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PRESENTATION DE LA REVUE AKIRI

Dans un environnement marqué par la croissance, sans cesse, des productions scientifiques, la diffusion et la promotion des acquis de la recherche deviennent un impératif pour les acteurs du monde scientifique. Perçues comme un patrimoine, un héritage à léguer aux générations futures, les productions scientifiques doivent briser les barrières et les frontières afin d'être facilement accessibles à tous.

Ainsi, s'inscrivant dans la dynamique du temps et de l'espace, la revue « **AKIRI** » se présente comme un outil de promotion et de diffusion des résultats des recherches des enseignants-chercheurs et chercheurs des universités et de centres de recherches de Côte d'Ivoire et d'ailleurs. Ce faisant, elle permettra aux enseignants-chercheurs et chercheurs de s'ouvrir davantage sur le monde extérieur à travers la diffusion de leurs productions intellectuelles et scientifiques.

AKIRI est une revue à parution trimestrielle de l'Unité de Formation et de Recherches (UFR) : Communication, Milieu et Société (CMS) de l'Université Alassane Ouattara. Elle publie les articles dans le domaine des Sciences humaines et sociales, Lettres, Langues et Civilisations. Sans toutefois être fermée, cette revue privilégie les contributions originales et pertinentes. Les textes doivent tenir compte de l'évolution des disciplines couvertes et respecter la ligne éditoriale de la revue. Ils doivent en outre être originaux et n'avoir pas fait l'objet d'une acceptation pour publication dans une autre revue à comité de lecture.

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La revue **AKIRI** n'accepte que des articles inédits et originaux dans diverses langues notamment en allemand, en anglais, en espagnol et en Français. Le manuscrit est remis à deux instructeurs, choisis en fonction de leurs compétences dans la discipline. Le secrétariat de la rédaction communique aux auteurs les observations formulées par le comité de lecture ainsi qu'une copie du rapport, si cela est nécessaire. Dans le cas où la publication de l'article est acceptée avec révisions, l'auteur dispose alors d'un délai raisonnable pour remettre la version définitive de son texte au secrétariat de la revue

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The Bororo community: From the Decline of Pastoralism to the Challenges of Socio-economic Reintegration

Sylvain TCHAGUI

University of Ebolowa (Cameroon),

Email: sylvain.tchagui@yahoo.com

&

Umaru HASSAN BUBA

University of Dschang (Cameroon),

Email: h.umaru36@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Livestock farming lies at the heart of the Bororo community's identity and way of life in Cameroon. Originally settled in the northern regions, these herders have migrated to other areas, notably western Cameroon. However, agricultural expansion, increasing urbanisation and climate change are gradually reducing the available pastureland, severely limiting their ability to sustain themselves. Faced with the inevitable decline of this pastoral activity, how can the socio-economic reintegration of the Bororo be ensured, and their livelihoods secured? The study adopts a mixed-methods approach combining secondary data with primary data derived from direct observations and semi-structured interviews. Results shows that land pressure and agro-pastoral conflicts are accelerating the decline of pastoralism. This situation leads to increased poverty among herders and the loss of their cultural identity. To adapt, the Bororo are turning to alternative occupations (security guards, cobblers or motorbike drivers). However, their integration remains difficult due to persistent language barriers.

Keywords: Bororo people, Pastoralism, Socio-economic, reintegration, West-Cameroun.

La communauté Bororo : Du déclin de l'activité pastorale aux difficultés de réinsertion socioéconomique

Résumé

L'élevage constitue l'essence de l'identité et du mode de vie de la communauté Bororo au Cameroun. Initialement installés dans les régions du nord, ces éleveurs ont migré vers d'autres zones notamment l'ouest Cameroun. Cependant, l'expansion agricole, l'urbanisation croissante et les changements climatiques réduisent progressivement les prairies disponibles, limitant fortement leur capacité de subsistance. Face au déclin inévitable de cette activité pastorale comment assurer la réinsertion socio-économique des Bororos et assurer leur moyen de subsistance ? L'étude s'appuie sur une approche mixte combinant des données secondaires et des données primaires issues des observations directes ainsi que des entretiens semi-directifs. Les résultats montrent que la pression foncière, les conflits agropastoraux précipitent le déclin du pastoralisme. Une situation qui engendre une pauvreté accrue des éleveurs et la perte de leur identité culturelle. Pour s'adapter, les bororos se tournent vers des métiers alternatifs (vigiles, cordonniers ou conducteur de moto). Cependant, leur intégration reste difficile en raison des barrières linguistiques persistantes.

Mots clés : Activité pastorale, Bororos, difficulté, réinsertion, socioéconomique, Ouest-Cameroun.

