

Profiling the CBMS Pilot Site in Benin Using Some Basic Indicators

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Abstract

The paper outlines the rationale for the selection of the city of Cotonou as the CBMS pilot area using some basic indicators. It presents the administrative and social profile of the city and highlights distinguishing facts that emerged.

Introduction

The main part of the information contained in this paper comes from the data of specific surveys as well as results of the last three editions of the General Census of Population and Dwellings in Benin (1979, 1992 and 2002). The creation of this paper is in response to the need for increased information at the municipal level due to the implementation of the Decentralized Urban Management Program which requires a follow-up of certain disaggregated indicators at the district level that may indicate the district's weaknesses. It is also due to the advent of decentralization which calls on the city to take charge of the key social needs that would serve as inputs for decisionmaking and the formulation of projects. The use of this paper made it possible to retain the 13th district for this pilot phase of the community-based monitoring system (CBMS) taking into consideration its distinctive characteristic on several indicators.

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The indicators discussed herein relate to several fields, most important of which are:

- Health
- Education
- Decontamination
- Justice and Criminality
- Demography
- Employment
- Pollution and Environment
- Housing

The paper is structured in three parts. :

- Part 1 presents the city of Cotonou with emphasis on the new changes operated at the administrative level;
- Part 2 describes the social profile of the city of Cotonou through the indicators presented by field; and
- Part 3 explains, through the social report, the outstanding facts that emerge from the profile.

The City of Cotonou

Profile

Cotonou is located on the offshore bar that extends between the Nokoué Lake and the Atlantic Ocean and made up of alluvial sands of approximately five meters maximum in height. The relief of the bar has two principal characteristics: parallel longitudinal depressions at the coast and hollows eroded by rain water run-off which connects to the lake. The site is cut into two by the channel called "lagoon of Cotonou", a direct meeting point between the lake and the sea dug by the French in 1894. The two parts of the city are connected by two bridges. The water table is located near the surface of the ground, the heightened permeability of which accelerates the infiltration of rainwater and liquid waste (risks of pollution).

The climate is of equatorial type with an alternation of two rainy seasons and two dry seasons. During the rainy season, the city is

threatened by serious floods (the low level strongly influenced by the variations of the water level outline; maximum level of floods: (1.50 m IGN). The sea wall of the port contributed to the erosion of the entire east coast of the city. This erosion takes place at a mean velocity of 16.80 meters per annum in the creek.

The city of Cotonou primarily draws its population from the neighboring regions or suburbs (Sèmè-Kpodji and Abomey-Calavi). It saw an increase of 8.26 percent between the censuses of 1961 and 1979 but slowed down in the last ten years (3.89% between 1979 and 1992 and 2.07% between 1992 and 2002), yielding a total population of 665,100 inhabitants in 2002, according to the results of the 2002 General Census of Population and Dwelling.

The city of Cotonou holds more than 45 percent of the working population of the ten principal cities of Benin. It is followed by the cities of Porto-Novo (14.5%) and Byakou (7.2%). The activity ratio (working population in relation to the population of working age) is 67.7 percent. An outstanding development is the rise of the activity ratio observed among the female population, which increased from 37.2 percent in 1979 to 54.7 percent in 1992, an annual increase of 3 percent. This is explained by the increasingly massive participation of the female population in the production of goods and services in the formal sector. The occupation ratio (ratio of the working population to the total population aged 10 years and above) is 66.7 percent. The results of the February 1992 census and the recent surveys (1-2-3 of 2001) reveal that participation in economic activities in Benin starts very early (as early as 10 years old) and continues well beyond the age of 55 years.

On the territorial aspects, the city of Cotonou is divided into 13 districts (Table 1) that extend over a surface of 79 km². This city presents a particular administrative statute and is set up as a department (Littoral Department). Majority of the establishments, such as the embassies, commercial firms, industry and other infrastructure establishments, are included here. This city is also home to the economic potential of the country (commercial firms and industry).

Table 1. The 13 districts of Cotonou

Districts	Ex-Districts
1	Avotrou Dandji
2	Senadé Yénawa
3	Sègbèya Ayélawadjè
4	Sodjatinmè Misséssin
5	Gbédokpo Gbéto Xwlacodji
6	Dantokpa Aidjèdo Ahouansori
7	Saint-Michel Dagbédji
8	Sainte Rita
9	Fifadji
10	Kouhounou
11	Gbégamey Vodjè
12	Cadjèhoun Djomèhountin
13	Houénoussou

Social condition

The section describes the social condition of the districts of Cotonou through four principal indicators: education and health; environment and decontamination; poverty and inflation; and employment and unemployment, and housing. While bringing out these aspects of the social life in Cotonou, this report puts emphasis on the issues of housing, employment and unemployment.

Demography

The data show that in 2001, the population of the district of Cotonou was estimated to be 666,549 inhabitants, 51 percent of which are female. The male-female ratio is 96 men for every 100 women.

According to the provisional results of the last General Census of Population and Dwelling of February 2002, however, the population of Cotonou is 658,572 inhabitants, of which 51.3 percent are female. One observes a disparity in the spatial distribution of the population by districts. In fact, according to the 2001 estimates, if the majority of the population of the districts is around 7 percent of the total population of Cotonou, then the most populated districts would consist of the 6th District (11.73% of the total population), the 12th District (9.82%) and the 13th District (8.08%) as shown in Table 2.

Further, according to the results of the 2001 Population and Health Survey in Benin (EDSB), the average size of the households in Cotonou is 4.7 people per household and the ratio of women household heads is 23.9 percent vis-à-vis 20.3 percent for the whole of Benin. In addition, this survey also shows that the proportion of children living under difficult situations is significant. In fact, in Cotonou, only 52.8 percent of children below 15 years old live with their two parents while 27 percent live with one of their parents and 13.9 do not live with either one of their parents at all.

Table 2. Distribution of the Cotonou population by district

District	Proportion
1st District	6.68
2nd District	6.37
3rd District	8.49
4th District	6.33
5th District	6.94
6th District	11.73
7th District	7.61
8th District	6.79
9th District	7.15
10th District	6.2
11th District	7.82
12th District	9.82
13th District	8.08

Fertility

The fertility level of Beninese women remains high, with a Beninese woman giving birth, on average, to 5.6 children before the end of her fertility. Those from the district of Cotonou in particular have a tendency to strongly limit giving birth since a Cotonese woman gives birth on average to only 3.4 children before the end of her fertility. Moreover, at the time of EDSB-II survey, only 8.2 percent of Cotonou women were pregnant compared to the 11.5 percent at the national level. This decrease in fertility can be explained, among other things, by the increase used of modern contraceptive methods (11.8% of Cotonese women as against 7.2% of the entire Beninese population) and by a late entry in marriages (the median age for marrying in Cotonou is 22.4 years old and 18.8 years old for Benin).

