

Report of the IUC Review consultation workshop

April 1, 2019

1. Background

Initiated in 1997, VLIR-UOS is facilitating Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes. The overall goal of the VLIR-UOS IUC programme is, *empowering the local university as an institution to better fulfil its role as development actor in society*. This is consistent with the VLIR-UOS logo which is “Sharing minds, changing lives”. In total, 32 IUC programmes have been implemented in 18 countries so far. 15 programmes are still running. The following can be considered as the main features of the VLIR-UOS IUC partner programme:

- Long term collaboration with a limited number of selected universities geared towards institutional development.
- Demand initiated leading starting from developmental and institutional priorities, leading to a joint programme based on partnership.
- Financing and facilitation of cooperation (Partnership)
- Development Relevance => focus on changing lives (university and society=> interaction with government, local development actors, society in general).
- Content based on match between the priorities of the partner university and the interest and expertise offered by Flemish counterparts.
- Programme logic: coherent set of interventions/synergetic projects targeting capacity building in different areas (academic projects (MSc/PhD education; research, publishing...) and institutional strengthening (transversal) projects (focus on policy development (research, HRD, IR, ..) internal service delivery (ICT, Library), external service delivery (services to society), managerial capacity (university management, RTT office, etc.)
- Two successive five-year partner programmes with an earmarked overall annual budget, prepared via a Phase In and followed by a Phase Out.
- The creation of North-South and (North)-South-South networks.

In 2011, the IUC concept was revised and adjusted, following a political agreement requesting VLIR-UOS to formulate a strategy for each of its 20 partner countries. An IUC think tank –consultants, academics- was composed and in close cooperation with academics, partner universities and international experts the whole the IUC programme underwent a review [exercise](#) that articulated the positioning of IUC programmes within the new country approach (country strategies and programmes) and distinguished different IUC types (focused expertise centers versus the classic IUCs (“institutional” based, multi-faculty/multi-thematic programmes), the creation of NETWORK-programmes and the elaboration of a new selection system.

Recently, VLIR-UOS conducted 12 external evaluations (3 in 2017; 9 in 2018) of IUC and NETWORK programmes. [These evaluations](#) formulated a number of conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations. Additionally, an impact evaluation of the Belgian university cooperation, funded by the Special Evaluation Service, was conducted. Within this impact assessment the VLIR-UOS IUC concept clearly comes out as a success story. Their scale, duration and interuniversity nature make IUC programmes unique in the area of development cooperation.

Linked to the above and in preparation for the next IUC call (2019), the Bureau UOS decided on 25 May 2018 to further optimize the IUC concept. A step-by-step approach was developed starting from the conclusions and lessons learned from the various evaluations. So far the results, recurring findings, conclusions and recommendations of the 12 evaluations as well as the impact evaluation were brought together in a meta-analysis. From this analysis, a number of IUC/NETWORK-topics where optimization was identified as necessary were identified. For each of these topics the current situation and a potential desired situation was identified. These topics were validated and complemented with new ideas during an input workshop with Flemish IUC coordinators/ICOS in December 2018. All of this input was also held against existing IUC policy and review documents such as the IUC Review – Policy advisory document ('Redesigning and positioning of the IUC programme in the framework of a Country Strategy Approach', October 2011) and the Bureau UOS decided to organize a broad consultation workshop on 1 April 2019 in Brussels with participation of Southern stakeholders.

The following topics towards optimizing the IUC programme were clustered in different discussion workshops to be organized at the consultation event:

1. Realising Change outside the institution ("Societal Change" workshop)
2. Realising change within the institution ("I in IUC" workshop)
3. Strengthening the programme logic throughout formulation, Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Programme logic workshop)
4. Partners(hip) concept, programme management and support (PSU) (Partnership workshop)
5. Getting to know the local & Flemish context (Phase In workshop)
6. The role, selection and guidance of PhDs within projects/programmes (PhD workshop)
7. The NETWORK model (NETWORK workshop)
8. M&E concepts in IUC (M&E workshop)
9. Integration of transversal themes in projects/programmes (Transversal themes workshops)
10. Additional funding opportunities, co-funding mechanisms ("Additional Funding" workshop)
11. Open space: time slot available for open reflection about the future & possible improvements of IUC/NETWORK programmes

These workshops were held on April 1 2019 in Brussels (University Foundation) and was attended by academics from the different Flemish universities and staff from university colleges, VLIR-UOS partners (from former/current IUC/NETWORK programmes and other stakeholders (DGD, the Special Evaluation Unit, NGO's, evaluators, selection commission members, etc.). Below, a short report is presented for the different topics discussed during the event. The report includes an overview of the workshop (topic, outline of workshop) and the most important conclusions.

2. Programme of the day

9:00 – 9:30	Registration (entrance hall) Coffee & Tea			
9:30 – 10:30	Welcome & introduction (<i>Félicien Cattier</i> room) Objectives, approach & programme			
10:30 – 11:30	Societal Change Room "Félicien Cattier"	NETWORK Room "Jean Willems"	"I in IUC" Room "Emile Francqui"	Partnership workshop Room "D"
11:30 – 12:00	Coffee break			
12:00 – 13:00	Additional Funding Room "Félicien Cattier"	NETWORK Room "Jean Willems"	"I in IUC" Room "Emile Francqui"	M&E Room "D"
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch			
14:00 – 15:00	Programme Logic Room "Félicien Cattier"	Transversal themes Room "Jean Willems"	PhD Room "B"	Phase-in Room "D"
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break			
15:30 – 16:30	Programme Logic Room "Félicien Cattier"	Open Space Room "Jean Willems"	PhD Room "B"	Partnership workshop Room "D"
16:30 – 17:00	Restitution & Way forward			
17:00 – 18:00	Goodbye drink (reception hall)			

3. Workshop reports

3.1 Realising Change outside the institution (Societal Change)

3.1.1 Workshop context

Institutional university cooperation programmes (IUC) aim at empowering a local partner university as institution to better fulfil its role as driver of change in a local development context. This workshop focused on **how to bring about this societal change**.

VLIR-UOS interventions aim to have an **impact outside the academic context** (cf. Changing Lives), not only after the intervention but also during the intervention via stakeholders involvement and creating from the start conditions for uptake. Societal impact requires **uptake** to take place: uptake of new knowledge created by projects, applications, products, services, etc. This 'uptake' doesn't happen automatically. It is important (cfr. impact evaluation) that projects develop strategies to create the conditions for this uptake.

There is currently no consensus on how to best prepare and achieve uptake, and VLIR-UOS doesn't offer specific guidelines or support. VLIR-UOS wishes to acquire more knowledge about how interventions can effectively create the conditions for uptake (among others through a thematic TEAM/SI evaluation in 2019 which will be executed by Syspons).

During this workshop, a **draft conceptual framework on how projects can create the conditions for uptake** was presented by Lennart Raetzell of Syspons. This was followed by an open discussion on these concepts in 3 groups, based on the following **3 guiding questions**:

1. What kind of aspects or factors are you missing in the presented conceptual framework?
2. Where do you see challenges in implementing the presented aspects of the conceptual framework in future VLIR-UOS interventions? Please explain why you see these challenges.
3. Where do you see the role of VLIR-UOS in supporting or generating conditions for uptake?

3.1.2 Main points in the discussion per guiding question

1. What kind of aspects or factors are you missing in the presented conceptual framework?

- The link between the (3) different dimensions should be clarified. How do they relate to each other? Can 1 project combine different dimensions or should a choice be made?
- Interaction with stakeholders could be made more specific in the model
- No mentioning of spin-offs and incubators (especially for Phase 2 of an IUC)
- No mentioning of the SDGs and national development goals (important when talking about potential impact and working towards sustainability)
- What about infrastructure?
- What about advocacy?
- Take into account that the university campus is often far away from the stakeholder environment

- The pathway to impact is not clear (what are the key steps?)
- 'Scenario thinking' is necessary from the start of the project (be flexible)
- 'Conditions for uptake' is not the same as 'uptake': strategies for uptake are needed
- What is 'demand driven'? Tools (e.g. surveys) and policies are needed
- What is 'societal change'? For which society? Identification of stakeholders is important! Also think about risk assessment and ethical guidelines
- What is the link with monitoring & evaluation?
- What is missing are the advantages and disadvantages per presented model/concept
- How does the proposed conceptual framework relates to timing?
- Risk need to be taken into account
- To what kind of conditions is referred on in step 3?
- Focus on education (the involvement of students in project implementation / evidence based teaching) is important and this is missing in the framework.
- Mechanisms for knowledge transfer and feedback for the users should be developed / suggested
- Clarify how to integrate 'invisible' stakeholders (eg. people that are not or less organised) in the stakeholder analysis
- Model should explain how a developmental problem should be translated into relevant academic one
- A dissemination plan should be developed before the start of a project, during the formulation phase
- Lessons learned from the passed should be taken into account

2. Where do you see challenges in implementing the presented aspects of the conceptual framework in future VLIR-UOS interventions? Please explain why you see these challenges.

- Uncertainty is inherent to research, so uncertainty is an inherent risk in research projects. If the formulated hypothesis is proved wrong, this influences further steps in the project (dissemination) and this might disappoint stakeholders
- Turnover of stakeholders: throughout the process, new stakeholders can be identified or identified stakeholders can lose their stake. Moreover, people representing stakeholders might change throughout the project. How should a project cope with this?
- Quantifying impact is not always easy
- It is a very theoretical framework that should be discussed in dialogue with the South partner before implementing it. Be flexible and take the local context into account ("go-between" persons from the South can help) It is important that partners understand each other (on conceptual and intercultural level)
- Conflicting disciplinary logics
- Balance between the developmental and the academic goals
- The increasing university populations in the South
- Intellectual Property management
- The identification of the demand
- The uniqueness of IUC is research related (attractiveness for new IUC coordinators!). A university is not an NGO.

3. Where do you see the role of VLIR-UOS in supporting or generating conditions for uptake?

- VLIR-UOS could play a (bigger) role in valorising project results after the project ended

- VLIR-UOS could materialise the link between research results and development outcome/impact.
- VLIR-UOS should offer a platform to share good practices on 'creating conditions for uptake'
- VLIR-UOS should take up a role as 'broker' to set up South-South collaborations
- VLIR-UOS could help in ethical guidance
- VLIR-UOS could help in the search of local experts for trainings (and as "go-between" persons)
- VLIR-UOS could offer scholarships in the field of research uptake
- VLIR-UOS should organise more workshops in Brussels for all IUC partners (trainings (not only on financial guidelines), sharing of lessons learned, etc.)
- An extra budget could be foreseen for stakeholder management and research dissemination
- Policy advocacy by VLIR-UOS (for example by setting up national platforms)
- Develop an alumni policy and involve alumni
- More budget could be made available for stakeholder management and representative meetings
- Formats could be made multilingual
- Staff costs for Belgian universities should be considered as an incentive (eg. Funds for PhD working in partner countries)
- Trainings on societal relevance and stakeholder management could be offered
- A fund for high risk projects (independent of the track record of the university) could be considered
- Incentives for knowledge sharing should be offered (data sharing among teams and beyond)
- More staff is needed at VLIR-UOS! (possibility of internships at VLIR-UOS?)

3.1.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- The presented conceptual framework was well received. Several suggestions have been formulated in order to improve / clarify / fine-tune the framework, as well as challenges that will have to be taken into account when operationalising the framework. The remarks given will be useful for the evaluator to fine-tune the framework (in the framework of the TEAM/SI thematic evaluation), and in turn this fine-tuned framework can also be used throughout the IUC programme cycle.
- An IUC is more than change within the institution and envisions to contribute with societal change as is also stated in the general objective' that an IUC is about strengthening a partner institution in its role as driver in a local society';
- Feedback was given on the 'dissemination framework' (creating the conditions for uptake) developed by Syspons. This framework shows different potential strategies of dissemination in different phases of a project/programme. The audience was receptive and acknowledged that further development could be interesting/useful
- Syspons will develop this further in the thematic evaluation (inception report end April, final report September) dealing with 'creating the conditions for uptake' in the context of university development cooperation projects.

3.2 Realising change within the institution (the I in IUC)

3.2.1 Workshop context

An IUC envisions not only a contribution to developmental change –linked to different academic priority domains – outside the university (see workshop 1 “societal change”) but also **a change process within the university leading to improved performance of the institution as an Higher Education Institution (HEI) in a number of institutional priority domains**. The proposed cooperation programme is therefore guided by both development (areas/clusters of strategic research) and institutional priorities (strategic plan of the institution, mission and vision) and matched with the expertise available and the willing offer by the Flemish HEIs.

