

Ministry of Scientific Research and Innovation

Buwal Local Level Background Survey

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INTRODUCTION

The following research project concerns the Buwal language. Dieu and Renaud in the ALTAS LINGUISTIC DU CAMEROUN (ALCAM) list the language as: Buwal [241]. The ETHNOLOGUE GRIMES (2000) provides the following descriptions: Buwal (Ma Buwal, Bual. Gadala) [BHS] 5000 or fewer (1983 ALCAM). In and around Gadala, Mokolo Subdivision, Mayo-Tsanaga Division, Far North Province. Afro-Asiatic. Chadic, Biu-Mandara, A, A.7. May be intelligible with Gavar. Speakers closer to Mofu or Gavar regions claim to understand those languages. Fulfulde and French bilingualism is limited. Buwal is used in the church. Investigation needed: intelligibility with Gavar.

BACKGROUND

Since 2004, Michael and Melanie VILJOEN, members of SIL, have conducted certain cultural and linguistic research on the Buwal language. In 2005, Michael VILJOEN published the findings of a cultural investigation into the names of the Buwal people in a paper entitled, 'Buwal Names and Their Usage'.

Previously published research into the Buwal and Gavar languages include field research by Brye (2000) and rapid appraisal survey reports by Seguin in 1992, which indicate that the Buwal and Gavar languages are sufficiently similar that speakers of both could benefit from the same language development efforts. In time, such initiatives could also benefit other nearby communities of other languages.

Research project: An investigation into the lifestyle and customs of the Buwal people, especially focussing on the domains of their history, geography, economics, education, literacy, and religion, in view of the commencement of possible projects in linguistics, literacy and translation in the Buwal language.

Duration of research: 01/04/07 – 31/03/08

Research Objectives: Gather and collate information concerning the Buwal people with respect to the appropriate domains.

Place of research: Research will take place amongst the Buwal people in and around the village of Gadala, the department of Mayo-Tsanaga, the Extreme North Province of Cameroon.

Methods of research: Research will be conducted through interviews and discussions with members of the community from various localities within the Buwal area, guided and aided by two local informants, Deli Kodji (Benjamin) and André Ezékiel.

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- SEGUIN, Lawrence Marc.1992. *A Sociolinguistic Survey of Buwal (Gadala) (Rapid Appraisal)*. Yaounde, Cameroon, SIL. 9 pp.
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The purpose of this survey is to gain a better understanding of the Buwal people, their lifestyle and culture.

Our desire is that the collation and publication of this information will help to promote a greater understanding of the Buwal and the region to the wider community, and so allow the Buwal people and their language greater access to information, programs, and activities that could be of benefit to the Buwal and their neighbours.

The Buwal are a unique people, sharing a common history, culture and language. Their homeland is centred around a mountain they call 'Mse', which is part of the Mandara mountains. It lies about 45km directly to the West of Maroua in Northern Cameroon. The Buwal population is roughly estimated to be about 7 000 – 10 000.

An alternative name for Buwal is Gadala. This is the name given to them by the Fulbe. The name Gadala is commonly accepted both by the Buwal and by the wider administration of the region, but the Buwal will naturally refer to themselves and their language as Buwal.

1. Historical Sketch

It is difficult to say who were the first inhabitants of the Buwal homeland. There are certain stories and legends which speak of the fathers of the Buwal, as well as later migrations of clans that were added to the Buwal population. The accuracy of these stories is difficult to verify.

There is a belief that among the first inhabitants of the region there were three brothers, their names being Mohoro, Buwal and Gavar. Mohoro, the eldest, settled on the mountain to the North, which is now known by that name. Buwal settled near the mountain of Mse. While Gavar, the youngest, settled on the mountains to the West of Mse, becoming the father of the Gavar Houssere (the Gavar of the Mountains, as distinct from people who live around the Gavar chefferie).

Some say that the first clan to inhabit the Buwal area were called the 'hølay' clan. They settled on the Gavar plain near what is today known as the neighbourhood of Msere, near the mountain of Mse.¹

Origins of Buwal language

Surrounding the Gavar plain are mountains or hills. Near the hills towards the north live the Buwal, to the west live the Gavar, to the east the Mbedam, and to the south the Hina. The Buwal language is most closely related to these three distinct languages and, also further to the south, the Daba².

A possible explanation for this is that these other peoples who were living on the plain at that time may have spoken either a common language or formed a language chain with the people to the south of the plain. Other clans arrived and joined with the clans already present. Later, upon the arrival of the Fulbe, the people dispersed into the mountains to protect themselves from the invaders. Because of their isolation on these mountains, each language became more distinct.

The Buwal share other linguistic characteristics and similarities with other groups from the region, possibly resulting from common descent or migration intakes. All of these languages in the wider area are part of the Central Chadic language family. This implies that these peoples have originally migrated from the north of Cameroon around the Lake Chad region.

¹ An historical report from the Buwal chefferie concerning their people and the chefferie is given as Appendix 1. This contains a different explanation for the origin of the word 'Buwal'.

² *Atlas of Northern Cameroon*, MINREST, 2000. page 65.

The Fulbe

The Fulbe were strong horsemen. Originating from outside of Cameroon, waves of Fulbe immigrants came and took control of the plains, conquering certain regions, establishing chiefdoms, and taking slaves. However, their horses were not so powerful in the mountains. Therefore the Buwal established themselves on the mountain of Mse. It is said that the name Gadala derives from a Fulfulde word 'gadal' meaning 'magical potion' from a tree bark, which the Buwal used to enable them supernatural speed to arrive safely at their mountain.

