



## Marketing Hope

Many West African herders depend on their cattle sales to make a living. But too often animal theft and injuries limited their success. The members of a rural cooperative group decided to make a change and reached out to USADF to get back on track.

In Gogounou, a small town in northern Benin, thousands of West Africans convene in a region so remote that it did not have electricity until 2009. But the real change came when the villagers decided to make a change to the local livestock and trading market.

West African nations have a long history of livestock marketing as a central component of the local economy and livelihood of thousands of villagers. Gogounou's Local Livestock Market Management Association (ALGMB) decided to ask USADF for funding to construct a new market facility to address some long standing problems.

In 2009, a grant was signed to fund the construction of an arena and loading dock which added new security fencing and better animal control features. Without new structures, herders would often make the long and difficult journey to Gogounou with no guarantee of a success because cattle were often stolen or injured before sales were completed.

The improvements worked and helped increase the volume of sales activities. By the end of 2009, revenues had doubled which raised the ALGMB cooperative status to a level to be recognized by the National Confederation of Livestock Markets.

Seeing a new opportunity, the members of the ALGMB cooperative built a hostel to accommodate travelers which further increased the number of people coming to the market. The sudden influx of visitors to the area has also helped other industries as well. Local craftsmen and women come to the area to show off their products and musicians flood the venue to entertain the herders.

ALGMB uses the fees associated with using the market and hostel to create jobs and pay dividends to association members, but also invests half of the profit in developing Gogounou's roads and in small projects in surrounding towns.

The hard work of ALGMB combined with USADF support has resulted in significant new economic growth and activity in Gogounou, restoring hope for this once stagnant town.



Since the USADF grant the ALGMB cattle market, business has doubled its sales revenues. The group used funding from USADF to add better security and animal control features to their market.

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