

### Chapter III-1: *Farming in Dagbon*

Yesterday I told you that we are going to take a different direction on the part of our talks. Truly, my talks have come to enter many talks. I have been telling you that talks enter one another, and what we are coming to join, and what we have been talking, it is all one. And so the talks we have been talking, I think I have reached to some point, and now we are coming to continue and talk about our way of living in Dagbon here. It is only that it will be good, if I am going to be talking to you about our Dagbamba living here, I should show you all the talks that are inside. There are many talks inside how we Dagbamba farm and the work we are doing. And what is following again is the talk of our families and how we stay together in our houses with our families. As I have shown you a small part of all that, I think it is a very nice and interesting talk. And so if you have an appetite for it, I am going to take it and follow it the same way I followed the drumming talks, and I will follow it into details. And we will reach the extent we can do. And so what is coming is not something that is going back.

And so today we will start the talk of farming. As for us Dagbamba, we are known to be farmers. And farming, and the way we live: there is nothing sweeter than farming, and there is nothing stronger than farming. And I think that even before Naa Zanjina, going to Naa Shitobu and even Naa Gbewaa, the Dagbamba were farming. When the Dagbamba came, the tindanas were for the land, and Naa Nyaysi beat them and collected the land, but it was not Naa Nyaysi who started Dagbon. Those who started Dagbon, we don't even like talking their talks. If you don't know something and you want to say it, you are going to be telling lies. Some think that it was Naa Gbewaa who started Dagbon, because Naa Gbewaa also came and met people. And as they say that Naa Gbewaa started Dagbon, he is not the one who started it. Dagbon started a long time ago, and I think that the time Dagbon started, the Dagbamba knew farming.

But truly, if you say that they were not farming plenty during Naa Gbewaa's time or Naa Luro's time, I will not argue with you. As for them, they were always fighting; they had no time for farming. As they didn't like farming, it made hunger to fall in Dagbon. When it was daybreak, they would go to another town and kill the people and take the land to be theirs. But they would only take the things from the town and go away. The Dagbamba didn't know how to wage war and put their children as chiefs to hold the land. And truly, I can say that the Dagbamba were fools, because if they had been fighting and taking the land, our land would have been very large by now. How we are sitting now, our Yendi was

not Yendi in the olden days. Yendi was near Diari. Even this Tamale, it used to be for the Gonjas. You see the Gonjas: apart from the Ashantis, no one in this Ghana has more land than the Gonjas. But the Gonjas have no people: if you go to the Gonja land, you can go twenty miles and you will not even see a small village. But in Dagbon, if you go two miles or three miles, you will be seeing villages. I think you can divide us Dagbamba four times and we will still be more than all the Gonjas. And we fought the Gonjas in a war, and we defeated them, but we were fighting and leaving the land. And today the Gonjas have got the land. If we had driven them from the land, we would have been for their lands now.

And I think in my heart that it was the Dagbamba who brought farming here, because in the north of Ghana, no one farms better than the Dagbamba. And that is why I'm saying that I think they were already farming during the time of Naa Gbewaa, because when they came here, there were not many people, and the people who were here were not strong in farming. I told you that those we call Yaawunde were here, but they went away before we came and sat down. And those we call Tiyaawumiya were here, but as they were not many, they were not farming much. Truly, they were farming a little, because if they had not been farming, where would they get food to eat? Where would they go and buy? And so those who got up before we came and sat down, if they were farming, I don't know, because I don't want to say something and it will be lies.

And what I know: Dagbon started a long time ago, and the time the Dagbamba came, they met people, and the people they met were not many. By the time of Nimbu and Naa Gbewaa, the Mamprusis and the Nanumbas were not here, because we show that the Mamprusis and the Nanumbas came from us. All the people who are here now were not here. Those we call the real Gonjas were not here, and even the Gonjas don't like farming. Look at the Gurunsis in the Upper Region — the Frafras and the Kasenas. If somebody says the Gurunsis were sitting here when the Dagbamba came, I will doubt it. And even the Gurunsis don't farm much. In the olden days we were buying them with food. We show that when we Dagbamba were farming, we were using our sense to take our crops and go and buy them. We were sending them to Salaga and selling them, and the Salaga people were taking them to sell to Kumasi people, and Kumasi people were also taking them to Cape Coast to sell them to the white man. If the Gurunsis were farming, how could we take food and go and buy them?

