



Pro-RUWA NEWS

The West African-German network „Promoting Academic Capacities for Sustainable Agricultural Resources Use in West Africa" - Pro-RUWA (Ruwa means „water" in Hausa language) aims to train a new generation of regionally and internationally educated young scientists, entrepreneurs, and administrators. Future decision makers in francophone West Africa will be capacitated to jointly overcome bottlenecks in resource overuse and food insecurity at the national and regional level by fostering university education, international relations, regional development, and operational links between the academic, public and private sector. Pro-RUWA builds on existing structures of three young universities in West Africa that have recently decided to overcome the language barriers and internationalize their graduate education.



Pro-RUWA Activities and Course Updates

April - May 2025 – Transdisciplinary Course: Sustainable Resource Use Involving Local Communities, Applying Transdisciplinary Methods (Benin)

In April, Pro-RUWA organized an innovative hybrid transdisciplinary course in Cotonou, Benin. The course brought together researchers, students, and practitioners from various disciplines to co-create knowledge on rural transformation and sustainable development in West Africa. A three-day self-paced online module was developed by Dr. Lysann Schneider ahead of the in-person meeting at UAC, introducing participants to the concepts and methods of transdisciplinary research. At the end of April, all participants gathered on campus to deepen their understanding and apply their knowledge through excursions to NGOs and local communities in the Cotonou area. Pro-RUWA will continue testing and refining this course to prepare it for future and regular use.



May 2025 – Drone Course in Burkina Faso

In collaboration with local experts and supported by DIGI-FACE, Pro-RUWA facilitated a Drone Application Training in Burkina Faso. The course, led by Youness Boubou (PhD scholar of University of Kassel), focused on using drones for data collection and monitoring of landscapes including agricultural areas to train participants on environmental management and landscape planning. Therefore, Pro-RUWA has equipped all partner institutions with multi-spectral drones to further increase the expertise in drone flying and data analyses by its members. Moreover, we intend to intensify our existing collaboration with WASCAL's who similarly build-up expertise on Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) application for land use monitoring and management.



Participants of the Drone Application Training in Dedougou, Burkina Faso practicing drone operations



Online Training Courses (Jan–July 2025)

Pro-RUWA continues to support capacity building through online education. Our long-term goal to offer more and specialized/advanced courses based on what we have already developed. Courses offered so far include:

- Excel for Data Management (hybrid)
- Zotero for Reference Management (hybrid)
- R Programming (self-paced)
- Agent-Based Modeling (ABM) (self-paced)
- Lecture series on Climate Change and Climate Resilient Agriculture (self-paced)

Coming Fall 2025:

DIGI-FACE will again offer GIS + R, Statistics, ABM, and Interdisciplinary Research courses. A French language course may also be included – stay tuned for the official call for applications via DIGI-FACE!

Project Announcements

Pro-RUWA 2.0

At the end of July, we submitted our proposal for the continuation of Pro-RUWA and hope for five more exciting years starting in January 2026. We added also a new partner from West Africa. Decision to be expected by October 2025 - fingers crossed.

PREPARE Project Kick-off

The PREPARE Project under DAAD's SDG Partnership Program, has been officially launched. It aims to enhance collaborative and preparatory research for sustainable development in rural Africa.

DFG Project Begins

A new "Forscherguppe" project (FOR5903) supported by DFG (German Research Foundation) will start in collaboration with partners from Ghana, India and Morocco, including vacant PhD and PostDoc positions available. www.uni-kassel.de/fb11agrar/en/sections/-/facilities/home/for5903.html

Application deadline: 24 July 2025



Stay Updated

For updates on upcoming courses, events, and collaborations, visit our website:

www.uni-kassel.de/pro-ruwa

Or follow us on DIGI-FACE: www.digiface.org

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