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Rwanda Strategy document

Based on the strategic framework as approved by the
Bureau UOS of 15 December 2016

vliruos
SHARING MINDS, CHANGING LIVES



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Foreword

Country Strategy Process

The process of country strategy identification was rolled out by VLIR-UOS, the Flemish Interuniversity Council – University Cooperation for Development, in the context of the implementation of the Political Agreement signed in 2010. In this agreement, VLIR-UOS committed itself to formulate a strategy for each of its 20 VLIR-UOS partner countries. During the reform of non-governmental development cooperation in 2016, Rwanda regained its place as a partner country of VLIR-UOS.

A country strategy is a road map for cooperation. It is the result of numerous inputs and consultations with a wide spectrum of actors in Flanders and the country in question. The basis of the country strategy paper is a desk study comprising a context analysis of higher education and development priorities in the country. Each country engagement results in a country strategy paper. It is a policy document that will be used by VLIR-UOS to guide its funding decisions.

The country strategy represents the strategic niche for future VLIR-UOS cooperation in a specific country. A strategy can contain a geographical and/or thematic focus. It should be multi-disciplinary and include an optimal balance between the different levels and types of intervention of VLIR-UOS.

Framework for programming and selection

A country strategy reflects the objectives and the choices of instruments for university cooperation for development between the country in question and Belgium/Flanders. A country strategy serves as a reference framework for programming, leading to strategy-based calls for proposals.

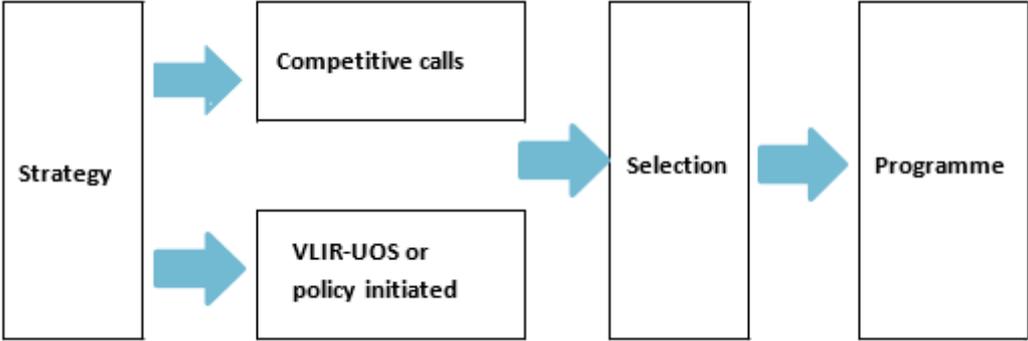
A strategy assures relevance and complementarity and promotes synergy. Relevance because it focuses on the needs and priorities of the partner country, and complementarity because it takes into account what other development partners do. The country strategies of VLIR-UOS are as such a major asset as to how VLIR-UOS will engage in this process of seeking synergies and complementarities. Specifically for Belgian actors, this is guaranteed by including the Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) as an important element in the process. The JSF provides opportunities for promoting synergy with other Belgian actors. A strategy starts from the needs of the partner country, and in particular the national priorities in terms of poverty reduction and national policies for Higher Education. Furthermore it takes into account the ambitions, capacities, expertise, and interest for cooperation among the Flemish academic community.

Time frame

In the context of new five year multi-annual programmes funded by Belgian Development Cooperation the objective is to have strategies for a longer period of 10 years – two five year programmes and permitting inclusion of long term institutional partnerships where relevant- and updated if needed after five years that is often precluded by current policy dynamics, which are characterized by constant changes and shifts at the international and country level in both North and South. In the case of Rwanda, VLIR-UOS has opted for a strategic framework covering, in principle, 5 years with the intention to update by the end of the first five-year programme.

From country strategy to country programme

The country strategy paper is the basis for elaborating a fully-fledged country programme. A country programme consists of a portfolio of specific cooperation projects according to different intervention types. In order to achieve this, both competitive open calls and strategically earmarked partner selection will take place as appropriate.



A country programme will consist of a portfolio of different intervention types:

INTERVENTION TYPE		LEVEL
NATIONAL (NETWORK and other national-level projects (JOINT))		COUNTRY
	IUC	INSTITUTION
	TEAM, SOUTH INITIATIVES & JOINT	DEPARTMENT/ FACULTY
	(Individual) SCHOLARS	INDIVIDUAL

VLIR-UOS facilitates academic partnerships and related initiatives within the context of a long-term country strategy with a general objective. Furthermore, VLIR-UOS has defined a range of indicators (Key Result Areas) on the basis of which individual initiatives are expected to report. Apart from tangible key result areas, VLIR-UOS also tracks more qualitative results. In a country programme, results from individual projects are brought together in order to come to a set of clear country-level results.

