The assertion of rights to agro-pastoral land in North Cameroon: a cascade to violence?
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Kubadje or Jiksa: contesting names, contesting claims

While climbing the hill to reach a point from which he can show me the natural boundaries of the grazing area of his clan, the Fulbe Prince encounters yelling and cursing bush-clearers who swear at him (and me). "You and your filthy fellow-Fulbe will not make it here any longer! Go away! This white woman that you brought will not make any difference. This is our land, and we will use it. If you do not go voluntarily, we will chase you away. We are stronger than you and have many arms!"

Since the mid 1980s, the small bush region on the border between the villages of Kila and Oudda which are, respectively, in the two sub-departments of Mogodé and Bourah (see Figure 7.2) has been a contested area. Until then, the savannah forest was used by a group of sedentary cattle-owners to graze their herds. The men of this Fulbe group leave their 'Kubadje' area in the dry season when the water wells for their animals run dry and fodder becomes scarce. Currently, a second group wants to make use of the land, namely Bana agriculturalists from surrounding villages who invade the area and start clearing fields in what they call 'Jiksa'. Unfortunately, these fields coincide in time and space with the cattle pastures within the small region itself and with the corridors to the larger adjacent bush land of Modélé. This means that direct confrontation between the two user groups cannot be avoided and that the conflict is growing. Some small clashes have already taken place and the risk of violence on a larger scale is increasing.

In this chapter I focus on the explanation of this conflict, following the VoE model of Chapter 2 (Figure 7.1). Thus, after some historical information, which is important to understand the influencing factors later. I start by investigating insecurities in the agricultural village. In the third section I explore the different options of the invading group as regards improving their situation. Thereafter I focus on the specific investment described in Box 2 of the diagram: the intrusion into another niche. The fifth section describes the claims of the Bana to the new area. Subsequently, in order to pinpoint the conflict (Box 3 of the diagram) the focus is on the opposing party. Their insecurities, their options for overcoming these, and their claims are described
in section 7.6. I end this chapter with a description of options and motivations of both parties to resort to, or abstain from, violence (Box 4 of the VoE model).

7.1 Background: History of the region

The middle ranges of the Mandara Mountains of Mayo Tsanaga department are inhabited by the Kapsiki and the Bana. These two ethnic groups are more or less related. For example, linguists point out the similarities of their languages (Lebeuf 1961; Wente-Lukas 1978). Their cultures also show many similarities. Both the Kapsiki and Bana societies are divided into two classes, namely the blacksmiths who, because of their role as undertakers (with both ritual and practical functions), form the lowest class and the so called ‘normal people’ who may be artisans, peasants (mostly) or even small traders. The blacksmiths are involved in the making of iron tools, like knives and heels, in (ritual) music making, medical care and medicine production and in divination ceremonies, of which the ‘reading of the crab’ is the most important. Blacksmiths’ wives have a special role in the production of pottery\(^1\). Originally the Kapsiki and Bana were ‘animists’. They believe that each thing, animal and person ‘has’ a kind of

Figure 7.2  Mandara Mountain plateaux and research area

Source: Report of eldest woman in Oualda-Baliwil, Dzagni, about 106 years of age at the moment of her interview with Moussa, August 1997 (College of Education-thesis of Moussa, one of the voluntary teachers in Oualda: "L'Histoire de la vie de nos vieux racontée."); For the Kapsiki: see Van Beek (1978 and 1987).
godly creature in it, being more or less a personalized form of the one and only god, which they say is the same as the god of the Christians and Muslims. Nowadays, lots of people of both ethnic groups have converted to one of these religions.

Next to that, the bride-price customs are more or less the same, with a diminishing amount of payment over the years. Divorce is practised frequently in both societies. More than one person has been married over 10 times. Far more women leave their husbands to live with another man than vice-versa and they then leave their children with their fathers.

According to Boulet (1984: 138), both ethnic groups are descendents of the Mofu that migrated into the area in the 17th century from the Diamaré plain or even further away, such as the Logone. They mixed with the then autochthonous population to form several new groups. Although the Bana admit that they arrived in the Mandara Mountains after the Kapsiki, they claim to have been the first to arrive in the current Oudda territory, including the now contested small bush area in the north. They also state that they arrived during the course of the seventeenth century and they, like Boulet, talk about origin places in the east. But according to them their place of origin was even further east, namely in the Sudan. They arrived in the Rhumsiki area after having relocated a number of times in the Mandara Mountains, partly due to locust plagues and partly due to violent encounters with other populations (for example on the current Nigerian border, the river Madagali). There they succeeded in reaching an agreement with the Kapsiki already present. The Kapsiki were to stay on the adjacent plateau and the Bana were to occupy the neighbouring area of the mountains to the south that is now called the district of Guili.

One of the origin myths of the Bana states that Oudda itself was established by three different Bana men who, during the time of the arrivals, came to the region and settled on three different mountain tops. At night they saw each other’s fire and, when meeting, decided to set up a village together. Over the course of several years, a real crowd of people from Rhumsiki arrived to join them. They built their houses and most of their fields on the mountain tops and slopes for safety, although from the beginning they had fields in the plains too. From the 1930s until well after independence, governments stimulated mountain people to descend and build their compounds in the more accessible plains. However, the hill-tops are where their common history is. The remains of houses and fields can be seen there and there are still burial places on the slopes.

Coming down from the slopes, people started to build their compounds in more or less concentrated settlements. They wanted to be among others, to feel safe and to be able to guard against attacks by humans (sometimes thieves) and ravaging wild animals. After such a “plain-hamlet” had been founded, now and again they moved on to use fields further away. Only a
few daring people set up new homes in remote bush areas, sometimes as far north as what is now Jiksa area. Because of this settlement pattern Oudda is now spread over a wide area and consists of different neighbourhoods and sub-neighbourhoods (see Fig. 7.3). It was only several decades after the foundation of Oudda by the Bana that the Kapsiki started a settlement in the southern ranges of their plateau territory, north of where now the contested pasture is situated. According to Van Beek (1981:114-115) these Kapsiki did not move southward from the plateau. He sketches an origin somewhere to the south-west in Nigeria. In line with Kapsiki customs this village, which is called Kila, stretches over a wide area and is divided into different, widely dispersed neighbourhoods, each with their own chiefs. Nowadays, one of these neighbourhoods is formed by the Fulbe area of “Kubadje”, the pasture area studied.

As explained in Chapter 4 the Fulbe arrived in the north of Cameroon at the beginning of the eighteenth century. At first they came with peaceful intentions, only in search of good pastures. Later, in the wake of their holy war, they antagonised the autochthonous population with their (accompanying) slave and harvest raids. In the Mandara Mountains the inhabitants fled to higher regions in an attempt to escape these raids. In those days the Fulbe did not settle in the mountains. Their elite, living in urban centres such as Mokolo, only invaded these areas from time to time to take slaves. Some lower classes rambled with their herds through plains and foothills and became settlers themselves. Others performed transhumance and lived in semi-permanent hamlets during the rainy season. One of the concentration areas of such Fulbe settlements could be found from Yola to Garoua (see Fig. 4.1, Chapter 4).

For these Fulbe the Cameroon-Nigerian boundary did not mean anything. They were used to travelling to and from between Garoua and Yola or from Maiduguri via Mokolo to Guider. The (semi-)settled Fulbe of Kubadje originated, several generations ago, from these surroundings of Garoua. The neighbourhood chief in charge during the research, Elhadji Ngoura, left that area when he was a young man and moved to the west, that is to Nigeria, where he married. But “when the Nigerian president expelled all foreigners”\(^1\) he and his fellow Garoua-Fulbe and their families sought the neighbourhood of the regional Fulbe lavan of the study area, who at that time was settled in Modélé (see Fig. 7.2). Because of the population increase in Modélé, some of the Fulbe group - 6 family heads and their families - moved to the bushland area of what is now called Kubadje. There they built their houses with the help of some

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\(^8\) The neighbourhoods are (going from Guii along the road, further and further into the bush): Baliwol, with its sub-quarter Glke; Bariki (also called “centre”) with its sub-quarters Relas and Guiki; Hlaka (with a high and a low lying sub-quarter), and Wazza (a very small and very remote neighbourhood in the north-western direction)

\(^9\) The word ‘Kubadje’ is the Fulbe word for the shrub Isoberlicher Doka that can be found in abundance in the studied pasture area. In general this shrub denotes a degradation of pasture quality (Mvondo Awono et al. (2001). Cattle do not eat the shiny, non-digestible leaves, but it is useful for fuel wood.

\(^10\) A kind of district (emirate) of the Fulbe Sokoto Caliphate, in what is now Nigeria.

\(^11\) Elhadji Ngoura refers to the Nigerian president Elhadji Shagari, who reigned from 1978-1983. It is difficult to define the period during which he expelled all foreigners from Nigeria. However, Ngoura seems to have arrived in Cameroon earlier than that. Perhaps he mixed different events and also referred to the political struggles connected to Nigerian independence and the preferred type of State in the 1950s. In that same period the emirs in the Northern region tried to purify their territory from foreign (for them meaning ‘southern’), non-Muslim influences.
Kapsiki who were asked by the Kila village chief, Koye, to provide assistance. Ngoura himself arrived a bit later than the others in 1958\textsuperscript{12}, after a period spent in Modélé. Thus, he only became the leader of the settlement ("lawam") some years after the foundation at the request of the inhabitants of the time. He constructed his house – now a very big compound incorporating all his grown up and married sons and their families, as well as a sister, an adult nephew etc. - separate from the neighbourhood centre. Today these first settlers and their descendants stress the emptiness of the area on arrival: "only pasture land, no persons or houses."

7.2 Insecurities: Box 1 and onwards

This section starts on the left-hand side of the VoE diagram (Figure 7.1) with a description of Box 1, the diminishing environmental space (scarcity) for the Bana. The step from Box 1 to

\textsuperscript{12} Report of forest and hunting-chief of Mogodé, (Chef de Poste Forestier et de Chasse 2000) which corresponds with the life history of Ngoura himself (interview November 2000).
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. Insecurity Complex) that shape the strategies of the Bana. These are the influencing factors, mentioned in the diagram, that decide whether or not the actors will enter into Box 2 or use an 'escape' route.

So, after a description of the environmental situation, I will examine the other (possible) insecurities of the Bana, in the human, economic and social domains.

7.2.1 Environmental insecurities

*Physical basis*

**Soils**

Because the Mandara Mountains form a volcanic range with soils consisting of partly weathered volcanic deposits (lithosols) one would think that the soils are fertile. However, this is not the case everywhere. The mountain plateau of the Kapsiki, for example, is less fertile than the eastern plains of the Diamaré and the area around Kaélé. On the other hand, the Bana have settled on pedologically better land than their northern neighbours, the Kapsiki (Mohammaddou 1984: 147).

The whole Mandara range has a basis of gneiss, anatexite and granite. This means rocks with a medium texture and a biotite and amphibole13 varying content. Because of differences in local conditions of pedogenesis, alteration products, and thus intrinsic fertility parameters, differ per locality. In addition, simple rocks with a rough texture can be found that contain only a small amount of ferro-magnetic minerals. These soils weather into a very rough quartzite over time and that is not the best agricultural basis. The whole region is dominated by sandy soils, interspersed locally with some argillic soils or those which have planosolic properties (not very suitable for agriculture, because of water-impermeability), or which contain high levels of carbonates.

In Oudda, the extended village of the agriculturalists, the soil is skeletal with a lot of small stones and a large variation in the sandy fraction. The land consists mostly of régosolic4 soils with washed aspects. The useable layers are not very deep and have deficient physical properties. The pedoclimate is dry, especially in eroded and furrowed regions. This type of soil has a high risk of erosion. According to Brabant and Gavaud (1985: *Carte des Terres*) these lands are only suitable for the maintenance of mountain agriculture and the production of subsistence crops.

In addition, soils of alluvial and colluvial origin, locally hydromorph, can be found that offer better agricultural possibilities. However, more to the south the soils contain increasingly less iron. Kila to the north has the same type of soils, although supplemented locally with soils with vertic properties which constitute good agricultural land.

Between Oudda and Kila, the area of the contested pasture, there is a wide pocket of very sandy soils which are deep and have a rough texture but which also have a dry pedoclimat. Water reserves in the soil are marginal. Like the other predominant soil type, these soils have a high erosion risk and deficient physical properties. Brabant and Gavaud (1985) consider

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13 Biotite consists of an ion-rich mixture of, among others, potassium, magnesium, aluminium. Amphiboles are magnesium-ion silicates with traces of many other elements.

14 A régosol 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.
these soils suitable for forest and pastures, but only marginally suitable for other rain-fed agriculture\(^{14}\).

In short, the soils of the Mandara Plateau are less fertile than might be expected. Where sand dominates, the production of sorghum becomes difficult. The large quantity of stones hinders cultivation and the high level of vulnerability to erosion and water shortage makes agriculture here a risky undertaking.

**Climate**

As explained in Chapter 4, their high altitude means the Mandara Mountains form a pocket of different temperature and precipitation conditions than their latitudinal position would suggest. A comparison between the two research areas situated at the same latitude (from approximately 10°15 to 10°25) reveals a 200 mm/year difference in rainfall. In the Bana district of Guili rainfall exceeded an average of 1000 mm/year over the last 50 years, compared to 800 mm in the Diamaré plain described in Chapter 5. The temperatures here are lower than in the plain: maximum temperatures are two degrees lower than in the study area of Chapter 5, while mean minimum temperatures are one degree less. In addition, diurnal temperature differences are higher outside the mountains. Despite the higher rainfall and lower temperatures, annual potential evaporation is still higher than precipitation.

**Table 7.2.1 Average annual rainfall per period (in mm)**

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mokolo</td>
<td>1035</td>
<td>1078.4</td>
<td>1080.1</td>
<td>962.1</td>
<td>1099.9</td>
<td>888.4</td>
<td>956.5</td>
<td>1112.8</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogodé</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.(^d)</td>
<td>n.av.(^d)</td>
<td>n.av.(^d)</td>
<td>n.av.(^d)</td>
<td>n.av.(^d)</td>
<td>926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir</td>
<td>1085</td>
<td>1054.2</td>
<td>1186.3</td>
<td>863.2</td>
<td>1138.1</td>
<td>1035.7</td>
<td>836.5</td>
<td>972.7</td>
<td>1113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourah</td>
<td>960</td>
<td>1092.1</td>
<td>1153.8</td>
<td>976.6</td>
<td>945.0</td>
<td>612.7</td>
<td>826.4</td>
<td>1061.7</td>
<td>1084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{a}\) = Data based on L'Hôte (2000). 1944–1969 data from Mogodé is not available because the Mogode pluviometric station only came into existence in 1970

\(^{b}\) = Data based on Beauvillain (1995)

\(^{c}\) = Data based on archives of pluviometric stations (copied January 2001)

\(^{d}\) = Annual data is not available. L'Hôte (2000: 19) only gives a 25 year annual mean of 1030 mm

The actual rainfall patterns for the middle range of the Mandara Mountains are recorded in the lists of the different pluviometric stations in the region, as shown in Table 7.2.1. The monitoring centres of Bourah in the South, and Mogodé and Sir further north are the closest to the Oudda and Kila areas. It has to be underlined, however, that the real numbers in the study area may differ because of substantial differences in rainfall per locality, both in amount and over time.

Although many uncertainties exist with regard to the rainfall figures\(^{15}\), and different authors give different numbers, in general it can be stated (and read from the Table) that precipitation

\(^{14}\) CPC S calls this 'washed tropical soils with colluvial contributions. ferruginous', and FAO speaks of ‘white and sandy luvisols’ (Brabant and Gavaud 1985).

diminished during the 1970s and 1980s due to droughts in the early years of these decades. In this period the decline in rain was especially concentrated in the two early months and the end months of the rainy season. That means that not only total precipitation diminished, but also that the cultivation period decreased, especially in the more important months of ploughing and sewing. Although this phenomenon was more obvious further north, Hallaire (1991: 20) states that several southern Mandara Mountains inhabitants changed their agricultural systems because of this precipitation insecurity. Indeed, several of my interviewees also stated that they had adopted the quicker maturing red sorghum species in stead of the white varieties that can only be harvested in December.

From the beginning of the ‘90s onwards the amount of rain increased. The five year mean from 1995 to 2000 was good in both the Bourah as well as the Mogodé districts, according to their pluviometric stations (see Table 7.2.1; and Table 1 and 2 in the Appendix).

However, insecurities did not disappear totally. The length of the rainy season in particular showed considerable variations. For the Kila-Oudda area, extrapolating from the data of the pluviometric stations north and south of it, most of the years in this period cannot be called ‘secure’. In 1996, total rainfall stayed far below normal. 1999 and 1997 both revealed a shortening of the agricultural season because of a zero precipitation in April. In 1997 this cessation of rainfall came after a good start in March, so many of the farmers lost their first seeds. It is still very difficult for cultivators to anticipate the best moment to farm and to choose the best crop.

Figure 7.4 4: Mobile average precipitation over 5 years in Sir (10° 34' N; 13° 40' E; 920m) and in Bourah (10° 15' N; 13° 31' E; 775m), plus years with bad spreading of rain for agriculture (a dot means that in that year the rainy season was shorter than 5 months and/or there were fewer than 4 consecutive months with more than 100 mm of rain) (Source: Beauvillain (1995) and archives pluviometric station Bourah and Sir)

During the period between 1945 and 1955 - which is interesting for the cases studied - no data is available from the regional stations of Sir, Mogodé and Bourah. However, Beauvillain (1995: 74 and 72) shows that the Far North suffered lower long-term means precipitation during the 1940s and 1980s (Mokolo and Maroua data) and at the end of the 1950s, albeit a less dramatical one (see Figure 4.3).
In general the surface run-off of the region (from north of Mogodé) is southwards\textsuperscript{17}, which means that the rainfall pattern more to the north is important for the off-stream in the riverbeds of the research area (Olivry and Naah, 2000). The same applies to the filling of the aquifers in this Atlantic basin, although Detay (2000) stresses the fact that many aquifers in the southern Mandara Mountains are discontinuous.

In the Sudan-Sahel zone primary production figures, and the number of people that can live off the land in an area, are directly related to the availability of water. Those who depend on this harsh climate are fully aware of the dangers of a lack of water. Thus, apart from official precipitation figures and sub-surface water-content, the perception of actors of water availability is an important factor in their decisions.

Both the Bana and the Fulbe of Kila use the presence of the others in the studied neighbourhood as a reason to blame these people for the reduction in surface water, both as regards extent and duration of the flow. In the past the rivers were bigger, both groups claim. There were more small rivers and they lasted longer, namely until April while nowadays the water supplies have sometimes already run dry in December\textsuperscript{18}. The clearance of the bush, the disappearance of trees and the exposure of bare ground to unlimited sunlight and wind causes more water evaporation and thus the drying up of more little streams and this all takes place earlier in the year than used to be the case when the bush was used only for pastoral activities, the herders say. On the other hand, the farmers highlight the influence of cattle. The trampling by the cattle and their eating of every little piece of grass means the soil cannot take up all the rain and the water runs off and disappears quickly. Both accusations are given meaning by the research of tropical culture technicians and environmentalists\textsuperscript{19}. Also blame for the late-season bush fires, which damage either crops or pasture herbs, is placed by each of the parties on the other and is regarded as being devastating for the water availability.

The Fulbe from Oudda village also complain about the lack of water in the area: “When I was a boy we could stay all year round in this area, but nowadays the rivers run dry well before the end of the dry season.”, a 60 year old herder from the Guiki sub-neighbourhood of Oudda explained. They do not refer to the increase in the number of agricultural fields as a cause. They hope that the government will implement initiatives for the construction of dams in the two bigger rivers to make up for the water need, so that they no longer have to make the dangerous journey to Nigeria in the second half of the dry season.

\textsuperscript{17} For example, the river Louti, starting just north-west of Mokolo heads south till it reaches the Bénoue in the North Province. The first small currents of a river can be directed east or west, depending on the slopes of the mountains, but the bigger streams of this part of the Mandara Mountains are southward bound.

\textsuperscript{18} It has to be stressed that there are some older Bana who explain the shorter duration of surface water in the area with a wider streambed of the rivers, due to water-erosion itself, and thus a quicker off-stream. Extension workers of the hydrology department try to encourage residents to build small dams in the streambeds to diminish the velocity of the current during the rainy season and to give the water more time to penetrate the soil and fill up the groundwater table (see also Hio Hio 1999).

\textsuperscript{19} If the infiltration of water after a downpour is hampered by soil degradation and the disappearance of vegetation causes the rain to reach the ground more easily, the peak-flow in the rivers increases. The run-off in small rivers can take place so quickly that it seems as if those small rivers do not exist anymore. On the other hand, tree clearing and the exposure of bare soil and puddles to direct sunlight can cause more evaporation. Then the total amount of water in general and of water that can infiltrate the soil diminishes.
In short: the physical basis of the area consists of vulnerable, intrinsically not very fertile soils with a poor humidity regime. On the one hand, the amount of rain offers better opportunities than could be expected at this latitude of the Sudan-Sahel zone, but on the other hand rainfall patterns and water availability throughout the year are very variable and insecurity thereof has increased since the 1970s.

Population densities
The actual numbers and the growth of the population of Oudda can be estimated using various sources. Counted against the (probable) surface of the area, this will result in population density figures, as shown in table 7.2.4.