Introduction

Cameroon is characterised by remarkable cultural diversity, with each community developing social and economic practices that contribute to the formation of its identity. Among these communities are the Bororo people, who are found in several regions of the country, particularly in the West Region, where they have historically been associated with pastoralism. Having lived for decades in the heart of the Grassfield highlands, the Bororo have traditionally depended on livestock farming as their principal economic activity. Renowned for their rich pastoral heritage and distinctive cultural practices, this community has, since the early 1990s, been confronted with an unprecedented crisis linked to the rapid urbanisation of rural areas in West Cameroon.

Existing literature has focused mainly on the origins of the Bororo community, their way of life, and their difficult coexistence with farming populations, as well as the challenges they encounter daily. This study goes beyond these concerns by examining how members of the community are adapting to the gradual decline of pastoralism.

Traditionally nomadic, the Bororo have built their identity around extensive livestock farming, a way of life that historically enabled them to adapt to environmental and economic constraints. However, the expansion of agricultural activities, increasing pressure on land, rapid urbanisation, conflicts with neighbouring communities, and persistent climate fluctuations have progressively reduced grazing lands. These combined factors threaten not only their means of livelihood but also the very foundation of their cultural identity, which is deeply rooted in pastoralism.

This study therefore seeks to explore pathways for the socio-economic reintegration of the Bororo people in the context of the decline of pastoral activity, particularly in West Cameroon. More specifically, the article analyses the causes behind the gradual disappearance of livestock farming and examines its social and economic repercussions on the community. The decline of pastoralism has also contributed to the erosion of ancestral knowledge transmitted through cattle rearing, including traditional healing rituals, ceremonies associated with birth, and rites of passage marking the transition of young boys into adulthood. Furthermore, the reduction in pastoral activity has resulted in declining incomes and increasing poverty within the community.

For this reason, particular emphasis is placed on identifying strategies capable of preserving Bororo cultural heritage while facilitating adaptation to new socio-economic realities. Given

the language barriers that hinder their integration into wider society, as well as their limited access to education, there is a pressing need for inclusive policies that recognise, protect, and promote their cultural identity while taking into account their specific socio-economic conditions.

The methodological approach adopted in this study relied on both secondary and primary data. It involved field observations, the administration of questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions, all of which provided valuable findings for the analysis.

1. Western Cameroon as the study's test area

It is important to note here the materials, methods and reasons for selecting the area that has served as the setting for this study.

1.1. Materials

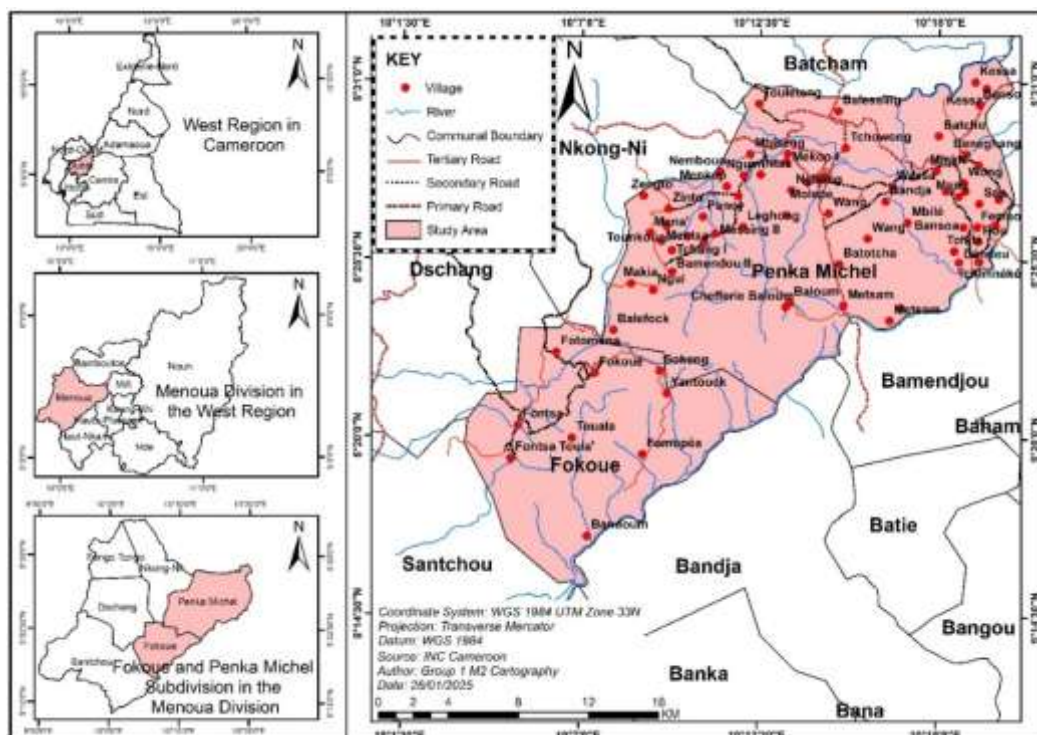
- A range of materials was used in this study. These included:
- Survey questionnaires for the socio-economic data (30) are shown in the figures.
- Guidelines for conducting semi-structured interviews (02), presented in this work as boxes;
- ArcGIS software for creating maps (location maps, grazing route maps);
- GPS data for the waypoints required to produce the various maps;
- From the camera, capturing moments that become photos and images;
- An Excel spreadsheet for creating charts and diagrams.