20th Century

There is not much spoken about the arrival of European colonists before the First World War. After this, the French became the colonial rulers of Cameroon and first began to appear in the area. It is said that the French came and established a regional base in the Buwal neighbourhood today known as Zukwadfanw, or also known as Bariki. Bariki is a word meaning 'centre' in Fulfulde. This neighbourhood is arguably the geographic centre of the Buwal homeland. However, the Buwal refused to welcome the French, who then decided to relocate and established their base at Mokolo. Today Mokolo is the central town for the Department of Mayo Tsanaga.

Cameroon gained independence in 1960. After this the government compelled the Buwal, along with many other mountain groups, to descend from the mountain to live on the surrounding plain. This was accomplished with some resistance, as many Buwal quite enjoyed living and growing their crops on the mountain. Today, caverns which were used as hidden store houses for grain are still present. The Buwal do not live on the mountain anymore, but still bury their dead in their traditional clan's tombs. These old storehouses are today used as tombs.

After the Buwal began living on the plain in recent decades, they have become more numerous. Some of the clans have split into two or more clans. For example, the vadam have divided themselves into the vadam magaway and the vadam kavamzam.³

Many of the clan names relate to claims of chiefdom, as if they were once the chiefly clan. In recent generations, the chiefs have all belonged to the ηkesel mse or 'mazay' clan.

Arrival of Christianity and Islam

It was the conquering Fulbe who brought Islam to the region. Though Islam was the first of the major world religions to arrive, the Buwal resisted conversion. Those today who practice the faith form a minority amongst the Buwal.

In past times, the Muslims were considered a threat to the Buwal, who escaped to the mountains in defence of being taken as slaves. Meanwhile, the Fulbe established chiefdoms in the region, which remain until today. Most chiefs in the region are Muslims. Such is the case in Buwal, where the newly appointed Buwal chief is also a Muslim despite Muslims amongst the Buwal being a minority.

Christianity was first established in the Buwal region around 1974 when the Baptist Convention at Zidim sent an evangelist to live in Meterngureme to establish a church. Around the same time, the first public school building (currently part of EP Gadala) was built. Education and Christianity were seen as somewhat related. They were well received by many but not all. A number of Buwal looked upon their arrival as a threat, and refused to allow their children to attend school.

Over the years the church grew in popularity. In the early 1980s, the Baptist convention built their first church building on the site of the present day church location, which forms the central church for the District of Gadala. At this time, the church was being guided by another evangelist sent from Zidim, a Guider man named André Tizé.

These days, by and large, Muslims, Christians, and traditional religionists, all live side by side harmoniously.

³ A complete list of clans is included as Appendix 2.

2. Current political landscape of the Buwal region

The political structure for the Republic of Cameroon works alongside the traditional system of local chiefdoms. In the modern nation of Cameroon, the village of Buwal rests under the Governor of the Extreme North Region, the Prefet of the Department of Mayo Tsanaga, and the Sous-Prefet of the Arrondissement of Mokolo.

Most of the Buwal homeland is situated within a village known as Buwal (or Gadala), in the canton of Matakam Sud, which forms part of the Arrondissement of Mokolo.

Canton	Base of Chiefdom	Chief 1st Degree
Matakam Sud	Mokolo	Dja Lige Zogoy

Gadala is presided over by a traditional chief.

Village	Fulfulde name	Chief 3rd Degree
Buwal	Gadala	Lawan Alaji Haman

For two nearby chiefdoms, the chief of Zamay and the chief of Gawar are 2nd degree chiefs. However, for serious matters requiring the assistance of a higher authority, the chief of Gadala will pass directly to the chief of Matakam Sud canton, who is the 1st degree chief.

The Buwal village is then also divided into twelve neighbourhoods, each with its own sub-chief.

Here is a list of **the twelve Buwal neighbourhoods** which are presided over by a sub-chief, some with their commonly used Fulfulde name, and the name of each sub-chief:

Neighbourhood	Fulfulde name	Sub-chief
Merkweze		Konai Edward
Njahwayam		Maroua Deli (Moussa Lawan – interim)

These two neighbourhoods, as well as a third, Kwavahwam, together are known as **Meterngureme**, also referred to as ‘Gadala Centre’, as it is the location of the main chiefdom and the main public school.

Zukwadfanw	Bariki	Deli Msaw
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The name Bariki, meaning ‘centre,’ implies that this was once considered the centre of Buwal.

Hwabakwdemas	Oro Pisar	Bapa
Mengezence		Dawai Tada

(These two are really one neighbourhood, with Bapa serving the Muslim population).

Zlence	Mangari	Meze Djabu
Watamba	Oro Joel	Hemere Joel
Magaway I		Danvou (aged), Tahay Danvou (son, serving)
Magaway II		Ghwadata Vezew
Uzampala		Marcus
Ghalza (largely Gavar speaking)		Ghalza Gondji
Huzla6		Kodje Handay
Bezlere	Kobadje	Haman Gawli

Outside of the Buwal village are other villages with significant Buwal populations:

Under the chief of Zamay:

Zeved, Yoldeo (Ləgwera Kwəyta), have Buwal majorities.

Hodango, is a sizeable village with around half Buwal speakers.

Hwadangwa Pawmla, contains a Buwal minority.

Under the chief of Gawar:

Məynawa, Msere, have Buwal majorities.

Njura, Njayende, contains Buwal minorities.