Table 7.2.4 Surface and number of inhabitants over the years of Oudda and its neighbourhoods

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda (recently)*</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>not available</td>
<td>2700</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>a: 3.110</td>
<td>a: 116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b: 3.863</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(210 Fulbe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b: 147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guili (Beauvillain)</td>
<td>5.933</td>
<td>8.932</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>11.648</td>
<td>15.499</td>
<td>316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(+ 35 Fulbe)</td>
<td>(+ 320 Fulbe)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Oudda (calculated)</td>
<td>1.695</td>
<td>2.460</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>3.185</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(+ 10 Fulbe)</td>
<td>(+ 91 Fulbe)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Baliwil</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>1.799</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banki</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waza</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlaka</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>n.av.</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = figures are based on the data of two recent surveys, both held in 2000 (see note 20)

** = figures are based on the information of Beauvillain (1989, 590, 598)

*** = figures are based on the Guii data of Beauvillain (see b), but extrapolated

**** = figures from “Données de Base de Programme Nationale de Vulgarisation (2000)”

***** = figures are estimated, based on field visits and interviews December 2000, January 2001

****** = 1987 (national) survey result, second number is estimated for 1996 (source: computer data of MIDIMA, January 2003)

From the table it can be seen that the population density of Oudda has risen from 13.6 people per km² in the 1940s to 26.3 people in the year 2000. Or, using the figures of Beauvillain (1989): from 11.6 people per km² in 1940 to 22.5 people in the 1970s. That is an increase of around 100%. However, there are big differences between the different neighbourhoods:


21. The number of 3,110 people in 2000 suggests a decrease in the number of inhabitants since the end of the 1970s. Although this is possible, there are no obvious reasons in the history of the region to suspect such a decline, apart from stagnation in the 1980s as reported by Beauvillain. Therefore, it is more likely that the higher numbers of the Delegue d’Agriculture of Bourah are correct.

22. The calculation of the Guii data has been made on the basis of a ratio of 3.5, although the surface ratio between Guii and Oudda is 2.7. The higher ratio is chosen because Guii is a town and we expect a higher population density there than in the village of Oudda.
Baliwel, Bariki and Hlaka have a higher population density (28.4; 27.8 and 28.7) than Waza (3.7). Moreover, it is not only the strict population density of a specific neighbourhood that shows the pressure on the land of that same neighbourhood. Oudda is perceived as one village and people also use the lands of that village in other neighbourhoods than the one they live in. The distribution is therefore uneven. The amount of surface used by people from one neighbourhood in the territory of another differs.

If we compare the densities of the two neighbourhoods nearest to the contested pasture area (Hlaka and Waza) with that of the rest of Oudda, it turns out that these two neighbourhoods that have the most and the fiercely expressed claims in the Kubadje-Jiksa area, have the lowest population density (see Table 7.2.5).

Table 7.2.5 Comparison of population densities in Oudda neighbourhoods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Neighbourhood</th>
<th>Surface (km²)</th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>People /km²</th>
<th>No of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda total</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3.863</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlaka-Waza</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bariki total</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.026</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiki</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baliwel</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.799</td>
<td>51.3</td>
<td>299</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = a Bana household comprises, on average, 3 adults and 3.2 children; a Fulbe household (in Guiki almost all inhabitants are Fulbe, plus a few Bana wives) consists of slightly less people (five on average)

Although population densities may constitute a source of insecurity for parts of Oudda, this is certainly not the case for the two ‘outer-neighbourhoods’, Hlaka and Waza.

Land availability

The availability of land to use for cultivation is diminishing. Whether or not the fields that former generations made available for agriculture are divided between the offspring or are still in the collective governance of the whole extended family, the fact is that these fields were once the property of just one person, to be used by him and his wife(s). But today they are used by two or more generations of offspring⁴. While the grandparents’ generation had an average of 3.8 sons that reached adulthood and the fathers’ generations had an average of 4.5 sons that reached adulthood, this means that the fields cleared by the (great-)grandfathers nowadays have to be shared with 17.1 male family members (or their offspring). With a current mean number of wives per household head of 1.1, roughly the same number of women have to make use of these fields, compared with at best 2 in grandfather’s time⁵. In short, the surface of

---

⁴ The number of Fulbe in Oudda in 1976 is very roughly estimated as being 120 people (a sophisticated guess based on a figure somewhere between the numbers of 1961 and the actual numbers). According to Beauvillain (1989), in the Bourah department the population growth was 1 to 1.4 % between 1940 and 1976.

⁵ Nine out of the 82 grandfathers not only cleared the bush but also (or only) inherited fields. In all the other cases the grandfathers were the ones who started to clear the bush in the Oudda territory (see section 7.2.4 “Land allocation”). In thirty-six cases, the respondents could not state the exact amount of ha their grandfathers had cleared. They only knew that it was “a lot” or “big fields”.

⁶ The number of wives that grandfathers had is not known. The number of wives of the father’s generation is slightly higher than of the respondents’ generation (mean 1.5). I therefore again assume a slightly higher mean for the grandfather’s generation and estimate there to have been 2 wives per household head.
fields used by 3 people two generations ago has to be shared by at least 35.9 people today. Furthermore, today’s household heads point out that this number is set to grow again. Although most families are not yet complete (72% of household heads-respondents is younger than 50 year), the mean number of sons is already more than one: namely 2.8.

Nevertheless, the Oudda territory is large. If all the land were to be usable, each person would have access to 3.8 ha (that is 22.8 ha per household with (a mean of) 6 people). This is far more than what is needed according to Dietz et al (2001: 198). However, because the area is a mountainous one, part of the Oudda surface is not available for agriculture and several areas are not even suitable for pasture. An estimation based on personal observation of these unusable areas, whose slopes are too steep, which are too rocky or which consists of a riverbed, excludes roughly 10% of the area. That means that 3.4 ha are available per person or 20.5 ha per household. In 1940, this was still 6.6 ha and in 1970 4.9 ha per person.

Table 7.2.6 Mean per person surface area of arable land (in 2000)
over three generations. (as private property (‘owned’), the available surface area of the total that is shared with the extended family, cropped and left fallow). All male respondents are household heads, females are mostly spouses, only 4 times household heads.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Ha per man (n = 82)</th>
<th>Number of men that bought</th>
<th>Number of men that rented</th>
<th>Ha per woman (n = 43)</th>
<th>Number of women that bought</th>
<th>Number of women that rented</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Respondent (owned)</td>
<td>3.6*</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent, part of shared</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father (owned)</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father part of shared</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grandfather (owned)</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent (cropped)</td>
<td>3.2 - 4.5</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.7 - 2.1</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent (fallow)</td>
<td>4.6 - 4.9</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a = (n = 24) 14 respondents had only fields in private property, 10 respondents had cleared fields themselves (mean 1 ha) and thus in private property, in addition to a shared inheritance. The rest of the respondents (57%) only share their fields with (male) family members

*b = in total 79% of respondents share fields with family members. Of those the Table gives an estimated mean of the available surface per household head. This estimation is based on the surface area stated for the extended family (mostly only explained as “a lot”, with a vague indication of how many “a lot” is) divided by the number of people (male) that have to share the inherited fields

c = n = 30 (included 8 x ‘many’, counted as 5 ha each, and 1 x 11 big fields, counted as 2 ha each) 14 times these fathers had cleared and inherited, and twice they only cleared and did not inherit.

d = n = 43 (included 29 x ‘many’, counted as 5 ha each; 5 x several number of ‘fields’ counted as 1.25 ha each; 2 x ‘8 big fields’, counted as 32 ha together). Three times these grandfathers cleared while also inheriting, once they bought land and 6 times they only inherited. The field surface area of the other 39 grandfathers is not known

e = the first number is for 1999; the second number for 2000

f = in 1999 three of the female respondents rented fields

This rough calculation is uncertain in two ways. One is the fact that some of the clearances were carried out by great-grandfathers. The number of generations using those fields is therefore higher and thus the number of offspring is also higher. The other uncertainty has to do with the fact that 20% of fathers cleared fields as well. In those cases, the number of offspring is correct but the number of fields to be shared is higher. These two effects are considered here as eliminating each other.

Dietz et al (2001) calculate a basic need of 0.25 ha per person for subsistence agriculture in the Sahel-Soudan zone. It has to be said, however, that such a figure heavily depends on the type of soil, the climate, etc.
The rough estimations of the inhabitants themselves also show a decline in land availability. This is shown in Table 7.2.6 which is based on figures the respondents have come up with. The data on ownership are facts (except for some contested fields, but these represent only a very small proportion of the total area). Data on shared fields has been guessed by respondents and the same applies to data on fallow. Because guesses have been made within the same range for both the current generation as well as for the former generation, the data is useful to compare the different generations and the perception of respondents on their field position. It is remarkable that respondents seem to ignore a large part of the Oudda surface. It may be assumed that fallow lands are underestimated, especially when they are shared with an extended family. Together with the data in Table 7.2.7 it can be stated that long(er) term fallow is not counted as such. Although land availability is diminishing, if one counts the amount of fallow together with the amount of land cropped, land availability per person can still be regarded as high, also in the mind of the respondents.

All calculations made here give a picture of mean land availability. Although this general picture is not that bad, the reality for several individuals was very different. As in other villages, there are considerable land inequalities in Oudda (see Table 7.2.7). As mentioned before, women do not own land and have to search for land to rent or borrow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.2.7</th>
<th>Range of available land surface area (for male household heads; n = 82) in quarts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available quarts</td>
<td>0 - 0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of male household heads</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The six people in the first column have access to land of less than what Dietz et al (2001) consider to be the minimum for subsistence of one person. The second column describes a field surface area which is still too small for a family of six people. In the not so fertile area of Oudda, and with the risk of too dry years in an area of low soil humidity also the people in the third column can be regarded as having a vulnerable position. So, extrapolating from respondents to the whole of Oudda, the land inequality in Oudda puts at least 39%, but perhaps even 56%, of households in danger.

When asked about the fertility of their fields only two people with less than 5.9 quart of land at their disposal mentioned having only fields with poor fertility. Of those with 6 to 14.9 quarts, two people mentioned having only poor fields (see Table 7.2.8). All the rest have good or a combination of good, bad and/or intermediate fields. Five people do not have personal fields at all and describe the fields they use as 'sufficiently fertile'. Thus, with regard to land

28 Counter-questioning on this issue during follow-up interviews in 2003 indeed revealed an underestimation of fallow land, partly because former fields situated on the slopes of formerly inhabited hills are not considered as 'again useful'. Respondents explained that they are 'Too steep and too much wild animals up there, nowadays'.

29 This mis-calculation can be due to a language problem (for example, different words for long term and short term fallow) but, when discussing the issue with some interpreters, I could not distinguish any linguistic problems regarding the concept of 'fallow'.
quality, only four households have real problems. Two of those are no part of the 39% of people without enough surface area.

Table 7.2.8  Land availability versus land quality (n = 82, but 38 people have more than one type of land)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Available quarts</th>
<th>0 - 0.9</th>
<th>1 - 5.9</th>
<th>6.0 - 9.9</th>
<th>10 - 14.9</th>
<th>15 - 19.9</th>
<th>20 - 29.9</th>
<th>30 - 39.9</th>
<th>40 - 99.9</th>
<th>&gt; 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commoditisation of land

As can be seen in Table 7.2.6 commoditisation of land in Oudda is not that developed (as yet). Only four men of the current generation have bought some of their fields. Although respondents indicate that the price of fields has increased over the years (for example a five time increase for a normal size field in the plain from 40,000 Fcfa twenty years ago to 100,000 Fcfa now), they also say that arable surface is still ‘payable’. Of course the price depends on the location (far or near the settlements, on slopes, etc.) and the soil quality, but that was no different in the past. It has to be added, however, that a price increase of just more than two times over the last twenty years, means a de facto decrease, because of inflation and the early 1990s Fcfa devaluation (see chapter 4).

The number of people that spend money in order to rent land has also not increased markedly. Over the years these numbers have changed slightly but over the generations there has been no net increase.

Thus, the commoditisation of land does not reflect a (felt) scarcity of land.

Calorific needs and production

Amount of production

Production figures of Oudda are based on 2 different sources: one is the production 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 7.2.9). The second source is the production figures of the village over the years recorded by the sub-departmental agricultural service (settled in Bourah, but with both a district and a village representative.

The production figures per ha, as given by the respondents in Table 7.2.9, are different from those of the agricultural services in Bourah over the same years (see table 7.2.10). This difference may be due to an under-estimation in the interviews (respondents tend to mention a lower production to hide their wealth and to appear poorer because that may lead to assistance being provided). On the other hand, the method of the Agricultural Services for measuring village production is based on household samples and extrapolation. Depending on which area is used as a sample source, production figures can differ greatly. The interviews for this study were mainly held in the more outlying neighbourhoods of Oudda where it is.
for example, more difficult to use chemical fertilisers \(^\text{10}\) and where production may therefore be lower\(^\text{11}\).

According to the respondents in the interviews, in the year 2000 the millet yield was especially disappointing due to a lack of rain at the end of the rainy season. Groundnuts produced reasonably well (although still with a lower per ha production than the year before). However, the surplus, which was due to an increase in cultivated surface area, caused the price on the market to drop. The Bana did not earn enough from the sale of beans and groundnuts to buy sufficient cereals.

Bambara groundnuts, which seem to generate a good additional income, are a risky crop. From time to time, for reasons which are not apparent, a field stops producing this crop. The Bana themselves explain this on the basis of 'the spell of the rainbow'. This means that, according to them, a rainbow stood above this field and from then on the field refuses Bambara groundnuts.

Table 7.2.9 Production and surface area used by respondents in 1999 and 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1999</th>
<th>2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean prod. / Mean surf.</td>
<td>Prod. /surf.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red sorghum</td>
<td>373 / 0.8</td>
<td>484 / 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White sorghum</td>
<td>196 / 0.5</td>
<td>438 / 1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>404 / 0.33</td>
<td>1244 / 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice</td>
<td>18 / 0.05</td>
<td>382 / 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut</td>
<td>273 / 0.67</td>
<td>411 / 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans</td>
<td>97 / 0.36</td>
<td>271 / 1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bambara nuts</td>
<td>147 / 0.53</td>
<td>1259 / 4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1174 / 3.24</td>
<td>449 / 2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallow</td>
<td>n.a / 3.23</td>
<td>n.a / 1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>993 / 1.68</td>
<td>637 / 2.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- \(^*\) = for all cereals the mean is given for only men (n = 82), as women do not cultivate these crops (only on very rare occasions)
- \(^+\) = measured only for men, as women do not own land. The estimates of fallow land are very rough. Only those fields that have been used recently or are to be used in the near future seem to have been counted\(^\text{12}\)

The ‘per ha’ production data of the Agricultural Service over the years does not show a downward trend. Even a climatic influence is difficult to discern. It seems as if, in general, used fields are fertile enough to keep up production.

\(\text{10}\) During the rainy season, Oudda-Bariki and neighbourhoods further down the road are no longer accessible because of running rivers.

\(\text{11}\) That the Agricultural Service data is faulty can be seen from the fact that the total production surface area of all of Oudda suddenly diminished from more than 4500 ha in 1997 and 1998 to less than 1500 ha in 1999 (in 2001 it increased again to nearly 2000 ha). The line officer in charge in 2002 could not explain this shift.

\(\text{12}\) Why the fallow surface in 2000 seems to be half as big as in 1999 cannot be explained. Apparently respondents have only counted those fields as fallow that they have been using the year before. Longer term fallow is not counted at all.
Table 7.2.10  Production per ha (kg and kcal) based on Agricultural Service data and interview data.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mais (kg/ha)</td>
<td>1.610</td>
<td>1.920</td>
<td>1.600</td>
<td>1.244</td>
<td>1.100</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>1.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mais (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>5.115</td>
<td>6.101</td>
<td>5.084</td>
<td>3.952</td>
<td>3.495</td>
<td>2.762</td>
<td>3.813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum (kg/ha)</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>870</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>910</td>
<td>273</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sorghum (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>2.781</td>
<td>2.627</td>
<td>2.689</td>
<td>1.424</td>
<td>2.812</td>
<td>1.894</td>
<td>2.472</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice (kg/ha)</td>
<td>1.490</td>
<td>1.600</td>
<td>1.530</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>308</td>
<td>1.200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>5.478</td>
<td>5.882</td>
<td>5.625</td>
<td>4.104</td>
<td>4.779</td>
<td>1.132</td>
<td>4.412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts (kg/ha)</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>1.290</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>1.390</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>3.163</td>
<td>6.801</td>
<td>6.853</td>
<td>2.166</td>
<td>7.328</td>
<td>2.103</td>
<td>5.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (kg/ha)</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>2.325</td>
<td>1.538</td>
<td>1.675</td>
<td>926</td>
<td>2.051</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>2.393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamb.nuts (kg/ha)</td>
<td>1.210</td>
<td>1.020</td>
<td>1.180</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>1.300</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>1.110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bamb.nuts (kcal/ha)</td>
<td>4.137</td>
<td>3.487</td>
<td>4.035</td>
<td>940</td>
<td>4.454</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>3.795</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Needs

When only counting cereals, an average household (consisting of 3.0 adults and 3.2 children, and thus with a need of 1424 kg of cereals) generally had a shortage of 299 kg of cereals in 1999 and 389 kg in 2000 (see Table 7.2.11). Of the household heads interviewed\(^3\), 58% did not produce the amount of cereals needed according to FAO standards\(^4\) to meet the energy requirements of their compound members and themselves (both in 1999 and in 2000). Nevertheless, 16% of respondents claim that they are very happy in Oudda because of the abundance of food. Moreover, almost all respondents said they were satisfied with the 1999 production. On average, the cereal production is sufficient to meet the needs of a household, according to respondents’ own ideas.

Table 7.2.11  Cereals needs and production per mean household in Oudda per year (in kg), according to the own perception of the respondents and the FAO calculation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Needed</th>
<th>Produced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>According to respondents</td>
<td>820</td>
<td>1,125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acc. to FAO calculations</td>
<td>1,424</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The discrepancy may be due to the fact that the Bana do not get their calories from cereals alone. Although beans and groundnuts are cultivated for the market, it does not mean that they do not eat these crops as well. Everybody nibbles groundnuts while peeling them and those

\(^3\) 82 household heads were interviewed, but 10 of them did not know their production.

\(^4\) The FAO (FAO/WHO/UNU 1985) norm for calorific need is 2500 kcal/adult (2300/woman and 2800/man) and 1670 kcal per child per day (my own summation from different age-group figures). 1 kg cereals contains 3342 kcal (3000-3600 kcal).
groundnuts that have a lesser quality are used in the sauce together with a certain proportion of the good quality groundnuts. Beans are used in the sauce and also in fritters, made to be sold at the local markets and partly for household consumption. Some households also produce potato and sweet potato, manioc and mostly also Bambara groundnuts. Table 7.2.12 shows the total agricultural calorific production.

Table 7.2.12  
Comparison of calorific needs and calorific production per (mean) household per year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kcal needed</th>
<th>Kcal produced 1999</th>
<th>Kcal produced 2000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda</td>
<td>4,820,341</td>
<td>6,269,719</td>
<td>6,959,578</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that the village produces enough calories. Yet, poorer families do not meet their requirements (see Table 7.2.13). Discrepancies in the village are considerable with 15 of the families (20%) who have a surplus, producing two to four times what they need in one or both years. Sometimes this could make up for an enormous shortage in the other year. In other cases the overproduction was structural. On the other hand, shortages could also be enormous. Thirty-two (43%) of the households had to manage with a production in calories in one or both years of less than half of what was needed, sometimes even with no production at all.

Table 7.2.13  
Percentage of households without enough cereals or calories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not enough cereals&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Not enough calories&lt;sup&gt;b&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General shortage</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grave shortage&lt;sup&gt;c&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereals</td>
<td>993</td>
<td>1.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> = people's perception of need measured against production  
<sup>b</sup> = FAO's figures of need measured against total agricultural calorific production  
<sup>c</sup> = this means half of what is needed or less

From time to time, for example when guests are visiting or on festival days, people eat meat (mostly from their own small ruminants or chicken, or meat bought at the market). More often, spare money is used to buy some dried fish on the market to put into the sauce. Those families with cows can drink milk, but they can not and do not consume that much.

Next to these agricultural products, people can eat gathered wild products. The bush area in between the fields and surrounding the village offers several opportunities to find wild vegetables and starchy roots, as well as small animals, like mouse, birds, sometimes even a monkey. Although according to Cameroonian law it is forbidden to eat these last, villagers do enjoy the meat when they are able to catch one.

<sup>15</sup> In 1999, seventeen households did not produce anything, according to their testimony (= 23%)


7.2.2 Human domain insecurities

Health insecurities

Every inhabitant of Oudda complains about the lack of a medical post in the village. During the dry season medical care can be obtained in the hospital of Guili, 8 km down the sandy road. From Baliwel, public transport in the form of motorcycles can be used, but most inhabitants do not have enough money to do so. Otherwise a donkey or a bicycle has to be used to transport ill people. But, again, there are not many inhabitants of Oudda who have one of these, so in emergencies they have to borrow some form of transport. And, antenatal and postnatal care is only provided at the hospital of Guili, except for some midwife type of assistance in the village based on the practical experience of older women. Unfortunately, in the rainy season (3 to 4 months) the road to Guili is blocked by at least two big rivers. Inhabitants of all Oudda neighbourhoods highlight the related death toll. Typical tropical diseases, such as malaria and tuberculosis, as well as the drinking water related amoebas and various intestinal pathological bacteria and worms are threats to people’s health. However, there is no money to purchase modern medicines.

All Oudda neighbourhoods have one or more water wells, but because these are open and because people use loose ropes and buckets to draw the water, they become easily contaminated. This adds to the number of intestinal diseases. When working in far-off fields (sometimes more than one hour’s walk), people drink water from streams and pools. Later in the year these are heavily contaminated as they are also used by cattle, for bathing, etc.

Fortunately, traditional health systems are still in place. These are mostly more accessible to villagers as they are more embedded in the physical and social fabric of the community and such services do not (always) have to be paid for in cash. Abundant bush areas means the gathering of ingredients for traditional medicines is not a problem. However, some of the traditional doctors complain about a diminishing of certain species, both plants and animals, whose leaves or skin particles are, for example, indispensable. Younger ‘doctors’ explain that they try to work together with their ‘western’ colleagues: “each has his precise task”

Educational insecurities

As described in Chapter 4 and in the case of the Diamaré and Tupuri regions in Chapter 5, educational possibilities diminished compared to the early Eighties of the last century. With the economic crisis and the following Structural Adjustment Programmes of the World Bank and IMF, the right of Cameroonian citizens to have free education has become more a written than an executed right. A decrease in the number of training places and thus a lack of properly educated teachers has reduced the quality of education and increased the class sizes. In Oudda there are sometimes more than 100 pupils per class. As is the case elsewhere, the primary school in Oudda, located in the centre of the village, is run by an educated, government-paid director, assisted by several so-called ‘parent teachers’. The latter are young men with at least some years of secondary school education themselves who are paid by the parents of children attending the school. Sending children to school therefore means the payment of a school fee. The director does not live in Oudda, but in Guili, so when the rivers are swollen (in and directly after the rainy season), he cannot reach his pupils. In the case of the outer neighbourhood of Waza, the centre of the village is still two hours away. Parents who want to send their chil-

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\footnote{Interview with Hamadou, 32 years old, Oudda Bariki, January 2001.}
children to school complain about the distance. They state that it is too far for the little ones and there are too many possibilities for the elder ones to detour on the way. “We do not have any control as to whether they reach the school or not. The teacher never comes by this way to inform us about whether our children have been playing truant.”