1.2. Geographical scope of the study

The Menoua Division in the West Region constitutes the geographical framework of this study. It is made up of six sub-divisions, among which the sub-divisions of Fokoué and Penka-Michel are of particular interest (Figure 1). These two administrative units were selected primarily because of the substantial presence of the Bororo population, who have inhabited these areas for several decades. Indeed, this part of the division has traditionally served as an important zone for Bororo settlement and transhumance activities. A second justification for the selection of these areas lies in their high population density, considered among the highest in the country, coupled with the extensive practice of pastoralism. Furthermore, Western Cameroon is characterised by a remarkable diversity of pastoral and livestock production systems, thereby providing an appropriate setting for examining the factors associated with the decline of pastoralism.

Finally, the choice of Fokoué and Penka-Michel was motivated by the intention to study communities sharing nearly identical natural characteristics, particularly in terms of topography, soil composition, and vegetation, within the same regional context. This similarity offers favourable conditions for comparative analysis. The Penka-Michel sub-division comprises four sub-districts, namely Baloum, Bamendou, Balessing, and Bansoa. The Fokoué sub-division, on the other hand, consists of the sub-districts of Bamegwou, Fotomena, Fontsa Touala, Fomopéa, and Fokoué.

Figure 1: Location of the study area



1.3. Methods

The study adopted a hypothetical-deductive approach and relied on the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data. Qualitative data were gathered through documentary research, which made it possible to consult previous studies and trace the origins of the Bororo people. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with community leaders in each of the two districts under study. These interviews provided valuable insights into the causes of the decline of pastoral activities and the consequences arising from this phenomenon.

Quantitative data, on the other hand, were obtained through a sociological survey carried out among 30 Bororo respondents, comprising 15 participants from each district. The questionnaires were administered using the snowball sampling technique, whereby information

is collected from target respondents through referrals and details provided by key informants. The purpose of the survey was to identify the challenges related to socio-economic reintegration, assess the measures already implemented by administrative authorities, and propose additional solutions capable of promoting the effective economic and social integration of the Bororo population within their present environment.

The data collected through the questionnaires were compiled and analysed using Microsoft Excel, from which graphs and statistical representations were produced. The findings derived from the analysis of the various data sets enabled the study to achieve the objectives defined at the outset.

2. The Main Causes of the Decline of Pastoral Activity among the Bororo People in Western Cameroon

Livestock farming constitutes a fundamental aspect of the cultural identity and economic livelihood of the Bororo people. However, this traditional activity is increasingly experiencing a significant decline, thereby posing serious threats to both food security and the socio-economic well-being of the community.

The factors responsible for this decline are numerous and interconnected. They include increasing pressure on land resources, environmental degradation, the progressive urbanisation of rural areas, and the rising level of education among younger generations, which has contributed to a gradual shift away from pastoral activities. Together, these factors have considerably weakened the sustainability of pastoralism among the Bororo population in Western Cameroon.

2.1. The Urbanisation of Rural Areas and the Reduction of Grazing Land

An analysis of the relationship between urban and rural areas reveals that both environments are shaped by multiple dynamics that illustrate the close interdependence between them. For a long time, these relations were characterised by rural exodus, which led to the massive departure of the active male population from the countryside towards urban centres. Today, however, the trend appears to be gradually reversing, as many migrants are returning to rural areas, either for family-related reasons or as a consequence of the economic difficulties affecting urban centres.

Furthermore, the decentralisation process in Cameroon, particularly in the western region, has significantly contributed to the modernisation of rural areas. Increasingly, these areas are being provided with modern socio-economic and transport infrastructure. This can be observed in the

tarmacking of the road linking the town centre of Penka-Michel to the Baloum community, as well as in the installation of mobile telephone masts within rural villages. In essence, the countryside is progressively undergoing a process of “urbanisation.”

While this transformation contributes positively to rural development and improves the living conditions of local populations, it also stimulates agricultural production, which remains the principal economic activity of these communities. Nevertheless, the urbanisation of rural areas has important environmental consequences, notably the gradual loss of biodiversity and grazing resources that constitute the primary source of feed for livestock. For instance, an examination of the vegetation cover in the Fokoué countryside over the years reveals a progressive reduction in natural vegetation (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Land use in Fokoué in 2017, 2020 and 2023