Mortality

With regards to the mortality of children, the city of Cotonou has the lowest level at 56 out of 1000 children dying before reaching their first birthday as compared to the 104.5 per thousand at the national level. Eighty-nine Cotonese children against the national level's 175.5 children per one thousand have died before reaching their fifth birthday for the last 10 years preceding the survey. This is due to the level of vaccine protection (67.7% of Cotonese children received all the PEV vaccines and only 59% in the entire Benin), the quality of prenatal care (97.6% of Cotonese women consulted either a doctor, nurse or midwife during their pregnancy compared to only 81.1% in Benin) and to the degree of assistance of a qualified personnel during childbirth (96.6% of Cotonese women against the 65.5% of women in Benin who sought medical personnel assistance).

Participation of women in the management of the household***Participation of women in decision-making***

The participation of women in certain decision-making tasks relating to various fields of family life is an essential element for her social and mental fulfillment. For their own safety, only 31.2 percent of

Cotonese women claim to have the last word alone or together with their partner against the 31.8 percent of Benin. Thirty-eight percent of Cotonese women can decide to make important purchases while 53 percent can decide when to visits to their families, relatives or friends. Finally 60.1 percent can choose what food to prepare each day.

Opinion of women with regard to marital violence

The 2001 EDSB Survey shows that 29.2 percent of the women in Benin approve of their husband hitting them when they burn the food. In Cotonou, though, only 8.6 percent of the women accept this state of affairs. In the same way, 14.5 percent and 17.3 percent of Cotonese women accept that their husbands hit them when they go out without telling them and when they neglect their children, respectively. A little more than six percent accept that they would be beaten when they refuse to have sexual relations with their husbands.

Decision on the use of the income

The Beninese women, more particularly Cotonese women, are very independent since majority of them (89.4% of Cotonese women and 80.1% of Benin women) are the ones who decide on how to use the money they earn themselves and only 5.4 percent in Cotonou and 12 percent in Benin decide with their spouses.

Education

The data relating to the education sector collected within the framework of this report consist primarily of those that characterize formal teaching given in various preschool and primary establishments.

On the level of primary education teaching, the 2001 EDSB evaluated the rate of schooling at 78.1 percent. The boys had it better with a net rate of schooling of 89.5 percent against the 68.2 percent for the girls. However, the question of the educational system's efficiency needs to be reconsidered effectively in the district of Cotonou. This is characterized by an increase rate of around 16 percent

(from CI to CM2, reaching 20% for CM2) and an abandonment rate of around 4 percent.

The student/teacher and student/class ratio worsened between 2000 and 2001, shifting respectively, from 41.8 to 48.0 and 43.2 to 47.9, thereupon indicating a decrease in the capacity to manage the students. The situation is more distinct in the 6th, 10th and 11th districts.

The analysis of examination results indicates an increase in the passing rate at the Certificate of Primary Education (CEP) level in Cotonou. This rate increased from 65.9 percent in 1999 to 72.38 percent in 2001. If this figure did not show a significant variation on the level of the men, one notes a clear progression on the level of the women where 80 percent passed in 2001 compared to only 62.28 percent in 1999. The results of the examination for Certificate of Secondary Education (BEPC) did not show significant changes between 1999 and 2001 in Cotonou.

Health

The development of the health sector in Cotonou relies on the support of the services of a relatively high number of health personnel thus making the health personnel/population ratio better than those of other departments. For example, there is one doctor for every 1297 inhabitants in Cotonou as against one doctor for every 54,322 inhabitants in Donga and one doctor for every 6,883 inhabitants at the national level. Cotonou benefits from a good symbiosis between the private and public sectors. In spite of the methodological difficulties encountered in finding out the exact number of health personnel in the private sector, it is almost certain that there are more doctors practicing in the private rather than in the public sector. There is, thus, an opportunity to cooperate with the private sector in the health sector. The actions could be directed to the organization and regulation of the private sector in the city of Cotonou.

Environment and decontamination

Four types of pollution occur in Cotonou:

- soil pollution (household wastes, domestic liquid wastes, oil change, cesspools, artisan waste, industrial waste, fecal waste);
- air pollution (latrines, domestic fumes, industrial dust, odors, others);
- noise pollution (flourmills, sawmills, music, garage, religious confessions, and others); and
- other types of pollution (road obstruction, biomedical wastes, animal ramblings, slaughterhouses, green spaces, waste pipe connections).

Out of 1414 reported cases in 2000, soil pollution came out on top with 644 cases (45.5%), air pollution came in second with 245 cases (17.3%) followed by sound pollution with 71 cases or 5 percent. Other types of pollution make up 32.1 percent of the reported cases. In this last group, biomedical wastes (28.8%) deserve particular attention.

In 2001, the same survey carried out under the same conditions revealed that soil pollution remains to be at the top comprising 43 percent of all cases. This demonstrates the acuteness of the major environmental problems in the city of Cotonou, particularly in the parts relating to the management of household waste and domestic liquid waste. Road obstruction, biomedical wastes and animal ramblings classified in the heading "Other types of pollution" comes in second. This accounts for 31 percent of the total pollution in 2001. Road obstruction is unfortunately a too frequent, even permanent offense. Many sidewalks are in fact illegally occupied and green spaces are constantly being destroyed

In relation to the reported cases of pollution, re-inspection visits were conducted to observe if said cases were remedied. A review of the results of this exercise in 2001 shows the percentage of "unresolved cases" to be 51 percent. A little more than half of the

reported cases remain as such, with an increase from 49 percent in 2000 to 51 percent in 2001.

On the collection of household wastes, it is striking to note a positive dynamics in this field. The number of those subscribing to such collection and the income of garbage collection show an increase. To illustrate, the accumulated income of garbage collection was estimated at 266,017,992 FCFA in September 2002. The collection rate fluctuates around 90 percent indicating a favorable support by the households. Garbage collection activities have a notable impact on employment, with 702 jobs created (648 for men and 54 for women). The growth in the number of subscribers per district indicates that considerable efforts were exerted particularly in the 2nd, 4th and 7th districts. There is a stagnation in the 8th district with around 1,456 unsubscribed residences still remaining. As for the other districts, the increase in the number of subscribers remains appreciable.

Two problems remain unsolved to date: (a) the discharge points for the wastes, and (b) their composting.

Poverty and Inflation

On the basis of data gathered in 1999-2000, the priority areas of the poverty reduction program are Borgou and Couffo for the rural areas and Littoral and Borgou for the urban areas. They contribute the most to the national poverty indexes. In urban areas, for example, the city of Cotonou contributes 60 percent to urban poverty; 68.7 percent to the intensity of urban poverty and nearly 75 percent to the severity of urban poverty.