In order to attend secondary school, pupils have to leave the area. Apart from the school fees and the books, notebooks and school uniforms, they need money to find lodgings. Several of them try to stay with relatives in town but even then cash or some other reimbursement has to be given. For girls, the fact that they have to be ‘away from home’ and the necessity of staying in boarding houses diminishes their chances of higher education. Parents are hesitant about whether they should send their daughters away or not because they fear a lack of protection. They fear that the loose moral codes in the ‘big city’ will culminate in a dishonouring of their daughters. They therefore prefer not to let them go.

In addition, most parents, especially those that have attended secondary school themselves, are perfectly aware of the lack of options for using this education. They all came back to the village to become a farmer, although in their schooldays they dreamt of careers in governmental offices. Even church-based support for learning more about agricultural modernisation seems to be diminishing.

7.2.3 Economic insecurities

Cash Crop insecurities

Several elder cultivators pointed out that cotton used to be produced in the area, mostly for personal use by weavers for traditional cloth and ‘ganduras’¹. The rise of commercial cotton cultivation in the rest of the Far North province meant it almost totally disappeared from the mountains. Instead, the groundnut production for the market has gained a big footing in the region. More than 90% of the Bana with some acres of land at their disposal produce groundnuts (at least from time to time). Unfortunately, the groundnut price changes enormously over the year and between the years. Large-scale merchants buy the groundnuts directly after the harvest (November-December) at the regional markets like Guli, when the local producers have had the time to peel them. They calculate on the basis of information from various sources (rumours from Douala, the international export centre, about harvests in other groundnut producing countries; direct information about production in the rest of Cameroon itself and from, for example, Nigeria) and build a security margin into their purchasing prices. Nevertheless, variations are big enough to entice people to cultivate groundnuts the year after a year of good prices. During this second year (with normal precipitation), production increases in such a way that the price falls. The fact that people have chosen to cultivate more groundnuts and less grain leads to a relative lack of cereals. That, in turn, increases market prices in a time that earnings from groundnuts are lower than expected. Thus, although groundnuts are a cash crop related to the international market, local producers are confronted by a local ‘pig cycle’. The world market price determines benefit or loss only in the case of the bigger traders.

" Interview with Kapoua, Oudda Waza. January 2001

¹ The big cotton dress from shoulders to almost the ground, in accord with Fulbe fashion, worn by men
Farm animals and insecurities

With regard to animal husbandry the situation in the Oudda territory is unclear. As explained in Chapter 4, counting the number of animals present is a difficult undertaking. However, several organisations have tried to measure and estimate both cattle and small ruminants.

In most parts of the Sahel-Sudan zone, cattle numbers decreased during the two drought periods at the end of the last century. In contrast, and according to Seignobos (2000e: 119) the number of cattle in Mayo Tsanaga department doubled between 1960 and 1980, mostly due to incoming Fulbe who, in these dry years, were attracted by the watering places in the dry season and the harvest residues on which to feed their cattle. In 1980, the Mogodé and Guili districts had 25 – 50 cattle/km² (0.5 – 1 per person). The increase in the department continued up till 1986", followed by a steady decrease until, in 1995, the lowest total number of 73,250 was reached (two years later than the provincial lowest amount). From then on, cattle numbers increased again.

Table 7.2.14 Numbers of cattle over the years for the department and 2 sub-departments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mayo Tsanaga</td>
<td>125,407</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>73,250</td>
<td>167,786</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogode¹</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>15,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourah</td>
<td>13,705</td>
<td>13,164</td>
<td>10,675</td>
<td>11,448</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ = numbers of 1986 – 1995 could not be obtained because Mogode sub-department was only installed in 1996; before that it was part of sub-department Mokolo.

The Bana themselves never were a cattle-keeping group. However, the rich used to have some cows (mostly of the Kapsiki type⁴⁰). As is the habit in Sub-Saharan Africa, a surplus of money is invested in cattle as a bank deposit. These days, in the whole mountain range, a shift to zebu cattle is taking place to the detriment of the Kapsiki cattle. Unfortunately this shift also means a higher risk to the health status of the cattle, as the Kapsiki race is more hardy, more used to the mountain environment and more Trypanosomiasis resistant (important for future raising programmes).

The Bana explain their current preference for Zebu by highlighting the longer growth period of this race. Kapsiki cattle are relatively small and reach their adult height quicker. They do not grow like Zebu and therefore you gain less from your investment. For this same reason even the value of young Zebu is higher on the market. The shift means bigger cattle, with a higher slaughter weight, and a higher fodder intake versus growth ratio. At the regional animal market in Guili, slaughter animals are more expensive than animals bought for labour or for enlargement of one’s herd. The price of a young adult bull for slaughter, seemingly in good condition, can reach 120,000 Fcfa. Zebu calves which are approximately six months old and which are in good shape can cost 40 to 60,000 Fcfa. However, a lot of cattle trading takes place at home where Nigerian ‘smugglers’ pay more and police do not interfere by demanding taxes⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Seignobos (2000e) mentions a decrease of cattle in Mayo Tsanaga from 1980 to 1988, except for Bourah sub-department (increase of up to 25 %).
⁴¹ The small Bos taurus race, see chapters 4 and 6
⁴¹ During my stay no Kapsiki cattle were sold and none of the owners could tell me the usual price. They only thought “probably I can get the same for a 6 month old calf as for a good sheep”, but this was not proven. I could not find potential or even imaginary buyers with whom to discuss prices.
For the Bana the high number of incoming cattle in the dry years made their position as cattle keepers weaker because of the competition over fodder. With the decline of incoming Fulbe cattle, the Bana took up more cattle keeping than was their custom. This is partly due to the increase in draught animals. One generation ago almost nobody used a plough. There were, of course, some donkeys for transport, but oxen for labour were rare. In 2000, 33% of the population already owned either donkeys or cattle for draught. To work with the plough a farmer needs two animals, as the soils are considered to be heavy. Thus, the step to purchasing a plough and accompanying animals is a big one because a lot of money is involved.

Actual cattle numbers in Oudda (see Table 7.2.15) show that Oudda experiences more or less the same trend of increase as the rest of the department. Although the whole village is not yet at the 1980 densities, Fulbe cattle keepers seem to be reaching former cattle numbers.

### Table 7.2.15 Number and density of cattle in 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Vaccinated cattle</th>
<th>Number of owners</th>
<th>Mean cattle per owner (+range)</th>
<th>Cattle per km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda total*</td>
<td>2,587</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>24.4 (2 - 320)</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudda Bana</td>
<td>1,540</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>16 (2 - 135)</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudda Fulbe</td>
<td>1,047</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95 (4 - 320)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubadjé Fulbe*</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38 (8 - 90)</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = This data is based on the vaccination campaign of May 2000 carried out by Gailaye Yata, the local veterinary officer of Gulil. It is very likely that at the time of vaccination the majority of the cattle were on their dry season transhumance to Nigeria and elsewhere.

b = In the case of Kubadjé the vaccination that generated the numbers was performed in November 2000, a time at which the herds had not yet left the area.

c = This number is calculated on the basis of the assumption that the Fulbe of Oudda graze their cattle solely in the neighbouring Boubakary Nene reserve (see Figure 7.3). The actual density will be lower because they also use other bush-forest land in the vicinity.

d = This number is based on the assumption that the Kubadjé Fulbe graze their cattle solely in their own reserve. However, they not only use the harvest stubbles on Kila fields as well, but also the more extended pasture area of Modélé.

For the Bana an ‘owner’ means a (male) household head. It is very rare for a woman to possess cattle. When they do, they are always added to a brother’s or uncle’s herd. In the case of the Fulbe the situation is different. Women inherit cattle from fathers and mothers, receive cattle as gifts, etc. Because all the cattle of an extended family (that is of a father and his sons, together with the cattle of sisters) are herded in one herd, here an ‘owner’ means the head of a group of households who manages the herd.

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*32 This does not correspond with the information on soil properties as given by soil scientists (Brabant and Gavaud 1985): according to them the majority of the soils consist of a high sand fraction (see section 7.2.1). Normally sand is easy to till. Perhaps it has to do with the stones in the fields.

*33 According to the veterinary service (animal husbandry line-office) of Bourah that also serves Oudda, cattle numbers increased between 1998 and 2002 from 1468 to 1829. Again, these numbers are claimed to be based on vaccinated cattle. The discrepancy between the numbers of the Gulil veterinarian and the administration in the sub-departmental headquarter Bourah remains a mystery.

*34 See, for example, De Bruijn and Van Dijk (1995) or Moritz (2003).
In the whole of Oudda the number of Bana households is approximately 609. There are also 42 Fulbe households. Of the Bana households 95 possess cattle: that is 16%, but the range of cattle per household is considerable (see table 7.2.16). Moreover, the further into the bush (away from Guili) you go the lower the percentage of cattle owners, except in the case of the Fulbe neighbourhood.

Establishing numbers of small ruminants is more difficult still. In general, though, these numbers show the same trend as those of cattle. In 1980, the Western half of the Mandara Mountains in the Kapsiki and Bana region had a small ruminant density of 75 – 100 animals /km². Further to the east, where the human population density is lower, these numbers were 25 – 50 sheep and goats per km². The decrease in ruminant numbers in Bourah started later in the case of small

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Table 7.2.16  
Division of cattle over the households (numbers of cattle based on vaccination numbers in 2000)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>Households</th>
<th>Cattle</th>
<th>Number of owners</th>
<th>Cattle per owner (+range)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baliwol</td>
<td>1,799</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14 (2 - 70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bariki (without Guiki)</td>
<td>816</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8 (2 - 25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waza-Hlaka</td>
<td>1,038</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>547</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>24 (4 - 135)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiki (= Fulbe)</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1,101</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100 (4 - 320)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7.2.17  
Numbers of small ruminants (Department, 2 sub-departments, village)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>goat</td>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>goat</td>
<td>sheep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourah</td>
<td>9,353</td>
<td>14,290</td>
<td>23,429</td>
<td>15,446</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oudda</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mogode</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
<td>n.av</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MayoTsana</td>
<td>213,043</td>
<td>201,094</td>
<td>190,185</td>
<td>122,581</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a = Figures for 1986 – 1995 are based on the year reports of the departmental animal husbandry service  
b = Figures for 2000 are based on data of the provincial animal husbandry service, except for Oudda itself which are based on the sub-departmental animal husbandry service. Bourah  
c = The steady decline in numbers was already noticeable earlier than 1986  
d = The fact that the numbers of goats for Bourah and Mogode are exactly the same makes one wonder whether these figures are true  
e = One may wonder whether this figure is correct because normally the number of goats is higher than that of sheep. In 1986, this was indeed the case in the other sub-departments of Mayo Tsanaga  
f = The fact that cattle numbers are very vague and unreliable can be illustrated by the difference between the vaccination numbers and the numbers mentioned during interviews. Of the 82 male respondents, 21 mentioned that they possess cattle (with 26 % a higher than village level counted during vaccination). Most of those have more cattle vaccinated than they say they possess. A possible explanation may be that small owners have added their cattle to the herd of a bigger owner for the purpose of vaccination  
g = Both the percentage of households with cattle and the mean number of cattle per household is much lower than in Dzambou (27 % owners and 18 cattle per owner) if the Fulbe are not counted
ruminants than in the case of cattle and also later than at departmental level, although it was in the same order. The departmental decline and the sub-departmental increase contradicts Seignobos' claim that there was a stable number of small ruminants in the whole province from 1985 to 1990 (Seignobos 2000e: 119). The growth of the numbers of both groups of animals restarted in the same 1995-1996 period. Contrary to cattle numbers for the whole department, but in accordance with those of Bourah sub-department, the numbers of small ruminants in 2000 had not yet been not totally restored to the 1986 levels (see Table 7.2.17).

In Oudda itself, according to the animal husbandry service in Bourah, small ruminant numbers increased from 1999 to 2002. Officially, 5,217 sheep and 5,107 goats were counted at that time. This already means 70 animals per km$^2$ and therefore almost a return to 1980 levels. But the same service data reveals high extremes over these 4 years. For example there were only 1,013 goats in 1999 and only 1,722 sheep in 2001, after a high of 4,800 sheep in 1999. These fluctuations can generally be attributed to epidemics, the employees of the service explain. But they do not have any idea as to which diseases take these tolls, let alone how to eradicate them. The keeping, breeding, diseases and deaths of small animals is a personal affair. These numbers reveal the vulnerability of the 'normal' Bana and their insecurity with regard to the so-called 'poor men's cows'.

Also those people who try to raise chicken are confronted by contagious diseases every year. More than half of the chicken owners complain about chicken deaths over the last year, sometimes affecting all their birds. Agricultural extension workers have started vaccination programmes to counter the huge numbers of deaths, but farmers are not used to vaccinating poultry. If vaccination takes place in an already contaminated environment, the chickens will not be protected and owners think it is due to the vaccination that the birds die.

The insecurity of the Fulbe of Oudda has other causes. An increase in the number of cattle means an increased risk of the spread of diseases. According to them their herds are not growing but instead the total number of cattle in the region is increasing because the Bana and Kapsiki have started cattle grazing$^4$. They complain about the diminishing access to harvest remains and the rising competition for fodder. The Fulbe estimate that 22 herds of 50 head (=1100 head) stay in their Boubakary Néné reserve - with a surface area of approximately 25 km$^2$ - during the rainy season (see Figure 7.3). This is in addition to quite a lot of herds that trespass on their way to or from Maroua district. The report by the head of the departmental animal husbandry service (Djonwé 2002) speaks of 713 cattle from the Diamaré in the mountains and 630 cattle trespassing from Hina to the north. Not all these cattle pass through Oudda and Kila, but some do. That means that in the rainy season the number of TLU per ha surpasses the 0.3.

Although the Fulbe claim that more and more Bana are keeping cattle. Table 7.2.15 and 7.2.16 together with the population numbers depicted in Table 7.2.4 show that, although quite a number of farmers have cattle these days, it are still mainly Fulbe who contribute to the vast number of cattle in the region.

Households (six household members) with the possibility of slaughtering 21 cattle per year may subsist on meat. This means they need a herd of at least 175 cattle (see Dietz et al 2001: 197-198). In Oudda there are only two Fulbe household heads who possess more than that

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$^4$ Two surveys of the CZV of Mogode in 1999 and 2000 show a slight decrease of cattle numbers in the whole of Mogode canton 6520 head in 1999 and 5870 in 2000 (Tchamaya, 2000)
number, but they have to share with more than 6 family members. To live off the meat of small ruminants, a six person household needs to slaughter around 140 goats a year. Given that there are 8,000 small ruminants in Oudda, on average a household can dispose of 12.3 small ruminants (two per person). If all stay alive and the off-take is 25 % per year, a household can slaughter three animals per year. This gives them a small amount of added energy and protein. But it is not much and it hardly ever occurs that all the animals survive the harsh conditions.

For the Bana individually, an increasing number of animals is a sign of prosperity and reduces insecurities. For the agriculturalists in general, more ruminants are good for improving the fertility of the soils. On the other hand, too many ruminants can put excessive pressure on the available bush land
t. The issue is how to find a balance. The head of the departmental animal husbandry service states that the mountains can still cope with an increase in cattle without being overstocked (Djonwé 2002). With a stocking rate of 0.17 TLU/ha, Oudda indeed still seems to have room enough. Of course, this is a general statement that has to be adjusted for each area. The activities of the State as regards improving cattle-keeping opportunities, such as the instalment of grazing reserves throughout the mountain range, mostly appear to be a threat to the agricultural community.

Thus, keeping cattle or small ruminants and even chicken is a risky undertaking because the Bana do not have special knowledge to keep these animals healthy. It is almost impossible to access such knowledge. Especially during the dangerous rainy season veterinary aid cannot be reached, as the nearest post is in Guili on the other side of at least two big (seasonal) rivers. Even the market at which medicines can be bought is in that town. In addition, official aid is expensive. Vaccination programs do not reach most small ruminant owners or chicken owners
t. Individual owners of all types of farm animals have to face regular losses because of diseases that cannot be treated. In the eastern part of Oudda (the region where the interviews were held) 33 % of the households suffered from the loss of one or more herbivores over 1999 and 2000 due to disease. To that can be added losses due to theft of which 8 % of the respondents complained.

In short, for some families the cattle (or small ruminants) they possess help them to meet their energy and protein needs or form a safety valve in times of hardship. However, the veterinary status and risks, together with the lack of knowledge and possibilities to care for the livestock, make livestock keeping an insecure activity. In addition, the vast majority of people in the village do not possess any cattle at all and even small ruminants are not owned by every household. Those without even a goat or sheep do not have anything in reserve.

*Non-agricultural activities and insecurities*

**Off-farm activities**

The economic crisis of the early 1990s meant a decrease in the possibilities for earning money

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*The carrying capacity of the 1,000 mm rain mountain belt lies between 1.2 and 0.33 TLU/ha, under favourable conditions (Breman (1975) and Gaston (1996) respectively See chapter 4.2.1)

*In addition, some of the existing pasture reserves seem to be already overstocked (see Mvondo Awono et al (2001))

*Vaccination of chickens is something new and most people (women, as chicken owners) are not used to it. In addition, one bottle contains doses for 50 chickens. It is very difficult to organise a vaccination session with enough owners to participate at the same time so as not to waste doses (and thus increasing the price).*
outside the own farm. There are no State jobs available in Oudda at all. Becoming a teacher at the local primary school is no option as only a few teachers are required, there are no vacancies and the present parents cannot pay for more. Outside Oudda, State jobs can only be acquired by those with higher education or the relevant qualifications, in combination with having ‘friends’ in the State offices. The Bana do not have such a network (see section ‘social insecurities’).

Because of the closeness of Nigeria, trade used to offer the more daring men an income, but nowadays the trans-border controls have been increased and a lot of money has to be paid (under the table) to escape import restrictions.

The use of crops which mature more quickly has generated possibilities related to agricultural labour migration. After the harvest at home, some people may move on to help harvest crops that mature later elsewhere. These are once again usually more adventurous young men who travel to Nigeria or to the surroundings of Maroua to help with the *muskuaari* (transplant-sorghum) harvest. Unfortunately, in the years that this addition in income is most needed – the dryer years with a lower yield – the *muskuaari* harvest is often disappointing and less labour is needed to harvest it.

**On-farm activities**

The possibilities for working from the home depend on the availability of raw materials in the form of ‘wild’ or cultivated products. With the abundance of bush area, such raw materials can easily be gathered. However, a rise in ‘modernisation ideas’ and the proximity of Nigeria with its cheap (plastic) products means a decrease in demand for traditional storing utensils or mats, etc. every year. Thus, production of these traditional products does not result in the same profits as in the past.

7.2.4 Social insecurities

Family and clan insecurities

Most of the Bana feel strong ties with their fathers and brothers, mothers and sisters and even with the more extended family of (patrilineal) uncles and nephews. It is only very occasionally that families experience a kind of breakdown of the social fabric, as a result of which sons or old age parents have to look after themselves. This is then regarded with disapproval by neighbours. Bana do not have a cultural taboo of marrying in the own clan, so many wives also come from the Oudda territory. This means the family-in-law is close by. Payment of bride-prices is (still) a common habit that binds young families firmly to the wife’s clan. Adult girls explain that they want a bride price to be paid when somebody wants to marry them. “Otherwise people may think you are worthless.” Paradoxically, another bonding factor is the habit wives have of divorcing quickly. Some women have divorced more than 10 times, especially during their younger years. Most of the time they give as a reason that their husbands did not give them enough land, cloth or other materials, or they say he was violent or they quarrelled too much. Although they lose the lands they cultivated when they divorce, the threat of going is one of the women’s security measures”. For the men it is a source of insecurity. More than one husband explained that he would do anything for his wife and give her as much as she wanted to make her stay (and therefore look after the children). But even then “she went away”, one of them said.

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1. See also Van den Berg (1997) about the apparent paradox between land security and divorce, in her study about the Giziga women of Far North Province of Cameroon.
Sometimes, however, the divorce custom is a source of insecurity for the women themselves. It is not always their own decision to divorce. Sometimes it is the decision of the father, who forces his daughter to move on to another husband, one who gives a higher bride price or who has a higher status in the community or a position that fits in more with that of the woman. For example, after marrying his daughter to a young neighbour, one of the fathers took her back under the pretext that she should not be involved in a blacksmith’s family.

The Bana, as a very small ethnic group (only around 16,000 Bana were recorded officially in 1996 which is 2% of the Mandara population\(^\d\)\(\), are very attached to each other. However, this does not prevent them from soon becoming distrustful of each other. If somebody is suddenly successful (with his crops or merchandise) someone of his fellow-villagers is sure to accuse him of witchcraft or an attempt to steal his wife. This means a judging session at the village or regional chief’s court, which is mostly an expensive gathering. Thus, rising above the mean can be a dangerous practice.

A broader social insecurity is based on the fact that the Bana are not really represented at levels higher than regional ones. While all different ethnic groups have contacts with deputies and politicians both in Maroua and in Yaoundé, the Bana, with their small population, are unable to do the same.

**Political insecurities**

For the Bana of Oudda, party politics is not an issue. Their interpretation of the whole power situation is as follows: generally speaking, president Biya is considered the leader. He comes (and did come) to power by way of his RDPC party. So, all power lies with the RDPC, somewhere in Yaoundé. Yaoundé is far away. Down there, they do not know anything about the Mandara Mountains. Let alone Oudda and the Bana. When you want something to be done here, to develop the region, Yaoundé has to decide. In the past they did help the whole North by abolishing intertribal feuds, but nowadays they have forgotten the region. If the village decides something for its own good, nowadays it cannot proceed with implementation because permission is always needed from Yaoundé, or at least from some authority that lives far away from Oudda. Thus, apart from reduced intertribal war and violence, the current position of Oudda is more difficult than in the past.

