The International Center for Development and Decent Work

5 years of promoting decent work
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Dear Readers,

Allow me to speak in two capacities, as a speaker for all ICDD partners and as one for myself. Speaking for all, I want to say that we are proud of our achievements of the last 5 years and we are looking forward to at least 5 more years of intense collaboration in the effort to strengthen academically the decent work agenda.

Speaking for myself, I would like to thank all our wonderfully engaged partners on four continents, the tremendously competent staff at the ICDD office in Kassel and the supportive DAAD officers for having made the ICDD a lively and effective network. And you, dear reader, please have a look at our record.

Prof. Dr. Scherrer
Director ICDD
1.1 Introduction

The International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) looks back on five successful years of research and knowledge creation on the topic of decent work. The University of Kassel created an International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) in 2009 in order to generate new knowledge with a view to achieving Millennium Development Goal 1: “Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger”, Target 2: “Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people”. The competence center is maintained through funding by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) as the result of a competition on “university excellence in development cooperation” in which five out of forty-six universities including the University of Kassel were selected for funding.

The ICDD is not only present on two campuses of the University of Kassel (Witzenhausen and Kassel), but has also generated a global network that brings together partner universities from around the world: the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai (India), the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad (Pakistan), the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg (South Africa), Egerton University (Kenya), the Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Brazil), and the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (Mexico). As a new partner to the network, the University of Cape Coast (Ghana) has been making vital contributions to the ICDD since 2011.
**Interdisciplinary cooperation** has raised awareness of the decent work challenges in rural areas, not only in the agricultural sciences but also in the social sciences, which have traditionally been more focused on urban labor.

The basic aim of the ICDD is to **generate new knowledge** (transcontinental, transdisciplinary, and sustainable) and to **transfer** this knowledge.

For **knowledge creation** the center has established an interdisciplinary Graduate School, a Visiting Professorship for Decent Work, the Ela Bhatt Visiting Professorship, and an innovative Alumni Applied Research School (AARS) as well as several transcontinental and transdisciplinary research projects (Research Clusters) from both the agricultural and the social sciences.

**Exchange between the partner universities:**

The ICDD would not be possible without the support of civil society partners and the following international partner universities:

- Egerton University (EGU), Kenya
- Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), India
- Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán (UADY), Mexico
- Universidade Estadual de Campinas (Unicamp), Brazil
- University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF), Pakistan
- University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana
- University of the Witwatersrand (WITS), South Africa

The partnerships involve various activities including study programs, student and faculty exchange, research collaboration, conferences, and workshops.
“The **decent work deficit** is not only palpable on the streets of Mumbai but exists especially in rural areas in many parts of the world”, says Prof. Christoph Scherrer, the executive director of the International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD).
Transfer instruments:

- short-term certificate program initiated, policy briefs prepared
- series of working papers initiated in 2011 along with a seminar series with members of the network as well as experts and scientists
- publication series titled “Labor and Globalization” launched in 2013, currently includes 7 volumes
- annual Alumni Applied Research School and alumni newsletter
- doctoral fellows affiliated with the ICDD Graduate School, as experts trained on decent work and ICDD topics, play a vital role in taking ICDD knowledge beyond the center’s confines

As think tanks, the ICDD and its partners have gained recognition for competency in the field of development and decent work. The centers themselves are approached by other academics, civil society organizations and government agencies for lectures, studies and consultancy.

In sum, the ICDD has established a presence in the field of development and labor. Beyond its expertise on decent work issues, the ICDD has attracted attention with three innovative features:

- Collaboration of agricultural and social sciences on issues of labor
- Triangular cooperation South-South-North
- Research with alumni
The Decent Work Concept

Work is central to people’s well-being. In addition to providing income, work can pave the way for broader social and economic advancement, strengthening individuals, their families and communities. Such progress, however, hinges on work that is decent. Decent work sums up the aspirations of people in their working lives.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has developed an agenda for the community of work. It provides support through integrated Decent Work Country Programs developed in coordination with its constituents. Putting the Decent Work Agenda into practice is achieved through the implementation of the ILO’s four strategic objectives, with gender equality as a crosscutting objective: creating jobs, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection and promoting social dialogue.

