



## VILLAGERS FROM TATTI

You live in Tatti, a village on the bank of the River Senegal. The village has about 700 inhabitants. You have heard from the extension worker that today some white people working for a donor organization will visit you. You heard it has to do with irrigation. Many rumors go through the village. Perhaps you will receive a large-scale irrigation system like in Dioma. You obviously would want that! The general goal of the villagers is to convince the visitors to construct an irrigation system as soon as possible.

### ***Village background***

- *Unity in the village:* The most important value for you is 'unity' in the village. You can never contradict a fellow villager directly in presence of others. A favorite start of a sentence is "I agree with the last speaker.....", or "The last speaker has basically said everything, but.....". Hints on possible differences within the village are not done. Nevertheless, there are some differences in the village, as you all know.
- *Dependence:* people depend on God and one has to obey Him. God gives rain, God gives floods. Attempts to take control are often doomed to fail. Nature cannot be controlled.
- *Relations with others:* generally unequal. A lower person needs to try to come into the favor of higher people by praising him and family, and deliver services. A higher person increases in power when he can attach many people to him. That can be achieved with some money or food. Higher people are busy a lot with their power situation. If you want something from someone, you must praise him. After you received something, you must obey. Women have to obey men in general and their own husband in particular. In meetings they cannot speak unless directly spoken too. The village chief has always the last say.
- *Habits:* It is common to complain. People do not feel this as negative. The favorite greeting is: "How does your tiredness go?" The favorite reply is "Don't ask".
- *Ideas on the donor:* Already since 15 years donors are active in the region. Three donors were active in irrigation; the last time (2002) it concerned rehabilitation. Donors come from the North; these countries are rich, agriculture is developed, there is a lot of knowledge. Villagers who have worked in Europe are among the richest in Tatti. As they have something to give, donors are treated a high rank people, even by the higher people in the village. A new donor is a gift from God, although donors not always seem to realize that they are predestined by God to enlighten the poor. To put it stronger: sometimes they try to get away from it. It does not help to discuss this, donors probably do not believe in God.

### ***Subsistence background***

Your local farming system has three main activities, with an important for each of about 1/3 for incomes:

- Migration labor
- Traditional submergence and rain fed agriculture
- Irrigated farming

There is some cattle and you fish in the river. This year is a difficult year. Only little rain has fallen. Submergence agriculture has also experienced problems. Too many grasshoppers eat the harvests. Most young men are looking for work in the cities, but that is difficult. There is a lack of money and borrowing is difficult. Irrigation is your hope. You can tell much more, but make sure you do not contradict the last speaker from your village!

### ***Irrigation in the village***

In 1995 irrigation system I was built close to the river. It was irrigated with a pump. It functioned for two years. In 1999 a second village irrigation system (II) was built, somewhat further from the river, again with a pump. Everyone received a plot of 0,2 ha. The system was not well maintained. When the pump broke down (fault of the village pump caretaker), you stopped irrigating. In 2002 the older irrigation system was rehabilitated and extended. This is now system III; every family in the village now owns 0,4 ha. There are two pumps and two main feeders. Harvests are low and costs are relatively high. Labor needs are high,

labor itself is intense. You manage the systems yourself. Water is distributed fairly; everyone awaits his turn and can take as much as he wants. Current problems are:

- The pump of system II is broke; it costs US \$ 14.000 to fix it.
  - The pump caretaker needs to be trained.
  - The village cannot get a loan anymore.
  - The larger feeder canal of system III has weak spots in an area of over 100 meters. The canals tend to breach all the time.
  - Some fields are relative high and difficult to irrigate.
  - It seems that water can never really go far in a canal. When the pump is turned off, water flows back. The pump is not strong enough.
  - The gates leak.
  - No field is level. Irrigation takes much more time this way.
  - The fields are much too small. You cannot live from them. Migration labor is still important.
- (You could divide these issues between the village members to be able to remember them)*

### ***Some remarks about reading maps***

Maps of irrigation systems are known to some villagers. They consider them rather poor attempts to figure the system. Usually they are black and white and the colors do not match the colors of reality. Trees and houses can never be found, which is rather amusing. Some of you can understand the collections of lines after some explanation, but only if the map is seen from the perspective of the real system from your position. Aliou (see personal descriptions) is able to indicate problem locations on a map.

### ***Meeting the mission***

The mission arrives. The village chief insists that the mission people will sit on good mattresses. The women representative arranges these. The village chief offers his chair to the one he thinks is the mission chief (independent of age!). He sits himself on a mattress. (if not mission member takes the chair, this remains empty). You inform about family, health, tiredness and work. From time to time villagers say "welcome, welcome...".

When everyone is seated, it is usual that visitors start speaking and tell who they are and what they do.

It is not that important what the mission tells you, you already know that it is about irrigation. Usually the white people only come when a project is about to start. The village chief gives a first reaction, followed by the president of the village irrigation system.

### ***Your task***

Read the assignment, prepare yourself (put it in writing). Prepare the meeting site; locate the irrigation systems from the site. You will meet the donors for 30 minutes. After the meeting you evaluate the progress of the meeting.

### ***Village people***

#### **Village chief (Diaye)**

The village chief is a religious old man. He owns much land in traditional agriculture and his sons send him money from town regularly.

#### **President of the village irrigation systems (Samba Thiam)**

Samba Thiam is about 50 years old. He has seen much from the world and is already 7 years president. He knows them by heart.

#### **Ibrahim**

This farmer is relatively young (40 years), and returned to the village from Europe not so long ago. He rents land from the village chief.

#### **Aminata**

Her husband went to Gabon 12 years ago, where he remarried. This makes Aminata relatively independent in the village. She is active in the women vegetable garden from Tatti.

#### **Aliou**

Aliou owns little and has had many misfortunes. He does not work as hard as he used too. But he knows much about irrigation and can, when the map is positioned correctly, explain about it excellently.



