

Governing Informal Markets in Eastern Africa (Supervisor: Assoc. Professor Dustin Garrick)

Outline

Informal water markets have proliferated in response to rapid urbanisation and increasing competition for freshwater. From Kenya to Kathmandu, tanker operators, packaged water vendors and other small-scale water enterprises operate in diverse settings, ranging from small towns to mega-cities. Despite their prevalence, informal markets are virtually uncharted, particularly their governance and patterns of cooperation, conflict and competition. Myths dominate in the absence of evidence, fuelling perceptions that informal markets prey on the poor and lead inexorably towards inequality and unsustainable outcomes.

This study will examine the institutions and governance underpinning informal water markets in eastern Africa using a mixed-methods approach involving a systematic review and comparison of the emergence, evolution and impacts of informal water markets. Grounded in the institutional analysis and development (IAD) framework, the study will revisit the classic 1968 study, *Drawers of Water*, from the perspective of informal water markets.

The ideal DPhil student will have a strong commitment to academic excellence and must be willing to work with local and global partners at all phases from research planning to translating research into impacts. The project will require a unique blend of skills and interests in both field work and systematic approaches to comparative institutional analysis across a network of sites in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Interests and expertise in collective action theory, institutional economics, database development and comparative methodology are encouraged.

The fieldwork will involve both local and global partners, ranging from water vendors and consumers to local and national governments, and global partners such as UNICEF, the Global Water Partnership and the World Bank. We strongly encourage applications from women and candidates with experience living and working in East Africa.

Essential skills

- A commitment to academic excellence with a track record of high impact research
- Proven skills in executing empirical research in challenging contexts
- Capacity to work independently and as part of a team
- Examples of high-quality written work, such as a journal paper or equivalent
- Outstanding interpersonal skills to work with multiple stakeholders

This post is one of 15, fully-funded early career researchers as part of a Marie Curie International Training Network on the Future of Water Governance – [NEWAVE](#) - funded by the EU (2019-23) led by the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam and a global consortium of academic and practitioner partners.

Suitably qualified candidates wishing to apply for this studentship should submit a CV with details identifying the fit and motivation for the role to Associate Professor Dustin Garrick (dustin.garrick@ouce.ox.ac.uk) before making a formal Oxford University application.

Applications must be submitted to the University of Oxford before 12pm/GMT on the 15th November: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/graduate/courses/dphil-geography-and-environment?wssl=1>

The successful applicant must be available to start with a programme-level training workshop planned for Summer 2020 in Amsterdam, completing their studies in September 2023. Prospective applicants should review the eligibility criteria stipulated here: https://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/sites/mariecurie2/files/msca-itn-fellows-note_en_v2.pdf