As for the Gurunsis, the Dagbamba didn't even have to fight them. What was their use? Hunger was going to kill them, and they didn't have anything. We have heard that when the Dagbamba came, they came on horses, and they were

able to ride horses to war. Dagbamba had horses, they had arrows, they had spears that they could use to throw. But the Gurunsi didn't have anything. They didn't have guns; they didn't have spears; they didn't have arrows. And so if the Gurunsi have a spear, a club, or an arrow, it is from the Dagbamba that they got to know about it. It's just like the way the Ashantis showed us guns. We knew spears, arrows, and swords. That was what we knew, and it was from the Ashantis that we saw guns. And I think in my heart that the Ashantis also saw guns from the white men. But when the Dagbamba came, what was a Gurunsi man going to use to fight? Could they take a sling and kill someone? And so we didn't fight the Gurunsi. They didn't have food, so what was their use, and what could we take from them?

And so I think that when the Dagbamba came, they were farming, but there was nobody farming the way we farm today. And as they were not farming much, there was hunger. When hunger came in Dagbon, they didn't know where to get food and eat. There are some leaves of a hibiscus plant we call *bira*. When we make yam mounds and it rains, this *bira* grows. In the olden days, they used to go and search for this *bira*, and they would cook it into a thick soup. They would slurp this soup and sleep. And there was something again. It was my father who talked and I heard. As the Dagbamba did not farm and there was hunger, they were digging under a type of plant we call *taŋkoro*. When you dig it, there is a big tuber like a yam. When you cut it, it is white, but it is very bitter. My father said that when the hunger fell, they used to dig under this *taŋkoro*, and they would pound it in a mortar. They would soak it in water, and then they would sieve it about three times and spread it out to dry. Then women would grind it and cook it. There was poison inside it: if they didn't sieve it well for the strength to go out, when they ate it, it killed some of them. My father said, if you are a human being and you get up and you have not eaten this *taŋkoro*, you should not say, "There is hunger," because you have not seen anything. And so it was in all this that they knew that farming is a good thing. And they also knew that if they didn't stop fighting, they would kill and finish one another.

In the olden days, the Dagbamba were fighting but they were not fighting for land, and they were not farming much. And I think that truly they became farmers by the time of Naa Luro, and it was because of hunger. But Naa Luro also fought a war, and after Naa Luro, the ones who fought war were Naa Zanjina and Naa Siyli, and they fought the Gonjas and drove them far away. But I think it was the time of Naa Luro that they began farming plenty. I can say that because by that time, people were many, and they became farmers because of hunger. But Dagbon started a long time ago, and by then we were farming small-small. And

those who were sitting here when we came, if they were farming, I don't know, because I didn't ask, and as for me, I don't want to say something and it will be lies.

And as the talk of farming has got many things, if we are going to take one day and talk about it, it will look as if I'm telling lies, or it means that I don't know it. But I am someone who farms. And even if I don't know farming, yet I am farming. Whatever happens, I know it to my extent. Since I was born and my eyes were getting open, I was all the time going to the farm. And I was farming, and at the same time I was beating drums. Truly, I was drumming before I started farming for myself. As I am drumming now, I am also farming, and I don't think I can compare the two of them. I can't tell how much money we make from our drumming because we don't keep accounts. But if I go for drumming at a funeral and come back, that day I will see the money. If they call us to play Takai, we will share the money when we get back. But the money from farming is coming in a yearly way, and again, farming is like playing the lottery. You know that when you play the lottery, sometimes you win and sometimes you don't win; farming is like that. If I farm and the farm does not do well, then I am falling. And so if it comes like that, then I will only be relying on the drumming for everything. But it was only the time I left home to travel to other places that I only relied on beating the drums. And as I have come back home to sit at one place, I have to get back to my old work again: that is farming.

