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TRIP REPORT - UPPER VOLTA

Dr. Liliane Toumi

May 1981

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Introduction

Located in the Sahel, Upper Volta is divided into 10 departments and 44 subregions. A coup recently shook the country (November 25, 1980). Upper Volta is an independent republic since 1960. It's population of over 7 million is characterized by a permanent emigration toward Ghana and somewhat less, toward the Ivory Coast.

All of these population exchanges are taking place around the big axis of the RAN (Abidjan-Niger Railway), which connects Ouagadougou with the port of Abidjan.

There are less than 100 physicians in the whole country.

Government Policy with regard to Population Matters

The Ministry of Health holds a rather poorly defined policy towards birth spacing, and the fertility rate as well as the natural growth rate seems to be at an acceptable level for them. The policy is such that it seems directed instead towards the creation of MCH centers (PMI's). Birth spacing seems to be considered a part of maternal/child health, and not a demographical problem. The policy is not, in reality, a pronatalist one. Family allocations are paid at a rate of 700 FCPA per child, but just up to a total of six children per family. This rate is not indexed, in fact, it has decreased since independence: before, it was 2560 Francs per child.

There are also very few public schools. There are private schools, for which tuition is very expensive. Only 11% of children are attending school.

Overall, and in particular, all the physicians, the young ones especially, seem motivated and feel concerned by the problem of spacing births.

Family Planning History

The first contacts were made in 1971 at a conference organized by UNICEF and UNESCO, with Mr. Pradervan (Swiss) working with a Canadian organization (Quakers). He proposed to hold a seminar on population problems in Upper Volta, and an invitation was extended to two women from Upper Volta to attend an 8-week course in Canada. It was also proposed to open a training center in Upper Volta.

1972: The Quakers held and financed a seminar on family planning. It included 50 participants recruited from among the midwives, social workers and representatives from youth movements, as well as the observers who requested permission to attend. The seminar took place over 3 days. The lecturers came from Benin and Togo, as follows: Dr. Assamoah/Togo (ATBF); Dr. Gadagbe, Canadian demographer;

Mr. Koulibali Philippe Sidiki, present treasurer of the AVBEF (Volta Association for Family Welfare).

1974: 2nd Seminar held by the Quakers. 60 participants; a success. Many observers attended. Lecturer: Dr. Sabwa (Zaire), present UNFPA Coordinator in Ouagadougou.

1977: 3rd seminar on family planning. At this time, the Quakers proposed that a family planning center be opened, which they would finance over 5 years, and then, after this period of time, the equipment would be left in place and the government would take over responsibility for this center. The government of Upper Volta refused this proposal. That is when IPPF's assistance was requested.

1978: Mrs. Jacqueline Tapsoba attended a seminar in Dakar on mass media, and made contact with IPPF. She is presently the IPPF coordinator. In January 1980, the statutes of the AVBEF (Volta Association for Family Welfare) were drawn up and registered. In January 1981 the statutes were given official acknowledgement. The AVBEF is only 5 months old. A center is being created in Ouagadougou, another center will be established soon in Bobo Dioulasso. AVBEF is financed entirely by IPPF. The subscription is 500 FCFA. AVBEF regroups the various associations and religious communities. Conferences are given by each group.

Projects by the Association

1982 Interest overall in integrated medicine and the creation of PMI (MCH) centers.

1982 'Year of the Adolescent'

They are thinking of holding a seminar for professors, teachers and educators, to reach those young people attending school as well as those not enrolled. It will be financed by IPPF. A meeting is therefore being planned for November 1981 to evaluate 'youth consultation', which will allow them to plan for the seminar projected for 1982, and to know what subjects in particular need to be covered.

The seminar will be held in two parts: - intellectual group
- 1 group of young people, from urban and rural settings.

They need to invite to this seminar, as lecturers: (all French-speaking)

- one gynecologist
- one psychologist
- one demographer
- one sexologist
- one young educator for the rural area participant

Principle subjects to be raised:

- sexuality/contraception/contacts
- morality/ demographical problems
- population/social problems
- forced marriage/excision/cultural problems

JHPIEGO could assist as follows:

1. Send competent persons from Upper Volta to training courses, so they learn how to organize and start up an integrated medical center.
2. Send a JHPIEGO consultant as an observer in November 1981, to the evaluation meeting for the 'Youth Consultation' Conference.
3. Participate in the 1982 Seminar. I could help by recruiting French-speaking lecturers here in-country (from Upper Volta).
4. Remarks
An IPPF retrospective and prospective survey on abortion could also be proposed together...the first 6 months of the evaluation could serve as a research model.

