**Makerere-Torino Cooperation programme exposes students to better ways of conducting anthropological research**

Every year, Makerere University with support from the Erasmus Partner Countries Programme receives professors from the Department of Culture, Politics and Society at the University of Torino on a mission to improve research capacity of graduate students of sociology and anthropology. During their visit, the professors train students in Ethnographic Methodology and Visual Anthropology as well as English Debating and Writing Skills. The programmes are offered as audited courses.

**The Ethnographic methodology and Visual Anthropology** course aims at developing competences in ethnographic and audio-visual methods for anthropological and sociological research. In the course of the one-month training, students are subjected to rigorous field work that initiates them to video techniques necessary to produce a short ethnographic documentary for research purposes.

With guidance from the facilitators, the students select a theme for their study and subsequently undertake fieldwork.

This year 2019, the graduate students of Anthropology with guidance from Dr Guido Nicholas Zingari from the University of Torino followed and made a documentary film on the life of street children in Kisenyi and Katanga slums in Kampala. During a workshop held at Makerere University on 27th September 2019 to review their work, the students presented the documentary and shared experiences of their fieldwork. In their remarks, the students appreciated the programme for exposing them to new ways of conducting research. The students noted that with such kind of engagement they get to appreciate life and to handle matters differently. “The fieldwork we undertook was an enriching experience. Many of us rush to judge people without listening to their stories. With this kind of training, we learn to appreciate life and handle issues with positivity,” a student explained. The students appealed to the coordinators to continue these kind of engagements.

In his remarks, the Torino-Makerere Erasmus Coordinator in Uganda, Dr Eria Olowo Onyango briefed participants on the progress registered under the programme. Besides the training activities, the programme has so far supported three masters and four PhD students from Makerere University with one-year residential scholarships at the University of Torino to complete writing their theses. The programme has offered two more similar scholarships to PhD students at Makerere University. Dr Olowo thanked the Italian Government for its continued support towards capacity building programmes at Makerere.

Speaking on behalf of the Principal of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Makerere University, Prof. Dominic Dipio from the Department of Literature applauded the **Ethnographic methodology and Visual Anthropology** programme. “Work does not start and end in class. This format of doing research is more satisfying and creates great impact on the policy makers. I appeal to other professions to adopt this method,” she noted. Prof. Dipio commended the students for the great job done in documenting the life of street children and promised to share the film within her circles.

At the end of the workshop, the students who participated the fieldwork were awarded certificates.

**BRIEF ON THE TORINO-MAKERERE COOPERATION PROGRAMME**

In 2004 the University of Torino established a Cooperation Agreement with Makerere University and this has been constantly renewed through the years. The cooperation promotes joint scientific and didactic activities in the field of Anthropology, Sociology and in the study and preservation of the cultural heritage of the Great Lakes region. Research activities have been constantly supported by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Italian Ethnological Mission in Equatorial Africa (<http://www.missioneetnologica.unito.it/homengl.htm>)

In this framework, several Italian and Ugandan students and scholars have had the opportunity to spend a research period in the partner institution. Since 2017 the Torino-Makerere Cooperation has benefited from the financial support of the Erasmus Partner Countries Programme (EU), allowing a more systematic development of student, teacher and staff mobilities within the two-partner institution. The Erasmus Partner Countries programme has already been renewed up to 2021.

Related link: <http://chuss.mak.ac.ug/news/torino-makerere-cooperation-boosts-research-capacity-sociology-and-anthropology-students>