

TRANSHUMANCE AND NOMADISM IN THE SYLVO-PASTORAL REGION (FERLO) OF SENEGAL: PERSPECTIVES FOR PASTORAL DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In Senegal, pastoral mobility has developed greatly over the last years as an adaptation to new environmental conditions. Competition for access to resources has increased (greater need for farms and buildings, need to get new pasturing zones available, etc.). In spite of new measures taken by the authorities, conflicts between transhumant pastoral groups and sedentary groups has hardly been reduced.

This article deals with the current pastoral mobility in the sylvo-pastoral area (*Zone sylvo-pastoral* (ZSP) with regard to the previous situation, and indicates the trends for sustainable development in the main livestock production area of Senegal.

1. MATERIAL AND METHODS

During 2000 and 2001, surveys were carried out concerning 20 ZSP drillings sites, i.e. 20 % of all the hydraulic development of the area as part of various agro-ecological systems. Initially, 500 domestic leaders were targeted, about 25 of which were at the drilling zone (or 15 % of the total number of the households). Due to various difficulties during the data collection and processing, only 395 leaders could be taken into account.

Surveys and consultations were also conducted with the local and administrative authorities as well as technical services involved in the management of the sylvo-pastoral resources. Furthermore, visits were made to the transhumant departure area toward the ZSP (the West of the groundnut basin) and the ZSP transhumant zones of reception (the South groundnut basin and Senegal Oriental)

2. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

2.1 The main directions of pastoral mobility in ZSP

Two major directions of movement can be identified: One takes place during the dry season and extends from the North to the South/Southern East. The other occurs in the rainy season and extends from the West/Southern West towards the Centre (Figure1). The zone represented by the triangle between Kaffrine, Linguère and the North West of Tambacounda constitutes the main receiving area for transhumant flocks and herders.

2.2 The evolution factors of the pastoral mobility

In comparison to the transhumance data of previous years (Gomez 1979, Barral 1982 and Santoir 1983), the pastoral mobility features in the ZSP have evolved according to a number of factors including the following:

2.3 Ethnic groups

Peuls and Sereres are the main groups practising this mobility. The transhumance of Sereres is, however, a relatively new occurrence. With the extension of cropping lands, they are obliged to leave their farmlands in the rainy season and to move their herds in the ZSP.

2.4 Distance

2.4.1 With regard to the area of influence of the borehole

This small transhumance can be considered as nomadism. It is carried out to exploit crop residues or have access to the best pastures or leave places for cropping. This very wide-spread type of transhumance generally helps reduce conflicts with the farmers.

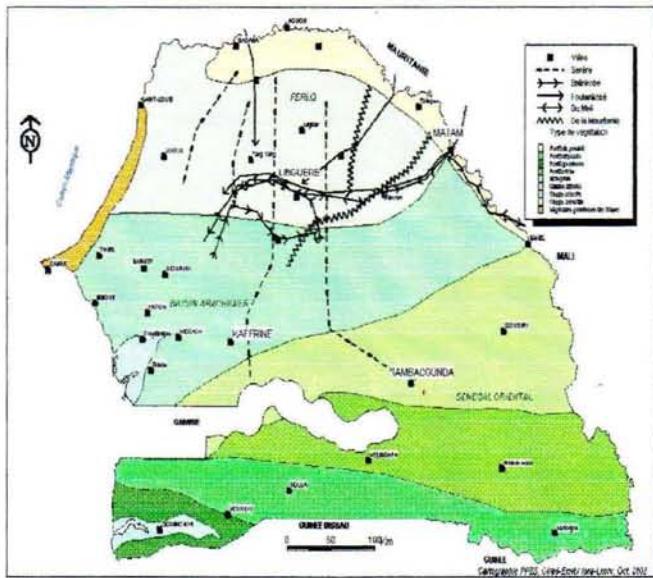


Figure 1. Current routes of pastoral mobility in ZSP

2.4.2. Outside the area of influence of the borehole

This transhumance is made over several hundreds of kilometres. It takes place regularly, but the size of herds and flocks involved and the exacerbation of its environmental effects (excessive pruning of woody species, the anarchic settling of camping sites in close proximity to ponds) are noticeable. The presence of transhumant populations from the North in the Niokolo Koba Park, shows that no pasture area is too distant