The workshop focused on **how to bring about change within the university in IUC programmes and suggested concepts and options for improvement**. Currently the change within an IUC is proposed as capacity building realised through academic theme-based projects (research and educational strengthening of involved departments) and mandatory so-called transversal (institutional strengthening) projects. These “transversal projects” are expected to focus on institution-wide organisational capacity building in:

- prioritised institutional policy domains (research policy, curricula/accreditation, university management, HRD, international relations, ...)
- internal service delivery (ICT, library, language, basic sciences labs, ..),
- external service delivery (outreach services, extension/RTT offices, ..)

For both project-types, VLIR-UOS needs to think about optimized strategies to effectively obtain the planned objectives related to organizational change, reflect about the positioning of transversal projects and come up with strategies to ensure success.

The workshop presented a matrix to broaden the discussion and to introduce a clear terminology, explaining the different levels and dimensions of capacity development:

	Capacity creation	Capacity utilization	Capacity retention
Individual level	Development of adequate skills, knowledge, competencies and attitudes (e.g. PhD)	Application of skills, knowledge, competencies on the workplace (e.g. PhD holder applies new knowledge and skills)	Reduction of staff turnover, facilitation of skills and knowledge transfer within institutions (e.g. PhD remains staff member)
Organisational level	Establishment of efficient structures, processes and procedures (e.g. introduction of lab-procedures)	Integration of structures, processes and procedures in the daily workflows (e.g. well-functioning lab)	Regular adaptation of structures, processes and procedures (e.g. Integration of regular evaluation mechanisms for lab management)
Institutional and policy environment level	Establishment of adequate “institutions”, policies, rules and regulations (e.g. development of a new HR policy)	Enforcement of rules and regulations for good governance (e.g. implementation of new HR policy)	Regular adaptation of institutions, rules and regulations (e.g. evaluation mechanisms for new HR policy)

The workshop further focused the discussion on 2 main topics.

Topic 1: Change in academic projects

Topic 2: Transversal projects (nature, complexity, level of ambition, focus, ..)

3.2.2 Main points from the discussion

Topic 1: Change in academic projects

Guiding Questions:

- *How can it be ensured that the “academic” projects go beyond individual capacity building (PhD training, workshops,...) , but also focus on building organisational and institutional capacity? What is needed?*
- *How to ensure “change” processes are actively managed, and are sustainable? What support can VLIR-UOS offer? (going beyond creation to utilization and retention)*

Framework capacity building

- Useful framework that helps to keep an eye on different levels of capacity building/change
- At the moment the frameworks mainly refers to ‘soft elements’ but it could also involve more ‘hard elements’ like investments, building of laboratories for example

IUC framework

- Although the IUC framework cannot be too stringent (flexibility is necessary given the great diversity of partner institutions and countries), it might be necessary to ask each IUC programme to focus on the three main ‘tasks’ of a university (research, education, outreach) in order to improve organizational and institutional change. E.g. each IUC programme has to think about translating research into education practices (teaching methods, curriculum development, community involvement throughout the university etc.).
- More examples of what organizational and institutional change can entail would be welcomed. VLIR-UOS could collect some good examples and maybe some failing-forward stories as well.

Importance of qualitative phase-in (preparation/matchmaking)

- A condition for realizing change is a good and comprehensive understanding of the local context, both on the level of the institution as well as on the level of the developmental context.
 - o Suggestion: it might be interesting to work with an external ‘facilitator’ who knows the context well and can support e.g. stakeholder analyses, institutional analysis, ... It can be someone working at an NGO, a consultant, embassy staff members, VLIR-UOS etc.

Who’s involved: profiles and responsibilities

- The university management of the south institution needs to be involved from the very beginning of an IUC, a.o. deans of involved faculties/departments, rector, vice-rectors. They define the

priorities for the university on the long term and have to support all the change processes, especially the institutional ones.

- Challenge = changes in management team during the IUC programme.
- Suggestion = ask for guarantees for continuity of responsibilities. Roles and responsibilities need to be more clearly defined in the management manual (not only for university management team – also the IUC team)
- The choice of project leaders and coordinators is essential. The IUC team has to make sure the projects go beyond individual capacity building. In this regard the steering committees need to focus more on those higher levels of capacity building (organizational, institutional) and follow up on concrete initiatives to translate research results in procedures or trainings, or to develop policies and regulations, etc. They also have to take initiative to explain/show the added value of certain projects/research at the organizational and institutional level.
- In order to be able to realize organizational and institutional change, an IUC team needs to consist of a mix of profiles, not only professors and researchers but also management staff, ATP, etc. Supporting services and administrative staff of both intuitions need to be involved (e.g. international office, communication office) as they can play an important role in capacity retention.
- Challenge is to keep team members motivated. How can the involvement of staff members be valorized, especially in the fields of organizational and institutional capacity building – with less ‘direct’ effects like publications etc? It is pivotal to look for ways to validate commitment, look for added value for everyone involved. Can staff costs (North) be considered?
- PhD researchers can be ‘an instrument of change’ in the institution but it is necessary to invest in a group, a cohort of PhD students who have a shared focus (importance of shared vision and mission from the beginning in all projects!), can act as a sounding board for each other and develop procedures, structures etc. in collaboration with each other. This is a shared responsibility of the different project leaders and programme managers and needs to be clear from the start of the programme.
- Preferably PhD’s stay part of the institution after finishing their research, at least for some time. Especially when a number of PhD’s stays involved, impact can be generated. Some commitment is needed in this regard, e.g. in the form of a contract.

Link research - education (practice)

- Organize technical trainings to transfer skills from PhD students to research groups, but also departments and the broader university community
- Depending on the context and institutional priorities it might be worthwhile to invest in the development of a doctoral school that transcends the level of individual projects

Topic 2: Transversal projects (nature, complexity, level of ambition, focus, ..) (Guiding Questions in ‘italic’)

How ambitious should transversal projects be? Focus on organizational level (“low hanging fruits” such as ICT strengthening etc.) or on institutional and policy environment (e.g. HR policies, research policies, etc.)?

- Each IUC needs to be ambitious and aim at institutional capacity strengthening as well
- Alignment with institutional policies is mandatory

- A focus at institutional capacity building also increases the involvement of (and consequently the support from) the local top management
- Through institutional capacity building, IUC can (indirectly) address students

What is needed? Preconditions? What are success factors? More space for complexity & flexibility?

- Alignment to local priorities and context is a precondition
- TISP formats should be different from 'theme-based' projects and adapted for their specific purpose
- TISPs' change processes need to be facilitated: role of change facilitator
- For TISP to be successful, you need champions within the partner university (members of top management who take the lead in certain issues and which become the focal point for this issue and lead by example). The role of e.g. deans is very important (not only at central level)
- VLIR-UOS could offer a platform to link up different TISP from different IUC programmes
- The role, personality and power of the local coordinator is considered as crucial. He/She can also take up the role of project leader in a TISPs which can help to achieve success in TISPs.
- Not aim at institutionalizing too soon, give time for reflective action & adaptation.

To what extent is PhD research relevant to transversal projects?

The incorporation of PhDs makes the TIPS be taken more seriously, both within the programme as within the partner institution. Although it can be good for the motivation of the team members who get the PhD opportunity, this creates tension and division within the project, as PhDs opportunities cannot be offered to all project members. Moreover, it is not the most efficient way to reach (most) transversal goals. Still, it is considered to combine academic and non-academic elements in TISPs (start with non-academic element, add academic elements later on)

Who's involved? How do we make sure that we match the objectives of transversal projects with the right academic/technical profiles? How can we motivate non-academic profiles to take up a role in transversal projects (for example ATP profiles, management profiles, Flemish high level academic authorities, etc.)?

- Involvement of technical and administrative staff from the Flemish HEI can be valuable for TISP (also Emeriti). Many are motivated to be involved in UDC projects, but they get less reward from their involvement (as compared to professors who get articles and PhD's from the projects). It is the responsibility of the Flemish HEI to incorporate measures (e.g. in promotion trajectories of their HR policies) to support and motivate their staff. It is observed, however, that few HEI take this serious, so it can be question if – although staff is motivated – the HEI are motivated to have their staff involved in UDC. Few positive examples exist, however (e.g. ICT at UGent). The necessity to have this supporting policies could be translated into a condition for a Flemish HEI to take up the coordination of an IUC
- What can the Global Minds programme offer to solve this issue?

Balance IUC (projects) support vs. institution-wide objectives?

TISP should focus in the first place on institution-wide objectives. Strengthening the partner university will in the long term also strengthen the programme. Only linking it to supporting other projects will be unsustainable.

3.2.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- Realising change within the institution is very important and should involve more than strengthening a number of institutional-level priorities (academic and institutional domains). A IUC should effectively target institutional strengthening in order for the 'I in IUC' to be of real merit
- A framework was presented to clarify the different potential levels and dimension of capacity building (individual, organizational, institutional, ..). This framework was intended to support the workshop discussions on institutional change and was considered useful for further development/reflection. Potentially this tool could be used as follow-up of different capacity levels during execution of the programme (e.g. JSCM meetings)
- A discussion was held on the current functioning of Transversal Institutional Strengthening projects, whereby it was mentioned to
 - Clarify positioning of transversal institutional strengthening projects in IUC
 - Transversal institutional strengthening projects target more than the IUC: these projects should provide (as much as possible) institutional broad support
 - Consider other formats/procedures for transversal projects
 - Consider mechanisms to include academic policy makers, ATP and Emeriti in IUC (transversal) projects
 - Allow but limit PhD funding within transversal projects based on clear added value motivation

3.3 Strengthening the programme logic and Phase 1 versus Phase 2

3.3.1 Workshop context

An IUC partner programme is the translation of a programme vision and proposed change at institutional and societal level. Technically an IUC programme is subdivided in a number of constituting projects (research, capacity building and extension related) with specific outcomes (specific objectives) and outputs (intermediate results) to be realised in the framework of the partner programme phase.

From recent evaluations VLIR-UOS learned that the programme level needs to gain more weight in the design and implementation phase of IUC programmes. Currently, the focus is on the project level and the programme level change is expected to 'happen' but is not 'alive'. As a result, the programme level loses its importance throughout the years, with the IUC programme evolving more and more to a mere sum of its parts (projects). This is especially the case for phase 2 where most conditions for research/education are put in place and the emphasis is to finalise and increase the number of PhDs. This results in reduced programme dynamics, missed opportunities in terms of internal synergies within the IUC programmes, and a decreased link with the partners' institutional priorities (as projects are defined in isolation and not in relation with institutional policies/programme vision). In this workshop a number of potential measures were suggested that try to strengthen this programme logic, and at the same time try to potentially reduce the administrative burden for projects.

Potential consequences in the different phases of the programme cycle were presented during this workshop:

Identification (South Concept Note)

- Stronger focus on programme vision and programme objectives. Proposals shouldn't focus too strongly on specific projects
- When talking about projects, focus on their contribution to the programme level, the synergy and complementarity between projects.
- Include a rudimentary programme level Theory of Change

Formulation

- Focus the formulation process on the programme level (instead of x separate project formulations). A first step needs to be the clarification of a programme vision
- A Theory of Change at programme level instead of separate project-level Theories of Change? Projects mainly operationalize the relevant parts of the Theory of Change.
- Risk management (strategic risks) facilitated by the programme level

Implementation / Monitoring

- Monitoring of projects could become 'lighter' as a number of strategic elements could move up the programme level:
 - Annual reflection on programme Theory of Change
 - Strategic management of risks
 - Precondition: JSCMs are used for strategic reflection and strategic steering

Evaluation

- Evaluations focus on the realization of the programme strategy. Project level becomes lighter (but still forms the basis for some elements)
- In dealing with a mid-term evaluation, programmes first look at shaping the 2nd phase of the programme ... and only later on look at implications for projects.

Phase 2

- Continuity + evolution
- Consolidation and valorisation
- Programme/Project team composition
- Preparation for the gradual take-over (decreasing budget)
- Sustainability: e.g. fund raising activities are launched

To further guide the discussions, following questions were used:

- Would this smoothen the process?
- How to balance programme vision and project level “freedom”?
- How do former/current coordinators feel about this?
- How can we stimulate the JSCM to become a space for strategic reflection & decision making?
- What is needed to make this all happen?
- How can the evaluation process further help to strengthen the programme logic
- How do we create the conditions for a successful 2nd phase? Do you see a link with role of coordinators vis-à-vis project leaders?