General Field Visit Schedule

May 11, 1981 Arrived at Ouagadougou Airport at 12:50 hours.
Met by Dr. M. Harper.

Went to Hotel de l'Indépendance. (Moderate priced hotel, OK accommodations).

15:30 hours: Dr. Harper came to get me to go to USAID. Met with Fathi Ouadraogo, Social Worker, and AID Coordinator, who I had met already at a conference in Tunis in 1977.

Met Mr. Meyer, USAID Mission Director. Short discussion with Dr. Harper and Mrs. Fathi concerning the different problems in Upper Volta with regard to JHPIEGO programs, training, hospitals, etc.

16:30 hours: Visit to UNFPA Offices. Met with Dr. Sabwa Matanda, former GYN Department Head at Mama Yemo Hospital, former IPPF coordinator in Nairobi, and now UNFPA coordinator for three countries (Niger, Upper Volta, Mali).

While in his office, I met Mr. Essan Niangoran/Ivory Coast, demographer and economist - a UNFPA coordinator in New York. He was with Dr. Sabwa on an evaluation visit. These two persons would make excellent French speaking lecturers.

The various UNFPA programs must be approved by the government and, for the birth spacing part, automatically go through the Ministry of Public Health.

Both explained to me the difficulties encountered in convincing people to include birth spacing in the programs. They have an important program on sex education. The first seminar took place in 1976/77.

For all services of the Ministries, youth movements and for the three religions, a recommendation report was prepared for the DAFS. (Direction of functional and selective alpha-betization). Sex education is provided to target groups, i.e. grade 12 students and university students. Such programs should be extended to the general population (women clubs, rural centers etc.).

Goals of these programs:

- 1) population and birth spacing information
- 2) formal and informal sex education
- 3) writing of a reference manual
- 4) creation of a real sex education program
- 5) approach of all problems, even abortion.

15 teams should be formed, to do an evaluation and organize in August and September, 1981 a retraining and evaluation seminar in Bobo Dioulasso.

Remarks: it would be interesting to have the participation of the AVBEF people who will be preparing the 'Youth Consultation' Conference in November, prior to the Bobo-Dioulasso Seminar.

18:30 hours: Meeting with Dr. J. Kabore to discuss the schedule of the next day's operations and of the installation of the laparoscope. Several cases were scheduled for the next day.

20:30 hours: Dinner at Dr. Sabwa's house, with Mr. Essan. We continued our conversation on the problems of Upper Volta.

May 12, 1981

08:00 hours: Visit of the Ob/Gyn Department of the Yalgado Ouedraogo Hospital. Met the Chief of the Department and the medical staff.

DESCRIPTION OF THE HOSPITAL

The Yalgado Ouedraogo Hospital is the largest principal government Hospital of Upper Volta.

Only one private catholic hospital is being inaugurated. There is one other center, one of the oldest in Ouagadougou: the Oualigouape Hospital, where traditional midwives are being trained. Mrs Ouaharo Maria is in charge of this program.

Almost all physicians in Upper Volta belong to the field of Public Health.

MEDICAL STAFF

Dr. Mathias Some of Upper Volta: was trained in Leningrad. Nominated in Kaya, in the North-East. Would like to specialize in Ob/Gyn. Needs to participate in a laparoscopy training program. Gave application to Mr. Wallace in Tunis at the beginning of June.

Dr. Sano Daman of Upper Volta: was trained in Bucarest. Nominated in this Department, would like to specialize. Application form given to Mr. Wallace. Will also be in charge of a research program in MCM for IFRP.

Dr. Fatmata Traore of Upper Volta: Studied in Angers(France). Was proposed by mistake for the Baltimore July Administrators Course. Fortunately, her participation was cancelled: she would like to specialize in Ob/Gyn; could be suggested for an Infertility course: does not appear to me to have the physical strength necessary to perform laparoscopies. During the trial, she was unable to push the trocar into the abdomen.

Dr. Joseph Kabore of Upper Volta: Chief of the Ob/Gyn Dept. Studied in Paris, Dijon. Works at the hospital, plus has a private practice. Enjoys an excellent relationship with the present government. Ex-deputy, trained in Tunis.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT

- about 3000 deliveries per year. Dr. Kabore is Chief of Department in 5 maternities, which together perform about 1200 deliveries per month.

- Family Planning: pills and IUD's.