The analysis of the evolution of prices in consumption for the year 2002 shows a decrease when compared to the preceding years, particularly the years 2000 and 2001. In fact, the inflation rate for 2002 (not including the month of December for which there is no information as yet) shows a slight decrease as compared to its level in 2001, passing from 4.2 percent in 2000 to 4 percent in 2001 then to 2.3 percent in 2002. The decrease observed in the prices in consumption is due mainly to the decrease in the transport sector (a

Box 1. Definition of some indicators of poverty

- **Incidence of food poverty** is the percentage of urban households below the food poverty line;
- **Incidence of total poverty** is the percentage of households below the total poverty line;
- **Expenditure deficit ratio** is the quotient of the difference between the average expenditure of the poor and the poverty line over the poverty line in question;
- **Coefficient of contribution of each city to national urban poverty.** This coefficient is calculated for a given city by multiplying the share of this city in the total population by the poverty incidence ratio in the city over the national incidence of poverty;

fall of 19 points between 2001 and 2002 on transport sector index) inspite of the increase noted in the food sector. This decrease is observed primarily in the lubricant and fuel sector. The price decreases in this sector is linked to quasi stability and even to the fall of pump prices as well as to the significant decrease observed in the price level in the informal sector. The international arena seems to contribute to the good behavior of pump prices. The relative stability observed during the year in Nigeria contributed as well to the maintenance of the prices in the informal sector.

Activity, employment and unemployment in Cotonou**Level of activity in Cotonou**

The size of the active population is an indicator of the number of individuals engaged in the labor market, whether they are employed (working active) or are looking for a job (unemployed).

For the potentially active population (individuals aged 10 years and above) of 457,733 people, the city of Cotonou counts 251,578 actives as defined by the International Labor Organization (ILO) (252,757 in the broad sense). In short, there is a total activity rate of 54.9 percent. This activity rate increases to 64.9 percent if the potentially active population is extended to individuals aged 15 years and above. In considering the 25 to 55 age bracket, the pressure on

the labor market affects the inhabitants of the 5th district the most. This is where the potentially active population is highest (activity rate: 97.9%). On the other hand, the 7th district, where more than seven out of ten people (72.3%) are already in the labor market, is the least affected. This demonstrates the extent of the employment "fever" embracing the city of Cotonou.

The city of Cotonou is characterized by a high total activity rate. Disparities, however, exist according to gender and age. Thus, before the age of 25, 40 percent of the women are already active compared to the 25.5 percent of men of the same age. After the age of 55, nearly a third of the women are still active (30.4%) compared to 26.8 percent of the men. Between the ages of 25 and 55, the activity rate of the men (94.2%) is higher by 22 percentage points than that of the women (71.9%). On the other hand, women are more active than men among the potentially active population in the 2nd district. No significant difference between the two genders in relation to the active working population is observed in the 3rd and 5th districts.

The dependency rate establishes a relationship between the number of adults with no gainful activity (unemployed or inactive) and the number of adults with a job. In Cotonou, among adults aged 15 years old and above, the dependency rate is pegged at 59 percent (59.5% in the broad sense). This phenomenon of dependents particularly affects the populations of the 1st, 10th and 13th districts whose dependence rates are 77.1 percent, 75.9 percent and 70.6 percent, respectively. In other words, in these areas, a working person takes care of two people on average. On the other hand, the phenomenon is lowest in the 2nd (19.6%), 4th (43%) and 8th districts (43.9%).

The active woman spends, on average, 24 hours per week doing household tasks in addition to her job, even more than the inactive woman with an average of 13 hours.

In short, whatever the age considered, the majority of women take charge. Proof of this is the other indicator of the life cycle taken by the status among households. In fact, more than six out of ten

Box 2. Concepts and definitions of some indicators on employment

Working-age population: Population of 10 years old and above

Active population : The number of unemployed plus the employed active population.

Unemployed : Persons who have not worked (even for just one hour) during the week preceding the survey, and have been looking for a job during the month prior to the survey.

Active working population : Population that have worked for at least one hour during the week prior to the survey, plus the number of persons who have not worked but who normally have a job and who are either on vacation, sick, on strike, or are on temporary cessation of work, plus all individuals who will start work during the month following the survey.

Informal Sector : The total of production units that do not have an assigned statistic number (n° INSAE), or, in the case of owners and workers of their own businesses, those who do not keep accounts.

Activity Rate : Ratio of the active population to the population of working age.

Unemployment Rate: Ratio of the number of unemployed to the active population.

Dependency Rate : Ratio of the number of the inactive or unemployed, to the number of active working individuals within each household.

Salarization rate : Ratio of the number of wage-earners, to the active working population.

Pluri-activity rate : Ratio of the number of persons who have one or more secondary jobs, to the active working population.

Rate of visible underemployment : Ratio of the number of working actives who involuntarily work less than 35 hours per week, to the active working population.

Rate of invisible underemployment : Ratio of the number working actives who earn less than the minimum hourly rate (25,000 FCFA for Benin), to the active working population.

Rate of total underemployment : Ratio of the number of unemployed, and working actives in underemployment (visible or invisible), to the active population.

spouses are active. The activity rate of the household heads is highest (83.1%) while that of their children is lowest (26.1%).

Who are inactive?

The majority (68.4%) of the inactive ones are young people who are still in school. Housewives account for 12.2 percent. The proportion of pensioners is relatively high accounting for nearly 9 percent. In

more than 86 percent of the cases, the inactive ones are taken care of by other people, usually by members of their family.

Generally (60.5%), the inactive ones have involuntarily chosen to be in this status: more than four out of every ten inactive (44.63%) consider their qualifications insufficient in finding a job (pupils and apprentices); 14 percent do not know how to find a job while almost the same percentage (39.5%) choose to be so voluntarily (they either do not consider themselves to be of working age or do not think that they need to work in order to live). This form of disguised unemployment underlines the hazy border which exists between these discouraged inactives and the unemployed who are also counted as part of the working population as defined by the (ILO).

This is again encountered in the 7th district (18.3%, of which 94% have qualification problems and have no knowledge of how to look for a job) and in the 12th district (34.9%) who also have qualification problems.

Unemployment in Cotonou¹

During the last quarter of 2002, unemployment affected approximately 8,417 actives (9,600 in the broad sense) of a working population of almost 251,454 people in Cotonou. The total unemployment rate is relatively low at about 3.5 percent (following the definition of the ILO in a strict sense). If the discouraged unemployed (defined in the broad sense) is taken into account, this rate is increased to 3.9 percent.

As gleaned in Table 3, the highest proportion of the unemployed is found in the 12th (55.7%), 10th (16%) and 5th (9.7%) districts while the rest is distributed among the other districts.

