

# Putting Technology to Work to Improve Property Rights in Benin

## Poverty Reduction through Secure Land Tenure

A long-standing problem for developing countries like Benin has been the lack of reliable land titling and records systems. Without clear title to their land, it is difficult for families to obtain financing for improvements or development. The uncertainty of ownership causes people to invest less in the land, and deters private sector investment. This is why establishing a sustainable land registration and a comprehensive property registry is critical for sustainable poverty reduction. As part of its five-year, \$307 million compact with the government of Benin, the U.S. Government's Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is dedicating \$36 million to address this problem. The compact's "Access to Land Project" will create secure property for the poor and non-poor alike

through the promotion of effective, transparent governance of land and property issues. This project will help the poor of Benin secure property rights in urban and rural areas with the goal of increasing land security, improving access to land throughout the country, and improving the management of property records.

MCA-Benin, the independent entity responsible for implementing the compact, is working with 54 villages to support activities that increase land tenure security and improve land management. Public events throughout the country have been organized to engage local authorities and inform beneficiaries of upcoming opportunities. These outreach efforts complement technical innovations, including the installation of seven "Continuously Operating Reference Stations" which allows surveyors to survey and map land parcels accurately and efficiently. With



*Surveyors receive training on innovative technology that allows them to quickly and accurately map property.*

this MCC-funded technology and technical assistance, Benin aims to convert 30,000 occupancy permits in urban areas to land titles and to issue 75,000 land certificates to rural households.

Thanks to MCC's investment, Benin now has some of the most sophisticated geodetic and surveying technology in Africa, joining South Africa as a pioneering member of the African Reference Framework Initiative (AFREF). AFREF seeks to develop uniform geodetic reference frames as the basis for national and continental mapping and surveying activities, infrastructure development, and promotion of science and technology. MCC actively supports the expansion of AFREF by funding purchases of specialized equipment and software, and by supporting training in not only Benin but also Burkina Faso and Ghana.

With such innovative technology, MCC and the government of Benin are building a strong foundation for economic growth through the improvement of land administration and formalization of property rights. This gives the poor secure tenure to one of their most important assets for growth: their land and property.

Learn more about how MCC's innovative approach is reducing poverty around the world at [www.mcc.gov](http://www.mcc.gov)