*For these localities, see maps, Appendix 3 and 4.

3. Economics

Crops

The Buwal depend on farming for their livelihood. Nearly all Buwal are involved in the planting of cotton as a source of income.

Millet, corn, and peanuts are the other principle crops. The Buwal depend of these to form the basis of their diet, but they are also grown with the intention of selling at market, depending on the preference of the farmer or the vagaries of the harvest. To a lesser extent, the Buwal also grow rice, sweat potato, and soy. To vary their diet, the Buwal will grow various types of beans, nuts, okra, melons, and leaves such as folere.

Many Buwal own some animals, but they do not raise cattle in large numbers. It is the neighbouring ethnic Fulbe who are the traditional cattle herders.

Farming, its difficulties and challenges

Of primary concern to the Buwal is the production of the staple food. After this, the family will then give their attention to the cotton fields, which is a major source of income. Both of these areas of farming are considered the domain of the man in the family.

The women are responsible for their fields, in which they grow peanuts, beans, okra, pumpkins, and other leaves and vegetables.

It is normal that men and women help each other in their respective fields, or sometimes they will seek the assistance of hired labourers. In some cases, a man who has several wives who work in his fields, or has hired labourers, may only be supervising his fields rather than labouring himself.

There are many challenges associated with farming. Rainfall can vary from year to year in its quantity and its timing. In the same year, rain can vary between fields that are relatively close to each other, perhaps only a kilometre apart. A farmer must look to the rain and respond accordingly. Therefore, it is good to have a variety of fields. Some fields require much rain while others may spoil or rust with consistent rain. In any given year, there will be some fields that produce better than others. Nearly every year it is necessary to vary the crop so that the field doesn't become exhausted. The size of the harvest yields can vary greatly between years.

Generally, they aim to sow their crops early, either after the first rains in May when the ground is easier to plough, or possibly even before the rains arrive.

Caterpillars are one danger to the crop, especially when the rainfall after sowing the crop is only light. Locusts have arrived and destroyed crops in the past, but this has not been a problem in recent memory.

Of more grave concern is the common problem of cattle straying into the fields and eating the crops. This can often arise when the harvest is collected and laid in piles on the ground before being

gathered. Sometimes this is the result of cattle herders' negligence, but more often it is deliberate criminal activity on their part. The Buwal are more likely to suffer if their fields are near to a cattle thoroughfare or far into the bush where the field is more difficult to oversee or protect. Only if the farmer can track down the cattle responsible would he have any chance of seeking compensation through the authorities.

A good cattle herder will pay the farmer for the privilege of allowing their cattle to clean the fields straight after the field is harvested, or sometimes the farmer will grant such privilege out of kindness.

Most Buwal have some animals. Some have cattle or donkeys, which are used in labouring the fields. Many have sheep or goats, but not in large numbers, perhaps ranging from just one or two up to twenty. They also raise chickens or ducks for food. The Mafa who live amongst the Buwal are known for raising pigs. Cattle, sheep and goats will sleep in the same compound with the family or perhaps in an adjacent enclosure, as animal theft from other Buwal or people from neighbouring villages is a common problem.

Cotton GICs

Nearly all the Buwal people are engaged in cotton growing. Even for some who have not gained greatly from their cotton yields will be motivated to grow cotton, as it is a major community activity. Growing cotton also helps to fertilize the soil, which may bring a greater millet harvest in a following year.

Cotton production is overseen and organised in Northern Cameroon by the SODECOTON company. For the Buwal, each cotton planter is part of a 'circle de caution', which is a group of close neighbours numbering between 3 and 20 planters. The circle appoints a leader who takes responsibility for buying seed, fertilizer, and other products. This acquires a debt to SODECOTON. After the harvest and the cotton sales, the leader of the circle will be responsible for distributing the profits to his colleagues which remain after the debt is repaid. SODECOTON will expel from the system any farmer who is not productive. For the next year, he would not be allowed to buy seed on credit.

Several circles, perhaps 10-15, which may cover a whole neighbourhood, will unite to form a GIC. This GIC is recognised by SODECOTON and works together with SODECOTON in organising the growing, harvesting, and collection of the cotton, for the benefit of all the cotton planters in the GIC. A percentage of what is earned by the GIC will go into a fund which is administered by SODECOTON to be used for minor works and projects within that GIC's neighbourhood, such as the building of a well for the community.

Grain yields

A typical basic family unit, such as parents and a small number of children, would aim to accumulate perhaps 15 sacks (100kg per sack) of grain in a year. Of those, 10 or 11 could be kept for eating, while 4 or 5 could be sold for income.

A sack of grain may be sold for something like 10 000 cfa (approximately 15.25 Euros⁴). In difficult months or years when grain is more scarce, the price could rise to 15 000 or maybe even 20 000 or more. Of course, this is good for the seller and bad for the buyer, but in general, it would be bad for the average Buwal. For in times when harvests are bad, they are more likely to be buyers than sellers.

Harvest time is around October or November. Ideally the grain store from the previous year should last past this time. If you are eating the old year's grain in January, this shows you are doing well. Often someone may harvest their grain and store it on a platform next to their house. If it is still there without being threshed into January, this demonstrates that the person has a sufficiency of food. (Others would prefer to sell their grain if they had plenty.) However, if you need to eat your new grain already in September, this shows that you are having some difficulty.

