The assertion of rights to agro-pastoral land in North Cameroon: a cascade to violence?
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Citation for published version (APA):

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Baba Deli: moving borders, moving opinions

"You see these riverbeds? These used to be the boundaries of the grazing area. You see the millet field on the pasture side of these riverbeds? Its position asks for crop damage by cattle, don't you think? And you see these poles that indicate the new boundaries? Can you see how they have ruined them and tried to pull them out?" Yes I can see it all and I can see the different ways in which different users here try to claim rights to the land.

The vast territory of Dzambou, a Kapsiki village on the plateau in the middle range Mandara Mountains of the Far North of Cameroon (see Figure 6.1), has always been used for two different purposes, namely agriculture and cattle grazing. Apart from the fallow lands between the fields being used for cattle, a specific area was more or less set aside as a pasture reserve. For approximately ten years, however, several agriculturalists have been cutting trees and bushes in this zone to make space for new fields. Another group of Dzambou inhabitants are contesting this invasion heavily and are trying to formalise the status of the grazing lands. Decisions by the authorities regarding the boundaries of the pasture reserve and on the related user rights have met with resistance. Nevertheless, the Dzambou agriculturalists do not see the authorities as their adversaries. Instead they blame their pro-pasture co-inhabitants for manipulating the circumstances in their favour while disregarding the farmers’ interests. More than once, pro-pasture Dzambou villagers and pro-field inhabitants have clashed with each other over crop damage, the crossing of boundaries or the delineation of these boundaries as such. Feelings are running higher and higher and somewhere in the future a real conflict can be expected.

In this chapter I focus on the analysis of this conflict by explaining the behaviour of Kapsiki in reaction to insecurities and (perceived) options in the studied region. The description will follow the steps of the VoE diagram in chapter 2 (see Figure 6.2). Thus, after an historical overview that is important to understand some of the influencing factors. I start an investigation into the insecurities facing the agriculturalists. In the third section I explore their different options for improving their situation. Thereafter I will focus on the specific investment described in Box 2 of the schema, namely intrusion into another niche, in this case intrusion into the former pas-
ture area. The fifth section describes the claims of the cultivators to this new area. Subsequently, in order to pinpoint the conflict (Box 3 of the schema), the focus will be on the opposing party. Their insecurities, their options for overcoming these, and their claims are described in section 6.6. I end this chapter with a description of options and motivations of both parties to resort to, or refrain from, violence (box 4 of the VoE model).

Figure 6.1 Mandara Mountains and plateau
6.1 Background: history of the region

Dzambou is a rural village on the plateau of the middle range Mandara Mountains of the Far North of Cameroon (see figure 6.2). It is inhabited by one ethnic group: the Kapsiki. According to Van Beek (1981) the oral history of the Kapsiki distinguishes two different areas of origin. One is the Nigerian village Babere, more than 200 km to the South-West. The other is the area of Gudur, in the East, between Mokolo and Maroua. This eastern area of origin corresponds with the findings of Boulet (1984: 138) regarding their descent from the Mofu who came from the east (although further away). Generally speaking, the more northern Kapsiki, like those of Mogodé, Vité and Rhumzu, can trace their origins back to the Gudur area. The more southern ones, like those of Rhumsiki and Sir, say they arrived from the west. Van Beek (1981:118) concludes that the majority of Kapsiki villages certainly existed before the 19th century, and the most important migrations most probably took place before the start of the 18th century. This

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1 The Kapsiki society is divided into two castes: the blacksmiths (who also have an 'undertaker' role) and the rest. Origin stories of the two groups differ. The Kapsiki blacksmith are most probably all of Sukuru origin, in the north because that is where the centre of the iron operation was. Sukuru-founders are said to originate in the east (Gudur); see Van Beek (1981).

2 Van Beek (1981) points out that the Northern Kapsiki may mention Gudur as an origin area because of the important religious role Gudur plays in the Kapsiki culture (like the Mecque of the Islam, the people explain). He is therefore more sure about the truth of the origin stories of the blacksmiths of the Kapsiki, than of non-blacksmiths.
corresponds with the migration time of the "course of the seventeenth century" mentioned by Boulet (1984: 138). Arriving in the Mandara Mountains, newcomers mingled with the autochthonous population to form their present ethnic group, long before the Fulbe conquered the region.

Because discords developed in the study area between two groups from the same village and the same ethnic group, it is not so much the settlement history of the whole district and the relation with other incoming groups that have to be clarified. I therefore focus on the history of the village itself.

The settlement's origins can be traced back over several generations, when Kapsiki people started to descend from the hilltops in the south, where they had sought shelter from the slave-raiding Fulbe conquerors (see chapter 4). First, in a period that was still dangerous, they only started to cultivate the fertile soils of the plateau. Depending on the energy and bravery of the men involved, more or less extended areas were cleared and set aside for future offspring.

Figure 6.3  Settlement pattern and neighbourhoods of Dzambou
When the general security situation improved because of the colonial control, the first bush-clearers brought their wives and children from the overcrowded origin area of Sir, a rocky hill-top, to the plateau and started to live in their fields. Later, whole groups of families descended, following the example of the first clearers, and they also established fields and houses on the plateau.

The genesis of the village neighbourhoods more or less followed a pattern of radial expansion northwards, in steps corresponding with semi-circles. Some individuals came down to the most northern part (Tchibi) first and moved back to the in-between area only later (see Fig. 6.3). The result of this expansion pattern is that the inhabitants of the outer area feel more brotherhood ties with the inhabitants of the corresponding (radial) part of the inner area than with other neighbouring ‘pie-pieces’. The fact that the most eastward part of the inner circle, Oudava, belonged until recently to the village of origin, Sir, and is now an independent village means that bonds between people cut across these village boundaries.

Today Dzambou consists of one small neighbourhood (Tchibi, in the far north and separated from the rest by an extended bush area) and three big ones (see Fig. 6.3): Dzambou Centre, close to Sir; Dzambou Tndmou a bit to the north and Baba Deli, still further north and extending to the east where its southern part lines up with the northern boundary of the newly independent Oudava village. The Baba Deli territory is divided into two: one part is an extended zone composed of houses, fields and fallow land (as the rest of Dzambou) and the other is a big ‘empty’ bush area with, in a corner, a small settlement of mainly Islamic Kapsiki. This last hamlet is adjacent to the rest of the inhabited zone.

The so-called empty bush has been used as pasture for at least two generations now. All Dzambou inhabitants agree about the place of the boundaries of this area when it was first designated for (temporary) use as pasture. In addition, parts of it were and are used as fields because forefathers cleared large parts of the original forest. Villagers claim that they cleared ‘all’ the parts.

Four years ago, the government-based organisation for the Mandara Mountains (MIDIMA) declared the Baba Deli bush area, with a surface of ca 190 ha, to be an official forest and pasture reserve. For some years now, MIDIMA has been working on the reservation of forest areas in the Mountains in co-operation with the ministries of environment, agriculture and animal husbandry. For this purpose they mostly choose areas that are already forested. In this case they started to inform the population at the end of 1999. But, after they informed the population again at the beginning of 2000, it took some time before the next step was taken. Finally, in spring 2002, MIDIMA officials and the regional authorities again arranged some village meetings to inform the inhabitants about the plans. There was no option to say “no” to the whole project of ‘instalment of a forest-pasture reserve’, but the villagers were able to voice

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1 Several of the inhabitants refer to their fathers’ histories of extended forests that covered the plateau when they and their fathers came down from Sir for the first time to cut the trees. “When you climbed up the mountain (i.e. the inselberg, see photo 6.1. RN) and looked down, you could only see trees, from here to the mountains ridge in the east and all the way north”, they say.

2 Mission de Développement Intégré des Monts Mandara, based in the Ministry of Economic Affairs. Program Formation and Management of State Territory. This organisation has to organise the economic development of the region in general and to decide about what has to be done what all the land that is not (yet) occupied. As a State institute it is strongly attached to official rules and laws.

3 MIDIMA’s calculation (September 2003).
opinions on where and how. The boundaries were agreed upon during one of the meetings in Mogodé (the district and sub-departmental capital. see Fig. 6.2) with both sub-department and district authorities as well as village representatives.

However, two months later, a village meeting at the spot, in Dzambou, resulted in a clash between two groups of inhabitants. They had gathered to start the implementation of the delineation of the forest-pasture reserve. The moment the representatives of the authorities arrived with pots of paint and pointed out the trees and rocks that had to be marked as a boundary sign, some people took the paintbrushes and set to work while others refused to cooperate. Angry scenes ensued and there was a lot of yelling and pushing and pulling and fighting with fists as both groups tried to implement what they thought to be the right action. The anger was triggered by the observation that the proposed boundary did not correspond with the one that had been decided upon during the Mogodé meeting. As perceived by the villagers, this new boundary favoured a group of inhabitants that had settled within the reserve and who could now go on living and cultivating there on the very fertile soil (see the place of the "Fulbe hamlet" in Fig 6.3). Of course, those were the ones who finally put up the boundary signs on the instructions of the authorities.

6.2 Insecurities: Box 1 and onwards

This section starts on the left-hand side of the VoE diagram (Fig. 6.1) with a description of Box 1, the diminishing environmental space (scarcity) for Kapsiki. The step from Box 1 to Box 2 is not only caused by environmental insecurities. It is a complex of personal, socio-political, economic and environmental factors and insecurities (see Chapter 3) that shape the strategies of Kapsiki. These are the influencing factors, mentioned in the VoE diagram, that decide whether or not the actors will enter into Box 2 or use an ‘escape’ route.

After a description of the environmental situation, I then deal with the other (possible) insecurities of Kapsiki, in human, economic and social domains.

6.2.1 Environmental insecurities (see chapter three for information on the five indicators used)

Physical basis

Soils

Like on the rest of the plateau, the soils of Dzambou rest on the volcanic basement of the Mandara Mountains, with its gneiss, anatexite and granite. The grounds are skeletal with many small stones. They have sparse inclusions of deep soils, dispersed in the areas where rocks appear in mountainous terrains. Local intrinsic fertility can differ tremendously due to differences in local conditions of pedogenesis and alteration products. The majority of the Dzambou soils are regosolic with washed faces. The pedoclimate is dry, especially in the ‘furrowed’ zones. These soils have a very shallow usable level and deficiencies in their physical characteristics. In addition, there is a high risk of erosion. The amount of sand and small stones varies. In the East and North (the direction of Baba Deli) the soils contain less iron and are less fertile. According to Brabant and Gavaud (1985), the soils of the plateau are only suitable for

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6 A regosol is a type of azonal (with insufficient horizon development) soil consisting of shallow, medium to fine textured, unconsolidated parent material derived from freshly deposited alluvium or sands.
mountain agriculture and the production of subsistence crops. In reality, groundnut and some cotton production is possible.

Further to the east a small band of very sandy soils, with rough texture and again a dry pedoclimate can be found. However, although they also exhibit deficiencies in their physical properties and have high erosion risks, they are deep and thus less vulnerable than the more western soils. These soils have a colluvial origin. With their marginal water reserves they are thought to be only marginally suitable for rain-fed agriculture, and for forest and pastures (Brabant & Gavaud 1985: Cartes des Terres).

The same properties and suitability can be found in the soils of Sir, the origin village, where many respondents still have family fields. There, the soils abruptly change from the regosolic soils in the North to two types of soils that merge here, one dominantly lithosols and one consisting of almost no developed soils. A very limited number of areas have an alluvial origin.

In the whole region, the soils along the riverbeds are of alluvial origin and are richer and suitable for more water dependent crops such as potatoes, rice and fruit trees. The general data about soil fertility does not give enough information about individual situations. Nor does it provide us with an insight into the perception of farmers of their own fields. However, this general data shows that a dry period will seriously affect the production possibilities of the farmers, because of the low water capacity of the soils.

The vulnerability of the soils to drought and erosion, and thus to loss of production capacity, is enhanced by the hilly aspect of the region. The area does not have really steep slopes (except for some inselbergs with foot slopes of 45 percent and cones that arise more or less vertically (Photo 6.1: see the centre pages of this book), but at least half of it extends over low hills. Most of the land has a slope that does not exceed four percent, but some slopes can be as steep as ten percent.

Without special measures, here the soil is washed away quickly when the natural cover has gone. According to extension workers and certain more educated villagers, over the generations terrace-building knowledge and capacities have declined, so now even low degree slopes suffer from erosion. The nutrients are transported to low lying parts in the terrain where they are carried off by streams or lay unused because of the risk of flooding when rainfall should be higher than usual.

Climate
As explained in Chapter 4 (and also in Chapter 7) the Mandara Mountains receive a higher precipitation, have lower temperatures and lower temperature extremes than are expected at this latitude. Nevertheless, differences in precipitation per locality are as great as in the rest of the Sahel-Sudan zone. Data from the two nearest pluviometric stations - those of Sir and Mogodé - concerning the second half of the 1990s show that Mogodé, which is only 8 km to the north and 13 km to the west (see Fig. 6.2) and is at a slightly higher altitude, has totally different

*CPCS and FAO call this 'washed tropical soils of colluvial origin' and 'ferruginous' or 'white luvisol' (see Brabant and Gavaud 1985).

This period is considered as a time that 'normal' precipitation was finally restored in the Sahel and Sahel-Sudan zone after the drought years of the 1970s and 1980s. In this big region, 1997 and 1998 are even considered as relatively wet, as also reflected by the data in table 6.2.1.

Sir lies at an altitude of 920 m and Mogodé at 850 m.
precipitation rates to Sir. The precipitation is higher or lower without any significant pattern, although in Mogodé the rainfall generally seems to be less (See Table 6.2.1).

Table 6.2.1  Precipitation in Sir and Mogodé and differences over the years 1995 – 2002 (the minus sign in the ‘difference’ row means that Sir precipitation was less than that of Mogodé; no sign means the reverse).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir</td>
<td>896</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>1287</td>
<td>1133</td>
<td>1066</td>
<td>1282</td>
<td>1286</td>
<td>935</td>
<td>1085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogode</td>
<td>991</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>1182</td>
<td>1068</td>
<td>735</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1049</td>
<td>1039</td>
<td>964</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>difference</td>
<td>-95</td>
<td>-36</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>-104</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The yearly mean fluctuates around the 1000 mm (see also Table 7.2.1), but over the years, during the years and throughout the region, precipitation differs enormously and unpredictably (see Figure 6.4).

Figure 6.4  Mobile average precipitation over 5 years in Sir and years with poor spread of rainfall (black dots).

According to the inhabitants of Dzambou, rainfall has diminished over the years. “Apart from occasional outbursts, like the one we had seven years ago, that washed away many houses and crops, the amount of rain is far less than what we were used to in the past, when I was young,”

10 several respondents remarked. The younger ones refer to the stories of their fathers and grandfathers about the abundance of rain and year-round river water. This goes as far as “Then they could fish in this river until April.” Most probably they were referring to a longer rainy season and therefore greater infiltration.

10 Source: Beauvillain (1995) and data from the agricultural service Mogodé and Catholic Mission Sir.
11 “Seven years ago” refers to 1995.
12 In January 2003 “this river”, the one that (between other things) forms the boundary between Oudava and Baba Deli, was already no more than a dry bed.
Indeed, the precipitation pattern before the 1970s seemed to have been satisfactory. Nevertheless, even at the end of the 1950s the North of Cameroon suffered from a drought (see Figure 4.3).

At the same time, the farmers explain that not only the amount of rain or the number of months is important. In the whole of Dzambou, farmers refer to the year 2002 as a dry year ("The water in the rivers will disappear earlier this year, and perhaps even the deep-dug water wells will run dry before the new rains"), but for agriculture it was good enough, because the rain fell evenly divided over the days. "Each time the crops needed water, it came down". But, as they realise fairly well, the reverse can also be the case. Table 6.2.6 shows the absence of a correlation between total year precipitation and production (when precipitation is within the normal range). The two years with the highest precipitation have the lowest grain production.

In general the flow of surface water of Mogodé sub-department is to the south-east although on a lower scale level, water may flow in another direction due to the position of slopes. The groundwater flow is south-east as well. This means that part of the water availability depends on run-off from the north. Unfortunately the precipitation in the north is less than in the area itself.

In short, soil types and the location of soils, the high erosion risk as well as the variability of the precipitation and water availability makes the area an insecure one as far as agriculture is concerned.

Population density

Although the sub-department of Mogodé was only created after 1991, the chieftaincy (lamidat) of the same name can be used as a reference to trace back population growth because the two have the same territory. Table 6.2.2 shows the population densities in the study area over the years. Differences in population density in the Mogodé sub-department are considerable\textsuperscript{13}: from vast areas with almost no inhabitants at all to local zones with more than 150 inhabitants per km\textsuperscript{2}. Apart from the sub-departmental capital, Mogodé proper, one of these last is the territory of Sir. ‘Empty’ zones are the areas which, up until now, have been dedicated to pastoral use.

Two or three generations ago the whole of Dzambou region, but especially the northern parts, could be considered as empty. In Dzambou Centre some houses must have been present at the end of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and the beginning of the 20\textsuperscript{th} century because that was the period during which the first babies were born there. Based on the birthplaces of respondents, their fathers and grandfathers, over the years a minimal number of houses per area can be deduced\textsuperscript{14}. Although this amount has obviously increased, even today the population density is not very high (Table 6.2.2).

According to calculations of Dietz et al (2001), in the Sahel-Sudan zone a farmer can subsist on 0.25 ha of arable land per person. Dependant on soil type, to maintain field fertility

\textsuperscript{13} As in the whole department the plateaux as a whole are relatively sparsely inhabited, while the steep northern Mandara Mountains have a high population density (see Van Andel (1998) or Zuiderwijk (1998)).

\textsuperscript{14} In 1945, only one house was constructed in the Baba Deli area and in the Tindou area. More to the south at least nine houses had already been constructed. In the two northern areas the number of houses had grown to five by the end of the 1950s. Dzambou centre increased to approximately 12 households in 1959.
when no chemical fertilisers are available, at least 0.5 ha should be added for fallow rotation. EVEN THEN, in the Dzambou region, each family should be able to do more than feed itself, having (on average) 3 ha to use per person.

Table 6.2.2 Development of population densities in the study region compared to the Province and mountains as a whole (sources: Beauvillain (1989: 590) and Djonwe (2001) and own survey 2002-2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface (km²)</th>
<th>1945 Inhab/km²</th>
<th>1959 Inhab/km²</th>
<th>1976 Inhab/km²</th>
<th>1995 Inhab/km²</th>
<th>2002 Inhab/km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>n. av.</td>
<td>33*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogode</td>
<td>736</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandara</td>
<td>7.660</td>
<td>n. av.</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Far North Province</td>
<td>48.125</td>
<td>n. av.</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = In 1945, in addition to the existence of some houses (11), many fields had already been cleared and were in use in the Dzambou area. 76% of respondents' grandfathers were born in Sir. Most of them created fields on the plateau next to that hilltop when they had grown up

* = In 2002, Dzambou village comprised 184 households with approximately 7.8 persons per household (a total of 1435 persons)

Land availability

The whole of Dzambou territory extends over 44 km² (see Table 6.2.2). In 2002, 2020 ha thereof were used for agriculture. Apart from a small proportion that is too steep (far less than 10%); see above) the rest, being 1980 ha, is available for animal grazing. This seems to be a situation of abundance.