**Conflict mediation**

As in the other two case studies, the people of Oudda tend to choose the forum at which they prefer to settle their disputes. In cases of crop damage caused by livestock, both mutual agreements and the involvement of line agencies, local chiefs or the lamido may occur. The distance from Oudda to the sub-prefect in Bourah is too great to go there very often, although some inhabitants do make the effort to take caught animals to the mayor in order to ensure that the owner pays for his neglect.

More social conflicts, without economic repercussions are generally settled by the village and neighbourhood chiefs, often with the help of a ‘conseiller’: one or two elderly men, especially appointed for this task. If they are unable to deal with the case, the lamido’s court and judges are next in line. A judge hears the parties in the conflict and several witnesses and sends (when deemed necessary) some of his helpers to the area of the dispute. Then he decides what

\(^\d\) Only two or three other groups, in the South of sub-department Bourah, are smaller
is best. Afterwards he informs his boss, the lamido, who most of the time agrees but can also call for a re-opening of the case.

**Land allocation and insecurities**

In the Bana culture there are no land masters or other traditional chiefs who have the authority to decide about land allocation. Land that has been bush area for as long as everybody knows can be cleared of trees and bushes and therewith become the property of the person that cut that vegetation for the first time. Subsequently, the use, management and expropriation of arable land is a personal affair involving the owner or his offspring and is, at best, subject to decisions by male family elders in cases in which the fields of ancestors are not divided into small properties per offspring. When, according to the wishes of the first clearer of the land, the surface remains the property of the whole (extended) family, all male family members are entitled to use the fields they want. In the event of conflicts concerning the fields between such members, the oldest family members function as arbiters. They also have the power to make decisions on sales. Yet, in most of these big families other adult male members can have their say and (most of the time) their arguments have almost the same weight as those of the elders. It is not important whether the oldest person in the patri-line is present in Oudda or not. He still has to be contacted when decisions about the land have to be taken.

If the first clearer has not expressed the wish that his land be kept as a united property, the offspring can decide to divide the surface into portions and have these inherited by the sons. As a rule these portions are equal in size and, most of the time, equal in quality as well as regards the soil fertility and the distance from the compounds. In these cases the inheritors are real owners and have all the rights that pertain to such a status. Of the 82 household heads that were interviewed, only 18 had full ownership rights over (part of, for example the part they bought or cleared themselves) their land.

Women do not have the right to possess land. Unofficially they are not even entitled to buy. Although respondents do agree that it is officially possible, they point out that it has never happened and never will happen. Women have user rights via their husbands. When a Bana man has only one wife, they mostly cultivate together. The wife helps her husband with the ploughing and weeding of the cereals fields (sorghum, maize and rice are specific men’s crops). they have shared groundnuts and bean fields, but she also cultivates her ‘personal’ fields with Bambara groundnuts, the typical women’s product.

In the event that the man has several spouses, the husband gives fields to his wives to use as they like, whether or not with the obligation to pay him back a certain amount of the yield: “to show that they are his fields”. Divorced women have to rely on fathers or brothers to ask for land, but this is an insecure solution. To safeguard their access to land they have to be married and, thus, marry again quickly after divorce.

For example Martine (40 years old) quarrelled with her husband and decided to leave him, taking with her a baby on her back. She went back to her father in a neighbouring village but he has only one quart to cultivate for him and his remaining children. He told her she had to look for a new husband quickly. After a period of reflection she went back to her first husband where her

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51 Women household heads can borrow or lend fields and are allowed to cultivate cereals.

54 In Oudda Bank I discovered one exceptional case of a woman who used fields that her son – now living in Maroua – had bought for her after his father had died.
other children were living as well. Habiba (32 years) was married to a man in the town of Bourah. She was able to use her husband’s fields in the vicinity of the town. When they broke up she came back to Oudda but decided she could not stay with her parents because she had become a Muslim in the meantime. She now lives in the house of a Muslim family in Bariki, but they cannot (or will not) offer her a field, so she is trying to rent some land with the profits of her groundnut production in Bourah. The problem is that Bourah is far away and it is by no means easy to sell the groundnuts. In addition, even if she did have money, renting land in Oudda would not be that easy for her.

In line with the fact that fields are inherited from ancestors who cleared the bush, and the fact that those ancestors started with these clearances when they were still living on the mountain slopes, fields are scattered over a large area. From the mountain tops all the (great-) grandfathers started to develop the land at the foot of the slope. Thereafter they moved on and continued clearing in a certain direction further and further into the bush. Depending on health and perseverance of the farmer, areas of various sizes were cleared and varying distances away. When people finally descended from the mountains for good they established their first compounds in the vicinity of the first fields. Afterwards they came down a bit further, but they almost never choose to settle somewhere near their furthest fields, alone in the bush as it were. Several concentrated settlements were founded that now constitute the different neighbourhoods of Oudda (see Fig. 7.3).

Because of that clearance and settlement pattern, the residential neighbourhood is almost never the only location of someone’s fields. Next to that, the amount of surface area used by people from one neighbourhood in the territory of another differs as well. Families from Bariki have spare land in the Waza bush, for example. In Baliwol, the neighbourhood along the road to Guiili, some families do not have any fallow fields left, neither within their neighbourhood nor elsewhere, because not many of them have land outside this neighbourhood. Most of them started with less surface area (due to their great-grandfathers having less ‘spirit’ as regards clearing bush further away), and their family sizes have grown faster. So, nowadays all fields have to be used permanently. Only a few families in Baliwol possess fields far away in the bush that can be used alternately. Sometimes, but not often, these are situated in the direction of Hlaka/Waza. Although not all inhabitants of Baliwol were interviewed, it seems that no families there have fields in the Jiksa region.

Apart from the family structures and elders that have power to take decisions concerning land, the only other recognised authority is the traditional regional chief, the lamido of Guiili, himself a Bana. He has the right to allocate certain areas for common purposes such as pasture. In reality he decides that in the territory of a certain neighbourhood an area needs to be appointed for the goal he has expressed, and the neighbourhood chief or conglomerate-neighbourhood” chief decides which area it will be, even when that area was already the property of a certain family or person. Accordingly, the lamido has the right to send his noblemen\textsuperscript{16} to see to the implementation of such decisions.

\textsuperscript{16} In Oudda some neighbourhoods have a joint chief, while other neighbourhoods have their own. Sometimes a neighbourhood chief is also a conglomerate-neighbourhood chief at the same time, like the chief of Bariki, whose chieftancy is the oldest in the whole of Oudda and even older than the Guiili lamidat.

\textsuperscript{16} Some of a lamido’s noblemen reside almost permanently at his side at the court during the daytime. They have specific jobs, like judging in minor offence cases, serving as assistants in other cases or they are just on hand to brighten up the ambiance.
It is on the basis of such appointments that Oudda has a group of settled Fulbe on its territory. The Fulbe neighbourhood ‘Guiki’, headed by lawan Boubakary, is situated at the eastside of Oudda centre (Bariki), adjacent to the big north-south flowing river (at least in the rainy season) that forms more or less the boundary of the biggest pasture area in Oudda\(^76\). It was the father of the current lamido who decided to delineate four of such areas to make sure that cattle had their proper grazing space\(^58\). For most of the Bana these reserves have a legitimate status. Although some cultivators try to clear fields at the borders of the reserve, they do so at their own risk and complaints about cattle damage are not allowed. This is contrary to normal regional habits that place all responsibility for damage on the cattle owner.

In addition, the status of the Boubakary Néné pasture is also confirmed by all sorts of ‘modern’ authorities, such as the sub-prefect of the sub-department, the sub-departmental heads of the agricultural and animal husbandry services, the sub-departmental police superintendent, etc. However, it is still unclear who has the real power to ensure implementation. Even within the Oudda territory, farmers who invade pasture reserves may be warned by the lamido or one of the modern officials, but punishment or actual removal does not occur.

Cultural insecurities

The increase of new religions (Christianity and Islam) is causing the bonds provided by the traditional religion to disappear. The Lutheran church as well as Islam, for example, prohibit alcohol. Social drinking gatherings, that existed before as part of the yearly cycle and were related to ancestor worship, can only be attended by that section of the population that does not adhere to the new religious rules. A kind of divide has therefore developed within the community. On the other hand, the fact that beer drinking is now extended to market days instead of restricted to traditional religious occasions means that exchanges between the different groups are possible. Although Catholics and followers of the traditional religion drink their beer together in one corner of the market, they will still go and speak to Muslims or Protestants in another corner.

Incoming or visiting religious leaders, that try to mobilise feelings for their specific religion, do not seem to incite hostile feelings or behaviour. Although it would be only natural to enhance one’s own religion by demonising another one, in the reality of Oudda this does not happen. People are free to choose the religion (or sect) they want, to change and change back again, to visit churches and attend mass or pray to Allah whenever or wherever they want. Within families, a number of members may adhere to different churches and beliefs without even so much as a dispute. Very occasionally a father and a son may have a conflict about religion, but mostly this is based on another discord and both parties are soon able to separate the religious problem from the real inconvenience.

In short, it seems as if social insecurities are no different from those in the past. The only difficulty that can become a real problem is the link with higher level institutions.

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\(^{57}\) This pasture reserve is called after the Fulbe lawan “Boubakary Néné” (see Figure 7.3).

\(^{58}\) The surface area corresponded to the number of cattle present at the moment of creation. The Fulbe leader of each neighbourhood with such a reserve received an official paper to confirm the existence of the pasture. Three of the four pasture areas are situated within the Oudda boundaries, one next to the neighbourhood Waza, one in the direction of Modelé and the third and biggest east of neighbourhood Guiki. This one is called Boubakary Néné.
7.3 Investments: going to Box 2

As depicted in the “insecurity complex” in Chapter 3 (Methodology), when people experience insecurities in a mutually influencing complex of domains, they may search for strategies to overcome these. In the “VoE”-diagram of Chapter 2 it is the step from Box 1 to Box 2 in which actors perceive the different possibilities (Figure 7.1). To understand the step to Box 2 of the 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 Bana as well as the Fulbe invest in social relationships, economic goods, personal capabilities or environmental circumstances to improve their future and that of their children. Sometimes people do not really invest in anything but just ‘muddle through’, perhaps merely 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 Kammainga (1995: See Chapter 2): feasibility 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 scheme, see Figure 7.1) or make them decide to take the step towards the invasion of a new niche.

7.3.1 Environmental investments

*Investments in the quality of land*

In order to improve the land quality and yields the Bana can use the same techniques and methods as the Kapsiki (see chapter 6) just north of them. Table 7.3.1 shows the different uses of field improvement techniques. The most important in Oudda is the use of fallow rotation. In these mountains, the cycle can be very long. Sometimes respondents indicate that they have used their fields for at least twenty years now, or that their father or uncles already used it before they were born. Most actors respond that they use a field for 5 to 7 years and that the fallow period lasts twice as long. However, that all depends on the basic fertility of the location and the possibility of maintaining it with animal dung (the only option available in the past to improve fertility actively). Some areas have not been used for over 20 years, as can be seen by the height of the trees.

In Oudda, the use of chemical fertilisers is fraught with difficulties because they are not sold in the village. Those farmers that have money to purchase fertilisers (19% of respondents) depend on the occasional arrival of a truck from some chemical company or other at the regional market in Guili. But, as is evident from their complaints, such fertilisers always arrive too late in the season when the effect on the field is far less than it could be.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.3.1</th>
<th>Fertility improving methods (in % of respondents. Some actors use different methods at the same time)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Although 61% of respondents have farm animals that produce manure. Table 7.3.1 shows that only a small proportion of the respondents (16%) use this natural fertiliser to improve the fields. Table 7.3.2 shows the connection between possession of ruminants and the use of their dung. The third part of this table shows ‘animals’ as a variable to show a possible connection between, on the one hand, the number of entities to be brought together to gather their dung and, on the other hand, the use of dung. Table 7.3.3 depicts the relationship between ownership of TLU and the use of dung. The ownership of donkeys (35 people out of 125) does not change the numbers in the third part of Table 7.3.2. Those people who have only donkeys and no other farm animals do not use their dung to improve their fields. The majority of those who use the droppings of their animals belong to the richer people in the village who have a lot of animals (or a high TLU). Gathering animal dung is most probably only worthwhile when people have a certain number of animals. Cattle can be guarded (in night corrals made out of thorny shrub branches) on the fields that have to be fertilised, but the manure of small stock has to be gathered and brought to the field. The construction of a corral is too much effort for only a small number of cattle. Of those that do not use the natural fertiliser they posses in the form of their animals’ dung, only seven have more than 10 animals. All these (except for two women) have access to a large area of land, but in three cases this land has to be shared with quite a number of family members (the other two times only with two or three people). For all those with only a small number of animals (43 people) land surface varies, just like the number of people to share it with.

Table 7.3.2 Animal ownership and the use of the dung of those animals. Number of people (men or women) who own animals and number thereof that use the dung. Total number of people using the dung of their own animals is 15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Animals owned</th>
<th>Ownership</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
<th>Women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 - 3 cattle</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 6 cattle</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 10 cattle</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 99 cattle</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 100</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = One owner with 25 cattle and the two owners with more than 100 cattle who use their animals’ dung do not have any arable fields but improve their pasture area using manure (NB. They are not Bana, but Fulbe).
In short, the use of either chemical or natural fertilisers is not determined by the need of the fields itself, or the ownership situation of the actor with regard to the fields. Instead, it is limited to the richer inhabitants of the village (in money or animals respectively) and especially to higher numbers of cattle. Poorer people just wait and let the soil weather to fertility in a natural process. The only woman that uses animal dung possesses four cattle that she keeps near the house. The rest of the women, with small numbers of cattle, have their cattle further away in the herd of a brother or uncle.

Of course, household waste is only used on fields surrounding the compound, but the higher fertility and humidity because of organic matter content is taken advantage of by cultivating maize which matures more quickly. Most inhabitants have fields around their house as well as far into the bush. Fields in the bush means that the farmer has to walk distances of up to an hour. Small numbers of sheep and goats are not herded so far away.

Technological equipment to improve the yield mostly consists of ploughs and animal-tractions weeding equipment. In the year 2000, 34% of the inhabitants of Oudda owned a plough in. This proportion increased rapidly as more people tried to buy draught animals and the accompanying tools. The long distance from the compound (and compound fields) to the bush fields is a setback for the use of ploughs. Carrying a plough that far is a heavy job, even on a donkey’s back.

Labour input can be used in the cultivation season to increase the surface of the fields harvested and thus the harvest as such. Some farmers (men and women) hire extra labour to plough, weed or harvest and pay the people a salary. However, mostly the work is carried out in mutual working parties where good food and drinks are served (see also ‘social investments’). The majority of extra labour is used outside the rainy season. First, there are field owners who try to improve their land by building small stone ridges, just before the rains will start, to combat water run-off. The majority of such dikes are in the vicinity of Bariki and only on the steeper parts. Of all the respondents, only three mentioned the fact that they use this method. The second and most important labour demand in the off-season is for the preparing of new fields. Because of the long fallow periods, this requires the cutting of big trees and dense bushes. As far as women are concerned, new fields mean the hiring of manpower and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TL. U owned</th>
<th>Number of owners</th>
<th>Number of users of dung</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.1 - 0.6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.7 - 1.3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 - 2.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 - 2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.8 - 4.8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9 - 9.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 19.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 - 29.9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 - 49.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 - 90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Substantially more than in Dzambou (20%, see chapter 6).

Only one of these had erected lines of stones on some fields that were not really steep.
they therefore need to save money beforehand. Sometimes their husbands and (grown-up) sons help with the cutting of big trees.

Nevertheless, the clearing of such dense forest is a job that people are glad to postpone. A period of decision-making can be prolonged by the sowing of beans in the less fertile soil. Beans are less demanding, and what is more, as a leguminous plant that binds air nitrogen at its roots, it even improves the soil in the meantime. In Oudda nobody cultivates beans in order to fertilise the soil. Many respondents are not even aware of this property of beans.

**Quantity of land investments**

Apart from ameliorating the quality of land, a higher production can be achieved by cultivating more fields. This can be done by borrowing, hiring or buying land. One generation ago there were only two people that bought land, this generation the amount of buyers has increased and a lot more people indicate that they want to buy fields to counter a future lack thereof (see Table 7.3.4). Indeed, 43 % of respondents fear such a shortage of land in the future\(^1\). Some respondents refer to the land market in Oudda as the most important economic activity at the moment. But land prices vary tremendously depending on location and fertility, as well as on arbitrary factors that are not retraceable (seeming to be just what people ask or are prepared to give)\(^2\). There are also still people who want to borrow.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.3.4</th>
<th>Number of respondents who bought, rented or borrowed fields or want to do so. (n = 125). The numbers 'want to' do not represent those who already implemented the involved category (although they want to continue)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^*\) = one woman only wants to add to her fields by asking if she is chased from her actual Jiksa-field

The clearing of old fallow referred to can also be seen as the extension of land quantity. After decades of fallow rotation in the vicinity of the neighbourhoods, Oudda-ers suddenly decided to return to the age-old fields of their ancestors which are now secondary forest. As mentioned above, the reason is the exhaustion of their other fields.

Another option is to leave the Oudda territory and search for land elsewhere. However, of the small number of sons who have indeed left Oudda (6 %), none did so to find more and better land. The same applies to the previous generation. A handful of brothers of respondents (8 %) have left Oudda, but mostly to live with family in a neighbouring village or to try their luck in a city such as Maroua or Yaoundé.

\(^1\) \(49\%\) of men and \(33\%\) of women; \(9\%\) of men and \(7\%\) of women consider the number of fields sufficient

\(^2\) The rental price of a field can vary between 2,500 and 15,000 Fcfa/ha or a proportion of the yield (from a small bin with grains up to a whole bag). Purchase prices are between 100,000 and 200,000 Fcfa/ha (or, as the respondents state: ‘per field’), while 20 years ago the same type of field cost ‘only’ 40,000 Fcfa (the Fcfa then was worth more than 2 times its current value), a goat or a large ‘bouhou’ (that is a man’s dress).
7.3.2 Human domain investments

*Health investments*

During the dry season, several neighbourhoods invest in the digging of new water wells. In 2001, for example, Hlaka organised digging parties at two different locations. One of the reasons is the distance to the wells dug in the past (situated in the older neighbourhoods). But, a more important factor is the dependency on natural pools or rivers that do not guarantee hygienic drinking water throughout the year. With the help of hydrologists from the PDRM⁶, the inhabitants determine the best place for a well and make a schedule for all men to participate in digging to a depth that hand-digging cannot be employed anymore and machinery has to be used. This same institute is approached every second year and is asked to disinfect contaminated wells with chlorine. The conglomerate neighbourhood *lavan* and his staff co-ordinate this kind of work to make sure that all wells are treated, albeit separately, so that a well is always at hand⁴.

Next to that, several grown-ups try to inform their children as to how to use the wells properly. They keep cords and buckets separately and do not let their children meddle with the water jar at home. In addition, Christians and Muslims pay attention to hygiene in relation to meals (washing of hands before touching the meal) and their bodies. The new religions within Oudda have resulted in the introduction of the custom of tying up the flock within the compound during the night and not letting them roam the house and deposit their droppings everywhere. This has increased hygiene levels, especially with regard to small children.

A health-related activity that is also organised at community level⁶⁵ is the vaccination of children. Parents are highly motivated for this. When the news spreads that nurses are in the village centre to carry out such vaccinations, mothers and their young children start out on the journey from the outlying neighbourhoods to the vaccination post.

If they feel they are suffering from one illness or another, the Oudda inhabitants invest both in visits to the traditional healers as well as in visits to the regional hospital in Guilî. In some compounds the income of one of the wives is almost totally dedicated to medicines and hospital visits of family members, instead of letting people suffer and die. Time is also invested in ill family members or friends. Husbands accompany their spouses to the hospital, sometimes for days, even if this interferes with agricultural activities. Fathers and grandfathers as well as mothers do the same with their children.

For eight years now, the Oudda-ers have been trying to set up a medicine store in the centre of the village to bridge the rainy season blockade to the Guilî hospital. One of the inhabitants knows a little about modern medicines and is willing to act as a pharmacist. However, the lack of good contacts with higher level authorities appears to be a major hindrance. Official permission is required for such a store and although the village chiefs ask again and again both the mayor and the sub-prefect have not granted anything up till now⁶⁶.

*Educational investments*

Most parents try to send their children to school. Both State administrative functions as well as trade are mentioned as goals to be reached with a more ‘open’ mind as a result of education.

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⁶¹ *Projet du Développement Rurale Mont Mandara*, see also chapter 6
⁶² A well treated with chlorine has to be covered and left un-used for three days
⁶⁵ Instigated by WHO initiatives.
⁶⁶ After the municipality elections of 2003 hopes declined because the new mayor is no longer a Bana. “Why should a mayor from Tchevi do what a Bana has neglected?”: the inhabitants of Oudda ask
The village pays two ‘voluntary’ schoolmasters. That is, in addition to one government-paid director of the primary school in Oudda Centre, two more classes are led by village-paid teachers who do not always have a real teacher’s education but have at least finished three years of secondary school. In the case of Oudda, one of them even finished his College of Education. The number of pupils in a classroom increases to over 100 so the parents complain about the lack of education quality. All of them are very content with the new College of Education in the department’s headquarter Mokolo. Today, women choose to use their income to pay for their children’s school fees. In one case a young woman even spends her household earnings from beer, fritters and chicken breeding on the education of her husband at the College of Education.

The village has already invested in education in the form of the parent teachers. There are others who want to send their children to school but do not have the possibility to do so. Sometimes the fee is too high, sometimes the husbands do not agree and sometimes the school is too far away. Several of them are trying to overcome the problems through ‘lobbying work’. Women try to persuade their husbands of the importance of such an investment, and sometimes even offer to pay for the education of their children themselves (sometimes even then husbands have to be persuaded). People in outlying neighbourhoods have started discussions about the setting up of a school in their neighbourhood. Some are trying to get the school to accept a lower fee for those who are very poor, but the parent teachers are already complaining about their low wages. In December 2000, they even organised a kind of strike for several days to make their stance.

