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Gender and Embodied Mobility: Learning in Tarsaw, Northern Ghana

Rachel Maria Flanary

1 1 JAN 2005

Thesis submitted for the
Degree of *Doctor of Philosophy*

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ABSTRACT

In many rural areas of Africa, people rely on intermediate means of transport (IMTs) or walking and head-loading to transport themselves and their produce, due to the limited availability of motorised forms of transport. IMTs have been increasingly seen as a way of improving rural accessibility, mobility and subsequently food security (Doran, 1990, 1996; Riverson and Carapetis, 1991; Starkey, 2000, 2001) and a counter to earlier transport projects that overwhelmingly focused on infrastructure. Donors have invested significantly in IMT promotion since this time. There is particular interest in promoting IMT use among women because of their disproportionately heavy transport burden, low income and often restricted access to motorised transport (Bryceson and Howe, 1993). However, despite this recent interest, the uptake, success and overall sustainability of IMT schemes have been, on the whole, disappointing (Starkey, 2000). IMT projects have generally failed to take account of the gendered nature of transport tasks, or the underlying power relations that constrain or assist mobility and access to transport in different cultural and socio-economic situations.

The performance of transport tasks is embedded in a wider social and cultural situation in which individual's carry out particular roles and responsibilities. This thesis seeks to explore the complexity of women's travel and mobility, within the context of Tarsaw in Upper West, Ghana. In Tarsaw, rural mobility has been revolutionised by the bicycle and through the gradual introduction of animal traction and bullock-drawn carts over the last thirty to forty years. Despite these changes, there are clearly quite serious inequalities between men and women in accessing places and resources, since women have little or no access to motorised or intermediate forms of transport and continue to carry their supplies on their heads. In Tarsaw, as in much of rural Ghana, women do not own any means of transport apart from their feet, and have very little money with which to pay for the use of public transport. Furthermore, there are limited opportunities for women to borrow IMTs, or other means of transport, from their husbands, brothers, or other family member. This thesis seeks to understand why women suffer in this way, despite women's greater burden of transport. This thesis focuses on the gendered and embodied nature of mobility (embedded within everyday life), rather than the actual mechanics of getting from A to B. The thesis provides an ethnography of life in a rural area of Ghana, giving substance to the lived and embodied experience of mobility for men and women and setting this within a broader framework of gender roles and relations. This thesis seeks to discuss particular issues at the intersection of gender, embodiment and mobility, bringing in various aspects of social theory and feminist thought.

DEDICATION

For Melanie

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAG	Association of American Geographers
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
CPP	Convention Peoples' Party
DA	District Assemblies
DFID	Department for International Development
DFR	Department of Feeder Roads
ERP	Economic Recovery Programme
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
GAD	Gender and Development
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GLSS	Ghana Living Standards Survey
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFI	International Financial Institution
IGA	Income Generating Activity
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IMT	Intermediate Means of Transport
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IPRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme
MOFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
MTADP	Medium-Term Development Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRIL	Natural Resources International Ltd.
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PAMSCAD	Programme of Actions to Mitigate the Social Costs of Adjustment
PARDIC	Public Administration and Decentralisation Implementation Committee
PNDC	Peoples' National Defence Council
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
RTTP	Rural Travel and Transport Programme
SHF	Self-Help Foundation
SLA	Sustainable Livelihoods Approach
SSATP	Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme
TBA	Traditional Birth Attendant
UGCC	United Gold Coast Convention
UWR	Upper West Region
VIP	Village Infrastructure Project
WAD	Women and Development
WID	Women in Development

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

> 'The extent to which the transport burden on women can be ameliorated will depend on the policies affecting rural development and the role of women in the planning of transport and social services. It will also depend on the *willingness* of men and women to learn new skills such as bicycle riding for the *performance* of their duties'
>
> *(Riverson and Carapetis, 1991: 12, emphasis added)*

1.1 Background

This thesis is the outcome of an ESRC collaborative (CASE) research project, which is partly funded by Natural Resources International Ltd[1] and linked to an action research project in southern Ghana (R7575- funded by DFID, see Porter 2003a for a review). The initial aim of this research was to assess the potential of intermediate means of transport (IMTs) for improving access to markets in Ghana, with a particular focus on rural women. IMTs are considered to be those forms of transport that fill the gap between walking and load-carrying, and large-scale motorised forms of transport. This would include bicycles, wheelbarrows, hand-carts, trolleys, animal-powered transport, motorcycles and power tillers (Starkey, 2000). This research was to link into the DFID project in the south of Ghana (Central Region) by providing detailed comparative information on, and understanding of, women's mobility patterns and access to transport (and particularly IMT). The rationale for this focus was that, despite the important role women play as transporters and traders across much of Africa, and their limited access to motorised transport, there has been very little research on the actual and potential impact of low-cost transport on women (notable exceptions include Buabeng et al. 1995, Doran, 1996. Porter, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, Starkey, 2000). Throughout the 1960s and 70s, emphasis was placed on expanding road networks and improving transport infrastructure in order to link communities and therefore improve accessibility. This was regarded as a strategic instrument to 'catalyse' economic development through its so-called market-widening effect (Howe, 1997). According to this approach, economic activity depends to some considerable extent on the provision

[1] NRIL is a limited company that specialises in the preparation, management and delivery of research, consultancy and training projects in the natural resources sector for international development. It manages five programmes for the UK Department for International Development (DFID), including Crop Post-Harvest (of which rural transport is a significant part), and manages consultancy projects funded by bilateral and multilateral donors.

of transport and communication infrastructure, and without adequate transport facilities, 'activities such as the growing of cash crops, the intensification of land use, or any other form of agricultural progress' would be impossible (White, 1962: 173). By the 1980s and 90s it became increasingly clear that investment in roads and transport infrastructure was insufficient, since people continued to move themselves and their goods by walking and head-loading. IMTs have been increasingly seen as a way of improving rural accessibility, mobility and consequently food security (Doran, 1990, 1996; Riverson and Carapetis, 1991; Starkey, 2000). The World Bank and other donors have invested heavily in IMT promotion since this time. However, despite recent interest, the uptake, success and overall sustainability of IMT schemes have been, on the whole, disappointing (Starkey, 2000).

Despite important changes in development policy and the conceptualisation of women therein over the last two decades, transport policy and practice has generally failed to incorporate or even acknowledge the gendered nature of transport tasks or the possible implications of their interventions (Flanary, 2001). The majority of transport interventions tend to have a very static view of 'household' and 'community' and assume that resources are pooled and benefits 'trickle down'. Projects have generally failed to take account of the gendered nature of transport tasks, or the underlying power relations that constrain or assist mobility and access to transport in different cultural and socio-economic situations. As Bryceson and Howe (1993) note, in the context of Africa, 'women's mobility is disadvantaged relative to men's with respect to: 1) access to mobility aids, 2) spatial and temporal impediments to mobility, and 3) the social attitudes of the community (pp 23-4). These are important points to address 'before any programme for IMT dissemination is initiated' (ibid. p. 24). Without this background research, which should be carried out in a careful and genuinely participatory manner, 'technological solutions imposed by outsiders are very likely to fail' (Porter, 2003: 83).

The research has evolved and changed somewhat since the original proposal was written, through my interaction with supervisors and colleagues, through the course of my fieldwork, through attendance at conferences and seminars and through the exchange of ideas with numerous other individuals. Women and gender relations are still very central to the focus of this research, and much of what is written stems from a desire to understand exactly *why* women overwhelmingly inhabit a 'walking world' (Porter, 2002) despite the existence of IMTs and other forms of transport. Little attention has been paid to the actual mechanics of moving goods and people or to

assessing the 'potential' for women's increased use of IMTs, although consideration is given to the latter point in the conclusion to this thesis. Methodological and logistical problems through the course of the fieldwork forced me to reassess my initial focus. It was problematical for me to carry out the intended fieldwork in a range of different rural settings and I instead decided to adopt the case study approach in only one village (these issues are discussed in more detail in chapter four).

A major turning point in the focus of my research followed my decision to participate in a session on *'The Mobile Body'* at the 2003 meeting of the Association of American Geographers. I initially submitted an abstract because I felt I could contribute to a discussion of mobility and gender issues. Through spending an extended period in one area of Ghana with frequent periods of frustrated inactivity, I had been able to observe more closely how bodies conveyed and performed gender: through interaction between men and women, through use of space and time, through the different activities that each undertook and through their mobility. After engaging with the literature on embodiment and 'the body', I was compelled to reflect on how my research in Ghana fitted into theories of the body, or rather, how theories of the body fitted into my research, and steered me towards the course my research subsequently took.

Because of these changes, this thesis focuses much more closely on the *gendered and embodied* nature of mobility (embedded within everyday life), rather than the actual mechanics of getting from A to B. The thesis provides an ethnography of life in a rural area of Ghana, giving substance to the lived and embodied experience of mobility for men and women and setting this within a broader framework of gender roles and relations. This introductory chapter will provide a brief discussion of some of the main theoretical discussions before concentrating on the local complexities of embodiment in Tarsaw.

1.2 The Case-Study Approach

A case study approach was adopted in this research in order to tackle the complexity of the issues central to this thesis. This approach was employed in order to embed gender and mobility issues within the specific social and cultural context. By doing this, the particularities of the subject can be set within a broader framework and thereby shed light on the wider applicability (Sayer, 1992). In any research, there is generally a 'trade-off between geographical coverage and depth' (Harriss, 1992: 140). Within this piece of research, it was felt that a case study approach would allow me to look at the

issues in more depth through 'interaction, observation, participation in activities and informal interviewing', or in other words, to obtain 'insider knowledge' (Eyles and Smith, 1988: 2).

1.2.1 Choosing the Case

The choice of case study depended on a number of elements. There has been substantial interest in the potential of IMTs in the country, indicated by the Government of Ghana's Village Infrastructure Project (funded by the World Bank) within the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and other initiatives within the Department of Feeder Roads. The promotion of IMTs is an increasingly important element within both government and NGO projects. Furthermore, Gina Porter, who put together the original proposal for this CASE award (in collaboration with NRIL), has considerable experience in West Africa, and more recently, Ghana. The focus on the north of Ghana was to provide a contrast to the work that was already underway in the south of Ghana. The choice of Tarsaw in Sissala District, Upper West Region as the case study village, came about more by accident than through a strict sampling strategy (discussed in more detail in chapter four). When choosing a case study area, I had to consider not only the presence of IMTs, but also my own access to safe drinking water and the availability of English speakers with suitable credentials. I learned of Tarsaw through a former Peace Corps worker who had lived and worked there some years before. Based on this information (and assurances that the village would be happy to receive me), I decided that Tarsaw would be a suitable place to base my research.

1.2.2 The Village

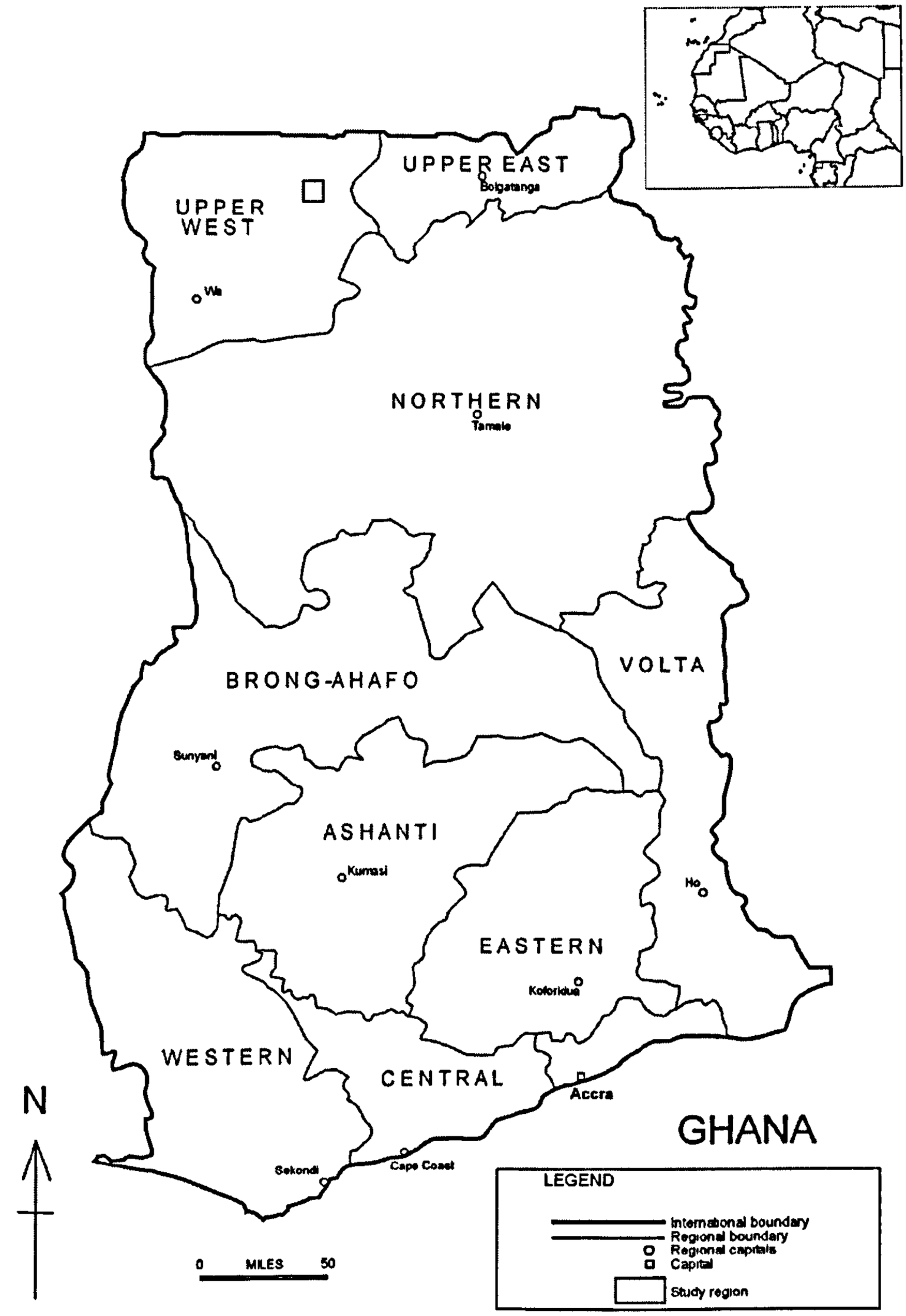


Figure 1.1: Ghana and study area (for detailed map of study region see figure 3.2- chapter 3).

Tarsaw is a small rural village in the Sissala District of Upper West Region, Ghana, near the border with Burkina Faso. This region is the poorest of all Ghana's regions in part due to its lack of adequate access and infrastructure (Sissala District Council, 2000). The village has a total population of just over 800 people and the local economy is almost wholly based on subsistence agriculture (with some of the more prosperous farmers selling their surplus of maize and groundnuts). The main forms of transport that are owned or used in Tarsaw are bicycles, bullock-carts, motorbikes and the occasional car or market truck. Rural mobility has been revolutionised with the

introduction of the bicycle (the first arriving about 40-50 years ago). Every compound has at least one bicycle, with the more wealthy compounds having more than one. Motorbikes are also becoming increasingly common, although there is a distinct seasonal pattern to their usage due to lack of money for petrol in the late dry season. These tend to be owned by the wealthier men of the village, who use motorbikes for prompt access to markets, visits to the clinic and travelling to see family members. The quality of the roads has improved over recent years, and although the vast majority are dirt roads, they are graded fairly regularly and culverts reduce the damage by rivers and streams. This has allowed a certain amount of access for small vans and larger trucks, used to transport people to and from the market on the local market day, which is every six days. Bullock-carts have been steadily increasing in number since the mid-1960s. These have perhaps had the most profound impact on both farming and the movement of crops and people. They have also helped to reduce women's burden of head-loading, since much of the farm produce and building materials once carried by women are now transported using the bullock-cart.

Despite these changes, there are clearly quite serious inequalities between men and women in accessing places and resources since women have little or no access to motorised or intermediate forms of transport. In Tarsaw, as in much of rural Ghana, women do not own any means of transport apart from their feet, and have very little money with which to pay for the use of public transport. Furthermore, there are limited opportunities for women to borrow a bicycle, or other means of transport, from their husbands, brothers, or other family member. Despite the arrival of bullock-carts and other forms of transport, women in Tarsaw still have to endure a very arduous life, characterised by hard physical labour and a heavy burden of childbirth and childcare duties. Despite the growing numbers of IMTs available in the area, and therefore relatively good material conditions for women to ease their transport burden, this has not yet happened to any great degree. Tarsaw is endowed with draft animals that could, theoretically, be harnessed for the transport of domestic goods such as firewood and water. What is stopping women from benefiting from transport in this manner? This answer partly lies in the fact that, the gender division of labour and women's access to various forms of transport are heavily influenced by attitudes of male domination and control of female labour. These attitudes are couched in arguments about female physical incapability and lack of strength.

Within Tarsaw, physical strength and the ability to endure bodily punishment is extremely important to a woman's survival since it can have major consequences for

her marriageability, livelihood and general welfare. Both men and women rely heavily on their bodies for survival, as is generally the case in agricultural societies that are dependent on human labour. Although women earn very little income from their own labour, since they generally work for their husbands, their ability to work hard for their husband and on their own income generating activities relies on good physical health. As a consequence, if a woman were to injure herself or fall sick, there could be very serious repercussions for the family's welfare and prosperity. Jackson and Palmer-Jones (1998) discuss the idea that individuals carry out 'body projects' where women (and men) may implicitly strategise and bargain in order to build up, maintain and carefully expend 'body capital' in order to achieve social and personal goals (p.21). By body capital, they are referring to an individual's 'physical endowments, their labour entitlements, their extended entitlements to the labour of others (or their products), their capabilities and functionings, and their achievement of well-being' (1998: 23). This illustrates how the body can be strategically used to improve the livelihood of an individual.

Both men and women have clear ideas about what they could and should be doing. The majority of tasks are delimited by age and gender and people generally have a clear idea of women and men's capabilities. In terms of mobility and the use of certain forms of transport, there are socially accepted norms that prohibit the use of certain forms of transport generally or at particular times in a woman's life cycle (pregnancy, old age). Men and women are socialised into believing that there are men's tasks and women's tasks, and this quite often brings in ideas about bodily strength and physical ability. This is also rooted in the need to be *seen* to be performing certain tasks. Within Tarsaw, a premium is placed on physical strength since it is important to successful farming and therefore survival. Men are able to profit from their physical labour, whereas there is little opportunity for women to do the same because they are required to carry out their domestic (reproductive) tasks, which generally do not provide income.

1.3 Gender and Embodied Mobility

In relation to human societies in general, there are a number of clear interconnections between embodiment, gender and mobility, which can be highlighted through a discussion of the gendered use of transport technologies in relation to social theory of the body and feminist thought. In all social settings, behaviour is subject to certain rules or norms of what is considered to be appropriate and permissible. This is most strikingly apparent in relations between the sexes (although not to the exclusion of

other social relations). As Goffman asserts, 'sex is the base of a fundamental code in accordance with which social interactions are built up, a code which also establishes the conceptions individuals have concerning their fundamental human nature' (Lemert and Branaman, 1997: 201). These codes often contain implicit assumptions about physical capability (and therefore body/biology) although I would argue that such assumptions are social and rather stem from relations of power and authority. Power acts directly on the body's movement, actions and use of space. This issue of power needs to be acknowledged as central to any attempt to discuss mobility or gender in any meaningful sense. This element of bodily mobility is largely overlooked in conventional transport literature. However, the issue of power and authority is central to facilitating or inhibiting movement, particularly for women.

Power should be regarded as part and parcel of the micro-practices of everyday life. As Grosz asserts, 'power actively marks or brands bodies as social, inscribing them with attributes of subjectivity' (1997: 237). These inscriptions produce the body as sexually determined and coded and transform the physical structure of the body 'as socially located *morphology*' (Grosz, 1997: 245). The body, therefore, becomes the bearer of signs and cultural meanings that go beyond pure physiology. Gendered bodies *perform* these cultural meanings through everyday practice (praxis), through use of space and resources, through interaction with others and through language. Embodiment refers to the production of social and cultural relations through and by the body at the same time as the body is being 'made up' by external forces (Grosz, 1994, McDowell, 1996). Bodies are used to act out roles in various settings, which confirm and at times resist wider sets of expectations. Unequal power relations, which underlie these norms of social behaviour, particularly gendered behaviour, are perhaps most noticeably observed through mobility and travel patterns. Women's use of transport technologies are intrinsically gendered and embodied; subject to a range of limitations and constraints that derive largely from their sex.

Cultural expectations and societal structure shapes the activities of individuals through the social norms and assumptions about the different activities that should *'naturally'* be *performed* by men and women. Expectations of what a woman or man should do or be, are bound up in complex ways with changing notions of responsibility and agency. These expectations are socialised within the larger society and also internalised by individuals, often reinforcing male control over women's bodies and behaviour. In many cases there is a strong social incentive for men and women to be seen to be fulfilling their expected roles and responsibilities. The outward expression of these underlying

social and cultural constraints is evident in the gendered body's use of time and space. Women who are particularly mobile or behave contrary to expected norms have sometimes faced ignominy and disgrace; being labelled prostitutes, wayward women (Cornwall, 2001, Hodgson and McCurdy, 2001), dishonest or disobedient and been blamed for the spread of disease (Ankomah, 1999: 291).

Implicit in much theoretical discussion on the body is the idea that gender (along with age, class and race) is a performative act. This is discussed by Judith Butler, who argues against the notion that femininity and masculinity are the cultural expressions of a material fact but, instead, are acted out through everyday practice (1990: 279). 'Sex', in other words, is not a static or unchanging fact, but materialises through a reiteration of norms and expectations (Butler, 1993: 1-2). Goffman (1977) brings in ideas of performativity when he talks about the 'performance of genderisms', which, for him, stem from deep-seated institutional practices (this is discussed in more detail in chapter two). To illustrate this point, it is a common daily practice for women in many parts of rural Ghana and indeed other parts of Africa to carry their water on their heads. This simple act makes a strong statement about gender and what it means to be a woman. It is a performance that many women feel is almost part of their identity and without doing this daily act, they would somehow feel that they were defaulting on their duties as women. It is therefore not only deeply institutionalised but also internalised so that to see a woman carrying her water by any other means would be regarded as out of place since it falls out of sync with expected behaviour. Daily actions and activities speak volumes about gender and are bound up with ideas on what a man and woman should be *seen* to be doing. These embodied actions are bound up with complex notions of power and authority.

1.3.1 Learning in Tarsaw

In Tarsaw, many of the activities that men and women undertake on a daily basis automatically necessitate a separation in the use of space. Although there are places where men and women interact and work together (for example, the farm), there are also many places, which, along with their associated activities, are predominantly male or female (see Robson, 2000, for a review of this issue in northern Nigeria). By undertaking the activities associated with a particular 'place', both men and women are performing gender in a very overt manner. This gender performance is embodied in every individual. Men and women subsequently develop the associated skills and strength by repetitively carrying out these activities. A man's ability to build yam mounds or mix cement becomes an embodied capability through years of hard physical

work. Likewise, the ability to carry heavy loads on the head or make the evening meal so efficiently is embodied in every woman through years of training.

The embodiment of gender relations is evident in the most mundane daily actions. The daily journey to farm can be illustrative of this point. Photograph 1.1 tells a story in this respect. This was taken as a family walked back to the village after a day working in the fields. Three women walk with heavily leaden basins on their heads, picking their way across the dirt road with only worn sandals protecting them from the uneven surface. They are carrying maize cobs from the farm as well as firewood and the pots that had contained their food for the day. At times they may rearrange the basin to make it more comfortable or balance it more evenly. This picture would often be completed with the addition of a number of children following closely behind, or with babies securely tied to their backs. In this picture, a man, presumably the husband walks a few paces behind them, encumbered only with a hoe, which is slung casually over his shoulder. The fact that he is walking at all probably indicates that he is a relatively poor man, since he is not riding a bicycle.

Photograph 1.2 also tells a story. This picture was taken at the Tarsaw chief's 'enskinment'[2] ceremony. The man sitting with the umbrella held above him is the paramount chief from the neighbouring village, Walembelle. The other men beside him are his 'elders'. The men who are standing are from the same village, but of lower social status to the chief and elders. The woman crouched at the chief's feet is serving water to all the men (although custom dictates that the senior man is served first). She is crouched in deference to the males present and has covered her face with a shawl and has her eyes averted as a way of showing respect for those present. This is the way women would usually have to serve men, particularly those of high status. Even when a woman has to serve her husband with food or water, she will have to crouch in this manner. During the customary daily practice of greeting household members and elders, there is a clear social hierarchy, which is evident in the manner in which they address each other. Those of lower status would be expected to demonstrate their deference to the other. Depending of the size of the gap in status, the person of lower status will either crouch fully or simply bow their head and avert their eyes. This is not necessarily based purely on a division between men and women, since young men of lower status would crouch or bow to men *and* women of higher status. Status is

[2] The enskinment marks the official recognition of the new chief. It is a highly symbolic event that signifies the initiation of a new leader.

generally dependent on age, marital status, social status and wealth, as well as gender[3].

Photograph 1.1: The journey back from farm



Photograph 1.2: Woman serving the men drinking water during a ceremonial gathering



Such expressions of deference are therefore not just symbolic, but indicative of broader social inequities. As Williams and Bendelow (1998) point out, 'even simple expressions

[3] It is interesting to point out here that, whilst I would observe local custom and crouch in front of senior men and women, in some cases this was not expected of me because of my whiteness and perceived status. Senior women seemed particularly uncomfortable with my display of deference, although this was not true in all cases.

of bodily deference...can be seen not merely as symbolic, but as constitutive of gender inequalities' (p.61). However, in Tarsaw (as in many places), it is not only constitutive of gender inequalities, but all manner of social disparities[4]. Men and women from poorer households can be united in their disparity with wealthier and higher status people: both dressed in their shabby clothes, both begging for help from others, both forced to walk to farm and both dwelling in their ramshackle compound.

However, it is not always easy to interpret bodily actions and there is a danger that, as an outsider, one could misconstrue them. Some forms of expected behaviour can be appropriated or transformed in ways that could be imperceptible to the outsider, inexperienced in the nuances of the particular cultural and social context. Some forms of resistance could also be unnoticeable to 'insiders' that are outside of that particular relationship. For example, a woman could have private ways of subverting expectations, ways of showing her displeasure towards her husband whilst physically performing the customary action. Some women might use the very act of obeisance as a form of resistance, perhaps by overacting the part in an almost mocking manner. As Townsend et al. (1999) point out, 'oppressed people have their own powers of resistance' such as 'acting stupid, acting ignorant, conniving, colluding, doing bad work deliberately' (p.34). These are all powers exercised by the seemingly 'powerless'. To 'outsiders', many of these forms of power and resistance may be invisible and perhaps even unfathomable. Women are outwardly behaving in a manner expected of them, yet manipulating the situation to serve their best interests. Their body is performing or acting out expected behaviour, but this is more a 'display' of gender, which does not necessarily reflect the reality. Chapter 7 discusses at length the powerful gender discourse around women's mobility and physical capability, which inhibits their mobility. This is nuanced, where possible, with an acknowledgement of individual contestation and resistance. However, there are many instances of resistance which are concealed from view and rarely discussed openly. This should be taken into consideration when reading this thesis.

1.4 Research Objectives

This thesis addresses the following themes and objectives:

[4] Busby (2000) vividly describes how the body expresses social divisions in Marianad, Kerala. Here the division of caste separates people much more obviously than gender. She cites a passage, which narrates the encounter between an Untouchable couple and a group from the higher castes: 'Potiyama's body and its posture...seemed to express and confirm that she was an Untouchable and a bystander' (Uchiyamada, 1995, quoted in Busby, 2000: 9).

- To assess the relative utility of certain conceptualisations of mobility and clarify what the concept of mobility actually means.
- To provide a contribution to current understandings of 'mobility' through the use of a case study approach. This account is original in that it combines temporal and spatial understandings of mobility within a broadly corporeal framework.
- To understand why women in Tarsaw are overwhelmingly responsible for head-loading domestic and agricultural goods, whilst benefiting the least from locally available forms of transport. This requires a detailed understanding of the cultural and social context within which daily mobility is set, in order to identify the constraints and impediments that women face in accessing motorised and non-motorised transport.
- Daily activities and the gender division of labour play an important role in the performance of gender. Mobility and use of space are integral to this performance. This thesis aims to illustrate the ways in which men and women in Tarsaw demonstrate their gender through work and daily practices.
- To assess the implications of these understandings of mobility and the gendered body for transport policy and academic discourse.

1.5 Thesis Structure

There are generally many aspects involved in the consideration of any research question, including theoretical and methodological concerns. These aspects have been organised into the subsequent chapters. This thesis seeks to discuss particular issues at the intersection of gender, embodiment and mobility, bringing in various aspects of social theory and feminist thought. As illustrated by this introductory chapter, I want to do this, not in an abstract (or disembodied) way, which seems to be the tendency of much social thought about the body, but to talk directly from the lived experiences of those who were interviewed through the course of my fieldwork. As Williams and Bendelow (1998) claim, this is the only way of 'putting minds back into bodies, bodies back into society and society back into the body' (p. 3)[5]. Bodies are not just abstractions, but are embedded in the immediacies of everyday, lived experience. Chapter two discusses these theoretical concepts in more detail, in order to shed light on the empirical findings discussed in later chapters. The chapter will also question the belief that mobility is necessarily and intrinsically advantageous. Even within the 'hypermobile' West, can we really say that increased mobility is wholly beneficial and

[5] This work is 'global' and does not relate to any particular geographical area. It investigates the 'lived body' through a theoretical discussion of issues such as pain and emotion.

positive? These are important questions, both for policy and academic discourse, and will be addressed within this thesis from a new and different perspective.

Chapter three then gives a more detailed background to Ghana generally, and Tarsaw in particular, highlighting the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the village to provide a base upon which to build the empirical discussion. Chapter four sets out the methodology that underpins this research, including the practical and personal problems that have helped to shape the course of the fieldwork. Chapters five, six and seven relate the empirical findings and theoretical development within three broad themes- work, time and mobility- although all are linked to the main themes of gender, mobility and embodiment discussed in chapter two. The daily activities and responsibilities of men and women at various stages in the life course play an important role in the performance of gender. By undertaking these expected tasks, individuals are affirming (and perhaps at times resisting) the differences between men and women in a very visible manner. Chapter five details the gender division of labour in Tarsaw, illustrating how gender difference becomes reinforced and inscribed through work and daily practices. Chapter six structures the issue of gender and daily practice from a more temporal perspective. Temporality here is taken to be an intrinsically embodied experience, where time is *felt* as well as measured. This perspective allows us to look at gender and mobility issues from a different angle, forcing us to question whether the current methods of valuing and quantifying time, particularly in terms of travel time, have utility in this cultural context. Chapter seven places the issue of gender and mobility within the particular social and cultural context, illustrating how the differences between men and women are understood in Tarsaw and how this is concretised in the gendered body. It therefore highlights the cultural nuances and intricacies, which provide constraints or opportunities for mobility at different stages in men and women's lives. The thesis concludes by summarising the main points and discussing the theoretical and policy-related implications, before highlighting possible avenues of further research.

CHAPTER TWO

Gender, Mobility and the Body

> 'Changes in the *mobility* balance of power can disrupt communities and liberate women almost as quickly as any other social transformation. The patriarchal grip slips when women get cars of their own, or bicycles, or wings- which is why those advances are often fiercely resisted'
>
> *(Domosh and Seager, 2001: 121 emphasis in original)*

2.1 Introduction: Gender and Transport

This chapter aims to draw together and critique some of the many and varied debates concerning gender, mobility and the body. Much of this literature has been written from a Western standpoint since the majority of these debates, from transport geography to social theory, particularly concerning the body and mobility, originate in the global North. There has been, to date, relatively limited discussion of such issues from scholars from the global South, where culture, technology, thought and practice may be very different[1]. This chapter draws together the various strands of inquiry, bringing in voices from both the North and South[2].

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[1] This is not a straightforward issue, since it is not always possible to establish the 'positionality' and perspective of individual scholars. Most people have multiple identities, which transform over time through constant interplay and contestation. Some scholars are quite clearly from the global North (generally speaking North American, Australasian and European, which is reflected in their writing (Butler, Goffman, Grosz, Law etc.). Others originate from the North, but spend or have spent considerable time working and/or living in the South (for example Bryceson, Porter Rowlands and Townsend). There are also those who grew up in the South, but have lived in the North for a period of time (for example, Buvinic, Kabeer and Sen). However, as Raju (2002) asks, 'Who should/would speak for whom? Even if there were two researchers with identical lived-in experiences/positionalities...would their representations necessarily be the same?' (p.174). Spivak provides some useful insights in this respect, writing from the perspective of a non-resident Indian. She argues that: 'the space I occupy might be explained by my history. It is a position into which I have been written. I am not privileging it, but I do want to use it. I can't fully construct a position that is different from the one I am in...The idea of neutral dialogue is an idea which denies history, denies structure, denies the positioning of subjects' (Bhatnagar, Chaterjee and Sunder Rajan, 1990: p68 & 72).

[2] In this thesis, the North refers to countries that 'give' overseas development assistance, or aid, the South to those that receive it (Townsend, Porter and Mawdsley, forthcoming).This distinction is obviously a crude one and I am aware that the reality is much more complicated than this. This chapter will, however, attempt to differentiate between the various authors' positions, since it has a significant bearing on how theory is produced and represented. Most of the gender and transport geography literature has related to the global North, which will therefore be considered first.

This chapter is organised around the broad concept of embodied mobility. The various theoretical debates around gender difference and the body are central to this discussion. How the gendered body is conceptualised and inscribed with social meaning is important, particularly since localised discourses of the gendered body may have profound implications for bodily mobility. However, from the outset, we need to be clear about what is understood by the term 'mobility'. Within the various strands of literature (transport, gender and embodiment/social theory) the term 'mobility' is used to describe very different processes. These can be divided into three main categories. Firstly, the term 'mobility' can be used to describe the process of getting from one point to another, in a very mechanistic way. This is generally the way mobility is viewed within conventional transport literature. Secondly, the term 'mobility' is used to describe the movement of the body, not necessarily implying physical distance and movement beyond a fixed point, but movement in a distinctly embodied and physical way. For example, how the body moves, and what affects bodily capability (such as child-bearing and carrying). This use of the term has been utilized by both the gender and body/embodiment literatures. Finally, mobility can be viewed as a reflection of bodily *autonomy*. Mobility, within this use of the term, is more a reflection of the way the body is controlled and constrained by power relations, which is a predominant discourse in much of the gender literature.

The latter interpretations of the term mobility, however, are interrelated, primarily because power and authority affect the body's mobility and its capability for physical access. One theme within the literature, which clearly crosscuts in this respect, is the alleged dichotomous relationship between mobility/immobility and freedom/confinement. Here, immobility is considered to be the outcome of powerlessness and/or oppression, which is directly manifested in the body's capability for physical access and movement over space. The relationship between mobility and power is complex and multifaceted, as some (primarily Western) commentators have acknowledged (Domosh and Seager, 2001). Indeed, some of the writing on women in Islam (Callaway, 1984; Robson, 2000; 2002) highlights this complexity by pointing out women in some contexts gain social stature from their situation of seclusion. These issues will be discussed in the latter part of this chapter.

This chapter aims to bring together the various strands of literature, within a broader discussion of gender relations and gender difference, to provide a theoretical framework from which to analyse the empirical data. By bringing together the literatures on gender, mobility and the body, this thesis provides a fresh approach to our

understanding of mobility, which has so far been overlooked in much of the transport literature. The chapter will begin with a discussion of how gender, and more specifically women's use of space, has been treated within both the gender and transport literatures.

2.2 Gender, Transport and Space

According to Robin Law[3] (2002), 'the field of transport geography is one of the branches of human geography most deeply imbued by positivist approaches and probably among the least influenced by the cultural turn' (p.427). The main criticism Law has of transport geography is that it neglects the symbolic and subjective aspects of gender. She argues that the sub-discipline would gain a great deal from an engagement with contemporary social theory and feminist scholarship. The predominantly male and ethnocentric environment of transport planners and engineers traditionally focused on meeting goals relating to the operational efficiency of the transport system rather than development (Levy, 1992: 94). They have tended to ignore the everyday activities of women and therefore marginalise them from the discipline. Both transport policy and research were (and arguably still are, for the most part) not only gender-blind, but palpably masculine in their approach. This can also be said for much of the early literature on travel and mobility (with roots in the geography of exploration), which tended to focus on the experiences of Western men (Rojek and Urry, 1997: 16, writing from a Western perspective). Within this body of literature, women were relegated to the spatial confines of the home whilst men were the explorers and adventurers who inhabited the domain of limitless external space. Here, mobility is clearly associated with masculinity, whereas the immobile and bounded environment of domesticity is seen as the preserve of women. This is one of the central tenets of the dichotomy of public/private, which has been most evident in debates surrounding urban land use, particularly in a Western context, and has been heavily debated within Western feminist thought (Bondi, 1998; Bondi and Domosh, 1998; Rose, 1993; amongst others). Bondi and Domosh (1998) point out that the distinction between public and private spheres is not fixed and unchanging. In New York City, mass industrialisation 'reshaped the separation of the public from the private so that the value systems did not correspond directly to the distinction between public and private' (p.284).

[3] Robin Law is a geographer from the University of Otago in New Zealand. Her work has focused mainly on gender and mobility issues in the context of developed countries (mainly New Zealand), and the majority of the theories used originate from the west.

It has only been over the past three decades that Western feminist geographers and some urban planners have voiced their criticism of gender-blind approaches to transportation research and planning (Doran, 1990; Grieco et. al, 1996; Law, 1999; Porter, 1997, 2002; Rosenbloom, 1993; Starkey, 2000). Initial attempts to highlight the gendered nature of transport began with research and explanations of the different travel patterns (trip distance, modal choice and trip purpose) of women in a primarily Northern context. Such studies illustrated the fact that women generally worked within close proximity to the home, often in part-time or flexible employment and usually undertaking shorter work-trips than men (England, 1996: 14; Hanson and Pratt, 1995; Rosenbloom, 1993). These studies were primarily carried out in a European and American context and spoke from this particular standpoint. Theoretical discussion of gender and transport has used such information to link women's gender role with their travel and mobility patterns (Pickup, 1984; 1988, cited in Law, 1999; also see Rosenbloom, 1993 for a review of this literature). Feminists have long been conscious of the importance of spatial structure and the movement of individuals in the production and reproduction of 'masculinist' societies (Rose, 1993). Some would argue that feminism itself is a kind of spatial politics, wherein 'the dichotomy between the private and the public is central to almost two centuries of feminist struggle' (Pateman 1989 quoted in Rose, 1993: 18). Indeed, it is at the interface of Western feminism and geography that the spatiality of everyday life is seen as intrinsically gendered. It is through the everyday movement of individuals that the structures of society, the economy and culture are produced and reproduced, and thereby establish meaning.

However, whilst Western gender literature has made some inroads into debate concerning transport and how it affects women and men differently, albeit in a Western context, transport research has failed to fully embrace issues of gender, either in a 'Western' or 'Southern' context. Resources, opportunities and daily activities are intrinsically linked to the social construction of gender and reflect wider issues of power inequality, which subsequently affects the transport needs of men and women. Therefore, since men and women through different stages of their lives have very different transport needs, it stands to reason that transport interventions should take account of this. This point is important in any cultural context. However, this is inadequately appreciated in the case in most countries, particularly developing countries, and the majority of transport planning and research tends to ignore such issues, or to pay it lip service at the most.

Western feminist geographers have made significant headway in highlighting connections between social constructions of gender and use of space. Some have made important contributions to our understanding of space and place as gendered. By conceptualising an individual's movement through space not only in spatial terms but also as an indication of social relations, geographers can look at the use and creation of space as a social construct and analyse it as such (Massey, 1994). Societal structure shapes the activities of individuals through the social norms and assumptions about different roles that should 'naturally' be performed by men and women. The values, ideas or beliefs about men and women in a given society have important implications for what is considered 'natural' and proper. Expectations of what a woman or man should do or be, are bound up in complex ways with changing notions of responsibility and agency. These expectations are socialised within the larger society and internalised by individuals, in many contexts reinforcing male control over women's behaviour and justifying the gender division of labour. There is often a strong social incentive for men and women to be seen to be fulfilling their expected roles and responsibilities, particularly in the South. Women (and men) who behave contrary to these expectations or try to push the boundaries of acceptable behaviour are often labelled and stigmatised (Hodgson and McCurdy, 2001, in an African context). The outward expression of these underlying social and cultural constraints is evident in the individual's use of time and space. Women who are particularly mobile or behave contrary to expected norms have sometimes faced ignominy and disgrace; being labelled prostitutes, wayward women (Cornwall, 2001, writing on Nigeria), dishonest or disobedient and blamed for the spread of disease (Ankomah, 1999: 291, writing on Ghana).

The idea that space and the use of space (through time) is intrinsically linked to social relations, allows us to acknowledge that space can also be subject to control by others and can therefore reflect social inequalities and power relations. Women (and men for that matter) can therefore be constrained by a range of factors apart from the practical issue of lack of transport and access to related services. As Fernando and Porter (2002) discuss, in the context of the South, 'household structures, family composition and size, and women's role in the household affect the gender allocation of tasks and responsibilities and women's mobility and transport burden' (p.6). Women's prescribed gender roles have a powerful influence on their travel and transport patterns and consequently their mobility (Mashiri and Mahapa, 2002: 20). In many countries in the South, women are primarily responsible for childcare and for the care of other household members; they are also traditionally responsible for household management

such as the provision of energy and water for cooking (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993: 15). Women, in most cases, are acutely aware of their domestic responsibilities and often take great pride in carrying them out efficiently and without complaint. These factors often impede a woman's ability to move about freely.

Within the context of low-income countries in the South, it has been widely acknowledged within the rural transport literature, primarily deriving from Northern scholars, that women bear the major brunt of the transport burden both within the household and the wider community (including Bryceson, 1993; Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Curtis, 1986; Doran, 1990; Starkey, 2000, Turner and Fouracre, 1995). However, there appears to be little acknowledgement of the importance of gender issues within the highly technocratic transport planning process, and little understanding of how women could be differentially affected by transport interventions in low-income countries. Women's transport needs, which are intrinsically linked to their social status as expressed through everyday activities and actions, are rarely consulted or even considered by transport planners. Where women are taken into account, they are unlikely to be consulted in any meaningful way, and their inclusion tends to be viewed as an after-thought or 'add on'. This is indicative of a broader ignorance of how women's ability to move around freely is dependent not only on having the technology and equipment to get from A to B, but also on the power structures that may inhibit their movement and their actual bodily capability, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

Reasons for women's relative lack of access to transport and their inability to move around freely, particularly in a developing country context, are complex and multifaceted. Women's role as carers within the household, and the work burdens that accompany this role can limit their mobility (Doran, 1990; Porter, 2003a). Religious/cultural factors and the authority husbands can place on their wives places restrictions on their movements (Robson, 2000, 2002). Women also lack access to land and labour resources and subsequently lack the income to purchase means of transport (Porter, 2003a). The constraints women face in accessing transport in the context of my study area are discussed in more detail in chapter 7. Women's use of and access to transport technologies are intrinsically gendered and embodied; subject to a range of limitations and constraints that derive primarily from their sex and the gender relations that arise from sexual difference and cultural convention.

2.3 The Mobile Body

> 'Social norms, and the spaces constructed to hold those norms, shape what we think a body can and cannot do...in all societies there is an intertwined reciprocity between space, bodies, and the social construction of both– neither "space" nor "bodies" exist independently of a social imprint'
>
> (Domosh and Seager, 2001: 112)
>
> 'The female body is inscribed socially, and most often, individually experienced as lacking, incomplete or inadequate body...Women's oppression is generated in part by these systems of patriarchal morphological inscription- that is, by a patriarchal symbolic order- or part by internalised, psychic representations of this inscribed body, and in part as a result of the different behaviours, values and norms that result from these different morphologies and psychologies'
>
> (Gross, 1986: 139)

There has been an increasing interest and debate on the body within and outside of the discipline of geography (including Braidotti, 2003; Butler, 1990, 1993; Foucault, 1976, 1977; Gross, 1986; Grosz, 1994, Irigaray, 1985, Longhurst, 1995, Young, 1990) although it has been relatively under-theorised in relation to mobility (notable recent exceptions include Cresswell, 1993, 1996, 1999). As indicated by the above quotation from Domosh and Seager, a person's movement through space is not only socially constituted but also embodied. Although people's ability to get around is shaped by physical capability (and disability), it is also deeply enmeshed with social status and power relations. This illustrates the complex interlinkages between our understanding of mobility as bodily capability and mobility as product of bodily autonomy. An individual body's experience of moving from one point to another is clearly affected both by bodily capability and power relations.

Foucault's account of power asserts that power functions directly on bodies through disciplinary practices. He argues that power is inscribed on and by bodies through modes of social supervision, surveillance and discipline as well as self-regulation (1976; 1977). Foucault's detailed analysis of the discursive operations that construct the 'docile body' have been fertile ground for feminist understandings that make clear links between the everyday body as it is lived, and the regime of disciplinary and regulatory practices that shape the body's form, behaviour and movement. The body that navigates the geography of everyday life carries with it the marks of his or her social make-up (class, race, gender and age), which can aid or inhibit a person's access to and use of certain spaces. Being seen 'out of place' could be interpreted as a

challenge to norms of feminine or masculine behaviour (Domosh and Seager, 2001: 111)[4]. These norms contain implicit assumptions about physical capability (and therefore body/biology), and I would argue that such assumptions stem from relations of power and authority. Unequal power relations underlying these norms of social behaviour are most noticeably observed through a person's mobility, travel patterns and use of space.

Some feminist scholars have been rather wary of any attempt to use the body as an explanation for socially constructed differences between the sexes. Feminists have tended to oppose biological determinism to explain perceived physical differences between the sexes, primarily because such arguments are often used to buttress and reinforce gender divisions. Rather, feminism has insisted that gender is socially constructed rather than biologically fixed and unchanging. This approach tends to reject the body as a basis for explaining gender difference. Judith Butler has arguably been most influential in breaking down the distinctions between biological bodies (sex) and socially constructed gender difference and probably provides the most radical refusal of gender difference. She argues that the distinction between male and female bodies is itself arbitrary and a product of social order. For Butler, women are neither born, nor made (as Simone de Beauvoir would assert), but rather appropriate the cultural prescriptions on sex. The body is the domain through which individuals *enact* sex- usually in compliance with social and cultural norms.

The subject of difference, and in particular gender difference, has played a central role in feminist scholarship generally, and also in the more recent scholarship on 'the body'. Some feminist scholars have argued that it is imprudent to ignore the role the body plays in shaping difference, and particularly gender difference. Difference is considered essential for understanding embodiment and to ignore bodily differences is regarded as falsely universalist, denying the bodily experiences of individuals (e.g. Braidotti, 2003; Irigaray, 1985). Some have thus been critical of approaches which have treated the body as generic, thereby ignoring the specific features of women's embodiment. Others have turned to phenomenology to explore the lived experience of gendered bodies, for example, Young's essay on '*Throwing Like a Girl*' where she explores feminine

[4] Social theory on the body appears to me to be overwhelmingly western and white, focussing on gender difference and playing down the importance of other factors such as race (by omission). However, more recent scholarship, both by white women and women of colour, has made it clear that we can no longer present a theory which does not take account of racial difference, (along with other differences such as class, age and disability). Feminist theorists such as bell hooks (1991), Patricia Hill Collins (1991), Ruth Frankenberg (1997), Felly Nkweto Simmonds (1999) and Moira Gatens (1999), amongst others, have made it clear that we can no longer portray a body as unmarked and colourless.

comportment and spatiality (1990) following on from the ideas of Merleau-Ponty. She demonstrates that the constraints of femininity in contemporary Western societies make it almost impossible for women to use their full bodily capacities in an open and free engagement with the world.

Erving Goffman[5] has provided significant insights into gender difference through his essays on *'Frame Analysis'* and *'The Arrangement Between the Sexes'*. His perspective, although limited in scope, provides some useful insights into the embodiment of gender, which contrasts with some of the work on the body that focuses primarily on discourse (Foucault, Butler etc.). According to Goffman, one of the key ways in which gender is given significance in society is by the process of institutional reflexivity, which is the process whereby the social environment is organised in such a way as to make whatever 'natural' sex differences there are significant (Goffman, 1977). Institutionalised arrangements do not so much allow for the expression of natural differences between the sexes as for the *production* of them. Goffman gives the example of the home training of girls and boys in early life, where sexual difference is punctuated by role differentiation and differing behavioural expectations. Through my own research in Ghana this would seem to be the case. Here, boys and girls are made aware of their role and responsibilities from an early age and are given tasks in accordance with this.

Unlike some writers on the body, Goffman does not reduce the body to the mind or to social symbolism, but is primarily concerned with what the body *does* in the social world. With his keen eye for observation and interpretation, Goffman seeks to understand how the body works to construct and reproduce the world and how it acts through conscious embodied praxes. This includes an examination of the bodily production of social hierarchy, dominance and control, in terms of how social space and time are taken up and actively transformed according to the specific purposes, meanings and functions of social action. So, whilst Goffman acknowledges the limited impact of biological constraints and does not deny the significance of social structure, his approach is to examine how the frames that organise social interaction produce the meaning of gender. Gender is given expression in social situations through 'displays', a process that leads to the socialisation and institutionalisation of gender differences. The *performance* of gender, in this sense, stems from deep-seated institutional practices

[5] Goffman is an American sociologist whose works have provided a new way of looking at an individual's interaction with the social world through his detailed description and analysis of the processes and meaning of mundane social interaction.

taking on a 'ritualised form which affirms beliefs about the differential human nature of the two sexes (Williams and Bendelow, 1998: 60).

Butler puts forward a similar argument in her discussion of the body. For Butler, the body (sex) and gender do not have any separate ontological reality, but are mutually constituted through the repeated enactment of appropriate gender performance, the embodiment of gender through everyday practice. Sex, in other words, is an 'ideal construct' that is forcibly 'materialised' through time and space: 'It is not a simple fact or static condition of the body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialise sex...through a forcible reiteration of those norms' (Butler, 1993: 1-2). Explicit in this work is the issue of power. The materiality of the body, including its fixity and movement, is an effect of power and could be argued as power's most productive effect. Viewed in these terms, 'sex' is not simply what one has or what one is, but rather is one of the fundamental regulatory and reiterative norms by which one becomes 'viable' at all (Williams and Bendelow, 1998: 126).

Some of the theoretical discussion on the body, and the performativity of the body is helpful in enabling us to think about gendered corporeality in a notional manner but provides very little sense of the body as a living, experiential and emotional body. The body appears in an almost abstract way, seemingly disconnected from the social and material world. The focus on the discursive construction of the body leaves little room for a 'real' or 'material' world that might intervene in cultural reality other than through the institutions and structures of language and discourse. To leave out material and biological accounts of the body simply reduces the body to a blank page upon which society and culture inscribe their mark (Haraway, 1989: 591). We need to recognise the body as a real entity, with agency that shapes and is shaped by cultural practices, than the linguistic[6]. Some of the literature on bodily *performance* goes some way in acknowledging this.

We can, however, think about gender and biology in ways that are not biologically deterministic, since biology itself is no longer conceived as being fixed and unchanging. Instead, the human body is seen as an incomplete project whose material form is transformed, over a lifetime, through the inscriptions of health and working experience,

[6] Post-structuralist theories can be supportive in this respect since they enable us to recognise that a body's movement is not simply a product of structures of power and domination, but of the individual's agency, desires and emotions (see for example Pile and Thrift, 1995). These theories create a space in which it is possible to think about gender identity as both constructed *and* lived (embodied) and therefore neither fixed within existing structures nor freely chosen (Mehta and Bondi, 1999).

cultural and social institutions (Jackson and Palmer-Jones, 1998: 22[7]). This highlights the instability and precariousness of bodies, and the difficulties of theorising about women or men's bodies as an inflexible and static binary. Once we acknowledge that bodies are experiential and socially/culturally inscribed, we can see that bodies are made up not only from their experience of sexual difference, but all other conditions of difference such as sexuality, disability, age and ethnicity. We need to understand that bodies have their biological limits. As Grosz (1994) points out, 'the body is not open to *all* whims, wishes and hopes of the subject: the human body, for example, cannot fly in the air, it cannot breathe underwater unaided...it requires a broad range of temperatures and environmental support, without which it risks collapse and death' although she points out that these limits are perpetually being overcome (p. 187). Grosz disagrees with the belief that biology is simply the subject minus culture, but instead argues that it is an 'open materiality, a set of (possibly infinite) tendencies and potentialities which may be developed, yet whose development will necessarily hinder or induce other developments and other trajectories' (ibid. p.191).

That bodies vary in size, shape, capability and stamina is self-evident. These variations, however, are not simply a product of biology but are also related to class, ethnicity, disability, age and so on. The physical ability to move one's body can vary quite substantially over the life course and can be profoundly affected by ones social status and ethnicity. It is not sufficient to treat gender variations in physical capability as purely a matter of biology, since biological processes interact with the social, providing constraints and opportunities in specific contexts and over time. Therefore it is misleading to draw a picture of biological fixity, particularly in relation to the female body given the capacity for 'mutation, birth and change' (Battersby, 1998: 6-7). Differences between bodies, not only in terms of experience and subjectivity but also at the level of practical and physical capability, enjoy considerable social and historical variation. Activities that seem impossible for bodies to undertake in certain cultures may, at certain times, seem totally viable in others[8] (Grosz, 1994: 190).

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[7] Jackson is a British scholar writing about gender difference in the South.

[8] For example, the way women tend to carry their loads on their heads in Ghana and many other countries, demonstrating amazing poise and balance, would be physically problematical and perhaps even impossible for women from other backgrounds. Throughout the world people have developed various ways to transport themselves and their loads: including head-loading, shoulder poles; back-loading with the weight taken by the head via a sling (e.g. Nepal); bicycles; hand-carts and so on. Each method will require and develop muscle strength in a particular way and involves other embodied skills such as balance. As Law (2002) points out, the ability to ride a bicycle or motorbike, or even to embark on a bus is encoded in the physical memory of muscle and an awareness of bodily boundaries. Learning these bodily skills is a social process and the ability for the body to carry out these activities imparts social meaning (p.580).

The way the body 'performs' through daily norms and practices constitutes the body, not simply through representation and symbolism, but in very real and material ways. Differences between male and female bodily actions are not simply a show or 'performance'[9], a conscious acting out of femininity or masculinity, but rather they are embedded and largely subconscious dispositions of the body, reflecting wider social and cultural expectations. The body itself is materially altered by history, by the ways in which it learns to move, the interactions with others and with the cultural and physical environment (Busby, 2000: 18). These actions, over time, produce marked differences in muscle tone, flexibility and bodily capability. As Connell (1987) has noted, 'our bodies grow and work, flourish and decay, in social situations that produce bodily effects' (p.86). The work of Bourdieu (1990) can be insightful here, by showing how practices come to be embodied and naturalised as a consequence of learned 'habitus', where gender is embodied through reiterated practices. Men and women's bodily comportment- ways of walking, carrying, demonstrations of bodily deference or disdain- are, for Bourdieu, learned through the body via practical involvement and observation: through the ways in which children imitate the gestures and actions of adults, engage in work or daily practices appropriate to their age, sex, class and so on. Gender habitus is therefore particularly strongly related to the prevailing sexual division of labour, something that is of fundamental importance to gender in Tarsaw (discussed in more detail in chapter 5).

In many low-income countries, there tends to be a relatively rigid idea of what should constitute men's work and what should constitute women's work. Generally, these distinctions rest on beliefs about bodily capabilities, notions of skill and the belief that women and men should 'naturally' be responsible for certain tasks. As a 'consequence of their biology', women are expected to bear children and also take care of them: this is an unavoidable fact for many women. As Goffman would put it, 'mother is in a position to breastfeed and father is not' and because of this fact, 'a whole range of domestic duties come (for whatever reason) to be defined as inappropriate for a male to perform; and a whole range of occupations away from the household come to be defined as inappropriate for the female' (Lemert and Branaman, 1997: 201).

[9] I am somewhat uncomfortable with the term 'performance' for a number of reasons. Firstly, it feels almost pernicious to state that someone is engaged in a performance when they clearly do not feel they are. The term brings with it connotations of being on stage, and therefore I, as the observer, am the audience. Secondly, the term also implies that the person is 'acting' of their own free will and that they are the author of their own fate. This is clearly not always the case since the actions of both men and women are in some way constrained. They are constrained both by societal structures that limit choices (including patriarchy), keeping both in their 'proper' place, and by the internalisation of these structures that make people believe that this is the only way to behave.

In summary, the body is undoubtedly important in determining the extent of our physical boundaries and capabilities. This is not to say that biology is at the root of gender inequality, since it is only when a society values or devalues certain types of work (invariably reproductive/women's work) that biology becomes an issue. As Jackson and Palmer-Jones (1998) state, 'discourses of value around assertions of the bodily demands of different kinds of work are likely to be significant in the *processes* by which women's work, men's work, and shared tasks not only create value but are understood to do so' (p.21 emphasis in original). We should, however, be able to acknowledge that bodies *do* vary in capability, capacity and stamina, without implying that it is necessarily a product of gender. As Haraway (1989) notes, the body is not a blank page upon which society and culture inscribe their mark but vary considerably over the life course and as a consequence of social and cultural experience.

2.4 Gender and Mobility

> The issue of spatial mobility is inextricably linked to the social and economic empowerment of women'
>
> *(Matin, Mukib, Begum and Khanam, 2002: 128)*

As the previous section has highlighted, mobility, not just in the context of travel and migration, but also the more mundane daily movements that form the basis of much of our activities (Law, 1999; 2002), is not only intrinsically socialised, but also imbued with meaning and power (Cresswell, 1999: 176). This is true in both a Northern and Southern context. Development practitioners, who rather view mobility in purely economic and efficiency terms, generally ignore its embodied nature. The way that bodily mobility is impeded or facilitated by power and authority is also largely overlooked. Academics, particularly within economics and urban planning, have made similar omissions (Preston, 2001; Priemus, Nijkamp and Banister, 2001).

Within the discipline of geography, and particularly transport geography, travel and mobility are considered to be '*necessarily* generated by work, household, family and leisure needs' with little concern for the '*social* bases of travel' (Urry, 2002: 2565, emphasis in original). In many cases, physical mobility is seen as a necessity to economic (and sometimes social) development, in both the North and South. It is understood to be the path to progress and an indicator of individual agency and autonomy. This section aims to provide a more detailed consideration of mobility,

bringing in various points raised by both academics and practitioners, from the perspective of both the North and the South. This will provide a greater understanding of what we mean when we talk about mobility, and how mobility has been conceptualised within the study of gender issues and development more generally. This will be important when considering the mobility constraints and opportunities that women and men face in my case study village. The latter part of this section will discuss how mobility has been portrayed and analysed within policy and practice in the South, since this has undoubtedly had an impact on the nature of transport interventions and how women have been affected therein.

2.4.1 Mobility within Academic Literature: The West

'Ah, freedom, mobility, Ah, the open road. I mull over her words. How familiar...how romantic...how like a– man..."liberation" is the word commonly used to describe how the automobile has released women from social control and geographical confinement... Mobile? Maybe. Yet, it is a false form of consciousness that fails to assess women's enslavement to the motor vehicle in the auto-dependent [American] households and society it has helped install.'

(Kay, 1997: 23-24)

'Foucault's analysis of the Enlightenment correlates progress (read: development) with a spatial story of mobility. To become enlightened is to exit from a kind of bondage; it is to cross a frontier, a border. Kant does insist that what is necessary for Enlightenment is freedom...To be free, to be modern, to develop is to get out of a situation of confinement. The modern West's understanding of liberty relies upon a narrative of mobility, of openness and dynamism'

(Pritchard, 2000; 49)

The quotations by Kay (1997) and Pritchard (2000) raise a number of issues that are important to this discussion. Firstly is the notion that travel and mobility are inherently masculine attributes, implying that women are rather confined and spatially bounded, relegated to limited domestic space (as discussed in section 2.2). Secondly is the conviction that mobility is necessarily and undeniably a force for good, with the ability to liberate and set free. In relation to the first point, even geography as a discipline, with roots firmly planted in the desire for exploration, the expansion of our scientific knowledge of the world, and in conquest, has a decidedly masculine (and Western) appearance (McEwan, 2000; Rose, 1993; 1995). However, the increasing number of books and articles about women travellers (for example, Blunt and Rose, 1994; McEwan, 2000; Robinson, 1990, 1994 and Russell, 1988) challenge this assumption that women are rooted within the home (or private sphere), while men are the travellers

in limitless public space[10]. The travels of Mary Kingsley in colonial Africa, armed with a 'good thick skirt', are indicative of this, although it should also be noted that such travels often took place within wider disparities in the connections between power and mobility and were not necessarily acts of resistance. Many of the early women travellers used various tactics, such as style of dress, to give an appearance of respectability and retain a sense of propriety. However, the travels of imperial, middle-class women are important for a number of reasons. They demonstrated that some women were able to shake off some of the constraints imposed on them and also allowed them to produce new kinds of knowledge through their stories, which often contradicted and challenged existing, masculine accounts.

Western critiques of patriarchy and gender inequality are replete with references to women's need to gain freedom from bounded domestic space and the confines of patriarchal authority. The control of women's movement through space is one of the primary features of patriarchy since, as Domosh and Seager (2001) notes, 'it is hard to maintain patriarchal control over women if they have unfettered freedom of movement' (p.115-116). 'Surveillance' is therefore an important element of this control, which, in Foucauldian terms is one of the main mechanisms of controlling and disciplining the body and its movement (Williams and Bendelow, 1998). Issues surrounding mobility and women's utilisation of time and space have therefore been a central concern for feminists (particularly Western feminists) for some time. As Gillian Rose (1993) states, 'For white feminists, one of the most oppressive aspects of everyday spaces is the division between public space and private space' (p.17). As Domosh and Seager (2001) note, the association of women with the home and with femininity is commonplace and has a long history. Some would argue that feminism itself is a kind of spatial politics, wherein 'the dichotomy between the private and the public is central to almost two centuries of feminist struggle' (Pateman 1989 quoted in Rose, 1993: 18).

Western feminists have long contended that public-private spatial divisions are reflected and replicated in social terms. The public sphere is seen as being the space of power, politics and production, therefore being largely male, whereas the private sphere is the site of domestic/reproductive activities, and is overwhelmingly female. This distinction has been debated and critiqued over recent decades. As discussed in section 2.2, the separation of spheres between public and private is rarely unproblematic. The seemingly 'natural' delimitation of 'feminine' and 'masculine' spaces is seldom so

[10] It should also be noted that many of these accounts are written about elite middle- and upper-class women from decidedly privileged positions. Travel is therefore clearly marked by issues of gender, class, ethnicity and culture (Cresswell, 1997: 361).

straightforward in practice. Duncan (1996) has suggested that this binary of public/private place is not entirely stable or unproblematic. It can be argued that it is a false representation since, for example, private relations are not only restricted to the private sphere and relations of production or politics have powerful influences on domestic relations. Feminist and other critiques have asserted that women have played important public roles and experienced mobility in many different ways within public and private space (Ryan, 1990), that the private sphere can be a space of resistance and agency (McDowell, 1996) and that public and private spheres are porous, with each enabling and constraining in various ways. However, assumptions regarding the 'natural' place for women and men have a powerful influence on gender identity and subsequently on mobility and use of space.

In a discussion of the arrival of the automobile age in the United States, McShane (1994) discusses how assumptions about women's 'natural' place and their biological limits impeded their opportunities to use new transport technologies. Men overwhelmingly dominated in the appropriation of the motorcar and sought to deprive women of their use. Although there was some discussion of putting a legal ban on women drivers in some states, this never materialised. However, women drivers often faced ridicule and open hostility, along with other tactics to limit their use. Some men feared that the automobile had given women too much confidence, and actively sought to exclude them from the growing car culture (McShane, 1994: 157). Indicative of the mood of the times, one local magistrate stated that: 'In my mind no woman should be allowed to operate an automobile. In the first place she hasn't the *strength*, and in the second, she is very apt to *lose her mind*[11]' (ibid. emphasis added). This links back to the quotation at the beginning of this chapter by Domosh and Seager (2001), where changes in the relationship between gender and mobility can often be fiercely resisted through fear of the possible 'liberating' effect. Women drivers were seen as a threat to family stability, good social order, and women's sexual purity. 'Scientific' studies were even conducted to prove that women were mentally, physically, and biologically incapable of mastering the complexities of driving (Domosh and Seager, 2001: 125). The gendering of the automobile 'demonstrates the complex intertwining of mobility, the construction (and reconstruction) of masculinity and femininity, and the assignment of "proper" gender roles' (ibid. p.123).

[11] It is interesting, though not unsurprising, that physiological and biological arguments were used to limit women's mobility in this manner. Other arguments included the conviction that driving a car had a 'sad effect on motherhood' and that women's 'natural hysteria' limited their ability to think clearly when driving and could cause them accidents (ibid. p.158). Similar arguments have been used in other cultural contexts, indeed, as chapter seven demonstrates, women in Tarsaw face strikingly similar constraints to their use of bicycles and other means of transport.

A similar kind of gendering can be seen in other technologies, both transport and non-transport, including bicycles. When cycling was first introduced in nineteenth-century Britain and the United States, the subject of women riding was fiercely contested. In some cases the very design of bicycles (cross-bar, seats, height etc.) and the physical demands of moving a bicycle were condemned as being sexually inappropriate for women (Domosh and Seager, 2001: 128). The 'liberating' potential of bicycles, like any other mobility aid, was feared to challenge the (masculine) social order. This fear has often resulted in the control of women's use of space, and their ability to move freely.

Spatiality and use of space has been an important focus of feminist literature for some time, and particularly Western feminist literature (Rose, 1993). Hanson and Pratt (1995) argue that feminist theories of gender identity and difference utilise spatial narratives that talk about liberating mobility and suppressive immobility. The quotation by Pritchard (2000) critiques the rhetorical affinity between feminist postmodern theory and an enlightenment narrative of development consisting primarily of the valorisation of mobility and the repudiation of locatedness. Pritchard is not, however, calling for feminists to renounce all discussion of mobility, but rather wishes to 'focus attention upon the constellation of mobility, development, modernity and postmodernity, so that feminists may become "accountable for [our] investments in cultural metaphors and values" (Kaplan, 1994: 139)' (p. 47). Metaphors linking liberation and development with mobility, and oppression with containment are ubiquitous within feminist and development discourse more generally. However, as McEwan (2001) notes, we need to de-colonise such discourses and recognise that they are 'unconsciously ethnocentric, rooted in European cultures and reflective of a dominant Western world-view' (p. 94).

There is no doubt that the number of kilometres travelled by most people in the West is on the rise, and that the length and speed of journeys is increasing. This has had a number of important consequences for society. Shove (2002) notes that, 'as families become spread out within countries and across continents, the amount of movement required to maintain a quota of face to face familial contact escalates'. In permitting such flexibility, cars, like other convenience devices, 'have the unintended consequence of tying people into an ever denser network of interdependent, perhaps even dependent, relationships with the very things designed to free them from just such obligations' (Shove and Southerton, 2000 quoted in Shove, 2002). As the quotation from Kay (1997) at the beginning of this section highlights, Western society is

increasingly becoming an 'auto-dependent' society, where people are not liberated by their mobility, but are rather *enslaved* by it. This is particularly the case for women, who have to use the car not only for their own work/home purposes but also as a taxi service to take their children to their various commitments. Within Western society, women tend to benefit much less from the help of their family than previous generations as a consequence of the fragmentation of families (Kay, 1997). This has increasingly led to a 'do-it-yourself society' (Shove, 2002) placing increasing burdens upon women, in particular. In such a situation, can we really argue that mobility is necessarily liberating or an outcome of autonomy and freedom?

Mobility has recently been linked to a discussion of 'social capital'[12] (see Urry, 2002). For Putnam (2000, cited in Urry, 2002), the increasing travel times and distances that individuals in the West have to undertake (to fulfil work and other commitments), *reduces* social capital, since the majority of trips are undertaken alone, and commuting and the spatial fragmentation between home and workplace cuts down on involvement in the community (p.263). However, as Urry points out, certain kinds of social capital seem to depend upon extensive long-range travel and '[f]or many social groups it is the lack of mobility that is the real problem and they will seek to enhance their social capital through access to *greater* mobility' (p.264 emphasis in original). For Urry, social capital 'depends upon the range, extent and modes of mobility, especially vis-à-vis the mobilities of other social groups' and mobility in general is 'central to gluing social networks together' (2002, p.265). Participation in social networks, in certain contexts, therefore involves issues of transportation and mobility. However, as Urry concludes, 'mobilities themselves can generate social exclusions that reduce social proximity, social trust and social capital' (ibid.). Increased mobility can be detrimental to those who are unable to participate fully- divisions of class, gender, ethnicity, age and disability can result in significant forms of socio-spatial exclusion, or 'mobility-exclusion' (ibid.). Kenyon et al. (2002) define mobility-related exclusion as:

> '[t]he process by which people are prevented from participating in the economic, political and social life of the community because of reduced accessibility to opportunities, services and social networks, due in whole or in part to insufficient mobility in a society and environment built around the assumption of high mobility' (p.210-11).

This definition is based on the opinion that social exclusion is not just about poverty but is also to do with people's access to participation in society, which therefore includes an element of mobility. This may not necessarily be the case in contexts where

[12] According to John Urry, 'societies with high social capital are characterized by dense networks of reciprocal social relations, well-developed sets of mutual obligations, generalized reciprocity, high levels of trust in one's neighbours, overlapping conversational groupings, and bonds that bridge across conventional social divides' (p.263).

'corporeal travel' (Urry, 2002) and mobility (particularly auto-mobility) is less important in sustaining social networks and pursuing economic opportunities.

According to Domosh and Seager (2001), in order to understand why some groups are more able to 'overcome the friction of distance' than others, one needs to look at the 'systems of control, privilege, and hierarchy- and of gender, class and race' (p.113). To a certain extent, mobility can be linked to economic status, since the wealthier classes generally have more transportation choices open to them and are therefore able to travel more freely. In this sense, mobility can, in some circumstances, be framed as a poverty issue. However, as Domosh and Seager argue, since poverty is largely a women's issue '[a]lmost everywhere in the world', lack of mobility is also disproportionately a women's issue (p.114). Poverty and economic status are not the only constraints that women face, since controlling women's movement, in many different contexts, has been a preoccupation for 'governments, families, households, and individual men' (ibid. p.115). Adrienne Rich (1986) details some ways in which women's mobility has been circumscribed, through: 'means of rape as terrorism, keeping women off the streets; purdah; foot binding; atrophying of women's athletic abilities; high heels and 'feminine' dress codes in fashion; the veil; sexual harassment on the streets; prescriptions for 'full-time' mothering at home; enforced economic dependence of wives' (1986; 37-8).

2.4.2 Mobility Within Academic Discourse: The 'Other'

Whilst many of the points made by Rich are clearly important issues affecting women's mobility, some commentators would argue that including purdah and the veil, is reproducing an essentialist (Orientalist) view of women's lives (Farah, 2002: 93). Veiling has figured significantly within Orientalist representations of, particularly, Muslim societies (see for example Kandiyoti, 1991; Jeffrey, 1979; Yeğenoğlu, 1998). As Secor (2002) notes, veiling often symbolises the inscrutability of the East, evoking imagines of the sensuality of the secluded female and the supposed barbarity of Muslim societies[13]. Farah notes that there has been a growing obsession in the West with, particularly, Arab women's bodies, illustrated by disapproval of the use of the *hijab* or veil, female genital mutilation and female seclusion (ibid.)[14]. The focus on these

[13] It should be noted that seclusion is not just an Islamic institution. As Jeffrey (1979) points out, 'many Hindus, as well as members of other religious communities, keep their women in seclusion. Indeed, right across Eurasia, from India, through the Middle East, the Balkans, and even some parts of northwestern Europe, to the Iberian Peninsula, there are reports of women secluded in their homes' (p.22).

[14] Mernissi (1991), a leading Muslim feminist from Morrocco, provides a very thorough and detailed theological discussion of the historical evolution of veiling and seclusion. Her autobiography *'The Harem Within'* (1994) also provides insights into these issues. There are a

issues, argues Farah, whilst important, draws too much attention to such issues 'at the expense of the larger political, historical and cultural context and other dimensions of women's lives and struggles' (p.93). In the real lives of women, these subjects are 'appropriated, rejected or transformed in terms of its meaning' (p.98). For example, some women choose to veil in order to gain more autonomy, whilst other women are forced to veil, but their priorities are beyond the question of whether to veil or not. The opening discussion by Michael Smith in Mary Smith's *Baba of Karo* (1954) is insightful in this respect:

> 'Formerly...free Hausa women and concubines neither farmed nor gathered firewood, though women of slave status were compelled to do both tasks. With the abolition of slavery under British rule, women formerly of slave status withdrew from the farm and, as far as possible from wood-gathering, as an assertion of their new legal status as free persons, and in imitation of the traditional role of free Hausa women. Linked with this development is the spread of purdah-type marriage...for the seclusion of wives is closely connected with their refusal, wherever possible, either to farm or to gather sylvan produce, and their preference for the more rewarding craft and trade activities which they can carry out in their leisure time at home' (p.22-3).

This implies that women entered seclusion as a strategic choice that enabled them to claim a new status. This choice allowed women to move away from farming activities and many of the more burdensome domestic chores in order to undertake more favourable and rewarding activities. This raises the issue that, how we value mobility in the West, particularly women's mobility, may be vastly different in other cultural and social contexts.

