



Uganda Strategy document

December 2011

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Foreword

The process of country strategy identification and IUC selection was rolled out by VLIR-UOS in the context of the implementation of the political agreement signed in 2010. This agreement necessitates VLIR-UOS to formulate a strategy for each of its 20 VLIR-UOS partner countries. This will be done in a phased manner, Uganda being one of the first six countries for which a strategy will be formulated by the end of 2011. Identification missions were conducted by country teams consisting of two experts (one international and one local expert), a member of the Bureau UOS and the VLIR-UOS country desk officer.

A VLIR-UOS strategy represents an informed policy choice that serves as a framework for programming. This framework must be sufficiently broad in order to ensure that a sufficient number of quality partnerships can be formed and projects formulated on the basis of the VLIR-UOS operating modalities. However, the means of VLIR-UOS, both in terms of financial and human resources, are limited. For this reason, a relatively broad strategy may result in a modest programme.

VLIR-UOS funds partnerships of willing academics (Flemish academics offer their time on a voluntary basis) on themes that are developmentally relevant and result from a shared interest. Interventions may be in the form of scholarships or projects at institutional or sub-institutional level. Capacity development aimed at furthering the ability of HE institutions to serve as actors in development, is at the centre of the VLIR-UOS programme.

Country strategies are policy documents that will guide funding decisions of VLIR-UOS and allow for strategic impact based on programme coherence and contextual relevance.

Time frame and content

The development of academic capacity requires a long term framework that often goes against the current policy dynamics that are characterized by constant changes and shifts at the international and country level in both North and South.

Therefore, VLIR-UOS has opted for a strategic framework covering 12 years. This may seem long but merely represents one or two programming cycles in case of the budgetary more significant VLIR-UOS intervention types. Obviously, contextual changes (national policies, donor positions, VLIR-UOS (country) priorities etc.) may necessitate interim changes.

Also, the 12 year timeframe should be seen as a guideline given a more 'evolutionary' approach whereby every 6 years a strategic review will be made, if possible coinciding with the 6-year strategic programming of VLIR-UOS to DGD. A more explicit re-formulation will occur every 12 years. As a principle, abrupt strategic re-orientations will be avoided as this undermines the need for predictability and long term visioning, in particular at the level of the academic communities concerned.

As for content, strategies are meant to focus on academic and societal needs that match with the interest and expertise that can be offered by Flemish higher education institutes. This focus may be conceptual and/or region based with due consideration for the importance of possible themes put forward by ongoing IUC partnerships. In all cases, however, it must allow for multidisciplinary inputs. VLIR-UOS indeed favours holistic approaches.

Ownership and legitimacy

A country strategy is the result of numerous inputs and consultations with a wide spectrum of actors in Flanders and 'Country'. The strategy draws legitimacy from the lengthy consultation and formulation process. Eventually, however, it is a VLIR-UOS policy document.

While fully funded by the Belgian government, VLIR-UOS is not obliged to align itself with the Belgian bilateral cooperation programme, in those VLIR-UOS partner countries that also are Belgian partner countries. In terms of its strategic orientation and priorities, VLIR-UOS is therefore fully independent.

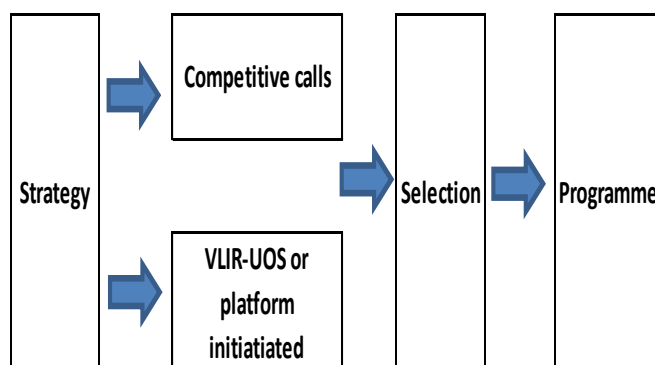
The country strategy as overriding reference

VLIR-UOS embraces project funding through open competitive calls and a merit and quality based selection. However, calls for proposals will make reference to the respective country strategies. Given sufficient quality, proposals will be further evaluated and ranked in terms of their possible contribution to the strategic framework. This may include considerations of strategic areas that are relatively over or underserved.

A country programme

VLIR-UOS has defined an indicative country budget that allows for a translation of this strategy academic partnerships and related initiatives through competitive calls and need/opportunity based interventions. The totality of the selected and funded projects represents a country programme for which VLIR-UOS in turn receives funding of the Belgian government on the basis of successive action plans each covering 3 years. VLIR-UOS oversees project implementation by the academics concerned, and reports to the Belgian government in terms of the (country level) results achieved.

However, in terms of fundable initiatives, VLIR-UOS relies on the response of the academic partners, and in most cases the academics of Flemish higher education institutes, to respond to such calls.



Country level objectives and results

VLIR-UOS facilitates academic partnerships and related initiatives within the context of a long term country strategy with a general objective. The portfolio of funded VLIR-UOS initiatives in 'country' will contribute to attaining this objective, and represents a result in itself.

Furthermore, VLIR-UOS has defined a range of indicators (Key Result Areas - KRAs) on the basis of which individual initiatives are expected to report. Such KRAs conform with standard academic benchmarks. Apart from objective key result areas such as publications and degrees being awarded, VLIR-UOS also tracks more qualitative results. The accumulated indicators for the whole of the funded country level initiatives, henceforth represent actual results that qualify the objectives.

The building of academic capacity is central to the work of VLIR-UOS. However, such capacity is expected to generate knowledge and insights as well as applications that when adopted could result

in 'changing lives'. This dimension is obviously much more difficult to capture, but VLIR-UOS hopes to identify trends through interim country level evaluations.

Acronyms

ADB	African Development Bank
BTC	Belgian Technical Cooperation
BTVET	Business, Technical and Vocational Education and Training
BU	Busitema University
EU	European Union
FARA	Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa
GU	Gulu University
HE	Higher Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IEEAF	Internet Educational Equal Access Foundation
IUC	Institutional University Cooperation
IUCEA	Inter-University Council for East-Africa
KYU	Kyambogo University
MMU	Mountains of the Moon University
MUST	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
Nuffic	Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education
RENU	Research and Education Network for Uganda
RUFORUM	Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture
UCU	Uganda Christian University
UMU	Uganda Martyrs University
VicRes	Lake Victoria Research Initiative
VLIR-UOS	Institutional University Cooperation, University Development Cooperation

1. Introduction

1.1. General Info

Uganda, landlocked republic, eastern Africa, bordered on the north by the Republic of Sudan, on the east by Kenya, on the south by Tanzania and Rwanda, and on the west by the Democratic Republic of the Congo. A former British protectorate, Uganda became a fully independent member of the Commonwealth of Nations on October 6, 1962. Uganda has an area of 241,038 sq km (93,065 sq mi). The capital of Uganda is Kampala.