2.4.3 Interstate

- Between Senegal and Mauritania: since the tragic events of 1989, the number of the Moorish herds, especially cattle and camels, moving to the ZSP has been heavily reduced. On the other hand, small ruminants keep on arriving through Bakel. This transhumance has a double purpose, which consists of fattening up the animal and then selling it during the Tabaski. Together with the transhumance made in the North of Matam, these are the two current forms of herd movement towards Senegal. A movement of Walo herds towards the other bank is also identified; the flow is not significant, and besides, they are people who do not want their herds to go too far away from their living place.
- Between Senegal and Mali: movements occur in the Bakel area in both directions but presently, the increase of attacks by armed gangs is of particular concern

2.5 The purpose

2.5.1 Water points search

this still constitutes a very important purpose of movement despite the efforts made by political authorities. In ZSP, the strategy of water transport through rubber inner tubes is worth mentioning. This is the reason why livestock keepers of big herds of small ruminants do not often need to move them for watering.

2.5.2 Fodder search

The floristic composition of pastures remains a significant purpose of movement; but presently the important fact is the wild research for *Zornia glochidiata* concerning sheep.

Crop residues constitute, for many breeders, a primary reason for movement of herds; the sale of crop residues after harvest is a new mode of access to these residues

2.5.3 Market Research

Breeders keep on moving with their herds for the marketing of milk products and small livestock. The development of weekly opened markets even in basically pastoral areas and the improvement of the road network have further encouraged the commercialisation of animals in the town centre.

2.5.4 Getting better health requirements

Availability and more efficient veterinarian drugs against animal diseases and the increase in the number of veterinarians have opened pastures existing in more and more remote areas to exploitation. These pastures were formerly inhospitable because of some prevailing conditions.

2.5.5 Mineral elements search (salt cure)

This practice, specified only in Matam as a purpose of transhumance, seems to be less common than in the past; this abandonment results from the use of mineral and vitamin complementation.

2.5.6 Free Living space search

This has become more marked because of the anarchical settling and encroachment of farming lands. In some regions, in the rainy season there are pastures, but to avoid problems related to the roaming of animals, they are driven in more remote sites (forests, etc.).

2.6 The animal species

2.6.1 Small ruminants.

A massive departure of small ruminants was noticed from October in all the North part of the sylvo-pastoral region; this type of transhumance seems to be the main adaptation to environmental conditions.

2.6.2 Cattle

Nowadays they are less mobile in the western part of the sylvo-pastoral region; elsewhere the big herds mostly move, but lactating cows often stay to supply the family with milk.

2.7 The family members moving with the drove

In most cases, just one member of the family goes with the herd, which is very different from the times when all the population of sylvo-pastoral zone was on move (Grosmaire, 1957). Among the Fulani, young couples are more likely to move, while within the Sereres group, only men lead the herds.

3. EVOLUTION OF THE CONFLICT AND MEDIATION

Efforts are always made by the Senegalese authorities for the establishment of a legal framework enabling a harmonious exploitation of the pastoral resources. Apart from constraints due to the fact that the requirements of pastoral breeding are not taken into account, many problems relating to the enforcement of these legal measures were noticed.

With the support of the local authorities, the legal dispositions concerning the management of the pastoral resources are always scoffed at. The conflicts between rural players still prevail.

For years, mechanisms of conflict prevention (pre - harvest meetings, creation of mediation committees, statutory measures determining the harvest period) have been developed everywhere; these are administrative or local authority undertakings. Experiences of community management are implemented in some zones by the local groups or with the support of development projects.

4. CONCLUSION

Contrary to the statements of authorities, livestock of the sylvo-pastoral area of Senegal are largely mobile for a number of reasons. The modalities of conflict regulation and mediation remain unsatisfactory even if strong efforts are made in certain areas. The contribution of this pastoral system to the development of the breeding of sheep and cattle shows that it needs greater consideration from authorities for a more harmonious rural development.

5. REFERENCES

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