Yet, the growing population means the land available per person is diminishing. In addition, land is not evenly divided over the families. Some households dispose of extended fields that have to be shared with only a small number of people while others own only a small area. Moreover, the location and spread of fields over the total area differs per family. This influences production possibilities as the fertility of the soils varies greatly and "far-away" fields are less easily maintained and cropped, or protected from wild or grazing farm animals.

Some farmers do not use their bush fields, either because they are too far away, or because they are situated within the forest-pasture boundaries. They sometimes prefer to rent land. Sometimes this is only temporarily. Once a fallow period has restored the fertility levels of their own fields they use them again. Table 6.2.3 shows the ownership of land among respon-
dents (almost all household-heads) and their forefathers, as well as used and fallow lands. Because families, and therefore respondents, used to judge their property in terms of fields instead of in hectares these figures can only be used to compare the current situation with that of the past, not to compare property with the actual surface area.

6.2.3 *Surface in fields and ha and ways of acquiring land* per category of respondents, their father or grandfather, and within or across village boundaries. NB the numbers of fields shown should not be added to the given ha because respondents indicated the areas they had acquired in one of the two ways.\(^a\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of fields</th>
<th>Bought(^a)</th>
<th>Inherited(^a)</th>
<th>Cleared(^a)</th>
<th>Shared(^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (n = 180)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>69.5</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Dzambou</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathers (n = 166)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Dzambou</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand-fathers (n = 143)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
<td>Surface (ha)</td>
<td>Number of fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside Dzambou</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\) = These three columns refer to privately owned fields  
\(b\) = ‘Shared’ means fields are collectively shared with other family members  
\(c\) = The number of respondents who cleared fields themselves is 35 (19\(^c\)\%); all of them performed this work when they were young. They are now more or less over 50 years of age, except for two young Fulbe men from the ‘Fulbe settlement’ in the Baba Deli neighbourhood (40 and 27 years\(^c\)). Because the men aged 50 started their clearing exercises when very young (at 15 or so), one can deduce that new clearing was possible up until the mid 1960s.

The table shows that field clearing was done by fathers and grandfathers. Later, all the land had been already opened up and the current generation of farmers had to rely on other methods to increase the size of their property. At the same time, the table shows a kind of concentration towards Dzambou territory over the generations. The fact that most grandfathers started their agricultural life in Sir (that is outside Dzambou) and certainly cleared fields there is clearly shown.

Although people bought or inherited fields to enhance their arable surface, these transactions diminished the surface of other persons and families. Most of the time, purchasing turns out not to result in a more evenly division of fields among the inhabitants since only the rich could (and can) afford to buy. There are several families who started letting fields, gained a lot of money by doing so and then added to their already sufficient surface by buying more. They

\(^8\) Surface of fields can differ tremendously from respondent to respondent, but not over the generations within one family. Field surface can range from 1 ha to more than 5 ha

\(^9\) These two are cattle keepers who started cultivating when grown up. They do not know the difference between primary and secondary forest and they assumed that they cleared their plots as first clearers. However, Kapsiki cultivators tell me that their fields were already cleared from vegetation in the past. One of them was given a plot in the direction of Sir by the *lawan* of the Fulbe settlements. This field was originally in the possession of the *lawan* himself, having been cleared by his father.
were also able to benefit from long fallow periods and the subsequently high production of crops that could be sold at the market.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.2.4</th>
<th>Surface of arable land per class of obtaining over three generations (n of respondents = 180, but 15 of them do not know at all, 14 times they do not know about their fathers and 37 times not about their grandfathers), surface in ha and fields (f)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean surface</strong></td>
<td><strong>Range of surface</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (privately owned fields)</td>
<td>4.5 ha - 4.4 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (shared fields)</td>
<td>1.5 ha - 7.4 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (rented or borrow fields in = 62)</td>
<td>0.9 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (privately owned fields)</td>
<td>3.6 ha - 8.5 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (shared fields)</td>
<td>1.0 ha - 6.9 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (rented or borrow fields in = 62)</td>
<td>0.8 ha - 18.6 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (privately owned fields)</td>
<td>0.13 ha - 5.8 f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (shared fields)</td>
<td>1.8 ha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents (cropped fields)</td>
<td>0.5 ha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = Information about renting or borrowing by former generations is only sporadically available (mostly only about compound fields of fathers). For that reason I left it out of this table

b = The number of fields indicated here by respondents reflects only the short-term fallow periods that respondents think of when asked. They do not think of long-term, more family-field related fallow.

The number and surface of shared fields in the generation of the respondents and that of their fathers seems to be approximately the same (Table 6.2.4), but the number of people sharing differs over these two generations because the total number of persons has increased. On average fathers had to share their fields with 3.4 brothers, respondents with 3.5 brothers plus all the 3.5 sons of their 3.4 uncles and the current generation will have to share with, again. 2.7 brothers and the off-spring of uncles etc.². So, what was used by only one household-head in the time of grandfathers now has to be shared with 12 household-heads. In the future this will simply rise to 32 or more.

² This number is somewhat lower because this generation is not yet complete, with 48 % of households heads under 50 years of age.
Commoditisation of land

Although buying occurs more often than in the past, prices do not reflect a land market as such (see section 3.1.2, Table 6.3.3). The idea of quickly rising prices is a perception of the cultivators that increases their feeling of insecurity with regard to access to land.

The fact that more land is demanded than is available can be seen from the rapid rise in the position of land as a commodity. Tables 6.2.3 and 6.2.4 show that land sales started two generations ago, but only gained in importance over the years. In general, the insecurities of especially the poorer families with regard to access to land are increasing. The rise in the value of land due to a greater number of sales means the practice of lending land for free is diminishing. In the past, renting cost at most two chickens and a jar of beer per year. Nowadays rent prices have increased to between 10,000 and 40,000 Fcfa/ha. Nevertheless, it is still possible to borrow at what was called a renting price in the past. Some field owners (and renters) consider compound fields to have more value and ask (or pay) more for them. For example, one respondent expressed his willingness to pay twice as much for a compound field as for a field in the bush of the same surface and fertility.

Calorific needs and production

Amount of production

The production figures for Dzambou are based on 2 different sources: one is the production as recorded by the researcher according to the respondents (that is, based on memory and estimation). Most of the farmers can only recall the production of last year and the year before (see Table 6.2.5). The second source, recorded in Table 6.2.6, is the production figures of the village over the years recorded by the sub-departmental agricultural service (in Mogodé²¹).

Apart from maize the agricultural production is lower than the North Cameroon mean yield for 1988-1989, and there is no downward trend in production per ha (see Table 6.2.6). The sorghum production is especially low. This can be due to the mixed cropping system used by Kapsiki, which spreads risks and is environmentally sounder. The farmers claim that the production of beans and groundnuts make up for a low grain production in ‘bad’ years, because in such years these products can grow better, while the grain plants do not provide that much shadow. Table 6.2.6 confirms this expectation for beans in exceptionally bad years, such as in 2000. However, the data given by the respondents themselves over that year is strikingly different from that of the agricultural service and do not even confirm that 2000 was a bad year²².

Another (or added) reason for the lower sorghum production can be that the overall (North Cameroon) mean is high because of the high production in some preferable areas, such as parts of the Diamaré, south of Maroua²³. In spite of the relatively stable outputs, the farmers encounter insecurities with regard to production. On an individual or group level incidental causes, such

²¹ Although Sir region officially has a regional representative from the agricultural service, during the last two years this civil servant was out of office due to training.

²² If we assume that the figures of the agricultural service are true, the higher data given by the respondents would indicate that the inhabitants ‘forget’ difficult years. However, it is more probable that the service data are somewhat unreal, because they are based on extrapolations of a restricted amount of measurements.

²³ According to De Steenhuijse Pters (1995) sorghum yield in the Diamaré (Gaban) was 1600-2500 kg/ha. On the other hand Chapter 5 showed that the rain-fed sorghum production in Kolara in 2000 was 856 kg/ha (and in 1999: 959 kg/ha), only slightly higher than on the plateau.
as monkeys in the neighbourhood of the inselbergs, can cause a crop failure. In the year 2000, caterpillars devastated the young sorghum plants of more than one cultivator. Table 6.2.6 also shows the absence of a correlation between total year precipitation and production.

Table 6.2.5  Production and surface used by respondents’ households (n = 180) over two years.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop</th>
<th>Production in 2000</th>
<th>Production in 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean household (in kg)</td>
<td>Mean household (in kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>465.2</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>34.7</td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundnuts</td>
<td>200.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>78.0</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamb nuts*</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallowb</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>891.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These figures are most probably underestimated. Bambara groundnut is a typical women’s crop, but mostly recorded here by male household heads. Although checked where possible by asking the wives, several production figures are only guesses or are not known at all.

b These figures only show the fallow periods of fields the respondent feels (s)he left fallow (herself) himself. That is, fields shared with extended family and over which the respondent has no power to decide are often forgotten. The data not included are the ten times that respondents explained “the rest” to be fallow in 2001 and the five times they did so in 2000.

Table 6.2.6  Production per surface area (kg/ha) of four main crops in Dzambou (over the last 5 years and with the average of North Cameroon as a comparison) set against yearly precipitation. (Source: the Agricultural Service of Mogode district, not published, and Ali et al (1997) for the mean production).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Sorghum</th>
<th>Maize</th>
<th>Groundnuts</th>
<th>Beans</th>
<th>Year precipitation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>1.725</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>1.030</td>
<td>2.050</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>470 (790)</td>
<td>800 (1386)</td>
<td>500 (720)</td>
<td>1.010 (651)</td>
<td>1.133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>650 (618)</td>
<td>1.100 (1176)</td>
<td>790 (728)</td>
<td>675 (439)</td>
<td>1.066</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>925</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean North Cameroon prod. (88/89)</td>
<td>1,130</td>
<td>740</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Between brackets the production as it is given by the respondents (see Table 6.2.5)

The figures of Ali, Peters and Fozein (1997) are those for 1988-1989, published in the regional analysis (1995) of SNV (a Dutch development NGO that works in Cameroon). FAO statistics has counted a mean production for the whole of Cameroon during the 1990s of 869 kg/ha for sorghum, 1745 kg/ha for maize, 407 kg/ha for groundnuts and 838 kg/ha for beans. During the first years of the new century productions were higher with means over 2000 – 2003 being sorghum 1201 kg/ha, maize 2404 kg/ha, groundnuts 1076 kg/ha and beans 848 kg/ha.
Figure 4.4  Main geographical relief forms (see page 95)
Photo 5.1  New settlement Yameda (see page 168)

Photo 6.1  Cattle on their way to the river pass the Dzambo inselberg (see page 211)

Photo 7.1  Bana showing the original boundary between Oudda and Kila (see page 320)
Two other important crops for Kapsiki are potatoes and sweet potatoes (see Table 6.2.7). These are produced for people's own consumption. Only on very rare occasions (mostly in case of a sudden surplus) do farmers try to sell them. They are insecure crops that need a specific amount of water in the soil during growth. In general only low-lying fields or those adjacent to river(bed)s are suitable. When the rains turn out to be abundant, these fields can easily become too wet. In addition, during storage these crops can suffer from too much humidity in the soil, while they are stored in a hole in the ground covered by soil. This makes them also vulnerable to insects and termites.

**Table 6.2.7 Production of potatoes and sweet potatoes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2000</th>
<th></th>
<th>2001</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total production (in kg)</td>
<td>Used surface (in ha)</td>
<td>Number of cultivators</td>
<td>Total production (in kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>1.125</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potatoes</td>
<td>6.910</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>10.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>8.035</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>13.845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

= In 2000 seven respondents cultivated both potatoes and sweet potatoes. In 2001 this number was eight.

In addition, these crops are vulnerable to pests in the soil during growth. To avoid the build up of, for example, potato eels, the production can only be continued on the same spot for two or three years at a time. If there is no suitable surface, either the farmer has to choose, beforehand, for a lack of these additional calories or (s)he has to take the risk of producing too often on the same spot.

In the village a diversity of other products is cultivated, but in very small quantities and these are very different per household. According to the Agricultural Service of Mogodé, the whole village produced two tons of manioc and 1.7 tons of taro in 2002, but almost none of the people interviewed mentioned these products. They mention melon or other vegetables, like aubergine or onions, when they cultivate them, but none of these really add up to calorie consumption. Soybeans could help (also to add protein), but up until now these have only been produced by three or four inhabitants.

**Needs**

Because Kapsiki consider only cereals to be a real meal, they express their needs in bags of cereals. Table 6.2.8 compares the amount of cereal kgs needed per household according to the respondents with what is produced and with what the FAO has calculated as sufficient. if only

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1. Potatoes and sweet potatoes contain 700 - 950 cal/kg. The hundred or two hundred kg per producer can therefore add a substantial amount of calories. And they are rich in protein.
2. Data from the Agricultural Service mentions the absence of soybeans production until 2002. 0.4 ton compared to 0.6 ha. See also section 3.1.1 below.
cereals are eaten\textsuperscript{27}. The mean production per household is more than the household heads indicate they need, except for Baba Deli in 2001 (but that followed a surplus in 2000).

Table 6.2.8  \textit{Needs and production of cereals per average household (in kg), according to the personal perception of the respondents and the calculation of the FAO.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household members</th>
<th>Needed</th>
<th>Produced</th>
<th>Household members</th>
<th>Needed</th>
<th>Produced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adult</td>
<td>Kid</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>908</td>
<td>1.059</td>
<td>897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respondents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>1.647</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAO</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If there is a shortage, this can be made up for by buying a bag of sorghum at the market. For the richer inhabitants this does not cause any problems. It is the poorer villagers who encounter difficulties and it is this group especially that suffers a shortage of grains (see also Table 6.2.10). In addition, this group does not have enough fields to counter-play the shortage by means of a high groundnut or bean yield which they can sell. Or, if they have a surplus, they have no time to wait until the best period to sell it and buy what they need. Once again, they do not have (small) animals to serve as a safety net.

The problem is that prices of surplus products decrease while those with a low yield increase. When cereals production is low, farmers try to sell more groundnuts and (or) beans. Sometimes (as can be seen in Table 6.2.6) the yields of these crops are also low. Then the price is good, but the sale per household remains low. In other years the production of these crops is good. Then everybody tries to sell and the price goes down. Thus, buying additional cereals with the help of money gained with beans and groundnuts is an insecure and not very profitable undertaking.

Table 6.2.9 \textit{Comparison of calorific needs (according to FAO-norms) and calorific production per (mean) household per year.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kcal needed</th>
<th>Kcal produced 2000</th>
<th>Kcal produced 2001</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baba Deli</td>
<td>5,435,246</td>
<td>5,390,303</td>
<td>5,101,233</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou rest</td>
<td>4,856,687</td>
<td>4,762,912</td>
<td>4,990,604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total village</td>
<td>5,145,966</td>
<td>5,076,608</td>
<td>5,045,919</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand calorific needs can also be provided for by the cultivated beans, groundnuts and tuberous plants. As can be seen in the production tables 6.2.6 and 6.2.7. Kapsiki pro-

\textsuperscript{27} With a mean household composition of 3.6 adults and 3.6 children the calorific need per household according to the FAO norms is 15,012 kcal/day (calorific need is 2500 kcal/adult (2300 woman and 2800 man); and 1670 kcal per child per day. 1 kg cereals contains 3342 kcal (3000-3600 kcal).
duce a lot more than only cereals. Table 6.2.9 is an overview of calorific needs and total calorific production in agriculture.

As has already been mentioned, all sorts of animal products (eggs, meat and milk of own animals or bought at the market, as well as fish from the market) can add to the diet, but mostly those people with a lack of agricultural production are not the ones with a substantial herd of farm animals. The consumption of wild products is not restricted to only poor or rich inhabitants. It depends more on the household composition: children between 8 and 15 consider the gathering to be a game. Such families dispose of high quality food with high protein content (but mostly not very much in calorific terms) especially when insects (termites or grasshoppers) or animals (mice) can be caught.

With the calorific needs already almost met by the crop production and with an additional calorie supply from other sources, Dzambou village as a whole did not encounter any calorific difficulties over the last two years. In Baba Deli the situation is worse, especially because the shortage has hit the neighbourhood for two consecutive years. But within the village a high percentage of households faced a shortage of calories; sometimes even severe shortages (see Table 6.2.10). Of those that had two consecutive years of shortage of produced calories, only four percent\(^{24}\) had enough farm animals to make up the shortage with calories from milk and/or meat while two percent could make up for missing calories with milk or meat in only one of the two years\(^{25}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.2.10</th>
<th>Percentage of households without enough cereals or calories from agricultural production.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baba Deli</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou rest</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(a\) = People's perception of need measured against production  
\(b\) = FAO based calculation of need measured against production

One of the households at risk is that of Teri of Baba Deli. At an age of 38 he has two wives and seven children, six of which are under school age. The household owns 2.5 ha and therefore meets the required 0.25 ha per person. However, in the two years under study Teri and his wives did not produce enough calories to feed the family, although they dispose of a plough and a donkey to increase the cultivated surface and sow at the right time. In 2000 in particular the deficit was considerable, being almost half of what was needed. Teri says he can supply food by selling some of his goats, but he cannot supply enough calories by

\(^{24}\) Percentages of whole population  
\(^{25}\) The range of the number of calories lacking was broad: from less than 60,000 kcal to more than 5,000,000 kcal. The importance thereof depends on the size of the involved family. A bigger family can stand a bigger shortage because the per capita shortage is less. However, the number of persons who are undernourished is then bigger.
normal off-take. As a result, the shortage he experienced during these two years meant his flock decreased. In addition, he lost three sheep because of diseases and one sheep and a donkey due to theft (see also Table 6.2.11). He fears for his future and that of his children, but has no solution for the problem.

In short, the general land availability and the mean production may give rise to the idea that Dzambou does not suffer from a shortage in either of these respects. However, differences between different families and households are substantial. A poor production year or a reduction in the arable surface area may push those who are already on the margin over the edge.

6.2.2 Human domain insecurities

Health insecurities

Especially in the two northern neighbourhoods of Dzambou (Baba Deli and Tndmou) people complain about the lack of a medical post. The nearest hospital – of the Catholic Mission - is in Sir, which for them is ten or more km away across hilly terrain. In the rainy season the majority of these neighbourhoods are isolated from the south by big rivers. Also the alternative hospital in Mogodé is not reachable in the rainy season. The rest of the village has reasonable access to the hospital in Sir. Prices are not that high and the staff are well educated. Even patients from Mogodé sometimes undertake the long journey to receive better help for lower prices. Nevertheless, for more complicated illnesses and surgery the nearest hospital is in Mokolo, more than 30 km away.

Hygienic drinking water, in the form of a closed pump, is only available in Dzambou Centre, south of the inselberg. However, even there people complain about a lack of water wells. Many households depend on open wells or rivers. During the second half of the dry season, the distances people have to walk to watering locations increase, sometimes to more than 1 hour’s walk. Several of the most important diseases are water related. Almost all open wells are contaminated by amoebas and small worms. The women in the most northern part of Baba Deli filter the well-water with cloth, but still, many inhabitants suffer from diarrhoea and stomach ache.

