

## Responsible land policy in Benin



### Context

With 10 million inhabitants and a population density of 94 inhabitants per km<sup>2</sup>, Benin is one of the more densely populated countries in Africa. Less than 1% of the farmed land is protected by land titles. The land use system in the country is based on traditional land law and is largely unable to cope with the growing pressure on agricultural land. Disputes between local smallholders and nomadic or settled pastoralists are very common.

The project represents an important contribution to

combating hunger and poverty in Benin and supports implementation of the country's new land legislation. Traditional rights are being formalised and the institutional framework is being strengthened to improve the chances of success of a fair and responsible land policy. The challenges in Benin include the substantial disadvantage of women and socially marginalised groups, legal provisions that have little relevance to practice, largely undocumented land transactions and land rights, and a high level of corruption with a weak rule of law.

### Activities in Benin

- In the first field of activity, the project aims to improve the institutional framework and processes for securing rights to land use and ownership in the department of Borgou.
- In the second field of activity, the project aims to increase the involvement of civil society in formulating and implementing a responsible land policy.
- The third field of activity focuses primarily on private agricultural investors and on raising their awareness of implementation of a responsible land policy as part of the G7 New Alliance initiative.

### Our objective

Access to land as a core condition for combating poverty and hunger in rural areas is improved for specific population groups in the department of Borgou, particularly women and socially marginalised groups.



## Region

The project is being implemented in four local communities in the department of Borgou.

## Duration

July 2016 to October 2019

## Budget

EUR 4 million

## Implementing partners

Benin's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP) and the National Agency for Domains and Land (ANDF) within the Ministry of Economy and Finance.

## Lead executing agency

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP)

## Target group

The rural population in Borgou (9,000 households), specifically women and socially marginalised groups (young people, pastoralists and migrants).



## An example from the field

A majority of the population of Benin – around 70% – earn their living from agriculture, which also accounts for just under one third of Benin's Gross Domestic Product. However, the country is currently facing low growth rates and financial crisis. The lack of legal certainty in the area of land is hampering urgently needed investment in rural areas.

Benin passed legislation in 2013 to bring its national land administration and land management into line with international guidelines. The project is providing support in this area by building both individual and institutional capacity. A core issue is the complete recording of all village residents and their land through a rural land registry plan (*plan foncier rural*). This is being achieved in cooperation with the National Agency for Domains and Land (ANDF), which is playing a leading role in implementing the new legislation and building up the cadastre and land register. Land rights are being registered, mapped and formalised, facilitating the issuing of official documents. The particular feature of the project in Benin is that it aims to involve civil society in the long term and to strengthen women and socially marginalised groups. The project also seeks to help ensure that future agricultural investments comply with international guidelines.

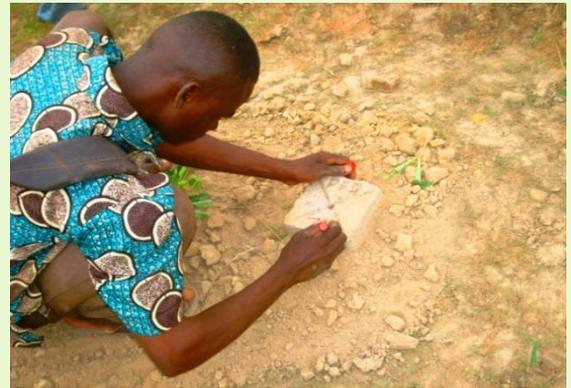


Photo: Surveying in Benin

## Project structure and partners

The lead executing agency is the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP). The Ministry of Economy and Finance is also a major partner through its downstream land administration agency, ANDF.

The project also cooperates closely with non-state actors, with other German development cooperation projects (especially ProAgri, which promotes agriculture), with other projects, including ProSOL (soil protection and rehabilitation) and ProFinA (agricultural finance), and with the KfW *Fonds d'Investissement* project. During the implementation period, supporting research will be carried out into the impact of the measures.

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