

Rural Land Reform in Benin: Transformations in Fulani Agropastoral Communities
An Ethnographic Film

by:

Eunice Adwoa Sarpong
(UGÖE, UP)

Introduction

- Rural communities rely on customary land tenure systems
- The Institutionalisation of Land Reform in Benin
- Formalisation requires significant institutional changes and careful consideration of the diverse needs of stakeholders.

Land Reform and Tenure Change

- The legal framework versus local actors' logic
- Formalisation process is not linear; it is shaped by institutions, gender relations, and evolving economies.
- Aim: To understand changing realities of Fulani Agropastoral Communities in the context of land reform implementation.



The Legal framework vs Local Realities

- Land registration ensures tenure security.
- Tenure security is tied to history, use, and access.
- Customary systems involve layered rights-ownership, use, and access
- Tensions emerge when customary systems meet legal formalisation.
- Some Fulani are seen as "landless" due to their pastoral mobility. ‘Displacement narratives’
- *“There is no bush where the Peulh has not set foot...”*





Key messages

Land reform is not linear: it is negotiated, contested, and reconfigured

Autochthonous claims vs. Allochthonous claims deepen tension

Customary tenure remains central to people's identity and survival

Land reform has unintended outcomes; understanding local realities is essential for meaningful reform



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Thank you for your attention!

For further questions or discussion, please contact:
eadwoasarpong@gmail.com



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