⁴ 1 Euro equals 656 Franc cfa

A woman may collect five sacks of peanuts in a good year. Of these, she may keep one for sowing the following year. She may intend to keep two for selling later when she believes the price is good, and keep the other two on hand for selling little by little at the markets during the dry season, or whenever there is a need to buy small items such as soap, fish, meat, clothes, a goat, or whatever.

Cotton yields

Cotton fields are usually spoken of in basic units of quarter hectare squares. That is, 50 x 50 metres. A planter may cultivate as little as one square or several; five is already a large number, but a few may have more than 10.

The standard price for selling the cotton is about 175 cfa per kg, or sometimes slightly more in a good year. From a square, a planter needs to return 125 kg to demonstrate that he has minimally worked his field. Such an effort has therefore yielded 21875 cfa, but most of that will be kept by SODECOTON for the outlay of seed and other produce.

Hopefully the farmer will produce more than the minimum 125kg. In a very good square, a planter could return 3 or 4 times that number of kilograms. Therefore, a clear profit from a successful farmer may yield 200 000 cfa in a year, although usually less than 100 000 cfa is a more realistic hope. Other times, in a bad year, a farmer could work hard in his cotton field and make nearly no profit at all after repaying the debt to SODECOTON. He could even lose money and lose his place in the circle.

Other income

Nearly all the Buwal living in the Buwal region are concerned with farming, but many will aim to supplement their income in other money making ventures, or contribute in services, such as the following:

- Merchants, who transport goods from Maroua, or possibly Mokolo or Nigeria, and sell them in the local markets of the region,
- Butchers, who trade in mainly goat or sheep meat.
- Tailors, who operate from home or in the local markets using pedal powered sewing machines.
- Mill operators are those who have petrol (essence) powered machines within their compound to grind millet or corn into flour, or other machines which crush peanuts or beans.
- Increasingly, some men are acquiring motorcycles. And though there is little regular traffic, on request you could arrange for a motor-taxi service.
- Women may participate in winemaking, such as millet wine, which may be sold occasionally from their house or possibly on a regular basis at the local markets. It may take three days to properly prepare a batch of wine to sell at market, which will take time away from her work in the fields.
- Some women also gain income from selling doughnuts or other food in the local markets.
- Some men work as teachers in the local primary schools. They usually are considered as volunteers, as often those in the Public school are not salaried. Both these and the teachers in the parent run schools are helped with their needs by the parents.
- The blacksmiths are a special class of people. These people are born into the blacksmith clans, which are socially distinct from other clans. The male blacksmiths trade in metalwork, while the women traditionally make the pottery. These clans are also relied upon to perform certain religious tasks as well as assisting in funerals and burials.

All of the people mentioned above will also be responsible for farming their fields also.

Outside of the Buwal language area, there are a few Buwal working in medical services as nurses or administrators in clinics or hospitals, and one known church pastor, within the region. Apart from these, there are few Buwal involved in any kind of professional or government work.

Recently there has been a flow of Buwal men who have taken residency in Yaounde, either for a season or sometimes permanently. Often they have been involved in street vending, in particular, meat selling. However, the high cost of living in the cities makes it difficult to survive in the city and save money, or to support a wife and family.

Markets

There is a system of markets in Buwal and the surrounding region in which to buy and sell produce. The markets operate all year around, returning regularly on a particular day of the seven day week.⁵

There are small local markets in several of the neighbourhoods (see the map, appendix 3). Often the smaller markets are more social occasions where people can gather, eat doughnuts, or drink millet wine. There is an opportunity for women to sell wine and doughnuts, or perhaps some peanuts, and some butchers may sell meat. But these little markets are mainly social. There is only very little produce for sale.

There is no large market within the Buwal region in which to buy many commonly needed items, such as clothing, metal pots for cooking, plastic household items, bicycle parts, grain or other produce in larger quantities. The main markets that the Buwal frequent for such items, in order of size and distance from the Buwal homeland ascending, are the Saturday market at **Gawar Wende**, the Monday market at **Zamay**, the Tuesday market at **Wanarou**, and the Wednesday market at **Mokolo**.

In preference to keeping money in the house, people often prefer to invest in animals, such as cattle, donkeys, sheep, or goats, which could be sold at a later time. To buy cattle, one must go to **Zamay** or the Thursday market at **Gazawa**.

At harvest time, or at the time of the arrival of the cotton money, people may buy an item they have been saving for, such as a bicycle, or motor bike, or metal roofing for their house. For such large items, someone would travel to **Mokolo**, or **Maroua**.

If you want to buy anything in quantity, you will find it cheaper at a larger market.

4. Organisations, Institutions, and Services

Schools

There are no secondary schools in the Buwal area. For those children wanting to advance after their primary education, they will usually attend a secondary school or trade college in Mokolo, or Maroua. There is also some attending the secondary school in Hina. This year 2008, a new secondary school opened in Zamay, which is now the closest, being just outside of the Buwal area. All of these involve travelling and lodging there during the school term.

There are two government run primary schools in the region, the largest at Meterngureme, the other at Hodango. There are also smaller parent run schools in Magaway, Zeved, Mangari, and Zukwadfanjw (the last not operating this year). These were begun by the churches in the area.

Religion

All of the baptised Christians in the area are associated either with the Baptist church (UEBC) or the Catholic Church.

All of the Baptist churches in the Buwal region are part of the district known as 'Gadala', with its central church based at Meterngureme. The Gadala district is one of five districts forming the Baptist Church Convention based at Zidim.

The Catholic churches in the region are overseen by the Parish of Zamay, which forms part of the Diocese of Maroua-Mokolo.