Meanwhile, the unemployment rate for men (6.2%) is seven times larger than that of women. The highest unemployment rate is in the 30-34 age bracket (9.8% of which 18.9% are men) but it is at the end

¹ As mentioned in the methodological note, it is necessary to use unemployment indicators with caution since the number of unemployed counted in this survey does not necessarily ensure the relevance of the estimators developed for this purpose.

Table 3. Characteristics of the unemployed and length of unemployment

	District												Total
	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th				
Size	Previously employed	149	814	355		420	133	1338		62			3271
	First-time job applicants				51					442	4593		5086
	Total	149	814	355	51	420	133	1338		442	4655		8357
% of unemployed	Previously employed	4.56	24.89	10.85		12.84	4.07	40.9		1.9			100
	First-time job applicants				1					8.69	90.31		100
	Total	1.78	9.74	4.25	0.61	5.03	1.59	16.01		5.29	55.7		100
Median age	Previously employed	33	39	43		54	29	32.5					38.07
	First-time job applicants				25					24.5	30.29		29.73
	Total	33	39	43	25	54	29	32.5		24.5	30.44		33
Average length of unemployment (in months)	Previously employed	22	102.33	129.31		42	115	7.5					54.17
	First-time job applicants				13					17	30.94		29.55
	Total	22	102.33	129.31	13	42	115	7.5		17	30.91		39.19
% of unemployed for more than a year	Previously employed	8.21	44.85	13.06		23.14	7.33						100
	First-time job applicants				1.01					8.74	90.25		100
	Total	2.17	11.85	3.45	0.74	6.11	1.94			6.43	67.31		100

Source : 2002 Employment Survey TBS for the city of Cotonou, INSAE computation.

The long-term unemployed are those who have been looking for a job for more than a year.

NB : Districts 1, 2, 3 and 13 do not appear in this table for the simple reason that the number of unemployed counted in each of these localities does not allow for the calculation of the indicators of unemployment.

of the active life (between 50 to 54 years old), in particular for the men, when an increase in the number of people seeking employment is noted: the unemployment rate is 8.3 percent. The 9th district has the most severe unemployment with a rate of 14.3 percent. It is followed by the 10th and 11th districts where the unemployment rates are 7.3 percent and 6 percent, respectively.

The criteria of the ILO are applied in the definition of the unemployed.

The position in the household is also a discriminating factor in looking for a job. One should expect that it should be household heads who suffer the least from unemployment (3.4% of the active household heads are unemployed). Curiously, though, it seems that they depend more on their spouses to contribute to household income (almost all the spouses are working). Lastly, it is the young people who suffer the most from lack of job offers (three out of every ten people below 30 years are job applicants).

Who are the unemployed?

Eighty-seven percent of the unemployed are men. They are found mainly among the young people since 30 percent are less than 30 years old and 85 percent are below 40. Their level of education is high, as 28.8 percent passed primary school. About 35 percent pursued higher learning. The two types of unemployed people are distinguished by (a) those who are trying to get their first job (the first-time job applicants or “primo-demandeurs”) and (b) those who have lost their previous jobs (“the previously employed”). Thirty-nine percent of the unemployed are first-time job applicants.

The first-time job applicants

This category consists approximately of 3,272 people, 67.6 percent of whom are men and characterized by their relative youth as well as their high educational level. The first-time job applicants have a median age of 29.7 years compared to the other unemployed whose median

age is 38. Almost all of them belong to the 19-34 age bracket.

They are more educated than the working actives since they have an average number of 13.4 years of study. This is not due to the effect of structure because even when comparing the first-time job applicants with the previously employed of the same age bracket, the former are seen to be the most educated, surpassing the “discouraged unemployed (11.7 years of study)” or even the “real inactives (10 years of study)” and are largely ahead of the “working actives (7.2 years of study)”.

The previously employed actives

Nearly eight out of every ten of the formerly working actives (79.2%) who have lost their jobs were laid off and the remaining 20.8 percent resigned voluntarily because they considered their salary to be insufficient.

Characteristics and length of unemployment

The length of unemployment lasts more than three years on average (39.03 months). This figure must be interpreted more as the period during which the unemployed did not have access to “a real” job rather than the real length of unemployment. The figures of the average length of unemployment do not reflect the extreme difficulty that the unemployed encounter in integrating and/or re-integrating themselves to the labor market. This is confirmed by the significance of long-term unemployment. More than eight out of every ten unemployed (82.2%) have been without jobs for more than a year. This affects the first-time job applicants the most since 99.4 percent of them are in situations of long-term unemployment as compared to only 55.5 percent of the previously employed.

Method of finding jobs

For the majority of the unemployed, job hunting is done individually either through the mobilization of family contacts (57.4%), or through

direct application to employers (41% of cases). Less than one out of every ten unemployed (1.6%) resort to media advertisement (newspapers, radio, etc.) The methods of canvassing are almost identical for the first-time job hunters and for those previously employed.

The registration rate of the unemployed in Placement Services (National Solidarity Fund for Employment: the NSFÉ) is explained mainly by the ignorance of the unemployed on the role of these institutions. Approximately, almost 60 percent of those not registered think that it is of no use to them while 41 percent do know about the NSFÉ at all. A serious effort must thus be made by the authorities to support the unemployed, through these institutions, in particular in terms of providing information.

The type of jobs sought

More than 60 percent of the unemployed are looking for a paying job and 95.8 percent are seeking full-time employment. On average, the unemployed would like to work 42.9 hours per week and nearly nine out of every ten unemployed (89.9%) would like to work between 35-48 hours per week. It is thus a matter of a population available for work and not of a reserve located in the margins of economic activity. Among those who seek paid employment, 84.7 percent prioritize salary and job security.

Nearly four out of every ten unemployed (38.6%) are attracted to the civil service (47.1% if paragonovernmental service is included). More than one out of every three unemployed (36%) would like to set up their own business and approximately 1.4 percent of the unemployed do not mind whatever type of job they get.

Expected salary of the unemployed

Table 3 shows that the expected average income is 67,200 FCFA per month (82,300 FCFA for first-time job applicants and 43,700 FCFA for those previously employed).

However, 75 percent of the unemployed state that they are willing to re-consider their wage claims² if unemployment is prolonged. Finally, the acceptable minimum income is 66,300 FCFA per month, more than double that of the SMIG (25,000 FCFA).

Structure and dynamics of jobs

Among the active working population of Cotonou, 243,096 people aged 10 years old and above have a job. Consequently, the average number of dependents for each working active (which is called the “dependence rate”) is 0.88. On the whole, there are almost two employed active people (1.73) per household.

