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SECOND QUARTERLY REPORT

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PROJECT TITLE : TRAINING WOMEN IN THE SAHEL

## THIS PROJECT

I. Research

For reasons which I discussed in my previous quarterly report, I have not undertaken any systematic survey research. I have, however, been looking into some subjects informally.

A. Inter-Clan Relationships: There is an interesting division of labor among the free Peul clans in Bouloy. The Diallo clan, which is mostly based in one quartier, is a herder clan. They leave Bouloy in January with their cattle to travel to the Fada area in search of good grazing and do not come back north until late June or July when the grazing areas here have been restored. They have not come back yet. What is interesting in this is that the Dialloubé take cattle belonging to other clans as well when they go on transhumance. In return for caring for those cattle, the Dialloubé consume the milk and either eat or sell those that they judge it necessary to kill. Since at least some of the Dialloubé don't cultivate any fields, I attempted to find out if they were also paid, either in cash or in kind, for their services. My attempts were stymied by the unwillingness of the people I asked to admit to the ownership of any cattle at all. "Oh I don't know if people pay the Dialloubé. I don't give them any cattle because I don't have any." A blatant lie, in every case. Keeping cattle in the Dori area during the dry season is a very risky business. During this past dry season, a few cows kept producing a little milk, but a number of animals, including some cows, starved to death. So I suspect that there are a number of people who utilize the services of the Dialloubé. (I also suspect that the project should be very careful about funding small livestock projects.)

B. Inter-Caste Relationships: The paternalistic relationship between Peul families and individual Riymaibe still exists. It is well known that a particular Riymaibe is the Riymaibe of this or that Peul family. There is no free labor, goods or other services given to the Peul by the Riymaibe, as far as

I can determine. Rather, Peul families pay "their" Riymaibe, e.g. to work in their fields, at the standard rate for general labor--500 francs per day. The Peul complain a lot about how hard cultivating is for them and like to reminisce about how the Riymaibe did that sort of thing for them in the old days. The Peul have a very superior attitude toward the Riymaibe and occasionally that causes problems (see below, the histoire of the pump).

C. Local Credit Institutions: There is a form of rotating savings association in the Dori area, called adaase in Fulfulde. These are similar to the ones that exist along the West African coast, but they are not as complicated or as fully developed. There are women's adaases but not in Bouloy. I am told that these savings clubs, although they exist in Dori, are rare in the villages. I have discussed with some project personnel the need to try to explain how a rotating credit fund works by building upon concepts that people are familiar with, such as the adaase. I found a misunderstanding of how the interest works among some people in Bouloy who thought that the interest was for the "enrichment" of the project. I have suggested to the project personnel at a staff meeting that they should explain it as it was initially intended, i.e. the money for the credit fund has been given in a set amount; in order for that amount to remain sufficient in the presence of inflation it is necessary that interest be paid on the loans.

Otherwise, I have made it a point to attend all public ceremonies, such as naming ceremonies, etc., to get people used to me. I have not felt that it would be a good idea to go around visiting private homes when there is no public occasion or business to be conducted there because I am still regarded with some suspicion and apprehension.

This leads us to a discussion of how the villagers see my role. Now that I have gotten settled in and the initial hospitality has started to wear off, it has become obvious that there are a number of serious misunderstandings. First

of all, the villagers think that I have come to direct the project. As it was explained to me, people know that "the money comes from whites", I am white, "it's all the same thing." It is very common for people who have very limited dealings with another group, e.g. rural Africans with whites, to lump the "others" together and ignore any differences among them. The attribution of power to whites is also a legacy of the colonial era. When I explained that this is not the case at all, I was told that whites always lie and that I was certainly lying about that. This puts me in the extremely awkward position of being held responsible for the conduct of the project when I don't always even agree with it and seem to have only a very limited ability to influence it (see below under implementation).

The villagers also feel that they were "promised" money as much as a year ago. They feel that they have been bothered with questions and meetings, and they are beginning to say that the promise of money was false. They are convinced that if I only would, I could go to Ouaga and bring back the money. They are angry because I haven't done that, and again refuse to believe that I am not lying when I say that I can't.

