



The Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP) of the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies is looking for a PhD student to fill the position of

Research Assistant

for its project entitled “Curbing Illicit Financial Flows from Resource-rich Developing Countries: Improving Natural Resource Governance to Finance the SDGs”, funded by the [Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development \(r4d programme\)](#), a joint initiative of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF).

Application deadline: 2 April 2017

Start date: 1 September 2017

Contract modalities: The Research Assistant will receive a 100% contract (40% of the time is devoted to the project and 60% to the writing of his/her dissertation). The contract will be issued for one year and can be renewed upon mutual agreement, subject to the student’s status.

About the project:

Attempts to reduce illicit financial flows (IFFs) have gained increasing policy traction and scholarly attention in recent years. Following the 2008 financial crisis and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, curbing IFFs is seen as critical to help developing countries mobilize resources to implement the SDGs. Existing studies – conducted so far primarily by think-tanks and advocacy groups – emphasize the volume and centrality of trade-related IFFs resulting from trade and transfer mispricing. Yet, the topic remains under-researched and the evidence weak because of data and methodological flaws.

This interdisciplinary, collaborative research aims to i) improve our knowledge and understanding of commodity trade-related IFFs, ii) analyse the variables that explain the persistence of IFFs along the value chain, iii) examine the roles and potential contributions of the key state and non-state actors involved, and iv) design/promote innovative policy responses at the national, regional and global levels to curb trade-related IFFs.

Drawing on economics, law, political science, and political economy analysis, the project engages in intensive process-tracing across multiple data sources. It seeks to uncover the key drivers behind IFFs with a focus on both push factors (out of developing countries) and pull factors (into major trading/financial hubs). It examines the mechanisms, strategies and policy innovations through which commodity trade-related IFFs can effectively be curtailed in diverse institutional and political settings. The project is divided into five work packages, with the focus of this position being on work package 1. Consisting of a statistical dataset construction and statistical and econometric analysis, this work package engages in ways to ascertain both the volume and the composition of trade-related IFFs. Using an existing data set as well as data compilation, construction and analysis, the work package will triangulate for missing data through in-depth interviews with relevant stakeholders in the countries of interest. The work package will also serve the purpose of mapping and engaging key stakeholders who represent additional vectors of influence for the research-policy transfer planned in the later stage of the project.

The project is implemented jointly with partners from the University of Ghana, the National Economic Research Institute in Laos, the Centre for Development and Environment (CDE) of the University of Berne and the NADEL Center for Development and Cooperation at the ETH Zürich. The consortium is supported by a multi-stakeholder advisory group.

For more information about the project, please visit our website [here](#).

Main tasks and responsibilities of the Research Assistant:

The focus of this position is to assist Prof. Gilles Carbonnier and a postdoctoral researcher (project coordinator) in the elaboration of work package 1. Specifically, the Research Assistant will:

- Engage in desk research, data compilation, and dataset construction;
- Assist the postdoctoral researcher in conducting a variety of expert interviews;
- Support the construction of the trade-related IFFs database;
- Take part in the quantitative analysis to ascertain the volume of commodity trade-related IFFs based on solid data and methods;
- Collaborate on different project outputs such as academic papers, policy briefs and dissemination materials; and
- Assist the project team with other project-related matters as they arise.

Required qualifications:

- Solid background in economics and quantitative methods;
- Excellent English-language writing, drafting, and communication skills;
- Proven interest in the field of natural resource governance, commodity trade, taxation, development finance or other fields related to the research project;
- Strong desk research and analytical skills;
- Ability to work under time pressure, meet multiple deadlines, and work both autonomously and in a participatory manner within an interdisciplinary team.
- Experience with the compilation and management of large datasets (command of relevant software packages) would be an important asset;

Applicants must be enrolled in a doctoral programme of the Graduate Institute at the beginning of the contract (1 September 2017).

To apply, please send a one-page **letter of motivation** addressed to Prof. Gilles Carbonnier and a **complete CV** via email to ccd@graduateinstitute.ch. The subject heading of the email should read 'r4d Research Assistant Position'. The deadline for applications is Sunday, **2 April 2017**.