For many in the West, seclusion and the veil are very overt and poignant symbols of women's oppression and confinement in Muslim societies. Within such a view, women's confinement to the private sphere is considered to be a measure of her oppression and control by men (Rosaldo, 1974). Therefore, women are only seen as being truly liberated when they are able to transcend the 'private' and break into the public domain. This theme came out quite strongly in Mexico, where women's self-empowerment was expressed as 'getting out of that house!' (Townsend et al. 1999). Similar arguments have been put forward in relation to women and work. However, the veil can also be seen as a means by which women carry the private sphere around with them. As El Guindi (1999) discusses, veiling creates a 'permanent sacred space' where women are able to preserve their sanctity beyond the home (p.134). By wearing a veil, a woman is able to observe customs of modesty and propriety within a public space. The veil could then be considered liberating to some women, since they are able to safely navigate 'public' space without fear of harassment (El Guindi, 1999;

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number of interesting accounts of seclusion, including Callaway, 1984; Cooper, 1994; Lovejoy, 1988; Porter, 1988, 1989; Robson, 2000; Smith, 1954.

Secor, 2002). Secor (2002) demonstrates, in the context of Istanbul, that the veil can act to constrain or enable physical mobility (p.19)[15].

Many of the Women in Development programmes of the 1970s and 80s sought to redress gender inequalities and 'liberate' women by bringing them into the wage economy. However, as Irene Tinker (1990) has pointed out, new studies in developing countries have shown that 'women participating in the wage economy are far from liberated' (p.50). This leads us to question the efficacy of creating equality on the basis of work. Sylvia Walby (1990) illustrates that women in North America and Western Europe have been under two forms of patriarchy in succession. The first was 'private patriarchy', where women's place was regarded as being in the home, under the rule of a father, husband or other male kin. The second is 'public patriarchy', where women have entered public space of paid work and politics but are still heavily controlled. Women in the West have entered 'public' space but are far from being 'liberated'.

Some writers suggest that women can gain prestige and satisfaction from maintaining their separate role in society and can sometimes use their dominant position in the home to gain influence in the public sphere (Lomnitz, 1977 on Mexico cited in Callaway, 1984). Tinker points out that, in some Southern societies, 'family prestige, and therefore women's status, is enhanced when women are taken out of the visible public labour force even though they become economically more dependent' (p.51). Callaway (1984) highlights an interesting paradox in the practice of seclusion. She states that:

> When men live apart from women, they cannot control them...women are secluded, in part, to enable men to feel 'in control'. But such physical and emotional separation means in a very fundamental sense that they are not dependent on men. Women can conduct their lives with an independence for which there is no recognition in the 'dominant model' (p.433).

Women therefore may not enjoy the same kind of mobility that men do, but can be independent and powerful in other, often less obvious ways[16]. Perhaps drawing on Indian experiences, Gita Sen warns us against seeking individualised autonomy and

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[15] Just as the body itself is imprinted by history and inscribed by power and knowledge (as discussed in section 2.3), styles of dress also acquires meaning within the 'historically and socially situated conditions of its production' (Secor, 2002: 7).

[16] I am, however, aware that there are many situations where women experience cultural, social and even physical restriction of their movements, either directly or indirectly (see for example Pellow, 1991). There are no doubt countless situations where women are unhappy with their confinement and feel it is more of a constraint that a benefit. However, it is also likely that there are women in the West who are equally unhappy with their lives. Some might feel forced to go out and earn to support the family at the expense of spending time at home with the children (my own mother has often complained of this). Others might feel that their dependence on the car and the subsequent need to chauffeur their children (and other dependents) around is a burden rather than a benefit.

running the 'risk of splitting off from ourselves the nurturant aspects of human existence' and states that 'if we view hierarchized, oppressive interdependence versus a non-hierarchical, alienated individuation as the only two possible alternatives, then we lost indeed' (1988, quoted in Tinker, 1990, 52). If we look more closely at the lives of women, in situations of apparent mobility or confinement, we will no doubt see that it is far more complex than pure freedom or oppression. Women's lives are not simply of mobility *or* immobility, power *or* powerlessness, seclusion *or* freedom, but a intricate combination of all of these at different times and in different situations. Stories such as those written by Fatima Mernissi (1994) provide important insights into the complex web of obligations, interdependencies, rights and duties that bind families together, providing situations of power and powerlessness that go beyond the question of mobility.

Naila Kabeer (1999) raises interesting questions in this respect. She criticises NGOs in Bangladesh that accept the Western donors belief that mobility equals liberation for women. She points out that it is not necessarily empowering for a woman to be forced into behaviour that is contrary to her religious beliefs in order to increase her family's income. In some cases women have found the opportunity for greater mobility, empowering. As Townsend et al. (1999) have discussed in the context of rural Mexico, women regarded 'the house' as a place where women are 'enclosed, hemmed in, useless, and "to get out of the house" is...to get started, to get moving, to take off' (p.71). The following quotation vividly expresses some of the difficulties women face in 'getting out of the house':

> ' "People around us, especially our husbands and the boys, they have always been the bosses, they have always been making the decisions, with us always following. Then, with all the changes and with us feeling bad, we are feeling bad and in the face of this either we leave our husbands or we *go back to the house, to seek refuge in the house*, so as not to feel bad" (Teresa, elected advisor, *Sonora*)' (Townsend, et al. 1999: 71).

The points made by Kabeer and Townsend, however, both concur with the idea that an individual cannot be empowered by someone else (Rowlands, 1997). Empowerment must come from within an individual. Compelling a woman to desist from wearing the veil or to leave the 'confines' of her house is not automatically going to empower her. Mobility is only empowering if it has been undertaken as a consequence of autonomy. Forced mobility, or mobility borne of necessity are not acts of agency. Mobility, per se, therefore, is not necessarily indicative of power.

2.4.3 Mobility within Development Policy

> 'Accessibility can be measured in terms of time, effort and cost. Access depends on infrastructure (availability of water sources, roads and bridges, schools, hospitals, markets etc.) and available and affordable transport options, for people themselves and for their loads. Poor rural people often have to spend much time and effort to access basic needs necessities, and the reduction of isolation and inaccessibility are fundamental to poverty alleviation. Accessibility depends on mobility (ease and frequency of movement) and proximity (distance). Access may be improved by greater mobility and/or improved proximity to services.'
>
> *(Starkey, 2001: 17)*

Within policy debates, mobility is rarely considered to be a particularly complicated or problematical issue. Many of the issues discussed in previous sections (bodily capability, bodily autonomy and the possible negative value of mobility), do not feature in policy debates. In many cases, donors consider mobility to be vital in fostering economic and social development (Riverson and Carapetis, 1991). Improving rural and urban roads, and increasing access to transport are integral to this belief. Throughout the 1980s and 90s, initiatives to improve mobility and access initially focussed on investing in roads and transport infrastructure. This was seen as vital in increasing productivity in agriculture and industry (Leinbach, 2000: 3). However, this approach clearly failed to comprehend the nature of rural transport needs as essentially localised, and the capacity of rural people to utilise such infrastructure. In many rural areas of the South, small and relatively localised load movements form the bulk of travel, which do not necessarily benefit from improved transport infrastructure (Pankaj and Coulthart, 1993).

By the 1980s, there was a growing move towards finding alternative approaches to the transport problem. This need has been given greater importance with the emphasis on raising agricultural production in structural adjustment programmes since the 1980s. Furthermore, economic decline and the subsequent imposition of structural adjustment in many developing countries led to deterioration in the road transport systems and the standard of road maintenance (Porter, 2002: 286). The 1980s witnessed a steadily increasing interest among both major development agencies and NGOs in the introduction of IMTs, as a way of improving rural accessibility, mobility and subsequently food security (Riverson and Carapetis, 1991; Starkey, 2000, 2001). Since this time, considerable work has been undertaken by a range of organisations, and a number of donor agencies have included an IMT dimension in their transport

interventions[17]. However, in many cases, the IMT component is still rather small in comparison to the attention that is paid to infrastructure. The majority of transport initiatives to date, including the early focus on transport infrastructure and the more recent attention on IMTs, rest on the implicit assumption that increasing mobility is necessarily beneficial.

As the quotation from Paul Starkey (2001) indicates, mobility is often discussed in relation to accessibility. Within policy and practitioner circles, both mobility and accessibility are regarded as quantifiable primarily in terms of distance, travel time and the number of opportunities or destinations reached. Riverson and Carapetis (1991) distinguish between mobility and accessibility, stating that mobility is the ability of people to move themselves and their goods, measured via distance covered in a given time, number of travel modes available and the number of trips made. Accessibility is similar to mobility, but takes into account the ability or ease to reach various destinations. Accessibility is dependent on the availability of transport and the existence of a reliable path or road. Mobility and accessibility, in this sense, is therefore considered to be purely a matter of getting from one point to another and the means available to achieve this. The constraints that bodies face in achieving this movement are not explored. Although implicit to some extent, this account does not give any real sense of human agency or acknowledge how access and mobility can be subject to control and authority.

Bryceson et al. (2003) are more explicit about the importance of human agency and regard mobility as a 'measure of the agency with which people choose to move themselves or their goods around' (p.4). This notion of mobility involves two components. The first relates to the performance of the transport system, whilst the second depends on the 'characteristics of the individual, such as whether s/he has a bicycle or car available, can afford a taxi, bus or rail fares, is able to walk or use public transport, or has knowledge of the options available' (Porter, 2001, quoted in Bryceson et al., 2003). Accessibility, on the other hand, is not concerned with behaviour, but with the 'opportunity, or potential, provided by the transport or land-use system for different types of people to engage in activities' (ibid.). Bryceson et al. (2003) link mobility and

[17] The World Bank has implemented a number of important programmes, including the Rural Travel and Transport Program (RTTP) and Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme (SSATP). Other organisations such as the International Forum for Rural Transport Development (IFRTD), the German Appropriate Technology Exchange (GATE), Animal Traction Development and the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG) have also implemented innovative schemes and research programmes in a number of developing countries.

access needs to the sustainable livelihoods approach (SLA) used by DFID[18]. Within this research, mobility is considered to be 'vital to individual and household livelihood pursuits, involving travel to paid formal or informal work, travel to agricultural fields, and travel to see family and friends that form one's social network' (p.41). The research also notes that 'relative immobility is a defining feature of the poor in both urban and semi-urban settings' (ibid. p.38). However, the report also notes that 'mobility in and of itself is not necessarily desirable. Often poor *access* increases the need for more mobility...thus, good access to work, educational and health services, recreation, shops and basic utilities like water and energy, should underpin regional and local authorities' policies' (ibid. p.43). However, to date, non-transport interventions (improving access rather than mobility), has been given much less attention than mobility and transport infrastructure (illustrated by Malmberg Calvo, 1994).

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated that mobility is not simply about the distance between two points in space (and time), but rather a person's *ability* to move around freely. Ability or inability to move is not necessarily a consequence of transport availability or the funds to pay for it, but can be viewed as a result of bodily autonomy. An understanding of mobility therefore requires an understanding of *agency* and the limits to agency, which inhibit or promote an individual's mobility. This does not necessarily imply that mobility is necessarily empowering, just as immobility is not necessarily disempowering. As some commentators have argued, spatial boundedness is not always a constraint, just as mobility is not inherently a path to power (Domosh and Seager, 2001: 120; Kabeer (1999). As Katz and Monk (1993) have pointed out, 'rootedness offers many women personal satisfactions and rewards, as well as possibilities for social life and the sharing of burdens in productive and reproductive spheres' (p.271). People can often have very different experiences of mobility and travel, related to age/lifecourse, race, gender, disability, and the social, cultural and economic situation within which their lives are set, as the work of Rosenbloom (1993) illustrates. Mobility can often be indicative of a mixture of freedom and constraint, since bodily movement is not always an act of pure will and intentionality, just as remaining in the home is not always a consequence of powerlessness. Indeed, even within the 'hypermobile' West (Urry, 2002), can we truly say that our mobile lifestyles are always and necessarily empowering and free? Kaplan (1996) clearly narrates the socialities involved with this extensive mobility within the context of the United States, stating that travel, for her,

[18] The SLA categorises five types of capital: natural, human, social, physical, and financial, otherwise referred to as the 'capital asset pentagon'.

was rather: 'unavoidable, indisputable, and always necessary for family, love and friendship as well as work (p. ix). Implicit in this cultural context is the belief that one is not only *entitled* to travel but indeed *should* travel (Urry, 2002).

This is even more pertinent in areas of the West, where urban areas have been specifically designed in order to expedite the movement of cars (not pedestrians). Urban planning in the West has created land-use patterns that spatially separate living, working and leisure, with the result that access and participation in society is now equated with mobility (Kenyon et al. 2002). In both urban and rural environments, access to 'services, facilities and social networks has, for many, become problematic and sometimes impossible without access to a car' (ibid. p.211). As Rosenbloom (1993) points out, in suburban areas in the US, public transport is a very poor substitute for a car. Travelling by public transport is one-third as fast as a car (not taking into account unsynchronised transfers, walks at either end of the journey and delays) and do not provide women with the flexibility they require to carry out their various tasks. Women in these areas become dependent on the car since, as Rosenbloom asserts, 'it is hard to see how many working women could successfully juggle a home, a job, and several children in the cities we have today without a car' (p. 242).

In the context of the global South, women's mobility is equally complex and multifaceted, and women experience mobility in very different ways depending on their context within which their lives are set. The primarily Western obsession with improving people's mobility is perhaps inappropriate in different cultural settings. Western views on the supposed injustice of certain cultural practices that constrain women's movement (such as purdah and wearing the hijab), betray an ignorance of the social, cultural, economic and political situation within which these practices are embedded. As discussed in this chapter, some women choose to wear the veil or live in seclusion as a strategic choice. Tinker (1990), and others, have pointed out that women's participation in the wage economy, in many developing countries, has proved to be far from liberating or empowering. We therefore need to understand the context within which mobility (or lack of mobility) is set, the range of constraints that individuals face in accessing places and resources, and the different ways in which they overcome (or do not overcome) these problems in order to carry out their daily activities.

An important theme that has been explored at length in this chapter is the embodied nature of mobility. Mobility implicitly concerns the body and the body's ability to travel through time and space, in a very real and lived sense. Mobility can therefore be

viewed as bodily movement not simply in terms of travelling beyond a fixed point, but also as bodily *capability*. Bodies vary in terms of physical capability, stamina and skill, and their ability to travel varies considerably over the life course and as a consequence of social and cultural experience. This is perhaps even more the case for women than men, since their bodies go through considerable mutation and change with childbirth. Even after giving birth, the mother can experience enormous constraints on her bodily mobility as a consequence of having to carry and wean her child. The physical body, therefore, interacts with the social and cultural. Bodies are materially altered- through health and working experience, through interaction with the physical, social and cultural environment- over a lifetime. Such factors have largely been overlooked in conventional transport literature. This consideration of embodied mobility, and its application to gender and mobility in the context of Tarsaw, provides a fresh way of looking at transport and gender issues.

CHAPTER THREE

Placing the Research in Context: Ghana and the Field Study Area

> The 'natural' conditions of soil, climate and even population have been used by several anthropologists to 'explain' the relatively underdeveloped condition of Northern Ghana during the colonial period and its aftermath. Such explanations take no account of the requirements of the colonial economy for the labour power for mines and cocoa plantations. It was the demand for labour which determined migration from the North and not the North's mythical lack of resources. In fact, prior to colonial conquest, the North had been at the heart of 19th Century trade routes and food production.'
>
> *(Plange, 1979: 4)*
>
> 'In terms of prestige the [Gold Coast] Southerners came next to the whites in the early days of British rule. The few Southerners who were in the Protectorate [north], for their part, did a lot to create the impression, if not of superiority, at least of being markedly different from the relatively more backward Northerners'
>
> *(Saaka, 1987: 6)*

3.1 Introduction

How does the study village of Tarsaw, and indeed the north of Ghana more generally, come to be so poor? How has the areas environment, and its particular social, economic and historical background contributed to this situation? The neglect and isolation of the north of Ghana has a long and complex history. The north has had a vastly different experience of colonial administration and post-colonial government policies than the south of the country. For the most part, the north of Ghana was considered to be useful primarily in its ability to provide the Gold Coast Colony with migrant labour to serve the needs of the mines and plantations in the south. The development of the north in terms of health, education, agriculture and infrastructure was never considered to be a priority for the colonial government. Even today, the north is considered to be lagging behind the south in terms of infrastructure and services. The physical environment of the north, in terms of climate, topography, soils and vegetation is markedly different from the south, providing different opportunities and constraints in terms of agriculture, infrastructure and development. The aim of this chapter is to provide an overview of the north of Ghana, placed within its particular historical, social, economic and political context. The physical environment of the north

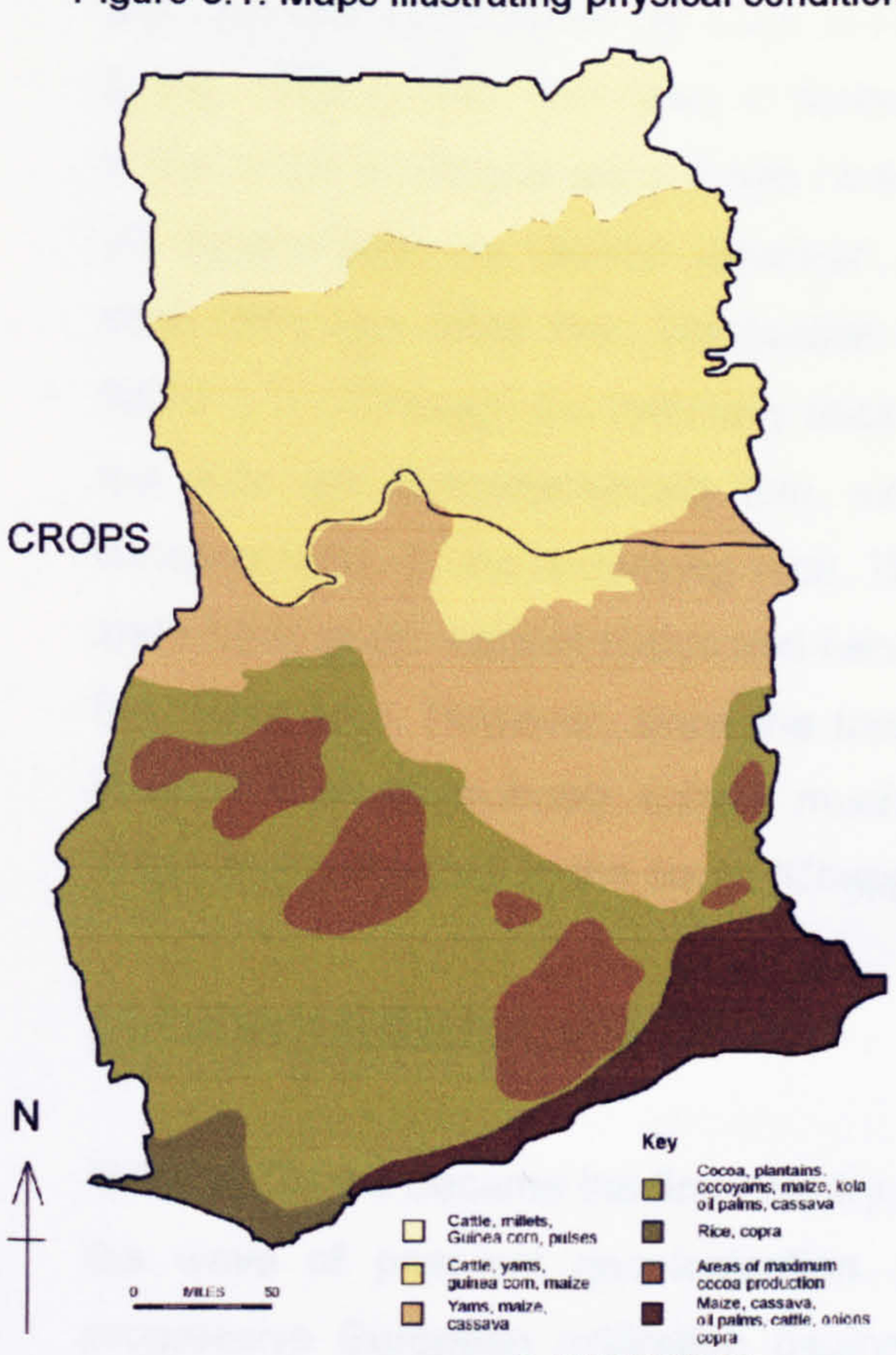
will be discussed; particularly in terms of the effect this has had on development, the building of infrastructure and the use of transport. The majority of this chapter details the particular situation of Tarsaw, the village that is the central focus of this study, bringing to the fore the demographic, social and economic characteristics of the village. This will set the scene for a more detailed discussion of the gender division of labour in relation to social and economic structures, later on in this thesis.

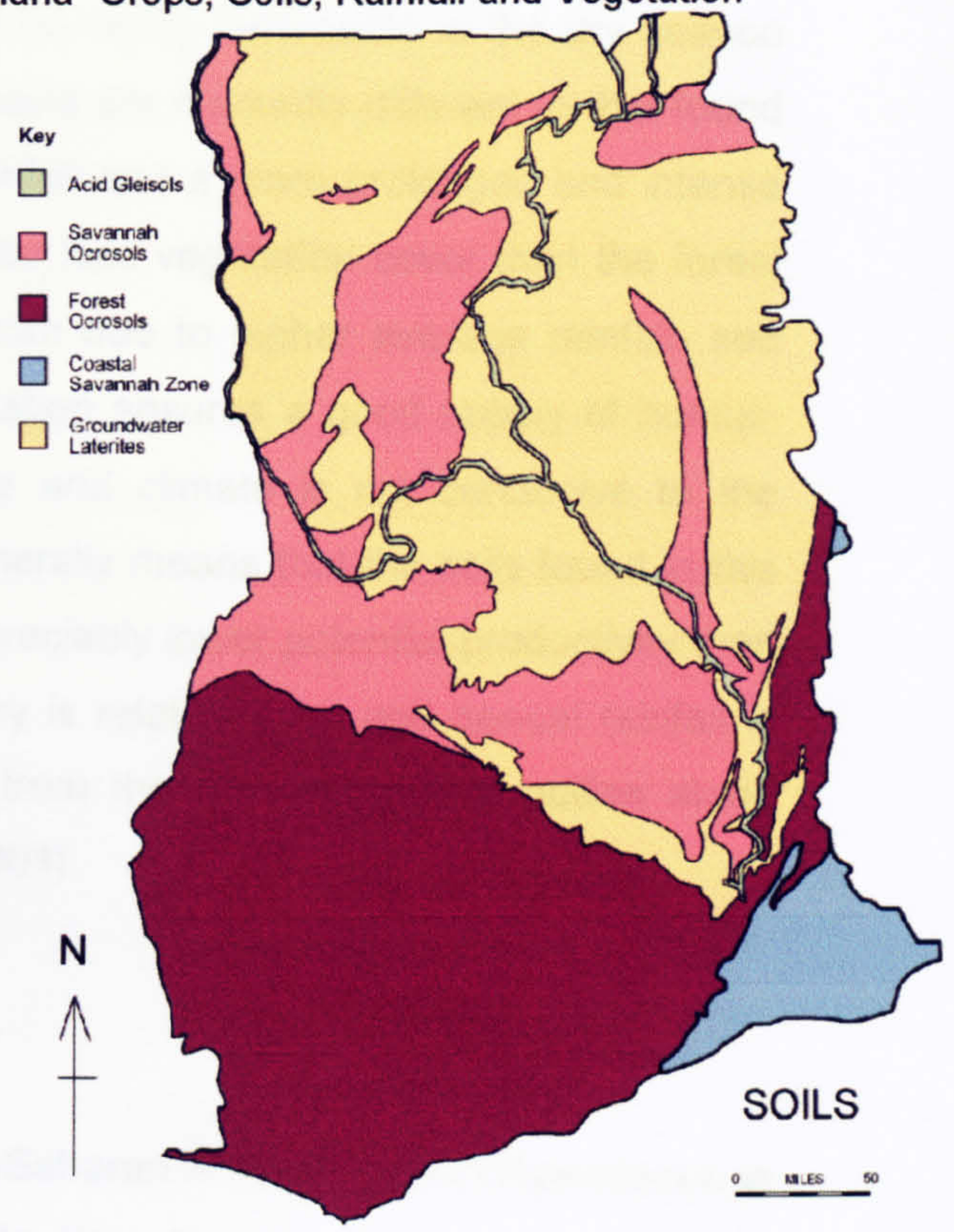
3.2 The Physical Context of Northern Ghana

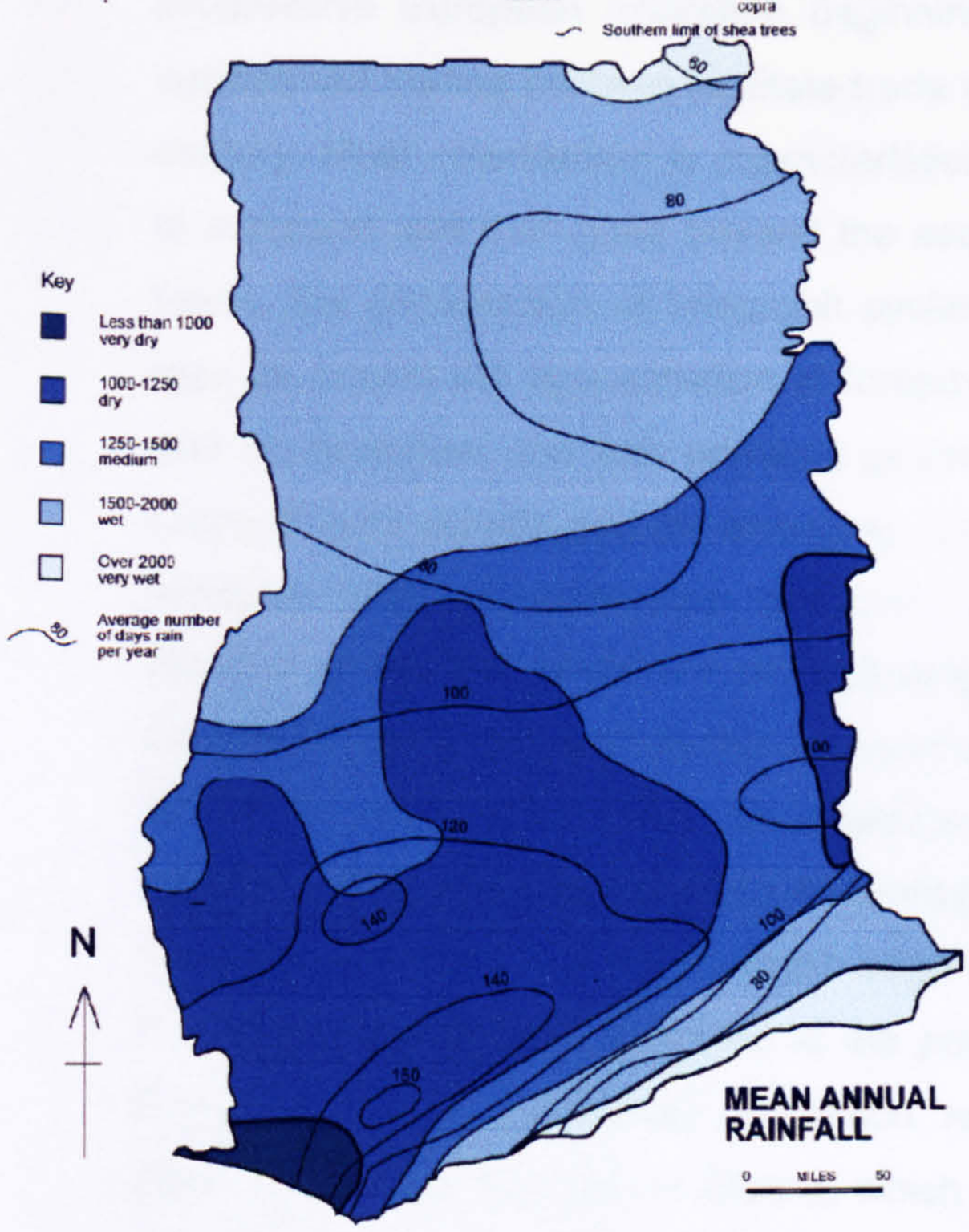
Ghana is administratively divided into ten regions spanning a variety of agro-ecological conditions The north of Ghana includes the Guinea savannah regions of Northern, Upper-West and Upper-East (Tengey *el al.*, 1999), which constitutes over 40% of Ghana and covers an area of over 27,000 square miles (43,443km²) (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1982). The country displays important variations in climate and topography, which result in distinct agricultural areas (see figure 3.1). The variations characteristically follow a north-south divide, a pattern that also holds true for many of the social and economic distinctions within the country. Indeed, natural boundaries and divisions, including climate and vegetation, can be strongly correlated with economic, social and ethnic variation from north to south (Ladouceur, 1979).

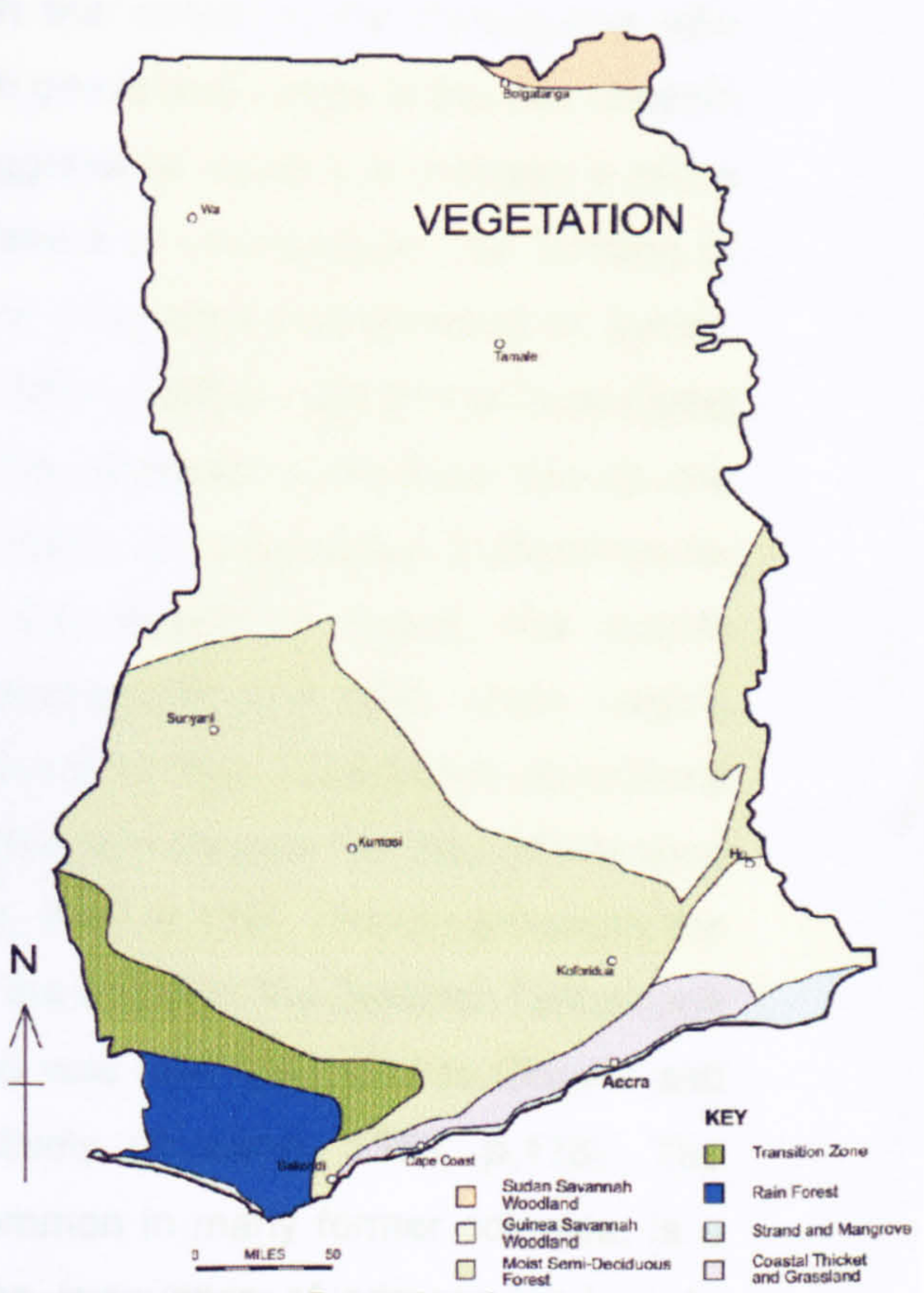
Northern Ghana has suffered repeated and chronic food insecurity caused by a combination of environmental and historical factors. Unpredictable and heavy rainfall combined with a long and intense dry period has led to soil erosion and infertility (Naylor, 2000: 54). This has, in some cases, been exacerbated by unsustainable land-use practices such as more intensive farming with shorter fallow periods, overuse of pesticides and fertilisers, and deforestation. This can increase erosion by both wind and rain, and lead to environmental degradation in some of the drier areas. During years of normal rainfall these effects are gradual, however, during periods of scarce rainfall, such as the drought years of 1982-83, they become particularly evident (Sarris and Shams, 1991: 42). The north characteristically has relatively high temperatures throughout the year ranging from 24°C to 35°C, since the northernmost point lies not more than 11.5° from the equator. The hottest months are generally March and April, whilst August is the coolest. The north tends to experience a lower annual mean rainfall of and has only one rainy season a year with rainfall increasing slowly from March, peaking in August or September followed by a prolonged dry season.

Figure 3.1: Maps illustrating physical conditions of Ghana- Crops, Soils, Rainfall and Vegetation









Source: Wills, J.B. (1962) Agriculture and Land Use in Ghana Oxford University Press, London

The Guinea savannah region is typically composed of short, often widely spaced trees, with a more or less continuous carpet of grass (Boateng, 1959). Taller tussock grasses

are also characteristic of the area, which can be highly flammable in the dry season (Lane, 1962, p.165). Soil types in northern Ghana are markedly different to that found in the south of Ghana since it has heavier rainfall and a more prolonged and intense dry season than the coastal savannah, and has less vegetation cover than the forest zone (although more than the coastal savannah due to higher average rainfall- see figure 3.1). Although the relatively thick vegetation ensures a good supply of humus, the soils are characteristically thin, since the arid climate is not conducive to the decomposition of the underlying rock. This generally means that the soils found in this zone have lower nutrient status and hence appreciably lower potential productivity than the forest soils. However, since the topography is relatively flat and annual rainfall is lower, the north probably suffers much less from the development of gullies along roads and paths than in the south (Chappell, 2001).

3.3 Historical Background

In 1957, Ghana became the first country in sub-Saharan Africa to gain independence in the wave of post-war decolonisation. Prior to this, the country had experienced progressive European infiltration beginning with the arrival of the Portuguese who established trading posts to facilitate trade in both goods and slaves in the late fifteenth century. Most colonisation is characteristically aggressive, since it is primarily a move to conquest and thus goes beyond the establishment of colonial rule. The building of roads, the construction of telegraph systems, the extraction and transport of goods, may all require the appropriation of forced local labour. British rule in the Gold Coast was no exception and was primarily geared to the extraction of revenue through the taxing of gold exports and the emerging cocoa industry. This has major implications for transport and communication networks since the supply of capital was largely determined by the possibility of exploiting mineral wealth and cash crops, largely confined to the south and central areas of Ghana, rather than subsistence agricultural resources. Had minerals been discovered in the Northern Region, the map of transport networks would have looked quite different (White, 1962, p.174). This is particularly the case with railway development, which began with the arrival of the Sekondi-Tarkwa line in 1901 to connect the gold-field to the port, and was later extended to Obuasi and Kumasi for gold and cocoa extraction respectively (Boateng, 1959, p.118). The situation that we now see in Ghana, which is common in many former colonies, is a dendritic system of transport, geared towards the evacuation of primary produce to coastal ports for onward shipment to Europe. In favoured export zones such as the

ones mentioned above, motorised transport expanded rapidly eventually producing nodes of high accessibility in certain areas by the late 1950s (Porter, 2002: 286).

Further to this, the south benefited from a number of important improvements in agriculture through introductions of new crops (particularly cacao trees, which were introduced in 1878) and the development of modern modes of extracting minerals. Many of these initiatives were attributed to Governor Guggisberg who presented a ten-year development program in 1919 involving improvements in transport, water supply and drainage, hydroelectricity, schools, hospitals and other services (Naylor, 2000). As Bourret (1960) states, 'even by the 1950s [the inhabitants of the Northern Territories] were in a primitive condition in comparison to the tribes of the Colony and of Ashanti' (p.82).

A northward extension of the railway line from Kumasi was proposed as early as 1920[1], ostensibly to stimulate the development of cash cropping and livestock farming in the north (White, 1962, p.175). The improvement of agriculture and cattle rearing was a means of providing valuable commodities to the south, rather than developing the north. As Bourret (1960) explains, 'southern areas had to depend almost entirely upon imports for their meat supply' and food crop potential in the north was believed to be sufficient to 'eventually supply the southern colonies, where interest in cocoa led the farmers to neglect subsistence agriculture' (Bourret, 1960: 84). The railway to the north was never built due to the high cost of construction, the scarcity of the population and the post-war depression in Europe (Kimble, 1963: 56) and so the north remains dependent on road transport for the movement of people and goods.

3.3.1 The Growth of North-South Inequality

The cancellation of the proposed railway extension was symptomatic of a wider pattern of limited investment and development of the north. Throughout much of the colonial period, the majority of schemes and policies focused primarily on the southern parts of the country to the detriment of the Northern Territories. Indeed, it was soon after the incorporation of the Northern Territories into the Gold Coast colony that a clear policy of interregional division of labour was placed on the agenda (Songsore, 1987: 16). Northern Ghana was to be the labour reserve for the development of productive forces centred on the export of raw materials based within the forest zone: cocoa, timber, gold

[1] Guggisberg, who was probably the only governor to regard the Protectorate in a positive light, proposed this plan. He appraised the area's potential in terms of both exportable raw materials and basic staple foodstuffs and believed that this could be achieved by extending the railway line to the north (Bening, 1999: 234).

and diamonds[2] (Plange, 1979). Further to this cause, the colonial administration discouraged the commercialisation of northern agricultural produce by impeding the development of markets and undermining existing trading circuits (ibid. p.9). So, colonialism for the south saw the transformation of the economy into one of the most dynamic in Africa whereas it paved the way for several decades of neglect and stagnation in the north (Eades, 1994: 26-7). A number of studies have emphasised the broad disparities between the north and south of Ghana in terms of levels of economic development, provision of social and economic infrastructure, education and the general quality of life (Bening, 1999; Plange, 1979, 1984; Saaka, 1987; Shepherd, 1981; Songsore, 1989). Plange (1979) states that there were 'remarkable structural differences between the Southern areas (in this sense Ashanti and the Coastal areas) and the North' reflected in '*education, urbanisation, income levels, social services, health facilities, diseases and gross levels of poverty*, occasionally escalating into famine' (p.5, emphasis in original). This was compounded by a dearth of socio-economic institutions to tackle such problems, resulting in a situation where the north was relatively backward compared to its southern counterpart.

The negative attitude of the colonial administration towards the north can be clearly illustrated by the views of F.M.Hodgson, the Governor of the Gold Coast when he declared in 1899:

> 'The country as far as is known is destitute of mineral wealth, it is destitute of valuable timbers, and does not produce either rubber or Kola nuts or indeed any produce of trade value...I therefore cannot too strongly urge the employment of all available resources of the Government upon the development of the country to the south of Kintampo leaving the Northern Territories to be dealt with in future years...I would not at present spend upon the Northern Territories...a single penny more than is absolutely necessary for their suitable administration and the encouragement of the transit trade' (quoted in Bening, 1999: 79).

This inferiority is still deeply ingrained in the national psyche, evident in the way southerners seem to look down upon those in the north as backward. Within the civil service (agricultural extension, education, health, public services etc.), a probationary posting to one of the northern regions is still considered to be unfavourable because of the lack of infrastructure and services and apparent underdevelopment of the area. Once the posting period is completed, most civil servants seek to move back 'down south' as quickly as possible. This was clearly articulated in numerous interviews with

[2] This pattern of north-south migration, which was encouraged and exploited by the colonial authorities, contributed substantially to the increased wealth of the Colony to the detriment of the north. As a consequence of the increasing number of migrant workers moving to work in the south, many towns and villages in the north had to contend with growing social imbalance from being deprived of their menfolk.

teachers, health workers, extension workers and other government employees undertaken through the course of this research. Bourret (1960) makes the argument that northerners possessed inferior intellectual capacity compared to the highly organised tribal government of Ashanti, who were subsequently able to profit from the commercial advantages that came with British rule. Northerners, in contrast, lived in 'small, uncoordinated groups' and as a result 'took no interest in commercial possibilities' leaving all trade to the foreign Hausa and maintaining their primitive habits (p. 85). As Plange (1979) points out, this kind of viewpoint, which places the blame for the north's underdevelopment on the ability and motivation of the inhabitants, is misleading and false. He argues that, 'if northerners did not avail themselves of opportunities for self advancement it was because the opportunities were just not there...it was the administration that terminated trade and also discouraged commercialisation of crops in the region and conscripted the able-bodied men to the mines' (p.13).

Because the north of Ghana had had a vastly different experience of colonialism from the south, many northerners felt that the time was not right for independence and that it was more an ambition of the south than the north. As the paramount chief of Wallembelle (Sissala District) stated:

> 'Kwame [Nkrumah], its alright if you want independence, but look at it like this. If you had three wives, one is highly pregnant, one is maybe about 6 months pregnant and the other is three months pregnant. The first wife is the Colony, the second is Ashanti and the third is the Northern Territories. If you expect them all to deliver at the same time, the 6 month will be stillborn and for the 3 month it would be abortion. We have been handicapped in the north, independence is just not realistic for us at this time' (interviewed 07/11/01).

This was a common view held by those in the north, who feared they would lag behind the more prosperous south, since many felt they had gained very little from colonialism so far (apart from the British putting a stop to Ashanti slave raiding into the north).

Upper West Region has been particularly disadvantaged in terms of the provision of economic, social, political and educational facilities and services, partly because the region did not exist until 1983 and prior to that formed part of Upper Region, administered from Bolgatanga. At independence, the former Northern Territories became Northern Region and were later divided into Northern Region and Upper Region in 1960, the latter being further subdivided into Upper East and Upper West Regions in 1983 (Bening, 1999). This final subdivision was ostensibly to create 'growth poles' in the regional capitals (Wa, Tamale and Bolgatanga) as an attempt to redress the inequality between the north and south, but to date has had very little success.

Upper West Region still expresses deep dissatisfaction with the level of attention they receive from central government and are conscious that they lag behind in almost all development indicators such as, health, education and employment (GLSS, 2000).

3.4 Economic Situation

Ghana is a country of considerable mineral wealth, which has meant that it has played an important role in regional and international trade since prehistoric times. Indeed, at independence in 1957, Ghana was considered one of the strongest and most economically prosperous countries in sub-Saharan Africa (Killick, 2000: 54). This situation had reversed by the mid-1960s and continued to decline despite a number of economic stabilisation attempts by President Rawlings in the late 1970s. This situation forced the government to enact a structural adjustment programme (SAP) in 1983 in order to reform and restructure the economy.

From 1983, Ghana, under the leadership of Rawlings and his military government, consistently implemented a SAP or Economic Recovery Programme (ERP), with relatively favourable results, according to the World Bank (World Bank, 1996). This represented a significant shift in policy direction from the previous years focus on 'radical populism' (Mohan, 1996). Critics have argued that the 'benefits' of reform have been far from uniform and a number of sectors have suffered as a result. Anyinam (1989) argued that the ERP largely failed to improve conditions for ordinary Ghanaians, since 'the cost of a minimum nutritious diet for an individual Ghanaian was ¢168 a day, even though the minimum daily wage is currently ¢112.00' and that 'imported goods that have flooded the market [were] priced beyond the pockets of the people' (p.538-9). Furthermore, the favourable economic performance of the 1980s was not maintained in the 1990s as GDP growth began to fluctuate around 4% p.a. (Foster and Zormelo, 2002). Low economic growth combined with a 'boom and bust' economic management and ballooning debt burden, resulted in a sharp reduction in public expenditure in the 1990s (ibid.).

The underlying assumption of the World Bank/IMF economic reform programmes was that economic growth would eventually 'trickle down' to the poor, which proved false in the case of Ghana. Indeed, critics have pointed out that adjustment has not led to a reduction in poverty and has, in many cases led to a worsening situation for the poor in Ghana (ODI, 1996). This is perhaps even more the case in northern Ghana, since the export orientation of the ERP has meant that little attention is paid to the production of staple crops, which are more commonly grown in the north of the country. Policy

reforms in the agricultural sector in the first and second phases of adjustment focused predominantly on the rehabilitation of the cocoa industry and reform of the marketing system (Hutchful, 2002: 67). Whilst timber, cocoa and non-traditional exports received national attention and investment, the north obtained very little assistance in terms of development due to the lack of export base (Salia, 1987: 27). In fact, food agriculture did not receive systematic attention until the adoption of the Medium-Term Development Programme (MTADP) in 1990 (Hutchful, 2002: 71). As a result, the majority of farming households who do not cultivate cocoa have experienced stagnation in their real per capita incomes since 1984 (Anyinam, 1994: 454). This is confirmed by figures in the most recent Ghana Living Standards Survey (2000), which recognises poverty in Ghana as a mainly rural phenomenon (80%) and concentrated among food crop farmers (60%), most of whom are located in the rural savannah areas in the north. Though national absolute poverty continued to decline in the 1990s (from 36% in 1991-2 to 29% in 1998-9), the percentage of absolute poor in the rural savannah zone, and the depth of their poverty, actually increased (Foster and Zormelo, 2002).

One area that received significant attention under structural adjustment was the rehabilitation of physical infrastructure (roads, railways, harbours etc.), but this is usually aimed at supporting the production and extraction of exports (and hence, the south). In 1982, the government announced that 37.1% of the $4.2 billion stabilisation programme would be spent on physical infrastructure (Anyinam, 1994: 452). From this budget, a number of major projects were undertaken and new ones put in progress to 'rehabilitate trunk, urban and arterial roads as well as feeder roads[3]' and other projects were undertaken to 'rehabilitate the Ghana Railway system and the sea ports of Tema and Takoradi' (Kwakye and Sharan, 1994: 369). Therefore, the more export-oriented south tended to benefit from such investments, and the only roads that received attention in the north of the country, in the decade after 1983, were between Yapei and Morno and Kintampo and Morno (Anyinam, 1994: 453). According to Kwakye and Sharan (1994), given the extensive area that the three northern regions cover, and the relatively low population density across much of the area, the cost of constructing roads to effectively cover the area is prohibitive, stating that there is, 'no possibility of improving rural mobility by motorised transport in such areas in the near future' (p.369).

[3] The provision and maintenance of the road network in Ghana is the responsibility of the Ministry of Roads and Highways. This ministry has three sub-sectors: the Ghana Highways Authority; the Department of Feeder Roads; and the Department for Urban Roads. Feeder roads, which form the bulk of the north's road network, are allocated only one-quarter of the total budget. The main goals of the ministry focus on contributing to economic growth, although this has had limited impact on helping to overcome the specific access problems of the rural poor (Foster and Zormelo, 2002).

The GPRS, which was prepared in February 2003, recognised the importance of redressing the limited attention that food crop farmers had received through previous policies. Furthermore, in terms of transport and infrastructure, the GPRS aimed to reduce north-south and rural-urban inequality by increasing the share of road works carried out in deprived districts, primarily in the north. The GPRS has been sustained under the new NPP party of John Kufour[4] although it is unclear to what extent this, or the new government, is likely to change the economic situation in the north of the country or reduce north-south inequality. At the time of writing, there were no clear signs to suggest that the conditions in the north had either improved or worsened, although there is little indication that the NPP are moving away from previous development trajectories (Porter et al 2003). Ghana recently joined the World Bank/IMF Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in order to obtain relief on the country's $5.8 billion foreign debt (ibid.), although the continuation of this support is dependent on the country's progress with GPRS (Foster and Zormelo, 2002: 32). This suggests a continued reliance on external support.

[4] John Kufour won power in elections held in December 2000. This, according to Hutchful (2002), was a landmark in the maturation of the democratic process in Ghana, since it was the first peaceful change of government through the ballot box and the first time an elected government had been succeeded by another elected government in 43 years of independence.

3.5 Governance and Aid

According to the World Bank, governance refers to 'the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs' and/or 'the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development' (1989, quoted in Gyimah-Boadi, 2001: 3). As highlighted by the above discussion, aid and governance go practically hand in hand since we can no longer look at state power as sovereign and autonomous. In an increasingly globalised world, policies are no longer simply internal/national matters, but rather reflect agenda's outside the state's control (Mohan, 1996: 77). Local and national government, therefore, is affected by developments in the global arena and cannot be considered in isolation from these. Donor policy, particularly World Bank/IMF policy in Ghana, as in other countries, has had a profound impact on governance and the institutions of government. According to Foster and Zormelo (2002), donors have had a significant influence on the poverty rhetoric of the government since the 1990s (first with PAMSCAD, more recently with the IPRSP). This is not surprising considering that donor support currently represents around 46% of government expenditure (ibid. p.31). An important part of structural adjustment involves rethinking the role of the state, particularly in terms of how the state relates to and is responsible for the people. A major thrust of donor and subsequently government policy has been to push for not only economic reform, but also for political reform and more specifically, good governance. Reform measures to this effect include democratisation, public service reform and decentralisation[5], all of which have profoundly affected governance and the institutions of governance.

Decentralisation has been a key component in the move to improve governance. The programme of decentralisation led to the creation of 110 district assemblies (DAs) where there had previously been only 65 (Mohan, 1996). The responsibilities of the district assemblies are primarily related to the provision of services at the local level. They are formally recognised in PNDC Law 207 and established individually through legislative instruments (ibid.). Assemblies include two-thirds elected and one-third appointed membership made up of both a political and an administrative body and comprising 22 government departments (although the capacity of some of these departments is somewhat limited in a number of districts). Along with District assemblies, area councils and unit committees were established to assist assembly members at the local level (see Mohan, 1996). Despite this, local government has

[5] The decentralisation programme began in 1988 (Haruna, 2003) with the Public Administration Restructuring and Decentralisation Implementation Committee (PARDIC), five years after structural adjustment was launched. Earlier policies aimed at instituting decentralisation were characteristically vague and confused, having little beneficial effect as a result (Mohan, 1996).

suffered from limited autonomy, since the recurrent budget is yet to be decentralised and the districts do not control their staff complements (Foster and Zormelo, 2002: 30). Furthermore, although it was intended that a Local Government Service, which all local civil servants would belong to, should be formed, this is yet to be established. Civil servants, therefore, continue to owe their loyalty to the 'parent department' to whom, in most cases, they are responsible (ibid.).

Due to lack of institutional capacity, particularly at the local level, and the effects of structural adjustment on the poor (mainly through retrenchments, currency devaluations and social service cuts), NGOs have played an increasingly important role in local service delivery. According to Kyei, the number of registered NGOs in Ghana increased from 10 in 1960, to about 80 in the 1980s, then to over 350 in 1991, to a staggering 900 by 1996, including 45 International NGOs or INGOs (cited in Porter, 2002). In many districts, local administrations are increasingly working alongside both national and international NGOs in order to build civil society and catalyse local development efforts.

3.6 Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods in Northern Ghana

Agriculture is the mainstay of the northern economy, with only limited production through manufacturing and other services, which are generally restricted to a few handicrafts and agro-based processing industries located around the urban centres of Bolgatanga, Tamale and Wa (Salia, 1987: 22). Farming in Ghana is still largely undertaken by smallholders on small plots of land, and is usually rain-fed and labour-intensive. The predominant mode of farming over much of the country is traditional, both in terms of farming system and the technology used (Sarris and Shams, 1991: 27). Inter-cropping is extensively practised along with shifting cultivation using simple hand tools such as the hoe, axe and cutlass. Draught power is used in some parts of the north due to the relative absence of Tsetse fly. By cultivating a mixture of crops, farmers reduce the risks associated with variations in rainfall and optimise the use of the soil (Sarris and Shams, 1991: 27). Input use within this traditional system is low, except for cash crops such as rice and maize, which tend to involve the use of fertiliser, at least for those who are able to afford it and have the means to obtain it. This is generally applied by men (since it is most often men who cultivate these crops) and usually without the appropriate safety equipment. The majority of the farming activity is carried out in the rainy season, with building and petty trading being undertaken during the dry season (see Chapter 6 for more detail).

According to Hutchinson (1962), of the 430,000 cattle in Ghana, the largest proportion was located in the interior savannah region of the north (p.425). This is believed to be due to the favourable climate and the relative absence of tsetse fly (Boateng, 1959: 72). Around 70 percent of all livestock in Ghana are located in northern Ghana, and in 1986, it was recorded that 77.4 percent of cattle were in the north (Al-Hassan et al., 1997: 136). According to Hill (1970), this was largely because of disease control following the first mass immunisation campaign against rinderpest in 1930. Following this programme, commercial cattle rearing rose from 69,000 to 170,000 by 1941 and to around 400,000 by 1964 (Hill, 1970: 83). More recent figures state that 70-77% of the country's cattle, 45-55% of the small ruminants and 25% of the poultry can be found in northern Ghana (Karbo and Bruce, 2000: vi). Livestock rearing provides an important source of income in the northern regions of Ghana, particularly cattle, which are extensively used for ploughing and cultivation. Cattle are also extensively used for the transportation of farm produce, farm inputs and building supplies (water, bricks, sand etc.), and are therefore an important element of the transport system.

3.7 Transport and Travel

As a result of colonial policies, and more recently government policies, northern Ghana suffered (and arguably still suffers) from poor infrastructure and service delivery. Roads are generally in a bad condition and two-thirds of the feeder road network has been classified as non-maintainable (Tengey *et al.* 1999). This is subject to a high degree of seasonality and a large proportion of feeder roads are totally impassable in the rainy season, forcing farmers to head-load farm produce, a task which invariably falls to the women and children of the compound. Indeed, in Sissala District, Upper West Region, it is estimated that around 30% of the land area is classed as so-called 'overseas areas', which has meant that, although people are able to produce plenty of food, they are unable to market their produce until the dry season[6]. Provision of basic services such as health, education and sanitation is also inadequate, particularly in rural areas where they are either not available at all, or if in place, do not work reliably. According to Tengey *et al* (1999), 40% of the rural population in the north have to walk over 15 km to receive medical attention. Such policies have left the north in a situation of relative

[6] Figure estimated by the Department of Feeder Roads, Sissala District Superintendent *(Johnson Chiame, interviewed 03/11/01)*. 'Overseas areas' are those areas that are completely cut off during the rainy season due to swollen rivers and damaged or destroyed roads. These areas are thought to be extensive throughout the three northern regions.

isolation[7], since much of the transport infrastructure is concentrated in southern Ghana with approximately 75% of the road network and all 350 miles of railroad located in the south (ibid.). However, as some scholars have argued (Plange, 1979; 1984; Songsore, 1987), northern Ghana's situation of underdevelopment was not a consequence of lack of resources leading to lack of investment in infrastructural development, but was rather a by-product of the vital need for northern labour for the mining and cocoa interests in the south.

This situation has meant that the basic infrastructure needed to improve accessibility and mobility in the north of the country has lagged far behind that of the south. Rural areas generally experience greater problems of access and mobility due to lack of infrastructure and transport provision, unless they are fortunate enough to possess mineral wealth and profitable cash crops. Rural transport conditions across Ghana, as in many sub-Saharan countries, are remarkably poor, particularly when compared to countries in Asia and Latin America (Porter, 2002). In comparison to other African countries such as Nigeria, Ghana lags behind in terms of the condition of the roads (Porter, 2002; World Bank, 1994). Roads are poor not only because of poor design, poor construction and substandard materials, but also due to lack of regular maintenance. Despite the effort that has gone into road rehabilitation in Ghana, studies indicate that there has been limited overall improvement, with only 29% of Ghana's paved roads and 10% of gravel roads in a good condition in 1997 (Wilbur Smith Associates, 1998 quoted in Porter, 2002: 287).

The poor quality of the roads and transport infrastructure in those rural areas that fall outside the main export production zones in Ghana, (primarily in the north, but also in the south- see Porter, 2002), has subsequently led to high transport costs and inadequate transport provision. The poor state of rural roads means that higher prices are charged due to additional maintenance costs and the increased likelihood of breakdown. In 1998-9, the standard charge by tro-tro (minibus) in Central Region, was around 100 cedis per passenger per unpaved road mile, compared to around 50 cedis per paved road mile, over a distance of around 10 miles (Porter, 2002: 288). Rural areas also suffer the added drawback of obtaining spare parts, which is invariably difficult, costly and time-consuming. Because of this, vehicle owners are usually

[7] Upper West is particularly isolated, partly because the main and feeder roads into and across the region are in an extremely poor state (CRI/UDS, 2000), but also have had difficulty improving their road links into Northern and Upper East Region. The Northern Regional Co-ordinating Council have been more interested in improving the road north to Bolgatanga and south to Kumasi than west to Bamboi and Wa, and since the largest proportion of the Wa-Bamboi road lies in Northern Region it falls to the NRCC to pave it (Bening, 1999:148). Without proper road links into UWR, the potential for development will be circumscribed (ibid.).

reluctant to take their vehicles on unpaved roads and may either refuse or charge exorbitant prices to do so. In some parts of the country, particularly in the north, such vehicles for hire are rare outside of the major urban centres.

In northern Ghana, the only fully paved road is the main trunk road running from Accra and Kumasi in the south, through Tamale and Bolgatanga. Only small sections have been paved for the remaining highways in the north, which is characteristically a small section running through urban centres such as Wa, Navrongo, Tumu and Damongo. Beyond these paved areas, the roads rapidly deteriorate to dirt tracks, which are frequently eroded and damaged and benefit from only sporadic maintenance and grading. In Upper West Region, the majority of the roads are classed as feeder roads and therefore under the management of the Department of Feeder Roads. An interview with Roosevelt Otoo of the DFR regional office in Wa indicated that, of the 1884.7km of the total feeder road network, only 951.1km is currently maintainable (interviewed 22/10/01). He went on to complain that the government does not pay serious attention to roads in Upper West and the region currently lacks sufficient equipment and expertise to maintain the roads.

The physical geography of the region has a number of important implications for the travel patterns of the population and also the types of transport that are suitable. The sparse vegetation means that relatively long distances have to be travelled in order to gather firewood and other products (shea, dawa-dawa etc.). Women and children carry these products on their heads along the numerous paths and tracks that criss-cross the bush and farmland. The water-scarce character of the area means that only a small number of rivers (the Volta, Pra, Ankobra and Tano) are navigable by small dug-out canoes, and these are obstructed by rapids in parts (White, 1962, p.173). As a result, water transport is not widespread. However, the flat and relatively uniform topography, along with the comparatively sparse vegetation cover characteristic of much of the area, makes it an ideal environment for a wide variety of land-based transport modes, including bicycles (and bicycle-trailers, although these are not common), bullock-carts, push-carts and so on. Furthermore, the flat and dry nature of the region means that the construction of roads and tracks is relatively cheap and easy compared to the forest zone and hilly areas, which provide obstacles to road construction (White, 1962: 174).

In rural areas of Ghana, which generally lack access to motorised forms of transport, IMTs are becoming increasingly popular. The forms of transport that predominate in the rural areas of the north are principally bicycles and animal-drawn carts. A survey by

Tengey et al. suggests that 51.4% of 400 respondents in the savannah zone owned an IMT compared to 9.8% of 600 respondents in the forest and coastal savannah zones combined (1999). All of the IMTs in the south were bicycles whereas in the north they included motorbikes, animal-drawn carts and bicycles. A study carried out in 1987 found that 76% of the estimated total of 190,000 bicycles in Ghana were in the three northern regions of the country (Ministry of Transport Bicycle Assembly study, cited in Porter, 2002). The use of animal-drawn carts is also much more common in the north than the south. This is partly because of the prevalence of tsetse fly and other animal diseases and the fact that there is no history of animal husbandry in the south (Porter, 2003a, 44). People generally have little idea about how to handle and care for bullocks in the south and feel that the terrain is totally unsuitable for this form of transport (ibid.). IMT use in general is much lower in the south than the north, in part due to terrain, rainfall, vegetation and the presence of tsetse fly in the south. Population density is also an issue, since the lower population densities in the north means that distances from village to farm can be as great as 10km or so (Porter, 2002: 13). The higher distances to farmland and other places might necessitate use of IMT, particularly given the relative absence of motorised forms of transport.

However, despite the relative abundance of IMTs in northern Ghana, they are rarely, if ever, used to undertake domestic tasks such as the collection of firewood and water. This is primarily because men tend to own and use the transport technology rather than women, who are generally responsible for such activities (see chapter 5). A 1987 World Bank survey in Ashanti, Volta and Northern Regions of Ghana revealed how inconsequential the modern transport system was in rural areas, noting that the majority of trips, particularly within the village, were done exclusively by walking and headloading (Bryceson and Howe, 1993: 3). The survey also revealed that 73% of total travel was internal to the village, rising to 76% in respect of load carrying travel, which was overwhelmingly in favour of basic needs provisioning (ibid.). External travel accounted for a relatively small percentage and was generally to places in the surrounding area. Longer distance travel accounted for an 'insignificant proportion of total trips (less than 0.6%)' (Ibid.). Given their preponderance in basic needs provisioning and their lack of purchasing power coupled with cultural constraints, women are overwhelmingly responsible for transporting of goods and yet are far less likely to own and use an IMT than their menfolk (Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Porter, 2002). This is discussed in more detail in chapter five.

3.7.1 IMT Promotion in Northern Ghana

Donor organisations and NGOs have played an integral part in the promotion of IMTs in Ghana since the late 1980s, primarily in the rural north than the south. The World Bank has funded many of the more substantial IMT initiatives. A relatively recent initiative is the World Bank/Ministry of Food and Agriculture's Village Infrastructure Project (VIP), which commenced in 1997 with an 18 month pilot phase. The rural transport component included selective improvement of feeder roads (including consideration of track and footpath improvement) and IMTs (focussing on power tillers, bicycles with trailers and donkey carts) (Porter, 2003a: 15). The implementation of the IMT component was carried out by the NGO Self Help Foundation (SHF), who were tasked with vigorously promoting IMTs in Ghana, mobilising farmers to take advantage of the package and undertaking the training (Wilberforce Ansah, SHF interviewed 19/07/01). Another major initiative is the World Bank RTTP (Rural Travel and Transport Programme), a component of the Sub-Saharan Africa Transport Policy Programme (SSATP), based within the Department of Feeder Roads (see Adarwka et al. 2000 for a review of this project). In the north of Ghana, the RTTP focussed mainly in Northern Region with the Northern Region Pilot Infrastructure Scheme, which started in 1993/4. This project focussed mainly on improving feeder roads, although there was an element of IMT promotion (mainly power tillers and bicycle-trailers). According to Adarkwa et al. (2000), the promotion of IMT through the DFR has suffered from 'low demand, high cost of capital and the depreciation of the local currency' (p.56). At present, the DFR and MOFA IMT initiatives operate entirely in isolation from each other, although there are obvious points of interaction that could be fostered.

Other organisations have also included an IMT component to their project work. IFAD appear to have had the most success in promoting the use of animal traction (particularly bullock-drawn carts and ploughs) in northern Ghana, offering equipment and training on a finance basis. Other organisations that have played a part in the promotion of IMTs in Ghana, albeit on a smaller scale than the World Bank programmes, include Amasachina, ADRA (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), Actionaid and Riders for Health. Some of these organisations, such as Amasachina and ADRA, have worked on larger programmes as facilitators and motivators. For example, Amasachina worked on the mobilisation and training component of the DFR/RTTP initiative. Some government ministries such as the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, have encouraged and supported the use of motorbikes to staff involved in outreach and extension in all regions of Ghana.

3.8 The Position and Condition of Women

Ghana's ethnic, cultural and agro-ecological diversity makes generalisation about gender relations and the division of labour, and their consequences for women's access to resources, decision-making and status very difficult (Baden et al, 1994: i). Furthermore, the diversity of women's experiences has been further amplified by differences in historical development and regionally biased development policies. However, some generalisation is possible and it is clear that women play a vital role in rural Ghana and constitute around 52 percent of the country's total population (GLSS, 2000) and 51 percent of the total workforce (Sarris and Shams, 1991: 92). They account for around 70 percent of the total food crop production, process and market nearly all the grain and starchy staple foods, and constitute about 30 percent of the heads of households (Ministry of Agriculture, 1990: 48) although a relatively small proportion of women heads of household are located in the rural savannah areas in the north (GLSS, 2000). Generally speaking, women bear a disproportionate share of the burden of being poor. Women are obliged to spend a great deal of time and energy not only working in family enterprises (predominantly agriculture), but also in the nurture and rearing of children and in important household tasks. Throughout much of Ghana, women have very limited or no control over productive resources and income accruing from their labour (Kofie-Yariga *et.al* 2000).

Within the three northern regions, the condition of women is rendered harsh by the combined impact of severe climatic conditions, low productivity, limited options outside of small-scale farming, and poor service and infrastructure provision (ibid.). The division of labour in Ghana is highly gender segregated in both the traditional and modern wage sectors (Ofori-Bah, 1998). Within rural agricultural areas, which constitute the majority of northern Ghana, women and men perform different household and farm-related activities irrespective of whether households are male or female-headed. Although women's main economic roles are in food crop production on their own or their husband's farm, they also participate in a range of important off-farm activities (see chapter 5 for a fuller discussion of this in relation to the field site). Despite their extensive role in farming, women do not have direct access to land. In northern Ghana, people have usufruct rights to the land, which is neither bought nor sold, but passed down from generation to generation. Women's access to land is predominantly through the husband, or through other male family members if unmarried or widowed. Women tend to farm a small plot of land through their husband

and also work on the family farm[8]. Because of this, women earn very little income, since the money from the family farm typically goes to the husband. The small amount of income earned through petty trading and farming is usually used to supplement the family income rather than larger investments (cattle, farm inputs etc.).

Islamic ideology gives religious sanction to the dependent status of women and their seclusion, based on the premise that men provide for the material needs of women and children. The incidence of seclusion varies depending on the context within which it is set. In Ghana, seclusion appears to be a largely urban and upper class phenomenon and is rarely, if ever, practised in rural areas. In many areas of northern Ghana, including the village under study in this research, Muslim laws have very little impact on the everyday lives of women, particularly in rural areas where their labour is needed on the farm. As one farmer stated, 'if you do that you can't get food to eat' *(Seibu, young male farmer, interviewed 13/10/01)*. Another farmer also pointed out that most people feel that Islam is a 'foreign religion' in the area, since it only became widespread a generation ago *(Ibrahim, interviewed 07/05/02)*. The majority of people therefore combine their traditional beliefs with those of Islam. They will pray five times a day and fast during Ramadan, but many continue to believe in their old Gods. As a result, unlike some Islamic areas, women continue to enjoy relative freedom of movement and take a full and active part in agricultural and domestic activities. Women's relative lack of freedom of movement, in most cases, has much less to do with Islam and seclusion than the general control that men are able to exercise over women and their use of space. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

[8] Furthermore, as Ofori-Bah (1998) notes, it is not uncommon for women to be forced off fertile plots when the men have decided on other uses for those holdings (p.6).

3.9 The Field Study Area

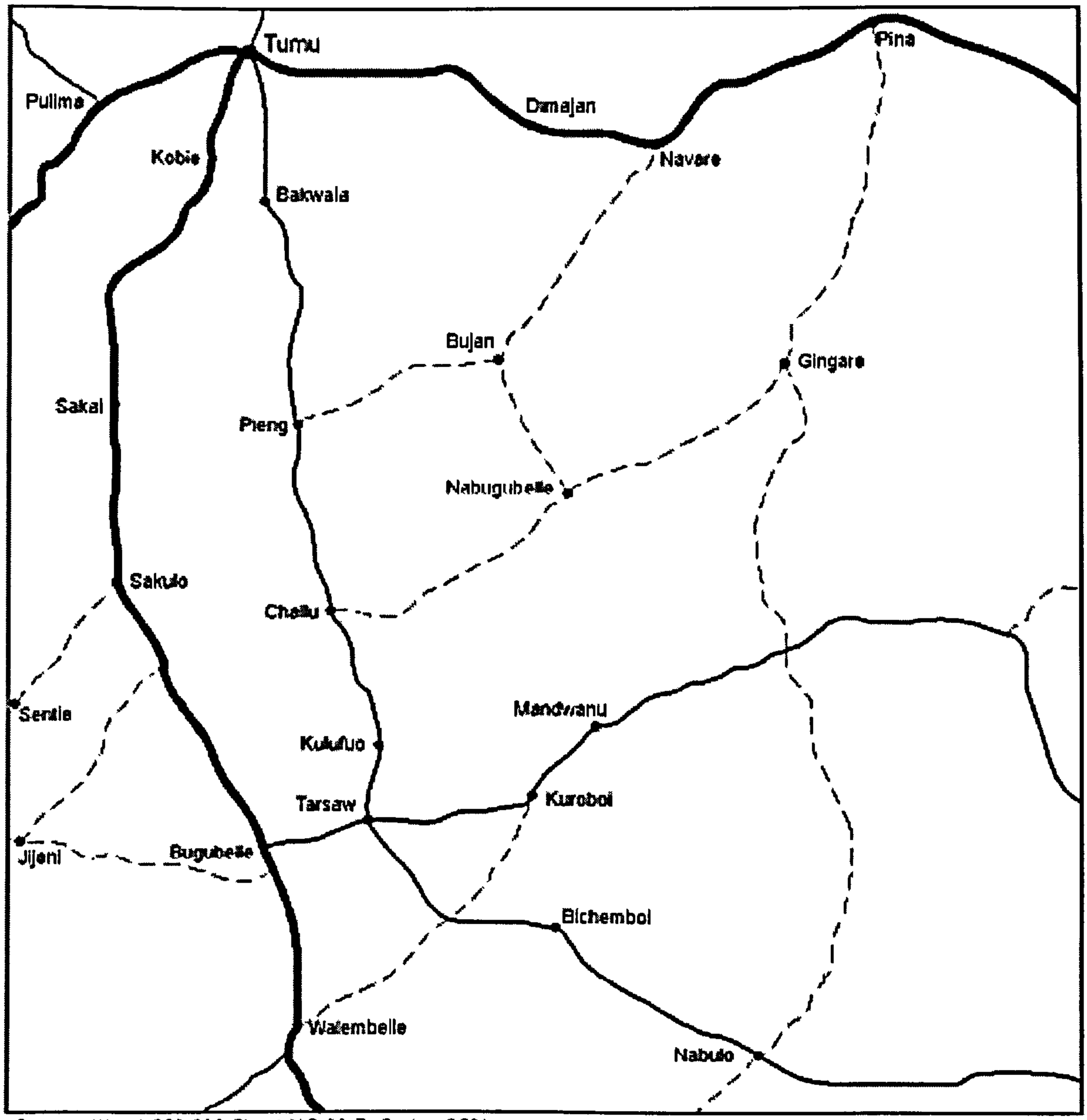


Figure 3.2: Sissala District map
For location of the field study area in Ghana, refer to Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1.

3.9.1 Sissala District, Upper West Region

Sissala District is the largest of the five districts in UWR, covering roughly 39% of the total land area of the region (other districts are: Wa, Lawra, Jirapa/Lambussie and Nadawli). The topography of the district is gently undulating and flat in parts, with some

outcrops of granitic rock. As in the rest of northern Ghana, the climate of Sissala district is tropical continental, characterised by a single rainy season from March/April to August/September. The long dry season, coupled with the harmattan winds which blow from December to March, provide ideal conditions for bush fires, which can be a major environmental hazard and a danger to crops and animals.

The Guinea savannah vegetation supports a range of different trees (Shea, Dawa-dawa, mango), which provide firewood, wood for the construction of houses and additional sources of food. It is also ideal for growing maize, groundnuts, millet, yam, beans, bambara beans and rice. Vegetables such as okra, chilli, garden eggs and tomatoes are grown, although the latter two require careful attention and plenty of watering in order to survive. The area is mainly drained by the Kulpawn and Sissili river systems, both of which are reduced to intermittent pools in the dry season. Until the implementation of the Upper Regions borehole-drilling programme in the 1970s and 1980s, this seasonal shortage of water was apparently one of the major causes of out-migration from the district (Sissala District Development Plan, 2000). According to a recent study carried out by Technoserve, the seasonal use of different water sources is distributed as indicated in figure 3.3.

Figure 3.3 Seasonal sources of water

	WET SEASON	DRY SEASON
	% Households	% Households
Piped Water	4.0	4.9
Well	15.5	11.4
Borehole	66.1	73.1
River/stream/spring	4.7	4.0
Dam/dug-out/pond	5.7	6.6
Rain water	4.0	N/A

Source: Technoserve, Upper West Region Baseline Survey, 1997

The district is predominantly inhabited by people of the Sissala tribe (95% of total district population), although there is a minority of Kassenas in the east and Dagarti-speakers in the west of the district (Sissala District Development Plan, 2000). Almost the entire population of the district is located in rural areas, apart from those residing in Tumu, which is the only urban settlement in the district. These villages, totalling 155, are widely dispersed over the district, with some located up to 50km or more from Tumu. As a result of this, Sissala District has a relatively low population density compared to other parts of Upper West, notably Lawra and Jirapa-Lambussie (Sissala District Development Plan, 2000).

