Degree Project
Level: Master Degree

Negotiated Statehood in the Educational Sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo

The Case of Bemba Gombo in Goma

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Abstract:

The thesis focuses on the historical-diachronic analysis of the development of the Democratic Republic of Congo's educational sector, with particular reference to the context of Nord Kivu and its capital Goma. The thesis aim is to understand and investigate how the DRC's educational sector has managed to be resilient over time (especially with regard to its funding), taking into account the interaction of different actors involved. Through the application of Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard's negotiated statehood approach to the Congolese educational sector and to a specific school in Goma, Bemba Gombo / Saint François Xavier Institute, it is possible to understand who are the principal actors in the educational field, and which actors are excluded from the negotiating tables of the Congolese educational sector.

Keywords: Education, Negotiated Statehood, DRC, North Kivu, Goma, Bemba Gombo.
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Acronyms

ASSONEPA: Association Nationale des Ecoles Privées Agréées
CAT: Cellule d’Appui Technique
CBCA: Communautés Baptiste au Centre d’Afrique (Protestante)
CEBCE: Communautés des Eglises Baptistes du Congo Est (protestante)
CELPA: Communautés des Eglises Libre du Pentecôte (protestante)
CEPAC: Communautés des Eglises de Pentecôte du Congo (protestante)
CESA: Continental Education Strategy for Africa
CFS: Common Solidarity Fund
CNA: Congolese National Army
CO: Cours d’Orientation
COGE: Conseil de Gestion
COPA: Comité des Parents d’Élèves
CSF: Common Solidarity Fund
CSR: Country Status Report
DRC: Democratic Republic of Congo
ECC: Ecoles conventionnées Catholiques
ECI: Ecoles Conventionnées Islamiques
ECK: Ecoles Conventionnées Kimbanguistes
FBO: Faith-Based Organization
FDF: Frais de Fonctionnement
FDM: Frais de Motivation
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
GER: Gross Enrolment Ratios
GPE: Global Partnership for Education
IEP: Interim Education Plan
LSB: Local School Board
MEPSP: Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel
MEPS-INC: Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et de l'Initiation à la Nouvelle Citoyenneté
MESU: Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Universitaire et de la Recherche Scientifique
METP: Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique et Professionnel
NGO: Non-Governmental Organization
OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (United Nations
PAU: Pan African University
RPM: Revolutionary People's Movement
SDG: Sustainable Development Goal
SECOPE: Service de Contrôle de la Paie des Enseignants
SSA: Sub Saharan Africa
TN: Technique Nutritionnelle
TS: Technique Sociale
TVET: Technical Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USD: United States Dollar
YRPM: Youth of the Revolutionary People's Movement
WB: World Bank
Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Congo is often considered a weak, fragile or failed state. These considerations are mainly linked to the political instability that has marked the country since its independence and are linked to its permanent conflict situation, especially in the eastern regions. In regard to its educational sector, the DRC ranks fourth among the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa in terms of public expenditure on education as a share of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The already precarious budget for education has been and is allocated inefficiently and failing to address the priorities of the sector, including the achievements of free primary education, which, in addition to being a Sustainable Development Goal, is defended by the Congolese constitution. Despite this, the Congolese education sector has good results in terms of key indicators, such as, for example, millions of attending students at both primary and secondary school, hundreds of thousands of employed teachers, regardless of whether they are officially registered or not, and tens of thousands of accredited state schools, especially since the 2000s. But it is necessary to point out that these general indicators are only apparently positive, since the Congolese educational sector presents many structural problems and many contradictions, with minimal improvements in quantity but not in quality. Nevertheless, in the literature concerning the concept of failed state, the collapse of public services is a typical symptom, but it is not in the Congolese case, where the educational sector continues to expand. The problem remains to understand how it has managed to survive.

Through the historical-diachronic analysis of the birth and development of the current educational sector of the DRC, with particular reference to its financing, observing the interaction between the various actors involved, the purpose of the present thesis is to understand how this sector has managed to survive the brutality of colonialism and the wars of post-independence, especially in North Kivu and its capital, Goma.

Since the state does not have the power and resources to guarantee the functioning of the country's educational sector on its own, the negotiated statehood approach is useful to understand how the continuous negotiation between state and non-state actors, especially parents and families, allows the sector to be maintained. However, this represents a difficult negotiation, being it developed on the borderline between legality and illegality. Here, it should be noted, non-coded norms\(^1\) rather than actual formal policies or coded norms\(^2\) strongly influence the interactions between the various actors.

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\( ^1\) With non-coded norms I refer to the idea of practical norm of Olivier de Sardan, Kristof Titeca and Tom De Herdt that I will explain more during the theoretical framework and offer practical examples in the second and third chapters. With coded norms I refer to the norms present in a formal framework, such as the Congolese constitution, national educational plans or international agreements/conventions.

\( ^2\) Legal provisions.
The decision to undertake the thesis work focusing on the analysis of the Congolese educational sector, particularly in the region of North Kivu and its capital Goma, is linked to an experience of missionary travel that I carried out between 21/12/2014 and 06/01/2015, at the missions created by the Italian Catholic Congregation of the Piccole Figlie dei Sacri Cuori di Gesù e Maria. Furthermore, through the project of Rafiki-Amici del Congo, closely linked to the missions of the congregation of Parma, I was able to observe and take part in the mechanism of distance school adoptions managed by the group, adopting in turn, together with my family, a Congolese girl.

1.2 Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this work, is thus to investigate the complexity of the governance of the Democratic Republic of Congo’s educational sector, in Nord Kivu and its capital Goma specifically, through the application of the negotiated statehood approach to the historical-diachronic analysis (from colonialism to the present) of its development and through the application of the negotiated statehood approach to a specific school in Goma, Bemba Gombo / Saint François Xavier Institute, that represents the case study of the thesis. The aim must be understood from a holistic point of view, understood as the interaction of different actors involved in the educational sector, in particular as regard their symbolic and material powers, ideas that are explained in the theoretical framework. Conducting two parallel analysis, in applying the negotiated statehood approach to the historical-diachronic analysis of the Congolese educational sector and in a specific school in Goma, the broad thesis aim is to understand and investigate how the DRC’s educational sector has survived and has managed to be resilient over time. In this way it will be possible to understand how the negotiated governance of the Congolese education sector, understood as governance that is not monopolised by state authority but by many different actors, allows the sector to survive, mostly in regard to its financing. Furthermore, this approach allows to understand who the principal actors are in the educational field in the historical period studied, and which actors have been excluded from the negotiating tables of the Congolese educational sector.

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3 The translation from Italian to English is: Little Daughters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary are a religious congregation founded in Parma in 1865. The congregation is very active both in Italy and in other parts of the world, in various areas including: education, assistance to the sick and elderly and with pastoral service and catechesis. The congregation is engaged in teaching religion in some schools of the archdiocese of Bukavu and in the dioceses of Goma and Uvira. An archdiocese is the most important diocese of an ecclesiastical province. During the thesis, I refer to the congregation as Little Daughters.

4 The translation from Italian to English is: Rafiki-Friends of Congo, is a group of volunteers, born in 2004 in San Secondo (province of Parma), with the aim of starting to collaborate with the congregation of the Little Daughters to support their interventions in the educational field in North and South Kivu. (Rafiki-Amici del Congo, https://amicidelcongo.wordpress.com/, last retrieved 29/03/2020).

5 Approach explained in the theoretical framework section of the thesis.

6 Swahili name for Saint Francis Xavier. Through the thesis work, I always use Bemba Gombo to refer to the school.
Using the negotiated statehood approach as a basis of reference, I achieve the goal of understanding and investigating how the sector has managed to survive from colonial time to the present day, answering the following research questions as regard the historical-diachronic analysis of the development of the Congolese educational sector and as regard Bemba Gombo institute:

- Who are the actors responsible for financing the education sector?
- What are the main places of negotiation on the educational issue?
- Who are the actors excluded from the negotiating tables?

To do this, the thesis work is divided into 4 parts. The first includes the theoretical and methodological framework, the state of research and the materials used to build my thesis. The second part refers to the historical framework of the DRC, from colonialism to the present day. This section describes the birth and development of the Congolese educational sector with reference to 3 historical moments (1: colonialism, 2: Mobutism, 3: Years 2000), in which the negotiated statehood approach is applied, mostly regarding the financing of this field. The third part refers to North Kivu and Goma contexts and their educational sector, keeping the same time differentiation mentioned in the second chapter. Moreover, the third chapter is about a case study, corresponding the application of negotiated statehood approach to a particular school, the Bemba Gombo Institute in Goma, in which specific empirical material emerges. The last part refers to the general conclusion of the thesis where the final considerations are explained.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

The analysis of the Congolese educational sector allows us to go beyond the idea of a failed state in the DRC. Patience Kabamba, resuming the characterization of Africa as “heart of darkness”⁷ by Joseph Conrad, wants to underline how a tendentially negative image of Africa is dominant both in the media and in the works of social scientists specialized in the DRC. Such negative ideas come close to a further concept, that of a failed state, elaborated after the end of Western colonialism. According to Kabamba: “the notion that African states have failed or collapsed is part of the same movement to reify and fetishize the colonially imposed Weberian model of statehood”,⁸ so the predominance of Eurocentrism is reiterated when it comes to African statehood. Statehood can mean those conceptions that do not reduce statehood to the concept of the state, understood in its narrowest meaning, that is, as a subject endowed with exclusive sovereignty. Therefore, reference is made to

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⁸ Ibidem, p 281. Many scholars and the African Union itself reject the Failed State paradigm, identifying it as a failed paradigm.
the establishment of social relations as state relations, in which there is no primacy of an entity tending to be as exclusive as the state.\footnote{Andrea Bixio, \textit{La statualità come momento di una teoria giuridica della società}, Ordines, per un sapere interdisciplinare sulle istituzioni europee, (ISSN 2421-0730 NUMERO 2 – DICEMBRE 2017). pp-79-80.}

As for academic literature on the idea of a failed state, Tobias Hagmann and Didier Pécillard stress how many academic works portray post-colonial African states according to negative characterizations. The African state was conceived as collapsed (Zartman, 1995), failed (Rotberg, 2004), fragile (Stewart and Brown, 2009), weak (Jackson and Rosberg, 1982), as a shadow (Reno, 2000) or quasi-state (Hopkins, 2000; Jackson, 1990).\footnote{Tobias Hagmann and Didier Pécillard, \textit{Negotiating Statehood Dynamics of Power and Domination in Africa}, Volume 41, (John Wiley & Sons Ltd, The Atrium, Southern Gate, Chichester, West Sussex, 2011), p. 1.} Even a source such as the Foreign Policy Failed States Index in 2011 reports that the DRC was still ranked as the fourth most failed state in the world, following closely behind Somalia, Chad and Sudan.\footnote{Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, \textit{Faith Based Organizations and Public Goods in Africa: Islamic Associations in the Education Sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo}, (a dissertation presented to the graduate school of the University of Florida, 2011), p. 30.} Changing the starting point that leads to such negative characterizations of the African statehood and the DRC is possible if another approach is used as a basis. Kristof Titeca and Tom De Herdt, echoing Robert Rotberg's vision, argue that: “an archetypical characteristic of ‘failed states’ is their retreat from the public domain and more particularly their inability to provide basic public services. These failed states are seen as a ‘vacuum of authority’ in which the state is nothing more than a mere geographical expression”.\footnote{Kristof Titeca and Tom De Herdt, 2011, op. cit., p. 219.} Nevertheless, the idea of a failed state overlooks the analysis of new forms of negotiation of authority at local level. It is important understand how state, non-state, local, national and international actors interact in an attempt to produce order and authority in contexts and sectors where the state is less present or tends to be absent, like the educational sector. Therefore, it appears to be necessary to observe and understand the interaction between different actors with regard to issues in which the state is, in any case, involved.

With regard to the concept of negotiation as a characteristic of statehood, Titeca and De Herdt believe that: “through the negotiated character of statehood, and the power differential between the various actors involved, this ability is no longer inherent in the state, but is a result of ongoing negotiations. This does not produce uniform results; rather, the outcomes depend on the power configurations in particular localities at particular time”.\footnote{Kristof Titeca and Tom De Herdt, \textit{Real Governance Beyond the ‘Failed State’: Negotiating Education in the Democratic Republic of the Congo}, (in “African Affairs”, VOL. 110, N. 439, 2011), p. 213.} The contextualization of constant negotiation is explained by Titeca and De Herdt, taking up Christian Lund's idea according to which there are open moments that become opportunities to renegotiate social norms and structures. By adopting such view, the
legitimacy of legal and institutional norms and procedures, needs not to be taken for granted. Statehood ultimately emerges not anymore as fixed but involved in a constant process of formation. Therefore, it can be said that, in DRC, the state has not disappeared, failed or collapsed, but its main functions, among which may be the provision of basic services such as education, have been assumed by different actors, involved in constant negotiation. As Hagmann and Péclard say, the negotiated statehood approach can help to understand the agreements made at various levels, namely local, national and international, to organise public authority in various African contexts.

As for the theoretical framework, the idea of negotiated statehood elaborated by Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard is at the basis of the present work. Their approach proposes to analyse statehood, not by referring to a Weberian ideal but focusing on a more “empirically grounded understanding of the state”. The authors propose a framework that aims to explore by whom and how the statehood domain is shaped (actors, resources, repositories), where the place of the process is located (negotiating tables) and what the main outcomes and issues to be addressed are (negotiating objects). One challenge that the authors propose, is to identify the boundary between the political space of the state and that of other groups of actors who negotiate the material and symbolic dimension of the statehood. The negotiating table metaphorically refers to the place where the negotiation of something takes place and defines the scope of the involved actors in terms of inclusion or exclusion from the place of negotiation (negotiating tables). Some negotiation tables are dominated by long-standing conventions on how and by whom the statehood is defined, others lack predefined and recognised procedural modalities for decision making. With regard to conventions or procedural modalities, I am also referring to the non-coded norms and coded norms that I mentioned earlier, which in this work refer to the educational sector. In the state of research paragraph, the areas of study, in which this approach has been applied, are reported. In the thesis work the proposal is to understand which actors are present and which are excluded from the negotiating tables represented by the educational sector of the DRC and in the school of Bemba Gombo in Goma.

The proposed negotiating statehood approach does not provide an explanation or a causal model for the failure and formation of the state. Nor does it apply to all states at any time and in any place. It is neither a theory nor a concept in the strict sense, but rather a way of looking the dynamic and complex dimensions of statehood, therefore, “call for an alternative approach to current processes of state

14 Ibidem, p. 219,
16 Weberian ideal and state, mentioned above, refer to the German scholar's conception that the state in the modern sense must rely on an important administrative and bureaucratic apparatus. His ideas are linked to the European context, which is difficult to apply in the current and past context of the DRC.
17 Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard, op. cit., p. 3
18 Ibidem, p. 12
formation and disintegration on the African continent, an approach that is interpretative rather than normative in scope, sociological rather than state-centric in philosophy, and dynamic rather than static.”.19

The idea of a negotiated statehood for the management of the education sector in the DRC is useful to demonstrate how the sector is characterized by strong resilience and has survived despite the progressive withdrawal of the state from the sector, especially with regard to its financing. In fact, if we consider the DRC, the heart of its educational sector can be considered characterized by a historical and complex public-private negotiation between the state and religious networks, as it’s possible to observe in the second chapter of the thesis. Hagmann and Péclard take up the vision of Ferguson and Gupta according to which the delegation of state attributes to non-state actors during the negotiation processes on the exercise of state functions has been an integral part of the formation of the African statehood since early colonial times.20 Furthermore, the negotiation can be understood in terms of cooperation or competition, which I will highlight in the second chapter of the thesis.