The overall goal of decent work is to effect positive change in people’s lives at the national and local levels. The Decent Work Agenda offers a basis for a more just and sustainable framework for global development. The ILO works to develop “decent work”-oriented approaches to economic and social policy in partnership with the principal institutions and actors of the multilateral system and the global economy. Decent work is the core concept behind the ICDD and the goal it seeks to promote.
Main Achievements

In addition to regular study programs at the MA/MSc level, the ICDD has also hosted a number of short term trainings for professionals. The certificate program “Empowerment and Capacity Building Network for Global Labor Activists and Trade Union Officials on Global Economic Policies” (ENGAGE) was funded and organized in close cooperation with the GIZ and the ILO, and conducted successfully at the University of Kassel and the Berlin School of Economics from 2010 to 2013 with a total of 44 alumni. From 2013, the program was transferred to the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) in South Africa and continues to run successfully.
Every year approximately thirty activists working in NGOs, trade unions, political foundations, and governmental institutions from the Global South and Germany meet for one week near Kassel for the Internationale Kasseler Sommer Akademie (IKSA). Its central theme is “How can the rules of the world economy be shaped to make the globalization process more socially acceptable and sustainable?”

The “Deutsches Institut für tropische und subtropische Landwirtschaft” (DITSL), one of the core partners of the ICDD, is strongly involved in the organization of the international annual conference on agriculture in the tropics and subtropics (“Tropentag”). It is a major meeting place for academics and professionals, for example, from the German Federal Enterprise for International Cooperation (GIZ).
The ICDD’s spectrum of activities for the transfer, exchange, and dissemination of knowledge and experiences is broad. In addition to workshops, conferences, seminars, and lectures, it encompasses an advanced training program for professionals, joint research projects between academics and workers affected by severe decent work deficits, and structured networking between different stakeholders.

For the whole network, two online modules have been developed: a course on Global Labour Rights (in cooperation with the ILO) and an English-language e-learning module (funded by University of Kassel). More e-learning instruments are planned for the future.

**Policy advice**

A group with former ICDD member Prof. Dr. Helen Schwenken took a very active role in the Research Network for Domestic Workers’ Rights. The network successfully supported the adoption of the ILO convention on “Decent Work for Domestic Workers”. This is just one example of ICDD member engagement with policy communities and development oriented civil society organizations. Over the years, ICDD members have increasingly been asked to provide expert advice.
University of Kassel President Dr. Rolf-Dieter Postlep, ICDD Director Dr. Christoph Scherrer, MP Ullrich Meßmer, Jill Akaltin (Assistant to Mr. Meßmer), and MP Christoph Strässer
Members of the ICDD international network have been asked to develop decent work indicators by their governments, to share their expertise on the living conditions of farmworkers, to advise development banks or ministries on issues of development and decent work. The Indian government has designated the ICDD partner in Mumbai, TISS, as host to the National Corporate Social Responsibility Hub. TISS research on street vendors led to legislation in support of workers in the informal economy.

Many members of the ICDD network have given newspaper, radio, and TV interviews, most recently on the ramifications of a Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) for the decent work agenda.