In the past, some of the wells were guarded against misuse (for example by children) by elders living nearby. Nowadays, however, this community task has disappeared. With this, the level of insecurity regarding water has increased. The construction of new wells is a difficult process. Digging in the rocky underground is only possible using heavy machinery. One of the Mandara Mountains development organisations (PDRM) or the Catholic Mission are willing to help, but only after a preliminary effort by the population itself. They have to start digging the first (easy) layers (with borrowed PDRM utensils) and gather a reasonable amount of money to invest in the work and building material needed. Up until now the social fabric or motivation of the neighbourhoods involved does not seem to be strong enough (see Social Insecurities).

\[\text{\textsuperscript{16}}\] In Dzambou Centre there was even a lock and set opening hours.

\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\] Projet du Développement Rurale des Monts Mandara, the institute responsible for, among other things, the water supply in the Mandara Mountains which was partly financed by the European Union.
Educational insecurities

Both in the whole country and in the Far North province Kapsiki are considered to be one of the most backward groups as far as formal education is concerned. In the whole village only 28% of the household heads have ever received some form of education which sometimes means only a couple of months of the first years of school or some adult literacy courses. In Dzambou many young adult Kapsiki constantly mention this fact, while stressing the need for more and more accessible schools. North of the bigger rivers there is only one primary school, but this does not offer a full curriculum. Up until 2001 the rest of the village or the children that wanted to continue lessons up to the last primary school classes depended on the mission school in Sir. From the northern part of Baba Deli this means a two hour walk twice a day. What is more, in the rainy season the road is blocked by the rivers. Some of the parents in the northern Tndmou neighbourhood choose to send their children to primary school in Viti, but doing so isolates them a bit from the rest of the villagers.

Sir also provides some secondary school education, but in order to prepare for the first official exams and diplomas (after three years) the children have to go to Mogodé, which is even further away and more expensive. To gain a real baccalaureate, pupils have to apply to schools in Mokolo or Bourah where they will have to board. Because this is expensive and unsafe for girls, most parents do not consider this as an option. Sending away adolescent boys means sending away a labour force despite household costs increasing.

Several of the men who attended school for less than 2 years now regret leaving school prematurely. In some cases it was even their own fault since their parents wanted to invest in their education, but they themselves did not want to go. They feel less secure in these modern times without any knowledge of French (the official language and thus the language by which to communicate with authorities or in court) and without the ability to read and write. “We do not know our rights. We do not know what the authorities are talking about, or what they want, so we cannot resist them. For example, now they have taken my lands! And without any reimbursement!”

There are various reasons why some members of the population did not send their children to school at all. In most cases it is because, when these children were young, schools had not yet been built in the region. Only a small proportion explains that they lacked money. However, this did influence schooling levels as in many families only the education of a part of the children could be paid. And more often than not, for those that did attend the payment of school fees stopped short after some years of education and they had to leave.

In general Kapsiki feel deprived of information. They complain that the only agricultural or health-related information they get comes from the extensionists of the Catholic Mission. This church demands strict Catholic lifestyles of their employees, so when one of them divorces or marries a second wife his contract with the Mission is ended. This not only diminishes his income and his own knowledge, but the amount of new information for his fellow inhabitants as well.

Iyébi-Mandjeck (2000: 139) mentions a level of education of Mayo Tsanaga department of between 20 and 40% in 1987. Attendance by girls is again the lowest of the Far North Province (2.8% of pupils being girls as opposed to 6% for the whole Province).

Viti is a village to the north-west. From Tndmou it is reachable by way of a small bush road along the western boundary of the pasture reserve. From the main (north-south) road turning eastward one can reach it by a reasonably good road.
The Baba Deli neighbourhood in particular, that is even more isolated than the other Dzambou neighbourhoods, is almost never visited by workers of the several organisations that are trying to help develop the Mandara Mountains.

6.2.3 Economic insecurities

Cash crop

The Kapsiki plateau is a specific groundnut producing area. Indeed, men and women all produce at least some groundnuts, not only for personal use, but mostly for the market. Like the Bana further to the south (see Chapter 7), Kapsiki are the victims of a tremendously variable groundnut price. Over the years and over the months prices have ranged from 10,000 Fcfa to 20,000 Fcfa per bag of 100 kg. The farmers do not benefit from high world market prices. According to Pasquet and Fotsó (2000: 92) the groundnut variant produced by Kapsiki is sold mainly in Douala and other southern towns for use as groundnut oil or in snacks. When individual Dzambou inhabitants try to sell in the south themselves, they are worse off because they do not know their way around and are easily swindled.

Some of the more water-retaining soils are very suitable for fruit trees and several families in fact possess tree gardens. However, most guavas, grapefruits and lemons are eaten by children because of the lack of an all-season road that connects the Dzambou region with the outside world. At best some off-take can be sold at the weekly market in Sir. However, this market is very restricted and only serves a small region. In addition, the products have to be carried there by the farmers themselves or by donkeys. Potato cultivation is hampered for the same reason. To make it possible to sell potatoes from the Baba Deli or Tndmou neighbourhoods a long track through bush and fields has to be cleared of overgrowth every year. The same applies to onions, garlic and egg-plants, produced in small gardens around the house or along the river. It may add to household consumption diversification, but it does not help to improve the economic position.

Farm animals

In 2002, Dzambou accommodated 763.7 Tropical Livestock Units (TLU), excluding poultry and pigs. Although there are major differences between cattle and small stock as regards what they eat (graze or browse\(^35\)), one can generalise by saying that this amount of TLU needs 916.4 ha, provided that all feed produced by the pasture lands is available throughout the year\(^36\) and that it has a sufficient protein content. When counted using the calculation of Gaston (1996) the surface of grazing land needed is 3 ha/TLU (0.33 TLU/ha). That would mean a total requirement of 2.291 ha. The ha left for animal grazing in 1980 should have been enough (namely: 0.39 TLU/ha) in the first case but were not quite sufficient according to Gaston. However, now crop residues (stubbles and stalks) are added to the diet, I assume that there is enough surface area. Although, during the rainy season, the pasture zone is also visited by cattle from other villages in the region and perhaps from even further away, there are also cattle

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\(^{34}\) For example, in December - January, when the fruits are ripe, a grapefruit on the Sir market costs 50 Fcfa. compared to double that price in Maroua, the provincial capital.

\(^{35}\) Total edible forage production depends on the ratio between herbaceous and woody cover. On the other hand, the potential usable forage depends on what type of TLU use the area.

\(^{36}\) The most optimistic calculation of Breman (1975) is a carrying capacity in the 1000 mm rain belt of 1.2 TLU/ha (see chapter 4.2.1).
owners from the village who herd their flock in one of the pasture areas outside the village to escape problems related to field damage. The increase in numbers during the rainy season may exceed Gaston's 0.33 TLU/ha that is the limit on a yearly basis, but not the 1.2 TLU/ha of the optimistic calculation. During the dry season, which is the main limiting period for cattle\(^\text{17}\), the total number of TLU decreases even below the 0.33 TLU/ha due to some out-transhumance. This number can easily live off the remaining dry matter even when, as Boudet (1975: 2) stated, "approximately half of the biomass produced at the end of the growth period vanishes [...] during the dry season" when preserved from grazing\(^\text{18}\). In short: there is no overstocking of the vegetation-for-fodder resources in this area\(^\text{19}\), although the situation is not one of extreme abundance.

There is, however, a problem with water availability in the dry season. No artificial water-point has been constructed throughout the 'pasture' area of Baba Deli. When natural rivers run dry, herds have to depend on the one well that has been dug for animals in the middle of the hamlet, far away. The owners of small stock say it is impossible to walk so far with their animals each day.

Due to the combination of heat stress and a lack of water, which both also lead to decreased immunity against contagious diseases, the loss of small ruminants in the second half of the dry season is high. This adds up to diseases prevalent in the rainy season (see Table 6.2.11).

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Diseases dry season & Diseases rainy season & Diseases whole & Theft \& Theft > 5 years ago \\
\hline
Baba Deli & 33 & 39 & 70 & 54 & 20 \\
Dzambou rest & 52 & 34 & 86 & 50 & 11 \\
Whole village & 42 & 36 & 78 & 52 & 16 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Percentage of respondents with animal losses over the last five years. (Data on diseases prevalent among ruminants, donkeys, horses and poultry; theft of ruminants, donkeys, and poultry)}
\end{table}

Another insecurity problem is formed by the high risk of livestock theft in the three isolated bush areas of Dzambou: the Baba Deli pasture, the bush dividing Baba Deli from Tchibi (adjacent to the pasture area and Baba Deli settlement) and the bush area just north of the Tndmou settlements (just south of the pasture area). Sometimes animals are even stolen from within the settled areas. Several households suffered from theft more than once. In a two month period at the end of 2001 at least five cases of theft of cattle, donkeys, goats or sheep were reported. Over the years almost everybody has suffered from this type of loss (see Table 6.2.11).

People who do have animals do not generally succeed in increasing their herds in a way that makes real trade possible. In order to trade cattle a high basic investment is necessary for each

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\(^{17}\) According to Breman (1975) and Boudet (1975).

\(^{18}\) See (e.g. in Chapter 4.2) De Leeuw and Tohill (1990: 2) about the loss of biomass during the dry season. In the presence of grazers, however, the part over which this 'climatic' decline takes place is smaller because the animals have already eaten part of that biomass.

\(^{19}\) According to Breman (1975: 6) to "avoid the risk of destroying the grassland beyond repair during relatively dry years". 0.7 TLU/ha is more realistic in the 1000 mm belt and this is still more than the amount in Dzambou.
animal⁴ and most inhabitants do not have the means or are afraid of losing too much if their animals die or are stolen.

In fact, the percentage of people with cattle or with connections to cattle decreases. Several more fathers and grandfathers than current respondents were the owners of cattle.

**Insecurities in non-agricultural activities**

**Off-farm activities**

Given the low education level in the village, there are few off-farm possibilities in terms of paid jobs, whether with the government or other organisations. In the past some Dzambou youngsters used to go to Nigeria in search of jobs but the increasingly unsafe situation there means this is not an option either.

Kapsiki are not very used to labour migration, but some are realising that they should perhaps start considering this now. But, they do not know where to begin and are therefore in a disadvantaged position compared to other Far North ethnic groups.

Each village needs a butcher, a tailor, an undertaker. However, these are only job options for a very small number of inhabitants. The growing outside market, that seems to open up possibilities for outsiders and not for villagers, means that more and more cloth and meat is imported. Such a market should have provided opportunities for trade, but the larger market demands larger investments and villagers seem to lack the funds to make the initial step. Several of them complain about the stop on small credit possibilities. One generation ago, it was still possible to borrow government money in Mogodé without having to provide real collateral. However, those who counted on this option are these days very disappointed. Animal banking and trade is also insecure due to the various diseases and thefts that affect the region.

**On-farm activities**

Several farmers and their wives are active in the production of household utensils from raw materials that are available in the direct vicinity. However, the products are mostly for own use because, once again, transport to regional markets is almost impossible. Even when people make the effort to construct traditional products and transport them to the market, they are outnumbered by cheap plastic products from Nigeria that are imported on a bigger scale each year.

Wives can earn with *bilbil* (local sorghum beer) production or bean-flour fritters, sold at household gatherings or the local markets. However, the increasingly popular Islamic faith and the Lutheran church forbid the drinking of alcohol.

In short, modern economic possibilities are not very abundant, while traditional sales are, at the same time, diminishing.

6.2.4 Social insecurities

**Family and group insecurities**

Within the Kapsiki culture the extended family in both the patrilineal as well as matrilineal line

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⁴ A year-old calf costs 60,000 - 80,000 Fcfa. Fully grown cattle can fetch a price of 150,000 with big bulls sometimes costing 300,000 Fcfa.
is important. As we have seen, the patrilineage offers access to fields and other economic inheritance. However, for care and social security one has to rely on the matrilineal family members. In particular, brothers and sisters of the same mother have a strong bond. At the same time the level of insecurity is high for those children that lose their mother at a young age. When they are still very young, they are claimed by their maternal family. Indeed, they have to live with a maternal grandmother or mother's brother, because co-wives do not often take care of their husband's other off-spring. Such children can only stay within the household if the father's mother lives in the same house.

However, this phenomenon does not increase insecurities because all Kapsiki are used to it. If a wife temporarily (or permanently) leaves her husband's compound, her children have to be looked after by the husband himself. Especially when there was only one wife in the compound, this puts a burden on the man's (and household's) security, because he cannot take care of his children, cook the meals and cultivate at the same time. The increase of Christianity with its one wife policy is adding to the difficulties.

In the past, village chiefs could obligé women to return to households with very young kids to enhance survival chances, but nowadays even the lamido does not want to interfere in such domestic problems. Several complaints submitted at district court level (= lamido's court) by fathers who have been left by their wives are deliberated on year after year without any solution being found for the stricken household. Sometimes the father’s mother lives in the same compound and she will then look after motherless children, but this is only possible for one (the oldest) son.

With the increased expectations of modernity, expectations between family members, and especially between family in law, have risen to a level that can only lead to disappointments. Postponed bride price payments for the sake of giving the young couple the opportunity to acquire some wealth only lead to quarrels because the expected wealth does not arrive and the groom cannot pay his father-in-law later on. Sometimes the discords even result in physical aggression between spouses and sometimes between brothers and brothers-in-law. Naturally, the bonds between the families deteriorate.

Political insecurities
With the increase in democratisation, people feel they should have more influence over their lives. In the past they were forgotten by the authorities, but now they believe they can choose a party which knows about their existence and which is able to implement change. Unfortunately, this has turned out not to be true. Because they were not satisfied with what the incumbent mayor had done for them and with the things the ruling party in general had done for the region, they tried to elect another mayor in the community and another party in parliament. As far as electing a new mayor was concerned they succeeded although, as they say, it remains to be seen whether he will do more for the village or more for himself. Most respondents say that they have not seen any positive changes in the six months since he has been in office.

At country level President Biya and high-level party members made their own decision.

41 In case of the beating up of a wife by her husband, neighbouring half-brothers of 'only' the same father will not interfere, as I had the misfortune to experience during my stay in the village in January 2004.
42 This habit seems to increase, and so does the number of quarrels.
Although a substantial part of the Kapsiki chose a representative of the non-governing party, the UNDP, this man has not become member of the new parliament. In fact, the number of RDPC seats in parliament has increased to more than 82% and the UNDP is only represented by one seat. The elections in the Kapsiki sub-department were labelled fraudulent. The result is that the sub-department is not represented at all. Now the Dzambou inhabitants have not only been forgotten, they do not even have a voice.

Conflict mediation

In Dzambou, as regards problems concerning private matters such as profound quarrels between spouses, when two grown-up brothers have been engaged in a fight, or when a farmer suspects his neighbour of stealing from his granary, the village or neighbourhood chief has to act as arbiter. When necessary he is assisted by wise men.

In addition, in the case of discords between two village inhabitants about the ownership of a piece of land, parties go to the village chief with their witnesses and explain their claims. Apart from hearing the story of the complainers and the testimony of the witnesses, the chief consults with his counsellors and other wise men to establish the history of the piece of land involved. The increase in bribing means the reliability of witnesses has decreased. If the accused or complainant does not pay enough to his witness (or did not pay enough in the time of the transaction) this witness will not back him up. In other cases threats are issued to witnesses to prevent them from testifying or to make them testify in favour of the person who threatens. Women seem not to have any significant role as a witness, although they can explain their point of view. When they are themselves parties in a case they have to rely on the testimonies of male relatives. Thus, money and social contacts influence someone’s position in a case. But money is gaining in importance and with that the position of poor people is becoming less secure.

Even the village chief himself can be a witness (for example in a land transaction that is contested later on by the offspring of the seller). He will not act differently from his subjects if he thinks the (previously) received witness fee is insufficient. In such a case the parties will try to resolve the problem between them or they will decide to appeal to people “higher up”. The village chief (or even the neighbourhood chief) is also the first to be consulted in the case of criminal offences (theft or personal violence). He will decide whether or not he is entitled to handle the problem himself or should inform the higher level authorities. In the event of crop damage by animals belonging to the village chief and his family, the injured party is powerless. Of course, the village chief then handles the problem himself and decides in favour of the animal owner.

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United Nationale pour la Démocratie et le Progrès.

1 This happened in a conflict over land, situated on the territory of Sir. The land was sold a couple of years ago by a woman living in Mokolo to Yaya of Baba Deli in the presence of, among others, the high chief of Sir. Yaya had an ownership paper but that appeared to be useless. The woman wanted to have her land back because she wanted to sell it to a friend of her own family in Sir. She tried first to say that Yaya did not pay the real price and then arranged for relatives (men) to claim that she could not have sold it, being a woman, and finally she asked the Sir chief to be her witness. This man, being fully aware of the sum paid and the fact that that sum was given in accordance with the asking price, gave testimony in favour of the woman. One of the reasons could be that the land was now back in the hands of an inhabitant of Sir. However, the chief admitted freely that he did not want to back Yaya because he had given him nothing for being a witness when the deal was made.

2 In 2000, this happened to the neighbour of the Dzambou village chief when she saw the pigs of the chief’s wife enter her fields. Even asking to guard them did not help.
The first person of a higher rank who people can appeal to is the traditional district chief - the *lamido* - the highest placed 'non-official' administrator. He will handle the problem in the same way as the village chief, although with more authority (and will accept a 'salary'). For more official prosecutions or settlements by judges people can appeal to the sub-department chief who will ask for official reports from the police (the 'gendarmerie'). If the sub-department chief cannot solve the problem, the parties can go to court and thereafter, to the court of appeal if necessary. Authorities themselves can charge subjects with criminal behaviour, in which case the police will interrogate them and draw up an official report. Again, this report can serve as testimony before the judge of the criminal court.

As regards combating banditry, the central government set up a semi-military anti-gang (see Chapter 4). This organisation has been accused by human rights watchers of arbitrary executions and arrests. Moreover, several people in Dzambou have told stories about arbitrarily arrested brothers or sons. People complained about an increase in personal insecurity because of the anti-gang rather than a reduction thereof. "Animal thefts have not diminished. It is still very dangerous in the bush and now you even have the risk of being arrested by those anti-gang bandits."

In the case of crop damage by livestock, the best route is (apart from settling it between the involved parties themselves) to report to the agriculture line officer in Sir or Mogodé, who sends somebody to assess the damage and calls together the special committee responsible for this type of problem (see Chapter 4). The animal husbandry line officer, the police chief and the agriculture line officer sit on the committee and the sub-department chief acts as its president. The committee consults the official lists to establish the compensation that corresponds to the damage done, and considers special circumstances for the case at hand that may give rise to a deviation from the standard reimbursement. However, this route entails a high risk of losing more money than you gain because of the corruption of the parties involved.

All cases at a level higher than village level have to be paid for by the plaintiff and the accused. That means that, as was the custom, people pay a fixed sum to the *lamido* for his generous intervention. At present, this payment is higher, more arbitrary and more influential on the outcome than in the past. Farmers say, "If you have cattle, you can always pay enough to make the *lamido* choose your side." In addition, the judging authority keeps a portion of the settled (reimbursement) fee. Thus, asserting your rights is an expensive practice. However, it can be used strategically to ruin your adversary.