As far as the theoretical framework is concerned, the idea of practical norms elaborated by Jean-Pierre Olivier De Sardan, Kristof Titeca and Tom De Herdt is at the basis of my thesis work. As the authors suggest that seeing the difference between the coded norms and the norms that are actually practiced allows a better understanding of how a sector, such as education, works.21 According to the authors, the practical norms give individuals access to financial resources and allow the resilience of the Congolese educational sector, but at the same time they also argue that these practical norms have not called into question the role of the state in education, but rather refer to the state regulatory framework and direct actions towards the state, thus strengthening its role.22 According to Olivier de Sardan, practical norms define the space within which the strategies and actions of social actors can be deployed. Only through empirical analysis can the actual presence of practical norms and official or coded norms be understood and if they overlap or contradict each other.23 To this concern, by presenting the Goma case study, the proposal is to understand the presence of practical norms and coded norms for the provision of education in the Bemba Gombo.

Mostly as regarding the conclusive part of the work, by explaining how the negotiating statehood approach is applied in the DRC’ educational sector, the idea of symbolic power is used, as understood by Titeca and De Herdt. They suggest that the role of the state as the main and responsible actor in the educational sector is not questioned, therefore, holds a high degree of symbolic power in the

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19 Ibidem, pp. 6-7
20 Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard, op. cit, p. 19
22 Ibidem, p. 11
negotiating table. Moreover, other actors in not questioning the role of the state, are incapacitated to renegotiate even their own position, keeping the situation unchanged. Moreover, the idea of material power is employed, intended as who is most responsible for the finance of the educational sector in DRC.

1.4 State of Research

The study on the Congolese educational sector, observed through the negotiated statehood approach, is the one of Kristof Titeca, Tom De Herdt and Inge Wagemakers. They have pointed out that the literature on the negotiated statehood has a clearer empirical focus since it analyses, for example, negotiations between rebels and traders (Raeymaekers 2007, 2010), government and traders (Menkhaus 2008), the centre and the periphery (Kefale 2010), and so on. Moreover, the above-mentioned authors have as well conducted a study on the relationship between the state and the Catholic Church in the context of the DRC education sector, utilizing the negotiated statehood approach as a theoretical reference, keeping as a focus the Common Solidarity Fund and its application in the context of Kinshasa. They discussed the Catholic Church's failed attempt to reform the tuition system in Kinshasa (DRC), concluding that agreements between state and non-state actors evolve largely indirectly, not following the lines of an explicit negotiation process, but that are more determined by decisions taken at a local level and not at national and international one. The CSF was an initiative taken by the Catholic educational network for the city of Kinshasa at the start of the 2008–09 school year to introduce uniform school fees, and therefore to renegotiate both formal and non-formal school taxation, also involving actors such as parents and teachers. While aiming at reforming the system, it did not lead to change.

It should then be noted that Hagmann and Péclard analysed, as an object of negotiation, the following issues: the provision of security, the institutional structure of the state, and above all the balance of power between the centre and its peripheries and the memory, identity and politics of belonging. Scholars have in fact observed the retreat of the state from many key areas of its governance, but not from the educational sector, causing an increase in the number of actors, tables and objects of state bargaining in recent decades throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

This thesis work must not be considered a contribution to Titeca, De Herdt and Wagemakers’ research, but rather being inspired by their analysis. This work is along the lines of the presented study, but without the arrogance of observing a change and simply offering an analysis of the

24 Kristof Titeca, and Tom De Herdt, 2011, op. cit., p. 224
26 Ibidem, p. 118.
Congolese educational sector starting from the same negotiated statehood approach. With the case study in Goma instead, the thesis aims to present the reality of a peculiar school, showing how this small local educational reality has tried to manage internal difficulties, as will be presented in the third chapter. Moreover, the originality of the thesis work lies in conducting a parallel analysis, applying Hagmann and Péclard approach to the Congolese educational sector, seeing its development starting from the colonial time to present, and applying this approach to a Bemba Gombo school in Goma, taking into account particularly the role of the Congolese families and parents, on which no studies have yet been focused. Moreover, Goma’s case study is the more original part of the thesis because highlights a little-known reality and present unpublished data relating to Goma’s context, resulting from interviews collected in the city of reference.

1.5 Methodology

The aim of the thesis work coincided with the objective of investigating how the Congolese educational sector has managed to survive and, in a more circumscribed way, how the education provided in the school of Bemba Gombo in Goma can be maintained. This aim emerged from an experience of my missionary travel that took place between 21/12/2014 and 06/01/2015 in the Little Daughters missions in Goma, North Kivu.

To achieve the objective of the thesis work, qualitative methodology is used. The experience on the territory and the remote contact with people from the DRC, allowed me to use the case study as a research method for the final part of my thesis work. In fact, a case study is “one of the first types of research to be used in the field of qualitative methodology”27 as Adrijana Biba Starman underlines. The case study consists in the application of Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard’ approach to the school of Bemba Gombo in Goma.

I have had direct experience on the territory, mainly characterized by the observation of the work done by the Little Daughters and by listening to their experience, consisting of more than 40 years of activity in the North Kivu region. After this direct experience, I kept in touch with the Little Daughters, which allowed me to collect interviews during the 2018/2019 period. During my master's degree in African Studies in autumn 2018 at Dalarna University, I came up with a series of questions about the management of the school and the actors involved in providing education in Bemba Gombo. The choice of that particular school is linked to the availability and knowledge of the interview participants and the context in which they are placed as a result of my direct experience in the city of Goma. My mother, with whom I shared my missionary travel in 2014/2015, returned to North Kivu in 2018/2019 on another missionary travel. I was able to collect the semi-structured interviews, which

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were recorded with a tape recorder by my mother and which I listened to and transcribe personally when she returned in Italy. The participants in the interviews were: two Little Italian Missionary Daughters, three Little Congolese Missionary Daughters, the Headmaster and the Director of Studies of the school of Bemba Gombo. The choice of the interview participants was based on the prior knowledge of the Little Daughters, choosing to speak with those who currently reside in DRC. On the other hand, the choice to speak with the headmaster and the director of studies was linked to the desire to have a testimony of those who have a more comprehensive view of the management of Bemba Gombo. It could have been interesting to speak also with some teachers and with the parents’ committee, sadly though, since the interviews were done during Christmas holidays, it was difficult to get in touch with this category of participants and carry out more interviews. Indications about the interviews, collected in Goma, the participants and the time of the interviews have been listed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview</th>
<th>Total Number of Participants</th>
<th>Category of Participants</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Interview Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>A: Headmaster of the Bemba Gombo Institute</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Headmaster of the Bemba Gombo Institute</td>
<td>22/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>B: Director of Studies of the Bemba Gombo Institute</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Director of Studies of the Bemba Gombo Institute</td>
<td>22/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>C: Congolese Missionary Little Daughter</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Religious teachers/Founders of Bemba Gombo</td>
<td>23/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>D: Congolese Missionary Little Daughter</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Religious teachers/Founders of Bemba Gombo</td>
<td>23/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>E: Congolese Missionary Little Daughter</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Religious teachers/Founders of Bemba Gombo</td>
<td>23/12/2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>F: Italian Missionary Little Daughter</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Religious teachers/Founders of Bemba Gombo</td>
<td>2/01/2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>G: Italian Missionary Little Daughter</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Religious teachers/Founders of Bemba Gombo</td>
<td>2/01/2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the second and third chapters, a descriptive method is employed, having reported, from a historical-diachronic point of view, the content of materials and resources inherent to the Congolese educational sector, including numerous academic articles, monographs and reports from the World Bank, UNICEF, statistical yearbooks and sectoral plans of the Ministry of Primary Secondary Education and Introduction to New Citizenship (MEPS-INC) of the DRC. These sources have been selected using a qualitative method, choosing authors and relevant reports on the basis of the consistency of their research and data collected on the Congolese educational sector. Although, it followed a descriptive method in both chapters, the application of the negotiated statehood approach to the Congolese and North Kivu educational sector contributed to the choice of which notions and information have been reported on the basis of the study and analysis of the texts mentioned above. The methodology utilised has also limitations:

Number 1: The use of several schools, as a single case study for the realization of the multiple case studies in Goma, could have had a wider value and knowledge, at least at the level of comparison between several schools. A further aspect concerns then the realization of a diachronic case study, in which the same information about Bemba Gombo could have collected referring to different years, in order to give more reliability to the case itself. The biggest limitation was not having been able to carry out real field research, which would have given the case study greater reliability, value and depth. The limitations presented, if implemented, could have led to similar or different conclusions regarding the application of the negotiated statehood approach in Goma and in DRC in general.

Number 2: one aspect that can be both an advantage and a disadvantage of the methodological choice of the case study concerns the "selection bias" as Starman mentions, which consists in the impact of my previous knowledge of the case study, its context and the participants interviewed, and, therefore, a possible favouritism towards certain hypotheses.

1.6 Source Materials

A great number of researches has been done in the educational sector of the DRC. These are primary sources such as those elaborated since 2000 by the World Bank, UNICEF and the Congolese Ministry of Education. In addition, numerous studies have been conducted on the Congolese educational sector, from academic articles to monographs.

An important limitation of the thesis concerning the absence of material and sources studied on pre-colonial education sector must be noted. This choice is linked to the impossibility to observe a very long period of time in this research.

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28 Adrijana Biba Starman, op. cit., p. 36.
With regard to primary sources, understood as World Bank reports, National Statistical Yearbooks, elaborated by MEPSP, data processed by SECOPE, UNESCO or CSR,29 despite their validity as a source for photographing the DRC’s educational sector, their reliability is precarious. Morten Jerven argues that, if some unreliable data are used, it is important first of all, to recognize and point out that they are unreliable,30 and that is what, in part, can be observed by providing some examples of unreliable data collection on DRC education sector. Moreover, precisely because of the unreliability of data concerning the Congolese educational sector, the data collected with the semi-structured interviews in the Bemba Gombo Institute in Goma acquire an important value as primary and unique sources.

When we talk about education, we are talking about people, respectively school-age children,31 so it becomes necessary to know the demographic composition of the Congolese population. As Cyril Owen Brandt and Tom De Herdt point out, the 1984 population census remains the reference for the estimate of the number of inhabitants in the DRC even today.32 Relying on this census could possibly make the data and information obtained lose representativeness also with regard to the educational sector.33

Another example to understand the unreliability of the data used concerns the procedure for preparing statistical yearbooks, which remain the main source of data for the total number of schools, teachers and students in the country. The yearbook is produced by the Planification Direction of MEPS-INC by sending questionnaires from Kinshasa to all schools in the DRC by land transport. Because of the size of the country, the limited transport infrastructure and the large number of schools, this process takes time (for which data is often available years later) and is unreliable and expensive.34

Another problem is the absence of a formal quality control process in the manual processing of thousands of questionnaires. As Geoffroy Groleau points out, the school heads tend to underestimate the number of students enrolled in supervisory structures because they have to pay the share of the tuition fees they collect for each student, so the lower the number of students, the lower the amount to pay. On the other hand, if they have to receive funding from a donor, school heads usually tend to

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31 Children from 3 to 18 years old, attending from kindergarten to secondary school.
34 Ibidem, p. 25.
overestimate the number of enrolled students. In addition, school heads can only include children who have paid their full tuition at the time of the census, which is about two months after the start of the school year, but some children manage to pay later than the deadline, so they are excluded from the survey. In addition, children who manage to attend school intermittently and who drop out are not considered.

A final example which I find particularly significant for the thesis, concerns the SECOPE database which provides data on each school (number of enrolments), on each staff member (career, qualifications and salaries) and draws up an inventory of buildings, furniture and equipment. Cyril Owen Brandt points out that, since 2010, SECOPE distinguishes between non-mechanized schools and budgeted schools, and only the latter receive government funding and their teachers can receive a salary. Therefore, SECOPE’s data do not represent the entire number of teachers active in the sector, but only the staff in schools and administrative structures that are registered or in the process of registration. In addition, there is often a delay between the request for registration of a teacher on the payroll and the day on which he or she first receives a salary. Poor overall IT capacity also plays a role in this situation. In fact, as Groleau points out that SECOPE database is not secure and anyone with access to the database can change the status of individual personnel files without leaving any trace of who did it and when these changes were made. All these aspects could also explain the reported cases of ghost schools, i.e. schools that are registered but do not exist, or floating staff, i.e. staff that is not assigned to a particular school because of the war.

The qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews, which details are reported in table 1, gives to the thesis a unique originality, being these original primary sources. The content of the interviews, representing the empirical material of the thesis, can be found in the last paragraph of the third chapter of the thesis, where Goma’s case study is presented. Although it does not concern my

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36 According to World Bank, SECOPE was created in 1985 as a separate administrative entity in order to simplify the payment of salaries to teachers. Initially supported with the help of Belgium, this administrative unit now has provincial units and occupies an important place in the administration of education. SECOPE’s responsibilities refer to the distribution of salaries to pre-primary, primary, secondary and professional teaching and administrative staff, the distribution of operating and management costs (FDF) incurred by schools and local and provincial school offices and the management of an updated database of teaching and non-teaching staff. (World Bank, 2005, op. cit., p. 16).

37 The schools that are not recorded in SECOPE’s databases.

38 Cyril Owen Brandt, *Teachers’ Struggle for Income in the Congo (DRC), Between Education and Remuneration*, (University of Amsterdam, 2014), pp. 31-32. Non-mécanisée means schools that have been registered, including either newly opened schools or simply those that have not yet been registered. Budgetisée or even mécanisée schools are those that have been registered and therefore paid for. The discourse of mechanization applies not only to schools but also to teachers. A greater effort to mechanize all schools and their staff could also be a way to solve the problem of ghost schools and floating staff.

39 Geoffroy Groleau, op. cit., p. 17.

40 Ibidem, p. 19.
thesis work, I am still in contact with the people interviewed, because I specifically asked them to maintain a collaborative relationship and to update me if there were any changes with respect to what they told me in the interviews of 2018/2019 and if they wanted to update me on what is happening in North Kivu and Goma, specifically in its educational sector.
2. Chapter 2: Birth and development of the educational sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo and its financing

The chapter highlights the most important moments in the development of the educational sector of the Democratic Republic of Congo, using a historical-diachronic and a holistic point of view. Moreover, the negotiated statehood approach is applied to the development of the Congolese educational sector at every historical moment, from the colonial period until today.

2.1. Historical Background

The DRC is characterized by a violent history since colonization, started by Henry Morton Stanley's crossing of the Congo River, called Bula Matari, which symbolically represents the beginning of European foreign domination. In addition, the westerns discovered the immense Congolese mineral wealth, which painted the country as a “geological scandal”, characteristic that still remains today. After the Scramble for Africa during the Berlin conference of 1884-1885, Congo was recognized as a colony, named Free State of Congo, even if the country became the functional territory only for the interests of Leopold II, the Belgian king. It remained so for more than two decades, until he ceded it to Belgium under pressure in 1908, when the country became an effective colony. When Congo became a colony, an extremely hierarchical and centralized administrative and bureaucratic apparatus began to form. After the Second World War, in the United Nations Charter of 1945, the term 'colony' disappeared from history, and in its place the expression ‘non-autonomous territories’ began to be employed, but without any changes to territorial management. The country gained independence in 1960, through a process marked by violent episodes. In fact, the period between 1960 and 1965 is known as the First Congolese Republic, given the fact that the country was subjected to massive atrocities. A civil war broke out, ethnic pogroms, secessionist tendencies, especially in Katanga, two coups, three rebellions and as many as six heads of government (Lumumba, Iléo, Bomboko, Adoula, Tshombe and Kimba), scourged the country’s independence. On November 24th, 1965, aided by political instability, Joseph Désiré Mobutu, General of the ANC, intervened with a military coup.

