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Methodological innovations in Burkina Faso with village network mapping

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In October 1992 IIED conducted a PRA training¹ for PATECORE and partners in Burkina Faso. PATECORE (*Projet d'Aménagement de Terroirs et Conservation de Ressources/Land Management and Resource Conservation Project*) has worked in Bam Province, Burkina Faso since 1988, receiving funding from German Technical Assistance. Their approach to land use management is widely known for its innovation and success. During the final evaluation, they made it clear that PRA could be very useful in many stages of the land use management activities.

Two co-trainers were Matthieu Ouedraogo (*Projet Agro-Forestier*, Oxfam, Yatenga) and Moussa Ouedraogo (PNGT - *Projet National de Gestion des Terroirs*) provided the basis for a methodological innovation. In a previous training exercise, they had produced a so-called *Diagramme de Polarisation d'Echange* to describe inter-village relations, drawing it themselves from interviews. This time round we decided to ask the villagers to make these diagrams themselves (see Figure 1). These diagrams seem to be a valuable methodological addition as they allow communication links between villages to become clear and could provide insights into farmer-to-farmer extension strategies. They are a type of elaborate village-level mobility 'mapping' (although not geographically accurate) and could usefully explore rural-urban links.

From Figure 1, constructed by a large group of men in Bayend Foulgo, we learnt the extent of

inter-village management and exchange required for the management of a closure area. Although entirely located on Bayend Foulgo's lands, consultation and agreement was apparently required with 11 other villages to ensure the closure would be respected. From this we developed a type of composite Venn/Inter-village diagram (see Figure 2). The participants of the training were interested to see if there was any correlation between the strength of marriage ties and degree of collaboration with the management of the closure area. Marriage ties are commonly considered to be a good indicator of the quality of inter-village relationships. First the villagers indicated with which villages women had been exchanged in marriages. Then they showed the type of involvement of each of these (and two additional) villages in management of the closure area. Although no clear correlation between the two criteria was established, the combination of the two variables in one diagram of this type provides much scope for further experimentation to understand better the complexity of inter-village relations.

Another interesting development was the use of Venn diagrams to understand the concentration of power within the village (see Figure 3). After identifying members of the village committee, their membership of other village level groups was explored. This could prove interesting if used in combination with social mapping to see if there is a concentration of power within a particular family or neighbourhood.

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¹ A report of this training will soon be available through IIED or PATECORE.

Figure 1. Inter-village network diagram of Bayend Foulgo, Burkina Faso (drawn by men)