Another problem may arise when land ownership is not contested between co-villagers, but with the State. In other words, when the State wants a piece of land that, in the perception of the users, is their property. Because, according to law, all land is State land as long as it is not registered otherwise. and because there are not many cultivators that have registered their properties (registration was (and is) an extremely difficult undertaking44), the chance of winning such a case is small.

*Land allocation and insecurities*

According to customary law, once land has been cleared it remains the property of the family of the first cultivator, even if this farmer did not actually grow any crops on the field in question. In reality Kapsiki established the habit of lending out land for free to whoever needed or

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44 See Fisit (1992), Goheen (1989a) and Van den Berg (1997)
wanted it (Van Beek 1978). When the French colonial power arrived, the plateaux became safer and the first clearers built houses there for their families. Also new settlers arrived from the same region of origin, called Sir (see Figure 6.3).

According to their system, access to fields should be easy and their use cheap. However, growing population numbers and increasing distances between lines of off-spring that live far from each other, cause customs to harden. More and more people ask for money for fields that were lent out in the past, or try to sell them for high prices. Some families are even chased from their compounds, where they have lived for generations, because the owner of the land decided to sell (whether he lived nearby, in the same village or even far away). On the other hand, many farmers that now live in Dzambou have lost the fields of their ancestors in Sir. They complain that they have no place to go “when, for example, locusts arrive in the village”.

Conflicts over field-boundaries or field-ownership are becoming increasingly common. Even the testimony of former witnesses cannot be trusted anymore. It seems as if the traditional territorial rules are changing into “might is right”. However, what this might is based on, or what it consists of is unclear, even to the Dzambou people.

**Cultural insecurities**

Social insecurities based in the cultural domain can be seen when people are no longer able to rely on the rules, norms and values prescribed by religion, beliefs and other traditional systems that cover this realm. As long as no shared, new systems have replaced the old ones, and specifically when the different new ones clash with each other and with the old ones, bonds and linkages become vague and perhaps even develop into something which is the reverse.

With the increase of new religions (Christianity and Islam), bonds offered by the traditional religion disappear. In 2002, the majority of Dzambou still belonged to the traditional religion (61%), but 23% were Christian and 14% Muslim. Kapsiki encountered the same breakdown of traditional binding ceremonies as the Bana of Oudda (see Chapter 7). Here again the Protestant church as well as Islam prohibits the use of alcohol that plays a role in the seasonal festivities. Instead of a shared ceremony of all villagers to celebrate the beginning of the growing season, Muslims give priority to their Ramadan and sheep festival and Christians to Christmas and Easter. In this way, a divide is created within the community.

The new religions can be the source of heavy controversies, leading to fights and casualties, as can be seen in neighbouring Nigeria. New bonds within new groups can lead to the breakdown of bonds and linkages between the groups. In such instances the social cohesion of the total village and even of the whole Kapsiki community (of Mogodé) may disappear. Indeed, the religious leaders that each form their congregation in Dzambou come from outside the village. They seem to have no intention to hold the Kapsiki together. On the other hand, they are not busy trying to turn the villagers of their own religious persuasion against those of the other religions. They preach a life of tolerance and peace. This is only logical given that

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1. Interviews with seven different household heads in Dzambou Centre, Tndmou and Baba Del. October 2001 – January 2003.
2. 15% of the population was Catholic and 9% Protestant, divided into 6% Adventists (who mostly live in their own settlement adjacent to that of Baba Del) Fulbe and 3% Lutheran Brethren.
Kapsiki themselves are very tolerant and say that people should believe what they want and make such statements as "in fact we all believe in one and the same god".

Thus, in general, it seems as if social insecurities are only slightly bigger than in the past. However, they are increasing. Major violent outbreaks against neighbouring villages may be less common than two generations ago but the number of smaller internal discords is growing. Wise old men fear for the breakdown of the social fabric of the village, because of a lack of a common enemy. Fair conflict resolution is becoming rare. In addition, the links with higher level institutions with a view to enhancing development in general is becoming a real problem.

6.3 Investments: going to Box 2

As is depicted in the "insecurity complex" in Chapter 3, when people experience insecurities in a mutually influencing complex of domains, they search for strategies to overcome these. In the "VoE diagram" it is during the step from Box 1 to Box 2 that actors perceive the different possibilities (Figure 6.2). To understand the step to Box 2 of the VoE diagram the diversity of options that lead to certain strategies and the choice for specific options have to be explored. With a variety of capitals at hand (see Chapter 2) the different Kapsiki invest in the social relationships, economic goods, personal capabilities or environmental circumstances they meet to improve their future and that of their kids. Sometimes persons do not really invest in something, but just ‘muddle through’, perhaps only hoping that their positions will improve in the future. The investments are shaped by the combined effect of each of the four categories of the Actor-in-Context model, as formulated by De Groot and Kamminga (1995; See Chapter 2): implementability of options, objectified motivations, interpretations and the autonomy towards implementation per actor. I will describe the factors that influence these options and make people chose ‘escape routes’ (downward arrows from the central part of the “VoE diagram”, see Figure 6.2) or make them follow the way to the invasion of a new niche.

6.3.1 Environmental investments

*Investments in the quality of land*

Dependent on the basic fertility of the soil, the owner (or user) has to maintain or improve this soil. To improve the quality of land, and via that the agricultural production, a natural fertilisation process, the adding of fertilisers, extra labour input or more technological equipment can be used. The natural fertilisation process means leaving the field fallow for as long as it takes to build up fertility levels again. Added fertilisers can be natural or chemical. The latter can be bought at the market, from agricultural extension organisations or via friends. Natural fertilisers consist of animal dung, household waste, leaves or stems from harvest left-overs, or several types of ‘wild’ organic matter, like leaves of trees.

Table 6.3.1 shows details on different uses of fertility ameliorating techniques. The most important in Dzambou is the use of fallow rotation. In these hills and plateaux the cycle can be very long. Mostly, fields around houses are used for longer and are left fallow for shorter periods. This is (partly) possible because of the use of household waste and it is done for convenience. Most actors reported that they use a field further away for three to five years and that
the fallow period should last at least ten years. But this is not always possible. Everything depends on the basic fertility of the location and the possibility for maintaining it with animal dung (the only option in the past for actively improving fertility) and, of course, of the other surface area available. Two of the three bush areas (that of Baba Deli and the smaller one in the direction of Tchibi) have not been used for over thirty years, as can be seen by the height of the trees.

Because Kapsiki are used to mixed cropping (mostly even three crops: cereals, beans and groundnuts), the leguminous beans can increase the fertility of the fields slightly which makes it possible for the grains to grow better. It is doubtful whether this is a deliberate choice, but the effect is the same. When the leaves of both groundnuts and beans are left on the field this increases the fertility even further.

As far as Kapsiki are concerned it is difficult to use chemical fertilisers because these are not sold in the village. Those farmers that have money to purchase them (13.9% of respondents) depend on the occasional arrival of a truck from some chemical company or other at the regional market in Sir. However, they complained that the supplies always arrive too late in the season. The effect on the field is then far smaller than it could be.

Table 6.3.1  
Fertility improving measures (in numbers and % of respondents. n= 180. Some actors use several measures at the same time)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fallow rotation</th>
<th>Animal manure (own animals)</th>
<th>Animal manure (other's animals)</th>
<th>House-hold waste</th>
<th>Natural fert (non-animals)</th>
<th>Chem fert</th>
<th>Nothing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers of respondents</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of respondents</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other ways of improving the fields is to use measures to curb surface run-off, measures to combat flooding when necessary (see Table 6.3.2) and measures to protect against pest infestation. Examples are: *Striga hermonthica* that attack millet roots or potato bacterial diseases and nematodes. Farmers can use crop rotation to combat the latter. When potato seeds are bought they are mostly treated with chemical bactericides. But when farmers produce their own seeds, by cultivating the crop twice a year (the second time during the dry season with the help of irrigation), seeds and soils can become heavily infected and agronomists recommend the use of pesticides. In the whole village, only two or three farmers try to produce a commercial amount of potatoes. Then they also try to lay their hands on appropriate pesticides.

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51 In Dzambou a large number of fields are infested with Striga plants. According to Raemaekers (2001: 54) "Striga seeds can remain viable in the soil for as long as 20 years", they "germinate in response to a stimulant produced by the host roots" and "Low soil fertility and low rainfall favour Striga infestation". Thus, after long fallow periods the parasite may still be present. Possible ways of controlling the parasite are to increase the soil fertility or to pull out the plants by hand as soon as they become visible.

52 Potato is a relatively new crop for the region and in 2000 nobody produced enough to sell on a large scale. In 2001, only one farmer in Baba Deli neighbourhood produced 40 bags (20 kg) while in 2002 two farmers had sown a substantial surface area and hoped to sell more than 30 bags each after harvest.
Table 6.3.2  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other field improving measures</th>
<th>Terraces</th>
<th>Stone ridges</th>
<th>Ridges of stems</th>
<th>Small canals</th>
<th>Nothing, although necessary</th>
<th>Nothing (not necessary)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Numbers of respondents</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of respondents</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = These canals ensure the quicker run-off of water in cases where there is a risk of pool-formation on the fields  

b = The necessity of measures is mentioned by the respondents themselves

The terraces built by Kapsiki living on the mountain plateau cannot be compared with the highly developed terraces of the Mafa and Mada (for example) in the steep mountains further north\(^2\). On the plateau the terraces are lower, at best (depending on the sloop\(^3\)) half a metre, and even that is very rare. The majority of terraces are not higher than 10 to 20 centimetres. Most of the time they are constructed by piling stones to form the wall, with a little bit of earth between them to make them stick together. The bank (the horizontal part used as field) is mostly left to form in the course of time: the run-off carries earth-particles that are blocked by the wall, and fill up the angle between the slope and the wall. The general aspect of the banks is not, as within Mafa territory, horizontal or even inclined towards the slope. Although less steep, it still follows the course of the slope. In short, most ‘terraces’, as they are called by the respondents, look like glorified stone ridges. The lack of proper building techniques and maintenance is partly due to the fact that terrace building is relearned by the current generation after the former one has neglected this traditional method of soil conservation. Knowledge is therefore not transferred effectively. Now the extension workers and their local assistants are reintroducing the techniques.

Doing nothing to combat run-off. even when this is regarded as necessary, may be due to a lack of stones in the field to build the terraces or the ridges, an inability to perform the job personally and (or) a lack of money to get others to do the work for you. Building terraces and laying out stone rows is a man’s job. Of all the respondents, only three have paid labourers to construct terraces\(^4\). This is a type of investment that will be recouped in the long run.

**Investments of quantity of land**

Not only field quality, but also field quantity is increased by terrace building. Sometimes, an area that was unsuitable before can be used after terracing. Even dividing a used slope into horizontal plots increases the quantity.

\(^2\) For the use of different soil and water conserving techniques in the northern (steep) Mandara Mountains see, for example, Van Andel (1998); Zunderwijk (1998) and Ndoum Mbeyo o (2001).

\(^3\) The slope also defines the number of terraces necessary. On hillsides, the number of walls can increase to one for every 5 metres. On average no more than one terrace wall is built every 200 metres because on the flat plant-like parts of the village no terraces are built at all. The length of each terrace wall depends on the width of the fields.

\(^4\) The wages for labourers to construct terraces depend on the number and height of the ‘walls’ to be made. For example, one older farmer paid 8.000 Fcfa (in 1999) to some labourers to construct two 20 cm high terrace walls of approximately 30 m length. Another paid 60.000 Fcfa to labourers who constructed three 50 cm high terrace walls of 10 m length in 1998.
In the past, land quantity was increased by borrowing land, but this habit is disappearing. Many residents acknowledge the reduction in the available lands due to the growing population. But the family planning program of the State has not (yet) reached the area. Almost nobody does anything to decrease the number of children born.

Investment activities to improve land surface security can be separated into two main classes. Those with many family fields activate their ownership claims. Fields that they did not use, but were used by other villagers (sometimes without asking or even without knowledge of the owning family) are claimed. This means that users are evicted or forced to pay rent. The latter can still be a symbolic amount of money or a non-monetary act to demonstrate who the owner is.

On the other hand, actors decide to buy fields to safeguard the position of their off-spring. At the moment, 28% of respondents have already bought fields. However, many potential buyers first have to save money. Their investment strategy is therefore to perform other activities in order to acquire capital. Up until now, nobody has considered looking for credit to facilitate land purchases.

As yet, land prices are not fixed. According to respondents there are some criteria, such as proximity, the general position of the field, fertility and measure. However, on the whole, prices are established between seller and buyer in a quite arbitrary manner (see Table 6.3.3). As has been said before, a real land market does not exist (yet). Although Table 6.3.3 does not show a difference in prices for different types of fields, compound fields are regarded as having a greater value. Nevertheless, there are users who do not want to pay the requested (high) price. Up until now they can take the risk of refusing because they can continue living at the location during the negotiations (which can last for years). The feeling that prices are rising rapidly (which has also not been demonstrated to be a fact in the table) makes people eager to buy now.

Table 6.3.3 Land prices (in Fcfa x 10^3 ha) over the years (based on personal information of interviewees, October 2002 – February 2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mean land price range (50 - 100)</th>
<th>Price of compound-field (mean)</th>
<th>Number of sold fields</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960-1980</td>
<td>75 - 52</td>
<td>No data</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-1991</td>
<td>50 - 110</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992-1993</td>
<td>50 - 110</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994-1995</td>
<td>17 - 128</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996-1997</td>
<td>50 - 128</td>
<td>109.5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998-1999</td>
<td>30 - 240</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000-2002</td>
<td>31 - 133</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One can say that the real price is decreased because the prices stayed more or less the same despite the value of the Fcfa decreasing enormously55, 56.

To circumvent future problems with regard to the proof of ownership, and based on rumours

55 From before independence, the Fcfa was always linked to the French Franc. The economic crisis meant a considerable rise in inflation and in 1994 the Fcfa was devalued by 50%. In 2002, 1,000 Fcfa was worth 1.5 Euro.
56 Indeed, one respondent declared that he knows of a land sale 40 years ago of 2 ha for the price of a car!
57 Adult education tries to teach people their rights and obligations. One of these is the right to land and the fact that the registration of land is a necessity.
about the necessity of registration of land\textsuperscript{58}, sales are more often carried out now on the basis of the production of transaction and ownership papers\textsuperscript{59}.

6.3.2 Human domain investments

\textit{Health investments}

In the more isolated parts of the village, like the Baba Deli neighbourhood, the importance of preventive health care is acknowledged. Groups are formed to build a hut to serve as a surgery for visiting nurses and to spread information about both the hours of such visits and about new home health measures. Some village residents take on the task of lecturing about the necessity of vaccinations and of helping vaccination teams to reach all children in the village. Sometimes this work is connected to outside projects organised by the church or a foreign NGO that has engaged the help of villagers. In those cases the ‘informers’ will probably have more information at their disposal and may sometimes even have learned useful methods of communications.

In addition, several neighbourhoods try to collect money and to engender a ‘willingness to dig’ more water wells. In the beginning of 2002, the village chief, together with representatives of each neighbourhood, visited each compound personally to explain the authorities’ intention to construct an artificial water well and to ask for financial support from his subjects to ensure the authorities indeed implemented the plan.

\textit{Educational investments}

Today’s parents are more motivated to send their children to school than in the past. The number of parents who send their children to school has more than doubled. These days, it is even considered a good investment to send daughters to school. Only five fathers out of a total of 180 do not want to invest in their daughters. But others mention the possibilities offered by highly educated girls who bring home rich husbands and accompanying goods\textsuperscript{60}. Of the 43\% of the population that does not send their children, the most important reason is that they are going to send them in the future when the children are old enough, if there is still enough money to do so. Parents dream of high-up administrative for their children, or even that they will one day become governor\textsuperscript{61} or presidential assistant. On the other hand, general knowledge of French and the juridical system are considered to be a good return on educational investments. More information, for example about land rights and ownership papers, about identity card fees or taxation levels, makes them more secure against authorities and fraudulent civil servants, the respondents say.

The most obvious reason for the former generation to keep the children at home, namely that they are needed there to fetch water or herd the goats, is only mentioned by four current fathers among all the 180 respondents. This is a real sign that schools are deemed very important, at least for the boys. Several girls are considered (more by their mothers than their fathers)

\textsuperscript{58} Most, if not all, of these papers have no formal legal status because the law prescribes special procedures and signatures of specific officials. Even those papers that have been signed by the mayor or his representative do not fulfill these prescriptions, despite the fact that the new owners have paid for them (15,000 Fcfa for example). The papers are, however, useful at local level and reduce people’s dependency on witnesses.

\textsuperscript{59} “Then she can come by car and take me for a ride and even give me some extras from Maroua”, one of the proud fathers said, or “When she has a good job, she will not bother to have children too young and then she can save a bit and look after her old father.” said another.

\textsuperscript{60} Highest administrative post at provincial level.
to be needed at home during the labour intensive rainy season and post rainy season harvest period. However, these same mothers or grandmothers are willing to pay for lessons for them in the dry season. At the adult education lessons and the literacy courses they meet several of those grown up men and women that regret their former truancy or lack of possibilities and are now trying to make up for the loss.

To give the current generation more options, the population in Dzambou Centre started a primary school during the course of 2000. They paid one of their inhabitants, with some secondary education experience himself, to act as a teacher and they borrowed the small chapel of the Catholic Church in which to give the lessons. To the satisfaction of the Dzambou Centre inhabitants, the new mayor invested community money to ensure that the teacher received regular salary payments61. Subsequently, the male population started debating how to construct a real school building. They invested time and money in discussions of the site, the levelling of the ground, the manufacture of the bricks and the inviting of experts from neighbouring villages who had gone through the whole process before and who could help with advice. As far as the other Dzambou neighbourhoods were concerned, the community investment was a sign of an unequal distribution of resources. They are not really against it, but they underlined the increased necessity of also investing in some other schools62.

The whole process of social action to obtain a school has taken many years. It shows that the village has enough social fabric to carry out collective action, but it was (and is) a difficult road, paved with many quarrels63.

6.3.3 Economic investments

Cash crop investments

The two most important cash crops as far as Kapski are concerned are groundnuts and beans. Beans are a century-old crop that originates in Africa itself. People are therefore used to producing it although, until recently, it was mainly used for consumption purposes. Groundnuts were introduced by the colonial powers. This crop served to bring the Mountain plateau inhabitants into the cash economy. From the 1920s onwards more and more Kapski became dedicated to the production of groundnuts as a cash crop. Thus, in 2002 - although every household still used beans in the vegetable sauce that goes with sorghum paste, and groundnuts in other dishes64 - the bulk of these two crops was produced for the market.

Some villagers buy up small amounts from different farmers and bring the collected bags to the regional market in Sir. Regional traders – one of them living in Oudava; locally well-known as a rich man - drive here in trucks built to pass the rocky, difficult road from Mogodé.

61 This is a strategy often applied in order to convince the State authorities of the necessity of and eagerness of the population for a school. Sometimes it works and the school expenses are (officially) paid for by the State.

62 In the beginning of the school year 2003-2004, the Catholic primary school in Baba Delt (three years course) indeed changed into a public school. However, this did not lead to an improvement, the lack of school equipment is still as acute and the teacher's salary, which was paid punctually each month by the Catholic Church until June 2003, has not even been paid once since (in January 2004). Equally, the Dzambou Centre teacher was not paid his salary either now that school is no longer a community matter but also a State matter.