And so when I am going to talk about it, it will be good if I talk and the talks follow one another. And truly, some of the talks will enter one another, and so we should not take all of it to talk at once. If God gives us health, and we continue, I will talk to my end. Inside the talk of farming, our typical Dagbamba are there, and they are all farmers. And the farming the Dagbamba were farming, it was yams, guinea corn, cowpeas, corn, millet, red beans, and bambara beans. These were all here and we were farming them. And coming to this modern-day farming of rice and groundnuts, I will talk of it. And I will tell you of the boys who farm for their fathers, their grandfathers, or their uncles; and some of them remain in their fathers' farms and their uncles' farms until they die there. And in Dagbon we have got all this, and I will tell you about what I know, because for us Dagbamba, there is nothing stronger than farming, and there is nothing sweeter than farming.

But truly, if we knew where food was, and if the food was just coming to enter our mouths, and if we were not buying food, no one would farm. If it were just that you sit down and they will bring food to you, no one would farm. It is now that the white man's farming has come that everyone is farming. As for the

white man's way of farming, you just sit down and take your hand and point and say, "The tractor should go and farm." They can take a tape and ask you how many acres you want. If there is money in your pocket, you say, "Sixty acres." They will farm for you, and you have not bent your waist. But if it is the farming we were farming in the olden days, you will bend on the ground, and getting to the falling down of the sun, your eyes will see. When you go home, you will know that you have gone to the farm. When night catches, you cannot roam. When they prepare the food and fill the bowl, when two people eat it, you will think that ten people have eaten. And so farming, I will take its talk and we will talk about it.

If you follow the Dagbamba, the ones who used to farm were not many. Those who were not farming in the olden days, I will count them for you. Drummers were not farming; we used to eat in the chief's house. Maalams were not farming, because when day breaks, the maalam will go and pray for the chief. As he has prayed for the chief, where the chief eats is where the maalam eats. Barbers were not farming, because the barber was shaving the chief's wives and the chief's housechildren, and even the chief himself. As the barber is shaving them, what they eat is what he eats. And even if he was shaving them and they were cooking, he would finish and go to his house, and they would finish cooking and send his share to him. The chief's housechildren were not going to the farm. But the butcher used to farm, and the blacksmith used to farm.

Who was farming for the chief? The chief's villagers and his townspeople were farming for him. When it was time for farming, the chief would call the Lun-Naa and tell him, "Let the town know that tomorrow is my farming day." Anyone who has young men or has not got young men, he will have to go and farm for the chief. When day breaks, anyone who has got one young man or three young men, he will let them go to the chief's farm. Anyone who has not got a young man, as others have gone to dig the farm for sowing, he will sow the crops. Those who are old will sit with the chief under a tree. And small children who have not yet been called but they have the appetite, they will go and fetch water for people to drink. And after the townsmen have farmed for the chief, the chief will send someone like the Wulana's house boy, and this boy will go to the villages and tell the village chiefs, "The chief says that on such-and-such a day, you should come and help him." This boy will go to all the villages and say the same thing, and if the chief has ten villages, he will tell them. Sometimes they will come and farm for two days and finish farming the farm. If it is that the villages are many, if they are twenty, the chief will let ten villages come and farm. When they finish farming and the farm comes to grow grass and weeds, the chief will let the other villages come and cut the grass. Every chief, they respect him like that for farming. And the chief and his farming, that is how it is.