1. Introduction

1.1. General Info

Rwanda is a small (26.338 km²) and landlocked country in Central/Eastern Africa. It is bordered by the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the west, Uganda to the north, Tanzania to the east, and Burundi in the south. The entire country is at a high altitude (mean elevation 1.598 meters), the lowest point is the Rusizi River at 950 meters above sea level. Rwanda has many lakes, the largest being Lake Kivu at the west of the country.

The 1994 genocide decimated Rwanda's fragile economic base, severely impoverished the population, particularly women, and temporarily stalled the country's ability to attract private and external investment. However, Rwanda has made substantial progress in stabilizing and rehabilitating its economy to pre-1994 levels. GDP has rebounded with an average annual growth of 7%-8% since 2003 and inflation has been reduced to single digits. Between 1980 and 2014, Rwanda's HDI value increased from 0.299 to 0.483. So although Rwanda is clearly progressing, is it still situated in the low human development category, meaning Rwanda still has considerable challenges to meet in order to improve living conditions of the population.

Africa's most densely populated country (13 million people in 2016, estimate) is trying to overcome the limitations of its small, landlocked economy by leveraging regional trade; Rwanda joined the East African Community in 2007 and is aligning its budget, trade, and immigration policies with its regional partners.

Rwanda held its first local elections in 1999 and its first post-genocide presidential and legislative elections in 2003 which Paul Kagame won. The Rwandan Patriotic Front has been the dominant political party in the country since then. President Paul Kagame is serving his second (and normally last) term, and presidential elections are due in 2017. However, in December 2015, the Rwandan constitution was amended and allows the president to run for a third term. Human rights organization Freedom House claims that the government suppresses the freedoms of opposition groups. Amnesty International also claims that the RPF rules Rwanda "without any meaningful opposition".

For more information on the country we refer to the [Country Fact Sheet](#).

1.2. Development priorities

With its [Vision 2020](#) objective of combating poverty, the Government of Rwanda is embarking on a comprehensive program of privatization and liberalization with a goal of attaining rapid and sustainable economic growth. The goal is to transform the economy from its 90% dependence on subsistence agriculture into a knowledge-based, service-oriented economy with a middle-income country status by 2020, welcoming investors and creating employment and new opportunities. The major objectives of Vision 2020 are:

1. Macroeconomic stability and wealth creation to reduce aid dependency;
2. Structural economic transformation (with attention for improving the quality of education and health as this will be crucial for providing an efficient and productive workforce);
3. Creating a productive middle class and fostering entrepreneurship.

Vision 2020 consists of 6 pillars and 3 crosscutting areas through which the aspirations will be realized, according to the Government of Rwanda:

Pillars of Vision 2020	Cross-cutting areas of Vision 2020
1. Good governance and a capable state	1. Gender equality 2. Protection of environment and sustainable natural resource management 3. Science and technology, including ICT
2. Human resource development and a knowledge-based economy	
3. A private sector-led economy	
4. Infrastructure development	
5. Productive and market-oriented agriculture	
6. Regional and international economic integration	

The long-term aspirations of Vision 2020 are translated into medium-term Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategies (EDPRS) at the national level. The overarching goal of the [EDPRS 2](#) (2013-2018) is growth acceleration and poverty reduction through four thematic area priorities: economic transformation, rural development, productivity and youth employment, and accountable governance.

1.3. The Rwandese higher education system

There are two types of tertiary education institutions: Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) and Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutions (TVET-Polytechnics). The number of tertiary institutions reduced from 45 institutions in 2013/2014 to 44 institutions in 2015/2016 due to the merger of five colleges/schools into the University of Rwanda (see [full list](#)). Furthermore, four newly established institutions were added to the number of private tertiary institutions. In total, 31 are classed as HLIs and 13 as TVET-Polytechnics. The public University of Rwanda (UR) was created out of the former National University of Rwanda and the country's other public higher education institutions.

Student enrolment continued to increase steadily in tertiary institutions between 2011 and 2014 although a slight decrease was observed in 2015 especially in public institutions. From 2012 the number of students enrolled in private institutions outnumbered that of students enrolled in public institutions. In 2015, private institutions recorded 49.888 students (57.8%) while public institutions recorded 36.427 students (42.2%). The participation of female students (43.3%) was in 2015 still lower than that of male students (56.6%), especially in public tertiary institutions. In 2015, Rwandan tertiary institutions counted about 4.000 academic staff, of which only 18% were women. 54.2% of this staff holds a Master's Degree, 16.0% are PhDs.

There are different responsible bodies for tertiary education. The Higher Education Council (HEC) is a semi-autonomous agency which is responsible for securing coherent provision of quality higher education in Rwanda. The Rwanda Education Board (REB) has responsibilities related to student financing, ICT and open and distance learning. The TVET institutions fall under the authority of the Workforce Development Authority (WDA). In the area of research, the National Commission for Science and Technology (NCST) serves as an advisory board for development, promotion and coordination of science, technology and innovation.