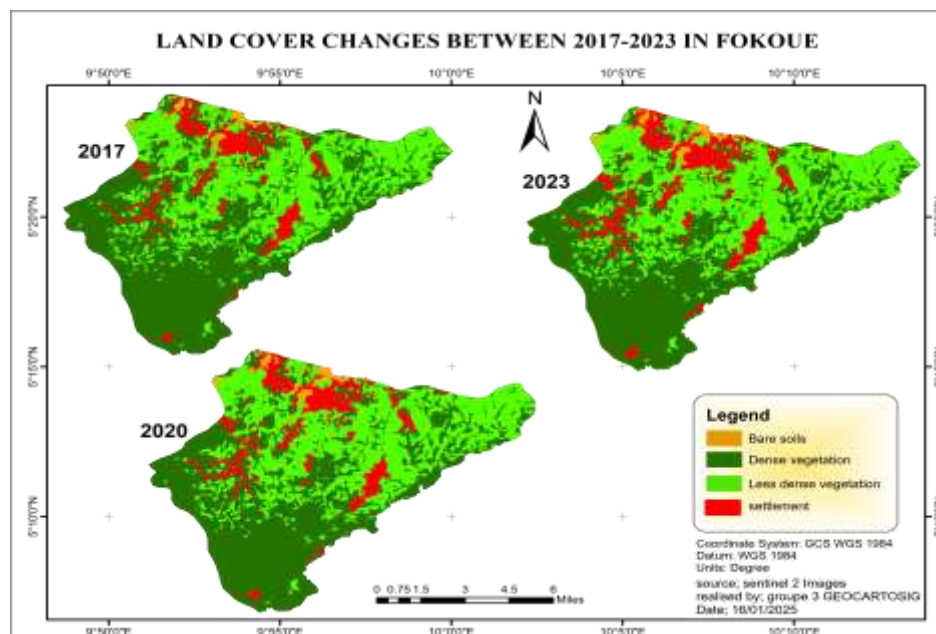


Figure 2 illustrates land use patterns in the Fokoué district in 2017, 2020, and 2023. The data reveal a significant reduction in vegetation cover since 2020. In both the Fokoué and Penka-Michel districts, the gradual disappearance of biodiversity has had a direct impact on the pastoral activities practised by the Bororo communities living within these administrative units. Grazing lands are progressively being replaced by “modern houses” and economic infrastructure such as shops and commercial buildings. One of the immediate consequences of this situation is the increasing recurrence of farmer-herder conflicts, often with serious repercussions, as illustrated by the conflicts recorded in Baloum in 2023.

Several factors explain this progressive loss of biodiversity in rural areas. The first is the expansion of intensive farming practices, which contribute to the reduction of both plant and animal species diversity. Modern agricultural methods, particularly the excessive use of pesticides and chemical fertilisers, further aggravate environmental degradation. In addition, deforestation resulting from the indiscriminate cutting of trees and the destruction of natural vegetation by rural populations for construction and agricultural purposes has considerably accelerated the depletion of natural resources.

These factors, compounded by increasing pressure on land in certain villages and inadequate land management practices, constitute major drivers of biodiversity loss and, consequently, the degradation of rural grazing lands.

2.2. Changes in the Level of Education within the Bororo Community

Traditionally perceived as incompatible with the nomadic lifestyle of the Bororo people, the growing expansion of formal education within the community is increasingly contributing to the decline of pastoral activity. Field surveys reveal that the Bororo population is predominantly youthful. According to leaders of the regional association MBOSCUDA, formal education now competes directly with pastoral training. Young people, who formerly played a central role in cattle herding from an early age, are progressively abandoning pastoral activities in favour of formal schooling. This transition has weakened the community's capacity to manage large herds effectively.

Furthermore, educational access policies and support measures implemented by public authorities, particularly because the Bororo are recognised as a vulnerable social group, have encouraged a steady increase in school enrolment among Bororo children across the region. In the Baloum community of the Penka-Michel subdivision, for instance, the number of Bororo students enrolled at the Government Bilingual High School between 2018 and 2024 has continued to rise significantly (Table 1).

Table 1: Number of Bororo pupils at the bilingual secondary school in Baloum between 2018 and 2024.

Years	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Girls	0	0	3	4	3	2	4
Boys	2	2	6	7	7	9	6

Source : Field data

Table 1 illustrates the trend in the number of pupils from the Bororo community enrolled at the Baloum Government Bilingual Secondary School. The data indicate that, with the gradual transformation of social values within the community, an increasing number of parents are now sending their children to school, even though the payment of school fees remains a major

challenge¹. A comparison with the 2024–2025 academic year shows that enrolment figures continue to rise, with an increase of six pupils compared to the previous academic year.

An analysis of the age distribution of these pupils reveals that the majority are between 13 and 18 years old, with a particularly strong representation in the English-speaking sub-system. The situation observed at Baloum Government Bilingual Secondary School is similar to that of other institutions in the area, notably the Government Bilingual High School of Penka-Michel. Table 1 also highlights the growing number of female pupils within the Bororo community. The education of Bororo girls is no longer considered taboo; rather, it reflects a gradual transformation in attitudes and perceptions within the community, even though it reduces their participation in traditional dairy-related activities, which have historically constituted an important component of pastoral work.

