



Call for Applications:

The Centre for Rural Development in Berlin (SLE) is looking for an experienced team leader for a Joint International Research Project (JIRP) in Kenya 2026

Project Title: Agroforestry – A sustainable approach for integrated water management in coastal Kenya?

Project Partner: In cooperation with Pwani University/Plant Village; SLE- AfriNutriForest (ANF, 01.04.2024-31.03.2027)

About the project

The SLE-AfriNutriForest project aims to develop, test and promote innovative sustainable agroforestry systems (arbo-market gardens) using participatory and transdisciplinary approaches in Senegal and Kenya. These arbo-market gardens produce healthy and nutritious fruits and vegetables in an agro-ecological and socially acceptable way to diversify the diets of local populations, transform horticulture into a resilient food system and improve the livelihoods of local communities. Agro-ecological intensification in arbo-market gardens in a “reinvented way” particularly seeks solutions that are low-cost and offer labour-saving technologies. It also promotes farm management and rural agro- entrepreneurship models that are attractive to rural youth.

In five work packages, the project addresses the monitoring of sustainability challenges along selected value chains (WP1); performs scientist-led on-farm research of innovative agroecological practices (WP2) and farmer-led research through farmer field schools (WP3) with solar-powered and digital technologies to increase productivity while reducing manual labour, production costs and use of agrochemicals. Co-learning and training on agroecological practices and innovations and South-South exchange will be disseminated through work package 4. The SLE Joint International Research Project (JIRP) will contribute to WP1 (endline) and WP4 (scaling through policy brief and business guides).

The objectives of the project are:

1. Assess the policies for water-smart and nutrition-sensitive agroforestry and develop arbo-market agroecological business guides, with local communities and other stakeholders
2. Develop, conduct and analyse an endline survey (173 farming households) incl. focus group discussions to assess the impacts of the project interventions

About the role

The SLE is looking for a qualified team leader to lead the research and implementation of developing in a consultative process arbo-market gardens business guides and to guide the team to conduct the endline and the focus group discussions.

In general, the team leader will be responsible for the preparation, implementation and documentation (policy brief) of the JIRP. The JIRP team consists of seven interdisciplinary and



international Young Professionals from the SLE Postgraduate Programme “International Cooperation for Sustainable Development” and a team leader (this position).

Key responsibilities

- Lead on developing the stakeholder consultation dialogue, with workshops/meetings/communication materials, ensuring it aligns with local needs and captures relevant data for policy briefs in the water-climate-nexus.
- Develop an inception report outlining the conceptual framework, methodology, and timeline (due July 2026).
- Oversee part of the data collection and analysis, ensuring robust, evidence-based recommendations for policies.
- Coordinate with local and international experts and institutions, fostering strong partnerships and knowledge exchange.
- Deliver a comprehensive policy brief, outlining results from the research and linking to stakeholder dialogues as well as nutrition-sensitive agroforestry/arbo-market gardens (in English).

Qualifications and experience:

- Advanced degree (PhD) in political science, administration, economics, social science, climate change or a related field.
- Proven experience in developing policy briefs.
- Experience with research (incl. data analysis) to guide policies in the water-climate-food nexus.
- Excellent leadership, stakeholder engagement and team management skills.
- Experience working in Kenya.
- Knowledge of Swahili language.
- Residence in Berlin-Brandenburg as full time presence is required in June and July with no travel budget involved.
- Strong analytical, report-writing and presentation 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 requires approx. 4 months of work input, stretched across June – December 2026. Results are to be documented in form of a policy brief and presented to partners from international cooperation. Team leaders are remunerated according to SLE honorary regulations (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 planning, responsibility for the timely preparation of high-quality inception report, policy brief 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 2026 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 Kenya for at least 4 weeks. Following field work activities, the draft of the policy brief will be prepared in October and 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:

For the time period between June to December 2026, following time commitments are expected from the team lead

- **Berlin (June, July, August 2026) – full time** participation for preparation, team coordination, and methodology finalisation.
- **Kenya (August, September 2026) – full time** participation for field research, stakeholder engagement, and data collection for at least 4 weeks
- **Berlin (October, November, December 2026) – partly/remote participation** for analysis, policy brief writing, and project wrap-up

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

Deadline for applications: April 14, 2026; interviews will take place on 16 and 17 April.

We look forward to your applications!