Dr. Kabore says that he inserts 600 to 750 IUD's per year between the Hospital and his private practice.

11:00 hours: installation of the laparoscope. The CO2 bottle was leaking and emptied itself within a few minutes. We had to operate with room air. We had some difficulties obtaining sterile water. Mercryl-Lauryl and general anaesthesia were used for every case.

13:00 hours: did two cases:

- 1 diagnostic case of infertility
- 1 tubal ligation

16:00 hours: Met with Dr. Ouedraogo Payade of Upper Volta. An application form should be sent to him. He is the Chief Physician at the Dori Hospital. He has a surgical, Ob/Gyn and medical training. Had a 1-1/2 year training at the Ouagadougou Hospital. Studied in U.S.S.R. Is very interested in attending a laparoscopy training program, but does not have an adequate operating theater to install a laparoscope. I advised him to contact IPAVS and request equipment from them.

FAMILY PLANNING IN THE DORI REGION

Region of North Sahel, populated mostly with moslem Peuls. Very underdeveloped, very populated; however infant mortality is low. No pills, no IUD's. One can purchase pills in the Hospital Pharmacy.

May 13, 1981

08:00 hours: the morning was dedicated to operations: Performed three diagnostic cases. Lost some time, because we had to do an emergency operation for recidivist extra-uterine pregnancy. The extreme frequency of extrauterine pregnancies in Western Africa must be stressed.

15:00 hours: Met with Dr. Ouili Saïdou, of Upper Volta. Studied in France. Surgeon and Ob/Gyn. Chief of Department at the Yalgado Ouedraogo Maternity prior to Dr. Kabore. Was nominated chief of Department in Fadda after the November 1980 coup.

FADDA NGOUMA HOSPITAL

This hospital was created by the French 'Frères des Hommes'. At first, the idea was to create a center for four countries (Benin, Togo, Upper Volta and Niger), since it is located in a central area. It is the capital of Upper Volta's largest department. It is located in the East and populated mostly with Mossi and Gourmanches.

The paved road only goes as far as Koupela, but it will soon go as far as Fadda, to make an opening towards Niger and the Arly National Park; this will probably take place next November. There is an airport but the flights are irregular.

The hospital includes a service of Pediatrics
a service of Surgery
a service medicine
a service nutrition
a service infectious diseases
a service maternity-gynecology
(40 beds)

There is no Family Planning Center.

CURRENT MEDICAL STAFF:

Dr. Serme Doro, Physician-Director

1 French pediatrician, who changes every second month
1 specialized nurse has all other services

Dr. Ouili Saïdou for Ob/Gyn

I gave two sets of application forms:

- 1 to Dr. Ouili Saïdou for laparoscopy
- 1 to Dr. Serme Doro for the administrators course.

They will return them to Fathi Ouadraogo at AID.

I also left 1 paramedical application form, for Dr. Oualli's choice.

N.B. I unfortunately did not manage to go to Fadda (there was no convenient flight, and to drive is too time consuming (350km).

May 14, 1981

08:00 hours: Morning spent at the hospital. Met Mrs. Fathi Ouadraogo, to arrange some more appointments with people from Public Health and with the AVBEF personalities, as well as with staff from the Feminine Condition. Met Mr. Grahl, Chargé d'Affaires of the United States; explained to him the purpose of my visit to Upper Volta. He is very interested in our program.

May 15, 1981

08:00 hours: Met the General Secretary of the Ministry of Health.: Colonel Didier Ouadraogo, military physician. I had asked for an appointment on the day before to inform him of my intention to visit the interior of the country, i.e. Bobo Dioulasso, second town of the country, and Fadda, important town in the East. In the absence of the Minister, Dr. Keylen, who was attending a conference in Geneva, he asked me to wait until the Minister came back, on the following Monday. I was very disappointed since I had wanted to travel during the week-end and be ready on Monday; this was forcing me to prolong my stay. He described to me the position of the government, which is an attitude of expectation: they are waiting for the first initiatives from private associations and from the medical profession. He likes the idea of a national seminar, but he advised me to organize it with the help of the CESAO (Social Studies Center for Western Africa). The headquarters are in Bobo Dioulasso.

Unfortunately I did not have a chance to get in touch with them, but we could write to them. I left disappointed and without knowing what to do, i.e. leave on the Saturday as originally planned, or wait for the Minister's decision.

10:00 hours: Met with the Chief of the Cabinet of the Social Affairs and Feminine Condition Minister. Mrs. Kome was not there. The Chief of the Cabinet is M. Koulibali François. His position is the same as the government's, but he personally assured me of his support.

