

Impact of COVID-19 on forest communities in Kenya (additional Corona-related funding)

Initiative: Wissen für morgen – Kooperative Forschungsvorhaben im subsaharischen Afrika (beendet)

Ausschreibung: Postdoctoral Fellowships on Livelihood Management, Reforms and Processes of Structural Change

Bewilligung: 12.10.2020

Laufzeit: 1 Jahre 6 Monate

In addition to his current project, Dr. Mbeche proposes to assess the impacts of COVID-19 on livelihoods of forest-dependent communities in Kenya and their corresponding coping strategies. Many, especially poor, people depend on forests for part of their livelihoods as forests provide services such as fuelwood, water, medicines or fodder for the poor, but also regulating, supporting or cultural services like carbon sequestration, soil formation or the provision of spiritual places. The forestry sector in many developing countries is also a source of informal employment for local communities. The actions taken by the Kenyan Government to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic (i.e. cessation of movements, curfews, and quarantine) have resulted in a disruption in food logistics and closure of markets potentially disrupting the livelihood of forest communities. For example, restrictions on travel and movements affect the transportation and trade of fuelwood (particularly charcoal) from production sites in the remote areas of forest communities to market centers, which are mostly located in urban areas. Forest communities have also high levels of rural to urban migration, particularly for young men and women; however, COVID-19 is leading to reverse migration, which has the risk to not only spread the disease to remote, unprepared areas but also increases the level of unemployment in rural areas. The reverse migration could also lead to loss of remittances to rural communities. COVID-19 is also disrupting value chains to towns and cities for goods and services, on which members of forest and farm producer organizations depend to meet their income needs.

Projektbeteiligte

Prof. Dr. Eva Schlecht

Universität Göttingen

Fakultät für Agrarwissenschaften

Department für Nutztierwissenschaften

Abteilung Tierhaltung in den Tropen und Subtropen

Göttingen

Dr. Robert Mbeche

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture
and Technology
Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics
Technology Building, Main Campus
Nairobi
Kenia