41 The meaning of these words is: who crushed the rocks.
43 Dunia P. Zongwe, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Online Compendium Autonomy Arrangements in the World, 2019, p. 2. The expression 'geological scandal' is attributed to the Belgian geologist Jules Cornet, who conducted geological research in Congo in the 1890s.
d’état, thus securing the takeover of the newly independent Congo, concentrating it solely in his hands. From a strongly centralized government, the country moved to a dictatorship that lasted for 3 decades. With the establishment of the Mobutu government, the First Republic ended and the new president appointed the country Zaïre, effectively beginning the era of the Second Republic. After the end of Mobutism, the two Congolese wars broke out. It is not possible here to summarize the extent of the two wars in the Congo (the first between 1996 and 1997 and the second between 1998 and 2003), also to respect the tragedy of what happened in the Great Lakes region. The phases of the conflicts were numerous as were the actors involved, who had different interests. The violence of the colonial state and the post-colonial state have led to a cultural vacuum in Congo, filled to some extent by the culture of violence. It was only on July 30th, 2006, that the first democratic elections were held in the DRC, 46 years after the country's actual independence. Joseph Kabila emerged as winner, remaining in power until 2019. At the present time, Félix Tshisekedi has been in office since 25 January 2019, after the elections that were due to take place in 2016.

2.2 External Negotiation: Missionary teachers: an essential component of the colonial trinity

During the colonial era, the country was run by the so-called colonial trinity, the colonial administration, the church, and extensive external economic interests, that were able to exert full control over the colony. The actors responsible for the education sector in colonial times, were mainly represented by the first two elements of the colonial trinity. Nonetheless, the Belgian state did not take direct control of the sector but gave it in particular to the Catholic Church. The definition of education as a public good, which is the exclusive competence of the State, is deeply extraneous to the political constitution of Belgium and therefore also to the Congolese colonial heritage. In fact, Belgium, as a national society, did not develop according to the principle of a centralised state, but it was based on a fundamental agreement between two communities, Catholic and anticlerical. The two had ultimately agreed to live together on the condition that they were granted a certain number of freedoms, in particular to organise collective life.

These characteristics were also maintained in the African colony. In the Belgian Congo a close collaboration was established between the colonial state and the missionary church, which monopolized almost the entire educational sector. Like most colonial administrators, the Belgians believed that their primary task in Congo was a civilizing mission, in order to eliminate paganism and

promote modernization. This was not done exclusively by Europeans, since black catechists were an important bridge between the two worlds. The civilization of the Congolese, to better control them, was an important need for the settlers. The notion of civilization referred to three issues in particular: “the conversion to Christianity, the introduction of a market economy by way of putting people to work, and the adoption of rational, enlightened forms of government.”

The so-called school colonies also spread, understood as schools run by religious but created by the state, functional to include schoolchildren in the Free State of Congo army service. Shortly before the birth of Congo as a colony, in 1906, in regulating the role of the Church in the country, Leopold II and the Vatican signed a formal agreement, the Concordat, which laid the foundations for the development of the Congolese Catholic school. The Concordat stipulated the rules for the concession of land to the missionaries, their income and the modalities for the foundation of schools by the Catholic missions. Thus, the first formula of official education in the Belgian Congo was established, in which religious teachers were considered as public teachers by the State. Literacy, evangelization and civilization became one and the same thing. Protestants were excluded from their educational duties, with the justification that their works of evangelization did not conform to the Belgian national mission. Moreover, while Protestants tried to convert individuals, Catholics turned to groups and communities, an orientation considered by colonial power to be more effective. The exclusion was also a consequence of the fact that Protestants came mainly from the United States and Great Britain, being thus considered by the Belgians as foreigners. Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber argues that the missionaries were responsible for the day-to-day running of schools, but the colonial government controlled the curriculum, the textbooks and their functioning. Thus, the educational sector was run by the state and church, a characteristic that is still found in DRC in the contemporary era.

The schools were used to be rudimentary places in which the students learned to read, write and do accounts. They learned sacred history, the provinces of Belgium and the Belgian royal house. There were also lessons regarding the Congo history, for example the slave trade. Therefore, lessons were set on the basis of Western culture and were functional to carry on the Belgian 'civilizing' mission. Until the 1950s, the guaranteed school had been strictly primary-professional, with only a minority of children graduating. A system of subsidies to missionary schools was fully formalized in the 1920s, whereby land grants and subsidies from public authorities were given to the national Catholic missions. The Catholic and subsidized schools were fully considered of public domain by the colonial government, even though the public administration exercised only partial control. Until the end of the

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49 Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 174.
51 Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 175.
1940s, their autonomy was truly great: they ran and inspected their own schools, while no specific diploma or qualification was required from missionaries for teaching or inspection. Leinweber points out that Louis Franck, in addition to supporting the Catholic missions, established in 1922-1924 an educational commission that led to the definition of six principles for the education of Congolese students. Among them: 1) moral education is more important than technical education or literacy; 2) schools must be adapted to the native environment; 3) native languages must be used in primary school; 4) the state must work with Catholic missions; 5) girls must be educated as well as boys; 6) native teachers must be included.52

From what has been said so far, it can be seen that the school was based on a close and systematic complicity between the Catholic missionaries and the colonial administration. This collaboration was deeply rooted in the way of managing the territory, that is, using a decentralized administration. A form of indirect colonial government was constituted, which led to the creation of a decentralized despotism, not only political but also cultural. Although, the negotiating table was located in the missions of the Catholic Church, which had effective control over the day-to-day functioning of the educational sector. Moreover, the functioning of the schools could be placed within a formal framework, that is, that of colonial legislation. The Church and the colonial state had good working relations in the field of education for most of the colonial period, but after the predominance of non-Catholics in Belgian domestic politics, the relationship worsened.53 The real exclusions were the Congolese and other religious organizations present in the territory, for example, the Protestants.

Collaboration between the colonial state and the church was called into question in the mid-1950s. After the Second World War and until Congolese independence, there was much discussion about educational reforms in the colony, mostly among Belgian politicians. In fact, during Belgian colonialism, the negotiating table of the Congolese educational sector was located in the Belgian parliament. It must be remembered that the post-war changes in education policy in Congo were mainly linked to the fact that many Belgian expatriates went to live in the colony and began to demand a secular school system for their children.

Afterwards, the colonial minister, Robert Godding from the Liberal Party, has established a secular54 educational sector in the mid-1940s. These schools though, were intended only for Belgian children, since the colonial state did not have sufficient resources to transform all the missionary schools into secular ones and take charge of the growing number of Congolese children. Godding, on the other hand, wanted to limit the Catholic monopoly on education, so he also gave subsidies to Protestants for the establishment of their own schools. But when the Catholics returned to power in the Belgian

52 Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 176.
54 Understood as sector where the schools are not run by religious denominations and in which religion is not taught.
representative chamber, the new minister of colonies, Pierre Wigny of the Christian Social Party, went in the opposite direction to his predecessor. In fact, Catholic missions continued to receive far more funds than Protestants, even though the latter ran more and more schools.55

During the 1950s, Belgium was marked by school battles,56 which reached the Congolese colony around 1954/1955. Young notes that the school battle concerned the relationship between state and church schools, with reference to the use of public funds. The solution was to ensure adequate financial support for both the state and ecclesiastical school systems.57 Therefore, Catholics decided to negotiate the relativization of their absolute hegemony in education. This happened even though they were continuing with the Africanization of clerics and continued to be the main organizational actors of education, showing themselves as challengers of the state at the level of organizing power.

In 1950, missionary representatives and the colonial administration signed a new convention that aimed to create a new formal policy for subsidized schools. In 1951, Catholics created an Office for Catholic Education and in 1953 they replaced the 1906 Concordat with a new agreement concerning mainly funding for the sector. In 1954, Auguste Buisseret of the Liberal Party was appointed new colonial minister, who ordered the establishment of a Pedagogical Mission, within which three Belgian ministers spent two months drafting a report called “Reform of Teaching in Belgian Congo”.58 This report was very critical toward the missionary education and pointed to the important goal of achieving greater secularization of the school. In fact, in 1954, Congolese children had the same possibilities as Belgian children to choose the type of school, even though the language of instruction remained French.

Since the new minister wanted to suspend subsidies for missionary schools, the Catholic Church threatened to close its facilities, so Buisseret was forced to maintain subsidies. Thus, it can be observed that the Congolese educational sector depended very much on the decisions taken by colonial ministers, even though teaching always remained a privilege of the missionaries. Ecclesiastical pressure was the other influential engine of change and decision maker in the field of education. The negotiating tables remained dominated by Catholic missionaries.

As repeatedly mentioned, colonialism and its characters were the key drivers of development and change of the formal Congolese educational sector. Strong pressures came from Belgium, as shown by the school wars mentioned above, but not much pressure came from the international or internal Congolese dimension. Both for religious and state-run schools, with the 1958 Schools Pact, the state

55 Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 178.
57 Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 180.
58 Ibidem, p. 179.
agreed to increase subsidies for both schools.\textsuperscript{59} The introduction of the Congolese into the negotiating process only began to be felt in the 1950s, with the emergence of a lively associative culture. In alumni associations and student clubs, a political consciousness began to form. Moreover, for the first time Congolese bishops and their counsellors, agreed that school education should certainly have been unified at the national level, but only by applying a pluralistic conception of education, in which the different actors involved could cooperate without renouncing their respective autonomy. This idea was formalized in the 1964 Constitution,\textsuperscript{60} which enshrined widespread school pluralism regarding both the subsidised and non-subsidised schools, even though the state remained the guardian of the sector. Beyond the initial standardization of the curriculum and official inspection, both Catholic and Protestant education were recognized and subsidized by the state, including the payment of teachers' salaries.

\textbf{2.3 Suppressed negotiation: the failed nationalisation of the Congolese education sector}

At the time of independence, only 3\% of school-age children attended secularized schools, while the rest enrolled in religious schools, especially Catholic ones. Despite this distribution of school attendance, an important attempt to change Congolese educational sector was pursued by Mobutu, who initiated a Zarianisation programme, trying to limit, if not to eliminate, the role of the church in education. As Wyatt MacCaffey points out that, regarding the educational sector, the Zarianisation was a national campaign for the recovery of Congolese cultural authenticity, but in reality it was an attempt to remove the dominion of the Catholic Church from the educational sector, also representing the main source of opposition to the regime of President Mobutu.\textsuperscript{61} It was certainly not an easy task to change the key player in the educational offer in such a radical way, since considerable economic resources would have been needed and the culture of schooling in the country would also have had to change.

The so-called second school war, in post-colonial times, was opened on the initiative of the PRM regime, which decreed in 1971 the complete nationalisation of education and school structures. Mobutu had succeeded in holding back all opposition movements, not only political groups, but also trade unions and churches. The students demonstrated increasing bravery, keeping on organizing demonstrations. The secularity and authenticity of the state were proclaimed, a process to which the Catholic Church refused to cooperate. \textit{“Instead of studying religion, students were to receive a civic

\textsuperscript{59} Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 180.
\textsuperscript{60} The Lualabourg Constitution guaranteed for the first time the right to education, giving relatives the possibility to choose the type of education for their children according to Article 33. Other questions relating to education are contained in Articles 33 to 38 of this Constitution.\textit{(Constitution de la République Démocratique du Congo de 1964).}
and political education, based on the Manifeste de la N'sele (which defined the official political position of the Popular Movement of the Revolution).”\textsuperscript{62}

In 1974, all schools were nationalized and the three universities of the country\textsuperscript{63} had been united into a single university (National University of Zaire), but this management did not last long. The church was clearly opposed to these changes imposed by the dictator, but students also showed strong resistance, as demonstrated by numerous student demonstrations. After these demonstrations, Mobutu decided to put an end to all student organisations in Zaire, including the General Union of Congolese Students. Only the youth of the RPM party could join to found unions for the defence of Congolese students, in fact, only the YRPM was recognized that “was quite effective in eliminating all competitors and in exercising an organizational monopoly in the student and youth spheres”.\textsuperscript{64}

In any case, Mobutu's attempt to nationalize the school sector also failed because of a major economic crisis, considerably reducing funds to finance an entirely public sector, understood as controlled by the state authorities. After the deterioration of the education sector in just a few years, the Congolese government returned the administration of the education sector to the churches, provided that an agreement was signed between the state and the churches, wanting to maintain greater control of the sector compared to pre-mobutism period.\textsuperscript{65} Although the formal framework of the educational sector was made by Mobutu, the Catholic Church remained the dominant actor in the negotiating table of the educational sector.

The co-management of the educational sector between the state and FBO did not cease, but was written into the 1977 convention, which stipulated that the State and a representative of each of the four main religions, Catholic, Protestant, Kimbanguist and Islamic, had signed an agreement that religious schools must be recognised by the State and follow its provisions, but are entirely responsible for the day-to-day running of the schools. This method of management remains in force today.\textsuperscript{66} From now on, the public primary and secondary school sector in the DRC is characterised by two types of schools: conventional schools (schools with special agreements), run by the 4 religious networks mentioned above, and non-conventional schools (schools without special agreements). Both are supported by the State budget and are under the responsibility of MEPSP\textsuperscript{67} and its administrative branch.

\textsuperscript{62} M. Jeanne Haskin, op. cit., p. 46.
\textsuperscript{63} The first universities in DRC are: The University of Leuven born in 1954. The Socialists immediately took action to open a secular university in Elisabethville (Lubumbashi) in 1956. The Protestants founded their own university in the third large city, Stanleyville (Kisangani), in the mid-1960s. (Wyatt MacCaffey, op. cit., p. 245).
\textsuperscript{65} Ashley Elizabeth Leinweber, op. cit., p. 182-183.
\textsuperscript{66} Ivi.
\textsuperscript{67} Between 1997 and 2003, the education sector in the DRC was administered by a single Ministry of Education responsible for all levels of education (primary, secondary and higher education). Since 2003, the Ministry's activities
As a result of this agreement, the churches gained more managerial control than they had before Mobutu's radicalisation. Moreover, the agreement did not change the organization of education by much during the colonial period, only giving it a greater formality. In any case, the Catholic Church remained the dominant actor in the negotiating processes of the educational sphere.

A further important turning point was in 1983, when the state budget for education evaporated, since, following the structural adjustment program implemented from 1982 to 1987, the state decided to cut the education budget from 25% to 7% of national public spending. Moreover, during the same period, teachers' salaries decreased from $68 to $27 per month. On September 22nd, 1986, the National Education Framework Law was passed. It can be said that the practical norms filled the legal gaps in the sector, as will be shown later, since the new law did not change anything compared to the past, except to open the school field to private initiative. Private schools are present mainly in urban areas and are the most widespread in the provision of nursery education, representing 52% of children enrolled in 2012.