For more information on the country we refer to the [Country Fact Sheet](#) and [Identification Mission Report](#), available on the VLIR-UOS website.

1.2. Development priorities

While Uganda has been one of the few durable success stories of Africa, its continued economic prosperity requires moving the economy to a higher productivity level and integrating all regions into the development process. Equal access to quality social services, in particular education and health, must be coupled with promoting growth through infrastructure investments in the places where it will earn the highest return. This will ensure faster integration of the slower and faster growing areas of the country.

Uganda's overriding development challenge is to manage its resources, in particular the fast growing youthful population and newly discovered oil. To reap the demographic dividend, Uganda must invest in fertility reduction, quality education and skills development, and job creation. To reap the oil dividend, Uganda must maximize the social benefits through adequate investment and prudent macroeconomic management of the oil sector, as well as transparency and management of expectations.

Perceived deterioration of governance and increase in corruption threatens to tarnish Uganda's image as a development model and challenge its future development efforts. Uganda needs to decisively address increasing petty corruption, the perceived growing culture of impunity for grand corruption and pervasive "quiet corruption"—the failure of public servants to deliver goods or services paid for by governments—such as unchecked teacher and health worker absenteeism.

Uganda was the first country to prepare a comprehensive, participatory, and country owned national development strategy in 1997, creating the model for the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. The 1997 Poverty Eradication Action Plan (PEAP) received international praise. It was revised and updated in 2000 (PEAP II) and 2004 (PEAP III). PEAP III was extended for two years, to June 2010, due to delays in preparing its successor.

In February 2010, the government finalized a new five-year (FY2011-2015) National Development Plan (NDP). The NDP's main theme is "Growth, Employment and Socio-Economic Transformation for Prosperity," marking a broadening of the country's development strategy from poverty reduction, the focus of the PEAPs, to structural transformation to raise growth and living standards. It is the first in a series of six plans intended to transform Uganda over thirty years into a modern and prosperous country.

The NDP has eight objectives. These are: (i) increase household income and promote equity; (ii) enhance the availability and quality of gainful employment; (iii) enhance human capital development; (iv) improve the stock and quality of economic infrastructure; (v) increase access to quality social services, (vi) promote science, technology, innovation, and information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance competitiveness; (vii) strengthen good governance, defence and security; and (viii) promote sustainable population and use of the environment and natural resources. In addition, the NDP identifies four priority areas for investment: infrastructure development; human resource development; critical production inputs; and science, technology, and innovation. The NDP identifies fifteen "national flagship projects" intended to address binding constraints to growth.

The NDP includes analysis of cross-cutting issues crucial to sustained growth, such as gender. It highlights gender inequalities, commits to mainstreaming gender-responsive development, and proposes strategies to address gender gaps. Other cross-cutting issues include: governance, urbanization and decentralization, climate change, and regional cooperation. The NDP also includes a detailed discussion by sector, including a situational analysis, constraints, objectives, and planned interventions.

1.3. The Ugandan higher education system

Legal framework and governance

The 1992 Government White Paper on Education is the basis of official policy on the purpose and programmes of education. While some of the programmes have been revised as a result of intervening events, the White Paper's articulation of the purposes of Ugandan's education system continues to be the supreme guidance for the sector.

There was no overall legal framework pertaining to the entire higher education sector until 2001, when the Ugandan Government passed the Universities and Other Tertiary Institutions Act. The Act's goal is to establish a system of governing institutions of higher education so that same or similar courses offered by different institutions of higher education are made equal across the system—while respecting each institution's autonomy and academic freedom.

The Act also establishes a National Council of Higher Education for quality assurance at all tertiary institutions. The functions of the council include (a) advising the Minister of Education and Sports, (b) establishing an accreditation system, (c) investigating complaints, (d) evaluating national manpower needs, (e) ensuring minimum standards of education, (f) setting national admissions standards, (g) ensuring that HE institutions have adequate physical structures, (h) publishing information about HE institutions, and (i) determining equivalence of academic and professional degrees and credits between institutions.

At the central level the three bodies now supervising tertiary education in Uganda are the Higher Education Department, the Department of Business, Technical, and Vocational Education (BTVET), and the teacher education department within the Ministry of Education and Sports (MOES).

At the institutional level, most higher education institutions have a governing board, although the governance system differs greatly by the kind of institution.

Institutions

The number of higher education institutions in virtually every category has increased since the late 1980s. In 1987, there was one university institution only. By 2005, the number of universities (some of them without provisional licences) had grown to 27, of which four were public (Makerere, Mbarara, Kyambogo and Gulu) and one affiliated institution, Makerere University Business School, and the rest privately owned. In addition, there were 120 "Other Tertiary Institutions" offering variety of certificate and diploma programmes (see Table ...). A 5th public university, Busitema University in Eastern Uganda, was established in 2007. A 6th public university, Muni University, would be established in the West Nile Region (north western Uganda). See also list of higher education institutions (private <-> public) in the more detailed Country Sheet document of VLIR-UOS (available on the VLIR-UOS website under "Country Strategy").

Infrastructure

The infrastructure of institutions, most of it constructed in the colonial period, is no longer able to sustain the growing numbers of students. Available classroom, library, laboratory and learning space is old, dilapidated, and rotting. This is especially true of public universities of Kyambogo and Makerere. The student to space ratio of libraries, classrooms, laboratories, playing fields and other learning facilities is far from ideal as per NCHE gazetted standards. Many institutions, particularly private ones, do not have laboratories. Where there are laboratories, space increases do not match increasing

student numbers. Only a few universities are well advanced in information and communication technologies (ICT) infrastructure.

Education Sector Strategic Plan & Government White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Committee to Public Universities

The current education policy focuses on expanding the functional capacity of educational structures and reducing on the inequalities of access to education between sexes, geographical areas, and social classes in Uganda. It advocates for the redistribution of resources viz a viz reforming the educational sector.

As to higher education in Uganda, the “Education Sector Strategic Plan (ESSP) 2004-2015” of the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) calls for a reform of the curricula in higher education that will link them more closely to Uganda’s national development needs and those of the labour market. In particular, it will give highest priority to science, mathematics, technology, and other subjects critical to Uganda’s national development. It will integrate Information and Communications Technology (ICT) into courses, so that every graduate - and faculty member - is computer literate. Noting that the quality of tertiary education depends on the quality of its faculty and staff, the National Council of Higher Education will work with the Ministry to attract and retain faculty staff by improving their conditions of service.