But now, truly I can say that most Dagbamba farm. In Dagbon, if you take Dagbamba alone, those who farm are more than those who don't farm. And the tribes who have come to stay in Tamale here, there are Ewes, Ashantis, Gas, and others who have come to work here, and as they are working here, some of them farm and some of them don't farm: those among them who don't farm are more than those who farm. But if you count the real Dagbamba, you will see that most of them farm. And at a place like Kumbungu or Savelugu or any real Dagbamba town, everybody is farming. At Nanton or Voggo or Tolon, it is the same. It is only our women who don't farm.

If you yourself are a farmer, in this Dagbon, when you bring forth your children, you are not the only person who holds them. If your brothers are there, you will remove one of your children and give him to one of your brothers, and say that he should farm for your brother. If your mother is there and your father is not there, you will build a small house and let your mother be in it. And you will remove one of your children who are boys, and say he should "be closing the gate of his grandmother." As you have said that, it means that he should go and be farming for her. It is he who will be farming for her to get food to eat. If his grandmother dies, this boy will not come back to your house again. And so as you are there and giving birth to children, you will be sending some of these children to your brothers and your mother.

If it is your sister's son or your brother's son, they will be coming to your house to farm for you. And if your brother dies and his children are still small, it is you who will go and perform the funeral and take these children and come home. These children will be farming for you, together with your own children who are still in your house. Every day, they are in your farm farming food for you. If your brother's children grow up and your children are still small, you are the one who will find wives for them. As they have farmed for you, what they farmed and got, it is some of the profit from inside it that you will remove to get wives for them. And when you finish getting wives for your brother's children, and your children too are growing, if your brother's children are three or four, you can remove two of them and say, "Now farm for yourselves." And at that time, these two will go behind your house, at the side their rooms are, and they will push the walls down and build and extend your house. It will become the young men's side, and we call it like that. They and their wives have separated themselves, because they are farming for themselves. But sometimes, when the farming falls, they will come and help you. As they farm for you, it is not by force, because you have already separated them. And even again, as these young men have not yet brought forth children because they have just taken wives, if your children are

many, you the old man, you can remove two children and give them and say the children should go and be fetching water for them in the farm. And what you have said, it means the children should go and help them farm. And by that time, you will see that those you have separated, their hearts will be white. They will know that when they came to farm for you, they were not suffering for nothing.

And what I'm telling you, a Dagbamba way of living is there for some Dagbamba. There can be a Dagbana, if his brother dies, he will go and take the children, and come and add them to his children. And these children will be farming for him, and he will be getting. And the children will grow up. If he is not a good person, he will separate his own children and get wives for them, and leave his brother's children. And his brother's children will still be there and be farming. He will not mind them. Not even a dog will call them. And when they farm, too, they cannot say anything. They will be farming to see whether their junior father or senior father has got patience or whether he is calling them useless. And he is calling them useless: he is showing that their real father is not there. You will see that when these children get to know, and it is that "Our father says we are useless," they will run away and leave him. Sometimes they will run and be in another town, and they will build their house and be farming. You will see that they will get a lot of money. And you will see that some bad talks will go and fall on their junior father or senior father. And in Dagbon here, some do that.

And so, "my senior brother's child" and "my junior brother's child," if your brothers are not there, you will take them and come to your house: if you have sense, you will respect them. And your sister's son, if your sister is not there and her husband too is not there, and there is no one to take care of the children, you will go and take your sister's children, and they will be in your farm farming for you. As they are farming, if you have sense, you will get wives for them. You should not let them grumble. As they are suffering for you, if you let them grumble, you too will come to grumble. Even if they farm for you, you will not get profit. But someone who respects such children, if you enter his farm, you will walk from here to the other side of town. His brother's sons or his sister's sons, they are suffering for him. The one who has patience will not allow his brother's child or his sister's child to grumble. But if he calls them useless, it is lying down, and they will have no use for him.

