Working paper: non-beneficiary survey in UER

Roger Blench
Wa, Sunday, 01 January 2006

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1. Introduction

To assess the impact of the project effectively, it should ideally be measured both against a baseline survey of potential beneficiaries prior to the start of the project and against non-beneficiaries once the project is complete. A baseline survey was conducted for LACOSREP II by FIDS of UDS at Navrongo in 2000, but was sent back several times for analytic and methodological deficiencies and was only finally accepted with reluctance (FIDS 2002). Many figures given there seem to lack credibility given a knowledge of the ground, and it has therefore not been used. A new survey was carried out in April-May 2005 conducted by Hippolyte Bayor (2005) analysing retrospective perceptions of change by beneficiaries, and a small sample of non-beneficiaries was included. A fresh, larger-scale survey of non-beneficiaries, preferably also in settlements where no NGOs were operating conducted between the 1st and 6th of June 2005 in four districts of UER. 104 households were censused and responded a variety of questions about changes in their life and production system since 1995, i.e. when LACOSREP I became fully operational. This working paper presents the results of that survey with some interpretation of the results.

Appendix Table 1 and Figure 3 show the numbers of interviews, the districts and villages where they were conducted and their distribution. Appendix Table 2 shows the languages in which interviews were conducted. The survey was a single page and was not intended to seek numerical information, except in the case of household size and structure, making it easier to answer rapidly.

2. Profile of interviewees

The policy of finding respondents was to interview household heads or responsible individuals, since many actual households are away on labour migration. The mean age of the interviewees was 50.5 years and some 79 (76%) were household heads. Seventy-seven (74%) were male and 27 female (26%) reflecting a high incidence of single mothers as well as those whose husbands have gone south and never returned. UER is an ethnically complex region and the survey attempted to capture this diversity. Table 1 shows the ethnic groups of those interviewed.

Table 1. Ethnic group of interviewee

Language	No.	%
Bisa	6	5.8
Booni	3	2.9
Gurune	28	26.9
Kasem	24	23.1
Kusaal	23	22.1
Nabti	1	1.0
Nankani	9	8.7
Talensi	7	6.7
Yanga	3	2.9

3. Household structures

Households in UER are dominated by migration. No family is without some members away and the percentage away reflects the stresses on food availability in a particular district. migration is a well-established tradition and many plantations in the humid zone of Ghana depend heavily on this movement. Low-paid jobs in the urban sector are also very much the preserve of migrant northerners. Contributions to household budgets vary; some migrants regularly send back food and money, others forget after some years and choose to establish themselves permanently in the south. Table 2 shows the sample size for each district, the numbers of migrants per household, mean number of household members present and both represented as a percentage of the entire household (i.e. those present and on migration).

Table 2. Household size and migrant numbers

District	No.	Migrants per household	%	Household members present in UER	%	Total
Bawku East	32	8.09	38.3	13.03	61.7	
Bolga	16	8.31	34.5	15.81	65.5	
Bongo	23	5.96	30.0	13.91	70.0	
Kasena Nankana	33	2.58	26.7	7.06	73.3	
Total	**104**	**5.90**	**33.4**	**11.80**	**66.6**	**17.7**

Figure 1 shows these figures as a bar chart;

Figure 1. Mean household size and percentage migrants in UER districts
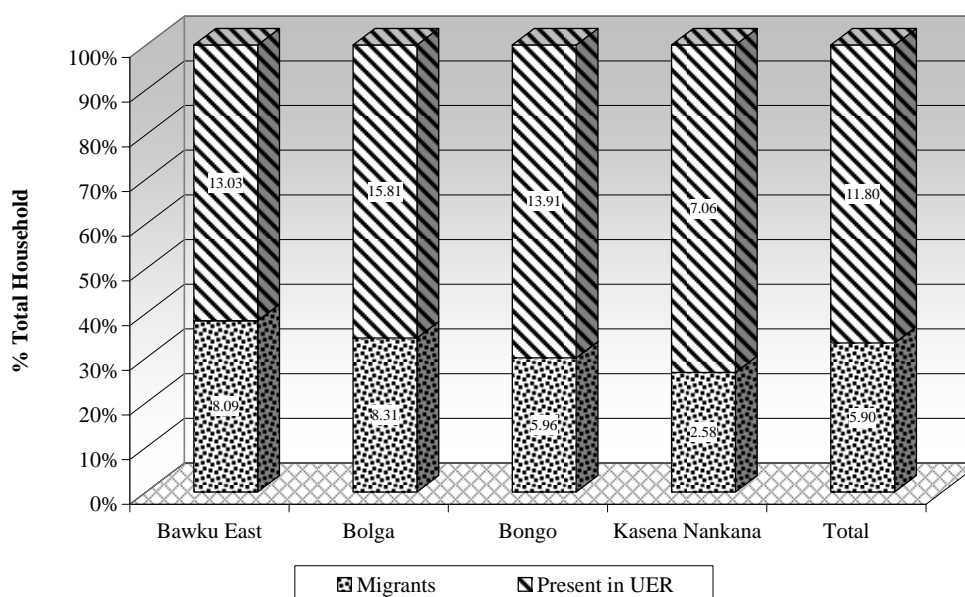
Although absolute household size varies considerably between districts as does number of migrants, the overall percentage of migrants is less variable. This reflects ethnic differences in household structure; lower numbers of migrants per household in Kasena Nankana is an indication of the structural consequences of smaller households. Keeping familial structures functioning requires a certain minimum of key members which cannot be dispensed with; thus fewer can leave for migration.

