

## **SWSA Collaborates with European Universities on a joint Masters programme in Social Work with Families and Children (MFamily)**

### **Background and overview of the programme**

The Department of SWSA is collaborating with three European Universities to run a joint Masters Course named the **European Master in Social Work with Families and Children (MFAMILY)** funded by the European Union (EU). The MFamily programme is an Erasmus Mundus programme of the European Union (EU). This collaboration builds on the many years of friendship and partnership that the SWSA department has had with some European universities such as Gothenburg University in Sweden. The current collaboration includes Makerere University and three European Universities, namely, University Institute Lisbon (ISCTE-IUL) in Portugal, University of Gothenburg (UGOT) in Sweden, and The University of Stavanger (UiS) in Norway. The programme is run under a consortium agreement signed by all the partner universities.

### **Description of the programme**

MFAMILY contributes to the Lisbon Treaty goals of providing citizens with an excellent standard of skills and competencies needed by society at large to promote smart sustainable growth, social cohesion, inclusion and employability. MFAMILY integrates a comparative and intercultural perspective. The programme presents innovative and multidisciplinary approaches to social work with families and vulnerable children and explores the potential benefits and challenges of adopting democratic principles and empowering methods in social work theories and practice in the areas of social policy, family welfare and child protection. The programme seeks to enable students to work effectively with families and children in a changing global context and prepare students for careers in social work and social policy with governmental and non-governmental organizations, international organizations and private practice. The programme also aims at exploring international models of families, including the differing cultural contexts, legal policy contexts and social problems and will provide students with strengthened scientific evidence to inform the public, participate in political dialogue and stimulate a broad and productive debate on current and alternative approaches to children`s and marginalized families situation.

### **Specific Objectives**

Specifically, the objectives of the MFamily programme are as follows:

1. Develop the student`s analytic expertise in relation to vulnerable children and the situation of marginalized families.
2. Improve the student`s knowledge and skills in order to develop interventions that will protect, promote and fulfil children`s rights
3. Enable students to work effectively with vulnerable children and families in a changing global context promoting the participation of children
4. Prepare students for career in children and family social work in order to meet the need of the labour market (governmental and nongovernmental organizations, international organizations and private practice) for expert knowledge in the best interest of children and families in need.
5. To explore international perspectives on vulnerable children and marginalized families, including the differing cultural contexts, beliefs and practices, legal and policy contexts and social problems.
6. Introduce students to comparative research to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses in European and other international welfare models recognising that interpretations and social work practices and social policy vary in different parts of the world.
7. Enable students to conduct independent research in intercultural contexts.

### **Duration and Eligibility**

The MFAMILY is a two-year programme and admits European (EU) and Third-Country graduate students interested in specializing and mastering in Social work with families and children. The Masters Course is open to European and non-European students of exceptional calibre having acquired a B.A./B.Sc. in Social Work, Sociology or another discipline relevant to the programme. Each year about 25 students are admitted. Some limited number of scholarships are available on a competitive basis. Self sponsored students are also welcome. The collaboration started in August 2013 and will run up to 2019 with a possibility of renewal. Applications are received during October of every year.

### **Organization of the programme**

The programme is coordinated by ISCTE. The teaching language is primarily English, although students are given the option to take courses in Portuguese, Swedish and Norwegian. In the first year the students are hosted at ISCTE-IUL in the first semester and spend the second semester at Stavanger University. The second year starts with the third semester at Gothenburg University. The fourth semester is spent at the partner/associate university of the student's choice according to his/her dissertation subject. The completion of the curriculum is rewarded by a joint master degree jointly issued by all 4 partner institutions.

### **Contact details**

#### **For Makerere:**

Dr Denis Muhangi  
Department of SWSA  
Tel. 0772445198  
Email: [dmuhangi@chuss.mak.ac.ug](mailto:dmuhangi@chuss.mak.ac.ug)

#### **For ISCTE:**

International Relations Office at ISCTE  
Phone: +351 217 903 049 ext. 731151

School of Sociology and Public Policy  
Phone: +351 21 04 640 15  
Email: [mfamily@iscte.pt](mailto:mfamily@iscte.pt)  
Websites: <http://mfamily.iscte-iul.pt/>  
<http://www.mfamily.eu/>