3.3.2 Main elements in the discussion

- Programme level is very important. There are some experiences (e.g. Morocco) where this programme logic is well developed and aligned to institutional priorities. There seems to be a general consensus that an IUC should be seen as a package. The programme vision is to be developed first and after that projects are defined. IUC needs a programme level otherwise it is only a set of TEAM projects that are bundled together. Agreement in the audience (more strongly in first session/2nd session more critical) on the proposed strengthening of the programme logic. The audience feels this is a logical choice and would contribute to the coherence and results of the IUC programmes. X-separate project formulations without finding a common ground on the programme vision not considered a good practice.
- The extent to which a strong programme logic can be developed depends on context and the strength of the partner. Reference is made to cases in DR Congo and Burundi (2nd session) where working in projects is considered easier as developing a programme vision and using the institutional strategy as a starting point is considered more difficult. IUC is strong concept starting from a lower level with similar common features including PSU and capacity building. Your minimum standard/expectation is still a number of stand-alone projects.
- The programme vision should already be clear from the concept note (elaborated by the partner university) which is often not the case: a potential partner university answering to an IUC call often wants to involve as many faculties as possible and just divide the available budget. So it could be useful to create a number of (extra) conditions related to the development of a strong programme vision in the IUC call.
- Synergy/complementarity between projects should not become an objective on its own. In large IUC programmes this is rather difficult. S/C is important but not all projects need to be linked to each other explicitly.
- A stronger programme level is not considered as an extra burden for programme coordinators (compared to the current situation)

- Suggestion to spend more time on the formulation of a programme vision in the first 1-2 years of an IUC, and only formulate projects once that programme vision is clear. Earlier collaborations between the project coordinators N and S can be an advantage in this process of working towards a strong programme vision. Remark that enough people from the partner institution should be involved from the start of the formulation process to guarantee ownership.
- Suggestions to give tools or a monitoring framework for the JSCM to use during annual reflections about the programme strategy
- Going from phase 1 to phase 2, the idea is discussed to have more projects (and budget) instead of an ex aequo (or diminishment) In phase 2, the partners know each other well enough to increase the working load instead of decreasing and thus creating new opportunities for all parties involved (including University colleges). Transversal projects are crucial in phase 1 whereas phase 2 should be more concentrating on new funds and co-funding in the view of sustainability.
- According to some participants, an IUC coordinator cannot be project leader, because this risks resulting in conflicts of interest. On the other hand it is observed that there might be less involvement of the coordinators in that case. Coordinator has overall overview but would not be aware of the personal evolution of the students and projects. Added value should include an incentive at that level too. How to define that incentive?
- Programme level helps programmes in avoiding duplication among the projects. Hence the importance of the transversal projects.
- Interest in south and north is crucial. Team members should continue to build up and define new challenges. Team spirit is always guiding feature.

3.3.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- Go ahead with proposal to strengthen programme level starting from a clear programme vision/theory of change
- When developing adapted formats due attention should be given to the situation of weaker universities in fragile countries so that not too many expectations are put on the programme level. As such it is important to maintain a balance between a stronger programme level and the autonomy of projects
- The transition of Phase 1 to Phase 2 should be taken very seriously with enough room for changes between Phases (scope, number of projects, change of projects, ..)
- Provide tools to help the IUC Joint Steering Committee Meeting to follow-up on programme level

3.5 Partners(hip) concept, programme management and support (PSU)

3.5.1 Workshop context

A successful IUC builds upon a **strong partnership** between the local partner institution and the involved Flemish HEIs. The partnership is translated into a partner programme jointly managed by the partner institution and the Flemish coordinating university. **Sound programme management**, with as much as possible alignment and integration into local systems and procedures, is key to success.

Therefore, it is important that the involved institutions –and not only the coordinators in person- know each other very well. In particular at the local level involvement of the university leadership/ management (decision making structures in the university) in the formulation and implementation of the successive programme phases is crucial. Also in the follow-up of the programme. This also implies that vertical linkages between the IUC programme management via the combined leadership of the Flemish/local IUC coordinator and the Joint Steering Committee and the decision-making structure of the local partner institution should be foreseen. Within this context, it is important to look at the **IUC management system** with its blueprint task division (position and profile of coordinators, the programme manager, project leaders) and the **role of the Programme Support Unit (PSU)** and the **Joint Steering Committee Meetings (JSCM)**.

In this session, we exchanged ideas about ways to improve the **Partnership Concept, Programme management (roles and responsibilities, division of tasks)** and the **Programme Support Unit** (incl. the management manual as specific tool). The discussions were organized around those 3 broader themes.

3.5.2 Main elements in the discussion

Partnership concept

Guiding Questions:

- *'How to create /strengthen the vertical linkages and create a regular feedback loop between IUC and university authorities. (during all phases of IUC programme; objective: strengthening the strategic partnership and ownership*
- *'How can we better embed IUC programmes in Flanders and in partner countries and strengthen commitment at all levels?'*

All participants agree that it is **important to strengthen vertical linkages and create a regular feedback loop between the IUC programme and the university authorities**. This should indeed be seen as a continuous effort and is crucial for a strong partnership and for maintaining the ownership during all stages of the IUC.

A number of elements were put forward on flipcharts as how to ensure that the partnership is a success:

- **the university authorities/Board of the selected IUC partner institute should be involved as from the very start to get their involvement:** university authorities should realize from the beginning what IUC contains and involves because this seems often underestimated; this means that

during the Phase in and even before formulation of IUC there should be regular contacts with the highest levels.

- The IUC programme is an institutional programme so there should be **content “co-ownership”** on behalf of the university authorities and the **IUC proposal/themes should be integrated with the strategic plan of the university** so that they can also be monitored as such. This way the authorities maintain their interest and see the IUC as sufficiently strategic;
- In fact the IUC partner institute’s strategic plan should prevail with vision and agreement between partnerships because persons come and go. An argument was also put forward that an IUC programme –e.g. the institutional/programme strengthening elements- should involve sufficient flexibility in view of changes of rector/university board so that policy changes can be accommodated. This **flexibility in the process**, esp. in the beginning when things are perhaps not always clear, is important. Others argued that in fact there is already quite some flexibility (e.g. Annual Programmes permit adaptation as compared to the partner programme);
- **If possible the IUC could be part of a vice rectorate** (e.g. vice rectorate of research & supporting council/structures) to assure vertical linkage and communication lines between IUC and university.
- **Not only the top management but also the lower authority levels/ deans need be involved in the IUC:** organize regular interaction between university board, faculties and the IUC;
- The transversal (institutional) project within IUC could be managed by vice rector or another university authority to assure links with IUC;
- **Coordinators (N. and S.) should be institutionally embedded and at least be strongly supported by the board of their university** and as such also ensure strong institutional ownership. Some argued that (in particular on the south side) they should be member of or involved in higher decision-making levels of the university but there was no consensus on this argument as it was also stressed that it was important to maintain a certain level of autonomy in case of authority changes. On the Flemish level it was stressed that time restrictions might be an issue for academics involved in university/faculty boards and also that there should be a content-wise link with the programme;
- **An IUC partnership/programme should also be well-supported by the Flemish university authorities, in particular of course the coordinating university.** For the quality and sustainability of the partnership it is also interesting to create inter-institutional contracts so that every Flemish partner university within an IUC understands the value. Via the projects and the Flemish inter-university agreements this commitment of Flemish universities can be strengthened, but also by getting them involved in formulation and phase-in and expose their expertise.

In order to ensure the embedding of the IUC programme locally it was also mentioned that it could be important that the local institute has a strong national (e.g. national government) and local network (e.g. provincial/local government, local stakeholders, ..).

Roles and responsibilities in programme management

Guiding Questions:

- *What do you think of the general “blueprint” IUC management structures (blue-prints)? Is such a blueprint still relevant? Should there be changes in the set-up?*
- *If we want to strengthen partnership and programme management, what does that mean for the profile and position of the coordinators and project leaders?*
- *How can we ensure the Joint Steering Committees plays a more strategic role?*

- *To what extent can VLIR-UOS help coordinators and project leaders in the strategic management of their programmes/projects? Should VLIR-UOS foresee a training or coaching offer?*

With regard to the **standard “blueprint” no objections or specific changes to the set-up were proposed.**

- A challenge however would be to maybe add some graphic element in order to clarify the interdisciplinary within/among the projects and the programme theory of change versus project logic.
- However, the importance of maintaining clear that there are project responsibilities is also important.

A number of elements were put forward on flipcharts as how to ensure a **good distribution of roles and responsibilities and sound programme management:**

- *(argument already put forward in the discussion on the partnership):* **Coordinators (N. and S.)** should be institutionally embedded and at least be strongly supported by the board of their university and as such also ensure strong institutional ownership. Some argued that (in particular on the south side) they should be member of or involved in higher decision-making levels of the university but there was no consensus on this argument as it was also stressed that it was important to maintain a certain level of autonomy in case of authority changes. On the Flemish level it was stressed that time restrictions might be an issue for academics involved in university/faculty boards and also that there should be a content-wise link with the programme;
- A challenge with regard to the above is the **motivation and interest of the coordinator** candidates in the position. The role of coordinator involves mainly management/coordination: how can we assure that they can also be involved as researchers (content/PhDs) so it would become more attractive? The combination of coordinator with a post of project leader is by some of the participants considered as a conflict of interest. However, it is important for the coordinator to feel involved and be a broad expert in the broader IUC theme. With this respect he also plays a role in supporting the interdisciplinarity. It is not easy to find coordinators responding to all ideal criteria. If combining the position of coordinator with a position of project leader is not ideal, maybe with exception of the transversal (institutional) project within IUC (perhaps a way to assure involvement in content and management), a coordinator can definitely play a role in project teams and be scientifically involved.
- We expect a lot from coordinators: they need to be good communicators, create relations of trust, diplomatic/influence decisions, people managers with leadership skills, information sharers knowing to unlock barriers. It was also argued that maybe we should not search for academics but this argument was not shared by the group, on the contrary it was stressed that to engage in this kind of level of academic cooperation, the position is to be taken by an academic.
- One participant mentioned it could be interesting to have coordinators on board of the Bureau UOS, but it was mentioned that discussion was held at level of VLIR and VLIR-UOS and that the current position is that this is seen as a conflict of interest
- With regard to the **project leaders** there focus is mainly academic expertise related. **It is important that as is the case now also young academics can integrate an IUC** where they are guided by more experienced academics and get familiar with VLIR-UOS opportunities. IUC is seen as an ideal programme to integrate these young academics because of the management system already in place and the fact that collaboration prevails above competition. Some mentioned that it could be a good idea to have co-PLs (back-ups) to combine senior with junior academics? However, there was no consensus and there are pros and cons...conclusion is that there is no need for VLIR-UOS to create more formal positions next to coordinators and project leaders.

Within an IUC project team, responsibilities can be well-divided but there is not one blueprint model for this.

On the **role of Joint Steering Committees** the following arguments were put forward:

- JSC-Meeting: should be combined with training activities, workshops for training and coaching, field visits, a conference, Belgian week, etc.: foresee content, not only administration and formalities.
- JSC-Meeting: make sure that important decisions are taken at that moment and for this good preparation of these meetings is needed; a maximum of information is to be shared (also from university governance), feedback from anyone is to be assured. In preparation it can also be efficient to have a management meeting before the JSCM
- Follow-up on strategic decisions should happen during these meetings
- The meetings should be for several days, to get to know each other better and also in order to restrain the ecological footprint.
- University authorities should assist to make sure decisions are taken at the right moment. They are mostly held in the South and this should remain the focus but perhaps they could be organized twice a year of which the 2nd one per skype, or in the North by combining a number of S-N visits. Even if not complete and just for a few people (not the whole group) a 2nd meeting per year can be interesting to keep the group dynamics.

The programme support unit and management manual

Guiding Questions:

- *'Does the PSU have a great potential and should the PSU-by default/optionally-have a role in strengthening organizational capacities? Role of PSU in linking with other IUC's (in country-region)'*
- *'Role and profile of the programme manager (S) and requested support from the Flemish (ICOS and other services at the level of the Flemish coordinating university)'*
- *'The management manual is very important. How can we further improve it?'*

With regard to the standard position of the PSU no specific remarks were made but that the PSU should be a well-functioning structure, interlinked/integrated within the administrative structure was supported by all. The way of integration in the local structures differs from the local context but at least there should be a strong interlinkage/interaction. The potential of the PSU can be much more explored.