Contribution to the post MDG 2015 agenda

In Phase 1, the ICDD made a committed contribution to the attainment of Millennium Development Goal 1, Target 2. Unlike other MDG goals, full employment and decent work for all will unfortunately be missed by a large margin in 2015 according to the ILO. Especially for those without access to land or the ability to grow their own food, poor working conditions is one of the main defining features of their livelihood struggles. The post-2015 MDG debate initiated by the United Nations has therefore kept this target on the agenda. Sustainable Development Goal 8 calls for the promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. During Phase 2, the ICDD will therefore stay focused on the issue of full and productive employment and decent work for all.
1.2 ICDD Graduate School

The core of the ICDD is the Graduate School

– Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer

One of the ICDD’s main objectives is to generate and transfer knowledge on how to create as well as improve work and income opportunities in rural and urban regions of developing countries. A core structure through which such knowledge is generated and transferred is the Graduate School of Socio-Ecological Research for Development. Currently, 23 doctoral candidates at seven ICDD partner universities are pursuing their PhDs within the graduate school; this includes 15 PhD fellows and 8 associate PhD fellows. Since 2010, 22 candidates have completed the PhD or are in the final stages of their PhD work. In 2014, the ICDD was pleased to welcome 7 new PhD candidates as well as 4 visiting PhD fellows. PhD fellows receive support in the form of office space, housing, university administration, organizing academic events, field research funding, and workshops.

The PhD projects are rooted in either the agricultural or social sciences and primarily focus on actor- and problem-oriented research on sustainable human-environmental relationships and decent livelihoods. As one of the core activities within the graduate school, all doctoral candidates meet annually for a one-week PhD workshop at an ICDD partner university. These workshops provide a forum for discussing theoretical approaches, methods and research results with each other as well as with ICDD faculty. The participants also regularly explore current issues related to development and decent work.
Based on the positive experience with the PhD learning format and to reach out to external PhD fellows working in its thematic realm, the ICDD organized the International Summer School “Social Protection in Developing Countries: Qualitative Research Methods” with the financial support of the VolkswagenStiftung. This was done in collaboration with the new member, the University of Cape Coast (Ghana), for doctoral fellows and post-doctoral researchers in May 2013.

Apart from the annual PhD workshops, doctoral fellows also participate in the PhD curriculum offered at their home university. Its structure and content varies significantly between ICDD partner institutions, ranging from fully structured, long-term and mandatory course work in the discipline of economics at Unicamp (Brazil) to a more voluntary and demand-tailored approach at Witwatersrand (South Africa).
Post-Doctoral Scholarships

In line with the recommendations of the mid-term evaluation, the ICDD has started to broaden its networking activities and action arenas by granting post-doctoral fellowships to selected former alumni and external applicants.

1.3 Annual Thematic Conference

The Annual Thematic Conference (ATC) is an international conference organized within the framework of the International Center for Development and Decent Work (ICDD) to discuss and formulate strategies for building capacity and supporting research on topics related to decent work and development.

With the cooperation of seven international universities and public and civil society partners, the conference takes place at a different partner university every year. It brings together central actors in higher education, international institutions, and non-governmental organizations as well as scholars from various regions and multiple subject areas.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATC</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>Migration and Decent Work: Challenges and Opportunities</td>
<td>Institute of Economics at Campinas State University (Unicamp), Brazil</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Urban, Peri Urban Agriculture: Empowerment and Value Chain Management</td>
<td>University of Agriculture Faisalabad, Pakistan</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>The Food Crisis: Implications for Decent Work in Rural and Urban Areas</td>
<td>University of Kassel, Germany</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>The Roles of Work, Food and Cash in Overcoming Poverty</td>
<td>Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Mumbai, India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Reflections on MDG 1 “Decent Work for All”: Where Do We Stand?</td>
<td>Kassel/Witzenhausen, Germany</td>
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1.4 Visiting Lecturers and Researchers

The ICDD is regularly and enthusiastically involved in academic exchange. This includes inviting visiting scientists and lecturers to enrich teaching and student supervision, as well as engaging in staff and student exchange with international partner universities. The Ela Bhatt Visiting Professorship is awarded to candidates with a demonstrated record of academic excellence and substantial contributions to decent work at universities or research institutions in developing countries.

The ICDD promotes network cooperation by sponsoring guest lecturers and staff exchange: the 6 to 12 month Ela Bhatt Visiting Professorship for researchers from developing countries contributed to research and training in various fields related to decent work in the graduate school and MA/MSc programs at the University of Kassel. Additionally, short term guest lectureships enriched the curricular program and professional expertise available. The visiting professors and guest lecturers in turn benefited by developing stronger professional ties within the ICDD.