Furthermore, school attendance requires families to adopt a more sedentary lifestyle. In order to ensure access to education for their children, many Bororo families are progressively abandoning long-distance transhumance and settling near educational institutions. This transition has encouraged the emergence of a more sedentary agro-pastoral system, often characterised by limited natural resources. Nevertheless, once educated members of the community attain a certain level of social and economic stability, they frequently contribute to the promotion of education within their communities by assisting with school fees and providing school supplies for younger generations.

2.3. Environmental Pressure Resulting from Human Activities

Biodiversity in Western Cameroon is currently subjected to multiple forms of pressure arising from human activities. The principal threats include deforestation, soil degradation, the overexploitation of natural resources, pollution, habitat fragmentation, and climate change. These phenomena are contributing to the progressive reduction of natural ecosystems, the disappearance of plant and animal species, and significant disruptions in ecological functioning.

In both Penka-Michel and Fokoué, these pressures are particularly severe due to the heavy dependence of rural populations on natural resources for their livelihoods. Activities such as extensive agriculture, livestock rearing, timber exploitation, the harvesting of non-timber forest

¹ Comments made by Jean Marie Mbadzi, headteacher of the Baloum Government Bilingual Secondary School at the time of the survey conducted in April 2025, revealed that many parents of Bororo pupils were experiencing difficulties in paying school fees in full, despite the flexible payment arrangements introduced by the school administration.

products, and hunting constitute essential sources of income for households, yet they also contribute substantially to environmental degradation.

In highland regions such as these, livestock farming occupies a central position in the local economy. However, it is frequently associated with overgrazing, the destruction of vegetation cover, soil compaction, and the depletion of water resources. This perception, widely reflected in institutional and media discourse, often attributes environmental degradation primarily to human activities.

3. The Socio-Economic Reintegration of the Bororo People

The process of socio-economic integration among the Bororo people in Western Cameroon presents distinctive characteristics. Upon migrating to urban areas, members of the community tend to integrate predominantly through informal economic activities and self-employment. Direct observation of their principal sources of livelihood indicates that small-scale trade constitutes the primary pathway to economic integration (contact sheet 1).

Contact sheet 1: Some of the Bororo people's economic reintegration activities



Source: On-site photographs, March 2026

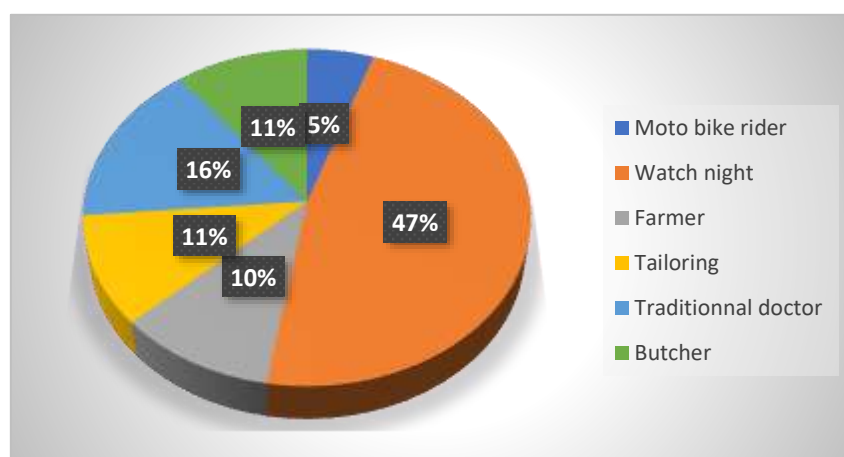
Picture 1 illustrates the various economic reintegration activities undertaken by the Bororo people in the principal urban centres, particularly in Penka-Michel and Fokoué. The data reveal that catering services and street trading constitute the dominant economic activities within these urban settings. In this context, men generally engage in occupations requiring physical

effort, such as car washing and street vending, while women tend to utilise their skills in the catering sector. This occupational distribution can largely be explained by cultural and religious norms, which encourage women to preserve their modesty and avoid excessive public exposure.

In rural areas, however, the situation differs somewhat. Bororo communities that settled there more than a decade ago have gradually gained access to small plots of land on which they engage in agricultural activities. In localities such as Baloum and Bansa, for instance, traditional authorities have temporarily and freely allocated land to members of the community for farming purposes².