12:00 hours: Went to the hospital to perform a diagnostic laparoscopy on a young French lady from the Cooperation.

15:00 hours: Met Mr. Grahl, Chargé d'Affaires for the United States in Upper Volta. I explained to him my problem, and the General Secretary of Health' refusal to let me go to Bobo Dioulasso and to Fadda. He was very surprised, and believes that the reason was that the topic was contraception. He promised to phone me on the next day to tell me whether he has been able to personally do something about this.

May 16, 1981

08:30 hours: Mr. Grahl called me to say that he had tried to intervene by the authorities, without any success. He advised me to drop my plans.

09:30 hours: Met Mrs. Jacqueline Tapsoba, wife of J.B. Tapsoba, who was the Ambassador of Upper Volta in Washington after the Independence. Mrs. Tapsoba belongs to the Union of the Women of Upper Volta; she is the executive secretary and administrator of IPPF; she also belongs to AVBEF as a secretary. She told me the history of the creation of the association, and reviewed some actions undertaken in Upper Volta since 1971.

We discussed the problem of induced abortion. Lots of people perform illegal abortions, one famous one is in jail. He was charging 10.000 FCA per month of pregnancy. Many women use abortifacient plants, Coicedra bark and even boiled honey: they make a drink out of it, which sometimes provokes serious intoxications. They also use ovules in the vagina, which sometimes provoke vaginal perforations, hemorrhages and sequels of adhesions and synechres in the cervix and cul-de-sac, which in turn of course create dystocial problems at the delivery, permanent sterility and only rarely the abortion hoped for.

After the 1974 seminar, the members of the Union of the Women of Upper Volta requested that young pregnant girls be allowed to stay in school. There is no legal text, an arbitrary system is being applied: young girls are no longer fired, except from boarding schools. Often the request for abortion is due to the traditional family pressure. We also discussed the problem of excision in Upper Volta. Excision is mostly practiced on the Mossi plateau. It may

be performed eight days after birth among the Moslems of the North-East. Excisions and circumcisions are done by seasons or periods (for example, after the rainy season) in Mossi girls aged 12 to 15. Sometimes it is done before the wedding, or after 1 or 2 children, depending on the ethnic tradition. Excision is done without anaesthesia, with a stone knife (matrone) or with a razor; cicatrization takes two weeks; the women are not allowed to scream; they sometimes die from a hemorrhage. After this long conversation, Mrs. Tapsoba advised me to not leave, and to go with me to the Ministry of Health on Monday morning; she insisted that I should go to Bobo-Dioulasso and meet Mrs. Kone-Bibiane.

16:00 hours: Had a drink at Dr. Sabwa's place (FNVAP), where I met M. Koulibali Sidiki Philippe, demographer and Director of the Demographic Research Center in Ouagadougou. He is the treasurer of AVBEF; studied in Canada.

Mrs. Koussowbe Marie-Madeleine studied in Treichville, Abidjan. She has a diploma in midwifery, she is responsible for the Banfora Hospital (in the South-West). She would like to participate in a course/seminar for midwives during the school vacation (she has children). She does not appear to be overly interested in Family Planning, although she practices it. She has trouble accepting permanent sterilization.

May 17, 1981

Sunday. Worked on my report.

May 18, 1981

Morning. Met with Mrs. Tapsoba, who took me to the Ministry of Health, where we were received right away by Mr. Nougou Hilaire, who in the absence of the Minister, gave me right away the permission to go where I wanted in the interior of the country. I called Mr. Grahl at the embassy to let him know my decision. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP: Departure at 12:30 hours with a group from UNICEF for rural development, until 130 km from Bobo Dioulasso; from there, hitch-hiked with two Germans. Arrived at 19:00 hours at the RAN Hotel in Bobo Dioulasso.

May 19, 1981

09:00 hours: BOBO-DIOULASSO HOSPITAL. Met the Director of the National Hospital, B.P. 676: Dr. Henri Bouchard. He belongs to the French Cooperation; he is a surgeon. The hospital has 700 beds, plus annexes;
18 physicians.

FRENCH MEDICAL STAFF: 2 surgeons
1 resuscitator
1 otorhynolaryngologist
1 ophtalmologist
2 generalists
1 biologist
1 anatomo-pathologist

PHYSICIANS FROM UPPER VOLTA: 3 surgeons

7 other physicians.