The salarization rate, which is an indicator of the degree of formalization of working relationships, is 28.74 percent in Cotonou. Almost three out of every ten jobs are therefore paid employment. This rate varies according to the type of sector and manpower. It is of course higher in the private and public formal sector, and for the type of manpower employed there: men (38% compared to 18.3% of women), household head (33.2%), and manpower in the 40-54 year-old age bracket (34.1%).

A majority of workers work in the informal sector. Some particularities can nonetheless be distinguished according to age: those below 20 years old are mainly workers who are dependent on the informal sector; there is also a small emergence of wage earners in the formal sector that hardly reaches 32 percent of the 40-50 age bracket. Lastly, in the 25 to 55 year old age bracket, six out of every ten people work as the owner or manager in the informal sector. This proportion reaches 81 percent for those above 55 years old.

The total is lower than 100 percent. The independent ones in the formal sector were not included due to their very small proportion.

The distribution of jobs by institutional sector is a good synthetic indicator of the structure of the labor market. Five sectors are

² The expected salary is the monthly salary expected by an unemployed person relative to the given number of working hours.

Table 4. Expected salary (x 1000) and reservation wage of the unemployed

	District												Total
	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th				
Wage claim	Previously employed	50	46.67	43.33	50	15	10	52.5	55	66.19	43.66		
	First-time job applicants Total	50	46.67	43.33	50	15	10	52.5	55	85.25	82.27		
Willing to reconsider (%)	Previously employed	100	100	100	0	100	100	100	0	2.09	45.50		
	First-time job applicants Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	97.91	54.50		
Reservation wage	Previously employed	25	36.67	28.00	40	30	37.5	37.5	47.5	52.81	35.41		
	First-time job applicants Total	25	36.67	28.00	40	30	37.5	37.5	47.5	99.80	92.13		
Expected weekly work hours	Previously employed	48.00	30.00	40.00	48.00	70.00	40.00	45.00	40.00	42.59	43.83		
	First-time job applicants Total	48.00	30.00	40.00	48.00	70.00	40.00	45.00	40.00	42.91	42.71		
										42.91	43.15		

Source : 2002 Employment Survey TBS for the city of Cotonou, INSAE computation.

The wage claims correspond to the amount of desired income, declared spontaneously by the unemployed, for the job which they seek. The reservation wage is the level of minimum income below which the unemployed ones state they would not want go lowers.

NB : Districts 1, 2, 3 and 13 do not appear in this table for the simple reason that the number of unemployed counted in each of these localities do not allow for the calculation of the indicators of unemployment.

distinguished: public administration, parapublic sector, formal private sector, informal sector and social sector. It is obviously the informal sector which occupies the top spot: 78.4 percent of the working actives are employed there (Table 5). It is followed by the private sector (including formal organizations) with 11.8 percent of jobs. Lastly, only 9.8 percent of the working active work in the public sector.

Public jobs are obviously concentrated in the noncommercial branches. They absorb more than half of the skilled wage-earners since more than 68.4 percent of senior and junior executives work there. It is also in this sector that the median age is highest (44.8 years). Employment stability in this sector explains the relatively high length of service (15 years on average). Lastly, more than seven out of ten jobs (73.6%) in the public sector are occupied by household heads.

In the formal private sector, the salary rate is 58.1 percent. This sector accounts for 12 percent of the total and takes up 7.8 percent of industrial jobs and 13.1 percent of services to companies (banks, insurances, counseling, etc.). It is thus in the tertiary sector that one finds the majority of jobs. In fact, 60.1 percent of positions in the formal sector are service-related jobs (mainly services for companies) and 27.2 percent are commercial jobs.

Finally, the manpower in the informal sector, focus on small-scale establishments. The total (99.3%) of jobs come from production

Table 5. Structure of employment by institutional sector (principal employment)

Institutional Sector	Size	Distribution%	Median age (years)	Proportion of women	Proportion of migrants	Seniority of service (years)
Public administration	18 939	7.79	44.82	17.63	60.38	14.82
Public firms	4 989	2.05	44.63	12.71	68.69	15.04
Private formal firms	26 395	10.86	30.79	39.72	65.90	5.74
Private informal firms	190 542	78.38	32.82	58.81	56.02	7.34
Associative firms	2 230	0.92	33.16	51.48	64.08	3.18
Total	243 096	100	33.78	53.18	57.78	7.87

Source : 2002 Employment Survey TBS for the city of Cotonou, INSAE computation.

units composed of less than 6 people and 54.1 percent are self-employed. This result is the lowest salary rate for all the institutional sectors, with 15.8 percent of wage earners. The precariousness of establishments is measured by the fact that hardly a third (33.5%) of the jobs is carried out in professional settings (or in markets). Almost the same proportion of jobs (3.7%) is carried out along public roads and three out of every ten jobs (31.7%) are carried out in homes. Finally, 61.2 percent of the informal jobs are independent workers.

Forty-eight percent of the informal jobs are found in service activities while 30.5 percent are in the commercial branch (Table 6).

The informal sector counts more jobs in the branches of processing than in the private sector, taking up 92.2 percent of industrial jobs.

The labor force is young (33.4% are less than 25 years old) but not very skilled. More than 26 percent of informal workers never attended school and only 43.7 percent are educated. Moreover, there are more women in the small processing units with almost six out of every ten women employs there. They are also the ones who comprise the secondary manpower of the household (after the household head at 58.8%).

Branches

The primary sector includes agriculture, breeding, fishing and

Table 6. Structure of employment by branch of industry (principal employment)

Institutional Sector	Primary Sector	Manuf- turing	Commerce	Services	Total
Public administration				100	100
Public firms			5.19	94.81	100
Private formal firms	3.43	10.11	27.47	58.99	100
Private informal firms	3.89	17.26	30.47	48.37	100
Associative firms		2.51	24.35	73.14	100
Total	3.41	14.61	27.15	54.83	100

Source: 2002 Employment Survey BS for the city of Cotonou, INSAE computation.

silviculture. Manufacturing includes manufacturing and extractive industries and BTP. Commerce includes wholesale and retail. Services include hotels and restaurants, repair services, recreation and tourist activities and domestic services, community services, services to companies, banks and financial services, telecommunication and transport and other services.

Dynamics of employment over a long period

The starting date in the current job is an important indicator in understanding the dynamics of job creation at the labor market of the city of Cotonou. In the first place, the average time spent in the current job by the actives of Cotonou is 8 years. The situation in other institutional sectors is contrasted. In the public sector, that length is 15 years while in the private sector, it is only 6 years and 7 years in the informal sector.

The modern sector is a weak sector. The informal sector is extremely strong, creating more than 80 percent of jobs since the beginning of the 1990s. Thus, from 2001 to 2002, eight out of every ten jobs created were in the informal sector (89%). The formal private sector only contributed approximately 12 percent while the public sector less than 10 percent of the jobs created in the same year.