There are also at least some who think that I should distribute free foodstuffs because the Centre Sociale does that. I thought that this issue had been settled some time ago because the monitrice had the same problem. However, I was expected to give out gifts or at least serve food and drinks after the last committee meeting, including by the monitrice. When I said that I had nothing to give out, I got a very hostile, disbelieving response. Part of this may be that the women think they should be rewarded for attending committee meetings since they don't see any point to them.

Just in general, people here see the project and my presence in the village as a means by which they can get money or goods. The idea is that there is money to be had, and if I would be more cooperative and less stingy they would be much happier. In part, the idea that there is money to be had was probably

fostered by some of the project personnel, who have the same idea themselves-- toward the project and toward me. Explanation will not correct this; people will just have to learn from observation that things don't work that way. This is a complicated subject that I will return to below.

Another cause of the villagers' attitude is the other projects that are working in the village. These include the Centre Sociale, FAO, UFC, ORD, and CIDR. There is also an Ecole Rurale in Bouloy. The people of Bouloy have learned through experience how to play the development game. They see development projects as unreliable and authoritarian and have the attitude that one should get what one can where one can by telling the outsiders what they want to hear, if necessary. There is a history of things being done by outsiders in the village that goes back to the 1960's. An all-concrete collective granary stands empty at the edge of chief's compound. This was constructed by the "administration" in the 60's. There is a cemented well with a pump that was put in by the administration in 1973 and which is maintained by the ORD. The Centre Sociale gives out free foodstuffs in conjunction with an infant nutrition program. I have been told that the women aren't too interested in baby-weighing etc. but that they like the gifts. There are things to be had from development projects.

And many of the projects are authoritarian or unreliable. A representative from CIDR came out in February to talk to artisans about forming a cooperative and hasn't been back since. This has been commented upon. People say that boys work in the garden and fields of the Ecole Rurale schoolmaster, but then he eats the proceeds and the boys can't even write their names. True. Representatives from the ORD came out to say that they were sending a man to catch herders who were cutting branches off trees to feed their animals. People don't understand the function of trees in maintaining ecological balance and may not even appreciate their long-term value with respect to the shortage of firewood. But they do know that feeding leaves to starving animals may save them, and I continue to see cut branches being fed to goats and sheep even though the people have

been told that they will be arrested and fined for doing this.

The get-it-while-you-can attitude leads to abuses. The local FAO representative is trying to start demonstration plots for the cultivation of forage crops. One of the chief's sons donated a large space in his personal field for this purpose. Another villager told me that the young man had done this because he intended to get FAO to build a well on the site. The young man was a "bandit" for doing this, he said, i.e. the owner of the field was trying to get out of the project more value than he had put in. Nothing happened and the young man left for Niger, so I asked the FAO representative about the matter. He said that he had paid for fencing for the area, and the young man was to get the materials and have the fence put up. However he came back to find that the fellow had gone off to Niger with the money. He said this is not the first time he's had that sort of problem. When the same villager who had initially commented on the young man's banditry pointed out to me that nothing had been done on the demonstration plot, another example of whites not doing what they say, I told him in a straightforward manner what had happened. He was embarrassed and said again that the young man was really a bandit.

The histoire of the pump: This was a very difficult story to piece together. The UFC installed two pumps in Bouloy, one in the quartier farthest from the chief's quartier and another near the chief's quartier, just a few yards from the pump installed by the government. The former was to be for general use by the public, the latter for use by the school master in his school garden and for a reforestation project. The school master was to maintain the second pump and to look after the small citrus trees until people had taken them (freely) to plant near their homes. He was also given a lock and key for the pump.

Apparently the villagers had expressed some interest in the trees and one man even claimed to have paid UFC for some. However, the vast majority of them were left in the school garden compound and were eventually stripped of their

leaves by goats. This happened while the school master was on leave. A few of the stripped trees were transplanted into the chief's compound and died shortly after. Really, no one had the time or energy to transplant the trees and carry water for them. Carrying water is women's work, and the women are already busy from dawn to dusk. Exit the trees.

