

## **Global Learning for Sustainable Development**

### ***Longitudinal Study: Transnational Biographies and Networks of Highly Skilled Graduates from Africa, Asia and Latin America***

(Prof. Dr. Carola Bauschke-Urban)

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With the globalization of the sciences and the inter- and trans-nationalization of the higher education system, the number of mobile students is constantly increasing. The focus of research is almost exclusively interested in student's mobility within as well as to and from Western countries, the large number of highly qualified young scholars from postcolonial spaces who participate in European higher education is rarely discussed. The project looks at biographies and educational pathways of students from postcolonial spaces and includes mixed methods data from an empirical sample of graduates from 40 Germany based higher education institutions that offer government funded master programs with a focus on countries in Africa, Asia and South America. The majority of these programs provide higher education within the STEM disciplines as well as in the applied engineering disciplines and in economics. Therefore, the sample is constituted by a highly mobile and extremely heterogeneous group of graduates.

The longitudinal empirical design includes biographical interviews, multi-sited ethnography as well as quantitative data. The theoretical framework focuses the discourse on transnational mobility and Bourdieu's theory of field and capital, which are combined with a perspective on intersecting multiple inequalities such as (world)regional origin, gender and social class.

The project addresses the following research questions:

- What are the effects of highly skilled mobility of graduate students from postcolonial spaces to Europe?
- Does it enforce brain drain or is it a contribution to economic, social and political development?
- What are the biographical effects of transnational mobility?
- How does mobility shape the networks and social lives of the highly skilled graduates from postcolonial spaces?