



Tropentag, October 11-13, 2006, Bonn

“Prosperity and Poverty in a Globalised World—  
Challenges for Agricultural Research”

## Water Consumption in Private Households in Benin

MARION SCHOPP

*University of Bonn, Institute of Agriculture Policy, Market Research and Economics, Germany*

### Abstract

Benin, a small country in West-Africa, doesn't fall in the category of water scarcity. There are villages with lots of wells or pumps, but there are many cases in which the conditions are not ideal. In the case of the dry season the wells may fall dry, which cause longer ways than during the rainy season. Compared to water consumption in urban areas many of the households have the possibility of getting access to water pipes. But often the standpipes have to be considered as a status symbol. Even if the households are equipped with water pipes, they are not used in several regions. Based on this background information an analysis of water consumption in different areas was made in the framework of an interdisciplinary study (Hadjer, Klein, Schopp, 2005) by the IMPETUS project.

Two hypotheses have to be proved:

1. Water consumption is a linear function to the household size.
2. There is a correlation between main age of the household members and the water consumption.

Regarding important criteria like economic status (rich or poor), demographic status (monogamy or polygamy), water access (kind of sources in villages, peripheries and towns) and seasonality (rainy and dry season as well as short-term strategy of the household members) some correlations could be found:

If the raw data were classified, water consumption from nearly 19 litres could be considered. As expected furthermore the consumption of rich households was much higher than of the poor ones. However, the water consumption seems to be higher in the rainy season than in the dry season even though their domestic need is much increased in the dry season.

These results indicate that water consumption was influenced by a lot of various factors. Programmes aiming for improving the current water situation in Benin need to consider carefully the specific socio demographic and socio economic conditions as well as the preferred taste of different water sources.

**Keywords:** Benin, household, water consumption, water consumption per capita, water scarcity