



Call for applications: training and research opportunities in eastern Africa for registered masters and PhD research students

Background

The project 'Co-operative research on East African territorial integration within globalisation' (CREATING) has received funding from the EU 7th Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development under its Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH) programme of measures to support international cooperation. CREATING currently involves nine major partners in Europe and eastern Africa and aims to put in place a firm basis for future enhancement of an *integrated* European and eastern Africa research capacity, and to help define relevant areas for future collaborative research.

CREATING has two geographic foci of study (the catchment for Lake Tanganyika and the mountains that lie along or close to international boundaries in eastern Africa).

Eligibility, programme and mode of Application

As part of the CREATING project, financial and academic support for research training and fieldwork exists for up to 25 early stage masters and PhD research students registered at universities in eastern Africa or Europe. Successful applicants will participate in a training workshop followed by a practical field school. Upon successful completion of the training part of CREATING, which will include the production of an acceptable research proposal, they will receive an element of financial support for the field component of their studies.

Applicants should email the following:

- (1) CV and copy of official university transcript;
- (2) Taking account of the four major research themes set out below, a concise statement of the ways in which this opportunity relates to their research interests and future career plans (500 words maximum);
- (3) Signed letter of support from their current university supervisor/chair of their supervisory committee;
- (4) Signed letter from their Head of Department/School confirming their current registration as a graduate research student in their university

Inter-Universities
Council for East
Africa



French Institute
for Research in
Africa



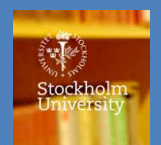
Royal Museum
for Central Africa



British Institute
in
Eastern Africa



UNIVERSITE
DE TOULOUSE
LE MIRAIL



to BOTH creating@ifra-nairobi.net and creating@iucea.org Please state CREATING APPLICATION in the subject field of the email.

Closing date for applications is Friday May 16, 2008. Please note that applications received after this deadline will not be accepted.

All applications will be acknowledged.

The language of the project is English, and the workshops and training will be conducted in English.

Description of themes

Resource management and livelihood sustainability

A necessary focus for understanding rural livelihoods is the land users and other stakeholders, their priorities and decision-making. These are, in turn, influenced by various factors, such as physical conditions and aspects of economy, culture and power, including gender relations and global forces. Political ecology potentially provides a means of understanding the dynamics of human-environment interaction.

While policy agendas for wildlife conservation and biodiversity protection have gained a strong position in eastern African land policies, investments by international business in large-scale commercial agriculture (e.g. biofuels), and recent initiatives to develop and expand opportunities for small holding agriculture as a primary measure to fight poverty and fulfil the Millennium Development Goals raise new challenges. Research is needed into how these different policy agendas and business interests will interact and impact resource management and livelihoods.

This theme aims to develop the skills needed to create new types of data that capture local realities and conflicts. Qualitative methods, including both deep and semi-structured interviews with farmers and other stakeholders,

various Participatory Rapid Assessment (PRA) techniques - such as group discussions, workshops and mapping of villages, fields and other resources - are central to this. Furthermore, training in the use of aerial photographs and satellite images is important. Spatial data on resource use will also be incorporated and analysed using GIS as part of the training.

Applicants may wish to develop projects that overlap between this theme and the second theme, *Human dimensions of environmental (including climatic) change*.

Human dimensions of environmental (including climatic) change

Natural and human-induced environmental, including climatic, changes are both contentious and topical. Despite much media attention over the past decade, little is actually known about how environments across eastern Africa have changed in the relatively recent past, and how people and livelihoods have adjusted to those changes. Such knowledge (or environmental history, the nature, timing and rate of past environmental changes and human responses to these) is crucial to understanding present conditions and to the more certain anticipation of future environmental (including climatic) changes and states. Moreover, awareness of changing environmental conditions and their implications for humans and livelihoods has not led to such awareness being incorporated to rural and urban planning.

This theme focuses on environments (wetlands and mountains) that are generally thought to be particularly vulnerable to change because they are ecotonal, and therefore relatively minor variations in conditions can have dramatic and potentially catastrophic consequences. Applications from students who wish to develop research projects that address one of the following topics (research questions) will be particularly welcome under this theme:

- ❖ How are environmental changes impacting people and livelihoods close to protected lake and mountain areas?
- ❖ How have environmental changes impacted people/ livelihoods, resource availability in the remembered past, and how have people coped with these changes?
- ❖ Are there major differences in adaptive capability within communities? If so why?
- ❖ Is there any evidence of climate change being linked to increased incidences of human/crop/animal diseases and pests?
- ❖ What prevents information on environmental changes and their implications from being acted upon (allowing, for example, inappropriate developments in *both* rural and urban areas to continue)?

Applicants may wish to develop projects that overlap between this theme and *Resource management and livelihood sustainability*.

Mobility and identities

Discourses about belonging and relationships are continuously formed and re-formed through processes of migration and mobility. A better

understanding of the formation of identities, such as among and between residents and immigrants, is of crucial importance for any effort towards integration, reconciliation and development in eastern Africa.

Far from being isolated geographical entities, the areas around Lake Tanganyika and the mountains of eastern Africa have been sites of intense interaction across a variety of borders: ecological and economical; societal and political; and language and religion. Both small and large-scale forms of mobility and migration have accompanied multiple forms of environmental, cultural, political and socio-economic changes. Conversely, changing forms of mobility provide indicators of such processes of change. The movement and displacement of populations profoundly transform the spaces in which they happen, creating zones of translocality and transnationality. They also have a deep impact on the ways in which ordinary people situate themselves within these spaces and with regard to the wider world.

Of particular interest under this theme are places and areas in which groups of different status and identity interact through migration and mobility, such as small/medium urban centres. Applications from students who wish to develop research projects that address one of the following topics will be particularly welcome under this theme:

- ❖ What different forms and ranges of migration and mobility exist within particular areas or places, and how do they intersect?
- ❖ How do different mobile actors interact with each other?
- ❖ To what extent are recent migrations and mobilities building on earlier patterns, and to what extent are these remembered by local inhabitants?
- ❖ What are the different causes of outward migration or mobility, and how do they combine with each other?
- ❖ What are the effects or consequences of particular forms of mobility on social relations and identities among particular groups of migrants/mobile actors, and to what extent is mobility a marker of their identity?

What are the relations between migrants and residents in both the departure and the destination areas or places? Applicants may wish to develop projects that overlap between this theme and *Urban-rural linkages and development*.

Urban-rural linkages and development

Urban transition in eastern Africa now relies on the growth of small/medium urban centres. Networks of mobility and exchange are centred on a growing number of markets and small/medium urban centres, which are nodes of rural mobility where services and connections to the wider world are provided. These nodes play a specific role in highly populated mountainous areas and lake shores as places where resources are exchanged and social changes take place. They also strongly influence regional integration, especially in border areas, along main roads. Despite this importance, little research has been done on the role of markets and small/medium urban areas in eastern Africa.

The main objective of activities under this theme is to redefine methodologies and concepts such as the rural-urban dichotomy, taking into account dynamics of regional integration. Applications from students who wish to develop research projects that address one of the following topics will be particularly welcome under this theme:

- ❖ changing functions of urban centres and communication networks;
- ❖ patterns of mobility between rural and urban areas;
- ❖ impacts of urbanisation on the environment;
- ❖ the role of small/medium urban areas in local and regional development;

Applicants may wish to develop projects that overlap between this theme and *Mobility and identities*.