Ela Bhatt visiting professors:

- **Prof. Edward Webster** (2009/2010) is a professor emeritus from the School of Social Sciences at the University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa as well as from the Society, Work and Development Institute (SWOP).

- **Prof. Dr. Muhammad Younas** (WS 2010/2011) is a professor and Chairman of the Faculty of Animal Husbandry, Department of Livestock Management at the University of Agriculture in Faisalabad, Pakistan.

- **Prof. Dr. Juan José Jimenez-Osornio** (SS 2011) is a professor at the Campus of Biological and Agricultural Sciences at the Universidad Autónoma de Yucatán.
- **Prof. Dr. Sakhela Maxwell Buhlungu** (WS 2011/2012) came as a professor in the Sociology Department at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. He is now at the University of Cape Town.

- **Prof. Dr. Sharit K. Bhowmik** (SS 2012) was until his retirement a professor of labor studies and Dean of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai, India. He is now an adjunct faculty member at Rajiv Gandhi Centre for Contemporary Studies, University of Mumbai.

- **Prof. Dr. B. V. Chinnappa Reddy** (WS 2012/2013) is a professor of Agricultural Economics at the University of Agriculture in Bangalore, India.

- **Prof. Dr. Sharit K. Bhowmik** (SS 2013), see above.

- **Prof. Dr. Paulo Baltar** (WS 2013/2014) is a professor at the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP), São Paulo, Brazil and works in the field of labor economics.

- **Prof. Dr. Michelle Williams** (SS 2014) is an associate professor of Sociology at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) in Johannesburg, South Africa and chairperson for the Global Labour University Programme (GLU) at Wits.

- **Prof. Dr. Gordana Kranjac-Berisavljevic** (2014), University of Development Studies, Ghana.
The Ela Bhatt Visiting Professorship as well as the many additional ICDD guest lectureships have led to further cooperation. For example, the University of Kassel, the Berlin School of Economics and the University of the Witwatersrand will establish a double degree program starting in 2015. Similarly, UAF and the University of Kassel have signed a Memorandum of Agreement to engage towards a double degree program in Sustainable International Agriculture. The research cluster “Adding Value to Agricultural Products Using Solar Energy” has supported the University of Agriculture Faisalabad in launching two new academic degree programs: “Energy Systems Engineering” and “Food Engineering”. Through the New Passage to India Program funded by the DAAD, a close exchange of students and faculty between the University of Kassel and the Tata Institute of Social Science (TISS) was established and maintained. The faculty exchange with UAUDY in Mexico and Egerton in Kenya has led to a strengthening of the South-South cooperation.

The ICDD has funded and encouraged the mobility of faculty and staff between the partner universities. The majority of this mobility has been South-North, but exchange is also facilitated South-South.

First Ela Bhatt visiting professor, Prof. Dr. Edward Webster from South Africa
1.5 MA Scholarships

All ICDD affiliated universities have their own MA/MSc programs that feed into the ICDD approach to foster relevant capacities in the field of development cooperation. The ICDD offers scholarships for MA and MSc degrees to students from developing countries for the programs “Global Political Economy (MA)”, “Labour Policies and Globalization (MA)”, and “Sustainable International Agriculture (MSc)” at the University of Kassel. The ICDD also supported MA and MSc students at the different partner universities. Furthermore, there are study and work scholarships, thesis research grants, and field research scholarships available. In return, the ICDD gains a large pool of students familiar with the network and who may become potential PhD fellows or cooperation partners for the ICDD in the future.