⁵ I specify this, as in some parts of Cameroon, markets operate on an eight day cycle.

Muslims form a significant minority within the Buwal homeland. Most are centred around the neighbourhoods of Oro Pisar or near the chiefdom at Njahwayam. Prayer and teaching occur at a mosque at Oro Pisar, although for the main Friday prayers, participants will all gather at the mosque at Njahwayam.

Traditional religion still forms a major part of the Buwal culture and traditions. One often sees festivals, funerals, and other practices which follow traditions associated with traditional religion. Traditional religious practices are presided over by the 'Bay Kwakwas', the chief of traditions, and his assistants. The 'Bay Mzla', the chief of the blacksmith clans, also assists.

SODECOTON

Cotton GICs play an important role in managing the growing, harvesting, and selling of the cotton, as well as other community concerns, in cooperation with the SODECOTON company. Each neighbourhood would usually contain one cotton GIC. Some of the neighbourhoods also have a store house owned by SODECOTON, in which is stored the seed, fertilizer, and other equipment necessary for cotton production.

Hospitals and Clinics

There are no medical clinics within the Buwal homeland. (This situation may be changed as of late 2008).

When the Buwal have need of medical services, they will travel to either (in order of distance ascending) Gawar, Zamay, Zidim, Mokolo, Mokong, or Meskine hospital, or one of the other hospitals in Maroua, depending on the type of medical service sought.

The nearest medical services are those of Gawar, a government dispensary, and Zamay, a clinic overseen by the Catholic Church. Both serve in basic medical problems, such as treatment of malaria, as well as pregnancy and midwifery. With these, and all the other medical services listed below, travel, whether by foot, bicycle, motor-bike, or other, can be restricted by rivers which rise in the wet season.

Sometimes the Buwal prefer to go to Mokong for such services. Mokong also has specialist services for the treatment of eye problems.

The nearest hospital with fully trained doctors and staff and facilities capable of diagnosing more rare or complicated conditions, is the Zidim hospital. This hospital was established by the Baptist church. It is 17 km to the South East, but travel to it can also be restricted by rivers which rise in the wet season. At such times, hospitals in Maroua, such as Meskine, may be comparable in terms of the difficulties of travel. There is also a hospital at Mokolo, which is another option which is often used.

For dental services, the only option would be to travel to Maroua.

Political Parties

Buwal generally are enthusiastic in their participation in national elections. Voting is often conducted at the main Public Schools at Gadala Centre and Hodango.

Many of the Buwal are associated with political parties, mainly the RDPC, the UNDP (using their French acronyms), and the SDF.

Projects

Certain outside organisation have conducted projects in the Buwal region to assist in development.

In the past, these have included: CARE International, which has assisted in well digging and reforestation; the PDRM, which built school buildings and grain store houses for grain cooperatives and also helped in reforestation.

Presently, Credit de Sahel, with its agency in Mokolo, assists the Buwal with loans and finance.

Heifer is assisting certain cooperatives with investment in cattle and other animals.

‘Produits PAM’ is a government project assisting some local groups by providing grain, which can then be used to stimulate investment, as well as provide staple food in difficult months when grain is scarce.

5. Languages and Literacy

Language within Buwal homes

The Buwal language is dominant within the Buwal homeland. It is mostly uniform throughout, although some slight word choice differences can be discerned in people raised in various neighbourhoods on different sides of the mountain. On the northern and western side of the mountain, French and Fulfulde are in less common usage, and people have been less touched by outside influences such as Christianity and non traditional practices.

For most Buwal, their second language is Fulfulde, as this is the language of the nearby markets, and generally the language of wider communication for the region. Children learn to speak Fulfulde from a fairly young age, perhaps as young as five years old. Generally men are more proficient at Fulfulde than women, as men travel more and visit markets more than women.

Within the Buwal homeland schooling (primary only) is conducted in French, the main official language of Northern Cameroon. A person’s ability to speak French is reflective of the number of years that they have attended school, as there are not many occasions outside of school where French is commonly used. Sometimes non-Buwal speaking teachers are sent to work in the Buwal schools, and will only use French, or possibly some Fulfulde, in their instruction.

Women as well as older men are usually not competent in French, as formal education is a more recent introduction, and was given to boys rather than girls. These days the numbers of girls attending school at the lower age levels compares favourably with the boys, but girls are still likely to drop out more quickly than boys.

Within the Muslim population, Fulfulde has high prestige, since this is the language of those who brought Islam to the area, as well as being the dominant language for commercial activity within the wider region. Some Buwal who have become Muslims tend to use Buwal language less than non-Muslims.

Usually when women from other language groups come to live in Buwal area because of intermarriage, they will learn to speak Buwal and teach it to their children. There are also a number of Mafa immigrant families that have come to live in the area, more so than any other language group. They have also generally learned to speak Buwal, especially the women who may not be strong in Fulfulde.

Language in other domains

So while the Buwal language is dominant within most homes in the Buwal homeland, other languages are often used in certain settings or for certain activities.

Fulfulde is often used in the churches. Bibles and liturgies are most commonly read in Fulfulde. Leadership training is often conducted in Fulfulde, as are many circulatory letters written in Fulfulde. Pastors and other church leaders visit from outside the language area or have been sent to Buwal to work, and so must use the language of wider communication. The Baptist Church district of Gadala is spread over an area that covers part of the Gavar or Mofu areas also, so a common language is sought. Translations of sermons are usually made from Fulfulde to Buwal, or sometimes the other way around for the benefit of those visiting who don’t speak Buwal.