It is important to note that agriculture represents a relatively recent activity among the Bororo people. Land insecurity, identity-related conflicts, and limited training in intensive farming techniques constitute some of the principal constraints affecting their agricultural involvement. These challenges may explain why agriculture still represents only a small proportion of the socio-economic reintegration activities undertaken by members of this community (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Main economic reintegration activities of the Bororo people



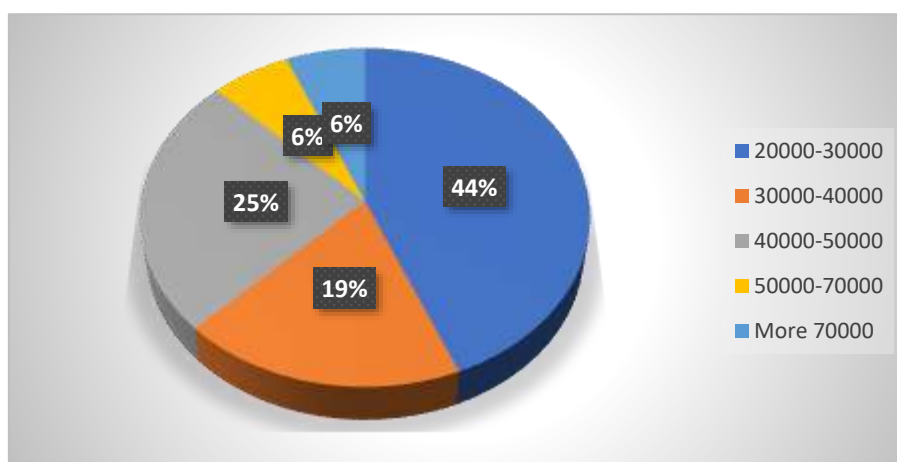
Source: Field data, April 2026

Figure 3 illustrates some of the economic reintegration activities undertaken by the Bororo people in Penka-Michel and Fokoué. It shows, respectively, the work of motorbike taxi drivers, 'night watchmen', farmers, tailors, traditional healers and butchers. It has been observed that these income-generating activities are predominantly carried out by men. This situation sufficiently reinforces the idea that, among the Bororo, it is mainly the man who takes care of the family's responsibilities and needs, whilst the woman manages the household. Figure 3 also

² Field data obtained from His Majesty Noussi Pokam Charly Constant, Chief of the Baloum, during a semi-structured interview in March 2026 at the chiefdom headquarters of this group.

highlights a marked diversification of activities. Whilst livestock farming remains prevalent, it is observed that reintegration now involves activities in the primary sector, such as livestock farming, and those in the informal sector. It shows that agriculture accounts for only 10% of this population, whilst there is a significant presence of these individuals in activities such as 'night watchmen'. However, motorbike taxi driving remains an increasingly favoured occupation for these nationals, given the difficulties in securing formal employment. All things considered, these are activities that enable them to provide for themselves and their families, even if their incomes remain very low (Figure 4).

Figure 4: Income Generated by the Bororo People's Reintegration Activities



Source: field data, April 2026

An analysis of Figure 4 reveals a clear predominance of income levels ranging between 20,000 and 30,000 CFA francs, which account for 44% of respondents. In contrast, incomes of 70,000 CFA francs and above represent the smallest proportion, accounting for only 6%. These findings suggest that the majority of the economic activities undertaken by the Bororo people generate relatively modest earnings. Although these incomes remain insufficient, they nevertheless enable households to meet their most basic needs.

The modern sector into which the Bororo community is gradually integrating is largely dominated by the field of education. In their search for employment opportunities, many members of the community most of whom possess at least a bachelor's degree offer their services within primary and secondary educational institutions, although their numbers remain relatively limited. This situation can partly be explained by the continued influence of the traditional Arab-Islamic educational system within the community.

In summary, despite the precarious conditions under which they live, the Bororo people in the Penka-Michel and Fokoué districts are progressively succeeding in securing a place for themselves within certain sectors of the local economy.

4. The challenges facing the Bororo people in their reintegration

As mentioned earlier, the Bororo people are historically nomadic and rely on cattle herding; however, they are increasingly becoming settled. Moving to urban center such as Fokoué and Penka-Michel is not always a choice but a necessity driven by land pressure and recurring conflicts in rural areas. Once in urban areas, they face numerous difficulties, the main ones being:

- The language barrier and low levels of education

The primary obstacle to the integration of members of this community is a lack of professional qualifications. In these areas, the traditional education of young Bororo people remains largely focused on pastoralism, often neglecting the standard curriculum, if not Arabic-language schooling altogether. Indeed, under-education and the lack of qualifications limit their access to the formal labour market, with many of them ending up in precarious jobs. Furthermore, the language barrier particularly their limited command of French in predominantly French-speaking towns significantly hinders their chances of finding employment.

- Precarious Employment Dominated by the Informal Sector

Unable to continue practising their traditional livelihoods within urban environments, the Bororo people have increasingly turned to survival activities that may be described as “niche” economic strategies, given the extremely difficult conditions under which they are carried out. These activities generally generate low incomes despite the considerable physical effort and human resources they require. Their economic integration therefore depends largely on the informal sector, particularly through small-scale commercial activities and occupations such as security guards, small shopkeepers, café owners, and porters. These jobs are often characterised by instability, irregular wages, and very low levels of remuneration. In many cases, workers are either poorly paid or receive no fixed salary at all.

Those who succeed in becoming self-employed frequently face serious financial constraints, notably the inability to access bank loans due to the absence of property or other forms of collateral. Consequently, they rely heavily on assistance from family networks and community-based organisations in order to establish their businesses. However, these organisations

generally lack sufficient financial resources to satisfy the numerous requests they receive, especially given the wide range of sectors and localities requiring support³.