A number of elements were put forward on flipcharts as how to ensure a good distribution of roles and responsibilities in the PSU, clear programme management guidelines and well-functioning PSUs:

- Roles of ICOS – PM – Coordinator: often differ from one IUC to another, depends on context
- The Programme Manager (PM) could play role in training and selection, together with FI. Coordinator and ICOS. The PM should guarantee continuity/stability and not change all the time. This person is the one who knows all the ins and outs, the one who follows the whole IUC (also in absence of coordinator and/or PLs). So he/she should work full time for IUC, but this is often not the case. Although some are of the opinion that it is positive to be implied in other (IUC-linked) programmes like training or involvement in contents (projects) because otherwise the job appears to be boring.

- Also the ICOS can be more involved and take over more administrative tasks from the Flemish coordinator, being not only finance and administration but maybe also a stronger role in the PSU management, its role now is often underestimated
- PSU should be a good coordinating/communicating instance with a clear communication plan
- We should in first 3 years of IUC put more energy in trainings. The PSU could have a role in organizing trainings (it could have a training unit):
 - o Administrative/financial/managerial;
 - o Support in managing the transversal (institutional) project;
 - o keeping track and exposing good practices,
 - o stakeholder management,
 - o support in organizing project content trainings

On the importance of the management manual the following arguments were put forward:

- The Management manual is often not well known or followed; seems more to be a burden, however important to have clear guidelines and procedures in particular on those aspects that differ or complement the existing set of VLIR-UOS guidelines.
- A solution could be that Programme Managers make it more lively and useful, working with flowcharts of procedures, succinct information and where repetition of VLIR-UOS guidelines rather refer to these (with hyperlinks). Another possibility is to put it online and put it on every JSCM agenda to add new things if necessary.
- Very often the scientific part is underexposed and only addressed (too) late in the process of selection and follow-up of scholars, establishment of publication guidelines, working with patents, etc..
- Since it is a document that evolves, sometimes difficult to apply it by local authorities who miss some flexibility.

3.5.3 Main conclusions from the discussions

- Guarantee institutional embedding and support from top management as from inception of the programme and assure sufficient vertical linkages with the university authorities throughout the programme execution
- Flemish and local IUC coordinators should be backed by their institution
- The position of coordinators needs to be attractive enough (e.g. as opposed to them only being involved in management and not in education or research)
- IUCs are interesting interventions to include new/young (Flemish) academics as project leaders within a supportive environment
- An IUC partnership/programme should also be well-supported by the Flemish university authorities, in particular of course the coordinating university
- Re-inforce the JSCM as an important moment/space for strategic decision-making and progress monitoring. Include training and synergy actions within the framework of JSCM and involve university authorities
- A sound programme management and well-functioning PSU is crucial: more attention should be given to the PSU development and the role of the programme manager (e.g. support in terms of reporting requirements, training needs, event organization, ...). A programme manager function should be a full-time job

- The role and support of the Flemish support (via the ICOS and other services) should be well-elaborated
- The management manual format and use can be optimized

3.6 Local context, linking up with other interventions (Phase-in)

3.6.1 Workshop context

At the start of each IUC programme and before engaging in long term cooperation a major challenge is the full understanding of local contextual aspects (developmental, institutional,..) and the development challenges and opportunities (link between national development priorities and the VLIR-UOS country strategy, the Joint Strategic Frameworks of Belgian non-state actor cooperation, other donor activities). On the other hand, the local partner institute should be fully aware of the Flemish HE cooperation opportunities, the VLIR-UOS guidelines and procedures.

An IUC cooperation targets institutions that are able to function adequately at all levels and are able to direct their own institutional destiny in a coherent manner. This assumes an adequate level of institutional planning and management, a transparent institutional environment, sufficient exposure to research as well as the availability of minimal human resource capacity. It also assumes a readiness to engage in a process of change management.

In order to select the institutions that meet the minimal requirements for IUC cooperation, it is important to discuss on the needs in terms of local context analysis, organizational assessment, the importance of matchmaking and the understanding of the Flemish HE and IUC specific guidelines and procedures. Summarised, this workshop was organized around the broader theme of how to ensure that -before the start of an IUC- all programme stakeholders are well informed on:

- **The local context** : country developmental analysis, mapping of donors, of VLIR-UOS projects, other donor activity/Belgian ANGC potential, VLIR-UOS link with JSF; link between development priorities and VLIR-UOS country strategy ...
- **The institutional context** (partner university institutional assessment; research and educational capacity, level of accreditation of institute and programmes; administrative, financial and managerial capacity; embeddedness of the institution in the local context and extension/dissemination capacities; capacity for uptake/dissemination, risk and sustainability assessment)
- **The expertise and opportunities within the Flemish HEI and the VLIR-UOS guidelines and procedures**

3.6.2 Main elements in the discussion

Local/country context

Guiding questions:

- *Which contextual knowledge is needed for start-up of an IUC, at the level of the country (context)? Knowledge of in-country conditions/risks?*

- *How/when should we map other donor activity in the region? How can we organize/maintain interaction with other donors active in the institution/region and effectively support/promote synergy and complementarity among Belgian ANGC and really link up academic projects with other Belgium funded projects?*

All participants agree that it is important to **map and share the information** on:

- the national/local developmental context (vision, poverty reduction doc., ..)
- higher education and scientific/research policies of the country
- overall national political situation, relation with national government
- local power dynamics and ecosystem of the university (relation provincial/local government and institution, local political situation, ..)

Someone mentioned that information should be available but in order to permit young professors to participate not all Flemish project leaders should already have experience these in-country conditions .

In terms of the links with other actors/donors in the national/local development scene and potential for interaction and synergies/complementarities:

- The country strategies were referred to in the context of the mapping and selection of future IUC candidates. However, in response to this it was mentioned that even if certain elements and in particular the relation with other Belgian actors was updated in the context of the Joint Strategic Frameworks, quite some contextual information with regard to the HE and institutional contexts per country are to be updated
- Important to follow-up on relations with other actors and potential for synergy and complementarity via the programme coordination/PSU/international offices.
- Follow-up on S&C via organization of meetings with stakeholders (multi-stakeholders platforms, Belgian actors activities in the context of Joint Strategic Frameworks)
- In view of future selection of new IUC candidates, it was mentioned that the VLIR-UOS identified potentialities

Institutional context

Guiding questions:

- *Which institutional context knowledge is needed for start-up of an IUC, at the level of the partner university? What should be part of the ex- ante institutional assessment?*

It was stressed that in the past VLIR-UOS performed local capacity analysis of potential IUCs via different methods and this in the context of ex-ante programme assessments or country strategy identification assessments (including assessments of IUC potential). As such, different institutional fact sheets and base line models to analyse the capacity of units within thematic IUC projects were applied. Independent experts then went to the field to check/complement the institutional information which was provided.

The audience concluded that it is important to clarify the **institutional profile of an IUC institution** – typically an institute with a minimum level of research/educational capacity in a specific local setting- so that the starting level of “dreaming” can be set.

Elements to support the institutional profile and overall **institutional capacity assessment** to be realized are:

- research and educational capacity,

- accreditation of programmes;
- administrative, financial and managerial capacity;
- sustainability assessment
- staff & student assessment (number of PhD, Master, ..)
- Assessment of infrastructure & equipment
- Existing cooperation (national and international) – past (and running) cooperation with (Flemish) HEI
- Capacity assessment – motivation of future teams, of the personnel

With regard to the pre-selection of institutes based on a concept note, it was referred to that the weighing of selection criteria could be adapted so that a selection would not target top research/educational institutes but institutes with potential for change at institutional and developmental level. In this regard the presence of a clear vision on the future of the institution and/or a capacity plan with future goals allowing to identify opportunities could be important.

Important is that a potential partner proposal comes forward via a bottom-up approach: demand-driven, local institution should be willing to cooperate and indicate in what sectors. All these elements should be part of concept note ideally. This is important for later when lessons learned are defined

Expertise and opportunities at level of the Flemish HEI and getting to know VLIR-UOS

Guiding questions:

- *How to make sure the partner institute understands the VLIR-UOS system and gets to know the Flemish institutions?*
- *What kind of matchmaking should we organize in order for the south delegations to meet/interact with all potential expertise within the Flemish HEI?*

- A lot of information is given but even then it is usually learning by doing; can take 1-2 years sometimes much longer (e.g. understanding of the scholarship guidelines);
- Continuous efforts are needed;
- A 1 week visit to local partner prior to the formulation will allow the Flemish partner to get to know the partner much better.
- Local preparatory workshops could also involve different VLIR-UOS projects/programmes (e.g. IUCs learning from each other)
- IUC regulations should be shared asap and during the whole phase in: during orientation workshop with coordinators, partly during matchmaking, at timing of concept note (but be careful with overload)) and regularly repeated so that local partner knows exactly what is expected at start-up of the programme;
- More targeted guidelines might be needed on certain aspects (how to manage an IUC programme, various responsibilities...)
- ToC is performant tool but should be more adapted to academic needs. Idem for LFM.

3.6.3 Main conclusions from the discussions

- Add questions (from workshop) to the ex-ante local context and institutional assessment.
- When pre-selecting IUC candidates, the weighing of selection criteria could be adapted so that a selection would not target top research/educational institutes but institutes with potential for change at institutional and developmental level
- Foresee ample time and means to inform partners on VLIR-UOS system, local context, etc.

3.7 The role, selection and guidance of PhDs within projects/programmes

3.7.1 Workshop context

During this workshop a round of discussion will be organised in order to formulate a clearer framework for PhD students within VLIR-UOS projects and within IUC programmes in particular. This topic is related to the role of PhDs within a programme/project ('PhDs as drivers of change' (institutional and societal change)), the requirements/conditions for PhD selection and follow-up (monitoring, supervision, local conditions/commitment/support, ..) of PhD students and their within a project/programme. A general principle to bear in mind is that scholarships granted as part of an IUC programme are to contribute to the capacity building and organizational strengthening at the level of the local partner institution.

3.7.2 Main elements from the discussion

The role of PhDs within an IUC programme ("PhDs as drivers of change")

Guiding questions:

How can PhD students contribute to the academic/institutional/developmental change processes during and after an IUC/Network programme?

- *Change within the research group/local department (within the context of project/programme level objectives role in organizational strengthening)*
 - *Change within the institution, (link with institutional strengthening processes)*
 - *Change within the development context (entities linked to the institution, the region) and role in outreach*
- The response to the question above depends on the stage of the IUC programme (beginning, half-way, end) and whether you'd refer to the actual, current situation or the desired situation:
- At the **beginning of the programme** a PhD student would most probably be a **driver of change for and within the research group, while at a later stage, he/she can contribute more to change at the level of the institution or even region.**
 - It is important to strive for change at a 'higher' level than a research group but **capacity building at the level of the research group should be the starting point.** This would include aspects like mainstreaming of the research (e.g. protocols), the set-up of feedback loops, the installment of a management structure etc. This would also allow for the research group or department to become a group/project that can harness the abilities in its field of research and the services it can provide to external stakeholders.
 - PhD's can contribute to the development of education and research at an institution but **they can also play a role in the development of a region**, by doing research on topics that are relevant for the region and with involvement of relevant actors from e.g. NGO's,

local governments, private sector (How do you define the research topics? Which stakeholders do you involve, how and when?). IUC's are programmes in the context of development cooperation and should therefore focus on regional impact, with involvement of PhD's.

- **It is unrealistic to believe one PhD student can bring about change at the level of the institution (or broader). To do so you need a cohort of PhD students that can collaborate to contribute to organizational change, that can help create a culture of research and outreach at the university.** PhD's are about human capital development at an institution. You thus hope that a group of PhD's can play a role in defining new research topics and attracting new research funds, in improving the quality of education (e.g. research-based education), in supporting curriculum development, in training colleagues in the use of methodologies, in developing a research culture and a – policy, in bringing in and building international networks, in looking for innovative solutions, in attracting funding for better infrastructure,... They however need to be able to discuss with each other, receive feedback, etc. **They need to be embedded in a well-designed (research and project) team.**
- If PhD candidates are expected to be a driver of change then a **qualitative recruitment strategy/policy is essential.** Candidates need to know from the very beginning (call) what is expected from them and they need to have the necessary qualifications to deliver services, to do outreach and support change in the institution.
- It can be useful to actively involve all PhD's that were doing research as part of phase 1 of the IUC, during both preparation and implementation of phase 2. They know the programme, they have been trained, they have a network and can play an important role in training other staff members, translating research results into policy or curricula, etc.
 - It can be interesting to look into co-funding-models whereby e.g. a regressing model of funding is used (less funding during phase 2) and partners are expected to find additional funding for example to set-up research for/with stakeholders. PhD's could play a role in this (find funding).