Since the 1980s, the Congolese education sector has been experiencing a major crisis which have continued until the first decade of the 2000s. Most state schools have been closed and enrolment has been assessed at 78% for primary school, 23% for secondary school, while only 56% of children have reached the fourth grade. After the outbreak of the Congolese wars in the 1990s, at the level of public investment, the government's spending on education was less than 1%, despite the fact that primary education for children aged 6 to 12 was defined as compulsory at the official level. From the 1990s to the early 2000s, the guarantee of public services was formally non-existent, during the period of political transition and the economic crisis of the 1990s, "the state budget has been dizzyingly decreasing to only $4 per pupil". In 2002, "a teacher's salary was only $8 a month".

have been divided into two parts: the MEPSP and the MESU. In parallel, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Youth and Sport and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection remained responsible for non-formal education, literacy, remedial courses, technical training and continuing adult education. However, in January 2015, the MEPSP was divided into two parts: the Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et de l'Initiation à la Nouvelle Citoyenneté, or MEPSINC (primary and secondary education) and the METP (technical and vocational education). (World Bank Group, Public Expenditure Review of the Education Sector in the Democratic Republic of Congo An Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Equity Analysis, (Report No. ACS14542, 2015), p. 9, p.14). MEPSP is characterized by a large branch of offices at provincial and sub-provincial level. Each religious network has its own structure to manage its schools, characterized by a large branch of offices at provincial and sub-provincial level. (Geoffroy Groleau, op. cit., p. 10).

From the general provisions of this law, it can be seen that education remained linked to the preservation of national identity and culture, as it was conceived by the dominant political party of the dictatorship of Zaire, MPR. Furthermore, it was stipulated that the competence to guarantee the educational sector was exclusive to the state, which formally remained the main actor, despite the establishment of decentralized entities that provide education (Considerations with reference to the Journal officiel de la République Démocratique du Congo, Cabinet du Président de la République, Loi-Cadre sur l'éducation nationale, 2005).

Private schools are represented at national level by the Association Nationale des Ecoles Privées Agréées (ASSONEPA). This type of school can be run by individuals, NGOs and others.

M. Jeanne Haskin, op. cit., p. 69.
World Bank, 2005, op. cit., p. 70.
Cyril Owen Brandt, op. cit., p. 49.
Since the 1980s, the schools have become more fiscal units than learning spaces, severely undermining the quality of provided education. For instance, the tax to finance teachers’ salaries, FDM\textsuperscript{73} was introduced by an agreement between the Catholic Church and the Parents' Committee, and although it was designed as a temporary measure to overcome the state budget evaporation, it was later institutionalized. Nevertheless, starting in 2011, government authorities proclaimed the abolition of official school fees for the first 5 years of primary school, including FDM. In any case, the collection of this type of fee continues today.

While prior to 1997 it was still possible to speak of a rapprochement between church and state in the educational field, during the Congolese wars this relationship was brutally broken off. The church, not only Catholic, was the only actor able to maintain the sector as far as its quotidian functioning was concerned, while parents became the main financiers of the sector.

2.4 Difficult negotiation: from the fragile promises of the constitution of the democratic transition to the current structure of the Congolese education sector

The transitional government of the early 2000s had defined a number of actions that were essential for the recovery of the education sector. The gradual resumption of the payment of teachers' salaries, the consolidation of public finances under way since 2001, the strengthening of cooperation with non-governmental actors involved in the sector and the rehabilitation of certain school infrastructure, although they have been limited in scope due to a lack of human and financial resources have been the most significant.\textsuperscript{74}

Particular emphasis was placed on the preparation of a sector strategy within the framework of the provisional DSRP\textsuperscript{75} which was to work together with all partners concerned. These efforts have played a key role not only in ensuring the provision of educational services to heavily impoverished populations, but also in trying to preserve the decentralised education sector.

In the DRC in the early 2000s, it was unlikely that the country could be able to achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015, or to eliminate gender inequalities in

\textsuperscript{73} It consists of another way to understand the Teacher Bonus Fee or motivational costs, fee introduced to pay teachers’ salaries.

\textsuperscript{74} Ministère de l’Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel B.P. 32 Kinshasa/Gombe, \textit{Plan d’Action National de l’Education Pour Tous (Projet)}, 2005, p. 44.

\textsuperscript{75} It is an economic policy document that describes macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes leading to pro-poor growth. These policies are accompanied by an estimate of the costs required to implement them. The development of this document is participatory and includes all segments of the population as well as donors. (Document de Stratégie de Croissance et de Réduction de la Pauvreté – DSCR P 2, 2001, p. 23). It was first adopted in 2002.
primary and secondary education by 2005. Studies from the WB era in the field of education indicated that the DRC’s needs were enormous for this sector.\footnote{In particular: very limited access to education, especially in Eastern regions, qualitative poverty of present services and education, lack of a legal and regulatory framework to ensure the long-term sustainability of the sector, in particular with regard to financial sustainability and, finally, the state did not have the financial resources to support it.}

An important formal breakthrough for the education sector came with the entry into force of the new constitution in February 2006,\footnote{Articles 42 to 45 of the new constitution.} which laid down new principles for the education sector in the DRC. For the first time in the history of the DRC, these principles made education not only a duty of the new Congolese government, but also a right of the youth and their families. The right to education had become part of the normative dimension, as a fundamental right. The state became a defender of the right of education and not simply one of its founders, at least in theory. Even the international community\footnote{For example, the World Bank’s Education Sector Project was in line with the government's 2006 post-election development priorities, which were presented in several key documents, including the 2006 Letter of Education Sector Policy that guided the reorganization and strengthening of the sector, the Education for All (EFA) Action Plan and the Pact to Modernize Higher Education (World Bank, Implementation Completion and Results Report on a Grant in the Amount of SDR 99.2 million (US$ 150.0 million equivalent) to the Democratic Republic of Congo, (Report No: ICR00003231, 2015), p. 3).} did not remain deaf to educational issues in post-conflict Congo. New negotiating tables emerged in the early 2000s. In fact, the sector was chronically underfunded, receiving less than 10% of the national budget in 2006, an insufficient amount for any effective improvement or change.

Although it has been agreed that the budget should be aligned with the priorities set by the government, this alignment was at that time not set, leading to an imbalance between national priorities and budgetary allocations. Since the education sector could not be supported financially by the state alone, the WB and other external donors financed important education projects.

It should be added that only in 2010 did the government have its first strategy for the education sector (primary and secondary education only) and in 2012 the more detailed Interim Education Plan (IEP) 2012-2014 followed.\footnote{Cyril Owen Brandt Winner, Constructing schools in a recurrent armed conflict in Democratic Republic of Congo, England, Education Development Trust Tim Morris Award, (2015), p. 23.} Moreover, IEP guaranteed that free primary education was the priority, aiming at reducing the amount of school fees.\footnote{Ministère de l’Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel, Plan Intérimaire de l’Education 2012-2014, 2012, p. 8.} The Interim Education Plan was also part of the wider process of joining the GPE and was the first sectoral education plan in the country to formally publish objectives and principles that referred to the broader Millennium Development Goals. One of the most emblematic measures of the plan was the abolition of certain costs for primary education including: teachers’ salary supplements, administrative and operating costs of schools and examination fees, starting mainly with the execution of the 2010 state budget. In addition, the government had committed to allocate 15% of its budget to education by 2015.\footnote{Ministère de l’Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et Professionnel, Plan Intérimaire de l’Education 2012-2014, 2012, p. 8.} In any case, looking
at the context of sub-Saharan Africa in general, DRC spending on education as a percentage of GDP (1.8%) in 2013 was inadequate and lagging behind. Its share of GDP is lower than foreseen in the Education Sector Plan 2010-20, as well as the GPE recommendation of 4.1 percent and the SSA average of 4.6 percent.82

What has been said so far suggests that the government had begun to see the development and implementation of an efficient education sector as a key strategy and pillar to reduce widespread chronic poverty in the country, promote good economic development and ensure peace. Nonetheless, the education sector was heavily underfunded.

A further plan containing a new strategy for the education and training sector has emerged for the years 2016-2025,83 even if by comparing this recently adopted sectoral strategy, the planned budget still shows a strong dependence on contributions from external donors and in particular Congolese parents. The contribution of external donors is evident in the DRC, where the main donors are: the WB Group (45%), Belgium (17%) and the United States (16%).84 Even though the public education budget has started to increase again, especially since 2011, WB noted that actual expenditure on education is increasing in real terms but is not growing in line with GDP growth, leaving the sector still underfunded. It is important to underline what WB has noted in regard to the implementation and execution of the public budget for education. According to the institution, the allocation and execution of the budget are not aligned, resulting in significant discrepancies between the two. While the budget execution of recurrent expenditure, which mostly includes the payment of salaries, is almost completely executed, capital expenditure is grossly under-executed.85

It is necessary to point out that the MEPSP and the MESU are responsible for the recurrent costs of the education sector with regard to personnel, which are met by Congolese funds, while capital investments are mostly met by external funds. Although international donors had requested their funds to be officially included in the education budget, this manoeuvre, sometimes implemented and sometimes not, has not helped to increase the implementation rates of capital expenditure, which is not directly under the control of the Congolese government. While the higher education budget is implemented directly by the MESU, the implementation of the MEPSP budget involves several key actors, so it should be more decentralised. In fact, it can be observed that the Congolese government plays a more than central role in the country's education sector funding system.

In 2013, SECOPE accounted for only about 68% of all teaching staff, so that only 68% of the teachers enrolled were paid.86 In any case, WB notes that most of the budget is used to pay the salaries of

83 Ibidem, p. 17.
85 Ibidem, p. 43.
86 World Bank, 2015, op. cit., p. 36.
educational staff, therefore, is allocated to SECOPE. However, as De Herdt, Titeca and Wagemakers point out, the MEPSP budget has led to an increase in teachers' salaries from USD 13 in 2001-2002 to only USD 34 in 2007-2008, despite the fact that the Mbudi agreement was signed on February 12th, 2004, according to which the transitional government and teachers' unions should agree to a monthly salary of USD 208. With Mbudi’s agreement, the salaries of those who were denied were to triple, but in reality, they are still below the poverty line.87

Furthermore, WB points out that the budget allocations to Central Services are high and increasing, while execution rates are low and decreasing. However, there are many provinces that have execution rates above 100%. This implies that resources have been transferred from one province to another or from Central Services to provinces without these transfers being present in the original budget plan.88

In addition, the budget allocation does not seem to take into account factors such as the percentage of the population, the number of school-age children, the number of children enrolled and the total staff of the sector for each province. WB noted that non-conventional schools receive more than double the amount given to conventional schools for non-wage expenses, even though conventional schools account for more than 75% of public enrolments and represent about 67% of all primary and secondary schools in the national territory.89

These discrepancies in terms of funding between the two types of schools have important implications for the efficiency of the Congolese education sector, since they are not directed where the needs are greatest. Conventional schools are more expensive, although the costs sustained by families are similar for both types of schools. Nonetheless, the government bears different unit costs, giving more to non-conventional schools. Backiny-Yetna Prospere and Wodon Quentin argue that in the countries with fragile education sectors due to scarce public funding, like the DRC, where most students attend schools run by religious networks, the cost of education is borne by the parents, and there is not much difference between public, private or religious schools.90 The cost of kindergarten, primary and secondary schools is lower in public schools than in private schools, while for tertiary education, the cost of public schools is more than double that of private schools, with a cost of $959 in public institutions and $474 in private ones.91 Yet, as pointed out above, the public budget is mainly allocated to tertiary education, therefore, inefficient use of resources can be observed, since school fees for tertiary education are higher in public schools than in private ones.

89 Ibidem, p. 53.
90 Prospere Backiny; Yetna Wodo, World Bank, Quentin, *Comparing the Performance of Faith-Based and Government Schools in the Democratic Republic of Congo*, (Munich Personal RePEc Archive, Paper No. 16463, 2009), pp. 119-120.
91 World Bank Group, 2015, op. cit., p. 56.
Despite the educational plans developed after the 2006 elections, it was only on February 11th, 2014, that a new law for education was drafted, eliminating that of the Mobutist regime of 1986, totally unsuited to DRC constitutional and social development. The new framework law takes into account the international legal instruments duly ratified by the DRC. For the first time, the framework law regulates in depth the management and substance of the Congolese education sector, with its 242 articles. An important aspect to underline is how the relationship between the state and the other actors involved in the educational sector is regulated, which had remained linked to the 1977 law during the Mobutu regime. The law speaks of a partnership for learning, meaning a method of education management in which the state involves different actors (educational partners): “parents, promoters of approved national private educational institutions, religious denominations, grassroots community, provinces, decentralized territorial authorities, national public and private companies, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, national and international organizations, socio-professional associations with regulatory, educational, scientific and cultural vocation, bilateral and multilateral partners”. This is a participatory approach aimed at involving the various actors of school education in the design and management of national education, with which the state shares responsibilities and tasks for the achievement of common educational goals. The partnership applies to all aspects of the educational process: educational policy design, education management, administrative management, financial management and asset management and applies to all levels of national education. The rights and obligations of the partners are the following: to ensure active, democratic and equitable participation in the structures created for the functioning of the partnership and to make human, civic, cultural, material, patrimonial and financial contributions to education. Even if a participative approach has been formalized since the early 2000s, the space for practical and non-codified norms is still remaining, as it is possible to observe in the next paragraph, specifically as regard the school fees system, which birth is tamed in the early 1980s.

92 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of Human and Peoples' Rights, the Constitutive Act of UNESCO, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the World Declaration on Education for All, the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights, the Pan-African Youth Charter, the Florence Agreement and the 1963 NAIROBI Protocol on the free movement of goods of a scientific, cultural and educational nature and, on the other hand, the Constitution of the DRC in Articles 12, 14, 37, 43, 44, 45, 46, 123, 202, 203 and 204, the Law on the Protection of Minors and the recommendations of the General Assembly on Education held in Kinshasa in February 1996. It also takes into account the evolution of higher education and university systems, as expressed in the Bologna Process of June 1999. In addition, compulsory and free basic education became a human right and an issue for each country at global level following the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien (Thailand) in 1990 and the World Education Forum held in Senegal in Dakar on 26-28 April 2000, where the compulsory and free nature of basic education was adopted at global level (The legislation listed refers directly to the text of the Loi-Cadre № 14/004 du 11 Février 2014 de l’Enseignement National).

93 See the Loi-Cadre № 14/004 du 11 Février 2014 de l’Enseignement National.

2.5 More to teachers or administrative staff? The role of parents in financing the Congolese education sector

The WB stresses that the allocation of public resources undermines the country’s ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals related to universal primary education. If universal and free primary education was to be achieved in 2015 throughout the DRC, such a distribution of resources pushes this objective further away, also demonstrating a lack of capacity on the part of the Congolese government to manage the priorities of the education sector. Indeed, government contributions were higher for tertiary education, while families and external donors directed their support mainly to the primary and secondary levels of education. Development partners have focused precisely on the primary level to accelerate the achievement of universal and free primary education, but which has not yet materialised. Families are the largest financiers at all levels of education, with the highest level (77%) for secondary school, 72% for primary and 69% for tertiary, so the role of families appears vital to the resilience of the Congolese education sector.

Groleau points out that although wages are the largest item of expenditure in the education sector, representing 94% of MEPSP spending between 2013 and 2015, most teachers are still unpaid. Moreover, the author points out that the number of administrative structures and administrative officials has increased much more than the number of teachers, thus contradicting the priority of education plans that prioritised the payment of teachers, who, especially in rural areas, do not receive their full salary or suffer significant delays. Therefore, it can be observed that the bureaucratic and administrative machine absorbs a large part of the economic resources.

In any case, GER and literacy rate have increased at all enrolment levels. As the WB points out, at primary level, GER increased from 93% to 108% between 2005 and 2012, at lower secondary level from 56 to 67%, higher from 38% to 59%, and at tertiary level from 4% to 8%. These increases are unbalanced by the fact that the state provides much more economic support for tertiary education than to primary and secondary education, as highlighted above.