Migration has an important impact on household structure, as men migrate preferentially and women thus outnumber men in every district. Table 3 shows the structure of households in the four districts studied.

Table 3. Structure of households present in UER

District	No.	Men	%	Women	%	Children	%
Bawku East	32	3.4	22.3	5.0	32.8	6.8	44.9
Bolga	16	5.0	29.5	5.5	32.5	6.4	38.0
Bongo	23	2.6	22.8	3.2	28.2	5.5	49.0
Kasena Nankana	33	1.9	27.4	1.9	27.4	3.1	45.1
Total	**104**	**3.0**	**24.9**	**3.7**	**30.8**	**5.3**	**44.3**

N.B. 'children' are all those less than 15 years

The male-female balance does not smoothly correlate with the overall migration percentages suggesting that in some areas, notably Bolgatanga, there is higher pressure on women to migrate in comparison to men. Figure 2 shows these percentages as a bar chart;

Figure 2. Distribution of men, women and children within households
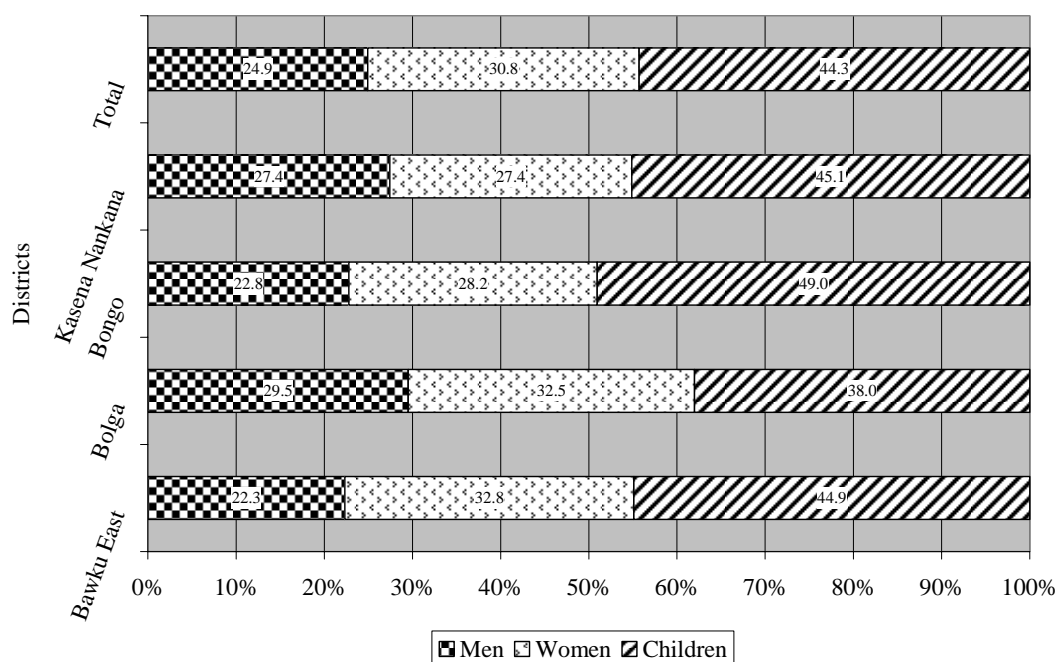
This is almost certainly a reflection of preferential access to education. Work opportunities for women require relatively more education than for men, where manual labour is most common.