Qualitative and administrative requirements for doctoral recruitment and supervision and “what next?”

Guiding questions:

- a. *“A Belgian (co)supervisor is essential to a successful IUC PhD”*
- b. *“Twinning of IUC PhD students with Flemish PhD students will help increase mutual impact”*
- c. *“Do we focus on training individual IUC PhD students to ‘manage’ their PhD, or do we equip institutions to take up this role?”*
- d. *“Joint or double PhDs are merely a financial, not an inherent added value to the Flemish partner”.*
- e. *“A PhD: what next?”; within or outside the university? Should PhDs be maintained as permanent staff after graduation? What if students are recruited externally? Is it realistic/necessary that all trained PhD students remain at the institution after the end of the scholarship?*

(a) There should be **mutual engagement of both the South institution and the Flemish institution** and its staff members. There should be at least co-supervisor for a joint PhD. The final responsibility would be for the local promotor but as a Flemish co-supervisor you take up similar supporting tasks. For some the (co)-supervisor shouldn't necessarily be a Belgian/Flemish professor but others point out that the strength of an IUC is exactly the involvement of different Flemish universities and their staff who have experience in certain topics that are relevant to the south partner. It wouldn't make sense to go look for supervisors elsewhere, who would probably also need to be paid.

(b) **It can be interesting to twin Flemish PhD students with IUC PhD students.** They can be counterparts and complement each other with specific expertise. Funding however is a big challenge as there are not many financing schemes for Flemish students to do development relevant PhD research. There used to be the VLADOC programme but since the Global Minds programme started, there's no longer an overall call on the level of VLIR-UOS.

(c) The focus of an IUC is capacity building of an institution. Although it depends on the context, **it is probably not realistic to expect the partner institution to offer thorough training for PhD's at the beginning of an IUC programme.** After some time the balance will probably shift, with more capacity in the south and PhD's that can be involved themselves in setting up/supporting training. During an IUC programme, methodologies can be exchanged, content can be developed, etc. It is all about collaboration and communication – with the realization of a stronger south institution at the end of the programme. **Better training for PhD's can be one of the aspects that are developed but it is not a priority (nor possibility) for all partner institutions to start a doctoral school.**

(d) There are quite a few other reasons why a joint PhD can be an added value: stronger links with certain topics or networks, bring in local knowledge and experience about certain topics in the Flemish research group, broader global exposure, articles that get published etc.

(e) It is not realistic nor desirable to expect that all PhD's stay active in a specific institution for the rest of their career. It is probably interesting to create the conditions for PhD's to stay for some time (a few years) connected to the university to support the further capacity building like curriculum development, involvement in innovative research, development of management structures, deliver services, ... but they can and should also play a role in other sectors, other organizations, governments. **It is the responsibility of the local institution to make sure PhD's can stay involved in research, can contribute to research for some time. However, not everybody will be able to get promoted and build a career within the university.** In some countries (e.g. Cuba) there are no positions for Post-docs in universities but they often take up management positions in research institutions. Those are equally important positions, often with high potential impact.

Supervision and support

Guiding questions:

- f. *“Local institutions should be able to produce open and transparent selection and doctoral regulations upon start of an IUC PhD programme”*
- g. *“In joint or double PhDs the recruitment criteria of the Flemish university apply simultaneously with those of the partner institution”*
- h. *“In non-joint or non-double IUC PhDs can or should the Flemish project leader take up a role in the selection procedure of the candidate?”*

(f) It depends on the situation of the partner institution. Is there already a PhD programme? If so, they should be able to show they have their own regulations. If not, it can be part of the IUC programme to (further) develop a PhD programme and regulations on selections (who selects, how is the selection organized, follow-up etc.). **The Flemish universities can support the partner institution in further developing selection procedures and PhD regulations. It can thus be an objective within the programme (e.g. mid-term result to be realized after Phase 1) but the intentions and planning of an institution need to be clear from the beginning.**

(g) Flemish requirements have to apply in the framework of a joint/double PhD. Otherwise the student cannot be a PhD student at the Flemish institution.

(h) group 1: The Flemish project leader should not necessarily take up a role in the actual selection of a candidate for a local PhD but the Flemish project leader should at least be involved in the selection of

the PhD topics. Obviously there should be communication and collaboration about the actual position (why this topic? Is PhD the best instrument?) but there should be enough trust to leave the selection to the local coordinators, project leaders, teams.

3.7.3 Main conclusions from the discussions

- PhD students can play a role as driver of change, but one should be realistic. At the beginning of the programme a PhD student would most probably be a driver of change for and within the research group, while at a later stage, he/she can contribute more to change at the level of the institution or even region. Capacity building at the level of the research group should be the starting point.
- It is unrealistic to believe one PhD student can bring about change at the level of the institution (or broader). To do so you need a cohort of PhD students that can collaborate to contribute to organizational change, that can help create a culture of research and outreach at the university. They need to be embedded in a well-designed (research and project) team.
- If PhD candidates are expected to be a driver of change then a qualitative recruitment strategy/policy is essential.
- There should be mutual engagement of both the South institution and the Flemish institution
- It can be interesting to twin Flemish PhD students with IUC PhD students.
- Better training for PhD's can be one of the aspects that are developed but it is not a priority (nor possibility) for all partner institutions to start a doctoral school.
- It is the responsibility of the local institution to make sure PhD's can stay involved in research, can contribute to research for some time. However, not everybody will be able to get promoted and build a career within the university.
- The Flemish universities can support the partner institution in further developing selection procedures and PhD regulations. It can thus be an objective within the programme (e.g. mid-term result to be realized after Phase 1) but the intentions and planning of an institution need to be clear from the beginning.

3.8 The NETWORK model

3.8.1 Workshop context

The **Network University Cooperation (NETWORK)** programme was designed as a **national level institutional network** led by a former IUC partner institute and with focus on a **priority theme** of the country strategy (nation-wide needs based). The programme is about multiplying and levelling up capacity building efforts that were initiated at level of a former IUC partner institute and collaborating HEIs in the country.

Based on the evaluations and reported experiences the following drivers for discussion were identified:

- Network programmes ought to be organized around strong, motivated, medium to large HEI that worked together before.
- Networks need to be more than the ideal of a hub institution that coordinates activities around a specific topic with other HEI.

- Networks should foresee sufficient time and resources to get to know each other, and strengthen the relationships between the Network partners. The main feature of a Network programme is a balanced distribution of responsibilities.

Preparing for the IUC consultation event of 1 April a first consultation/discussion was organised in December 2018 during a meeting with Flemish coordinators and stakeholders. The following main considerations came forward:

- Added value and importance to continue based on prior IUC cooperation experiences
- Intervention type is part of our national level programming. How to link up with cross-country initiatives? How to include new institutions?
- Solid Phase In is advisable
- Partner universities should already have cooperation experience, the request should not be limited to a one partner (IUC) university request
- Balance between hub and other partner universities
- Budgets are limited and were foreseen as seed money. Is this realistic?

In order for all workshop participants to understand what NETWORKs are about and to provide food for thought in the discussion round, the Network workshop started with a short presentation by South coordinators of NETWORKs that recently underwent a midterm evaluation. The NETWORK coordinator South of CTU could not make it due to visa problems meaning that there were only 2 of 3 programmes presented, being the ICT Network Cuba, by Hector Cruz Enriquez (UCLV), and the Network biodiversity Ecuador, presented by Juan Manuel Cevallos (ESPOL). They were asked to present some of the main findings and challenges faced during 6 years of NETWORK programme execution.

The workshop discussions were organized along the following 3 main topics (with some underlying sub-topics):

- **NETWORK concept - proposed goals and features:** criteria for selection, impact and sustainability
- **Management structure of a Network programme:** level of interuniversity cooperation among local partner institutes, position of the hub institution, balanced division of responsibilities
- **Identification and Phase in (context analysis:** foresee sufficient time and resources to get to know each other, and strengthen the relationships between the Network partners).

3.8.2 Main elements in the discussion per topic

NETWORK CONCEPT

Subtopic - Main characteristics and features

Guiding questions:

Topic 1: main characteristics of a NETWORK.

- *The Network Intervention strengthens national interuniversity cooperation within a given country. However what about international cooperation opportunities. How to link up with cross-country initiatives or integrate in international networks (e.g. networks of the Flemish experts)? Currently we have only 1 NETWORK per country, what do you think about this?*

- As also indicated during the introductory presentations, participants agree that even if the focus is on strengthening interuniversity cooperation in support of development at the national level, the NETWORKs can be very different in terms of needs and contents. The specific local context of the universities and the country level political context are very determining factors (e.g. in Ethiopia there is a huge need of PhD and capacity building; Ecuador/Vietnam the focus is on strengthening interuniversity cooperation in terms of master programmes;
- In terms of linking up with international networks, the possibility to connect with existing ICP programmes is an advantage since these strengthen the cooperation of the programme and the links between the involved universities.
- The IUC is seen as a leader but how to make sure this does not interfere with the main purpose of a Network which is actually creating a network! After building capacity it is now time to share it with other partner universities around a specific theme. Capacity building can be made available for the weaker university members. After IUC as capacity and investment it is time now to move to a higher comprehensive level offering the post-graduates the possibility to excel their research skills. Centers of excellence can be developed.
- Flemish academics can still play an important role in the Networks. Sustainability-wise there is still room for improvement and the Flemish partners can play a crucial role in this. Links with external programmes and partners is usually guarantee for success. The idea is that after the implementation of the Network there is enough capacity built to take over from the Flemish partners, once enough local staff is being trained.
- Exchange of students remains crucial feature of the UDC. Joint PhD formula's do exist in some cases already. That does not exist yet for MSc but some credit exchanges are already in place. Policies on this could/should be implemented at national level, whereby exchanges not only go from South to North but also the other way since Flemish students should also be given the opportunity to go study in Vietnam.
- Some mentioned that national or international networks depend on the situation. Sometimes it is better to go for transnational networks if not for the fact that different funding sources (read governments) can be addressed. If in the same country there can be a competition between the partners to get co-funding. Other state that the structure should be kept as simple as possible and that the purpose is to address national purposes.

Subtopic - Sustainability at national and institutional level and conditions for uptake

Guiding questions:

- *What about the institutional embedding? What will happen after a Network? Sustainability measures to be taken? Co-funding (in-kind or financial) to be increased over the years?*
- *Same focus on research/educational practices & publications, etc. or more societal impact? How can we better create conditions for societal uptake? How can we measure outcomes and impact of a Network?*

In order to ensure the embedding of the NETWORK programme locally in view of sustainability and uptake it is agreed upon that it is important that the local institute has a strong national (e.g. national government) and local network (e.g. provincial/local government, local stakeholders, ..). Also the links with international networks (see comments above with regard of the links with Flemish programmes) strengthen the potential sustainability of the Networks.

- Important to have **involvement of ministries** for such type of programmes. In some countries (Cuba) it is mandatory to get the line ministries onboard. Not necessary to put it on the national agenda, but involvement and interaction (research) is crucial also in Ecuador. 1/3 of programme budget is financed by government. Each university can decide how much it contributes.
- Cuba has 2 strategies in terms of **sustainability**. At local/regional level there are 3 PhD schools and 2 summer schools. Next step is closer involvement of industries in the lecturing. Opportunities to work together and further develop research. At international level there is a consortium with private partners that support the research and take up trained students in collecting and interpret data also with regards to infrastructure. Hence societal impact is much more outspoken.
- Networks should not be overrated when talking about **societal impact** with “only” supporting cooperation between 4-5 universities. More partners is not recommendable for keeping a good oversight budget wise and administration wise. Crucial to involve government. Also the impact and quality of the scientific research results should be most important.
- **Programme ownership** is key and local partners should be involved continuously. The same recommendation also holds for Flemish partners where maximum cooperation is recommendable. That is also a strong point towards local governments: the more partners involved, the more weight in the scale.
- **How to get more impact as a Network?** Publications are considered as an important contribution as well the use of research results by the population. Ecuador took the risk to fund MSc even though demand is rather low. Still, the programme is convinced that the first batch of post-graduates will prove its usefulness and attract more attention. Also local people are strongly involved in the project implementation.
- The Flemish partner should continue being of added value. The cooperation between the Flemish institutions is even more important. University colleges should also more often being involved through additional funding with South Initiatives and other types of projects.