2. Country Strategy development

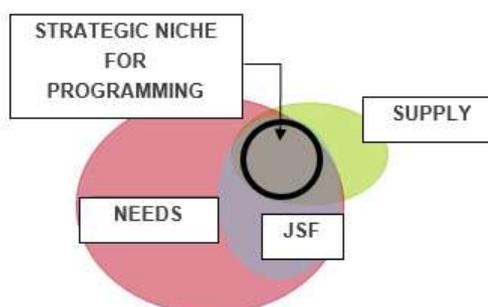
2.1. Background

2.1.1. Rwanda 2017-2021 programme

VLIR-UOS submitted a five year programme in September 2016, for 20 countries in which they want to be active from 2017 to 2021 with funding from the Belgian government. A country programme for Rwanda was also submitted, although no interventions were selected yet. The Rwanda country programme is conceived as a general framework introducing future interventions for Rwanda. A general theory of change, partnership strategy, stakeholder analysis, risk analysis, results framework with indicators, indicative budget... are presented. The outcome of this programme is that **Rwandese HEI have been empowered in their role as drivers of change by strengthening their threefold mission of research, education and extension to society in order to contribute to development.** Future interventions are expected to improve research practices, improve education practices or create new knowledge, applications or services that are taken up by relevant stakeholders. The elaboration of a country strategy was announced as a first step by providing a framework for future calls for proposals.

2.1.2. Rwanda country strategy formulation process

The Country Strategy Identification process started with the development of a desk study in which the Flemish areas of interest in working with Rwanda have been captured (supply side), the Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) for Belgian non-governmental development cooperation in Rwanda has been taken into account (see also 2.1.3.) and Rwandese higher education and development priorities have been analysed (needs).



The results of the desk study were presented in the Country Fact Sheet, that was made available on the [Rwanda Country Page](#) on the VLIR-UOS website. This document provides a general introduction to the country, presenting statistics, a country profile, an overview of the education system, analysis of development aid in the country, and a review of university development cooperation. The desk study was used as input for the organisation of the Northern seminar, organised on 21st of November 2016 in Brussels to listen to the experiences and interest in future cooperation with Rwanda and the Flemish partners.

2.1.3. Higher education and research: policy environment

The concepts of universal equitable access and quality education provision are the foundation of the [Education Sector Strategic Plan \(ESSP\) 2013/14 -2017/18](#). This plan builds upon the national priority of making quality twelve-year basic education available for all children and also reflects the country's mission to make education at all levels more accessible.

The ESSP outlines three main goals:

- Promoting access to education at all levels

- Improving the quality of education and training
- Strengthening the relevance of education and training to meet labor market demands.

The **sector priority** related to **tertiary education** is “Improved relevance of education and training to the labour market, including secondary education, demand-driven TVET and higher education”. The ESSP foresees a strengthened performance in science and technology at all levels of education by improving teaching, facilities and learning materials, strengthening research and improving the application of science, technology and innovation in relevant sectors of the economy. At tertiary level, there will be an emphasis on delivering high quality research in partnership with the private sector. The quality of research and teaching in tertiary education institutions will be strengthened, particularly in the area of science and technology, including ICT. Higher education has a critical role to play in providing sufficient number of appropriately skilled graduates to support Rwanda’s target to generate 200.000 off-farm jobs each year and to raise productivity across all sectors to meet private sector demands.

The **sector outcome at tertiary level**, is “Increased equitable access to affordable, relevant, academically excellent higher education that also delivers quality research outputs”. Increasing access to higher education is critical for Rwanda to compete in the global economy, according to the ESSP. The ESSP 2017/2018 target is to achieve 56.938 students enrolled in public institutions and 102.777 students enrolled for the whole sector. An emphasis is thus put on expansion of private sector provision. More specifically, the ESSP wants to stimulate enrolment in science and technology, as a culture of innovation is crucial for economic transformation as described in Vision 2020. To meet the increasing demand of student enrolment, this requires innovative approaches, which combine full-time, part-time, and Open, Distance and e-learning (ODeL) opportunities for students. This expansion will be supported by the construction of additional public facilities including classrooms, laboratories and student hostels. A staff retention plan for the University of Rwanda will be implemented to ensure that high performing and experienced staff are recruited and retained within the system. Linked to this is the development of an increasing number of partnerships with international universities and higher learning institutions, which will strengthen the Rwandan HLIs in the area of quality, faculty training, joint research projects and knowledge and exposure to the latest educational technology such as open, distance and e-learning. The student loan financing system will be strengthened with a more efficient student loan recovery system, and weighted more in favour of providing access to students from poorer backgrounds.

