

Junior Fellowship for Georges Djohy: Women's Associations in a Pastoralist Society in Transformation: Implications for Gender-Based Livelihood Improvement Policies in Benin

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

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

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Projekt-Website: www.uni-goettingen.de/de/564779.html

How does the organization of women transform gender relations and living standards of Fulani women in pastoralist communities of northern Benin? This is the main question that the postdoctoral project aims to address. Northern Benin is facing various environmental, socio-economic and technological changes threatening the livelihoods of the entire Fulani pastoralist community, including women. To meet the challenges of marginalization specifically of women, improve their access to resources and gain socio-economic and political power, Fulani women with support from male Fulani leaders have set up, from the year 2000 onwards, some community-based associations known as GPFERs (Professional Groups of Female Herders of Ruminants). Fifteen years later, the GPFER movement has spread across the country, with about 120 GPFERs in 48 municipalities, covering 75% of the national territory. Through an ethnographic study, it will be analyzed how the "GPFER-ization" of Fulani communities has influenced gender relations of power at both household and community levels. The project thus deals with the social dimension of livelihood strategies from the perspectives of local actors, especially women. By exploring the ideas, actions and relations of Fulani women within the context of GPFERs, the project intends to contribute to and advance the analyses of gender relations, identity politics and development among African pastoralists.

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