Students of the MA program “Labour Policies and Globalization” working with Prof. Dr. Devan Pillay (WITS, South Africa) at the ICDD
1.6 Alumni Applied Research School (AARS)

The Alumni Applied Research School (AARS) is a transfer instrument that allows alumni to share their experience and work on ICDD/decent work topics after receiving their MA/MSc. It takes place over the course of several days in September/October each year with the goal of bringing together former and current students, as well as professors and field experts to strengthen Global Labour University (GLU) network links and to explore possibilities for future research collaboration.
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<tr>
<th>AARS</th>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>AARS 2009</td>
<td>Research methods, collaboration and dissemination in three research</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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<td></td>
<td>clusters: Minimum wage, domestic work, and gender and trade unions</td>
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<tr>
<td>AARS 2010</td>
<td>Labour and the global crisis: Sharing the burden, shaping the future?</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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<td>AARS 2011</td>
<td>The politics of labour and development</td>
<td>Johannesburg, South Africa</td>
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<td>AARS 2012</td>
<td>Sustainable growth, development and labour:</td>
<td>Instituto Cajamar, Brazil</td>
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<td>Progressive responses at local, national and global level</td>
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<td>AARS 2013</td>
<td>In support of the working class</td>
<td>TISS Mumbai, India</td>
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<tr>
<td>AARS 2014</td>
<td>Inequality within and among nations: Causes, effects, and responses</td>
<td>Berlin, Germany</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Summer School 2013, Mumbai</td>
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1.7 Public Relations and Marketing

In addition to generating knowledge on decent work topics, an important function of the ICDD and the ICDD network is to share that knowledge as a means of raising public interest and influencing policy decisions. This has resulted in a considerable number of publications over the years since 2009, including a series of Working Papers as well as the Labor and Globalization book series edited by ICDD Executive Director, Prof. Dr. Christoph Scherrer. In addition, the ICDD has published a calendar with photographs related to PhD fieldwork and decent work projects and an international cookbook containing recipes from all over the world.
1.8 ICDD Organization and Management

**International steering committee (ISC)**
The activities of the international ICDD network are coordinated with the key partners through an international steering committee (ISC) in which the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva is also represented. All strategic decisions are taken here during the annual meeting. The ICDD in Kassel is a central academic institution of the University of Kassel (Kompetenzzentrum), with members from three different faculties, the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Faculty of Organic Agricultural Science and the Faculty of Economics and Management.

**ICDD Directorate**
The ICDD in Kassel is headed by a Board of Directors composed of member-elected scientists, including one representative of the German Institute for Tropical and Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL).
Research Clusters

Agriculture provides jobs for 1.3 billion smallholders and landless workers in the developing world. Many of these jobs do not ensure decent levels of income or sustainable livelihoods for two main reasons: first, value creation is low due to low productivity and soil depletive practices. Second, rural workers are among the most socially vulnerable due to the many obstacles they face against collective action. Within the framework of the ICDD network, three research clusters were formed to investigate how value creation can be increased to allow for better working conditions, as well as instruments best suited to promoting decent work and available strategies to empower workers and ensure decent work through political means.

The PhD theses fit thematically into these research clusters and are complemented by post-doctoral and senior scientist research based on shorter field trips.
1 Sustainable Value Creation for Decent Work

Research Cluster 1 focused on strategies to increase value creation through the development of technologies for a more efficient and sustainable use of resources and by improving human skills, with a special emphasis on improving agricultural commodity chains. Making use of approaches from agricultural sciences, social sciences and economics, RC01 is also centered around spatially and sectorally detailed urban-rural linkages to address human mobility, as well as goods, services, money transfers, information and re-use of waste and associated fluxes of nutrients, energy and water.

