

The African Food Fellowship

Job Description: MLE Country Officer

Summary of the role

Purpose: We are recruiting two monitoring, learning and evaluation (MLE) professional to provide support to the Kenya and Rwanda country teams in collecting and analysing relevant data. The MLE Country Officer (MLECO) will also support the team to learn from the information generated and from the events organised.

Profile: mid-career MLE professional with experience in qualitative and quantitative data collection, cross-cutting analysis, excellent writing and learning skills. Conversant with food systems and eager to work on measuring systems change.

Salary: A competitive daily rate, based on demonstrable track record.

Commitment: Approximately 2 days per week, starting in September '23. 6 months contract renewable.

Reporting To: MLE component lead.

About the African Food Fellowship

In January 2021, Wageningen University & Research and Wasafiri have initiated the [African Food Fellowship](https://www.africanfoodfellowship.org) to empower food systems leaders across the continent. The initiative aims at transforming Africa's food systems for more inclusive, sustainable and healthy outcomes. The mission of the African Food Fellowship is to elevate 10,000 food systems leaders, by 2032.

We believe that food systems will be transformed leveraging Policies, Power dynamics, Investments, and socio-economic Incentives (PPII). Thus, one of the pathways to advance those changes are food systems actions and accountable leadership.

By the end of 2023, the Kenya and Rwanda Food Fellowships will count about 90 Fellows each.

Some of the terms we use:

- **Policies, Power dynamics, Investments, and socio-economic Incentives (PPIIs)** are food systems policies and regulations, power dynamics, (financial) investments, and socio-economic incentives. We consider them to be the critical levers for transforming the food systems:
- An **impact area** is a sector within a country food system through which regional or continental connections can be achieved. Impact areas in the fellowship include: access to nutritious food; sustainable land use; food tech and trade; horticulture; agri-finance, and aquaculture.. Impact area creates a powerful glue for collaboration between Fellows.
- **Food systems actions** are efforts by people to change the conditions in the food system that give rise to current undesirable symptoms such as biodiversity loss or exploitation of workers. Food systems actions help people across the food system work together better and adapt in ways that bring about desirable change within the system.

The African Food Fellowship comprises the following components:

- A **Food System Leadership Programme (FSLP)**: a 10 months world-class leadership training designed and delivered by Wageningen University and Wasafiri.
- **Country Food Fellowships (CFFs)**: national impact networks where food system leaders belong, connect, learn and take action. Each CFF is focused on triggering food systems actions for healthy, inclusive and sustainable food systems.
- **Research for knowledge** generation on what is food systems leadership,
- Rigorous **monitoring, evaluation, and learning** on what works and why.
- **Communication** that amplifies what the African Food Fellowship represents and does,
- **The Food Hub**: a virtual platform to support the programme and Fellows in the long run in their work as connected leaders on food system transformation.

The African Food Fellowship has the following governance structure:

- a **Secretariat** setting direction, connecting to African and leadership institutions and working on a paced expansion,
- an **Advisory Board** providing independent advice on food system transformation and leadership. Fellows and experienced leaders in African food systems are represented,
- **Strategic Advisory Circles** providing feedback and inputs to CFFs. They are made of Fellows that have completed the FSLP.

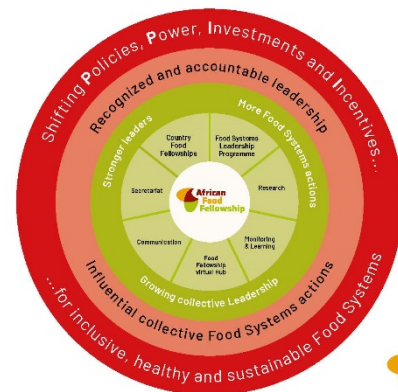
What is our approach to Monitoring, Learning and Evaluation (MLE)?

Our MLE framework

Our MLE framework is anchored in our theory of change (ToC), partially described below (with connected visual):

In order to shift PPIIs for inclusive, healthy and sustainable food systems, we believe that leaders will need to be recognized, invited in and held accountable in leading systems change and that systems actions will need to work synergistically within impact areas.