4. Farming systems

Farming in UER is predominantly rainfed, with dry-season cultivation an innovation that probably dates from the 1960s. Bucket irrigation in riverside gardens was probably introduced by migrants, but it has gradually spread to the indigenous population, as have more modern technologies, such as small pumps. Dry season farming based on seepage from dams originally intended for livestock watering is also practised. Of the sample of 104, some 30 (28.8%) farmers were practising this type of farming although 22 of these were in Bawku, indicating that the techniques are far from widespread in UER as a whole. This is also correlated with the lack of indicators for seasonal hunger in Bawku (cf.).

Soil fertility management as a whole is a major issue for food security and the promotion of composting has been a major strategy of MOFA, IFAD and many NGOs. Traditionally, farmers collected and carried animal manure and placed it on the field, but other methods of improving the quality of compost were unknown. However, this message has clearly spread, as shown in Table 4. Farmers were asked to compare their present practices with 1995 and the great majority are now practising composting of some type, usually simply the heap method. More advanced techniques, such as *zai* and the pit method are also known, and will probably spread further in the coming years.

Table 4. Composting

Techniques	No.	%
All composting	88	84.6
Zai?	6	5.8
Pit?	24	23.1
n=104		

Access to other agricultural inputs is very limited. Fertiliser was widespread in the 1970s and 1980s when it was available at highly subsidised prices, and cotton farmers were supplied with it for their farms, but it has only been sold at market prices for nearly a decade. Since the year 2000, prices of all types of fertiliser have more than quadrupled. Pesticides are freely available but similarly expensive. Table 5 shows the numbers of

farmers using more fertiliser and pesticides since 1995, a remarkably low level given the fertility crisis. Many other farmers commented that they now used none at all due to the cost.

Table 5. Input use

Item	No.	%
Fertiliser	18	17.3
Pesticide	19	18.3
n=104		

Herbicides and other inputs are at vanishingly low levels.

5. Crops

The crop repertoire in UER is typical of rainfed farms across semi-arid West Africa, except that the high proportion of millet grown is rather unusual, millet more generally being found in <600 mm. Table 6 shows the percentages of farmers who had increased production of specific crops since 1995.

Table 6. Increased crop production

Species	No.	%
Maize	36	34.6
Millet	71	68.3
Guinea-corn	62	59.6
Beans	52	50.0
Vegetables	71	68.3
Cotton	4	3.8
n=104		

Although it is widely believed that maize cultivation is on the increase, of the cereal staples, maize has shown the lowest growth. The growth in traditional staples undoubtedly reflects an absence of farm inputs combined with ever-rising human population. Many farmers also commented that they have to bring ever more land into cultivation just to get an equivalent yield every year. The growth in vegetable production is very notable, suggesting that even without project interventions, the concept of growing vegetables for sale is everywhere becoming more important. However, as in other figures, Bawku predominated in the increase in gardening, with 31 out of 32 farmers growing more vegetables. Finally, the low figures for cotton reflect its virtual disappearance as a cash crop. Many farmers commented that they had dropped it entirely.

6. Livestock

Compared with crops, farmers who had increased their livestock holdings were relatively few in all districts. This was greatly outweighed by farmers who stated that their holdings were either static or had actually fallen due to disease. Table 7 shows the individual species and the percentage of farmers who stated that their holdings had increased since 1995.

Table 7. Increased livestock holdings

Species	No.	%
Cattle	16	15.4
Sheep	17	16.3
Goats	22	21.2
Pigs	11	10.6
Chickens	22	21.2
Guinea-fowl	30	28.8

n=104

Since 1995, government has introduced cost recovery for veterinary drugs and this has led to a dramatic fall in vaccination against common epizootics. The low figures for pigs reflect the epizootic of African swine fever which swept through UER in 2003. Livestock typically represent a savings strategy and cash resource in UER, so these low figures should be a cause for concern.

7. Living standards

Measuring overall living standards is difficult, as economic change causes perceptions of deprivation to change. UER has been dependent on Food Aid for a long time. Only three households admitted to being dependent on Food Aid, but school feeding programmes, which supplement children attending school, are widespread throughout the region.

Another typical measure of increased wealth in rural populations is the use of income proxies, typical purchases in rural communities, such bicycles and tin roofs. For a long time, these have been valid in much of Africa, where the priority purchases in a newly monetarised economy are fairly standard. Bayor (2005) used numbers of individual proxies to try and demonstrate that IFAD beneficiaries were wealthier than non-beneficiaries. But crucially, even non-beneficiaries are acquiring more possessions. Table 8 shows interviewees' perception of increased material possessions since 1995.