Crispin Mabika Mabika and David Shapiro stress the influence on access to education of variables such as: the economic well-being of families, the size of the household, gender and place of residence. The authors noted that “low incomes at the microeconomic level and poor economic performance at the macroeconomic level are among the factors that constrains children’s participation in school”. Therefore, the economic well-being of the family represents a certain key to the enrolment of children.

95 World Bank, 2015, op. cit., p. 37.
96 Geoffroy Groleau, op. cit., p. VI.
97 World Bank, 2015, op cit., p. 18.
in school, a significant consideration when analysing the total tuition fees and the general size of households. Anyway, the substitute par excellence in ensuring the resilience of the Congolese education sector is represented by parents, who must make up for the shortcomings of the government which continues to hold the power of the sector, which, as noted above, remains highly centralized. As the National Central Bank points out in 2015, as mentioned above, the education sector remains largely financed by households, which continue to finance 73% of education expenditure in the DRC (down from 90% in 2005), while the government contributes 23% of education expenditure (compared to 6% in 2005), with donors contributing the remaining 4%. 99

De Herdt and Titeca argue that the system of tuition fees to ensure the maintenance of the Congolese education sector has developed since the 1980s and was implemented more during the 1990s, coinciding with the evaporation of the public education budget in those same years, in fact “the Catholic Church and the students’ parents association proposed to take care of the teachers’ salaries and allow schools to ask parents to pay ‘teacher bonus fees’ (FDM) to supplement teachers’ salaries. Although all parties involved saw this as a temporary measure, it soon became an institutionalized practice”. 100 These measures were also taken to calm the wave of strikes that occurred in the 1990s in Congo.

Although the 2005 Constitution states that primary education is free, parents continue to pay a lot of taxes. De Herdt and Titeca say that tuition fees can be decided at national, provincial, and even each school can set its own. In fact, FDM are mostly decided at the school level. Religious congregations themselves can set their own fees, so the number of fees risks becoming very excessive and not regular. In 2007, UNICEF report has identified more than 70 different types of tuition fees which are set as codified norms according to the individual interpretation of the legal framework, but still in direct contradiction with the ambitions of the state to eliminate tuition fees. 101

According to the World Bank investigation, tuition fees account for 65% of total household expenditure, although there are differences. In primary education, the share of tuition fees is marginally lower than at secondary school level, but it is impossible to say whether this is due to the relative size of tuition fees between levels or the effects of the free school policy. 102 The free teaching has been implemented mainly since 2011, after the abolition of official school fees for the first 5 years of primary school, although, Brandt, resuming the vision of Ngongondu, J. B., a university student at the University of Kisangani in 2013, says that: “the official fees only made up a minor part of parents’ financial contributions, the agenda has become a mere “slogan” and does not take into account local

100 Tom De Herdt and Kristof Titeca, 2016, op. cit., pp. 2-3.
The idea of the slogan suggests the perspective that each school should be understood as a separate reality from the others, a consequence of the management of the Congolese educational sector which is not able to offer a great homogeneity in the country as far as education is concerned.

In 2013, UNICEF’S National Survey on the situation of out-of-school children points out that, in DRC, 57% of households earn less than 540,000 CFs ($556) and 81% less than 1,080,000 CFs ($1112) per annum. It can be said that the average salary of Congolese people is not enough to send their children to school, at least not all of them. In fact, Congolese families are very numerous, as the Demographic and Health Survey 2013-14 notes that women in the DRC have on average 6.6 children, having 5.4 children per woman in urban areas and 7.3 in rural areas, so it becomes very difficult for a family to send all their children to school, taking into account the numerous taxes and the low average salary of the population.

According to authors such as Groleau, De Herdt and Titeca, one of the key effects of the education sector's dependence on tuition fees is that the relationship between school and administrative structures has shifted from an administrative and pedagogical relationship to an almost exclusively financial one, in fact “schools have been turned into both formal and informal taxation units for the government, the religious networks and their administrators”. Moreover, the crystallisation of fee collection practices, which are subject to genuine institutionalisation, has reached such a level that the local offices of SECOPE are now often formally charged with collecting fees and redistributing them within the sector. This role and the associated resources also explain the rapid proliferation of these structures.

Brandt points out that: “Congolese teachers have difficulties to ‘connect the two ends of the months’, meaning that they hardly reach the end of the month with their salary. The motivation fee has become the main mechanism used to complement teacher income. The quote above shows how the motivation fee has been institutionalized and is now a practice at every school”, which may be different, since the amount of the FDM may be different from school to school, and teachers tend to ask for the highest possible fee. On a general level, the taxes contained in the provincial edict finance almost entirely the functioning of the administrative structures. In turn, those set at school level mainly support teachers' salaries and school operations, although some of them always serve to finance the administrative structures, in fact as Groleau points out: “on a day-to-day basis, this situation results

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103 Cyril Owen Brandt, 2014, op. cit., p. 5.
105 Ministère du Plan et Suivi de la Mise en œuvre de la Révolution de la Modernité (MPSMRM), Ministère de la Santé Publique (MSP) and ICF International, Democratic Republic of Congo Demographic and Health Survey 2013-14 : Key Findings, (Rockville, Maryland, USA : MPSMRM, MSP et ICF International, 2014), p. 3.
107 Cyril Owen Brandt, 2014, op. cit., p. 56.
in administrators exercising non-stop pressure (including intimidation) on school directors to collect school fees. This leads to similar coercion patterns on households by school directors.”

As the World Bank points out, the FDM for the salaries of teachers and the FDF for financing the administrative apparatus and operating costs are the most onerous taxes for families.\textsuperscript{109} As far as operating taxes are concerned, it is assumed that schools retain 80\% of the FDF, but in reality, a relatively high percentage of the expenditure is allocated to the highest levels of administration (both in public and conventional schools) leaving little for the running costs at school level,\textsuperscript{110} therefore, also thanks to this redistribution of fees, the administrative machine grows and is supported to the detriment of teachers and parents, despite limited pedagogical support.

The preponderance of tuition fees in education may imply that parents and community members have a strong voice in the running of the school, but in reality, this is not the case. The Parents’ Committee (COPA) should ensure the participation of parents and community members in decision-making processes in schools, while the Management Board (COGES) should ensure that decisions within the school are taken in consultation with representatives of parents, teachers and students. Many civil society organisations (CSO) are involved in education, but are often weak and do not significantly represent parents’ interests. COPA in the DRC were officially created in 1975\textsuperscript{111} with the aim of encouraging parents to contribute to the financing of the education sector. As Gaël Comhaire and Sonia Mrsic-Garac believe, despite the diversification of the tasks entrusted to parents’ associations over time, the specific logic that led a country such as the DRC to encourage their implementation is still prevalent in the authorities’ and associations’ own conception of their role, namely that of contributing financially to education. In the DRC, the 1986 framework law gave COPAs certain administrative and educational prerogatives.\textsuperscript{112} However, it is necessary to assess the extent to which the committees have the necessary means, expertise and legitimacy to intervene effectively, but as Groleau points out, neither COPA nor COGES currently serve as effective structures for empowering the school director and a transparent school management.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{108} Groleau Groleau, op. cit., p. 24.
\textsuperscript{109} World Bank, 2015, op. cit., p. 145.
\textsuperscript{110} World Bank, 2005, op. cit., p. 63.
\textsuperscript{111} In 1980 a single federation, ANAPEZA (Association Nationale des Parents d'Élèves du Zaïre), was founded. After the Sovereign National Conference of 1991-1992, different structures gradually emerged to reflect the current organization of the educational system. Therefore, today we distinguish ANAPECO (Association Nationale des Parents d'Élèves et Étudiants du Congo), heir of ANAPEZA, for the official network, APEC (Association des Parents d'Élèves Catholiques) for the registered Catholic network, APEP (Associations des Parents d'Élèves Protestants) for the registered Protestant network and APEKI (Association des Parents d'Élèves Kimbanguistes) for the registered Kimbanguiste network. These organisations have representations at the level of provinces, urban districts and, in theory, municipalities. (Comhaire Gaël; Sonia Mrsic-Garac, LA “PARTICIPATION” DES PARENTS DANS DES CONTEXTES DE SYSTÈMES ÉDUCATIFS EN CRISE. Études de cas au Bénin et en République Démocratique du Congo, De Boeck Supérieur | « Mondes en développement », V. 3 n° 139, (2007), p. 46).
\textsuperscript{112} Ivi.
\textsuperscript{113} Groleau Groleau, op. cit., p. VI.
The role of the parents' committee would be both to participate in the drawing up of the school budget and to monitor the administrative, financial and infrastructure management of the school, but they are often unaware of the responsibilities, rights and duties they have within the school councils, which could be an important link between school and community, and thus open the institution of the school to members of civil society, represented by parents.

In 2019, Corneille Luboya Tshiunza, a researcher at the National Pedagogical University of Kinshasa, completed his analysis of the governance system of local school councils (LSB) in the DRC, observing 16 pilot primary schools. According to the scholar, “the school board is the decentralization of school authority from the central and local government to the school unit”. Therefore, it could be an important tool for the implementation of the decentralisation of the management of the Congolese education sector which has not yet been achieved. It also highlights the participative nature of the LSB's collegiate body, which can be a guarantor of better management of the reality of the school. In reality though, the role of school councils (COGES) as well as that of parents' committees (COPA) in the context of the DRC risks being in vain. Indeed, Comhaire and Mrsic-Garac, through a socio-anthropological and comparative study of the parents' committee in the DRC, challenged the paradigm of participation. The lack of cohesion within parents and their associations does not allow to speak of a counter power to a state that is not very present in the educational sector. On the contrary, precisely because of their weakness, COPAs contribute to naturalize the financial contribution of parents at school level reducing their role to that of "banker". In fact, for scholars, the desire that is expressed is to restore the sector and not to reform it.

It is not wrong to say that the implementation of tuition fees is many times on the borderline between legality and illegality. In fact, taking into consideration the idea of practical norms of Olivier de Sardan, Titeca and De Herdt, the naturalisation of the tax collection mechanism does not allow a concrete change in the sector. In the case of the DRC, the practical norms may concern school fees, which are decided not within a formal framework the majority of the times. It is important taking into consideration the participants and their interests involved in the Congolese education sector and its financing, in order to achieve a good governance, characterized by codified norms, inserted in a legal framework, therefore, capable of having more guarantees. Anyway, at the moment, the country is still far from achieving a solid education sector for young Congolese people.

115 Ibidem, p. 41.
116 Comhaire Gaël and Sonia Mrsic-Garac, op. cit., p. 50.
117 Ivi.
2.6 Concluding Remarks

Through the writing of this chapter, answering the research questions underlying the thesis work, I figure out that in the DRC, education has been provided mainly by the Catholic Church since colonial times, and subsequently by all other religions in the country, especially since the 1977 Convention. Subsequently, especially after the economic crisis of the 1980s/1990s and the outbreak of the Congolese wars, families and international actors such as UNICEF and the WB have become much more involved in the negotiation of the educational sector. These examples answer the question of who negotiates Congolese statehood. The interaction between the state and religious networks, especially the Catholic one, can be cooperative, think of the fact that, during colonialism, the colonial state and the colonial church were considered part of a single trinity, and, at the same time competitive, think of the struggle of the Catholic church against the Mobutist state. The 1977 convention, sanctioning the co-responsibility of the state and religious congregations, to date, could be seen as a consolidated and formally recognized negotiation, so a coded norm. On the other hand, the FDM can be seen as an arena of negotiation in which the state, religious networks and Congolese families have agreed on a temporary solution aimed at maintaining the resilience of the Congolese educational sector, but with respect to which the recognized modalities for its implementation have not been negotiated, can therefore be an example of incomplete negotiation, so non-coded norm. These examples answer the question of where negotiation processes can be observed. Since the implementation of the tuition system in the early 1980s, the excluded actor par excellence are the parents, at least as regard their symbolic power, since they do not call into question the role of their committee, since they do not perform their legally recognised duties and they do not participate in the decisions of the educational sector. From the point of view of material power, on the other hand, they are the main actors since they have to pay taxes both formally recognized and practically imposed.
Chapter 3: Negotiated Education in the North Kivu region and its capital

Goma

In this thesis chapter, the negotiated statehood approach is applied within a precise secondary school located in Goma, Bemba Gombo institute, with attention also to its development. Before that, the context of the investigation is highlighted, by presenting the North Kivu and Goma’s educational sector, trying to understand which are the main actors for the maintenance of the sector and who are excluded and which and where are the negotiation tables of the educational sector.

3.1 Context of investigation: Nord Kivu and its capital Goma

The status of North Kivu as a political and administrative entity has undergone several changes during the experiences of political and administrative decentralization in the DRC. In 1988, North Kivu became a province again within the geographical limits of 1956, which are still recognized today, as are the other two sub-regions of Kivu (South Kivu and Maniema). Today, the three cities in the province are Goma, the capital, Beni and Butembo. North Kivu is not divided into districts, but its rural environment includes 6 territories divided into 10 sectors, separated into 97 groupings or districts and about 5,000 villages.

The economic potential of the province, especially regarding its mineral-rich subsoil, is threatened by the continuing political and social instability that still exists in the territory today. The period of the Congolese wars from 1996 to 2003 and the Kivu conflict until 2009 turned the area into a battlefield. From that moment on, the clashes became stronger and even today they cannot be said to have ended, leaving the area in a situation of recurring conflict. It is impossible to summarize all the moments and actors of the conflict in Kivu, but it surely is significant to report what Luca Jourdan, anthropology associate professor at the University of Bologna, has discovered, listening to the testimonies of many young Kadogo fighters from North Kivu. By selecting one in particular, has emerged that some Kadogo, who come from poor families who do not allow them to go to school, join armed groups to have an opportunity for social mobility and an easy way to get money. In a context where peace seems impossible for many, these young people do not know the causes of war.

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118 The province of Kivu (comprising North and South Kivu) changed from a district in 1939 to a province in 1951. North Kivu then became a separate district in 1956 with the capital Goma, divided into 6 territories (Beni, Lubero, Rutshuru, Goma, Masisi, Walikale). After independence, in 1962, all the districts of the Democratic Republic of Congo acquired the status of provinces again, including North Kivu, until 1965. When Mobutu took power, the old districts resumed their status and North Kivu remained linked as a district to the province of Kivu.


120 Ibidem, pp. 8-9.

121 The most important raw materials are: coltan, cassiterite, gold and diamonds. In addition, there are two large lakes, Lake Edouard, very fishy, and Lake Kivu, which contains methane gas. (Ibidem, p. 6).

122 In Swahili, Kadogo means still little, although this name was later used for child combatants in East African countries, and for the DRC, it referred to those child soldiers who fought mainly for Kabila's FDLR. (Theodore Trefon, Noël Kabuyaya, Goma: stories of strength and sorrow from Eastern Congo, (London, Zed, 2018), p. XV).
and do not join armed groups for political reasons, but to have access to financial resources.\textsuperscript{123} Anyway, the child soldiers’ issue is a huge topic, therefore, deserves a much broader discussion that cannot be dealt with in this thesis work.