Next to this, another **sector outcome** is related to **research** “Strengthened performance in science, technology and innovation (STI) at all levels of education, and application of science, technology and innovation in relevant sectors of the economy”. Strategies to improve STI capacity include promoting knowledge acquisition and deepening knowledge creation, knowledge transfer and a culture of innovation in order to promote sustained growth of GDP including enhanced opportunities for growth in rural areas; to improve skills and knowledge among the population and to integrate technical education with commerce, industry and the private sector. The lack of research and development, particularly linked to new product discovery and product development, has been highlighted as one of the key constraints to growth, for example in the agro-processing area. The ESSP includes a renewed and intensified focus on research and development in higher education and research institutions. There will be enhancement of the existing business incubation centres in tertiary education institutions to support the development of sustainable business ventures, and to provide a channel for innovation and application of research to support economic transformation and graduate job creation.

2.1.4. Joint Context Analysis and Joint Strategic Framework

In 2015, the Belgian government started to prepare a reform of the sector of non-governmental development cooperation. All actors active in a country were asked to elaborate a [Joint Context Analysis](#) (JCA). This analysis made it possible to make a [Joint Strategic Framework](#) (JSF) for 31 countries in 2016. So the JCA and JSF Rwanda were an important source of information for elaborating the country strategy. In the JCA, 37 actors made an in depth analysis of civil society, the administrations and public institutions and the conditions which enable their strengthening. The actors presented this for the sectors of education, health, agriculture, human rights & governance. In 2016, the JSF was elaborated with 25 actors that want to be active (with DGD funding) in Rwanda from 2017 to 2021.

The JSF presents 7 common strategic goals on which the actors want to work as of 2017:

- Contribute to the emergence of a legitimate, independent, strong, competent and accountable **civil society**
- Contribute to the emergence of effective, accountable, responsible institutions open to all (**good governance**), in the first place at the level of decentralized authorities
- Ensure inclusive and equitable quality **education** and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Allow all to live healthy and promote the right to **health** and to quality health care for all at any age
- Strengthen sustainable family **agriculture** that contributes to food sovereignty, nutritional and food security and a social rural economy
- Promote the emergence of a peaceful and inclusive society, and promote respect for **human rights**
- Ensure and improve access to knowledge, improve **research** and stimulate innovation in order to contribute to development

The JSF also mentions possible synergies and complementarities between Belgian and international actors, as it is a priority for the Belgian government. The thematic JSF “Decent Work” covers activities in Rwanda of two organisations. They want to promote decent work in Rwanda by creating jobs and sustainable livelihoods for all, guaranteeing labour rights for all, extending social protection for all and promoting social dialogue for all.

The JCA/JSF-process was taken into account when elaborating the programme of the North Seminar, as to inform the different stakeholders on its content and to facilitate future synergy with other Belgian actors. The other Belgian actors were invited to the seminar and were asked to present their programmes for Rwanda during lunchtime by means of a theme-market.

2.2. Views and themes expressed

2.2.1. Expressions of interest by the Flemish (academic) stakeholders

During the presentations at the northern seminar that took place on 21 November 2016, the following findings were raised:

1. There is clear interest of Flemish Higher Education Institutes to work with Rwanda, which resulted in Rwanda regaining its place in the country partner list. This is also reflected in the

variety of cooperation initiatives that already exist or under construction outside the VLIR-UOS framework. Different Rwandese sources expressed their interest for academic cooperation and regretted not being a partner country. The findings of the seminar will also be discussed with the Embassy of Rwanda.;

2. There are a lot of Belgian actors active in Rwanda, so there are certainly possibilities for synergy. These synergies are in fact already happening, as was shown in the list of cooperation initiatives of Flemish HEI and Rwandese HLI outside the VLIR-UOS framework.;
3. Based on experiences of cooperation with Rwanda, it was stated that there is a clear general desire for progress in Rwanda and a lot of investment is going on in the country. Rwanda is known to be a “donor darling”, so it is important to know the other players in the field. An important remark was about the discontinuity of personnel involved in the projects (brain drain), which had a negative influence on the implementation and results of the project.
4. Rwanda has evolved a lot in introducing English as the primary language for education. This shift from French to English took time, but is now giving result.
5. The political situation of Rwanda was also brought up as an important point of consideration. Although VLIR-UOS cooperation is not political and not all research disciplines are as closely related to the political context, awareness is a necessary condition for working in Rwanda. Research in the field of social sciences is difficult in Rwanda because of the political situation, so experience with working in Rwanda is crucial;

The following key issues were raised:

1. **Thematic areas and crosscutting elements:**

Bringing together the different domains of interest of current academic cooperation, considering built up expertise within the VLIR-UOS framework and taking into account the Joint Strategic Framework (see [annex 1](#)), following areas were identified during the discussions:

MAIN THEMES	Non exhaustive subthemes and links:
FOOD SECURITY	land degradation, soil management, land administration & policy, land rights, land registration, land conflicts, rural economies and infrastructure, family agriculture
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	natural & mineral resources, natural hazards, seismology, renewable energy
ENVIRONMENT	urban and spatial planning, climate change, erosion
HEALTH	non-communicable diseases, patient-oriented health care, health, audiology, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, maternal and child health, ophthalmology, ageing (geriatrics), midwifery, link with social sciences: mental health, active ageing, psychiatric nurses, medicinal plants

HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE	human rights, political rights, land rights, gender, urban and spatial planning and development, conflict
Crosscutting & support (themes) for higher education, research and innovation	quality assurance and training the trainers approach, also linked to technical and vocational training, data analysing and communicating results, good research and lab practices (incl. maintenance of equipment), statistics for research, developing spin offs, digitalisation, database access and management

2. Partner institutions

The main topic of discussion on partner institutions was about the difference between public and private institutions. Different points of view were expressed:

- For topics related to geology and earth sciences, a private institution in the North (INES Ruhengeri) is already a partner in cooperation project outside the VLIR-UOS framework.
- Quality of teaching is often poor in private institutions and capacity for research is limited, so the needs for support are high. It was also suggested to hear the Rwandan government to give more information on the capacity of private institutions.
- The public higher education sector in Rwanda is limited to one public university. The University of Rwanda (UR) is already a partner of the Swedish research cooperation, of ARES and many other donors. According to ARES, the UR has a strong administration which can point out the needs for cooperation with new partners.
- When working with government institutions, the discontinuity of personnel is a reality.
- In the area of health, there is a lack of cooperation between the different levels of higher education institutions. This problem should be tackled, and even asks for a regional approach.
- When working with private institutions, the government must be involved because they approve research proposals. The interest of the government in evidence-based policy can be a support for the implementation of the project, but it can also be an influence for which awareness is important.
- In terms of academic networks, the link with the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS) is certainly worth mentioning. The AIMS is a pan-African Network of Centres of Excellence that offer quality post graduate education, research innovation and public engagement/outreach programs for the advancement of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). In August 2016, AIMS opened its 6th centre in Kigali.

Generally speaking, academics were in favour of focusing on exploring cooperation possibilities, which asks openness to different kinds of institutions.

3. Geographical focus

A geographical focus was not put forward. Rwanda is a small country and national policies do not put certain areas forward for development. A geographical focus can be necessary in certain research projects (e.g. related to crops growing in certain regions), but this depends on the topic and is not necessary to put forward in a general country strategy. However, the remark was made to focus research on the rural areas and to make links with other actors in the region (East and Central Africa).

4. Modalities/tools of intervention

It was explained that for the moment in these new countries, mainly department level projects (TEAM and South Initiatives) would be open and this is also most relevant as this is an opportunity to build out new cooperation and also link up with other initiatives abroad (JOINT). This gives the chance to get to know each other before expanding to larger, long-term cooperation engagements. Given budgetary constraints related to the reform of non-governmental cooperation, national or institutional modalities were not put forward. The reformed North-south-south cooperation into what is now called JOINT was found very interesting to link up project activities in for instance (East-)DRC, Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania. Possibly in a first step, TEAM and SI could be more accessible, but complementary opportunities for JOINT projects can already be identified.

The conclusions of this seminar were put together in a strategic niche framework (see [annex 2](#)) and presented at the Bureau of VLIR-UOS for approval, to serve as a base for elaborating the country strategy.

2.2.2. Expressions of interest by the South (government and academic stakeholders)

For Rwanda, the decision has been made by the Bureau of VLIR-UOS to develop a “light” country strategy. Taking into account (i) the time needed for the implementation of the reform of Belgian non-governmental development cooperation (ii) the time pressure to develop a country strategy for the new call for proposals 2018, and (iii) the limited current interventions and experience of VLIR-UOS in Rwanda, the focus was put on an elaborated desk study (taking into account national strategic documents in terms of poverty reduction, development and higher education priorities) and a thorough North consultation round (including a North seminar).

However, a consultation with the Ambassador of Rwanda took place on the 9th of December 2016. The Ambassador confirmed the importance of the proposed themes and emphasized the alignment with the Rwandan Vision 2020 and its goal to develop a knowledge based economy. The importance of higher education cooperation in supporting Rwandese development priorities was highlighted by the Ambassador who welcomed the decision of the Flemish higher education institutes to renew cooperation for development with the country.

