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Call for PhD and Masters Applications

Social Transformation Research and Policy Advocacy Project

Deadline for submission of application: 30th April 2020

We are inviting applications for **PhD** and **Masters** studies under a five-year project, “Resilience Against Climate Change-Social Transformation Research and Policy Advocacy”. Funded by the European Union, the project is a research collaboration between the International Water Management Institute, University of Ghana-Centre for Migration Studies, University for Development Studies and CSIR-Science and Technology Policy Research Institute. The project will: contribute to more inclusive and sustainable economic growth policy and programming approaches in the project areas by 2025.

Over the course of the project, we expect to support a total of 3 PhDs and 15 Masters (first batch of 10; second batch of 5) with full studentships for four and two years respectively. For this Call, two (2) PhDs and 4 Masters will be based at the University of Ghana, and one (1) PhD and 6 Masters will be hosted by University for Development Studies.

All the students will follow the stipulated training procedure of the host Universities, with joint supervision across project collaborating organisations. In addition, the students will participate in policy advocacy events (e.g. workshops, learning events and policy dialogues), with the aim of bridging research and policy, through students’ direct involvement in the narratives, practices and networks of development planning.

Background information of project

Northern Ghana suffers from high climate variability coupled with high depletion of the natural resource base which is related to rapid socio-economic and demographic changes. These changes present complex rural development challenges for farmers (particularly women and youth), communities, policy-makers and development planners. Addressing the complex challenges requires better understanding of transformative processes, strengthening of institutional capacity, and effective natural resource governance.

The Resilience Against Climate Change-Social Transformation Research (REACH-STR) project has identified the need to integrate climate-smart practices in planning activities, to strengthen extension services, community engagement and support the incorporation of social transformation analysis into policy processes and development planning. Social transformation refers to persistent structural changes in the economic and social relations that surround individuals, households and communities. These changes could be as a result of ‘drivers of change’, notably demographic, policy strategies, market and social trends and influences.



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The project seeks to develop and test theoretical/conceptual frameworks to understand social transformation from the perspective of climate change, migration and gender and in the context of Upper West Region and Sawla-Tuna-Kalba District.

Successful students will conduct research under any of these three main project work streams:

- 1) **UDS:** *methods and strategies for building climate change resilience; policy and governance issues related to natural resource management and development planning.*
- 2) **UG:** *migration and youth-specific issues of social transformation.*
- 3) **Both UDS and UG:** *gender and key constraints to positive social transformation outcomes, and ways of enhancing equality and expanding economic opportunities for rural women and youth.*

Eligibility

Applicants will be required to meet the general admission requirements of University for Development Studies or University of Ghana, depending on where they intend to study. Applicants must have applied to any of the two Universities for the 2020/2021 academic year. In addition to the general requirements, applicants should preferably have a background in social science research and methodological skills. However, suitable students with any relevant disciplinary background can be considered.

Applicants must:

- ✓ Hold a relevant degree (i.e. First Degree for persons applying for the Masters and Masters Degree for those applying for PhD) in social science/humanities related discipline(s). Particularly (**but not limited to**), Geography, Development Planning Studies, Migration Studies, Agricultural Extension, Agricultural Economics, Climate Change, Rural Development Sociology, Sociology, Anthropology, Political Science.
- ✓ Be highly motivated to pursue postgraduate studies according to the approved study plan of the Universities involved.

Scholarship Package

Award of scholarship is subject to gaining admission to the University of Ghana or University for Development Studies during the stipulated academic year.

The scholarship covers:

- ✓ Full tuition fees
- ✓ Full research costs towards thesis
- ✓ Monthly stipend to cover living expenses in Ghana



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Application Process

Student selection will be based upon evaluation of:

- 1) A pre-proposal (maximum 10 pages-PhDs and maximum 6 pages-Masters) **describing the applicants proposed research idea and conceptualization on any of the three project work streams of interest.**
- 2) A brief motivation (maximum 2 pages) note explaining their interest in social transformation research, and how their pre-proposal aligns with the thematic focus (social transformation research and policy advocacy) of the project
- 3) An application letter, addressed to the REACH-STR Project Coordinator, IWMI West-Africa Office, Ghana
- 4) Applicant's Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- 5) Two references or recommendation letters one each from a supervisor and a senior scholar familiar with the applicant's academic and professional trajectory. The references should be emailed directly by the referees to c.osei-amponsah@cgiar.org with the subject as: 'UNIVERSITY_APPLICANT NAME_TYPE OF DEGREE APPLYING FOR', e.g. *UG_Yaw Manu_PhD*
- 6) Evidence of University of Ghana or University for Development Studies 2020/2021 admission into relevant and regular postgraduate programmes

For UDS: Faculties of Planning and Land Management, Integrated Development Studies, Natural Resources and Environment, and Agribusiness and Communication Sciences. (Please note that Msc and MPhil are tenable only in Faculties of Planning and Land Management, and Integrated Development Studies, but PhD applicants can choose from any of the four Faculties)

For UG: The scholarship is tenable at the Centre for Migration Studies and the Department of Geography and Resource Development

- 7) Copies of certificate(s) and transcripts of previous studies at the University level
- 8) For applicants applying to **University of Ghana** all required documents must be submitted to c.osei-amponsah@cgiar.org and copied to teyejoseph@yahoo.co.uk with the subject as: 'UNIVERSITY_APPLICANT NAME_TYPE OF DEGREE APPLYING FOR', e.g. *UG_Akosua Mensah_MPhil*



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- 9) For applicants applying to the **University for Development Studies** all required documents must be submitted to c.osei-amponsah@cgiar.org and copied to fjarawura@uds.edu.gh, fsanyare@uds.edu.gh and jarawura@yahoo.com with the subject as: 'UNIVERSITY_APPLICANT NAME_TYPE OF DEGREE APPLYING FOR', e.g. UDS_Akosua Mensah_MPhil

Mode of Selection

A panel made up of lecturers from the two Universities, researchers from IWMI, and other experts will conduct the selection. A two-stage criteria will be adopted to evaluate the applications. In the first stage of selection, each application will be graded based on a common score sheet by panel members. The average scores will be used to shortlist applicants for the second stage of selection. In the second stage of selection, the shortlisted applicants will be interviewed by the panel. Each panel member will award marks based on a common score sheet. Applicants will finally be selected based on a combination of marks earned from the assessment of application documents and oral interviews.

Enquires

For further information, kindly contact: Dr. Francis Jarawura (UDS) at jarawura@yahoo.com
Prof. Joseph Teye (UG-Centre for Migration Studies) at teyejoseph@yahoo.co.uk
Dr. Charity Osei-Amponsah at c.osei-amponsah@cgiar.org

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