63 Comparing the final result with the deep-down autonomy of Kapski households as described by Van Beek (1978; 1987), one can say that the social capital towards collective action has grown.

64 Groundnut paste is seen as indispensable for a good ‘ngari’, the sweet flour (and rice, if available) drink. It is a nourishing drinkable meal consumed particularly as the first meal on Christmas morning or of the evening during Ramadan and given to hungry travellers and visitors to market ‘cafés’ or people’s homes.
They buy a load of groundnuts to be sold in Douala. Some of the groundnuts are exported to Nigeria and some to other areas of the world, although most of the crop is intended for the Cameroonian market itself. Nevertheless, the price is influenced by that on the world-market and this can differ tremendously. The risk, however, is taken by the bigger traders, not by the villagers themselves. They have fewer investments, earn less but are more secure.

Beans can also be transported as far as Douala, albeit in smaller quantities (approximately one-third of the groundnut quantity). The majority of beans are sold in Maroua. Because more and more Islamic people use beans in their daily dishes, the internal market is also growing.

Women produce Bambara groundnuts. Mostly they do so mixed with other crops or in a small corner that would otherwise not be used. They use them to feed the children between meals and to sell. Most of the time husbands are not aware of the amounts produced. Sometimes they may have helped out a bit and have at least some knowledge, but Bambara groundnut production is really a woman's domain.

Fruit production is a good option because the area along riverbeds and on more humid slopes is suitable for the cultivation of fruit trees. Several families have so-called tree gardens where their ancestors planted mango, guava, grapefruit and lemon trees. People who own compound fields often plant trees, like papaya, around their houses. In spite of the fact that transport to the bigger markets is difficult and the villagers depend on regional markets only for sales, more then 20% of young men explain that they would like to have more trees. Everybody is expecting there to be better roads in the future. Then fruit could be sold in Maroua or even further away. Until then only handfuls of grapefruits and guavas reach the Sir market or the different village and neighbourhood markets and the income generated only serves to buy salt or sugar for household consumption, or pens and notebooks for school-children. The rest of the fruit enhances the vitamin uptake of the village children.

For several years the production of potatoes and soybeans has been on the increase. However, production is still in a kind of experimental phase and transportation presents the same problems as for all other products. Nevertheless, some farmers with suitable fields do think these crops are good alternatives. Diversification means the risks are spread. Those who produced soybeans over the last two or three years are happy with the price and with the easiness of production.

In the Fulbe settlement of Baba Delione one of the young men is trying to generate an additional income from potatoes and he is investing heavily in order to make transport to bigger markets possible. Every year after the harvest, he clears the herbs and bushes of the small rural road from his hamlet to the main road by hand using a machete! By doing so he opens the 10 km long track for a small truck that is then able to reach his stock. Although it costs him a lot of energy (and thus the need for more consumable calories) it does not interfere with labour demand elsewhere.

As far as he and other villagers are concerned, it is worthwhile asking repeatedly for a governmental investment in an all-weather road. However, nobody knows what else to do than to
ask the village chief to ask the regional or sub-departmental chief, or perhaps the mayor. This is the price that has to be paid for the poor connections between village and those at higher levels.’

Farm animals
Like in the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa animals are used as a banking system. People start by buying chicken, collect enough to buy a sheep or goat and later on purchase cattle if at all possible. This can partly be seen as an economic investment. The invested money can be returned with interest when the animals procreate. However, the real animal husbandry for profit is only carried out by a small number of village inhabitants. Although Kapsiki are known as the breeders of a special breed of cattle (Bos taurus. Kapsiki race) and they were used to cattle, it was more often than not the case that they owned cattle purely to maintain their cultural system of having a bull fattened in the house in order to be slaughtered on specific ‘holy’ occasions (see Van Beek 1978). This was no animal husbandry aimed at amassing a herd in order to live on the meat and milk or to sell the surplus to become rich.

Today, of all respondents (n = 180), only 49 have cattle (26 in Baba Deli (30%) and 23 in the rest of Dzambou (24%) and the mean number of cattle per owner is 18 (22 for Baba Deli, range 1 – 175 and 14. range 2 – 50, for the rest of Dzambou). Several different activities connected to farm animals are carried out as can be seen in Table 6.3.4. Most of the people that herd their own cattle (or have their children do the job) keep their cattle in the vicinity of their compounds, or at least in the settlement area of their compound. For example, Tndmou cattle owners take their herd no further than the Tndmou bush area just south of the Baba Deli pasture.

Table 6.3.4 Cattle related activities of household heads (n = 180)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cattle owners</th>
<th>Own child herder*</th>
<th>In herd other pers</th>
<th>Use paid herders</th>
<th>Herding own cattle</th>
<th>Herding patron’s cattle</th>
<th>Trade in cattle*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With crops as major income</td>
<td>With crops as additional income</td>
<td>With crops as major income</td>
<td>With crops as additional income</td>
<td>Herd own cattle as well</td>
<td>With crops as major income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cattle owners (n= 49)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-cattle owners</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In two instances the children herd the cattle in turn with their father
* This mean the structural buying and selling of cattle, not the incidental sale of cattle because of crisis
* On eight occasions this ‘other’ is a brother and on one occasion a son
* These people are also included in column 5 and 6
* NB The first three columns describe cattle owners that cultivate crops as their main income-generating activity.

Note: For an overview of categorisation and history of introduction of the Kapsiki sub-type of the Savanna shorthorn Bos taurus. see Rege et al (1994).
There are several livestock traders in the village, but only a few of them buy and sell substantial numbers. Some of them combine their animal trade with being a butcher at local markets, buying animals to be slaughtered soon afterwards.

To counter the insecurity of theft in the extended bush areas, people herd their cattle on the fallow surface between the fields. Now small flocks are guarded more than in the past and always in the vicinity of the houses. Zero grazing even takes place from time to time, especially during the rainy season and directly thereafter, when the risk of crop damage is substantial. Good products that can be used as fodder are the leaves and stems of beans and groundnuts.

At least five respondents had invested time and effort in the herding of someone's cattle when they were younger. However, only some of them had actually earned enough (or did not lose their calves again) to pay for wives or to build up a (small) herd.

Non-agricultural options

Off-farm activities

Some of the Dzambo men try to earn an additional income from small-scale trade. Products like sugar, salt, matches, soap and batteries are always in demand in the villages. They buy their merchandise in Mogodé, then travel from one local market to the other with just a box at the back of a bicycle and sell at slightly higher prices than they paid themselves. Profit is low per transaction, but especially in the dry season it is almost the only way to earn something.

There are some individuals who can increase their income by being a butcher (buying a goat or sheep and slaughtering it at a local market), a tailor (also possible for women), or such incidental professions as photographer or assistant to an official. The latter profession is an honourable but, with regard to income, highly insecure activity that may take up a lot of time. For example, the forest guardian, who is assistant to the head of the sub-departmental “Forest and Environment” bureau, has never been paid.

During my field visit I did not encounter people who engaged in migration labour. Some sons leave temporarily during their adolescence, but they return when it is time to marry. From then on they stay in the village. Some go as far away as Douala to seek their fortune while others choose Lagdo where they, for example, work as fish carriers at the lake’s shores. Most of them go to Garoua to see something of the world. There they work as street vendors, become guardians for richer Cameroonians and some of them even end up as robbers. The money they earn comes in handy to pay for a bride price or household utensils. One returned adventurer had bought a generator and a television and now he is able to watch programmes if all goes well and he continues to have enough money to buy petrol.

There are (young) men who structurally do off-farm labour for others, but within the village or at best in Sir or Mogodé. 5.5% of the inhabitants earn an additional income from herding the cattle of rich villagers or owners from, for example, Mogodé. Some of those herders look after their own cattle at the same time. Boys can start looking after cattle at a very young age as a way of learning the job. However, most owners with more cattle, and specifically when such an owner lives further away, want a more trustworthy and responsible herder. Looking after a herd day and night, taking the animals into isolated places to look for grazing

He complains, though, about the lack of possibilities in the village to gain money: “I could build up for the future when I was in Garoua, now I become poorer every year”, he says.
and avoiding crop damage, protecting them from theft, diseases, and thirst is a heavy task. But it is well paid: every five months the herder earns a grown calf. All the herder’s expenses while performing the work, including meals, have to be paid by the herd owner, while he also pays for medicines, salt licks and other things the cattle need.

An unusual way of earning money is by performing for tourists. The Mogodé area, with its typical rock formations and inselbergs, attracts several hundreds of tourists per year. They are interested in the Kapsiki traditions, like the ‘crab reading’ that is used to prophecy or find remedies in the case of illnesses. In addition, Kapsiki are famous for their dances. So several young men can and do form a group and hire themselves out to dance for tourists⁷.

**On-farm activities**

When overall production is sufficient, women have enough millet and bean yield to use for *bil-bil* production and the preparation of fritters. Thanks to there being a market in each neighbourhood every week and thanks to the possibility to visit markets in neighbourhoods close by, women still have the possibility to earn some money. Sometimes this is enough to pay the school fees of (some of) their children. Lutheran or Islamic women prepare fermented millet drinks, without alcohol, to sell at markets to people of the same faith.

The grasses that grow abundantly on the fallow fields between the compounds are used to make mats, roofs and especially granaries. Those who still know the ancient art can earn a substantial income from other villagers. Although people try to save for brick houses with tin roofs because that means an increased status and less frequent repairs, such houses are too expensive for most inhabitants. Granaries are still all made according to traditional methods.

### 6.3.4 Social investments

**Investments in family and friends**

Even between brothers and sisters of different beliefs, the exchange of gifts is normal and in times of crises they help each other. For example, my Lutheran host in Dzambou Centre looked after the small stock of his Islamic sister, who is married and lives in Baba Deli Fulbe hamlet. When she needed some cash he sold one of his own goats, instead of one of hers. At the same time, the dung of these goats could be used to fertilise his fields. Although this can be regarded as normal behaviour, in a way these are also investment activities, because the good relationship with his sister, and thus with her husband and his group, serve as a safety valve in times of hardship.

The fact that religion also does not cause deep divides between non-relatives is shown by this same man’s social network. He invests a lot of time and effort in maintaining or even enlarging this network. His best friends are two Muslims, one a (second) brother-in-law. They were invited to attend the Christmas celebrations and the man himself was invited in return for the festivities marking the end of Ramadan. He discusses with them how to resolve problems concerning his own parents-in-law. In addition, he sends his son to the Catholic mission school in Sir and (without payment) works for the Catholic priests when they want information to be distributed around the village. At the same time he is active in his own church. He helped put up a church building and organises services and a field which is worked collectively by church members in the more isolated Tndmou area. It does not seem to be a conscious investments strategy to maintain relationships with members of different religions. Based on the general
tolerance of Kapsiki regarding religious beliefs, he simply chooses a wide range of different people to diversify his network.

At the same time, he is an example of the young men who heavily invest in being a good Protestant. He attended all the services, read the bible, prayed at home and became a catechist. When he married his first wife, who was also a Lutheran, he hoped to be able to build a different, more prosperous life with her. When she left him, as is one of the customs of Kapsiki, he was enormously disappointed and it took many years for him to get over this.

A good strategy for both mothers of grown up sons and for the sons themselves is for the mother to live in her son’s compound. She can then help with different tasks and thereby reduce the tension that can arise between spouses. The mother herself gains a more secure place to live than between the co-wives in her husbands’ compound. Living apart from a husband but in a son’s compound is not regarded as divorce, so the mother can continue to use her husband’s fields. In many instances, the (first) son will live near his father’s house to make this arrangement possible. The only investment required is to visit the husband’s/father’s compound now and again to help with minor tasks and to deliver little gifts. By residing in her son’s compound the mother is also investing in her future security. She helps the household with cooking (for example for visitors), cleaning and the production of crops, she looks after ‘lonely’ children. She acts as a counsellor to her son when he does not want to ask his wives for advice. With her active presence she acquires a place to live in her old age, either with the same son or with one of the grandchildren.

In Table 6.3.5 social cohesion is measured with the help of percentages of people who loan out ploughs and draught animals. It has to be said that, on the whole, not many households in Dzambou own ploughs. That means that the percentages of people who can loan out ploughs are not very high either.

Table 6.3.5 Percentages of people who owned or borrowed and loaned out ploughs and draught animals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>n</th>
<th>Own plough</th>
<th>Borrowed plough</th>
<th>Own draught animal</th>
<th>Borrowed draught animal</th>
<th>Loan out plough</th>
<th>Loan out draught animal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baba Deli</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou Tndmou</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou rest</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou total</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ownership of ploughs and draught animals in the rest of Dzambou in particular, is very low (7% is three people). As a result, no conclusions can be drawn from the fact that 100% of owners loan out. This same high percentage colours the Dzambou total numbers. The only conclusion that can be drawn is that there is no difference between Baba Deli and Tndmou.

Political investments

According to tradition, the first clearer and settler in a certain area becomes the chief and his offspring inherit the position. Such a position is an honourable one that brings with it some
privileges (such as free beer at household gatherings), but mostly it is also a burden. It asks time and effort to settle disputes between the other settlers and, in modern times, it makes you the unpaid authority representative. You have to collect taxes, distribute information and voice villagers’ wishes. When higher authorities do not respond to these, it is the chief who has to deal with the angry reactions within the village and who gets the blame.

Happily enough there are still men who have the ambition to be village chief. Some even try to buy the position these days71, because of the status that goes with it. This is possible because nowadays a village chief has to be approved by the district and sub-departmental authorities. If the authorities appoint a chief who is not a member of the royal line7, his legitimacy within the village is questioned. However, in cases in which the higher authorities are involved, the village adapts itself opportunistically. Then a village chief with good connections at higher levels is handy. Villagers try to use such networks to make higher authorities aware of village needs. In short, village inhabitants do not invest in the choice of their local chief.

None of the Dzambou inhabitants deliberately tried to influence the appointment of the chief with the aim of becoming better represented at the higher level and of thereby ensuring better governance of village affairs. Dzambou people talk a lot about the appointment of chiefs once it has happened, but in the end they take things as they come and make the best of it.

The same situation exists at national level. Within the democratic system of Cameroon, citizens can (theoretically) be politically active and support a certain party that they think will look after their needs more effectively. However, in Dzambou I did not encounter more than two men who were (slightly) engaged in this process. In the whole Sir region the most active person with regard to general politics lived in Oudava8. But because he is on his own he is very vulnerable. The villagers do not seem to be aware that they can gain more clout vis-à-vis the State authorities if they give more secure support to people like him. The loss of a deputyship during the last elections made people decide to vote for the RDPC at the next elections. They are not going to invest in a more secure democratic process. This is partly due to the illiteracy of the region: many voters do not know what they are doing. They put a voting card of a certain colour in the box arbitrarily (or following the advice of a neighbour or son), without even knowing for which party that colour stands, let alone what the party’s manifesto contains9.

Conflict mediation
As is depicted in section 2.4, conflict mediation is changed in a ‘might is right’ situation. This

71 The current village chief of Oudava earned a lot of money in this way when he was young. He used it to amass a cattle herd and finally even managed to buy the position of chief.

72 The new Oudava village, a neighbouring village of Dzambou and Sir, acquired this independent position thanks to the current chief who bought his chiefship in Mogode. Both the Sir and the Dzambou chiefs very much regret this development: “brothers should stay in the same village”, they say, but what they mean is that the one lost a substantial part of his territory and the other had hoped to incorporate that same territory into his own.

73 For information about the different lineages, and the royal (Mazeu) lineage in particular, see Van Beek (1978).

74 Being the representative of the municipality, he used to be a member of the RDPC. But when he noticed the fraudulent behaviour of the administration and other RDPC members with certain power positions, he changed to the UNDP and that decision caused him a lot of hardship.

75 During the 1997 parliamentary and municipality elections, at least a third of the men that went down to the voting stations did not know that they had to vote for two different things. Several of them, while being very unhappy with the incumbent mayor, nevertheless voted for him because they did not realise that the second box was meant to put in the votes for a new mayor, and that the chosen colour represented the incumbent mayor
means that a general investment in the conflict resolution realm should aim at the improvement of the hierarchical position within the village. Then, internal conflicts will be judged by co-villagers in favour of the person of higher order. In the case of conflicts outside the village (whether with the authorities or with inhabitants of other villages) the lower placed co-villagers will make a bigger effort to support the higher-placed person, in an effort to gain a better position themselves. When the better position cannot be reached by way of wealth ranking or relationship with chiefs, other methods have to be used. One of these can be creating a name in wisdom, claiming longer term ancestry of one’s family and royalty thereof, or by demonstrating a good relationship with the higher authorities. The latter seems to resemble circle reasoning, but it is feasible, as is shown by two inhabitants who regularly visit Mogodé to help out at the lamido’s or sub-prefect’s house or court/bureau.

In addition to the general position within the village, the overall importance of one’s social network is a major factor. On the one hand this influences the hierarchical position as such (many important friends make you important too). On the other hand, if the ties between the members of one social group are strong enough, it also makes a lower placed person stronger by way of numbers. For example, if witnesses are required, really good friends are indispensable. Even if they do not serve as witnesses, their insistence in a difficult matter makes judges side with them more quickly.

In a more ad hoc sense, people nowadays tend to invest more effort and money in conflict resolution by involving the police more quickly. They do not trust village conflict resolution systems and resort directly to the higher authorities, despite them knowing that this will cost them a lot of money. They say that they prefer to pay more if it gives them more security as regards punishment of the offender. More often than not this is related to general feelings of (in)justice. There are inhabitants that are involved in year-long court sessions because they do not want their adversary to go free. Whether or not this can be seen as a long-term investment in the sense of “you can’t escape him, so do not do anything bad to him” remains to be investigated; especially when the amount of money lost is very high.

Investment in the solution of conflicts with the State is more difficult. Of course this is directly related to the political security of the whole village and the village inhabitants separately. But here again, the social network within the village or region plays an important role (see the end of this section and note 74).

The need to have more security against arbitrary actions from State officials related to accusations of criminal offences makes people again seek a better social position within the village. Next to that, they try not to upset the authorities in general, although their autonomous character defends them from being too docile. Another important domain of conflicts between cit-

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75 That this is a risky undertaking is shown by the son of one of the respondents, who visited the lamido so often that he got annoyed and forebode him to come to his court ever again.

76 A good example is the case of the field sold between Dzambou and Oudava (January 2003) in which the buyer (a sub-neighbourhood chief) was objectively in the right. However, the seller was able to claim more money, even two years after the deal, because he had more family and friends around him during the hearings at the market and they kept on coming back several days in a row to insist again and again on a re-judgement.

77 Some people simply referred to honesty and justice and sometimes, but not always, referred to Christian norms. For them it seems to be an issue related to morals and not economics or investments. Of course defending moral codes has a community function (with a very long-term effect) and this could be the motivation of certain individuals, especially when they speak of “I do not want to live in a village with so many liars.”
izens and the State is the tenure of land. These days adult education teachers tell the inhabitants of the importance of land tenure titles and this means more and more people are starting to register their territories. However, because legitimate registration is very difficult, within the context of village reality people organise written proofs of traditional ownership rights and their sale. Unfortunately, such registration between farmers does not have a legitimate status for the State.