As my son Alhassan is with me, he is my brother's child. When he was small, he came and met me. Any time I was going to the farm, he would follow me. And my own son Abdulai is there and he is older than Alhassan. As Alhassan has been going to the farm, my child Abdulai has been sitting down and doesn't go, and he is working the white man's work. One day, it was about five years ago,

Alhassan refused to go to the farm. And I kept quiet. I told him, “If I go to the farm and you don’t follow my steps, you shouldn’t let me meet you in this house.” And I went to the farm I was farming then, at Galiwe. And he came. And I told him, “I have been suffering with you on this farm. Your father and I had the same father and the same mother. Your father sucked our mother’s breast and gave me. And today you are with me. And I am getting something from this farm. If I don’t use what I get to find something for you to wear or to find a wife for you, if I take it to give to Abdulai, God should ask me. And so don’t look and say that as Abdulai has not been going to the farm, one day I will get a wife for him. And so if you call me someone’s father, as for that, that someone is like you.” That is what I told Alhassan in the farm, and when I told him that, he heard. And now Alhassan has got a wife and given birth to a son. And Abdulai is still there, going around, doing the white man’s work. As I have not minded him, has he got? And so farming, for those who hear truth, it had got profit. But those who don’t follow its ways, there is no profit. And so today, I myself, I have seen it inside my house, not outside. If I have not seen anything, I have seen Alhassan. And so I don’t follow what others do, to let your brother’s children farm for you and then call them useless.

Even I have seen, and I heard, and I think it is true. Someone took his brother’s child and came, and the child was with him in the farm every day. When they farmed and got profit, this old man would keep the money. And he was keeping the money down till his own son grew up. When his son grew up, the old man gave him the money, that he should go and trade. The son was going round buying things and coming to sell, and the old man was in the farm with his brother’s child. And he searched and got a wife for his son. And coming to a year’s time, this man went to Mecca and came home. And his brother’s child was still in the farm farming, and what he got from the farm was plenty. And the man took it and sold, and gave the money to his son, that he should get and add and be trading. Coming to a year, he told his son to go to Mecca. He didn’t even search for a wife for his brother’s son, or even say that his brother’s son should go to Mecca. And his son got up and went to Mecca, and he got missing there. They finished praying, and they didn’t see him. Up till now, they have not seen him. And so farming, on the part of your family child coming to you, it is a big talk in Dagbon. If only you are farming, you will know.

And those your children, it is not anyone who knocks them into farming. When they come to the age of farming, they themselves will start it. Truly, there is a child who wants you to force him. When you say, “Let’s go to the farm,” he gets up and runs away, and says, “My father says we should go to the farm; I will not

go.” As for such boys, they force them into farming. But the child who has interest in farming, it is not you the father who will disturb him to start. He will start and you will see. Someone the age of my son Osmanu, about three years old, going to four, if he follows me to the farm, he cannot carry anything. But he knows how to lie under a tree. And there is no farmer who has got only one hoe. He has *kushia*, the small one; he has *gbee*; he has *kulagaa*; he has *kutitale*, the big one. If he is using the big one for clearing or making yam mounds, the small one, *kushia*, is lying useless. That is the one we use for weeding. If the small hoe is there and your small child like Osmanu follows you to the farm, you will give him the hoe and say, “Let’s go and dig crickets,” because you have been catching them and showing them to him. And the crickets are in the corn. And as he is digging the crickets, it is there he will learn how to farm.

So in Dagbon here, if your father gives birth to you and he is farming, when you get up and your father is going to the farm, you follow him. We have something called *nosuyu*: it is a hen basket. If you are up to the age of six or seven, you can put a hen basket under your arm and another one on your head, and you will carry them and follow your father to the farm. When you reach the farm, you will remove the hens and let them roam. And if your father is farming, and he is bending down, he will tell you to bring water and give him to drink, and you will fetch the water. You will be doing this up to the time you are ready for farming. And the farming children do is weeding. If your father sows corn and there is some grass inside it, you will get a small hoe like *gbee* and be digging the grass and shaking the dirt and throwing the grass behind you. And that is the farming of children.

