

## **Lolig Tuopang**

**Ethnic group:** Frafra (Talensi)

**Language (dialect):** Frafra (Talni)

**Country:** Ghana

**Recording date:** August 19, 2015

**Recording location:** Kpatare, Tengzug, Ghana

**Total Recording time:** 32:00

**Technician:** Brian Nowak

### **Group members:**

Lolig Tuopang - dabit (spike-fiddle)

Yaw Kuruj - siyareg (calabash shaker) and back vocals

Brarenaabzor Doateba - siyareg (calabash shaker) and back vocals

Kela Pablo - back vocals

### **Track names -- duration**

1) Lolig Tuopang - interview - 5:58

2) songs 1 - 10:05

3) songs 2 - 15:37

### **Group introduction:**

Lolig is from Tengzug, the village name meaning the head of the land, head as in top. This name refers to the elevation of the village set in mysterious rock boulders all over the small saddle valley the village calls its home and spiritual center. The large and impressive chief's compound and surrounding area is highly visited by tourists through an impressive community eco-cultural tourism initiative for those that go to the Northern region of Ghana.

However, Lolig's home is located before one reaches the chief compound and visitor center. Lolig receives few visitors and is a major traditionalist, speaking no English and usually wearing locally woven cotton fabrics sewn into pants and a loose shirt. Most drive-by, without noticing the home which faces the field in the back rather than the road, therefore off the many wandering paths of visitors. His skill is well known and his dedication resounds in the vocal intensity that borders a strain or even sacrifice pushing the throat to the edge of expression at times, like pushing out the end of a long breath.

### **Recording context:**

Lolig performed two examples of original songs with family and neighbors, both on and in front of the family concession's graves. The first is a vocal and spike-fiddle version of a song while the second is more typical of a musical group ensemble for community celebrations.

Rather than a performance, adults in the vicinity sat to listen and kids lined up to watch or dance, more like a house party for an extended family.

This family lives in the close quarters of an organically constructed village that grows as sons marry and build their homes and families. Passing the elders graves is the only way in or out of the large family concession. Sacrifice, respect and honor underlie the generally relaxed nature an outsider observes when watching a family sitting, laying out, chatting, or sleeping in the large, smooth, raised graves.

The second track of songs also features some praise-shouting to the neighborhood chief and a short example of a dance style. The fluid journey from singing with the kids dancing, to singing while slow-walking around, to approaching the chief, to kneeling for some praise-shouting, to a short, side-bar dance demonstration, portrays the performance leader aspect that comes so natural to experienced artists.