Table 8. Income proxies

Item	No.	%
Bicycles	57	54.8
Tin roofs	58	55.8
Radios	64	61.5

n=104

It should be remembered that the sample villages are significantly remoter than the IFAD beneficiary villages as they were chosen for the absence of interventions. It may be that as consumer goods become relatively cheaper and certainly more available, even in rural areas, they become a less reliable guide to well-being. Certainly, in a context where 30% of households say that hunger is worse than in the previous decade, it suggests that consumer durables may be acquired on the strength of a single good year and do not reflect any sustained increase in well-being.

With this in mind, respondents were asked an open-ended question about the changes they observed in their lives since 1995. There was no restriction on the nature of responses or on the number of responses; some informants felt that there had been no change at all in their lives. For this reason, the results can be treated as indicative and not statistically valid. The cumulative responses are set out in Table 9;

Table 9. Perceived changes in life since 1995

Life-changes	No.	%
More hunger	33	31.7
More education for children	26	25.0
Better health-care	21	20.2

Life-changes	No.	%
Lower crop yields/poor soil fertility	11	10.6
Widespread livestock disease	9	8.7
Greater community spirit	7	6.7
Better crop production	6	5.8
More material possessions	6	5.8
Reduced hunger	6	5.8
Greater access to water	5	4.8
Women have greater access to trading	5	4.8
Women free from diet taboos	5	4.8
Unable to pay for medicine	4	3.8
More domestic animals	3	2.9
Reduced access to water	3	2.9
Poor trading conditions	3	2.9
More cash-crops	2	1.9
Better crop production	2	1.9
Improved sanitation	1	1.0
Reduced access to water	1	1.0
Access to credit	1	1.0

The high-frequency results are particular striking; almost a third felt that there was more hunger than a decade before, yet many also commented on the increased availability of schools and clinics. In the case of responses on hunger, it is notable that none of these were in Bawku and were concentrated in Kasena Nankana. Of the 33 responses declaring that hunger was greater, these were distributed in districts as follows (Table 10);

Table 10. Districts where hunger has increased

District	No.	%
Bolga	4	12.1
Bongo	5	15.2
Kasena Nankana	24	72.7

This was related to a perception of falling yields and reduced soil fertility.

8. Conclusions; general trends

The survey described here was intended to try and provide a picture of lives in villages largely unaffected by development projects in Upper East Region of Ghana. The results are generally disturbing; despite greater access to consumer goods, schools and clinics, food shortages remain very prevalent and indeed are probably increasing. The main cause is ever-expanding population with only very limited agricultural intensification. Migration is at exceptionally high levels, with 25-40% of any given household away. The exception to this is Bawku, where increased vegetable production and expanded trading networks have probably reduced hunger, although this is also where migration is at its highest level.

Other results make it clear that IFAD interventions, especially dams, have significantly improved the lives of beneficiaries in a region where conditions are extremely difficult. This survey indicates that conditions are not improving for most of those outside the orbit of development projects and without substantially more investment may continue to deteriorate.

Bibliography

Bayor, Hippolyte 2005. *Summary Tables of IFAD survey of LACOSREP and UWADEP*. UDS, Tamale. ms.
FIDS 2002. *Report on a baseline survey of the upper East Region of Ghana.* ms. LACOSREP office.

Appendix: Survey details

Enumerator Names	Questionnaires
Ronald Miah	34
Benno Achana	35
Aaron Alezan	35

Appendix Table 1. Villages and numbers of non-beneficiary survey

District	Village	No. Interviews	Total
Bawku East	Aloko	4	32
	Beka	4	
	Beo Tankoo	1	
	Daware	4	
	Kulagu Bansi	4	
	Widnaba	4	
	Yalugu	4	
	Ziako	3	
	Zong Alatingu	4	
Bolga	Kpatia	4	16
	Tindong	4	
	Zono	4	
	Zuarungu Katonga	4	
Bongo	Beo Tankoo	4	23
	Kambungo	4	
	Tindon Boko	6	
	Zoko	9	
Kasena Nankana	Amutanga	4	33
	Badunu	4	
	Katiu	4	
	Mangoro	4	
	Nabango	4	
	Nakong	4	
	Sakaa	4	
	Yedania	5	
Total			**104**

Appendix Table 2. Language of interview

Language	Number	%
Booni	1	1.0
Gurune	34	32.7
Kasem	25	24.0
Kusaal	32	30.8
English	3	2.9
Talensi	1	1.0
Nankani	8	7.7

Figure 3. Distribution of interviews

Bawku East Bolga Bongo Kasena Nankana