

PhD Fellow – Project “Making Refugee Integration Sustainable: In Search of Durable Relations with Host Populations in Uganda”

Application Deadline: Monday, February, 11 2019

The Faculty of Interdisciplinary Studies, Department of Planning and Governance, Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Uganda and the Institute of Development Policy (IOB), University of Antwerp, Belgium, invite applications for a four-year, full-time position as Doctoral Researcher.

The position provides the opportunity to pursue a doctoral degree in development studies in an international development institute (IOB) with high academic standards and an interdisciplinary environment. The PhD Fellow conducts fieldwork-based doctoral research with a focus on social relations between hosts and refugees in Uganda.

This position is financed as part of a grant from the Flemish Interuniversity council (VLIR-UOS) for the project “Making Refugee Integration Sustainable: In Search of Durable Relations with Host Populations In Uganda” led by Dr. Frank Ahimbisibwe (MUST) and Dr. Bert Ingelaere (IOB).

About the project

A sustainable relationship between host and refugees is essential to guarantee the social and political stability of countries and regions. Uganda is known to be hosting one of the largest refugee populations in the world. This project aims to contribute to a better understanding and facilitate policy interventions that can ameliorate social relations between hosts and refugees. This will be done by:

- (1) developing innovative research approaches studying conflict trajectories (escalation vs. mediation);
- (2) structurally improve and strengthen the research capabilities (e.g. methodological skills) at Ugandan partner institution (students, PhDs and staff members);
- (3) propel the Southern Partner (MUST) and its staff into a recognized leader regarding high quality research on forced displacement;
- (4) translate findings to policy makers through participation of international and national NGOs and Ugandan authorities (national/local).

More information can be found in annex.

The position of the PhD fellow in the team

The PhD fellow is expected to undertake original academic work within the framework of the project. A successful applicant submits an interesting PhD proposal (max. 3 pages) when applying (see below).

The PhD fellow will prepare a PhD under the supervision of Dr. Frank Ahimbisibwe (MUST), Dr. Bert Ingelaere (IOB) & Dr. Kristof Titeca (IOB) and work with academic staff at MUST (Tom Ogwang & Dr. Cleophas Karooma) and IOB (Sarah Vancluysen).

The PhD fellow will enroll in the PhD program at the IOB, University of Antwerp. The PhD progress plan will be closely tied to the overall project plan. The PhD fellow will be based at MUST and spent approximately 21 months at the IOB in Belgium (several months each year). The salary during the stay in Uganda is estimated at approximately 1,474,000 US\$. For trips to and during stays in Belgium, the fellow receives financial support for transport, housing and a per diem.

The PhD fellow will conduct fieldwork and collect original data on refugee-host relationships. A budget is available to cover these activities in Uganda.

The PhD fellow publishes academic articles on the research theme in international scientific journals, participate in (inter)national conferences and communicate to a larger audience. A budget is available to participate in and to present work at international academic conferences and workshops.

The PhD fellow supports project activities with respect to administration, education and outreach.

Profile

Applicants must have the following qualifications:

- Have the Ugandan nationality.
- Hold an M.A. or equivalent in a relevant domain of social sciences (development studies, anthropology, sociology, social work and social administration, political sciences, applied economic sciences, socio-economic sciences,...)
- Have excellent study results. You have graduated with distinction at least.
- Strong writing skills
- Be fluent in English (oral and written). Knowledge of French is an asset.
- Have experience with fieldwork and qualitative and/or mixed method research.
- (Academic) publications and/or relevant professional experience are a plus.

Application procedure

The application is to be submitted by email to sarah.vancluysen@uantwerp.be **and** fahimbisibwe@must.ac.ug before Monday February 11, 2019, 2pm CET including:

1. A cover letter in English that addresses the candidate's motivation and requirements for the position as described above;
2. A curriculum vitae in English, including a list of publications;
3. One academic writing example (e.g. MA thesis)
4. A letter from an academic referee supporting the application (1 page)
5. Copy of certification of university degrees and an overview of all master courses taken and all individual study results (Scanned and merged in one document);
6. A PhD project description of 3 pages (excluding references) in English, outlining an original PhD proposal that takes the overall project as a framework and contains:
 - A short overview of the state of the art on refugee-host relationships
 - A specific research question addressing a key aspect of refugee-host relationships in need for better understanding
 - A detailed methodological approach to answer that question (research techniques; research sites; respondent sampling/selection; ...;
 - Overview of organization and management of data collection and analysis.
 - Four-year timetable providing overview of PhD progress, with key milestones indicated.

A preselection will be made on the basis of the files submitted. Selected candidates will be informed by February 20. Unsuccessful candidates will not be informed and there will be no communication regarding the reasons for (non-)selection. The second selection round will take place in the week of 4-8 March, 2019 in Mbarara, Uganda and includes a presentation and an interview with the project (co-)promotors.

For specific questions about this vacancy, please contact Dr. Frank Ahimbisibwe: fahimbisibwe@must.ac.ug

ANNEX: SUMMARY PROJECT INFORMATION

This initiative builds on the findings of a previous VLIR-UOS funded **South-Initiative**: *“Finding Durable Solutions for Old Refugee Case-loads in Nakivale settlement (Mbarara District)”*. Based on the **knowledge gap** determined in the course of the previous project activities, our ultimate goal is to contribute to the peaceful coexistence between refugees and their host in Uganda. Many of the conflicts in the refugees’ country of origin are ethnic in nature. A spill-over of these tensions to Uganda should be avoided. Hence, the project activities aim to better understand and help to reduce the incidence and impact of disputes among refugees themselves as well as with their host communities. By including the voices of refugees and hosts of different ethnicities, more insights will be created regarding underlying sources of tensions so that peacebuilding activities can be adjusted accordingly.

Our study will take place in 2 different contexts: in **Nakivale in South-Western Uganda** (oldest settlement, refugees from DRC, Burundi, Rwanda) and **selected settlements in Adjumani district** (bordering South-Sudan, with high numbers of recent arrivals). This geographical variation can create insights into how the refugee-host relationship is determined by diverse contextual elements, such as e.g. whether or not people share a history of cross-border movement, have cultural ties or the extent to which they have access to natural resources. From the outset, a two-pronged research strategy is adopted. First, what are existing activities that focus on peaceful coexistence? Second, what is the type, nature and incidence of conflicts and conflict resolution mechanisms?