their teams of consultants who conducted the feasibility study to consult the central or provincial government.

Exploring in depth the value of territorial integration in municipalities that share geographical contiguity, one of the study interviewees stated the following:

"When the municipalities were created, the issues of local initiative were taken as acts in which the central government should not interfere. Local initiative, such as territorial integration, was up to each

municipality to do its part in the decentralization process and not the central government" (Impissa, 2022)⁵).

Although this reasoning corroborates the ideal of decentralization, in the practice of Mozambican policy on decentralization, the local initiative of the LGA is situated on a haze line that entangles mayor's loyalty to the central government in a legal way in a presumed or real fear, but which induces the suffocation and inertia of the LGA to take initiatives to promote local development.

The absence of parameters on territorial integration, apparent or real, leaves open who should take the initiative in situations where two or more municipalities share territorial contiguity and have comparative and competitive advantages to execute the mandates under decentralization in their jurisdictional territory without ignoring the value of territorial integration through economic activities, provision of basic services to citizens, physical planning and infrastructure and twinning agreements to jointly promote local development.

Ultimately, territorial or spatial integration through economic activities, integrated physical planning of infrastructures can help economically less vibrant urban territorial spaces. In all the first 33 municipalities, the issue of territorial integration, whether in contiguous spaces or not, or via twinning agreements, integration of the provision of services and goods, economic activities and sharing of technical and human capacities between municipalities does not appear to have been on the agenda during the first 20 years of municipalization. And because territorial integration was not taken into account in the process of municipalization, either legally or as a political guideline, the study points decentralization could have been used to promote local development in the municipalities through territorial integration.

Institutional Interaction

On a scale of 0 to 10, the interviewees gave a score of 100% in the first third, that is, from 0 to 4, in relation to the remaining thirds, as illustrated in Table 2. The study notes that from the consultation of the legislation on decentralization in the period from 1997 to 2018, there exist a formal framework for interaction between the central bodies, namely, the central government and the Assembly of the Republic with Local Government Authority. However, the realization of this institutional interaction, in practice, was characterized by an attitude of evasive legality, that is, of exempting oneself from responsibility for carrying it out, for example, by bringing together different sensibilities, consensus and interests to the cause of the municipality. The exemption from responsibility for institutional interaction was based on the invocation of the law whenever appropriate, in the sense that the central government and central bodies cannot interfere in the sphere of the Local Government Authority administrative autonomy. By the mere act of excuse, the central government clearly showed that decentralization was not at the service for local development.

The type of institutional interaction referred to here may be of a formal nature, in the sense of being regulated by law, as is the case of the MAEFP, which is the entity responsible for municipalization; the MEF, the entity from which monetary transfers, such as the Municipal Compensation Fund (FCA) and the Local Initiative Investment Fund (FIIL), both under the terms established by Law 1/2008, of 16 January, are carried out. Formal institutional interaction also applies to the Assembly of the Republic, through the 4th Commission of the AR that deals with public administration and decentralization.

However, the formal character does not exhaust the sense of interaction where there are various interests, because in these interactions different interests are articulated: political, that is, the control and

⁵ Entrevista concedida no dia 13 de Janeiro de 2022.

maintenance of power; economic, for instance, the participation in economic opportunities in local authorities; social, that is, participation of various segments of society in decision-making about political power in a municipality. It is from these multiple interactions that we can appreciate the approach of the central government to the population and the participation of this local population, which goes beyond electoral acts. Therefore, a multiple interaction that attacks not only interests and consensus, but also allows the valorization of acts of transparency, accountability and accountability of municipal bodies in the exercise of power in the municipality can be viewed and utilized within decentralization reforms to promote local development.

During the first 20 years of decentralization, the mechanisms of institutional interaction between the central government and the LGA bodies, although regulated by law, in practice the interaction was more informal in nature and based on the logic of power control, which made it difficult to align, accommodate the interests of the institutions to boost local development. Because of this centralizing logic, there is an absence of practices for the use of spaces created by law to debate, think, feedback between the central government and LGA, and even for the central government to direct the LGA to take initiatives that promote local development in the municipalities.

Conclusions

Drawing on the academic debate on local development and its relevance to the consolidation of state institutions via decentralization over the past 50 years, this study set out analyze the potential of decentralization to promote local development in municipalities in Mozambique. This article argues that it is necessary to bring the decentralization-local development debate in Mozambique, because during the first 20 years (1998-2018) of municipal decentralization in the 33 municipalities, Mozambique disconnected the process of decentralization with local development in the municipalities. The results presented in this article show how this disconnection in the municipalities in Mozambique has been. The examples from the Municipality of Tete from 1998-2018 confirms this. However if the two domains, of the Local Governance Authority and of Local Development can be operationally combined in the decentralization policy, development at municipal level can take place.

This paper's main objective was to demonstrate how decentralization is a powerful potential vehicle to promote local development in the municipalities in Mozambique. This could have taken place in the first 33 municipalities, during the last 20 years, from 1988 to 2018). Specifically, the paper presented the debate about local development by highlighting different meanings, expressions and how decentralization can be a best vehicle to promote local development at municipal level in Mozambique by applying both sectoral and territorial approaches to fulfil the promises of decentralization, namely, efficient governance, institutional and procedural equity, participation of citizens in decision-making processes and provision of services and goods. From the two inter-related analytical domains: local governance authority and local development, this paper rejects the prevailing disconnects between decentralization and local development in Mozambique municipal decentralization. In view of this, the paper concludes that decentralization is a viable vehicle to contribute to local development as part of a national strategy to consolidate democracy and strengthen State institutions.

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