In the case of a conflict between the State and farmers over land that the State wants to categorise as forest, former owners (according to local traditional customs) do not have many rights if their property is not officially registered. Consequently, the people involved look for other options to safeguard their interests. One of these is Act 94/01 of 1994 on the regime of forests, wildlife and fishery. In Articles 26 and 27 it states that, when a certain forest is classified as protected, the autochthonous population can go on with its ‘normal use’. If such rights become limited (or denied outright) the population should be given compensation (according to rules laid down in an up-to-date decree). The classification can only take place when all the people that have made investments in the land concerned are compensated.

When, in the current case, some of the villagers heard of this right, they started to inform others to make sure that enough people register as owners. They thought this investment would increase the possibility of payment. Indeed, several users of pasture fields willingly subscribed to the list of ‘field owners’ that the sub-prefect made during the first information meeting with the villagers. They thought it a good, or at least feasible, way of resolving the problem. The definition of ownership of the sub-prefect, however, did not correspond with that of the Kapsiki of Dzambou. For him, and according to the 1994 Act, only those users that improved their fields would be eligible for compensation. Nevertheless, up until now, although the border poles have already been placed, these registered persons did not receive anything in cash or kind.

On the contrary, those Dzambou farmers who indeed registered now regret their investment in the ownership list. Meanwhile they have become afraid that the list of names will be used against them. The sub-prefect has already accused one of the persons, who expressed to be against the installation of the pasture reserve, of insurgency.

Cultural investments

In Kapsiki culture seasonal highlights are celebrated throughout the year together with other Kapsiki. This has a bonding (within the village) and a binding (between the villages) function. An example of such an occasion is the “Lah festivities” that celebrate the harvest and the new marriages of the last year. In a festival cycle, the different Kapsiki villages of the Mogodé district take turns to slaughter animals, brew beer and make music and dance while eating and drinking together for a number of days. Most Kapsiki do not visit (all) neighbouring villages during their festival days to join in the celebrations, but some of them do and some of the people from Dzambou at least go to Mogodé when it is that village’s turn. Apart from going from compound to compound to drink the millet beer and to eat the special groundnut-with-ashes

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7 For an extensive discussion of the 1994 Forestry Law see Nguiffo (1994)
8 See also Chapter 4
9 This was the representative of Sr Municipality, living in Oudava. It was only at the departmental court in Mokoło that a judge dared to declare this accusation false and only after the hearing of many witnesses co-villagers (again a sign of the importance of social bonds in the village) and when the sub-prefect himself did not appear at the court session.
paste. The festival days are used to confirm marriages. During the year, when all harvest activities have been completed (the end of January until March), marriages are consummated by the bride residing at her new husband’s home for a period of one month. After that, she returns to her father’s house to await the Lah festival and to gather utensils and belongings for her new home. On the first day of the village festival, relatives and friends (especially women) arrive at her father’s home to give her presents and to accompany her subsequently to her new house. The long procession of singing women lead their ‘victim’ first to a trustworthy neighbour of the groom who has to take over the father’s role from the bride’s father. This connects the bride’s neighbourhood to that of her new husband and makes sure she is protected now her own father is so far away. It also gives the groom the advantage of a more secure marriage and protects him against hasty divorces.

Kapsiki acknowledge the greater psychological distance between members of different villages and those within villages. To strengthen bonds between the villages in the event of cross-border marriages, special attention is paid during the festival dances by the newly wed men to their ‘outsider’ wives.81

Even Muslim and Christian villagers visit the dances (although perhaps only as spectators), to demonstrate their connectedness with their village and the Kapsiki as a whole. This also reflects the fact that, although the different religious groups invest in their churches, these same religions do not (so far) pose a threat to the cohesion of the village. Between Christians and Muslims a kind of feeling of togetherness exists because of the idea that they adhere to a modern religion. On the other hand, Catholics and traditional believers are happy to drink beer together. This binds Lutherans and Muslims, because they can look down on those ‘alcoholics’.

In general, Kapsiki like an interesting chat and a good laugh. The habit of telling jokes with double meanings, using (and inventing) verbs with double meanings and singing “scabrous youth songs” (Van Beek, 2004, pers. comm.) diminishes internal conflicts and binds them together. Also the bragging and laughing about violence (for example, about the taking – not ‘stealing’ – of somebody’s property, or about a ‘strong wife’ standing up to her husband and, of course, about the attacks by ancestors on neighbouring villages or the Fulbe82) are binding elements. In day-to-day reality, however, violence is not intended to escalate. At village level, plenty of very nasty stories of the past are told on this subject which serve as sufficient warning. In addition, at household level, spouses are not meant to beat each other up.

The general livelihood situation as well as the insecurities that exist in the village, together with people’s investments as described in section 3 are summarised in Table 6.3.6.

In short, the bulk of insecurities does not concern the natural domain of the village, but rather the other three domains. The environment has a moderately safe status and population pressure is not very high. However, as regards the worst off third of the population, they suffer from a lack of land availability and a resulting shortage of food production. In addition, specifically investments in the natural domain are difficult, thus, future environmental insecurities may be feared.

81 See also Van Beek (1989: 631), about villages “celebrating its new members”.
82 Based on personal observations and on the personal comments of Van Beek (2004).
Table 6.3.6  Summary of current level of insecurities and investments in the domains of the "insecurity complex", based on "capital" of the village as a whole (- = bad, 0 = moderate, + = good, in the investment column: - = no investment, 0 = a bit investment, + = a lot of investments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical basis</th>
<th>Situation of worst off third of pop</th>
<th>Security (expected level in future)</th>
<th>Investments</th>
<th>Investments details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical basis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>No real family planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land availability</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Various qualitative methods by small number of persons. invasion of pasture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food of land</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Rising: more safeguarding by owners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food production versus needs</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Crop diversification; ploughs; etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Rising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash crops</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Everybody, but low scale. no sales development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livestock</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Everybody tries, not really successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-agricultural possibilities</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Low scale, low technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>Loss of old systems, but some increase of new ones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Almost not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land allocation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>'0' when regarding pasture lands, but quick retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ad hoc muddling through</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.4 Intrusion of other niche: Box 2

In combination with, or apart from, all the investment options described, some farmers choose to enter the designated pasture area (see Figure 6.2. Box 2). For decades it has been used solely as grazing land, combined with some extraction of construction wood and minor "wild" products. Only a small group of Islamic "cattle keepers" (called such by the rest of the village) founded a tiny settlement just inside the boundaries, almost at the start of the period of pastoral use. Initially they started they built only simple compounds, but in the course of time they cleared fields around their houses and built a water well to provide for their drinking water needs. Nowadays this settlement is called the "Fulbe neighbourhood".

Thus, the original grazing land was more or less divided into two parts: the empty bush and the "Fulbe settlement". When, ten years ago, the first cultivators passed the boundaries of the so-called "empty pasture", as agreed upon a generation before, and started to cut down trees to prepare fields for agriculture, hardly anyone was bothered. However, other people quickly followed the example of these pioneers and soon a whole segment of the pasture area had become

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k1 See Chapter 2

k2 The name "Fulbe settlement" is derived from the fact that it used to be inhabited by Fulbe, alongside Kapsiki converts, and because the Kapsiki tend to denominate all Islamic persons "Fulbe", being the name of the ethnic group that originally brought the Islam to these regions of North Cameroon (see Van Santen 1993, Schilder 1994, and Chapter 4 of this thesis). This adoption of the Fulbe name gives Islamisation an additional ethnic quality.
cultivated land. After a number of years, a second wave of farmers had arrived and then a third\textsuperscript{8} and each time the boundary of the pasture was redefined (see Figure 6.5). To an ever increasing degree, the pasture area was at risk of being totally invaded.

Of the twenty-three users in 2001, eight started using the pasture fields one or two years ago while five others did so three or four years ago. Another seven respondents mentioned that they have used their pasture fields “a couple of years now”. That means that at least thirteen people started to use the pasture fields after the announcement by the authorities that a reserve was to be created and there may have been more. Only three of the 2001 users certainly started earlier.

The reasons and motivations of farmers for choosing this invasion option will be analysed in the following sections. Additional reasons will also be sought to explain the difference between farmers that left the area and those that continued. After the authorities had declared that the area was to become official forest pasture land, some people relocated their agricultural activities to ‘outside’ fields. Others, however, continued inside the delineated boundaries. Confronted with these cultivators and the fact that most of them had already prepared their field and even sowed it, the sub-prefect gave extended permission for the land to be used for one more production season.

6.4.1 Reasons for intrusion in the environmental domain
The surface of Dzambou seems to be vast and there does not seem to be a general scarcity of land. There is not even any evidence of an overall decline in production. There are, however, individuals and families who are experiencing increased pressure on their fields. It is the quality or quantity of fields outside the pasture area that may influence farmers’ options. Some cultivators do not have much land available, or their land is infertile. To them the scarcity is obvious. Those whose ancestors cleared fields in the pasture area may want to use those fields. Others in the same position, but without traditional ownership of territory in the pasture area, may want to hire or borrow from owners because of the vast quantity or good quality of the pasture fields and because the owners are interested in loaning or renting out for a variety of reasons.

In order to determine the influence of position, quantity and quality of fields on the use of pasture fields, Table 6.4.1 shows the field position of fields owned, divided among owners and non-owners of pasture areas, and users and non-users thereof. In other words, those who cultivate or not within the pasture boundaries as they were delineated by the authorities’ 2002 boundary markings. In this table, ownership of fields is defined according to Kapsiki tradition, that is on the basis of whether the fields had been cleared in the past by the actor or one of his ancestors and whether they were still family (or personal) property (not sold or given away). The position of fields can be three-fold (or a combination thereof): 1) fields can lie within the pasture boundaries that are delimited by the authorities in 2002 (excluding the Fulbe neighbourhood from the pasture); 2) they can lie within the traditional boundaries, but outside the delimited area (that means in the Fulbe neighbourhood) or 3) totally outside the pasture zone. From table 6.4.1 it can be concluded that there are no households that depend totally on the pasture for their fields. Yet, there are four households that depend on the fields in the Fulbe settlement area. They run the risk of losing their fields should the authorities change the implemented delineation and resort to former boundaries in order to avoid havoc (see below).

\textsuperscript{8} Most of those invading farmers came from Dzambou, but some of them originate in Viti in the North-West.
Table 6.4.1: Number of users and non-users of pasture fields and the position of owned fields (shared or private).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Users of pasture fields</th>
<th>Non-users of pasture fields</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Owning pasture fields</td>
<td>Owning pasture fields</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not owning pasture fields</td>
<td>Not owning pasture fields</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- In pasture only: 0 | 0
- In past + outside: 13 | 16
- In past - Fulbe corner: 0 | 0
- In past - Fulbe corner - outside: 3 | 2
- In Fulbe corner only: n.a. | n.a.
- In Fulbe corner - outside: n.a. | n.a.
- Outside only: n.a. | 2

* = a 'user of a pasture field' is somebody who cultivated a field situated within the official 2002 boundary, at least until the moment of delineation.

There were some inhabitants of the Fulbe settlement (four households) that used fields within the pasture boundaries, although they are very much in favour of the pasture and think the clearing of trees within the area a real waste. This strategy may be based on the feeling that leads to the tragedy of open access: when nobody regulates the pasture, not using it is a personal loss, because at the same time, others acquire a (short-term) gain. The long-term loss is going to occur anyhow. The moment that the sub-prefect forbade the agriculture within the pasture zone (April 2002), they stopped cultivating there. These people were very happy with the intervention of the authorities.

There is only one owner-user who lives outside the Fulbe settlement and who stopped straightaway, but he declares that he did not know the authorities would grant another year of use, otherwise he would have continued. Thus, in total 12 owner-users continued cultivating during 2002 and they all want to continue afterwards.

Table 6.4.2 shows necessity based on the fertility of other fields.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 6.4.2</th>
<th>Number of users, non-users and owners of pasture fields with a certain soil fertility of fields outside the pasture (n = 180, but respondents can give different types of fertility for different fields, so the total number is more than 180.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Users</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-users</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owners</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that pasture field users have bad or good fields to cultivate outside the pasture equally often. Moreover, as far as owners are concerned, the division of fields is spread

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86 Of the six user-non-owners only two continued cultivating in the pasture after the delineation.
over good, bad and moderate. It seems as if the state of fields outside the pasture has not influenced the choice to use pasture fields or leave them alone. Those users with good fields elsewhere either had quite a number of family fields and/or private lands acquired by purchasing or clearing. The worst position related to surface area was occupied by two household heads from the same extended family who have to share 3 ha with four male (extended) family members (household size five and four persons, meaning access to 0.2 ha and 0.15 ha per person).

The last reason in the natural domain that can play a role in starting cultivation in the pasture area is related to distance. Although, in general, only those farmers that live within reasonable distance to the pasture use the fields therein, this does not offer any explanation as to why they start using those fields now. Moreover, the farmers the closest to the pasture, those of the Fulbe settlement of Baba Deli, all refrain (now) from using pasture fields, except for those fields that surround their compounds and lie within the traditional boundaries only. They explain that specifically “the inhabitants of ‘Dzambou’ and not those of Baba Deli started cultivating in the pasture”. For them this is all the more amazing, because they think Dzambou is so much further away.

That this idea of “only those farmers from Dzambou invade the pasture” is based on false perceptions is shown by the data: of all the 22 users, 9 live in Baba Deli neighbourhood. Again this shows the general social distance felt between Baba Deli inhabitants and the rest of Dzambou. It has to be added, though, that eight of those nine farmers stopped cultivating after the delineation and only two of them are against the official delineation of the pasture. This is the reverse of the figures of Dzambou Centre and Tndmou users.

6.4.2 Reasons for intrusion in the human domain
The persons that start(ed) using their fields in the reserve and mention that they are against the installation of the pasture are slightly different from the rest of the Dzambou inhabitants with regard to their health or their investments in health. They see to the vaccination of their children. In the event of illnesses they visit the health post more quickly even if they have no money and all their wives visit the antenatal consultations at the hospital. Of course they are mostly young and healthy men (mean 35 year, with a range from 27 to 43), but that is because the pasture is far from the compounds and the trees to be cut to clear a field are high. Old or ill people are not able to perform one of these tasks. whether they want to or not.

In the field of education, pasture ‘invaders’ who do not want to quit are more educated than the village mean: 70 % have had some primary school education and 80 % send their children to school.

Thus, they are younger men with higher capacities (own education and information), more motivation to achieve a better position in life (see for example the number that send their chil-

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87 Of course, those individuals without good fields went into the pasture because of the lack of fertile fields elsewhere, but this cannot be used as a general and therefore clarifying tendency.
88 These are members of a relatively well-educated family with their compounds in the north of Tndmou adjacent to the pasture. Anger about the restrictions on using the pasture fields is high within this extended family.
89 Namely either in Baba Deli or in Dzambou Tndmou (except for only two users): see Figure 6.3.
90 As has been explained before, inhabitants of Baba Deli. although officially part of the whole Dzambou village, consider themselves as a separate entity, more related to Oudava (see Fig. 6.3).
91 Eight out of thirteen users are against the pasture. On two occasions the respondent’s opinion was unknown.
92 They explain that they count on credit possibilities. “The nurse won’t send you away if she sees that you are really suffering. You can always pay afterwards.”
dren to school) and less timid with regard to the authorities. Contrary to former generations, they know that Cameroonian citizens have rights and they referred repeatedly to these during the interviews and talks.

6.4.3 Reasons for intrusion in the economic domain

The human capital profile outlined leads to a different way of looking at economic possibilities. These young men have learned about the possibility of commoditisation of land, they 'see' (and discuss between them and with the interviewer) the future value of land (if they are not yet already perceiving a high economic value) and do not want to lose such land just like that. They are more oriented towards modern life and know about the existence of television" and higher production systems. They are not geared towards traditional productions or production systems, but want to have enough fields to use modern systems or even to escape village life altogether.

Some of them, who acknowledge that they are not able themselves to cultivate their entire surface area, want to have income from rent, especially from the fertile pasture lands. When they do aim to acquire more farm animals, they do not foresee any shortage in grazing possibilities saying, "there is so much fallow land between the fields now". For them the installation of a pasture reserve is not necessary. On the contrary, it would mean that the needs of (several) Dzambou farmers are denied.

6.4.4 Reasons for intrusion in the social domain

Although, as stated in the Chapter 4, Cameroon is a hotchpotch of different ethnicities, in this case the whole village consists of only Kapsiki inhabitants (except for two Fulbe families in the ‘Fulbe settlement’). Although villagers in general and Fulbe settlement inhabitants in particular, use the name “Fulbe” for Muslims, they still make a difference between the “real” Fulbe and “We Kapsiki”. Many jokes are made by the Fulbe about the length of Kapsiki noses, to which Kapsiki reply with jokes about the relatively recent arrival of those “whites”. Consequently, one can conclude that, at least in this case of discord, ethnicity plays no role.

The situation may be different when religion is involved. All types of religion are represented within Dzambou. As has been mentioned earlier, most of the villagers adhere to the traditional Kapsiki religion*, but several of them are Christians that belong to the Catholic, Adventist or Lutheran churches and some are Muslims. Different religions can even be found within one family, sometimes even in one household and tolerance with respect to religion is high. Because it turned out that mainly inhabitants of the Islamic Fulbe settlement helped the authorities with the placing of border poles around the pasture reserve, the question rises as to whether it is religion as such that makes people choose the side of cattle keepers (as if in memory of the original occupation of those that brought Islam, and their cattle, to the country).

Users and owners of pasture fields do not, however, specifically belong to one of the three

* At least seven of them asked me about, or explained, the possibilities for obtaining and watching a television in the village or in their own compound.
*" Personal interviews and group discussions with village inhabitants, October 2002 – January 2003
* In general, the Fulbe have a lighter skin than the non-Fulbe and an 'Arabic' nose, while the Kapsiki have broader, short noses. However, inter-marrriages have evened out a lot of these external differences
* For an explanation of that religion see Van Beek (1978 and 1987).
religions or their churches". Neither are they specifically restricted to one of the Dzambou neighbourhoods. In some neighbourhoods more pasture field users can be found (like in the northern half of Tndmou), but this is due more to the fact that family members used to build their compounds in the vicinity of fathers' house. As a result, some sub-neighbourhoods consist of extended families that together (again like in the northern Tndmou case) own a specific part of the area. Their forefathers normally cleared fields that were situated adjacent to each other in the same region.

Of course, these extended families that experience the same problems are strong alliances designed to withstand other users or even the authorities. Even when a nephew or uncle is able to survive without a pasture field, the lack of fertile lands available to his family members and the perceived injustices perpetrated against his relatives makes him angry enough to be a potential ally in future fights.

In the political domain it seems as if the thirteen (and perhaps seven others\(^8\)) that started using the pasture fields after the announcement of the reserve installation, chose to use their pasture fields as a deliberate strategy to counter the State's plans. Perhaps they counted on the State law that obliges the buying out of traditional users in the case of forest reserve categorisation. Whether or not this is true cannot be concluded, because none of the respondents gave a positive answer to this type of question. It can be assumed that at least some of these users did not know of the existence of such a law beforehand and that, if they did know, could not have known of the difference the State authorities make between actual users and owners according to traditional custom (see below).

