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FIRST QUARTERLY REPORT

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I. Research

In all field research, work begins in the library several months or often years before arrival in the field. It was not possible for me to spend that amount of time in preparation, but nevertheless I was able to do a quick review of the literature on the Peul.

Most of the information available of Fulfulde-speaking populations concerns groups which are pastoral nomads or semi-sedentary transhumants. In both cases the economy is heavily or exclusively reliant on cattle. Because the care of cattle requires mobility, the productive and residential group is no larger than the extended family for at least part of the year. There is little information available on fully sedentary populations of Peul descent. As a rule, these groups have evolved in one of two ways. Economic hardship--the loss of their cattle--forced some to settle and take up farming. Over a period of time they merged with the host population. On the other hand, some Peul populations became fully sedentary as elites: first as a religious and later as a ruling elite in northern Nigeria, or as a conquering elite in northern Cameroon. In northern Nigeria the urban Peul community has lost its ethnic identity. The members of this group no longer speak Fulfulde or keep cattle. The Peul group in northern Cameroon came to area as bearers of the flag of the Sultan of Sokoto in the jihad of the early 19th century. They established their authority over a non-Muslim population and settled back as a leisured ruling class supported by serfs. They have not lost their language or ethnic identity.

The Fulfulde-speaking population of the Dori area differs from those of others in several ways. Even though the population is fully sedentary, cattle are an important part of the economy. Among other Peul who depend on cattle for an important part of their subsistence, the women have an active and independent role in the acquisition, processing and sale of milk and milk products.

In the case of Peul groups who do little or no farming this gives the women almost total control over the family food budget, the income from milk being used to buy grain. This appears not to be the case in the Dori area. There is disagreement in written sources as to whether women or men milk the cows, one source reporting that it is women, another that it is men and a third contradicting itself stating at one point that men do the milking and at another that it is done by women. When asked, people say that men do the milking. There is almost undoubtedly some variation which is the cause of the confusion. The nature and extent of the variation remain to be determined. It is the women who do all the processing of milk products, and when there is a surplus to sell it is normally the women who manage the marketing. The surplus seems to exist on a seasonal basis only, however. In once or twice weekly trips to the Dori market since December I have seen milk being sold only once. I have been told that fresh milk is readily available only during and immediately after the rainy season. Women are not then in complete control of the distribution and sale of milk products, nor does this serve them as a steady source of income. Rather, sources of income for Peul women are handicrafts (e.g. spinning of cotton) and the raising of small livestock. Other women in the area earn money by selling produce from their vegetable gardens as well.

Aside from this difference in family economy, the Peul of the Dori area also differ from other Peul in the area of group economy. Grazing rights only are a matter of concern to nomadic Peul who are not agricultur^{al}ists. Semi-sedentary Peul are concerned with rights to agricultural land, but typically when such land is in short supply in one area some members of this already mobile group simply move off into a new area. Other sedentary Peul groups are generally urbanites who are not concerned with both grazing and agricultural land, sometimes with neither--while in the Dori area the majority of families need both. I do not know that there is a land shortage in the Dori

area, but with normal population growth and a limited amount of land available one would expect that sooner or later, in the absence of permanent emigration, land would be in short supply. This is another matter to be investigated. This issue concerns not only economic relations among Peul groups, but also those between the Peul and other ethnic groups.

This leads to a discussion of the third way in which the ^{Peul} of the Dori area differ from other Peul. That is in the area of inter-group relations. An exposition of this topic requires a brief excursion into the history of the Dori area and into the social organization of the different Peul clans.

The first Peul migrations ^{to} the area occurred from the 15th to the 17th centuries, according to P. Delmond. At that time four Muslim clans, whose descendants still live in the area as identifiable social groups, founded villages in the Dori area and lived under the rule of the pagan Akoramba. One of the project villages was founded by one of the original clans at that time and is still dominated by them--the Wakambe clan of Kampiti. The other 3 original clans, Torobe (surname Ly), Ba^labe (surname Ba), and Dialloube (surname Diallo) are still scattered throughout the area and are associated with particular villages, but none of them are project villages. In the early 18th century the Dori area was conquered by the Gourmantché. Shortly after, another group of Peul clans including the Baribe (surname Bari) and Ferobe (surname Dicko) moved into the area from Mali. During the 18th century the Ferobe led a religious revival among the original Peul inhabitants who had become lax in religious matters during their long period of residence under pagan rulers. Peul resistance to Gourmantché rule was based partly on economic matters and partly on religious differences, and the Ferobe came to assume a position of political dominance among the Peul. Wendou, one of the project villages, was founded and originally the chieftainship was held by Torobe. The Ferobe clan took over the chieftainship of Wendou even though this caused a dispute that resulted in the emigration of some of the Torobe. During this era, Ferobe

also founded Bouloy and Kachirga, two other ^{project} villages.

Even though Ferobe leadership was not always accepted unanimously, Peul ethnic sentiment and political resistance crystallized around the Ferobe. In 1810 the Dori Peul, under Ferobe leadership and in alliance with Ousman Dan Fodio of Sokoto, defeated the Gourmantche and founded the emirate of Liptako. The family of the emir is descended from the Ferobe leader who originally started the religious revival in the 18th century.