In North Kivu, competition for land, state crisis, economic crisis and the war led to violence becoming increasingly widespread. In addition to insecurity, the province faced difficulties in accessing drinking water, agro-pastoral and fisheries production, health and education infrastructure, suitable income levels, employment, housing, environmental preservation, energy resources (firewood and electricity), social inclusion, women's politics and customs, combating and preventing HIV/AIDS and adult literacy, especially among women.\textsuperscript{124} Since May 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2019, there has been a climate of uncertainty among the inhabitants of the northern localities of the territory of Beni, as a result of the growing activity of armed groups and a place of high spread of the Ebola virus, causing a growing number of displaced people.\textsuperscript{125} According to the International Displacement Monitoring Centre, the number of displaced persons in the DRC between January and June 2019 was 718,000, bringing the country to the second place for the number of displaced persons after Syria.\textsuperscript{126} Although violence continues to be visible in North Kivu, it is significant to resume the vision of Denis M. Tull, who argues that the concept of failed state is not applicable to the context of North Kivu. In carrying out a historical analysis, the scholar observed that, during Mobutism, the state was the dominant force in the territory, while, since the 1990s, the province has no longer succeeded in being under the control of the government since the issues of land and ethnicity, previously used by Mobutu himself as the main instrument to divide and rule North Kivu, have turned against the state. During the Congolese conflicts, rebel movements made important efforts to show the formal attributes of state administration, despite using a predominantly extractive approach, collecting taxes and benefiting from the exploitation of natural resources.

In early 2000s, Tull observed that Congolese statehood in Kivu has undergone a violent transformation that is based on informal/uncodified norms such as patronage and negotiated accommodation processes with local actors. Given the difficulties of achieving a higher degree of statehood in Kivu due to opaque bureaucratic structures, it will not be surprising if future regimes


\textsuperscript{124} Cellule Technique Provinciale des Statistiques de l’Education (CTPSE) and UNESCO, p. 7.


\textsuperscript{126} Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, \textit{Internal Displacement from January to June 2019}, \url{www.internal-displacement.org}, last retrieved 19/02/2020, p. 4.
will continue to rule in the same way.\textsuperscript{127} Although as Crawford Young and Thomas Edwin Turner claim “\textit{the moral entitlement of the state to legitimacy is not challenged, even while its directives are widely ignored}”.\textsuperscript{128} The authors quoted above take up the idea of negotiated statehood in North Kivu, especially Tull, with his idea of \textit{negotiated accommodation processes}, in which the state still has a highly symbolic power, as Young and Turner point out with their idea of non-questionable state morality. Laura Elizabeth Seay, taking up Tull's idea, argues that, despite the tragic events of the last two decades in North Kivu, it is too early to declare the \textit{death of the Congolese statehood}, since there are so many actors involved in maintaining it.\textsuperscript{129} Following the thinking of these authors, it is important to understand how the educational negotiation processes have taken hold in North Kivu and its capital.

As far as its capital is concerned, the origins of Goma date back to colonial times around 1912, when, in the territory where the city is present today, there were the camps of colonial transport office (Otraco\textsuperscript{130}) workers, engaged in the construction of the port of Goma. Anna Verhoeve highlights that, between 1948 and 1958, the city expanded as the colonial government was campaigning against migration from rural areas to the city by imposing a system of residence permits.\textsuperscript{131} In 1962, Goma became the capital of North Kivu Province. With the beginning of the Second Republic in 1965, Goma became a district again, while in November 1988, it became the capital of the North Kivu province, first dependent on Bukavu. The alteration of the city's status set in motion a series of new dynamics. One of these was the construction and establishment of new administrative services and infrastructural expansion\textsuperscript{132} in the city, which provided new job opportunities, attracting a huge number of officials mainly from Bukavu. Large companies increasingly set up headquarters or branch offices in Goma, attracting many Zaireans to settle in the city, looking for work.

Due to its position close to the Rwandan border, Goma has been politically and economically strategic since the colonial period. It is an important transit junction towards East Africa, just as it is of strategic economic importance, being located between the Kelemie-Uvira-Bukavu-Goma-Rutshuru-Bunia

\textsuperscript{128} Crawford Young and Thomas Edwin Turner, op. cit., p. 45.
\textsuperscript{129} Laura Elizabeth Seay, \textit{Authority at Twilight: Civil Society, Social Services, and the State in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo}, The University of Texas at Austin, (2009), p. 46.
\textsuperscript{130} If initially Otraco recruited workers for a few years, with the policy of stabilizing the indigenous workforce, Goma became more and more an urban center, attracting those from the hinterland.
\textsuperscript{132} Electricity and street lighting have been installed in several neighbourhoods. For example, the dictator encouraged the asphalting of the road between Sake and Goma and the construction of the "musée", a sort of presidential residence which in 1998 would become the headquarters of the RCD and which today is known as "le musée de la honte" (the museum of shame). Mobutu also ordered the construction of large houses for himself and his family. He also forced his ministers to buy land in Goma and build prestigious houses in the city (Anna Verhoeve, op. cit., p. 107).
axis, an important colonial trade route.\(^\text{133}\) Since 1998, the city has suffered a serious decline in health and education sectors, as it was the centre for action by rebel groups.\(^\text{134}\) In 1994, the city of Goma entered human history after welcoming Hutu refugees following the Rwandan genocide. At least 1.2 million refugees arrived in Kivu, one million of whom gathered in refugee camps around Goma, where a cholera epidemic also spread.\(^\text{135}\) In the following years, Goma was the centre of action for many rebel groups, as it is still today. Despite this, Verhoeve notes that during the Congolese wars many cities in eastern DRC have experienced a growing demographic boom. Despite the demographic expansion, cities like Goma are characterized by considerable urban degradation and by the development of new informal urban processes.\(^\text{136}\) She points out that, since 1996, there has been a significant population increase due to the relocation of many people from Rwanda and rural areas. However, the sudden increase in population had to deal with the lack of basic infrastructure in the city, which was necessary to absorb the new arrivals. Thus, since 1996, new districts have arisen such as Keshero, Mugunga and the village of Ndosho, where Bemba Gombo is located. It is worth noting that these new neighbourhoods, which developed in a context of insecurity and in a period of absence of government control, shared a number of similar characteristics. There are no roads, no water, no electricity, no drains, no schools, no public spaces.

An important contribution was made by Theodore Trefon and Noël Kabuyaya who, thanks to research conducted between 2012 and 2015 in Goma, have created a valuable and in-depth image of the city from a social, cultural, political and economic point of view. For many observers, the city is built on conflict, but the authors want to present counter-examples of Congolese resilience. Goma has seemingly seen phases of growth in situations of great chaos, even after considerable humanitarian trauma. In fact, Trefon and Kabuyaya claim that: “the end of the Kinshasa’s domination over the Kivus coincides with commercial and construction booms in Goma”,\(^\text{137}\) turning the from a place of war and suffering, to one of opportunity.

After these considerations regarding the context of the region, in the following paragraphs, it is possible to see how the educational sector in North Kivu and its capital Goma has been maintained, even if laboriously.

\(^{133}\) Koen Vlassenroot and Timothy Raeymaekers, op. cit., p 104.
\(^{134}\) Laura Elizabeth Seay, op. cit., p. 81.
\(^{136}\) Anna Verhoeve, op. cit., p. 103.
\(^{137}\) Theodore Trefon and Noël Kabuyaya, op. cit., pp. xxi-xxii.
3.2. The actors of the educational sector in North Kivu and in its capital city

The first Catholic missionaries, members of the Order of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart, established a presence around Beni in 1906, while the Protestants arrived in North Kivu shortly afterwards, led by Swedish and Norwegian Pentecostal missionaries. During the colonial era, missionaries were in charge of education in North Kivu, especially Catholic ones. In 1998, churches ran 80% of schools in North Kivu, a situation that has remained unchanged to this day. Furthermore, Tull, taking up G. Prunier's vision, points out that during the Congolese wars, most civil society groups in North Kivu and the Catholic Church have lost much of their symbolic power acquired during the democratization process interrupted in the early 1990s. On the other hand, in South Kivu, civil society and especially the Catholic Church have managed to maintain control over it.\footnote{138} L. E. Seay states that the Catholic Church is extremely rooted in North Kivu society. During colonialism, subsidies by the colonial state were only directed to the Catholic Church until World War II, and therefore the operating costs of Catholics for schooling were lower and their network could be much larger than the Protestant one. The historical presence in North Kivu of the two churches does not differ much, as it has been mentioned earlier. In any case, both the Protestants in Goma (particularly the Nandedominated 3eme Communauté Baptiste au Centre d’Afrique (3eme CBCA)) and the Catholics, play a significant role in providing social services to the region.\footnote{139}

During the conflicts, the Church did not behave as a homogeneous body because the bishops embodied the ethnic and political divisions of the conflict, contributing to the instability of the region.\footnote{140} Most Catholic schools lacked external funding, although some have obtained assistance from international organizations for the reconstruction of facilities after the 2002 volcano eruption. Despite competition between the Protestant church, especially the CBCA, and the Catholic one is still ongoing, the latter accounts for about one third of school enrolments in the city.\footnote{141}

L. E. Seay observed that: “Catholic schools are widely regarded as the best in the region, such that any parent who can afford to do so sends his or her children to the elite Catholic schools in Bukavu and Goma”.\footnote{142} In any case, it is important to underline that, despite the differences between the conventional and non-conventional schools, the institutions do not discriminate on ethnic or religious grounds and families and students seem to select the school mainly on the basis of price and location.\footnote{143}

\footnote{138} M. Denis Tull, op. cit., p. 440.  
\footnote{139} Laura Elizabeth Seay, op. cit., p. 101.  
\footnote{140} Ibidem, p. 130.  
\footnote{141} Laura Elizabeth Seay, op. cit., p. 136.  
\footnote{142} Ibidem, pp. 27-28.  
\footnote{143} Ibidem, pp. 205-206.
Despite the efforts by the Catholic and Protestant Church to maintain the educational sector in the region since colonial times, the only actors effectively present and inserted in the region, education appears as a constant struggle rather than a right. Under UN Security Council Resolution 2225, the Congolese Government should have taken consistent measures to discourage the military use of schools, which is a problem in the region. It has adhered to the Safe Schools Declaration, which is committed to protecting education from deadly attacks. To date, 17 AU Member States have endorsed the Safe Schools Guidelines, including the DRC, and it has been proposed that the Peace and Security Council report, presented to Heads of State at the AU Summit, should contain a section on children in armed conflict. The use of schools by the militias was evident during the Congolese wars and the Kivu conflict, but even at the beginning of 2012, attacks on schools increased sharply in eastern regions. Throughout Congo in 2013 and 2014, the UN detected attacks, looting and military use of schools by numerous rebel groups. To date, 2020, the activity of rebel groups is still present, therefore, schools cannot be considered safe.

More and more, a new actor emerges in the educational scene especially since the beginning of 2000: humanitarian organizations. As Lisa Bender points out, reporting the vision of the IRC: “The vast majority of education projects in Eastern Congo are short term and impact relatively small target populations. Limited resources for comprehensive follow-up evaluations limit the strength of findings and the ability to generalize efficacy of interventions.” OCHA is the largest coordinating body in North Kivu, and has been in place since 1994, following the genocide in Rwanda. In fact, after that year more than 200 local national and international NGOs arrived in Goma for humanitarian operations. It is not a simple challenge to implement long-term projects in the context of study, in fact L. Bender notes that many NGOs and humanitarian organizations are at risk of experiencing very dangerous situations, as even Nadia Bernasconi (Manager of the educational program in North Kivu from 2008 to 2011) pointed out. Despite the difficulties, L. Bender says that individual parents and students benefit greatly from the basic skills acquired through participation in projects carried out by

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144 The declaration was approved by 49 countries in October 2015, with 100 countries signing in 2019. (Cfr: States that have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, [https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/development-cooperation/safeschools_declaration/id2460245/](https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/development-cooperation/safeschools_declaration/id2460245/) last retrieved 15/12/2019.

145 IRC has been working in the DRC since 1996 (Lisa Bender, [Innovations in Emergency Education: The IRC in the Democratic Republic of Congo](https://ircglobal.org/sites/default/files/Innovations%20in%20Emergency%20Education%20%282011%29.pdf), p. 3).

146 Ibidem, p. 7.

147 Theodore Trefon and Noël Kabuyaya, op. cit., pp. 110-111.

148 In December 2008, an AVSI education monitoring and evaluation officer was shot and killed while attempting to visits schools in Rutshuru territory. There were also multiple incidences of sexual violence against international workers in North Kivu in 2008 and 2009. A humanitarian convoy was stopped and came under fire by government forces in October 2009 (Lisa Bender, op. cit., p. 8).
humanitarian organizations, therefore, an investment in the educational sector is still important, even if it’s difficult and in a constant emergency situation.\textsuperscript{149}

The Coordination of the Educational Cluster meeting in Goma in January 2020 believes that the suitability of an organization depends on its good reputation in producing and sharing relationships, participating in meetings and more. The aim is to avoid misappropriation of funds, including the Fonds Commun Humanitaire. The funds are given to competent, experienced, reputable and low-risk NGOs and UN agencies. This requires reliability in the overall management system: reliable and up-to-date reports, a reliable disbursement procedure (segregation of duties), procurement procedures and quotations, which is not insurable in North Kivu.\textsuperscript{150}

A critical role in the work of the humanitarian organizations in the area is underlined by Eric Kyungu, cited in T. Trefon’s and N. Kabuyaya’s work who was vice president of the provincial committee of North Kivu in 2003 and was an activist in various humanitarian organizations. For Kyungu, four approaches have been applied in the work of these organizations: “One, each organization had its own planning strategies; two, OCHA brought the different actors together once a week to share information about actions taken the previous week; three, thematic clusters (health, security, education, logistics...) met to discuss priorities and work on funding proposals; and last, the provincial government worked with the entire set of partners to identify priorities and strategies to deal with them”.\textsuperscript{151} In addition, Kyungu points out that there were too many NGOs requesting financial support from a limited number of donors for similar activities, which led to an ineffective, conflictual or unrealistic humanitarian agenda that did not take into account the local reality in all its complexity, resulting in a big discrepancy between actual and expected results. However, it is not possible to generalize the work of humanitarian organizations, in fact, Trefon and Kabuyaya believe that the humanitarian business is based on very different feelings strategic perspective.\textsuperscript{152}

Despite the instability in the region, researchers from the Children’s Rights Division of Human Rights Watch point out that throughout the DRC, parents, in their efforts to pay tuition fees, are showing that they believe a lot in the value of education. In fact, even when schools are damaged, communities devise alternative solutions by transforming rudimentary structures into schools.\textsuperscript{153} Juvenal Bazilashe Balegamire highlights the fact that, on a cultural level in the DRC, “children are an added value,

\textsuperscript{149} Lisa Bender, op. cit., p. 9.
\textsuperscript{150} Cluster Education, République Démocratique du Congo, COMPTE RENDU DE LA RÉUNION ORDINAIRE DU MOIS DE JANVIER 2020, GOMA, 14 JANVIER 2020, DE 9H\textsuperscript{00} À 11\textsuperscript{00} TENUE AU BUREAU DE L’UNICEF, pp-2-4.
\textsuperscript{151} Theodore Trefon and Noël Kabuyaya, op. cit., p. 112.
\textsuperscript{152} Ibidem, p. 12.
“Omwna Akwira (the children are a miracle)” with the related “Ha proverb that (when you give birth you do not know the child’s future) is true”. For the Congolese, the strength of a family depends on the number of children.

Before 1988, the division of primary, secondary and vocational education was based in Bukavu, the capital of the former Kivu province, now the capital of South Kivu. In 2004, the Provincial Division of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education of North Kivu was divided into two autonomous provincial divisions, namely: The North EPSP - Kivu I Division based in Goma with 12 subdivisions and the North EPSP - Kivu II Division based in Butembo with 8 subdivisions.