In the “Government White Paper on the Report of the Visitation Committee to Public Universities in Uganda” from November 2008, following recommendations were made:

- The current enrolment of students in science and technology is still below the recommended 40% of total enrolment. Accordingly, government should continue its affirmative funding of science and technology students because these disciplines are key to economic development.
- All public universities should move rapidly to integrate I.C.T in all teaching/learning, assessment and research.
- Most of the buildings in public universities were built in the colonial period to serve the needs of the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. To restore the quality of Higher Education in many of the faculties and departments to internationally acceptable levels, Government should undertake rehabilitation, modernization and expansion of infrastructure.
- The current funding of libraries in Public Universities ranges from 1.3% to 5% of annual university expenditure. There is need to raise the library budget to the acceptable level of 10% of University budgets.
- Practical work is crucial in training of science and technology students and requires provision of laboratory/ workshop space and materials. Currently, public universities are producing scientists/ technologists with little practical experience. Therefore public universities should put emphasis on provision of functional laboratory/workshops.
- The government should set up a national training centre of instrumentation technicians. Such a centre should also be able to offer consultancy on procurement of scientific equipment.
- Universities should establish interdisciplinary research laboratories. This will enable them to afford expensive equipment, avoid duplication and promote maximum utilization of equipment.
- The trend of turning non-university tertiary institutions into universities most of which offer already existing programmes is not advisable. There is a crucial need for Technical Colleges to produce

the very large numbers of non-graduate Technicians/Craftsmen and women to maintain the industrial and domestic economy and to service the university programmes. The government should create a layer of other tertiary institutions to produce Technicians needed for poverty alleviation tasks. For every Engineer/Scientist, there should be ten Technicians meaning that for everyone university graduate there should be ten graduates of other tertiary institutions.

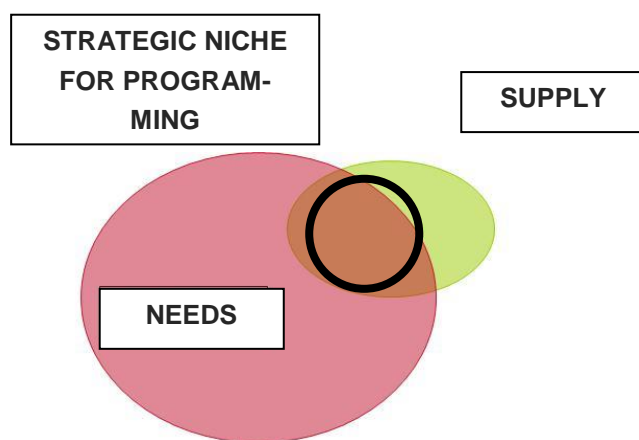
- Distance education should be further expanded; an Open University should be established.
- Public Universities should develop stronger involvement in public/private research and development to deploy the full potential of the science and technology graduates so as to contribute to national development/economic growth.
- Universities and government should provide more funding, training for research and publication, in accordance with the African Union Lagos Plan of Action whereby 3% of the GOP of each country should be used for this purpose.
- Both government, institutions and private sector should provide more funding for post graduate studies critical to national development.
- The current mismatch of students numbers and facilities is the major cause of the developing quality crisis in public universities. The Government should increase funding to public universities to match the surging numbers of students. The Government should also fund research in Universities on a sustainable basis. This means that the Ministry of Education allocations to the tertiary sub sector should be raised to at least 20 % per year.
- Public universities should continue to expand areas of income generation to more sources including endowments, alumni, research, consultancies and partnership, to reinforce public sources of funding.
- Currently, there is massive duplication of courses that hike the cost of running public universities. Faculties and Departments should not be permitted to start academic programmes which are beyond their subject mandate and demonstrated competence.
- The present system or culture/practice of paying wide ranging "Allowances" should be reviewed and drastically reduced. Universities should not pay allowances for duties which form part of staff contract responsibilities of an employee during normal working days - including meetings.

2. Country Strategy

2.1. Background

2.1.1. Uganda country strategy formulation process

In the past months, the Flemish areas of interest in working with Uganda have been captured (supply side). The identification mission was meant to identify the needs (demand side) and identify (thematic, regional, institutional) the space and opportunities for both to match. Needs identification was done through visits to pre-selected HE institutions, authorities and other stakeholders. In addition, the hosting of a local seminar allowed further inputs and discussions.



The preparatory work consisted of a survey of Northern and Southern institutions and a desk study of various Ugandan and international (policy) documents. Among other, The Ministry of Education and Sport, the National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) and RENU (Research and Education Network for Uganda) were contacted. Also, VLIR-UOS could draw on the findings obtained during a 2009 monitoring mission on the occasion of which various stakeholders were visited. In addition, a number of HE institutions have approached VLIR-UOS directly in terms of expression their interest in academic collaboration. Contact was also made with BTC and DGD representatives, in view of the fact that Belgium is the lead agent in terms of aid for education in Uganda.

All the information collected, including the results of a survey among academic stakeholders in Flanders resulted in a draft Uganda Fact Sheet. This document, as well as further information on the preparatory work can be found on the Uganda webpage.

2.1.2. Higher education and research: policy environment

Considerable national challenges, and the role of universities in this respect

As emphasized in the Country Fact Sheet and during the Brussels seminar of 2 September, Uganda is facing considerable challenges in the foreseeable future in terms of population, development, post-conflict reconstruction and natural-resource management. The universities have in this respect a significant role to play, not only in educating relevant professionals in sufficient numbers, but also in delivering quality research to inform national policy.

During the country seminar, the participants were challenged to brainstorm on the most significant problems facing their country in the foreseeable future. The resulting list was organized in five strongly inter-related clusters (Annex 3):

- High population growth + unemployment + no skills development;
- Food and human insecurity;
- Poor governance;
- Environment degradation;
- Education: insufficient quality, relevance, management.

In this context, not one academic discipline emerged as more crucial than the others to meet these challenges. Rather, a multi-disciplinary approach appeared as the only viable method. However, it is strongly felt that universities will be able to share - i.e. make a meaningful contribution to a thematic network or a problem-based research initiative - only if they have sufficient quality available: "Networks are not for people that are not experts".

Strong signals, but limited input from the government

The Education Sector Strategic Plan and Government White Paper highlight in particular the following challenges for the sector (See Country Fact Sheet, Uganda):

- Preparing for a considerable increase of student numbers in the years to come, and bringing the enrolment within science and technology up to 40%;
- Aligning the curricula and strengthening the research capacity to meet the national development needs and the needs of the labour market;
- Preventing course duplication and sharing research facilities;
- Integrating ICT in teaching, learning, assessment and research;
- Improving the physical infrastructure, equipment and libraries.

Given the scarcity of funding available, the recommendations for increased resource sharing between the universities are important signals.

In spite of repeated attempts, it was not possible for the identification team to meet with officials from the Ministry of Education and Sports during the mission. A number of officials, including the Minister, the Minister of State for Higher Education and the Director of Planning, were abroad at the time. The local expert met however with the Minister of State for Higher Education after the mission, to explain the visit of the VLIR-UOS identification team, its objectives and various tentative proposals.