3.9.2 The Case Study Village: Tarsaw

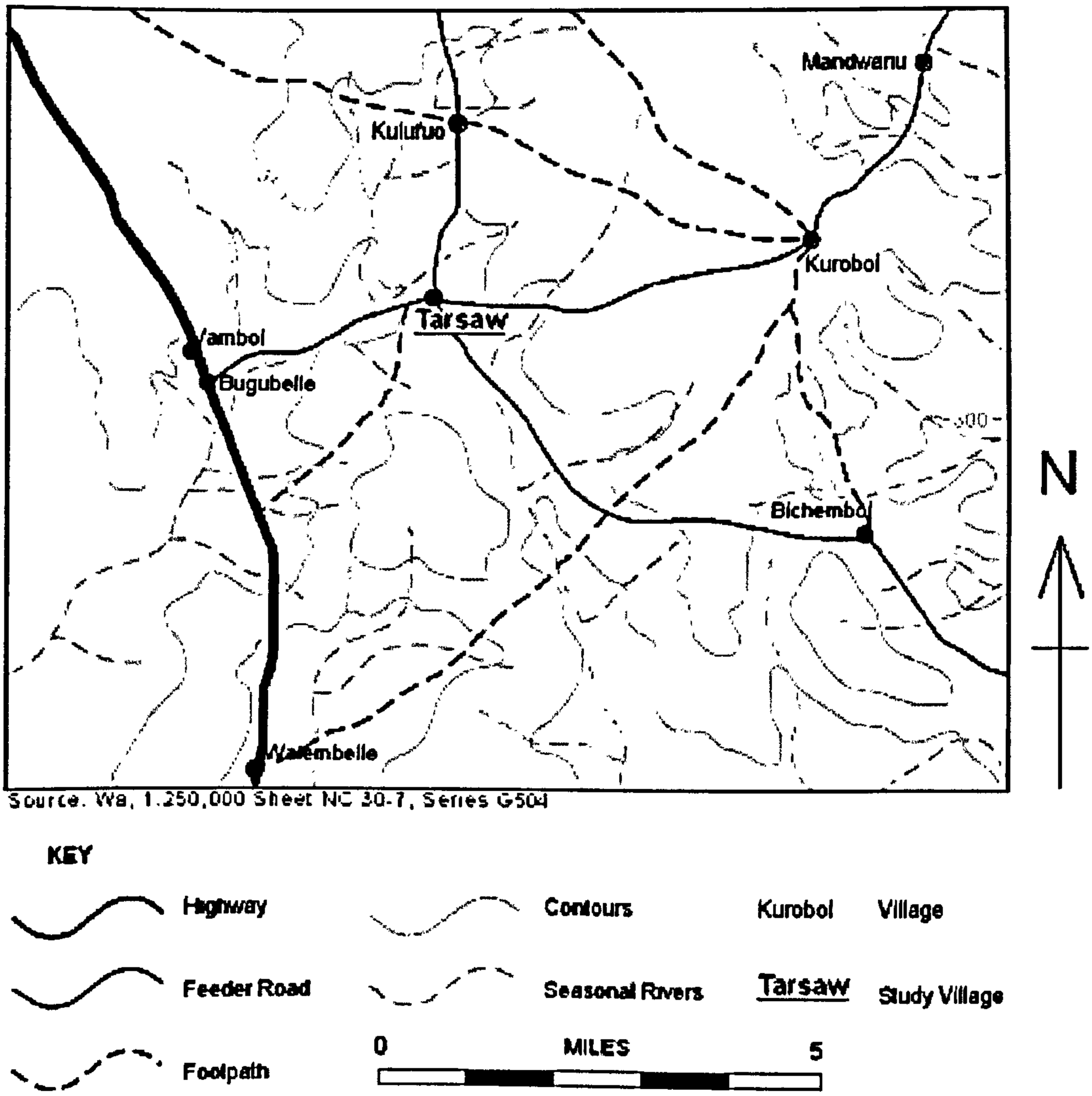


Figure 3.4: Map of Tarsaw and surrounding area

Tarsaw is a relatively remote village in Sissala District, located about 20-25 miles south of the district capital, Tumu (see figure 3.2) with a population of roughly 800 inhabitants, all of which are Sissali. The village is situated at a junction, with four roads radiating out towards Bichemboi/Nabulo, Kuroboi/Manduanu, Kulufuo/Challu and Bugubelle. All of these roads are intermittently graded dirt roads, which suffer some erosion, although rarely to the extent of gullying. Most of the seasonal rivers are bridged with culverts, which avoids extensive erosion around river crossings. Most of these roads are passable throughout the year, although the culvert between Kulufuo and Tarsaw has suffered from damage by erosion, making crossing by cars and larger vehicles very difficult. Most vehicles that try to reach Tarsaw from the direction of Tumu (north) travel on the much better surfaced Tumu-Walembelle road (classed as a highway and maintained by the Ghana Highways Authority) and take the road from Bugubelle to Tarsaw and beyond. This road, although still a dirt road, has been

widened and graded and has recently had culverts put in place along its length, reducing the risk of damage during the rainy season.

3.9.2.1 The Social and Economic Context of Tarsaw

The majority of the population rely on agriculture (both for subsistence and sale) for their livelihoods. There are a small number of traders, food sellers, dressmakers and artisans in the village, although most of these will also farm (see chapter 5). Most farmers rely on quite rudimentary tools to farm with, such as hoes and cutlasses, although a growing number also have access to bullocks for ploughing (see photograph 3.1)

Photograph 3.1: farmer ploughing using bullocks



Tarsaw itself is part of the Galibaka sub-group of the Sissala tribe. There are three other villages included in this sub-group: Kulufuo, Wallembelle (where the paramount chief is based) and Bugubelle (the market town). It is believed that the Galibaka migrated south to this area following attacks from the Zabarima and Samorian tribes, towards the end of the nineteenth century[9]. People of the Galibaka group have a strong identity and feel themselves to be distinct from other parts of Sissala[10], and have

[9] The story of the Galibaka tribes migration to this area was told to me by several of the Tarsaw village elders, the Paramount chief in Wallembelle and even some of the younger men in the village. There appears to be a strong tradition of passing on important stories like this to younger members of the family, usually during evening 'story-telling' sessions.

[10] According to the paramount chief, the Sissala 'tribe' did not exist until the British arrived. Because the area was populated by small tribes such as the Galibaka, some with a chieftaincy system and others without, the British decided to group them all under the name of Sissala (the name for one of the tribes they encountered in this area). Because of this, most people would identify themselves as Galibaka before Sissala.

slightly different facial markings from other parts of the Sissala tribe (three scars radiating out from the sides of the mouth as opposed to two for other groups). Of the four Galibaka villages Kulufuo was the first to be settled and is therefore the senior of the four villages, despite the paramount chief currently residing in Wallembelle. As Kulufuo started to grow, some of the families decided to look for new areas to inhabit further south and came upon Tarsaw. This area was chosen because of the large number of trees, which provided shade, building products and a food source. Later Bugubelle and Wallembelle were settled. Bugubelle was chosen to be the market town because it is central to all the Galibaka villages. The Galibaka share many traditions and customs (all taboo the porcupine and are therefore forbidden to kill or eat them) and representatives from each village are required to meet on a regular basis and when particular problems arise.

The village is organised through a series of hierarchies, the village chief having overall authority, although in practice he consults with his elders over most of the important issues. The chief and elders decide on the rules and regulations that the village has to abide by and are authorised with the power to enforce those rules[11]. The chief will also make the call for all able-bodied people to participate in communal labour when this is required (for example, to help in the construction of a communal building etc.). The village itself is organised into seven sections: Tangoboi; Bukemboi; Jakpaboi; Taluwuo; Balosumo; Bombieboi and Forkuwieboi[12]. Each section has a section head, which is generally one of the male elders of the village[13]. When any problems or issues arise, the section head has to be informed in order to convey it to the chief. Any person can go to the section head with a problem, although most issues are usually conveyed via the compound heads or other senior men from the compound[14]. The chief and elders generally meet up every other Friday in order to discuss village matters, although this is

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[11] Ghana has an elaborate system of Houses of Chiefs, including several hundred traditional councils, ten Regional Houses of Chiefs and a National House of Chiefs. The relationship between this traditional system and the decentralised government is complex. At the village level, chiefs generally assume responsibility for the immediate needs of the people in their village, including traditional law and order and general welfare.

[12] Each section is apparently related to a particular branch of the family. The original settlers lived in Bukemboi, which is the 'senior' section of the village. Later on six junior brothers started up their own compounds and the village has grown within these seven main sections.

[13] Each section also has a senior woman elder to represent them, but their role is to deal solely with issues related to women. If the chief has any problems or issues with one of the women in a particular section, he will go to the female elder to discuss it.

[14] Compound, rather than family is the most appropriate term in this respect. Whilst the term is not unproblematic, it does imply a co-resident unit and a shared set of activities related to production, reproduction and consumption, whereas 'family' denotes kinship ties that fulfil certain functions without necessarily inhabiting a common geographical space. Within a compound, a number of separate family units will often reside. These family units can be termed 'households' in the sense that they 'eat from the same pot' i.e. they produce and consume as a unit, distinct from the geographical space.

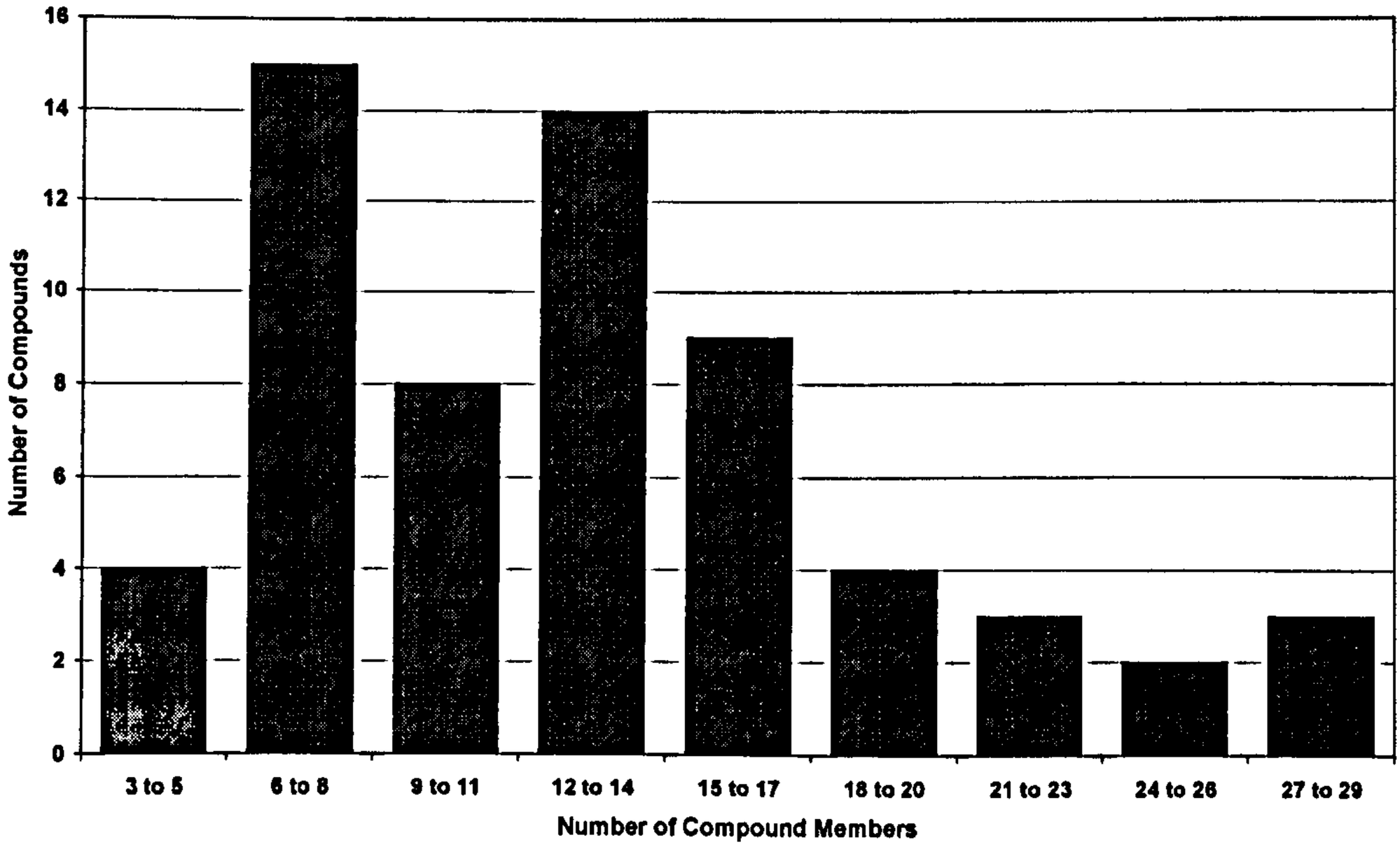
considerably less frequent during the peak farming seasons. The issues discussed can include good times to plant various crops, how to deal with incoming NGOs etc. and how to deal with local crimes (theft of crops etc.) and so on. Women rarely attend such meetings since it is generally not deemed to affect them directly and they rarely have the time to attend. Women are only called to such meetings if the discussion includes issues of direct relevance to women, but this is very rare.

The area adheres to a patrilineal form of descent, whereby ancestry is traced through the paternal line. This confers 'jural status, rights of inheritance and succession to property and offices, ritual privileges and obligations and determines political allegiance' (Manoukian, 1951: 25). This system means that, upon marriage, women are required to migrate to the husband's natal village, only returning to their hometowns for funerals and other family related reasons. It also means that, if a husband and wife divorce, the children of that union remain with the father, since they are part of his 'property' and wealth. Furthermore, since all of the Galibaka villages belong to the same family, it is forbidden for people to marry within or between the four villages. Men therefore have to search for their bride from villages outside of this area (the usual meeting places are markets, outdoorings, funerals, weddings etc.). Some of these towns and villages, such as Wa, Pina, Bolgatanga, Kajiperi and Pulima are considerable distances from Tarsaw, far in excess of 50km away. The majority of the women come from villages within a 10-15km radius, such as Challu, Nabulo, Vanboi, Nmanduano and Bichemboi. Since marriage ties are strong between these villages, men and women continue to meet from these villages through weddings, funerals and market days.

Polygamy is very common, sanctioned both through traditional values and Muslim beliefs. Under Muslim law, men can marry up to four wives as long as they are able to adequately provide for them and treat them all fairly. Traditionally, men were allowed an unlimited number of wives, the number being determined by a man's status and wealth, with village chiefs usually having the most. Men also used to inherit wives through the death of a senior brother. This practice still continues, albeit to a lesser degree. Because men are now restricted to having only four wives, these widows still come to live in the man's house but without going through the formal process of marriage. As shown in Appendix 1, 47 of the 166 adult men in the village have two or more wives. The total number of married men, which is not shown in the Appendix, is 112. Therefore, fewer than half the married men live in a polygamous marriage. Men with more than one wife are generally the more senior of the compound.

Compounds generally consist of the male head, his wives and children/grandchildren and sometimes his brother or brothers with their wives and children/grandchildren, extended family members through the paternal line, and possibly other dependents such as the elderly mother (again from the paternal line) and sometimes female cousins who come to work as maidservants. There is a range of different residential domestic units within Tarsaw as shown in figure 3.5 below.

Figure 3.5: Table showing the range and variation of compound size (n=62)



A small number of compounds are very small, consisting of a husband, his wife and children, operating more like a nuclear unit. More common is the extended family unit, with both close and extended family members. As shown in figure 3.5 above (drawn from data presented in Appendix 1), compounds vary considerably in size, although the highest number of compounds have between 6 and 8 members. Very few compounds have more than 18 members. Below is a table showing a small selection of compounds (extracted from Appendix 1), demonstrating the variations in composition of domestic units.

Figure 3.6: Variation in Residential Domestic Units

Compound No.	Number of			
	Men	Women	Boys	Girls
1	4	4	1	2
5	2	1	0	0
11	4	5	5	12
22	1	3	2	6
23	3	6	14	4
32	1	1	3	2
37	8	6	4	5
54	6	6	10	5

Source: 2001 Household Survey

Compound 5 and 32 are small nuclear units. The former consists of an elderly couple and their 30 year-old son, who has not yet married. This is generally considered to be unusual in this area. The couple are blessed with seven daughters and only one son. All the girls have married and subsequently left the village. As a consequence of the compound's small size, and lack of adult men, they are unable to farm a large area of land. Furthermore, the compound's lack of young boys means that they have no one to handle bullocks and therefore do not own them (this might also be because they cannot afford to purchase them).

I did come across cases in other compounds where young boys were 'borrowed' from other branches of the family to tend the bullocks, in the same way that young female relatives are brought in to work as maidservants. These boys live, eat and work in that compound, until such time as they are needed in their father's compound. Where a compound has a surplus of young girls or boys (possibly more than they are able to feed), or is lacking in this respect, they are loaned or borrowed to redress this, where possible. This practice, which is generally more common with young girls, is a widespread custom, making up for labour shortages in a particular compound.

In contrast to compound 5, number 54 is very large, consisting of the compound head, his five junior brothers, their wives and offspring. This compound is able to provide labour to farm a large area of land. In addition to the crops grown on the family farm shown in Appendix 1, three of the junior brothers also farm their own plot of land in order to feed their 'branch' of the family. As the compound head explains it, 'I am too old to farm, but my junior brothers all work on my farm since I am head of the family, but also have their own farms. After harvesting, I will take some and give some to them to buy his own clothing and to manage his own affairs' *(Sumani Siafu, life history interview, 29/03/02)*. The compound members have been able to purchase a large number of bicycles, which are usually used by the junior brothers.

In larger compounds, the different family groups that live within the compound may either operate as different production and consumption units, or as one unit. In compounds where there are a large number of adult men resident, each adult male will, in most cases, grow his own produce to feed his own family unit. Where older, married sons are still resident in the father's compound, he may farm as a nuclear unit, although in some cases he will farm for the father and live off the crops from the main farm. The variety and complexity of such families is illustrated by this quotation: 'we are many in our house so we can't all work the same farm. Food preparation depends on

which farm you work on. There are four farms within our compound and three boys. I am working with one of my brothers but the other one is working on his own farm, although we sometimes still help him. The farm that I and my brother work is where we get our money. We all come together after harvesting and contribute food for our mother, who prepares the food for everyone' *(Ibrahim Benin, informal discussion, 09/03/02)*. In this compound, the father had died some years back so the senior brother (Ibrahim) was generally in charge of family affairs.

The size and composition of a compound has implications for the amount and type of work that each individual is required to undertake. Although there is rarely any pooling of labour resources between adult women (for a number of complex reasons, which will be explored in more depth in Chapter 5), women may benefit from the labour of their daughters, but less so their sons. In compounds that contain a large number of girls, the burden placed on the women, particularly in terms of water and firewood collection, is often relieved to a certain extent. Husbands and compound heads generally have overall control over the labour of the compounds inhabitants, but generally utilise the labour of sons for work on the farm, rather than daughters. In polygamous marriages, although there is limited pooling of labour between wives, each wife benefits to a certain extent, primarily because they may alternate which day they prepare the food for the husband.

As previously mentioned, there is limited pooling of labour resources or money within the compound, beyond occasional payments to senior compound members, as discussed above. Men are responsible for their income and rarely share their money with women beyond occasionally helping with specific items or paying for healthcare. Husbands are responsible for providing their wives with staple food and occasionally buying them footwear or clothing. Women receive income from farming a small plot on their husband's land, collecting and selling bush products, and petty trading. Women do not share their money with their husband or co-wives. This is largely because, if a woman were to share her money with her husband, he might use it to acquire another wife. If a woman were to share money or property (or labour) with a co-wife (commonly referred to as 'rival'), it might be used to gain some advantage against them. For example, the rival wife may use the money to purchase better ingredients to flavour her food, thereby winning the husbands favour. As a result, women's labour and money is highly individualised, despite the often large, extended residential units of polygamous compounds, which could provide opportunities for pooling.

Women use their money to purchase goods for their children and particular items such as ingredients, bowls, basins and other items for their own use. These items are not shared with other members of the compound. Women are responsible for the acquisition of these items for their own use. As one woman states: 'a man would very rarely buy pots and pans for his wife, she has to buy them herself. Some men will do but it is generally considered to be an insult to the woman is he does this' *(Safia Buno, interviewed 14/10/01).* This has particular implications for the purchase and use of IMTs, which is discussed in more detail later in this thesis.

3.9.2.2 Wealth Differentiation at the village and compound level

Within the village, there is a certain amount of wealth differentiation between individuals and compounds, which is evident in the standard of housing (zinc or straw roofing, cement or mud walls, and cement or mud floors), ownership of transport (see section 3.8.2.2) and standard of dress. Within Tarsaw, men are the heads of the compound and are therefore responsible for the money from farming and compound expenditure. Because of this, it is generally men who are considered to be either rich or poor. It is possible for a woman to become relatively rich through her own efforts (collecting bush products and farming a small plot on her husband's farm), but most women are unable to earn large sums of money from this and are generally not as wealthy as their husbands, fathers or other male kin. Women are sometimes able to accumulate wealth through the help of their husbands- initial finance to begin trading or help with the farming- although it does not necessarily follow that a wealthy man will have a wealthy wife. As one woman stated, 'women can be poor in a rich man's house. She will get food but she might have nothing else. If she doesn't grow her own groundnuts or do other things she will have nothing. People will show her less respect because of this since she has not worked hard enough. She might think that because she is married to a rich she does not have to work hard, but this is not true' *(Safia Buno, interviewed 14/10/01).*

Some women have been able to build up their own wealth with the help of money from their father or mother. It is quite rare (but not impossible) for women to become wealthy without help from others, although some have managed to improve their situation quite considerably through their hard work. In such cases, women have become wealthier than their husbands, though this would not be evident to the outsider. A woman may in these circumstances provide money to her husband, although it is considered to be in the best interest of both parties to keep quiet about this.

Poverty and wealth are apparent not only in material ways, but is also embodied through an individual's comportment and behaviour towards others. A poor person *(Nyao)* is generally unable to solve his (or her) own problems and tends to ask for help from others. Ploughing and harvesting times provide particular difficulties for poor people in this respect, since they will generally need to beg for the use of bullocks and/or a plough/cart in order to farm their land. Without this kind of help, the person will be unable to cultivate enough crops to feed his family and will slip even further into poverty. A man who has to beg for help from others in order to feed and cloth himself and his family will usually hold his head up in pride or talk with confidence in the company of other men. A poor woman is less able to provide her family with tasty food or to clothe herself and her children well. She will also be unable to furnish her room with the bowls and pans that are such apparent signs of a woman's wealth or poverty.

Being poor is not only evident in dress and living conditions, but also in the amount of respect shown by others. As one woman says, 'people are proud if they are rich and relate to people differently than a poor person. People won't listen to what a poor man has to say even if he has a view that is beneficial. They will listen to the rich man' *(Mary Bawa, interviewed 18/10/01)*. One woman explained this in terms that, 'you must respect the rich person because by doing that he can also do something for you so you can help yourself. If you don't give them this respect, you will not get their support or help' *(Hawa, women's group discussion, 27/04/02)*. Poor people are generally more dependent on help from others in order to meet their needs. If you are poor, people are not likely to listen to your opinions or take heed of your advice (and you are less likely to offer it). Consequently, a poor person would carry their body in deferential respect towards others, acutely aware of their position within the social hierarchy. A rich person *(Kiatina)*, on the other hand, would carry him or herself with much more confidence and feel free to voice opinions to others.

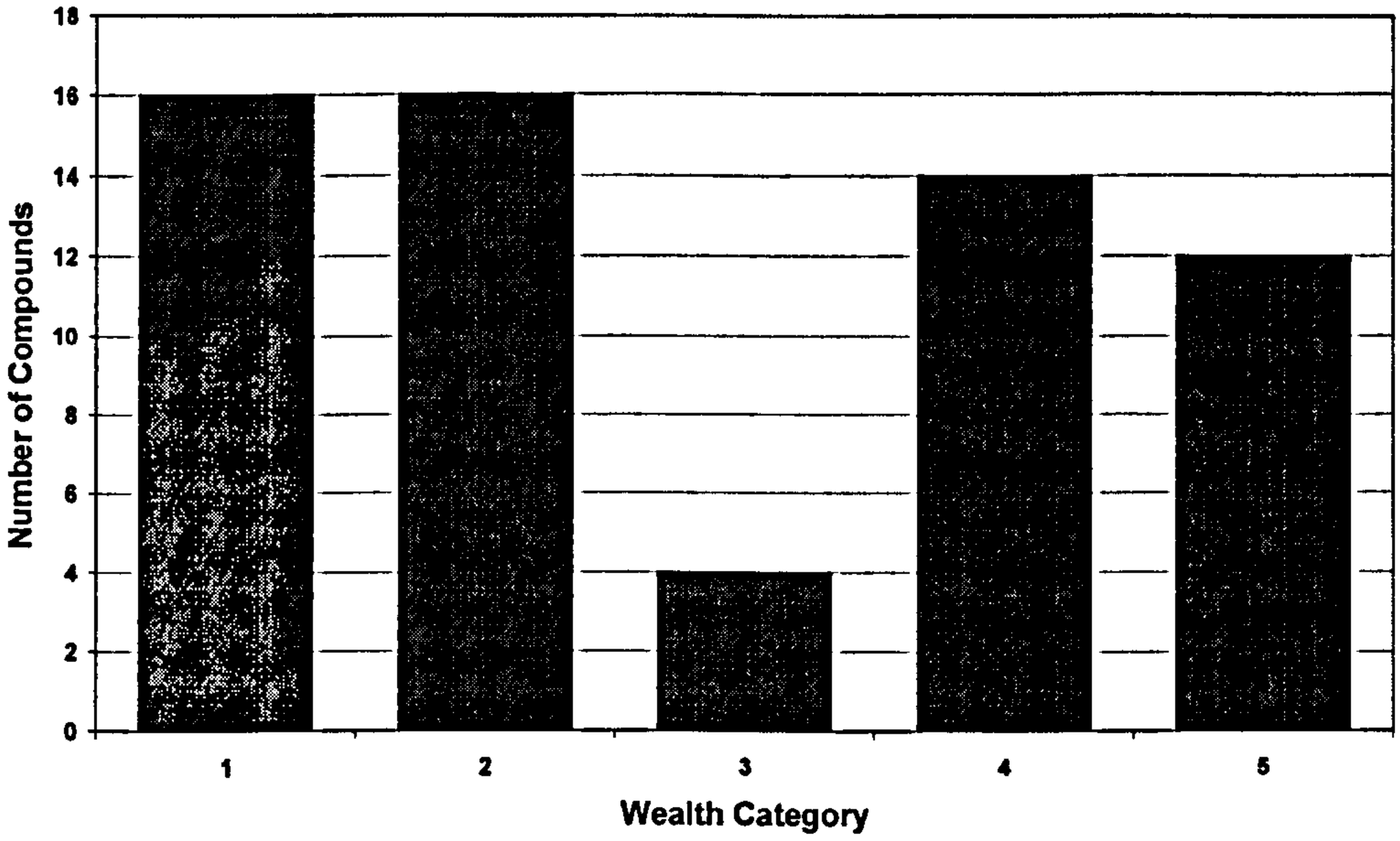
The very poor or destitute are known as *Nito*, which literally translates to mean someone who has no use. *Nito* are generally considered to be lazy people, since they do not want to work at all. Since there is always work to do in a rural area such as this, many feel that there is no excuse for being totally destitute. The disabled, elderly and infirm, who are effectively destitute, are not called *Nito,* since their poverty does not stem from laziness, but rather an inability to contribute productively.

A rich person is generally a successful farmer, has a large family to help on the extensive farm, has cattle and other livestock and is able to solve his (or her) problems

and often those of others. As one woman pointed out, 'during the farming season rich people would be using their bullocks, but the poor people cannot get those things so they use the hoe' *(Adisatu, women's group discussion, 27/04/02)*. A rich man is able to afford more wives and therefore have more children, which will enable his compound to grow and prosper since children are also regarded as sources of wealth. A rich man can improve the compound's productivity by providing bicycles for his sons and for himself (buying a bicycle for a woman is not considered to contribute to farm productivity). Some rich men might use some of their money to buy themselves a motorbike, although this is not always the case. On the whole, rich people are more mobile than their poorer counterparts, and are therefore able to access health and other services more easily.

A person's financial status can also be evident in the person's physical size. Those who are wealthy are able to grow 'fat' as a consequence of their diet, whereas their poorer counterparts grow 'lean'. These words are often used to describe a rich or poor person regardless of their actual physical girth. A 'fat' person may not necessarily be physically rotund, but may be wealthy enough to become fat. By naming a person 'fat' or 'lean', one is also making a statement about their financial status.

Figure 3.7: Wealth categories of compounds (n=62)



In a wealth ranking exercise carried out by my research assistant in the second fieldwork phase, five relatively distinct categories of wealth were identified in Tarsaw on the basis of compounds (the number and nature of the categories were not determined before the exercise- see chapter 4). Category 1 = wealthiest, 5 = poorest. The people in category 1 are generally able sell a sizeable amount of their produce and are

therefore described as able to solve their problems, own many animals and be more mobile than other compounds (because they can afford to use local motorised transport more often, when available, and tend to own more IMTs than other compounds). In some cases, the men have more wives and children. Compounds in category 2 also have a relatively good standard of living, but do not have as many animals as category 1. Compounds in category 3 are neither wealthy nor poor, although they are generally able to cater for the compound members and sell surplus from the farm produce. Compounds in category 4 were considered to be poorer because they lacked animals. Some compounds would own a pair of bullocks, but not cows or small ruminants. Category 5 would not own any animals, would probably live in thatched-roof compounds and only farm a small plot of land. The numbers in each category are shown in the table above (figure 3.7). It should be noted, however, that whilst these categories provide a useful guide to a compound's general wealth status, they do not highlight the differentiation between individuals within the compound. As previously mentioned, this can be significant.

3.9.2.3 Transport in Tarsaw

There are four main means of transport that are owned and used within the village: bicycle, bullock-cart, motorbike and car/lorry. Bicycles are by far the most numerous in the village, totalling 147 according to the household questionnaire conducted in September 2001 (see Appendix 2). This is followed by the bullock-cart (48), motorbike (11) and car (1). In a life history interview with an elderly woman, she spoke about the arrival of the first means of transport to the area. The first means of transport to arrive was the bicycle, which was owned by 'a great (i.e. wealthy) man in town' who was from Vamboi and worked for feeder roads cutting the gutters *(Adamu Salamatu, life history interview, 02/07/02)*. At this time, it was only men owning and using bicycles because the women 'even if she should buy a bicycles people would kill her with witchcraft. So even if she had the money, she would give it to the husband to buy and he would be using it' *(ibid.)*.

All compounds owned at least one bicycle, with some of the larger compounds having considerably more than this. This was partly related to compound size, but also to do with the relative wealth of the compound (see Appendix 1). Bicycles are an important means of transport in Tarsaw, both for transporting people and goods. They are used for the majority of travel, both within and beyond the village. All apart from one of the bicycles are owned and predominantly used by men. The local food seller owns one, although she rarely uses it herself, but rather sends her children to run errands for her

with it. The majority of the bicycles have been purchased by individuals using money saved through farming, although there are a small number of bicycles that have been acquired by individuals for their work with the Ghana Cotton Company (6), the Agric Project (1) and Actionaid (1). In the case of the Ghana Cotton Company, the bicycles were purchased by contributions made through the sale of cotton. The bicycles were provided as an incentive for farmers to start growing cotton on their farms. The bicycles provided by Actionaid and Agric Project (a Catholic missionary project based in Tumu), were given to people, who acted as representatives and worked on a voluntary basis for them. The majority of bicycles were purchased from the district capital (including those purchased through the Ghana Cotton Company), although a significant number have been obtained from the capital of Ashanti Region- Kumasi. Generally speaking, those purchased from surrounding villages (Kulufuo, Bugubelle) and a number of the bicycles purchased from Tarsaw, were bought second-hand from the previous owners.

The main type of bicycle found in Tarsaw (and in much of the north) is the Chinese Phoenix bicycle since it is considered to be durable and robust enough to handle the uneven dirt roads and farm tracks. They are also popular because the parts are easily obtainable and local artisans generally have more knowledge on how to maintain them. The artisans in Tarsaw are able to fix most bicycle repair needs, although they are hampered by the lack of welding equipment and are unable to repair more serious, structural damage.

An interview with a bicycle seller in Accra (Starlite, Osu) indicated that the Phoenix brand was not very popular in the south because 'people don't like them down here, they prefer the other types because they are more modern' *(Joseph Apiah, interviewed 21/02/02)*. However, an interview with a bicycle seller in Tamale (Fatawu Bicycles) indicated that the Phoenix was their best seller, although they were starting to sell other models as well: 'in rural areas particularly, the Phoenix is the best. It is durable and people have the spare parts and more knowledge to fix them' *(Razaq Saidu, interviewed 26/02/02)*. In most cases the carrier on the back of the Phoenix bicycle is strengthened in order to carry heavier loads or take passengers. Indeed, they are frequently used for these purposes and are commonly seen either transporting farm inputs and farm produce or carrying relatives or friends. Bicycles are rarely, if ever, used to transport domestic inputs (for example firewood, water), although they are used to transport produce to the market, both by men, and occasionally women. This is in contrast to rural areas in the south, where 'the concept of the cycle as a load-carrying IMT has not been widely accepted' and 'cycles are rarely used to take produce

to market, despite continued shortages of conventional motorised transport ' (Porter, 2003a: 32).

Bullock-carts are primarily used for transporting farm produce, marketed goods and farm inputs, although they are also used extensively for carting building materials in the dry season (see chapter 6). The male head of the compound generally owns the bullocks and equipment, although it is usually the young boys of the compound who are responsible for operating them (see chapter 6). Forty-one compounds owned a bullock-cart, although it is customary for owners to loan their bullocks and/or cart to family and friends. All are owned and only ever used by men or boys, since it is generally considered to be taboo for women to handle cattle. In terms of the wealth categories outlined in section 3.8.2.1, from the 41 compounds that owned bullock-carts, 29 came from categories 1 and 2 and 12 from categories 3 and 4. No compounds in category 5 owned bullock-carts. From the 7 compounds that owned 2 bullock-carts, 6 came from category 1 and only 1 from category 2. There is quite clearly significant wealth differentiation in terms of bullock-cart ownership.

Although the very first bullock-cart was introduced in the 1960s by the Catholic mission in Tumu (Agric Project), bullock-farming failed to take off at that time, probably due to lack of critical mass (see Paul Starkey, 2000, 2001) and poor technical skills. In the mid-1970s, animal traction experienced another revival with the introduction of a small number of carts and ploughs, again through the Agric Project and with the help of Brother Guido (the full story is unclear on this). Around the 1970s an animal traction 'station' was set up near Navrongo (in Upper East Region) and from there a campaign was run to promote animal traction in Upper East and West Regions. Out of a total of 48 carts, 22 had been purchased through a project (16 from IFAD and 6 from Agric Project). Although it is unclear exactly how many were purchased at this time, 6 of the Agric Project carts remain in working order and are still in use (data from first household questionnaire). Since the mid-90s, animal traction equipment has been supplied through loans from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) along with advice and training on bullock farming. This more recent influx of equipment and training has perhaps been the most important in promoting animal traction, resulting in the large number of farmers that currently utilise the technology. Since the establishment of animal traction in Tarsaw, individuals (always men[15]) have sought to purchase this equipment independently. The majority of bullock-carts have been

[15] Given that it is considered taboo for women to operate bullock-carts or to handle cattle, men have generally been the main recipients of animal traction and other new technologies. This is discussed in more detail in chapter 6 and 7.

purchased from Tumu, which is also where the IFAD equipment is bought. A large number are purchased in Tarsaw (including those bought through the Agric Project), in this case middlemen bring them to the village.

The main problem faced with using the bullock-cart is the lack of local capacity for maintenance. The local blacksmith's is able to repair many of the problems with the cart and ploughing tools, but the lack of welding equipment means that they are unable to fix more serious problems, such as broken axles or frame. This causes serious difficulties for farmers, since they then have to take their cart to Tumu to be fixed, which is expensive and time consuming. As the village mechanic acknowledged, 'it would be good to have a welding machine. That can help the business to develop. I can then do everything here and people won't have to send it out for mending' *(Abdul, interviewed 08/10/01)*.

Motorbikes are a relatively rare possession, although as Porter (2003a) points out, they are more common in the north than the south of Ghana (p.37). Howe and Barwell (1987) note that, although the three northern regions contained 19.4% of the population, they had 35% of the motorcycle stock (quoted in Porter, 2003a: 37). Motorbikes are generally (but not always) owned by the wealthier men of the village and are generally seen as status symbols. In terms of the wealth categories discussed above (section 3.8.2.1), the compounds that owned the motorbikes were all from either category 1 or 2. They are generally used for longer journeys or emergencies rather than the relatively short trips to the farm (for which they would use their bicycle). Since the cost of petrol is relatively high and is not always available, men tend to only use them in the dry season, when they have more money available from the sale of the harvest.

Most of the motorbikes in the village have been purchased in Kumasi apparently due to the lower price charged. Those bought in Tarsaw are all second-hand. There is an artisan in Tarsaw who is able to fix motorbikes, although he frequently has problems obtaining good quality parts. In an interview, he stated that: 'to be parts is very difficult. There is nobody selling parts in Tarsaw so at times I will go to Bolga, Bawku or Ouaga for my parts. They have the motors plenty in Ouaga so it is easy to get the parts. I would normally go to Bolga because it is closer and they have all that I need' (interviewed 08/10/01). He later indicated that some people take their motorbikes to Bolga, Kumasi or Wa because he does not have the equipment to do welding work and can therefore only carry out basic repairs.

The one car in the village, which was purchased in Kumasi, is generally only used on market day to transport people and goods to Bugubelle (although the cost of this journey is beyond the reach of many of the poorer villagers). The owner's senior son (the only person who knows how to drive the car) also uses the car to make trips to Wa and Tumu to purchase provisions for his shop. In terms of wealth categories, the car is owned by a compound from category 1. In addition to the transport owned by the villagers, a number of market trucks owned by people from surrounding villages (mainly Tumu) pass through on market days to ferry people to and from the market (for a review of marketing patterns see chapter five, section 5.3.2). These trucks vary in size, from the larger grain lorries to small vans. They are generally used to transport people to Bugubelle market. In the dry season, the larger trucks pass through the village collecting farm produce for sale in Navrongo or Tumu. These will often carry passengers to the villages and towns they pass through, for a negotiated fee. On other days of the week and during the rainy season, there is very little traffic passing through the village.

3.9.2.4 Resources in Tarsaw

In terms of resources, the village has three grinding mills (although one remained inoperative throughout the course of the fieldwork- 2001/2- and was unlikely to be repaired in the near future). One of the grinding mills is privately owned and Actionaid built the other, although the profit goes into a bank account held by the village women's group[16]. These grinding mills greatly assist women, reducing their burden by taking a lot of the drudgery out of the production of maize and millet flour. Tarsaw currently has two boreholes (one roughly 1km away and the other 0.5km away), although they sometimes break down and require maintenance, which can take a long time. Additional sources of water are provided by hand-dug wells (four of which still provide water) and seasonal streams and pools as well as collected rainwater during the rainy season. All sources, apart from the boreholes, dry up during the dry season causing people to depend on borehole water for all purposes throughout this period. This is a difficult time for women, since the collection of water becomes an arduous and time-consuming task (see chapter 5). Prior to my final departure from Tarsaw in 2002, the village raised the money (through compulsory contributions) for two additional boreholes through the district assembly. However, the engineers were unable to find

[16] The Tarsaw Nimakodogo (Unity) Women's Group was founded in 1981 with the assistance of Susan Caster, an American Peace Corps Volunteer. All of the married women in Tarsaw are members of the group, numbering approximately four hundred women. When a meeting is held, one or two women from each compound go as representatives of that compound. The group builds capital through membership fees and from the profits derived from their grinding mill.

points where the water table was high enough to sink a borehole, despite several drilling attempts[17].

Local health resources are relatively poor. The nearest clinic is based about 3 miles away in Kulufuo, although this is poorly equipped and staffed. According to the nurse, the clinic is 'undersupplied with drugs. I have been ordering since I came here (4 months) but nothing has come. I have had to manage with the little that is here. I don't have most of the drugs. We don't have anything apart from malaria treatment ...some small antibiotics, but our store is almost empty. We don't even have oral rehydration salts for diarrhoea' *(Christina Dery, interviewed 22/03/02)*. Furthermore, since there is only one nurse working there, when she is not working, the clinic has to close. Because of these problems, people generally have very little faith in modern methods and instead take their medical problems to the traditional healer in Tarsaw. If this fails (which it often does), they will go to either Kulufuo or one of the clinics further away (Nabulo or Walembelle), or will travel to the hospital in either Tumu or Wa. The hospital in Wa (Kaleo hospital) is generally thought to be the best around, so those with serious illnesses often prefer to travel to Wa than to Tumu.

The village also has two small stores selling basic provisions such as soap, tea, coffee, powdered milk, cigarettes and so on, and two chop bars, which provide a small range of prepared meals. For most provisions and the sale of much of the local farm produce, people travel to the nearest market (Bugubelle), which, along with the rest of the markets in the district, runs on a six-day cycle.

3.10 Conclusions

Geographically speaking, the north of Ghana is an area which has long been set apart from the rest of the country by climate, vegetation, ethnicity, language, social and political forms and historical experience. The north of Ghana generally, and Upper West Region in particular, has a long history of neglect and isolation, from colonial rule through to current day government policies. According to a recent report from the Ghana Statistical Service (2000), rural areas in the Guinea savannah zone (primarily in the north) were the poorest in the country and in some respects, their poverty had worsened since the early 1990s (Ghana Statistical Service, 2000: 33). However,

[17] I have since been informed that an additional borehole has been drilled, although they were unable to locate it near to the village (much to the disappointment of the villagers). It apparently placed close to Tarsaw-Kulufuo road, about a kilometre out from the village. The second borehole has so far been unsuccessful and is yet to be drilled.

Plange (1984) suggests that the colonial period did not ignore the north entirely, but rather 'actively dominated and integrated [the north] into the economy as a whole' (p.42). This relationship was an unequal one based almost entirely on utilising the north as a labour reserve for the mining and cocoa plantations in the south. The extension of the capitalism in the form of wage labour recruitment 'underlined the emerging position of northerners in the Ghanaian class formation (ibid.). This position was one of inferiority and lower status in relation to the more prosperous and developed south. The development of the north in terms of health, education and agriculture was never a priority for the colonial government. To this day, the north generally has poorer infrastructure than most parts of the south and an inadequate numbers of schools, hospitals and other key services (although, as Gina Porter (1997, 2002) points out, there are many 'off-road' areas in the south which suffer extreme isolation and lack of access to services).

However, although access to motorised forms of transport is relatively limited in the north, particularly in rural areas such as Tarsaw, the number of intermediate means of transport is generally higher than other parts of Ghana, most notably the south. This is primarily due to the favourable terrain, the lack of animal-related diseases such as Tsetse (and subsequent history of animal husbandry in the area) and the long distances that people have to travel to reach their farms and other services. Porter (2003a) also notes an apparent cultural bias against bicycle use in some parts of the south (particularly urban areas), where it is 'regarded as the converse of a status symbol' (p.27). This is generally not the case in northern Ghana, particularly the rural north, where bicycles (and also bullock-carts) are a clear indicator of status and wealth. However, both bicycles and bullock-carts are overwhelmingly owned and used by men, despite the fact that women undertake the majority of the load carrying, both for trade and household provisioning. In many parts of Africa, women are commonly regarded as 'natural transporters' (Fernando, 1997)

Grieco et al. (1996) suggest that bicycles would have great economic value for women, particularly those involved in petty trading (p.115). Unfortunately, lack of purchasing power coupled with 'cultural stereotypes and infrastructural dangers' work against women's use of bicycles (ibid.) and also bullock-carts. Furthermore, given that women within the compound and more generally, only pool their labour for a small number of very specific tasks, there is little likelihood that women will purchase an IMT between them for shared use. There appears to be numerous constraints to women's use of transport, many of which go beyond lack of access or purchasing power. During the

course of an action research project in Central Region (southern Ghana), Gina Porter and Kathrin Blaufuss reported that:

> 'Although we targeted women initially, and women indicated they were purchasing bicycles for themselves, most of these cycles were purchased by men. The few women who purchased cycles also all requested men's cycles, not women's cycles. It transpired that men's cycles were selected not merely because they were considered stronger, but because most women had little intention of using them themselves (Porter, 2003a: 31-2).

This quotation, along with many other examples of IMT projects that have specifically targeted women (see Malmberg-Calvo, 1994 and Starkey, 2001), highlights the difficulties of introducing new transport technologies into areas that are generally male dominated. It also indicates that introducing IMTs is not a simple (or entirely beneficial) matter. There are a whole range of complex issues at work, particularly in relation to gender and mobility, which impede or assist the introduction of transport technologies in particular situations. This case study of Tarsaw in Ghana's Upper West Region, aims to demonstrate this complexity. The remainder of this thesis, and specifically chapter's five, six and seven, sheds light on the social and cultural situation within which people live and work in Tarsaw. These chapters build up a detailed ethnography of Tarsaw, demonstrating the complex ways in which gender, mobility, and embodiment, intersect.

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CHAPTER FOUR

Methodology:
The How's? Whys? And Wherefores?

> Fieldwork is not so much a 'drawing up and enactment of a research blueprint, but more a progressive unfurling of a tapestry of logistical hurdles, travel, waiting, funding difficulties, acquisition of new skills' and 'a degree of personal fortitude'
>
> *(Batterbury, 1997: 87)*

4.1 Introduction: Ways of Knowing

In accounts of fieldwork and methodology, some researchers have adopted the metaphor of a personal research journey (de Vries, 1992). Whilst I can relate to this in some respects, the term implies a linear process from start to finish, which is not in accord with my own experience. In reality, my research involved considerable interchange between theory and practice, between myself and my respondents and between different scales of analysis. In writing up my methodology I do not wish to simply give a bland account of the methods used and why, but to place myself within the research, since my position has profoundly affected the research process and the 'end product' (Bailey, 2001). One should not be afraid to talk about the problems faced, the difficulties overcome (or not) and the general messiness of research, since such factors have consequences for the way the whole project is conducted. This chapter works through my research experience, highlighting important aspects that have had a bearing on the content and course of the project. This includes practical issues such as language problems and the selection of a field site and research assistants, and more personal aspects such as my approach to the village and my relationship with the inhabitants.

In recent years there has been a growing interest in, and debate concerning the need for research which is more reflexive and critically aware (Baxter and Eyles, 1997). This has been largely stimulated by post-modernist, post-structuralist and feminist debate (Bondi, 1997; Rose, 1993). The context within which fieldwork is conducted is integral to the research process. This reappraisal of research methods points to a more deep-seated shift in ideas concerning the validity of social science research methodologies

and the subsequent 'knowledge' that they generate. In this sense, research is no longer seen as a neutral, dispassionate and purely technical process whereby researchers discover or reveal 'knowledge', but as a fundamentally human process where knowledge evolves, transforms and progresses. Individuals do not gain knowledge simply through the careful observation and contemplation of a given situation independent from society, since they are intrinsically and unavoidably both product and part of that society. The relationship between knowledge and practice should therefore be acknowledged as being an interactive process rather than passive. This is particularly pertinent in the case of research that crosses cultural and social boundaries since the socially constructed meanings that are locally attached to concepts and practices (femininity, masculinity, work, and religion) may not be immediately apparent to an outsider. The acknowledgement of the limits of representation stems largely from recognition that the activities of understanding, knowing and interpreting all involve the complicated issue of translation, while reality and language are never one and the same within different social settings (Olsson, 2000, p.1236). Furthermore, meaning can be transmitted through a myriad of other activities that transcend language, including signs, symbols and actions, which are often highly context dependent (Sayer, 1992).

The problematisation of what we consider to be valid knowledge has meant that previously unquestioned terminology such as reason, power, femininity, masculinity and rationality can no longer be taken for granted. This has been most fiercely debated in feminist discourse, which seeks to counter the maleness of the majority of geographical (and other) forms of knowledge (Rose, 1993). Feminist critique has shown how such concepts are discursively constructed rather than given in nature and are therefore far from unambiguous or innocent. They can therefore be both mutable and contestable. This requires an appreciation and understanding not simply of method, but also an engagement with the relationship between method and theory, concept and object, researcher and researched. This has subsequently led to important changes in the ways in which both researcher and the researched are viewed and represented and the manner in which information is appropriated, used and interpreted (Madge, 1993; Oakley, 2000; Sidaway, 1993). Many of the developments within this process can be primarily attributed to Foucault (1972) and his ideas concerning the dynamics of discourse and its interaction with social reality, which has clearly influenced more recent debate (such as Escobar, 1995; Mudimbe, 1988; Peet and Watts, 1993; and Said, 1995). Such work leads one to question the underlying power relations inherent within the research process and forces researchers to consider and

acknowledge their personal politics and position and their probable impact on the research process and outcomes. Locating ones position within the research process and wider social relations can inform and influence both the research approach and outcomes.

It is important to note that the research presented here is not only a product of the problems and difficulties faced during the fieldwork, but also of my engagement with the literature and theory through the course of the research: prior to, during and after the fieldwork. This research has evolved and changed, through my interaction with supervisors and colleagues, through attendance at conferences and seminars and through the exchange of ideas with numerous other individuals. A particular turning point in the theoretical focus of my research came (quite unexpectedly) after my decision to participate in a session called 'The Mobile Body' at the 2003 meeting of the Association of American Geographers. I initially submitted my abstract because I felt I could contribute to a discussion of mobility and gender issues. It was only when I came to prepare the paper and started engaging with the literature on the body and embodiment that I realised I could provide a meaningful contribution to a discussion of embodied mobility. This forced me to reflect on how my research in Ghana fitted into theories of the body, or rather, how theories of the body fitted into my research, and steered me towards the course my research subsequently took.

4.2 Practical Issues

There are a number of important issues regarding the context of this research that have had a profound impact on my conduct of it and need to be highlighted. Firstly, it is important to reiterate that this piece of research has been funded through an ESRC collaborative award (CASE) with NRIL. NRIL have played an important role in the conduct of this research, not only in a supervisory capacity, but also through the support they have provided, both in Ghana and the UK. Prior to starting fieldwork in Ghana, they were helpful in providing information and contacts that were useful to me in the field, particularly in the initial stages[1].

Secondly, my research is also linked with another project in the south of Ghana, funded by NRIL (DFID project R7575) and managed by my supervisor Dr. Gina Porter. Many

[1] I am very grateful for all the support and assistance provided by Fuseini Haruna Andani (Prince) during my stay in Tamale. Prince was working on an NRIL-funded project during the time of my fieldwork and was my main point of contact in the north prior to and during my stay in Ghana.

of the interviews with key personnel from various government ministries and NGOs, which were conducted during my initial period in Accra, were secured through contacts provided by Gina Porter. This provided an invaluable starting point for my research since further interviews were accessed through these initial contacts. In addition to this, many of the methods used in my research (particularly the time diaries, transport interviews, load weighing and seasonal calendars), were initially used by Kathrin Blaufuss (research assistant on R7575) and Gina Porter through their research on transport, IMTs and mobility in the south. Additional methods such as the household load-weighing exercises were later adapted from these methods.

4.2.1 Selection of field site

The selection of a field site proved to be far more problematic than I had anticipated prior to my arrival in Ghana. I was aware that selection would be based on the willingness and enthusiasm of a community to participate, the availability of local translators and logistical feasibility, but had anticipated that the location of IMT schemes would figure more strongly in my final choice. The main problem was finding reliable information on the various IMT schemes that had taken place in Ghana, since there was no central source of information on the various government, NGO and donor projects. I originally intended undertaking my research at a number of locations, allowing me to look at different IMT projects at various stages of completion and/or in different cultural and social contexts. This proved to be an impossible task partly because of difficulty in obtaining reliable information about the projects, but also because of difficulties in gaining access to the communities and the logistical problems in getting to the various field sites. Furthermore, travelling around Ghana, particularly to rural areas in the north, is time consuming and very tiring without access to private transport, so travelling around to different areas to investigate possible field sites was not always feasible. In order to get some idea of how things worked in different areas, I took advantage of opportunities to travel to a wide range of sites as they presented themselves during a pre-field phase spent in Tamale.

Travelling around Northern Ghana gave me an overview of the diversity of livelihood situations within the area, relating to variations in culture, religion, geographic location and so on. Furthermore, local socio-economic conditions have led to rather different landscapes: a major road, an important market or a major NGO project provide important variables in the gendering of transport and mobility. This diversity offers a bewildering array of different livelihood circumstances, all of which appear worthy of further investigation. As is common in Ghana, selection hinged on the network of

contacts I accumulated in the early period of my stay, which resulted in the choice of Tarsaw in Sissala District[2]. Tarsaw had access to a borehole and other resources, a range of IMTs, some of which had been provided through a project, and a sufficient number of secondary-educated people who could assist me with my work. Furthermore, the village was willing to accommodate me and support me in my work for the duration of my research. I arrived in Tarsaw at the end of August, two months after my arrival in Ghana and just as the harvesting season was about to start in earnest.

The focus of my research shifted quite substantially following the first phase of my fieldwork, primarily because of difficulties finding multiple field sites. As a result of my decision to work in Tarsaw, my focus and approach to the subject also changed. Working in more than one village would have allowed me to look comparatively at the gendered use and ownership of IMTs and I would have taken a much broader approach to the issues. By working in only one village and thereby taking a case study approach, I felt that the issue of IMTs would not have provided enough material to base my research on. I therefore chose to look more closely at the issue of gender relations and gendered access to transport, since this was an area I found particularly interesting and felt would work well in the context of Tarsaw.

4.2.2 Finding a Research Assistant

Having found a suitable research site, the next crucial step was to find an assistant who could help me with translation and other tasks. Since I possessed no knowledge of the local language (Sissali) and had insufficient time to be taught to a satisfactory level of competence, I decided to hire a research assistant and learn as I go along[3]. Devereux (1992) discusses at length the various pros and cons to learning the local language, suggesting that one should weigh up the costs of becoming fluent against the social and professional benefits of fluency (p.44). However, since I made the choice of study site 'in the field' and therefore had no idea which of the numerous languages I

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[2] Prior to this, I undertook a short pilot study in Datoyili, near Tamale in Northern Region. This was organised by Prince, since he was familiar with the area and felt that Datoyili matched many of my criteria. The village was within cycling distance of Tamale, where I was staying at the time. However, I discounted it as a field site primarily because of its close proximity to Tamale. Although Datoyili suffered with problems of access, particularly for women, the fact that it was situated on the main truck road from Tamale to Kumasi meant that there were more passing trucks than in more remote rural areas. However, the two weeks I spent working in Datoyili were useful in allowing me to practice and gain confidence in my interview technique and get an idea of the problems than men and women faced in peri-urban areas.

[3] Devereux (1992) feels that it is not merely a case of 'learning the language' since obtaining a knowledge of the vocabulary is not understanding of meaning. Rather, it is better to 'learn from the people you will be working with- they will know the relevant vocabulary' (p.45).

would be working in (and Sissali is a minority language in Ghana with no formal means of learning it) the only available option was to learn as I went along. Although I never attained a particularly high level of competency in Sissali, by the second fieldwork phase I was able to handle myself better socially and could follow what was being said in interviews.

My original aim was to work with a woman, since I felt that this would be important when posing sensitive questions with women in the village. On arrival in Tarsaw, I set about making enquiries regarding suitable candidates[4], stressing my preference for a female assistant, but not ruling out the possibility of working with a man (in a relatively remote area such as Tarsaw, there is very little choice). Finding a suitable female assistant, i.e. educated with sufficient free time to work with me, proved to be a very difficult task. In order to get things moving, I began working with a young, secondary educated man who had a good understanding of English. He was selected more through accident than design since he was the only person who had the time to assist me as he suffered from a rare blood disorder which stopped him from farming. I did not intend to work with him for the full duration of the research, and continued my search for a suitable woman. In the meantime, I utilised his skills in order to undertake a preliminary household survey and interviews with the chief and elders. However, Moro proved to be competent and his profound understanding of the community proved invaluable, particularly in the initial stages of my field research. I was still a little concerned about whether he would be a suitable assistant to undertake interviews with women. My ongoing search for a woman research assistant repeatedly ended in frustration. At this time of the year, it was generally quite difficult to work efficiently since people were very busy farming so even when I was able to work with an interpreter it was difficult to get people to interview. I had to be flexible in my approach to interviewing and data gathering and so there were often times when I would have to interview people on their farms.

The second fieldwork period, carried out between February and July 2002, posed new problems and opportunities in terms of my work with research assistants. On arriving back in Tarsaw, I discovered that Moro[5] had left the village for further education. After some searching, I found two new people to work with: Issahaku and Farimara. Issahaku had recently returned to the village after completing his secondary education,

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[4] The woman I was initially advised to work with was not suitable for a number of reasons, mainly because I felt that her understanding of English was not sophisticated enough for the kind of questioning I hoped to undertake.
[5] All names used within this thesis are pseudonyms in order to protect the individual's identity.

he had a very good understanding of English and had also undertaken facilitator training with ActionAid. Farimara was the local primary school teacher and also had a very good command of English. However, she was only able to work with me after school hours, which is why I decided to work with two interpreters. This proved to be an effective strategy since I was able to work with Farimara after school hours and often at weekends and with Issahaku on occasions when Farimara was not available to work, or when I felt his skills were most needed. As my work progressed, I began to work with Issahaku more frequently. This was partly because Farimara became pregnant and therefore started walking to school instead of using her bicycle (so returned from school later in the afternoon and tired from the walk), but also because I found Issahaku easier to work with. He had a very amiable manner and both men and women seemed to respond well to his approach. Issahaku proved to be an invaluable resource and played a crucial role in the conduct and progress of my research. I found his knowledge of people's working patterns invaluable since we were better able to plan when we could meet people.

4.3 Personal Issues

In the past, it was common for personal issues, such as research relationships, to be omitted from the main text. The author would rather adopt what Lefebvre has referred to as the illusion of transparency, assuming that there can be unmediated access to the truth of the objects of research (Blunt and Rose, 1994; Lefebvre, 1991). As mentioned above, recent feminist and poststructuralist work has questioned this illusion and focused upon the processes by which 'truths' are mediated: through the norms and experiences of the researcher, and the relationship he or she has with the participants. Relationships with people whilst working in the field were complex and multi-layered. However, three aspects stand out as being particularly important in colouring the research process. These were: research relationships and my position as an unmarried woman; how I presented myself to various groups of people; and my living arrangements in the village.

4.3.1 Research Relationships

Research undertaken at the village level always places the researcher and the researched in a social relationship. The relationships forged whilst in the field are important not only on a personal level, but also in academic terms since they have a profound influence in shaping the research goals, methods, interpretations and representations that emerge from the research experience (as discussed above).

Coping with and adapting to these various relationships are probably the most problematic but important aspects of this type of research: important because it has a profound effect on the character and quality of the information collected; and problematic, because it often brings expectations on both sides, which are not likely to concur. The main factors that affect this relationship include: gender, ethnicity, age, marital and social status, the community's previous exposure to outside influences, the nature of the research project and the research methods used, how you arrive in the community and with whom you are associated, living arrangements and how you become involved with the community. Positionality and personal politics are of paramount importance.

As a woman, I found that life course position, in particular the difference between being married and unmarried, was a central issue. Throughout my fieldwork I found myself being constructed (or reconstructed) through my marital status in ways that appeared to have profound implications for my research. The fact that I was an unmarried and highly educated woman (seemingly beyond the usual age of marriage) seemed to worry both men and women within my village and encouraged them to discuss the issue of relationships between men and women and marital decisions. Some women, particularly the older women, regarded the fact that I was unmarried as a failing on my part and proceeded to give me advice on how to make a man happy. Some of the younger women appeared to consider me with curiosity and sometimes suspicion, possibly in response to their husbands asking me to marry them. Those I got closer to would ask interested questions about my relationship with my partner and 'how it is' for me. Whilst this was useful in the sense that I was able to gain a greater insight into this dimension, it did make me aware of just how great the influence of my positionality was over the kind of narratives that emerged from my work.

4.3.2 Hello, my name is Rachel Flanary...

How you present yourself, or rather who you present yourself as, when carrying out research of this nature, has important implications for the way people respond to you and your questions, and therefore requires a certain amount of consideration prior to entering the field. It is necessary to consider local context, the kinds of information required and the different types of people likely to be encountered. Furthermore, you will undoubtedly have to present yourself differently at various stages in your research and among the range of different audiences you are likely to come across. In the initial stages of my fieldwork, prior to arrival in the village, I had to meet up with representatives from government ministries, NGOs and academic institutions. For

interviews at this level, I dressed relatively smartly and presented myself with a certain amount of authority, supported by business cards. This enabled me to gain relatively easy access to fairly senior civil servants and obtain respect. People at this level were used to being approached by outsiders, particularly the civil servants and NGO representatives, and were well versed in how to deal with my kind of information request. Most people were rather interested in my work and happy to help in any way they could: there were very few exceptions.

However, at the village level, it was quite a different matter. People in Tarsaw had had some experience with national and international NGOs and the presence of a Peace Corps worker (the second in the village) meant they were accustomed to having white people reside in their midst. However, their past experience with donor organisations and NGOs had been primarily as aid recipients and they were unfamiliar with the work of academics. The legacy of my predecessors affected the manner in which people perceived me. Initially, I had difficulty trying to dispel the idea that I was there to 'bring development' in some form or another. This can be problematic, not only on the personal level of having to deal with guilt and worry over unfulfilled expectations, but also on a professional level since it could affect the kinds of answers I received to my questions. There were many occasions where interviews turned into a wish-list of things needed or a catalogue of problems they faced. Some would even ask me outright if I would be able to give them loans so that they could purchase fertiliser, bullocks or bullock carts and zinc roofing sheets. Many believed I had the power to change their situation by contacting people within my own government or the Ghanaian government, or directing NGOs and donor organisations to work in their village. It was a difficult balance to strike, since on the one hand I wanted to be able to give something back to the community for all their help, but at the same time I did not want to make promises I would be unable to honour. I found that the best way to deal with this matter was to explain to people that I was a student and that this was an information gathering project not an aid project. However, I also pointed out that there were organisations in the UK and Ghana who were interested in my research and that I hoped in the future, it would help people not just in Tarsaw but elsewhere in Ghana.

One thing that did work in my favour was the fact that the village had had positive experiences with most visitors, particularly the former Peace Corps worker,[6] Juliana Bostic, on whom people regularly reflected with nostalgia. The fact that I arrived in Tarsaw on the advice of Juliana, and with her recommendation, is perhaps partly the

[6] I would like to thank Juliana Bostic for all her advice and support prior to my arrival in the village. Her 'seal of approval' opened many doors for me during my stay in Tarsaw.

reason I was welcomed so generously. However, my relationship with the village also developed through my own actions and, as time went on, it was clear that people appreciated me for my own conduct. Although I think it would be impossible to blend in completely, there are certainly things one can do, and things one can avoid doing in order to make the differences less obvious. In terms of clothing, I tried to dress in a suitable manner, wearing relatively simple dress or locally made garments. Basically, I tried not to draw attention to my comparatively privileged background.

My role was not entirely unambiguous. Although people understood the concept of 'student' and were aware that I was not as wealthy as other white people they had encountered, my whiteness, and the fact that I was able to come to a country like Ghana in the first place, indicated to them that I was certainly not poor. In many parts of Ghana, familial and kinship ties require that wealthier relatives aid and support those who are poorer. Although I had no desire to become patron to the whole community, there was an expectation that I could assist in some way, despite the fact I was a student. How to strike a balance between these expectations, my ability to help and the need to maintain some impartiality became quite a distressing issue. I still worry about whether I handled the issue adequately. I negotiated remuneration for research assistants on an individual basis which depended on the length of time spent and the nature of the work. With requests for assistance from my 'family' members and other close acquaintances, I judged each case on an individual basis and asked that our arrangement be kept private so as not to compromise my 'student' status. I gave copies of photographs I had taken to all who participated in my research. For the focus group participants, I also agreed to assist the night school with much needed equipment[7].

4.3.3 Living arrangements and the rhythm of village life

Since I wanted to be in a position where I could observe and take part in daily life as much as possible, I felt that living and working in the study area was essential. Following discussions with the chief and elders on my arrival to the village, it was decided that I would live in a compound with a family. This gave me the opportunity to observe domestic relationships closely, particularly since my window looked inwards into the compound. Furthermore, the family became an invaluable source of information through informal conversation. This allowed me to verify some of the information I had obtained elsewhere through more formal interviews. I became close

[7] This money was raised through collecting sponsorship for a race I took part in 2002. A total of £400 was raised, which has been used to equip the night school with desks, benches, stationary and books.

friends with many of the family members and their friendship opened doors to other people who felt I had a legitimate presence in the village as a result of my association with the family. Furthermore, living with a family provided opportunities for learning the local language. The sacrifice of privacy was undoubtedly more than outweighed by my feeling of belonging and the building of trust that came from living there. I feel people would have been much more reluctant to let me interview them if I had chosen to reside in more refined surroundings and not wanted to 'muck in' with daily activities such as water collection and food preparation.

Living in this kind of setting is not entirely unproblematic. On arrival, a researcher is generally unaware of any pre-existing tensions or social alignments within the village (Francis, 1992). By living with a particular family, work with other families could become problematic due to existing tensions. In a broader context, the host family are situated within a network of relationships and interdependencies with other households and individuals, and this inevitably influences how people perceive and respond to one's presence. Although it is impossible to envisage potential problems in this respect, it is advisable to be aware of how such factors can influence and shape relationships with villagers (both positively and negatively).

Within this working/living environment I found it possible to fit in with people's daily pattern relatively easily. Their daily and seasonal rhythms were reflected in my own routine: I was able to identify times when it was most productive to work and when I could find people to work with. I realised very quickly that, in order to work efficiently, I would need to work at times when people were available, not too tired and free to give up a significant amount of time. Some of my interviews with women had to be undertaken as they were carrying out other tasks or were late in the evening when they had returned from farm. I would also take advantage of asking informal questions when collecting water or walking to market. This provided many interesting insights and added weight to the more formal interviews. Because of the problems I faced with organising interviews and learning the language, I spent a lot of time observing people: how they undertake their many and varied tasks and the way they interact with others. This is another reason why I came to focus on embodiment and the mobile body.

4.4 Methods

Whilst in the field, I found it incredibly difficult to stick to any form of timetable, no matter how short term, since a myriad of factors would conspire to impede my progress. During my time in the field I had to contend with several bouts of illness,

travel problems and a rather unfortunate attack by armed robbers[8] on my arrival in Ghana for the second field visit, amongst other difficulties. This was offset by amazing incidences of good fortune in the most unlikely places. Given the admittedly messy nature of fieldwork research it is usually more fruitful to employ a flexible approach whilst still maintaining an overall plan of action. I kept an overall idea of what I needed to achieve and worked when it was possible to work (see section 4.3.3). As Devereux and Hoddinott (1992) note, it is more sensible to 'identify a general area of inquiry and to develop several tentative hypotheses, rather than being overly committed to specific theoretical constructs and arriving in the research site with piles of pre-written questionnaire forms in order to 'prove' these ideas' (p.10). Therefore, questionnaires were written and adapted in the field, and interview topics 'evolved' as my understanding of the subject developed. The timing and choice of interviewees was determined more by opportunity and chance rather than following a particular plan of action. The theme of 'embodied mobility' also developed over the course of the fieldwork, as can be seen from the schedule of interviews in Appendix 2.

In order to analyse gender relations in the context of mobility constraints and unequal access to transport, I chose to work with quite a wide range of research tools. These tended to be primarily qualitative methods of data collection, with some use of quantitative methods, since I felt this to be the most effective means of obtaining well-grounded and rich descriptions and explanations for the complex processes that were at work at the local level. The lean towards more qualitative methods could perhaps be regarded as a bias of the research. However, the subject matter of this research, and the subsequent move to follow the theme of embodied mobility, meant that qualitative methods were more appropriate. Understanding the discourse and perceptions of 'mobile women' required in-depth discussions with a range of people from different perspectives. The interviews, informal discussions, life histories and focus group discussions have therefore been most influential in determining the course of this research.

Through the course of my research, I conducted a number of surveys, to gain information about household composition, farm size and transport owned etc. Although these surveys elicited some useful information, it also reinforced my awareness of the limitations of the approach. Some of the questions had clearly been misinterpreted, inadequately answered or contradicted in practice (which became clear through living

[8] This attack resulted in the loss of some of my notes from the previous field visit and all of the papers I had brought in preparation for the second field visit (travel interview sheets, traffic count sheets etc.) amongst other vital supplies.

in the village and through other research methods). My emphasis was on understanding how people comprehend their worlds and how they create and reproduce meaning through their particular social and cultural situation: qualitative methods are more complementary in this context. As Burgess (1984) notes, qualitative methods allow researchers to 'get close to the data' and 'learn about the social world at first hand' (p.2). Quantitative methods have frequently been criticised for failing to fully comprehend the dynamics of rural life by ignoring local people's perceptions, needs and understanding[9].

The three basic types of research method used in the field research were: structured surveys of various types, ethnographic methods (observation, interviewing and informal conversations) and PRA type methods (focus groups, seasonal calendars etc.). Some methods, such as the time diary/budget do not easily fit into any of these categories, but are considered in the PRA section for convenience. The schedule of various activities is shown in Appendix 2.

Although each method has its own strengths and weaknesses, they have all contributed to the outcome of this research. As Oakley has discussed (2000), 'paradigm wars' between quantitative and qualitative methodologies do not make much sense on a practical level, since many people use a mixture of methods. By triangulating the various methods used, one is able to validate and support the data given through any one method (Burgess, 1984; Philip, 1998). This section will outline these various tools and assess their relative merits and limitations.

4.4.1 Structured Surveys

Throughout the course of my fieldwork, I conducted a number of household surveys and utilised other survey methods, which were used to elicit particular types of information. The first household survey[10] recorded data such as household

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[9] Oakley argues that there has been a fundamental gendering of ways of knowing. 'Qualitative' is "the soft, the unreliable, the feminine, the private- the world of 'subjective experience. The 'quantitative' and the experimental are hard, reliable, masculine, public: they are about 'objectivity'" (p.42). This, for Oakley, raises a basic question about the material and ideological processes that give rise to the gendering of ways of knowing. This dichotomy is often the reason why 'qualitative' methods are advocated for research on/with less powerful people such as women, children and ethnic minorities.

[10] Household-based research has been subject to much debate, concerning definitions of 'household', and the ways in which female activities and intra-household power relations tend to be obscured (for a review of this, see Kabeer, 1994). In the research presented here, the household is not so much a unit of analysis as a research domain. Households were seen as largely kin-based co-residential units in which a number of livelihood aspects were shared and effort was made to understand the complex web of economic and social relations between different household members.

demography, agricultural production and farm size, and items of transport owned and used within the household[11]. This survey served many purposes beyond that of providing me with basic information on which to develop further research. Firstly, it enabled me to go round to all the households, meet people and make them aware of what I was actually doing. Secondly, it gave me a sense of purpose in the early stages when I was feeling particularly disoriented, and thirdly, it served as an effective use of my time at a point when I was still unsure how to proceed.

The second household survey was conducted at the end of my second fieldwork period and sought to gain information on the recent harvest (number of bags for each crop), how the produce was transported and sold and what the harvest income was being used for. I hoped this would support any data I might have concerning wealth categories, and also highlight any problems people faced in transporting and selling their crops. The survey again included all households, and questions were directed towards the household heads (where available) or senior sons. Both questionnaires are provided in Appendix 2.

Following on from similar methods use in project R7575 in the south of Ghana, I conducted a series of traffic count exercises in order to get some idea of the daily flow of 'traffic' (pedestrians, bicycles, motorbikes, bullock-carts and cars/lorries) into and out of the village (shown in Appendix 2). These were carried out at 3 points in the year- planting season, harvesting season and dry season- on both a market and non-market day, in order to get a seasonal picture of transport and mobility patterns. Tarsaw is situated at the intersection of four roads and so, between 6 a.m. and 6 p.m. on a market and non-market day, charts were filled in by assistants on each road, logging incoming and outgoing traffic for each hour. The charts were designed to be easily understood so that people with limited education could participate. Pictures were used in place of words and I fully briefed participants prior to the exercise taking place. Not only did these exercises provide me with useful data, it also made the villagers more aware of my work since they were curious about what we were doing and would ask questions. However, on the much quieter non-market days, we had difficulty convincing people that we were not simply resting in the shade, but were actually 'working'.

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[11] I decided to include the whole village in this survey since it was a very brief questionnaire and the village population only totalled around 8-900 people. Furthermore, following advice from a number of people, I decided that I would only interview the head of the each household (which is always a man), since it would have been considered improper to approach other members of the household before the head. Local custom seems to dictate that any official persons (of which I was initially regarded as one) coming from outside the village should first go through the head- if I had approached more junior members of the family (which includes the women) first they would simply have referred me to the head to answer my questions anyway.

In order to obtain some idea of how and when people used the various forms of transport throughout the year, I carried out 'transport interviews', again at 3 points in the year. This method was initially used on IMT work carried out in the south of Ghana (by Gina Porter and Kathrin Blaufuss, See Porter, 2001), although I adapted the form and selection procedure to account for local conditions. For this exercise, I randomly selected 20 households from the total of 64 surveyed in the initial household survey, by drawing compound numbers out of a hat. For each item of transport in the 20 households, a sheet was filled in asking what the owner had used it for over a period of one week[12]. A separate sheet was filled in if the item had been loaned out to anyone, asking the same questions. The categories used were compiled following interviews with a number of individuals and revisions were made following discussions with my research assistant (surveys are shown in Appendix 2).