But the villagers had their pump. They knew it wasn't intended for general use, but they were accustomed to having the use of it anyway and were very unhappy if the school master ever refused to unlock it. The old schoolmaster had been pretty agreeable about letting people use the pump, but when his replacement, a Riymaibe, came in April, the new man started using the pump as a weapon against the villagers. He ordered the women who were using the pump to carry water to his house for use in some construction he was undertaking. Normally when anyone has a construction project he hires a charette owner to haul water by the barrel. But the women's reaction was that they were free-born Peul and Peuls do not carry water for captives. The school master locked the pump. (This tale was related in a project staff meeting by our monitrice, herself a Dicko, who was very self-righteous about it and took the same point of view as the Peul women. She was warned not to get involved in village squabbles.) On another occasion the school master demanded 100 francs from each woman using the pump so that he could buy grease for it. The women refused. The school master locked the pump.

One day while I was at the office a German fellow who works with UFC came out, saw the condition of the trees and the pump, and angrily ordered his workers to take out the pump. On my arrival I met with angry demands that I go back to Dori and bring back the pump. I explained that I couldn't do that, and after having people demand that I give them my water and coming home another day to find that someone had emptied my canari the whole thing blew over. The explanation given by UFC for the affair was that they had put in a second pump on the agreement that the school master would maintain it. He had not done this, so they took it out.

The villagers, however, felt that they were being punished because of the trees. They had almost certainly lied about wanting them so as, they thought, to get the pump. The government-installed pump was broken, the other JFC pump too far from the other quarters, so, they said, they would be forced to use standing water from the rains and there would be sickness in the village from drinking dirty water. All because of UFC--which had in the end, still given the other pump.

I have related all of these stories, which I hope have not been too long and drawn-out, to illustrate a point. This little history shows that Bouloy is like a microcosm of everything that can go wrong with rural development projects. Analyses and criticisms have been made repeatedly of authoritarian, ill-conceived, top-down development projects and yet the same mistakes continue to be made. That villagers learn to resort to deceit and develop a dependent attitude in response to them is not surprising. There is also a lack of cultural understanding here that I think is important. Behaving in an authoritarian manner, obviously displaying wealth, and giving out cadeaux are all characteristics of a traditional leader toward his dependants. Traditional leaders are obliged to take care of their followers. It follows, then, that people who view themselves as poor will react as dependants, emphasizing their poverty and expecting to be taken care of. Once this expectation of being taken care of is established, it is almost an insult for the leader to refuse. There is no formula that I know of for getting people to work for their own benefit once this kind of pattern is established. I think that only very consistently good, well-explained, patient, and well thought-out work with the villagers may overcome this pattern.

## II. Implementation

This has continued to be a difficult area to work in. There were severe money problems, the project's checks having gotten lost in the mail, and there were some not-terribly-popular reforms instituted within the last three months. I was advised by the interim project manager to just stay away from the office until the whole thing blew over, but I didn't want to appear to withdraw from the project. So I continued to work at the office where I served the function of general flack-catcher. I did not, however, try to push myself into what was going on because even casual, conversational questions of mine got answers that ranged from evasive to hostile. I think the monitrices felt that they were being punished for the failings of the project, which were certainly not all their fault.

People also undoubtedly thought that I was checking up on them. So I did not try too hard to press questions on what was going on, and I was promptly cut out of everything. Loan groups in the villages were organized, rather quickly somehow, during the first 2 weeks in April while I was stuck in Ouaga with an illness. I didn't even find out about them until May, and then it was from villagers who thought that I should've brought their money. Staff meetings on Fridays were started, I don't really know when, and even though I was at the office several times on Fridays (not one of my regular office days) I was not even told that they were being held. Now that I know about them I am going to them, of course.

