

Welcome to AfriNutriForest

Agroforestry reinvented: agroecological, nutrition-sensitive intensification of vegetable production under fruit trees in Western and Eastern Africa

Welcome to our first Newsletter of the **AfriNutriForest** project. With this newsletter, you can stay up to date with the latest developments and get to know our team. Happy reading!

What is the project about?

AfriNutriForest (ANF) aims to develop, test and promote sustainable agroforestry systems (arbo-market gardens) in Senegal and Kenya through participatory approaches. These gardens will produce nutritious fruits and vegetables in an agro-ecological way, improving diets and livelihoods while transforming horticulture into a resilient food system. The focus is on low-cost, labor-saving technologies and agro-entrepreneurship models that appeal to rural youth.

The project will run over a period of 3 years (2024-2027) and its five work packages (WPs) include: monitoring sustainability in value chains (WP1), scientist-led on-farm research (WP2), farmer-led research using solar and digital tools (WP3), training and knowledge exchange (WP4) and project coordination (WP5).

ANF is a cooperation among the following partners:

- Kenya: Pwani University and the NGO Plant Village
- Senegal: The Senegalese Agricultural Research Institute ISRA, Gaston Berger University as well as the NGOs APAF and Eclodio
- Germany: The Center for Rural Development (SLE) and the division of agroecology at Humboldt University in Berlin

With support from



by decision of the German Bundestag

Project manager



Kick-off Workshop

On April 15, we held a hybrid kick-off workshop with participants from Senegal, Kenya and Germany. The workshop began with an introduction by a representative of the Federal Office for Agriculture and Food, the project's primary donor. This was followed by presentations by the Work Package coordinators, outlining the project's goals. ANF will address issues such as climate change and its impact on soil productivity, biodiversity loss and the impact on food security, especially for rural populations.

A Q&A session allowed participants to clarify project details, after which breakout groups for Senegal, Kenya and Germany discussed specific challenges, risks and mitigation strategies relevant to the intervention zones. Since the project will be implemented in certain coastal regions of Senegal (Niayes) and Kenya (Kilifi), which are facing several difficulties in the horticultural sector (e.g. groundwater salinisation, soil depletion, spread of crop pests and diseases, low crop diversification, poor access to technologies and production inputs etc.), the exchange enabled a better understanding of the specific context for all project partners.

The workshop concluded with a wrap-up, highlighting key outcomes and outlining next steps. Additional breakout sessions in the afternoon allowed for continued self-organized discussions. Overall, the workshop successfully launched the AfriNutriForest Project, fostering collaboration across regions and setting the stage for future activities.



Screenshot from the Kick-off workshop on 15th April 2024

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Get to know our team



Farmers and team members during a focus group discussion for WP1 in Senegal

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Team Kenya

Pwani University:

- Prof. Dr Annie Hilda On'gayo
- Dr Rose Kigathi
- Dr Elisha Gogo
- Students: Matthew Muinde Mumo (PhD), James Njenga & Ouma Francis (MSc)

NGO Plant Village:

- Dr John Chelal
- Mercilyn Tsuma
- Caroline Charo

Team Germany

Center for Rural Development (SLE):

- Prof. Dr Markus Hanisch
- Dr Silke Stöber
- Dr Katja Kehlenbeck
- Aicha Mechri
- Mathilda Fuhrmeister

Humboldt University Berlin:

- Prof. Dr Marcel Robischon

Team Senegal

ISRA:

- Papa Madiama Diop
- Fota Gueye

Gaston-Berger University:

- Dr Ghislain Kanfany
- Students: Martin Raff Tendeng (PhD), Ahmadou Diallo & Rokhaya Fatiakh Gueye (MSc)

NGO APAF:

- Fatimata Diop

NGO Eclodio:

- Dr Fatou Diouf

Meet the Advisory Board

We're pleased to introduce our advisory board, a team of experts dedicated to advancing our mission.

Kenya:

- Prof. Dr Mkuzi Saha: Dean of the School of Agriculture and Agribusiness at Pwani University.
- Ms. Esther Kiruthi Kagai: Director of the Community Sustainable Agriculture and Healthy Environment Programme (CSHEP).

Senegal:

- Mr. Pierre-Gilles Commeat: Founder and General Manager of Baobab des Saveurs in Thiès.
- Mr. Medoune Loum: President of the Water Platform and DyTAEL (Dynamique pour une Transition AgroÉcologique Locale) in the Niayes zone.

Germany:

- Prof. Dr Susanne Huyskens-Keil: Head of Research Group Quality Dynamics/Postharvest Quality Management at Humboldt University of Berlin.
- Mr. Guillaume Imbert: Technical Advisor at GIZ Sun4Water.

Joint International Research Project 2024

The Joint International Research Project (JIRP) is part of the WP1 activities in Senegal. The JIRP team comprises 8 interdisciplinary postgraduate researchers: Aminata Bèye, Burcu Dolanbay, Massamba Gning, Franziska Schrön, Yolande Senghor, Kaya-Katharina Van der Wyst, Kolja Wächter and Theresa Wolf. The team is led by Dr André Diatta.

The project started on 5 June 2024 with a two-month hybrid inception phase conducted both in Berlin and remotely. During this phase, the team developed a research design including the methodological approach. From August to end of October 2024, the entire team conducted fieldwork in 3 sites in Senegal namely Mboudaye (Fatick), Pambal (Thies) and Gandiol (Saint-Louis).

The study's approach, framed around the role of women and youth in the agricultural sectors in Senegal aims to: characterize production systems in the study regions, participatory identify sustainability challenges along tomato, onion and mango value chains, and explore potential solutions with all stakeholders along the value chains. The fieldwork followed a mix-method approach including semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and a validation workshop.

The results of the JIRP were presented on 21 November 2024 at Humboldt University of Berlin and online. The study report will be published in early 2025 as part of the SLE publication series. Additionally, the research methods and instruments developed during the JIRP in Senegal will also be adapted to the Kenyan context and implemented as part of WP1 activities in Kenya.



JIRP team during field activities in Senegal

© André Diatta

Tropentag 2024, Vienna, Austria

In September, the SLE team and partners hosted a hybrid workshop at Tropentag 2024 that focused on the role of agricultural value chains in promoting healthier and more sustainable food systems, particularly agroforestry systems in sub-Saharan Africa. We explored the potential of underutilized crops like baobab and sorghum, emphasizing the need to include neglected actors, such as small-scale processors and traders, to build more inclusive value chains.

Participants engaged with practical tools like the *Value Links* approach and *Participatory Hotspot Analysis* to identify opportunities for transformations. We were inspired by the collaborative spirit and lively discussions, and we look forward to implementing these ideas in our ongoing efforts within AfriNutriForest.



Workshop participants and SLE team at Tropentag 2024

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Annual Meeting Kenya | November 2024

From November 25-29, the ANF team was gathering in Kilifi, Kenya, for its annual meeting. Over five days, we discussed the progress of our work packages, carried out team building activities, hold stakeholder meetings, enjoyed keynote presentations and participated in field visits of three farmer groups.