Extra activity

Often proposed, having an extra activity is regarded as a strategy of households and individuals to increase their income and to offset their losses in periods of recession. As seen in Table 7, of the 251,513 working actives in Cotonou, 12,137 declare that they have undertaken an extra job during the week of reference. In fact, during the past year, approximately 20,904 of the working actives undertook another job apart from their principal employment.

The type of jobs sought by the young generation

The satisfaction degree of the working actives with their jobs or the type of jobs sought by the inactives or the unemployed who want to

Table 7. Having an extra activity

	Undertook a second job during the week prior to the survey	Undertook a second job during the last 12 months prior to the survey
1st	100	5.63
2nd	100	22.43
3th	75.66	6.37
4th	77.28	19.33
5th	90.01	13.07
6th	38.65	12.97
7th	11.45	3.49
8th	91.63	8.58
9th		17.64
10th	63.23	16.96
11th	100	11.49
12th	31.63	5.01
13th	33.33	8.87
Total	60.02	8.63

re-integrate themselves to the labor market deserves particular attention considering the fundamental importance of the agents' expectations on total economic dynamics. More specifically, the nature of mismatch between proposed and desired jobs gives a measure of potential inflexibility to the labor market. The analysis is centered on the young people aged 15 to 24 years old insofar as this generation constitutes the bulk of those who enter or will enter the labor market in the coming years.

The city of Cotonou counts approximately 133,400 young people aged 15 to 24 years, 68,300 of whom are inactive (Table 8). About 62,400 people have a job while 3,400 are unemployed. The unemployment rate among these young people is 3 percent.

Among those who are employed, 38.1 percent declare that they are satisfied with their job and will not look for another in the near future. On the other hand, approximately 53 percent wish to find a

new job, either by changing companies (13.3%), or by mechanisms of internal promotion within the establishment (5.2%).

When the young people were asked regarding their professional plans, a mismatch between their preferences and real employment opportunities was noted. The public sector (public administration and public companies), which generated less than 4 percent of total employment from 2001 to 2002 makes up 27.7 percent of the desires of the young people. In the same way, the informal sector, principal provider of jobs with 90.5 percent of jobs created from 2001 to 2002, attracts approximately 22.4 percent of the young people.

The analysis in terms of socio-professional categories confirms “the unrealism” of the young people. More than 35 percent hope to become executives when there are only 4.9 percent such positions

Table 8. Jobs sought by the youth

	Jobs sought by the young people	Jobs created in 2001-2002
Public administration	13.87	3.11
Public company	13.87	
Formal private company	49.84	6.42
Informal private company	22.42	90.47
Total	100	100
Socio – professional Category		
Senior Executive	35.18	
Junior Executive		4.86
Skilled worker	27.66	6.6
Unskilled worker	5.85	10.07
Laborer		21.56
Owner		
Own account	31.32	29.15
Other unpaid		27.77
Total	100	100

Source : 2002 Employment Survey TBS for the city of Cotonou, INSAE computation.

being offered in the market. Meanwhile, less than 6 percent would like to become unskilled workers or laborers whereas this category accounts for 31.6 percent of employment opportunities.

Housing occupancy status and equipment

The characteristics of houses as capital of the households also serve as factors in assessing the living conditions of the populations. The analysis of the state of the housing in the city of Cotonou shows a marked use of permanent materials. In fact, more than eight out of ten households (83.8%) live in dwellings made of permanent materials. This is observed in almost all the districts. The two principal types of dwellings seen in Cotonou are houses for rent (47.7%) and row houses (23.7%). More than seven out of every ten households (70.4%) use electricity as the principal mode of lighting. However, hardly half (51.4%) of the Cotonou households have access to running water (interior or exterior taps). Access to cesspools with flush still remains to be the privilege of a minority: less than a quarter of the total number of households.

The most common occupancy type of dwellings in Cotonou is owned (38%). Households living or accommodated for free come next (36.5%) followed by those who rent (25%). In the 6th district, more than five out of every ten households own the house where they live in (57.5%). The houses for rent are concentrated in the 4th (45.3%) and 13th (44.9%) districts.

As for the energy used in the kitchen, coal remains to be the principal source used by more than half (55.2%) of the households in spite of advertising campaigns in favor of substitute energies like ORYX gas, "NANSU" stoves and others. The households of the localities in the 1st, 4th and 5th districts use this mode of cooking more with a utilization rate of approximately 70 percent.

Apart from radio (85.4%) or television set (59.5%) for which the equipment rate of the households is rather high, access to the other types of equipment is on the whole very weak. Nevertheless,

almost 4 out of every ten households (36%) have at least a motor bike, 24 percent have at least one car while 40.4 percent have an electric fan. In terms of mobile phones, 35 percent own one while 21.3 percent own a conventional telephone.

Information on the income of households

The level of income primarily affects the choice of the type of housing and the rent that can be paid. An analysis of the distribution of income of the households is therefore necessary within the framework of this exercise. An observation of the level of the households' incomes reveals that less than 15 percent of the surveyed households earn more than 100,000 FCFA monthly. Thirty-one percent of the households have monthly incomes ranging between 44,000 FCFA and 88,000 FCFA and 25.9 percent have income between 25,000 FCFA and 44,000 FCFA. No significant differences have been noted between one district and another. The comparison of the income level of one district with another was however limited by the fact that the absolute incomes were not collected because of the inherent risk of uncertainty in this step. It was noted, however, that on the stratum of the rich, the incomes of the households are higher when compared to the two other strata. In fact, there are 22 percent of households that earn more than 300,000 F CFA monthly in this stratum compared to hardly 3 percent in the two other strata.

Main reason for changing dwellings

If financial difficulty, which pushes 31.5 percent of the households to change dwellings for more modest lodgings in terms of rent is disregarded, the most common reasons by order of decreasing importance are an increase in the size of the household (18.5% of the households state this reason), an increase in the rent (14.8%), difficult relations with the owner (14.8%) and the search for more comfortable housing (11.1%).

No particularities were observed from one district to another. However, a large proportion of the households in districts 7, 8, 11

and 13 have stated the exaggerated increase in rent as their main reason for changing dwellings.

Level of rent in the dwellings of Cotonou

The level of the rent was classified according to the number of rooms of the dwellings such as those with 1, 2, 3 and 4 rooms.

