

## **Project on access to energy in the DRC**

This research project analyses the dynamics of access to energy in the DRC using an energy justice approach that focuses on issues of redistribution, participation and recognition of the needs of local communities. We are investigating why increased electricity generation capacity does not automatically lead to equitable access to electricity, particularly when infrastructure remains primarily geared towards extractive, industrial or export-oriented objectives. Drawing on our research and critical insights regarding the Inga projects, we analyse the tensions between energy production, export, national electrification and social justice.

Our initial findings highlight:

- the risks of an ‘energy paradox’ between national production and limited local access to electricity;
- regional inequalities in the distribution of energy infrastructure;
- tensions between large-scale energy projects, local needs and social justice;
- the limitations of current mechanisms for governance, participation and the redistribution of energy benefits.

Our ongoing research focuses on:

- the political economy of energy access;
- the social and environmental impacts of major energy projects;
- alternative models of decentralised and community-based electrification;
- the generation of knowledge to inform public decision-making.