To lead to these two ultimate outcomes, stronger leaders are taking on a more deliberate leadership role within food systems and collective leadership is growing. The number of emerging initiatives purposefully working on systemic change within impact areas is also increasing.



At the impact and ultimate outcome levels the following **assumptions** were identified:

- Systems leadership is critical to transform food systems,
- Policies & regulations, Power dynamics, Investments (including financial ones) and socio-economic Incentives (PPII) are the most important drivers of food system transformation,
- Impact areas are the immediate food systems where Fellows will act collectively,
- A critical mass for change of Fellows, governments, and all other stakeholders believe an inclusive, healthy and sustainable food system is desirable,
- Fellows have the will and capacity to progressively lead Country Food Fellowships and other parts of the African Food Fellowship.

The African Food Fellowship MLE is led by two principles:

- **Learning for adaptive management:** using the ToC as anchor for the MEL, putting emphasis on the users of the information generated through the MEL and building a culture of double/triple loop learning with feed-back loops of critical reflection,
- **Building evidence around systems leadership and food system transformation:** targeting certain aspects of the ToC to be followed, including the two layers of outcomes and impact but also assumptions and external context and trends, and working hand-in-hand with the research component.

In addition, we strive to avoid making our MLE extractive and we are careful with what/how much we ask from Fellows, how we ask them and how we can build a strong sense-making process with them.

Our main knowledge question is *How does individual and collective leadership promote inclusive, healthy and sustainable food system transformation?* With the underlying assumption that leadership supports food system transformation. Furthermore, questions were phrased for each of MEL domains (impact, outcomes and outputs) and a plan was drafted to structure the data collection, analysis, sense-making and communication of the results. Questions and plan will be shared.

Current data collection, analysis and sense-making

At the moment, the MLE team is collecting and processing data:

- **On Fellows:** on their capacities and other topics relevant to the FSLP: baseline and endline surveys for each cohort with *KoboToolBox*.
- **From Fellows** around their work especially in their impact areas and as leaders: continuous, self-paced and voluntary inputs via the SenseMaker software.
- A compilation of **Fellows' needs** assessment.

The MEL team is also designing:

- **Longitudinal studies** on a sampled number of Fellows to appreciate the evolution over time of skills used and impact achieved.
- **Food system actions monitoring** on the food systems actions implemented by Fellows to appreciate their systemic and potential for change and actual achievements.

The MEL team is also supporting learning processes to inform adaptive project management. An independent evaluation will start at the end of August '23, with its own ToR.

Role and tasks of MLECO

Role: The MLECO will be part of the MLE team that works in close collaboration with the research team. The MLECO will provide support: 1) to operationalize MLE tools and 2) to collect and analyse relevant data in country; 3) country team to learn from the information generated and from the events organised.

Tasks:

1. Act as MLE contact point for Fellows in their country and feed-back to the MLE and Research team;
2. Support Research and MLE events with Fellows such as the sensemaking sessions around SenseMaker;

3. Provide support in collecting and analyzing data from the Fellows for different tools such as longitudinal studies, the monitoring of Food System Actions and possibly Social Network Analysis of the CFF;
4. Conduct document review related to context changes relevant to the African Food Fellowship and the impact areas;
5. Participate in reflexive learning with the AFF team and reporting to Ikea Foundation.
6. Support the refinement of CFF MLE framework questions
7. Conduct Pause and Reflect sessions at the Strategic Meetings

Requirements

Energy and approach

First and foremost, we're looking for people with a spirit, energy and approach that aligns with the culture of the Fellowship. In particular, we will be looking for:

1. **Curiosity about systems change:** we are looking for people who will bring a deep desire to contribute to healthy, sustainable and inclusive food systems and who are interested in learning about how to measure systems' change.
2. **An ability to build outstanding relationships:** MLECO will need to connect with the country implementation team and support them, with a friendly challenge function. The MLECO will stimulate reflections on how to improve effectiveness and coherence of country implementation. The role also requires to connect with the Fellows to ensure that they are getting value out of the MLE component and that they take part in the MLE processes. As such we are looking for MLE professionals with the necessary multicultural communication skills for effective engagement.
3. **An ability to be responsive to the needs of Fellows (and their food systems actions) and to the African Food Fellowship team:** be able to maintain a Fellow-centred approach, ensuring feedback loops and a non-extractive approach.
4. **Propositional in getting M&E functioning and functional for the initiative:** spot opportunities to learn and generate useful insights, articulate ideas to improve MLE activities.