The province of North Kivu is characterized by great difficulties in the field of education, in fact, as the statistical yearbook of 2015/2016 notes, in the province, 27.8% of people are not educated (compared to 20.1% at national level), a third (32.6%) of the population has reached the primary level, 37.1% the secondary level and only 2.1% the university level. Additionally, enrolment rates, both at primary and secondary level, are below the national average. In regard to the admission rate to secondary school in North Kivu, out of the total number of school-age students for that type of education, only 50% have enrolled. Furthermore, considering the low reliability of national data, the percentage may be even lower. As far as the completion rate is concerned, the statistical yearbook notes that, in 2015/2016, the rate of children enrolled in primary school who manage to reach the fifth grade in North Kivu was 51.5%, compared to 53.1% in 2014/2015. In 2015/2016, the secondary completion rate in North Kivu was 20.2% compared to 27% in 2014/2015.

The literacy rate of the province, which is 37.4%, is lower than the national level, which is 43.2%. This low level of schooling is linked, among other things, to the high level of children entering the labour market, in fact, the activity rate of children aged 10-14 years reaches 19.2% in North Kivu. As reported in the statistical yearbook of North Kivu, the barrier is more financial than geographical, being the main cause of early dropout (41.7%) in North Kivu and the whole DRC (41.3%). In fact, more than 90% of primary and secondary schools are covered or not by agreements, i.e. their operation and teachers' salaries are the responsibility of the State. Given the low and irregular salaries paid by the state though, parents are often forced to supplement these salaries, not always being able to do so because of their low purchasing power. Finally, the low salaries paid by the state and their

154 Juvenal Bazilashe Balegamire, Children, children's rights and the context of their education in South Kivu in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, (Springer Netherlands, 1999), p. 239.
156 Cellule Technique Provinciale des Statistiques de l’Education, CTPSE, UNESCO, p. 3.
158 Ibidem, p. 97.
159 Ibidem, p. 108.
irregularity lead to a lack of motivation of the teaching staff.\textsuperscript{160} At the level of material power, parents and families appear as the main actors financing education in North Kivu.

For maternal education, despite the differences between the various territories and communities, at a general level in North Kivu, there is a greater presence of private nursery schools, followed by public and conventional schools. Among the latter, the highest number is represented by Protestant contracted schools (ECP).\textsuperscript{161} Considering primary education, there are more and more public and conventional schools, followed by private ones. Among the first two types of schools, the largest number is represented by ECPs, followed by Catholic schools (ECCs).\textsuperscript{162} For secondary schools, there are more public and conventional schools, followed by private ones. Among the first two, ECPs are the most numerous followed by the ECCs.\textsuperscript{163}

L. E. Seay reports that in 2004-2005, the three municipalities of Goma housed a total of 278 schools, out of which 42 are kindergartens, 154 are primary schools and 82 are secondary schools.\textsuperscript{164} In the year 2017/2018, it can be observed that the number of schools in the city of Goma has increased considerably since the early 2000s. The majority of schools are run by private bodies at all levels of education, while the minority belongs to the public-school sector. As far as the conventional schools are concerned, the largest numbers are represented by Protestant schools, followed by schools run by the Catholic Church (ECC), while the Islamic schools (ECI) and the Kimbanguist schools (ECK) have only little representation. On a general level, for all types of schools, the largest number is represented by primary schools, followed by secondary schools. For the kindergarten, the participants A and B highlight that: “almost all of these schools are run by private individuals”.\textsuperscript{165} As they point out: the private schools can also be run by the state, even if they are managed and supervised directly by an individual, called private person, who could be represented by a group of people gathered to form an association or by an individual who opens a school with the aim of doing business and earning money.\textsuperscript{166}

Secondary schools in Goma are not very well connected. In the city as well as in the capital Bukavu, starting from the last few years, inter-school activities are beginning to take place, especially at the sport level where both conventional and non-conventional schools participate. Cultural exchanges or twinning are totally absent in North Kivu as far as secondary school is concerned, while something is being done at university level. According to the participants F and G: “although an openness in

\textsuperscript{160} Cellule Technique Provinciale des Statistiques de l’Education, CTPSE, UNESCO, p. 12.
\textsuperscript{161} Ibidem, p. 20.
\textsuperscript{162} Ibidem, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{163} Ibidem, p. 61.
\textsuperscript{164} Ibidem, p. 83.
\textsuperscript{165} Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
\textsuperscript{166} Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
terms of links between various school structures is desirable, there are many technical and structural difficulties that prevent its realization”. 167 In Goma, there is an “increasing number of technical schools, oriented towards mechanics, electronics, agronomy and nutrition to meet today's important needs of Congo. Previously there were more pedagogical schools for the training of teachers or, in any case, directed towards humanities and social subjects”. 168 Technical schools are also useful precisely because if a young person is unable to complete a course of study previously undertaken, he or she can try to obtain a certificate at these institutes.

Researchers from the Children's Rights Division of Human Rights Watch, filming the MEPSP and its 2012 investigation, report that the province of North Kivu in DRC had the highest percentage of school-age children not in school in 2012, compared to the other provinces of the country. In fact, they pointed out that, in North Kivu, fear of crime and conflict were the third most cited reason after money and distance from school. 15% of respondents in North Kivu cited fear of crime and conflict as the main reason why school-age children never entered the educational cycle. In addition, fear of kidnapping and sexual violence were seen as further causes of non-entry into school and also because of concerns that armed groups targeted boys for unofficial school fees to be paid to families. 169 In addition, we must remember the role of the Kadogo, considering that in the insecure areas of eastern DRC, buying a Kalashnikov is cheaper than buying a goat. The fear of rebel militia fighters, government soldiers and ordinary bandits and murderers is present in many speeches of the Congolese population. 170 In fact, to give an example of the military use of the schools and the danger of keeping schools open during conflicts, as the participants F and G point out: “for example, in 2013, for about two months, due to the rebel invasions, schools were completely closed in Kivu for about two months”. 171

Prof. Kambale Karafuli and others 172 have carried out a qualitative analysis of the reasons for school dropouts after 2006 in North Kivu and precisely in Goma, Masisi, Rutshuru and Butembo, showing that school dropouts are due to a network of causes. These include low parents’ income, state disengagement, cost of education, wars and widespread insecurity, cultural causes such as the high number of children in families, gender discrimination, lack of awareness of the importance of education by parents and children, parental exploitation of young people, violence in schools,

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167 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
169 Thomas Gilchrist and Bede Sheppard, op. cit.
171 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
inadequate school infrastructure, long distances between school and home, and lack of food. The report by the Provincial Inspectorate of Primary and Secondary Education of North Kivu/Goma from 2001 to 2007, shows that the percentage of children reaching the fifth year of primary school decreased from year to year in the first decade of the 2000s. The major causes of early school dropout identified by researchers in the Goma areas, namely in Mugunga I&II, Bulengo, and Buhimba are economic causes due to unemployment and high poverty, complicating the payment of school fees that can be increased at any time. According to the researchers, a holistic approach and a synergistic partnership between state institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations, UN agencies and communities are essential to address the underlying factors of early school leaving and children outside of universal primary school. Among the things they recommend are also actions and campaigns to raise awareness on the role of parents. Teachers and students continue to take to the streets. This mobilisation should also be done much more by parents and families.

If we consider another central international player, the African Union, Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want is the project and master plan of the African continent to transform Africa into the global power of the future. It represents the strategic framework of the continent, which aims to achieve inclusive and sustainable African development and is a concrete manifestation of the pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and collective prosperity. Agenda 2063 is the concrete manifestation of how the continent intends to realize this vision over a period of 50 years from 2013 to 2063, through the development and implementation of ten-year implementation plans. According to the 2019 Status of African Youth Report, education is the second pillar for a strategic investment in African youth. The Agenda presents a series of objectives for better education on the continent, also presented in the Continental Education Strategy for Africa (CESA 16-25), adopted by the AU Heads of State and Government as a framework for transforming

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174 Ibidem, p. 16.
175 The genesis of Agenda 2063 is due to the awareness of the past by African leaders of the need to redirect the African agenda towards the fight against apartheid and the achievement of political independence of the continent, struggles that were at the heart of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), precursor of the African Union. African Union, (https://au.int/agenda2063/overview, last retrieved 6/01/2020).
176 Agenda 2063 has seven general aspirations for sustainable and inclusive development related to issues such as political pan-Africanism, democracy, recovery of cultural identities, focus on youth and women and Africa as a united and strong global player. (African Union Commission, *Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want*, 2015, p. 2).
179 The objectives of the CESA are based on the following issues: greater value for teachers, retraining of educational infrastructures, strengthening ICT skills, harmonizing all levels of education at national level, aiming at gender equality in education, combating illiteracy, focusing on increased scientific knowledge, broaden TVET opportunities, expand tertiary education, research and innovation, creating a Pan-African University (PAU) as a continental initiative of the AUC to revitalize higher education and research in Africa. There are five thematic institutes of the PAU in each of the
education and training systems in Africa and for the implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goal number four (SDG 4) to ensure inclusive and quality education for all. Member States, partners, the private sector and civil society were invited to disseminate and raise awareness of CESA and to work to develop implementation plans and mobilise national resources to implement the strategy. The CESA strategy is based on grouping priorities, objectives and interventions by thematic areas, in order to improve alignment between stakeholders and facilitate the identification and implementation of synergies for greater efficiency and effectiveness. Looking at the CESA objectives set out in the note, it can be said that teachers have been considered key players in national education sectors in achieving the CESA 16-25, SDG 4 and Agenda 2030 strategic objectives for education, as they are the reference for the first objective of the strategy.

Looking at the provision of education in the DRC through the interpretative approach of negotiated statehood, it is possible to say that parents and their committees should be have more consideration in the negotiation processes. Although the role of parents and their committees has been formalized since 1975, defining them as key players in the decision-making processes of every school, their function has been and remains confined to that of bankers. Teachers with their trade unions SYNEP (Syndicat National des Enseignants Protestants) and SYNECATH (Syndicat National des Enseignants Catholiques) and primary and secondary school students took part in numerous demonstrations in Goma and, in general, in North Kivu in October and November 2019, protesting mainly about teachers' salaries, which have not been paid since the beginning of the school year. As reported by the journalist Elias Aungama, in the memorandum presented to the office of the Governor of North Kivu Province, the latter congratulated the President of the Republic for announcing that basic education is free of charge, as required by the Congolese Constitution. However, the failure to fulfil this promise continues to be expressed and condemned, since the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year in fact, there has been no regular quality education, let alone...
free of charge.\textsuperscript{184} Declaring the gratuitousness of basic education could certainly be considered a step forward for the DRC, even if a declaration is not enough, we need effective educational policies for a real implementation of gratuitousness and the renegotiation of the formal/coded and practical/non-coded norms underlying the governance of the Congolese educational sector.

\textbf{3.3 Negotiated Education in the school of Bemba Gombo/ St. Francis Xavier}

In this paragraph, the aim is to apply the negotiated statehood approach to the school of Bemba Gombo, first giving a brief contextualisation of the school and a brief description of its birth and its physical structure. Then, analysing what has emerged from the empirical material of the research, the paragraph will be divided according to the actors who are present in the school, in order to provide education, highlighting the negotiating tables within which actors are involved and the main issues in terms of scholastic management.

Thanks to the support of long-distance school adoptions, the funding of the Italian volunteer group Rafiki-Amici del Congo and the work of the Little Daughters, it was possible to found the Bemba Gombo secondary school, located in the district of Ndosho in Goma. It is a building composed of 16 classrooms, the headmaster's office, the director of studies, the secretariat, the library, the laboratory, a storage room, the teachers' room and 12 bathrooms. Construction work lasted from 16 June 2009 to 14 August 2010. This secondary school organizes 2 training courses, the technical-social one and the nutritional one.

Taking up the approach of Tobias Hagmann and Didier Péclard applied to the education provided by the Bemba Gombo school, the actors involved are respectively: the state, the national, provincial and sub-provincial Catholic coordination, the teachers and administrative staff of the school, the students' families and their committee, the students, the religious congregation of the Little Daughters and the Rafiki-Friends of Congo group.

As for how these actors are present in the school, it could be said that the state is absent, if not that it contributes for a 10\% of teachers' salaries, which is not even always effectively provided. Participants F and G argue that: "The state is indifferent, let everyone do what they want",\textsuperscript{185} since, although there are national lines on education, every school has to do what it can to stay open and function. Furthermore, no compromise can be found with state authorities regarding school fees. In fact, as participants A and B argue: "the FDM, the FDF and the final state examination fees that continue to be necessary and required in Bemba Gombo".\textsuperscript{186} These fees are examples of the practical norms that contribute to the maintenance of Bemba Gombo’s provision of education. Yet, the state is seen by the

\textsuperscript{184} Elias Aungama, op. cit.
\textsuperscript{185} Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
\textsuperscript{186} Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
participants as the actor that should be most responsible for education, especially in regard to its funding, the provision of educational support in accordance with the guidelines provided by the school, the provision of an increasing number of educational infrastructure due to class overcrowding, and taking responsibility for providing access to education for the poorest children. In fact, as A and B further discuss: “the state tends only to recognise the school and the academic qualifications acquire”.  

There is no education policy to follow, in fact participants F and G argue that: “if over the years it has not been possible to improve the quality of education it is because of the policy”. Despite the state being only one of the various actors involved in the governance of this school, it is the one that holds the greatest symbolic power, since the perception of its role is not questioned by the participants and it is strongly required.

As far as national, provincial and sub-provincial Catholic coordination is concerned, the participants believe that conventional schools, such as that of Bemba Gombo, are able to make up for the shortcomings of the state, despite the fact that participants C, D and E believe that: “the state-church agreement should be revised and modernized“ in order to strengthening in a formal lever their cooperation. From another but close side, participants A and B argue that: “a more effective collaboration between the church and the state could help the schooling of the poorer classes of society, and it is necessary press on this”. This cooperation refers to a coded framework, thus, exerting pressure to change it could be a way to create an adjustment in the formal educational framework and reduce the use of practical and non-legitimated norms. On a general level, compared to the capital of South Kivu, Bukavu, “schools are more expensive in Goma”. In fact, in Goma, Catholic schools are the most expensive, even if they are perceived as delivering high-quality teaching. According to the participants, Catholic conventional schools follow the pupils more closely than public ones, transmitting values and discipline. In spite of this, participants F and G wonder whether education provided in Catholic schools will help children to create a new society in the future, no longer marked by extreme poverty and structural and brutal violence, since “they do not perceive great results at the end of the schooling offered”. The symbolic power of Catholic coordination is high, since Catholic schools are perceived as the best in term of quality and also could be a great change agent, capable of lobbying for state responsibilities.

187 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
188 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
190 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
192 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019. In addition, one nun points out that the high price of the Catholic schools is due to the fact that all the conventional schools must give: a sum to the central/national Catholic coordination, a sum to the state (national, provincial and communal) and a sum to the Catholic North Kivu provveditorate.
193 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
As far as the teachers and administrative staff of the school are concerned, they hardly ever receive their salaries from the state, even the registered ones. Participants C, D and E report that “teachers are not always able to exercise authority over students”,\(^{194}\) as classes are uneven in age and very numerous. In regard to the Bemba Gombo number of students, since its foundation in 2010, the school comprised a teaching and administrative staff of 18 employees and 432 schoolchildren. In 2014, the teaching staff increased to 24 teachers, and there were also 5 heads of studies and a headmaster. At the beginning of the 2014/2015 school year there were 866 students, at the beginning of the year 2016/2017 there were 872 pupils. In 2017/2018 the school had 914 students and at the beginning of the school year 2018/2019, there were 895 pupils. Moreover, the classes are very numerous in Bemba Gombo school since, in 2016/2017, the average number of students per class was 59 pupils, in 2017/2018 it was 60 pupils and in 2018/2019 it was 59 students.