6.5 Assertion of rights to fields: Box 3

The conflict situation, as depicted in Box 3 (see Fig 6.2), only arises when two (or more) parties are opposing each other. Both continue to stress their access, use or even ownership rights to the same piece of land. At the same time it is clear that mutual use is not possible. Because conflict asks for two parties that ascertain their rights, here I will first depict the claims of the cultivators.

It is not only farmers that own, use or want to use fields in the pasture area, who claim rights there. Also other inhabitants of Dzambou, and even outside Dzambou, do have an opinion about the legitimacy of the installation of the pasture reserve.

6.5.1 About the borders

Everyone agrees about the limits of Ardo's zone: originally it was far bigger than at the moment (see Figure 6.5). Yet, after 20 years of strict pasture use, the reserve started to diminish due to invading cultivators from all directions - sometimes up to the centre of the area - and

\(^8\) Four of the users are Islamic, seven adhere to a traditional religion and nine are Christian. The numbers among the owners are 5 Islam, 17 traditional and 11 Christian.

\(^8\) Most probably some of these seven did not want to oppose the State with their pasture cultivation (even if they did start after the announcement), because they belong to the group very much in favour of the pasture. They stopped their cultivation activities in the pasture zone directly after the instalment of the boundaries.
due to the settlement of ‘Islamic cattle keepers’ on the east side. First, these cattle owners only built their houses there, so it did not really disturb the pasture. But later on they started to cultivate around these houses and, as a result, the pasture area lost a considerable part of its surface area. As soon as the authorities decided to establish the pasture area officially to counter agricultural invasions, discords arose between the villagers over which boundaries should be used and where. Some of the cultivators that do not live in the “Fulbe settlement” of Baba Deli stick to the original boundaries from the Elhadji Ardo time. “Why should the Fulbe be favoured? When we are not allowed to cultivate in the pasture reserve, they should not be allowed either. They are no different to us!”

*Figure 6.5 Boundaries of Baba Deli pasture reserve over time*
In the whole village, 22 household heads (12%) are against the pasture as it is delineated by the authorities, because of the inequality that it causes (see Table 6.5.1, third column). They express their willingness to assist field owners in their resistance of both authorities and (what they call) cattle owners. They agree with pasture field users when they continue to use those fields despite the official delineation.

6.5.2 Pasture or arable land

The bush area of Baba Deli is denominated as pasture reserve and has, indeed, been used as such for decades. Today’s inhabitants of Dzambou agree about the existence of this grazing area in the past. Unfortunately, they do not agree about the current status of this zone. Some 40 years ago a rich cattle-owner, Elhadji Ardo, who roamed the bush with his herd, started an area specially set aside for cattle and which was not used for agriculture. According to today’s cultivators it was an agreement between him and the first cultivators, as a ‘win-win’ arrangement. Because there was enough space to cultivate elsewhere, the grandfathers and fathers of today’s respondents consented to leaving this part of the recently cleared forest to cattle. “But”, many of the farmers say today, “only for the time being!” According to the respondents the deal was that, when necessary because of increasing infertility of the fields used, the cultivators would return and the cattle keepers would switch to the exhausted fields. Thus, the invading farmers are motivated to do so because they think it is their right and because it is in line with the former agreement and their customs. The offspring of the original clearers should now inherit the land.

Table 6.5.1 Division of opinions about the pasture\(^a\) in Baba Deli, Tndmou and rest of Dzambou and of owners and intruders (=users) (n =172; 2 x double opinion, 2 x three opinions, intruders: 2 x double opinion).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Against, no need</th>
<th>Against, unequal</th>
<th>Against, no land</th>
<th>Total against</th>
<th>Pro pasture</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baba Deli</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tndmou</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dzambou-rest</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total village</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intruders(^a)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intruders that stopped</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owners of past. field</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19(^b)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) = 8 users are from Baba Deli in total
\(^b\) = 5 x inhabitants of the Fulbe neighbourhood

For today’s farmers, whose fields seem to be loosing their fertility, the time has come to fulfill that agreement. Even those without fields in the pasture area, but with diminishing field-

---

\(^a\) ‘No need’ means, that the respondents think the pasture is unnecessary because of an abundance of grazing land or a lack of cattle. ‘Unequal’ refers to the idea that inhabitants’ rights should be the same: everybody or nobody can use the pasture lands for cultivation. ‘No land’ means that the respondent is against the creation of pasture because (s)he needs the fields there because (s)he lacks other fields. ‘Pro pasture’ can mean the respondent is for the creation of pasture land without restriction or is for it but with slightly different boundaries. Most people who are both for and against want a pasture zone, but not in Baba Deli.
fertility, can see the logic of this reasoning. All claim the fields within the pasture boundaries for themselves or their co-villagers. And they expect cattle keepers to carry on using the other part of the village territory. The majority of those farmers do not see the need for pasture in the first place (see Table 6.5.1, second column). There is plenty of fallow and bush between the fields and around the compounds that can be used by cattle all year round, they say. “There is more grazing land than cattle, and that will continue to be the case for a very long time”.

In addition, there are some farmers who do not have enough land themselves, as explained above, and have no alternative than to start fields in the pasture, but this is a small minority. In general, the farmers that claim that there is not enough land left all have several other fields at their disposal and these also have a moderate to good fertility status. The discrepancy between their claim of a lack of land and their factual information about their fields’ situation can be explained by the tangible feeling that the land area and level of fertility are diminishing, populations are increasing and by the wish to modernise, a wish to enter the new way of life.

There is a remarkable distribution throughout the village of farmers who claim the pasture to be arable land that should also be used as such. It is “the rest of Dzambou” that hosts a significant majority of claimants. Although Tndmou neighbourhood, and especially Dzambou Centre, are further away from the pasture than Baba Deli, from the northern part of Tndmou where a big amount of contestants live, it does not take that long to walk to a pasture field.

The same applies to the herding of cattle there. Nevertheless, Dzambou cattle owners now prefer to herd their cattle in the vicinity of their compounds so that more manure is produced on the fields close to their homes and where there is more security against theft. The denomination of a pasture area would sooner or later make cattle owners retreat to that zone. This would be a loss for those with only fields outside the pasture. They would then be faced by the problem of where to acquire manure. Thus, for some of them, the sooner the pasture is designated as arable land and the fallow between the houses as grazing land, the better. If the pasture fields could indeed be used for agriculture, the risk of crop damage would not be very big because wide enough corridors from one fallow field to the other would remain open.

Table 6.5.2  Number of village inhabitants with a certain field position and their opinions about the pasture reserve (n = 172; 21 x double opinion; 2 x three opinions; 1 x no fields at all)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Position</th>
<th>Totally agreed</th>
<th>Agreed diff. form</th>
<th>Nno opinion</th>
<th>Against no need</th>
<th>Against inequality</th>
<th>Against no land</th>
<th>Total for</th>
<th>Total against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In reserve only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In reserve - outside</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In reserve - F-settlement</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In F-settlement</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In F-settlement - outside</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In F-settlement - reserve outside</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* outside = fields are situated outside the pasture reserve as well as outside the Fulbe (F-) settlement

Although there is a difference in opinion about the pasture between the two Dzambou regions, the division of opinions for or against the pasture seem not to depend on the position of the
fields (see Table 6.5.2). The opinions of all persons with some fields in the pasture are evenly divided between those for and against (22 versus 23). Of all the Dzambou inhabitants who have only fields outside the contested area, a small majority of 66 versus 55 is for the creation of pasture land.

An opinion on the pasture can, however, be shaped by the perception of the field-owner of the usefulness of his fields and the possibility of getting a sufficient yield from them (see Table 6.5.3). Indeed, although the correlation can only be seen when bad and moderate fields are taken together, and is then still not significant, field infertility seems to make people aware of the necessity of the use of the pasture fields.

Table 6.5.3 shows that a majority (112 persons out of 198) consider (some of) their fields to be properly fertile, although they are sometimes complemented with moderate or even poor fields. This underlines the remark about the general scarcity position of the total village (see above). On the other hand, one can say that the better the fields, the higher the ratio between the pro and the contra pasture opinion: this ratio is 62 : 41 for people with good fields and 33 : 34 for people with moderate fields. A calculation of the significance for a pro or contra pasture opinion of a certain field composition shows that \( \chi^2 \) remains far below the threshold (\( \chi^2 = 7.09 \); test statistic 21.0). People with only moderate and/or poor fields divide their opinions about the pasture according to the ratio: 37 in favour and 42 against. For the division of the opinion of these people against the opinions of all those with at least some good fields, \( \chi^2 = 3.48 \) (against a test statistic of 5.99). Even inhabitants with only poor fields are not significantly more against the pasture than all the other inhabitants \( \chi^2 = 1.03 \); test statistic = 5.99). Thus, it is not possible to conclude that when people have less production opportunities and perceive the field-situation as more pressing they are more opposed to the reserve. Most probably this effect can only be seen in the case of those who actually go into the pasture area to cultivate (see earlier sections).

| Table 6.5.3 Perception of soil fertility of used fields versus opinion on pasture (n = 172, 21 x double opinion, 2 x three opinions). sometimes different fields of one user are categorised differently (e.g. one person uses a good field as well as a moderate field). |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                | Total agreed    | Agree,           | Against,         | Against,        | Against,        | Total for        | Total contra     |                 |
|                                |                 | dif. form        | No opinion       | no need         | unequal         | no other land    |                 |                 |
| Good                            | 24              | 17              | 5               | 16             | 6              | 3               | 71              | 41              | 25              |
| Good and moderate                | 6               | 5               | 1               | 4              | 2              | 1               | 19              | 11              | 7               |
| Moderate                        | 10              | 9               | 3               | 15             | 6              | 3               | 46              | 19              | 24              |
| Moderate and poor                | 1               | 1               | 0               | 0              | 1              | 1               | 4               | 2               | 2               |
| Poor                            | 10              | 6               | 4               | 12             | 4              | 0               | 36              | 16              | 16              |
| Good and poor                   | 5               | 4               | 3               | 3              | 3              | 2               | 20              | 9               | 8               |
| Good, moderate, poor            | 1               | 0               | 0               | 0              | 0              | 1               | 2               | 1               | 1               |
| Total                           | 57              | 42              | 16              | 50             | 22             | 11              | 198             | 99              | 83              |
In fact, anger about the creation of the pasture area is evident among both young and older men. The latter consider the authorities’ activities as leading to the loss of past investments made by people from the same generation as they themselves. They fear a disappearance of traditional norms and rules. For them personally it gives rise to a feeling of insecurity in general, but also with regard to their own efforts in the past. They do not know when the authorities will come and take their land and designate it pasture or something else they deem necessary. In such a situation they are even more fiercely opposed to the delineation and believe that, if there were any justice, the process would be reversed.

6.6 Counter-assertion and conflict: Box 3

When Kapsiki started cultivating in the contested pasture area of Baba Deli, they claimed it to be their right. “These are our fields”. There would have been no problem if the other users had acknowledged this right straight away and had withdrawn. However, that was not the case. Part of the contested area is used as settlement area and houses have been built there. The Fulbe-Kapsiki have cleared some ‘home fields’ around these compounds, but for the rest they want the area to be strictly set aside for grazing. They also have historical arguments to underpin their claim.

In fact, the whole neighbourhood closest to the pasture has the highest amount of inhabitants supporting the idea of a specific grazing area (Table 6.5.1). Even when all the household heads of the Fulbe settlement are not considered, Baba Deli is pro-pasture! With these two opposing assertions the conflict of Box 3 is a fact (see Figure 6.2).

6.6.1 Environmental domain

Physical basis

In general there is no difference between the soil types or climatic circumstances of those who claim the pasture to be for cultivation and those who want it to be grazing land. We have seen that there is also no significant difference in field disposition of the different claimants. But, those who support the creation of the reserve experience another type of land scarcity. This concerns cattle owners who do not have enough room for their cattle because their herds are too big and the corridors between the fields are too small, or farmers who foresee such a problem in the future. “If people go on producing a lot of crops, they will grow rich. Then they will buy cattle - everybody does – and where must they graze without disturbing the fields if there is no pasture area?”

According to the departmental head of the animal husbandry service (Djonwé 2001), the number of cattle decreased between 1985 and 2000 from 125,407 to 71,766. and continued to decrease in the last two years (Djonwé, pers. communication, January 2003) due to out-migration to the North Province and Nigeria of big cattle owners and the sale of cattle by those who stayed in the region. Djonwé attributes these two phenomena to the decrease of pasture surface, because of the growing population and the need for more agricultural fields.

The North Province used to be infested with Tse-Tse flies and trypanosomiasis, but with chemical pesticides being more readily available and thanks to zoo-technical measures to decrease the infestation, this area is now a good cattle grazing region (see Boutrais 1999).
As we have seen, the region of Dzambou does not suffer from an excessive population density. One may even state that in the situation of moderate to small population density combined with an out-migration of cattle, the abundance of pasture land is even more obvious. But the pressure felt by cattle owners in the past, that made them leave the area, can still be perceived today by current cattle-owning inhabitants. Thus, was it indeed an attempt by cattle owners (or those who want to have cattle) to safeguard a perceived last resort of pasture, that made them ask for the delineation of the Baba Deli reserve? Most of them have experienced a decrease in personal (or familial) cattle herds and numbers of cattle during their lives. Table 6.6.1 shows the opinions on pasture in connection with cattle ownership.

Table 6.6.1: Number of people with a certain number of cattle and their opinions about the pasture reserve (n = 172; 21 x double opinions, 2 x three opinions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of cattle</th>
<th>Totally agreed</th>
<th>Agreed, diff form</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Against, no need</th>
<th>Against, inequality</th>
<th>Against, no land</th>
<th>Total for</th>
<th>Total against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;9 cattle</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3-9 cattle</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 cattle</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6.1 shows that a very small majority of the big cattle owners favour the pasture. Surprisingly, among the non-cattle owners a small majority of those who do have an opinion are also pro-pasture area (78 versus 67). It is among the owners with a moderate number of cattle that we see the clearest support for the pasture (9 persons for versus 5 against), although the numbers are small. The conclusion has to be that the variable ‘cattle ownership’ does not differentiate the pro-pasture inhabitants from those who are contra. A slightly more convincing relationship can be found for the more extended cattle-related variable “cattle feeling”, that covers things such as “used to cattle” or “love cattle”, as can be seen from the following Table 6.6.2. Therein ‘cattle-related’ means: owning cattle, herding cattle, having herded cattle in the past, ownership of cattle in the past (self or family) and even being a butcher (seven times) because butchers have to be very easy-going with and knowledgeable about cattle. They need cattle and therefore cattle grazing space.

Table 6.6.2: Cattle relations versus opinion about pasture (n = 172; 21 x double opinions, 2 x three opinions).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totally agreed</th>
<th>Agreed, diff form</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Against, no need</th>
<th>Against, inequality</th>
<th>Against, no land</th>
<th>Total for</th>
<th>Total against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cattle-related</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ratios show a slight influence of ‘cattle feeling’ in the direction of promotion of the pasture: 40 people with ‘cattle feeling’ support the pasture with 28 against (ratio is 1.5). On the other hand, non cattle-related people generate a lower ratio of 57:55 (= 1.1), although the relationship is not significant ($\chi^2 = 0.8$ with a test statistic of 3.84). Some hint of an explanation of the conflict may be in evidence here, but only in a very general sense. Cattle feeling may create certain tendencies to assume positions, but obviously that alone does not explain why people resort to violence.
Population density
The whole village of Dzambou has a low population density. Certain sub-neighbourhoods may have a higher number of inhabitants, and others more extended fallow fields around the compounds, but because everybody can leave the surface of his direct living neighbourhood to cultivate or herd elsewhere, population densities per neighbourhood are irrelevant. Indeed, the inhabitants of the Fulbe settlement live closer to each other than those of Tndmou, but they have the same possibilities to rent fields in Dzambou Centre or even in Oudava, to fall back on forefathers' fields in Sir or buy land outside the traditional pasture boundaries.

There are even inhabitants that express their doubts about a population increase. Some areas of the village have experienced a decline. People mention the high death rate of both children and grown-ups and point to the remains of houses that have become empty. For them these are not signs of households moving from one place to another, but of the disappearance of whole families. However, among those that notice such reductions in the number of inhabitants there is no difference between those who are for or against the pasture area. On the one hand, people do not see any need for pasture land in view of the existing abundance of land on which to graze cattle. On the other hand, they highlight the necessity of the existence of big trees. “If you change the pasture forest area every now and again, trees never have the chance to grow. And big trees attract rain!” some say.

6.6.2 Human domain

Health
No specific health characteristics are evident among those who decided that pasture is necessary. Even those who actively promote the pasture area, those who have done so over the last years and those who are involved in the protection thereof (almost all inhabitants of the Fulbe-settlement) are no more healthier, younger or older than the average Dzambou inhabitant. Apart from the water well in the Fulbe neighbourhood, that was dug almost a generation ago, this neighbourhood does not and has not invested more (or less) in the health of its inhabitants.

Education
Taking account of all the pasture proponents, the level of education is more or less the same as the Dzambou mean. Also the number of people that send their children to school does not differ from the rest of Dzambou. However, the level of education of the Fulbe settlement inhabitants is below village mean (only four people attended primary school for some years). Moreover, the number of school-going children is lower there not only because of the fact that Islamic children in rural areas of Cameroon are generally less literate (they attend their Koran schools in the settlements), but also because the settlement is really a long way from every primary school in the region. In short, the Fulbe settlement inhabitants exhibit the general Fulbe habits with regard to education (see further section 6.6.4).

6.6.3 Economic domain

There is some difference between those people from Dzambou who (more or less) actively promote the pasture, those who are not against it (but only expressed being supportive when asked) and those who oppose it. Some of the Fulbe neighbourhood inhabitants cultivate so many cash crops (or a cereals-surplus) that they can acquire a good additional
income by selling. The option to gain money through activities other than agricultural ones is evenly divided over the groups. Of the people that actively promote the pasture reserve some work as miller, some as small scale trader and some as a cattle trader or butcher.

The wealth situation is diverse, with differences between the different groups if one examines the TLU, ploughs and other utensils such as bicycles, generators, motor bicycles, etc. (see Table 6.6.3). In particular, the active promoters seem to be wealthier than the rest of the village members. For the largest part, this wealth is in the hands of three persons. Two of them are Fulbe, who are real cattle keepers like their ancestors and the third is a Kapsiki cattle owner, who is also interested in agriculture and therefore also owns a plough. However, even if the Fulbe, as strict cattle keepers, are not counted, the mean TLU of this group is high. It is possible to say that at least for this group the interest in the pasture reserve has grown due to their wealth and their access to livestock.

