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Projekt: Medium-Scale Farmers in Rural Africa: Transformations in belonging, property, kinship and power

We are pleased to announce that our project proposal "Medium-Scale Farmers in Rural Africa: Transformations in Belonging, Property, Kinship and Power"
Will be funded by VolkswagenStiftung in the funding line "Perspectives on Wealth: Repercussions of Wealth."

Project partners are Prof. Kojo Amanor (University of Ghana); Prof. Ruth Hall (PLAAS, University of the Western Cape, South Africa) and Prof. Emmanuel Sulle (Aga Khan University, Arusha Climate and Environmental Research Centre, Tanzania), Prof's. Michael Bollig and Clemens Greiner (GSSC, University of Cologne).

Project description:
A dramatic new phenomenon has been taking shape in rural Africa over the past two decades: the rise in the preponderance of medium-scale commercial farms. Within African landscapes, medium-scale farmers represent a new type of economic actor: domestic entrepreneurs who are mostly men and who enter agriculture often on the basis of capital they have accumulated elsewhere. The academic literature is divided on the implications, as to whether the trend drives economic dynamism and inclusion, or inequality, exclusion and conflict. We aim to contribute to this debate by investigating the repercussions of medium scale farmers' investments on accumulation, wealth and impoverishment in the rural landscape and agrarian economies of Namibia, Ghana and Tanzania, using a combination of anthropological and political economy approaches. Our focus is on the agency of these farmers, their strategies for accumulation, and their impact on the agrarian economy and smallholder production. We work with four sets of variables that shape the context of their actions: translocality, belonging and changing patterns of urban and rural economic and social life; agri-food value chains, employment and local economies; kinship, gender relations and intergenerational inheritance; and local politics of state and traditional authorities that mediate access to resources.