The reactions of the Minister were mostly positive:

1. He declared that he would like to see partnerships around different themes. The themes identified during the seminar seemed to him very relevant, and certainly addressed important questions for Uganda. He said that he was willing to put his weight behind the eventual implementation;
2. He felt that a strong coordinator would be needed to achieve results, to avoid the risk that some universities might feel more important than others;
3. He felt that no precedence should be given to one university over another, but that cooperation should be the rule;

4. And finally, he was looking forward to the decisions of the VLIR-UOS on these matters.

It is worth noting that, since 2008, Education is a priority sector of the Belgian Embassy, with a yearly commitment of EURO 4,000,000 from 2010 and a general aim of improving quality and access. From 2012 Belgium will chair the Education platform and in this capacity will be responsible for coordinating and harmonizing the interventions of government, donors, actors and stakeholders. The platform is an instrument for decision-making at national policy level. Six working groups have been established within various aspects of education, including one on higher education in which VLIR-UOS is welcome to participate. Two areas of interest are highlighted:

- Teacher training (for secondary education), with a particular focus on innovation;
- BTVET, with a particular focus on the needs of the labour market.

Overall fragility of the research capacity

Research appeared to be embryonic at all visited institutions. This was either explicitly stated, as at MUST or UCU, or implicitly recognized elsewhere as an area in considerable need of strengthening.

The recruitment and retention of qualified academic staff/researchers was mentioned everywhere as a major impediment. This is due in particular to a lack of promotion prospects, poor salaries, poor infrastructure, packed teaching schedules, and to an overall lack of incentives.

There is a perception of a strong gap between the programmes offered at the universities and the needs of society and the labour market, as pointed out during the seminar on 31 October.

Some groups among the visited universities emerged however with a clear potential, such as medicine or development studies at MUST, development studies and governance at UMU and UCU, Built environment at UMU, Environment (humanities/social science aspects) at UCU, teacher education at MMU. Ugandan alumni in Belgium or the Netherlands appeared also to be good potential partners for future research cooperation in the framework of the VLIR-UOS programme.

Public vs private universities

The main observation of the identification team, based on its meetings with 6 selected “emerging” universities, is that there was no significant divide in terms of quality between the public institutions on the one side, and the private on the other side. In both groups, there were strong and weaker actors and features, both within education and research. Both groups declared to have a strong concern for national development as well as for the needs of their communities. The main source of financing of private universities comes from student fees, but they deliver modularized education which allow private individuals to improve their professional status. All have established several campuses or learning centres in addition to their main campus, in order to make education accessible locally. The identification team sees no particular reason for making a distinction between public and private universities in terms of cooperation with Flemish universities.

As highlighted in the Country Fact Sheet, the public universities currently enrol about 60% of the student population. Most programmes within science and technology – which are the most costly – are offered at the public universities, although government support to strengthen staff capacity and maintain infrastructure is clearly insufficient. (At the same time, because of their focus on science and technology, the public universities will now be targeted by the African Development Bank with a significant programme to build up infrastructure.) Public universities such as BU and KYU are the result of mergers of an array of pre-existing colleges and institutes, resulting in dire management constraints and a relative weakness of their overall offer. This was reflected by the quality of the

information provided during the meetings with the identification team, in spite of good preparation and participation. Comparatively, the senior management at MUST has decided to expand more slowly, and the representatives met by the identification team gave a more dynamic and focused impression. Eventually however, MUST will also have to respond to the pressure of increasing enrolments, and is presently faced with the challenge of moving to a new, still undeveloped campus area.

The selected private universities respond to the needs of their student populations, since student fees is their main source of income. Two are religiously affiliated (Church of Uganda for UCU and the Catholic Church for UMU), which may raise some concern as to how their religious identity impacts on their academic policies (e.g. in terms of selecting students). MMU was conceived and founded by leaders in the local community in western Uganda and is as such unique in Uganda. Whereas UCU and MMU gave a strong impression of focus and vision, the focus on the essentials did not transpire clearly in the meeting with the management of UMU, especially that the Vice-Chancellor was absent. However, certain subject areas such as Built Environment (Landscape/Architecture and Environmental Design), Ethics & Development Studies and Governance/International Studies, are clearly strong assets there.

Makerere University vs the rest of the university sector

The university sector in Uganda is characterized by the extreme dominance of one institution, Makerere University, over the other, much more recent universities. Practically all scholars have been trained at, and still maintain links with, Makerere University. As a consequence of its considerable superiority, Makerere University attracts most of the attention of donors and international partners, and receives substantial project resources. At the same time, serious criticism is voiced regarding the quality of its offer and its relevance to the needs of the communities.

In spite of this situation, it can also be argued that Makerere is a considerable resource for the provincial universities, to which it extends its expertise (management, staff, programmes, facilities).

Trying to strengthen the capacity of selected emerging universities within the magnetic field of Makerere University is a challenge for the VLIR-UOS programme.

Networking, a cooperation model to explore?

Despite the common challenges facing the universities and the overall scarcity of resources, including human, there were only few instances of networking between the visited universities (except for inevitable links to Makerere University.) Their cooperation with regional and international partners was often more significant than trying to achieve a critical mass of expertise by reaching out to each other. The few instances which were mentioned concerned RENU, RUFORUM, regional cooperation on the Great Lakes region (for instance between UMU and GU), and an MOU between 5 medical centres on family medicine. No direct explanations were offered on this lack of cooperation, other than geographic distance, insufficient facilities such as for teleconferencing, and maybe also a lack of specific knowledge about each other's offer, given the very young age of most of these universities and their relative weakness in terms of research capacity. Representatives of Makerere University could on the contrary boast about their extensive network of contacts in practically all disciplines, at all the universities.

This matter was put up for discussion during the country seminar and received unanimous support from the participants, a clear indication that this is a modality worth investing on. On the one hand, it would allow Makerere University to participate, hopefully without dominating (this would need to be monitored.) On the other hand, it would provide a flexible arena for the contribution of individual – or

groups of – researchers, either in limited projects, or in larger initiatives for the whole network, such as curriculum development or trainings within specific transversal areas. This modality would facilitate the exchange of information and hopefully also expertise between the universities, regarding study programmes in similar or complementing areas. In the context of limited funding, many players would still have access to the programme. Networking on the Flemish side is already happening with the Governance/Post-conflict/Human Right platform, and has a potential to develop further – which can be very beneficial also in other contexts.

In addition, several initiatives confirming the potential importance of networks deserve attention:

- Significant cooperation is already taking place within Medicine, with a good cooperation between Makerere and MUST as a stepping stone;
- As a result of a Nuffic NPT project, several universities (Makerere, MUST, KYU, GU, and to a lesser extent BU) have in common developed their ICT capacity ;
- RENU (<http://renu.ac.ug/>) is an initiative at the level of the senior management of Ugandan universities, with the primary concern to facilitate the establishment of technical networking facilities (ICT-network);
- RUFORUM (<http://ruforum.wordpress.com/backgroun/>) is a regional inter-university initiative within agriculture and the environment, funded by the Rockefeller and Gates Foundations (unfortunately, in spite of initial signs of interest, the network could not meet the identification team during the mission);
- The Inter-University Council for East Africa <http://iucea.org/> promotes inter-university cooperation within research and education, particularly through its VicRes programme (<http://vicres.net/>), with funding from Sida. The Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA, <http://www.fara-africa.org/>) was also mentioned by the IUCEA as an important platform of cooperation for the promotion of research for development, capacity strengthening and agricultural innovation;
- The ADB is finalizing its plan of a support programme to the public universities within science and technology, with a particular emphasis on networking capacity.

