PARTICIPATORY CARTOGRAPHY IN BENIN

Involving citizens in demarcating their communities, a case study from Benin

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Who we are

Working on local governance since 1912

Committed to strengthening democratic local governance worldwide

Participatory Cartography
Projet d’appui à la gestion Foncière au niveau Local (PFL)

- *Laboratory* to implement Benin’s new land code
  - Turn paper into reality
Communities know best

- Cadastral records are registered at “village level” in Benin
- Non-existence village demarcations

Simple methodology
Communities are central
Cheap & Quick
Participatory Cartography is simple

Step 1: Participatory mapping

Step 2: Mapping landmarks

Step 3: Community validation
Step 1: Participatory Mapping

- Community members discuss village boundaries based on landmarks
- + members from neighbouring communities
- Chaired by a land surveyor
- Group elects village representatives
Step 2: Mapping Landmarks

- **Land surveyors**: Collect coordinates of identified land marks

- **Village representatives**: Assist the land surveyor in identification + identifies new land marks
Step 3: Community Validation

- Resolve overlaps
  - Counsel members of both villages
  - Village elders
  - Municipal authorities (moderator)

Result: No outstanding conflicts
Results of Participatory Cartography

- **No conflicts** between village remain
- Land registration can begin
- Results are **not legally binding**
Results of Participatory Cartography

- May to July 2016 – only 3 months time
- Total of 34 villages were demarcated
- Cost: USD 400,00
- Demarcations based on community perception
Solid Preparation

- Ensure commitment of local authorities
- Inform citizens on new land code
- Create trust
- Ensure commitment of citizens

⇒ Do no harm, avoid conflicts
Beyond Benin?

To map domestic boundaries

- Simple
- Cost-effective
- Fast
- Community based
Participatory Cartography has proven to be an inclusive, inexpensive and feasible way to peacefully draw domestic borders based on community identities.

Thank you for your attention!

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