At other times when leaders or instructors have come to the Buwal region from various organisations, such as health professionals teaching health practices or giving vaccinations, or when leaders of political parties have arranged meetings, then Fulfulde is the expected language that will be used, but occasionally French.

One time, when the Sousprefet made a tour of the village, the meeting of his reception was conducted in French with a Buwal translation, as the Sousprefet is clearly engaged in matters of the state, and French is the official language of Northern Cameroon.

Buwal sometimes own radios. They are happy to listen to programs in both the French and Fulfulde languages – whatever is available. However, there are no programs in the Buwal language. Few have much access to television.

Literature

The Buwal will generally have few books or other literature in their homes. Not much literature of any description is sold in the markets or made available through other means. School children learn by copying notes from their teachers but don't buy their own text books.

Christians may have a Bible in either French or Fulfulde. Fulfulde is the most commonly used of the two. These Bibles may have been obtained through the church at subsidised rates.

Some Buwal like to read a newspaper which is produced by the SODECOTON company, pertaining to matters related to agriculture. This is available in French and Fulfulde but Fulfulde seems to be preferred.

SODECOTON has been involved in teaching Fulfulde literacy in the past within the region. The Catholic church has sometimes overseen some adult literacy classes in French.

When people write letters or notes to each other, French is preferred, but Fulfulde is often used. French is the language of education, and has more standard spellings, therefore when both the writer and the recipient are literate in French, then French will be used. However, Fulfulde is also used on other occasions as it is the more familiar language. Few have ever attempted to write notes or anything else in Buwal language.

Appendix 1

Histoire de l'évolution site Gadala et la chefferie

par Deli Benjamin, secrétaire du chef

I) Création de site Gadala

Gadala existait avant le 14^e siècle. Les peuples y venaient de différents coins. Cependant les premiers habitants étaient les « Halaï ».

Les premiers habitants de la montagne « Amché » (terre de la chefferie) étaient les Mazaï qui venaient de Mokolo (Moufoulé). Or les Mazakat de Gamva Mbaldizé occupaient l'extrême coté Ouest.

II) Evolution de la Chefferie

La chefferie appartenait aux peuples Mazaï qui avaient cherché dès leur arrivée alors que les autres races faisaient la chasse au terrain.

- Le 1^{er} chef est Mazaï, père de Bezatabaï.
- Le 2^{me} Bezatabaï, héritier de son père. Cependant était chassé par les Mazakat de Gamva Mbaldizé qui voulait arracher le pouvoir. En effet il se réfugiait à Oudiak. Aidé par les Madagamzam de la race de sa mère, ainsi il reprenait son pouvoir la même période après être descendu de Oudiak par Magawaï où il avait fait d'escale pour étudier les dernières réactions de ses adversaires.
- 3^e Gamva Mazaï, fils de Bezatabaï.
- 4^e Gavarai Mazaï, fils de Gamva Mazaï.
- 5^e Gala Mazaï, fils de Gavarai Mazaï qui régnait environ pendant une vingtaine d'années, était arrêté en prison dit Mozougoï à cause de son refus de descendre sur la plaine et l'utilisation de peau comme utile d'habillement.
- 6^e Koldalha Mazaï : Tout en assurant l'intérim de son père était aussi arrêté en prison par un coup monté sous prétexte de vol. Il n'avait régné que pendant quelques mois.
- 7^e Galdok : Réfugier chez le chef Mazaï qui en continuant l'intérim était installé définitivement par mal entendement entre les deux frères fils Mazaï Gala qui sont Kodji Mokol, dit Ldouda sous la proposition de père arrêté et Kodji Méchéwéléo dit TEBE par son choix personnel. Cependant ce dernier, Galdok meurt après deux (2) ans de règne à la suite de pratique de sacrifice d'idole appelé Nguéldé qui ne devrait pas faire parce qu'il n'appartenait pas à leur famille.
- 8^e Tséré Galdok, fils de frère Galdok appelé Mézé, mort le 21 Juin 2006 après avoir régné environ pendant une trentaine d'années.
- 9^e ELH Haman Mokol, chef de 3^e degré voté en date 7 septembre 2006 jusqu'à nos jours.

III) Définition du mot « Gadala »

Gadala vient du mot fulfulde « Gadal » qui signifie remède ou écorce, nom donné en suite à la montagne qui veut dire montagne de génie écorce ou miracle qui sauvait les peuples et terrassaient les peuls musulmans qui voulaient imposer l'islam à la population lors de la guerre sainte musulmane organisée par Gusman Dan Fodio.

De plus les blancs auraient du s'installer mais étaient toujours chassés. Ces derniers s'installaient à Mokolo où ils développaient pour devenir en suite une ville.

Ce nom Gadala reconnu officiellement en réalité en terme locale est « Buwal » vient du mot « changer » qui signifie les différents peuples se sont rattachés à une langue, même tradition tout en devenant aussi une même ethnie à présent.

Sur le plan social, Gadala est composé de 13 Chefs de quartiers. La population actuelle quant à elle, est majorité Buwal et une minorité de Peuls et les Mafa (Matakan).

Dans le cadre religieux se présentent le Christianisme, l'Islam et l'animisme.

En ce qui concerne le plan économique, l'agriculture est essentiellement la base suivie d'élevage et un peu de petits commerces. La culture pratiquée est le mil (sorgho), maïs, arachide, haricot et beaucoup d'autres légumes pour la subsistance de la population et légèrement pour la vente.