Thus, patterns of cooperation and hierarchy among different Peul clans date back to the late 18th and early 19th century. The Ferobe were leaders among the Peul clans almost from the time of their arrival, and they have continued to hold the chieftainship of the area (the emirate) and of some of the largest villages in the area. Writing in the late 1940's, P. Delmond described the relationship between the Ferobe and other Peul clans as comparable to that between nobles and vassals among the Tuareg. That this sort of relationship still exists is denied, but I have heard, perhaps half-jokingly, "Lenyol Bari na wooda!" (The Bari clan [Baribe] is no good) from a Dicko. Peul clans are endogamous (i.e. they do not usually intermarry) and are thus semi-independent as social units. Rights to land and cattle are inherited within the clan, so the clans are semi-independent as legal units. Cooperative labor, e.g. in agriculture, exists only among members of the same family; the clans are independent as productive units. But villages and even quarters are almost always mixed. Even a quarter made up entirely of Peul will include members of several different clans. Thus the clans are interdependent politically, the smallest-scale political organization being at the level of the quarter. It is here that inter-clan relations are important for the TWIS project which is based on the organization of group projects with group credit under a village committee with members representing each quarter.

The relationship between the Peul and other ethnic groups also has its roots in the history of the region but in more recent history. The period from 1830 to

1860 was a time of war between the Emirate of Liptako and its neighbors to the south and west. Most of the captives who became the Riymaibe, the serfs or slaves of the Peul, were taken during that era. These people were drawn from the Mossi, Gourmantche, and Songhai. It was also during the mid-19th century that large numbers of Bellah came into the area. They founded Oulo, one of the project villages, and quarters in Bouloy and Koria, both project villages. Although neither Riymaibe or Bellah are formally considered to be subordinate groups now, they are openly looked down on by Peul who have no interest in denying that social inequality exists. Whether economic inequality still exists and to what degree, is a matter for investigation.

In the areas of family economy, group economy and inter-group relations, the Fulfulde-speaking population of the Dori area differs from those described in the literature on the Sahel. All of the areas are of importance to an economic development project for women which is based on notions of group credit for group projects. Inter-group relations are important for reasons mentioned above, ^{and} for any village-wide projects, such as wells, which the project may undertake. Economic inequality between groups, whether between Peul clans or between ethnic groups, is of interest not only to assess whether the groups in question are competing, e.g. for land, or to know which group is most needy. It is also important for simple practical purposes, for example does a particular group have access to land for an agricultural project (this is particularly important for women, who do not hold rights to land independently of their husbands), or does a particular group have access to enough cattle for a project in improved processing of milk products to be practical, etc.

A knowledge of family economy is particularly important because the level of female economic activity and even the possibility of independent economic activity by women typically varies with stage in the domestic cycle. For example, among nomadic Peul, females are considered to be juveniles and are not

expected to be economically active (except in the service of their mothers or mothers-in-law) until after the birth of their first child. A woman is then able to set up house as an independent economic unit with full access to the milk of the portion of the husband's herd allotted to her. Women are expected to be, and generally are active as traders of milk and milk products until their last child is married and a parent. They then retire to the household of a child. The pattern of activity common among agricultural groups in West Africa is rather different. Young women may be economically active before marriage, but as young wives their opportunities are generally very limited. House work, child care, and subsistence farming typically take up so much of a young woman's time that she is unable to earn an income. In addition, husbands of young women are more likely to object to their wives spending time away from home or to their having an income. Women typically do not become economically active (except for subsistence activities) until "middle age" when they have children old enough to help them with their household work and are secure enough as wives to overcome any objections. They generally continue their activities for as long as they are physically able to do so.

The difference between these 2 patterns is not simple a difference between pastoral nomads and sedentary agriculturalists. There are many variables which contribute to the maintenance of these patterns. Peul women in this area apparently fit neither pattern. Riymaibe and Bellah women may fit one or the other, but as neither group has been the subject of intensive investigation this is not known. The point is that it is not possible to form specific hypotheses regarding patterns of female economic activity or other matters relevant to project implementation on the basis of a review of the literature on similar or related groups. The literature on the Dori area is surprisingly large, but much of it is unavailable. What is available is cursory and contradictory. It is therefore necessary to start from scratch, as it were, to determine what are patterns of female economic activity before going on to assess

the potential for project impact.

My original work plan called for the completion of a census, economic, and kinship and social organization surveys of Bouloy by the end of June. It has become apparent that this will not be possible. In the last 2 years, 2 enquêtes have been carried out in Bouloy, one by CVRS and the other by a TWIS project monitrice. In neither case is the information sufficiently detailed or reliable to provide any real basis for an analysis of women's economic activities. In both cases questions on sensitive topics were asked directly. This is considered very rude, and I have been told that people here were offended by this. In addition, they are fed up with being asked questions because they have not yet seen any concrete results. Since I will be investigating some of the same topics in even greater detail it will be necessary for me to proceed with caution, approaching issues gradually and using more time-consuming methods, such as indirect questioning and participant-observation.