Table 7.3.5 shows that 22 % of the male respondents (n = 82) received some sort of ‘western’ education and only 9 % of the women (n = 43). All the people who themselves attended school plus some of the non-educated people want their children to attend. Some of them have indeed sent their children to school, but in other instances this is not yet possible because the children are not old enough. Surprisingly, those who sent their children to school are seldom the same people who said that they consider a school education to be an important asset for future jobs.

Table 7.3.5  School attendance (number of people that visited school or sent (want to send) his/her children to school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary school</th>
<th>Secondary school</th>
<th>Tertiary school</th>
<th>Koran school</th>
<th>Not available then</th>
<th>Want to send</th>
<th>For future jobs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men self</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women self</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men kids</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women kids</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- **Not available then**
- **Want to send**
- **For future jobs**

97 This strategy of sharing and mutual investment between husband and wife is very exceptional.

98 After a couple of days, they decided to go back to work, because only the children suffered from their action; parents would not (and could not) pay more. And in this period of the year the teaching did not interfere with other obligations or possibilities.

99 It is not possible to simply add up the numbers of the men and the women who sent their children to school to arrive at a total number of children attending because these are sometimes the same children (some of the interviewed women are married to the men interviewed, but this was not always the case).

100 Only four of the twenty men that sent their children to school mention the importance thereof for a job, and four of the nine women.
7.3.3 Economic investments

Investments in cash crops

Groundnuts and beans are typical cash crops, although a small quantity is used in the sauce. Both men and women cultivate these two crops. It is not surprising that the inhabitants want the price of groundnuts to be high and that of sorghum to be low. The real price that farmers get depends on the supply and that itself depends on the rains as well as on the cycle of production that seems to exist. This cycle means that during the year in which the price of groundnuts is high, people decide to grow groundnuts for the next season, as a result of which the supply is abundant and the price goes down and vice versa.

Women can sell their surpluses like the men do at the regional market in Guil or use them to make local beer or fritters to sell at the local markets or in the neighbourhood centres and houses. The women use Bambara groundnuts (Vigna subterranea) as well as ‘souchet’ (Cyperus esculentus) as an added source of income. Bambara groundnuts bring in approximately 500 Fcfa per kg. With a mean production per household of 150 kg (see Table 7.2.9), a person can earn 25,000 Fcfa per year.

Some farmers earn extras from the cultivation of sugar cane, sweet potatoes and manioc in gardens surrounded by thorny bush fences. This can mean an extra income of 12,000 to 400,000 Fcfa depending on climatic circumstances and the size of the cultivated area. The people who have access to low lying fields try to cultivate rice when the rains are good. However, the harvest is generally not sold but added to consumption sorghum and used in the Ramadan flour-drink that is consumed first thing after sundown.

Investments in farm-animals

As is the habit in the whole of Sub-Saharan Africa, animals are used as a bank deposit. A surplus of money is invested in sheep, goats and, when possible, in cattle. There are not many people in Oudda who deliberately breed animals to earn additional income, except the Fulbe. But these complain about a lack of pasture. Because of that, they have to sell more animals than they would have done otherwise. Also because of there being too many cattle (the Bana keep more cattle now than in the past, the Fulbe say) and thus more frequent outbreaks of disease, their herds are diminishing, they say. It is nevertheless still their way of life and the only investment route they know.

Because of the proximity of Nigeria, cattle trading is a profitable activity. Nigerian merchants visit cattle owners at home, during the evenings, because they want to smuggle the herd over the border and therefore offer good prices. At the same time, this avoids payment of official taxes on cattle transactions. The official route via the Guil market is only followed for slaughter animals. These fetch higher prices: up to 120,000 Fcfa for a healthy looking, young bull.

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71 Most women are saving (in yield or in animals) to pay their sons’ bride price or their daughters’ hope chest. Women do not have land of their own, but use that of their husband. Thus, in the event of divorce they depend on their sons or fathers for cultivating or even for having a place to live. Thus, they usually remarry quickly.

72 Souchet is a very labour intensive product, especially during the harvest, and requires high soil fertility. Mostly producers add fertiliser to the field. As a result, field owners are very willing to lend out a field for souchet production for one year.

73 Several people who earn between 20,000 and 100,000 Fcfa (= 30 to 150 Euro) from sugar cane and manioc, call the surface area used “a small field”.
Despite the losses of chickens due to contagious diseases, every year people try to start breeding them again. Agricultural extension workers put a lot of effort into persuading the owners - and enough owners at the same time - to vaccinate their birds. People also keep ducks and these may be used to add to the household protein supply or to generate income via sales at home or at the markets.

The village has no real small ruminant market. On the other hand, someone in trouble will sell his animals (10% of respondents indicate that they will use their flock for such calamities) and people who have earned money do buy goats or sheep. In 2001, 57 of the 125 respondents possessed small ruminants, mostly goats (with a range of 1 – 36). Almost all transactions take place at household level. Only a very small number of small ruminants are traded at the Guili market. Even the week before the ‘sheep festival’ of the Muslim community, a time that sheep prices in the rest of the Far North have increased sharply, the number of small ruminants there only increases marginally⁴.

One of the main by-products of cattle is their milk. In Bana society, however, this is not a real economic commodity. Cow owners, mostly the male household heads, decide on what happens to the milk and usually they give it to the children. During the dry season they allow only the calves to drink it. If the herd is not in the neighbourhood of the cattle owner’s house, the actual herder can use the milk for his household. Kapsiki cattle produce less milk than Zebu, but as regards the latter Dietz et al (2001: 197) mention an average yearly production of 400 litres for human consumption. To fulfill the calorific requirement, an adult has to drink 1140 litre per year. This means that a Bana household can meet its energy needs with 17 zebu cows or 28 cattle as is the case with twenty Bana households and ten Fulbe households in Oudda⁵.

Investments in non-agricultural options

Off-farm investments

The villagers search for possibilities to minimise the dependence of their children to land. As stated in section 3.2. ‘Human domain investments’, education is a much favoured (although not widely practised) option for acquiring off-farm jobs. This approach was not very successful for the current generation, however. After the economic crisis at the end of the 1980s the possibilities for becoming a (well-paid) civil servant diminished tremendously. This does not stop today’s parents from hoping for such a job for their offspring. Half of the interviewees (men and women) even wanted their daughters to be highly educated (university education was even mentioned a couple of times). Everybody knows of a success story of a family member or neighbour literally swimming in luxuries in town. On the other hand, youngsters with at least secondary school education have the experience that they had to return to the village and start cultivating again due to a lack of State appointments. However, even (or especially) they want their children to be educated. “This time of hardship cannot last long” and “The government knows that they have to come up with more paid jobs to enhance the development of Cameroon”. are variations of hopeful phrases heard every day.

⁴ At this same market, just after Christmas, the price of a healthy looking, full grown, male sheep is 20,000 Fcfa.
⁵ Some of those 20 households possess Kapsiki cattle, but then in higher numbers, so the required milk production is still reached.
When trade is mentioned as an opportunity to earn money, it is not the small supplementary commerce with minor products such as a bit of sugar, soap or salt, mostly smuggled from Nigeria that people have in mind, but the real traffic, like that of the big salesmen that visit the market in Guili, or even Garoua or like the village chief of Oudda, Ardou Hamadou, who travels back and forth to Maroua with his 'pagnes' (cloth) on his bicycle. Nevertheless, the small-scale trans-border trade can become a stepping stone to something bigger and can offer a platform for some of the young men to start investing.

The Bana are not a very outward moving ethnicity. Although several young men have attended high school outside their own village, most of them return (especially when they reach marrying age or when their fathers become widowers and need looking after) and they do not then leave again. Only a very small number of them are daring enough to become involved in migration labour in Nigeria where the harvest of white sorghum takes place slightly later than in Oudda, or in the region around Maroua where the harvest of transplanted sorghum demands some extra labour force at the end of January.

Some of the young men try their luck in cities, such as Garoua, where they perform small trade, hire themselves out to rich inhabitants as guards, or become street bandits (this was mentioned by two respondents with regard to sons of neighbours or other villagers). However, most of them return home without any benefit from their investments.

**On-farm investments**

Some individuals stick to more traditional occupations. Naikwa, a 40 year old farmer with 5 sons, braids grass mats (for the market) and granaries (on demand) and teaches his skill to his children to avoid problems which may arise due to a lack of fields. "At the moment I could live from those grass products alone". A granary costs him four days work including the cutting of the grass and earns him 6 to 8,000 Fcfa. A mat is less work (half a day) and generates up to 1,500 Fcfa76.

Traditionally, women earn money from processed agricultural products. They make ‘bilbil’ and ‘wine’ out of sorghum and fritters from bean flour, groundnut paste or a mixture of these with sorghum flour77. All these products are sold at local markets78 in the village or in Guili.

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76 Normally the price of a bag of sorghum (100 kg) starts at 5 - 6,000 Fcfa at the moment of harvest, increasing from 8 or 9,000 Fcfa in December to 14,000 Fcfa in the rainy season when there is increasing scarcity. At the Guili market, a bag of groundnuts fetched 16,000 Fcfa in December 2000 compared to 30,000 Fcfa the year before. All depends on the results of the last harvest, for example the bad rains of the end of the rainy season in 2000 caused the price of sorghum to rise to 12,000 Fcfa in December and as high as 22,000 Fcfa in the beginning of July 2001. The low groundnut price in December was due to a good harvest and the fact that many farmers had grown more fields with this product than in other years, because of the extremely good price acquired in 1999. By way of a comparison, in Guili a good quality pagne (a piece of cloth to make one whole dress) costs 6 - 9,000 Fcfa (Dec. 2000). Because of the coincidence of Christmas and the end of the Ramadan, which both lead to greater demand, this price was higher than usual.

77 The home-made dough is taken to the market and the fritters are baked at the spot in groundnut oil.

78 Baliwol II and Baniki have their own weekly markets (on Wednesday and Sunday respectively), but at the junction in Baliwol I, where the motorbikes and sometimes vans stop for their clients, there is a kind of very small, roadside day market for sugar cane, fritters etc. next to a small shop with soap, sugar and even coca-cola.
town". The benefits are not only used for sons' bride-price and daughters' hope chests" but, as has been stated above, for school fees as well (if the fathers consent).

7.3.4 Social investments
As mentioned in Chapter 3, to measure the total social capital and investments therein demands more research time than could be spent during this study. Therefore, I will only provide some indicators and examples of social bonds and linkages as well as the rules and norms springing from them that are present or 'under construction' in Oudda.

**Investments in family and friends**
Investment in family networks is a natural course of action in Bana society. Although there are some young men who escape the social pressure of their fathers and uncles, this is met with surprise and disapproval by the rest of the community. Most of the time fathers and mothers help their sons with bride prices, and their daughters with their hope chests. Children are respectful and help their parents when they are still at home. When married, sons are going to live in the house or at least the neighbourhood of their father. New wives take turns to prepare household meals. In a way, you can say that young couples look after parents, especially when these reach old age. If they live next door, they share a lot of small meals and small labour tasks. The post-harvest work of groundnut peeling is done in companionship of others, mostly neighbours, and thus (also) family. Everybody present helps all the others present. Parents-in-law are not forgotten either and mutual visits are paid and small gifts exchanged. When old, both widower fathers and mothers without husbands can live with their married sons. On the one hand it is a kind of pay-back of the care and help given when the children were young. On the other hand, this custom makes people expect that their effort in looking after their parents will be made up for by their children when it is their turn.

Some fathers try to make a real profit out of their daughters by 'selling them off' to the highest bidder. Occasionally, they even take them back from one husband because another offered more. But this is an exception and even though daughters are unable to stop that, such fathers weaken the bonds with their offspring and sons-in-law. They apparently choose a more cash-based security.

Help in agricultural activities is also mostly organised via kinship ties. So-called working parties are held with friends and co-wives, but the core of such groups consists of family members, like sisters, nieces, aunts, etc. for women, and brothers, nephews and uncles for men. Of course helping somebody means you can expect him (or her) to help you later on. These parties are a happy event, with good food, drinks (traditional beer) and lots of laughter.

For younger men, the school is also an ideal place to form a group. Especially those that visited secondary school together stay friends forever. Being away from home and spending years caring for each other in a strange environment resembles the old initiation rites that

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7) The big market in Gui, every Saturday, attracts people who want to buy and sell their products (groundnuts, beans, sorghum, clothes, 'pagnes' (the cloth to make women's wear), meat, sorghum beer, etc.). They come from the surrounding villages as well as from further away. Those from further away are bigger traders who buy the agricultural products from the region or try to sell luxury goods such as radios and watches. Even Nigerians join in the sales, but they are taken away by the police if discovered.

8) In Bana culture a man has to pay a dowry to the father of his bride. If possible, his parents try to help him with that. On the other hand, when a daughter marries, she needs household utensils, like pans, saucers, mugs. Female relatives, especially the mother, have the duty to give her such useful gifts.
formed the same age groups. Back in the village, they invest in the continuing of these relationships. They still look each other up in order to drink a beer and play a game of "ne t en fais pas" under the gathering tree in the neighbourhood centre. In these 'old boys networks' they can find assistance during harvest 'parties' and in hard times. When one of the younger, more educated men was successful in trading, he was accused of treachery. The case was submitted to the lamido during one of my stays in the village, January 2003. His former school friends helped him out, proving he was not a treacherous person at all.

Each neighbourhood forms a group that provides direct help when needed. Elder people without the strength to labour are given meals and other material help, as well as assistance with roofs, etc. When children become orphans it is not necessarily the family that takes them in. Sometimes neighbours look after them. Moreover, when older boys develop some problems with their parents at home (mostly based on puberty issues) neighbours can decide to give them a place in their compound (for the time being). All these investments in mutual aid strengthen the social fabric of the village and secure the inhabitants of help in times of need. Indeed, the moment a fire destroyed a hut and the sorghum stock of one of the inhabitants in the beginning of the year 2001, all neighbours came to rescue what could be rescued and to help build a new stock and a new hut. When I asked why they did that, the answer was that "you can have a disaster yourself and nobody will help you when you do not help others".

To measure social bonds and who invests in which bonds at all, the pattern of hiring and lending draught animals can help. This pattern is depicted in Table 7.3.6.

Table 7.3.6 Source of plough and draught animals used (in numbers of respondents; n = 125; 82 men and 43 women)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plough</th>
<th>Own</th>
<th>Borrowed of father</th>
<th>Borrowed of husband</th>
<th>Borrowed of another</th>
<th>Hired</th>
<th>No plough (hand)</th>
<th>No information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draught animal*</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>n.a</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\* = 2 times from a brother; 4 times from a boss (e.g. the owner of the grain-mill where the respondent is the employee); 1 time from the field-owner; 5 times help in exchange

The majority of farmers use their own plough and draught animals or that of their husband. For men, borrowing (half of the times from family members, half from others) happens three times as much as hiring. If we do not count the borrowing from husbands, hiring or borrowing by

\* The custom of initiation is slowly disappearing. Men older than 50 still count their age in years after the initiation and have some ties with their age group members. The younger the men, the less they have been subject to initiation rites.
women occurs just as often. People who hire do not generally have family members or friends with enough ploughs and draught animals to be used by more people. In general we can conclude that most of the Bana are rich enough to possess ploughs and animals for labour and that commoditisation of these is not (yet) widespread. In addition, those without such equipment can easily borrow it, either from family or from other villagers. But that depends on the social circle one belongs to. Investing in kinship or friendship ties helps to acquire access to such cultivation equipment. Lending out a plough, on the other hand, means investing in those ties and therefore in future access to help.

Weddings and burials are important moments to strengthen kinship and friendship ties. Each death has to be commemorated with days of mourning at the house of the closest kin. Both friends and family, from near and far, visit the compound and bring bilbil or food, consume drinks and meals and exchange warm feelings and information. At weddings as well, visitors have to be accommodated, food is shared and a kind of party with music and dance is held.

**Political investments**

The socio-political organisation of Oudda rests on different levels of authorities. At the lowest level each neighbourhood has its own chief who has a role in conflict mediation and in the bringing together of men to discuss village issues and attempts to implement the required measures. He performs these duties with the help of a special counsellor and other neighbourhood elders who inform him about ongoing processes and important circumstances. For example, in the Hlaka neighbourhood, inhabitants decided to dig two more wells in the dry season of 2001. They came together in the house and at the request of the neighbourhood chief. There they organised a digging scheme (each in turn) and the chief saw to involvement of the extension organisation that can measure the water depth and can offer building materials later on. A neighbourhood chief is democratically elected (although mostly he comes from the chief’s lineage) and he has to provide his fellow villagers material and immaterial goods. The position gives him a considerable status in the village as well as in the wider region. To make up for the time spent at the gatherings and on arbitration, chiefs have several privileges, such as first choice when an animal is slaughtered, free beer on certain occasions, etc. Moreover, outside the village they encounter fewer problems with police officers checking their identity papers or the origin of (smuggled?) merchandise. In the past, village and neighbourhood chiefs could depend on their subjects being available for free for a certain number of days to work in their fields (or to help with the clearing of new fields) but that tradition “has disappeared with the democratisation of Cameroon”, as the brother of the neighbourhood chief of Bariki told me. The presence of a neighbourhood chief makes the position of the neighbourhood stronger vis-à-vis other neighbourhoods and, especially, higher authorities. He is the official representative. Some neighbourhoods did not have a chief during a certain period and they felt their position weakening. Quarrels were not solved and disputes with inhabitants of other neighbourhoods were judged in the favour of those who did have a chief. So, both for the internal organisation of the neigh-

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8: Most of those who work by hand (without a plough) are old or sick and do not want to cultivate more
9: This is not repeated each time a women remarries. Only the first time is a reason for a real party. Moreover, dance is not a custom in the Islamic religion, although some Bana Muslims mingle their new habits with the old ones and do celebrate their wedding in a more traditional way.
10: Gains per case rarely exceed 500 Fcfa
bourhood as well as for the position of the neighbourhood in a wider context, villagers are willing to invest in small presents and services to their ‘Anio’ to make him stick to his role.

This same organisation and position is also present one step higher, at the level of a conglomerase of certain neighbourhoods. Mostly these chiefs have inherited their position from their fathers who governed the same territory in a time that it was only one neighbourhood. They already fulfilled this job when Guili did not have its regional headquarter function and when, therefore, no lamido resided there. These chiefs are counted on to know the important issues (for example of the history) of the village and as such can represent the interests of the village even better than the lowest level chiefs. When the lamido in Guili wants to know something about the village or wants to consult his subjects of Oudda, he invites the higher level chiefs. These are free to bring along their advisors, some of which certainly will be the neighbourhood chiefs.

Party politics in the sense of influencing people’s election preferences is no issue in Oudda. People do not feel attached to a specific ethnically based party that could better represent their interests at the State government or provincial level. Even a ‘Mandara mountain-based’ political party does not exist. The Bana are such a small group, it is better to be seen and to behave as a Cameroonian. They do not trust official State authorities, but they consider the RDPC as is good as any other party and perhaps even better because “Biya is in power so long now, he need not enrich himself any further. With a new president you risk predatory behaviour”, as several men in Oudda assure me. In addition, they are grateful to Biya because “he abolished intra- and inter-group violence”. “When I was young I could not go from here to Guili, because of the risk of being taken as a slave by a neighbouring tribe”, several older villagers explain to me”.

But that was in the past. Nowadays “it is not possible to understand what those ‘Yaoundé’ people are doing” and “they have forgotten that we exist”. Even the mayor of the municipality to which Oudda belongs is far away. Until 2002 he was a Bana but, like the sub-prefect of Bourah, he never visited the Oudda area. During the 2002 municipal elections, a RDPC member from Tchevi (a village south of Bourah) was elected mayor and, as a result, Oudda inhabitants are even further removed from the authorities.

Once again, an investment in the relations with the village and regional chiefs is more important. As far as is necessary. Oudda is ruled by the neighbourhood chiefs and the lamido in Guili. It is to this latter person that the Oudda-ers pay their taxes* and to him they pay homage on, for example, Christmas day (although for him as a Muslim this is not a very important religious occasion). They expect him to stand up for their rights in cases concerning higher levels. With that in mind they are willing to let him decide what is good for the development of their village, if they consider such a task to be beyond their own reach. Also, it is to him and his noblemen that they can turn in cases and conflicts in which the local chiefs are powerless.

Nevertheless, some people are active in politics. Some are members of the RDPC women’s group that promotes women’s consciousness regarding their rights, birth control and other relevant issues. Others sit on the Oudda RDPC board or are just party members. Within the party they try to influence local governance but do not go beyond the discussion stage. They do not dream of putting pressure on anybody. They say that their political activities earn them no


** Collected by the neighbourhood chiefs. In the past the lamido did not offer any money to compensate for the work, but in 2001 he promised to pay the chief 2-3,000 FCfa when he brings in the taxes.
more than a dress (with the RDPC signs or the portrait of Biya on it). However, their involvement does provide them with an extra group to fall back on in times of need and sometimes (although very rarely) it gives them access to higher level decision-making institutions and people. Yet, it has to be stressed, that this is not the reason for doing this work. It is more or less the other way round. If a certain family is involved in the RDPC, you have to be involved in politics in order to become or stay a full and valued member of that family.

Conflict mediation

In Bana society the village chief also used to serve as arbiter in the event of disagreements. These could be arguments about field boundaries, crop damage by animals, fights between youngsters or (co-)spouses, discords over bride price and the paying thereof, etc. Here again the region chief, the lamido (or his court) has to help when the lower authorities cannot solve the dispute. Nowadays, the State has installed agricultural and animal husbandry line officers and an official commission to deal with quarrels about land and crop damage (see chapter 4). The first step then, is to inform the agricultural line officer, who visits the field and estimates the damage (or the boundaries). This will then be converted into an amount of money that the cattle owner has to pay or into an order to a perpetrating farmer to withdraw from a field. Discords over this decision are brought before the commission, of which the sub-prefect is the president87. In Oudda, a village-based representative of the agricultural line officer and a district based (in Guili) representative of the animal husbandry line officer have to be addressed.