Something I have been trying to convince the project personnel of since February is to stop antagonizing the villagers with enquetes. Some of the questions included in the first enquete were rude by local standards, and people are tired of being asked questions without seeing any results anyway. Nevertheless, the project agreed to do another enquete in April, on the foyer ameliore. I was told about it until the whole thing had been arranged, then it was presented to me as something which was being done for the Ministry, which, it turns out, was not true. When I reminded some of the project personnel that the villagers

were fed up with questions and said that I thought it would be better to build some stoves in the villages so that people could see how they worked first, I was told that the villagers were "forced" to answer the questions. I certainly hope that we're not running another authoritarian community development project, but if I can't convince people to change that sort of attitude I have no authority to do anything about it. Now that I know about the staff meetings and am attending them I at least have a means of finding out what is going on and a forum for explaining my views. I am also developing a much better working relationship with the monitrices now that they have gotten used to the idea of living in the villages and I have the opportunity to talk to them regularly.

I mentioned the problems of the attitude of some project personnel about money and of the way this was presented to the villagers. The people of Bouloy obviously don't understand the role of the village committee and are just chafing about being kept waiting for the money they feel they were promised. Obviously something went very wrong here; the project should never have been "sold" to the villagers in that manner. It is routine, to be expected, that educated townspeople like to play the role of big man to villagers. This almost always happens and is not really much of a problem in and of itself. What can be a problem is the extent to which it is done, and it seems to have been over done in Bouloy. I think that part of the fault must lie with AID's anxiousness to get the project together and make loans quickly. This was passed on in a too direct manner to the project personnel. It is easier to get villagers to agree to participate in a project by telling them that they will get loans than by telling them that the project will help them solve their problems because they have heard too many promises like the latter before. The solution, of course, is to find another village if the people in one don't want to participate without being promised money, but that takes time. It is also easier to get people to organize village committees, answer questions, etc. if they think that they must do this to get money. Their experience with other projects tells them that they must go through

various motions to get what they want, but they don't understand community development.

The attitude of some, not all, of the project personnel toward the project is another matter. It is important to avoid the appearance of extravagance, and I'm not sure that this has been done. For example, we use more expensive motorbikes than the other projects. If and when it is necessary to get better quality bikes ( or anything else) this should be done, of course, but the reason for the extra expense should be made very clear. Otherwise this is interpreted as conspicuous consumption, just as important a cultural phenomenon here as in the States, maybe even more so. Any sort of extravagance creates a reputation and expectations which we don't want.

#### Summary of Work in the Villages

The director told the monitrices that they should arrange to take their vacations before the loans are made, so things will probably be a little slow for the next month.

Pendo will live in Bouloy when the project director and the chief arrange a place for her to stay. Poor Pendo has been stuck with the two worst villages, and is quite naturally a little frustrated.

Koria--This village should have been replaced long ago, but the director seems reluctant, for some unknown reason, to approach the prefecture about the matter.

Bouloy--This situation has been described above. The women from the 2 quartiers where the Centre Sociale works are not only uncooperative but also troublemakers. I have suggested to Pendo that she tell these women (and the chief) that there are no cadeaux and that if they don't want to participate without being given gifts that they are free to withdraw. If she has not done this when I get back from Ouga I will do it with her. There is no collective field in Bouloy because of lack of cooperation. There are, however, four groups waiting for loans: one of Bellah women who do leather work, one composed of women from all quartiers for petty trade, one composed of women from all quartiers who want to buy small livestock, and one of Peul women from 2 quartiers who want to buy cotton for filage.

Jematou--Originally she was to work in Debere Talaata and Kampiti. The people of Debere Talaata refused to work with the project, and for some reason another village has never been chosen to replace it. Because of factors of distance, one of Amnatou's original villages, Katchirga, was transferred to Jematou.

Katchirga--There are two loan groups here, one composed of women from all quarters who are interested in petty trade and one of women from one quartier who want to buy small livestock. The monitrice is living in this village.