![Bar chart: Student/Classroom Ratio by Class Type and Year. Source: Report of the school year offered by the Bemba Gombo school.](image)

As it can be seen from Fig.1, the first two years of orientation and the first year of both the technical-nutritional and technical-social course (3TN and 3TS), show the concentration of students per major class. The last year of secondary education provided by the school presents the lowest levels of pupils per class for all three years considered. Teaching in classes of 60 pupils on average, is a major challenge for teachers. It should though be noted that the graph refers to initial enrolments for every school year. Judging by the number of dropouts during the year, it can be deduced that the number of pupils per class gradually decreases, even if the initial value is very high.

\(^{194}\) Interview 2, Goma, 23.12.2018.
The interviews collected among the Little Daughters of Goma confirm the difficulty of many teachers in having classes of this type. Despite this apparent increase in the number of students enrolled through the years in Bemba Gombo, the age homogeneity tables show that an increasing number of children aged 10/11 years enter secondary school in the first year of orientation, which could not be possible since the official age for entering this cycle is 12 years. In addition, an increasing number of students enter secondary school very late, being aged 14 and 15 still in their first year of orientation. Advances and delays of this kind lead classes to be totally uneven in terms of age, making the quality of education very poor. Participants F and G have also reported that “there are families who enrol their 4-year-old children in elementary school and there are children aged 20 in the first year of orientation; age falsification is a widespread practice and is accepted by the school”, since the more pupils there are, the more the teachers' salary rises.

Another dynamic that occurs is that pupils do not have much respect for teachers precisely because they are forced to pay for their own education and do as they please. “The tuition fees system is a huge constraint”, because in addition to contributing to the impoverishment of families, commonly composed of up to 9 children, it leads to a lowering of the quality of teaching and discipline in the classroom. Despite the difficulty of running classes of this type and the little respect that students sometimes show, teachers tend not to take serious measures as it is the families of the pupils who pay their salaries.

The school in Bemba Gombo has several problems regarding the quality of teaching provided. Participants F and G point out that: "the only teaching tool that exists in Congo is the blackboard", although this condition cannot be generalised to all schools. Educational supports tend to be precarious for both conventional schools and public schools, while private ones are more provided. In Bemba Gombo's school, pupils have no textbooks to study on, they mainly use notebooks taken in class or summaries prepared by their teachers. The teaching remains essentially oral. The state, especially the Ministry of Youth and Initiation to New Citizenship, identifies the national programmes of the various addresses, but they are not published very frequently. In fact, according to the national programme of the technical-nutritional course, one should study dietetics, but textbooks on this subject are rarely found. Taking into account these last considerations, participants A and B highlight that: “teachers use what they find on the market according to the money they have”, being the only way to reach some textbooks and materials. The contact with the outside

195 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
196 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
197 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
198 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019. The missionary points out that in Bukavu, the schools of the Sisters of the Company of Mary have created primary schools equipped with many computers.
199 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
world is difficult via Internet, since the school does not have a network connection, in fact, “the headmaster is able to access to internet once a month when it is possible”.200 Precisely because of the lack of Internet, teachers should use more up-to-date texts, which they hardly have access to. The use of libraries is small and sending pupils to research books in the library is not common and not considered to be useful. In fact, participants C, D and E say that: "if you send kids to the Ciber Café to use the internet to do research, they print something by copying and pasting without studying or learning much”.201 In Goma, there are many pay rooms where videos are broadcasted about the outside world related to very superficial issues, mostly relating to consumer goods and entertainment. For this reason, participants F and G point out that: “a problem present in the city is that of globalization, of poor globalization that has a great influence on young people”.202 Starting from the quality of teaching provided, it is fair to ask what kind of society will be formed from such an education sector. Moreover, “many teachers are not qualified, having taken up this profession only because when they went to school, they got high grades”;203 contributing to the low quality of the education provided. Despite these dynamics, the participants reported that, compared to the past, the subjects being taught are different and more up to date. Many teachers are keen to be more and more qualified, even if it is difficult to have the money to do refresher courses. Despite this, “teachers’ motivation is decreasing because their profession is not valued”.204 Nonetheless, the role of the teachers is a great responsibility, since it is entirely up to them to choose the books to be used for teaching and classes. While teachers appear to have little power in material terms, yet they possess a strong symbolical one.

As far as the families of the students and their committee are concerned, the school staff report that the participation of parents is not very large, especially regarding COPA. In fact, “they have contact with the school only to pay school fees and to collect the report card at the end of the year”.205 The participants noted that the greatest concern of parents is related to safeguarding the livelihood of their family. Corresponding students’ families’ belief and expectations of the importance of schools to the child’s preparation to family life, participants A and B point out that: “especially after high school, children have much more discipline and are much more responsible”.206 Furthermore, families see school as a way of keeping their children away from crime and the informal economy, believing in a better future for them in terms of work. It is difficult for families to send their children to school.

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200 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018. The operators reveal that the absence of the internet is a condition specific to many schools in the city of Goma.
202 Interview 3, Goma, 02.01.2019.
204 Interview 2, Goma, 23.12.2018.
206 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
because of tuition fees, but, on the other hand, they want quality education to be given to them. Despite the important significance that parents give to education though, the level of school dropouts is still very high in Bemba Gombo.

![Graph showing drop out trend per class between 2016 and 2018.](image)

**Fig. 2:** Drop out trend per class between 2016 and 2018. Source: Report of the school year offered by the Bemba Gombo school.

For what concerns the number of school drop-outs in the school, the highest levels are recorded in the first year of orientation, while the lowest levels are recorded in the sixth year for both the technical-nutritional and social courses. The high level of dropout in the second year of orientation may also be due to the fact that, after orientation, students choose addresses other than those provided by the Bemba Gombo school. Anyway, it can be said that on a symbolic level, parents do not hold much power, while in material terms they are the biggest financiers of education in Bemba Gombo. In fact, parents represent the major actor for the maintenance of school fees, some of them consisting of practical rules, others of codified rules.

As far as the students and their committee are concerned, the school staff feels a strong desire to go to school and learn from both young and older children. The desire to learn is felt much more by those who are excluded or who know that exclusion may be imminent at any time. In fact, as participants C. D and E point out: “children who are taken out of school often ask the Little Daughters to be able to go to school even if they don’t have managed to pay the school fees”\(^\text{207}\). Anyway, despite efforts by school workers, who accept late fee payment, and the Little Daughters to keep pupils within the school cycle, if the family cannot pay school fees, even late, the student can no longer go to school. For this reason, the student’s requests are very difficult to be satisfied most of the times. In class, “the children actively participate in the lessons, also because participation is required by the teachers

\(^{207}\) Interview 2, Goma, 23.12.2018.
themselves”. For example, through their committee, they are involved in the organization of cultural and sports activities and also in matters related to the discipline within the school. Moreover, despite the level of drop-out, those who manage to get to the sixth and final year of secondary school can achieve excellent results as showed by the charts below.

Fig. 3: Nutritional Course: ratio of participants/graduated in the state exam by gender. Source: Report of the school year offered by the Bemba Gombo school.

Fig. 4: Social Course: ratio of participants/graduated in the state exam by gender. Source: Report of the school year offered by the Bemba Gombo school.

In the last year of the secondary cycle, there were no dropouts. In fact, students participating in the Final Exam had achieved excellent results in terms of promotion since the first years of the school's opening. In any case, as participants A and B point out: “school drop-out is high, linked not only to

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the instability of the region and the city, but also to the general impoverishment of many families and the fact that many families are forced to move”. Students do not have much power in material terms, while they do on symbolic terms, since it is the school-age children who are the real beneficiaries of the maintenance of the Congolese educational sector.

As far as the religious congregation of the Little Daughters and the group Rafiki-Friends of Congo are concerned, through the instrument of school adoptions, they try to send as many children as possible to school from families who cannot afford their education. Even if this is a tool that tends to be a welfare instrument, precisely because it does not directly target the causes of the problems inherent in the educational sector in the DRC and in Goma in particular, it is still a way to reduce children exclusion from the school cycle. Moreover, although more indirectly, it is an important mean to connect parents from different cultural backgrounds (Congolese families and Italian donors) and to connect adoptive parents and adopted children, enriching each other. It is a cultural exchange, which is important in a context lacking peaceful cultural exchanges. Moreover, the congregation of the Little Daughters is Catholic, so it benefits from high symbolic power among the Gomatracien community precisely because of its religious extraction, even if it does not hold great power in material terms. The Rafiki-Friends of Congo group may seem like a drop in the ocean in terms of both material and symbolic power, even if this offers an important opportunity for exchange in cultural terms with both children and families, materially helping someone.

In regard to the main topics that have emerged from the interview analysis, the central problems refer to the absence of the state in paying teachers’ salary and the poor quality of education due to the lack of learning supports. Anyway, there is a strong desire and need for education on the part of Bemba Gombo students, but learning is made difficult by the number of displaced families and the circumstances of constant instability that undermine learning skills at school.

What the participants are hoping for, is that the state will take responsibility both for paying for the management of schools and for building new infrastructures. Moreover, they hope that more cooperation should be implemented between the state and the church, aiming to integrate children from poorer families into the school cycle. Furthermore, it is hoped that the state will provide more learning support, while also investing in technical schools. The participants, as school workers and members of a religious congregation, believe that they manage to partially replace the state and prevent many children from entering the informal economy and delinquency dimensions. The negotiating tables to renegotiate the norms underlying the functioning of the Bemba Gombo school are represented by the various school committees, parents' and students' administrative and economic

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209 Interview 1, Goma, 22.12.2018.
210 People that live in Goma.
committees, which should encourage the involvement of all the actors to the process. As previously mentioned, each school represents a peculiar reality, which is why it could also become a model of reference for other schools. On the level of material power, parents are the main responsible actors, while on a symbolic level, the state is the more responsible one. Starting to put pressure and openness in the parents' committees, it could be a strategy to change the coded and non-coded norms present in Bemba Gombo's management. The first ones are represented by the national guidelines in terms of education, as previously mentioned, the latter instead are represented by school fees and the way teachers could find learning supports.

3.4 Concluding Remarks

The objective of this thesis chapter was to highlight specific characteristics of North Kivu and its capital from different points of view, with reference to the educational context. Examples of resilience have been highlighted in this context where peace and stability are still far from being reached. Since in the DRC context each school is a reality on its own, Bemba Gombo can become a model for others, both within the community of reference and, in a broader sense, in the city of reference, region and ultimately at the national level. Since the negotiation and its outcomes are not fixed, it is necessary to find open moments in which to reformulate the norms of the educational sector. Furthermore, precisely because the negotiation has its own space and time, I assume that the change must take place within the parents' committees. Their participation and their effort to maintain the educational sector in economic terms must acquire a considerable symbolic power, which they do not possess yet. Precisely for this reason, I have presented this case study, highlighting the actors that are involved in school management, seeing them in terms of material and symbolic power. As pointed out in the third chapter, the role of the state is not questioned by any actor involved, being the one who holds the greatest symbolic power, and the parents continue to be the financiers par excellence, being the ones who holds the greatest material power in the school. In order to change this, it is necessary to give a voice and make those who are most excluded, i.e. parents, participate in school decision-making processes, so that they can become agents of change.
4. Conclusion

The aim of this work was to investigate the complexity of the governance of the Democratic Republic of Congo’s educational sector, in Nord Kivu and its capital Goma specifically, through the application of the negotiated statehood approach to the historical-diachronic analysis (from colonialism to the present) of its development and through the application of the negotiated statehood approach to a specific school in Goma, Bemba Gombo/ Saint François Xavier Institute. Through this parallel analysis, I achieve the goal of understanding and investigating how the sector has managed to survive from colonial time to the present day, answering the following research questions in both the analysis conducted:

- Who are the actors responsible for financing the education sector?
- What are the main places of negotiation on the educational issue?
- Who are the actors excluded from the negotiating tables?

Teachers with their trade unions and primary and secondary school students took part in numerous demonstrations in Goma and, in general, in North Kivu in October and November 2019, protesting mainly about teachers' salaries which have not been paid since the beginning of the school year. DRC President continues to announce that basic education is free, as provided for in the Congolese Constitution. However, the failure to fulfil this promise continues to be manifested and condemned since the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year. In fact, there has been no regular and free education, with only a minimal improvement in quantity but not in the quality of education. The government has declared that basic education is free of charge and this public pronunciation can certainly be considered a step forward for the DRC, even if it is not enough. An effective educational policy is needed for a real implementation of free education and the renegotiation of the coded and non-coded norms underpinning the governance of the Congolese education sector, such as, for example, school fees.

Looking at the provision of education in the DRC through the negotiated statehood approach, understood as a way of looking the dynamic and complex dimensions of statehood, children’ parents and their committees should be having greater consideration in the negotiation processes. Although the role of parents and their committees has been formalized since 1975, defining them as key players in the decision-making processes of every school, their function has been and remains confined to that of bankers and funders.

At the level of symbolic power, the Congolese educational sector presents itself as centralized, since the state is considered as the most responsible for its functioning. Yet, if we consider the history of the Congolese educational sector, since the colonial period, the state has never really been present in
the provision of education to the Congolese youth. Still on the level of symbolic power, religious networks are also key players, since, from colonial time, they have been at the center of the daily functioning of school realities.

On the level of material power, the Congolese educational sector appears as centralized, since it is the parents who mainly provide the financing of the education of young Congolese people. The logic of participation within schools must be questioned, since the existence of a parents' committee is not enough to make their role active.

Teachers and students are demonstrating for higher quality education, but it would be necessary for the state, parents and religious networks to find new open moments to renegotiate the formal and practical norms, since they are the main holders of the material and symbolic power of the governance of the educational sector.

Following the analysis carried out in regard to the DRC education sector and observing CESA's objectives, which do not refer to the role of parents in education, their implementation in the context of reference cannot disregard the greater inclusion of families in school realities and the increase in spaces for dialogue between parents and public authorities. Parents will have to succeed in making their rights and duties concrete, to encourage a possible change in the role of the state in the educational sector, especially with regard to its funding.

The analysis of the school of Bemba Gombo highlights that for that school reality the participation of parents is low and the awareness of their role regarding the education of the Congolese students is low. A starting point could be the solicitation of their involvement in that school reality through the negotiation of their role, solicited by the school committee and all other actors involved, being able to become a model school in terms of family participation in education.

Despite the DRC perennial conflict situation and despite the limited financial resources at its disposal, the Congolese educational sector has managed to be resilient since the colonial period thanks to the negotiation of the educational offer by state and non-state actors. But since negotiation is not easy, often on the borderline between legality and illegality, between formal and practical norms, it is important that those who are excluded from the negotiating processes find channels for greater involvement on both material and symbolic levels.
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Appendix 1: List of Questions in the Semi-Structured Interviews

Questions addressed to all the participants in the semi-structured interviews for the case study at the high school of St. Francis Xavier/Bemba Gombo.

1. Is the state present in North Kivu in the educational sector?
2. How many public, conventional and private schools are present in Goma?
3. How are the educational supports (blackboards, books, etc.) in public/conventional/private schools?
4. How much do public school cost, is it accessible for most people?
5. Does the state obstruct your work? If so, in what way?
6. What are the major difficulties you find in managing your schools and children's education?
7. What help would you need most to improve the quality of the education provided?
8. Do the children's families participate in any way in improving your commitment at school?
9. Do the children participate in improving the school level in the area?
10. Which subjects are covered most in the curriculum?
11. What was the school situation like during the Kivu conflict?
12. Since when have you been in Kivu have you seen an improvement in the level of schooling / literacy in the area? (Addressed only to the Italian Little Daughters)