Inhabitants of Oudda choose their own strategy to respond to crop damage or other conflict causes. Some of them (and most of them most of the time) only address the perpetrator and do not contact any authorities at all. They tend to think that the amount of money and gifts that have to be paid are not proportional to the chances of winning a case. This is even more so, they think, because the perpetrator of the crop damage can always give cattle and that is worth more than anything a cultivator can give. Others use the traditional hierarchy of neighbourhood chief, conglomerate chief and regional chief, but never seek access to the administrative lines, let alone the official judiciary system. Still others only complain to the Mayor (although he is far away in Bourah) and bring the captured livestock along as evidence. This strategy means they are sure of not getting any reimbursement themselves, but it does at least guarantee that the owner of the animals has to pay for the involvement of this public servant and the costs of keeping the ‘imprisoned’ animals overnight. This, according to actors with this strategy, makes people look after their flock more carefully and therefore prevents future damage.

In the event of discords between farmers and Fulbe (or other cattle keepers) within one village, apart from village chiefs, the lamido can always act as mediator because both parties acknowledge his authority. Most of the time he sends one or two of his noblemen to assess the situation in the field and to decide what has to be done. When the people involved do not agree with the noblemen’s decision, they can appeal to the lamido personally. In a kind of court session (lawsuit), all the parties are heard, wise men can add information and the lamido decides who is to blame and what has to be paid (both to himself and to the winner of the adjudica-

87 Other members are the same line officers, the commander of the regional police corps, the regional chief (the lamido) and, where necessary, the line officer of forest affairs.

88 Interviews with Oudda-Bariki and Walwol Kordawareh inhabitants (see figure 7.3) during field observations of the Boubakary Nene pasture borders in January 2001 (see also note 63 in Chapter 8).
tion). The possibility of involvement of the lamido’s noblemen means it is important to invest in good relationships with those men and their families. “The lamido always believes his noblemen, but they can give a report to their chief that does not match the truth. For example when you have quarrelled with family members of a nobleman, who live in Oudda, next time when you need an objective statement about the borders of your field, this nobleman will give an account that favours the person that wants your field.”

For people vulnerable to village jealousy or over-zealous policemen, it is wise to invest in a good relationship with the lamido himself. Young men who try to set up (trans-border) trading need the lamido’s support in the event that they fall foul of the authorities (or co-villagers) and will visit the lamido’s court now and again to pay him their respects and give him (small) presents.

*Cultural investments*

The rise of ‘new’ religions has led to group formation along those lines. The Catholic Church helps its promising members with educational opportunities. This attracts youngsters to become active within the church, binding them not only with co-believers in Oudda, but also with Catholics in Guili, where the church has its centre and where mass is held. In the Protestant churches (two types of Lutheran Brothers) also activities for the young ones organised by the adolescents - like a choir, Christmas celebrations with theatre and bible knowledge quizzes, etc. - strengthen group bonds. Once you have become a member of a church you remain a member of that group long after you have stopped practising Christianity actively. Catholic men who marry a second or third wife may be barred from communion, but they continue to be member of the Catholic group.

The Islamic community functions at two levels. Men pray together in places delineated as ‘mosques’ and discuss religious and social issues directly afterwards. Bana Muslims form a group that provides a bit of mutual help in the event of problems. Despite their praying together and the performing of the other Islamic duties, they do feel more or less isolated from the Fulbe Muslims of their village because these “despise us, black men”89. A sign of the difference between the two groups, for instance, was that in 2000 the end of the Ramadan was celebrated one day later by the Fulbe than the Bana. For women, being Muslim does not help them become members of a special group. Women pray alone in a corner of the house. Fulbe women form a kind of group, but this is more ethnically related than based on religion. As is the case with the Bana women, their social network mostly consists of family and friends. As far as Fulbe are concerned, these family members and friends sometimes live far away in Garoua, Ngaoundéré or Nigeria.

Music is an important part of Bana culture. Both within all different religious meetings as well as in common free moments (in the evenings, or when visiting markets as a place of social contacts), ‘professional’ musicians or youngsters who are still learning to play the drums, violin or guitar, grace the gatherings and attract listeners. This again helps to form and maintain social bonds within and between groups. In the Christian churches, for example, music and

88 Interviews with Oudda-Barik and Waliwol Kordraweshi inhabitants (see figure 7.3) during field observations of the Boubakary, Nene pasture borders in January 2001 (see also note 63 in Chapter 8)

89 This sounds dramatic, but in daily life this does not lead to major frustrations or the rejection by the Fulbe of their religious brothers
singing is a lively way to connect people and to attract young members. Each of the two Lutheran brothers’ groups of Oudda has its adolescent choir, led by a slightly older boy. They practise every Saturday evening and sing during services. Even young girls and boys from non-Christian parents want to join these ‘age groups’. Moreover, a young player (son or nephew of the household head, or a neighbour’s son) will soon be accompanied by others around the compound-hearth (even in Muslim families) who build friendship ties between them and with the host family.

In short, in the social domain investments are generally unchanged from what they used to be in the past. The Bana have a strong social fabric that can help them through difficult times. It seems as if some modern factors only add to that fabric. Investments with a view to maintaining these social bonds cost time (mostly experienced as ‘good’ time) and the sharing of material things. Individuals invest in special capabilities that can serve their community, like leading a choir, playing a musical instrument, or learning more about modern agricultural methods to inform fellow farmers.

Table 7.3 - Summary of current level, insecurities and investments in the domains of the ‘insecurity complex’, based on ‘capitals’ of the village in total (- = bad; 0 = moderate; + = good; in the investment column: - = no investment, 0 = a bit investment, + = a lot of investments)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average level of village</th>
<th>Situation of worst off third of pop.</th>
<th>Security of expected level in future</th>
<th>Investments details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical basis</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>n.a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population density</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>No real family planning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Land availability        | +                                   | -                                   | Various qualitative methods by small number of people, invasion of Jiksa-Kubadj 
| Commodity of land        | -                                   | +                                   | Rising: more safe guarding by owners; inhabitants expect increase |
| Food production versus needs | -                               | -                                   | Crop diversification; ploughs; etc More discrepancy |
| Health                   | 0                                   | 0                                   | Rising, esp. when local dispensary arrives |
| Education                | -                                   | -                                   | Rising, already more than in Dzambou |
| Cash crops               | 0                                   | 0                                   | ‘Everybody’ a bit; no sales development |
| Livestock                | -                                   | -                                   | Everybody tries, not really successful |
| Non-agricultural possibilities | -                             | -                                   | Fulbe inhabitants |
| Socio-cultural           | 0 to -                              | 0 to -                              | Low scale, low technology, no real Labour migration |
| Political                | -                                   | -                                   | Some increase of new systems (religious) |
| Land allocation          | -                                   | -                                   | Almost no linking with higher-up |
| Conflict resolution      | -0                                  | -0                                  | Fear of loss Jiksa via national government decisions |

* See Chapter 2
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.

7.4 Intrusion of other niche: Box 2

After descending from the hill tops\(^a\) the Bana built their compounds first on the lower slopes and then moved further into the plains each time and finally some of them into the far bush. Once the general level of safety had increased, the grandfathers and great grandfathers of current inhabitants wanted to live in the middle of their fields to protect their crops against invading wild animals (monkeys, antelopes, ward hocks etc.). At the same time they did not want to live totally alone, with only their small family, so in remote areas they settled in small groups. One of those groups consisted of the clearers of the more hilly Jiksa region and they started to build houses there somewhere during the 1930s.

According to the Bana of Oudda, the Jiksa region lies at the same place as the (current) “Kubadje” neighbourhood of Kila, but with a wider north-south extension. Thus, it stretches over two km along the Kila-Oudda border from east to west. It covers the whole of Kubadje from north to south, but southwards it covers another 1 km that lies in official Oudda territory (see Figure 7.3).

Whether for safety reasons (such a small group of only three family heads formed an easy target for bandits and predator animals that abounded in those days) or because living conditions deteriorated (the Far North Province suffered from a drought period during the 1940s; see section 2.1.1 and chapter 4)\(^b\), the Jiksa settlers turned back to the more central Oudda neighbourhoods somewhere around 1945.

After a generation of cultivation in the surroundings of the Baliwol, Bariki and Hlaka neighbourhoods, some farmers started to clear the bush of the Jiksa part anew, starting from around 1985 onwards. Although they did not consider the possibility of building houses, they did want to cultivate the fertile soil. They did not bother about the Fulbe who had settled there in the meantime and more and more co-villagers invaded the area in order to create fields.

7.4.1 Reasons for intrusion in the environmental domain

The most obvious reason to start a field in Jiksa is the fact that the family (or the individual) possesses land there, at least according to that family’s perception and that of other Oudda inhabitants. This ownership-perception added to the idea that the soil in Jiksa had to be very fertile, after decades of being fallow and of being used by cattle. However, not all inhabitants who own fields in Jiksa actually use those fields. Table 7.4.1 shows where the fields of respon-

\(^a\) These hilltops are situated in the centre of Oudda, more or less between Oudda-Baliwol and Oudda-Bariki (Fig. 7.3)

\(^b\) Some other inhabitants, for example the Fulbe chief of Guiki, talked about their more remote homestead where they lived when they were young and the fact that their fathers withdraw further and further towards the centre of Oudda because of a lack of water.
dents are situated and where they use fields. Of the thirty-three owners of fields in Jiksa only sixteen use (some of) their fields there.

Table 4.1: Number of respondents that owns and or uses fields at certain places (n = 125) a = in Jiksa, b = around the house, c = in rest of bush, d = no fields possessed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place of fields</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>a+b</th>
<th>a-c</th>
<th>a+b-c</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>b-c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men(ownership)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>34 (41.7%)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men (use of owned fields)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>a: 0</td>
<td>a: 0</td>
<td>a: 1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>b: 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>b: 11</td>
<td>b: 3</td>
<td>b: 11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a+b: 4</td>
<td>a+c: 2</td>
<td>a+b-c: 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women (use)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>43</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explanation of this table. For example, the second row, third column shows that fifteen men own fields at two different places, being in Jiksa and around the house, the third row shows that of this type of owners no-one uses only his Jiksa fields (a: 0), eleven use their fields around the house only (b: 11) and four use both types of fields (a + b: 4). The fourth row shows the place women use for cultivation while the third column shows that eight women use fields in both Jiksa and around the house.

Sometimes the use of the Jiksa area is inevitable. Whether others use it or not is the result of calculating the different factors (see Table 7.4.2). A lack of money, for example, that prohibits the purchase of other fields, of chemical fertilisers or enough animals for animal manure obliges actors to search for those (own) fields that have a natural fertility, namely the Jiksa fields. This approach is weighed against possible disadvantages such as the distance or the fact that the Fulbe have to be disturbed.

Table 7.4.2: reasons for use or non-use of owned fields in Jiksa (n = 34)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No reason</th>
<th>Only field</th>
<th>Rest infertile</th>
<th>Rest fertile</th>
<th>Too far</th>
<th>Disturb Fulbe</th>
<th>Sons use</th>
<th>Not necessary in Jiksa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-use</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These two people do not want to disturb the houses of the Fulbe and/or the place of their fields

* These five people indicate they are going to use Jiksa fields next year, because two of them have now grown-up sons, and 3 others have run out of possibilities for leaving land fallow outside Jiksa.

Although for the majority of Jiksa users, the reasons to use Jiksa-fields seem to be straightforward and seem to arise from natural circumstances, it remains to be seen whether or not these actors have other possibilities. Going to Jiksa in fact implies several disadvantages. First of all, the labour input to clear the fields there is very high. Because the forest has (mostly) had...
the chance to grow for more than a generation, and sometimes even more\(^4\), trees are big and cutting them down is hard work. Also the removal of brush requires a lot of work. The actor needs to be very healthy, or he needs money to hire workers. Indeed, some older farmers leave the job to their sons (and not only the four that let their sons use the area (see Table 7.4.1 and 7.4.2)).

The second problem in Jiksa is encounters with cattle, donkeys and their owners. The animals cause damage to crops and the owners are not willing to pay any reimbursements. Thus, cultivating in the 'pasture' area needs to be accompanied by control and defence activities. Several respondents explain that they have to go down there every day, "even Sundays\(^5\)" and have to stay out a long time to make sure the cattle keepers do not let their animals go into the fields.

On the other hand, the fact that more Oudda inhabitants cultivate in Jiksa at the same time means that they can share the patrols. And, they do not need to be so afraid of Fulbe aggression.

### 7.4.2 Reasons for intrusion in the Human domain

In general there are no health-related reasons that would cause people to choose for the fields in Jiksa. At best, health and life-cycle situations can help to overcome the disadvantages of cultivating in Jiksa. For example, those farmers that use or (next year) want to use fields in Jiksa, are all healthy people. As has been explained, people with poor health are unable to cut trees and endure the daily walk. Being young certainly helps in this situation. The mean age of users is 35 (range 22 to 59\(^*\)), while the mean age of non-users who own fields in Jiksa is 47. This indeed shows that younger men in particular go to Jiksa to clear and cultivate.

Education may cause an opening of the mind to future problems and, as such, may direct people towards certain strategies. However, those young men that use their fields in Jiksa do not have a higher than average level of education (the percentage that attended school or schools at a higher level is no higher). So, for them education has not served as a triggering factor. Instead, more of them than the village mean have sent their children to school and certainly a higher percentage of them than of the group that owns Jiksa fields but do not use them (see Table 7.4.3). It therefore looks as if the reverse is true: those people that use Jiksa fields seem to have an open mind for the modernisation that is incorporated into education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7.4.3 Number of owners users and owners non-users of Jiksa fields sending school-age children to school.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jiksa field users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(*=\) The percentages shown are percentages of the people with school-age children.

\(^4\) Clearing the bush (during the clearing period of the grandfathers) often only meant that in a certain area two or three trees were cut and then the whole area was delineated as being the property of that person.

\(^5\) Sundays are a day of rest for all inhabitants of Oudda. Whether Muslim, Christian or followers of the traditional religion.

\(^*\) The two users of over 50 years already cleared parts of the Jiksa bush when they were young.
The Jiksa users not only mention the necessity of other options than land for their children, but (if possible) they also do something about it. They themselves do not have any extra chances via education but they obviously do feel the pressures of land shortage and infertility.

7.4.3 Reasons for intrusion in the Economic domain
The same lack of money that prohibits the use of chemical fertilisers or the purchase of animals for manure also prevents people from becoming something else than farmers - such as traders or civil servants. For the purpose of the analysis, wealth will be defined here as the possession of animals and ploughs⁷. The possession of land is excluded from the calculation because it would otherwise lead to circle reasoning. Table 7.4.4 shows how many people in the three categories (users of Jiksa fields. Jiksa-field owners that do not use them and the rest of respondents) are ‘rich’ according to my definition⁸.

Table 7.4.4 division of wealth (n = 81) with category percentages in brackets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>‘Rich’</th>
<th>Not ‘rich’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>User of Jiksa fields</td>
<td>10 (63 %)</td>
<td>6 (37 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner, non-user of Jiksa</td>
<td>7 (39 %)</td>
<td>11 (61 %)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other villagers</td>
<td>27 (57 %)</td>
<td>20 (43 %)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Table shows that significantly more farmers are ‘rich’ that own and use fields in Jiksa than non-using owners or fellow villagers that do not own fields in Jiksa. Therefore, it does not seem likely that Jiksa fields are used because of a lack of other possibilities.

7.4.4 Reasons for intrusion in the Social domain
Most of the current users of Jiksa fields started using those fields some five years ago. This was directly after the lamido of Guili issued a kind of official statement about his territory and its boundaries. At the same time he granted permission to his subjects in Oudda to cultivate in the contested area. Although this was counteracted with objections from the official authorities in Mogodé, the farmers involved took the permission seriously because it came from their one and only chief.

Up until recently, other owners of Jiksa fields continued to look at the area as an insecure possession because the lamido is far away. It is easy for him to declare that the area be used because he does not have to deal daily with intrusive cattle keepers and resulting crop damage. These people doubted whether they should use their fields there. The arrival of the researcher and the related trips to the area to view the situation - the damage in fields and the position of the borders - as well as a visit to the Kila village chief and an on-the-spot discussion between the Kila and Oudda inhabitants caused even more remote Oudda-ers to become aware of the problem and to become involved in the struggle being fought out by their fellow villagers. As

⁷ De Steenhuijsen Piers (1995) used the same indicators to distinguish rich and poor farmers in his study of the Diamaré production differences.
⁸ According to my definition somebody is ‘rich’ if he possesses a plough and a pair of draught animals, a plough accompanied by a combination of 4 other animals (or 3 if a cow is involved) or if he has no plough but at least 3 cattle or 6 or more smaller stock in combination with a cow, or a combination of 2 cattle with 2 smaller stock.
a result, the owners emphasised the question of loyalty and made the lamido declare that he was in agreement with the lamido's statement. The conglomerate neighbourhood chief of Bariki, Hlaka and Waza incited his village men to go to Jiksa and start cultivating there.

In other words, the intrusion turned into a collective action backed up by expressions of leadership and loyalty by people in Oudda who did not own Jiksa fields.

7.5 Assertion of rights: Box 3

As far as the Bana are concerned, the Jiksa region is theirs because it belongs to the territory of the Guilli district. Thus, it is part of the same district as their own village of Oudda. At the same time it is theirs because their ancestors cleared the (empty) bush and started to develop the wilderness after they came down from the hilltops. Their own customary laws and the State laws declare that this is a basis for ownership rights. Unfortunately, both claims are denied by their adversaries.

7.5.1 About the boundaries

Apart from the question of who designated the area as a pasture reserve and whether it was allocated as such at all, the exact position of the boundaries of the area is also subject to discussion. The least contested are the eastern and western borders, although the Bana deny the status thereof as they deny the existence of the pasture as such (see below). Nevertheless, following the description by the Kapsiki and the Kila-Fulbe of the reserve status of their land, one can state that its eastern boundary is formed by the river Ndo, an almost year-round stream (although it reduces to a couple of separate pools at the end of the dry season) that runs in a more or less north-south direction at that location. The western boundary is formed by a hill ridge between the bush area and the territory of Haou, the southern-most village of Mogodé district along the main road that runs parallel to the border with Nigeria (see Figure 7.3).

The Fulbe and Kapsiki of Kila oppose each other with regard to the northern boundary of the pasture reserve and agree about the position of its southern boundary. However, as far as the Bana of Oudda are concerned, there is only one boundary, namely, that between their village of Oudda and the territory of Kila. Referring to an intertribal war some 50 to 60 years ago between Oudda and Kila\footnote{The older inhabitants who do remember this war cannot recall the exact date. The village chief of Kila, Takva Koye, now about 80 years old, participated in the fighting when he was young and when his father was still chief.}, that was ceremonially ended with the sacrifice of a dog on the traditional boundary between the two villages\footnote{The origin of the war lays in the animosities caused by the death of a Kapsiki man who had visited Oudda just days before his death, to carry a demon from the Oudda premises to Kila in order to use this figure against one of his fellow Kila. The Oudda people were blamed for this death and when some Kila-people, who were fishing in an Oudda river, saw some Oudda cultivators on their fields they attacked them with knives and machetes, yelling and shouting as they did so. This noise they made attracted the attention of the other residents of Oudda and, before long, the two villages were engaged in a full-scale war that lasted a month. Some of the older inhabitants of today fought during that conflict and they know exactly which person was killed first, second, etc. After a month, they claim, the people from Kila grew tired and withdrew. Then the Oudda elders asked the Kila authorities for compensation for the dead and requested the ceremony involving the dog to confirm that the two peoples would never attack each other again and never again pass the mutual boundary.}, they claim the boundary to be more than 500 m
to the north than the Fulbe and Kapsiki declare.

From several km north of Haou, the boundary between the two districts runs eastwards over the hilltop of the mountain Tsakatsla\(^{144}\) (see Figure 7.3). Then, east of this mountain, on the western side of the Kubadże area, a small riverbed forms the boundary between Mogodé and Guili. The moment a rocky ridge emerges in east-west direction (Photo \(^{16}\), see the centre of the book), the boundary follows this fall that gradually changes, first into a hilltop and, in the end, into a new, shallow riverbed which joins the southermost of the two east-west flowing rivers between Kubadże and Kila almost at the point where the Fulbe settlement was built. From that point onwards, that is in an easterly direction, the boundary is formed by this river, which lies just north of the Kubadże settlement. Because of the collective ceremony in the past, the Bana pressurize the Kapsiki to deny this boundary position. They do not communicate with the inhabitants of the Fulbe settlement on this issue but focus on the party that should know.

In a gathering of Kila-Kapsiki and Oudda-Bana to discuss the position of the boundary and the memories of the ceremony (Kubadże, January 2001), the Kapsiki village chief, Takva Koye, came up with a neat statement to run with the hare: The fields in this region are the property of the Oudda people because their ancestors cleared them of bushes and trees. but the area itself belongs to the dominion of the Kila. and thus the Mogodé authorities. This does not satisfy the Bana\(^{142}\) who explain the difference between the official and the traditional border by referring to the fact that after five peaceful Mogodé lamibe, problems about the boundaries started with the lamido before last, known as Hama Djouda. He wanted to enlarge his area and bribed the prefect of Mayo Tsanaga department. Although the prefect made an appointment with both lamibe, Loumbi of Guili and Hama Djouda of Mogodé, so that they could show him the original boundary in order to clarify its location once and for all, they organised it in such a way that Loumbi came too late and Hama Djouda had already given his opinion. The prefect accepted this without any changes and without giving Loumbi any opportunity to explain his stance. So it was Hama Djouda that moved the boundary to the hilltops and cheated both the prefect and the inhabitants of Oudda. The prefect must have received gifts (money or cattle) to agree with this proposal\(^{149}\). He made people erect iron signposts along this new boundary, the Kapsiki say, of which the stone foundations can still be found\(^{144}\).

