THE FOOD CRISIS IN WEST AFRICA: A WOMAN'S PLIGHT

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This video speaks for itself.

Bamogo picked up an ax and chopped an old stump into firewood. She gathered straw and carried it to her house to start a fire. She set a blackened pot on the flames and poured in water, which she had fetched from a pump a half-mile away that morning.

Standing in the dirt, she started washing pots and dishes.

Her husband, Pierre Sibra, 50, lay in the shade nearby, watching her work. He was also tired after a long day in the field -- one of the few men working in fields dominated by women.

"I am sad that I am not feeding my family well," Sibra said. "And I am sad to see the way my wife is suffering. When you look at her, you see she is losing strength."

As he spoke, one of his young sons brought him a cup of water.

"It is tougher for the ladies," he said. "We do the same work in the field. But now I am just sitting, and she is still working."

Sibra was asked why he did not help his wife with the chores. He looked shocked. In cultures like this one, roles for men and women are clearly defined. Men do manual labor outside the home, but women are responsible for caring for children and all housework and cooking.

"That's how it works," he said. "Field work we do together. But this is absolutely different. She has to do it. It is her job, and I will not do it." Read More

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