There are a number of general problems with structured survey methods. First, the formality of the approach seemed to elicit more formal responses, which, after living in the village for some time, I recognised not to be a true reflection. Related to this, since people were experienced at answering formal survey questions (with the recent government census and a survey conducted by the cotton company, amongst others), the respondents tended to provide well-rehearsed answers, particularly to the household survey questions. Secondly, formal surveys (as with any form of interviewing) were affected by the lack of time people had to spend answering my questions. This was particularly the case where people's farms were some distance away from the village and they only returned home occasionally. Finally, the formal survey method tended to oversimplify matters and the use of a fixed set of questions does not allow for additional questions that are tangential or supplementary to the main questions, to be asked. Because of these drawbacks, various ethnographic methods were used to try and recover the complexity, process and meaning in the research.

4.4.2 Ethnographic Methods

There is a strong argument for multi-method approaches, which incorporate both qualitative and quantitative methods (Philip, 1998). An over reliance on any one methodological approach tends to reveal a very partial picture. However, using only quantitative methods, which tend to be expensive, can be very detached and

[12] My research assistants filled in these forms, generally with the help of one or more friends. I did not accompany them during this exercise since they were more than capable of conducting it independently.

inaccessible[13]. I relied significantly on more ethnographic tools[14] in the hope that I could reveal more of the everyday reality of people's lives (Eyles and Smith, 1988). The kind of methods associated with ethnography range from participant observation, to semi- structured or unstructured interviewing.

Participant observation enables the researcher to understand social phenomena without being isolated from the context within which they arise (Evans, 1988). As Burgess (1984) notes, 'the value of being a participant observer lies in the opportunity that is available to collect rich detailed data based on observations in natural settings (p.79). Observation and informal discussion is obviously complementary to both quantitative and qualitative data gathering, and provides a much more subtle approach to exploration. Furthermore, it can be used as a means of familiarising with the new surroundings whilst helping to build trust and rapport with the people being studied. My approach tended to concentrate on listening, studying and asking questions, and making extensive notes in my field book. Observation is also an effective means of cross-checking for discrepancies between respondents' words and actions, and providing an insight into behaviour that cannot be obtained purely from documentary sources and survey methods. There are however, drawbacks with this method, particularly where the researcher is physically differentiated. Being a tall, white, Western female undoubtedly makes undetected movement impossible, may consequently alter the way people act. However, participant observation, rather than providing the cornerstone on my research, gave more of a contextual backdrop upon which more structured methods could be hinged.

Also important to my research were the semi-structured interviews. These interviews took two principal forms: the first were targeted interviews looking at issues concerning gender relations, access and mobility, travel and use of transport and other related themes; the second were based more broadly on the life story or history of the interviewee. Life history interviews were carried out with a total of 9 individuals: 5 women and 4 men. Interviewees were those I had built a certain amount of rapport (Francis, 1992) and whom I felt would be interested in participating. This appeared to be the most effective strategy, particularly since my first attempt to conduct a life

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[13] Surveys can provide more than just the question responses, if you take into account your own observations of people's reactions to the questions and discussions of the results with others. Large surveys, which would have been beyond my time and financial budget, are good for establishing patterns, but weak on process (Sayer, 1984, 1992)

[14] In general terms, ethnography is a research style which is concerned with the 'understanding and analysis of meanings in context (Eyles and Smith, 1988: 2) in which the aim is to 'draw large conclusions from small, but very densely textured facts (Geertz, 1973: 28) otherwise referred to as thick description.

history interview with someone I was unfamiliar with turned out to be fruitless. The respondent did not appear to want to be interviewed at all, and frequently gave short, terse answers. Over the course of the two research phases, 101 interviews were carried out with individuals in Tarsaw; 22 with key informants in Accra and Kumasi; 26 in Tamale, 9 in Wa and Tumu, and 22 during the pilot study in Datoyili. The details of all interviews are provided in Appendix 2.

The life history interview was not used as a tool to catalogue an individual's life from birth to the present, but rather to focus on various aspects of the interviewee's life. I generally allowed respondents to talk freely and only interrupted when a specific point needed clarifying. According to Francis (1992), when conducting life history interviews, the interviewer must 'make sure that the informant does not feel overly constrained by the researcher's preconceptions' and also 'be flexible enough to respond to the unexpected' (Francis, 1992: 93). Within this narrative framework, people were encouraged to share their thoughts and feelings about relationships between men and women, restrictions on their mobility, marriage and divorce and inter-generational differences. Most interviews lasted between one or two hours, and were generally conducted over several interviews. This method had a number of advantages: firstly, it gave voice to those who might have been obscured through more conventional means of analysis[15]; and secondly, it was a method with which people felt relatively comfortable since they were free to talk at length about their lives: something they knew they could not be challenged over.

Interviews, whether life history or more thematically targeted, aim to bring detail and context to the research topic, by allowing the researcher to explore everyday life experiences more intimately (Philip, 1998). Whilst some scholars have stressed that interviewing removes the power relationship between interviewer and interviewee to a certain extent (England, 1996), others see the power relationship as more asymmetrical in favour of the interviewer (Pile, 1991). Power relationships remain even though dialogue can move in both directions, because the researcher usually maintains ultimate control over the process and direction of the interview. However, despite these problems, interviewing remains the most effective source of social scientific information about everyday behaviour.

[15] Townsend et al. (1995) utilise a similar method to document the experiences of women pioneers in Mexico.

4.4.3 An attempt at PRA

There has been considerable debate and discussion concerning participatory research methodologies, largely as a consequence of paradigm shifts from statist approaches (top-down) to more people-centred approaches (bottom-up). The latter approach claims to recognise poor people's knowledge base and capabilities rather than seeing them as passive recipients of 'our' knowledge. This is often referred to as participatory rural appraisal (PRA), which is a growing family of approaches and methods that seek to enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions and to 'plan, act, monitor and evaluate' (Chambers, 1997, p.102). Through PRA, researchers can adopt a flexible strategy that combines a range of techniques from diagramming, observation, mapping, interview and ranking[16].

The level of participation can in practice, however, vary, from mere tokenism or manipulation by researchers to a radical process where researchers form an alliance with those being researched (Braidotti *et al.* 1994). Some researchers use participatory methods not simply as a means of data gathering, but as an opportunity to enable the education and empowerment of those participating by sharing knowledge and skills (Francis, 2001). Although this has drawn criticism from those who feel that research should be objective and neutral, such criticism generally stems from a polarised argument around the value of quantitative and qualitative methods. As Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) point out, this polarisation 'obscures issues of agency, representation and power which lie at the core of the methodological critiques from which the development of participatory approaches stem' (p.1667).

Although I make no claims to empowering those who participated in these methods, many of these methods, particularly the focus groups and mobility exercises, fostered an exchange of information and a discussion of my views as well as the views of those participating. Since many of the discussions concerned issues such as gender relations, power and inequality, many of the participants felt that talking about these issues in a group, and also asking me to talk about these issues in the context of the UK, enabled them to become more aware of their situation. Many of the participants

[16] It is important to note that there have recently been some serious criticisms of PRA and 'participation' more generally, although I do not intend to discuss these criticisms at length here. The most notable critique can be found in Cooke and Kothari's edited volume 'Participation: the new tyranny?' (2001) which shows how 'methodologically parochial the participatory development discourse is' (p.8). The chapter by Henkel and Stirrat concludes that "participatory approaches to development, far from marking a radical shift away from an ethnocentric concept of modernity, are intimately part of the process of modernization itself. In fact, we argue, they might provide even more effective ways of incorporating people into the 'modern project' compared to those available to the 'old orthodoxy'" (pp182-3).

were disappointed when the meetings came to and end and tried to persuade me to continue running them. As one participant stated: 'I also get something out of the discussions we are having. I have to think and make sense of what is happening and I try to find out what these questions are telling me' *(Amina, women's group discussion, 11/04/02)*. I utilised a number of PRA style exercises (albeit adapted to local context, subject requirements and resources) in the course of my fieldwork. These methods generated a rich and comprehensive set of data and provided a different perspective from the data gathered through other methods. It also enabled a process of triangulation to be applied, thus increasing and verifying the validity of the final analysis.

4.4.3.1 Focus Groups

Focus groups, including a number of exercises along the lines of those used by PRA practitioners, provided important information on a number of issues. Focus groups were originally used by market and media researchers in order to elicit user preferences and opinions on products and services. The technique has since been taken on more broadly by social scientists who have adapted the tool to obtain information on socio-cultural characteristics, environmental attitudes and health issues (Crossley, 2002; Esposito, 2001). Focus groups have also been used to provide insights into the 'relational construction of beliefs' and 'social processes of belief formation' (Waterton and Wynne, 1999: 127) through the social interaction that takes place in group interaction. Some have argued that focus groups are particularly important in feminist research, since group interaction can provide 'moments of learning and empowerment' and the potential for power relationships to be more diffused and knowledge to be collectively constructed (Pini, 2002: 341-3). There are a number of pros and cons to using focus groups, as there are with any research method (see Howden and Vanclay, 2000). However, these discussions provided an important additional form of information from that gained through my interviews and observations

A total of 11 focus group discussions were carried out with women, women and mixed groups. The topics covered in each focus group are shown in Appendix 2. The discussions were undertaken in the second fieldwork period for a number of reasons: firstly, I felt I had a better understanding by then of the issues and the context in which they were set; secondly, I had built up a good relationship with many of the villagers, so people seemed much more willing to give up some of their time to participate; and thirdly, I was working with a research assistant who had some experience of bringing groups together in this manner through his facilitator training with ActionAid and his role

as the night school teacher. Issahaku's input was vital to the effective conduct of meetings and without his help, it is unlikely that I would have been able to conduct them at all. Furthermore, his knowledge of the villagers and his access to a network of people through his teaching and general running of the village night school meant that he knew when would be a suitable time to conduct the meetings. I therefore put much of the organisation of the meetings into his hands. Prior to each meeting, I discussed the requirements i.e. a group of women who had access to bicycles on a regular basis, or a group of women who had taken loans in the past, and then I left Issahaku to bring the groups together. This strategy seemed the most appropriate because Issahaku's work with the women and men of the village through his teaching in the night school meant that he had a better idea who would participate effectively[17]. Before any meetings took place, we brought together the night school learners in order to let them know what I was aiming to achieve and then asked them whether they would be willing to support this work. All of the learners agreed that they would be happy to help.

Over the course of the second fieldwork phase, we carried out a total of eleven focus group meetings, all of which were recorded and then transcribed the following day. For each of the meetings I had listed a series of discussion points or questions, and aimed to cover a specific issue, or set of issues. For a number of the meetings I organised exercises to help illustrate the point of discussion and make it more interesting for the participants. Out of the eleven meetings, seven were carried out with groups of women (4 with the same group), three with groups of men and one with both men and women (draw from participants from the previous meetings). For each of the meetings we had between 6 and 10 participants, all of which were drawn from Issahaku's group of learners. The issues covered in the meetings included: women's workload and head-loading demands; the organisation of daily activities and importance of time; use of transport and constraints on mobility; power and inequality between men and women; women's access to bicycles and other forms of transport; women's access to credit and income; mobility and trust between men and women; and other issues. A number of exercises were used around which some of the discussions were framed. These are discussed later in this section.

[17] The reason I decided to draw my focus groups from the night school learners was because I was having great difficulty bringing groups together through any other means. Because Issahaku had tutored many of the learners for a number of years, they were very fond of him and were happy to 'give something back' for all his help. So, when he asked them if they would like to assist me with my work, they gladly accepted. Also, because of their loyalty to Issahaku, they did not want to let him down so turned up promptly and participated fully. Despite the possible bias inherent in this strategy, I decided that this would be better than having no meetings at all.

I initially hoped that there would be more of a discussion during the meetings and wanted the direction of the meeting to be guided primarily by the interests of the group. However, people seemed to be unfamiliar with this method of research and when asked to discuss points seemed stuck with what to say. I therefore altered my approach and started asking more targeted questions instead of raising discussion points. This seemed to prompt greater debate, although still not to the extent that I had originally hoped. Although this method placed a certain amount of control of the interaction into the hands of the participants, I still felt that I had to prompt them into taking a point further. This was particularly the case in the earlier meetings, but over time became less of a problem. Another problem with the meetings was that, because they were generally conducted late in the evenings, the women who attended were generally very tired and some found it difficult to stay focused. Some brought babies or young children along with them and had to tend to their needs during the discussions. This caused occasional disturbances in the flow of the meetings and sometimes meant that meetings would be brought to a premature conclusion. However, on the whole, I was quite pleased with the outcome of the focus group meetings and felt they provided me with a rich and detailed source of data, which supported other forms of data gathering.

4.4.3.2 Load-Weighing Exercises

Much of the literature on women and load carrying discusses the weight of the loads women carry and the distances they have to travel with their loads. It was important in the context of this project to also obtain such information. The methods used to elicit much of this data benefited significantly from discussions with Kathrin Blaufuss, since she had carried out similar procedures in the Central Region of Ghana. Since the head-loading of goods to market is an important activity most commonly done by women, it was important to get some idea of the weight of the various loads women were carrying. Because the carrying of marketed goods is such an important part of women's overall load-carrying burden, it was important to get some idea of the weights and type of loads that women carried at various points in the year. To do this I spent a full day (from 6am til 6pm) weighing the women's loads[18] and asking them about the nature of their load, finding out their route and why they walked instead of using the market transport. This was conducted on two separate market days, one in the dry season and one in the planting season (I was unable to obtain scales to conduct the exercise in the harvesting season). Most women found this exercise quite amusing and could not understand why I would want to do such a thing. Some refused to be weighed and just

[18] I did this by asking the women to stand on the scales firstly with, then without the load on their heads.

walked on. We tried to entice them by providing drinking water. This was quite an interesting activity, because women complained about the heavy loads they carry or the reasons for not taking the lorry to market.

I also wanted to obtain information on the daily loads that women and children carry. This was logistically more difficult because there is no one single route the women follow or a particular time that they go. I decided to try and obtain this information by walking around the village and weighing the loads that people were carrying- firewood, water, dawa-dawa, shea nuts, farm produce etc. I did this is the rainy season and dry season but again did not have scales available for the harvesting season so instead asked certain women to fill their basins with produce so that I could get some idea of the approximate weight[19].

To gain a slightly different perspective on load-weighing and the organisation of tasks, I decided to carry out a number of household load-weighing exercises. This involved staying within a compound from 6am until 7pm and weighing the various loads that the household inhabitants carried into and out of the house (and noting their destination). The choice of compound was based on the willingness of the household to participate, although an attempt was made to ensure the compounds were different in some way. Not only did this provide an ideal opportunity to observe the activities of the various household members more closely, but I was also able to interview people as they were carrying out various tasks. This exercise was important because it provided a considerable amount of context to the issue of load carrying, the gender division of labour within the household and the organisation of daily tasks.

4.4.3.3 Mobility Exercises and Seasonal Calendars

As previously mentioned, I conducted a number of exercises through the course of the focus group meetings. I wanted to get a better idea of the types of journeys men and women were making inside and outside the village throughout the year. In order to obtain this data, I conducted what I call 'mobility exercises' with a group of women and a group of men. Firstly, I asked the group to think of all the journeys they make during the dry season (which was when the activity took place) and split up 100 stones into journeys made inside and outside the village. After they had settled on the split between the two options, I then asked them to look at the stones they had placed for inside the village and talk about the various journeys they undertook. Once they had exhausted the selection of different categories I then asked them to divide the stones

[19] The scales I have taken out with me were stolen with the rest of my belongings. I was unable to acquire another set until later on in the year.

into the various categories. The same was then done for journeys outside the village, and then the whole activity repeated for travel in the rainy season. The exercise was taped and transcribed in the same manner as the other focus groups and the discussion about the various sections added context to the numbers provided for each section.

Another exercise that was carried out, but this time only with women, was seasonal calendars (an exercise which was modified through discussions with Kathrin Blaufuss and following a pilot exercise undertaken in Central Region). The aim of this exercise was to obtain information on women's load carrying burdens throughout the year. To begin the exercise, I encouraged the women to discuss the various loads they carried at different times of the year. I laid out 12 stones to represent the months of the year and had 100 small which I wanted the women to place against the larger stones to represent when a certain item was carried least/most. I asked Issahaku to explain the exercise to the women then we had a trial run with overall work levels throughout the year. They then carried out the exercise for each of the load carrying items. This exercise was also recorded and transcribed the following day.

4.4.3.4 Time-Diaries

Through my own observations, it was clear that women spent a considerable amount of time walking from place to place and that their lack of access to transport meant that they had to plan their activities in a very different way to men. Because some kind of measure of women's and men's time use throughout the day was needed to shed light on the gender differences in this respect, the time-budget or time-diary method seemed the obvious place to start. Within geography, the time-budget as a methodological tool has been used as a means of studying the time location, frequency, sequence and duration of social activities and human behaviour. The time-budget is usually presented as a log or diary of the sequence and length of time spent on various activities by an individual over a specified period of time. This enables researchers to determine how a person's time is utilised, which can subsequently be employed in the analysis of predominant social and economic trends (through a longitudinal diary) and subgroup differences in the allocation of time (Parkes and Thrift, 1980) such as gender, age and ethnicity. It is therefore a descriptive empirical technique used for analysing human activity and behaviour. Diaries are usually given out and completed by a large number of participants to form a quantitative survey of human activity, although in some cases it can be completed by the researcher.

In terms of its usage within feminist geography, early feminist geographers set themselves the task of making the work and everyday geographies of women visible, and furthermore argued that the activities and experiences of women were fundamentally different from those of men. They therefore saw the use of time-geography as a means of recovering and acknowledging the everyday activities of women. This assertion, as discussed by Rose (1993), was based on the belief that women occupied the everyday and ordinary world of mundane and routine activities within a largely masculine society (p.22), activities largely ignored in the majority of accounts. Time geography studies have helped to highlight how women have often had to develop complex work schedules around the location and hours of work, the location of child care facilities, available means of transportation, and the general needs of their children, the elderly and sick[20] (Tivers, 1985, Pickup, 1988).

However, I feel that the strict measurement of people's time use fails to take into account the richness and diversity of human activity, particularly in a culture that does not share our obsession with time measurement. Time is experienced on a multitude of levels that vary from individual to individual and through space and time. This does not always equate to conventional ideas of time as calculated by clock and calendar, but is experienced and perceived through a variety of means, which are intimately linked to the conduct of each person's life. Furthermore, the time-budget involves categorisation and classification of human activity, which generally reflect the various biases and assumptions of the researcher. Because of these problems, I had hoped that by using an adapted form of time budget analysis I could gain greater insights and more detail about the everyday activities primarily of women. I did not plan to use time-budgets in a strict, conventional sense, as I considered this to be inappropriate for a number of reasons, not least of which was a lack of time and resources[21].

Given the logistical, practical and resource implications of undertaking a rigorous and satisfactory time-budget study, and the methodological problems with carrying out such a study in a northern Ghana village context, other methods were used to obtain the data needed. The merits and demerits of various methods, such as the 'random visit' (Tripp, 1982) and 'following' methods, were discussed with my supervisors and Kathrin Blaufuss, prior to my second period of fieldwork. Instead of using a time-use questionnaire or self-filled diary (both of which would have been impossible in the

[20] Primarily in studies undertaken in Western industrialised countries.
[21] Time budget surveys are usually very time-consuming since they need to be representative over time (day, week, year and season) in order to be of any use. Furthermore, given the intensiveness of this type of research method, it requires a high level of co-operation from individuals and can therefore be expensive.

circumstances), we decided that the best approach would be to follow an individual for a full day, noting their movements and whether they carried out certain activities alone or accompanied. On the following day, the participant would then be interviewed in order to obtain his/her account of the previous days activities[22]. In many ways we regarded this as a test of method as much as a data gathering exercise, particularly since the recall method is often relied upon in time-budget studies. Given that the 'following' method is very intrusive, we decided that it would be best to work with someone with whom we had built good rapport and felt comfortable enough to impose ourselves on for a full day. This obviously poses certain problems from the start since selection in this manner is clearly not representative and is biased from the outset. However, to follow an unknown, randomly selected person for a full day would have been a very difficult task. The intrusion on his/her daily activities is more likely to cause disruption and alter the daily routine than if you were following someone you already knew.

I decided to follow Amina, one of the women from my own compound, since I was already familiar with her daily routine and had become good friends with her. She spoke a certain amount of English, which meant that we could communicate without requiring a third person (which would have increased the imposition). Before following Amina (or perhaps accompanying would be a better phrase), I explained what I wanted to do and why I wanted to do it so that we had a mutual understanding of the aim of the exercise. I tried to make it clear that the aim was not to test her on the time and that she should therefore not make any special effort to know the time or change her day in any way. However, my presence changed her daily routine in a number of important ways. Firstly, since I felt very uncomfortable just following and observing Amina in her daily chores, I decided that it would be best to assist her with tasks where possible. This could have significantly increased or decreased the time spent on various activities since some tasks could be completed more efficiently or Amina might have to tutor me on how to carry out certain tasks, thereby delaying her. Often we would start to do a task together then she would dash off and begin another job, leaving me to complete the chore. Sometimes I would lose her completely as she would leave the compound to 'go to the bush' (i.e. relieve herself), and return after some time, having carried out some additional task on the way back (such as bring back firewood). This made it very difficult to account for her activities accurately. Also, the fact that I was making a note of all the activities she carried out, automatically made Amina more

[22] Both Kathrin and I carried out a similar exercise concurrently (Kathrin working in Central Region, southern Ghana) in order to test out the method in two different contexts and compare the difference in results.

aware of the time she was taking in each task. I cannot say whether this actually changed her daily routine, but it certainly altered how she recalled tasks the following day. Another problem I encountered with the method as a whole was that, through my familiarity with Amina's routine and indeed, many other women's routines, I realised how unrepresentative it would be to generalise from one day in a woman's life. Through talking to women about how they organise their tasks (in group and individual interviews) I learnt that, although there are many things one can generalise about, individual women can employ very different strategies to organise their workloads. Furthermore, a day can be disrupted by rain, funerals, weddings and sickness. How can following a woman or even many women, for one or more days, sufficiently highlight the diversity of women's daily 'routine'? I found that the best information on time use and mobility constraints came from the individual interviews and informal discussions I had with the women. It is primarily from this data that I will draw in my discussions.

4.5 Conclusions

The strategy I adopted in order to investigate gender and mobility issues in Ghana, was flexible and multi-method. Prior to entering the 'field', I undertook substantial background reading in order to obtain a clearer picture of the cultural, social, environmental, economic and political situation of the area, much of which has been incorporated into Chapter 3. Primary data collection included both quantitative and qualitative methods, although more emphasis was placed on the qualitative methods since I felt that these would be more appropriate when attempting to elicit well-grounded and rich descriptions and explanations for the complex processes at work at the local level. These included survey methods such as traffic counts, household surveys and transport interviews, ethnographic methods such as semi-structured and unstructured interviewing, informal conversation, life history interviews and participant observation, and PRA methods such as focus groups and group exercises. The structured surveys provided some initial context upon which to build the more detailed ethnographic methods and allowed for a certain amount of quantitative analysis of mobility and transport issues as well as basic demographic data. The interviews and continuous participant observation added much detail surrounding the issues I wanted to explore and allowed me to build a clearer picture of the area. The subjects covered during the interviews evolved and developed as my understanding of the area grew. Further to these more standard methods, I attempted a number of PRA type exercises in order to provide a different perspective on some of the information I was obtaining

through the interviews. These were carried out in the second fieldwork period when my relationship with the village had grown and matured.

Much of the literature on methodology and analysis suggests that using multiple sources of information in this manner gives validity to the research by triangulating and cross-checking the data (Burgess, 1984). Triangulation can present a more complete picture than relying on one or two methods and sources of data collection. It can be achieved by using a variety of methods and/or approaching a broad range or number of people, either in the same or different social or economic groups. Multiple visits to the same household or individual discussions with key informants about the information you have received, can also be a way of determining the relative strength or 'truth' of the data. Advocates of multi-method research claim that it not only provides a more complete picture (Denzin, 1970) but also forces the researcher to look at how 'multiple, but somehow different, qualitative measures might simultaneously be true' (Kirk and Miller, 1986: 42). In the research discussed here, triangulation enabled me to explore the issues surrounding mobility and gender much more thoroughly. Multiple sources of information meant that I was able to ground the more abstract representations provided through survey methods, through a greater understanding of people's situations and experience. However, it could also be argued that the use of multiple methods, rather than providing an overall picture of mobility and gender issues, instead yields multiple, or partial truths. Each of the research methods used has produced *particular* truths, either emphasising or obscuring various points. However, despite this problem, there are some points of intersection between the different methods, and certain ways of marrying the difference types of data. The remainder of this thesis tries to steer a course through and between the various sources of data, drawing on various methods at certain points in order to present an analysis which captures the range of experiences evident in the study area.

CHAPTER FIVE

'Men Don't Carry': Women, Work and the Gender Division of Labour in Tarsaw

> 'In our culture, the women have to head-load because a man has to work very hard on the farm. The men do all the arduous jobs on the farm like weeding and making mounds so they cannot head-load as well'
>
> *(Seibu, young male farmer, interviewed 05/09/01)*
>
> 'The men have to give the women the farm produce for them to prepare. The women do the cooking, cleaning, taking care of the children. Women take care of the house, but the man is responsible for the farming and building of houses. The man will build and make the roofing. So everybody comes together and joins hands to do things'
>
> *(Alhassan, Chief of Datoyili, Northern Region, interviewed 13/08/01)*

5.1 Introduction

Human mobility, as discussed in chapter 2, is intrinsically linked to gender relations and the roles and responsibilities that form the basis of gender difference in many societies. The main purpose of this chapter is to provide a detailed account of the gender division of labour and responsibilities in Tarsaw. The starting-point for an understanding of the gender division of labour should be a recognition of its complexity (Edholm, Harris and Young, 1977). It should not be portrayed simply in economic terms, since it is also intrinsically social and cultural. At a particular level of abstraction, it is the allocation of tasks according to sex that is significant, where gender differentiation is recognised through various social activities (ibid. p.119). This is often implicitly justified in biological terms, where women are seen as the 'natural' carers and therefore more likely to be associated with certain tasks (Molyneux, 1977: 62)[1]. However, as discussed in chapter 2, it is societal structure that shapes the activities of individuals, through social norms and assumptions about the nature of different activities. Although the gender division of labour is invariably linked to biology, it is not *founded* on it. Instead it must be conceived as a 'relation mediated through complex social processes and subject to sometimes contradictory determinations' (ibid. p.63). As highlighted by some of the

[1] Marx and Engel's adopt this position, explaining the gender (or sexual) division of labour as a 'pure and simple outgrowth of nature' (Engel's, quoted in Molyneux, 1977). Such thinking is founded on a very static view of 'woman', where women are regarded as a universal category. This has been strongly criticised by feminist scholars such as Edholm, Harris and Young, 1977 and Harris and Young, 1981, amongst others.

debates arising from the literature on the body (see chapter 2), it is insufficient to treat gender variations (in labour, mobility or otherwise) as a matter of biology, since biology is not fixed, but interacts with the social, providing constraints and opportunities in specific contexts and over time. Bodies are 'made up', not only through their experience of sexual difference, but all other conditions of difference, including age, race, class and disability.

A strict division of labour between men and women is not always apparent for all tasks and in all contexts. Many tasks require cooperation between men and women or are differentiated according to age, status, class and so on. It is this complexity that this chapter hopes to portray, by providing an in-depth rendering of how various tasks are organised in Tarsaw. This contextual information provides an important basis for later discussions of gender in the context of time and time burdens (chapter 6), and mobility and freedom of movement (chapter 7). Such an analysis may help to explain more fully the circumstances under which women experience mobility constraints.

5.2 Gendered Divisions of Labour

According to Maureen Mackintosh (1981), 'all societies exhibit a sexual division of labour' and understanding this division is 'crucial to any attempt to understand, and to change, the social position of women as a whole' (p.1). Women's position vis-à-vis men, in terms of labour, has been of particular interest to feminists (particularly Western feminists) for some time, because it is seen to express, embody and, in many cases, perpetuate, female subordination (Afonja, 1990; Mackintosh, 1981; Mazumdar and Sharma, 1990). Gender, often in conjunction with other factors such as age and wealth, forms the basis for a fundamental division of labour in most societies. This is primarily expressed in terms of productive and reproductive activities (Çagatay, *et al.* 1995), although there has been considerable theoretical debate over the use of this terminology. The standard neo-liberal definition is that "productive activities" encompass those tasks that are income generating, all of which are market-oriented, while "reproductive activities" refer to a broad range of unpaid activities based around the care of people (Elson, 1999). The former are quite often associated with the work of men, whereas the latter are usually associated with "women's work"[2]. This simplistic

[2] This distinction clearly ignores subsistence agriculture, which is not 'market-oriented' or strictly 'male' or 'female' work. However, this comes as little surprise since, as Nash (1994) points out, 'economists of the neoclassical school have always left subsistence production out of their equations' (p. 8). Organisations such as the World Bank and United Nations recognise only market-oriented work as 'productive', which leaves out subsistence agriculture.

distinction can be misleading since there is usually overlap between productive and reproductive activities on the one hand, and men and women's work on the other.

Many feminist writers have pointed out that such a dichotomy is a false one and that the relationship between production and reproduction is both dynamic and interdependent- neither can or should be conceived in isolation from the other (Hanson and Pratt, 1988; Katz, 1991, 2001; Madge, 1994). Ken Kusterer, 1990) argues that the distinction is false and 'dependent on the denial of entropy on the one hand and on the denial of the importance of human and organizational "forces of production" on the other' (p.245). At the most basic level in a market economy, unpaid reproductive activities are crucial for the functioning and prosperity of the "productive economy" (Elson, 1999; Kusterer, 1990). Furthermore, the division of productive and reproductive activities obscures the fact that women play a major role in productive activities and in many cases employ a range of strategies to earn money and care for the family (Floro, 1995: 1914; Lim, 1990). However, since the majority of caring activities are rarely regarded as 'work' and as such are not socially valued or rewarded, the reproductive activities that are primarily the responsibility of women are often rendered invisible or undervalued (Madge, 1994; Papanek, 1990). According to Massey (1994), this valuation of one over the other (invariably production over reproduction), which is common to most dichotomies (public/private, male/female, culture/nature), is related to the *construction* of the distinction between genders, to characteristics assigned to both of them and to power relations maintained between them (discussed in chapter 2). However, Rose (1993) suggests that such dualisms are never 'solid' in geographical discourse, and meanings can alter, as can the values assigned to such terms. Furthermore, gendered meanings of 'work' (and home) can vary depending on the context within which it is set[3]. As Bryceson and McCall (1994) note from a historical perspective, there is 'no one traditional division of labour. A multitude of physical environments, farming systems and tribal differences led to the bewildering array of gender patterns seen by the 19th century European observers' (p.3).

For Katz (2001), social reproduction, which is the 'fleshy, messy and indeterminate stuff of everyday life', is a 'set of structured practices that unfold in dialectical relation with production, with which it is mutually constitutive and in tension' (p.711). Katz

[3] A recent study by Freidberg (2001) examines the historical origins of a localised gender division of labour in a peri-urban area of Burkina Faso (Bobo-Dioulasso). Freidberg describes a situation where men take the responsibility for market gardening, which involves tasks often defined as 'women's work'. She argues that gender divisions of labour 'are not simply constructed in particular places; they are constructs located near or far from other places, and thus influenced by multidimensional interactions between those places' (p.5).

argues that it is the work of 'globalised capitalism' (which Katz terms 'vagabond capitalism') that has changed the face of social reproduction worldwide over the past three decades: 'the demise of the social contract as a result of neoliberalism, privatisation, and the fraying of the welfare state is a crucial aspect of this shift' (p.710). For Ginsburg and Rapp (1991), the terms production and reproduction have been most useful when applied in fully capitalised contexts, although they can be rightly criticised as an ethnocentric imposition in other circumstances (p.314).

The burden of reproductive tasks in poorer countries is generally more marked in rural areas, since the activities associated with reproduction and household maintenance tend to be more arduous. This is due to poorer infrastructure and transport, reduced access to time-saving technologies or services that replace reproductive activities in the home and to the smaller share of household production and reproduction that has become commoditised (Beneria and Sen, 1981; Floro, 1995). In Tarsaw, as in the majority of rural areas in developing countries, a significant proportion of daily life is used in the household production of non-marketed goods and services due to market incompleteness and failures[4] (Floro, 1995). Vital resources such as firewood, water and food processing technologies are rarely, if ever, provided through the market in poor rural areas, and so these tasks simply form part of women's domestic activities. Most of these tasks unavoidably include an element of carrying and transporting, significantly increasing women's labour and time burden (see section 5.5). In some situations (particularly noticeable in urban areas), these goods and services are met by the market, where people pay for their firewood (or gas and kerosene are available as alternatives), water is piped directly to the house (or nearby), means of transport are more widely available and people are able to gain access to other household technologies. However, in Tarsaw, apart from two grinding mills within the village and two boreholes, one half a kilometre away and the other roughly a kilometre away, women do not have access to labour saving technologies. Transport technologies are available, although women have limited use of them and only occasionally have access to them (see section 5.5). Therefore, in order to fulfil the majority of their domestic tasks, women undertake a considerable burden of travel and labour. These tasks include producing, procuring, processing and preparing food; fetching and carrying water and fuel, sometimes over considerable distances (up to around 6 miles for firewood and 2 miles for water); washing and repairing clothing; cleaning and sanitation

[4] According to Floro (1995), there are two important sets of activities that generate non-marketed goods and services: subsistence farming and household work. In many African countries, the female members of the household overwhelmingly undertake these activities.

around the compound; cultivating small gardens; and producing their own crops for subsistence and trade and/or serving as unpaid labourers on the family farm.

Although gender is perhaps the most significant factor that affects the allocation and division of labour, age, wealth, class and other factors such as physical capability and skills are also important variables that interact with gender and must be taken into account when trying to understand a system of power relations, obligations and responsibilities that operate within a household[5]. According to Thorsen (2002), in her study of the intra-household division of labour in Burkina Faso, '[w]ithin the household, control over material and social resources is differentiated according to age, gender, and marital status, as is the access to those resources...[t]he household head has a larger degree of control over resources like land and labour than women and younger men, whose access to resources is closely inter-woven in a complex set of intra-household rights and duties' (p.129). In this respect, feminist scholars have criticised economic theories that assume that the household is an undifferentiated unit within which members share common goals, share resources and act altruistically (Agarwal, 1998; Elson, 1992; Harris, 1981; Whitehead, 1981). Naylor (1999) states that, '[T]he household was assumed to be a unit where production, reproduction, and consumption took place...it was also assumed that this unit was characterised by co-operative, altruistic relations, and that its members had a unity of purpose and equality of access to household resources' (p.40). Development planners have also made (and arguably still make) these assumptions, which have subsequently meant that women involved in agriculture have tended to lose out (ibid.).

In reality, what is often the case is that a complex situation of subordination and domination, conflict and cooperation, altruism and self-interest, fairness and inequality prevails (Whitehead, 1981). Fafchamps and Quisumbing (1999) refer to this as the collective model (as opposed to the unitary model described above), which posits that individuals within collective households have different preferences and do not pool their income, labour or other assets. Within this collective model, individuals' actions are largely conditional on the actions of others, and there is a certain amount of bargaining and negotiation within the household, in terms of resources. In Elizabeth Katz's 'Reciprocal Claims' model, the household is portrayed as a site of largely separate,

[5] Becker (1965) argued that it is optimal for households to divide tasks among their members, since tasks require different levels of human capital, e.g. strength, experience and literacy. Household members should therefore be allocated tasks for which they have comparative advantage (cited in Fafchamps and Quisumbing, 1999). However, I would argue that the allocation of the majority of tasks (apart from childbirth, breastfeeding etc.), particularly in rural/agricultural areas, probably has more to do with satisfying socially acceptable criteria than physiology (see section 5.5 in relation to the allocation of transport tasks).

gender-specific economies, linked by reciprocal claims on members' income, land, goods, and labour (cited in Chiappori, et al., 1993: 7). A wife's income is therefore kept separate from her husband's. However, very little has been written, to date, about differentiation between women within a household. How do women, either within a polygamous marriage or otherwise, negotiate their access to, and use of, household resources? Do women pool their labour resources in order to rationalise tasks within the household? Furthermore, how do intergenerational and status differentiation between women affect their access to resources and their ability to utilise the labour of others? This is particularly pertinent in terms of senior women's utilisation of junior women's labour (i.e. mother-daughter/daughter-in law relations, senior-junior co-wives etc.), and also women's use of children's labour. These relations are often quite complex, and vary according to the social structure of the compound. As highlighted in Chapter 3 (figure 3.4), there are significant differences in the composition and size of compounds. It is important to address how this affects an individual's burden of work. As discussed in chapter 3, there is significant differentiation and individualisation, and very little pooling of labour and financial resources in Tarsaw. The division of labour, both within and between the genders, will be discussed in each of the relevant sections below, making reference to the social structure of the compound.

5.2.1 Division of Labour in Tarsaw

Although generalisations can be made regarding the division of labour in Tarsaw, the situation is usually highly complex. Household and agricultural activities undertaken within a compound are not only differentiated by gender, but also age, seniority, and other social divisions. Therefore, the labour an individual has to perform is also dependent on the particular social structure of their compound and their position therein. Young children are generally at the very bottom of the social hierarchy, and therefore play an important part in the labour of the compound. When children are very young (say below the age of 5), there is fairly limited division of labour between boys and girls (as outlined in chapter 6, section 6.4). Apart from those boys that are assigned to work with the bullocks, neither boys nor girls will be assigned gender specific tasks. Both will be required to help with the harvesting of produce and both keep watch over the younger children. Beyond this age, children will learn the tasks that are expected of them in order to fulfil their gendered role. Boys spend more time with their fathers and other males from the compound, learning how to use a hoe, how to weed and plough, and how to make yam mounds. Girls spend more time around the compound, learning how to prepare meals, how to carry the various loads, how to pound rice and maize and how to wash clothing. The gender and age differences in

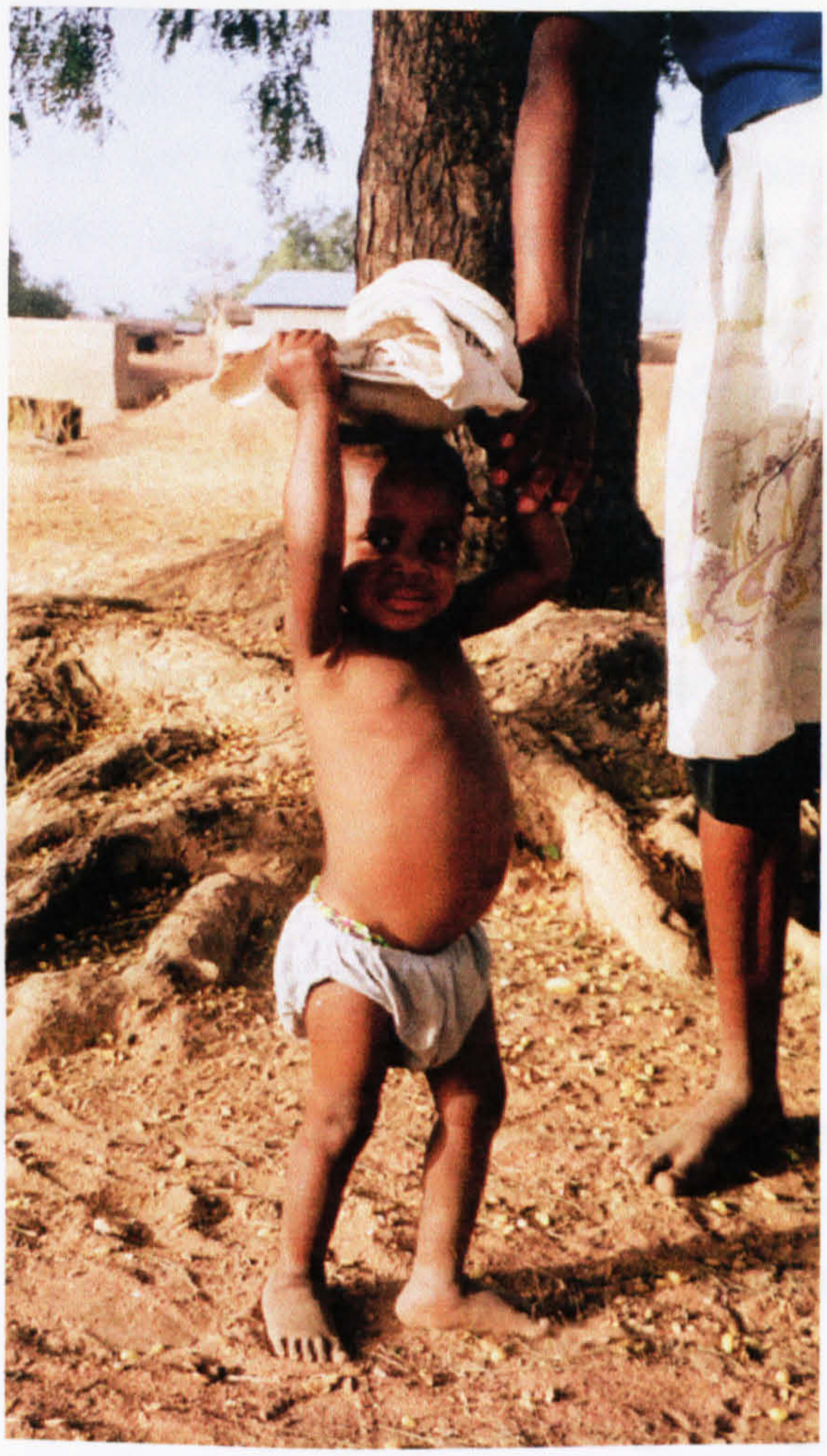
relation to various agricultural and domestic activities are illustrated in figure 5.1). These figures are not derived from structured data collection, but from a range of qualitative data sources, primarily interviews, focus group discussions and observation.

Figure 5.1 Participation in domestic and agricultural activities by age and sex

Activity	Age/Sex											
	3-5		6-10		11-15		15-20		20-50		50+	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Land Clearing	0	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	4	1	2	1
Sowing	0	0	2	1	3	2	4	3	4	4	3	2
Weeding	0	0	2	1	3	1	4	1	4	2	3	1
Harvesting	2	2	3	3	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
Ploughing	0	0	2	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	2	0
Carrying Harvest	0	0	0	3	1	4	1	4	1	4	0	3
Bullock-Carting	0	0	2	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	2	0
Processing	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	4
Food Preparation	0	0	0	3	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	3
Water Collection	0	1	1	3	1	4	1	4	1	4	0	3
Firewood	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	3
Shea-Nut	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	3
Dawa-Dawa	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	2
Medicinal Plants	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	3	0
Termites	1	0	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	0	0
Childcare	1	1	1	3	1	4	1	4	1	4	2	4
Cleaning	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	3
Washing Bowls	0	1	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	3
Washing Clothing	0	1	1	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	3
Building	0	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	4	0	1	0
Roofing/thatching	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4	0	1	0
Animal Husbandry	2	0	3	0	4	0	4	0	4	0	2	0
Trading	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	3	2	4	0	3
Food Selling	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	3	0	3	0	2

0 = never 1 = rarely 2 = sometimes 3 = often 4 = always

Photograph 5.1 Young girl imitating load carrying



It is a gradual process of socialisation, indoctrination and physical training that allows both boys and girls to take on these various tasks. Through the execution of these tasks, children are essentially 'performing' their gender roles and fulfilling the social expectations of their gender (see chapter 2). Gender is given expression through the bodily conduct of these social practices, which take on a ritualised form, affirming beliefs about the differential nature of the two sexes (Williams and Bendelow, 1998: 60). In terms of load carrying, this is introduced at an early age in a young girl's life, enabling her to carry loads up to and in excess of 50kg, often over considerable distances, as an adult. Photograph 5.1 shows a very young girl imitating the actions of the other women. The relevant strengths and skills become embodied in virtually all rural women in Tarsaw. This idea of socialisation and education of children is explored in great depth by Cindi Katz (1991) in her work on rural Sudan, and by Callaway (1984) in the case of Nigerian Hausa. According to Katz (1991), '[w]hat children learn...and how they use this knowledge in their work and play are fundamental cultural forms and practices, shared in a social matrix and bearing a specific relationship to the prevailing social relations of production and reproduction in the area' (p.489). This socialisation is vital in maintaining and reproducing society and is thereby crucial to the long-term maintenance of the socio-economic system. As illustrated throughout this chapter, children in Tarsaw play a vital role in farming and domestic/household tasks, and play an important part in the overall functioning of the compound[6].

Expectations again change as a man or woman enters particular stages in their life: marriage, parenthood and old age, for example. As mentioned in chapter 6, the early

[6] Katz (1991) makes a similar point, noting that 'children figured prominently in...activities, whether undertaken on a subsistence or income-producing basis' (p.496). Other studies on children's work include Cain, 1977, Schildkrout, 2002.

years of marriage are the most arduous for most women in Tarsaw, since all the responsibilities that had previously been shared with her mother and other female siblings now fall entirely upon her shoulders. As her children get older and begin to help with and eventually take over certain tasks, her burden will begin to reduce. As an elder (above the age of about 50), both men and women enjoy a much less arduous life since most of the tasks for which they used to take responsibility, are almost wholly undertaken by the younger members of the compound. For women, this can sometimes be slightly later in life, although post-menopausal women tend to undertake fewer chores as they are taken over by older daughters and son's wives'. This challenges the notion of a situation of stable and unchanging labour division. Change does happen, both over the course of a person's lifetime and also from generation to generation. Activities that were once regarded as purely women's tasks may be carried out by men, and vice versa.

5.3 Income Generating/'Productive' work

As highlighted by the preceding discussion, the terms productive and reproductive are problematic and in many cases misleading. The aim of this section is to provide information concerning the division of labour in income generating tasks. However, as will become clear, many of the activities discussed are not always strictly income generating. Tasks such as the gathering of bush products, agriculture and animal husbandry fulfil not only income generating, but also subsistence needs. In fact, for many people, particularly the poorer people in the village, these tasks are purely or primarily for subsistence. The use of the terms productive or income generating is, however, useful in the organisation of this chapter and provides a useful way of distinguishing between various tasks. Those included in 'productive' activities are, therefore, those activities that *can* be important in generating income, and those included in 'reproductive' activities are those that do not *normally* play a part in income generation, but are important in maintaining the general welfare of the compound.

5.3.1 Farming/Agricultural Activities

> 'When it is farming time and [women] have work at the farm, they will go to farm. They don't go to farm every day. When it is harvesting time they will go or if they have work at home they stay at home or sellers they will go and sell. *Farming is not important for the women*'.
>
> *(Alhassan, Chief of Datoyili, Northern Region, 14/08/01)*

Agriculture is the most important source of income in the village, as it is in the majority of rural areas in Ghana. The main crops grown are maize, yam, and groundnuts, although some farmers[7] also grow some or all of the following: beans, guinea corn, sweet potato, rice, bambara beans, late millet, vegetables and cassava. A few farmers are experimenting with soya beans (on the advice of agricultural extension staff) but only in very small quantities and usually entirely for sale, since it is not part of the local diet. So far yields have not been good for this crop. According to the results of the 2001 household survey, a small minority of farmers also grow cotton, but most prefer to grow crops that can also be used for consumption (see figure 5.2). The acreages for these crops vary quite considerably, but the majority of the land is devoted to yam, maize, and groundnuts. Guinea corn is sometimes intercropped with maize, but this is not always the case.

Figure 5.2 Main crops cultivated in 2001

	Number of households cultivating: (in 2001) n=62
Yam	62 (100%)
Groundnuts	62 (100%)
Maize	62 (100%)
Beans	17 (27%)
Guinea Corn	16 (26%)
Sweet Potato	4 (6%)
Rice	8 (13%)
Bambara Beans	12 (19%)
Late Millet	13 (21%)
Cassava	1 (2%)
Soya Beans	3 (5%)
Cotton	5 (8%)

Despite some of the (male) discourse that comes from rural areas in Ghana, illustrated by the above quotation, women now play an enormously important role within farming and the income generated from it. Although often referred to as 'help' or 'assistance', many women dispute this and argue that they 'work' on the farm and should be considered farmers alongside their husbands. This argument is prevalent across many parts of the world, for example Mexico (Townsend, 1999, p.28) and Burkina Faso (Thorsen, 2002). Although, unlike

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[7] Although the term 'farmer' is by no means problematic, in some cases it is assumed that the 'farmer' is male, since women are often assumed to be "housewives" rather than agricultural producers (discussed also by Naylor, 1999). Women's participation in agriculture and related activities has been routinely underestimated in census figures, since they are often considered to merely 'help' rather than farm themselves. In the context I am using the term here, I am referring to the male head of the compound, since he will make all the decisions about which crops to grow on the main family farm. I am not, however, implying that it is only men that can be called 'farmers' since I would dispute this quite strongly.

men, women clearly have to juggle farming duties with those of the household, their role in agriculture is vital, not least in planting, harvesting and post-harvest activities. The huge array of tasks that women have to carry out often means that they have to do several tasks concurrently. It is not uncommon to see a woman fetching her water, firewood, or other load, whilst carrying her youngest child on her back, keeping a close eye on the other children accompanying her and looking out for any wild leaves, roots and vegetables or additional firewood to add to her load. It is much more difficult to describe a typical day for a woman than it is for a man, since many are involved in a wide range of agricultural, domestic and income-generating activities (as highlighted in chapter 6).

There are significant variations in the roles and participation of women and men in farming activities. Some authors have contended that certain crops in certain places can be defined as women's crops whereas others are specifically men's crops (Doss, 2002; Henn, 1983). Whilst this may be true to a certain extent and with some crops, within the particular setting of Tarsaw, both men and women play an important role in the planting, tending and harvesting of many of the crops. There are certainly some crops that are predominantly grown by men and vice versa, but this is not always strictly the case. Yam *tends* to be grown only by men, while women are *predominantly* (but not always) responsible for many of the vegetables (okra, chilli pepper and tomatoes). However, the boundaries blur when looking at the farming of maize and groundnuts: both women and men grow these crops, both for subsistence and sale. Women not only play an important role in the cultivation of groundnuts on the main family farm, but most, if not all married women also farm their own plot of groundnuts and sometimes maize, although to a lesser extent [8]. However, when asked about crops and acreage during a survey of households (2001), few of the compound heads that were interviewed included the land farmed by women. On further investigation, I discovered that most women farm between 0.5 and 2 acres of land, which is predominantly used for groundnuts (both for sale and consumption).

A woman's first priority is always to fulfil her obligations on the main family farm, where the majority of her farming time will be spent. Her own plot of land is secondary and she will have to find the time, usually on market days, Fridays and sometimes late afternoons (if her husband is willing to release her from duties on the main farm). As a result, many women are unable to work on their farms at the crucial times for planting,

[8] Women tend to have much smaller plots than men, primarily because they have much less access to land and labour (Naylor, 1999) and have less time to spend farming as a consequence of their domestic duties.

weeding and harvesting, which means that their yields are generally poor, or fail completely. One woman complains that: 'in the rainy season we are very busy with farming, our days are very long. You will first have to work on your husband's farm. After that, you might get some small time to farm your own groundnuts. This year, the earth was dry and hard before I was able to harvest my groundnuts, so instead of pulling them up I had to dig them up, which is hard work. Some had even spoilt' *(Rahinatu Wana, interviewed 29/03/02)*.

This is not always the case and there are a growing number of men who are willing to allow their wives to work on their own farms, or will release the labour of their son for short periods of time, to help her with her plot of land. Interviews indicate that this depends largely on the social structure of the compound. According to one man, 'it will depend on their family situation and how much work they have to do on their husband's farm' *(Ibrahim, informal conversation, 02/05/02)*. In some cases, the man will even help to farm the woman's plot of land. According to one woman, 'my husband helped in digging the holes for sowing, helped in weeding and then helped in harvesting my groundnuts' *(Saratu, women's group discussion, 27/04/02)*. If there are no young boys in the compound to assist, then it is unlikely the woman will receive any help. When there is a general shortage of labour within the compound, all able bodies are needed on the main farm, and individual farms tend to suffer as a result. Junior men, and quite often adolescent children (primarily boys, but sometimes also girls), would also farm their own small plot of land. Similar rules would apply as for the women. In fact, for children with their own plot of land, their farm is quite often of even lesser priority.

As highlighted in chapter 3, some compounds have different branches of the family operating more like nuclear family units. There will be the main family farm, which is the responsibility of the compound head, but junior brothers, or senior sons, would also have sizeable farms, which will be used to feed their 'branch' of the family. From informal conversations, this appears to be a common situation. In such cases, priority is often given to the nuclear family farm before the head's farm.

Farming activities are highly seasonal and the level and type of work varies, depending on the time of year (see figure 5.3)[9]. Also, the division of labour between tasks varies slightly depending on the crop. The main farming season begins when the rains start towards the end of April, although prior to this time, the farms are cleared and prepared ready for planting. Included in the land preparation, the men build mounds and gather

[9] The impact that this seasonal workload has on men and women's mobility is discussed in more detail in chapter 7, section 7.3.2.

sticks ready for sowing, in the area intended for yam production. This is done early in the year, before the rains start in preparation for planting in March. This is the first crop to be planted. The average acreage used for yam cultivation is 3.2 acres per compound[10]. However, acreages vary considerably, ranging from 0.5 acres to 15 acres (for the chief's compound). The amount of yam farmed seems to depend partly on the number of adult males living in the compound, since those with fewer males to help in the making of mounds and sowing generally grow less than those who have more men.

Figure 5.3 The agricultural calendar

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC
Yam	MH		P					H				MH
Groundnuts					P	P				H		
Maize					P	P				H	MH	
Beans					P	P H	H					
B. Beans						P				H		MH
Rice							P				H	
Millet/G.Corn						P						H
Vegetables *					P		H	H	H			

*(okra, pepper, tomato, garden eggs) **P**= Planting, **H**= Harvesting, **MH**= Main Harvest

Once the yam is sown, the men collect leaves from the bush to cover the mound in order to protect the yam from the baking sun. Farming yam is considered to be the most strenuous and difficult task undertaken within the farming calendar, particularly the making of mounds since it can only be done using a hoe. Because of this, building yam mounds is generally the job that young men (usually accompanied by close male friends/relatives) undertake for their future father-in-law, in order to demonstrate their physical ability and impress him of their worth. A young man could not hope to attract a suitable wife unless he is prepared/able to carry out this duty. There is a common belief among both men and women that making mounds, because of the heavy physical burden, is purely a man's job. Because of this, women rarely play any part in the farming of yam, although in some cases, they may assist in the collecting of yam sticks or leaves.

The yam is ready for harvesting as early as August and from this time onwards, small amounts of yam are harvested for consumption, either on the farm or for meals at the house (used to make *fufu (kapala)* or *ampesi*). If it is for consumption on the farm, one of the young boys is sent to fetch some yam. Women (and sometimes the young boys)

[10] The figures on acreage per crop will vary year by year since farmers do not always grow the same combination of crops each year. They will decide in the dry season, weighing up various factors such as previous harvest for crop, household consumption needs and market value of crops.

are then responsible for boiling the yam to eat. When small amounts of yam are needed at the house, a woman either carries it home on her head, or men carry it on their bicycles. All farmers use some of their yam harvest for consumption in this manner, which is why many had great difficulty in giving me accurate figures on their yam yield. However, the majority of the yams are harvested in December, often being carted back to the village on bullock-carts. The main harvesting that is done at this time of the year is easier to quantify, since this is what is used either for sale or consumption. In the harvest of 2001/2 a total of 13 (out of 62) compounds stated that their yam harvest was used entirely for food; 17 compounds stated that their harvest was so poor that they were only able to produce enough to use for next seasons planting; 25 compounds sold all of their harvest; 5 compounds used around half for consumption and half for sale; and 2 compounds did not know how much they had sold and eaten. Of the compounds that had sold some or all of their yams, 16 had sold them in the village, 10 sold them in Bugubelle, 2 sold them in Techiman, 1 sold them direct from the farm and 1 sold them in Tumu. Men are generally responsible for the sale of yams when they are sold in large quantities. Women normally sell yams when traded in small quantities at the local market. Relatively few yams seem to be sold in this latter manner.

The reasons for these differences in sale location are varied and largely dependent on the preference or opportunities of the individual. Those who have the time and resources, and feel that the better prices outweigh the costs of the journey, travel to where the yam market is believed to be more profitable (Techiman and Tumu generally being the most lucrative). Others either do not have the time and resources, or prefer not to take the risk and are happy with local prices. As one male farmer explained, 'I sold my yam in Tarsaw because I am the only one working on the farm, so it would be a waste of time to travel' *(Bakari, compound head, 30/05/02)*. The prices received for the sale of yam varied quite considerably, with the lowest being 60,000¢ (cedis) per 100 tubers rising to a maximum of 300,000¢ in 2002. This is partly a result of the market, with higher payment from markets such as Techiman and Tumu, but also because of the size and quality of the yam. Farmers usually separate their yams into two or three different sizes, with the smaller ones obviously receiving less than the larger ones. Furthermore, the value of yam varies depending on when they are sold. Yams sold straight after harvesting in January receive less than those sold later in the year, around February or March.

Groundnuts are generally the first crop sown once the rains have started, although some farmers sow their maize and beans around the same time. Prior to sowing the groundnuts, women crack the nuts before carefully going through and selecting those that are most likely to germinate well. Men sometimes help in this task, but it is usually women, often sitting in groups helping each other, who do this work (see photograph 5.2). The groundnuts are sown after the rains have started, towards the end of April or beginning of May. When sowing, both women and men work in the fields: men making the holes for the seeds, whilst women follow them, sowing the seeds and covering the holes. This is also the case for most of the other crops apart from yam. Whilst the crops are growing, men go and weed between the plants. On the land where women grow their groundnuts, they either have to do the weeding themselves, hire labour to do it, or beg either their husband or one of their sons to do it for them.

When it is time for harvesting, all able bodies, both from the family compound and other compounds go to the farm to help. Men are generally responsible for pulling up the groundnut plants, whilst women and children sit in groups under trees plucking the groundnuts from the plants (see photograph 5.3). At the end of each day the harvest is brought home, either by bullock cart, where available, or women carry them back on their heads. Sometimes the harvest is stored at the farm (covered to protect from thieves and goats) until there is enough to warrant using the bullock-cart. Those who came from other compounds to help with the harvest are given a certain amount of the produce: the children will usually be given a small bowl and adults a larger bowl. It is generally the job of women to crack the groundnuts for personal use and sale. Even the elderly women and disabled have a role to play during harvesting time. Groundnut plants are normally brought back to the compound on the bullock-cart so they can remain at home and pluck the groundnuts.

The majority of groundnuts are sold unshelled by the bowl (roughly 8kg), usually for sale in Tarsaw or the local market. Many people keep hold of their groundnuts, selling small amounts in order to meet their various needs, rather than selling them by the bag. Within Tarsaw, there are usually three women who act as middlemen collecting groundnuts on market day for the bigger traders in Tumu and Bugubelle. They generally earn a small amount of money for this job. On Bugubelle market day, women from the village bring their groundnuts, which can be anything up to a basin full. These are measured by the bowl. This seems to be the most common method of selling groundnuts. Some women take their groundnuts to Bugubelle to obtain a slightly higher price. Those farmers who sell them by the bag either sell them to a middleman passing

through the village, or take them to Navrongo, Leo or Techiman (the main marketing centres are shown in figure 5.4). As with the yam, it is generally the men who take them for sale further away.

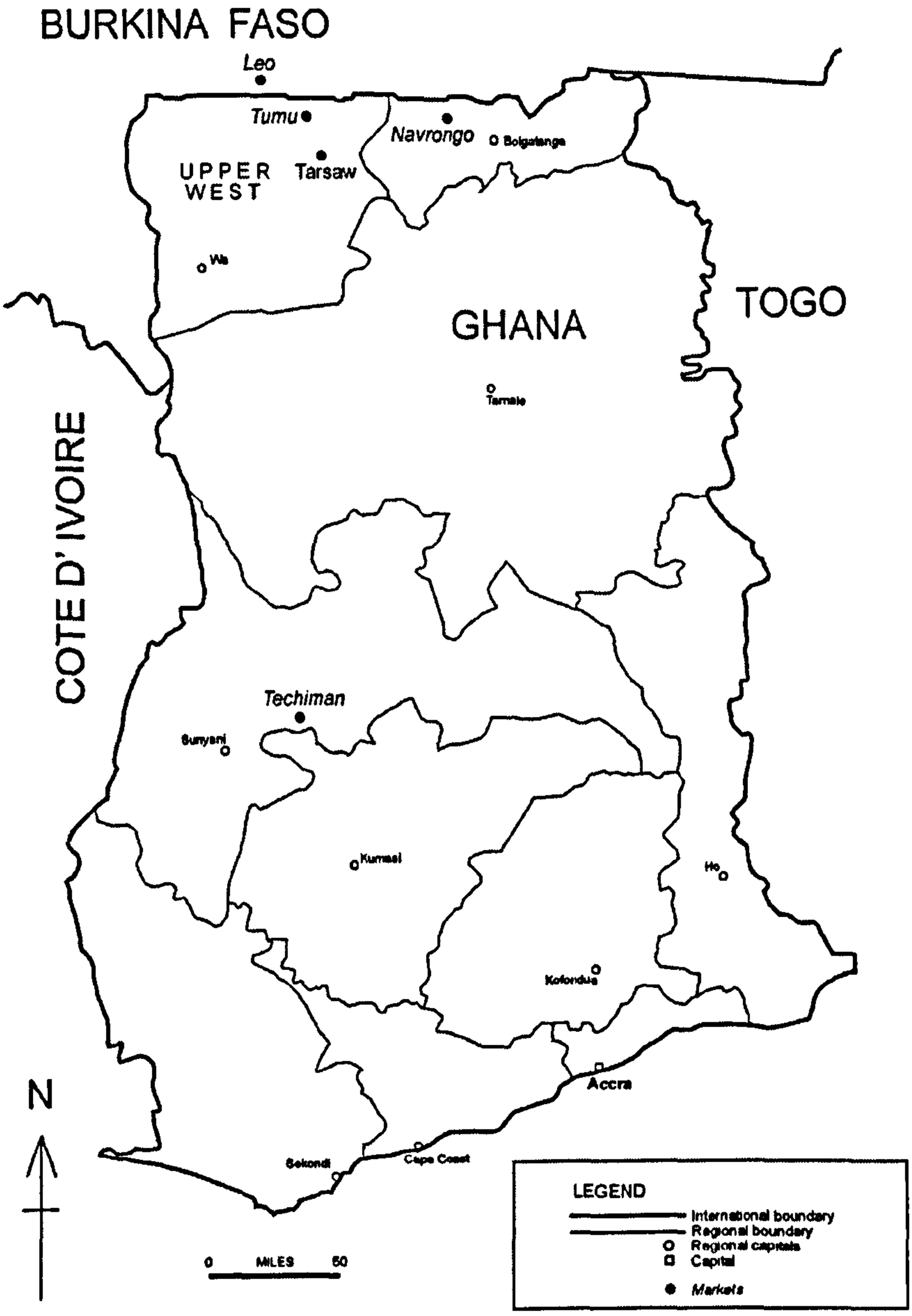
Photograph 5.2: Women selecting groundnuts for sowing



Photograph 5.3: Women plucking groundnuts at the farm



Figure 5.4 Main marketing centres



Maize is probably the most important food and cash crop grown in this area. It provides the grain for the main staple meal (*tuozafi*- "TZ") and earns the most income when traded. The main problem with maize is that in order to get a good yield, farmers insist that they have to use fertiliser[11]. This can often be difficult to obtain and is very expensive, usually because it is in high demand and not always locally available. This normally means that only the wealthier farmers can afford to purchase and have the resources to get hold of fertiliser and therefore get the better yields. Furthermore, because maize is such an important crop, farmers will carefully weed around the plants

[11] For each acre of land, a farmer will need about 2 bags of the fertiliser compound and one bag of ammonia, the combination of these varying depending on the quality of the soil. The compound cost around 130,000¢ (£13) per bag and the ammonia costs 95,000¢ (£9.5) per bag in 2001 depending on where purchased. If fertiliser is used a farmer will get about 16/17 bags of maize per acre, as opposed to 6 or 7 bags.

at least twice, in order to maximise yield. This is particularly important for those who cannot afford to use fertiliser, since it will help to improve the crop yield. This is arduous, backbreaking work, which is generally undertaken by the men (but not exclusively). These two factors alone make it difficult and sometimes impossible for women to grow maize, since they rarely have the money, resources or time to give to maize cultivation. Some of the wealthier women (generally those involved in trading beyond just the sale of their husbands crops) will hire local labour and sometimes purchase fertiliser in order to grow maize to trade. This is generally much smaller quantities than that grown on the family farm, but provide a small number of women with additional income.

The majority of people use maize for a mixture of consumption and sale. For the poorer compounds in the village, all the maize is used for consumption. However, for those who have a surplus of maize beyond the needs of the compound, this is then sold. In terms of sale location, Tarsaw is again most popular, although a considerable number of compound heads had not yet sold their crop by the time of the survey (May 2002), holding out for a better price. According to the survey of 62 compounds (2002): 42 compounds used some of their maize produce to buy fertiliser; 26 used some to solve family problems (health, funerals, etc); 5 used some to carry out building or maintenance; 2 used some to pay their IFAD loan; 1 used some to buy a bullock; 2 for their children's education; 1 bought a motorbike; 1 treated his animals and 1 bought a bullock plough. Wealthier farmers are obliged to give a certain amount of their produce as Sadaqa (*Zakat* i.e. tithe). This is one of the major 5 duties required by God from all Muslims. It is an obligatory charity whereby food is given to the old, infirm and the poor.

Men generally control the income from the sale of agricultural produce from the family farm. The compound head has ultimate control over this income as well as the labour of all compound members. Although many members of the compound will farm their own individual plot of land, and are entitled to keep the income from this produce, their main duty is to farm the family farm. Any labour they wish to use for their own farm is carried out after they have fulfilled their commitments on the main farm. Some compound members are able to employ additional labourers, usually junior members of the compound, to help with the farm work, although this option is rarely open to women. The Sissala compound is a complex social institution within which various forms of hierarchy coalesce, giving clear lines of subordination and domination based on age, gender, marital status and wealth. The amount of labour one is able to command and the subsequent income earned from this depends on one's position within this hierarchy. The head of the compound is at the top of this hierarchy, and is

ultimately responsible for the needs of all compound members. For his wives and the other female members of the compound, he is required to provide them with enough produce to be able to provide food for the compound, pay for their health needs (and those of the children) and cloth them (although in reality many women pay for this themselves). For the male members of the compound, the head is required to take care of the payment of brideprice, health needs and clothing and in some cases will purchase a bicycle or other means of transport to enable them to work more efficiently on the farm. There is a complex web of rights and obligations between the various compound members: between brothers and sisters, husband and wife, parents and children etc. The terms under which various compound members exchange labour, goods, services and income are embedded in the complex organisation of consumption and distribution within the compound.

5.3.2 Trading

> 'Both men and women go to the market. Some women will go and sell things and then buy their things. If the men have something to sell they will give it to the women to sell. Men will go only to buy. Men will go on their bicycles but women will walk or join a lorry if they have the money'
>
> *(Adam, Datoyili, Northern Region, 13/08/01)*

The trading of agricultural produce, particularly maize, groundnuts and yam, provides the major source of income for both men and women in the village. The majority of farmers (both men and women) cultivate primarily to fulfil consumption needs, but those with greater yields will sell the surplus to meet other needs: building maintenance and new buildings; purchase of fertiliser and other inputs; clothing, education and health; and family obligations. For some of the poorer families, the option to trade their produce is not open (apart from selling enough to pay the basic rate tax etc.) and many rely on dry season gathering (undertaken primarily by women) to make ends meet. Despite this, the lean season is a difficult time for the very poor. Those whose yields exceed their consumption needs are able to make a certain amount of money from the sale. Those who are able to keep hold of their harvest until the price goes up in the lean season will do best, but those who need the money and have to sell early will lose out somewhat. For the crops produced on the main family farm, it is always the male head of the compound who will make the decisions over when and where to sell the produce (the destinations of the main traded agricultural products have been discussed in section 5.3.1). This is quite often done in cooperation with other senior males from the compound. Those who farm their own small plot of land will generally make their own decisions regarding the sale of their crops. Women can decide for themselves

when they wish to sell their crop of groundnuts, but most will trade in small quantities to fulfil short-term needs.

Although not to the same scale as the powerful 'Market Queens' who dominate trade in the south of Ghana, women in Tarsaw undoubtedly play an important role in the trading of produce, whether it is their own produce or that of the main family farm[12]. It is generally women who will convey the produce of the family farm to the market (either on their heads or taken by market truck) to sell and then give the proceeds to their husbands. Women rarely, if ever, profit from the sale of their husband's produce. This is a duty that is expected of them, not something carried out with the expectation of reward. Most women and girls will play some part in trading. The task of selling the husband's produce is usually taken in turns between wives, where there is more than one. As previously mentioned, only in cases where large amounts of produce are sold, where it will need to be taken to Techiman or Navrongo, will the man take the leading role. Although many women play some part in the trading of produce and other goods, this can be to a greater or lesser degree. Some women just sell their own produce and that of their husbands, whereas others also participate in the buying and selling of crops, vegetables, foodstuffs and other goods, in order to make additional income. There are a small number of women in the village who trade, and participate in the buying and selling of agricultural produce, bowls, cooking utensils and clothing. These women usually travel to Techiman, Kumasi and Navrongo for their goods. This trading tends to be carried out in the dry season since the rainy season will again be taken up with farming activities. The majority of women trade on quite a small scale as a safety net against financial difficulties and a means of improving their family's economic situation[13]. When they have a stockpile of agricultural produce (usually groundnuts), either from their own farm or purchased to keep as an investment, they will often sell in small amounts, when money is required to purchase specific items.

The income made from trading tends to be small for the majority of women, often just enough to purchase goods for their children and household items such as ingredients,

[12] Through life history interviews with some of the village elders, it appears that women have played an important role in trading for a long time. However, because people were unable to grow large amounts of produce prior to the arrival of the bullock-carts and ploughs, there was very little to trade. One woman said that, 'in those days the common things we were selling were dawa-dawa, shea-nuts and millet, but now, because we produce plenty of food, sometimes when you go to the market you will not see the shea or dawa-dawa, but rather you will see maize, millet, rice and so many many foodstuffs' (*Salamatu, village elder, 08/07/02).*

[13] For most women, petty trading tends to take place at the local market (Bugubelle- 4 miles away). If they are selling small amounts (which is often the case), then they will carry the loads on their head. For larger amounts, women utilise the occasional trucks that pass through the village. The issue of transporting marketed goods is discussed in more detail in section 5.5.

bowls, basins and other items for their own use. Quite often, when women earn a small amount of income, either from selling their crops or gathered items, they will use this to buy foodstuffs to then sell when the price is better. As one woman explained, 'when you have some money you will buy something like foodstuffs to keep. If not, if you have the cash in your hand you will spend it. So, after having bought the stuff to keep, when the prices are high you can sell it to get more money and buy whatever you want to buy' *(Adisa, group discussion, 27/04/02).*

5.3.3 Animal Husbandry

The ownership of poultry, goats, sheep and larger ruminants is an important source of additional income for many compounds in Tarsaw, and indeed much of Northern Ghana. Although the larger animals are rarely traded or eaten, the smaller ruminants and poultry act as a safeguard against scarcity and are usually sold in the 'lean season' (late dry season/early rainy season before the new harvest arrives), or for special occasions such as outdoorings, funerals and naming ceremonies. Cows, and particularly bullocks are rarely sold or eaten, since they are far too important for ploughing and carting, and act as a clear indicator of social and economic status.

Boys appear to spend the most time caring for the animals, particularly the bullocks. The job of caring for the compound's bullocks is usually assigned to the younger boys of the compound (those who are too young to start farming) and it is not uncommon to see boys around the age of 6 or 7 herding them to local watering holes and feeding areas. They will normally do this in groups and the boys will meet up to help each other keep an eye on the cattle. As the boys get older, they will also be largely responsible for ploughing and carting activities and can sometimes earn some money by doing these jobs for others. These are important tasks, since the bullocks are probably the most valuable and prized of all male possessions. The boys who are assigned this task therefore take great pride in their work. As one of the village elders said, as he was reminiscing about his childhood days: 'I was trained as a cowboy before I began farming. I was happy because the animals were my father's property so it looked nice for me to do that. So even when there is rain, I would still graze them' *(Bipuah, village elder, 27/03/02).*

Many cattle owners entrust their cows and the bullocks that are not used for ploughing to the local *Fulani*[14] to look after, as observed more generally in northern Ghana (Al-

[14] The Fulani (or *Fula*) are a nomadic or semi-nomadic pastoralist peoples that have spread throughout West Africa. They tend to live on the outskirts of villages and towns throughout Ghana (although more numerous and extensive in other West African countries such as Burkina

Hassan, Famiyeh and Jager, 1997). Herdsmen often walk the animals for long distances in search of water and fodder. The Fulani are free to use these cows for their milk (which they consume themselves and also sell to the villagers) and the owners allow the Fulani to farm a plot of land. This is a mutually beneficial relationship since the Fulani are far more experienced with cattle than local farmers, and the Fulani not only get to use the cow's milk but also the dung for their farms.

In compounds that do not have young boys to look after the productive bullocks, a boy can either be 'loaned' to the compound by a branch of the family with a surplus of boys (as discussed in chapter 3), or the bullocks will be looked after by another compound. In the latter case, the compounds will most likely be linked through family ties, and there will rarely be any obligation of payment or reward to the host family. In the compound where I lived, bullocks and equipment were owned by the compound head, although they were looked after by his brother's son (living in the same compound), since he did not have a son old enough to tend them. In return, his brother was able to use the bullocks and equipment, when required on his own farm.