STRUCTURE/MANAGEMENT OF A NETWORK PROGRAMME

Subtopic 1: Management structure and dividing responsibilities

Guiding questions:

- *What do you think of the general “blueprint” Network management structures (blue-prints)? Is such a blueprint still relevant? Should there be changes in the set-up? Shortcomings, role of project leaders south versus focal points per institution and team members per project/institution. How can Flemish project leaders (advisors versus project leaders in generation 2013, generation 2017 all project leaders) be most effective in contributing to a Network? Role of team members?*
- *How can we guarantee that a Network is more than the ‘programme of the hub university’? What is most efficient way in dividing responsibilities/accountabilities between the partner universities? Is there a limit to the number of partner universities that can participate in a Network, that are manageable? How to get different Flemish HEIs on board?*

All participants agree that it is important to strengthen **vertical linkages and create a regular feedback loop between the NETWORK programmes and the different university authorities**. This should indeed be seen as a continuous effort and is crucial for a strong partnership and for maintaining the ownership at level of all institutions during all stages of the NETWORK.

A number of elements were put forward:

- Overall the similar blueprint structure to the IUC –with coordinators S/N, teams S/N and committees S/N- is quite useful for a Network as well with coordinators, project leaders and specific for the NETWORKs the focal points per partner institution.
- Local and Joint steering committees allow to report on a regular basis. Changes in this system (people moving) does make it unstable. It is key to keep the project leaders for the sustainability to be most successful. Yearly meetings could be organised at a different location thus supporting the rotation between the partners that as such can be in the spotlight.
- Also financially, responsibilities should be well discussed well before the start, not only between the partners but also between the teams. One should keep in mind that a network is still about seeding money.
- On the other hand the skill of networking should be taught and trained. Flemish partners do have to sense a return of investment otherwise they might lose interest. Blueprint on how to cooperate in a NETWORK could be offered by VLIR-UOS, the structure of a network further elaborated and established. This should be started from day 1 where structure and administration of the programme is explained. Also the current structure of the ICPs (at level of incremental funding partners) can be used in support of the NETWORKS for organizing the various trainings.
- Institutional strengthening and transversal projects should also be made possible in order to strengthen the network. Innovation and education are definitely part of a Network and could best be implemented in the second phase.
- The NETWORK structure should be kept as simple as possible and linked to this the purpose is to address national purposes.
- Another argument was that the specific model for the network should be developed so that purposes and goals are clear from the very start. Depending on that model one could then define what type of administration is needed and what skills are required to guarantee an optimal implementation. As such a facilitator can be searched and the necessary means could be made available during the phase in.
- The Networks should not be limited to a maximum partners. During the identification the potential partners are to be identified. It is more important to avoid exclusion than to highlight inclusion. It is up to the local partners to decide who can be part of the Network. On the other hand dilution should be avoided and thus 4 partners is a maximum. (Cfr; some platforms where too many partners were involved)

Subtopic : Implementation time

- *What is the most suitable implementation time for a Network to be most efficient? 2 phases as in IUC (building network conditions versus consolidation/sustainability)? Same runtime? Need for phase out?*

Not many arguments were collected on this matter. No real alternatives or comments, objections with regard to the ideal runtime came forward. What was stressed is that 2 phases remain crucial with a long Phase-In. Each phase should be closed with an evaluation . Also a Phase-out of 1 year is recommendable in order to guarantee an optimal sustainability.

IDENTIFICATION AND PHASE IN OF NETWORK PROGRAMMES

In-country conditions and institutional context

Guiding questions In-country conditions:

- Which in-country conditions should be present/advisable in order to start a Network programme? How to perform a local assessment of network potential? What criteria should be used for a potential partner university to becoming an effective member of a Network? Organisational assessment in IUC, part of the network assessment when preparing for a Network?

Guiding questions institutional context:

- How to ensure high level local support from the different HEIs (hub + partner institutes) in view of coherence, alignment with local systems? How to ensure support at Flemish level: is there support for a NETWORK at the level of Flemish HEIs? Possibility to link with international programmes & research at Flemish HEIs?

Quite some arguments related to sustainability can also be put forward in this discussion, such as the importance of taking into account **in-country contexts** (e.g. strong national networks), local network (e.g. provincial/local government, local stakeholders, ..), **institutional contexts** (e.g. importance of institutional assessment) at level of the different partner institutions, etc.

A number of arguments were put forward:

- Peculiarities of local context should be fully taken into account: government, existing cooperation between potential partners. Information on the structure of the programme is to be shared at the very first moment a Network is mentioned.
- Private partners, ministries and industries should be involved from the very start.
- Also Flemish institutions should be involved at the very start, allowing to continue after the Network's being implemented. Multi-stakeholders have to be in the South. Hence one could speak of a meta-network.
- Starting from IUC so it is up to that partner to decide who else should be part of the network. On that note one could work with clusters, direct partners and indirect, the former taking advantage of the Network without being actual members of the network. Capacity is here too a key criteria for becoming a member together with mutual interest and complementarity.
- Depending on the situation one should go for stronger partners to optimize the sustainability. Choice of local project leaders is also very important. They should have good research skills but also and especially managing skills. This also holds for focal points but in a less important way. As such project leaders could and should also come from the different partners in the network programme.

Suitable timing for NETWORK upstart, importance of Phase in, etc.

Guiding Questions: *What is the most suitable timing of starting up a Network after the completion of an IUC programme? After end-evaluation IUC (finalizes in Y11) or from start of Y 11? Until when can a former IUC partner be eligible for implementing a Network? The Phase In was very limited for networks upon till now, basically a formulation mission (budget). The idea is to foresee a real Phase in (1 to ½ years max., limited budget). What do you think about this?*

- Ideally a network should start right after the finalizing of the IUC programme. Capacity building is a continuous process and brings non-stop improvement. As such there is also an extra motivation for the finishing IUC. But that creates some challenges with more than 20 IUC programmes running currently. One of the criteria could be that there is already some cooperation on national level between universities. Thus an IUC should be well scanned in its capacities to lead such a network.

Also the local situation should be fully taken into account for deciding whether or not a network is desirable and feasible. Elements like national situation (MIC or LDC) and past experience with IUC programme should be taken into account. Also the suggested partners universities should be screened in detail as well not only to map out their

- Phase In should be extended so that try-out is made possible and partners can get to know each other optimally. This should take at least 1 year and even 2 years. Other state that Probes should start as soon as possible. In that context the phase-in should not be too long but rather implement an adaptive way of administrating and learning by doing.
- It might be useful that prior to NETWORK upstarts, there have been experiences with JOINT projects (e.g. prior experiences with NSS in Vietnam, Cuba, Ecuador). A good preparation and 'testing period' is crucial, more than with an IUC.
- There should be a clear mapping of the existing cooperation programmes and past experiences in UDC or other types of cooperation. Maybe it should be recommendable to make policy-initiated calls rather than open calls, allowing to see what is already available. Country strategy should be guiding tool in developing new networks.

3.8.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- Importance of ex ante assessment of network potential, institutional capacity and existing national interuniversity cooperation
- Potential of local, national, international linkages is to be explored and can contribute to sustainability and impact
- Blueprint network is ok but role of focal points at level of different institutions is important
- Network should be more than the 'hub', importance of clear division of roles and responsibilities
- During a Network execution, and in particular during Phase 1, enough time should go to actually creating/consolidating the network.
- Importance of support from all university authorities of involved institutions: phase in should be more than just the formulation, "getting to know each other"
- Call should address former IUC institutions with mapped institutional and national potential for networking

3.9 M&E concepts in IUC (M&E workshop)

3.9.1 Workshop context

As part of the new regulatory framework for cooperation, result-orientated management is part of the revised paradigm in development cooperation. Both in the recent impact evaluation and the recent IUC evaluations, evaluators found that IUC programmes did not excel in results-oriented management. This implies that objectives were often not well defined, and that indicators often did not go beyond the output level. At the same time, there is a wide recognition that academics might have other priorities in their agenda than M&E, that they are not M&E professionals and therefore expectations need to be realistic. In this workshop we informed participants about the current playing field (what are the rules of our back donor) and we discussed possible scenarios to simplify M&E processes for academics while at the

same time assuring higher quality of M&E and the availability of data about the effects of IUC programmes. The workshop started with a general, open discussion about M&E, followed by the introduction of a number of potential scenario's and finally a discussion about this scenario's.

Presentation of different potential scenario's:

Scenario A – continuing the effort

VLIR-UOS will capitalize on past interventions in order to avoid interventions needing to 'reinvent the wheel'. First, VLIR-UOS will make available a meta-Theory of Change/results frame for VLIR-UOS interventions. Applicants can get inspiration from this Theory of Change to design their own results framework (see attachment 1, Syspons example). Secondly, VLIR-UOS will make available an easy-to-use database which will include both objectives & results of VLIR-UOS interventions, and a list of indicators. This implies a kind of catalogue of potential objectives and results, and a catalogue of potential indicators, linked to the aforementioned objectives & results. These indicators could also be accompanied by benchmarks (e.g. what are the typical target values for indicators X in case of a project type Y?). These catalogues are tools that can help academics in developing their project but remain entirely optional. Interventions still have to provide objectives/results and indicators in a logframe format **next to** the monitoring of standard indicators.

Positive points:

- Will somewhat help academics in defining results and indicators, simplifying formulation
- Will lead to some harmonization and some quality improvement, but to a limited extent
- Still gives promoters all the freedom to develop their own objectives, indicators, results, etc.

Negative points:

- As it is optional, many academics will still "invent" own objectives and indicators and thus aggregation or meta-analysis remains difficult
- Still a need to have a systematic monitoring of standard indicators next to the monitoring of the project's indicators
- Only limited reduction of workload for academics

Scenario B – Unique ToC's, standard monitoring

Building further on Option 1, VLIR-UOS could provide projects with indicators that projects need to use to monitor progress (some can be 100% standard, some may need some limited contextualization). Different from "standard indicator monitoring" today, these indicators will be the only indicators to be followed up by the projects. A precondition for this is that a basic typology of projects exists (e.g. Research projects, Education projects, Transversal projects) and that there is a list of indicators that can fit any of these project types (some indicators may still need some limited contextualization). The need for a separate monitoring of standard indicators no longer exists, so no more parallel monitoring formats. In addition to the detailed definitions for the indicators, guidance is provided on the mode of data collection and analysis, setting baseline and target values. In the case of indicators where data are to be collected through surveys, further guidance on the content of the surveys and suggested templates could be provided to ensure a common approach.

Positive points:

- Will somewhat help academics in defining results and will help them strongly in defining indicators
- Will lead to harmonization at the level of indicators and data collection
- No longer a parallel system of LogFrame-monitoring and standard indicator monitoring
- Could allow some limited simplification of formats

Negative points:

- More standardization → indicators might no longer grasp some results/outcomes...
- Potential mismatch between a minority of projects and standard indicators per typology

Scenario C– Standard ToC's, unique monitoring

Building further on Option 1, VLIR-UOS could provide projects with standard results frameworks / standard basic Theories of Change. Promotors in this case simply have to choose the type of project they want to implement and do not longer need to formulate objectives or results. They only need to contextualize and explain them in the narrative: what does it mean for their project/context, what are the links between the different results and objectives, etc. In order to monitor progress, projects formulate adequate indicators to measure their progress (next to the list of 8 standard indicators) A long-list of typical indicators will be available for them).

Positive points:

- Will greatly help academics in defining results & objectives and will somewhat help them in defining indicators
- Will lead to harmonization and quality improvement in terms of results frameworks
- Could allow some limited simplification of formats

Negative points:

- Standard results frameworks will results in less attention for context and complexity during formulation and monitoring
- Some innovative project approaches might not fit in the predefined ToC's

3.9.2 Main elements in the discussion

- The monitoring of results matters and is important
- VLIR-UOS' system and format are already quite good. Annual follow-up of logframe is excellent as it keeps the logical framework "alive".
- VLIR-UOS already made some improvements in the past years. The reporting requirements in particular are mentioned as a tremendous improvement. Different speakers consider the current framework as sufficiently clear, not needing further adaptations.
- Flexibility in the logframe should remain.
- There is a broad consensus that further standardization of the Theory of Change would not be appropriate. The detailed Theory of Change is rich ... but very complex. This could be demotivating for newcomers to IUC. The basis ToC is fine and easy to use. Specific ToC development

should be left to the projects. This is not only important to give maximum freedom to projects, but also because the process of formulating a project strategy (ToC) with partners is considered as highly important.