The second problem in the conduct of my research is communication. Ordinarily, investigation of topics which are considered sensitive (in this case, some economic, kinship, and social organizational questions) is best done directly; the addition of a third party, the interpreter, between investigator and informant only complicates matters. In my situation it is imperative that I conduct the investigation myself. It is highly unlikely that anyone would volunteer any information on a delicate matter such as inter-group conflict to me through my interpreter because she is the chief's daughter. She is also the most taciturn individual I have met here and generally is not of much use as an interpreter. However, replacing her would mean displeasing the chief's family and bringing an outsider because there is no other female in Bouloy who speaks French. Since I must learn Fulfulde anyway and conduct my investigation gradually, it is best that I do both together. Information gathered in that manner is almost always of better quality than that obtained using prepared questionnaires and an interpreter. This will mean, however, that my research will

progress slowly until I have sufficient mastery of the language to carry on a normal conversation.

I have a lot of information on the dialect of Fulfulde that is spoken in the Dori area. It is from several different sources, and much of it is badly organized. I have therefore undertaken to re-organize the information on grammar and to organize a vocabulary file, both of which are nearly completed. At present my speaking ability is limited to simple sentence structures and basic vocabulary.

II. Implementation

It is more difficult to sum up work completed to date and future plans in the area of project implementation. It was necessary for me to create a role for myself in an organization that was already functioning on my arrival, and this is far from finished. Again, this is a delicate matter and must be done gradually. It is also an area in which I will not be able to be fully effective until I have sufficient mastery of Fulfulde to understand for myself what is going on when I accompany monitrices to the villages where they work.

After their initial training, the monitrices did enquêtes in their villages. The enquêtes were in progress when I arrived and were finished in January. There was then a series of meetings with the village committees during which the broad outlines of the credit system and the requirements for village animatrices were explained. The committees were asked if they were willing and able to choose animatrices and if they wanted to participate in the credit system. I attended some of the meetings and have discussed the progress of work in each village with the monitrices. I will briefly summarize the work of each monitrice by village:

Pendo's villages are Bouloy and Koria. While she was on maternity leave, from December to mid-March, her villages were taken over by Sumai.

Bouloy--A village committee has been formed. The committee has agreed to

choose 2 animatrices and has stated that it is interested in obtaining credit. Possible projects for which credit may be desired are petty commerce, vegetable gardening and filage. These projects have not been planned in any specifics.

Koria--This a "problem village." There has been a lack of enthusiasm on the part of the villagers here and I was told that there is no specific progress to report.

Sumai's villages are Mbanga and Wendou.

Mbanga--There is interest here in projects on weaving and in agriculture, but there have been no specific plans made. Mbanga has a problem of food shortage this year because the rains last year were unusually light.

Wendou--Here specific plans for a small-scale project in commerce have been suggested by the villagers. There is interest in obtaining credit for the purchase of kola nuts and millet for re-sale within the village. The suggestion was made very recently and has not been acted on yet.

Idizatou's villages are Oulo and Peckoy.

Oulo--There is a village committee which has agreed to choose animatrices and has expressed an interest in obtaining credit. There are suggestions for 2 projects here, but neither is very specific yet. There is interest among the Bellah women in a project in mat-making (typically only Bellah's do this work) and among women of other ethnic groups there is interest in a project in filage.

Peckoy--The village committee here has agreed to choose an animatrice although they have stated that they are not interested in obtaining credit because they feel they do not have the means to repay. There is a serious problem here with the amount of time required to get water during the dry season, and the villagers have stated that they want a well.

Annatou's villages are Katchirga and Ouro Ahidjo.

Katchirga--The village committee here has stated that water is a serious problem.. When the mare (which is very dirty) dries up, the women have to walk 12 km. to get water.

Ouro Ahidjo--This is the second village in which specific plans for a project have been made. This is a blanket weaving project. Credit is desired for the purchase of thread. Again, this suggestion was made only very recently.

Jematou's villages are Debere Talaata and Kampiti.

Debere Talaata--This village has declined to work with the project, and the sous-prefect has not yet chosen another village to replace it.

Kampiti--This was a "problem village" at first, but a village committee has been formed, has agreed to choose animatrices and is interested in obtaining credit. There is interest here in projects in petty commerce and filage, but there are no specific suggestions.

Three encadreurs started work with the project at the beginning of February.

All the extension agents attended a training session in early February which I also attended. The topics discussed included familiarization with the village, its organizations, activities, and problems; guidelines for working with village committees, and finally the formation of a plan for working in villages from initial familiarization to formulation of specific projects. This session was followed by more training exercises conducted by the local project staff. The extension agents are now beginning to follow a regular schedule of weekly visits to the villages alternating with days spent working in the office.

To familiarize myself with the experiences of other development projects working in the area I had a meeting with the former director of FDC and have made tentative arrangements to have a meeting with the local CIDR workers to discuss specific projects they have undertaken. I have found discussions of other projects very useful and hope to follow these up with meetings with other organizations.