It is very rare to see a woman or girl looking after cattle, although they may play some part in caring for the smaller ruminants and fowls. The men and boys are usually the ones to collect fodder for cattle during the dry season when grazing lands are dry and sparse, although the women quite often provide food for them by winnowing the maize to get the chaff. Small ruminants are generally left to roam about freely and tend to require less tending than bullocks. A man usually sends one of his sons, or on occasion one of his wives, to collect small termite mounds to feed the fowls. It is normally the responsibility of the men and boys to make sure that the goats and sheep are safe and fed. However, it is women and children's daily responsibility to make sure that the animals do not steal the food as it is being processed (dried, winnowed and pounded).

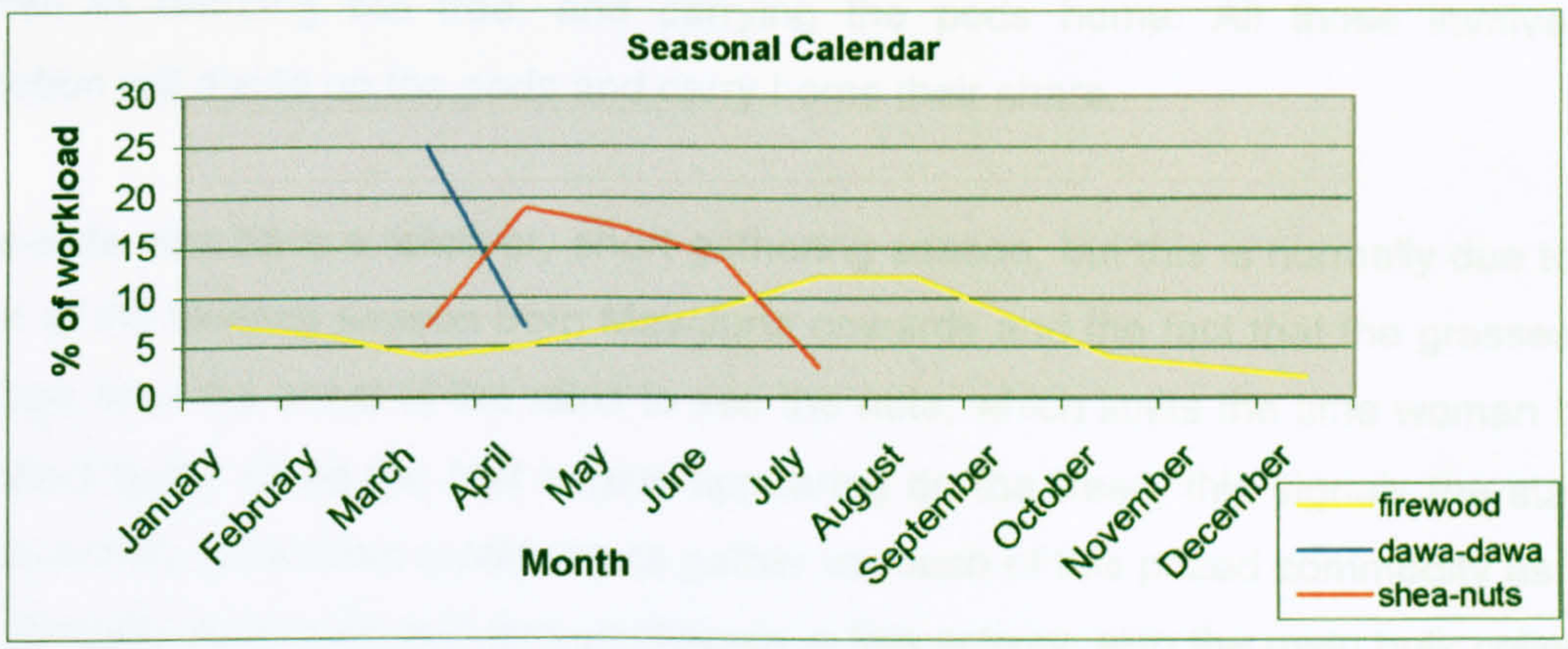
5.3.4 Gathering

There are numerous accounts that highlight the important role that the gathering of food products plays in household livelihood (see for example, Katz, 1991 and Madge, 1994). Madge believes that the cooking, preservation and storage of gathered food represents an important coping strategy in rural Gambia. The knowledge women have of food preparation practices is 'an essential, although often unappreciated (by

Faso and Nigeria) and play an important role in herding and trading. The dairy products that are produced from their cattle (and those they tend for others) are traded daily to the sedentary farmers and at local markets.

researchers/development practitioners) aspect of the economic and social resources of a household' (p.291). In Tarsaw, women and children (primarily girls) tend to do the majority of the gathering of products from the land. This includes wild leaves and vegetables, shea-fruit (primarily for their nuts), dawa-dawa and firewood. All of these, apart from the firewood, are seasonal products and usually collected in brief, but intensive, periods, at various points in the year (see figure 5.8[15]). Vegetables tend to be collected by the women and girls as they return from the farm, throughout the rainy season and into the beginning of the dry season, as a good way to supplement their diet[16]. Dawa-dawa seeds, which are naturally very rich in protein, are an important soup and stew ingredient and many women gather the seedpods in order to process and either sell or use. Those women who are able to collect the pods in abundance usually sell a certain amount of the processed dawa-dawa and use the remainder for themselves. This can provide vital income for the family at a time when income from the sale of agricultural produce is dwindling. For those families who do not harvest enough produce for the family, the sale of dawa-dawa is crucial for sustaining the family over the lean dry season.

Figure 5.5 Women's gathering activities throughout the year



Source: seasonal calendar activities carried out during a focus group discussion with women.

The collection of dawa-dawa is generally undertaken by groups of adult women, since the pods are found high up in the trees and it can be difficult and dangerous (see photograph 5.4). It is also an opportunity for women to socialise with their friends (as is often the case with gathering activities, see Besio, 2003, for a discussion of this in the context of northern Pakistan). Dawa-dawa trees are generally found on farmland or in

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[15] This information is based on data obtained through seasonal calendars (see chapter 4, section 4.4.3.3). The chart shows lower figures for firewood collection from September onwards despite the fact that this is the time of year when women collect more firewood in actual terms. Women explained that this was because firewood collection was more of a burden from June to September because of the already heavy workload on the farm, whereas in the dry season there is less overall work to carry out, and women's main burden is water collection.

[16] They sometimes make special trips to the farm or bush to gather these products, but this is not often the case.

the uncultivated bush areas. Those located on farms are looked after by the farmer and care is taken not to damage them in the land-clearing and burning process. The trees are not considered to be the property of the farmer whose land they are located, and anyone is free to gather the pods.

The pods are generally reached by one woman climbing the tree (with the help of her friends or female relatives), taking with her a long stick with another stick attached at an acute angle to the main stick. This will then be used to hook onto the pods in order to pull them off the branch. They will then be gathered by those on the ground, loaded into basins and carried back to the village. The gathering of dawa-dawa has a very short season since they are not abundant and the women will quickly gather all the pods that are available. Dawa-dawa gathering is one of the few activities where women will work together and pool their labour. This is probably because of the dangerous nature of the activity, and the fact that climbing the tree requires the assistance of others. The women will alternate who climbs the tree and who collects the pods. There are many women that are unable to climb the trees, for whatever reason. These women will still play their part by gathering the pods from the floor, assisting the other women in climbing the tree, and carrying the pods home. All those involved in collection will divide up the pods and carry home their share.

Shea-nuts also have a relatively short gathering season, but this is normally due to the onset of the farming season from May/June onwards and the fact that the grasses get too high after the onset of the rains to see the nuts, which limits the time women have to collect them. Once the fruit begins appearing on the trees, this signals the start of frantic activity as women quickly try to gather as much of this prized commodity as they can. Virtually all women and girls participate in this activity, with the main bulk collected from April until the end of May, decreasing after farming begins. After this time, girls continue to collect them, usually early in the mornings, whilst women start work on the farm. Shea-nuts are an important commodity for women, since the sale of shea butter[17] provides valuable income when traded at the local market. Most Ghanaian dishes require a lot of oil in their preparation and, since it is usually not possible to purchase oil from elsewhere due to cost, women are reliant on local sources of oil: namely shea-butter and groundnut oil. Obtaining oil can be a daily struggle for women, particularly those who have not learnt how to process shea butter and therefore have to rely on purchasing from others.

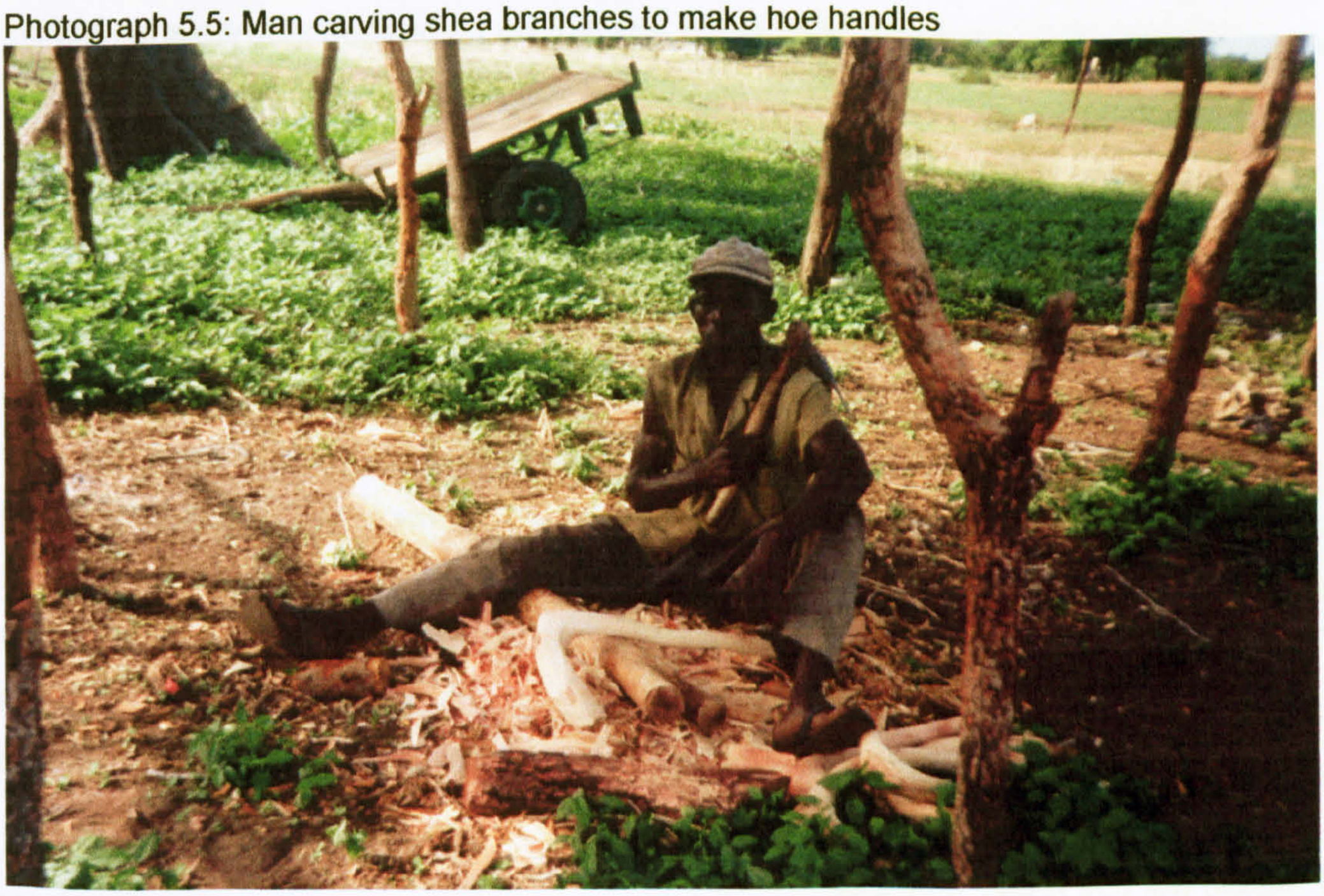
[17] Processing shea butter is an arduous and incredibly time-consuming task, which involves a number of labour intensive stages (see Appendix 3)

Photographs 5.4: Women collecting and carrying dawa-dawa pods.





Photograph 5.5: Man carving shea branches to make hoe handles



The branches of the shea tree are also utilised to make hoe handles. This provides an additional source of income for a limited number of men (two or three men were reported to do this work in the village), who go into the bush and farmland during the dry season, chopping off and gathering appropriately shaped branches to carve into shape (see photograph 5.4). These are either sold locally within the village, or taken to the market for sale. The sticks are usually carried to the village or market, strapped onto the back of the man's bicycle. Both the shea and dawa-dawa trees are considered to be economic trees, necessitating a certain amount of protection and management. Although much of the farmland is burnt in the dry season, both to reduce the risk of uncontrolled bush fires and to tidy away all the rubbish from the previous harvest, care is taken not to damage or destroy these trees, since they provide important sources of income.

From randomly weighing loads, it was found that the average load of dawa-dawa, removed from the pod, for an able-bodied adult is 15kg and with the pods it is about 44kg. The load would be carried in a basin the same as that shown in photograph 5.4 above. For an elderly woman, the values drop to 10kg with the pods removed and 31kg with the pods. The shea-nut loads varied depending on whether it was shea-fruit or dried kernels and upon the age of the carrier. An able-bodied adult is able to carry an average of 32kg of shea-fruit or 22kg of dried nuts and an elderly woman on average carries 12kg. Children also participate in the carrying of shea (although not usually dawa-dawa) and carried on average 12kg of fruit and 9kg of kernels. These values varied considerably depending on the age of the child. Because of the density of shea-fruit and kernels, they would often be carried is smaller basins that those used for water, although some would use the larger basin and not fill it to the top.

Traditional medicine is still a very important source of healthcare, quite often in combination with the more 'modern' medicine provided by local clinics. Men tend to play more of a role in traditional medicine than women (although it is always women who are the traditional birth attendants-TBAs). Within Tarsaw, there are a total of 4 traditional healers, all of whom are middle-aged or elderly men. The job of the healer requires an in-depth knowledge of the health properties of various tree roots, barks, fruits and leaves. Many healers and herbalists still maintain some level of faith in traditional beliefs and practices and so the cause of illnesses can sometimes lie with the various gods and spirits[18]. Either way, the cure generally includes some

[18] This issue is usually kept well hidden and is regarded as a dirty secret that few people are prepared to talk about in any detail. Many people deny that such practices still exist and insist that since they have turned to Islam they no longer believe in their old gods. However, after

combination of plants. In order to treat an illness, the healer will first diagnose the problem before searching the bush to gather the appropriate items. Rather than receiving payment in the form of money, a healer is generally recompensed with fowls and guinea fowls or, in more serious medical cases, goats and sheep.

5.3.5 Other Income Generating Activities

In addition to the income earned from agricultural work, trading and gathering activities, many women also participate in a range of other income-generating activities, including food selling and dressmaking. Food selling includes making *coco* (porridge), *kakulo* (maize cakes) and *boufu* (doughnuts) to sell at breakfast time; selling *kuli-kuli* (fried groundnut balls), mainly done on market day; and a small number of women have set up chop bars (food stalls), selling rice, beans, *kenkey, banku* and *fufu* amongst other dishes. There are two chop bars in the village, both owned by a senior woman of the family, but also employing a number of junior females who help out at peak times and when they are not needed on the farm. Men never participate in these activities under any circumstances, but are probably the chop bars main customers. If travelling to the farm early, before the women have time to prepare any food in their compound, the men will go and eat some food from the chop bar, or if they have very little money, they will go to buy *coco*.

One of the chop bar owners, a 55 year-old woman named Fatima, started selling food when her husband died 10 years previously. She had formerly been living in Cote d'Ivoire with her husband, working on a coffee plantation, but when he died, she returned to Tarsaw, his hometown. Since she "didn't know how to farm" and needed to make money to support herself, she decided to set up a chop bar (using money given to her by her father) and sells food throughout the year. This was the first chop bar to be set up in the village. As with the other chop bar, Fatima's chop bar is located on the Tarsaw-Kulufuo road, attracting customers from the village and any strangers who are passing through the village. Fatima is illiterate and does not keep any account of her income and expenditure, but she apparently manages to make enough to feed herself and her children. When describing her work, Fatima said that, 'sometimes I am up before first prayers to start preparing the food. I start selling at around 6 or 7. Sometimes, when the market is good I can finish at 2, if not I can be selling up to about 6 at night. I am alone, although people help me to collect water and I will pay them. A basin is 200¢' *(interviewed 12/11/01)*. The rainy season is the time when she makes the most money as people are busy on their farms and do not have the time to cook in

spending more time in the village, and building a level of trust with people, I began to realise that this was not strictly true and that people rather combined Islam with traditional practices.

the morning. Business is slower in the dry season as people generally have plenty of food from their harvest and also have the time to cook.

The other food seller, a 35 year-old woman named Abiba, has been selling food for 8 years. Abiba comes from a larger compound and is therefore able to receive assistance from her daughters, who fetch water for the chop-bar and help with food preparation. Coming from a larger compound, there is generally no shortage of labour to do the household and agricultural tasks. Since Abiba is the senior woman of the compound, she is sometimes able to utilise the labour of more junior women from her compound (if not needed for other tasks), in addition to the labour of her daughters. During the peak farming times, food is only prepared in the early morning, after which, she will close and start work on the farm. In the dry season, Abiba will serve food until it has run out, since there is no need to work at the farm. Abiba financed the start-up of her chop-bar with money given to her by her mother, supplemented with money from the sale of her groundnuts. Abiba has clearly built quite a profitable venture, since she has been able to expand her business and has constructed a new mud-brick building with cemented walls and zinc roofing to house her chop bar. She also purchased a bicycle about 6 years ago and another one 3 years ago to enable her to travel quickly to and from the market with her produce, although she no longer uses it herself since her children are old enough to run errands for her. The two chop bars tend to prepare different meals: Fatima cooks *kenkey, banku* and *omo tuo* (rice balls), whereas Abiba usually prepares rice and beans, *fufu* and sometimes Bambara beans. Both women use a combination of family farm produce and bought produce to prepare the food (although primarily the latter).

Other women in the village are able to supplement the money they earn from farm work through dressmaking. There are at least five women in the village who earn money in this manner, often with the help of other women-friends who keep them company and help with the ironing and so on. This is usually carried out on the woman's veranda or on a table under a tree nearby. All the seamstresses in the village are married women who have trained elsewhere and continue the craft in Tarsaw. It is normally a dry season activity as most, if not all of the women, are required to participate in farming at other times of the year. Furthermore, there is generally much more business in the dry season as people have the money to get clothing made and usually need new clothing in order to attend funerals, outdoorings and other occasions that are more frequent at this time of the year. It is difficult to say how lucrative this form of work is as all the women interviewed claim that they did not earn enough to buy much. Most declared

that they were only able to cater for their needs and the needs of their children, although others admitted that they were able to save and buy bowls and cooking utensils.

Another dry season activity is hair braiding, also carried out by a small number of women in the village. This is perhaps not viewed as an income-generating activity so much as a social activity. It appears that a minimal amount will normally be given to the braider, but not always. She does not set up a stall or tout her business in any way, but people come to her if they want her services.

5.4 Household/'Reproductive' work

> 'If you don't marry, your stay in the village is useless. Who will cook for you? Who will collect water for you? You will have to do it all. The women, they help us by preparing the home whilst we farm. If you don't have a wife you will suffer a lot. A man doesn't have time to cook after farming and he is also too tired'
>
> *(Ibrahim, village elder, interviewed 06/09/01).*

Regardless of their extensive involvement in farming, processing and marketing, women are still expected to fulfil their domestic duties of household maintenance and childcare. This includes the heavy burden of processing food prior to cooking (i.e. grinding[19], husking, winnowing, pounding of grains and other basic foods); the fetching of water and firewood; the collection of additional food; and cleaning the compound and taking care of the children. Because of their extensive role in domestic activities, women's workload fluctuates much less daily and throughout the seasons than men's. As one middle-aged woman stated, 'we do most of the work, the man only has to go to farm and after farm he will come and be relaxing. When the man goes to farm, you will still be doing the housework before you go to farm to assist him. When we return from farm, we have to continue our housework whilst the man will be resting' *(Jahara, group discussion, 31/03/02)*. The lack of technology and reliance on rudimentary tools makes the completion of these tasks incredibly time-consuming. As mentioned in Chapter 4, it is methodologically very difficult to obtain accurate information on women's working

[19] Since the arrival of the grinding mills in Tarsaw, many women choose to grind their grains at the mill rather than using a pestle and mortar or a grinding stone. The latter is both strenuous and time-consuming, whilst the former only requires preparation (pounding to remove the husk) and the walk to the nearest working mill. In Tarsaw this is usually not a problem since there are two and at least one is normally working at some point during the day. However, some women still grind their grains at home, either because they cannot afford the cost of milling, or at times when the mills are inoperative.

day. However, observation, interviews and focus group discussions reveal the extensive working hours and the intensity of the workload for women.

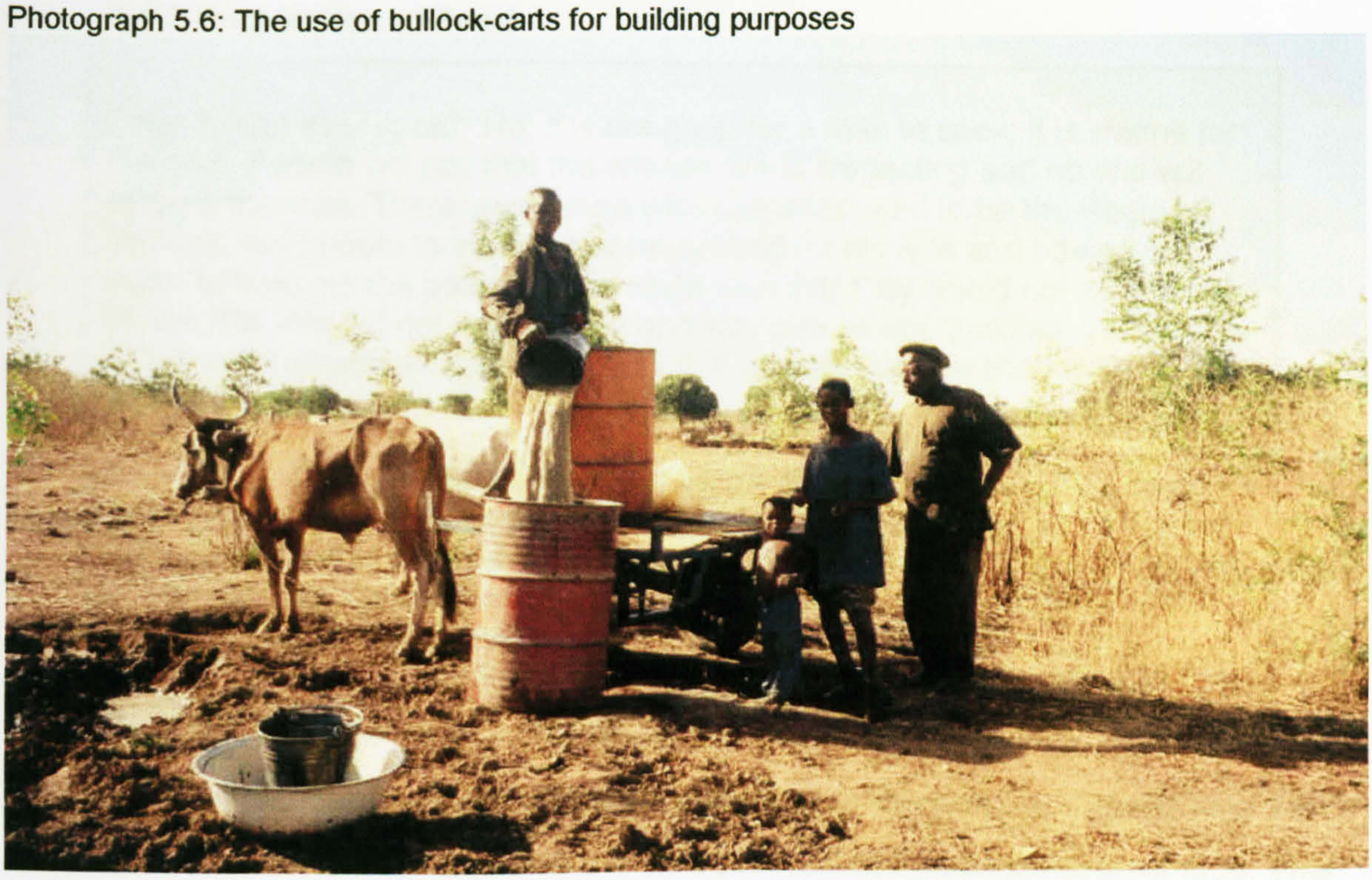
5.4.1 Building Work

Men contribute a very small amount of their labour to household activities and this is primarily for building work and household maintenance. Building work is almost entirely done during the dry season after all the work is finished on the farm. It involves collecting the water and sand for the bricks, drying the bricks, mixing more mud to secure the bricks, plastering the walls after building and adding the roof. The roof can be made of either thatch or zinc depending on the person's financial resources. As with a lot of the building work, thatching requires skill and expertise and not all men have the ability to do this work. If nobody in the family is skilled in this task, somebody else will be paid to do the work. Some people have the same problem with building work in general or prefer to pay others to help. Some men will spend much of the dry season helping others with their building work, earning about 5,000¢ per day for their labour and possibly more for the more skilled jobs like roofing or plastering. Building work requires a lot of water, which is used at various stages of brick making, building and plastering. This is almost always done using the bullock-carts, operated by the young boys (see photograph 5.6).

Although building is undoubtedly a male-dominated task, women play their part. Some compounds do not have access to a bullock-cart to help them transport the water and sand, so women will have to do this job by carrying it on their heads. Also, women were traditionally responsible for plastering the walls when mud and dung was used. Now that most people use cement to plaster their walls, men have taken over this task[20]. However, some walls are still plastered using traditional methods, perhaps the woman's own wall or the wall for her kitchen, and for this the women still do the plastering (see photograph 5.7).

[20] I am unsure exactly why this is the case, but presume that it is primarily because cement requires financial outlay whereas traditional methods do not. Women generally do not purchase cement for plastering, mainly because they do not have the money for such purchases (one bag of cement can be the equivalent of half a bag of groundnuts, depending on where it is purchased) and would rather use their money for feeding their family or purchasing clothing. Furthermore, it is usual for men to procure new 'technologies' before women (also men are usually deemed to be more appropriate targets for new technologies by development planners)

Photograph 5.6: The use of bullock-carts for building purposes



Photograph 5.7: Woman plastering her bathroom wall using traditional methods





Photograph 5.8: Women pounding

5.4.2 Preparation of Food

> Does a man ever cook? 'No, it is not good for a man to cook, it is shame for the man. People will say that the woman is not respecting and no one will respect the man. There was a man who was supposed to be the Regional Minister, but people found out that he cooked for his wife and heated her water to bath, so the people in the north said that they would not allow him to be the RM. We did not respect him and saw him as not qualified. We believe in our culture/tradition and don't allow it. If you do that you should not let anybody see'.
>
> What about if a wife was doing a man's job? 'If a wife is helping you, they don't mind as they will see the wife as respectful and helping you. If you only have one wife and she is delivering a baby, it is still not good for him to cook, some other woman will have to cook for him. If the wife is cooking and the child is crying you can take the child, that is OK'.
>
> *(Fuseini, middle-aged farmer, Northern Region, 15/08/01)*

Women, often with the help of their daughters (aged 7 onwards) and sometimes their mothers-in-law, are wholly responsible for the processing and preparation of food. This is a particularly heavy burden for young wives and those whose children are not yet old enough to assist or take over the task. As one young mother stated: 'food preparation is a woman's biggest burden, although the work becomes less as she gets older because she has children to help her do the work or the man might have more wives, who will then help her'[21] *(Amina, young mother, 09/09/01)*. Most of the meals that women prepare tend to be extremely time consuming and labour intensive. Some of the stages of processing and preparation can also be very physically strenuous, particularly the pounding (photograph 5.8- required at a number of stages to make *tuozafi* and an important part of the preparation of *fufu*- two of the main staple dishes) and stirring (also required to make *tuozafi*- usually over a hot, smoky fire for around 30 minutes). In addition to this, women often have to spend large amounts of time, particularly during the lean season, scouring the bush and farmland for wild leaves and vegetables to add to their soups for flavour.

Warner, Al-Hassan and Kidd (1997) discuss the division of cooking duties in relation to a woman's status and stage in the life cycle, among the Dagombas of Northern Region. Here they found that, when a woman has successfully borne children, marking the step from 'junior woman' to 'senior woman', a woman reaches the status of 'cooking wife'. This is described thus: 'having successfully given birth to one child, or sometimes two children...a married woman will then return to her husband's compound to take up

[21] It is important to note that women benefit in this respect not because the wives cooperate in the preparation of food, but because the wives will take it in turns to prepare the meals.

status as a full 'cooking wife'...cooking wives differ profoundly from married and unmarried, junior women in a number of important respects...women who are accorded full cooking wife status will usually have the right to days off from cooking' (p.147). In this situation, the sharing of cooking and other duties is more complex, since cooking wives tend to have more time to engage in various farm and income generating activities and are usually obliged to assist the other women by using some of their income to supplement the basic staples in the compound. There was little evidence of this kind of practice in Tarsaw. I found no indication that more senior women would supplement the staples of the compound in return for respite from cooking. In Tarsaw, husbands are generally responsible for the provision of the basic staples. When a woman becomes pregnant or is too sick to prepare the meal, more of the staple food would be given to the other wife or wives for provision of food.

In most compounds, in addition to wives and daughters, there are usually several other women present, including daughters-in-law, mother-in-law, other female relatives who are brought in as maidservants, and widows who co-reside in the compound. These women also take their turn in the preparation of food and other activities. From my own observations and through interviews with a range of women, it appears that there are a number of different 'systems' of organising the food preparation between the various women within the compound. In some compounds, the women (wives and their co-wives) take it in turns to prepare the food for their husband[22]. This is normally done in two or three day cycles. On the days that a woman is responsible for preparing the food, she will also be expected to cater for all of her husband's needs, including fetching and warming his bath water and sleeping in his bed. This is to help avoid disagreements between the women and maintain unity. It is generally down to the wives themselves to organise how they divide the work. The husbands first wife is always the senior, so if any problems arise, she will attempt to resolve them or will call upon the husband to settle the disagreement.

In other compounds, all married women prepare the food every day of the week with no sharing between co-wives and other women in the compound. They each prepare enough for themselves and their children and also provide a bowl of food for the husband. The reason for this difference is unclear and seems to follow no clear pattern in terms of compound size or composition. However, I suspect that it would be difficult for all women to cook in compounds that have shared kitchen and cooking facilities. In all compounds, each woman is provided with the staple crops of maize, yam and other

[22] For some women, this, and the sharing of other household duties between co-wives, was cited as one of the potential benefits of being in a polygamous relationship (see chapter 7).

foodstuffs by her husband to use for food preparation. Each wife will use her own funds to purchase soup ingredients, additional foodstuffs and her own pots and pans. There is often a sense of rivalry and competition between co-wives and each wife will struggle to make her food nutritious and tasty. Women take great pride in their ability to cook and serve their husband well and it is probably one of the most important skills that a woman passes on to her daughters, since it is vital in securing a good marriage.

In all compounds, the women prepare the meal for their own children and when her turn comes up for their husband, using their own utensils. Women that have daughters old enough to assist will utilise their labour in the preparation of food. In some cases, the daughter is old enough to complete the task without help from her mother, thereby releasing the mother's labour for other duties. If the compound head's mother lives with the family, she can also play her part in preparing the food. If there are daughters-in-law living in the compound, the mother is the senior, and therefore not obligated to prepare the meal for the compound members. This will generally be done by the younger women. The mother can assist by cutting up vegetables, sieving flour or other menial chores. If there is more than one daughter-in-law, the mother either helps them when it is their turn to cook, or, if each daughter-in-law prepares food every day, will help when asked.

As previously mentioned, there is little or no pooling of labour between co-wives, except maybe in specific and minor tasks, such as the pounding of grain, as shown in photograph 5.8. This is perhaps because it is a lengthy process, and since all women need to use the mortar, helping each frees it up more quickly. It is also more effective if more than one woman helps to pound. The only occasions when women would otherwise help each other to prepare the food is at weddings, funerals and outdoorings (see photograph 5.9 below). On these occasions, the staple grain is provided by all compounds concerned and the women from those compounds help prepare the food in the kitchen where the event is taking place. Furthermore, since such occasions require a lot of bowls, all the women who help cook the meal also bring their bowls (scored with their initials) to serve the food. The soup ingredients are generally provided by the man, usually the father (for a baby-naming ceremony) or head of the compound (for marriages and funerals). In such situations, there are fewer barriers to labour pooling, since women do not have to use their own grain, soup ingredients, water or firewood for the task.

Photograph 5.9: women preparing the meal at a baby-naming ceremony.



5.4.3 Water and Firewood Collection

The individualisation of food preparation is also linked to the need for water and firewood. In all compounds, women fetch their own water and firewood. As one woman states, 'everybody has their own work and so when you get up you will be doing your own jobs and they will be doing theirs. Everybody will have their own bowls or barrels and will fetch their own water. When you look outside, you see piles of firewood. Each woman will carry her own and have her own pile. Everybody does their own work' *(Rahinatu Wana, interviewed 29/03/02)*.

Women in all parts of Ghana, as in many other parts of the developing world, are primarily responsible for providing and managing water and firewood resources for domestic usage (see Curtis, 1986 for a detailed study of water collection in Kenya). These are probably two of the most important activities that women are required to carry out on a daily basis since without these resources, they are not able to carry out any of their other duties such as food preparation, washing and cleaning. As indicated in section 5.3.4, firewood tends to be primarily a dry season activity. This is when the bulk of the firewood is collected and stockpiled for later use. Small amounts of firewood are also gathered in the rainy season, but this is not stockpiled and is gathered to serve immediate need. Water collection is carried out throughout the year. In the rainy season there is generally more choice of sources and women tend to use a combination of well water, borehole water and river water to cater for their needs.

Although some of the older residents complain about the flavour of the water, these days borehole water is always used for drinking, whilst well and river water are used for washing and bathing. These latter sources are generally closer and hence quicker to collect water. In addition to these sources, women are able to collect rainwater, which is used for drinking and washing. For daily use for drinking, food preparation, washing and bathing, a woman will make the decisions regarding where, when and how often she will collect water.

These tasks, like most other tasks, are not done co-operatively between women. A woman would be prepared to carry her co-wife's empty basin to the borehole or well (to reserve her position in the inevitable queue), but would not carry water for her. At the borehole or well, women help each other to load the basin onto the head, but this is the extent of the help. Each woman owns her own basins and water storage containers, which are kept inside her own private room. Likewise, when collecting firewood, women will help each other load the bundles or basins of wood onto the head, but will not help with carrying the load. Each woman stores her firewood stockpiles separate from her rival co-wives. If the mother lives in the compound, there is generally no need for her to collect large amounts of water or create a woodpile, since she rarely has to prepare meals for the family[23]. If there are occasions when the mother has to cook, she will use the wood and water that her daughters-in-law have collected.

Young girls play a very important, but largely unrecognised role in firewood and water collection. From the age of about 5 or 6, girls go with their mothers to fetch water and firewood and from 7 onwards they often go with a group of girls and collect them without their mothers (see photograph 5.10). Consequently, for women with one or more daughters, their burden of firewood and water collection is significantly reduced. Young girls are duty-bound to carry out these tasks for their mother's. Even in compounds where the girls go to school, they will usually have to collect water before or after school (and sometimes both).

Only on very rare occasions did I observe a man fetching water for domestic use, in such cases collected in a plastic container strapped to the back of his bicycle (see photograph 5.11). In an interview with a young man his justification for this was that, 'if I were to be carrying a basin of water on my head people would be laughing at me, but since I am carrying it on my bicycle they won't think anything of it' *(Ahmed, 11/03/02)*. On this occasion Ahmed had to carry his own water because his wife had gone to her

[23] This would only in happen in certain situations, for example, when the other women in the compound have travelled, or are seriously ill and unable to cook.

hometown in an emergency. He still did not have to prepare food as his brother's wife was doing this for him, so the amounts of water needed were relatively small. A man or young boy might carry water in this manner when water is needed on the farm and there are no women around to fetch it, or the water source is too far for the woman to travel quickly. In such cases, it would normally be a junior man or boy, who fetches.

Photograph 5.10: Young girls carrying firewood back from the bush during the dry season



Photograph 5.11: Young man carrying water on his bicycle



On the few occasions I observed males collecting water, the women at the water source tended to fill his container for him. He would rarely have to queue, since the women appeared to prefer to allow him to obtain his water first. I felt this was more to

do with the borehole being a predominantly female space, where women were able to socialise and talk freely, rather than the man or boy being seen as higher status.

Some observers might argue that carrying the water on a bicycle might be a viable alternative to headloading. However, there are a number of reasons why this would not be practical. Firstly, women are unlikely to have access to bicycles for such purposes and buying them is not financially viable. Secondly, women are unlikely to pool their financial resources to purchase one for the same reason that they do not pool their labour resources, and there is likely to be competition over its usage if it were the case. Thirdly, few women are experienced and able to ride a bicycle; and fourthly, a plastic container does not hold anywhere near the same volume of water as a basin, resulting in more trips and therefore more queuing.

5.4.4 Childcare

In Ghana there is very little disagreement over the importance of women in reproductive and childcare duties. In Tarsaw, childcare is considered to be almost wholly the woman's domain of work and I only witnessed men looking after younger children in 'emergency' situations where the mother is needed for other tasks such as food preparation and no other women are around to take care of them. All women see it as their duty to take care of and cater for their children, although it is not uncommon for the husband to provide the money for their school fees, health and clothing needs. The duties of a woman throughout the course of a child's life, and the duties that the child assumes as he/she grows up, are explained in more detail in Chapter 6 (section 6.2.2).

5.5 Women as Transporters

All the factors discussed in the sections above have an important bearing on women's transport burden and the demands placed on them. A woman's role as the main transporter appears to be inextricably linked to her responsibility as the provider of basic needs such as food, water and firewood. Women's burden of load carrying, however, includes tasks that are crucial to income generation as well as domestic work. In Tarsaw, most transport tasks are linked to farming, the trading of produce and the procurement of domestic needs, although sporadic trips are made for purposes of health, acquiring agricultural inputs and visiting friends and relatives (see chapter 7, section 7.3.2). The burden of transport for African rural women has been increasingly well documented over recent years by both practitioners and academics (Barwell, 1996; Bryceson, 1994; Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Bryceson and McCall, 1994; Curtis,

1986; Doran, 1990; Malmberg Calvo, 1994). Howe and Barwell (1987) suggest that, in Ghana, the average adult female devotes almost three times as much of the working day to transport as the average male: at least 19 hours per week.

The initial emphasis of donor-sponsored village transport surveys, which were initiated in the 1980s, was on overall household transport demand in an attempt to counterbalance the stress which was previously placed on the establishment of a '*modern*' transport system for produce evacuation (Bryceson and Howe, 1993). This revealed that rural travel was primarily undertaken on foot. The collection of water and firewood, and trips to the farm for crop production and harvesting and to the market for the sale and purchase of goods were almost exclusively done by walking and headloading. Although a marked improvement on the earlier work on transport, this literature can also be criticised for assuming that household transport activities are equally divided between adults. As Bryceson and Howe (1993) point out, transport activities are not 'allocated on the basis of any physical attributes like body weight or muscle power. Furthermore, convenience and time availability are not critical factors in their intra-household distribution. Responsibility for transport is based primarily on local consensus regarding the sexual division of labour in the household' (p. 5). This more recent body of research has highlighted the enormous pre-eminence of women in rural load carrying. As Barwell (1996) notes, 'much of the burden of rural transport falls upon women, reflecting their dual responsibility for social reproduction and economic production' (p. 4). Since women have limited access to motorised and non-motorised forms of transport, this burden is primarily undertaken by means of walking and headloading. In a transport survey carried out in Ghana by Howe and Barwell in 1987, they found that men only allocated about 35% of the time women did to transport activities and, in terms of tonnage transported, their effort was only equivalent to 25% of women's carrying performance (Bryceson and Howe, 1993: 5; see Urasa, 1990 for similar figures). In another study it was found that 'an average female in Makete (Tanzania) spends nearly 1,600 hours per annum (averaging at over 4 hours a day) on transport alone, while in Ghana the average female spends about 1000 hours' (Doran, 1990: 8). As discussed in Chapter 3, the majority of this derives from trips made for daily household provisions.

Because of the important role that women play in trading in Tarsaw (see section 5.3.2), the weekly market day (based on a six day cycle) is a time when many women transport their agricultural products and other goods for sale. On market days, the village benefits from a limited number of trucks and vans passing through the village to

take people to the local market. However, these are mechanically unreliable and fares are often too expensive for many people to afford. Some women stated that they would rather not waste their time waiting for a vehicle that might not come for some time, or could be full on arrival at the village, and would rather start walking. If they meet the vehicle on the way to the market, depending on the remaining distance, cost of journey and the weight of their load, they either travel by car/truck or continue walking. The traffic counts that were conducted in the village (in the planting, dry and harvesting seasons) revealed that, whilst men and boys were by far the main users of bicycles, both on market and non-market days, there is a significant number of women using bicycles, particularly to get to market.

In a series of market-day load-weighing exercises (discussed in section 4.4.3.2), most of the women walking to market stated that they walked due to lack of money to travel by other means, although some said that they were unable to get a vehicle (full or not available) or had missed it. In the dry season, the weights of the loads carried to the market ranged from 1kg to 26kg with the average load weighing 9kg. Young girls and women of every age (ages ranged from 11-65 years-old) were carrying a vast array of processed and unprocessed goods: including maize, dawa-dawa, shea-nuts and butter, clothing, beans, rice, yam, millet, *kuli-kuli* and vegetables. Some of the women carrying loads to take to market had travelled from as far as Nabulo (10 miles away) and Challu (9 miles away). Women were prepared to walk a total of around 14 miles to get to their destination, rather than pay the market truck fees of around 2000¢[24]. Most women felt that they could not afford to take the market truck, since it would consume the majority of the proceeds from any sale they might make.

Those returning on foot were carrying between 0kg and 22kg with the average load weighing 6kg. This time they were mainly carrying kerosene, soap, and soup ingredients such as vegetables, dried fish, salt and sugar, amongst other things. For this trip, there were a slightly higher proportion of women travelling to Tarsaw than some of the further villages, perhaps because those living in villages further away had decided to spend some of their earnings on the lorry fare home rather than walking the long journey back in the intense heat.

In the planting season, similar data was collected and loads carried to the market varied from 1kg to 32kg, with the average load weighing 8.4kg. The loads were similar to those carried earlier in the year and included maize, groundnuts, dawa-dawa,

[24] This equated to around £0.18 at the time of survey, since the exchange rate was roughly 11,000 cedis to the pound.

guinea-corn, bambara beans, millet and vegetables. Again, the majority of women started their journey in Tarsaw, but some had travelled from Challu, Kroboi, Bichemboi and Nabulo to go to the market in Bugubelle. Those who returned from the market by foot were carrying lighter loads, between 0kg and 12kg, with the average load weighing 3.5kg. The various items carried by the women included ingredients, soap, kerosene, vegetables, bread, sugar and salt (see figure 5.10d). The majority of women only travelled as far as Tarsaw, but some continued on to nearby villages.

On non-market days, there is usually little or no transport passing through the village and so the majority of women have to walk to their destination, regardless of distance or load. In emergency situations such as sickness, women may beg their husbands or other close male relatives to carry them on the back of their bicycles, or ask anyone who owns a motorbike to take them. This rarely happens as the bicycles are usually needed for work on the farm or for other purposes and those with motorbikes will charge (for petrol and oil and possibly some in addition to this for maintenance etc.) making it an unlikely option for most women.

The main load-carrying duty, performed on a daily basis by virtually all female compound members, is the collection of water (discussed above). This provides one of the biggest burdens for women since it is both arduous and time-consuming. This is only ever done on foot since there are no suitable forms of transport that women have access to, to help with this task. As mentioned in the previous section, if men were to carry water, they would use a plastic container strapped to the back of their bicycle. This is not possible for women since they do not own bicycles and a plastic container does not hold the large volume of water that women are required to carry on a daily basis.

In the course of the fieldwork, two compound load-weighing exercises were carried out (see Chapter 4), in two different compounds during the rainy season[25]. One compound was very large, housing a total number of 30 people: 7 adult women, 9 adult men, 4 girls and 10 boys. This number includes the grandmother, who no longer has to do any load carrying, and 2 boys and 1 girl below the age of five, who contribute little to household labour. The second household has a slightly different make-up, but a similar number of inhabitants. This compound has 32 residents: 7 adult women, 8 adult men, 8

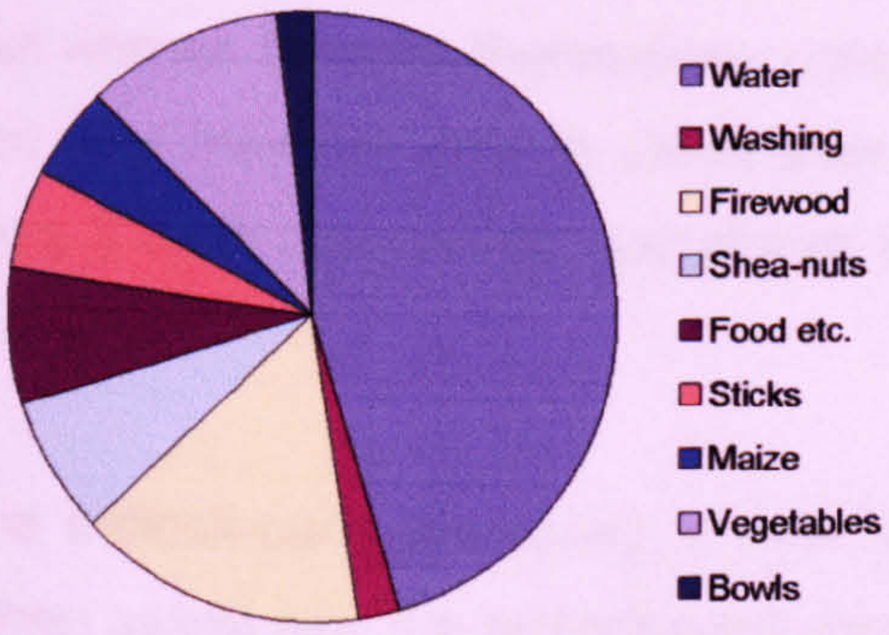
[25] It was not possible to carry out this exercise at other times of the year and in a larger number of compounds since it was a difficult exercise to organise and carry out. It was also very time-consuming, both to organise and carry out. The information gained through the household load weighing was supplemented with random load weighing.

boys and 9 girls. This includes an elderly woman, 4 boys and 2 girls below the age of 5 who do not contribute to household labour.

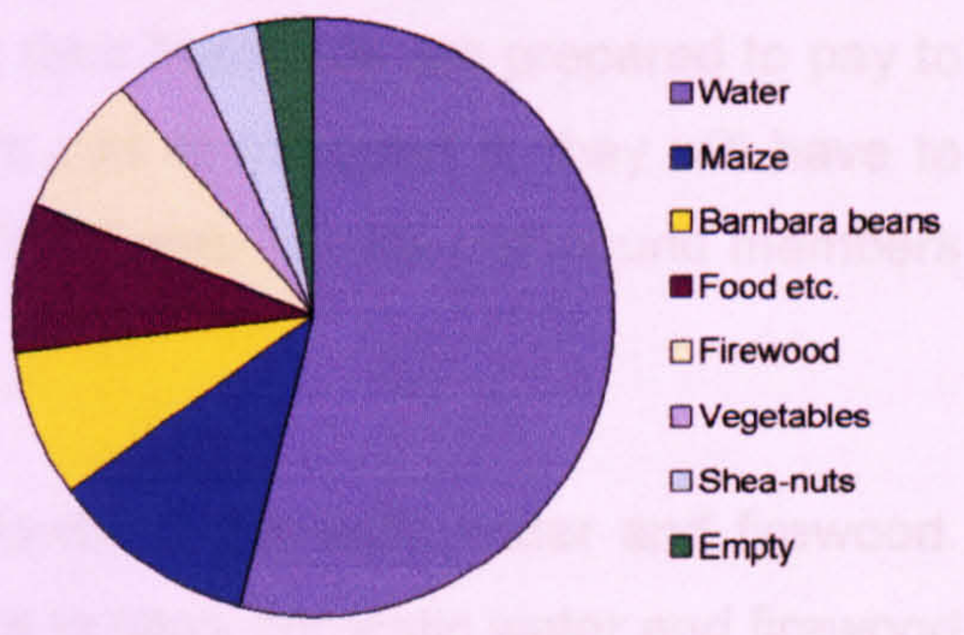
Despite being conducted during the rainy season, the collection of water accounted for 44% and 54% of total loads carried, respectively. In the second compound, girls between the ages of 8 and 14 accounted for 72 percent of the water collected that day, some girls were carrying 2 or 3 buckets or small basins of water (between 13 and 26kg each), mainly from the local well (0.5km away). The women collected their water much earlier in the day, carrying between 35 and 45kg of water from the borehole (about 1km away). Other loads carried included: inputs to the farm (3km away) including maize seed, food to eat and water, weighing between 4 and 13kg; items from farm including, bambara beans, vegetables and shea-nuts, usually carried together with firewood from the bush, weighing between 7 and 23kg; and loads of maize taken to and from the grinding mill in the village, weighing around 9kg (see figure 5.12a.). In the first compound, girls accounted for only a third of all water collection, probably because there are only 3 girls who are old enough to carry water (compared to 7 in the other compound). However, these girls are between the ages of 15 and 18, so are able to carry as much as the women. Other loads included food and other items carried to farm (3km away) weighing between 4 and 10kg; firewood, shea-nuts, vegetables and other items from the farm, weighing between 6 and 31 kg (see figure 5.12b.).

Figure 5.6 Compound load weighing

a) Compound 1 Loads



b) Compound 2



Source: data is based on information gathered through compound load weighing exercises. The unit of measurement is percentage of total loads carried out by women throughout the day.

Bullock-carts have relieved a certain amount of women's load carrying burden since much of the farm produce previously carried by women is now carried by cart. Furthermore, the life history interviews with some of the older members of the community revealed the introduction of bullock-carts enabled women to farm their own plot of land. Prior to the introduction of bullock-carts, all the farm work that was carried

out was done manually. This meant that there was a greater need for labour on the main farm. Women could not spare the time to farm their own plot of land because their labour was needed on the main farm. Now it is common practice for women to farm a small area of land. The distances between village and farm range from less than a mile to 7 miles[26], although the average distance is roughly 3 miles away. For men, this is usually travelled by bicycle, the younger children are carried on the bullock carts (when the carts are required to go in the peak farming periods) and women normally walk, often with a burden on their heads and some with a baby strapped to her back.

Not all farmers in the village own bullocks and a cart but they are often able to borrow one from a friend or family member for this purpose. Only 40 out of a total of 62 compounds, owned a bullock-cart. Although most people maintained that they took no money for this service, those borrowing often disputed this, claiming that they usually have to give some money to the cowboys operating the bullock-cart and also some of their produce to the bullock-cart owner. Because of this levy, those farmers who do not own a bullock-cart usually only borrow when they have collected enough produce to make it worth their while. Until this time, women have to carry a certain amount of produce back to the compound. In some cases women will be entirely responsible for carrying the produce, for example, when their husband is unable or unwilling to pay to use a cart or they are unable to get one in time to transport their produce. Harvesting time is a very busy time for all farmers, so the bullock-carts are in high demand. Those without bullock-carts often have to delay transporting their produce (taking the risk of fire and theft) or get the women of the compound to carry it. Also, for the groundnuts that women farm for themselves, unless they or their husbands are prepared to pay to cart it or they are able to utilise their husband's cart to transport it, they will have to carry it back themselves, sometimes with help from other female compound members or friends.

The bullock-carts are rarely, if ever, used to transport domestic water and firewood. When asked why the bullock-carts were not used to carry domestic water and firewood (when they are able to carry water and wood for building), one village elder stated that, 'women can be very difficult and if you start to do that for them, they will expect it all the time and there are times of the year when we are too busy on the farm to do that. Also,

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[26] One farmer has a second (seasonal) farm located near Pina, about 40 miles from Tarsaw. This is a relatively small farm, growing only 2 acres of yam and 3 acres of maize. This is apparently due to the lack of good land in the locality. Pina is the hometown of his senior wife, which aided his access to the land. The head of the compound, a relatively prosperous man of about 40 years-old, travels to the farm during the main farming season using his motorbike, spend extended periods at Pina or sleeping at the farm and brings the produce back on a lorry after harvesting.

if you have more than one wife, you would have to do it for all of them, which would be a problem' *(Mahama, informal conversation, 24/03/02)*. Another man reiterated this concern over creating a situation where women expect to be helped and argued that, '[women] are all aware that for water and firewood collection, it is their daily activity and if it is not a serious situation like a funeral or one is sick, the women will go and fetch it without my help...I always let them be clear that, "if I do this for you and it comes to a time that these bullocks are busy, you should not take it for granted that they will come to your aid in doing these things"' *(Haruna, interviewed 02/04/02)*. These issues will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

The carrying of agricultural produce and domestic inputs simply does not fall within the man's domain of work. In an interview with a male elder in the village, he stated that, 'no men carry things to the market unless using either a bicycle or bullock-cart or if possible, a lorry' *(Bipuah, interviewed 27/03/02)*. As I was conducting this interview some young boys were sat by the elders feet and laughed in response to my questions concerning these issues. One of the boys said 'if you ask any boy to carry something on their heads and walk even to Bugubelle [4 miles away], they wouldn't do it'. However, young girls regularly carry loads to the market and for domestic purposes, since this is considered to be an integral part of their duties.

5.6 Household Expenditure

The majority of the household income accrues in the dry season following the sale of agricultural produce. However, as indicated above, much of this produce is retained in order to trade when money is required for certain outlays. Additional income is also earned through trading and other income generating activities, as discussed above. Every compound is required to make payments for occasional or unexpected expenses as well as recurrent outlays. Taxes and school fees are usually paid annually or at particular times of the year, while clothing, health, marriages, funerals and so on, are paid for when required, or when the means are available. Decision-making over expenditure is strongly gendered and men and women tend to have different areas for which they are responsible and very different priorities over what they spend their income on. Within compounds, individual well-being relates not only to the overall level of household income, but also who controls income flows (Whitehead, 1981).

In principle, the compound head, since he is responsible for the welfare of the whole family, pays for school fees, health needs and supplies the bulk of the food. During a discussion meeting with a group of men, one man stated that: 'the man is in charge of

clothing and feeding the family. Also, if any of your family is sick, it is the man's responsibility take good care of them' *(Abass, group discussion, 30/04/02)*. However, in practice there are also many cases where women provide some of these things for themselves and their children if the husband is unable to do so. Indeed, although there is an expectation that the male head will provide certain things such as food, health needs and school requirements, women often play an enormous part in all of these areas, particularly in the lean season. Many women claimed that they 'help' their husbands economically, although this is clearly understated in some cases where the women are virtually the sole provider when the produce from the family farm has been consumed. Because of this, the extent of women's contribution to household expenditure is difficult to specify, although I suspect it to be widespread. Women, as well as men, have a vested interest in maintaining the image of the husband as breadwinner, as discussed in chapter 7.

Men are generally believed to be responsible for the purchase of any major items, such as bicycles, bullock plough/cart, ruminants or fertiliser and would rarely involve women in the decision-making of such items. These purchases are usually made during the dry season following the sale of the harvest. It is rare for women to purchase such items, since they seldom have the funds for such a big outlay and often feel that these are 'men's purchases'. Women are usually responsible for day-to-day expenses such as paying for milling, soup ingredients and other small outlays for daily consumption needs, and men would rarely pay for such things. In a study of household expenditure in Northern Region, it was found that 70 percent of surveyed women used their income to purchase basic staples for the compound in contrast to 10 percent who used their income for their own individual needs (Warner, Al-Hassan and Kydd, 1997).

With respect to clothing, women usually bought their own as well as their children's clothing, although men would sometimes contribute towards these expenses on occasions. There is considerable variation between compounds concerning who is responsibility for various types of expenditure. The budgeting of household expenditure is clearly part of a larger picture of intra-household negotiations, which involve bargaining, cooperation and conflict over intra-household resources and the rights and duties associated with them (Agarwal, 1998; Sen, 1990; Whitehead, 1981).

5.7 Conclusions

The preceding discussion links back to many of the theoretical points raised in chapter two, particularly in relation to the social and embodied nature of men and women's

daily activities and movements. Bodily actions and movements are regulated through societal norms and expectations, which are evident through the division of labour between men and women throughout their life course. The daily work and activities that men and women undertake are indicative of what Goffman would call 'gender displays', since people are performing these tasks in a ritualised manner that generally affirms gender difference. They are very visible and potent signs of gender difference. Gender is expressed through bodily actions and embodied practices. Implicit in much of the content of this chapter is the notion of bodily capability and embodied skill. The strength and skill that women require in order to carry such heavy loads of their heads is an *embodied* ability. This skill is socialised and embodied in every woman in Tarsaw, developed from an early age, through observation and repetition. Likewise, a man is able to build yam mounds and weed his farm for many hours because he has built up the physical capacity to do so over many years. These embodied skills are not necessarily 'natural' or innate, but are rather built up, and therefore socialised, through many years of training. Women do not carry heavy loads because they are genetically pre-programmed to do so or because it is necessarily instinctive. As Chapter two highlights, biology cannot be divorced from the social world in such a manner since they are unavoidably interlinked. Gender is embodied through reiterated practices, which consequently produces marked differences in muscle tone, flexibility and physical capability.

In Tarsaw, there is a marked division of labour between predominantly men's tasks and predominantly women's tasks, many of which relate to the work of childbearing and domestic maintenance. However, this division is not a straightforward or unproblematic one based purely on gender, as this chapter has demonstrated. Although both men and women have a clear idea about what they could and should be doing, the majority of these tasks are delimited by age, status and wealth in addition to gender (Thorsen, 2002). The social structure of the compound, and more broadly, the village, clearly has implications for the work that each individual has to undertake. As outlined in Chapter 3, there is considerable variation in the composition of residential domestic unit: some being little more than a nuclear unit, whereas others contain a large number of extended family members. Within the larger compounds, relations between individual members are complex. In terms of relations between the women of the compound, there are clear markers of seniority, primarily based on age and marital status, which determine the level of work and the ability to utilise the labour of others. This is true for both 'productive' and 'reproductive' activities.

The division of men's work and women's work into productive and reproductive is misleading and flawed, since women play an important role in so-called 'productive' activities at various stages of their life cycle (Elson, 1999; Floro, 1995; Harris, 1981; Kusterer, 1990). Also, categorising agricultural tasks as purely productive ignores the fact that subsistence production often occurs alongside the production of agricultural goods for sale or exchange. Despite the heavy burden of household tasks that women are responsible for undertaking (a burden which is particularly acute for young married women), they also play a significant role in agriculture and trading. Furthermore, many women provide vital income for themselves and their families through seasonal gathering activities and food selling (Floro, 1995). In poorer compounds, this can mean the difference between hunger and survival at a time in the year when people are most vulnerable.

Women clearly face profound constraints on their mobility due to their poor economic position (low incomes relative to men and less access to land and labour resources) and their heavy burden of farm work, household work and childcare responsibilities (this will be discussed in more detail in chapters six and seven). Furthermore, women have considerably less access to transport than men, partly as a result of their poorer economic circumstances, but also because of the volume of the work they have to carry out around the farm and house (Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Porter, 2002). Because of these factors, women are generally less mobile, particularly outside of the village. If women need to undertake a journey, for whatever reason, this will generally be done on foot, which is time consuming and laborious (the time dimension of men and women's mobility is discussed in more detail in chapter six). Men are able to profit from their physical labour, whereas there is limited opportunity for women to do the same since they are obligated to carry out their domestic (reproductive) tasks, which do not generally provide income. The income earned through the sale of farm produce is generally considered to belong to the man (and often the male head) since he is regarded as responsible for the majority of the farm work. The contribution that women make in this respect is often considered merely as 'help'. Men are, however, expected to provide for their family by giving their wife or wives some of the produce for the preparation of food.

Another important issue that affects the division of labour, which was discussed at some length in section 5.2, is the pervasiveness of individualisation within the compound in Tarsaw. I found very little evidence of any pooling of labour or financial resources, either within or between men and women. In the conduct of both agricultural

and household tasks, women tended to operate alone, or with the help of her daughters, when available. Between co-wives in particular, there was very little pooling of labour, even if it appeared to be (to an outsider, perhaps) the most efficient way of completing tasks. Women tended to keep both their labour and their resources separate, although they are, at the same time, compelled to carry out certain tasks for her husband. The compound is clearly a complex system of rights and obligations between the various members, dependent mainly on age, gender and marital status.

This chapter also highlights the importance of temporality and spatiality to the gender division of labour in Tarsaw. Activities are clearly structured around the seasonality of farming needs and the requirements of household provisioning. Workload and type of work varies according to the time of year in relation to the agricultural seasons, from wet season through to dry season. Furthermore, workload and activities/responsibilities change over a person's lifetime, with varying demands placed on individuals depending on their age and marital status. In spatio-temporal terms, women clearly have less time and fewer opportunities to travel than men. The following chapter aims to build on this discussion in order to provide a more temporal (and spatial) understanding of gender, work and mobility.

CHAPTER SIX

Linking Mobility and Time: The Temporality of Tarsaw

> 'The European and the African have an entirely different concept of time. In the European worldview, time exists outside man, exists objectively and has measurable and linear characteristics...The European feels himself to be times slave, dependent on it, subject to it. To exist and function, he must observe its ironclad, inviolate laws, its inflexible principles and rules. He must heed deadlines, dates, days and hours...Africans apprehend time differently. For them, it is a much looser concept, more open, elastic, subjective. It is man who influences time, its shape, course and rhythm (man acting, of course, with the consent of gods and ancestors)...time is made manifest through events, and whether an event takes place or not depends, after all, on man alone...In practical terms, this means that if you go to a village where a meeting is scheduled for the afternoon but find no one at the appointed spot, asking, "when will the meeting take place?" makes no sense. You know the answer: "it will take place when people come".
>
> *(Kapuściński, 2001: 16-17)*

6.1 Introduction

Having discussed the gendered division of labour in Tarsaw within chapter 5, this chapter aims to frame the issue of work and gender relations from a more temporal perspective. I feel it is important to outline and discuss these temporal rhythms, since our current understanding of time is overwhelmingly ethnocentric (Cain, 1977; Carlstein et. al, 1978 a, b, 1982; Ellegård, 1999; Kwan, 1999, 2000; Ornstein, 1997, Parkes and Thrift, 1980). Much of the research written on time and time measurement (often termed 'time-geography'), regardless of the cultural context, usually tries to fit peoples temporal patterns into a largely Western mould. Much of the transport literature has been 'guilty' of this, through attempts to quantify people's travel and time use (e.g. Doran, 1990) and through assumptions that all people wish to be more time-efficient and expedite their travel from place to place. There is generally little, or no, understanding of how people measure and value time, or what constraints (bodily or otherwise) they face in conducting activities more time-efficiently. Much of the transport literature acknowledges the huge amount of time and effort that people expend in walking and transporting goods by headloading. It also recognizes that this time-burden is particularly carried by women and children (Porter, 2002). However, very little attention has been given to understanding exactly what this 'time' means for individuals

and how this might differ for men, women or children. Surely if we are to talk about the need to reduce their time-burden by enabling them to move from place to place more efficiently, we need to begin from an understanding of what time means for different people in this context?

Time-budget and time allocation studies, which generally use methods such as the log or time diary in order to elicit information on people's utilisation of time, usually have a notion of time that is incompatible with local understandings of time[1]. Although these studies have undoubtedly had (and continue to have) their uses, and are particularly well respected by transport planners and policy-makers, their ability to highlight the intricacies of people's lives is somewhat limited. Many time allocation studies assume that time is the 'one and only resource that each and every day is evenly spread among all individuals in all populations' (Ellegård, 1999; 168). However, people are subject to various types and levels of structural, social and physical constraints, which circumscribe their ability to carry out their daily activities. The fact that all people experience the same amount of time does not mean that we all have the same capacity to utilise that time. Hägerstrand, one of the original proponents of time geography, argues that people's ability to carry out any 'project' in time is limited by capability, coupling and authority constraints (Johnston et al 2000, p.831). This approach[2] briefly means that physical capabilities, the ability or need to meet with other people, and the conditions of access and conduct that are imposed by others, all combine to restrict a person's use of time. These constraints not only have a temporal relevance but also apply in a spatial and embodied sense, as restrictions on time use can subsequently affect an individual's ability to move freely. Hägerstrand argued that, in order to

[1] It is important to note that there are serious criticisms and limitations to this approach to time measurement, particularly from a feminist standpoint. Gillian Rose (1993) has criticised time-geography for failing to fully account for the dynamic sociality of everyday life. Time geography instead seems to reduce human activity to a body's movement through time and space irrespective of age, ethnicity and gender. Emotions, motivations, desires and feelings are lost and activity is diminished to a rational (masculine?) body and its movement through space and time. How can this possibly account for human agency? Rose argues that time-geography is conceived and shaped by masculine ideas of the generation of knowledge and epistemology by making the assumption that the world is transparent and infinitely knowable (ibid. p.38). The belief that space and time can be mapped and therefore understood is based on the assumption that the body is an unproblematised and asexual 'object'. This not only ignores the subjective and partial positionality of the researcher vis-à-vis the researched, but also denies the discursive and emotional character of those objects. The naïve claim to produce a universal 'truth' about human activity and behaviour based on what is observed and visible ignores what cannot be observed and mapped. People and their movements are far more dynamic than the disaggregated abstraction that is often the product of time-geography studies. This points to a need for a combination of qualitative ethnographic methods, which complement and enhance the more quantitative methods employed within time-geography.

[2] Called the Lund Approach, since initial research on human activity in terms of 'location in space, areal extension, and duration in time' or so-called 'time-geography' was first attempted by geographers at Lund University, Sweden. (Parkes and Thrift, 1980, 243)

interpret the meaning of an individual's daily activity through space and time, you first need to understand the constraints placed on their mobility. Mobility is a central factor in the way people organise time and carry out their daily activities. If a person is elderly, infirm or disabled, this poses particular constraints on their mobility and hence on how they organise their time and activities. The sequence and order of these activities therefore not only reflect an individuals use of time for different tasks in various places, but also the choices open to them in relation to the *social, structural and physical* constraints they face.

Activities, and the mobility required to undertake them, are usually performed to fulfil human physiological needs (eating, sleeping), institutional demands (school, work), personal obligations (child care, food preparation) and personal preferences (leisure activities)[3] (Vilhelmson, 1999, 178). Individuals undertake these various activities to different degrees usually as a result of the composition, roles and tasks of the household and their position therein. An individual's time use in various activities and consequently their perception of time can therefore vary with gender, age and more broadly with culture (social norms) and social status. Gender relations in the context of access to and use of transport clearly involve issues of mobility (use of space over time), and therefore benefit from an understanding of time, how people perceive it, measure it and represent it.

A considerable number of policy documents, particularly in the transport sector, make assumptions about the need to enable people to become more productive and time-efficient (and hence the need to measure people's time use). There is, within this discourse, an underlying assumption that people wish to be more productive and efficient (in a distinctly neo-liberal sense). In terms of gender, such assertions suffer the same drawbacks as the 'women in development' (WID) approach of the 1970s[4]. As Moser points out, the WID 'efficiency' approach 'seeks to meet practical gender needs while relying on all of women's three roles[5] and an elastic concept of women's time. Women are seen primarily in terms of their capacity to compensate for declining social

[3] The classification of human activity is problematic in that it unavoidably involves value judgements about the nature and purpose of various activities. One method of categorisation may be totally unrepresentative and inappropriate in another context. To overcome this, one would need to give greater attention to how different kinds of activities are understood, and the context and location in which they are carried out. This is discussed in greater depth later on in this chapter.

[4] The various approaches towards women's participation in development projects are outlined in appendix 1.

[5] Moser (1993) defines the triple role of women as reproductive work, productive work and community managing (p.27). This concept derives predominantly from feminist debates on gender relations from both the North and South, which contest the assertion that men are the (productive) breadwinners, whilst women are the (reproductive) homemakers.

services by extending their working day' (Moser, 1993: 70). Increased *economic* participation for women is linked to gender equity and efficiency, an assumption that has been widely criticised. However, since efficiency and productivity are two of the key objectives of structural adjustment policies, it is no surprise that they are popular goals for donors and governments alike.

My intention here is to provide an alternative account of time and temporality, one that provides more bone and flesh than the mechanistic and dehumanised accounts that often emerge from traditional time-budget studies. I present an embodied account of time that is narrated through the daily lives of men and women at different stages in their life course[6]. My account is inevitably still written from a largely Western perspective, since it is difficult to decolonise oneself from this way of thinking[7]. However, I am exploring a different approach to try to look beyond Western understandings of time and temporality. Although I have narrated these stories in my own words from my observations and interviews, I hope that they provide much information about people's everyday lives and their use of space and time.

6.2 Background

It is easy to make assumptions about the way people experience and measure time. Some of the books and reports written during the time of colonialism are particularly extreme examples of this, often written with the aim of justifying the imposition of colonialism. Alatas (1977) provides an interesting critique of this in his examination of colonial discourse and images in *'The Myth of the Lazy Native'*. Colonial representations of the 'native', which originated from the deep sense of ethnic superiority that was predominant in Europe at the time, characterised them as morally, intellectually, culturally and socially backward, lagging far behind the West in all respects. Many of these assumptions stem from a gross misreading of the values and ideals of another culture, and misinterpreted the different sense of time and punctuality as a reflection on their motivation and ability to work and progress.

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[6] This account of time was partly due to the methodological problems I encountered with attempts to carry out some form of time allocation study (discussed in chapter 4)

[7] A recent article by Cheryl McEwan (2001) highlighted that many of the debates that are central to both development and feminism are 'unconsciously ethnocentric, rooted in European cultures and reflective of a dominant Western world-view' (p.94). Postcolonial discourse aims to overcome this by problematising 'the very ways in which the world is known, challenging the unacknowledged and unexamined assumptions at the heart of Western disciplines that are profoundly insensitive to the meanings, values and practices of other cultures' (ibid.).

Davison (1993) discusses similar issues in relation to the early European colonisers' impressions of the Aboriginal population in Australia. Here Europeans viewed the Aborigines as living in a timeless land of temporal ignorance, devoid of any recognisable forms of time measurement and a seemingly casual attitude to punctuality. Davison disputes this, arguing that time is a dimension of social life in all cultures, and the 'way it is conceived and observed was as fundamental to aboriginal culture as it was to European' (p.8). The same can be said for the people of Tarsaw. Punctuality is a functional concept, which depends on the context within which it is used. The people in Tarsaw are rather more conscious of "time" than I first thought, but this consciousness is not one ruled by the measured and quantified time of the clock, which dominates our temporal thinking in the West. Instead, they are perhaps more in tune with the natural rhythms: the cycle of night and day, the changing seasons, the 6-day cycle of markets, the Friday prayers and the five daily prayers. The majority of the people in the village do not possess a watch, and there are no village clocks like those found in the majority of Western towns and villages. Instead, there is an innate sense of temporality, a rhythm to the village, which is linked to the particular cultural, religious and social setting. However, the nature of perception and sense of time in Tarsaw, as in all settings, is inherently linked to the social makeup. Individuals experience time on various levels dependent on factors such as their gender, age, social status and the work they do. A young unmarried female experiences time differently to a married woman or an old woman or a market woman or a young man, since the activities they carry out during the day undoubtedly vary.

People, therefore, *embody* time through their daily activities and actions. Bodies are fundamentally linked to spatiality and temporality, since space and time are essential preconditions for the body's relationship and interaction with other objects and people. However, whilst numerous scholars have acknowledged the social natural of the body (see chapter 2), very few have given much attention to the *temporality* of embodied actions and experience. This is particularly notable in the context of the global South.

Time is an elusive concept that is generally understood in a relational sense through the activities of our daily lives, through our movement through time and space and the various points of interaction with other people. Time, therefore, cannot be understood in isolation from space or place since they are unavoidably and intrinsically linked. All activities occupy time and have a spatial location. According to Carlstein (1982), in all societies, individuals are constantly 'doing something', and these time and space locations tell us much about social structure (p.22). Social life within a given context

incorporates a range of norms, values and culturally understood metaphors that encapsulate their temporal organisation. This highlights the inherently social nature of time. Ingold (2000) argues that all human activities are inherently social and puts forward the idea of a *'taskscape'*, which refers to the array of human activities (both social and technical), which he sees as being embedded in the current of sociality (p. 195). The temporality of the taskscape is inherently social, not so much because society provides an external frame against which tasks can find an independent measure, but because *people attend to one another through the performance of their daily activities*, through interaction and contact.