If you the householder have many children, you will get hoes for all of them. If there are three or four of them, when they work and you see, you will be surprised. Their waists are not stiff. And as for children, their only medicine is food; food is what makes them happy. If you don’t give a child enough food to eat and be satisfied, he is weak. But when his stomach is full, he doesn’t even want to hear you say, “Let’s go home.” Such a child, at the end of a year, when you have farmed and ate, and some of the food remains, you will sell it and buy a cloth for the child’s mother, and you will buy something for the child too.

And so such children, you don’t show them farming. It is all from the child himself. If the child wants, he will learn. If a person doesn’t want something, and you tell him to do it, as he doesn’t want it, the work he will do for you is the work you also don’t want. And that time you will tell him to go. But if someone wants something, he will do it and you will know that he wants it. And so farming has no showing. No one shows another. It is a thing of the eye. How will you show

it? He has been following you every day to the farm, and as he has been watching you, he knows it. The only thing you will show is making yam mounds and ridges. As for yam mounds, when you start and go out making the mounds, you have to come back to the starting spot again. But apart from that, when you are farming and it is weeding, anywhere you face, you are farming. When the child is from fifteen years old going to eighteen, that is the time you can show him how to farm yam mounds. And if you have children like my sons Alhassan or Abdulkadiri or Yakubu, if it is the clearing of the land, they can do it, and if it is the farming of yam mounds, they can do it. When you have people like that and they are farming, they don't even want you to come to the farm and be suffering. When you the householder come and meet them in the farm, and you see their work, the whiteness of your heart is like the moon. And so farming, there is nothing sweeter than it, and there is nothing stronger than it. As you have been trying, these children have been following you, and the children who are also following behind them, they will also be growing. And by the time your children grow up to the age of about twenty years, by then you will not be farming again. You would like to farm, but your children will not let you. They will say, "As we are now grown up, we don't want you to farm again." And they will be farming for you, and no farming work will overcome them.

And again, on the part of farming in Dagbon here, we Dagbamba have something called *daa kparba*, market-day farmers. On market days, they come together and farm, and I can say that it is the young men who do it more. Every town has got farmers who are market-day farmers. There is someone who goes to farm every day, but he is not someone who can farm and get plenty. And there is someone who is not strong, because not everybody is equal. They will all come together and farm, and what they get, one man alone would not get it. Some people come together as six people, some ten people, some even two people, because like that they can help one another.

Let's say we are four people sitting down: one of us will say, "If we help one another, wouldn't it be better? Our farming would not be overcoming us." I have got my plot to farm, and I will say, "Come and help me on the Tamale market day." And the other three will come, and we will go together and farm. The Tamale market day is every six days, and another one will say, "As we have farmed your farm on the Tamale market day, the next Tamale market day coming, I am going to my farm." And we will go to that fellow's farm, and the farm will not look as if only one person is farming it. How we will come together to work the farming work, it will be better than if one person does it. If we are going to be farming for each other on the Tamale market days alone, it will be sending us a

long way, and we will say, “Truly, it is true.” And so we will get some days to add. You will hear one of us say that we should come on the Tampion market day. And you will see that the four of us will be going to one another’s farms, and two will farm on the one market day, and two will farm on the other market day, and it will be going round. If we go to farm together on the Tamale market day, the next market is Tolon and the one following is Savelugu. Those two days, we won’t farm one another’s farm. Everybody will go to his own farm. The next day is Tampion market, and we will farm for the next fellow. After Tampion market is Nyankpala and Gushegu, and the one following is Kumbungu: we won’t go to one another’s farm. The next market is Tamale again, and we will farm the market-day farming. That is how we will farm. If we like, we will add Fridays to it. So here it is: if the market-day farmers are ten, as the markets are every six days, if they choose two market days, then they will farm every three days: in one month they will go round once. When they take it like that, if you come upon their farms, fear will catch you. If you are inside the market-day farming, anyone coming on your farm will know that you are not the only person who has farmed it. And when you farm, if God likes you, you will get what you did not think you would get.