2.2. Views and themes expressed (based on survey, interviews and seminar, and mission and seminar)

Expressions of interest by the Flemish (academic) stakeholders

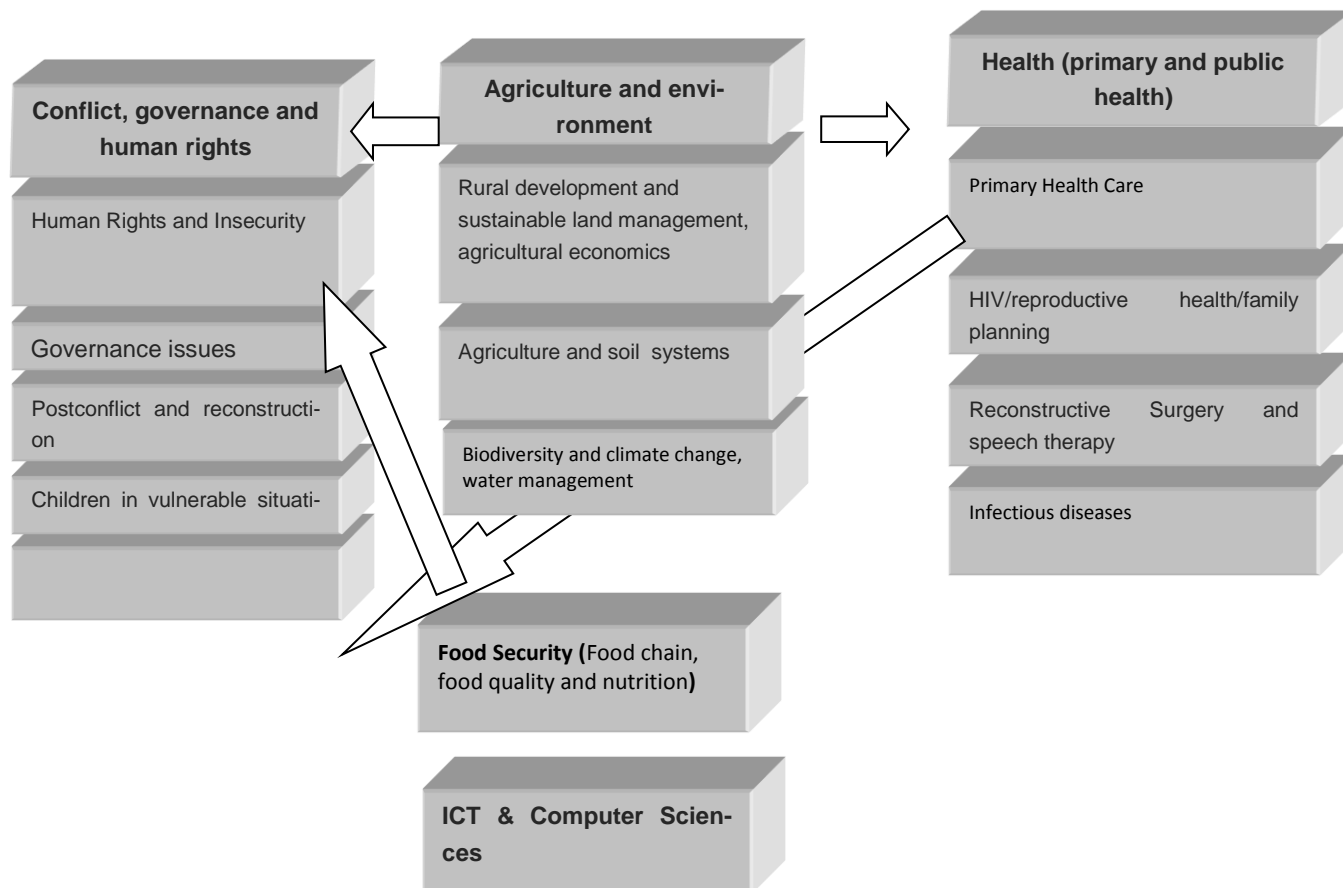
In terms of subject areas/themes, the following clusters of Flemish interest had been identified: **(1) Conflict, governance and human rights, (2) Agriculture and environment and (3) Health (primary health care and public health)**. However, academic linkages regarding these themes are institutionally and geographically spread. It was also stated that both private and public institutions can be considered for cooperation. In terms of transversal issues, governance and incentive policies were mentioned. Internet access and communication is less of a concern.

The link between higher education institutes and society is problematic. Partly this relates to the employability of graduates. In this context, VLIR-UOS should leave space for the Flemish university colleges.

Reference is being made to the strategy grid that was elaborated before the mission on the basis of present cooperation and interest in Uganda ([annex 1](#)). (below) summarises the thematic priorities and

research interests (and potential synergies between these) of Flemish academics who expressed interest in working with Uganda or are currently working in Uganda. collaboration experience in other countries.

Figure 1: Summary of Flemish academic priority themes and research interest



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

In order to come up with the main themes for Uganda in terms of university cooperation, it is important to look at some clustered problems the Ugandan society copes with (Table 1).