Kampiti--The Centre Sociale gives out foodstuffs in two Riymaibe quartiers here, and the women from these quartiers won't work with the monitrice at all without being given gifts. The Peul women don't work with the Centre because they prefer cow's milk and butter to the canned milk and oil given out by the Centre. (This is also true in Bouloy.) They are willing to work with the monitrice, but, she says, they are "afraid" of credit and haven't formed any groups.

Amnatou works and lives in Ouro Ahidjo, her one remaining village.

There are serious health and water supply problems here. Amnatou wants to start a health education program. She has already started this on her own but feels that she could be more effective if she had some instructional materials and health training. There are two credit groups, one of women who want to buy small livestock and one of men who want credit for thread for weaving blankets. The monitrice wants to arrange an instructional program for the women, whom she says are interested, in improved methods of livestock rearing. There are no other development projects working in Ouro Ahidjo.

Soumaye--Wendou--Soumaye stays here. There are no other projects working here, but the women here organized a sewing/handicrafts cooperative some time ago. Soumaye says that no one came in and organized this, the women did it themselves and it works very well. This handicrafts group is interested in obtaining credit to expand their business, and there are also credit groups in filage and blanket-weaving.

Mbanga--There is a severe food shortage here. Soumaye was asked if the project could loan millet to tide the people over until the harvest. The director said no. The chief of the village went to FDC to ask for the same thing. FDC doesn't normally work in Mbanga, but they agreed to do this as part of a food storage-collective granary program in cooperation with our project. The director has not yet met with FDC to arrange this. There are 3 credit groups in this village, one for blanket-weaving, one for petty trade and one for filage.

Adizatou has a housing problem. She is now staying at the home of the president of the women's committee in Peokoy but will stay in Oulo when a place is found for her there.

Oulo--There are 2 credit groups here, one of Bellah women who want to buy materials for mat-making, and one for filage.

Peokoy--There are two credit groups here, one for commerce and one for small stock-raising.

I discussed the small-livestock projects with the monitrices. None of the village groups aim to build up herds. The women want to buy lambs to raise and sell at ~~Maski~~ and to buy kids to fatten and sell for meat. There is less interest in poultry. Even though there are children with marasmus in several of the villages, there is no concept of buying animals to improve the family diet, e.g. goats for their milk, among the village women. Some of the monitrices see this as a problem they want to work on.

The project encadreurs are organizing collective demonstration fields. The village women provide the okra seeds (this is the most popular crop) and the project provides fertilizer and fungicide. The plots are measured and divided in half, one side is used for cultivation by the traditional method, on the other the modern products are used.

Amadou has a transport problem. Partly because of this he hasn't started work in 2 of his villages, Bouloy and Korja, but then there is nothing happening in Korja ~~and~~ a lack of interest in an agricultural project in Bouloy.

Mbama--Amadou is living and working here. He has been working in cooperation with the Ecole Rurale school master in getting the collective field organized.

Ousman works with Jematou in getting back and forth between Kampiti and Katchinga but can't get to Ouro Anidjo on a regular basis because it's too far away, and he doesn't have his own transport yet.

Ouro Anidjo--The encadreur was able to organize a collective field during his brief stay here. He also had a request to work with some young men but hasn't yet been able to follow up on it because of lack of transport.

Katchinga--Ousman stays with the ORD encadreur who lives here. He says the collective field is going well.

Kampiti--Ousman has not yet been able to organize a collective field here because there was an initial misunderstanding with the women about the type of crop to be planted and several members of the women's committee have been ill or absent since then. He says he is going to try again to get the women together this week.

Huse ni has a motorbike but no house in a village. He says he's going to move into Peokoy when the chief gets back from Ghana to arrange for a place.

Peokoy--There is a lack of interest here in any agricultural project for the women and the encadreur hasn't yet tried to work with the young men. He says the village is too far and the road too bad now to go there on a daily basis.

Oulo--There will be a collective field here, but it is not underway yet because the chief hasn't chosen the site.

Wendou--The encadreur hasn't started work here yet.

All the monitrices and encadreurs have expressed an interest in learning how to build the foyer ameliore and in having one in their villages.