There is a registered nurse school. They recruit at the level of B.E.P.C. (end of first part of high school). All diseases are treated. Abortions are performed by aspiration, and frequently by Kanman probe.

11:00 hours: visit to the Urban Health Dispensary.

I went to the PMI, one of Bobo Dioulasso's main urban health dispensaries. Met the Director of the center, Dr. Male M'DAYE Albert (B.P. 468, Bobo Dioulasso, Upper Volta). He is a Senegalese from the School of Dakar and has been in Upper Volta for 45 years. He is the president for Africa of a social support association which is affiliated with FIDAF (International Family Action Federation). This federation is interested in Family Planning, although through natural methods. Dr. M'DAYE is against the distribution of pills to a population where 95% are illiterate. Pills imported from Ghana are being sold on the black market anywhere. Dr. M'DAYE is too old for the administrators course (68 years old).

Dr. Sawa Doro Omar of Upper Volta. He is the assistant Chief-Physician of Health and will be replacing Dr. N'DAYE Male. His position is rather opposed to Family Planning.

The dispensary includes: prenatal consultation
pediatric consultation
postpartum consultation

There is no Family Planning Service. Dr. Sawa should be sent to the administrators course. His position is clear: he gives the pill upon request of the couple, not of the woman alone. Glycemia, cholesterol, hepatic tests are done.

In case of a pregnancy in a young girl, illegal abortions are performed, leading to numerous complications. 70 to 80% of the girls in the last years of high school or in University are pregnant. Virginity is very important in the Sahel. Illegal abortions are done with poisons: K Permanganate. Another problem is the transmission of venereal diseases, syphilis.

15:30 hours: Met Mrs Kone-Bibiane in the Ob/Gyn dept. (B.P. 603, Bobo-Dioulasso). Studied in Abidjan with Prof. Singaret and in Paris. Chief of the Ob/Gyn Dept. Deliveries: 6000 per year

Abortions: 600 per year, most complicated.

The demand for abortions is enormous. There is little syphillisin the area, and very little gonorrhoea.

This physician should go to the laparoscopy training in January/early February. She cannot go for more than 3 weeks because she has a four month old baby. She also is requesting material for the Nurses School. I gave her a French application form for Tunis. Should be contacted.

Dr. Navs is the departmental Director of Health in Bobo Dioulasso. I did not have a chance to meet him. Returned in the evening to Ouagadougou.

May 20, 1981

09:00 hours: Meeting with Mr. Grahl to report on my trip. He appeared to be satisfied.

10:00 hours: Last contact with USAID.

15:00 hours: Met Dr. Sabwa who had come back from Niamey and brought back some information for me on the PIEGO program in Niger.

16:00 hours: Visit of Cenatrin (National Data Processing Center), B.P. 1132 Ouagadougou, Tél. 33238. The director is M. Compaore Michel. The project director is M. Sawa Dogo Alain (IBM M370, 125 Model). It is possible to record and analyze a program there.

May 21, 1981

11:00 hours: departure for the airport.
Arrived in Paris in the evening.

OTHER HOSPITALS IN UPPER VOLTA

Koudougou

Chinese physicians

Gaoua

German physicians

Banfora

Dr. Théophile Compaore

general surgery training

no operating theater

Studied in Dakar and Lomé

Competent in Ob/Gyn

Nouna

Dr. Hien Sophar, surgeon.

Has an operating theater; trained at Patric Lumumba (Kiev)

Nursing School

School of Midwifery

School for assistants and social workers

Registered nursing school (end of first part of high school level)

All these schools are in Ouagadougou.

There is a registered nursing school in Bobo Dioulasso.

JHPIEGO Corporation

Johns Hopkins Program for International Education in Gynecology and Obstetrics

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Carol Salts
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J Wiley

August 27 1981

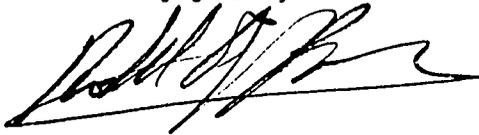
Dr. Andrew T. Wiley
Project Monitor
DS/POP/TI
Room 215, RPE
Agency for International Development
Washington DC 20523

Dear Dr. Wiley:

Enclosed for your information and review are copies of the trip reports of Drs. Liliane Toumi and Habib Toumi concerning their visits to Burundi/Upper Volta/Lesotho and Haiti, respectively.

We would be most interested in receiving any comments you may have with respect to these reports.

Sincerely yours,



Ronald T. Burkman, MD
Director/JHPIEGO

RTB/JF/vjc

Encl.