6.3 Men, Women and Timepieces

> 'With the use of a watch, I always make sure by 6 o'clock I should be at the farm, when it is time for prayers I will check the time to pray. When it comes to a time, like when the sun is very hot, I will relax and then maybe start the work again and at 5 o'clock I will close and come home. Some men also wear the watches for status.
> *(Salifu, unmarried village man, aged 19, focus group discussion, 19/04/02).*
>
> 'We use the watch for so many things. You always look at the time so that you should start work on time, to frame time and see that 'this is the time I will use for work' and also look at the time for you to close.'
> *(Mahama, village man aged 50, focus group discussion, 19/04/02).*

Although some of the temporal patterns discussed in the previous section also apply to men, there are a number of important differences in the way men and women perceive and experience time. Much of it is to do with the nature of men's work compared to women's and the way men interact with each other in relation to women. It also relates to the fact that men tend to own watches and clocks and/or radios that give them the time on each hour. Because of this, they are perhaps more likely to talk of time in terms of hours than the women, as indicated by the quotations above. As Seibu explains, 'men own more watches than women so men are more conscious of clock time.' (*Seibu, informal conversation, 09/03/02)*. Although not all men own or wear a watch or other timekeeping device, because men tend to interact together on a social level and sometimes with work, there is often a man within their group who has a watch and informs the others of the time. Furthermore, because owning a watch is regarded as a symbol of status, men consider knowing how to read a watch to be an important stepping-stone towards owning one. When conducting the traffic counts in the village (see methodology chapter), I needed one person on each of the four roads leading out

of the village. I ended up using only men for this task, because they knew how to read a watch, even if they did not own one themselves. When I asked one man why he felt it was important to own a watch, he answered 'it can be used to time my work or travelling to places or going to prayers. A watch will help me to do my work efficiently and I will be able to do my things at the correct time' *(Issaka, male farmer aged about 45, interviewed 15/03/02).*

During group discussions there was considerable debate about how a watch helps to make a person more *efficient* with their work, both with men and women. Women talked about the importance of the watch, but claimed that they are unable to afford one and did not know how to read one anyway. Many expressed a desire to learn and discussed the possibility of purchasing watches. One woman felt that 'without [a watch] you even fail to do some of your things at the right time. Even like in the rainy season when you don't see the sun, before you realise it, it is getting dark.' (*Jaratu, woman farmer, aged 35, focus group 06/04/02)*. The discussion with the men's group agreed with this and many felt that women could benefit from using a watch. One man explained that 'with the women not using time, they cannot plan their work; they will just do things, some also using the sun. Some days the sun will not even appear and the women will just be confused and how to do her work will be a problem. So we men with the use of time are able to do our work well' *(Moro, male farmer aged about 26, focus group, 19/04/02)*. The men went on to discuss the fact that, because the women do not own watches, sometimes they can delay at home and not come to the farm at the time agreed, which sometimes causes misunderstanding. They therefore felt that 'if both of you have got watches you can tell your woman that she should hurry up with her work and come at this particular time for us to start what we wanted to do. And that will help the work to go well' *(Abass, male farmer, aged about 35-40).*

6.4 Women, Work and Time

'We use the position of the sun to determine the time. So I will look at the sun and know when to go to prayers and when to prepare food. Time is important because time helps you to do something fast and tells you when you have to stop and be doing something else like cooking or prayers.'
(Mariama, village woman aged 50, interviewed 05/03/02)

'Without time we just work until its time for prayers, we go for prayers then we come back to continue our work.'
(Jahara, village woman aged 45, interviewed 26/04/02)

None of the women who live in Tarsaw own watches and none of them know how to read a watch, apart from the teacher (who is by far the most educated woman there, in terms of Western education). As the first of the quotations above indicates, the majority of women use the sun and the shadows it makes as a means of estimating the time of day. This helps them in planning their work and deciding when to stop and start various tasks. Other time indicators also help to structure the day and 'week'. There are several indicators on a daily level. Between 9 and 10 in the morning, the hens start to lay their eggs. This is referred to as *jiloi* time (hen-laying time) and is often used as a benchmark by the women so they plan to be at a certain point in their tasks by this time.

Prayer times (*Sadat*), which relate to the movement of the sun, also play a part in structuring the day, particularly during the dry season when more people are around the village and attend the mosque for prayers. For the midday prayers (*Zuhr*), those people who are not close enough to hear the call of Azan and do not own watches check that the sun is in the middle (*wisi maka nu tu twa*). Some people just follow their colleagues and friends as they make their way to the mosque. Women often find it difficult to attend the prayers 'on time' because they are usually too busy with their work or looking after the children. Because of this, women often take it in turns and when it is their time to go, the woman leaves her work and her children under the watchful eye of the others. Even so, there are usually much fewer women than men attending the mosque, as is generally true in other Islamic areas (Robson, 2000, 2002). Many women pray in their rooms rather than the mosque.

Time is also estimated by the changing temperature of the day. By mid-afternoon the sun is usually too hot for any strenuous work so women plan to have the heavier tasks completed by this time. Many of my interviews with women regarding time brought up the issue of temperature as an important factor in the organisation of their activities; the signal for when to start and stop work or rest. When I asked Mariama (a woman of about 50, see above quotation, 05/03/02) about how she organised her daily tasks, she explained that 'when I get up I plan things so that I can go for firewood early before the sun is hot. If it is too late it is tedious.' This was quite a common theme throughout my interviews with women. Also, tiredness can denote to a person that they have spent long enough on a particular task: as Asana mentions 'it depends on if you are tired. You can decide to close if you are tired' (*village woman, age 35, interviewed 16/3/02*). How women organise their daily work is also affected by the activities of others. For certain tasks, for example collecting *dawa-dawa*, women generally like to work in

groups both for safety and mutual assistance. This requires women to coordinate their tasks in order to go to the bush together. If women from the same compound (*janwuo*) are going together (which is the normal practice), they usually try to help each other to finish their tasks so that they can all hurry up and go to together.

On a longer time-scale, it is the 6-day cycle of market days that provide the main structure to a woman's week[8]. This is also true for the men of the village. When thinking about what day it is, rather than thinking in terms of Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and so on, people count the different market days leading up to their own market. In the case of Tarsaw, this works from the nearest one, Bugubelle Market day (*Yewo*), then Wallemboi market, Funsie market, Tumu market, Tarsaw market and Bandei Market[9]. Women play a major role in marketing and the local market day tends to be the only day that women experience a break from their normal routine. Most, but not all women have a break from farm work to attend the market. Those who are unable to go themselves ask a friend or family member to go and purchase their ingredients. Women often undertake petty trading of some description and in the build up to the market day, they dedicate a certain amount of time to preparing their stock for sale. This might include preparing *kuli-kuli* (fried groundnut), pounding rice, cracking groundnuts or preparing shea-butter. The small amount of money they make from selling these items is then used to buy the ingredients they need for that week. On the market day itself you see groups of women walking the four miles to market with a load on their head. Some pay the 1000 cedis and take the market lorries that pass through the village.

There are also weekly (7-day weeks), monthly and annual patterns or cycles that help to shape people's understanding of time. The Friday prayers play an important role in shaping peoples perception of the passing of time on a slightly larger scale. This is a special congregation day for all Muslims (*Jum 'ah*) and all Muslims are required to attend prayers at around 1pm at the central mosque. In Tarsaw, most of the adults in the village turn out for the prayers, particularly in the dry season when people tend to stay around the village much more. In the rainy season, some men either treat Friday as a rest day or stay at home, particularly those whose farms are far away, or will return home from farm in time to go to the mosque. Women do not use it as a rest day,

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[8] The use of the term 'week' is perhaps incorrect in this context, since it is not strictly a week in the Western sense of the word, but I will use this term for simplicity.
[9] This is not to say that people attend all these markets, there is not even a market in Tarsaw or Wallemboi, and never has been, people just say it is Tarsaw market so that they know what day it is!

but make a special effort to leave their work and attend. In the rainy season when the farm work increases, the day appears to be no different to any other day for women, although most take the opportunity to work on their own farm if they are not required to work on their husband's farm.

When talking of time in terms of months, people usually refer to the various phases of the moon, which last the usual 29 days between each new moon. These lunar months broadly relate to our artificial calendar months but not directly. When asked about time on this scale, people refer to the name of that lunar month rather than October, November and so on. The stage of the moon's passage can have an important impact not only on how people measure the passing of time, but also on people's social activities throughout the month. When it is full moon people tend to socialise much more and go and greet their friends and relatives during the evening. Children play games around the village until late into the night without fear. As the moon changes and the nights start to get dark, people tend to stay inside their own compounds.

On an annual scale, people are aware of the passing of time through the subtle and more obvious changes in foliage, wind direction, soil hardness, temperature and humidity. People's whole way of life and their livelihoods are shaped by the seasonal cycle of wet and dry and men and women have become experts in reading these natural signals in order to know when it is a good time to sow, weed and harvest.

Women generally combine these various temporal indicators: the 'universe' time of the movement of the sun and moon; the body clock that tells you when it is too hot or you are too tired to work, and the social time where you gauge time from the social activities and actions of others that structure your day. I now want to take you through the daily lives of various women, to get a better picture of their temporality. I will draw mainly from the stories given by a number of women in different situations in the village, combined with my own observations.

6.4.1 Amina[10]

Amina is a 26-year-old woman who is the only wife of her husband Seibu, and the mother of a three-year-old boy named Haffis. She lives in a relatively small compound with Seibu's mother, two brothers (junior) and their wives (each brother has only one wife) and their children. Each of the women are responsible for catering for their own husband's needs although they sometimes help each other out with tasks if they have the time. The mother eats with Amina and so she sometimes assists with certain household tasks such as the preparation of ingredients for the meal and looking after Haffis. Like most women in Tarsaw, Amina gets up before it is even light in order to attend the early morning prayers at 5am. The call of Azan summons the villagers to prayer before this time, and from then the village slowly begins to wake up. Amina rarely goes to the Mosque but prefers to pray in her room so that she can also keep an eye on her sleeping baby. Sometimes she misses prayers altogether if she is particularly tired and fails to wake up in time. If that happens she prays as soon as she gets up. Her son Haffis is just over 3 years old and is therefore no longer nursing, but still requires a lot of attention; attention that Amina often seems resentful of giving since it ties her down and she can never feel free of the burden of childcare.

After praying, it is then time to quickly sweep the compound before walking to the well or borehole to fetch water. This task is of the utmost priority because without water a woman is unable to do anything. Furthermore, it is usually something women like to do before the sun gets too hot, because the load is heavy and there is little shade around the borehole. If Haffis has not yet woken up she is lucky because she is free from carrying him on her back: an additional burden to her already heavy load. Some women in the village are wealthy enough to own large petrol drums where they can collect plenty of water. This allows them to store water or collect it up in the rainy season. For them, the collection of water may not be such a priority and they are able to get on with their other jobs and leave the water collection for later on. Amina does not own a petrol drum so she has to walk to the borehole (about 1km away) or the nearby well several times a day so that she has enough water for the day's work. This may take up to 1 hour per trip, depending on how many women are waiting. This is a

[10] Amina took part in a time-diary study (see chapter 4, section 4.4.3.4) during the second phase of fieldwork. Through this activity, and through living (and often working) with Amina and her family, I developed an intimate sense of her daily rhythms and how these linked with the rhythms of others in the household and village. Although the story presented here, like most stories, is only partial, since it is difficult to capture the diversity and multiplicity of a woman's daily life throughout the year, this account provides some feel for the organisation and prioritisation of Amina's daily tasks. This is important in highlighting the burden various tasks place on a woman and how this, in turn, affects their mobility.

particular problem in the dry season when the wells have dried up and the need for water is greater.

Once Amina is satisfied that she has collected enough water, she prepares the fire so that she is able to heat some water to bath herself and her son and also prepare some food to eat. As the water is heating she quickly washes the bowls and pans from the previous day. These jobs are normally done in conjunction with looking after the numerous demands of Haffis, who clings to his mother's side. By this time, her husband has usually left for the farm. Seibu walks to farm since his farm is less that 1km away. He works there and waits for Amina to come and bring him some food. If it is the dry season, Seibu has no farm work to do and either does some building work if needed, or more likely rests under the shade of a tree with his friends.

After bathing and feeding Haffis, Amina then has to prepare some food to take to farm for herself and her husband to eat. This might involve going to the nearby mortar to pound some maize or rice, or, if she has flour already in the house, she is able to prepare it quickly. For most of the jobs around the village, like going to the mortar or grinding mill, Amina usually tries to leave quickly without Haffis noticing, so that she can get her work finished promptly. Her mother-in-law is often around to keep an eye on him. However, if he notices that she is going, he demands to be taken along and Amina, unlike some of the mothers, cannot walk away from him. She then has to strap him to her back and carry him as well as her other load. If she is very pressed for time and wishes to leave for the farm early, she plans to prepare the food at the farm.

In the dry season Amina often has to go to the bush to fetch some firewood for her stockpile. Women tend to fetch most of their firewood in the dry season when the farming has finished. At this time the grass has died or burnt in bushfires, making it easier to collect the wood without fear of snakes and scorpions. If they decide to fetch firewood, it is normally done in the cool of the morning, because it is a heavy and arduous task, which normally requires them to walk many miles into the bush. Women also prefer to do this activity together, either with other women from their compound or their friends. This helps to pass the time quickly and also means that they can help each other to find the firewood and load it on to their heads. In the rainy season, if a woman is in need of firewood she quickly collects a small amount from the farm after completing her farm work[11]. Throughout the day, as we have seen, Amina always has

[11] Women rarely, if ever purchase firewood. If a woman is unable to collect her own firewood, perhaps through sickness, she uses the firewood from her own stockpile until she is well enough to fetch again. Some women are able to utilise the labour of their children for tasks such

to consider the needs and demands of Haffis, unless she is able to leave him in the hands of her mother-in-law or one of the older children of the house. If Amina has to fetch firewood, Haffis also goes with her, if she goes to farm, he has to be carried there, adding to the burden of her already heavy load, and a coupling constraint widely familiar in other societies (Tivers, 1985).

As has been emphasised, women generally try and get all their difficult tasks done in the morning when it is cooler. If they have maize to pound they usually do this before going to the farm. If they need the flour for that evening they take the maize to one of the grinding mills in the village (if one is open) and then quickly dry it at home or, if they are pressed for time, take it to the farm to dry. The lighter household tasks are usually left for the afternoon when the sun is hot. If Amina is not required at the farm nor has too much housework to do in the afternoon, she can sit in the shade of a tree whilst cracking groundnuts, shelling maize or preparing the ingredients for the evening meal. She also uses this time to do her washing, either by the borehole or well (to save her from carrying the water), or at home. A woman also has to make sure she has everything that she needs to prepare the day's meals. This might mean collecting leaves from the bush or farm, cracking groundnuts or fetching some maize or yam from the farm. She decides early on in the day what she wants to prepare so that she can organise her various tasks around the requirements of the food preparation. If the meal she is planning to prepare takes a long time to make, then she usually plans to leave her other tasks earlier so that she has plenty of time to prepare the ingredients. To estimate the time she needs to leave the farm, bush or borehole, she uses the sun and the shadows and leaves before the sun gets below a certain point. In the rainy season this is less easy since it is generally cloudy and the sun obscured. At this time, she tends to rely more on her own internal sense of time and also looks out for changes of light in the sky. Even then it is likely that she delays at the farm too long and returns as the sun is starting to go down.

When Amina returns from farm, the compound is again bustling with activity as all the women quickly begin their chores and starts the preparation of the evening meal. Sometimes she has to go and fetch more water before she can do this, since she has no daughters or junior females who can fetch water for her. Once she has enough water, she then heats some water for her husband to bathe, whilst preparing the food. At this time, women are generally too busy to participate in the evening prayers and as

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as fetching water and firewood. Very old women do not require so much firewood since they are no longer required to cook and cater for the family. The younger women of the compound fetch the small amount needed to meet the needs of older women.

the call to prayer sings out around the village, they are usually engaged in preparing the evening meal. Some try and stop what they are doing or leave a junior female in charge of the work, but the majority would rather complete their work and pray in their rooms after the food is prepared. Women cannot leave the food to sit and wait until after prayers since the children are hungry and the men, who generally have the power to say, like to eat their food soon after prayers so that they can go round the village and greet their friends. Once all the jobs are finished, Amina washes herself and Haffis before putting him to bed and then gathering the bowls together ready for washing the next day. The only job she does now is to sit and crack groundnuts whilst sharing stories with her house people. It is usually quite late before she goes to bed and rests, ready for another day of work.

6.4.2 Salamatu[12]

Salamatu is the senior wife of Adamu and has five children (3 girls and 2 boys) all of whom are grown up and married. The daughters now live in their husbands' villages while the sons remain in Tarsaw to work on the family farm[13]. Salamatu is between 50 and 60 years old, although it is difficult to get an accurate figure because few people measure their lifetime in such a way. She remembers pre-independence and reminisces about the time before Islam, when the people of the village sacrificed to the Gods. She now suffers from a sickness that means that she is unable to walk without the help of a stick. She is therefore unable to do any farm work and only helps with fairly minor tasks within the house. Her husband, Adamu, has one other wife who is much younger and does many of the chores for Adamu. He also suffers from a sickness, which stops him from working on the farm. Instead, he will sit under the shade of the tree, tending to his fowls and guinea fowls and feeding them the termite mounds that the children or his younger wife bring to him. Salamatu's son's wives help out a great deal around the compound so she is not forced to work despite her illness. As the senior woman of the compound, Salamatu is able to utilise the help of the more junior women of the compound. She no longer feels compelled to work hard or compete with her female colleagues since she is not physically able to do the work.

[12] Salamatu participated in a series of life history interviews (see chapter 4, section 4.4.2), which I conducted over the course of several months during the second period of fieldwork. Over this time, I developed a good rapport with Salamatu and would often sit with her, helping her with her tasks when I was not interviewing. Much of the information presented here is drawn from these interviews, and my observations over the course of my fieldwork.

[13] As discussed in chapter 3, men within the four Galibaga villages are forbidden to marry within or between these villages. Their wives therefore tend to come from further away. Since residence in Sissala villages is patrilocal, it is always the woman who, upon marriage, must leave her family to join that of her husband and his family. Marriage usually involves the payment of a bride price by the groom's family to the wife's kin. This payment cements the conjugal relationship and gives the husband and his family jural rights to the offspring of the wife (Grindal, 1972: 8).

This does not mean that she sits and does no work at all. The work ethic is still ingrained despite her disability and she works and makes a contribution to the compound in other ways. Salamatu is a highly respected woman in the village; she is not wealthy but has spent her life working hard and serving her husband well. This respect earned her the position of Deputy Chairwoman of the Tarsaw *Nimakadogo* (unity) Women's Group.

As with the rest of the women in the compound, Salamatu gets up at first light. This is probably more from force of habit than from the need to get up and complete her tasks. Instead, she gets up and sits in the compound making sure that the jobs run smoothly, helping out where possible. This could include sieving the flour ready for food preparation, cracking groundnuts or looking after the children while their mothers do their housework. The compound begins to empty as her sons leave for the farm with some of the young boys on the bullock cart and some of the women leave soon afterwards. At this time (around 10am), Salamatu slowly walks out of the compound with the aid of her stick or one of the compound members and sits on the bench under a nearby tree. Here she sits and cracks or plucks groundnuts depending on the time of year, keeping an eye on the young children who have stayed around the village, and sometimes watching over people's maize as it is drying outside the grinding mill and shooing off the occasional goat or sheep that tries to steal it. As with all elderly women, Salamatu plays an important role in childcare, particularly when the mother is busy with her work. She is often regarded as the children's 'playmate' and spends much time interacting with them. As Salamatu sits, other women often come and sit with her, helping her to crack her groundnuts, watching the children and passing the time. The women who come to the grinding mill also come and talk to her, grabbing a few handfuls of groundnuts and cracking them as they converse. This is how the morning proceeds until food is brought by one of the women from her compound around midday. After eating it is usually too hot to do anything, even under the shade of the tree. Salamatu spends this hottest part of the day resting and dozing with only occasional disturbances from the children. As the sun starts to go down and it reaches afternoon prayers (*'Asr*), Salamatu begins cracking her groundnuts again and waits for people to return from farm. She sits there until the sun begins to sink low in the sky and women begin preparing the evening meal. She then returns to the compound and again sits and helps the other women as she can before eating, bathing and eventually retiring to her room to sleep.

The stories of Amina and Salamatu illustrate how two women, at very different stages in their life course, experience time and the passing of time in very different ways. Their

roles within the compound and their responsibilities in terms of housework, farm work and childcare result in a very different sense of temporality, supporting my earlier comments about the social nature of time. Young women, particularly those who have recently married and are new to the village, tend to be driven by a strong work ethic in order to prove they are good and faithful women. According to Salamatu, 'women like to be hardworking so that her other colleagues will not tease her. Also, some men will not like to marry any woman who would not like to do this hard work. If a man has two wives and one is lazy, he will not do anything good for her and in the long run he can even divorce her' (*Salamatu, life history interview, 08/07/*02). Women are always driven by this competitive work ethic[14], but as a woman gets older she is able to utilise the labour of her children, particularly the girls(see section 6.4). This relieves her burden of childcare and household work to a certain extent, but usually means that her time is utilised for other activities, such as farming, income generating activities and petty trading. A woman's status is strongly determined by her ability to bear children and care for them in their early years, and therefore, of course, on her husband's and her own fertility. Status is also afforded to a woman who is seen to serve her husband well and work hard for the family. Thorsen (2002) describes a similar situation in her study of gender relations and work in Burkina Faso. Here, women that work hard are seen as 'showing respect' for their husband's, which reflects well on how they are perceived more generally (p.137). These expectations have implications for a woman's time burden throughout the course of her life.

Salamatu has passed her reproductive years and no longer needs to care directly for her own children since they have all grown up and have families of their own. She still plays an important role in care giving, but no longer needs to carry out the arduous tasks associated with the family upkeep: fetching water, collecting firewood, preparing food and so on. If she was not sick she might have to carry out these tasks to fulfil her own needs, but only if there are no women from the compound willing to help her. Either way, a woman at this stage of her life no longer needs to manage her time so efficiently since there are much fewer demands on her time.

A woman's time burden varies considerably with the changing needs of childcare. The changing demands of a child, and their impact on women's time use and time perception, are discussed in more detail in the following section.

[14] As the local nurse said, 'women tease each other, if they don't carry loads etc. they will say they are lazy. Women fear that people will talk about them so they force and do. It makes them feel like a woman to be doing all these things' *(Christina, interviewed 22/03/02).*

6.5 Governing Women's Time: The Needs of a Child

The needs and demands of a child change throughout the course of his or her life, placing differing duties and burdens on the mother (who is the primary care giver) and other members of the family who play a part in its upbringing. Childhood can be divided into four relatively distinct phases: from birth to three years a child receives constant care and attention; from three to six years, a child begins to learn his or her place within the family; from six to ten years, the child starts assuming responsibilities and contributing his or her labour[15]; from ten to fifteen years is the period of adolescence when a child will acquire greater responsibility and will have mastered the skills required of him or her; beyond fifteen one is no longer considered to be a child, but is expected to perform adult labour and have the requisite skills necessary for marriage. This section also highlights how, through the home training of boys and girls, sexual difference is accentuated, embodied and performed through role differentiation and differing behavioural expectations of boys and girls throughout their adolescent years (as discussed in chapter 2). The individuals discussed in this section are fictionalised, but based on information from interviews and observation.

6.5.1 Birth to Three Years

Alimata is just coming up to a year old; she is still being weaned and is not yet able to walk. Throughout these early years of childhood Alimata receives constant care and attention from various members of the extended family (predominantly female members), although most of the burden falls to her mother, Nashira. At this age, Alimata is indulged with attention and when her mother or other family members have free time they sit and play with her. Like all babies, Alimata is breastfed and there appears to be no specific times for feeding. Any time she starts to cry or show any sign of discomfort, the breast is offered to her. Nashira could be fetching water, working on the farm, preparing food or washing clothes, but she has to feed Alimata, sometimes in conjunction with these tasks. I often observed instances where her husband, Fuseini, would rebuke Nashira if she left Alimata crying without giving her attention. She is then forced to stop what she is doing in order to tend to the baby, unless the older children, Minata (aged about 4-5) and Lachia (aged about 6-7), are able to look after her. Some men are more understanding and relieve the mother themselves, particularly if she is trying to prepare the food at the time. However, whilst Alimata is still breastfeeding, there is very little she can do to relieve the burden of feeding and caring. Weaning is a gradual process that takes up to three years after birth. After about eight months the

[15] In a study conducted in rural Sudan, Cindi Katz (1991) demonstrates the importance of children's labour contribution, whether undertaken on a subsistence or income-producing basis.

child is fed a light porridge prepared from millet or maize flour mixed with water. Gradually, the child is fed adult foods such as *tuozafi* (known as TZ) beans and yam. However, throughout this period the child is still encouraged to continue breastfeeding. If the child insists on taking breast milk after this age, the mother applies some bitter herbs to the breast to discourage it.

There are a number of stages in a child's toilet training. Between birth and the age of about one-and-a-half the baby is not expected to control itself and no punishment is handed out if the child urinates or defecates either on the mother's lap or within the compound. The child is gradually introduced to toilet training and by the age of one-and-a-half is expected to report to the mother when it is time to relieve him or herself. They are then encouraged to go to a particular spot or are taken there by the mother or another member of the family. If they fail to do this, they are punished. It is expected that by this time in a child's life, they should be able to exercise a certain amount of control in this respect.

Unlike in the West, children are rarely encouraged to walk when they are very young. If Nashira has to make a journey with Alimata, whether short or long, she always carries her strapped to her back with a cloth. Children of this age are not considered to be strong enough to walk long distances and their slow pace would perhaps slow the mother down as she is trying to complete her tasks. Sometimes Alimata is given to either Minata or Lachia to carry. When she is able to walk, she will be allowed to walk around the compound area under the watchful eye of the other household members, but it will be some time before she can walk long journeys with her mother.

6.5.2 Three to Six Years

Minata is around the age of five or six and is no longer regarded as a baby or given the undivided attention of her mother. Since Nashira has already delivered another child, Minata is no longer the recipient of protective indulgence, but has to learn to start giving it to her younger sister, Alimata. It is through this phase of development that a child will learn and form basic relationships, primarily with the extended family. Within the extended family, the term 'father' does not only include one's biological father but also the father's brothers in the widest sense to incorporate any patrilineally related male of the ascending generation. The same is true for 'mother', which also includes the mother's sisters, the mother's co-wives and the father's brothers' wives. Similarly, brothers and sisters also include the offspring of their father's brothers and by extension to all patrilineally related males in the same generation (Grindal, 1972: 22,

writing about the Sissala in Ghana). Minata will come to learn that it is not only her own mother who is responsible for her caring, but also her other 'mothers', 'fathers' and senior siblings.

Minata is becoming socialised into the family network and gradually learning what is expected of her. She learns her place relative to the other children in the compound and the duties that are to be carried out as a result. Young boys of a similar age still have very little to do by way of labour, but Minata remains close to Nashira and has begun to help her with some of the simpler daily tasks. She will gradually progress to more difficult tasks as she gets older. However, at this age, there is still a fairly limited division of labour between girls and boys. Minata is sometimes given the task of looking after Alimata when her mother is busy, but the caring role does not extend beyond carrying her and watching over her (young boys can also be given this task). This relieves Nashira's burden somewhat and allows her more time to concentrate on her more pressing tasks. It is at this stage of life that a child learns his or her role as a sibling and position within the birth order: the seniority of older siblings and the differences between male and female children in this respect.

6.5.3 Six to Ten Years

Lachia is coming up to about seven years of age. She is the oldest girl-child in the compound and therefore plays a much greater role than Minata in the overall labour of the household, as do many girls of her age. By this age, the gender division of labour is more marked (as discussed in chapter 5). Girls tend to assume responsibilities at an earlier age than boys and are asked to help care for the younger children, sweep the compound and fetch small bowls of water by the age of about five years. Now that Lachia is seven, she is old enough to begin helping in the preparation of food. Most of her cooking skills are primarily learnt through careful observation of what her mother and the other women do, before attempting it herself. She is not skilled enough to prepare the evening meal, but will have 'practice sessions' in the art of making all the main dishes.

By this age boys begin expressing an interest in accompanying their father to the farm, or are given the responsibility of taking care of the bullocks along with their elder brothers. The relative emphasis given to these activities depends on the resources of the compound: number of cattle relative to size of farm. Rashid is about nine years of age and is the eldest child of Nashira and Fuseini. Although he helps his father and senior father on their farms, his main responsibility is caring for the compound's

bullocks[16]. This involves not only grazing the cattle and leading them to suitable watering holes but also being responsible for them when they are being used for ploughing. In terms of the farm work Rashid would have initially been given more menial tasks: scaring away the goats, birds and monkeys from the crops and fetching the water. He is not given the more arduous tasks until nearer the age of ten, but observes his elders and learns from them. Rashid moved out of his mother's room at the age of seven and lives and eats with his father.

6.5.4 Ten to Fifteen Years

By the age of about ten, one is considered to be approaching adulthood and is assigned tasks and responsibilities in line with this. Abass is now thirteen years old and has long helped to tend the cattle for his father and has even taught the younger boys how it is done. He operates the bullock cart and the plough when they are needed, but often leaves the grazing to the younger boys. He is fully trained in all the aspects of farming and helps with the sowing, weeding and harvesting of crops, although the building of yam mounds will not be a major job for him until he is nearer fifteen. Abass has progressively become proficient in all the tasks expected of him as a man, and even farms his own plot of land in addition to working on his father's farm. This allows him a certain amount of economic independence, which helps to initiate his passage into manhood. When he reaches the age of fifteen, he is considered a man and is expected to perform the labour of an adult. Soon he will be mature enough to marry.

As a fourteen-year-old girl, Aliata knows how to prepare all the meals for the family and has developed a more independent interest in the household work, often instructing the younger girls in these tasks. At this age, Aliata frequently prepares the main meals, leaving her mother free to undertake other (possibly income-generating) activities. From the age of twelve or thirteen she has been entrusted with all the domestic duties her mother performs and is often sent to the market to buy and sell on behalf of her mother. Since she has reached the age of fifteen, she is considered to be proficient in all domestic tasks and is considered mature enough for marriage. Once Aliata gets married, her mother will have to resume her responsibility for many of the household tasks, unless her sons have married. There is often great pressure on a girl of this age to marry. Some girls run away from home, often to the south of Ghana to find waged

[16] For certain parts of the year, particularly after the bullocks have been used for ploughing, some people will entrust their cattle to the Fulani to look. This is particularly the case in households where there are few boys to care for them. If the Fulani look after them, a boy's time is released so that he can participate in farm work. The bullocks will be withdrawn from the Fulani in the run up to ploughing so that the boy can get used to handling them again and the bullocks can get used to pulling the plough together.

work, in order to avoid marriage. Girls who remain at home and do not marry following puberty are generally viewed with suspicion[17] (as is apparently the case in other contexts, see Callaway, 1984, on Hausa women in Nigeria).

6.6 Men, Work and Time

Following on from the discussion about timepieces (section 6.3), the men all agreed that women's time is different from the men's. One man stated that 'our work is big, so we can just concentrate on doing it, but the women, their work is in bits and they will work small and leave it and go to do another job...for us men, when we get up, what we know is to go to farm. Our work is straightforward and the women have more work to do in that respect[18].' (*Salifu, focus group, 19/04/02*). Men do not appear to have the problem of balancing their time and planning their day to fit in numerous tasks, like women. They just need to get up and go to the farm. The only thing that varies about their daily work is the changing seasonal demands of the farm. Different crops are planted at different times of the year, depending on the weather and require different levels and types of work. Millet, beans and groundnuts are probably the easiest and cheapest crops to grow, since you only need to plough and weed before sowing, and then weed again before harvesting. Maize requires a little more labour and expense. Because it is the main staple and is also an important cash crop, farmers like to use fertilisers and weed at least twice to ensure a good harvest. Also, because it is not usually harvested until the dry season, there is always a fear of fire damage, so people will often sleep at the farm or spend long hours there to ensure the crops are safe. Yam requires the most labour and attention since one has to raise mounds to protect the tuber and has to cover it with leaves to guard it from the heat in the dry season. As the plant grows, a stick is placed against it so that it is encouraged to grow upwards. The sowing of yam is always carried out by older and more experienced men of the compound since it is a highly skilled and extremely arduous task. All crops are planted at a particular time of year and farmers carefully watch for the correct environmental conditions, which signal the time for sowing and harvesting. These seasonal differences in the needs of various crops result in a distinct temporal rhythm, particularly for men, who are primarily responsible for the bulk of the farm work, but also for women, who play a vital role.

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[17] From puberty and throughout a woman's life, there is a general concern about women's sexuality. As highlighted in accounts by Robson (2000) and Mernissi (1991) in the context of Hausa Nigeria, women's sexuality is often deemed to be disruptive and chaos-inducing. If women were to remain unmarried beyond puberty, this may be considered threatening and disturbing.

[18] This kind of statement is generally tempered by adding that men's work is generally more *physically arduous* than women's, as discussed in chapter 7.

Apart from these seasonal rhythms, men are also aware of other natural cycles such as night and day, the phases of the moon and changes in temperature throughout the day. Men also try and do their more strenuous work during the cooler period in the morning. When it is the time for raising yam mounds (dry season), men only stay at the farm until about midday because the work is very hard and too arduous in the heat of the afternoon. In the rainy season, the farm work begins in earnest and men stay at the farm for the whole day, from around 6 in the morning until maybe 6 in the evening. As Seibu points out, 'it is only in the rainy season when you will stay at the farm until darkness. Then you don't use time, you will only work until you are tired or when it is dark then you will return'. During this time, men work as much as they can and make the most of the cooler parts of the day and rest when it is too hot. If they are too tired to continue working or to make the journey home, they sometimes sleep at the farm. Otherwise, they return quite late in the evening when it is getting dark.

Friday prayers and the local market both play an important role in structuring a man's week. Unless it is the peak of the planting or harvesting season, a man is quite likely to take the majority of the day off if it is market day or Friday. Fridays are treated as a day of rest and prayer, particularly amongst the older men of the village, and market day is a time to socialise at the market or relax around the village. On market day, you see the men cycling to the market, between about ten and twelve o'clock (you never see a man walking to the market). Some go to trade, but most go to buy items such as batteries, bicycle parts or clothing, or just sit in the shade enjoying the cooked meat that is sold there. Some men will drink pito (an alcoholic drink made from millet), although few will admit to doing so since it is against their religion. During the dry season, most return home late in the afternoon to avoid cycling back in the hot sun.

As with the women, men use a combination of these temporal indicators, but perhaps with more of an emphasis on clock-time for day-to-day time keeping. Over a longer scale a man's time is dominated by the seasonal variation that structures his farming. In the following section, I want to narrate the daily lives of two men, again drawing from interview data and personal observation.

6.6.1 Seibu[19]

Seibu is a 26-year-old man. He is the husband of Amina and the head of the household (*diatina*). Although he lives with two of his brothers, he only farms with the youngest brother, Mohammed, since the other brother decided that he would cater for himself and his own family. Since he farms together with Mohammed, they help each other with the work on the farm and decide together how to use the produce at the end of the year, although Seibu has ultimate authority over the produce. Between them they share a bicycle, although Mohammed tends to use it more since Seibu feels that it is important to keep his brother happy so that he works hard for him. Seibu's day begins much the same as the majority of men in the village. He rises very early, relieves himself and then attends the morning prayers (*Fajr*). In the dry season, much of the day can be spent relaxing and talking to his friends, there is generally very little work to be done on the farm until the rains begin and the ground softens enough to begin the preparations. In the rainy season, Seibu leaves for farm straight after morning prayers. He changes quickly into his farm clothes and leaves, with his hoe slung over his shoulder. Once at the farm, he works until the sun is too hot or he is tired. At that time he sits, rests and east some food until it is cool enough for him to resume his work. For Seibu, his days tend to be filled with farm work every day, with only the seasonal variation in the type of work needed.

The rainy season begins April-May time, but farming usually commences in late May-June with the start of the planting season. During April and May the land is prepared for planting; the land is first cleared of debris and weeds and then ploughed, usually with the help of the bullocks. Bullock ploughing came to Tarsaw in the mid- 1970s with the help of a Catholic missionary (see Chapter 3). This intervention helped change the shape of farming for many people in the area, since it saved them time which was previously spent using a hoe and also meant that people could farm much larger areas. Not all farmers in the village own bullocks and the equipment, but many have some form of access through family and friends. Seibu has owned a pair of bullocks and a plough for a number of years. He is careful about how he uses them since they are important to his livelihood and he will have difficulties if one were to fall sick or die. In the build up to the time of ploughing, the bullocks are well fed and given the correct

[19] Seibu is the head of the compound in which I lived for the duration of my stay in Tarsaw. His room was situated next to mine and we shared a veranda where we would eat many of our meals together (although on occasions I would go inside the compound to eat with the women). Seibu has received secondary school education and spoke good English. We would spend long hours talking about various issues: both of us had an eagerness to learn about the others culture and values. The story presented here is based on my discussions with and observations of Seibu, although I feel that many of points raised in this account apply to many men of his stage in life.

injections to try and maintain their health and strength[20]. When it comes to ploughing season, Seibu first uses the bullocks to plough his own farm, with the help of his young nephew[21], allowing them to rest at regular intervals, before allowing his other family members to use them. For those men who do not own bullocks, this can be a difficult time searching for somebody to plough their farm and much time is wasted in the pursuit of assistance. Some people are reluctant to let others use their bullocks since they are such an important resource. Those who are willing to help send one of the young boys to go and plough for them, although on occasions the boys will refuse to do this unless they are suitably remunerated.

Once planting has begun, Seibu, like all farmers, remains watchful of the changes in the weather to make sure he plants at the best time. The first rains might not mean the start of the rainy season and if he plants too early he could loose all his crops in another dry spell. It is usually a gamble since the onset of the rains is not always predictable. Once the rains begin in earnest, it is a race against time to try and get all the work completed on time. All able hands are required at the farm for sowing and weeding and everyone has a role to play. Those with money available may even try and employ labourers to help during this time so that the work is completed quickly. The village is usually deserted at this time of year as most of the men and women leave for farm very early and arrive back very late or not at all. Only the very old, the sick and some children remain around the village.

Once the crops are planted, they need careful tending in order to ensure that the optimum yield is attained. At this time of year, all men, and the majority of women, spend long hours at the farm. Seibu is known to be a hard working farmer and usually leaves for the farm about 6am, often returning as late as 6 or 6.30 in the evening. Although the whole day is spent at the farm, Seibu breaks for food whenever Amina brings it to him and then continues working until the sun gets too hot. In the afternoon, Seibu, like most men, rests for a while in the shade of a shea tree, before resuming his work.

[20] It has been noted in other case studies that men with animal carts, when given the choice between conserving the energy of their animals and their womenfolk, favoured the animals (Goe, cited in Bryceson and Howe, 1993: 22). This also appears to be the case in Tarsaw and men would insist on allowing their bullocks to rest and conserve their energy over the dry season to enable them to work hard once the farming begins.

[21] The young boys of the family are always given the responsibility of looking after the cattle and are often called the cowboys. Before a boy can even farm, he is taught how to care for the bullocks by leading them to sources of food and water. When it comes to ploughing, the young boys also play an important role, freeing up the men's time for other tasks.

Since Seibu's farm is very close to the village (less than 1km), he is able to leave the farm relatively late. On arriving back at the compound, Seibu performs ablutions before attending prayers at the mosque (*Maghrib*- around 6.30). Since Seibu's compound is situated next to the mosque, he has no problem hearing the call of Azan. The final prayers of the day (*'Ishaa*) will soon follow and after that, Seibu rests on the verandah and waits until the evening meal arrives. After eating he is free to visit his friends or rest in his room. It is generally quite late in the evening before he retires to bed.

6.6.2 Adamu[22]

Adamu is one of the village elders and is probably approaching his seventies. Adamu has suffered bad health for a number of years and is no longer able to play a part in farm work[23]. However, like most men in the village, Adamu tends to rise early in order to perform ablutions before attending morning prayers. This is followed by the ritual greeting of friends and relatives, although since he is now the head of the household, most family members will come to greet him, rather than the other way round. The only people he goes to greet are the elders and the chief, often on a daily basis (as is customary). Adamu's day is generally spent tending his fowls, which are kept in cages under the shade of a tree located close to his compound. Adamu comes from a relatively large compound with two wives and numerous children and grandchildren. His second (and considerably younger) wife generally tends to most of Adamu's needs due to Salamatu's sickness (and seniority), although junior women from the compound (Adamu's sons' wives) are called to help during times when she is unable to do so (e.g. during pregnancy, illness or necessary periods away from the village). Because of his age, illness and perhaps more importantly, his position as household head, Adamu is not obligated to do any work in the compound. As household head he has the responsibility of managing the other compound members, although he is increasingly deferring these responsibilities to his senior son, partly to guide him into the position he will eventually hold. Despite the occasional tasks that Adamu has to carry out in his capacity as household head, his days are generally spent in relative leisure. When his fowls do not require attention, he will simply rest under the shade of a tree awaiting the arrival of his food, which arrives mid-morning before the women leave for farm.

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[22] Adamu also participated in a series of life-history interviews (a total of 4 interviews were conducted with Adamu). It is primarily from these interviews, and observations on other occasions, that I have written this account.

[23] I should note that, for much of the time this illness does not incapacitate him or stop him from using his legs, unlike his wife, Salamatu. However, he has, in the past, spent extended periods of time confined to his room convalescing after an operation, or after particularly severe bouts of sickness.

The only occasions that give cause for Adamu to leave the compound, apart from greeting the chief and elders, are prayer times. For this he attends the mosque situated across the road from his house, except on Fridays when he, along with most of the village men (and some women), will attend the central mosque to pray. Since Friday is a special day of prayer, Adamu dresses smartly and brings out his umbrella for the occasion. He generally takes his time walking to the central mosque, in order to greet the chief and other friends along the route. Friday has an almost festive feel to it, and Adamu enjoys spending most of it sitting in the shade and conversing with his friends. On occasion he is called to attend a meeting with the chief and the other elders to discuss village matters. These meetings usually occur early, after Friday morning prayers, and sometimes last for several hours. All elders are obliged to attend.

Apart from these occasion meetings, and partaking in 'outdoorings' both in Tarsaw and further afield, Adamu spends most of his days around the house, waiting for the arrival of food at various points in the day (generally mid-morning, before the women go to farm, and late evening, after the women have returned from farm). During the intense heat of the mid-afternoon, Adamu usually sleeps in the shade of a nearby tree, since any activity at this time is difficult. These are the main factors that punctuate the rhythm of Adamu's day: prayers, food and heat. Although Adamu wears a watch, this has been broken for many years and he continues to wear it only as a sign of status, which is not uncommon among men.

The stories of Seibu and Adamu illustrate how two men, at markedly different stages in their life course, experience the passing of time in very different ways. This is a partial insight into the temporal life of men, since a focus on other men's experiences could have yielded very different rhythms. However, they demonstrate broadly how a man's temporal rhythms change as he gets older and is no longer required to work. Seibu's days are much more clearly defined and organised, since the needs of the farm work mean that much of his time is spent at the farm.

6.7 Transport and Time

(How do you get to Challu?) 'My Grandson can pick me on a bicycle. When I inform my Grandson and the bicycle is not available then I will get up early in the morning and start walking. When I get up at dawn I can reach there around this time (10am) it takes about 5 hours. (How long on a bicycle?) On a bicycle we will go there early and by now we can be coming back. (Do you like to get there quickly?) It depends on what I am going to do there, when it demands quick action I want to get there quickly, when I hear that the children or somebody is sick I want to get there quickly. At other times I am not so concerned about getting there quickly.

(Ajara, village woman aged around 60, interviewed 10/03/02.)

'A lorry saves time and also you don't get tired. Saving time is important. (Why?) The time is important because if you are able to get there early and solve your problems, you can come back quickly and continue your work.'

(Afisatu, village woman, aged about 35, interviewed 16/03/02.)

'I use a bicycle to go to farm because it lessens my energy with walking, it also helps me to do things quickly. It helps because if you have to walk to farm it will take an hour, but if you use the bicycle it will only take you 15 minutes, so that will mean your work will go easier because you get to the farm earlier and can close earlier. This gives me more time to do other things.'

(Issaka, male villager aged around 45, interviewed 15/03/02.)

As indicated by the above discussion, a person's use of time is shaped around their burden of work and the duties of childcare and household maintenance. These factors are also affected by a person's ability to move around freely (freedom of movement) and access available forms of transport. This varies considerably between men and women at various stages of their lives. As the above quotations indicate, men tend to have much greater access to transport than women. This is partly through ability to access funds to pay motorised transport fares or own their own transport, but also because men are more likely to borrow (and be able to borrow) bicycles from other men. This affects the way men and women view time and organise their various activities. Most women tend to start with the assumption that they have to walk to their destination and usually get up very early in order to do so. For most long journeys, women plan to get to their destination before the sun gets too hot. If the destination is far away, they have to get up long before dawn. Sometimes women are able to ask their husband or sons to take them to their destination by bicycle, but this is not always possible. It is very rare that women are able to use the bicycle themselves, unless they are only going to the market to buy their ingredients. Men are generally not happy for women to use it for long since they need it for their own purposes and are also concerned about damage to the bicycle and/or the safety of the woman. Some men

argued that, if a woman were to injure herself while riding their bicycle, they would feel responsible for any damage incurred (both to the bicycle and to the woman). This is partly why men are more willing to loan their bicycles to other men rather than to women, since they feel that men are less likely to have an accident than women (these issues are discussed in more depth in chapter 7). If a woman travels to a funeral, she tries to organise it so that she can walk with a group of women, for safety and mutual support. Women often feel that they waste a lot of time walking from place to place, but since they are unable to get access to transport themselves, they have little choice.

As the story of Salamatu and the extract from an interview with Ajara above illustrates, older women tend to have a very different experience of mobility and temporality from younger (pre-menopausal) women (also found to be the case in parts of Nigeria, see Porter, 1995, 1997; Robson, 2000). This is obviously a generalization since there are vast differences between older women, as there are between younger women, not least as a consequence of disability, health and reproduction. However, generally speaking, older women are less likely to walk long distances and many would rather wait for transport to take them, or will forgo the journey entirely if it is not necessary. Time is generally much less of an issue, since elderly women are no longer required to work as hard as younger women and the burden of childcare is reduced. As the quotation above indicates, older women are sometimes able to command the help of younger sons or grandsons, who are obliged to take them to their destination if they are free from farm work. Despite the greater freedom of movement women enjoy once they are beyond childbearing age (discussed in chapter 7), they tend not to take advantage of this too much. This is perhaps partly due to the financial cost of travel, although the effort travelling requires and the fact that women no longer need to visit their parents (who are often deceased) are perhaps more important reasons for this. Relatively young and able-bodied women past their menopause continue to play a vital role in agricultural and household activities (as discussed in chapter 7, section 7.3.1 and 7.3.2), which tends to limit their mobility somewhat.

Men who own bicycles or who have access to somebody else's bicycle also try and get up early to avoid cycling in the heat. Generally a man does not have to plan his journey quite so carefully because it takes relatively little time to get to where he wants to go. Also, men do not have to organise themselves around the needs of children prior to travelling, like women do. Owning a bicycle or being able to use somebody else's bicycle saves men much time, which they would otherwise spend walking. In fact, men have got so used to the ease of having a bicycle that many find it almost unthinkable to

walk a long distance. They look for any other option rather than to walk. There were many occasions when I observed (and spoke to) men waiting for a passing lorry or motorbike to take them to their destination, rather than setting out on the journey on foot. Most of the time they would be successful. If they wait long enough, something will eventually come along or someone will take pity and lend a bicycle to them. These attitudes to travel and time will be discussed in more depth in later chapters.

The issue of perceptions and valuation of time have important policy implications. Panter-Brick (1992, 1997) shows how male and female porters in Nepal pace themselves to sustain work throughout the day (cited in Porter, 2003a). Porters therefore extend the time they spend on transport tasks in order to reduce the energy inputs required. This provides an example of the importance of recognising potential variations in the valuation of time. Similarly, the time savings offered by IMTs in terms of load carrying may be given relatively low priority by women, when the energy costs of riding a bicycle up a steep hill are taken into account (Porter, 2003a). This could be a particular issue for heavily pregnant women, lactating women and women carrying babies or small children on their backs. Therefore, an exclusive focus on time (as a proxy for burden, effort and equality), neglects the lived experience of work and daily life. As Porter (2003a) points out, 'bodily management (with its full gamut of socio-cultural meanings) and physiological bodily capabilities both clearly need to be taken into account when we look to unravel the frustrating complexities of IMT non-adoption' (p.53).

6.8 Conclusions

Women's transport activities are embedded in a complex web of multi-tasking. The preceding discussion illustrates how women schedule their various tasks and how this relates to temporal patterns (seasonally, weekly, daily etc). Bryceson and Howe (1993) note that understanding how women organise their load-carrying tasks (weight, bulkiness and number of trips) around these temporal patterns, and how they are managed amidst other housekeeping and childcare tasks, is crucial, particularly for transport suppliers (p.22). This chapter has demonstrated that men and women, at various stages in their life course, experience and use time in very different ways. The different time-burdens that women and men face throughout their lives has a profound impact on their mobility. This has not been established through a rigid measurement of people's daily activities, but through a deeper understanding of how people measure, understand and experience the passing of time, through the use of life history and semi-structured interviews and my own observations. According to Whitehead (1999), 'time-use surveys may provide inadequate understandings of women's and men's work, in the absence of an understanding of the significance of the local context in which the work is done' (p.59). I would go further than this to say that such surveys also produce an inadequate understanding of what structures and regulates people's time-use and how this is often gendered and embodied. Because of this fundamental misunderstanding, notions of time-use and work can be misinterpreted and misrepresented. It is important that researchers, policy-makers and practitioners understand the different work and time burdens faced by men and women throughout their life course. In order to do this, it is necessary to be much more sensitive to the ways in which the researchers' own cultural concepts of work and time come into play, particularly in the measurement of 'work' (ibid.).

There are a number of temporal patterns that impose similar constraints on men and women, such as seasonal variation, night and day, and the weekly market. However, women's time is also organised around the demands of childcare and domestic tasks, which vary depending on their stage in the life course. Women and men pass through various stages in their life course, which are primarily determined by age, but also affected by marital status, number of children and position within the household. These factors have a profound impact on men and women's mobility. For young men, marriage and the arrival of children does not impact too heavily on their daily routines, as it undoubtedly does for women. The early years of childhood bring the heaviest burdens on a young mother, since the child is yet to contribute to household labour and

requires significant attention. This burden becomes less of a problem if the woman has older children or junior women in the compound to designate certain tasks to (see Callaway, 1984, in the case of Hausa Nigeria). Women past childbearing age, such as Salamatu, still play an important role within and beyond the compound, particularly in relation to childcare, although this burden is significantly less than for pre-menopausal women. The mobility of post-menopausal women is also discussed in some details in chapter 7. A number of other studies have noted how women past childbearing age have more freedom and mobility than their younger counterparts (Porter, 1988, 1995, 1997; Robson, 2000). Robson (2000) points out that, in Hausaland 'married women in their sexually reproductive years should remain in the private sphere, secluded behind the high walls of domestic compounds, 'invisible' to all men but close kin' whereas 'post-menopausal women may freely move around' (pp 183-4). This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter

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CHAPTER SEVEN

'Even before God created the world, Man was created before Woman and the Man was the controller of Woman'[1]: Women's Freedom of Movement in the Context of Gender Roles

'Men have the means to travel. Men also control the house and the wealth, this is why they travel more than women. If you see a woman travelling outside of the village, she has sought permission. If her going is not seriously needed the husband can refuse. The men don't often allow their women to go out even if the woman had the money and means. Women also have a lot of children, which you can't just leave. Men don't cook or anything so we are free'

(Mahama, elder man interviewed 07/10/01)

7.1 Introduction

This chapter draws together the complex issues relating to gender and mobility in Tarsaw. Building on the previous discussions of the gender division of labour (chapter five) and the temporal nature of women and men's lives (chapter six), this chapter aims to look more specifically at the constraints women face in accessing places and resources and moving about freely, in the context of embodiment, gender roles and experience. Gender roles and *practices* are therefore the main foci of this chapter. I attempt to elucidate some of the limiting constraints of cultural and social structures in which power acts on the body via the tacitly reproduced, implicitly accepted and undisputed structures of day-to-day life within which individuals have agency (although in some circumstances the scope for agency may be somewhat limited). These constraints have been framed and organised in terms of capability, coupling and authority constraints, following similar categorisation used within time-geography (see section 6.1). The potential drawbacks to this categorisation are discussed in section 7.2. This chapter draws together issues at the intersection of gender, embodiment and mobility, bringing in various elements of social theory and feminist thought, which have been discussed in more detail in chapter 2. Much of the discussion is drawn directly from the interviews and group discussions with both men and women. Through the liberal use of quotations, I have tried to give voice to the thoughts, feelings and experiences of women and men in Tarsaw.

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1 This is an extract from an observation made by middle-aged male farmer during a focus group discussion conducted on 30/04/02.

7.1.1 Gender, Space and Transport

According to the ILO, 'mobility relates to the ease and speed with which one can transport oneself and one's goods' (Edmonds, 1998: 35)[2]. Donor solutions to this lack of mobility and access are therefore increasingly framed in terms of the provision of intermediate means of transport to reduce *time and effort* spent on transport and/or increasing access by bringing supplies, services and facilities closer to the people. By reducing the time spent on transport and travel, and the drudgery associated with it, people would normally be able to move around in a more *efficient* and cost effective manner. Doran (1996) suggests that 'using more *efficient* kinds of transport such as bicycles, carts, animals, vehicles and other transport services increases mobility' (p.8, emphasis added). This perspective is particularly predominant within Western policy documents and transport related literature, and numerous accounts have framed the issue in a similar manner. Starkey has recently written quite considerably on issues of mobility and access (1998, 2000, 2001) both within the context of Animal Traction Development and World Bank transport programmes. Although Starkey advocates the need for improved mobility and greater access, which he regards as being achievable through complementary transport and infrastructure, he also states that 'gender power relations and unequal access to money restricts women's mobility' (2001, 10). As Bryceson and Howe (1993) note, 'men are much more likely to adopt new intermediate forms of transport than women' (p.15). This is regardless of the fact that women are the main transporters of agricultural produce and household necessities (Doran, 1990, 1996; Porter, 2003a; Urasa, 1990). We have seen that the introduction of bullock-carts relieved women in Tarsaw of some of the burden of transporting farm produce. Other aspects of women's role as carriers have changed much less, which remains to be properly understood. Although new technologies have led to some changes in gendered perceptions of the body and the bodily burdens of women, these changes have come about gradually, through an ongoing struggle between tradition and change. Understanding these issues and their complexity is important not only for policy but also academic understanding.

As discussed in chapter two, Western feminist geographers have made significant headway in highlighting connections between social constructions of gender and use of space (McDowell, 1989; Robson, 2000; Rose, 1993). Conceptualising an individual's movement through space not only in spatial terms but also as an indication of social

[2] This conceptualisation is far removed from the notion of 'the mobile body' as portrayed in chapter two (section 2.2), which sees mobility as a socially inscribed and embodied experience. Rather than a purely technical and practical action, a whole range of factors, such as health and gender, race, disability and working experience, affects mobility.

relations allows us to look at the use and creation of space as a social construct (Massey, 1994). Western time-geography, when used from a feminist point of view has also been used as a means of recovering and acknowledging the everyday activities of women, stressing the spatial and temporal limitations and constraints that shape women's lives[3]. Time-geography studies have helped to highlight how women often have to develop complex work schedules around 'coupling' constraints such as the location and hours of work, the location of childcare facilities, available means of transportation and the general needs of their children, the elderly and sick (Tivers, 1985; Pickup, 1988). Given that women, and particularly mothers with young children, are required to balance a range of different activities in a day and often have to multitask as a result, they tend to face especially complex time-space budgeting problems in their daily lives (as illustrated in chapter 6, section 6.5). This is true in both industrialised and less-developed countries.

The idea that space and the use of space (through time) are intrinsically linked to social relations allows us to acknowledge that space can be subject to control by others and can therefore reflect social inequalities and power relations. Women (and men for that matter) can therefore be constrained by a range of factors apart from the practical issue of lack of transport and access to related services. According to Fernando and Porter (2002), 'household structures, family composition and size, and women's role in the household affect the gender allocation of tasks and responsibilities and women's mobility and transport burden' (p.6). Women's prescribed gender roles have a powerful influence on their travel and transport patterns and consequently their mobility, as outlined in chapter 5 (Mashiri and Mahapa, 2002: 20). In many countries, women are primarily responsible for childcare and for the care of other household members; they are also traditionally responsible for household management such as the provision of energy and water for cooking (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 1993; Curtis, 1986; Doran, 1990). Women, in most cases, are acutely aware of their domestic responsibilities and often take great pride in carrying them out efficiently and without complaint. These factors often impede a woman's ability to move about freely.

Through individual interviews and discussions with groups of women and men in Tarsaw, I gradually built up a picture of women's position of relative powerlessness and immobility, and men's position of control and mobility. Women's use of space is largely confined to a comparatively small area whereas men have the freedom, "strength" and resources to move around without restraint. This is obviously a gross

[3] As noted in chapter six, there have been strong criticisms against time-geography, most notably by Gillian Rose (1993).

overgeneralisation and the picture is far more detailed and complex than this. Whilst a powerful discourse of women's mobility and physical strength prevails, there are examples where individuals have exercised agency and contested expectations, either explicitly or covertly, to bring about a gradual change in their circumstances. Power relations within any given situation are always complex across a community since relations of power and inequality are determined by gender, age, economic status, religion, class and so on. Women can therefore have power over other women and even over men, whilst men can have power over other men. The experiences of men and women in terms of their degree of access to resources and freedom of movement vary quite considerably in Tarsaw. Some women, perhaps through sheer force of personality or fortitude, might be more successful in negotiating relations with their husband's and those around them, in order to create more space and freedom. Others may be less able or skilled at this, or are content to remain subservient, happy in the knowledge that they are fulfilling their expected role. Many women are still bound by an overwhelming desire to fulfil their expected role and serve their husband's, as their mother's and grandmother's before them did.

Yet, when talking to women of different ages, characters and background about their experiences of mobility and access throughout the course of their life, there were generally strong continuities in their stories. This chapter draws from these stories and also from the accounts given by men in this respect, in order to build a picture of the constraints faced by women in terms of their mobility. These constraints will be viewed through the lens of both women's and men's experiences, drawing from information provided through interviews and group discussions as well as my own observation. Although I want to present these experiences in their own words (emic), since I have extracted and (re)presented these voices in order to build this discussion, the content is primarily etic, an outsiders' view. However, I still feel that it offers insights into the lives of women and men within this context.

7.2 Thinking about Mobility Constraints

I originally intended to frame the issue of constraints in terms of strategic and practical constraints (as outlined in Appendix 1), following on from Molyneux's idea of gender *interests* (1985, 1998) and Moser's notion of gender *needs* (1989, 1993). Within this framework, Molyneux argued that 'gender interests are those that women (or men for that matter) may develop by virtue of their social positioning through gender attributes. Gender interests can be either strategic or practical each being derived in a different way and each involving differing implications for women's subjectivity' (1985, 232).

Moser reframed this slightly since she was coming from the perspective of policy planning. For Moser, 'an *interest,* defined here as a "prioritised concern", translates into a need' since it is the 'means by which concerns are satisfied' (Moser, 1993: 37). Both agreed that strategic needs/interests are derived from women's subordination to men and relate to the gender division of labour and relationships of power and control. Practical interests or needs on the other hand, are those identified by women within their socially accepted roles in society and do not challenge the pre-existing gender division of labour (Molyneux, 1985; Moser, 1989). To apply these ideas in order to structure a discussion on women's mobility constraints, I initially defined structural constraints as those whereby women's mobility is inhibited by structures inherent within society and women's generally subordinate position in relation to men of different ages; and practical constraints where mobility is impeded by lack of access to resources and finance, and women's obligations of care.

However, when trying to apply this categorisation, I found the division inadequate for my needs, since so many of the issues faced by women in terms of their freedom of movement could easily be construed as both strategic and practical. The concepts of strategic and practical interests and needs fail to fully account for the complexity of gender relations, or social and economic relations more generally. For example, according to Moser and Molyneux, women's provision of clean water for the family would be considered a practical need since enabling women to meet this need would not challenge existing societal structures and is therefore not a feminist action. However, women's burden of water collection is a product of their role within society, which can also be construed as a result of women's subordination to men. As Townsend points out 'it is unreasonable to criticise practical action because it does not change society, or strategic action because it does not meet the immediate requirements of present society' (1993, 272). Such divisions have their roots in a particularly Western way of thinking. They can be of use in thinking and teaching, but would be problematic if treated as the only way of thinking, and would most likely need significant adjustment if being used in a cross-cultural context (Townsend, 1995: 49).

Another approach to this issue could be to utilise and adapt some of the concepts used within time-geography, which relate to an individuals movement through time and space (Carlstein, 1982; Parkes and Thrift, 1980; Pred, 1981). Within time-geography, all individuals are seen as having goals, which require the formulation of 'projects' to attain them. A project includes people and resources, space and time. Hägerstrand, the original proponent of time-geography, contended that there were previously

unconsidered links between societal power relationships and the 'projects of institutions and individuals' (Pred, 1981: 30). He concentrates his attention on the 'real, physical limits and the real impossibilities which are created by time and place in connection with physiological and technological abilities, social ties and institutional domains' (van Passen, 1981: 27). However, the completion of projects requires overcoming certain constraints: capability, coupling and authority (Parkes and Thrift, 1980: 248). Capability constraints limit the activities of individuals because of their biological construction and/or the tools they can command. In terms of capability constraints, we can include the undeniable fact that human beings are indivisible and can usually therefore only carry out a project in one place at one time. Because of this, time-geography assumes that 'most activities are *mutually exclusive* in the sense that an individual cannot carry them out *at the same time*[4]' (Carlstein, 1982: 25 emphasis in original). Coupling constraints define 'where, when and for how long the individual has to join other individuals, tools and materials in order to produce, consume and transact' (Hagerstrand, 1970, quoted in Parkes and Thrift, 1980). This looks at the linking together of 'individuals, equipment, material and signals in cooperating groups for production, consumption and social intercourse' (Friberg, 1993: 69). People are subject to coupling constraints because they have to move themselves around but can only do so when the necessary inputs are available. Because the majority of activities require special sites and settings, individuals necessarily have to get themselves into contact with various localised inputs (tools, equipment or other people, for example) found in their environment (Carlstein, 1982: 26). Authority constraints impose limited access to 'space locations or time locations' whereby movement is subject to control areas and domains of authority (Parkes and Thrift, 1980: 249). Within these areas and domains of power, certain people or groups have the right to make decisions and exercise control. The various spheres of power frequently overlap and coincide with one another (Friberg, 1993: 69). Authority constraints[5] include a whole set of primarily invisible regulatory devices which reflect socialised norms, rights, duties and obligations which regulate human activity[6].

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[4] This often fails to account for the multi-tasking nature of women's work, whereby women, and particularly mothers with young children, are required to balance a range of different activities in a day. The majority of women experience a range of constraints in performing their daily tasks and often have to juggle an array of different tasks at the same time.

[5] Hägerstrand refers to them as 'styrningsrestiktioner' (i.e. steering constraints) but the English translation for the term is 'authority constraints' (Carlstein, 1982: 48).

[6] Although I would argue that many of these regulatory devices *are* visible through factors such as bodily comportment and a body's movement through space and time, as discussed in chapter 2.

A range of social, cultural, economic and religious factors shape women's mobility and general use of space. Although it is important to recognise space and the physical environment as gendered and therefore embodied, it should also be stressed that this is cross-cut by other factors such as age, marital status and economic status. As argued in chapter 6 in relation to time and work, women and men at different stages in their lives (unmarried, married, post-menopausal, widowed or divorced and so on) and experiencing different economic situations will face different constraints on their use of space and time. In relation to the framework discussed above, many of the mobility constraints faced by women stem ultimately from cultural norms which mean that women are subject to the control of men (authority constraints). This might be by means of direct control, for example through threats of beating, or indirect control through underlying assumptions about women's ability, such as discourses of women not being 'strong enough' to utilise certain forms of transport, their role as carers and their need to demonstrate trust with their husband. These ideas are often internalised by individuals within society: women will also talk about their lack of strength to handle certain animals or vehicles, or their inability to ride long distances on a bicycle. Such cases could be regarded as reflecting both authority and capability constraints. However, since these beliefs are often unfounded[7] in many respects, I would argue that such cases are better placed within the category of authority.

A similar problem is faced with categorisation when looking at issues such as women's role as carers and their obligation to carry their babies or young children when travelling. This could be construed as either a coupling or an authority constraint, since women have to consider the needs of the child (coupling) but this is also a consequence of gender roles and therefore relations of power/control (authority). However, since women themselves consider it their duty as a woman to cater for their children[8], rather than a requirement imposed by their husband or others, this is primarily treated here as a coupling rather than an authority constraint.

The boundaries between the three categories are therefore sometimes blurred and there is no neat and tidy dividing line between the three categories. The categorisation employed should be viewed simply as an organisational tool, since it does not have any explanatory power. Although the use of coupling, capability and authority

[7] As mentioned elsewhere, women in Tarsaw tend to be physically very strong from all the manual work they do on the farm and for the home. To say that women are not strong enough to operate a bullock cart when young boys from the age of six upwards happily manage them, points more to socialised beliefs of what women are capable of than to a lack of physical capability.

[8] I understand that this could be a debateable distinction, since one might argue that this is simply internalised subordination or oppression

constraints is unsatisfactory in some respects, it does provide a useful framework within which to explore and analyse the range of issues being discussed here and will therefore be used to structure the following discussion.

7.3 Coupling Constraints

7.3.1 Women's Childcare Obligations

> 'The men don't have small children in the house, the women can't just go out roaming leaving the children in the house like the men. We are different from the men.'
>
> *(Mariama, village woman aged about 50, interviewed 09/10/01)*

In many cultural contexts, women are constrained by their obligation to give birth to, and take care of, children. This is a particular issue in places where women have little or no access to family planning. In the case of Bolivia, Sage (1993) notes that 'for the majority of women between 15 and 50 years of age, pregnancy, birth and lactation are regular features of everyday existence' (p.247). This exerts significant tolls on women's nutritional and physiological status, and inhibits their mobility and access to income. In many cases, women, regardless of their age or reproductive status, are burdened by a duty of care within the household. As the above quotation indicates, women in Tarsaw, primarily due to their role as mothers, wives and daughters, face certain constraints on their mobility, as a result of their duties as carers within the family[9]. Chapter 6 outlined some of the time burdens that women face as a consequence of the needs of children of various ages. This burden appears to be particularly acute at times when the woman is called away with little notice, for example for a funeral or to visit a sick relative. At times like this, women feel unhappy because they have had to leave without being well prepared at home. According to Jahara, 'even if I get food self to eat, I don't feel happy because of the family. I will be thinking as I am eating, "are my children also eating something or are they hungry?"' *(women's discussion group, 11/04/02)*. During our discussions about mobility and the constraints women face in this respect, all the women agreed that their children were the biggest problem they face in moving around freely. This is particularly the case for women with more than two children, because they will inevitably have to leave some of them at home when they travel. If they have young children that need to be carried, women will have to plan more carefully what

[9] As previously mentioned, women's obligation to care for the children could also be construed as being an authority constraint because their role as carer is also a consequence of their gender and therefore relations of power and control.

they will need to take with them and also consider the practical problems faced with having to carry the child everywhere. If a woman has to leave her children at home whilst she travels alone or with the youngest child, she will always be concerned about what problems they might be facing at home. Another woman stated that, 'when I am going to any place I always become happy but as soon as I get there I start to think about what is happening at home and worry. I always think of the family, whether they are in good health, whether they have eaten or not' *(Fati, aged about 65, interviewed 07/04/02)*.

Because of these concerns, most women said that they don't like to 'roam unnecessarily' and would rather travel when they can prepare the home for their departure and know that the children are in safe hands. This should become less of a concern once the children reach a certain age and no longer require the constant care of the mother, or are old enough to take care of themselves and younger siblings. However, even the older women whose children have grown up feel that their childcare and domestic obligations deter them from travelling too much. This is perhaps because they have been habituated into a particular way of thinking, or perceiving themselves and their responsibilities, feel that they are almost duty-bound to worry about their children or grandchildren.

Women also have the burden of carrying young children under the age of about 3 or 4. This makes travelling anywhere much more problematic, because of the additional weight of the child along with his/her clothing and other supplies. Women always have a large cloth tied around their waist for the purpose of carrying a child. All women wear one, since they are expected to be ready to carry a child whenever needed, whether it is their own or someone else's. When the baby is very young she/he is tied so that they remain close to the mothers chest, so that feeding is easier and requires less adjustment of the cloth (and perhaps the load she may be carrying on her head). Once the baby is able to hold his/her head up without support, they are strapped to the mother's back with the cloth knotted at the front. In order to strap the baby to her back, the woman will bend forward and position the baby on her back by lifting one arm up and using the other to secure him/her in place, before lifting the cloth from around her waist to secure the child. Women are generally very dexterous and swift in carrying out this action, largely because they are charged with the job of carrying siblings and other babies from a very early age. This is an embodied skill, as discussed in more detail in chapter 2, not innate or natural, but learned through observation and repetition.

Amina complained that, 'if I am going to any place, I have to carry him, I could be tired but still, I would have to carry him. It makes going places difficult. I now have to spend more time in the house' (Amina, see chapter 6, section 6.3 interviewed 09/04/02). The logistical problems women face in transporting both themselves and their child or children, particularly in remote rural areas where there is limited availability of motorised forms of transport, are often prohibitive. As Bryceson and Howe (1993) point out, this is an issue which is rarely, if ever, mentioned in the African rural transport (ART) literature, yet is such an obvious omission. Given the high fertility rates in sub-Saharan Africa and the fact that most women wean their babies at the age of 2 or 3 (and the babies must therefore remain directly proximate to her for the majority of that time), the impact of women's childcare burden on their mobility is great. Unlike the West, the majority of women in low-income countries do not have the luxury of baby aided transport devices such as prams, harnesses and so on (ibid. p.28) and so have to use the resources available to them. Such devices would no doubt be inappropriate where women usually need their hands free for load-carrying or completing household or agricultural tasks. However, it is also true that the design of transport devices that would aid the movement of women with children is rarely, if ever considered a priority for the majority of (if not all) organisations that work in this sector.

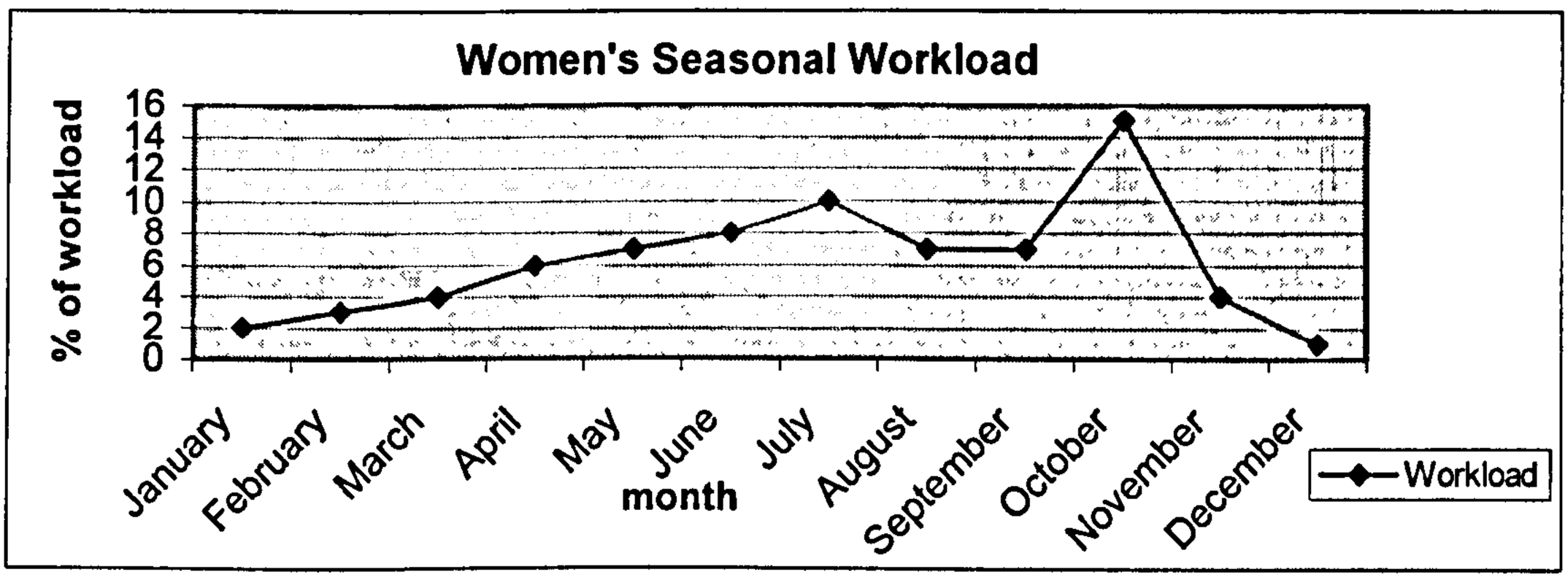
Many women are cautious about using certain forms of transport when encumbered with a child. For example, most women avoid riding a bicycle if they have a baby strapped to their back. Their caution is largely because they fear an accident. This is particularly true of those women who have little opportunity to ride and therefore have less confidence, and in cases where the bicycles are faulty in some way (which is not uncommon). However, it should also be pointed out that not all women would avoid riding a bicycle when encumbered with a child. On very rare occasions, women were observed to ride a bicycle accompanied by their child. These were always young women who had had a certain amount of experience and therefore more confidence on a bicycle. Most had perhaps had the opportunity to ride bicycles before they were married, and continued to exercise this ability following their marriage._You rarely, if ever, see elderly or middle-aged women (beyond the age of about 30), ride a bicycle at all, let alone with a child. The increasing number of younger women riding bicycles may well see a change in this respect in the future.

