

The International Institute of Social Studies of the Erasmus University Rotterdam the Netherlands is seeking to fill **one full-time (100%)** vacancy for the position of **Post-Doctoral Researcher** for a period from from 1 March 2017 to 31 December 2018. The research concerns Everyday politics and practices of family planning in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The researcher will be part of a large research programme consisting of multiple projects, entitled 'Power, Poverty and Politics (PPP) in DRC', a subproject of the [Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium](#) led by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in London. The project is financed by UK Aid for the UK Government. It comprises a network of partners and research under the project is set up as close collaborations between international and Congolese universities and research institutes.

This research program aims to deepen existing research on governance, service delivery and economic growth in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to examine the details of policy implementation from national to local levels, to generate lessons from what works in promoting positive change and how to measure change.

The International Institute of social Studies will appoint one Post-doc researcher, that will work in close collaboration with the Institut Supérieur de Développement Rural in Bukavu, DRC, in particular with its Centre d'Expertise et de Recherche sur le Genre et Développement. At ISS, the researcher will be part of a dynamic, international and cross-disciplinary research group under the academic leadership of Professor Thea Hilhorst and Wendy Harcourt.

The working languages of the project are both English and French. Applicants are expected to participate actively in seminars and workshops in the project, liaise regularly with DFID Kinshasa country advisors and spend a substantial amount of fieldwork in DRC.

The vacancy at ISS the Hague, the Netherlands is for the following research project:

#### **Everyday politics and practices of family planning in DRC.**

Promoting and protecting women's reproductive rights and health is key to women's empowerment and gender equality. This proposal concerns current policies and practices of family planning; debates on policy and perceptions of people regarding family planning and the role of societal stakeholders. It takes a 360 degrees, mixed methods look at family planning services. See below for a more elaborate proposal.

#### **Job description**

- You will conduct research on processes of gender, governance, and development in the DRC;
- 3 to 6 months of field research per year will be conducted in the DRC;
- Research will be conducted in close collaboration with the academic and policy partners.
- A number of publications will be written on the research, both aimed at academic audiences and applied audiences in policy and practice.

#### **Profile and requirements**

- You hold a doctorate degree (PhD) in development studies, political science, anthropology, economics or related social science disciplines.
- Exceptions for the doctoral degree can be granted to applicants who are able to demonstrate similar research experience.
- Research experience in the DRC is desirable, but similar experience in fragile states contexts is also accepted.
- You obtained outstanding academic results.
- You have a demonstrated capacity to publish in peer-reviewed academic journals.
- You are quality-oriented, conscientious, creative, social and collaborative.

- You have a demonstrated capacity to work in a multi-cultural, complex environment.
- You are able to do research in French, and are able to communicate in English. Knowledge of local languages is a plus.

#### We offer

- An appointment as a postdoctoral researcher for a period of 22 months.
- Depending on years of experience and qualifications, a full time gross monthly salary ranging from € 2.552,00 - € 4.691,00 (based on the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities scale 10 or 11).
- An 8% holiday allowance and an end-of-year payment of 8.3%.
- A dynamic and stimulating work environment.

#### How to apply?

- Applications may only be submitted online to [application.appl@iss.nl](mailto:application.appl@iss.nl) / "Application PPP in DRC, ISS", and should include (1) a cover letter, (2) CV and (3) a brief description (1,000 words max.) of how the applicant aims to contribute to one of the research lines. We also ask you to submit an article or report that you wrote.
- Deadline for applications: 13 February 2017
- The interviews of the candidates, preselected by a selection panel, will take place 20 February 2017.
- The date of appointment will follow as soon as possible after completion of the selection.

For questions about the profile and the description of duties, please contact Prof. Dr. Thea Hilhorst,  
[Hilhorst@ISS.nl](mailto:Hilhorst@ISS.nl)

*The International Institute of Social Studies is committed to building and sustaining a community based on inclusiveness, equity and diversity and believes this will contribute to our mission and vision of being the best institute in our field.*

*ISS (<http://www.iss.nl/>) is an equal opportunities employer and encourages applications from candidates of all genders, ethnicities and nationalities.*

## Everyday politics and practices of family planning in DRC

This proposal concerns current policies and practices of family planning; debates on policy and perceptions of people regarding family planning and the role of societal stakeholders.

Promoting and protecting women's reproductive rights and health is key to women's empowerment and gender equality, but as the years since Cairo 1994 has shown, it is an intensely complex project, that ultimately needs to take into account the changing context of sexual behavior, different local needs and ability of women to access comprehensive reproductive health and rights services. The 2013-2014 Demographic Health Survey indicates that Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) the average number of children per woman continues to be a very high 6.6. Surveys indicate that only 20% of women from 15-49 have used contraceptive methods (31% in cities and 15% in villages). Such figures indicate a large unmet reproductive health.

But the numbers only tell one part of the story. In a fragile and conflict ridden country the availability and access to information, knowledge and services around family planning is fraught. Poverty and insecurity combine in ways that make both the needs and rights of women to reproductive health difficult to plan and provide. In addition, in conflict situations women's every day health and security is complicated by gender based violence, HIV and AIDS and sexually transmitted disease and intimate partner violence. Research is required to go below these numbers and understand from the local women and societal stakeholders' perspectives how best to ensure women's access to comprehensive reproductive health services.

Family planning in this context is about more than reducing large family size. It is about understanding complex societal and economic factors - from religious to local ethnic traditions- that prevent women of different ages from making choices about wanted pregnancy and sustainable family size. In order to provide locally led, appropriate comprehensive reproductive health and rights services, in-depth qualitative research is needed on a number of levels in order to: assess the access and types of services looking at how and when women and

girls of different ages access clinics in urban and rural communities; look at whether information and services are available not only on contraception but also for women and girls suffering ill health, trauma, the stigma of rape, unwanted children and increasing domestic violence. The multifaceted research will use gender aware and intersectional analysis to undertake systematic qualitative case studies.

The case studies will look 360 degrees at the family planning services. From the appropriateness of the governance and funding structure to the perception of the local community of the effectiveness of family planning services. It will look at what information, knowledge and services are provided in order to propose in what they need to change in order to meet unmet needs. The series of case studies will focus on the access, knowledge and experiences of family planning services by local community women of different ages. It will in addition survey societal stakeholders – including male family members, clinic providers, religious and community leaders.