The country strategy identification process resulted in a selection of overarching themes for Flemish higher education cooperation supporting the main development priorities of Rwanda and pointed out the crosscutting support needs and opportunities in engaging in cooperation with Rwanda. Hereby, the link with the Joint Strategic Framework was put forward as an important new level of alignment next to the Flemish expertise/interest and of course primarily the local needs and priorities. This country strategy will, possibly, be reviewed at the end of the 2017-2021 programme through the acquired new experience thanks to hopefully many new and successful projects in Rwanda. Through the organisation of country platform meetings, it should by then also be possible to extend the level of consultation with the different stakeholders involved.

3. Country Strategy framework – conclusions

3.1. Areas of focus (thematic, regional, partners)

3.1.1. Themes

Matching the priorities in the South and at the Flemish level, and linking up with the Joint Strategic Frameworks of Belgian indirect cooperation, the following thematic areas are identified as strategic themes for future cooperation with Rwanda:

MAIN THEMES	Non exhaustive subthemes and links:
FOOD SECURITY	land degradation, soil management, land administration & policy, land rights, land registration, land conflicts, rural economies and infrastructure, family agriculture
NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	natural & mineral resources, natural hazards, seismology, renewable energy
ENVIRONMENT	urban and spatial planning, climate change, erosion
HEALTH	non-communicable diseases, patient-oriented health care, health, audiology, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, maternal and child health, ophthalmology, ageing (geriatrics), midwifery, link with social sciences: mental health, active ageing, psychiatric nurses, medicinal plants
HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE	human rights, political rights, land rights, gender, urban and spatial planning and development, conflict

Crosscutting elements for higher education, research and innovation policies

Rwanda's Vision 2020 indicates that the development of a knowledge based economy is a top priority and foresees an important role in this for higher education and research. Therefore the strengthening of higher education, research and innovation is certainly a crosscutting priority. Topics that were mentioned are:

- Quality assurance and training the trainers approach also linked to technical and vocational training
- Data analysing and communicating results
- Good research and lab practices (incl. maintenance of equipment)
- Statistics for research
- Developing spin offs
- Digitalisation, database access and management.

Transversal and priority themes of the Belgian government

- Gender,
- environmental sustainability,
- digitalisation for development (D4D),
- human rights approach.

The above transversal and priority themes of the Belgian government were also brought up and are taken into account within the clusters. This means that next to the fact that the transversal and priority themes will be addressed horizontally (so within all the projects), the participants of the seminar put forward to also address them vertically (projects focussing on these specific topics).

3.1.2. Geographical and institutional focus

Regional focus

A geographical focus was not put forward during the seminar, although the remark was made to assure the link with rural areas in research. A need for broader regional cooperation (Burundi, (East-)DRC, Tanzania, Uganda...) was also brought up.

Partners

A specific type of institution was not put forward, as to explore cooperation possibilities in a first phase. More information is needed on the capacities for research of private institutions, the different donors of the University of Rwanda, the government policies...

3.2. Partnership modalities (portfolio of intervention types)

Taking into account the built up experience with academic cooperation in Rwanda and the budgetary constraints related to the reform of non-governmental cooperation, following modalities are defined:

Level	Remarks
National	Given the limited interventions of Flemish academic institutions, this is not a preferred modality in this framework. This can be considered after building up experience with academic cooperation in Rwanda.
Institutional	Given the limited interventions of Flemish academic institutions, this is not a preferred modality in this framework. This can be considered after building up experience with academic cooperation in Rwanda. The presence of an institutional programme of ARES with the University of Rwanda should be kept in mind.
Departmental	In the short term, preference should be given to small seeding projects, type South Initiatives and TEAMS. This gives the chance to get to know each other before expanding to larger, long-term cooperation

	engagements. The reformed North-south-south cooperation into what is now called JOINT was found very interesting to link up project activities in for instance (East-)DRC, Burundi, Uganda and Tanzania.
Individual (scholarships)	Scholarships continue to be a keystone tool in HEI development. Any university cooperation between Flemish and Rwandese universities should maximally sign in into the existing Rwandese programmes that support scholarships both nationally and internationally.

In relation to the above, synergy will be sought not only by linking up thematically with the JSF and its goals, but also by encouraging the implication of other Belgian (governmental and non-governmental) actors in the project proposals for Rwanda.

3.3. Possible synergies with the activities of Belgian actors in Rwanda

Two sectors of the Belgian bilateral development cooperation are taken into account in the proposed clusters. Health is a main sector of the BTC programme in Rwanda and was also clearly put forward in the clusters. Energy, another main sector of BTC Rwanda, is mentioned as a subtheme with a focus on renewable energy. In the area of capacity building of public institutions, the third sector of BTC in Rwanda, VLIR-UOS can play a complementary role, by improving capacities of higher education institutions.