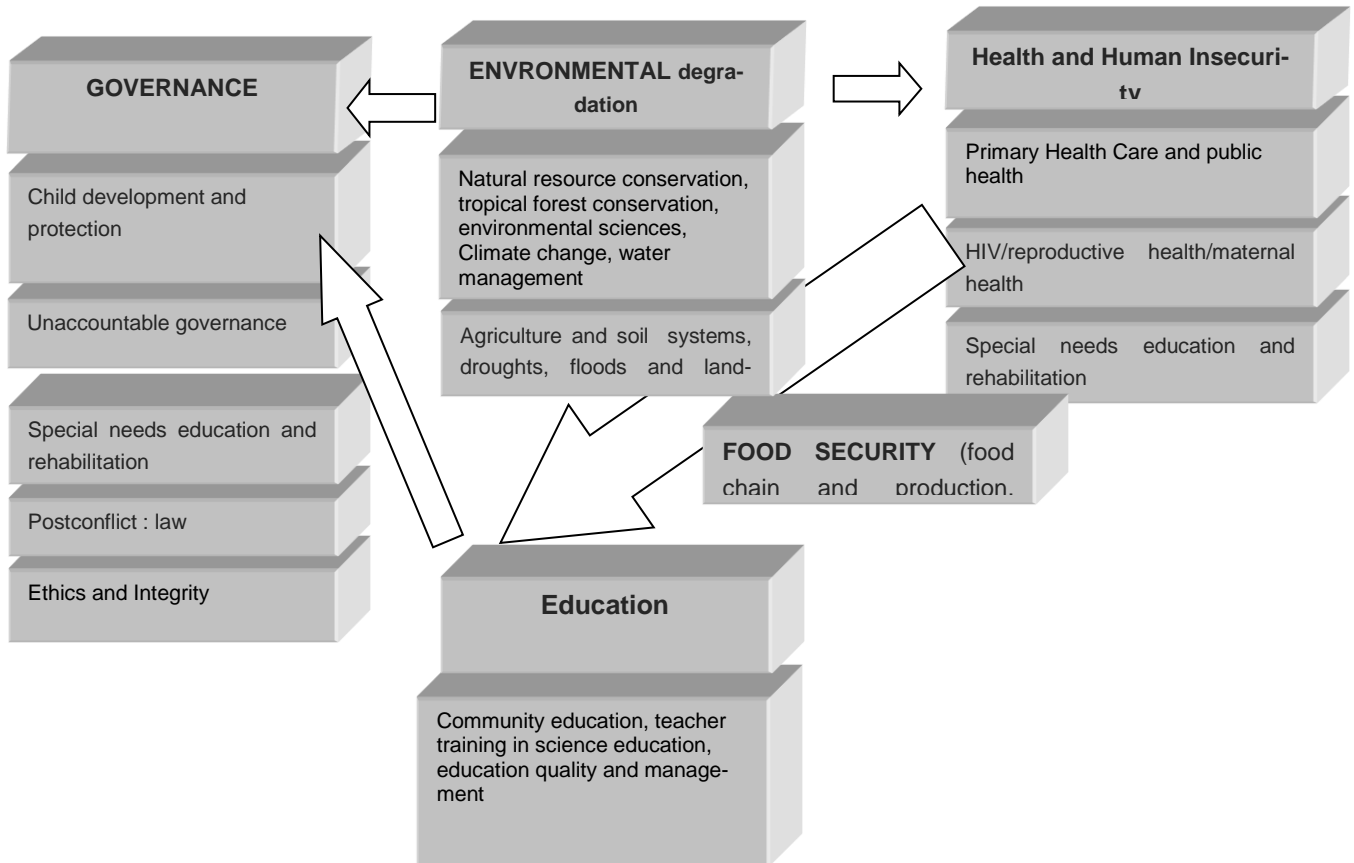
Table 1

	CLUSTERS	ISSUES
1	High population growth + unemployment + no skills development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High birth rate; • Unemployment; • No family planning; • Low quality of habitats; • Rural to urban migration; no retaining of staff in rural areas and in the country; • Lack of skills development; • Low literacy level;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance between higher education and economic development of the country;
2	Food and human insecurity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of focus on agriculture (tools, mechanization...); • Agro-processing: no link between research and application; • No modernization of agriculture (+ mindset of people: low status of agriculture); • Oil: governance challenge; • No retaining of staff in rural areas and in the country;
3	Poor governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil: governance challenge; • No retaining of staff in rural areas and in the country; • Ineffectiveness of governance programmes; • Rural to urban migration; no retaining of staff in rural areas and in the country; • Problem of land governance (lack of policy); • No link between universities and the government (little policy oriented research); • No knowledge on post-conflict transformation of society; • Gender; • Lack of values; • Empowering communities to be part of the governance process (mindset of people: lack of criticism – lack of education); re-search and education are not community-based. • Lack of action research.
4	Environment degradation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate change; • No emergency/disaster management; • Rural to urban migration; • Lack of skilled farmers;
5	Education: insufficient quality, relevance, management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance between public and private universities; • Distance between higher education and economic development of the country; • Lack of skills development; • Low application of science and technology; • Little attention to peace studies at universities; • Low literacy level; • Gap between research and society; • Empowering communities to be part of the governance process (mindset of people: lack of criticism – lack of education) • Low quality of education; • Indigenous knowledge not taken into account (no application of research, no impact on society) • Bad management of research budgets; • Lack of skilled farmers; • Lack of action research;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender; • Lack of values; • Quality assurance and management of universitie
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Figure 2: Summary of Ugandan academic priority themes and research interest



2.3. Strategy framework and implementation

2.3.1. Areas of focus (thematic, regional, partners):

Regional focus

A geographical focus is not put forward. As for the institutional focus, the 8 following universities are put forward: Busitema University, Gulu University, Kyambogo University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Mountains of the Moon University, Uganda Christian University, Uganda Martyrs University and Makerere University. Makerere University is only eligible if involved as supporting partner (no core funding).

Themes

There is a good potential complementarity within the following areas:

- **Health (“Human insecurity”/ Medicine);**
- **Environmental studies (including Agriculture and land management);**

- **Food Security;**
- **Development studies, governance, peace studies;**

In the areas of Computer Science (Flemish interest) and Education (interest from BTC in Uganda), the complementarity is less obvious. **Computer Science may however be included as a strengthening factor in collaborative projects.**

Please refer also to **Annex 3**, where this joint offer is complemented by proposed axes and modalities of cooperation.

Transversal needs and opportunities

Meetings during the identification mission have revealed a need for support within several areas where universities would profit jointly.

Table 2

Area	Status	Recommended transversal measure	Activity
Networking	<p>Except for inevitable links with Makerere University, inter-university cooperation in Uganda is very limited – although there is a consensus that networking and sharing resources are a necessity.</p> <p>RENU is an existing, formalized university network with an extensive mission. Currently, RENU’s focus is on establishing the necessary technical infrastructure, but stimulating a culture of inter-university collaboration is equally crucial.</p>	<p>Yearly funding for a programme of activities for the senior management of RENU’s member universities, on the benefits of networking and sharing resources (research, education, facilities etc.)</p> <p>A possible added-value would be to provide a regular platform of information on the progress and achievements of the two thematic platforms.</p>	<p>RENU should be invited to propose a programme of appropriate activities: meetings, conferences, poster sessions.</p>
Gender	<p>Although the issue of gender was mentioned during some of the identification meetings – in particular in relation to the need to increase the female student population, it is not the perception of the identification team that gender is high on the priority agenda of the selected universities.</p>	<p>Gender addressed as a transversal issue in the two thematic platforms, with the support of a gender specialist at the Host institution.</p>	<p>Trainings extended to the participating universities;</p> <p>Support to the consortia to prepare project proposals, and subsequently implement their projects, with due attention to gender.</p>

Community Engagement	Without exception, community engagement was mentioned by all visited universities as a priority high on their agenda. The most convincing presentations were offered by MMU and MUST.	As for Gender, the identification team proposes that Community Engagement be addressed as a transversal issue in the two thematic platforms, with the support of a specialist at the Host institution. MMU could in this respect have a special role to play.	Trainings extended to the participating universities; Support to the consortia to prepare project proposals, and subsequently implement their projects, with due attention to the needs of the surrounding communities.
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Possible synergies with the activities of the Belgian Cooperation in Uganda

See later in the document (Table 5) for the overview on potential synergies with non academic stakeholders.