According to the Kapsiki (and some of the Fulbe of Kubadże) one of their chiefs, Djaofofo, illegally removed the signs in order to shift the boundary to the south with the purpose of helping himself and his friend, lamido Issa Tizze of Mogodé, to acquire a larger territory. Of course, this is sheer speculation on the issue of who removed the signs (if indeed they existed

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\(^{144}\) The two current lamibe of Guili and Mogodé are always quarrelling about the position of the border in the neighbourhood of Haou along the main road, where the markets, settlements and travelling merchants make it worthwhile to have a couple of yards more territory. Here again the Bana of Guili position the border far more to the north than the Kapsiki of Mogodé. They underline their claim by referring to the language spoken in Haou, which is Bana and not Kapsiki. Thus, they state, also strengthens their claim to the boundary position in Kubadże-Jiksa.

\(^{142}\) "Have you ever heard of that", they say, "people owning fields in the territory of another village?"

\(^{149}\) Explanation of several Bana informants (men and women, aged from about 40 years and older), independent from each other, during the period December 2000-January 2001.

\(^{144}\) This is what the Kapsiki and Fulbe claim. Kila village chief, Takva Koye, tried to find those pedestals, but this proved to be very difficult if not impossible.
at all). Kapsiki, who visit the Kabadje area, complain about this removing of signposts, because they can foresee more problems coming out of that.

To underline the value of the whole story the Bana have a collective explanation of lamido Hama Djouda’s behaviour. He attempted to change officially the existing boundary, inspired by the fact that the Fulbe population were subject to the administration of his side of the boundary. In other words, the Kabadje inhabitants paid (and pay) their taxes to the chief of Mogodé. According to the Bana this is due to some impropriety on the part of the first Fulbe chief of Kabadje. Elhadji Djougé. After his arrival he started to give his tribute to the master of the territory, lamido Loumbi, but always was reluctant with his delivery. When, one day, Loumbi sent his noblemen to collect the delayed payment, a kind of quarrel broke out at the end of which Djougé swore never to pay anything to Loumbi anymore. He turned to Mogodé instead, where they were very glad to accept the money and the status of Kabadje to be part of Kila. Although Loumbi ordered Djougé and his kinsmen to leave his territory, when Djougé stayed the Guili lamido decided not to risk war over the matter\(^1\). In that period, the inhabitants of Oudda did not use their Jiksa fields, because they had left them fallow after 20 years of use\(^2\).

This brings us to the second half of the ownership claim to the region by the Bana. According to them this area is never meant to be set aside for cattle grazing, and those who are said to have taken that decision do not have the right to do so.

7.5.2 Pasture or arable land? Rights of settlement, use and decision
The difference between the opinion of the Bana that ‘Jiksa’ is to be cultivated and the opinion of the Fulbe that ‘Kabadje’ is a pasture reserve (which refers to the same area), is the result of differences about who has the first rights to the region and which authorities have (and had) the legitimate right to make decisions on it (this touches on the above-mentioned boundaries dilemma).

With respect to ‘first rights’ people refer to primordial presence. With that they mean that those people whose ancestors first lived on (or used) the particular land, have the strongest rights. As explained in the history section of this Chapter, the Kapsiki won this ‘race’ for the Mandara Mountains in general, but the Bana were the first in the Oudda territory. While living on the hilltops they already started to clear the bush at the foot of the mountains. Three to four generations ago, they started to develop the surrounding plains with real fervour. Only after the French encouraged them to descend in the 1930s did they leave their mountain tops and started to build their dwellings on the plains. All informants in Oudda that now have claims in Jiksa (n = 32) state that their grandfathers or great-grandfathers started to develop that bush (clearing the trees and bushes, building small stone lines along the borders of their

\(^1\) It is surprising that nobody has so far blamed the Oudda farmers for removing the signposts. When I asked the Oudda inhabitants themselves they stated that they had nothing to do with the matter. Along the main road crossing Haou, they say, a signpost demarcating the original location of the border had been removed by the Mogode authorities (or inhabitants). The remnants are still visible

\(^2\) Remarkably, Elhadji Ngoura, the Fulbe neighbourhood chief of Kabadje, did mention several times that they never paid taxes to Guli canton, without the researcher posing any question on the matter. Perhaps he is aware of the accusations of the Bana towards his former chief, Elhadji Djougé.

\(^3\) As stated, the departure from the Jiksa area may have been due to climatologic circumstances: the sandy soil there is very vulnerable to a lack of water. Up until the first new clearings were created in Jiksa in the 1980s it appears that the Oudda farmers had enough fertile fields surrounding their settlements.
fields and starting cultivation) somewhere between 100 and 120 years ago. This means they did so while they were still living on the hills. Like the respondents who do not have claims in the contested pasture (n = 91: 43 women), but in other parts of Oudda, they claim that the area was empty at that time: “There were no others there!”

In the Kubadje-Jiksa case, that is the historical dispute about the boundary and about the point at which the bush development started. It is not only important to establish who happened to be the first individual (family or clan) at the location in question, but also who happened to be the legal authority.

The Bana claim, referring to their vision of the boundary location, that it is their lamido (the one residing in Guili) who had and has legal authority over the Jiksa area. Indeed, in the past, this lamido Loumbi, together with his village chiefs, did change the classification of quite a large part of his territory from arable land into pasture reserve. He allocated four pasture reserves to four Fulbe chiefs. The surface area of each reserve depended on the number of cattle present at that moment in time. According to the present day Fulbe chief of Oudda, lawan Boubakary Néné. lamido Loumbi has given all four chiefs official papers to emphasise the ‘gift’. Although one of these reserves is not situated within the territory of Oudda, the other three are: one in the north-west region of the Waza neighbourhood, one in the direction of Modélé and the last one directly east of the Fulbe neighbourhood Guiki (see Figure 7.3). This one, named after the current sub-neighbourhood and Fulbe lawan, is the biggest. None of the four coincided with the Jiksa (or Kubadje) area.

According to the Bana, the Fulbe argument about tax payment to the Mogodé lamido as a proof of belonging is a false claim, although the fact as such is true. It is based only on the impertinence described (above) of the first Fulbe chief of Kubadje-Jiksa, Elhadji Djougé. It was and ought to be the Guili lamido to whom the Kubadje settlers have to pay their taxes and who has authority over the Jiksa region.

The Bana also denounce the claim by the Fulbe that Kubadje-Jiksa was an empty bush area when they arrived. The fact that they could not see any fields, houses or people does not mean that it was undisturbed wilderness. In that period, the inhabitants of Oudda did not use their Kubadje/Jiksa fields because they had left them fallow after 20 years of use. Nevertheless, they were still their fields.

In order to stress the fact that the Mogodé authorities know perfectly well who the owners of the area are and who has a say in the matter, several Oudda inhabitants report having met the lamido of Mogodé or the Kila chief, Takva Koye, at the market in Guili. There these chiefs asked the Guili and Oudda authorities, like Hamadou Loumbi or Hamadou Ardou, to solve the issues once and for all, and to declare the Kubadje-Jiksa region a pasture reserve. They would not have posed such a request, the Bana say, if they had known that they had authority over the area. Yet, mentioning these encounters and using them to stress again the position of both lamibe can also be a conscious and purposeful effort by the Bana to strengthen their claim: one has to realise that such a request by the Mogodé authorities (if really posed) may just have been a strategic move to try and solve the problem mutually and not by sheer force.

In daily life, the differences of opinion about the boundaries and the classification of the bush land of Kubadje-Jiksa led to several attempts to invade the pastures and to clashes between different users.
7.6 Counter assertion and conflict: Box 3

The conflict situation, as depicted in Box 3 (see fig 7.2), only arises when two (or more) parties oppose 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.

When Bana start cultivating in the bush area of Jiksa/Kubadje, they claim 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. This did not occur, however. Part of the contested area is used as a settlement area on which houses have been built. The present Fulbe have cleared some ‘home fields’ around these compounds. They use the rest of the region for cattle grazing and as tracks to other grazing areas. After the description of the claims of the Bana in section 5, I will examine the situation and claims of the Fulbe of Kubadje in more detail.

7.6.1 Environmental domain

Physical basis

The rich pasture areas of the Mandara Mountains plateaux between Mokolo and Bourah are covered with more than 118 herbaceous species and 67 tree species, of which all grass species and 15 tree species are eaten by cattle\(^{10}\). In one of the official pasture reserves near Mogodé (Ploumoutou) Mvondo Awono et al (2001: 272) consider the carrying capacity to be between 1.50 and 2.60 TLU/ha, dependant on the phytosociological group present\(^{10}\). Unfortunately many pastures are degraded (id: 267) and there is an abundance of ‘Kubadje’, the non-palatable Isoberlinea doka. Especially in the region just north of the Kubadje neighbourhood these bushes are everywhere. As stated, this explains the area’s name.

Nevertheless, the pasture area itself has more diverse vegetation. The herders of Kubadje are proud of the quality of their pasture. They showed me the good herbs\(^{10}\) and explained that Kubadje is the best pasture area in the far neighbourhood. Indeed, as described in section 2.1 of this chapter, the underlying soil is considered to be perfectly suitable for forest and pastures.

At the same time the Fulbe complain about the lack of herbs in the bush or a diminishing thereof due to a lack of rain (in 2000, 1999 was a good year) or water in general. They attribute this last fact to the activities of the Guili-people, such as tree-cutting and exposing the soil to the wind and sun. Because the grazing possibilities are limited, their herd numbers are not growing any more. In fact, the number of cattle is even diminishing, they say. For example Ngoura’s herds shrunk from six to three in ten years. Two others complained about a decrease in the number of their cattle by two-thirds in five years\(^{11}\).

During the rainy season, the Fulbe herd their cattle into the bush surrounding their settlement. As the dry season develops they withdraw more and more in the direction of the big bush area of Modélé to the east. Only some cows from small herds are kept behind to provide milk

\(^{10}\) Mvondo Awono et al (2001: 272)

\(^{10}\) For example, *Paspalum scrobuculatum* groups are estimated to maybe carry 2.64 TLU/ha. NB This is more than the carrying capacity estimated by Gaston (1996) or Breman (1975).

\(^{10}\) Among others: *Eleusine indica*, *Dactylolomium aegypticum* and *Brachiaria xantholeuca*.

\(^{11}\) The decrease in cattle numbers is not only a direct result of diminishing pastures but also an indirect one, namely for the payments that have to be made for crop damage reimbursements and to 'buy' the support of the authorities cattle have to be sold.
for the children and because moving them is not worthwhile\textsuperscript{112}. The herders also try to use the stubbles on the fields of the Kapsiki in Kila, but this is being met by more and more resistance because the Kapsiki want to use these harvest remains for their own cattle. In the second half of the dry season, the Fulbe are obliged to seek out the more abundant pastures of Nigeria. This is something they hate doing because of the security risks it entails for them and their herds. Some choose to go as far as Mayo Oulo more to the south, to be sure of water in the barrage lake there.

The younger men who have to grow maize for their small and extended families, reported a decline in agricultural production between last year and this year. They all complain of insufficient grain (maize) and that they have to buy grain to feed their families. It has to be added, however, that the Fulbe have always bought (at least some of) their grain in exchange for meat and milk. Most often they reported that this year’s yield (2000) is half of last year’s. The women’s groundnut production is more or less constant over time. Only when new fields have just been taken into production (every two or three years) is the yield somewhat higher. In general, field fertility is good because the Fulbe ensure that their cattle, small ruminants and even donkeys leave their dung on the fields during the course of several months.

\textit{Population density}

The Kubadjé reserve, with its Fulbe inhabitants and vast stretches of bush land covers roughly 2 to 1 km\textsuperscript{3}. It stretches along the Oudda border. Officially this area belongs to the Kila territory. In the 1950s, six young Fulbe family heads arrived with their wives and small children. In total they counted eighteen grown-ups and twenty-five children. Nowadays, the Fulbe hamlet consists of more than 300 inhabitants. The population density increased from 22.5 per km\textsuperscript{2} to 150 people per km\textsuperscript{2}. However, for half of the year the men are on transhumance with the cattle and do not put any pressure on this area.

\textit{Table 7.6.1} Comparison of population density in 2000, in different areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Surface (km\textsuperscript{2})</th>
<th>Inhabitants</th>
<th>People/km\textsuperscript{2}</th>
<th>Number of households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda total</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>3863</td>
<td>26.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hlaka-Waza</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guiki (Fulbe)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubadjé</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{*} The household organisation in Kubadjé is different from that of Oudda. Each household is made up of both the wives and unmarried children of a father, together with the married sons and their wives and children and sometimes even married grandsons with wives and children. Thus, a household can comprise 18 people (the number used here to calculate) or more, although small households exist as well.

The population density also increased over the years in the Kapsiki village of Kila. With the help of maps and oral information, the total surface of Kila can be estimated as being some 50 km\textsuperscript{2}. Like all Kapsiki settlements, the neighbourhoods and compounds are scattered over

\textsuperscript{112} They estimate that some 50 cattle stay during the dry season when there is just enough fodder and water.

\textsuperscript{113} The Kubadjé area is smaller than the Jiksà area because Jiksà also covers an area south of the official Kila-Oudda border. The northern half of the Kubadjé area was lost a couple of years ago, to the Kila cultivators.
the hills. Because the numbers of inhabitants in the past, as described in the literature, were not defined per village, it is impossible to estimate the increase in population density in Kila village itself. Nevertheless, based on the total population increase of Mogodé sub-department\textsuperscript{14}, one can assume a population increase between 1945 and 1976 of more than 100%. Although, according to Mohammedou (1984: 147) and Boulet (1984: 139) the death rates of the Kapsiki are very high, their population increases quicker than that of the Bana because of their far higher birth rate\textsuperscript{15}. Thus, in 2000, population numbers of the Kapsiki of Kila increased again and the soil surface area has to be shared by roughly double the number of people than when the Fulbe first settled in the remote neighbourhood of Kila.

So, the Fulbe in their pasture reserve are having to cope with increasing population pressure not only from their own numbers, but also from the surrounding villages and especially from the Kapsiki in their own village, Kila.

7.6.2 Human domain

Health

The Kubadjé area is a very remote place. From the road that passes through Kila one has to turn right into the bush, pass at least two deep riverbeds (filled to the brim with foaming water during the rainy season) and several hill slopes with rocks and boulders. It is impossible to reach the settlement by car, even in the most accessible period. Even for the other Kila inhabitants, health care and services are a long way away, but for the Fulbe of Kubadjé assistance is not available in acute cases. They have to look after themselves as if they were still bush nomads. However, because they are living in a somewhat degraded environment, they cannot dispose of all the necessary traditional (wild) medicines.

Drinking water is also a difficult issue. The nearest water well is on the way to Kila centre, at least an hour’s walk away. People wash themselves and their clothes and pots in the pools of the river Ndo during the dry season, while the sandy banks serve as a filter to tap drinking water. Over the weeks the pools become dirty, soapy ponds that diminish in surface area until they disappear and temporary water holes have to be dug in the sandy riverbed. Finally the women have to undertake the walk to the Kila well every day in order to collect water. Until that moment, drinking water quality is very poor and illnesses are rampant as a result. Almost everybody suffers from amoeba-related complaints and several of the small children seem to be stunted as regards growth. In addition, the number of polio-like disabled people is high (more than 2%)\textsuperscript{16}.

This latter problem is also due to the fact that mothers are not very motivated for the government organised vaccination programme. When asked, they express their willingness to offer their babies for immunisation, but the information about the exact day and hour of arrival of the vaccination team is not distributed properly (this in itself shows the inhabitants’ lack of interest) and those who know have more important things to do than to arrive in time. Because

\textsuperscript{14} Beauviliain (1989: 590 and 598). He equalises Mogodé with ‘Kapsiki’

\textsuperscript{15} This may be due to the very early age at which people marry in the Kapsiki culture (girls at 15 and boys at 18) in comparison to that of the Bana, where several 25 year old men explained that it was not yet time to be married. The same applies to girls aged 20 (interviews and observations during fieldwork, November 2000 – January 2003)

\textsuperscript{16} One has to remember that the northern part of Nigeria, where the fundamental Islamic chiefs prohibit polio vaccination, is close by and that the WHO has warned about the cross-border transfer of polio.
of the remoteness of the neighbourhood, vaccinating nurses are not willing to wait for people who are late. Thus, in January 2001, only three of the 25 children under 5 years of age received their anti-polio drops.  

Education  
Up to now the western type of education has not appealed to the Fulbe of Kubadje. Their lawan Ngoura explains that when the French obliged parents to send some of their children to school, they hid their offspring and sent the children of their slaves instead. They feared that the colonisers might be tricking them and capturing or killing their children or, perhaps even worse, changing them into non-believers. The Fulbe children are sent to the so-called Koran school. That means that in the evening hours children gather around the hearth where, from a very early age, they learn to recite and write Koran texts. The older ones with a bit more knowledge help the others and they, in their turn, are educated by one of the adults with a full Islamic education. The Kubadje settlement has a high percentage of ‘learned Muslims’, both men and women.  

These days, however, the value of the ‘western’ schools is recognised, especially by the younger parents. Ngoura also admits that the Fulbe missed the track: “Those Kirdi now occupy all the higher government jobs because we are not well trained.” But, starting in education is difficult. The nearest primary school is, again, in Kila which is too far to walk for the little ones and inaccessible for the bigger children as well when the rains arrive because of the swollen rivers that have to be crossed. The younger parents are now trying to organise a class in Kubadje itself, although it is equally difficult for a teacher to reach the settlement.  

7.6.3 Economic domain  
The Fulbe do not cultivate for the market. The increasing amount of time they spend on agriculture is only for subsistence purposes. Their life revolves around cattle.  

Like their ancestors, the Fulbe live from their cattle. Official numbers, based on vaccination, put the total number of cattle in Kubadje at 650 (Table 7.6.2). This means 2.2 cattle per person. If all the milk from the cows and all the meat from the ‘normal off-take’ is consumed, each person gets 429,400 kcal per year. This is less than half of what is needed for an adult (912,500 kcal). Based on interviews with family heads, it can be assumed that not all cattle are kept in the Kubadje surroundings. How many each family owns in other areas of Cameroon (or even Nigeria) cannot be established. However, economically (and thus also regarding the energetic basis of the families) the picture is somewhat brighter than is described here.

117 Own observation.  
118 Since January 2002 the acting chief Hassana (second son of Ngoura) has arranged for a Kapsiki school teacher to be present for half of the year (during the dry season), but in January 2004 the Fulbe women complained that the children had learned nothing because this teacher is not conversant with Fulbe habits: “After two years the children still do not speak a word of French”.  
119 All calculations with regard to milk production per cow, calorific value of milk, consumable meat weight per cow, calorific value of meat etc. are based on Dietz et al. (2001) in relation to East African pastoralism. Although there is no reason to assume that West African data or data for the Mandara Mountains of Cameroon are exactly the same (soils and vegetation are different), Dietz’s data are used because of a lack of other data.
Table 7.6.2 Number and density of livestock of Fulbe in 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccinated cattle</th>
<th>Number of owners of cattle</th>
<th>Mean cattle per owner (range)</th>
<th>Cattle per km²</th>
<th>TLU (non-cattle)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oudda Fulbe⁴</td>
<td>1047</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>95 (4 - 320)</td>
<td>42²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kubadjé Fulbe⁵</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>38 (8 - 90)</td>
<td>325²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ = For Oudda, the data is based on the vaccination campaign of May 2000, as carried out by the local veterinary officer in Guili. It is very likely that at the time of vaccination the largest number of cattle were on their dry season trek to Nigeria and elsewhere.

² = For Kubadjé the vaccination from which the numbers were taken, was performed in November 2000, a time at which the herds had not yet left the area. Apart from some calves the whole herd seemed to be made available for vaccination.

³ = This number is calculated on the basis that the Fulbe of Oudda graze their cattle solely in the neighbouring Boubakary Nene reserve. In fact, density will be lower, because they also use other bush forest land in the vicinity.

⁴ = This number is based on the assumption that the Kubadjé Fulbe graze their cattle solely in their own reserve. In reality, this is not true because they not only use the harvest leftovers on Kila fields, but also use the more extended pasture area of Modélé.

Women and small children are entitled to milk, although a certain quantity of milk is used for the coffee and rice drink that is prepared for visitors. The women churn butter from the milk and sell it separately. For one litre of fresh milk they receive approximately 150 Fcfa. One litre of butter fetches 3,000 Fcfa at the Kila market. Yet, they do not earn much because the herds are small. Most of the cows are away during three to four months and, as they say, the production per cow is low. During the dry season the sale of milk stops: during those harsh times the cows produce even less and most of them are away with the rest of the herd anyway.

Some younger men left the area in their youth to try their luck elsewhere, as a trader or a car driver, but when their fathers thought it time they returned to get married. Now they feel trapped. Having been summoned home to become real cattle keepers, they find out that the bush is declining and that cattle numbers are declining with it. They complain that, with so many fields around, they cannot even graze the cattle at night, so these lose weight and do not produce the number of calves they should do. Comparing the two Fulbe groups of Kila and Oudda (see table 7.6.2), it is obvious that the Fulbe of Kubadjé possess fewer cattle per person than those of Oudda (a mean of 38 versus 95 per owner). The Kubadjé Fulbe fear for their future as cattle keepers.

One of the economically based wishes they have is a road into their neighbourhood to make it easier for visitors to reach the area but also to increase the level of access to and from markets. They do not worry about whether or not this would disturb the pasture as such.

¹² Theoretically, 528 litre of milk is available per person per year. If the milk is divided between women and children, each gets 660 litres. But, because of a lower than average production and three months of almost no milk at all (from the few cows that are left at home to produce milk for the younger children), a woman or child has access to less than 437 litres in the most ideal situation (market value approximately 92,000 Fcfa).
7.6.4 Social domain

Family and friends

The Fulbe are an ethnic group dispersed over Cameroon and West Africa in total. They feel they belong to one big group but, at the same time, they are very attached to their own clan and (extended) family. Elderly men in particular travel a lot to visit their relatives. In cases of celebration (the graduation of young people from the Koran school, babies’ name-giving ceremonies) or death, visitors arrive from far and near. For Kubadje this ‘far’ may mean from their region of origin near Garoua in the south, or from Nigeria in the west where the Kubadje Fulbe spent part of their lives. People may even come from further away: married daughters who live with their husbands in Ngaoundéré or even Douala take the trouble to attend such events.