Synergy with BTC, non-governmental Belgian actors in line with the JSF and with other international donors that are highly present in academic cooperation will be looked for in all interventions. The theme market during the event made it possible to meet with other non-governmental actors and trigger first ideas for cooperation with other Belgian actors. In the domains of human rights, land and health, opportunities were identified. The proposed clusters have clear links with the Joint Strategic Goals (JSG): food security & JSG 5, health & JSG 4, human rights and governance & JSG1/2/6, higher education/research/innovation & JSG3/7 (more details in [annex 3](#)). Environment and natural resources management has been put forward more explicitly than in the JSF. Also other international donors and networks should be considered. A specific suggestion was also made that CBM NGO (Christian Blind Mission) could be a potential partner in the health sector.

ANNEXES

Annex 1 – Matrix matching Rwandan priorities, international donors & Belgian actors

THEMES	National development priorities (Vision 2020)	Belgian actors (BTC + JSF)	Other international donors	Previous VLIR-UOS interventions
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resource development and a knowledge-based economy - Infrastructure development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BTC - Allow all to live healthy and promote the right to health and to quality health care for all at any age 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USAID - EU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEAM: medical faculty - TEAM reference centre clinical biology - SI occupational therapy - Travelgrants
Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resource development and a knowledge-based economy - A private sector-led economy - Regional and international economic integration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BTC - Create jobs and sustainable livelihoods for all - Guarantee labour rights for all - Extend social protection for all - Promote social dialogue for all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU - JICA 	
Government and Civil Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good governance and a capable state - Gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - BTC - Contribute to the emergence of a legitimate, independent, strong, competent and accountable civil society - Contribute to the emergence of effective, accountable, responsible institutions open to all (good governance), in the first place at the level of decentralized authorities - Promote the emergence of a peaceful and inclusive society, and promote respect for human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USAID - DFID - EU - The Netherlands - Sweden 	
Food security and agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Productive and market-oriented agriculture - Infrastructure development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen sustainable family agriculture that contributes to food sovereignty, nutritional and food security and an social rural economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USAID - DFID - EU - The Netherlands 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEAM aquaculture - SI knowledge transfer
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Infrastructure development - Protection of environment and sustainable natural resource management 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DFID - EU - Niche - Sweden 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TEAM aquaculture - ICP PhD erosion

THEMES	National development priorities (Vision 2020)	Belgian actors (BTC + JSF)	Other international donors	Previous VLIR-UOS interventions
CROSSCUTTING/SUPPORT DOMAINS				
Education, Research and University	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resource development and a knowledge-based economy - Science and technology, including ICT - Gender equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all - Ensure and improve access to knowledge, improve the quality of scientific research and stimulate innovation in order to contribute to sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - USAID (basic education & teacher training) - DFID (basic education and lower secondary) - Niche (post-secondary) - JICA (secondary) - British Council (all levels) - EU (all levels) - Sweden (HE & research) - DAAD (HE & research) - NORPART (HE & research) - Campus France (HE & research) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All previous VLIR-UOS interventions
ICT and technology and information culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Human resource development and a knowledge-based economy - Infrastructure development - Science and technology, including ICT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure and improve access to knowledge, improve the quality of scientific research and stimulate innovation in order to contribute to sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EU (STI) 	

Annex 2 – Strategic niche framework – summarized overview strategic conclusions (confirmed by the Bureau UOS of 15/12/2016)

Strategic Niche Framework for Rwanda													
Geographical focus	No limitations.												
Partner institutions	No limitations, as to encourage exploration of cooperation opportunities.												
Main (multidisciplinary) THEMES for cooperation	<p>Bringing together the different domains of interest of current academic cooperation, considering built up expertise within the VLIR-UOS framework and taking into the Joint Strategic Framework, following clusters were identified during the group discussions:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>MAIN THEMES</th> <th>Non exhaustive subthemes and links:</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>FOOD SECURITY (link with JSG 5)</td> <td>land degradation, soil management, land administration & policy, land rights, land registration, land conflicts, rural economies and infrastructure, family agriculture</td> </tr> <tr> <td>NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT</td> <td>natural & mineral resources, natural hazards, seismology, renewable energy</td> </tr> <tr> <td><u>ENVIRONMENT</u></td> <td>urban and spatial planning, climate change, erosion</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HEALTH (link with JSG 4)</td> <td>non-communicable diseases, patient-oriented health care, health, audiology, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, maternal and child health, ophthalmology, ageing (geriatrics), midwifery, link with social sciences: mental health, active ageing, psychiatric nurses, medicinal plants</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE (link with JSG 1/2/6)</td> <td><u>human rights</u>, political rights, land rights, <u>gender</u>, urban and spatial planning and development, conflict</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	MAIN THEMES	Non exhaustive subthemes and links:	FOOD SECURITY (link with JSG 5)	land degradation, soil management, land administration & policy, land rights, land registration, land conflicts, rural economies and infrastructure, family agriculture	NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT	natural & mineral resources, natural hazards, seismology, renewable energy	<u>ENVIRONMENT</u>	urban and spatial planning, climate change, erosion	HEALTH (link with JSG 4)	non-communicable diseases, patient-oriented health care, health, audiology, midwifery, nursing, occupational therapy, maternal and child health, ophthalmology, ageing (geriatrics), midwifery, link with social sciences: mental health, active ageing, psychiatric nurses, medicinal plants	HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE (link with JSG 1/2/6)	<u>human rights</u> , political rights, land rights, <u>gender</u> , urban and spatial planning and development, conflict
MAIN THEMES	Non exhaustive subthemes and links:												
FOOD SECURITY (link with JSG 5)	land degradation, soil management, land administration & policy, land rights, land registration, land conflicts, rural economies and infrastructure, family agriculture												
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HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE (link with JSG 1/2/6)	<u>human rights</u> , political rights, land rights, <u>gender</u> , urban and spatial planning and development, conflict												
Crosscutting & support (themes) for higher education, research and innovation	Rwanda's Vision 2020 indicates that the development of a knowledge based economy is a top priority and foresees an important role in this for higher education and research. Therefore the strengthening of higher education, research and innovation is certainly a crosscutting priority. Topics that were mentioned are: quality assurance and training the trainers approach, also linked to technical and vocational training, data analysing and communicating results,												