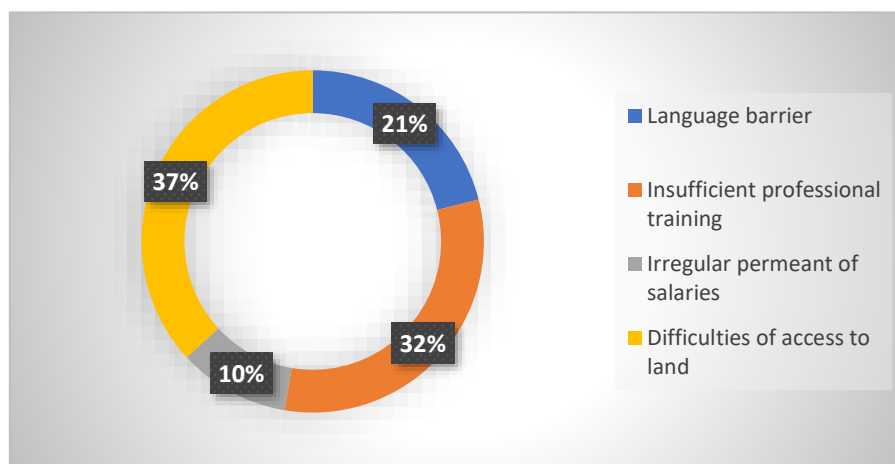
- Land Tenure Insecurity and Inter-Community Tensions

Even in urban and peri-urban areas, land remains a central and persistent challenge for the Bororo community. They are frequently regarded by host populations as “outsiders” or temporary settlers, a perception that further complicates their integration. In addition, land saturation resulting from the expansion of plantations and residential settlements has significantly reduced the availability of space for permanent occupation.

Furthermore, the customary system of land ownership, which is largely controlled by traditional authorities, makes land acquisition particularly difficult, even for relatively well-off members of the community who aspire to settle permanently. Consequently, many Bororo households continue to live under conditions of chronic land insecurity.

An analysis of the main obstacles encountered by the Bororo in their socio-economic reintegration process clearly indicates that access to land represents one of the most significant challenges they face (Figure 5).

Figure 5: The main obstacles to the reintegration of the Bororo people



Source: Field data, April 2026

Figure 5 highlights the major obstacles to the economic reintegration of the Bororo in urban areas. It is noted that a lack of vocational skills (32%) and difficulties in accessing land (37%) are the main barriers, severely limiting their independence and their retraining. Furthermore, language barriers (21%) complicate their integration into the economy, albeit in the informal

³Data obtained from Issa Gori, Chair of the Education Committee of the Bororo association Kawtuma Tukanko, located in the Menoua Division of the West Region of Cameroon, during a semi-structured interview conducted in April 2026 in Dschang.

sector, whilst irregular wage payments (10%) undermine their financial stability. Taken together, these figures highlight the precarious situation of this population in the face of the decline in pastoral activity.

5. Improving the Economic Reintegration of the Bororo People

To address the challenges identified, it is recommended that greater emphasis be placed on strengthening professional skills, alongside substantial support for entrepreneurship and access to microcredit facilities.

- Strengthening Professional Skills

The economic reintegration of the Bororo population in urban areas should not be viewed merely as a simple change of occupation, but rather as a profound structural transformation. The forced migration of these communities towards urban centres is primarily driven by the decline of pastoralism and has resulted in a significant skills gap. In urban environments, competitiveness no longer depends on knowledge of natural cycles, but rather on mastery of specific technical competencies and compliance with professional and contractual standards.

Analysis of the difficulties encountered reveals that the lack of professional qualifications (32%) constitutes one of the main barriers to economic reintegration. This situation effectively renders these populations “invisible” within the formal labour market, confining them to precarious survival strategies within a context of widespread labour market instability. In this regard, the term is used to describe situations in which some Bororo motorbike riders in urban areas do not own their vehicles. Instead, they operate them under daily rental arrangements, paying a fixed fee to the owner until the total purchase price is fully repaid. Furthermore, the irregularity of wage payments (10%), as shown in Figure 5, highlights a strong correlation between the absence of formal training and job insecurity. Without certified professional qualifications, the Bororo are often restricted to informal and unregulated occupations such as day labourers, security guards, motorbike taxi operators, or porters. These sectors expose workers to unstable working conditions and the discretionary practices of employers. Skills development therefore serves not only an economic function but also a crucial social protection role. By acquiring technical competencies in areas such as masonry, mechanics, tailoring, or dairy processing, Bororo migrants could enhance their bargaining power in the labour market, thereby transforming precarious employment into more stable and sustainable sources of income.