‘Near’ means from Kila (conversely Kapsiki) or Modélé, the first Fulbe settlement in the region approximately fifty years ago, where the Kubadje Fulbe also spent some years, or other villages and towns in the vicinity such as Guili or Mogodé. In short, they have relatives and friends everywhere.

The acting chief, Hassana, and several of the neighbourhood elders, spend quite a lot of time visiting their kinsmen in Modélé. They want to have a perfect relationship with them because they have authority over the bigger bush-pasture area there. Safeguarding access to this pasture is important. These fellow Fulbe are also important in the regional struggle for the definitive recognition by authorities of certain pasture reserves, of which Kubadje is one.

In the settlement itself there are two different sub-groups which are bonded separately. On the one hand, there is the large compound of Ngoura and, on the other, the rest of the compounds five minutes’ walk away. The inhabitants even give this second concentration a different name (that of the founder), but this is contradicted by Ngoura, every time he hears somebody using it. This separation may have some meaning in daily life, but to the outward world Kubadje is one entity.

Political domain

Officially Kubadje is part of Kila and, thus, is subjected to the Kila village chief and the lamido of Mogodé. Although the Fulbe recognise the position of Takve, the Kila chief, when they visit the Kila market or when minor quarrels break out between Kapsiki and Fulbe, they manage their settlement by themselves. For bigger problems they turn to the lamido in Mogodé. It is to him that they pay their taxes which are collected by their own neighbourhood chief. According to them it is not official politics that are important for ensuring that the area (and their lives) is/are managed properly. Keeping the lamido on your side is the main point.

The Fulbe lawan Ngoura himself is out of the settlement for at least half of the year. During that period he does not herd his cattle – that is the task of his sons - but instead invests in contacts with all the different authorities, as well as other Fulbe from whom he also collects information. He has a house in the departmental capital Mokolo, where he spends some time, close to the official authorities, but also close to the religious and Fulbe authorities. He

\[\text{12} \text{ See e.g. De Bruijn and Van Dijk (1995).} \]

\[\text{12} \text{ According to his position in the village he is a djamoro (a neighbourhood chief), but both the Fulbe and the Kapsiki, and even the higher authorities call him ‘lawan’.} \]

\[\text{12} \text{ It was in this house in Mokolo, after several months of illness and having been looked after by his third daughter (a grown-up woman) that Elhadji Ngoura died in the early days of January 2003.} \]
leaves the leadership of Kubadje to his second son. The first son is not as intelligent and politically capable, so Ngoura appointed this second son to watch over matters and the decision was approved unanimously by the rest of the settlement. Contacts closer to home, such as those with the lowan of Modelé, are maintained by this son. Together with the Modelé-Fulbe, the Fulbe of Kubadjé try to manoeuvre in such a way that the big pasture of Modelé is secured or even extended. \(^{124}\)

Although the Kubadjé-Fulbe seem to be far removed from State politics, indirectly they are involved in them via their extended networks. For example, because they have uncles and marabouts \(^{125}\) that are members of the ruling party, they have to back up that party too. This network also gives them some (small) say in matters. In the past, the so-called Fulbe party UNDP was an option to voice ideas and needs, but it lost power over time.

In short, although the Fulbe seem to be living in a very remote place, they keep in touch with all kinds of issues that are going on in the Far North of Cameroon which are of importance to their community.

**Conflict mediation**

Normally, internal conflicts in Fulbe society, such as disparities between spouses, quarrels between youngsters, discussions over access to waterholes or animal damage etc., are solved by the local chief (or herd master) and his wise men. If these cannot restore peace, the case is brought before the lamido. In the case of external conflicts, that is conflicts between groups (again over access to water or rights of trespassing), the groups’ lavans had to solve the dispute or visit the lamido together to ask for his objective intervention. In the past, the lamido’s subjects had to pay a symbolic amount of money for this arbitration (with every subject already having given something as an expression of their esteem the moment they entered the region with their cattle, just to make sure the lamido would defend their rights and do his utmost to safeguard the general security of the area (see Moritz \textit{et al} 2002)). Nowadays it is less clear. Most of the time, people complain that they have to pay the lamido more and more, and the word ‘corruption’ is heard time and again. On special occasions the lamido works together with the official police and the sub-prefect, but the Fulbe prefer to keep discords between their subjects to themselves.

**Land rights**

Within the Kubadjé area the neighbourhood lowan Ngoura\(^{126}\) decides about the use of land. He always consults the other elderly inhabitants, but the final decision is his. In this way, he can loan out land to agriculturalists if he thinks it wise to give up a small part of the pasture to engender loyalty to his group. He can forbid cultivation by the Fulbe on certain land surrounding the settlement because he is the one that has to implement the lamido’s allocation of Kubadjé as a pasture area.

This shows that he is subordinate to more senior chiefs. Officially the village chief of Kila is higher in line, but land allocation in the Kubadjé area is not his responsibility. As explained

\(^{124}\) Indeed, in 2002-2003, while awaiting a solution for the Kubadjé zone, MIDIMA extended the Hina-Modelé reserve to the eastern Oudda pasture reserve of Boubakary Nene.

\(^{125}\) Religous leaders

\(^{126}\) After his death his second son Hassana became the lavan. He already had considerable legitimacy before his father’s death.
above, the traditional chief of the region, the lamido of Mogodé, is the person to whom Ngoura refers with regard to issues concerning the outer boundaries of the pasture reserve, or when the intrusion of farmers disturbs the peace of the cattle and their owners. In such instances the lamido and (or) his noblemen come down to look at the situation and take their decision.

**Cultural domain**

Although a grown-up Fulbe is expected not to give free reign to his emotions, before they reach that stage a lot of quarrelling will have gone on and will have even been encouraged. The Fulbe of Kubadje raise their children to believe that they should not let anybody violate their rights. Parents and other adults encourage their little ones to stand up for their interests, even when these are only perceived interests. In order to achieve their goal, they are allowed to use verbal and even physical aggression. As a result, adolescents often become involved in real fights, some involving the use of knives. People have been seriously injured on two occasions in the past two years.

In the case of these and other quarrels the Fulbe regard themselves as totally autonomous. They do not want to involve the police or other authorities, but settle disputes between the parents of the children (or even grown-ups) involved on the basis of the arbiter role of the lwan or other elders. An external but related mallumi is only contacted occasionally in such situations.

Fulbe women have a full right to Koranic education. According to Islam they have the right to inherit (mostly they add inherited cattle to their brothers’ herds) and they are not required to perform heavy agricultural tasks. In Kubadje the women are mainly engaged in household tasks such as cooking, washing and looking after the children. They do, however, cultivate small plots with groundnuts and some vegetables around the house — all for household consumption. Officially they are subordinate to their men, who decide about everything concerning the family. The women are not (or pretend not to be) involved in men’s problems such as the diminishing of pasture surface and possible decisions about leaving or engaging in conflicts. They do, of course, discuss those matters among themselves (and, I am sure, with their husbands in the privacy of their huts). When talking more confidentially with one of them as an interpreter, several women expressed their concern: “What is going to happen? We cannot move to another place with all these people. Where can we go to? Where can we build new houses?” They wanted the authorities (and me) to take measures to stop agriculturalists invading the area.

In short, the Fulbe of Kubadje do not have many other options than to herd their cattle and earn their living from cattle and milk. Although they want to be autonomous, they understand the importance of having ‘outer’ authorities on their side to secure their grazing area. Therefore, they try to persuade others to realise the necessity of a pasture reserve and to keep the cattle tracks open from this small reserve to the larger ones nearby.

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126 On one occasion someone lost a number of fingers and once someone was stabbed in the stomach and was rushed to Guil hospital. On both occasions a son of lwan Ngoura was involved.

129 The Fulbe word for a marabout, a Koran teacher.

128 Most of the time a Kapsiki interpreter was used in the Kubadje settlement, because none of the Fulbe there could speak French (see Chapter Methodology), but if a Fulbe visitor was able to translate, especially if the visitor was female, I took the opportunity to involve her in my work.
7.6.5 Discords and claims

The northern limit of the Kubadjé reserve is demarcated along the northernmost of the two east-west running rivers, just between the rest of Kila and Kubadjé. The border was defined in recent times\(^{15}\) when the sub-prefect and the lamido of Mogodé entered this southernmost region of their territory, together with the sub-department’s line officers of the forest department and of the agriculture department. They came to intervene in a quarrel between the Fulbe inhabitants and Kila inhabitants of the region. According to the story, the former village chief, Koye, had already stipulated the location of this boundary to his citizens, but he obviously needed some back-up from higher authorities. The district authorities not only defined the boundaries but also declared to their subjects that it was prohibited to cultivate in the reserve and that possible crop damage caused by cattle within the reserve area would not be eligible for reimbursement.

The northern boundary is still discussed over and over again. It seems as if it has to be redefined every couple of years and the sub-department and district authorities (sub-prefect, line-officers and lamido) have to intervene regularly. A couple of years ago, for example, Zra Pierre, the nearby neighbourhood chief on the western side, asked the district chief of Mogodé to come and shift this boundary into the reserve slightly more, so as to make it possible for the inhabitants of his neighbourhood, Djalingol, to use some of the fields that had, until then, been situated within the boundaries of the reserve. Indeed, nowadays, the western part of the northern boundary of the reserve follows the hilltop and not the river as used to be the case. As a result, the Kila farmers are allowed to cultivate in the ‘re-established’ fields there and, in the event of livestock-induced damage, can claim reimbursements from the animal’s owner.

The discord between the Fulbe of Kubadjé and the cultivators of Oudda over the southern border is more severe. As outlined in section 5, the Bana claim that this border has to be situated more to the north. The Fulbe refer with fervour to the official maps, because these are supposed to be in their favour. Formally, the southern border between Kubadjé and Oudda, which is therefore located between the two districts, is stretched along a line running over the top of the east-west mountain ridge just south of the Fulbe village quarter. This latter border is confirmed by the Kapsiki of Kila, especially by their village chief, Takva Koye, who claims to have been present when the borders were established in his youth. Although the metal border poles have gone, both the Kapsiki and the Fulbe say that the mountain tops themselves cannot be removed and are proof in themselves.

As explained above, the Fulbe say that the lamido of Mogodé is their ‘boss’. They pay taxes to him and turn to him in cases of internal conflict. The official boundary delineated by the (since removed) boundary marks shows that the territory belongs to the northern district. According to an official government report written by the ‘Chef de Poste Forestier et de Chasse de Mogodé’ (2000), it was Takva Koye, the village chief of Kila, who in response to a demand made in 1958 by Elhadji Ngoura and his fellow Fulbe for a permanent pasture zone, started to delineate such a zone together with the accompanying small tracks for animals. This

\(^{15}\) An exact year is not given, but it could be 1981 (when the case between the chief of Guili, Loumbi, and his counter-part of Mogodé, Hama Djouda, escalated and was put before the committee in Mokolo, that decided to deny access to all farmers), or it may have been later, when Elhadji Issa Tize had already taken over the chieftain in Mogodé (upon the death of Hama Djouda, 1984), and the authorities had to visit the area for a second time (Chef de Poste Forestier et de Chasse de Mogodé (2000: 9-10)).
suggests that the area indeed belonged to Kila and, therefore, the northern authorities. However, this report is written by a line officer of Mogodé with interests and loyalties on the northern side of the boundary. Moreover, it reflects a demand by Ngoura at the time that he was indeed already paying his taxes to Mogodé.

7.7 Violence: Box 4

The last box of the VoE diagram: Box 4. Violence (see Fig. 7.1), will only be reached when (one of) the parties choose(s) to use violent means. Otherwise the result will be the ‘non-box 4’ route.

7.7.1 The use of force

Contending: the use of threats

Contending means trying to get your own wishes implemented without any regard for the wishes and needs of others. As far as the Bana are concerned this means that they want to chase the Fulbe out of the Jiksa area, without being bothered by how these cattle keepers can earn their living or where they have to live. As far as the Fulbe are concerned contesting would mean that the Bana stop cultivating in the Kubadje zone and that they leave open corridors to, for example, the Modélé bush. In theory both can be reached by persuasion, threats or straightforward violence: beating or shooting the other into submission.

The route to violence starts with threats (see also chapter 5 and 6). Mostly the expression of threats in the Kubadje-Jiksa area is triggered by crop damage caused by cattle. The threats can be expressed by either the cattle owner or the cultivator or both. For example, a cultivator tries, using reasonable arguments, to get the cattle owner to acknowledge his fault and to pay back the crop losses. As a result, the Fulbe starts to threaten his adversary in the hope that he will leave. In other cases the cultivator starts to verbally abuse and threaten (with the same hope) the cattle owner who has not looked after his herd properly.

Just encounters between agriculturalists and cattle keepers in the Kubadje-Jiksa bush can trigger an exchange of verbal abuse, especially when young Fulbe are involved (the elder Fulbe keep quiet, or patiently try to explain their stance). Sometimes such verbal abuse does not go any further than ‘calling people names’, but mostly it is mingled with threats. If the Fulbe see a Bana busily clearing a new part of the bush in their area they will feel obliged to warn the cultivator that his actions are illegal and that they will call on the police to arrest him. The Bana then responds with even more menacing counter threats: “It is you who should not be here. You are living on our soil and we will chase you away. We are in the majority!”

Contending: the use of violence

Several times the threats turn into actions. A woman who had the nerve to follow the cattle tracks from her ruined field to the Fulbe settlement and complained to one of the young Fulbe men present, was touched on her lips by him with a stick with the accompanying text that she should be quiet, “otherwise…. The other party also put up a good show: some years ago the refusal to pay for cattle damage had annoyed the Bana terribly. At that time a group of them captured the Fulbe lavar Ngoura, took his clothes (and even his shoes) and, while setting him free, warned him to change his behaviour and leave the area otherwise something worse would happen to him or one of his subjects.
Full blown violence has not (yet) occurred. The Fulbe indeed realise that they are in a minority facing a large population from a whole village. Although some of the Kapsiki from Kila have expressed their willingness to help ‘their’ Fulbe, it takes too much time to reach Kubadjje should the Bana launch an attack. On top of that, most Kapsiki are not even aware of a Fulbe settlement in their neighbourhood and some who are aware live close by and would be very happy if these Fulbe were to leave. It would provide them with a larger field surface area. Nevertheless, there are Kapsiki who do talk about war when Bana aggression is mentioned: “If those Bana start attacking ‘our’ Fulbe, I will pick up my gun (or spear) and help the Fulbe”. A small band of young men (Fulbe and Kapsiki) has already devised strategies as to how to attack the Bana and make them stop their cultivation activities in Kubadjje.

Almost all Bana with fields in Jiksa, even those who do not use the fields themselves, have expressed their willingness to help fellow villagers should they be attacked by the Fulbe. They are resigned to living with that possibility. Women are given fields surrounded by others so as not to be the first attacked. Several men from Waza and Hlaka are on the alert for calls from cultivators in the north. Of those who do not have fields in the contested area, 15% have expressed their general loyalty in words or state that they are prepared to fight when necessary. Some of them are even involved in the drawing up of plans for a first attack. They are not (yet) organising their troops, but every time they come together (for example at the weekly market or underneath the village tree at the end of the day) they discuss possibilities and exchange the latest news about damage and threats from the other side.

In general, the State is perceived as an entity which is not involved very much, but which will be there to suppress violence should it erupt. Inhabitants of both Kubadjje and Oudda have respect for the police, but they express their doubts as to whether this police will reach the remote pasture reserve in time should fighting start. The lower level authorities are certainly involved. These lamibe seem to be the triggering factors in the conflict. Riding on the waves of the conflicting interests of their subjects, they try to make those subjects fight their own fight, instead of helping find a solution. Their traditional role was one of conflict mediation but now they seem only to incite their subjects to aggression.

In short, the Bana with Jiksa fields seem to embody enough reasons for people to fight for their rights. Their cost-benefit calculations may turn out to result in the use of violence. As far as the Fulbe are concerned the situation is more problematic, but they also have more at stake. The younger (and thus more numerous) ones may tend to choose violence as their only option.

7.7.2 Escapes: can violence be avoided?
There are two types of action that can lead to the avoidance of violence. The first involves one of both parties giving in. This may be the result of pressure from the other party or higher authorities or it may be due to the autonomous decision of one of the parties. The second is the finding of a solution that serves both parties.

Contending: the use of persuasion
Theoretically it is possible to call the use of threats a method of persuading an adversary. Because it is the most violent method of persuasion, it is described in a section above under the heading ‘use of force’. Here we are focusing on the non-violent way of persuasion, namely the use of arguments by which one of the parties puts pressure on the other party without
(we are still talking about contending) listening to counter arguments or trying to understand what needs and interests the other party has.

However, because the two groups involved here are not really on speaking terms, normal, friendly persuasion is out of the question. Even persuasion of higher authorities, to make sure those authorities back them in case of escalation of the conflict, is not one of the strategies used by either Bana or Fulbe. Both parties leave that part of the contest to their lamido because he is the strongest ally in that respect. He has access to other authorities and knows the routes. He also wants the area to be his. As explained the Kubadjé chief, Ngoura, does invest in linkage building with his lamido. However, at the same time, he does not seem to do his utmost to maintain a healthy relationship with this lamido. He does not collect the taxes on time, does not respond to all the summons for meetings and, according to a complaint by the lamido himself, does not react to the plans and demands of this lamido for more development efforts (such as in education and health issues).

Yielding

The story told so far in this chapter would suggest that withdrawal of one of the parties is a past stage when the position of rights claiming is reached. Both agriculturalists and cattle keepers firmly state that they want to stay and they have the right to stay. Nevertheless, these firm statements really mask other views. Some of the Bana women refuse to cultivate in the Jiksa region because “You cannot be there day and night, so you can’t protect your fields from crop damage. The cattle owners from the settlement there will never pay for any damage. Why should you waste your time and energy with the risk of achieving no yield at all?” They have cultivated in the contested area - or their husband or friends have done that - and they continue to claim that the Fulbe have settled on their land, but they do not see any possibilities to make this claim come true. They do not believe the authorities will help in this matter. Local authorities do not have enough power themselves (like the lamido of Guili) or they do not want to exercise their power out of fear, or because of corruption. Higher level authorities are just not interested. Everybody acknowledges that the prefect is indeed needed but he is far away.

On the other hand, some of the cattle owners also reflect on their chances to win their case. “Farmers just go on clearing the bush. Even if authorities state that reimbursement in the event of crop damage by our cattle is not going to be paid for, where can we herd our cattle when everything has been turned into fields?” They start considering a move, quietly looking for other places to live. “Perhaps, with some luck, we can find a new place, although there are nowhere such good pastures as here.”

This shows that, although “yielding” is often regarded as giving in to other parties’ wishes, it is of course also a strategy which focuses on one’s own interests. Taking account of reality, and therefore, of other parties’ wishes means the costs of imposing one’s own wishes may seem to become too high. A cost-benefit analysis results in giving in.

Problem solving

If the two parties were to find a way to divide the area between them, to make sure the cattle can be fed, the cultivators can produce and the Fulbe can live in their compounds, then the problem would be solved. Indeed, many Bana have proposed a solution. This extends the contested area as such, but not their own territory. “Why shouldn’t we rotate the pasture areas?”
they ask, “In the past this was common practice”\textsuperscript{12}. Because the fertility of the fields in the direct vicinity of the Oudda neighbourhoods has diminished, they are willing to delineate these as a cattle reserve, to be given in use to the cattle keepers. The fertility in Jiksa is so good that a rotation back to their former fields, now offered as pasture, is regarded as only being necessary in more than 25 years time. During the interim period, trees may grow substantially and the fodder production of the new pasture will increase tremendously.

The Fulbe are not totally against the plan but they hesitate because they do not trust the other party or the authorities. “If we give up an official pasture reserve”, they say, “How can we be certain about the new area. It should be made official as well.”

Another major objection to the rotation of pastures is the fact that the Fulbe would have to build new compounds every time. They have now invested in well-constructed houses and furniture. It would be a major effort to move these belongings. Moreover, building new huts takes time, effort and even money due to a lack of expertise.

The biggest hurdle to get over is the disagreement between the lamibe in the two districts. Each of them is sticking to his idea about the border and, more precisely, the lamido of Mogodé would never accept the loss of part of his territory without higher level interference (and perhaps even not then either). For the moment no State organisation (for example MIDIMA) or NGO has taken on the task of settling disputes between the two parties as a cautious start on the way to reaching a consensus or compromise.

Even the presence of “our own Fulbe” in Oudda\textsuperscript{13} is not (yet) used in a kind of mediator role to bring the Bana cultivators and the Fulbe of Kubadje together. They can feel (and have experienced) the problems of the cattle keepers, they have the same culture but, at the same time, they feel like inhabitants of Oudda and are loyal to their fellow villagers more than to the Kila inhabitants.\textsuperscript{14}

The position of the border between Kila and Oudda is taken up as an issue by the inhabitants of Oudda themselves. However, they did not discuss it with the Fulbe that live in the area. They only overruled opinions of the Kila-Kapsiki and imposed their vision of the past, after which they decided that, from now on, they would not let anybody stop them from using ‘their’ land. If higher authorities accept this border shift, this ‘matter-of-fact’ approach may serve as the starting point for mutual problem solving.

\textsuperscript{12} The older men, and especially some of the representatives of the \textit{lavan} of Oudda I (the conglomerate of the Oudda-quarters at the Guiki side of the bend in the road), refer to this custom.

\textsuperscript{13} Many Bana refer to the Fulbe who live in the Oudda neighbourhood Guiki as “ours”, in contrast with the Fulbe of Kubadje, who have chosen (as the Bana say) to be “theirs”, that is “from Kila”.

\textsuperscript{14} At the end of 2002 the area of the pasture reserve Boubakary Nene was officially extended by the State (MIDIMA), because the Kubadje area, that they wanted to delineate officially in their quest of more forest-pasture areas in the Mandara Mountains, aroused excessively complicated controversies. Agriculturalists who own fields which were originally around the Boubakary Nene reserve but are now within the boundaries, are angry. They not only express their wrath to the authorities, but also accuse their “own” Fulbe. Relationships between the two groups within Oudda have deteriorated because of the MIDIMA action.