7.3.2 Workload

> 'The work is too much for the women and we need them helping us at the farm too. There is no time for roaming'
>
> *(Bukari, middle-aged man, interviewed 08/10/01)*

Women's (and men's) workload changes depending on the time of year and so there are distinct variations in travel patterns both within and outside of the village, primarily between the dry and rainy season. There are certain times of the year when women feel they are unable to travel because their workload is too great. This is particularly the case in the rainy season when the farm work is at its peak. Early rainy season and towards the end of the rainy season into the dry season are the two busiest times in this respect, being the planting and harvesting seasons respectively (see figure 7.1)

Figure 7.1 Women's seasonal workload

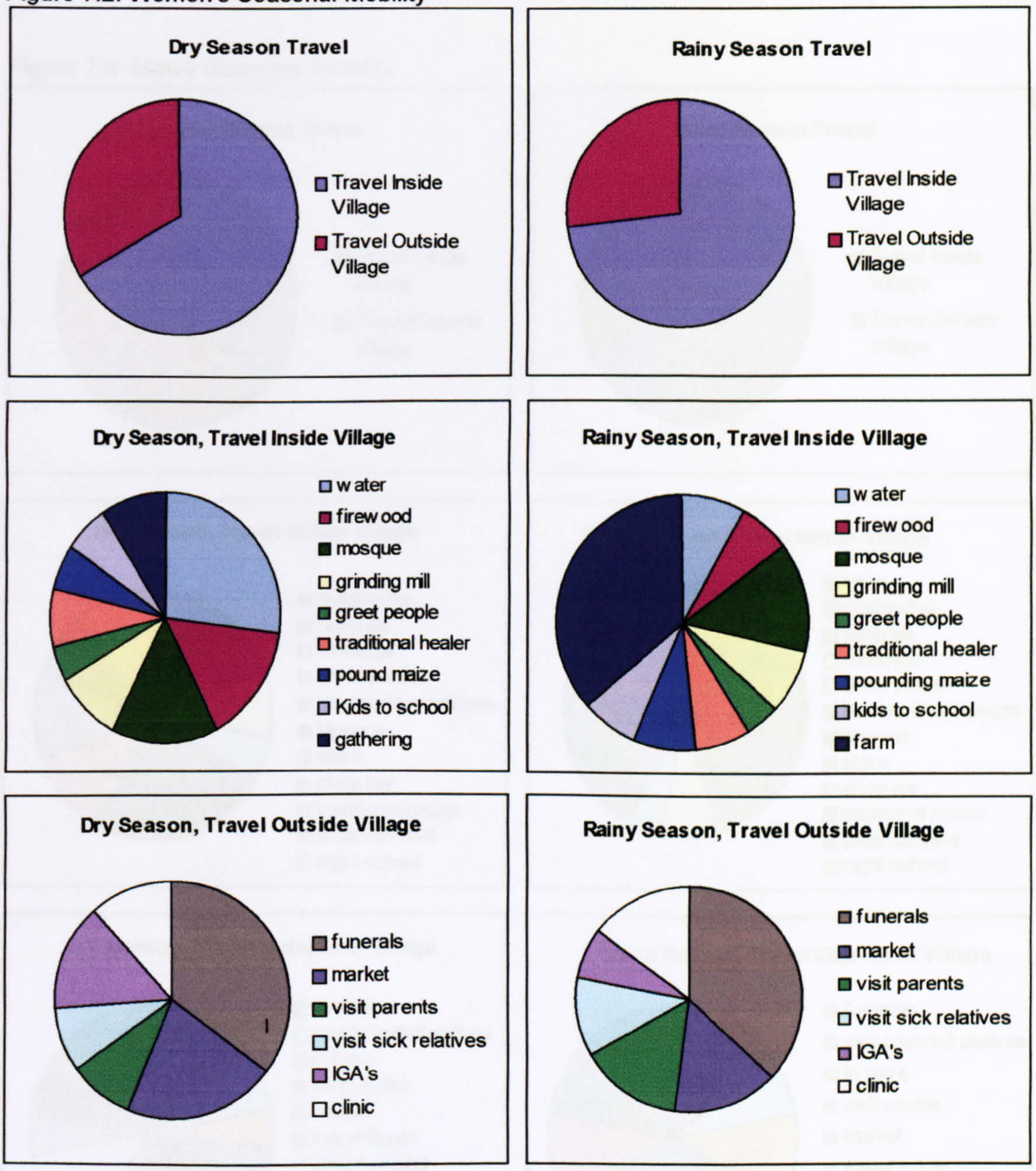


Source: focus group discussions. Unit is based on women's perceived workload throughout the year and the figures were arrived at through discussion and consensus.

As workload (and other burdens) varies throughout the year, this inevitably has an effect on women's and men's mobility/travel patterns. During the course of my fieldwork, I carried out a number of exercises with groups of men and women, including seasonal calendars and mobility exercises (see chapter 4). Although the methodology for these activities was in some ways rather crude, they did enable me to obtain information on women's and men's travel and mobility throughout the year and some of the constraints they face in this respect. The data from these mobility exercises have been presented in the form of pie charts (see figure 7.2 and 7.3), which show women's 'inside travel' patterns, as they defined them, to be far more seasonal than travel outside the village. Note that farm work, firewood and water collection and the gathering of bush products have all been included in travel within the village, although some of these activities can take the women far away from the village. This categorisation was made by the women themselves and therefore reflects where they

consider these activities to be rightfully placed. The charts show that women undertake considerable less 'outside travel' than men, consisting mainly of trips to funerals, the market and clinic, visits to friends and family and participation in income generating activities (IGAs).

Figure 7.2: Women's Seasonal Mobility

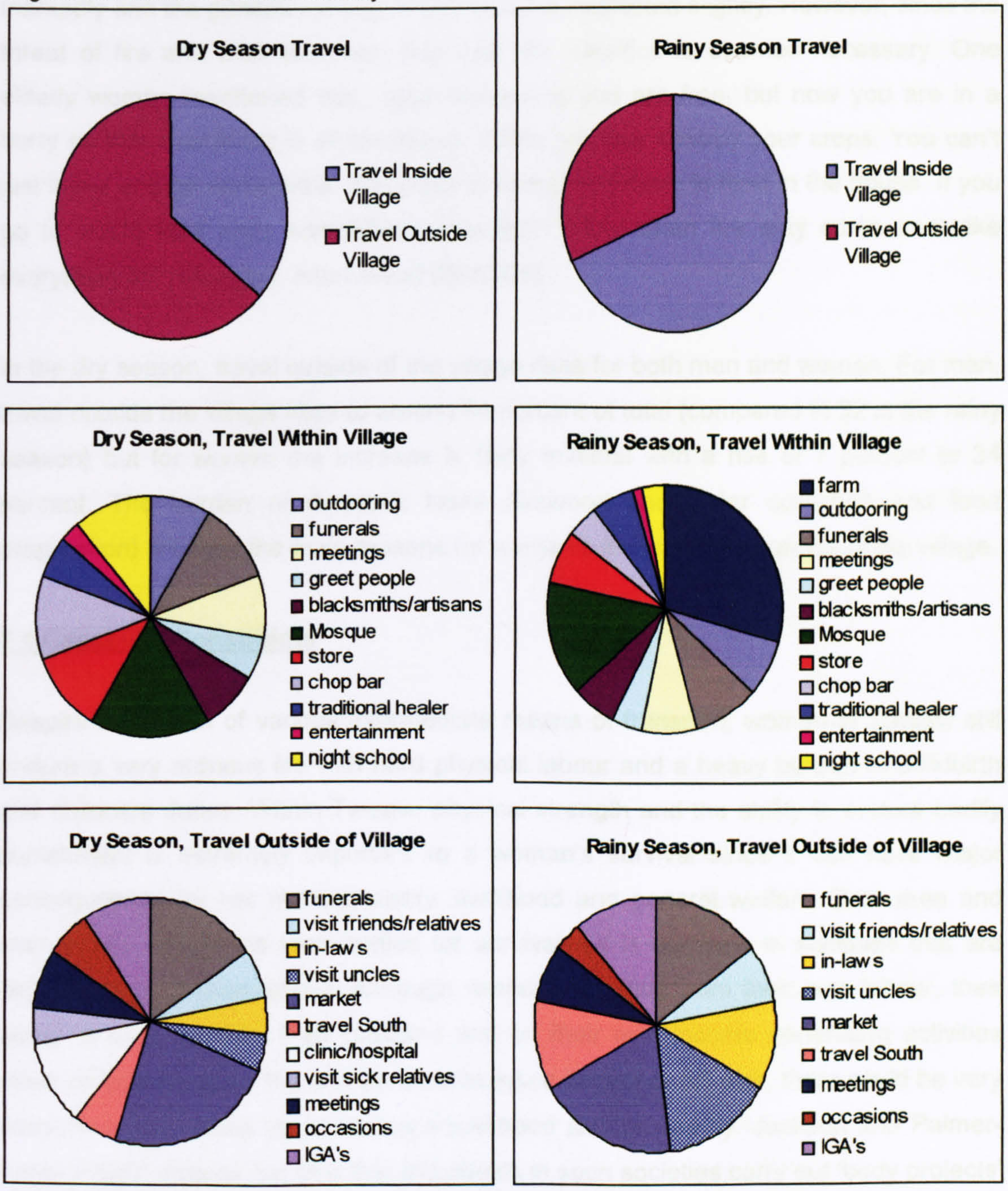


Source: focus group discussion with women. Amounts relate to women's perceptions of which travel activities take up a greater amount of their time.

In order to ensure a successful yield, it is important to plant the various crops at a particular time in the year. Most crops are planted between May and July, although land preparation will begin as early as March or April. Women do not participate in land preparation such as weeding and ploughing, but will begin sowing beans in May,

followed by the other crops in June and July. Harvesting will begin gradually from September onwards (although beans can be harvested as early as July) with the busiest time being towards the end of September and in October. Women play an important role in the harvesting of crops, pulling, plucking and cracking groundnuts, harvesting, shelling and winnowing the maize and harvesting and shelling the beans and other crops.

Figure 7.3: Men's Seasonal Mobility



Source: focus group discussion with men. Amounts relate to men's perceptions of which travel activities take up a greater amount of their time.

heads. Some women still do this, particularly at the beginning of the harvest when there is not enough to warrant bringing it back on the cart. However, for many women, this burden has been reduced since the introduction of bullock-carts, as the majority of the produce is now transported by cart. The harvesting season is probably the busiest time of the year for women and a time when many things have to be sacrificed in order to bring the produce home before it gets destroyed by fire or stolen by thieves. Travel is reduced to a minimum for both men and women, attendance at market diminishes markedly and the general upkeep of the house is neglected slightly. However, since the threat of fire and theft is a very real one, the sacrifice is deemed necessary. One elderly woman mentioned that, 'after harvesting you are free, but now you are in a hurry so that everything is at the house. If not, fire may destroy your crops. You can't just leave and go someplace. You have to make sure there is food in the house. If you go to waste your days somewhere, you don't know when fire may come and take everything off' *(Mariama, interviewed 09/10/01)*.

In the dry season, travel outside of the village rises for both men and women. For men, travel outside the village rises to around 64 percent of total (compared to 32 in the rainy season) but for women the increase is fairly minimal with a rise of 7 percent to 34 percent. The burden of domestic tasks (firewood and water collection and food preparation) are then the main reasons for women's limited travel outside of the village.

7.4 Capability Constraints

Despite the arrival of various intermediate means of transport, women in Tarsaw still endure a very arduous life with hard physical labour and a heavy burden of childbirth and childcare duties. Within Tarsaw, physical strength and the ability to endure bodily punishment is extremely important to a woman's survival since it can have major consequences for her marriageability, livelihood and general welfare. Both men and women rely heavily on their bodies for survival, as is common in societies that are dependent on human labour. Although women earn little from their own labour, their ability to work hard for their husband and on their own income generating activities relies on bodily health. If a woman were to injure herself or fall sick, there could be very serious repercussions for the family's livelihood and prosperity. Jackson and Palmer-Jones (1998) discuss the idea that individuals in such societies carry out 'body projects' where women (and men) may implicitly strategise and bargain in order to build up, maintain and carefully expend 'body capital' in order to achieve social and personal goals (p.21). This is particularly the case for poor people, since they tend to rely on their bodies as a resource even more than others.

Transport related skills or capabilities include a range of mechanical and physical competencies (such as the ability to change a tyre or ride a bicycle). While these skills directly affect one's ability to use a mode of transport, they also reflect differences in learning opportunities, and translate into human capital, which affects labour market positions (Law, 1999) in the North and South. As discussed in Chapter 5 (section 5.7), women learn and develop particular embodied skills as a consequence of their daily activities. Women have embodied strength and skill for carrying heavy loads on their heads, just as men have developed the strength and skill to plant yam[10]. The physical capability needed to carry out these tasks, such as flexibility, muscle tone and strength, is developed over years of hard work. Therefore, the ability to carry out certain tasks is a consequence of the socialisation of roles and responsibilities, which is embodied in all people. The different activities that men and women undertake reflect inequalities in learning opportunities. This is also the case with transport technologies, which reflect wider gender inequalities rather than the embodied incapacity of women over men. Although women's lack of purchasing power cannot be ignored in terms of the impact on learning opportunities, the most important stumbling block women face is attitudinal (Bryceson and Howe, 1993). Until attitudes about what women and men can and cannot do change, there will continue to be limited opportunities for women to learn to use new forms of transport.

Many of the factors that could perhaps be considered a capability constraint, such as perceived lack of physical strength and inadequate embodied skills, have been discussed in more detail as an authority constraint for the reasons outlined earlier. In fact, very few factors, which on the surface may appear to be due to lack of capability, can actually be regarded as such when you scratch below the surface. Perceptions about physical capabilities and gender stereotyping are intertwined in complex ways and vary depending on the cultural context. Bryceson and Howe (1993) note that physical strength is often used as a rationalisation to explain various transport related tasks that men and women carry out. This is true not only for women and men's use of bicycles and other IMTs, but also to justify women's excessive burden of head porterage. In a study carried out in Zambia, this was explained by the fact that: '[f]irewood and water are women's responsibility. Men can do, of course, help, but it is

[10] A number of papers in *Nature* discuss why African women are able to carry such heavy loads on their heads (Heglund, et al. 1995; Maloiy, et al. 1986). Heglund et al. (1995) conclude that 'African women can carry head-supported loads of up to 20 percent of their body weight for 'free', because their total mechanical work of walking does not increase...They conserve more mechanical energy through a more complete energy transfer' (p.54). Women have developed the most physically efficient way of carrying loads through many years of practice. This is an embodied (although not innately 'natural') skill.

not their job. It is a woman's job for they have *stronger necks than men*' (Skjonsberg quoted in Bryceson and Howe, 1993: 7 emphasis added). However, in the Askole region of Pakistan women do not porter, not only as a consequence of issues around Muslim women's seclusion, but also because 'local discourses construct portering as too difficult for women' (Besio, 2003: 26). Such discourses are also prevalent in developed countries, as shown by Saugeres (2002) in her discussion of gendered discourses of embodiment in a rural area of France. Here, women are represented as not being physically able to farm on the same terms as men because their bodies and biologies are seen to be deficient and lacking. However, as Saugeres demonstrates, it is not so much to do with physical capability, but rather the *discourses* surrounding women's bodies and the value attached to the types of activities that women perform.

Discourses in Tarsaw tended to run along the same lines as in Zambia, constructing the belief that women were more naturally physically capable of carrying loads on their heads. However, women's strength and hence greater ability to perform load carrying, does not appear to extend to other parts of their anatomy. As discussed in chapter 5, certain tasks are purely men's tasks (such as raising yam mounds), because women lack the physical strength to perform them. The idea that men's work was more physically strenuous and requiring more 'strength' than the women possessed came up frequently in interviews and informal conversations with both men and women. Such sentiments were also reiterated in discussions about women's use of bicycles and bullock-carts (issues discussed in more detail as an authority constraint later on in this chapter).

7.5 Authority Constraints

7.5.1 Marriage and Motherhood- Women's perspective

> 'When you marry, you will be having nothing doing again apart from your husband. He is the one who will direct you to do things and everything you do is on his behalf. You loose your power to choose what you want to do'
> *(Amina, village woman aged 26, interviewed 09/04/02)*

In order to understand the authority constraints faced by women in Tarsaw, one also needs to understand something of what life is like more generally for women. As previously mentioned, women face authority constraints both directly and indirectly, since women are socialised into carrying out certain tasks and behaving in certain ways. A direct authority constraint is actual or potential physical violence from the

husband. This is a powerful means of controlling women's movement and their behaviour more generally. The threat of physical violence is a very real fear for many women, and some feel it is more prudent to 'toe the line'[11]. As Townsend et al. (1999) writes, '"power over" may be enforced through violence or fear, or there may simply be social rules which enforce the weaker to accept the will of the stronger', which are in effect, 'those [fears] we have learned to impose on ourselves' (p.26). This fear forces women to participate in their own oppression and imposes a considerable obstacle to women's empowerment. This 'power over' inhibits women's movement, particularly married women of child-bearing age.

Young girls enjoy a certain amount of freedom and are allowed to go out and play with the other children, although even at this age their freedom of movement is noticeably less than the boys. According to one woman, 'the unmarried girls perform certain activities for their mothers so they also can't roam like the boys' *(Ajara, interviewed 03/02/02)*. When girls reach puberty their movement is more actively restricted, partly because they take up more domestic responsibilities and partly because it is not regarded as suitable for a young girl to be 'friending' with boys from the village, perhaps partly due to the family's fear that the young girl will get pregnant outside marriage. These factors render them relatively spatially bounded and they are no longer able enjoy the freedom of public space that they previously had.

The biggest change comes when a woman is married, since the society is patrilocal. She not only has to take on all the duties expected of a wife, but also has to uproot herself from her natal home to live with her husband. After marriage and until a woman is past the age of childbearing, a woman will be bound by the rules of her husband, which invariably lead to restrictions on her movement (as reported in other contexts such as Nigerian Hausa. See Callaway, 1984; Porter, 1988, 1989; Robson, 2000). Once she is married, a woman has to accept the control of her husband. As one middle-aged woman in Tarsaw stated, 'perhaps when you first get married, you will still think that you can roam as you did before. Also, you may try to argue certain things with your husband, meaning that you continue to live your life as you did before you married. Gradually, you will learn from your other colleagues and women in the compound and will finally correct your mistakes. My husband also contributes in telling me some of the things, like how to behave' (*Jahara, interviewed 28/04/02*). Most women would agree that marriage alters their spatial boundaries quite considerably.

[11] This is not always the case, and some women, particularly those who had been married for a long time and had built a relationship of trust with their husband, felt that there was no *need* for violence in their marriage because they never gave him *cause*.

The relative freedom of movement that they enjoyed as young unmarried girls suddenly vanishes, as they have to take on the even heavier workload of early marriage and then motherhood. Marriage undeniably has the power to mould women's consciousness and behaviour, circumscribing their thoughts and also limiting their actions. Many women share the belief that men are the natural leaders within the house, as one middle-aged woman stated, 'men have got property and they are also created naturally as the household head, so women are behind them' *(Afisatu, mixed group meeting, 02/05/02)*. Even in situations where the woman has become wealthier than her husband, this will not affect the belief that men are the masters. In an interview with one woman whose husband was sick and could not farm, I asked her whether her control over the labour and farming meant that she had power over him. She answered, 'I didn't do that because in this area when you start behaving in that way people will talk of you. They will think you have used medicine on your husband. Whatever the state of your husband, you have to respect him. He has to control everything or else people will say that it is because your husband is poor and has nothing and that is why you are ruling him. That will also be a shame on you' *(Mary, elder woman, life history interview, 14/04/02)*. In cases where women are more financially independent or wealthier than their husband's, such as Mary, women might exercise considerable power over their husband's or have negotiated a situation with her husband whereby they are able to conduct their affairs as they see fit. However, this situation is usually kept hidden and women would rarely talk openly about controlling their husband's or exercising free will against his wishes. It is important for both husband and wife to give the impression that the husband is the master- providing for his family and exercising control over his wife- and the wife is subservient and obeying his wishes. Even Mary, who was quite clearly a strong character with significant personal wealth, felt that it was important to maintain this story (although in private things may have been different).

Marriage is seen as one of the unquestioned necessities of life among the Sissala, and the inevitable outcome of marriage is children (Grindal, 1972: 48). Women accept marriage as an essential condition of their sex and as the only means of attaining any status or esteem in this patriarchal society[12]. Many women accept the sudden loss of freedom that comes with marriage as 'natural', an inevitable consequence of their duty as wives and mothers. According to Mary, 'It is a rule, when you get married you are

[12] Callaway (1984) narrates a similar pattern in Nigerian Hausa, where 'marriage is viewed as a necessary social state, not as a source of nurturing or of emotional security, and is an absolute prerequisite in order for a woman to be "respectable"' (p.439). Jeffrey (1979) discusses similar issues in '*Frogs in a Well*'.

not supposed to be moving around like an ordinary woman. When I wasn't married I was free and moved to everywhere to do whatever I liked. *But once you are married you are confined' (Mary, life history interview 23/03/02).* Within this context, 'confined' does not imply seclusion in the Muslim sense of the word but simply reduced mobility and freedom to travel.

From the woman's viewpoint, marriage and motherhood involve the gradual and often arduous process of transferring her focus of loyalty from her natal home to that of her husband's people. The early years of marriage are difficult and sometimes lonely, since the woman is often regarded as an outsider, a 'stranger', and is therefore expected to demonstrate her value as a wife by working hard and helping to establish amiable relationships with the other household members, particularly the husband's mother and other wives[13]. According to Amina, 'it was difficult to come to a place where I didn't know anybody. It took me about a year before I felt at home here. I was finding it difficult with the farm work because I was not used to it' *(life history interview, 09/04/02).* Safia tells me that, 'women in general, when they leave their villages are outsiders[14]. All women have to leave their village so when they go back they are visiting their father's village and they will also not see you as an insider. They will become insiders in their marriage villages but it takes time to become accepted anywhere' *(informally interviewed 14/10/01).* Marriage among the Sissala is more than a union between a man and a woman, it is also a contractual relationship between two family groups. Once the marital union is established, both families have a vested interest in the stability of the marriage. The husband's family have paid a bride price for the new wife and so there is an expectation for her to serve him and his family. However, the wife's family have given away their daughter so are also concerned about the union. Problems between the husband and wife are not simply a concern for the couple alone, but the whole family are involved.

Women are socialised into their roles of wife and mother, since they are taught all the tasks a woman is supposed to carry out from a very early age. A young girl will always stay close to her mother in order to learn these tasks, whilst the boys stay close to their fathers for the same reason. In a general (global) statement, March (1991) explains that, 'concepts of gender roles, desirable behaviours and appropriate expectations are

[13] The new wife may even share a room with the husband's mother in the early stages of the marriage until he has built her a room. It is very rare for wives to co-habit the same room.
[14] Safia is quite a rarity in the village. She is 26-years-old, is yet to marry and currently studies for a degree in Geography at Cape Coast University. She returns to Tarsaw occasionally to visit her family, but her difference is quite noticeable in terms of speech, dress and hairstyle. She no longer feels like an 'insider' in Tarsaw since her education and experience sets her apart from the other women in the village.

learnt from a very early age so that gender becomes an integral part of a person's identity and gender roles are seen to lie at the centre of people's cultural and religious heritage' (p.4, also discussed by Callaway, 1984, in the context of Hausa Nigeria). As the local teacher said on one occasion, 'the children see their mothers and fathers and know the role they should play' *(Mohammed, interviewed 05/10/01)*. Because of this socialisation, much of the work of a wife is second nature to women. However, upon marriage, the husband will play a major part in advising his new wife on how she should behave and what she should do: 'When you marry, your husband also needs to teach you some of the ways you should be behaving as a married woman' *(Fatima, group discussion, 29/04/02)*.

Women have to try and find their position within their husband's *janwuo* (compound) and contribute to the smooth running of the compound. This is often a very difficult time for young women, particularly if the husband already has a wife or wives. The stress of adjusting to their new role is compounded by having to take on full responsibility for the household tasks with which she had previously helped her mother. This sudden increase in workload places great strain on the new wife. One woman explains, 'my workload became heavier at my husband's place since everything is under me, unlike at my parents place where some of the work was being done by my parents and brothers and sisters. At my husband's place, everything that comes up is for you alone so I was working much harder' *(Siratu, interviewed 21/03/02)*. This also has the effect of restricting a woman's mobility since it is not always easy to just go away and leave the housework. Furthermore, the husband will expect his wife to be there so that she can care for him and any children they may have, since this is what her role requires.

Although many of the tasks are already familiar to women upon marriage, there are still certain things that they are expected to learn. Some of the activities enjoyed as a single woman, for example, have to stop and they will have to start obeying the demands of their husbands. During a discussion with women about the difficulties women face when entering their husband's compound, one woman stated: 'it will be difficult for you because you will be living with different people altogether and maybe they will have different characters. Maybe the way you behaved in your family house where nobody blames you or disturbs you, if you mean to continue that behaviour when you are married there will be misunderstanding between you and your house people and all will bring difficulties for you' *(Jaratu, group discussion, 29/04/02)*. It is undoubtedly a testing time for women, particularly since they are expected to fit in with the family without complaint. Those who find some of the relationships problematic and end up

quarrelling in the house or running home to their father's people without permission are viewed as troublesome.

Once a woman has borne her first child, she is then considered to be a whole woman and a true member of the village and compound. As in many societies, marriage and motherhood are two of the main things that provide a woman with status and recognition (see Callaway, 1984). Children also increase the woman's stature in the eyes of her husband and his family (observed by Grindal, 1972, also writing about the Sissala). Subsequent children further cement the marital bond. A married woman with a child has seniority over an unmarried woman, a woman without children or an unmarried man and this authority can even allow her to command others to do certain chores for her. According to Amina's experience, having a child 'gives you status in the village. When you are married and have not delivered, people will be insulting you. They will accuse you of aborting your baby when you travel to your parents. You won't feel happy until you deliver' *(Amina, interviewed 09/04/02)*. Conception and pregnancy are regarded as natural processes in the life of a woman, and those who do not or cannot conceive are viewed with distrust and suspicion. If a woman fails to conceive her husband will complain and might even decide to divorce her and find another woman. However, once the woman has borne children, her mobility is quite often circumscribed since she always has to consider the needs of the children before undertaking any kind of journey. One woman stated during a discussion meeting, that, 'because you have children you cannot leave them to be hungry while you go around doing unnecessary things or roaming about carelessly. Whom do you think should take care of the children?' *(Alimata, group discussion 11/04/02)*. These constraints will be examined in more detail later on in this discussion.

Age and seniority go hand-in-hand in Sissala society and great value is attached to women and men who have reached a certain age. For men, this is based on property and wealth, but for a woman it is usually based upon her fertility. When a woman is past the age of childbearing, she is then called an 'elder woman' which conveys a certain amount of status in her husband's house. By this time, she will hope to have grown sons to look after her, and she will be able to delegate the majority of her tasks to junior wives and her sons' wives (see Salamatu's story in chapter 6, section 6.4.2). Her relationship with her husband also becomes less formal and her husband will often discuss personal problems with her. A relationship of mutual trust and respect has often been built up between partners, over time. This trust, and the fact that the women have fewer direct responsibilities for children and housework, often allows the women a

certain amount of freedom of movement (also discussed in section 7.5.3). Some will make the most of this freedom and will travel to see their daughters and other family members, but others would rather rest at home, particularly if they are sick. This is also the time in their lives when women can take on certain public or community roles within the village. This might include playing a leading role in community or women's groups (like Salamatu) or becoming more generally involved in community affairs[15].

Box 1: Learning to ride a bicycle: Mary's experience

Mary was an unusual character in Tarsaw and stood out from her peers because of her outspokenness and authority. Despite a serious and debilitating illness, which has since led to her death, Mary always had an energy and vitality in her demeanour and approach to people. Prior to her illness, Mary played a leading role in the village women's group and was an inspiration to many women. Mary's husband, Mahama, worked in Bole, then Tamale for many years before returning to take up his responsibilities as household head in Tarsaw. After working as a maidservant in Tarsaw (her uncle's village) for a number of years, Mary then worked as a farm labourer and a cook in Bole and Tamale respectively, earning a wage to help support her family. This experience of life and wage work outside of Tarsaw is perhaps partly responsible for her different outlook on life, although much of it will undoubtedly be down to her individual character. The extract below was taken from one of a series of life history interviews carried out with Mary.

How did you start riding the bicycle? It was during the farming season and when me and Mahama were going to the farm together, after working, Mahama would teach me how to ride on our way home. Mahama would push me then leave the bicycle and I would be riding until I fall, then he would come and assist me again. We used three days for me to learn how to ride.

How old were you when you learnt? I don't know the exact age but by then I had stopped giving birth.

What motivated you to learn? I realised that my husband was suffering as when we were going to any place, he would pick me, so I decided to learn how to ride. After knowing, we used two bicycles and Mahama no longer picked me.

What did your friends think? They thought it was good because they thought I was able to do my things early and very fast.

Were you the first woman in the village to ride a bicycle? Yes

How do you feel about that? I was happy because when I was going for the dawa-dawa I would send the bicycle and even at times I would pass the women on the way and I would be the first woman to reach the bush. After finishing too, I would tie them on to the bicycle as the other women carried them on their head. I rode the bicycle to farm and even to Nabulo (hometown). At times when they inform me of a funeral, I would ride and even meet the dead body before it is buried but those footing will not meet it. I even planned to buy a motorbike, but I unfortunately fell sick.

(Mary, elder woman, life history interview, 14/04/02)

[15] Women generally play a much smaller role in community affairs and decision-making than men, but can play a greater part as an elder. This will usually take the shape of organising meetings for the women's group in the village, invariably to discuss 'women's issues'.

This pattern has also been observed in other countries, for example in Mali. According to Turrittin (1988), there is a strong correlation between women's participation in productive and trading activities and their stage in the life cycle in Mali: 'Post-menopausal women can generally earn considerably more than women of child-bearing age because they have more control over their labour-time and can engage in a wider range of cash-generating activities' (p.588). The main factors affecting women of child-bearing age, are 'the demands made by husband's lineage on their labour-time, number of dependent children, the women's relationship with their husband, and their religious identity' (p.589). This reiterates many of the issues discussed within this chapter. Women's greater mobility beyond childbearing age is illustrated in the story of Mary in Box 1, although it should also be noted that Mary's story is an exception to the general rule in terms of women's access to bicycles.

7.5.2 Marriage and a Man's Responsibilities

> 'Since you the man has taken the risk by going in front of the women's parents to bring her to your house, so you should control her and keep her safe so that her parents will not be sad. You are responsible for her, so that means you should have the power to control her in any way'
>
> *(Nuhu, group discussion, 30/04/02)*

Men or groups of men generally, but not exclusively, exercise power over other men and women. This is in large part due to structural inequalities between groups and individuals based on factors such as gender, age, class, economic position and social status. As previously mentioned, this does not always have to take the shape of direct control through violence, threats and fear, but can be internalised by individuals within society so that they themselves believe that this is the way things are supposed to be. This inequality in power within the context of gender relations, which is evident in all countries, stems from the 'gender ideology' that defines the relationship between men and women. Whereas women quite often regard their position of subjugation as 'natural' and an essential element of their sex, men also see their role of breadwinner and provider as essential to their own identity. Both men and women in Tarsaw regard male control and authority as natural or even God-given. According to Asana, 'men have got the property and they are also created naturally as the household head, so women are behind them' *(Afisatu, mixed group discussion, 02/05/02)*. This idea of men being the 'natural' rulers came up in many individual and group interviews from both men and women, as indicated by the quotation cited in the title of this chapter. Men are expected to have power over women and women are supposed to acquiesce to this power. With power comes responsibility. Since men are responsible for the majority of

household expenditure, they are also responsible for the welfare needs of compound members. As Seibu points out, 'I suffer more than my wife because all the responsibility is with me. I have to see she has clothing, health. All her food problems must be solved by me. She will only have the problem of solving her own things, but we have to worry about everything' *(informal discussion, 01/06/02)*.

To become respected within the community, a man is expected to work hard on the farm in order to be able to cater for his wife (or wives) and children. This way of thinking is deeply socialised and embedded within the cultural and religious tradition and becomes integral to an individual's identity. As a young boy, he is made aware of his role and responsibilities within the compound and is given tasks in accordance with this. Boys are either given their father's cattle to tend, or are asked to help out with the farming (primarily on their father's farm but occasionally on their mother's farm). In both cases they are made aware of the fact that this is 'men's work', which will eventually form the basis of their role as household head when they have a family of their own[16]. A boy is expected to work long hours on his father's farm and will learn all the activities expected of a man through this work. One schoolboy observed, 'the farm work is hard so the boys have to help their fathers so the food will be enough. The girls are not strong enough to help their fathers[17]. They have to help their mothers and we the boys have to help our fathers. *It is just expected' (Abulai, 8-year-old boy, discussion with school children, 22/11/01)*. Fathers see it as an important part of their duty to ensure that their sons work hard. As one man stated, 'if you allow your child to be lazy and you don't train him to work hard, it will be you that suffers, because when it comes to a time when you need them to be working hard on the farm, they won't do it' *(Seibu, informal conversation, 26/03/02)*.

Marriage is an important rite of passage for a young man, and is the final establishment of adult status. As with women, getting married and subsequently having children provides men with social standing within the community. When a young man intends to enter into marriage, the older male members of his house always support him, and when he goes to his future wife's people to announce his intentions, his father usually supplies the various 'courting gifts'[18]. He is still subject to the control and authority of

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[16] This socialisation of gender roles was discussed briefly in Chapter 5, section 5.2 and has also be discussed by Callaway (1984) in the case of Hausa Nigeria and Katz (1991) in the case of Sudan.

[17] The issue of strength, or rather perceived strength will be discussed in more detail later on in this chapter.

[18] Within Galibaka tradition, it is a taboo and therefore forbidden for a man to marry a woman from any of the four Galibaka villages (Tarsaw, Kulfuo, Bugubelle and Wallembelle). To get a picture of where the wives of Tarsaw come from, see figures 3.2 and 3.4 in chapter 3.

his father and his father's brothers until he is about 30 years of age. The older male members of the household are also partly responsible for the young man's new wife, at least until he himself has established his own compound and therefore has financial independence. He must always defer to the decisions of his elders and they, in turn, will help him to cater for his new wife and advise him on what measures to take when problems arise with his in-laws. The patriarchal lineage of the extended household is inherently hierarchical and seniority is dependent on age, property and position within the succession of household males. Ultimate authority rests with the overall head of the family (who may or may not live in the same compound) and he is the one who exercises control over all the family property. Individual males within the family will exercise a certain amount of control over their own affairs, but when important decisions need to be made, they are expected always to refer the case to their family head.

Within the marriage process, the issue of the payment of bridewealth is an important one, since it is partly through this that values of female respect and male authority, male power and female powerlessness, are reinforced and justified. Since the husband has 'paid' for his wife, she is therefore required to demonstrate proper respect for him. If she fails to do this, this is often deemed to be sufficient provocation to justify a divorce and subsequently the return of the bridewealth (although this is quite rare). One of the practical impacts of bridewealth is that it reinforces gender roles and the expectation that a wife should exhibit deference and obedience to her husband, whilst he is supposed to provide his wife with her needs and cater for her when she is sick. According to Cooper (1995), 'far from representing a moment in which a calculable loss to one family is materially recompensed through a "payment" by another, the act of transferring bridewealth in fact establishes the "worth" of the bride and her kin, *expresses and creates social difference and brings into being social relations which had previously been only potential*' (p.121, emphasis added). The power and importance of bridewealth is illustrated by this abstract, taken from a conversation between Margot Lovett and a male elder in Tanzania (2001):

> Today women are argumentative and fight with their husbands because couples marry without giving bridewealth. And so today a wife will talk back to her husband. *She thinks she's like a man.* But in the past, you gave bridewealth to marry. You couldn't take a woman for nothing. And then if your wife spoke back to you, you could beat her (p.47, emphasis added).

Because women are compelled to leave their natal homes to live and work on their husbands' land, they are automatically put at a disadvantage since they have no legal

rights over the land or property, apart from usufruct rights[19]. One married man explained that, 'the men have some property before they bring the woman in. The woman will also come to help you and through that everything will come to you the man. You will own the property instead of the woman because it is you that laid the foundation before she came to help'[20] *(Haruna, men's group discussion, 30/04/02).* Women are expected to provide their labour for their husbands, to work on his farm when required and fulfil certain duties within the household. Women therefore work for their husbands and the money from that work is given to the man. During the course of this discussion, it became clear that men felt that they had the right to control the women in their household, primarily because the women were living on their property and the men were responsible for taking care of them, providing them with food and clothing and sending them to the clinic when they are sick. In cases where there is a problem with the in-laws such as dowry or funeral activities, it is the man who will have the responsibility and obligation of paying for that, or giving out the animals. This is one of the main reasons men use to justify keeping the lion's share of the farming produce, or the income from the sale of produce or animals, since they are responsible for much of the expenditure. Many men also felt that women were not reliable enough to handle large amounts of money. This was often put across in a denigrating manner. One man felt that if he did not supervise the way his wife spent her money, she would be 'using it carelessly' and 'spending it on unnecessary things' *(Moro, men's discussion group, 30/04/02).*

A man will generally regard it as his duty and his responsibility to keep his wife or wives under control. This authority can be enforced by threats or violence, or might be socially understood rules, which both parties will recognise. Haruna explains that, 'if my wife needs to go to any place, she will let me know what she is going there to do and if it is important I cannot stop her from going, so I allow her to go' *(Haruna, interviewed 02/04/02).* However, he adds that, 'if you ask [your wife] not to do something and she refuses, you can beat her up. Or, if she feels she can misbehave, you can decide to send her to her parents and try to find out whether that is the way their daughter should be behaving. Maybe the parents will not support her, for it is the wrong path she wants to go. So she cannot actually have self-control' *(Haruna, group discussion 30/04/02).*

Since the man has paid bridewealth to the woman's parents, they are perhaps more

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[19] Usufruct rights gives the person the right to use and enjoy the profits and advantages of something belonging to another as long as the property is not damaged or altered in any way.

[20] The view that women's labour on the farm is only *help* rather than actual *work* is a predominant one, particularly among men. It is important in the sense that it also has implications for women's claim over the produce and income from the farm. They are merely helping their husband's to obtain income rather than working for their own income.

likely to support the husband, unless he has been negligent in his duties: if he has failed to feed her properly or care for her when she is sick, or has beaten her too much. Some women attempt to circumvent these rules by fabricating incidences that require their attention at their parent's home. It is difficult to tell how predominant this practice was, or how successful when attempted. However, given that the majority of people in the area are either related, or knows someone who is related, it would probably be difficult to keep deceptions such as this secret from their husband's family.

7.5.3 Trust Within Marital Relationships

> 'If you don't have trust with your husband he can disturb you when you want to go to a place. Even if you happen to go to the place, but still you will be worried that when you come back he will be asking questions'
> *(Sala, village woman aged 50, group discussion 11/04/02)*
>
> 'If you have a woman who does not travel just anyhow, if in cases you are not there and she moves for emergency travelling, when you come to hear, you won't feel annoyed because you know she has gone there for a serious problem. It is through trust that you do not mind'.
> *(Haruna, discussion group, 30/04/02)*

Trust between a husband and wife was a prominent theme that came up in both individual and group interviews. Trust is an important factor in determining how much freedom of movement a woman is able to enjoy. Within this context, trust was expressed in very masculine terms by both men and women, since it usually meant that women should obey their husbands and do exactly as they command: it did not appear to work the other way[21]. There did not seem to be much need for wives to know what their husbands were doing, since they were expected to place implicit trust in their motives. Trust depended in large part on a woman's nature and their behaviour: she should 'sit with her husband and let him know the use of her money and be open about her movements' *(Tarsaw/Kulufuo school head teacher (male)- Zakaria, interviewed 05/10/01)*. As one woman pointed out, 'In order to avoid misunderstanding and to keep trust, when you are thinking of moving around at any time, you have to stop or lessen your movement, since your husband will not be happy with you' *(Jaratu, group discussion 11/4/02)*. All the women interviewed and those who participated in the group discussions, expressed horror at the thought of travelling without first consulting their husbands. One woman said, 'if I want to travel anywhere, I seek permission from my husband. If my husband agrees I will go, but if he doesn't agree I won't go' *(Fati,*

[21] Trust is also much more of an issue for married women than unmarried women, since fathers and brothers are less concerned about it than husbands, probably because there is more of a feeling of 'ownership' for husbands.

interviewed 07/04/02). Maintaining trust seemed to rest on the woman obeying her husband. You need to be a 'reliable' wife who 'does things plain for your husband to see and whatever he asks you not to do, you should obey him' *(Zanabu, women's group discussion 11/04/02)*.

Most women agreed that if a woman has built a relationship of trust with her husband, her mobility will be greater. During a discussion with a group of women, Jaratu asserted that, 'with trust you can go to any place especially the market, and you can get money out of doing that, which will be a benefit to you' *(group discussion, 11/04/02)*. If a woman continues to do exactly what she is expected to do, she will be given 'the chance to roam and do whatever she likes and the husband will not worry her' *(Zanabu, informal discussion 11/04/02)*. If a woman is believed to be a reliable and trustworthy wife, the husband can allow her to go anywhere she needs without causing any misunderstanding. It is generally quite difficult for a woman to do anything without it reaching the notice of her husband. The community is relatively small and networks of family and friendship connections link surrounding villages so that even minor misdemeanours reach the notice of the husband eventually.

If a relationship of trust is yet to be established between partners, the husband can accuse his wife of roaming to 'friend' with other men and will try and restrict her movement as much as possible. Even too much movement around the village is regarded with suspicion and husbands can accuse their wives of wasting time, talking to boys or gossiping with their girlfriends. According to Amina, '[husbands] don't even like you to be roaming around the village, you are just supposed to stay in the house and do your jobs. He may say that you talk of his problems with your friends and grow annoyed' *(Amina, 26-year-old, married woman, life history interview 09/04/02)*. If there is a lack of trust between spouses, the woman is usually keen to try to allay her husband's fears and thus reduces her movement, since it could threaten her reputation if she continues to travel without her husband's blessing or could anger him enough to resort to physical violence. Women are usually concerned to maintain their public image and integrity, and generally try to conform to local expectations in order to do so. This includes reducing the amount they travel to fit in will what is acceptable behaviour for a married woman. Therefore, the issue of trust limits women's mobility both directly through the husband's orders and indirectly through the need to keep up appearances.

Linked to the issue of trust, many women agreed that some husbands are concerned about allowing their wives freedom of movement because they fear that they will start

to be in control of their own actions and will move without concern for their husband's wishes. This was certainly backed up by interviews with men (both individually and in groups), who feared losing control over their wives and subsequently losing their respect. Since the husband's role is to look after and cater for his wives, it is the wife's duty to respect and obey her husband's decisions. One woman stated that, 'if you do not respect your husband and do not do what he asks of you, he should also not allow you trust if you misbehave [...] like travelling to any place without asking him' *(Sala, group discussion, 12/04/02)*. Men, as well as women, have to maintain a good reputation within the community. From a woman's point of view, this involves respecting their husband's wishes and lessening their movements both inside and outside the village in order not to damage their husband's standing in the village.

From a male viewpoint, a number of important factors were raised in relation to the issue of trust. Firstly, men do not like women travelling around freely because they fear that they will be looking for other men. Secondly, they seem to think that women would easily be manipulated and deceived by bad men if they were allowed to travel, and thirdly, they are afraid of women becoming 'self-controlled' if they allow them to move freely thereby losing respect for the man's authority[22]. Many feared that their women would no longer respect their authority if they allowed them too much freedom or if their women earned too much, since they would no longer fear them. According to one man, 'with women, if they have money they will be ruling you as the family head. She will not fear you whatever you are saying' *(Issaka, men's group discussion, 30/04/02)*. However, as previously mentioned, some women were able to become more financially independent or wealthier than their husband's, as is the case with Mary. However, this situation is usually kept hidden. Women would rarely, if ever, talk openly about it, and would probably continue to ask her husband's permission to travel. It is generally considered to be in the best interests of both the husband and wife to give the impression that the husband is the master.

If a relationship of trust has been established between married partners these fears are reduced but, in many cases, men want to demonstrate their control over women's mobility in order to maintain a public image of authority and 'save face'. Men who allow their wives freedom of movement can be ridiculed by other men and sometimes by women. By allowing their wives to be mobile, they will be regarded as having lost control over them, which can be seen as a discredit to the man. According to Moro, 'if

[22] Similar fears have been expressed in other contexts, for example rural Eastern Uganda (Malmberg-Calvo, cited in Bryceson and Howe, 1993). Here, very few women ride bicycles and those that do are considered "too liberated" and "acting like men" (p.16).

you trust your woman, after harvesting, you can give her a bag of maize to also be doing petty trading with it. But, if there is no trust and you give the woman the money, later on she will not respect you with whatever she is doing' *(men's group discussion, 30/04/02)*. The control of property and income is vital to the control and domination of women, since men will often use them as a means of regulating and limiting women's mobility (either consciously or otherwise).

As previously mentioned, there is a clear distinction between married and unmarried women in relation to the above factors. One young man stated that, 'married women are not allowed to roam, they are not like the men. Some cannot be trusted and might be roaming to find another man'. *(Seibu village man, aged 26, informal conversation 01/10/01)*. This was certainly a concern for Seibu, whose wife had recently travelled to Accra to visit her brother. He had not agreed with her plans to travel since he did not see it as a necessity, but she was becoming increasingly unhappy with Seibu's behaviour towards her and wanted to see if she could discuss her difficulties with her brother. His wife has had the benefit of secondary school education and had long suppressed her desire to find work and earn her own income. Seibu viewed this ambition with mistrust and felt that her behaviour was not appropriate for a woman in her position. Her duty was to stay with him and care for their son, not chasing her own selfish ambitions to the detriment of the family. He tried to quash her ambitions by using threats of violence, and, on occasions, resorted to physical violence, but this seemed to make her more determined. As his wife said at the time, 'I am not happy just sitting here and if I stay much longer I will have to deliver again then I will be stuck here doing nothing. I want to be earning my own money so that when I want to do something or buy anything I don't have to ask Seibu for help, I can do it with my own means' *(Amina, informal conversation, 04/04/02)*[23]. Seibu was not happy with Amina's decision partly because she had made her decision without consulting him and 'it is different when you are married, you can't just be making decisions like that'. Furthermore, he

[23] This quotation is also indicative of the social pressure many women feel to conceive children after marriage. At the time, Amina had given birth to only one son (then aged three), after five years of marriage (see chapter 6, section 6.4.1). She was under pressure from her colleagues and her husband to deliver again, but was adamant that she would earn some money beforehand. She had successfully managed to avoid sexual contact with her husband since the birth of her first son: it is generally unacceptable for a husband and wife to have sexual contact until the child has finished breastfeeding. Since she had finished breastfeeding her son, Amina continued to shun her husband's advances, much to his annoyance (this would often be cause for him to beat her). Unknown to her husband, Amina had been taking contraceptive pills in order to resume sexual relations without fear of getting pregnant. Travelling to Accra without the husband's permission and taking contraceptive pills without his knowledge illustrates of some of the ways women are able to resist the control of their husbands. Although it is very rare for women to travel without their husband's permission, it appears to be more common for women to seek family planning advice without their knowledge.

did not trust her to go away for so long because 'she could be friending other men and I won't know of it' *(Seibu, informal conversation, 04/04/02)*.

During individual and group interviews, I gained the impression that the majority of men believe that women generally can not be trusted when they are travelling, because they have a tendency to misbehave. 'The men don't often allow their women to go out even if the woman had the money and means. Some fear that women will go and disobey and misbehave'. *(Mahama, village man aged about 60, interviewed 07/10/01)*. As well as the concern over the integrity of the woman, men also worry about women's inability to stave off the unwanted advances of unscrupulous men. One man said that, 'you can have trust with your woman but there are some men whose main purpose is to convince women in terms of love and if you allow your woman to be roaming about freely, even though you have the trust with her, such men can easily cause misunderstandings between you and your wife. So, it is better you keep her from roaming about carelessly' *(Haruna, men's group discussion, 30/04/02)*. Many of the men in this discussion group agreed with Haruna, as one of the other men stated, 'if you allow her to be roaming about carelessly, a man definitely can convince her and that can lead to misunderstanding' *(Nuhu)*. This portrays women as weak-willed and powerless in the face of male desires. Not only are women perceived as being untrustworthy, but also unable to fend off potentially amorous males. Furthermore, the use of the term 'careless' also implies that women's travel is thought to be frivolous and irresponsible, an unnecessary journey, as opposed to the purposeful and important travel of men. This somewhat patronising view is unfortunately rather prevalent, particularly towards young women who are still of child-bearing age, and works to suppress women's freedom of movement quite considerably.

Lack of trust appears to stem largely from a particular conceptualisation of female sexuality. Much of men's mistrust originates from a belief that women will engage in sexual relations with other men. This is often why women beyond the age of childbearing enjoy greater freedom of movement, since they are no longer considered threatening in this respect. Fear over women's sexual promiscuity or their inability to fend off male advances is prevalent within Islam more generally. According to Robson (2000), 'female sexuality within Islamic traditions is broadly conceived as chaos-inducing and disruptive' since it is active and uncontrollable (p.183). This is one of the arguments in favour of Islamic women wearing veils in Islamic societies (see Mernissi, 1987; Robson, 2000). Concerns about women's uncontrollable sexuality are prominent in discourses about women's mobility in Tarsaw and beyond, as discussed in more detail in the following section.

7.5.4 Discourses around Mobile Women

> 'I think that marriage is better than roaming about, because you can easily get diseases, sicknesses when you roam. Stupid boys can impregnate you then run away and leave you. If you roam you will be friending different men, and since you are roaming you are a prostitute'
>
> *(Amina, interviewed 09/04/02)*

This quotation is a typical assertion among both men and women. It is quite often a view held towards women who are unmarried in general, rather than those who are mobile. Since unmarried women are not as constrained as their married counterparts by patriarchal structures that inhibit their movement, there is a belief that they have a tendency to behave freely and with a lack of restraint or responsibility. This is sometimes conveyed as if women are weak of mind, and therefore need men to control their frivolous impulses. Even the quotation above, which was taken from an interview with a 26 year-old married mother, conveys women as being powerless to fend off the unwanted advances of 'stupid boys'. Marriage is regarded as a protection or safeguard against the evils of this type of behaviour, which 'inevitably' comes from being unmarried and therefore free to roam.

There is often a concern that mobile women are prone to 'friend' different men and they are sometimes regarded as prostitutes because of this. As indicated by the quotation above, these women are sometimes blamed for the spread of sexually transmitted diseases and other sicknesses, despite the fact that they have fewer opportunities to have extra-marital relations or to 'friend' men. This is often a concern levelled against women who choose to travel and work rather than getting married. Such concerns are not recent, but have a long history, as illustrated by Jean Allman's paper on the control of unmarried women in colonial Asante (1996). In the Asante region of the Gold Coast, between 1929-32, chiefs ordered the rounding-up and arrest of all girls who were over the age of fifteen and were unmarried. This was a response in part to the general chaos in gender relations at the time, and the perceived 'moral crisis' posed by uncontrollable women who were displaying aberrant behaviour, including 'prostitution', thus contributing to the spread of venereal disease. It was also a response to women making the move from 'being the most common form of exploitable labour [...] to themselves exploiting new openings for economic autonomy' (p.214). Women's new found economic independence (and resulting mobility) was therefore also deemed to be a threat to men's patriarchal authority. Similar stories about men's fear of women's

mobility and economic independence have also been narrated by Cornwall (2001) in the case of Nigeria and by Musisi (2001) in the case of Uganda. In Nigeria, labels such as 'prostitute' were deployed in an attempt to restrict women's movement. In Uganda, women's increased mobility appeared to be affecting a 'threatening change in the status of women', which called for 'stricter control of women' (p.177). Women's freedom of movement in Uganda was blamed for the breakdown of marriage laws and supposed erosion of morality: 'according to the chiefs "a woman who is tired of life in a rural community and has three or four shillings at her disposal can easily abandon her home and disappear in the towns, where she adopts a life of prostitution" (Kucyzynski, 1949)' (Musisi, 2001: 177).

There is a considerable literature linking the spread of disease to human mobility. The spread of HIV/AIDS has been linked to the mobility of sex workers (Ankomah, 1999; Caldwell et. al, 1989; Lyttleton and Amarapibal, 2002) and disease proliferation in general has been linked to migration (Inhorn and Brown, 1990: 102). The movement of people is recognised to increase the potential spread of disease, particularly in the current climate where HIV/AIDS is spreading so rapidly. This is illustrated by the fact that prevention campaigns often focus their attention on risk groups such as sex workers and on border zones, where the circulation of people is generally rather high (Lyttleton and Amarapibal, 2002). Men discussed the issue of mobility and disease as a factor contributing to their fear to allow women to travel freely. Views about women's susceptibility to disease relate to women's inability to fend of male advances. As Moro states, 'if women are allowed to be roaming, she will have the chance to meet with her friends and through that she can get diseases like the HIV virus' *(men's group discussion, 30/04/02)*. This is despite the fact that it is generally men who travel, are unfaithful and bring back diseases. In the case of Nigerian Hausaland, Callaway (1984) notes that it is women who are viewed as being inherently promiscuous, even though it is men who marry many women, have concubines and divorce by simple renunciation (p.439).

Women's mobility is limited by local ideas concerning women who are thought to be overly mobile. A woman can be accused of being 'in control' if she travels too frequently (implying that she does not respect the authority of her husband). This can often lead to accusations that she is not a good wife and mother since she will leave without thinking of the welfare of her family. One woman said that, 'if you are married and don't stay in one place...you will be moving here and there without thinking of your children. Your other colleagues will use it as an insult to be used against you, which is

a disgrace. That can even lead to your husband divorcing you' *(Jahara, women's group discussion, 11/04/02)*. Generally, women who travel too much are considered to be irresponsible and negligent, by both men and women.

7.5.5 The Discourse Around Strength and Physical Capability

> 'Women generally are not as strong as the men and they can't do hard work like the men. If you ask a woman to raise yam mounds or do plenty of weeding, she couldn't do it. She might be able to raise maybe 3 or 4 but then she will have to stop as she will be tired. But men can do it for many days. It's hard work but we do it. This is why men have all the money because the women don't have the strength to work like the men. Because of this, men have to be in charge, they have to be the leaders and take care of the women'
>
> *(Kpuria, informal conversation, 04/05/02)*

As the title of this chapter indicates, men in Tarsaw are often considered the natural or God-given rulers of women. Men should be the controllers of women because 'naturally men are physically stronger than the women' *(Haruna, group discussion 30/04/02)*. Although in some respects, this might be correct and both men and women in Tarsaw would probably agree with this idea, the importance of strength as an indicator of superiority or of an ability or right to exert control or power over others who are less physically strong is a *social construct*. Men and women are socialised (and socialise their children) into believing that there are men's tasks and women's tasks, and this quite often brings in ideas of strength and physical capability. Physical strength is only regarded as an important factor in relations of power and control if it is valued above other things such as intellect, economic and social status and so on. Within Sissala society, such a premium is placed on physical strength because it is so important to successful farming and therefore survival. Men are able to profit from their physical labour, whereas there is little opportunity for women to do the same because they are obligated to carry out their domestic tasks (as discussed in section 7.3.1), which do not provide any income generating opportunities (see chapter 5). Some might argue that strength, as a constraint on mobility, is a capability constraint rather than an authority constraint. However, since ideas of strength and physical capability are often based on social values and norms, rather than an actual inability to do certain activities, it is treated here as an authority constraint.

In many cultural contexts, activities are attributed to men and women on the basis of physical capability. In Samoa, division of work is based on assumptions about work roles and physical attributes where 'work that is light, clean and focussed on the central

village' is attributed to women, and 'heavy, dirty tasks' are seen as men's work (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 1993). As discussed in chapter 5, both men and women in Tarsaw have clear ideas about what they can and should be doing. People generally have a clear idea of women and men's capabilities. Opinions on women's strength, or lack of strength, affect their mobility in a number of important ways. In terms of mobility and the use of certain forms of transport, there are socially accepted norms that prohibit the use of transport generally or at certain times in a woman's life. It is generally acceptable for young unmarried girls to use bicycles for certain tasks or errands, but not to travel round the village for no reason, as boys do. Women of all ages are generally not supposed to travel long distances, partly because they are not thought to be strong enough, but also because both men and women worry about a woman's fertility if she does so. One young girl stated, 'people think that if the girls use the bicycles too much it will affect them. Mahama's wife is sick because she has been riding too much. People think that if a girl rides the bicycle too much she will not be able to deliver. I think it is true and I don't want to ride too much or too far because it might not be good for me' *(Alijata village girl aged 19, informal conversation 18/10/2001)*. A woman is also advised to refrain from riding a bicycle once she is beyond 3 months pregnant (some will stop as soon as they realise they are pregnant) for fear of harming the baby. One man stated, 'if [women] are pregnant and riding the bicycle, it could cost them the baby. Sometimes the women will be forcing themselves to use the bicycle and they might make themselves sick' *(Bipuah, village elder, interviewed 20/10/2001)*. As one woman stated, 'because we women deliver, so we are easily weak, also sometimes, when you are peddling for a long time your womb will be paining you so that can cause problems with fertility' *(Lariba, interviewed 05/07/02)*. These are very real concerns for women and many women would endeavour to limit the distance and frequency of their bicycle use as a result and avoid riding during and directly after pregnancy.

In discussions about women's use of various forms of transport, the majority of men felt that there were certain means of transport that women were unable to use because they were not strong enough. There is a distinct discourse around women's use of transport focusing on women's lack of capability and strength, which was clearly articulated in many of the interviews with both men and women. Some of the typical comments from the men I interviewed were that, women did not have the energy or the strength to ride bicycles like boys. One young schoolteacher commented that, 'I don't appreciate [women riding bicycles] because it makes them look like they don't like hard work'. This remark seems to imply that women, as part of their social role and identity,

are supposed to suffer, supposed to be burdened with their work, and attempting to alleviate this suffering by using transport such as bicycles would be seen as reneging on their role. One young man stated, '[women] have work to do in the house so they shouldn't be going out on bicycles. If you see a woman riding a bicycle like that you will say that she is disobedient'. She would perhaps be labelled a lazy woman who avoids hard work, as some village men have stated. A man might even seek to divorce a wife who failed to carry out her daily workload adequately or appeared to shirk the duties that are expected of her. Indeed, the ability to work hard is one of the key attributes men look for when selecting a wife (along with the ability to cook well and demonstrate the appropriate deference).

In many cultural contexts women are prohibited from handling or using cattle, for a variety of reasons, including socio-economic reasons and cultural propriety. In research carried out in Columbia (middle Magdalena), women in the lowland areas did not play any part in the tending of cattle since, 'zebu cattle are wild, dangerous and unmanageable for women' whereas 'highland cattle are seen as more placid and...women share in milking and caring for cattle' (Townsend, 1993: 273). This is corroborated by Meertens (1993) in the case of the Columbian highlands, where 'livestock may be exclusively entrusted to women' on small plots, and on medium-sized farms 'women share in cattle-raising, tending even to withdraw from agrarian chores in order to devote themselves to livestock, specifically to milking, feeding and surveillance' (p.261). Explanations for this contrast could be the 'more aggressive behaviour of zebu cattle in warmer climates and the introduction of capitalist relations of production on lowland ranches requiring male wage labourers' (ibid.). These examples highlight the importance of local context in the opportunities and constraints women face in owning and using bullocks. There are a number of arguments against women's use of bullock-carts in Tarsaw. One of the main discourses around women's use of bullocks (both from men and women) is that women are not physically strong enough or confident enough to handle the bullocks. As one of the village elders stated: 'women can't do anything with bullocks, it is hard and the bullocks are difficult to control *and the women don't have the strength to control them*'. An elderly woman also corroborated this statement by claiming that 'women are not strong enough to hold [the bullocks] and they can easily pull you and hurt you. But the men are strong and can control them' *(Adisatu, village woman aged about 70, group discussion 03/02/02)*.

I find it difficult to believe that lack of physical strength would be a real constraint to women operating the bullocks. After all, there are young boys of about 6 years old who

can operate them quite ably. Boys are trained to use the bullocks from a very early age and are confident enough to control the bullocks on their own by about the age of 8. From the age of about 5 or 6 you will see boys starting to learn how to become a 'cowboy' and following their elder brothers. If a boy of this age has the 'strength' to control the bullocks, surely a woman, tremendously strong from all the lifting and carrying that her role requires, is also strong enough? When questioned about this, men would often argue that women are usually scared of the bullocks and afraid that they will be injured by their horns. This was also backed up by interviews with some of the women.

Another reason for women's lack of access to cattle is that it is not considered appropriate behaviour. Following a bullock is simply not part of a woman's 'performance' and does not fit into her role as mother and wife. As one man stated: 'women don't take care of cattle. *It would look odd if you saw a woman following a cow.* It is something that the men do' *(Joseph, informal conversation, 04/02/02)*. So rather than strength being the main factor, it perhaps has more to do with seeming 'out of place' if women handled the bullocks. Bullock-carts are rarely, if ever, used by women and they have to ask permission from their husbands to allow their sons to use the bullocks on their behalf. Women therefore have very little to do with the animals. Because of this women tend to be more fearful of them and lack the confidence that the boys have in handling them. With practice, women could become equally competent in using the bullocks. As discussed in chapter 2, although bodies undoubtedly have biological limits and vary in size, shape and stamina, this is not necessarily linked to gender. Physical ability to move one's body varies considerably over the life course (as indicated in this and previous chapters) and it is unhelpful to portray a picture of biological fixity. People's actions (and inactions), over time, produce marked differences in muscle tone and bodily ability. This does not, however, relate to gender alone.

7.6 A Note on Polygamy

> 'Don't you see? We need more than one wife, since one wife will have too much work to do on her own. If you have only one and she is sick, what do you do? If she travels to her hometown, what do you do? If she goes to a funeral, what do you do? You need more than one otherwise you will suffer when something like this happens'
>
> *(Lari, young man with two wives, informal conversation, 31/03/02)*

It is evident, through interviews and observation that polygamy can be important in determining the level of mobility women are able to enjoy. This is partly because women who live as part of a polygamous union can sometimes have difficulty accessing resources, including transport related resources, because of the husband's requirement to treat all wives equally[24]. On the other hand, living in a polygamous relationship can provide more opportunities for some women to travel, since co-wives can share the burden of food preparation, childcare and farm work, which, as discussed earlier in this chapter, are important factors limiting women's movement. The relationship between polygamy and mobility is not straightforward or unambiguous. There are apparent advantages and disadvantages to polygamy for both men and women and the relationship between polygamy and mobility are complex. The above quotation is illustrative of this complexity since it brings together issues of polygamy, workload and travel. This section will try and present an account of these various arguments, demonstrating the implications for mobility.

It is not always easy to discern how the majority of women feel about polygamy and living within a polygamous relationship. Many women are reluctant to criticise the tradition of polygamy, as if by doing so they could be considered almost seditious, betraying both their husband and their tradition. Some merely remark that it is their tradition and 'the way things work here', in order to close down any discussion of the subject and avoid making a comment that would appear disloyal. Some simply say that they are happy with the situation, perhaps because they take pride in the fact that they obey their husbands and show respect for his decisions, or perhaps because it is unthinkable to not be 'happy' with polygamy for the reasons outlined above. As one elderly woman stated, 'it wasn't happiness as such, but whether you are happy or not; if he says he is bringing, he is bringing. More to the point, if he brings another wife, at times she can help you. If you are sick, she can cook for you' *(Siratu, interviewed*

[24] Kauffman, 1993, reports that men in northern Ghana were reluctant to let their wives have access to their bicycles because to show favouritism to one wife would cause problems with the other wives

21/03/02). Many women, whether they are generally happy or unhappy, acknowledge that polygamy can be beneficial in reducing the workload for individual women. One woman stated that, 'if the husband brings another [wife] it would be welcome because one is not good. Because when you are sick, you cannot do anything but when you are two, your rival will cook and do other things on your behalf. They can also take care of the children *when you have some place to go*' *(Kadija, middle-aged women interviewed 10/03/02)*.

Other women are more critical, stating firmly that they are not happy with their husbands taking more than one wife. Some feel that their husbands could not really afford to take on additional wives and by doing so jeopardise the welfare of the whole family. According to one woman, 'if the man can take care of more than one woman there is no problem with that. But if the man cannot cater for more than one woman, I don't like it that way. Right now, what my husband can afford is not enough for two of us, so if he wants to marry I would not be happy' *(Nashira, middle-aged woman interviewed 26/04/02)*. Most women feel that, on the whole, the man benefits most out of a polygamous marriage, as illustrated by the following quotation:

> 'Generally, most of the benefits (of polygamy) go to the man because we all work for the man. But, what the man will do for us may not satisfy us like it would with only one woman. Even in terms of the children, maybe we will deliver plenty of children who will also all work for the man. But in terms of individual women, maybe we won't get the labour of the children. [A Polygamous relationship] has both its advantages and disadvantages. If you are many your workload will be reduced and if you are one, you will have extra work to do. Maybe the husband will restrict our access to resources so that we will not all have good access to any of these items. There is often rivalry and misunderstanding between the wives, but the husband will have to play a very important role when there is misunderstanding between us. The wives will have different minds or ways of thinking and sometimes this brings about confusions. But often, it is the attitude of the husband, which actually causes the problems' *(Nashira, 26/04/02)*.

Men have an important role to play in this respect, and not all men are successful in this task. The difficulties faced in maintaining unity between wives were also commented on during group discussions and individual interviews with men. This is clearly illustrated in the quotation below:

> 'if you are a man with four wives, you should be neutral and should not show any differences for any one of them to see. But some women have natural behaviour that is not good- jealousy. So, when you try to bring them together, the jealous one will never agree. The job of the man with many wives is to keep balance and harmony amongst his wives- you can't favour one over the others. So, if you can't take one on the [bullock] cart, you can't take any' *(Seibu, informal conversation, 17/10/01)*.

The latter point is particularly pertinent because it highlights how polygamy can affect women's potential access to transport. Many men feel that they are less able to loan out their bicycles or allow their wives to benefit from the bullock-carts for fear of fuelling rivalry and creating expectations, which it may not always be possible to fulfil.

Some women note the way the relationship with their husband changes with the arrival of additional wives, and that this often affects their access to household resources. One woman stated: 'if you are the only wife of your husband you can do things commonly together and discuss your problems with him more freely. But, if you are more than one, it is difficult to organise things together. Your husband may not allow you to do certain things or he may think that if he does something for the other one and fails to do something for you, you will say the husband doesn't like you. It can be a problem' *(Afisatu, women's group discussion, 11/04/02).*

7.7 Conclusions

This chapter has examined in detail the mobility constraints that women (and men) face throughout the course of their lives. This has been examined within the context of coupling, capability and authority constraints following the framework used within time-geography. The discussion has shown that the relationship between gender, mobility and the body is a complex one. Although biological reasoning is often used to buttress and reinforce gender divisions and inequality, as discussed in sections 7.4 and 7.5.5, the issue of power and authority provides far more compelling reasons for women's relative lack of mobility. Discourses that construct women as unable to do certain things or behave in certain ways are fundamentally linked to the social and cultural context within which power and authority operate. The constraints discussed under the headings of capability, coupling and authority are intrinsically interconnected, since it is society and culture that produce and reinforce ideas about the 'natural' or appropriate roles that men and women should play. These ideas are given outward expression in bodily activities and bodily performance of individuals, and the discourse that accompanies these expectations. Surveillance is therefore an important underlying element to this discussion, since both men and women are conscious of needing to behave in accordance with social expectations and obligations, and fear social exclusion or ridicule if they are seen to act contrary to this. Unequal power relations underlying these norms of social behaviour are most noticeably observed through a person's mobility, travel patterns and use of space.

A woman's access to transport and her overall mobility are clearly linked to notions of bodily capability and skill. The predominant discourse in Tarsaw is that women do not have the energy or the strength to ride a bicycle for long distances and are in danger of adversely affecting their reproductive health if they do so. Similar discourses are levelled towards women's use of bullock-carts as a means of transport: women are not considered strong enough to handle the animals, which are said to be aggressive and difficult to control. These discourses adversely affect women's ability to own and utilise various forms of transport in Tarsaw. In other cultural, social and economic contexts these discourses may be very different, providing opportunities and constraints for women's use of IMT. In many cases, ideas about women's 'strength' to use certain forms of transport rest on beliefs about particular kinds of strength. Few men in Tarsaw would dispute the fact that women are strong since they are able to carry heavy loads on their heads and walk long distances. However, many would point out that women are strong in a different way to men (along the lines of the 'strong-neck' theory discussed by Bryceson and Howe, 1993). Jackson and Palmer-Jones (1998) discuss the interactions between male and female physiology and the social context within which work is conducted. Research conducted by Porter (2003a) in southern Ghana (R7575) also raised questions about the *types* of strength required to carry out certain tasks.

In terms of women's general freedom of movement in Tarsaw, there seems to be a degree of fear of the consequences of women's mobility. As discussed in section 7.5.3, many men do not trust their women enough to allow them to travel freely. This stems from a number of key issues. Firstly, men fear that women will be tempted into sexual relations with other men. This fear is common in many other cultural contexts (see Robson 2000). The fact that postmenopausal women are able to enjoy greater freedom of movement is illustrative of this point.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

'In rural Africa it is women who bear the greater part of the transport burden. Understanding their transport patterns is a first step in aiming to reduce their onerous task'

(Malmberg Calvo, 1994)

The most important stumbling block...to improvements in rural household transport is attitudinal...Broadly, load carrying is considered women's work, an essential duty of a wife under any circumstances. Head and back loading is synonymous with female exertion, part of their "natural role" as women, whereas men can be observed actively engaged in device-facilitated load transport'

(Bryceson and Howe, 1993: 1723)

8.1 Introduction

This thesis sought to undertake a gender analysis of mobility, and women's access and use of various modes of transport, using the case study of Tarsaw in Ghana's Upper West Region. As outlined in chapter one, this thesis aimed to approach the subject from a theoretical position that incorporates the lived and gendered body: the *embodiment* of gender. Embodiment is the active basis of being in the world, and the foundation upon which meaning, culture and society come together. It is not simply a textual effect or discursive construct (Williams and Bendelow, 1998). By bringing together a theoretical discussion of embodiment and mobility within the context of the empirical findings, this research sheds new light on our understanding of gender and mobility. In this final chapter the objectives of this research will be considered in the light of the theoretical development and empirical findings of earlier chapters. This chapter therefore aims to discuss and draw together some of the salient points that have arisen during the process of this research. The first section of this chapter reviews the main points that have been raised through the course of this thesis, drawing together the conclusions of the three empirical chapters and theoretical chapter. The chapter then considers gender and mobility in a broader context, highlighting the importance of cultural context. Following on from this discussion, I go on to consider some possible areas for potential local improvement through the introduction of appropriate IMTs. The chapter will then examine some of the wider substantive and

policy implications of these conclusions before ending by discussing further avenues for future consideration.

8.2 Main Objectives and Conclusions

The main objectives of this research, as outlined in the introductory chapter, were:

- To assess the relative utility of certain conceptualisations of mobility and clarify what the concept of mobility actually means..
- To provide a contribution to current understandings of 'mobility' through the use of a case study approach. This account is original in that it combines temporal and spatial understandings of mobility within a broadly corporeal framework.
- To understand why women in Tarsaw are overwhelmingly responsible for head-loading domestic and agricultural goods, whilst benefiting the least from locally available forms of transport. This requires a detailed understanding of the cultural and social context within which daily mobility is set, in order to identify the constraints and impediments that women face in accessing motorised and non-motorised transport.
- To illustrate the ways in which men and women in Tarsaw demonstrate their gender through work and daily practices. Daily activities and the gender division of labour play an important role in the performance of gender. Mobility and use of space are integral to this performance.
- To assess the implications of these understandings of mobility and the gendered body for transport policy and academic discourse.

A number of key issues developed from these objectives:

- Lack of Access/Ownership

Although women's relative lack of purchasing power is undoubtedly a factor in their inability to buy intermediate means of transport, this research also indicates that there are other, perhaps more compelling reasons. Women (and men) can be constrained by a range of factors apart from the practical issue of lack of transport and inferior purchasing power. Reasons for women's relative lack of access to transport and their inability to move around freely are complex and multifaceted, as this thesis has illustrated. Although group purchase of IMTs between women could, in theory, be a possible solution to the lack of individual purchasing power, this is unlikely in Tarsaw in the present context given the pervasiveness of individualisation of labour and money among women. This will be discussed in more detail later in the chapter.

- Mobility is Multifaceted

Mobility, not just in terms of migration and long-distance travel, but also the more mundane daily movements, forms the basis for much of our daily activities. Chapter two highlighted the number of different ways of conceptualising mobility, which have been utilised to greater or lesser degrees within the various strands of literature. 'Mobility' within conventional transport literature is described as the process of getting from one point to another in a very mechanistic way. However, the gender and embodiment literatures take a much broader view of mobility and see it not only as getting from A to B, but movement in a distinctly embodied and physical way. For example, how the body moves, and what affects bodily capability (such as child-bearing and carrying). Mobility can also be argued as being a reflection of bodily *autonomy*. Mobility, within this use of the term, is more a reflection of the way the body is controlled and constrained by power relations, which is a predominant discourse in much of the gender literature. It is through everyday mobility that structures of society, economy and culture are produced and reproduced, and thereby establish meaning. An individual's ability to use space is both integral to and implicit in social relations and can therefore reflect social inequalities and power relations. A person's ability to move about freely is undoubtedly shaped by physical and technological capability, but is also deeply intertwined with power, social status and norms about gendered behaviour (Domosh and Seager, 2001). As this thesis has demonstrated, issues of bodily capability and autonomy need to be considered by transport planners in the future, not least because they are fundamental to the potential for IMT adoption and uptake.