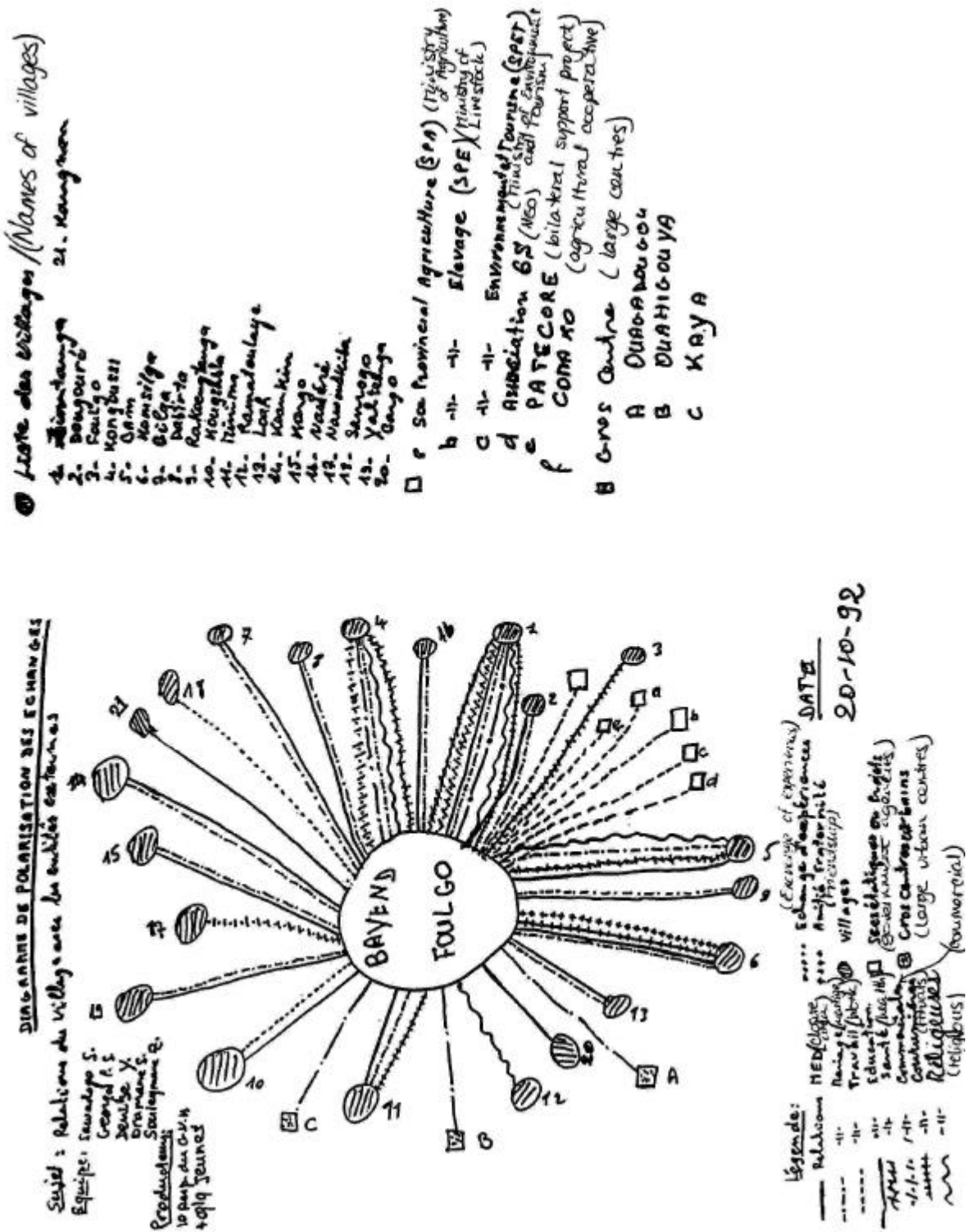


Figure 2. Inter-village Venn diagram of marriage ties and collaboration of closure area management

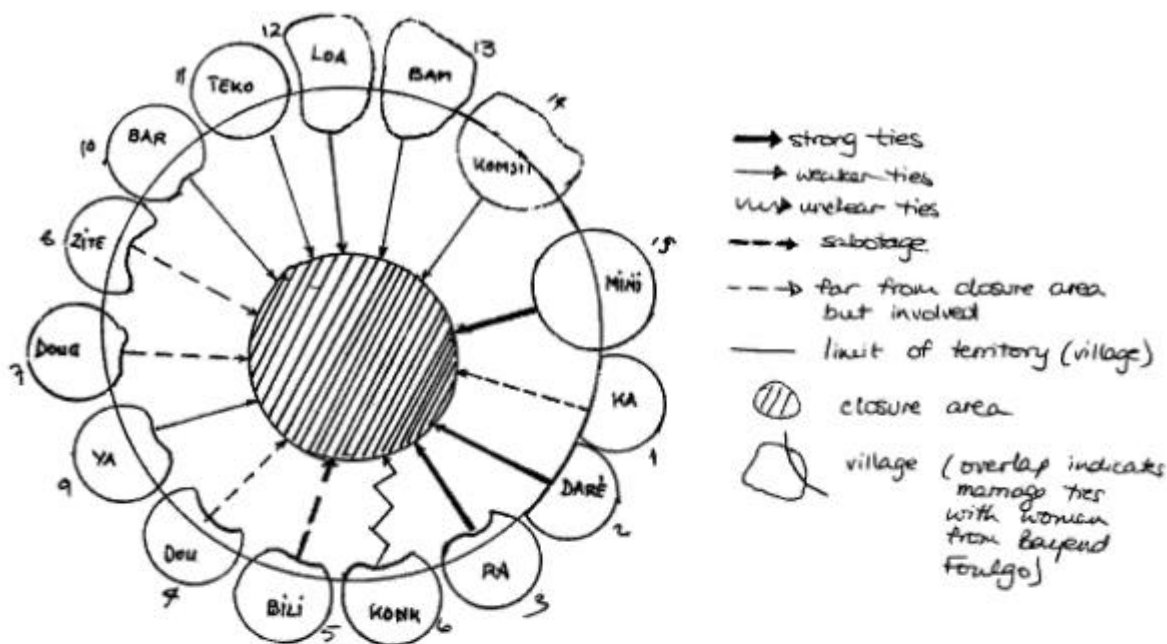


Figure 3. Diagram of village group membership of Noh, Burkina Faso