Table 6.6.3 Wealth position of groups of inhabitants with a certain opinion (activity) vis-à-vis the creation of the pasture reserve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Owner-ship of pasture</th>
<th>Active promotion</th>
<th>Non-active restricted pro-pasture</th>
<th>Pro-pasture with some restrictions (non-active)</th>
<th>Active promotion with restrictions</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Both pro- and contra pasture</th>
<th>Contra pasture</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ploughs</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(%) of group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TLU (mean)</td>
<td>10*</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other utensils (%) of group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = If the two big Fulbe cattle keepers are not counted, the mean TLU diminishes to 5.9
* = Wanting a pasture-reserve, but not in Baba Deli

6.6.4 Social domain

Family and friends

Not only the Fulbe settlement is inhabited by brothers and sons of only several families (and thus has a high internal link), but also the rest of the Baba Deli neighbourhood consists of the offspring of certain forefathers (although relatively more forefathers than in the Fulbe area). They experience stronger ties with the co-inhabitants of their neighbourhood than with the rest of Dzambou and even feel closely related to Oudava, the neighbouring village. For that reason they are inclined to let go quicker of their own wishes to support their "own" Fulbe, and to oppose "those people from Dzambou Centre".

Political factors

Connections with higher authorities may be felt more strongly by the Islamic inhabitants of

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104 Other residents of Dzambou explain that this is obviously due to the high fertility of the Fulbe-neighbourhood fields. This gives rise to the jealousy and the feeling of unequal possibilities.

105 When I announced that I wanted to stay in the other neighbourhood to improve my research possibilities, Baba Deli inhabitants even warned me that the Dzambou-ers (as they call them) would not be as co-operative as they themselves had been.
Dzambou because of the Islamic faith of the district chief. In land matters the lamido is perhaps more important than the sub-prefect. In addition, sub-prefects tend to disappear every now and again because they are regularly transferred to other departments. Building personal linkages with such officials is more difficult and less rewarding. Thus, in spite of the fact that the sub-prefect is a Christian, Christians do not feel more linked to him than to other officials.

In general the claim of the pro-pasture villagers corresponds with the viewpoint of the State. The pasture proponents indeed use this argument to underpin their interests. They refer to the importance of creating the pasture area using the same arguments as the State representatives while at the same time showing their ‘good citizenship’.

**Conflict mediation**

As in all villages of Kapsiki, the neighbourhood chief is the first to intervene when problems between inhabitants arise. This is also the case in the Fulbe hamlet. When, however, discords with other neighbourhoods occur, lavan Yaya is not the first to be involved, nor is the general Dzambou village chief trusted by the Fulbe settlement inhabitants. For example, in case of damage to fields by cattle owned by inhabitants of another neighbourhood, farmers and cattle keepers find a solution themselves or they approach higher authorities. Mostly they refer to the line officials of the agricultural or animal husbandry services. As regards cattle keepers, it is important to claim that the ‘pasture’ area is indeed pasture area (and to have that claim acknowledged) because all fields that lie in a ‘grazing only area’ are cultivated subject to the risk of crop damage by cattle being solely for the cultivator. The owner of the trespassing cattle has no responsibility and no obligation to reimburse the damage. The fact is that the cattle are not trespassing, but rather the cultivator. The officials are then left to declare that the field concerned lies inside or outside the boundaries of the reserve. This is one of the important reasons why people are for or against the delineation of the pasture. Cattle keepers or herders want to have clear boundaries, so they need not negotiate the position of damaged fields over and over again.

**Land allocation**

On the whole, the proponents of the pasture are subject to the same rules as all other inhabitants of Dzambou as far as land allocation is concerned. However, the Fulbe neighbourhood acts a bit differently within their settlement boundaries. Apart from denying everyone, including themselves, the right to use fields in the (newly delineated) pasture, they themselves manage the Fulbe pasture corner. The first clearer rules do not apply here. Other Baba Deli farmers, who claim to have rights because of their forefathers’ activities, are ignored. At best the settlers declare that they do not know who the owner is, or that the State owns everything. They use the fields surrounding their compounds and when new settlers arrive it is the lavan, Yaya, who decides over the location of the compound and fields.

He was not the first to arrive and to build his house, but he was the last of a first group. Moreover, he managed to persuade the district and sub-department authorities decades ago to appoint him neighbourhood chief. His father cleared a lot of fields in the region (from Tchibi to Oudava), including fields within the pasture area. As a result and because of his connection with the original cattle keepers (Elhadji Ardo and his fellow-men) and because Yaya himself was imprisoned once for only looking at the ruins of his fathers house in the middle of the pas-
ture area, he is adamant that the pasture area should be used as grazing land. He considers himself to be the person who has legitimacy to allocate fields in the ‘Fulbe’ Baba Deli region, and to guard the pasture against intruders.

Cultural factors
To decide whether pro-pasture opinions are related to cultural characteristics such as religion, in Table 6.6.4 a comparison is made between people’s different religions and their places of residence versus their opinions concerning the pasture. The group ‘some Muslims in neighbouring villages’ has been added as a correction for the very small number of Muslims in the rest of the village of Dzambou. Neighbouring villages, such as Oudava (see Figure 6.3) are heavily involved in the pasture discussion. Their inhabitants have or use fields there or own cattle which they (may) herd there.

Table 6.6.4 Numbers of Muslims, animists and Christians living within or outside the “Fulbe settlement” and their opinions about the pasture reserve (n = 180, there are 21 x double-opinion, 2 x three opinions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Totally agreed</th>
<th>Agreed diff form</th>
<th>No opinion</th>
<th>Against, no need</th>
<th>Against, inequality</th>
<th>Against, no land</th>
<th>Total for</th>
<th>Total contra</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muslims in F-corner</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims outside F-corner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslims in neigh-bouring villages</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animists within F-corner</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animists outside F-corner</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christians outside F-corner</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No religion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6.6.4 shows that opinions are evenly divided between the adherents of non-Muslim religions (pro : contra = 77 : 78). On the other hand, counting all the Muslims together seems to reveal that the Islamic religion is a strong factor that makes people opt to support the reserve idea (26 out of 37 people: \( \chi^2 = 4.8 \), significant). However, dividing the data according to place of residence shows that (almost) all Muslims from within the Fulbe-settlement think positively concerning the grazing zone (15 out of 16 persons). The opinions of Muslims outside that settlement are more or less evenly divided between pro and contra, as with the other religions. Thus, the fact that the Muslims of the Fulbe settlement are in favour of the pasture area cannot be fully traced back to their religion. When calculating the influence of religion in general, on a pro or contra opinion, it seems as if it has more to do with a combination of religion and the place of residence.

103 With his invalid foot and with his increasing age, he has now delegated this last task to some of his subjects ("with the approval of the authorities", the ‘Fulbe’ claim).

104 Calculating the influence of animism or Christianity versus all other religions shows no significance (the \( \chi^2 \) being 0.09 and 2.8 respectively; test statistic is 3.8). However, the influence of religion in general on the opinions for or against the pasture reserve is significant (\( \chi^2 = 6.04 \) with a test statistic of 5.99); the Muslim effect.
An explanation for the ‘place-of-residence’ influence can be sought in the ideas and perceptions of the inhabitants, and are grounded in social capital considerations. Perhaps they have realised that behaving as a protagonist of cattle-keeping and pastures, not only by expressing pro-pasture feelings but also by behaving as guardians over it, together with their belonging to the Islamic community, will make them allies of the powerful lamido of the district who is himself a Muslim and cattle keeper. In fact the few original Fulbe that live in the village have their compounds in the Fulbe settlement. The oldest Muslim Kapsiki of that neighbourhood started to live there in the time that the big Fulbe cattle keepers, such as Elhadji Ardo, herded their cattle there and sometimes even had a small house in the same corner. The bonds of the inhabitants of the Fulbe settlement with the Islam and the Fulbe perhaps make them seek to strengthen the link with the Islamic authorities. Those Muslims of Baba Deli (four households heads), who do not live in the Fulbe settlement, strongly oppose the reserve due to inequality reasons. They do not have linkages with the Fulbe lamido of the district by way of an appointed lawan, like the Fulbe neighbourhood has.

On the other hand, those non-Muslim farmers of Baba Deli that agree with the pasture do not do that based on an kind of ethnic feeling of “we Muslims”, as is suggested applies to the Fulbe neighbourhood inhabitants. The region of residence and direction of origin (see Fig 6.3) seem to be more important.

Discords and claims

According to those Dzambou residents that support the creation of the pasture zone, the agreement between Elhadji Ardo (and his fellow herders) and the then farmers of the Baba Deli grazing zone was meant to be ‘forever’. They say that he confirmed this agreement with the authorities the moment some discords broke out between the herders and a farmer. Ardo paid the department authorities for the pasture and with that made it ‘his ‘ ‘forever’.

The inhabitants from the Fulbe neighbourhood started to acknowledge the risk of a disappearance of the bush during the increase in bush encroachment by farmers some ten years ago. They started to tell new cultivators to stay away from this area to safeguard the possibilities to graze cattle. When the cultivators continued clearing the fields that their ancestors had first cleared 80 to 60 years ago, the cattle owners of the Fulbe settlement tried to mobilise the authorities, asking for a re-establishment of old limits. Indeed, reacting to the then status quo, some eight years ago a former sub-department chief pointed out certain small roads or riverbeds as the boundaries that should not be crossed in order to cultivate. But also at that time the Fulbe neighbourhood was left in peace (see Fig 6.5). Yet, the pasture was not fully protected. Although the agricultural population did not openly resist the decision or attack the cattle owners, in their perceived role as instigators of the (then) new delineation, they still felled the trees, cleared parts of this bush and started fields. Every now and again, disputes arose between the two different users of the area.

See Chapter 4 about regional ‘traditional’ chiefs (lambe). The lamido of Mogode, although Islamic, is not a Fulbe in the strict sense because he is of Kapsiki descent. Being from the noblemen’s lineage (see Van Beek 1978, 1987), he acquired his position with the help of a wealthy brother, after the former lamido died.

Some respondents claim that he paid a considerable amount of money to the prefect of the department. One respondent says that he claimed back his “forty cattle” because “he would leave the area” only then.
On the basis of the current delineation, the dispute about the boundaries flared up again. However, the inhabitants of the Fulbe neighbourhood, who are being threatened, renounce the accusations. In addition, they claim not to understand their fellow villagers’ complaints about a diminishing of the pasture area now Ardo’s boundaries are not adhered to in the Fulbe neighbourhood. With the current delineation of the pasture, they say, the surface of the reserve is now not smaller than it was in Ardo’s time. Although the authorities left the Fulbe neighbourhood in peace ("What else could they do? Where else could we live?"). on the other side of the pasture they took several fields out of production and added that area to the reserve. They explain that by doing so the authorities extended the reserve on the north-west side beyond the original boundaries that applied in Ardo’s time (see Fig. 6.5).

The Fulbe-Kapsiki claim that they started to live in their corner with Ardo’s consent. Some of them first had houses in the middle of the pasture, or at least on the inner sides of large boundary rivers, but they retreated according to Ardo’s wishes. This is how they explain the legitimacy of their settlement.

The fact that the inhabitants of the Fulbe settlement are not opposed to the pasture can be explained by the fact that their fields are not situated in the current pasture reserve or, if they are, that they have other possibilities at their disposal both in the hamlet and in the rest of the village. Table 6.6.5 shows the relationship between their opinions about the pasture and the location of the fields.

| Table 6.6.5 Opinion of Inhabitants of Fulbe settlement related to the position of their fields (n = 18; 2 non-Muslim) |
|------------------|--------|---------|----------|-----------|------------|------------|----------|
|                  | Totally agreed | Agreed. diff. form | No opinion | Against no need | Against inequality | Against no other land | Total    |
| In reserve only  | 0      | 0        | 0         | 0          | 0          | 0          | 0        |
| In reserve + outside past | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| In Fulbe corner only | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 |
| In Fulbe-corner + reserve | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| In Fulbe-corner + outside past | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Fulbe-corner + reserve + outside past | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Outside pasture | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Total            | 13     | 2        | 1         | 0          | 1          | 1          | 18       |

Four Muslim households of the Fulbe settlement depend for their agricultural fields on the original pasture area, that is, the zone of their settlement. They took a big risk when they asked the authorities to delineate. The decision of those in charge to leave the Fulbe settlement out of the new pasture must have been a huge relief. Also for those with other fields losing their fields in the settlement area would have been a major loss because this former pasture area is very fertile. In that respect, accusations by some village inhabitants referring to bribery, i.e. paying the authorities to leave the Fulbe settlement out of the reserve, are understandable.
6.7 Violence: Box 4

The future development of the conflict depends on the reactions of the two parties. Yet, in this specific case, in addition to the different groups of Kapsiki, the State is also party to the conflict. However, as yet, the threat of violence does not exist between Kapsiki and the State. Even though some of the Kapsiki feel angry towards the State, they voice their anger against their co-villagers whom they accuse of instigating the whole problem.

6.7.1 The use of force

*Contending: the use of threats*

To achieve their aims without any eye for the interests of the other party, the people who are against the pasture may opt for some kind of action to reverse its existence. They threaten with three possible courses of action concerning the invasion of the area and the continuation of agriculture. The first involves approving that others carry out the invasion (most people with this idea think the pasture is unnecessary). The second is to invade oneself and the third is to organise a group invasion to prevent a possible arrest by the police. Furthermore, the organisation of a group can serve to convince the authorities to change their decision (whether or not with the aid of bribes). Next, it can serve the aim of co-operation against the Fulbe hamlet inhabitants. The continuation of cultivation in the pasture area can also be performed personally but understandably with less success. Personal or group-based invasion of the pasture is considered by those who regard the pasture as a violation of the rights of cultivators because of the unequal treatment of different farmers and because some do not have enough fertile soil elsewhere.

During the year of the delineation they still had permission to finish their production because they had already started (says the sub-prefect). Rumours about this permission differ. According to some cultivators, the only reason was a political one. During that election year, the RDPC authorities tried to win enough votes in this UNDP stronghold and bought votes by promising to grant permission to cultivate. Some say they even promised permission that cultivation could be continued into the next year. Others say they never heard anything about voting for the RDPC, saying that they received this permission because they could not possibly go to other fields that they had not prepared thoroughly. According to the sub-prefect, use was limited to those who had prepared the soil and had no other options and they were to prevent cattle damage in their fields by making fences (using prickly bushes). If such damage were to occur, nonetheless, reimbursement would not be obligatory.

*Contending: the use of violence*

During the delineation meeting in Baba Deli another option came to light, namely the use of violence. When talking about the fight afterwards and comparing the members of the two fighting groups with the different opinions concerning the pasture, those that confess that they used violence mostly expressed that they were upset by the unequal treatment of inhabitants. In the whole village, 22 people support this opinion. From the tables in the rest of this chap-

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107 The first meeting to announce the coming delineation was held in mid March. Apart from the felling of trees (sometimes already done years ago), the production season could not possibly have been started then.
ter. one can deduce that of all the people who contest the pasture because they feel it is an injustice, most have no cattle (17 people out of 22) and only one third (7 people) have fields in the pasture. These seven people in particular feel the injustice most. Only eleven people in the whole village stated that they have no fertile land at all. Eight of them have fields in the pasture and declared that their other fields are not fertile. None of them have cattle.

The personal combination of ‘having thought of action’ with ‘feeling injustice or a lack of fertile land’ can clearly lead to violence in the future. The trigger will therefore not be an activity by the authorities, such as the placing of border poles, but rather controversies in the pasture itself such as when pro-pasture adherents (especially those who appointed themselves as pasture guards) catch other people red-handed. when they are busy destroying boundary poles, or when crop damage is caused by herds in the grazing reserve, where now no compensation is due. This latter possibility is especially dangerous in the event of group action. The formation of groups can even have the goal of scaring away cattle owners. All these actions depend on the judgement of readiness of the authorities to intervene. At the moment, like the presence of authorities in the case of cattle theft, this readiness is thought to be low. The pro-pasture inhabitants of the Fulbe hamlet, in particular, are trying to involve the authorities more (see section 6.6). The other important parameter is the possibility of finding allies in the group formation.

6.7.2 Escapes: can violence be avoided?

Yielding

Yielding means that farmers who want to use fields in the pasture area do not stick to their wishes. They give in to the authorities and to their pro-pasture fellow villagers. More specifically, they leave the Fulbe Kapsiki of Baba Deli neighbourhood in peace. They allow them not only to live in the pasture corner, which they believe should have been forbidden, but also allow them to cultivate the fields there.

Under pressure from the authorities, and especially the police force, there is a considerable chance that Dzambou villagers will yield and agree to the pasture area as such. In addition, no one wants a repeat of the violence experienced in the past. Although Kapsiki are not afraid of expressing their disagreements with a lot of yelling, threats and mutual pushing, the small fight at the boundary meeting has already gone further than the physical expression of discords which is normally allowed. However, the inequality of the situation continues to be a problem and as long as that is not solved the risk of irritations (even over other issues) and violence will grow.

Problem solving

With an eye on all parties’ interests, something impossible has to be achieved. The problem is not only a pasture versus fields conflict but also, as far as authorities are concerned, the preservation of a forest zone. The proposed pasture rotation, as was agreed between farmers and former cattle keepers (according to some villagers), would serve the goals of both user groups, but not that of the State. For the farmers this would have been an ideal solution. They would

\[16\] Of a total of eleven people with fields in the pasture.

\[17\] My experience is that, in a tense situation, other people present (also or even especially women) intervene quickly and keep aggressors physically away from each other, trying to calm down the dispute in the meantime.
have had access to the most fertile fields in the region and at the same time their exhausted fields would have been rendered more fertile with new manure. According to them, the cattle keepers should have been satisfied with this construction. The rest of the village offers enough fallow to serve as grazing land for the small amount of cattle owned by the villagers and for visiting herds. In addition, the current field area is closer to water wells than the pasture zone itself. The plans to build a new dam somewhere between Dzambou Centre and Oudava should have made the fallow fields even more attractive.

On the other hand, a fixed pasture reserve, which is at the same time forest, would serve State and cattle keepers' aims well as long as the number of cattle is restricted to the carrying capacity of the region. This is a condition that could certainly be met for the time being, given the relatively small number of cattle. However, the implementation of such a plan would be detrimental to the farmers who lack fertile fields. They would have to be compensated in cash or otherwise. Cash would mean that they are able to buy cattle themselves or chemical fertilisers to enhance the fertility of their current fields. Some other compensation would mean the same, if this was also in the form of cattle or fertilisers. Cash compensation would also give them the possibility to choose other options, like trade, in order to reduce their dependence on their fields. In the longer run this would be preferable.

The compensation prescribed by law should be paid without delay and without restrictions. The traditional Kapsiki rule of "owners are those who cleared or inherited cleared fields" is a better starting point to help families overcome field infertility and insecurity, and thus to prevent the build up of frustration and aggression.

Some farmers have said that they would accept the pasture if the cattle keepers were more willing to share their cattle's manure with field owners in the rest of the village. Whether or not this is possible to organise and implement remains to be seen, but it is certainly something worth talking about.

The problem of perceived inequality has to be addressed immediately. As long as people think that some are allowed to cultivate in the pasture area, they will do the same. This will definitely lead to clashes between the users or with the police and the conflict will escalate as a result. The Fulbe-Kapsiki of Baba Deli are now benefiting in two ways. Firstly, they have their pasture reserve and secondly, they have their fertile pasture fields (in their corner). Some of them have indicated that they are willing to move, if there is a place to go to. The problem could be solved with help from the authorities with a view to organising that or with a view to organising the communal use of the now privately used pasture corner. It should be remembered, though, that the Fulbe settlement corner is not big enough to provide fields for all families that lose pasture fields now. Therefore, without measures to improve the fertility of the rest of the fields, several families will continue to suffer from a decline in production.