In the case of Tarsaw, women are undoubtedly disadvantaged in terms of their mobility. This is clearly evident in the empirical discussions of work, time and mobility, which form the backbone of this thesis. Resources, opportunities and daily activities are intrinsically linked to the cultural and social *construction* of gender and reflect wider issues of power inequality. In Tarsaw, there are firm ideas about the kinds of activities and responsibilities that men and women should 'naturally' be performing. These prescribed gender roles can impede women's travel and mobility in complex ways.

- Mobility is Embodied

Mobility is fundamentally linked to the body. The body that navigates the geography of everyday life carries with it the marks of the individual's social make-up (class, race, gender, age and status), which can aid or inhibit a person's access to and use of certain spaces at various times in their life course. It is not sufficient to treat variations

in physical capability as purely a matter of biology, since biological processes interact with the social, providing constraints and opportunities in specific contexts and over time (as discussed in chapter 2). The body is an incomplete project whose material form is transformed- through the inscriptions of health and working experience, cultural and social institutions- over a lifetime (Jackson and Palmer-Jones, 1998). A major barrier to women's use of certain forms of transport is attitudinal. In Tarsaw and the surrounding region, men and women of all ages believe that women are incapable of riding a bicycle for long distances or handling cattle, because of their lack of physical strength. As this thesis has illustrated, the appropriate performance of gender in Tarsaw does not include these activities. We therefore need to consider how a woman's identity as a woman is bound up in particular cultures with her physical and social performance as a load-carrier. Bodily capabilities and physiology both need to be taken into consideration when looking at IMT adoption (or non-adoption). The theme of embodiment, which has been explored at length within this thesis, is new in the field of transport and mobility, particularly in the context of the global South[1].

- Importance of lifecourse

This thesis has clearly illustrated the importance of lifecourse in determining a person's experience of mobility. Men and women can have very different experiences of mobility and fixity throughout the course of their lives. This is particularly true for women, since marriage, pregnancy, lactation, and menopause all have profound impacts on women's mobility.

8.3 Understanding Gender and Mobility

Bryceson and Howe (1993) note that 'women's mobility is disadvantaged relative to men's with respect to 1) access to mobility aids, 2) spatial and temporal impediments to mobility, and 3) the social attitudes of the community' (p.24). All of the above have proved to be important factors impeding women's access to, and use of, transport in Tarsaw. This thesis has illustrated that it is not merely economic or technical factors that provide constraints to women's mobility, but also cultural, social and attitudinal. Culture is clearly an important determinant of women's freedom of movement and their ability to utilise transport technologies, as has been highlighted by this research and research undertaken in other contexts (Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Fernando and

[1] The AAG sessions on 'The Mobile Body' is indicative of a growing interest in mobility and the body. The majority of the papers presented in these sessions related to the mobile body in the context of the global North, although there were a couple of papers on the South (see Hyndman and de Alwis, 2003).

Porter, 2002). For example, Iga (2002) claims that, in Central Uganda, 'tradition does not allow women to ride bicycles, although they can be carried on them' (p. 52). As a result, it is primarily men who own and use bicycles in that region. In a World Bank working paper, Malmberg Calvo (1994), also writing about Uganda, points out that 'it is not considered *proper* for women to ride bicycles. Women are supposed to be "subservient and a bit secretive" and someone who rides a bicycle is judged to "behave like a man"' (p29 emphasis added). The cultural impropriety of women's acquisition and use of certain forms of transport has come up repeatedly throughout the course of this thesis. It is not always a matter of cultural propriety. Porter notes that it may also be the issue of women being harassed or shouted at by drivers of motorised vehicles (2003a, 53), or because girls never have time to learn to ride in villages in southern Ghana (2003).

In Nigerian Hausaland, the prevailing religious and cultural ideology of female seclusion, which is relatively widespread in Muslim areas, impinges on married women's mobility, albeit to different degrees (Robson, 2000). Hence, gender ideology (beliefs about how men and women *should* behave), is intimately linked to culture and use of space. Robson notes that 'spatial relations contribute to maintaining historically and culturally specific ideas of appropriate gender behaviour', which in Hausaland allows for the maintenance of seclusion (p.180). However, as discussed in chapter two, participation in seclusion in some circumstances can also be a strategic choice that women make for their own benefit (see for example Cooper, 1994; Porter, 1988, 1989).

Not all Muslim societies seclude their women, for a range of complex reasons. In the context of Tarsaw, both men and women acknowledge that seclusion is the usual practice for Muslims, but argue that poverty forces the women to work (although in practice the issue is probably much more complicated than this). In a short article written in 1989, Gina Porter discusses various factors that could account for the different practices of seclusion by Hausa in Hausaland and Kanuri Muslims in Borno. Factors included cultural variation; differences in groundwater hydrology (it is apparently difficult to sink wells in Borno so women would have to leave the compound to collect water); and to differences in colonial economic history. The expansion of groundnut cultivation in Hausaland may have encouraged female seclusion in that region, since it generated both 'greater wealth to pay for field labour, water carriers etc., and the need for large amounts of compound labour to shell the nuts' (ibid. p.488). Porter also suggests that slave ownership was not widespread in Borno at this time and so female participation in agriculture was not stigmatised as slave labour, and

therefore seclusion did not become the sign of a free woman (1989, 488). The connection between slavery and seclusion is highlighted by Mary Smith's *Baba of Karo* (1954) and discussed by Cooper (1994) and Lovejoy (1988).

These examples highlight the complex and multifaceted relationship between culture and mobility. Understanding this complexity is important both for policy (discussed in section 8.4) and our academic knowledge. Women's use of and access to transport, is dependent on a whole range of factors, which are integral to the particular social, cultural, economic and political environment. As this thesis has illustrated, there are particular cultural understandings around the body and embodied capabilities, which need to be fully appreciated. Women's adoption of IMTs is intrinsically linked to cultural beliefs regarding their physical strength and physiology. Chapter 5 has illustrated how discourses around women's physical ability fit into a broader understanding of the gender division of labour and the performance of gender, which is intrinsically embodied. Chapter 7 discussed these discourses in the context of women's use of certain forms of transport in Tarsaw, embedded within a wider framework of gender relations and power inequality.

Gender is both corporeal and performative: men and women demonstrate gender differences (and other differences) through their performance of everyday activities. Constructions of appropriate gender performance (of which mobility and use of transport is an integral part) vary according to the local cultural context. For example, in Askole, northern Pakistan women do not porter partly because 'local discourses construct portering as too difficult for women' (Besio, 2003: 26). Such physical labour is not considered appropriate by and for many Muslim women, although in other parts of the Hindu Kush-Karakoram-Himalaya region women porter (ibid.). In Tarsaw, women are constrained in using bicycles and bullock-carts because of their supposed lack of physical strength. Whilst this is undoubtedly a consideration, much of the resistance to women's adoption of IMTs is attitudinal: utilising these forms of transport is not considered part of a woman's performance. The cultural conditions and unequal power relations that limit women's mobility clearly need to be acknowledged since this is important in understanding women's limited use of transport and poor mobility (Matin et al. 2002). However, Bryceson and McCall (1994) emphasise that these cultural restrictions should not be considered 'brickwall obstacles'- it is not impossible to overcome them.

8.4 Policy Issues

This research complements other studies on gender and mobility (see for example, Bryceson, 1993; Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Malmberg Calvo, 1994, 1994a; Porter, 2002, 2003, 2003a). The thesis has explored the complexity of women's lives in Tarsaw and has suggested that this complexity provides considerable challenges for IMT interventions that seek to improve rural women's mobility. This research comes at an opportune time in terms of informing policy, since the promotion of IMTs is becoming an increasing priority in rural (and urban) Africa for the World Bank and other donors.

Despite important changes in development policy and the conceptualisation of women therein over the last two decades, transport related projects have generally failed to adequately comprehend the complexity of gender relations and the implications for transport interventions. As a result, the majority of IMT projects, whether aimed at women or not, have met with frustrating difficulties. Most IMT projects used to begin from the assumption that women do not use IMTs because they do not have the purchasing power to buy them. Whilst this is undoubtedly an issue, this thesis shows that the situation is far more complex. This supports the work of R7575 and earlier studies (Bryceson, 1993; Bryceson and Howe, 1993; Bryceson and McCall, 1994; Malmberg Calvo, 1994, 1994a). The research carried out in Tarsaw, as with the action research project in southern Ghana, highlights the frustrating complexities behind women's lack of access to IMTs and their disappointingly poor adoption record.

The cultural element, as discussed in section 8.3, has substantial implications for policy. The regional variations in the uptake of IMTs by women, and the difficulties that donor organisations and NGOs experience in introducing IMTs, can be partially explained by a review of these cultural nuances. Policy-makers must think about how they treat the issue of mobility and how, or even if, it should be measured. We therefore need to question the intrinsic value of mobility, in terms of the social, economic, political and environmental costs and benefits. Policy invariably views mobility as an intrinsically good thing or even a requirement. This research, and other studies, has shown that this assumption needs to be questioned. Constraints on mobility are not just economic or practical and should not be viewed and measured as such. We need to deconstruct the cultural context in order to understand the various strands that constrain and inhibit an individual's mobility. We therefore need to understand the interaction between the economic and the social, the political and the

physiological, the technical and the environmental, and need to be aware of the nuances in different contexts.

Some of the questions policy-makers need to reflect on are: will increased mobility be welcomed and is it beneficial? Will increased mobility be beneficial for all individuals or will some experience a negative impact on their livelihoods as a result? Even when we look at mobility in the West, can we say that increased mobility has made our lives happier/easier/better? This is particularly pertinent for women. In many ways the highly mobile society that we now live in the West can pull families apart as well as bring them together. Young women may not have the childcare support of their parents/mothers or other relatives. Older people can no longer depend on their children for help and support because their children and other relatives tend to move away from home. Increased mobility has, in some circumstances, perhaps made women's lives more difficult, as discussed in chapter 2, section 2.4.1. Rather than providing freedom for women, or liberating them from the home, increased mobility (often as a consequence of participation in wage labour) has increased their burdens, forcing them to juggle an increasing number of tasks. According to Tinker (1990), women's participation in the wage economy in many developing countries (along with the resultant mobility) has proved to be far from liberating. In some situations, women can gain status and prestige from not participating in the visible public labour force. Naila Kabeer (1999) raises interesting questions in this respect. She points out that it is not necessarily empowering or liberating for a woman to be forced into behaviour that is contrary to her religious beliefs in order to increase her family's income. Kabeer criticises NGOs in Bangladesh that accept Western donors' beliefs that mobility equals liberation for women. We therefore need to understand the context within which mobility (or lack of mobility) is set, the range of constraints that individuals face in accessing places and resources, and the different ways in which these constraints are overcome (or not overcome).

This research also highlights the importance of non-farm activities in sustaining household livelihoods (discussed in chapter 5). Non-farm activities are often carried out alongside farming, following seasonal patterns and household needs. In the case of Tanzania, Madulu (1998) reports that people involved in non-farm activities are not detached from the agricultural community, but are fully involved in farming (p.32). Yunusa (1999) emphasises that the rural non-farm sector depends on the purchasing power of deriving from the sale of agricultural produce. Bryceson (1999a) discusses a number of examples of cross-investment between farm and non-farm activities,

indicating that they operate interdependently in most cases. Activities such as the collection of water and firewood and the gathering of bush produce are a major source of livelihood for many women, something that has been largely overlooked in transport interventions. Rao (2002) discusses how women's control over the sale of these products is being eroded in Bihar, India, as a result of their lack of access to transport. The few motorbikes and bicycles in the area are owned and controlled by men. As a result 'the marketing of firewood and of fruits such as mangoes and jackfruits is gradually being take over by men, who take them to the markets on their bicycles' (p. 190).

Deborah Bryceson and others have made significant headway in exploring how a livelihoods approach can be brought into transport interventions (Bryceson et al. 2003). Bryceson et al. maintain that, whilst the 'Livelihoods Approach' (LA) has been increasingly used in the design of policies in the context of poverty alleviation, 'until recently, applications in the transport sector have been comparatively rare' (p.3). The 'Sustainable Livelihoods, Access and Mobility' (SLAM) study highlights the importance of combining sustainable livelihoods analysis with transport/mobility concepts. By extending and enhancing the sustainable livelihoods approach, the study was able to trace the connections between different forms of mobility and livelihood patterns (Bryceson et al. 2003). The research demonstrated the significance of certain forms of transport (e.g. *boda boda*) not only in facilitating mobility, but also in terms of the labour absorption capacity. It also highlighted the need for policy-makers to not only provide good access to work and income-earning opportunities, but also education, health services, recreation, and basic utilities like water and energy. This is particularly pertinent for the poor, who generally live in poor conditions devoid of basic utilities.

8.5 IMT Promotion in Ghana

There have been a number of initiatives by donors, the Government of Ghana and by national and international NGOs, to expand the use of IMTs in Ghana since the late 1980s. Most have been focused on northern rural regions of the country. The two main IMT related initiatives in Ghana are the Village Infrastructure Project (VIP), funded by the World Bank and managed by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture, and the World Bank's Rural Travel and Transport Programme (RTTP) based in the Department of Feeder Roads (DFR).

The VIP initiative commenced in March 1997 and had four main components: rural water infrastructure, rural transport infrastructure, post-harvest infrastructure and institutional strengthening of District Assemblies. The project was aimed at improving the livelihoods of poor rural farmers and households by increasing smallholder productivity, employment and rural incomes and improving community health and nutritional status. The rural transport component included the selective improvement of degraded feeder roads, the development of village trails and tracks to permit the use of simple wheeled vehicles and the pilot of IMTs (World Bank, 1997). The IMT component focused on three types of IMT: power tillers, bicycles with trailers and donkey-carts. Twenty districts in four regions (Ashanti, Brong Ahafo, Northern and Greater Accra) were included in this pilot phase, which ended in February 1999. A review of the pilot was carried out by Self Help Foundation and reported the successful completion of the project but noted a number of deficiencies. Linkages between the project and associated financial institutions and the Department of Feeder Roads were considered to be weak; there were problems with the performance of beneficiary groups and inadequate involvement of women (Porter, 2003a).

The DFR programme has primarily focused on feeder road improvement. The RTTP programme in Northern Region (Northern Region Pilot Infrastructure Scheme- NRPIS) did, however, incorporate an IMT component. A baseline report, produced in 1994 stated that, 'Non-Motorised Transport would be introduced and popularised in the project area to reduce head porterage, improve the haulage of agricultural produce to market centres and improve production techniques by local manufacturers to ensure continuous production to meet future demand' (p. ii). Three types of IMT were introduced through this project: donkey and donkey-carts, bicycles and trailers, and power tillers. Local NGOs, primarily Amasachina, Self-Help Ghana and 31st December Women's Movement, worked on the implementation of the IMT component, primarily in the distribution and micro-financing of IMTs. According to Pankaj and Coulthart (1993) despite some credit problems, the results of the project were considered to be positive. This is reiterated by Kwakye and Sharan (1994) and Buabeng et al. (1995). However, according to both Amasachina and Self Help, the IMT component faced a number of problems, primarily due to the design of the bicycle-trailers. Wheels were weak, particularly the rear wheels, and tended to buckle under heavy loads, the coupling mechanism did not work properly, and the trailers were not well-suited to the difficult terrain and poor conditions of the roads (White et al. 2000). In addition to these problems, Kauffman (1993) notes that the cycle trailers were too expensive (often as much as the bicycle itself), women (who were targeted to benefit most from the IMT

scheme) did not generally own bicycles to pull the trailers (it was assumed that bicycles were widely owned by both men and women), and that strong women's bicycles were not available. White et al (2000, reporting an interview with Amasachina) reports that another reason for the failure was that, 'in many beneficiary households, as many as four wives were vying for use of one bicycle and trailer. This created a problem within the household, which often resulted in the men being the sole beneficiary to resolve the conflict' (p.14).

Starkey (2001) argues that the bicycle trailers were promoted without a clear understanding of the social, economic and technical issues involved. Careful participatory research is required in order to establish likely costs, benefits, usage patterns and constraints, and other alternatives to assist women. As Porter (2003a) notes, 'these points are of general relevance to the broader IMT debate' (p.31). Despite these problems, bicycle trailers are still being promoted, most recently by the VIP pilot project. However, as Porter (2003a) notes, they have continued to fail and often end up broken or unused.

Animal-drawn carts have had much more success in northern Ghana, as discussed in earlier chapters. Both bullock and donkey-drawn carts are being offered under the VIP pilot. IFAD and Actionaid have also played an important role in the introduction and promotion of animal-drawn carts. However, as highlighted in chapter 7, there are various constraints to women's use of bullock-carts. As in much of Africa, the ownership and herding of cattle is strongly gendered (Starkey et al., 2001). Donkeys do not appear to have the same level of prestige and status as cattle, and have been used quite extensively by women in some parts of northern Ghana. Donkey-carts have been used principally to convey produce from farm to house, for hauling water and firewood, garbage collection and ploughing. Although the VIP project baseline survey reported some problems with donkey-cart adoption- initial fear of the donkeys and reports that some owners were overloading the cart and the donkey- their introduction had largely been welcomed in the north, but less so in the south.

The adoption of IMTs in Ghana, particularly by women, has faced a range of different cultural, social and economic constraints. As Doss (2001) emphasises in a review of technology adoption by African women, we must constantly bear in mind the complexity, heterogeneity and dynamism of African societies. Technology adoption and associated impacts depend on complex interactions that defy simple characterisations. As Porter (2003a) notes, 'this does not deny the possibility of identifying factors which

encourage or limit adoption of new technologies and the impact they will have within households and communities. But ultimately, local solutions have to be found for local problems' (p.49).

8.5.1 Possibilities for Improvement in Tarsaw

There is already significant ownership and usage of IMTs in Tarsaw. Some IMTs have been available for a considerable time. The most numerous are bicycles and bullock-carts, although there are growing numbers of motorbikes. However, access and ownership of these means is strongly gendered. Although increasing numbers of women can be seen using bicycles, these are generally borrowed from male members of the family and hence their access is limited. At present, women do not have the purchasing power to buy bicycles for themselves since their income from farm and non farm activities is generally not sufficient for such a major item. Also, for many women, purchasing a bicycle is not a priority and items such as bowls, basins and meal ingredients usually take precedence.

As mentioned in chapter 7, women's use of bullock-carts is strongly discouraged by a powerful local discourse of women's lack of physical strength and capability to handle the animals. These barriers have remained, despite the fact that animal traction was introduced to the area in the 1960s and has been widespread since the early 1990s. One alternative, which was discussed at some length with both men and women during the course of the fieldwork, is donkey-drawn carts. Donkeys have been used extensively by women in the northern part of Sissala district and across the border in Burkina Faso. In these areas they have been used for both commercial and domestic purposes. As mentioned in section 8.5, donkeys do not command the same level of prestige as cattle. Furthermore, donkeys are easier to handle than bullocks and are not considered to require as much 'strength' to control. When the possibility of introducing donkeys to the area was discussed with the supervisor from MOFA, he agreed that this would be favourable and felt that 'VIP didn't think that areas that have bullocks could also use donkeys' *(Onyobie Abu, interviewed 23/04/02)*. He went on to reveal that 'VIP didn't think of women as far as the use of traction animals is concerned' *(ibid)*.

Just before leaving Tarsaw for the last time, an Actionaid project to provide donkeys and equipment to 15 groups of women in Sissala district had been proposed. Tarsaw was one of the villages to benefit from this project and a group of mainly women received one donkey and equipment. This cost a total of 1.5 million cedis plus interest (the rate of which had not yet been decided). Although the beneficiaries were supposed

to be women, in the case of Tarsaw the group was organised by a man. The man believed this was preferable because he could make sure all the women pay their part of the loan and also benefit equally. He felt that women were not used to purchasing expensive items and would probably argue over payment and usage unless a man was there to take the lead. I do not know whether this is true or not, and since I left the village before the donkey arrived, I was not able to witness how women negotiated usage.

A growing number of IMT schemes, including the VIP pilot, prefer to give IMTs to groups rather than individuals. Under the VIP pilot scheme, groups were required to show proof of 'existence and vibrancy' by providing a list of all registered members, a list of executive members, a constitution and a bank account (Porter, 2003a). The group was then required to make a 20% deposit and if the loan was repaid in one year, no interest was charged. Group purchase has commonly been seen as a solution to purchase cost problems but, as Porter (2003a) notes, are rarely successful (p.58). This is true of both women and men's groups. Collecting payment from group members is often a big problem. In some cases, individual group members have felt that some in the group had not made enough effort to repay their portion of the loan. Maintenance also appears to be a key problem, unless arrangements and responsibilities are clearly established at the outset. This could partly be attributed to rapid group formation and lack of trust between members. As Lyon (2003) discusses in the case of community groups in rural Ghana, 'the ability of groups to be sustained depends on the ability to build up trust...some activities are harder to carry out as groups than others. Sharing farms and equipment was found to be a particularly difficult group activity. The successful group activities were found to be those that allowed individuals to manage their own income and come together for credit, training and marketing services' (pp. 328 and 330).

Group purchase among women is also complicated by the fact that there is generally quite limited cooperation between women, particularly in financial matters. Relationships between women in polygamous compounds are often characterised by an element of rivalry and competition. There is a certain amount of distrust between co-wives and it is generally considered to be safer to keep money separate. As discussed at some length in chapters 3 and 5, women tend not to pool their labour or resources with other women or with men. This is not to say that group purchase of IMTs by women in Tarsaw is impossible, but at the present time, the pervasiveness of economic individualisation appears to be an important barrier to group purchase of labour-saving

technologies. It will be interesting to discover whether the introduction and usage of the donkey by women in Tarsaw fosters a change in attitude in this respect.

8.6 What Next?

This thesis does not claim to fill all the gaps in our knowledge and understanding of gender, mobility and embodiment. There is still much more to learn about the embodiment of gender and mobility. Whilst this thesis has provided insights into the embodiment of gender difference and mobility, it has not looked in any great depth at the particular experiences of the elderly, young children or disabled people. In terms of embodied mobility, these groups of people have very different experiences of travel and mobility. It is important to recognise that women (and men) are not homogeneous and undifferentiated groups and that gender is often complicated by other factors such as age, occupation, disability, and so on. The particular problems faced by the disabled, the elderly and young children have received relatively little academic attention to date. There have been a small number of practical programmes by NGOs specifically aimed at improving the mobility of disabled people in Africa (Porter, 2003a) and increasing interest in the role that children play in the transport of goods (Porter and Blaufuss, 2002).

As this thesis has discussed, an individual's experience of mobility is directly affected by their physical (bodily) ability or disability (Wendell, 1999). In many cases, the built environment and the technological devices used to get around this environment are designed with the able-bodied user in mind. Disabled people who have to navigate this environment, or those dealing with the infirmities of age or frailties of illness experience severe disadvantages in their daily mobility (discussed by Domosh and Seager, 2001). In the global South, the issue of physical disability poses particular challenges, especially in poor rural areas where people rely heavily on their bodies for their livelihood. How do disabled people living in such an environment manage their daily affairs and overcome (or do not overcome) the constraints they face in accessing places and resources. In Tarsaw, there is an elderly blind woman who continues to carry out all the duties expected of a woman. Like all women in Tarsaw, she walks to the borehole to fetch her water, takes her grain to the mill, travels to the farm for firewood and participates in many of the farming tasks. She has been blind since the age of 10 (now 45) and manages to do all these tasks through years of experience and assistance from those around her.

There are other women (and men) in the village who manage to overcome some of the constraints that physical disability poses, although others experience severe difficulties and remain almost totally housebound. This is an area that has been relatively unexplored, particularly in the context of developing countries in the South. Although in many sub-Saharan Africa cities, hand-operated tricycles for the disabled are clearly in evidence (Porter, 2003a: 13). There is a need for research and policy that takes into account the needs on the disabled and elderly (and other marginalized groups). However, as Porter (ibid.) argues, it is important that such disadvantaged groups are treated as decision-makers, rather than merely as welfare objects (p.83).

Action research (such as project R7575 in southern Ghana) holds interesting challenges for researchers in rural Ghana and elsewhere, since it allows the 'subjects' of enquiry to define some of the parameters of the research, to a certain extent. This enables academics to conduct research that is more relevant to the everyday needs of the research participants. This could provide pointers to some of the difficulties women (and other disadvantaged groups) face in accessing places and resources, which are more firmly rooted in the realities of everyday life. In this manner, in could be possible to find more concrete ideas on avenues for change.

There is also room for further research into the different ways that women manage to overcome the various mobility constraints they face. There are many situations where change is occurring. For example, in Sri Lanka, Hyndman and de Alwis (2003) reports that before the war, women did not cycle, but since the war-induced fuel shortages and the dearth of males in the family, women have learned how to ride. Societal structures shape and are shaped by the activities of individuals through the norms and assumptions about the different roles that should 'naturally' be performed by men and women. However, these structures should never be assumed to be fixed and unchanging, since notions about gender roles and appropriate behaviour can change. In Tarsaw, people are slowly beginning to accept that women are capable of riding bicycles. This change is very slow, but it is becoming increasingly common to see women riding bicycles (photograph 8.1). Although there is a certain amount of resistance to this, there is also growing support from some men for women's use of bicycles (though little has changed regarding women's use of bullock-carts).

Although assumptions about embodied skills and capabilities are still stacked against women using these forms of transport for long distances, and they have much fewer opportunities to utilise IMTs anyway, perhaps these notions will also change over time.

The challenge is to learn how practitioners and policy-makers can best support their efforts.

Photograph 8.1: Young women riding bicycles to market



NB. I owned the bicycle on the left, although frequently loaned it to women who asked for it. The 'ladies' bicycle is rare in these parts of northern Ghana since most people consider the phoenix bicycle (on the right) to be more sturdy and able to carry heavier loads and passengers.

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APPENDIX 1: Household Survey Data

		Number of:				No. of polygamous marriages	Acres of staple crops farmed (on main farm):				Distance to main farm (miles)	IMTs owned:			Wealth Category
No.	H/hold Head	men	women	boys	girls		Yam	Maize	g.nuts	beans		bicycles	b.carts	m.bikes	
1	M	4	4	1	2	2	4	8	3	2	3	2	1	1	1
2	M	4	5	2	2	1	1	3	2	1	6	4	2	0	1
3	M	3	3	2	4	0	1	8	1	0	0.5	1	1	0	3
4	M	4	6	3	4	1	4	10	5	2	6	5	2	1	1
5	M	2	1	0	0	0	2	4	4	1	3	1	0	0	4
6	M	2	3	1	2	0	3	2	2	0	4.5	2	0	0	5
7	M	3	2	4	3	0	2	3	2	0	2	4	0	0	5
8	M	1	2	5	3	1	5	8	4	0	7	2	1	0	2
9	M	4	7	3	6	1	8	16	12	0	7	6	1	1	1
10	M	1	2	5	3	1	3	6	2	0	2.5	2	1	0	3
11	M	4	5	5	12	1	5	7	3	1	2	3	1	0	2
12	M	1	2	4	3	1	7	5	5	0	2	2	1	0	4
13	M	1	2	3	1	0	2	4	2	0	4	1	0	0	5
14	M	3	2	2	1	0	1	2	2	0	2	2	1	0	4
15	M	2	7	5	2	2	2	8	3	0	1	2	1	0	1
16	M	2	9	8	9	2	6	12	15	3	4	5	1	1	2
17	M	2	1	1	0	0	3	3	4	0	2	2	1	0	4
18	M	2	3	6	2	0	2.5	2	2	0	3	1	1	0	4
19	M	1	2	5	5	1	5	4	5	2	3	1	1	0	2
20	M	1	2	1	2	0	1	5	3	2	6	1	0	0	3
21	M	2	4	5	3	1	3	6	6	2	6	2	1	0	1
22	M	1	3	2	6	1	2	3	4	0	1.5	1	0	0	5

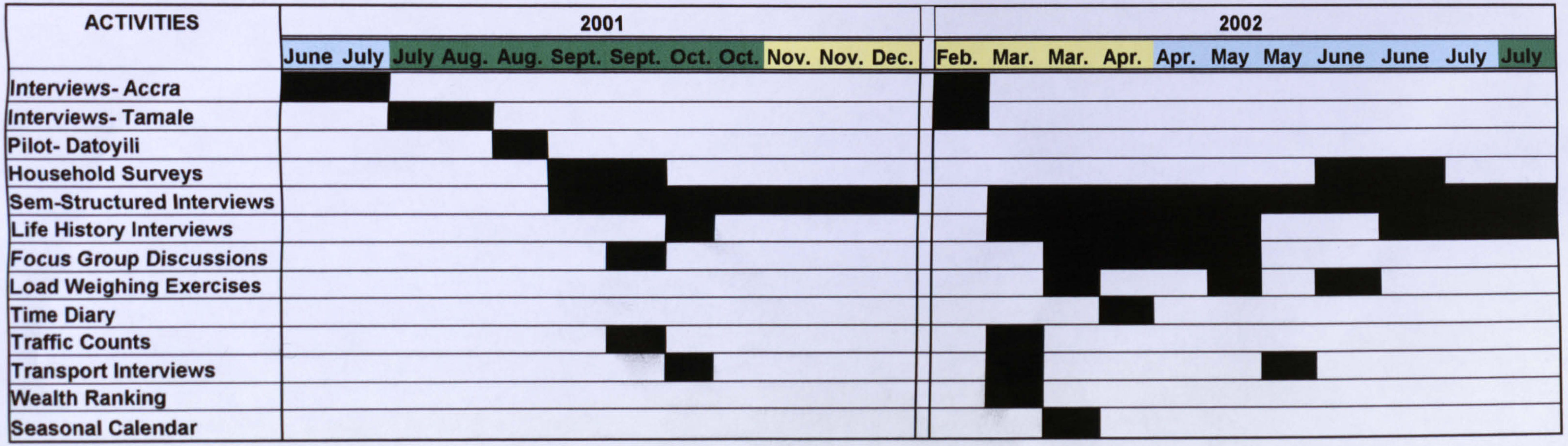
23	M	3	6	14	4	2	5	8	6	1	1	8	2	1	1
24	M	2	3	2	6	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	0	0	4
25	M	2	3	1	1	1	0.5	3	1.5	0	1.5	1	1	0	4
26	M	3	4	3	2	1	2	5	3	2	1	2	0	0	5
27	M	1	7	8	9	1	4	6	8	2	6	2	1	0	1
28	M	4	3	3	6	1	4	6	10	1	1.5	2	1	0	2
29	M	3	5	1	8	1	2	5	1	0	3	3	2	1	1
30	M	1	2	3	1	1	2	1.5	2.5	0	2	1	0	0	5
31	M	5	4	2	1	0	3	4	3	0	3	4	1	0	4
32	M	1	1	3	2	0	2	3	3	0	5	1	0	0	4
33	M	1	2	6	3	1	2	3	3	0	3	2	0	0	5
34	M	2	1	2	2	0	3	4	2	0	5	1	1	0	4
35	M	2	3	7	5	1	3	4	8	0	2	2	1	0	2
36	M	1	3	3	3	1	2	3	3	0	2	1	1	0	2
37	M	8	6	4	5	1	1	3	4	1	3	4	1	0	2
38	M	4	5	6	2	2	4	8	8	0	2	4	1	0	1
39	M	4	3	2	4	1	1	1	3	3	0.5	3	0	1	2
40	M	2	3	0	2	0	2	6	3	1	4	2	1	0	2
41	M	2	4	6	2	1	5	7	3	0	3	3	0	0	4
42	M	1	2	3	4	1	2	4	5	0	2	3	1	0	1
43	M	1	1	3	2	0	1	6	3	0	1	2	1	0	3
44	M	6	7	3	5	2	2	5	1	0	1.5	3	1	0	1
45	M	3	3	2	0	0	2	7	3	1	1	1	0	0	5
46	M	4	2	2	0	0	3	8	6	0	6	3	1	1	2
47	M	2	2	0	0	0	2	3	3	1	1	1	0	0	4
48	M	6	3	3	1	0	2	5	2.5	0	6	2	0	0	5
49	M	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	5	1	0	0	2
50	M	2	5	4	6	2	2	7	4	0	5	3	1	0 (1 car)	1
51	M	1	6	8	6	1	2	5	6	0	4	1	1	1	1

52	M	1	2	2	2	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	1	0	4
53	M	4	4	7	4	0	1	2	2	0	2	3	0	0	5
54	M	6	6	10	5	1	6	8	4	0	3	5	0	0	2
55	M	5	1	0	3	0	1	2	3	1.5	1	2	0	0	5
56	M	4	5	6	5	1	6	8	6	2	4	3	2	1	1
57	M	4	7	3	3	1	2	4	5	0	6	2	1	0	2
58	M	4	6	4	2	1	3	7	3	1	1	3	2	1	2
59	M	2	2	1	0	0	3	6	5	0	1.5	2	1	0	4
60	M	2	3	5	9	1	2	5	2	0	7	2	2	0	1
61	M	1	1	2	2	0	3	5	3	0.5	3	1	0	0	5
62	M	5	2	1	1	0	3	7	4	0	1.5	4	1	0	2
TOTAL		166	217	220	205	45	169	316.5	242.5	34	190.5	147	48	12	
AVERAGE		2.677419	3.5	3.548387	3.306452	0.725806452	2.725806	5.104839	3.911291	0.548387	3.122951	2.370968	0.774194	0.196721	

[1] Denotes the number of men in the compound who have more than one wife.

APPENDIX 2
Activity and Interview Schedules and Research Method Formats

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES



Planting Season

Dry Season

Harvesting Season

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Accra and Kumasi

Name	Org.	Date	Topics Covered
Mathew Oppong	MOFA	04/07/01	MOFA IMT projects; VIP; women and transport
Adeline Ofori-Bah	RICU/MOFA	04/07/01	Tamale pilot infrastructure project; women and transport; IMTs
Mr. Ashong	DFR	05/07/01	Northern Region pilot infrastructure project; promotion of IMTs in NR; affordability and acceptability of IMTs; women and IMTs
Mrs Annan	WIAD/MOFA	06/07/01	Role of WIAD; WIAD projects; gender awareness in MOFA; women and IMTs
Jake Tettey	DFID	06/07/01	DFIDs role in infrastructure and rural livelihoods projects
Joseph Boamah	MOFA	09/07/01	IMTs in northern Ghana; animal traction; links between VIP and DFR
Seth Asiamoh	Extension services	09/07/01	Gender division of labour; women's role in agriculture; women and transport
Johann Hesse	GTZ/PPMED	09/07/01	GTZ projects in transport sector; experience of working in IMTs
Dr. Wayo Seini	ISSER/ Legon	11/07/01	Women's mobility and freedom of movement; IMTs in Northern Ghana
Ellen Bortei-Doku Aryeetey	Legon University	11/07/01	Gender relations in Ghana; women's role in household and agriculture
Dr. Sheini Abu-Bakar	GRATIS	11/07/01	Transport related projects in northern Ghana; women and IMTs; women and mobility
Paulina Boamah	Danida	12/07/01	Danida projects in transport/IMTs
Alex Wilson		12/07/01	Research methods; living and working in northern Ghana
Mr. Tengey	African Centre for Human Dev.	13/07/01	Work of ACHD, particularly in transport/gender; possible contacts in northern Ghana
Mr. Tetteh	RTS	13/07/01	IMT credit-related issues; issues with credit group formation
Wilberforce Ansah	Self Help Foundation	19/07/01	SHF projects in transport/IMTs; facilitating the introduction of IMTs
Prof. Adarkwa	UST Kumasi	20/07/01	Work of DFR in IMT projects; gender impact of IMT projects; credit-related issues
Peter Donkor	UST, Kumasi	20/07/01	History of IMT projects in Ghana; successes/failures in IMT promotion; women's use of IMTs in Ghana
Ben Dadzie	NRIL	19/02/02	Recent IMT project in Ghana; sustainability of IMTs
Joseph Boamah	MOFA	19/02/02	VIP project; disbursement of power tillers; where distributed; loan agreement; sustainability/availability of spare parts
Vincent Djarbeng, Tweneboana Adu-Sarkodie	ADRA	21/02/02	Work of ADRA in north; animal traction; religion/culture and attitude towards AT; group purchase of IMTs; loan recovery
Joseph Appiah	Starlite bicycle shop	21/02/02	Composition of customers; types of bicycles available; number of women customers; women's use of bicycles; changes is women's use of bicycles

Tamale

Name	Org.	Date	Topics Covered
Naresh Shukla	CARD	26/07/01	Work of CARD; involvement in IMT projects
Richard Amoah	ACDEP	26/07/01	IMT projects in northern Ghana; rural transport issues
Jon Kirby	TICCS	26/07/01	Informal conversation
Sylvester Adongo	MOFA	27/07/01	Rural transport issues in northern Ghana
David Ackah	Tamale Implements Factory	27/07/01	History of TIF; work of TIF; involvement in IMT projects; funding
Yaa Adoma Adjekum	CIDA	27/07/01	CIDA work in IMTs/gender and transport
Nabila Anaba	Actionaid	27/07/01	Gender projects in northern Ghana; rural transport issues
Ibrahim Tikumah	Oxfam	30/07/01	Work of Oxfam in northern Ghana
Philip Laryea	MOFA	30/07/01	Potential for IMT usage in northern Ghana; gender relations; women as load-carriers
Mr. Musah	MOFA	30/07/01	Animal traction in northern Ghana; role of MOFA in AT promotion
Mr. Salifu	VIP/MOFA	30/07/01	VIP in northern Ghana; relationship with DFR
Andrew Kuyipwa	World Vision	31/07/01	Work of WV in northern Ghana; women as load-carriers; IMTs in northern Ghana
Issifu Zibrila	Farmer's group	31/07/01	When farmers group formed; how group organised; what use power tiller for; how has group benefited from IMT
Alhassan Ziblim	FATAWU bicycles	01/08/01	History and work of FATAWU; women and bicycles; cultural differences in the use of IMTs; design of new IMTs
Mr. Salifu	VIP/MOFA	01/08/01	VIP involvement with farmers groups; role of NGOs in IMT promotion
Benedict Anamoah	NORRIP	02/08/01	History and work of NORRIP
Mohammed Abdul Mumis	RTTC	02/08/01	Role of Gender and Development officer in RTTC; women and transport; role played in IMT schemes
Amidu Ibrahim Tanko	CARE	02/08/01	Gender issues in northern Ghana; women's involvement in IMT projects; rural transport issues in northern Ghana
Ishmael Lansah	Network	03/08/01	Work of Network; women and IMT usage in northern Ghana; cultural constraints on women's use of bullocks
Grace Koyiri	WIAD	03/08/01	Women and transport; women's access to resources; women's roles in the household
Mr. Zakaria	Amasachina	06/08/01	Work of Amasachina; role played in promotion of IMTs; women and IMTs
Konlan Lambongang	Maata-n-Tudu	06/08/01	Microfinance/women's groups in northern Ghana;
Mr. Badu	DFR	07/08/01	DFR experience in IMT projects
Andrew Kwabla	Dept. Urban Roads	07/08/01	Provision of infrastructure for IMTs
Juliana Bostic		10/08/01	Women and transport; rural transport issues in Upper West Region
Razaq Saidu	Fatawu Bicycles	26/02/02	Composition of customers; number of women customers; women's use of bicycles

Datoyili- pilot study

Name	Type of interview	Date	Topics Covered
Imuru Alhassan (Chief) with elders	Semi-structured	13/08/01	Social organisation of Datoyili; farming practices; gender division of labour; marketing; transport and access issues
Imuru Adam (M)	Semi-structured	13/08/01	Gender division of labour; household decision-making; purchase and use of IMTs
Adamua Amina (F)	Semi-structured	14/08/01	Household activities; farming activities; trading activities
Nimunatu Adama (F)	Semi-structured	14/08/01	Household activities; farming activities; use of transport
Sanatu Adisa (F)	Semi-structured	14/08/01	Household activities; travel and access to transport; use of IMTs; restrictions on travel
Imuru Adam (M)	Informal discussion	14/08/01	Wealth differentiation/ wealth categories; IMTs and wealth differentiation
Issah Bachisu (F)- trader	Semi-structured	14/08/01	Trading activities; household activities; load-carrying activities; travel and access to transport; use of bicycles and other IMTs
Sanatu Imuru (F)- elderly widow	Semi-structured	14/08/01	Activities when younger; travel when younger; changes over years; role in household
Iddrisu Alhassan (M)	Semi-structured	15/08/01	Household and farming activities; seasonal variation; travel and transport; ownership and use of IMTs; gender division of labour
Karimu Alhassan (M)	Semi-structured	15/08/01	Household and farming activities; seasonal variation; travel and transport; ownership and use of IMTs; gender division of labour
Senatu Adam (F)	Semi-structured	15/08/01	Household activities; management of time;
Adam Mampon (M)	Semi-structured	15/08/01	Household and farming activities; seasonal variation; travel and transport; ownership and use of IMTs; gender division of labour
Abdul Raqman (M)	Semi-structured	15/08/01	Household and farming activities; seasonal variation; travel and transport; ownership and use of IMTs; gender division of labour
Various men	Informal discussion	16/08/01	Available means of transport; use and ownership of IMTs; maintenance; women's use of IMTs; gender division of labour; duties of husband
Ibrahim Moro (M)	Semi-structured	16/08/01	IMT projects in area; VIP
Mohammed Kakananu (local artisan)- M	Semi-structured	17/08/01	Work as artisan; range of patrons; common maintenance problems; costs of maintenance; purchase of spare parts
Tia Docrogo (M)	Semi-structured	17/08/01	Household activities; farming activities; seasonal variation; ownership and use of IMTs; purchase and use of bicycle-trailer; maintenance problems with BT
Adisa Haku (F)	Semi-structured	17/08/01	Trading activities; use and access to transport; transport costs;
Saidu Abu (M)	Semi-structured	17/08/01	Travel and transport; household activities; gender division of labour
Imuru Alhassan (Chief)	Semi-structured	17/08/01	Involvement of DA and Agric. Extension in area; local government structures
Malia Imoro (F)- trader	Semi-structured	19/08/01	Trading activities; transport of goods; use of and access to transport; income from trading; expenditure; household activities
Karim Alhassan (M)	Semi-structured	19/08/01	VIP; community groups in Datoyili; purchase and use of IMTs

Tarsaw

Name	Type of interview	Date	Topics Covered
Amina Issah (F)	Semi-structured	31/08/01	Background information on Tarsaw; marketing system; farming activities; division of labour; health and education facilities
Meeting with Chief and Elders	Introduction meeting	03/09/01	Background information on Tarsaw; organisation of village; farming activities; division of labour; transport/access issues
Amina Issah (F)	Informal discussion	03/09/01	Activities of women; load-carrying
Oudu Wana (M)	Semi-structured	03/09/01	Marketing of crops; cost of farming inputs; transportation costs of various crops
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	05/09/01	Division of labour; contribution of children; load carrying; IMTs
Meeting with women's group	Focus group discussion	06/09/01	Organisation of group; membership of group; activities of group; work of women; access issues
Mahama Juabie (M)	Semi-structured	06/09/01	Activities as village facilitator; background; introduction of transport to Tarsaw; household decision-making; contribution of children; organisation of household
Meeting with Tarsaw Youth Association	Focus group discussion	08/09/01	Organisation of group; activities of group; inventory credit; farming activities; IMTs
Rahi Braimah F)	Semi-structured	11/09/01	Daily activities; load-carrying; farming activities; trading activities; access to transport; travel and transport
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	12/09/01	Annual income and expenditure; survival through 'lean' season; timing of farming activities; timing of sale of produce; role of wife in household and farming activities; role of other household members; polygamous relationships
Meeting with women's group	Focus group discussion	14/09/01	Daily activities; organisation of tasks; rainy/dry season activities; sources of income
Iddrisu Mumuni (M)	Semi-structured	14/09/01	Wealth differentiation; means of increasing wealth status; transport and wealth; women and IMTs
Iddrisu Alhassan (M)	Semi-structured	01/10/01	Family background; purchase and use of motorbike; involvement with Ghana Cotton Co.
Mumuni Domoyuka (M)	Semi-structured	01/10/01	Family background; role in family; sources of income; travel and transport
George Kanyan (M)	Life history	01/10/01	Family background; education; relationship with family; role as compound head; organisation of compound; how family relations have changed
Mahama Juabie (M)	Informal discussion	07/10/01	Wealth categories; differences between 'rich' and 'poor'; qualities look for in wife; marriage procedure; women's mobility after marriage
Bukari Pkaria (M)- village blacksmith	Semi-structured	07/10/01	Family background; work as blacksmith; workload; costs; problems
Abdul Rahaman Sulemani (M)- village mechanic	Semi-structured	08/10/01	Family background; work as mechanic; workload; training; access to parts; costs; problems
Issahaku Basi (M)- village mechanic	Semi-structured	08/10/01	Family background; work as mechanic; workload; training; access to parts; costs; problems
George Kanyan (M)	Life history	10/10/01	History of involvement with animal traction; impact AT has had on income, expenditure and livelihood
Cecilia Kanyan (F)	Semi-structured	10/10/01	Family background; organisation of compound; farming and household activities; income and

			expenditure; travel and transport; women's access to IMTs;women 'roaming'; discourses about mobile women;
Various men	Informal discussion	12/10/01	Women and mobility; women's use of IMTs; wealth categories; differences between 'rich' and 'poor'
Issah Moro	Informal discussion	13/10/01	History and migration of Galibaga; development of language; introduction of Islam; development of area
Fuseini Safia Buno (F)- young educated woman	Informal discussion	14/10/01	Wealth categories; transport and wealth; educational background; life since leaving Tarsaw; marriage and motherhood; polygamy
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	14/10/01	IMT projects in area
Joseph Benonkura (M) Senior Environmental Health Assistant	Informal discussion	15/10/01	Health issues in area; work of environmental health assistant; women and access to transport;
Mahama Juabie (M)	Informal discussion	15/10/01	Projects is area (IFAD, Actionaid, etc); relationship with surrounding villages
Amina Issah (M)	Informal discussion	15/10/01	Women's farming activities; groundnuts farm; vegetable garden
Amidu Tarpoulie (M)	Semi-structured	16/10/01	Marriage duties of man; duties towards in-laws; migration for work- where migrate? Reason for migration? Time of year?; prices for produce in different markets
Mariama Sumani (M)	Informal discussion	16/10/01	Load-carrying; women and transport
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	16/10/01	Organisation of village; organisation of area; marketing structure
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	17/10/01	Polygamy; duties of husband; division of labour between different family members
Issahaku Kpuria (M)	Semi-structured	17/10/01	Bullock-cart- uses; costs; maintenance problems; motorised transport available- uses, costs; women's use of and access to transport
Mary Bawa-elderly woman (F)	Semi-structured	18/10/01	Family background; compound structure; household activities; changes since young girl; marriage and motherhood
Sumani Puria-elderly man (M)	Semi-structured	20/10/01	Family background; farming activities; trading activities; transport and travel; history of IMTs in area; developments in area;
Abudu Kalla (M) labourer	Semi-structured	20/10/01	Family background; employment (terms of work, wages etc); women and IMTs; women and travel;
Mohammed Dimmie- (M) school teacher	Semi-structured	22/10/01	Family background; education; living conditions; work as teacher; views of mobile women; views of women using IMTs
Issaka Mori (M)-store owner	Semi-structured	26/10/01	Family background; farming activities; trading activities; purchase and use of IMTs; wealth categories
Alhassan Abubakari (M)-flour mill owner	Semi-structured	26/10/01	Family background; grinding mill business
Comfort Afierigo (F) Agric. extension	Semi-structured	26/10/01	Family background; education; living conditions; work as agric. extension; developments in area
Ahmed Kanluoru Doho (M)- Unit Committee Chairman	Semi-structured	31/10/01	Role as Unit Committee Chairman; local government structure; tax collection duties; role as Technoserve Group vice-chairman; local NGO activity

Abiba Tommie (F)- school teacher	Semi-structured	31/10/01	Family background; education; difficulties living in Tarsaw; views of local population; relationship with other women in village; women's freedom of movement; women's use of IMTs
Sumaila Dubie (M)- JSS school head teacher	Semi-structured	05/11/01	Family background; school attendance; girl-child education; problems with running school; wealth differentiation
Walembelle Paramount chief (M)	Semi-structured	07/11/01	Local government structures; role as paramount chief; family background; history of area; history of Galibaga; development of area; religion; gender relations; wealth categories
Matina Benonkura (F)- school teacher	Semi-structured	09/11/01	Family background; education; women's freedom of movement; women's access to IMTs; wealth differentiation
Abass Karim Nyo- (M) Business advisor Technoserve	Semi-structured	10/11/01	Background; family history; work of technoserve; group formation; credit-related issues; gender division of labour; women and travsport
Abulai Ausara Yakubu (F)- food seller	Semi-structured	12/11/01	Background; family history; work as food seller; savings and credit
Hillia Saidu (M)- Chief elder of Forkuwieboi	Semi-structured	14/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village;
Kanluoru Daa (M)- Chief elder of Bombieboi	Semi-structured	14/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
Jawei Sumani (M)- Chief elder of Tangoboi	Semi-structured	14/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
Hawa Adamu (F)- food seller	Semi-structured	15/11/01	Background; family history; work as food seller; savings and credit
Sumani Pkura (M)- Chief elder of Jakpaboi	Semi-structured	20/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
Kuri Dango (M)- Chief elder of Balusumo	Semi-structured	20/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
Issifu Salifu (M)- Chief elder of Bukemboi	Semi-structured	20/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
Mumuni Iddrisu (M)	Semi-structured	21/11/01	Wealth differentiation; differences between rich and poor
Boton Dimah (M)- Chief elder of Taluwo	Semi-structured	23/11/01	History of village; development of village; history of Galibaga; organisation of village
George Kanyan (M)	Informal discussion	24/11/01	History of bullock-traction in area
Mahama Juabie (M)	Informal discussion	01/03/02	Dry season activities (demonstrated through transect walk through village)
Sumani Ibrahim (M)	Informal discussion	01/03/02	Difficulties that young men have to deal with (e.g. obtaining wife); duties of husband
Abiba Tommie (F)- school teacher	Semi-structured	03/03/02	Men and load-carrying; women and bicycles; social expectations; relationship between husband and wife; women and power
Adissatu Salamu (F)- elderly woman	Semi-structured	03/03/02	Travel and access to transport; travel and saving time; restrictions on travel; role within compound; women and cattle; income and savings
Amama Haruna (F)	Semi-structured	03/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; travel and saving time; restrictions on travel; women and IMTs; women and load-carrying; income and savings; divorce; abortion

Mariama Sumani (F)	Semi-structured	05/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; restrictions on travel; women and load-carrying; household activities (seasonal variation); seniority in compound; polygamy; divorce
Mahama Dala (M)	Semi-structured	06/03/02	How/when/why purchase car; means of purchase; usage of car; wealth categories
Ibrahim Benin (M)	Informal discussion	06/03/02	Wealth categories; IMTs and wealth categories; cattle and wealth
Ibrahim Benin	Informal discussion	07/03/02	Introduction of Islam in area
Habiba Haruna (F)	Life history	08/03/02	Family background; life in hometown; relationship with parents and other family members; schooling; life in Accra; etc
Mimuni Bahuo (M)	Semi-structured	09/03/02	Family background; household and farming activities; hiring of bullocks for farming; problems with harvest; support from wife and other family members; problems of poverty
Ibrahim Benin (M)	Informal discussion	09/03/02	Organisation of compound; relationship between compound members;
Nganpuo Ajara (F)	Semi-structured	10/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; means of travel; restrictions on access to IMTs; household and farming activities
Kadjia Zakaria (F)	Semi-structured	10/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; restrictions on travel and access to IMTs; household and farming activities; contribution of children; polygamy
Ahmed Kanluoru (M)	Informal discussion	11/03/02	Why carrying water; local perceptions of men carrying water
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	11/03/02	Control over household labour; hierarchy of household members; polygamy
Da Kanluoru (M)- village elder	Semi-structured	15/03/02	Family background; income and farming activities of the compound; hiring of bullocks for farming; problems with harvest; support from wife and other family members; problems of poverty
Ibrahim Luri (M)	Semi-structured	15/03/02	Family background; income and farming activities of the compound; hiring of bullocks for farming; problems with harvest; support from wife and other family members; problems of poverty
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	15/03/02	Control over wife; difficulties faced when wife is away
Asana Mimuni (F)	Semi-structured	16/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; restrictions on travel and access to IMTs; household and farming activities; contribution of children; polygamy
Mahama Juabie (M)	Semi-structured	18/03/02	Measurement of time; seasonal variation in measurement of time; marriage ritual; divorce; abortion
Adamu Tarpoulie (M)	Life history	20/03/02	Family background; early childhood; relationship with family members; roles and responsibilities as child; current family situation; death of parents; role as compound head; changes in area
Sheitu Issah (F)	Life history	21/03/02	Family background; early childhood; role within household; marriage; difficulties of marriage and motherhood; household responsibilities and roles; relationship with husband
Christina Dery (F)- Kulfuo Nurse	Semi-structured	22/03/02	Family background; education; health problems in area; problems faced as local nurse; head-loading related injuries; women's health issues
Mary Mahama (F)	Life history	23/03/02	Early childhood; role in household; relationship with parents and other family members; life in Tarsaw; marriage

Issah Moro	Life history	24/03/02	Childhood; relationship with parents and other family members; education; marriage and fatherhood; family obligations
Mary Mahama (F)	Life history	25/03/02	Life in Tarsaw; relationship with husband; life in 'brigade'; work in Tamale; motherhood
Mary Mahama (F)	Life history	26/03/02	Difficulties with marriage/husband; roles/responsibilities of husband; life in Tumu; difficulties returning to life in Tarsaw
Zanabu Bukari (F)	Semi-structured	26/03/02	Societal expectations; marriage; inheritance
Adamu Tarpoulie (M)	Life history	26/03/02	Travel when young; arrival of bicycles and bullock-carts in area; impact on travel; benefits of travel; changes in gender relations over years; views on women using IMTs
Sumani Siafu (M)	Life history	27/03/02	Childhood; family background; relationship with parents and other family members; role in household; work in Koforidua; changes in farming; changes in family relations; changes in gender relations
Kadjia Bakperen (F)	Semi-structured	29/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; restrictions on travel and access to IMTs; household and farming activities; organisation of activities; contribution of children
Wana Rahinatu (F)	Semi-structured	29/03/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; restrictions on travel and access to IMTs; household and farming activities; organisation of activities; contribution of children
Sumani Siafu (M)	Life history	29/03/02	Life after returning from Koforidua; how perceived by other people; wealth categories; marriage; polygamy; relationship with 5 wives; keeping peace and harmony between wives; development of area
Haruna Kanluoru (M)	Semi-structured	02/04/02	Farming practices; animal traction; hiring-out of bullocks and equipment; purchase of bullocks and equipment; responsibilities as compound head; control over household labour;
Ibrahim Benin (M)	Semi-structured	02/04/02	NGO activities in area; credit availability; VIP
Amina Issah (F)	Life history	04/04/02	Life in Tarsaw; marriage; relationship with husband; life in Navrongo
Sulimani Fatima (F)	Semi-structured	07/04/02	Family background; travel and access to transport; travel and saving time; restrictions on travel; income and expenditure; household responsibilities; views on women riding bicycles
Amina Issah (F)	Informal discussion	08/04/02	Daily activitiews; organisation of tasks; time management; sharing of tasks with other compound members; women's access to loans
Amina Issah (F)	Life history	09/04/02	Childhood; education; relationship with parents and other family members; relationship between father and mother; how meet husband; life in Tarsaw; marriage and restrictions on mobility; motherhood
Afisa Osuman (F)- young cyclist	Semi-structured	13/04/02	Background; access to bicycle; how learn to ride; how perceived by other people; relationship with husband; use of bullock-cart
Mary Mahama (F)	Life history	14/04/02	Life in Tarsaw; difficulties of living in Tarsaw; household activities; role as women's group leader; how learn to ride bicycle; when learnt to ride; other issues
Mahama Gbanwuri (M)	Semi-structured	16/04/02	Family background; farming activities; harvest; sources of income; work in Accra; life in Tarsaw; use of bullocks; maintenance of bullock

			equipment
Mimuni Dimah Kanyan (M)	Semi-structured	19/04/02	Background; farming activities; sources of income; purchase and use of bullock cart; loan of BC; economic benefits of bullock-cart; women and use of BC
Jahara Moro (F)	Semi-structured	26/04/02	Organisation of daily tasks; prioritisation of tasks; saving time; impact of Ramadan on time and activities; contribution of children; impact of Islam on freedom of movement; polygamy; divorce
Asana Ibrahim (F)	Semi-structured	26/04/02	Organisation of daily tasks; prioritisation of tasks; saving time; impact of Ramadan on time and activities; contribution of children; impact of Islam on freedom of movement; polygamy; divorce
Amina Moro (F)	Semi-structured	28/04/02	Organisation of daily tasks; prioritisation of tasks; saving time; impact of Ramadan on time and activities; contribution of children; impact of Islam on freedom of movement; polygamy; divorce
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	04/05/02	Relationship between men and women; duties of wife; responsibilities of husband
Ibrahim and Issah	Informal conversation	04/05/02	Men as natural leaders; strength; power
Adamu Salamatu (F)	Life history	05/05/02	Childhood; activities performed as girl; relationship with parents and other family members; traditional beliefs; arrival of Islam; marriage; life in Tarsaw; motherhood; workload
Issah Moro (M)	Informal discussion	01/06/02	Responsibility of men; role of women; relationship between men and women
Moro Fuseini (M)- Mallam	Semi-structured	04/06/02	How become Mallam; family background; education; work of Mallam; role of women according to Islam
Farimara Seibu (F)	Semi-structured	05/06/02	Family background; farming and household activities and responsibilities; organisation of tasks; co-operation between household members
Hawa Dimuah (F)	Semi-structured	05/06/02	Role in household; household activities; organisation of tasks; cooperation between compound members; how daily activities affected by Ramadan; women's use of bicycles
Fati Issifu (F)	Semi-structured	05/06/02	Household activities; organisation of tasks; time management; time measurement; cooperation between compound members
Nashira Moro (F)	Semi-structured	05/06/02	How organisation household activities around school
Alidu Ahmedu Jedu (M)- Susu collector	Semi-structured	10/06/02	Work as susu collector; how susu system works; main customers; number of customers; amounts save; purpose of saving; where operate
Aliamata Abulai (F)	Semi-structured	11/06/02	Family background; farming and household activities and responsibilities; organisation of tasks; co-operation between household members
Amina Issah (F)	Informal discussion	01/07/02	What women look for in a man; choice over husband; importance of children
Adamu Salamatu (F)	Life history	02/07/02	First arrival of bicycles; who owned bicycles; women's use of bicycles; opinion of women riding; arrival of motorbike; trading activities
Jamila Bontei (F)	Semi-structured	03/07/02	Household and farming activities; organisation of tasks; contribution of children; how workload changes after marriage; competition between co-wives
Maria Seidu (F)- blind woman	Semi-structured	03/07/02	How become blind; how cope with loss of sight; how affected role in household; how meet husband; acceptance in village; relationship with co-wives
Lariba Adams	Semi-	05/07/02	Background; household and farming activities;

(F)- chop bar owner	structured		food selling activities; purchase of bicycle; when use bicycles; problems with women using bicycles
Adamu Salamatu (F)	Life history	08/07/02	Changes in area; changes in marketing; changes in women's roles and duties; arrival of bullock-carts and impact on women's load-carrying; women's farming activities; changes in health care; changes in transport availability

Wa and Tumu

Name	Organisation	Date	Topics Covered
Roosevelt Otoo	DFR, Wa	22/10/01	Condition of roads in UWR; access problems in UWR; staffing of DFR; prioritisation of works;
Mrs. Kate Bob-Milliar	National Council of Women and Development	23/10/01	Work of NCWD; activities in UWR; gender division of labour; women's freedom of movement
Watson Dey	Area manager, Highways Dept	23/10/01	Condition of roads in UWR; access problems in UWR; remit of highways department
Gaspard Deery	Planning Officer, District Assembly	01/11/01	Economic variations across district; relationship between north and south of Ghana; relationship between Sissala and rest of UWR; development of region; NGO activity; decentralisation
Mr. Nzo	Senior housemaster Kanton Sec. School, Tumu	02/11/01	School attendance; girl-child education; problems with running school
Baba Pele	Ghana Education Service, Tumu	02/11/01	Work of GES; local government structure; LG attitude towards education; school attendance; girl-child education
Johnson Chiame	DFR, Tumu	03/11/01	Links with DA; criteria for selection of roads; capacity of DFR at district level
Onyobie Abu (M)	MOFA, Tumu	23/04/02	VIP activities in area; mobilisation activities; work with women; potential of donkeys in area
Zakaria Yakubu (M)	Dep. Director Sissala District Assembly	23/04/02	ASIP projects; animal traction; training provided; work of community mobilisers; problems in district

IMT DIARIES

Owner Use **Transport mode:** **Season**

Day	Collecting produce from farm	Transport crop to market	Transport to Market	Firewood collection	Water collection	To Farm	Transport input from village to farm	Transport of input from market	Transport of building materials	Process or grind food	To clinic	To school	To Mosque	Social visit inside village	Social visit outside village	Leisure ride (no purpose)	Other (specify)
Thursday																	
Friday																	
Saturday*																	
Sunday																	
Monday																	
Tuesday																	
Wednesday																	

Rental Use **Transport mode** **Season**

Day	Collecting produce from farm	Transport crop to market	Transport to Market	Firewood collection	Water collection	To Farm	Transport input from village to farm	Transport input from market	Transport of building materials	Process or grind food	To clinic	To school	To Mosque	Social visit inside village	Social visit outside village	Leisure ride (no purpose)	Other (specify)
Thursday																	
Friday																	
Saturday																	
Sunday																	
Monday*																	
Tuesday																	
Wednesday																	

These IMT diaries were filled in at three points in the year: planting season, harvesting season, and dry season. Twenty compounds were selected at random and all means of transport in those compounds were monitored for a period of one week at each of the three points in the year

TRAFFIC COUNTS

ROAD FROM: **TO:** **DATE**

OUT OF VILLAGE MD/Non-MD

TIME															
											Bullock-Cart				
12 - 1															
1 - 2															
2 - 3															
3 - 4															
4 - 5															
5 - 6															

ROAD FROM: **TO:** **DATE:**

OUT OF VILLAGE MD/Non-MD

TIME														
											Bullock-Cart			
6 - 7														
7 - 8														
8 - 9														
9 - 10														
10 - 11														
11 - 12														

ROAD FROM: **TO:** **DATE:**

INTO VILLAGE MD/Non-MD

TIME											Bullock-Cart			
12 - 1														
1 - 2														
2 - 3														
3 - 4														
4 - 5														
5 - 6														

ROAD FROM: **TO:** **DATE:**

INTO VILLAGE MD/Non-MD

TIME															
													Bullock-Cart			
12 - 1																
1 - 2																
2 - 3																
3 - 4																
4 - 5																
5 - 6																

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONNAIRES

Household Questionnaire- 1 (September 2001)

Background Information

1. Number of Compound_____
2. Section of Village_____
3. Name of Head_____
4. Gender of Head_____
5. Number of Wives_____

Compound Composition

6. Children (of Head): Boys_____ Girls_____
7. Other members of the Compound (please specify)_____

_____

Farming

8. Crops farmed (in units)_____

_____

9. Distance to farm (in Km)_____

Transport

10. Number of transport means owned in compound
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

11. Who owns the means of transport?
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

12. Main users of transport
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

13. Other users of transport
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

14. What is the transport means used for?
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

15. Seasonal variation in usage
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

16. Is payment ever given when borrowing
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

17. Where do you maintain the means of transport
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

18. Do women or girls ever use
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

19. What do they use them for?_____

20. Reasons for non-use (if appropriate)_____

Household Questionnaire- 2 (June 2002)

Farming

1. How much did you harvest in the last season (specify units)?
   a. Maize_____
   b. Yam_____
   c. Groundnuts_____
   d. Guinea corn_____
   e. Millet_____
   f. Rice_____
   g. Beans_____
   h. Other (please specify)_____

2. Do you consider this to be a good harvest (please state reasons whether yes or no)?

   _____

3. How have you used the harvest so far?
   a. Maize_____
   b. Yam
   c. Groundnuts_____
   d. Guinea corn_____
   e. Millet_____
   f. Rice_____
   g. Beans_____
   h. Other (please specify)_____

4. How was the produce transported, if sold?
   a. Maize_____
   b. Yam_____
   c. Groundnuts_____
   d. Guinea corn_____
   e. Millet_____
   f. Rice_____
   g. Beans_____
   h. Other (please specify)_____

Transport

5. Have any new means of transport been purchased recently?
   a. Bicycle_____
   b. Bullock-cart_____
   c. Motorbike _____
   d. Other_____

6. Where purchased from?
   a. Bicycle_____
   b. Bullock-cart_____
   c. Motorbike _____
   d. Other_____

7. How much did it cost?
   a. Bicycle_____
   b. Bullock-cart_____
   c. Motorbike _____
   d. Other_____

8. How transported from purchase source?
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

9. Was it purchased on credit or paid in full?
    a. Bicycle_____
    b. Bullock-cart_____
    c. Motorbike _____
    d. Other_____

10. Have you hired out any of your means of transport in the past year (Y/N)_____

11. What were the terms (in terms of payment or otherwise)?_____

12. Have you borrowed any means of transport in the past year (Y/N)_____

13. What were the terms (in terms of payment or otherwise)?_____

Migration

14. Has any member of the compound migrated for work ion the past year? If so, please give details (who? Where migrated? Reason for migration? When? etc)_____
    _____

15. Has any member of the compound travelled for trade or other purposes in the past year? If so, please give details (who? Where travelled? Reason for travel? When? etc)_____
    _____

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

FGD 1 (Women): Women's work (31/03/2003)

Topics covered:
Women's work: types of work that women are involved in and seasonal variation in work; times in the year when work is most/least strenuous

Headloading: different items that women carry; items that are most/least strenuous and why; health problems related in load-carrying; accidents due to load-carrying.

Activities:
Seasonal calendars showing variation in work and load-carrying.

FGD2 (Women): Time (06/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Work and time: how do women organise their various activities; how plan the day to complete the tasks; how estimate time taken/needed to complete various tasks; what measures of time are used to estimate time; role of daily prayers in measuring time and organising tasks; role of school times; is it important to know the time? Why?

Saving time: what things can save you time? Is it important to save time? What role can different modes of transport play in saving travel time?

FGD 3 (Women): Travel (11/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Travel purpose: where do women travel to? Purpose of travel? Different types of travel that women do both inside and outside the village.

Constraints on travel: what constraints do women face in accessing places and resources; freedom of movement; how does women's freedom of movement change through their lifetime; role of husband/father etc. in restricting women's travel and mobility; trust.

Activities:
Participatory mobility exercise, dividing stones between different categories of travel, for both 'inside' and 'outside' village travel.

FGD 4 (Men): Travel and transport (16/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Constraints on travel: availability of transport; when and why use different modes of transport; are the constraints experienced differently by men and women of different ages; compare the differences between the travel patterns of men and women and the constraints they face.

Gender and transport: discuss women's use of, and access to, bicycles and other IMTs; what constrains women's use of different IMTs; why do boys have more access to bicycles than girls; why don't women buy bicycles and other IMTs.

FGD 5 (Men): Time (19/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Work and time: how do men organise their various activities; how plan the day to complete the tasks; how estimate time taken/needed to complete various tasks; what measures of time are used to estimate time; role of daily prayers in measuring time and organising tasks; is it important to know the time? Why? Is it important for men to own a watch? Why? What is the difference between men and women's measurement of time?

Saving time: what things can save you time? Is it important to save time? What role can different modes of transport play in saving travel time?

Activities:
Participatory mobility exercise, dividing stones between different categories of travel, for both 'inside' and 'outside' village travel.

FGD 6 (Women): Power relations (20/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Power: what things have power/control over your actions and how is this power exercised; what individuals have power/control over you and how is this power exercised; who has the ability to control you mobility and why; do you, as women, feel that you have control over your bodies (e.g. able to access family planning etc.); how does women's freedom of movement change over the life course?

Discourse: how are mobile women viewed and talked about within the village; does this impede your movement within/outside the village?

Income and power: is money important in power relations; who has control over the income; do men and women have equal chances of obtaining income; how does this affect your mobility; is it important for women to earn their own income?

Decision-making: do you feel you have a voice in the compound; what do you have decision-making power over within the compound; do you feel you have a voice in the community; what do you have decision-making power over within the community?

FGD 7 (Young women cyclists)- 26/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Access to bicycles: when/how learnt to ride a bicycle; is it your own bicycle or do you borrow it from someone else (is so, whom do you borrow it from); what conditions are attached to the use of the bicycle, if borrowed; are there times when you have more/less access; what purposes do you use the bicycle; when would you use the bicycle over other means; what is the furthest distance you have ridden; what do your colleagues think of you riding; are there restrictions on women's use of bicycles due to pregnancy, if so, when are you expected to stop and when able to resume riding; do you wear particular clothing when using the bicycle; do you feel you have more freedom of movement than your colleagues; what are the economic benefits of riding a bicycle; are there any other benefits to riding a bicycle; would you consider purchasing a bicycle of your own; what is stopping you?

FGD 8 (Women's credit group)- 27/04/2002

Topics covered:
Credit related issues: how did you first hear about the availability of credit; how/why decide to get a loan; what part did your husband play in the decision; how was the loan group formed; what were the conditions of the loan (e.g. interest rates, repayment etc.); what did you use the loan for; did you achieve your objectives; did having a loan make your work easier/harder; did having a loan create more/less worries; did having a loan help to improve your standard of living?

Rich and Poor: how do you become rich in this area; how would you be able to identify a rich/poor person (e.g. clothing, health, housing etc.)?

FGD 9 (Young women cyclists): Marriage and Polygamy (29/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Role of wife: how do you learn how to behave towards your husband; how do you prepare for married life; what difficulties do you face when you first get married; what is expected of you when you first get married; how does your relationship with your husband change as you get older?

Financial matters: how are financial matters resolved between you and your husband; who has control over money and other assets; what role do you play in decision-making within the compound?

Polygamy: how are tasks/responsibilities shared between co-wives; how does additional wives affect your relationship with your husband; do you ever experience problems with co-wives; are their any benefits to having a co-wife; how does it affect your access to resources within the compound?

Other issues: women and power; money and power; trust and freedom of movement; how can things be improved for women?

FGD 10 (Men): Control/power and gender relations (30/04/2002)

Topics covered:
Roles and responsibilities: what responsibilities do men have within the family/compound; what problems do men face as head of the family; what are the difficulties men face in maintaining harmony between wives; how do men benefit from having more than one wife?

Women's mobility: do you feel that women should be able to move about freely; men's control over women's movement; trust and women's mobility; fears of women's mobility; how control women's mobility?

FGD 11 (Mixed) Power/control of women (02/05/2002)

Topics covered:
Powerlessness v responsibility; need to control women's mobility; trust/mutual trust; why is there a gender division of labour? Women as load-carriers.

Transport: how can IMTs be used to help women; what forms of transport are most suitable for women and why?

APPENDIX 3

The Shea-butter processing method

Pictorial description of traditional 'Dagomba' shea butter processing method





1. Harvest
Fallen fruit picked from ground

2. Accumulate
Fresh fruit heaped for one or two weeks





3. Boil
Boil the sheanuts with water in large metal pots for about 90 mins. with temperatures of $> 95^0C$



4. Dry nuts
Whole nuts spread in the sun on a hardened mud or concrete floor



5. De-husk
Nuts hand-pounded with simple tools to remove husks





6. Dry kernels
Kernels spread in the sun for storage or sale (raw material exported or processed)



7. Crush kernels
Hand-pounded (1-3 at a time!) using simple tools



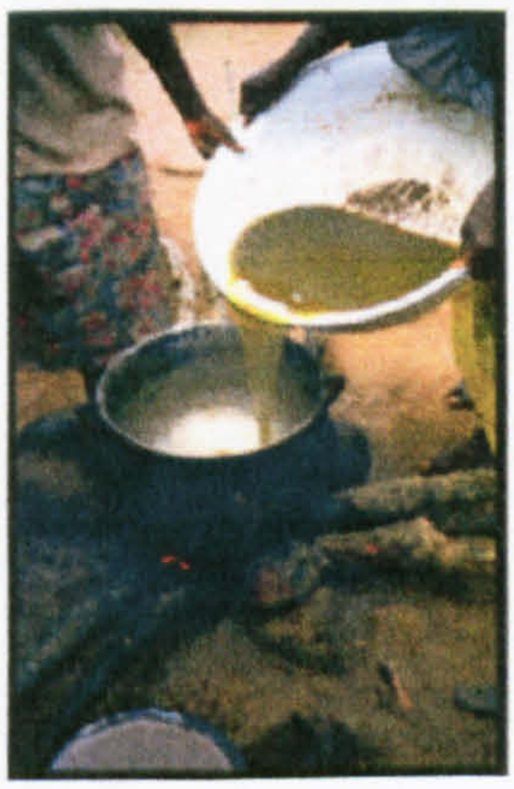
8. Dry-roast kernels
Dry-fried in large iron pots over open fires



9. Milled
Milled into paste, usually by commercial operator



10. Kneaded
Vigorously hand-beaten for 30-60 minutes until fats form emulsion, washed & removed



11. Boil fat
Cleaned by boiling on an open fire with decanting stages to clarify the oil



12. Prepare for use, sale or storage
Liquid left to cool & stirred into a smooth creamy butter

Source: Peter Lovett, Technoserve, Shea-butter pilot study. Northern Region.