Le coton, culture industrielle qui développe le village autrefois freine aujourd'hui l'évolution de certains par les impayés.

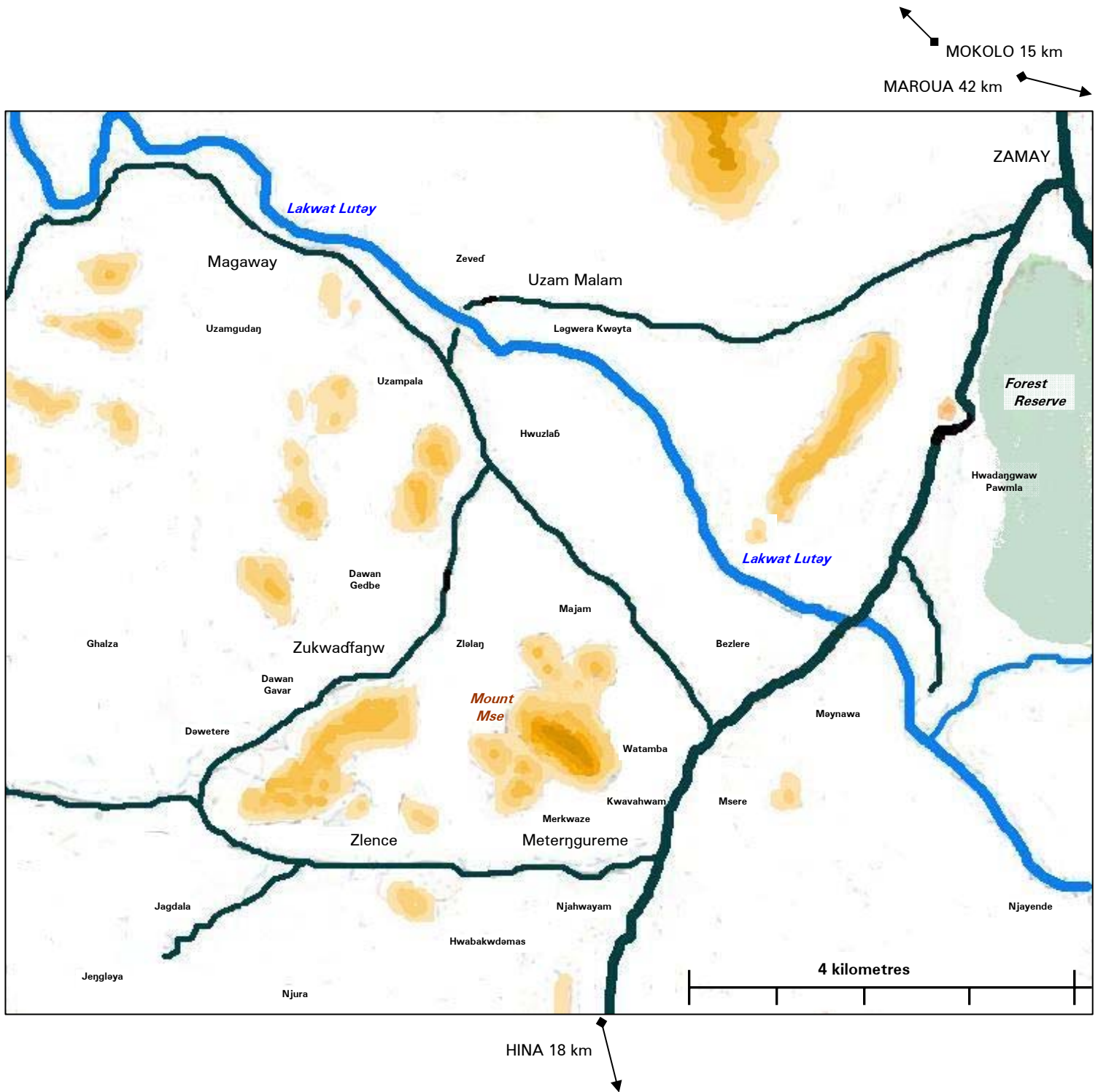
Appendix 2:

List of Buwal clans and their central locality

Clan	Male Clan Praise Names	Female Clan Praise Names	Locality
ηkesel mse	mazay	jawa mazay	Meterngureme
ηkesel barkasan	mazay barkasan	jawa barkasan	Zlence
ηkesel pakatay	mazay pakatay	jawa pakatay	Meterngureme
ndelem madagamzam lawtahw	madagamzam	devèleh madagamzam	Zlence
ndelem kavaynzam	madagamzam kavaynzam	devèleh madagamzam	Meterngureme
barkaslaf	bəytamben	jawa bəytamben	Meterngureme
maslay	maslay	maslay	Watamba
masar bezeh	masar bezeh	masar bezeh	Watamba
ndelemkevezled, ndelem madawan	baykevezled	devleh baykevezled	Zukwadfanjw
bəsəyn ndere	bəsəyn ndere	helensen ndere	Magaway
bəsəyn watamba	bəsəyn watamba	helensen	Watamba
masakwavakw watamba	masakwavakw	helensen	Watamba
bəyvəram dewetere	bəyvəram	talmanja	Dewetere
vadam kavamzam	bəymava kezelek	jawa bəymava kezelek	Meterngureme
vadam magaway	bəymava	jawa bəymava	Magaway
hwadabay mse	hwadabay mata mse	jawa hwadabay mata mse	Magaway
bəygwadal	bəygwadal	mbazla	Meterngureme
bəygwadal	bəygwadal	mbazla	Yeldew
bəydazan lawgwada	bəydazan lagwada	dawsa bəydazan lagwadaw	Zlence
madawelbe watamba	madawelbe	helensen watamba	Bezlere
bəydama	bəydama lagwa	bəydama lagwa	Meterngureme and Zlence
mazamgwavanjw kezelek	bəymazama kezelek tenten	jawa bəymazama kezelek tenten	Meterngureme and Zlence
njamay	njamay daw	gwazla	Bezlere
caklak (mazamgwavanjw magaway)	caklak	jawa caklak	Magaway
ηkesel dawnafay	mazay dawnafay	jawa dawnafay	Meterngureme
lagwa	lagwa mahwaraw	dam mazay	Meterngureme
ηkesel mazkad	mazay mazkad	jawa mazay mazkad	Zlence
mazay mazkad	mazay mazkad	jawa mazay mazkad	Magaway
ghəlay	ghəlay	ghəlay	Watamba
mafad habay	mafad habay	mafad habay	Zukwadfanjw