2 Instruments for Promoting Decent Work

Instruments that promise better enforcement of minimum standards for labor have been promoted, such as public procurement, supply chain governance, and national minimum wages. However, the effectiveness of these instruments has been contested. Research Cluster 2 therefore conducted empirical studies on the effectiveness of these instruments. To avoid a ‘one size fits all’ approach, the research cluster took into account contextual factors such as the degree of state capacities and the position in the international division of labor. The central research question was how social clauses in trade agreements should be designed and implemented in different state contexts.
Due to prevailing conflicts of interest in the world of work, good working conditions can only be attained and protected if employees or the underemployed are able to advocate their interests in economic and political decision-making processes. Access to information and avenues of participation in decision making processes may also contribute to the more efficient use of resources, including labor power. What kind of empowerment strategies can already be identified in the informal economy? What role can ILO conventions and human rights interventions play in giving marginalized persons a voice? What forms of participation allow for improving productivity and employment conditions in labor-intensive production systems? And more fundamentally, what kind of visions for development shall inform the request for more participation, given the limits of the current mode of ‘development’ in light of the impending climate crisis and depletion of polluting fossil fuels? Research Cluster 3 addressed these questions.

3 Strategies of Empowerment for Decent Work

Workers exercising their right to strike.
4 Third-Party Funding

The ongoing and completed research cluster projects have not only been able to present their findings in publications, but also to secure further third-party funding. Funding institutions continue to be convinced by the solid, collaborative and innovative (pilot) studies performed within the framework of the ICDD. Further third-party funding resulted from the efforts not only of Research Cluster participants, but also other members from the ICDD network and its partner universities.

ICDD Administration

East African Network of Learning Administrators, DAAD-DIES funding, 01.02.2013–31.12.2015. The project qualified East African finance administrators in the handling of third-party funding and has increased intercultural understanding between German and African administrators.
Witzenhausen

Project RELOAD (Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses and Value Addition in East African Food Value Chains) is a cooperative research initiative with partner universities and organizations in Germany, Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia. The aim of the South-South cooperation is to develop new knowledge and improved practices by building a research network firmly rooted in the region, and working jointly on reducing losses in post-harvest and food processing under tropical conditions. Project Coordinator: Prof. Dr. Oliver Hensel.

Milk traders in Nakuru County, Kenya, involved in a Collaborative Learning Activity as part of the RELOAD project.
WATERCOPE is a Sino-Mongolian-German project consortium bringing together researchers, herder-farmer organizations and policy makers and planners at various levels. The common goal is to develop, compare and test-implement technologies to better cope with climate change effects on scarce agro-ecological resources in the vulnerable steppe and semi-desert ecosystems of the Altay Mountains and the Dzungarian Desert Basin (Altay-Dzungaria). This trans-border water tower region faces severe conflicts resulting from increasing competition for scarce water resources and pastures shared by Mongolia and China. Partner universities in Germany, China, and Mongolia are involved in project research and exchange.

Pastoralism, an ancient strategy to cope with the unpredictability of a harsh desert climate in Bulgan, Mongolia.

Overgrazing and scarce water resources hamper the rejuvenation and productivity of riparian forests along the Bulgan River, Mongolia.
UrbanFoodPlus is an African-German partnership to enhance resource use efficiency and improve food security in urban and peri-urban agriculture of West African cities. The project aims to build a network of German, African, and international scientists, private sector representatives, and stakeholders to develop site-specific, farmer-tailored innovations for improved agricultural production, food safety, and value chains in four major West African cities. On-farm experiments, workshops, and policy dialogue will allow for the detection of bottlenecks in UPA production and marketing chains, and identify and test-implement options to overcome them. An International Graduate School will enhance scientific capacity building and knowledge transfer. Coordinated by: Prof. Dr. Andreas Bürkert (University of Kassel) and Prof. Dr. Bernd Marschner (Ruhr-Universität Bochum).

Strawberry and vegetable transport in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

Transnational Research Collaboration for Decent Work

Legend

MA = MA scholarship
PHD = PhD scholarship
GL = Guest Lecturer
WS = Workshop
ATC = Annual Thematic Conference
SCM = Steering Committee Meeting
AARS = Alumni Applied Summer School
= female  = male  = person
= Research Cluster Network
For more information, please visit the ICDD website at:
www.ICDD.Uni-Kassel.de
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