Dwellings with one room commonly called "entrée-coucher" (one-room apartment) amounts to an average of 6,000 FCFA rent per month. The rent for this type of dwelling varies from 3,000 FCFA (minimum rent) to 12,000 F CFA (maximum rent). Two-room apartments (composed of a bedroom and a living room) cost 11,000 FCFA on average and vary between 5,000 FCFA and 20,000 FCFA from one district to another. Three-room apartments have a rental value of 30,000 FCFA and range between 10,000 FCFA and 40,000 FCFA from one district to another. Dwellings with 4 rooms or more cost 96,000 FCFA on average and the rent ranges between 60,000 FCFA and 150,000 FCFA depending on the level of comfort provided.

The levels of rent show considerable disparities from one district to another as illustrated in Table 9.

For one-room dwellings, it should be noted that district 9 (Ex district of Fifadji) has more expensive rents as compared to the other districts while district 1 (Avotrou and Dandji) offers one-room dwellings at very moderate prices. It should be noted however that there is a strong disparity (as evidenced by a strong variation coefficient, 28.8%) from one district to another as regards the rent for this type of housing.

With regards to two-room lodgings, rent is more expensive in district 12 (Cadjèhoun and Djomèhountin) as compared to the other districts while district 11 proves to be the least expensive. The rent for this type of dwelling presents a relative homogeneity from one district to another.

For three-room dwellings, the highest rent can be found in district 11 while district 3 posts the weakest rents for this category of dwelling.

Table 9. Monthly rent by district

District	1 room	2 rooms	3 rooms	4-7 rooms
1	3000	12250	35000	-
2	5000	12670	28000	-
3	5000	10800	23300	75000
4	5000	12710	26670	-
5	6500	13000	30000	-
6	4000	10200	30000	-
7	4000	11570	30000	60000
8	5000	11000	32500	-
9	9300	11000	30000	-
10	6000	11560	28750	75000
11	5000	8710	40000	-
12	4000	13670	30000	135000
13	5000	9380	30000	-
Total	5138	11425	30325	86250
Variation coefficient	28.8%	12.2%	12.7%	33.4%

As for apartments (with four rooms), not all districts were surveyed due to low sample sizes. However, district 12 followed by districts 3 (Sègbèya and Ayélawadjè) and 10 (Kouhounou) seem to be the most expensive.

Household tenants’ perception of the cost of the dwellings

The perception of the household tenants is assessed, on one hand, on the basis of their opinion on the reasonable or unreasonable amount of the rent taking into consideration their income and, on the other hand, the level of rent in comparison with the conveniences that come with it. Finally, the part of income allocated for rent was determined. As for the question of the rent being reasonable in comparison with the conveniences it offers, about half of the households (49.1%) think that the prevailing rents are way beyond the level of comfort offered by these dwellings (Table 10). In other words, half of the tenants think that the prevailing rents do not take into account the level of comfort offered by the dwellings. This proportion, which is half of

the overall average in the city of Cotonou, presents considerable undertones from one district to another.

The remarkable outstanding facts which emerge from Table 9 indicate that in districts 5, 7, 10 and 11, the proportion of households which perceive the rent to be disproportionate in relation to the conveniences offered by the dwelling is greater than 50 percent. More than half of the household tenants in these districts are not satisfied with the cost of the rent in comparison with the conveniences that exist there. Aside from the conveniences, the perception of the household tenants vis-à-vis their income level was also highlighted. One out of every 2 household (50% of the surveyed households) think that the prevailing rent is disproportionate compared to their incomes. Taking into consideration this criterion (cost of rent compared to income), 50 percent of the households are not satisfied with the level of rent. In the same way, 47.4 percent of the households affirmed that the prices of rent have fluctuated in the last three years. The

Table 10. The household tenants' perception of the reasonability of the rent vis-à-vis the conveniences offered by the type of housing

District	Is the rent reasonable?		Total
	Yes	No	
1	50.0	50.0	100.0
2	50.0	50.0	100.0
3	55.6	44.4	100.0
4	50.0	50.0	100.0
5	33.3	66.7	100.0
6	66.7	33.3	100.0
7	37.5	63.5	100.0
8	64.3	35.7	100.0
9	66.7	33.3	100.0
10	40.0	60.0	100.0
11	46.7	54.3	100.0
12	66.7	33.3	100.0
13	50.0	50.0	100.0
Total	50.9	49.1	100.0

phenomenon seems to be more accentuated in districts 10 and 11. The change in the price of rents was the unilateral decision of the owner in 63 percent of the cases. For some of the cases, improvements done on the dwelling led to the increase in the amount of rent.

On the level of the districts, the 10th, 11th, and 5th districts saw changes of more than 57 percent whereas the 13th, 4th, 6th, 9th, and 2nd saw no changes. It should be noted that in the 12th district, no change was declared.

Method of acquiring housing, relations with the owner and preference for a district

The majority of the households acquire their houses through brokers (48%) or personal contacts (42%). Very few spoke directly with the owner (20%).

In general, 87.9 percent of the surveyed households indicated that they did not have problems with the owner of the house they were renting. Those who mentioned that they were having problems reasoned that it was due to the lack of courtesy of the owner (27.3%) and the delay in paying the rent (27.3%). Repair work left undone (18.2%) and the non-draining of the toilets are the other reasons that mar good relations between proprietors and tenants.

Preferences as regards to residence indicate that a little more than a third of the households living Cotonou wish to reside outside of Cotonou (Godomey, Calavi and other localities). A strong attraction for the first district was also noted in relation to the fact that this district is located at the periphery (Avotrou and Dandji) beside the sub-prefecture of Sèmè.

Environment and pollution

The analysis of the results of the housing survey reveals that on the whole, majority (79%) of the household heads (who are renting) dispose of their garbage through private garbage collection systems. A considerable percentage (15%) throws them out and very few (1%)

burn, bury or use a public garbage collection system to dispose of their wastes. Throwing out of household refuse without subscribing to a garbage collection system is more marked in certain districts particularly in the 1st district where 50 percent of the households do not subscribe to garbage collection systems; 37.5 percent in the 7th district; 35.7 percent in the 8th; 25 percent in the 2nd; 20 percent in the 11th (20%) and 20 and 16.7 percent, respectively, in the 6th and 12th districts.

Generally speaking, the majority of the surveyed dwellings (74%) do not get flooded during the rainy season. However, this varies from district to another. In fact, all of those who were surveyed in the 2nd district state that their dwellings get flooded during the rainy season. During this same period, the households of the 7th, 9th, and 13th districts do not experience flooding in their dwellings at all. A considerable number of household heads in the 1st and 5th districts declare that their dwellings get flooded during the rainy season.

According to the geographical situation of the respondents' residences, 3/4 of the dwellings are located outside a marshy zone. Among the dwellings that get flooded during the rainy season, 86 percent are not located in a marshy zone. As for those that get flooded during the rainy season, 56.7 percent are located in a marshy zone.