So in the market-day farming, they help one another. How does it help? If you are the only person in your farm, and you join together in market-day farming, if you miss going to your farm one day, the next day you are going with six or ten people. How they will farm, if you farm for one month, you cannot do it. As it is, is your farm going to increase or decrease? And so market-day farming is something that helps a person, because when the market-day farmer goes to farm, no one’s farm can be like his. Let’s say that today we come together four, ten, or twelve of us, and we put down today’s market. Every town has got its market days. If it is Kumbungu or Voggo or Tamale we are sitting, that will be our market-day farming. Today all the people will go to one person’s farm and come home. The next day everybody will go to his own farm. Maybe you are someone’s son and your father is still there. You will go to your father’s farm and be farming. Going to three days, the other one’s turn is up, and you will go and farm. Then you will come back, and you will be in your father’s farm. That is how it will go until it comes round. As your father is sitting, your mother’s children are also in your father’s farm every day, and they have not gone to join the market-day farming. As you are farming the market-day farming, it doesn’t show that you should only farm for yourself: when your turn comes to you, you will take them to your father’s farm first, and they will farm for your father. By that time your father will know that how you have been walking, you have not been walking uselessly. And your mother’s children too will know that as you

were walking about, you were not walking uselessly. The market-day farmers have come to help them, and their whole farm is now clear. They will be happy, and there will be white heart between you and your father, and white heart between you and your mother's children. The next time you are going to do the market-day farming, it is not wrong. When it comes to you again, if your father's farm is not finished, you will take them there again and they will farm your father's farm and finish all of it. And by then each of your mother's children will go to farm his own farm, and you will take the market-day farmers and be farming yours. And you are going to gain more than your mother's children.

And that is the market-day farming. It is white-heart work. Today my heart is white, your heart is white, Ben's heart is white, Kissmal's heart is white, and we are going to do work. No one is forcing us. How are we going to do it? We will take all our strength and farm, because it is white-heart work. But if someone goes to his father's farm, it's by force, and there will be a day when his heart will tell him not to go to the farm. But he fears the heart of his father. And so he will go and will not farm well. But the market-day farmers, if they come to your farm, they farm well. The one who is lazy and doesn't farm well, when you also go to his farm, that is how you are also going to do it. Dagbamba say that if your friend kills a hen and cuts your share for you, you should know that your hen in the house is also roaming with a broken leg. And so it is friendship and liking which bring the market-day farming. If you are staying with someone and you don't like one another, you wouldn't think of doing this market-day farming. It can be that your farm is near to another person's farm: every day you will talk while you are farming, and that will bring the friendship, and the friendship will let you make one mouth and do the market-day farming. It is just like how we are talking these talks. You are not from this Dagbon, but we are sitting with you more than with others, even our relatives. You ask of us, and we ask of you. And now we take you as our family. What has brought it? If you didn't like us, would you ask of us? Are we not doing work? That is how market-day farming is.

And as for the market-day farmers, as they are farming, they don't get and add together. The market-day farming shows that, "If I come and farm for you, the next time it comes, you have to come and farm in my farm." That is all. As you have come to my farm and I have gone to your farm, it is not that we have got an area which we are all farming together. When you get, it is for you yourself. If you don't get, it is not anyone's fault, and it doesn't catch anyone. You don't say that they didn't farm well for you. You will know that it is God who has not given you. And you don't look at those who have got. You don't have any debt to them, and they too won't give you anything. That is how market-day farming is. It is not that they come together and make a group farm.

