

## Global Phd Scholarship – St Andrews and Bonn

### Mega-infrastructure in Northern Kenya

#### Project description

Mega-infrastructure has returned to the global political and research agenda, with numerous large dams, roads, ports, irrigation schemes, and other ‘development’ projects planned or under construction, particularly in the Global South. These projects are now often framed as sustainable or green development, in contrast to previous modernist and nationalist discourses of the 20th century. China’s Belt and Road Initiative is a well-known global example for mega-infrastructure development; at a more regional scale, the Lamu Port-South Sudan- Ethiopia-Transport (LAPSSET) Corridor that crosses Northern Kenya is another. Critical research points to persistent underperformance on economic indicators, as well as negative environmental and social impacts, despite the aspirations and hopes invested by policymakers and citizens in these projects. That said, the reality of mega-infrastructure development is complex and diverse; some projects are stalled for decades, while others do materialize quickly. Most have unforeseen impacts.

Research proposals on mega-infrastructure are invited that have a regional focus on Northern Kenya. This region has seen, for example, the construction of an (highly underused) airport in the town of Isiolo, and plans for a large dam, Crocodile Jaws, which continues unbuilt, following local opposition. Although some of these projects are currently being studied by members of the research group of Professor Müller-Mahn, important research gaps remain, for example, regarding the interactions between different large projects, or between the expansion of transport corridors, land use change, and water resource availability. PhD proposals should be complementary to ongoing studies conducted within the ‘Future Rural Africa’ Collaborative Research Centre (CRC-TRR 228) at the Universities of Bonn and Cologne.

The project will be managed jointly between the School of Geography and Sustainable Development at St Andrews and the Institute of Geography at Bonn. The student will be supervised by Dr Christopher Schulz (St Andrews) and Prof. Dr. Detlef Müller-Mahn (Bonn).

Informal enquiries regarding this scholarship may be addressed to the co-supervisors:

- **Dr Christopher Schulz:** [christopher.schulz@st-andrews.ac.uk](mailto:christopher.schulz@st-andrews.ac.uk)
- **Professor Detlef Müller-Mahn:** [mueller-mahn@uni-bonn.de](mailto:mueller-mahn@uni-bonn.de)

For further information, please visit [Joint Doctoral Program St Andrews and Bonn](#) and [Global Doctoral Scholarships – St Andrews and Bonn](#).

**Application deadline: March 31, 2023**