Meanwhile, the results show that in 71 percent of the cases, the access road to the dwelling is a developed road compared to 15.5 percent where it is a well-beaten track and 12 percent where it is a footpath. In the 2nd, 5th, and 6th districts, the access road to the dwelling is a developed road, a footpath or others.

On the whole, 68 percent of those surveyed are not affected by noise pollution. However, when one looks at the districts specifically, 100 percent are said to be victims of noise pollution in the 2nd, 6th and 7th districts; 80 percent in the 4th district, and 66.7 percent in the 5th district. In the 12th district, 83.3 percent have declared themselves victims of noise pollution while 53.3 percent of household heads in the 10th district also consider themselves to be in a similar situation. In these districts where most or all of the households are victims of

noise pollution, the question that needs to be answered is what type of noise pollution affects the households.

An analysis of the nature of the noise reveals that 53 percent are noises that come from cars and motor bikes; this is followed by noises that come from airplanes (28%). Eight percent of the victims state that the noise pollution comes from the music of the neighbors and 8 percent say that it originates from restaurants and discotheques.

Waste water is disposed of either through gutters, septic tanks, in yards or directly to the environment. More than 41 percent of those surveyed dispose of waste water directly into the environment; 27 percent dispose of waste water in their yards; 23 percent make use of septic tanks and only 4 percent use gutters.

Forty percent of those who use gutters are located in the 10th district; 20 percent are in the 11th district, 20 percent in the 3rd, and another 20% in the 4th district. It should be noted that 50 percent of those surveyed in the 2nd district dispose of waste water directly into the environment compared to 25 percent who throw it out in their yards. In the 6th district, majority (83.3%) of the household heads throw their waste water in their yards; 62.5 percent of those surveyed in the 7th district do the same; 43 percent of those surveyed in the 8th district; 67 percent in the 9th and 53 percent in the 10th district also follow suit. Finally, it should be noted that 93 percent of the households in the 13th district dispose of their waste water directly into the environment.

Proximity of infrastructures to dwellings

In general, more than 74 percent of those surveyed feel that their dwelling is close to the market. This result is confirmed at 100 percent in the 5th, 6th, 9th, 11th, 12th and 13th districts. However, household heads in the 3rd and 4th districts do not think that they live close to the market.

As for the proximity of a public school, the majority of those surveyed (84%) consider their dwelling to be close to a public school. This report is seen at 100 percent in the 2nd, 5th, 6th, 9th, 11th, 12th

and 13th districts. A considerable percentage of those surveyed in the 3rd and 4th districts (44.4% and 40% respectively) consider their dwelling to be far from a public school. Except for those in the 4th district, the households consider their dwellings to be close to a private school. Only 10 percent of the household heads in the 4th district declare their dwelling to be far from a private school.

The proximity of a public health center to dwellings is noted at 100 percent in the 2nd, 5th, 6th, 9th, 11th and 13th districts. However, the opposite is observed in 1st and 3rd districts. Majority of the household heads in the 4th district (80%) considers their dwelling to be far from a public health center.

The proximity of the households' dwellings to recreation centers, meanwhile, is not observed in 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 6th and 9th districts. In fact, the surveyed household in these districts declare their dwellings to be far from a recreation center.

Values shared by the inhabitants of Cotonou

The adults of the city of Cotonou put work at the top of their values scale. It is followed in decreasing order of importance by: the family (95.9%), religion (94.6%) and friends and relationships (87.5%). Social pathologies like homosexuality and suicide do not gather favorable opinion from the population. The inhabitants of Cotonou show a predisposition to ban from society all practices which are likely to degrade the environment (throwing garbage in improper places, etc.) or foster corruption (not paying taxes and accepting bribes in the performance of one's duties). However, the proportion of people in the 11th district who spend ostentatiously during official gatherings exceeds twice that of the general level which is 14 percent.

The city of Cotonou is establishing a corporate image with its inhabitants. Seventy-one percent of the population indicate that they are proud to belong to this city compared to 29 percent who complain of their locality of origin. The sentiment of belongingness to the economic capital is most marked in the 12th district (88%). On the other hand, this feeling seems to lose intensity in the 2nd (23%), 8th

(29%) and 9th (30%) districts. For the last two districts which are the least proud of the image of the city of Cotonou, it should be noted that they comprise the principal marshy zones of the city as well as those with major problems. In the other districts, an average of more than six out of every ten people express their pride in belonging to the city of Cotonou.

Level of satisfaction for the infrastructures

Setting aside traffic lights (63.5%) and street-sweeping (62.4%) for which more than six out of every ten people express their satisfaction; efforts still remain to be made on certain urban infrastructures, particularly the refilling of unpaved roads, cleaning of gutters and street lighting. The 2nd district is the least satisfied with the infrastructures in the city of Cotonou.

There is a similarity between the confidence rate and the degree of satisfaction. In fact, all the districts which were shown to not have confidence with the infrastructures are also those who can be found in the category of the least satisfied. They consist of districts 2, 7 and 8.

Views of community members on the role of the State

Fifty-nine percent of the individuals feel that the State must leave the private sector in charge and intervene only in the event of problems. A little more than 97 percent add that they opt for economic liberalization. At the same time, 65 percent of the adult population of Cotonou favor a "reasoned" privatization of public companies. This agreement of ideas shows that a good percentage of the inhabitants of Cotonou are predisposed towards market economy.

The people emphasized the lack of information between the authorities and the citizens. In fact, 92 percent of the people complain of the lack of information on the policies or reforms in progress. It is thus safe to assume that newsflashes or reports on seminars, workshops and conferences transmitted by public or private radio or television stations are far from satisfying the population as regards to information on decisions that concern the country.

When one speaks about the resources available to the districts of Benin, the temptation to cite the city of Cotonou as the most affluent is strong. Curiously, hardly 48 percent of the people think that the district of Cotonou has the means of becoming independent at the beginning of the year 2003.

The expectations of the population of Cotonou seem to focus on four essential points, namely (i) to improve the living conditions of the populations living in the underprivileged districts (47.7%); (ii) to maintain the order in the district to ensure the safety of the population and to improve public roads (25.6%); (iii) to improve urban services (14.6%); and (iv) to involve the people more in the decisions of the authorities of the district (12.1%).

Comments

- The context of the paper was set up well. Preliminary results have been presented and there appears to be a positive response to Benin authorities to CBMS.
- There is a concern, however, regarding the number of households as 14,000 households is a challenging task. It is possible that choosing fewer households for a pilot survey will reduce the risk of problems. This is something to consider.
- The questionnaire and indicators which will be used for the project should have also been presented in order to give a more complete picture. Provide details on how the questionnaire will be administered.
- Provide information at which level of processing would be done, who will get involved in the data processing and at what level.
- Provide information on which questionnaire will be ultimately used.
- Provide information on the process of selection of indicators.