2.3.2. Country Strategy Framework (strategic niche resulting from the above)

Table 3: Country Strategy Framework summarises the potential domains in which these themes and sub-themes could be pursued in a programme of VLIR-UOS supported cooperation. It also takes into account where the Flemish interests lie, as articulated in the North seminar on Uganda and subsequent interviews.

Table 3: Country Strategy Framework – strategic niche of cooperation considering Ugandan demands and Flemish interest/expertise for cooperation

THEMES		REGIONS	PARTNERS	OUTPUTS									EFFECT	
SUB-THEMES /AREAS				EDUCATION, curriculum development / adjustment			RESEARCH		EXTENSION		MANAGEMENT			
				Short-courses, modules	Master degree	e-learning offer	Research training	Research output	Advocacy	Consultancy and services	HRD	International/regional networking and linkages		
CONTENT-BASED THEMES														
Thematic platform INSECURITY <i>(Human, Food, Environmental)</i>	Human	All	8 selected Ugandan universities, hosted by Mbarara University of Science and Technology	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	THEMATIC CAPACITY AT UNIVERSITIES RESPONSIVE TO NATIONAL CHALLENGE IN UGANDA	
	Food			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Environmental			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Interdisciplinary			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
Thematic platform <i>Ensuring accountable</i> GOVERNANCE	Population and employment	All	8 selected Ugandan universities, hosted by Uganda Christian University	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	THEMATIC CAPACITY AT UNIVERSITIES RESPONSIVE TO NATIONAL CHALLENGE IN UGANDA	
	Ineffectiveness of institutions			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Inadequate higher education offer			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
	Interdisciplinary			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X
TRANSVERSAL AND CROSS-CUTTING THEMES														
Inter-university network	Establishing a networking culture among universities	All	In Uganda: RENU and partner universities.	X								X	SUPPORTIVE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT (SENIOR MANAGEMENT OF UNIVERSITIES)	
Strengthened University Management	Institutional strengthening (planning, procedures, QA etc.)	South, Centre, West	MUST, UCU, MMU									X	X	SUPPORTIVE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

Community-based and -focused university education, research and services	Educational offer	All	The two thematic platforms	X				ALIGNMENT WITH NEEDS OF COMMUNITIES
	Research agenda							
	Extension and outreach programmes, consultancies							
Gender	Educational offer	All	The two thematic platforms	X				EMPOWERING WOMEN; MORE PRODUCTIVE MEN/WOMEN BALANCE
	Research agenda							
	Extension and outreach programmes, consultancies							
EFFECT				NEW PROGRAMMES, IMPROVED TEACHING QUALITY, IMPROVED QUALITY ASSURANCE	STRONGER RESEARCH CAPACITY, CULTURE AND OUTPUT		PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATION AND PROCEDURES	

2.3.3. Collaboration within platforms

The Country Team also strongly advocate a platform strategy for VLIR-UOS support and Flemish cooperation with Ugandan HEIs.

Proposed model of Platform University Cooperation: two thematic platforms, each coordinated by a host university:

Theme	Potential hosts/coordinating universities
<i>(Food, Health & Environmental) Insecurity</i>	Mbarara University of Science and Technology
<i>(Ensuring Accountable) Governance</i>	Uganda Christian University

During the Country Seminar, clusters of serious national challenges were identified by the participants. The participants also expressed their readiness to engage in collaborative activities with each other to address these challenges. Such platforms could develop and implement a programme agenda of research, education and extension activities, in collaboration with corresponding platforms within the five Flemish universities – and possibly also hogescholen. Each platform would be coordinated by a designated university, both in Uganda and in Flanders, but the collaborative activities would be open to all members. In the opinion of the identification team, this model would:

- Lead to academic strengthening at all the selected universities;
- Promote good practice within the areas of community engagement and gender (proposed transversal issues);
- Provide some support to the two host universities, but with clear expectations on their role as coordinators and facilitators at the service of the platforms;
- Strengthen the current effort of RENU to bring together the senior management of higher education institutions in Uganda, as a measure to improve the “enabling environment” of the two platforms;
- Replicate the successful inter-university collaboration scheme promoted by the VICRES programme of the IUCEA.

2.3.4. Partnership modalities (portfolio of intervention types)

Table 4: Summary of potential in various partnership modalities

Level	Remarks and recommendations
National/transversal (see table p. 9 and 10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking • Gender • Community Engagement =>Provide support and collaboration within educational sciences (community-based and –focused action research, education and extension) → this could be developed into a national project;
Inter-institutional (plat-	During the Country Seminar of 30 October, the Ugandan universities

<p>form)</p>	<p>expressed unequivocally their willingness to cooperate with Flemish Universities in the framework of academic platforms, to address some of the main developmental challenges confronting Uganda today. Within the budget tentatively allocated to the VLIR-UOS programme in Uganda, this seemed to be the most inclusive and flexible format.</p> <p>Support to two content platforms addressing two broadly-based themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Food, Health & Environmental) Insecurity; • (Ensuring Accountable) Governance. <p>Each platform will be open to the selected 8 Ugandan universities and could potentially be hosted by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mbarara University of Science and Technology for (Food, Health & Environmental) Insecurity; • Uganda Christian University for (Ensuring Accountable) Governance. <p>During the mission, however, the identification team has not had the opportunity to verify with MUST and UCU whether they would be willing to act as platform host, and to check more thoroughly on their management capacity in this respect.</p> <p>As specified in Annex 6, the identification team proposes an initial establishment phase of two years during which the VLIR-UOS programme will fund necessary meetings and activities of all interested universities in order to form an operational platform and jointly define an agenda for their platform theme.</p> <p>During this period, it would be advisable that MUST and UCU receive targeted support to improve their capacity to fulfill their role as hosts.</p>
<p>Institutional but hub-based</p>	<p>Not applicable in Uganda</p>
<p>Institutional</p>	<p>Fully-fledged IUC: Technically possible, but not recommended by the identification team.</p>
<p>Sub-institutional</p>	<p>Four South Initiatives per call:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First call to kick-start academic cooperation within the platforms; • Thereafter open calls outside the approved programmes of the platforms – and open to universities outside the initial group of 8. This will allow for flexibility, adjustments and renewal.

	<p>Alternative options:</p> <p>As an alternative to the “Platforms & South Initiatives” model recommended by the identification team, a more traditional strategy based on a combination of Own Initiatives and South Initiatives is technically a possible alternative. The advantage would be for VLIR-UOS a simpler system to manage and monitor. Contenders could be stimulated to link with each other’s proposals – or to reach to each other during the implementation of their projects – in order to obtain a certain level of interaction (inter-disciplinarity, inter-university cooperation.) Calls could be focused on the national challenge areas highlighted during the Kampala seminar. The identified transversal issues could be addressed by the selected group of 8. This would after 6 years hopefully result in a relatively integrated portfolio, with significant flexibility allowing readjustments.</p> <p>The disadvantages of this approach would however be that the process to a large extent would be Flemish-driven, and the portfolio fragmented. The approach recommended by the identification team is innovative in that it provides a stimulus for scholars from South and North to join forces around two problem-based themes, and together design a programme of research, education and extension activities.</p>
Individual (scholarships)	As part of the proposed agendas of the two thematic platforms, and of the South Initiatives.

