



## Doctoral Research Fellowship for the Project 'Drylands Transform'

[Drylands Transform](#) - Pathways and challenges toward a socio-ecological transformation of landscapes, livestock and livelihoods in the East African drylands, is a multidisciplinary research project (2020 - 2024) led by the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU). The geographical focus of Drylands Transform is the cross-boundary area between Kenya and Uganda, part of the Karamoja cluster. The project is funded by the Swedish research council FORMAS and involves scholars from seven different universities and organizations in Sweden and the East African region. Dryland Transform is part of the [Triple L](#) research initiative.

The project aims to investigate the links between land health, livestock-based livelihoods, human well-being, and land management and governance. We will contribute with new knowledge for transformative change and sustainable development of rangelands in the drylands of East Africa.

Through strong stakeholder engagement in interdisciplinary research, we set out to explore the challenges and pathways towards a social-ecological transformation in drylands that optimizes synergies among the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while minimizing the trade-offs. We will use innovative field research approaches focusing on livelihood improvement through rangeland restoration and governance interventions in four sites in the border region between Kenya and Uganda.

The entry point of Drylands Transform is the urgent need to identify and enhance synergies between food and nutrition security (SDG2), land and ecosystem health (SDG15) and governance and justice (SDG16) for sustainable dryland development, while minimizing trade-offs between agricultural productivity (SDG2), natural resources management (SDG15) and climate change (SDG13).

In Drylands Transform we will:

1. Assess land health at the landscape scale and explore the links with human health and well-being.
2. Co-develop sustainable rangeland management options with local communities, and set-up knowledge sharing hubs ('livestock cafés').
3. Study impacts of seasonality and climate variability on food and livelihood strategies, well-being and resilience.
4. Identify innovative land governance mechanisms and practices that effectively address livestock-keepers' dependence on both flexible and secure rights to land.
5. Co-design and evaluate alternative scenarios for sustainable dryland transformation in East Africa with local and regional stakeholder groups.

### **Description of the doctoral fellow position**

Within the overall aim of the project to contribute to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals in the East African drylands, the PhD research fellow is expected to conduct research with a specific focus on Objective 3 - Study impacts of seasonality and climate variability on food and livelihood strategies, well-being and resilience. Under a "sandwich" degree arrangement, the PhD research fellow will be enrolled at Makerere University, Uganda, in the Department of

Agribusiness and Natural Resource Economics, and will spend three months each year at Umeå University, Sweden. The PhD fellow will be jointly supervised by researchers from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU), Makerere University, Uganda, Umeå University and Linnaeus University, Sweden.

### **Subject area**

The selected PhD research fellow will study the topic:

*Climate variability impact on diet diversity, hidden hunger, food security and stunting among children, including the effects of change in women labour time allocation due to climate variability on child nutrition and health. This topic will also include infant and young child feeding practices, as well as child and maternal health.*

### **Responsibilities of the doctoral research fellow**

In close multidisciplinary collaboration with other scholars within the Drylands Transform program, the doctoral fellow will:

- a) Contribute to the theoretical/conceptual framing of the subject area (as stated above)
- b) Assemble and review peer-reviewed and grey literature for adequate analysis of subject area
- c) Participate in design and implementation of qualitative and quantitative research at the four sites in Uganda and Kenya
- d) Author a thesis and joint publications.

### **Funding**

The project includes funds for 36 months and covers travel costs and subsistence allowance, insurance while in Sweden, tuition, fieldwork as well as participation in project meetings, regional workshops and international academic conferences, and a monthly stipend.

### **Core eligibility criteria**

The suitable candidate will fulfill majority of the following qualifications:

- Master's degree in any of the following fields: Applied Human Nutrition or related fields; Public Health/Health Sciences or related fields, Agricultural Economics or related fields; Rangeland Management or related fields
- Master's degree should not be older than 5 years
- National of Uganda
- Prior experience of conducting qualitative and/or quantitative empirical research, preferably in the drylands
- At least one publication in peer-reviewed journals.

### **Other favorable skills and experience**

- Use of basic MS Office tools
- Data analytical skills using common programs (Excel, Stata, R, etc)
- Experience in qualitative data collection and analysis
- Language proficiency (English)
- Ability to work in an interdisciplinary and multicultural team
- Experience with project work and working with partners is of advantage.

**How to apply:**

Interested applicants should send applications to Dr. Alice Turinawe ([alice.turinawe@mak.ac.ug](mailto:alice.turinawe@mak.ac.ug)) and copy to Dr. Kristina Lindvall ([kristina.lindvall@umu.se](mailto:kristina.lindvall@umu.se)) by end of day, **August 30, 2021**.

Applicants are required to submit the following documents:

1. Motivation letter
2. Current Curriculum Vitae, including at least two academic referees
3. Copies (PDF format) of academic certificates and transcripts of degree and courses taken
4. A short summary of master thesis (max. 3 pages)