Essential profile and experience

1. **8 years of experience in planning, monitoring and evaluation:** working at different stages of the MLE process from the planning phase of any initiative (e.g. formulating ToC), to setting up M&E systems, implementing a M&E plan, facilitating learning processes and being involved in evaluation (either internal or external ones, baseline-mid-term or endline).
2. **5 years of experience/exposure to food systems:** The work of the Fellows and the African Food Fellowship lies across food systems. It is essential that applicants have a strong knowledge and/or working experience in these areas, so as to better understand the issues shared by Fellows through their MLE engagement.
3. **Education:** a minimum of a Bachelor's degree or equivalent in a field related to social studies, agriculture, nutrition, environmental studies, economics, international development.

4. **Research mindset:** a combination of a research mind-set with hands-on skills to look for concrete ways to get the right information to advance the work of Fellows and the team. Any courses or certifications in relation to MLE is of added value.
5. **Expertise in relevant MLE methodologies and processes:** ability to use qualitative data collection approaches (e.g. semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions) and in doing cross-cutting analysis putting pieces of information generated by the various data streams together. Familiarity with mixed methods approaches is of added value.
6. **Experience working with ICT for M&E:** ability to use various software to collect and analyse information (e.g. KoboToolBox, SenseMaker, Excel) as well as for communication purposes.
7. **Ability to facilitate learning:** bring Fellows and other actors together to allow sensemaking of information and learning of the information generated through MLE. MLE work also requires to be able to synthesize information generated into digestible pieces so that the primary users (the Fellows and the Secretariat) can use it in their work. The MLECO will ensure that the information generated is timely and in an engaging format, combining short texts and visuals.
8. **Rwandan/Kenyan resident/citizen:** We expect a national or resident living in Kenya or Rwanda to understand well the issues playing in the country. Moreover it is expected that the MLE support will work together with the implementation team requesting his/her presence in country. Fluency in English is essential as it is the team core language, Kiswahili or Kinyarwanda is an added value. There is one position in Kenya and one in Rwanda.

Further information

Working arrangements

Work will combine online and face to face moments. It is essential that the MLE support has consistent, reliable internet allowing video-based meetings as well as is able to meet the country implementation team on site when needed and requested.

Line management

MLE support will report to the MLE component lead while working with country implementation teams and organising the work with Wasafiri.

Contractual arrangements and level of commitment

Successful applicants will be contracted as independent consultants by Wasafiri. We will not accept applications from Consulting Firms or networks. MLECO will be contracted to provide support of approximately 2 day/week, at a competitive day rate that will be negotiated on award. Effort might not be equally spread as some events and moments might require more engagement than others.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

How to apply

1. Include a CV no longer than 3 pages.
2. Include a cover letter that at minimum summarises:
 - Professional MLE expertise
 - Track record of relevant MLE experience

- Motivation to apply
3. Please submit the Cover Letter and CV to **opportunities@wasafirihub.com**
 4. Please use the subject heading: **Application – AFF MLECO**

Application timeframe

1. Closing date for applications: **August 25th**
2. Interviews: Week of 28 August
3. Reference checks & Due diligence: Week of 28 August
4. Appointment: Friday 1 September
5. Likely start date and induction: Mid to late September

Selection process

1. We will review applications as they arrive and retain the right to interview and accept applicants prior to the application deadline.
2. Completion of satisfactory professional references and background checks are essential conditions of contracting.

Ensuring equality of access

Wasafiri values the unique skills and experiences each individual brings to the organisation and we are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment for everyone.

Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the recruitment process or would like to have an informal discussion with the Stage 2 Coordinator, please contact Wasafiri by email to opportunities@wasafirihub.com. Please use the subject heading **Enquiry – MLE support**.

“These African Food Fellows are on a journey together that will continue for a generation, to further realise their country’s and continent’s potential.”

Joost Guijt, Director of African Food Fellowship

Initiating partners:
Wageningen University & Research
Wasafiri Consulting



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