	<p>good research and lab practices (incl. maintenance of equipment), statistics for research, developing spin offs, digitalisation, database access and management</p> <p>These themes are in direct link with JSG 3/7.</p>
<p>Transversal and priority themes of the Belgian development cooperation</p>	<p>Gender, environmental sustainability, digitalisation for development (D4D), private sector approaches and human rights approach.</p> <p>The above transversal and priority themes of the Belgian government were also brought up and are taken into account within the clusters. This means that next to the fact that the transversal and priority themes will be addressed horizontally (so within all the projects), the participants of the seminar put forward to also address them vertically (projects focussing on these specific topics).</p>
<p>Instruments/partnership modalities:</p>	<p>As indicated in the five year programme submitted for Rwanda, a focus is put on departmental level cooperation (TEAM/SI/JOINT). Individual scholarships remain crucial and should be continued while linking up with national scholarship schemes.</p> <p>Synergy will be sought not only by linking up thematically with the JSF and its goals, but also by encouraging the implication of other Belgian (governmental and non-governmental) actors in the project proposals for Rwanda.</p>

Annex 3 – Linking the JSF with the Country Strategy Themes

Thematic area	Joint Strategic Goal	Belgian Actors
Food security	(5) Strengthen sustainable family agriculture that contributes to food sovereignty, nutritional and food security and a social rural economy	<i>Broederlijk Delen, Caritas International, Vétérinaires sans Frontières, Entraide et Fraternité, Auto-Développement Afrique, Louvain Coopération au Développement, Croix Rouge de Belgique, SOS Villages d'Enfants</i>
Natural resources management	Transversal	All
Environment	Transversal	All
Health	(4) Allow all to live healthy and promote the right to health and to quality health care for all at any age	<i>SOS Villages d'Enfants, Light for the world, Handicap International, Rode Kruis Vlaanderen, Chaine de l'Espoir Belgique, Louvain Coopération au Développement, Auto-Développement Afrique, Caritas International, Croix Rouge de Belgique, Light For The World, ARES, Artsen Zonder Vakantie, Fracarita</i>
Human rights and governance	(1) Contribute to the emergence of a legitimate, independent, strong, competent and accountable civil society (2) Contribute to the emergence of effective, accountable, responsible institutions open to all (good governance), in the first place at the level of decentralized authorities (6) Promote the emergence of a peaceful and inclusive society, and promote respect for human rights	<i>11.11.11, Caritas, RCN Justice et Développement, Louvain Coopération au Développement, Croix-Rouge de Belgique, Africalia, Light For The World, Rode Kruis Vlaanderen, Vétérinaires Sans Frontières, SOS Villages d'Enfants, Coopération par l'Education à la Culture, Broederlijk Delen, Handicap International, Auto-Développement Afrique, VVOB, ARES</i>
Higher education, research and innovation policies	(3) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (7) Ensure and improve access to knowledge, improve research and stimulate innovation in order to contribute to development	<i>APEFE, VVOB, ACTEC, Handicap International, SOS Villages d'Enfants, Fracarita Belgium, Africalia, Light For The World, Auto-Développement Afrique, Coopération par l'Education à la Culture, VLIR-UOS, ARES, Broederlijk Delen, Chaine de l'Espoir Belgique, Vétérinaires sans Frontières, Croix Rouge de Belgique, Rode Kruis Vlaanderen</i>