**Methodology**

The research involved an interdisciplinary, multi-sited, comparative case study approach involving four years of in-depth, empirical research between 2012 and 2016. For our fieldwork, we selected the Bui dam in Ghana, the Kamchay dam in Cambodia, the Bakun dam in Malaysia and the Zamfara dam in Nigeria. The three dams in Cambodia, Malaysia and Ghana were successfully constructed and operationalized, whereas the Nigerian dam failed to proceed to construction after feasibility studies. Yet, we analysed it to understand the pre-construction negotiations and consultations between Chinese dam-builders and Nigerian authorities and to compare this ‘failed’ dam case to the ‘implemented’ dam cases. Each of these dams involves the Chinese as dam developers, and has a capacity of more than 50MW.

We started by conducting a multi-level stakeholder mapping (Schiffer, 2010) to identify key stakeholders engaged in Chinese overseas hydropower projects for each of the host countries and China. Secondary data were compiled to assess the environmental impacts of dams and their governance implications by examining the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) reports of the dams and also firm strategy documents and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) documents.

We also conducted 163 semi-structured in-depth interviews in Cambodia, Malaysia, Ghana, Nigeria, UK and China and 40 focus group discussions (FGDs) with the affected communities. Sensitive material has largely been omitted from the data repository, particularly to keep the identities of interviewees safe. Therefore, only anonymised transcripts from FGDs have been included, as well as anonymised records of institutional interviews which are deemed not too sensitive. For Nigeria, we also analysed 149 household surveys. This was mainly because the security situation in Northern Nigeria became very difficult due to terror threats by Boko Haram, meaning that household surveys were delivered rather than individual interviews conducted as access worsened. However, FGDs with community members were conducted in Nigeria as in the other countries. Four affected communities interviewed in Ghana are farming and fishing communities resettled after the construction of the dam. Five affected communities were interviewed in Southern Cambodia. These communities rely mainly on farming, fishing and the collection of forest products, such as timber, wild fruits and bamboo. In Malaysia, the major ethnic groups resettled due to the Bakun dam were interviewed, three longhouses were chosen to represent them, as well as minority ethnic groups located in Sarawak, Borneo, East Malaysia. In Northern Nigeria, nine communities affected by the dam-building plans were involved in the fieldwork.

After analyzing each case in its own right we conducted the comparative analysis across the four dam cases. We did this by comparing the environmental, social, economic, political and technological perspectives of each dam in comparison to the other dams and drawing out key themes that were similar or different across the four cases, such as access to natural resources, access to energy, impacts on livelihoods etc.

Not all interviews and FGDs are included in this data set due to the high sensitivity of the data. We have made available fully anonymised data that is not considered too sensitive. The remaining data cannot be released as it may pose a security risk for the study participants.