As for group farming, it was the white people who brought group farming to Dagbon here, and even they made us do it. But it has no use for us, and that is why we have refused it. And the reason why we don't do group farming is that there is cheating inside it. And there is foolishness, too. Let's say that John, Ben, Kissmal, and I are sitting, and they say we should make a group farm. We cut one area, and we farm. When we finish farming, grass grows. I go to the farm with John to weed it. Ben has not gone; Kissmal has not gone. The next day, John and I go; Ben and Kissmal don't go. And when we go home, as Ben and Kissmal have not gone to the farm, they have not come to tell us what prevented them. As it has happened twice, we are annoyed at them, but we will not ask them, "Why didn't you come?" If we have patience, we will keep quiet. And we will mark the two days down. The next one coming is the time Ben and Kissmal know that the food is getting up. When the food grows, we will all go to cut it. But when we are going to share it, we won't share it equally. That is the day we are going to ask them about the days they didn't come. If we ask them and they don't talk well, that is the day we will quarrel, and everyone will go where he wants.

It is because the government says we should do group farming, that is why we say we also do it. It is by force. The white people brought it, and they are no longer here, but the bank people will not help a single person. They make you come in a group. If it is the bank that is giving us money to make a group farm, we will say we will come together and farm. Let's say I am the leader: I am the one who will stand in front, and they will give me the money. If the farm is there, I will divide it and say, "This part is mine; this part is John's; this is Ben's; this is Kissmal's. When it's daybreak and you don't come, my hand is not in you." And as I am the leader, the money the bank gave, I will also get it and divide and give you. And then I will write your names and give to the bank manager, and I will say, "All of us, we have a group farm, but everyone has got his farm inside it, and he is looking at it." And the manager will ask me, "What is wrong?" And I will say, "There is cheating." And he will say, "As you have said you are doing group farming, if that is it, the next year coming, we will collect the money." And those of us who don't fear farming, we will be trying. Before the year comes, your food will do well. You will harvest your food and sell, and you will pay your debt and get profit. And those who don't want farming, their farms will spoil. And the manager will tell them, "Try to finish paying your debt. If you don't finish paying, we won't give you money to farm again." But even if they finish paying, they will not get money again. By that time, has the group farm spoiled or has it not spoiled?

And so, we Dagbamba don't like group farming. We blacks, those of us in Dagbon here, it will be a long time before we are going to do group farming. Those talking that we have been doing it, they are telling lies in this our land. They are deceiving you. No one in Dagbon has a group farm, because we all know the habits of one another, and no one will let his friend cheat him. Truly, you can know that someone is cheating you and you will also be benefiting from that person. As you are sitting here, we are with you. If you come to think that we are cheating you, and you know that we are cheating you, you will not get what you want from us. And if we knew that you are cheating us, we wouldn't get what we want. And so if it comes like that, you will know that they are cheating you, and you will be working and doing. And we will also do that, and we will all be working. But as for the group farm, they don't do it that way because there is no benefit, and that is why we don't have group farms. And so if they tell you that there is group farming in Dagbon here, if you go there, you will see that everybody will have his part. Or if they have their names on the paper that it is group farming, you will see that each one has gone to a different place to farm. When you cut your part, you don't have any time for any person again. When it's daybreak, you and the person whose mouths are one, you can go and farm together. But as you have farmed together, you are not going to sell the food together and share the money together. Everybody is going to take his part, because if you are farming, and it comes to the time that you should put your hand inside your pocket and remove money for something, there is someone who won't remove it. He will be looking at you. When you remove your money and you weed the farm, you are going to get the food. And when you get the food, you are going to get money. And when he gets his part, it will be small. That is the day his heart will not be white. And that is why we don't have group farming. That is not how we work.

But the market-day farming doesn't show cheating or foolishness. As for market-day farming, for some people in Dagbon here, that is how they work. It makes them get profit in their farming, and that is why they do it. When they come together and farm like that, it helps them. When the market farmers farm and get food, they don't get the food and add it together, because everyone has got his own house. The market-day farmer, if God likes him, he will farm and get a lot of food, and when he gets like that, he will take and sell. In his profit he will buy cows. And someone will buy sheep, and someone too will buy hens. And someone will build his house nicely. Someone will have the money and keep his people, and they will be living well. And that is the profit of their farming. And I think I will stop here, and tomorrow we will start and talk about how we Dagbamba farm yams, because yams have got a lot of talk in Dagbon here.