



Call for Applications:

The Centre for Rural Development in Berlin (SLE) is looking for an experienced team leader for a Joint International Research Project in Cambodia 2025

Project Title: Strengthening the evidence base for introducing climate resilient practices in Cambodian pepper and cashew nut value chain development.

Project Partner: In cooperation with GIZ-CAPSAFE

About the project

Cambodia has undergone rapid economic growth in recent decades, but this development has come at a high environmental cost. Between 2000 and 2020, the country lost over 2.5 million hectares of forest, primarily due to agricultural expansion. Despite rising agricultural output, smallholder farmers capture little value: over 90% of cashew and conventional pepper production is exported unprocessed—mostly informally and at low prices—to neighbouring Vietnam. At the same time, climate change and extreme weather events increasingly threaten agricultural productivity and the well-being of rural populations.

The EU -German Cambodia Partnership for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (CAPSAFE) as implemented by GIZ has identified a key challenge: farmers and other value chain actors currently lack the means to improve product quality and value addition in a climate-resilient way. This Joint International Research Project (JIRP) will analyse sustainability issues in the pepper and cashew value chains and assess the potential for climate-resilient agricultural practices, with a focus on agroecology and agroforestry.

The study will provide evidence-based recommendations for fostering resilience and for up- and out-scaling socio-technical innovations in agriculture that are relevant to diverse groups of farmers.

About the role

The SLE is looking for a qualified team leader to lead the research and implementation of this applied research project. In general, the team leader will be responsible for the planning, implementation and documentation (articles) of the JIRP.

The JIRP team consists of up to eight interdisciplinary and international Young Professionals from the SLE Postgraduate Programme "International Cooperation for Sustainable Development" and a team leader (this position).

Key Responsibilities

- Lead a systematic and comparative study of climate-resilient practices in the Cambodian cashew and pepper value chains.
- Coordinate a scoping study on the sustainability challenges in both sectors and assess the feasibility of introducing specific agroecological or agroforestry practices.



- Ensure alignment of the research with the perspectives and sustainability concerns of various value chain actors.
- Develop an inception report outlining the conceptual framework, methodology, and timeline (due July 2025).
- Oversee participatory field research with implementing stakeholders in Cambodia.
- Guide the preparation of 4–5 concise research papers (5–10 pages each) with summaries in English and German, providing a sound evidence base on specific climate-resilient practices.
- Ensure high-quality data analysis, clear recommendations and collaborative review with in line with SLE standards.
- Coordinate with local and international partners and stakeholders throughout the research process.
- Contribute to professional growth of SLE Young Professionals.

Qualifications and experience:

- Advanced degree (MSc/PhD) in agriculture, agroforestry, sustainability science, rural development, political or social sciences or a related field.
- Proven experience in applied research related to sustainability, climate resilience or agricultural value chains.
- Experience with empirical and participatory research methods in diverse local contexts.
- Familiarity with Southeast Asia and/or the Cambodian context.
- Excellent leadership, stakeholder engagement and team management skills.
- Strong analytical, report-writing and communication skills in English.

Team management experience and very good communication skills required:

The team leader bears a high degree of responsibility for team management, financial oversight, and the final content of the study. This process requires experience in guiding research teams, a confident and respectful attitude in a multicultural context, respect for and recognition of learning processes, high motivation and social competence, the capacity to work independently as well as within a team, experience in the preparation of publications and scientific rigour.

General information about the team leader position at SLE:

Team leaders of the JIRPS are expected to work independently with the Young Professionals from the SLE while receiving institutional support. The collaboration usually lasts 7 months. Results are to be documented in a study report as part of the SLE publication series and presented to partners from international cooperation. Team leaders are remunerated with a lump-sum fee of 40,000 euros (travel and subsistence expenses are reimbursed separately).

Team management includes the following areas of responsibility:

Content management of the project, guidance of the team members and monitoring of the group's learning process, communication with cooperation partners, ensuring organisation and logistics, financial management (budgeting and reporting), responsibility for the timely preparation of high-quality reports and presentations as well as joint quality control with the SLE review board.

The team leader will work with the team on the study concept and methodological approach from the beginning of June to the beginning of August 2025 and is expected to be present at SLE in Berlin. From mid-August onwards, the team leader will accompany the team during the field phase in Zambia,



which will be carried out until mid-October. During this period, the first draft of the study will also be prepared. This draft will be revised together with the SLE review board by December and subsequently published. The results will be presented to the public.

Time commitment and on-site requirements

We expect the **Team Leader** to be available **full-time** for the duration of the project (June-December). The role requires on-site presence during key phases, specifically:

- **Berlin (June, July, August 2025)** – for preparation, team coordination, and methodology finalisation.
- **Cambodia (August, September, October 2025)** – for field research, stakeholder engagement, and data collection.
- **Berlin (October, November, December 2025)** – for analysis, report writing, and project wrap-up

Applications should be sent in one PDF file to: Dr. Margitta Minah, Centre for Rural Development (SLE), Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Hessische Straße 1-2, 10115 Berlin, please send an e-mail to margitta.minah@agrar.hu-berlin.de and in cc to sle@agrar.hu-berlin.de.

Deadline for applications: 20 April 2025; interviews will take place shortly after the advertisement.

Disclaimer

This position is contingent upon final funding approval. While we are optimistic about securing the necessary funding, the recruitment process will proceed with this condition in mind.