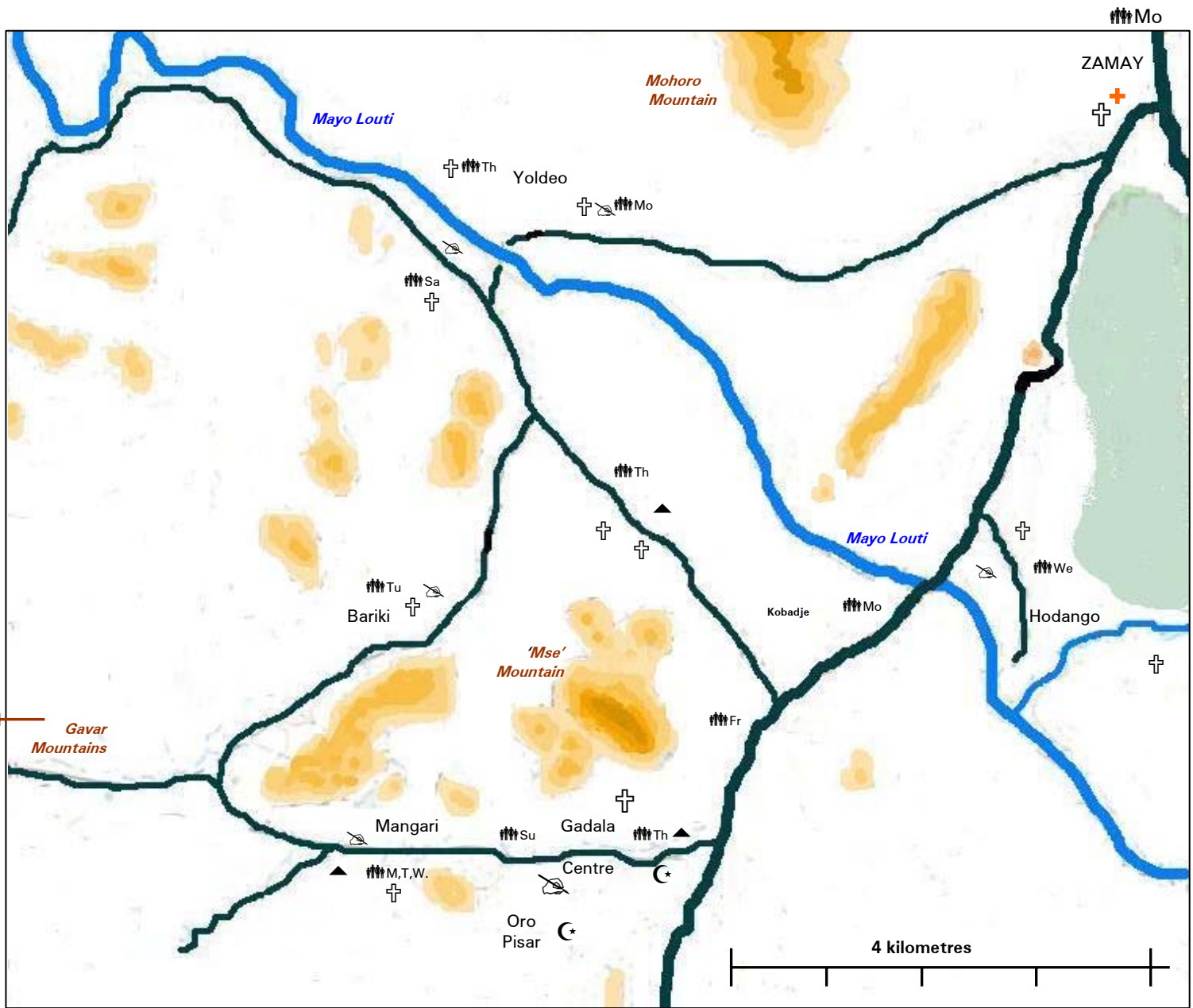
Appendix 3 :

Map showing the Buwal homeland (Buwal place names & spellings).
The 12 neighbourhoods and other Buwal population centres



Appendix 4 :

**Map of Buwal, (including some alternative names and regional spellings).
Buildings and services**



LEGEND			
School	.	.	↘
Church	.	.	✚
Mosque	.	.	☾
Market	.	☾ (day of the week)	
Storehouse (SODECOTON)	.		▲
Clinic / Hospital	.	.	+

☾ Sa ↓ 3km Gawar Wende
 + Zidim 13 km