- The database of indicators sounds interesting and useful. However, such a database could also lead to an information overload. Still, the general appreciation is that a quality assured list of indicators (as examples) could be useful. This indicators can still be categorized to make the list more accessible and user friendly.
- Though some find the idea of standardising monitoring attractive, there is a broad consensus that combining standard (needed for meta-reporting) and non-standard indicators is the best option, although this results in a parallel system. Participants think it is important that projects are able to develop their own, specific indicators.
- It remains important to make sure VLIR-UOS does not make the indicators the objective. Current pragmatism and flexibility needs to be maintained at VLIR-UOS.
- Making available (optional) VLIR-UOS tools for monitoring more complex changes would be very useful and appreciated. This could imply the development of VLIR-UOS tools, or providing information on other existing tools.

3.9.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- No major changes requested, reporting already drastically simplified: continue current efforts
- No standardization, but provide more tools, and long list of potential indicators

3.10 Integration of transversal themes in projects/programmes

3.10.1 Workshop context

According to the Belgian law on development cooperation of 2013, following themes need to be integrated in a **transversal** way within all interventions of the Belgian development cooperation as to reach sustainable and inclusive development:

- the **gender dimension**, which aims at the empowerment of women and at the equality between men and women in society;
- the protection of the **environment** and of **natural resources**, including the fight against climate change, drought and global deforestation. Linked to this project holders should also take into account the legal obligations related to Treaty concerning biological diversity (CBD) and the Nagoya Protocol on the access to natural resources and the fair division of benefits coming from the use of these resources.

The ambition of VLIR-UOS is not restricted to the minimal requirements of the law, but to identify support mechanisms & tools for integration both themes in projects and programmes, and to support a mainstreaming of the related concepts in its organizational culture. The workshop organised a brainstorm on how to move forward with the transversal themes of gender and environment in the context of IUC programmes. In the workshop, a discussion on the ambition of VLIR-UOS to deal with the transversal themes was held in two groups. Support mechanisms & tools for integration of both themes in projects and programmes, and to support a mainstreaming of the related concepts in the organizational culture were also discussed.

3.10.2 Main elements in the discussion

Suggestions and recommendations for gender

Challenges

- Delegations of VLIR-UOS (in the context of an identification or formulation for example) are often received in a **male dominated environment**, which does not necessarily give a view on the needs and expectations of women in the society or organization. How can we give visibility to **hidden stakeholders**?
- Often specific **data** on gender is not available or hidden.
- In the formulation of phase 1, there is not a lot of possibility to discuss gender. There is not a lot of **budget** to travel nor a lot of **time** to discuss the topic fundamentally.
- There is still a lot of **knowledge** missing on gender, as is made clear in the elaboration of project proposals. Most questions concern filling in the section on gender.
- It is difficult to work on the “numbers”, as a **baseline situation** needs to be taken into account (e.g. intake in higher education). However, we need to think critical about the argument that there are no suitable female PhD candidates (e.g. which efforts were done?).
- The risk that the integration of gender happens in a **superficial** way is very high when turning it too much into an **obligation**.

Three levels – suggestions and recommendations

- The three levels (numbers, content, organization) need to be addressed together, in an **inclusive approach**. Ambition is necessary to reach sustainable change.
- **Top down measures** need to be applied to reach more equality, as models show that it still would take 100 years to reach a balance. The highest levels need to be involved.

Suggestions & tools – suggestions and recommendations

- Researchers need to **reach women** and get them out of their isolated position, as to make programmes more gender sensitive.
- **Gender analysis** should be integrated in the diagnostics of a project. There are a lot of examples/tools available, that need to be thought through in the specific context of a project. VLIR-UOS needs to **supply tools** that people could use.
- Organizing a **fact finding mission** is crucial, there are a lot of things hidden behind numbers.
- There should be **incentives** for universities which are serious about gender mainstreaming, for example by favoring them in the **selection** through certain criteria.
- **Imbalanced teams** (at both sides) should be **avoided**. There is less leverage for discussing the topic if there is a male-only representation at Flemish side. Importance of **role-modelling** is also a responsibility of the North partners. Other levels than ZAP (e.g. postdoc) should also be encouraged to participate, as to have more diverse teams.
- **Local gender expertise** should be consulted. But **responsibility** for integrating gender should not be exclusively on the expert, otherwise this doesn't invite the **team** to learn about it. Also, the expertise should be available for different background **disciplines** (economics, agriculture...).
- In each project, there should be a **member** involved which is **trained** in gender bias.
- **Gender policies** of partner universities are an important source of information, but must be checked with reality.
- A **specific approach** should be discussed: call for project proposals specific on gender, recruitment specific for female PhD candidates...
- VLIR-UOS should encourage to share **best practices** as it is necessary not to lose courage, for example on female authority, on how to cope with bullying as female applicant... What are strategies when you experience problems? This is relevant for North and South and could be an important base for **collective action**. A critical mass of 1/3 is needed to make a difference, as is shown by research.
- **Evaluation teams** should be gender balanced.

IUC in general – suggestions and recommendations

- There has to be **previous cooperation** with an institution, before starting up an IUC. This gives you more insight for example on who to involve to get useful information for gender analysis.

Suggestions and recommendations for environment

Three levels – suggestions and recommendations:

The two levels management and organization are not easily distinguishable and it was suggested to combine both (few to none comments were given on the level of organization, so it might be considered to drop this level at once)

- Management:
 - o It is agreed that in every project 'environmental impact' should be considered
 - o Avoid imposing 'do's and don'ts'
 - o Awareness raising on environmental sustainability is important (eg. waste treatment)
 - o The management of a project which takes environment into account might have an example function and serve as a role model to other projects
 - o Concrete suggestions:
 - don't print everything on paper (especially meeting documents which are hardly used)

- use public transport as much as possible, and facilitate collective travel & synchrony of fieldwork to limit environmental impact
 - more use of telecom to minimize travels. It is not possible, however, to exclude international travel from projects where personal exchanges are crucial
 - consider sustainable energy sources
 - take into account how waste is treated
 - introduce environmental friendly techniques / protocols / habits, eg. in the labs. This is good for the university, for the environment and for the people as take home message
- Content:
 - Several projects have a clear, obvious and direct link with 'environment' (eg. recovery of bioactives from natural waste materials like cocoa pulp and seaweed)
 - If a project is not directly linked to 'environment', should it pretend to have an environmental impact? This might perhaps lead to 'overshooting'
 - In order to take 'environment' as transversal theme into account in a more contextualized way, approaches like 'Areas Based Education / Research / Curriculum Development' and 'Asset Based Community development' can be considered

Suggestions & tools – recommendations

- Integration in analysis of the context (concept note, organizational assessment):
 - Important
- Collecting advice from an expert:
 - Can be done, but not during selection (because that way it becomes too much of a focus) but rather as a coach during formulation
- Providing training or information sessions
 - Training after selection
- Appointing an expert in the selection commission
 - No, that way it becomes too much of a focus
- Sharing good practices
 - Ok, during implementation
- Developing specific indicators
- Integration of an activity, intermediate result, specific objective
- available checklists
 - Using Existing toolkits should be made more feasible, more user friendly
 - The toolkits could be made available as a suggestion, but not as an obligation
- Appointment of a (local) focal point
- Integration in evaluation (ToR, self-assessments)

3.10.3 Main conclusions from the workshop

- There is a clear support for **being ambitious** on the integration of both themes.
- The distinction between **different levels** are a useful point of entry
- Different suggestions have been validated and other suggestions were added
- **VLIR-UOS and the programmes** are invited to reflect on the concretization of the engagement to be ambitious

3.11 Additional funding opportunities, co-funding mechanisms

3.11.1 Workshop context

An IUC programme brings about a dynamic of cooperation which is unique in its shape, duration and multidisciplinary. As such it also triggers new opportunities and ideas. This, however, might be hindered by financial limitations of the partner programme, as well as of the local institution.

In this workshop we discussed how we can “bake a larger cake”. The VLIR-UOS guidelines with regard to IUC funding and additional VLIR-UOS funding opportunities have evolved throughout the years. From broad, high-budget IUC’s with no possibility for additional funding there was an evolution to adapted scope and budget with differentiated additional funding opportunities depending on local context and institutional analysis, all of this in a context of concentration of aid and country programming.

In a context of a renewed vision on concentration of aid, country programming and strategic partnership concepts, VLIR-UOS is preparing for a new call for IUC programmes - which are a response to institutional priorities of selected partner institutes - whereby modern concepts of additional/co-funding and guidelines on additional funding schemes are important to bring into the discussion. In this workshop VLIR-UOS wanted to gather feedback & ideas on this topic. To what extent is it feasible/opportune to require co-funding? What are the preconditions?

To further guide the discussions, following questions were used:

Additional VLIR-UOS funding

- *Additional VLIR-UOS funding: allow or not allow?*
- *If allowed: how to connect additional VLIR-UOS projects to the IUC programme? Require a letter of support from the IUC coordinators to be added to the proposal? Clarify the added value? Limits? Agreement with PSU? Other ideas?*
- *What kind of additional project funding should be allowed for IUC programmes? SI? TEAM? JOINT? (already allowed) Global Minds, ICP,? Different approach Phase 1 versus Phase 2? Other?*
- *What about ‘Synergy and complementarity’? Useful to foresee a small fund in each of the IUC programmes intended for S&C initiatives with other stakeholders?*

Co-funding

- *Guarantee for more ownership and sustainability?*
- *If yes, how?*
 - *In kind: how?*
 - *In cash: from which sources? how much? phase 1 and/or phase 2? need to differentiate between institutions/countries? using whose financial system? Planning, reporting?*
- *Create conditions for sustainability?How? When? What could VLIR-UOS do to facilitate?*

3.11.2 Main elements in the discussion

Additional funding

- Allow or not allow?
 - Instead of creating new rules with regard to additional VLIR-UOS projects, the IUC program/intervention itself should be made more flexible (f.e. part of the budget could be a 'free budget')
 - For every additional VLIR-UOS project: require an extra partner (NGO, university, private company, ...) and a matching fund (cofunding) (= more ownership and sustainability + broadening of the partnership's network)
 - Discussion: no limits on additional VLIR-UOS funding (= concentration of funds on 1 partner university) versus limits on additional VLIR-UOS funding (= leaving 'seed money' for new IUC partnerships)
- What kind of additional project funding should be allowed for IUC programmes?
 - Global Minds: risk for double funding (f.e. PhD)
 - Additional VLADOC funding (Flemish PhD) should be allowed
- What about 'Synergy and complementarity'? Useful to foresee a small fund in each of the IUC programmes intended for S&C initiatives with other stakeholders?
 - VLIR-UOS should facilitate collaborations with other actors (not only NGOs)
 - VLIR-UOS should organize workshops, platforms, etc. to increase the visibility of project results
- What about initiatives related to transversal themes (gender, environment)? Useful to foresee a small fund in each of the IUC programmes?
 - No fragmentation!
 - No only gender and environment should be taken into account, but all SDGs
 - Gender should not only be 'measured' by registration of female project participants, but also by measuring the impact on the female society (especially when no female project participants are available)
 - Extra or separate funds for transversal themes will not change the situation: it is not a question of funding but of finding links (idem for synergy and complementarity)

Co-funding

- Guarantee for more ownership and sustainability? If yes, how?
 - In kind already exists: PhD, topping-up, infrastructure, availability of involved professors, organization of a seminar, ...
 - Specify in kind is not a good idea: it will inflate means, it should not be made compulsory either
 - In kind could be mentioned in the report, not necessary to specify it in planning
 - In cash could create more sustainability and ownership but we cannot make it compulsory: we often collaborate with weaker institutes and even in middle income countries we may intervene in a poor region; in cash could be prepared during 2nd phase through creation of conditions for sustainability
- Create conditions for sustainability?
 - Capacity building should in 2nd phase involve competitive project application & writing
 - Help to attract other donors: could this be done in a generic way or more specific context-linked way?
 - The IUC should involve the creation/development of management and research structures which will last beyond the end of IUC intervention: they will need extra funding to guarantee sustainability; they will also need persons to keep the structures functioning and therefore we

could rely on researchers, local PhDs and post docs trained by the IUC; it would also be beneficial to have the involvement of the local government to maintain goals. Moreover, the S. partner should be (made) aware of the value that IUC has created in order to get maintained support, also after IUC intervention.