Moreover, as previously indicated, access to land remains the most significant constraint faced by these groups (37%). In rural areas, land constitutes the primary factor of production, with agriculture being the dominant livelihood activity. In urban contexts, however, land is both scarce and expensive, particularly for populations living in precarious conditions. The strengthening of professional skills would therefore facilitate a shift in the basis of income generation, moving from land-based capital to human capital. Given the limited access to land, the most viable pathway for successful reintegration lies in enabling the Bororo to offer skilled labour that does not depend on land ownership. In this sense, vocational training becomes a key instrument of resilience, facilitating entry into the service and craft sectors, where technical expertise can substitute for land-based resources.

- Support for Entrepreneurship and Access to Microcredit

Entrepreneurship represents a key solution to overcoming the constraints associated with limited land access. Given the scarcity and high cost of urban land, the Bororo should be encouraged to establish small-scale service and commercial enterprises that require minimal spatial investment. The analysis of reintegration challenges has shown that even when employment is obtained, some workers do not receive regular wages. Providing access to start-up capital would therefore enable Bororo households to reduce dependence on the goodwill of urban employers and instead generate independent and sustainable daily income.

To achieve this, it is essential not only to facilitate access to identity documents, such as national identity cards, but also to provide small-scale educational and entrepreneurial loans. These could support the purchase of productive assets such as dairy processing equipment, sewing machines, or initial trading stock. Such measures would contribute to enhancing financial stability in contexts where wage employment remains unreliable. It has also been observed that language barriers constitute an additional obstacle to economic integration. Consequently, microcredit programmes should involve local organisations equipped with multilingual field agents or community interpreters capable of clearly explaining the objectives and benefits of these initiatives. Financial inclusion should go beyond the simple provision of credit; it should aim at integrating the Bororo into the formal financial system, where they can progressively learn to save, invest, and manage resources effectively. By facilitating access to credit, it is possible to reduce feelings of exclusion among individuals lacking formal qualifications and ensure broader inclusion within development strategies. These agents would also play a key role in communication and awareness-raising, particularly as many members of the community primarily speak Fulfulde. This approach could be modelled on strategies

used in the health sector during vaccination campaigns, where community-based communication has proven highly effective.

6. Discussion

This study has demonstrated that pastoral activity is experiencing a marked decline within the Bororo community. This trend is attributed to several interrelated factors, including climate change, agro-pastoral conflicts, and the increasing “rurbanisation” of rural areas. These findings are consistent with the works of Boutrais (1994), Moritz (2008), and Pelican (2015), who argue that the transition from subsistence pastoralism to market-oriented livestock production increases pressure on land resources and contributes to the gradual decline of pastoral systems. However, these authors also emphasise that this decline is not inevitable, but rather the result of broader social transformations.

The study further reveals that, in their efforts to achieve economic reintegration in urban centres, the Bororo face numerous challenges, particularly linguistic barriers and difficulties in accessing land. These findings are in line with Kamwa and Tsalefac (2020), who demonstrate that Bororo economic integration in Western Cameroon occurs mainly within the informal sector. However, they differ from the conclusions of Kossoumna Liba’a (2008), who identifies land saturation and agricultural pressure in rural areas as the primary causes of pastoral decline. Nevertheless, both studies converge in highlighting that difficulties in obtaining land titles continue to render Bororo economic reintegration in urban areas highly precarious. This study concludes that two main policy levers should be activated to improve reintegration outcomes: enhanced vocational training and strengthened support for microcredit and entrepreneurship. These findings are consistent with those of Data Petel (2023), who argues that despite their strong attachment to livestock production, the Bororo have increasingly become urban entrepreneurs, diversifying into sectors such as transport, trade, tailoring, and catering in response to the decline of pastoralism.

Conclusion

This study has examined the issue of the economic reintegration of the Bororo people in the context of the decline of pastoral activity, particularly in the Menoua Division of Western Cameroon. By moving beyond strict disciplinary boundaries, it has drawn on history, sociology, and geography to provide a comprehensive analysis of this phenomenon. The decline of pastoral activity within the Bororo community in Western Cameroon is a significant and ongoing process. It has been further intensified since the 2000s by the return of migrants from other regions of the country, encouraged by appeals from traditional authorities to develop

their home areas, worsening urban unemployment, and government promotion of entrepreneurship, particularly in agriculture. As a result, pressure on land has increased significantly, infrastructure development has expanded, and agro-pastoral conflicts have intensified in a region where agriculture remains the dominant economic activity despite severe land constraints, given that it is one of the smallest regions in Cameroon in terms of surface area. Given the profound implications of these changes for Bororo livelihoods, a gradual influx of these populations into urban areas is expected to continue. Predominantly composed of vulnerable groups, the Bororo face significant socio-economic challenges in the communities that host them. In their efforts to survive, they engage in a wide range of informal activities; however, these remain insufficient to guarantee decent living conditions. There is therefore an urgent need to implement reforms in governance systems particularly land governance as well as policies promoting economic inclusion, in order to provide more sustainable and appropriate responses to their situation.

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