- IUC should be seen as a kind of seed money: VLIR-UOS supports a vision, a strategic plan of a S. partner to collaborate with others and improve/change a certain situation. In that perspective, the S. partner should make link with policy: with representatives of local government + local embassies. VLIR-UOS can support this through capacity building and sharing of information. Stronger links should be made with (external) stakeholders so that they could contribute with money (in cash) during 2nd phase of IUC. We should not make it compulsory but at least stimulate it; we should make IUC less academic and more flexible in planning, focused on solving stakeholders' problems. IUC supports a vision and can play a trigger to attract other funding, to create a multiplier effect. This logic should be made clear from the start, than give the freedom to apply it.
- Out of the box approaches could be beneficial: why not work out a scheme for student loans? Some students have a very rich background and don't need to be (fully) funded. Also the links with banks, industry and commerce could be good because it broadens the scope for collaboration and can attract external funding.
- Involve ATP staff in IUC to search for extra funds.
- Involve labs to introduce a service facility (payment for using/hiring material), involve the selling of crops to generate funds and sustain activities.
- In cash co-funding could – like for in kind contributions – be mentioned in the reporting, not in the planning.

3.11.3 Main conclusions from the discussion

- No consensus on mandatory co-funding for IUC
- In-kind contributions do not need to be accounted for/made explicit in the proposal, however, are important to take into account when discussing the local commitment during Phase In (PhD de-load, local in kind support to the programme, ..)
- The IUC programme/intervention itself should be made more flexible (e.g. an IUC budget should be flexible enough, review should be possible during annual programming versus partner programme; maybe part of the budget could be a 'free budget' if this would be acceptable within current DGD regulatory frameworks)
- No consensus on extra rules for additional funding for ongoing IUCs. However, it was suggested that new projects with the IUC partner institutions are only eligible for funding when they include extra partners (NGO, university, private company, ...) and matching funds (co-funding). This would guarantee more ownership and sustainability + broadening of the partnership's network) ; quid Global Minds (overlap?). Whether or not this is feasible needs to be further studied.

4. Way forward

Topic	Main conclusions	Development / adaptation needed for Call?	Development / adaptation needed for Phase-in (incl. formulation)?	Development / adaptation needed in programme execution as of start of PP (2021)	Policy decision needed by BUOS
1. Realising Change outside the institution (“Societal Change” workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An IUC is more than change within the institution and envisions to contribute with societal change as is also stated in the general objective’ that an IUC is about strengthening a partner institution in its role as driver in a local society’; Feedback was given on the ‘dissemination framework’ (creating the conditions for uptake) developed by Syspons. This framework shows different potential strategies of dissemination in different phases of a project/programme. The audience was receptive and acknowledged that further development could be interesting/useful; Syspons will develop this further in the thematic evaluation (inception report end April, final report September) dealing with ‘creating the conditions for uptake’ in the context of university development cooperation projects. 	Some elements might be included in the concept note format part of the IUC Call for ‘South proposals’ (step 1 in the selection procedure)	Framework potentially to be included in the formulation (e.g. as guideline) of partner programmes	Tbd, potential follow-up tool in the context of the yearly planning and reporting/monitoring	No specific decision required for now apart from validation of the main elements to be taken into consideration in the Call for South proposals
2. Realising change within the institution (“I in IUC” workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realising change within the institution is very important and should involve more than strengthening a number of institutional-level priorities (academic and institutional domains). A IUC should effectively target institutional strengthening in order for the ‘I in IUC’ to be of real merit A framework was presented to clarify the different potential levels and dimension of capacity building (individual, organizational, institutional, ..). This framework was intended to support the workshop discussions on institutional change and was considered useful for further development/reflection. Potentially this tool could be used as follow-up of different capacity levels during execution of the programme (e.g. JSCM meetings) A discussion was held on the current functioning of Transversal Institutional Strengthening projects, whereby it was mentioned to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarify positioning of transversal institutional strengthening projects in IUC Transversal institutional strengthening projects target more than the IUC: these projects should provide (as much as possible) institutional broad support Consider other formats/procedures for transversal projects Consider mechanisms to include academic policy makers, ATP and Emeriti in IUC (transversal) projects 	Include the different levels of capacity building in an IUC in the formats Clarify role and positioning of transversal institutional strengthening projects	Adapt IUC formulation guidelines with regard to Transversal Institutional Strengthening projects (e.g. revise/optimize the formats for transversal projects if needed)	Tbd	Yes, discussion on how to create institutional incentives at the level of the Flemish HEIs to include more academic policy makers and ATP, and, if found relevant, emeriti in the transversal institutional strengthening projects. This discussion leads us to reflect upon the contents of these projects

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Allow but limit PhD funding within transversal projects based on clear added value motivation 				
3. Strengthening the programme logic throughout formulation, Phase 1 and Phase 2 (Programme logic workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go ahead with proposal to strengthen programme level starting from a clear programme vision/theory of change • When developing adapted formats due attention should be given to the situation of weaker universities in fragile countries. so that not too many expectations are put on the programme level. As such it is important to maintain a balance between a stronger programme level and the autonomy of projects • Discuss phase 1 → Phase 2: the transition of Phase 1 to Phase 2 should be taken very seriously with enough room for changes between Phases (scope, number of projects, change of projects, ..) • Provide tools to help the IUC Joint Steering Committee Meeting to follow-up on programme level 	Minor adaptation formats proposal & call	Minor adaptation formulation process and PP format	Develop tools for JSCM	Not for this new call, but in view of later Phase 2 programme preparations, discussion on the way of follow-up of mid-term evaluation recommendations can be held
4. Partners(hip) concept, programme management and support (PSU) (Partnership workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee institutional embedding and support from top management as from inception of the programme and assure sufficient vertical linkages with the university authorities throughout the programme execution • Re-inforce the JSCM as an important moment/space for strategic decision-making and progress monitoring • Include training and synergy actions within the framework of JSCM and involve university authorities • Flemish and local IUC coordinators should be backed by their institution • IUCs are interesting interventions to include new/young (Flemish) academics as project leaders within a supportive environment • An IUC partnership/programme should also be well-supported by the Flemish university authorities, in particular of course the coordinating university • The position of coordinators needs to be attractive enough (e.g. as opposed to them only being involved in management and not in education or research) • A sound programme management and well-functioning PSU is crucial: more attention should be given to the PSU development and the role of the programme manager (e.g. support in terms of reporting requirements, training needs, event organization, ...). A programme manager function should be a full-time job • The role and support of the Flemish support (via the ICOS and other services) should be well-elaborated • The management manual format and use can be optimized 	<p>More focus on the link of the IUC proposal with the institutional priorities and clarify support from the university authorities</p> <p>Details of the different functions in the IUC management structure should be clear for IUC partner institutions (e.g. so that take these into account when selecting local project leaders/coordinators)</p>	Clarifying the different positions in the Call for Flemish interested parties (Coordinators, project leaders) and clarifying the outline of the PSU/programme manager expectations	Follow-up on PSU/JSCM functioning could be optimised	No, except for discussion on selection procedure for coordinators (when/how?) and project leaders (interuniversity participation,..) and validation of the policy framework of the call

<p>5. Getting to know the local & Flemish context (Phase In workshop)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add questions (from workshop) to ex ante local context and institutional assessment • When pre-selecting IUC candidates, the weighing of selection criteria could be adapted so that a selection would not target top research/educational institutes but institutes with potential for change at institutional and developmental level • Foresee ample time and means to inform partners on VLIR-UOS system, local context, etc. 	<p>Final selection procedure document, with steps in the phase In</p> <p>Decide on weight of selection criteria</p>	<p>Update selection system document</p> <p>Update/development institutional assessment framework (incl. mapping of other actors)</p> <p>Foresee mechanisms to inform partners on VLIR-UOS system</p>	<p>Mainly relevant for Phase In, but some elements of institutional capacity assessment could require follow-up during programme execution</p>	<p>Yes. A follow-up discussion needs to be held on the selection procedure (incl. matchmaking) and the weighing of selection criteria taking into account the policy framework on countries and types of institutions to be defined by the Bureau UOS on 26/4</p>
<p>6. The role, selection and guidance of PhDs within projects/programmes (PhD workshop)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PhD students can play a role as driver of change, but one should be realistic. At the beginning of the programme a PhD student would most probably be a driver of change for and within the research group, while at a later stage, he/she can contribute more to change at the level of the institution or even region. Capacity building at the level of the research group should be the starting point. • It is unrealistic to believe one PhD student can bring about change at the level of the institution (or broader). To do so you need a cohort of PhD students that can collaborate to contribute to organizational change, that can help create a culture of research and outreach at the university. They need to be embedded in a well-designed (research and project) team. • If PhD candidates are expected to be a driver of change then a qualitative recruitment strategy/policy is essential. • There should be mutual engagement of both the South institution and the Flemish institution. Open and transparent communication about the strategic and management approach to a planned PhD from an early stage are key. • It can be mutually enriching to twin Flemish PhD students with IUC PhD students – but finding the funding for this is an important issue. • Better training for PhDs can be one of the aspects that are developed but it is not a priority (nor possibility) for all partner institutions to start a doctoral school. • It is the responsibility of the local institution to make sure PhD's can stay involved in research, can contribute to research for some time. However, not everybody will be able to get promoted and build a career within the university. • The Flemish universities can support the partner institution in further developing selection procedures and PhD regulations. It can thus be an objective within the programme (e.g. mid-term result to be realized after Phase 1) but the intentions and planning of an institution need to be clear from the beginning . 	<p>No</p>	<p>More attention to PhD support framework and regulations at local institution</p> <p>Clarify towards the local institutions, the VLIR-UOS rules and expectations with regard to sandwich PhDs and the provided support/commitment on behalf of the IUC</p>	<p>Follow-up on a more systematic and strategic basis during JSCM</p>	<p>To be discussed in the context of PhD discussion within projects, RSZ, VLADOC, etc.</p>

7. The NETWORK model (NETWORK workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of ex ante assessment of network potential, institutional capacity and existing national interuniversity cooperation • Potential of local, national, international linkages is to be explored and can contribute to sustainability and impact • Blueprint network is ok but role of focal points at level of different institutions is important • Network should be more than the 'hub', importance of clear division of roles and responsibilities • During a Network execution, and in particular during Phase 1, enough time should go to actually creating/consolidating the network. • Importance of support from all university authorities of involved institutions: phase in should be more than just the formulation, "getting to know each other" • Call should address former IUC institutions with mapped institutional and national potential for networking 	Final selection procedure document, with steps in the phase In Foresee a real Phase In (not limited to formulation, but a real pre-partner programme phase with clear deliverables)	Update selection system document Update/development institutional assessment framework (incl. mapping of other actors)	Mainly relevant for the call and Phase In, but some elements of network capacity assessment could require follow-up during programme execution	Yes, importance of good pre-selection based on ex ante evaluation; means needed for Phase In of Network, policy initiated call
8. M&E concepts in IUC (M&E workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No major changes requested, reporting already drastically simplified: continue current efforts • No standardization, but provide more tools, and long list of potential indicators 	No	Provision of optional tools, examples, long list of indicators	No	No
9. Integration of transversal themes in projects/programmes (Transversal themes workshops)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a clear support for being ambitious on the integration of both themes. • The distinction between different levels are a useful point of entry • VLIR-UOS and the programmes are invited to reflect on the concretization of the engagement to be ambitious 	Include some elements in the concept note formats	Include transversal themes during institutional assessment	Tbd	Discussion of gender policy approach at level of Bureau UOS (26 April and following) Further steps with regard to environmental policy VLIR-UOS to be planned
10. Additional funding opportunities, co-funding mechanisms ("Additional Funding" workshop)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No consensus on mandatory co-funding for IUC. • In-kind contributions do not need to be accounted for/made explicit in the proposal, however, are important to take into account when discussing the local commitment during Phase In (PhD de-load, local in kind support to the programme, ..) • The IUC programme/intervention itself should be made more flexible (e.g. an IUC budget should be flexible enough, review should be possible during annual programming versus partner programme; maybe part of the budget could be a 'free budget' if this would be acceptable within current DGD regulatory frameworks) • No consensus on extra rules for additional funding for ongoing IUCs. However, it was suggested that new projects with the IUC partner institutions are only eligible for funding when they include extra partners (NGO, university, private company, ...) and matching funds (co-funding). This would guarantee more ownership and sustainability + broadening of the partnership's network) ; quid Global Minds (overlap?). Whether or not this is feasible needs to be further studied. 	Study whether the existing potential for flexibility (PP/AP/result-based versus activity based planning&reporting) versus regulatory framework is sufficient or can be optimised	Tbd	Rules regarding additional VLIR-UOS funding to be clarified before the following project calls/ quid linkages with other interventions (e.g. Global Minds)	Yes, when discussing portfolio and calls for the next FYP (as of 2 nd semester 2019 and mainly in 2020)

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