2.3.5. Non-academic partners and stakeholders

Table 5

Partner	Domain	Possible synergy with VLIR-UOS programme
<p>Belgian bilateral cooperation</p> <p>Belgian Development Agency BTC</p>	<p>Education</p> <p>Together with Health, Education is a priority sector of the Belgian bilateral cooperation, and is expected to remain so also in the next Indicative Development Cooperation Programme after 2012. It receives a yearly funding of EURO 4,000,000 and the general aim is to improve quality and access to education. From 2012 Belgium will chair the Education platform and in this capacity will be responsible for coordinating and harmonizing the interventions of government,</p>	<p>The support programme of BTC is somewhat on the side of the interests expressed by Flemish researchers, but there is a complementarity with the needs expressed by Ugandan partners for a stronger higher education sector.</p> <p>The identification team sees here a potential synergy with its proposed focus on <i>community-</i></p>

	<p>donors, actors and stakeholders. The platform is an instrument for decision-making at national policy level. Six working groups have been established within various aspects of education, including one on higher education, where VLIR-UOS is welcome to participate. Two areas of interest are highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher training (for secondary education), with a particular focus on innovation; • BTVET, with a particular focus on the needs of the labour market. BTC has shared with the identification team its need for a training needs analysis of the labour market in Uganda (a possible assignment for KU Leuven?); <p>In addition, special attention is given to the West Nile region, for historical reasons. This is an underprivileged and war-torn area at the border of DR Congo and South Sudan, where a new public university will be founded.</p>	<p><i>based & -focused education and Gender</i> as transversal themes, and its recommended support, in particular, to MMU. Comparatively, the educational approach of MMU is both innovative – with its inclusion of teachers from the workforce – and intrinsically responsive to the demand of its surrounding communities, where it has established learning centres.</p> <p>The Belgian Embassy has been extremely supportive during the identification, and has offered to host initial university network meetings within its grounds. In general, the Embassy is keen to facilitate the work of VLIR-UOS in Uganda and welcomes VLIR-UOS in the donor working group on Higher Education.</p>
	<p>Health</p> <p>As mentioned above, Health is also a priority sector of the Belgian cooperation.</p>	<p>Health is an important potential component of the two thematic platforms proposed by the identification team – in particular the one on <i>Insecurity</i>.</p>
	<p>Scholarship programme</p> <p>From 2013, the yearly funding of EURO 1,000,000 for scholarships to mid-career professionals will be allocated preferably for post-graduate studies at Ugandan universities, as a support to the local higher education sector.</p>	<p>This programme should be open for candidates within the two thematic platforms.</p> <p>It is an innovative approach which will have the advantage not to contribute to brain-drain outside the country.</p> <p>It is likely, however, that Makerere University will host the lion's share of the candidates, a further boost to its status.</p>
<p>Protos and</p>	<p>Both organizations have already expressed</p>	<p>Compared to the rest of the</p>

<p>Broederlijk Delen</p>	<p>their need for more applied research to inform their activities and interventions (see report of interviews in Flanders).</p> <p>Representatives participated in a meeting with the identification team together with MMU. They could confirm the great accessibility of the university, the uniqueness of its partnership with local NGOs, and the eagerness of young workers in the communities, who are given access to relevant further education and better professional prospects.</p> <p>In the area of water resource management, for instance, MMU is a valuable partner delivering applied research and environmental assessments.</p>	<p>higher education sector, MMU is academically less developed. However, its interaction with local stakeholders and actors is a quite unique model, which should be of great interest for the rest of the sector.</p> <p>The identification team recommends targeted institutional strengthening for MMU, and interventions/partnerships enhancing its innovative pedagogical approach.</p> <p>MMU is potentially of great interest for hogescholen (with sufficient capacity), since it offers primarily undergraduate programmes.</p>
<p>Research and Education Network for Uganda RENU</p>	<p>RENU was founded in 2006. Its mission is to bring together public and private research and higher education institutions in Uganda, with the aim to provide a better education and research environment geared towards the development of the country. The motivation is to collectively address the similar challenges faced by the sector, through a collaborative approach.</p> <p>RENU's main tasks are specified on its website http://www.renu.ac.ug/index.php/about-us/14-background.</p> <p>RENU's initial focus is on securing fast, affordable and reliable access to information resources, institutional capacity building to support ICT-enabled research and education, and synergistic models for e-content development and e-learning deployment, using ICT-mediated connectivity of RENU member organisations.</p> <p>The RENU initiative is funded through membership contributions, USAID and the EU, and supported through partnerships with telephone companies.</p>	<p>RENU is the network of senior university management. With the exception of BU, the universities targeted by the VLIR-UOS programme are all members of RENU.</p> <p>The identification team proposes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use RENU as an instrument to strengthen a culture of networking and inter-university sharing at the level of the senior management. This transversal measure is part of RENU's core objective and will hopefully contribute to facilitate and support the collaborative activities within the two thematic platforms. For suggestions of possible activities, VLIR-UOS could invite RENU itself to develop a proposal. At this stage,

	<p>It is a key strategic objective of RENU to get the top management and policy makers from RENU institutions to buy firmly into a common vision of how they can use and leverage RENU to enhance their collaboration and advance their institutional missions.</p>	<p>what the identification team foresees is not a general support to RENU as an organisation, but targeted support to organise seminars and workshops of the senior management and other relevant groups of member universities, to facilitate networking and contribute to the consolidation of the two thematic platforms.</p>
<p>Inter-University Council for East-Africa IUCEA</p>	<p>IUCEA counts currently 88 accredited universities and university associations in the five countries of East Africa. Its main role and functions are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate inter-university cooperation in East Africa; • Facilitate the strategic development of member universities; and • Promote internationally comparable higher education standards and systems for sustainable regional development. <p>IUCEA also stimulates collaborative research through regional scholarships and programmes such as VicRes, a regional, collaborative and multi-disciplinary initiative focusing on the Lake Victoria environment, in particular on climate change and food security.</p> <p>There are currently discussions within IUCEA about establishing regional Centres of Excellence (one per member-country) in targeted disciplines, which will be in charge of “trickling down” and raising the academic level of lesser higher education institutions in the other countries. For Uganda, the proposed Centre of Excellence is Makerere University, within the subject area of Law.</p> <p>The experience of Makerere University in</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VicRes, which is now in its concluding phase, has been a largely successful initiative. Its modalities (collaborative research projects from at least two partners from at least two member countries) have fostered inter-disciplinarity and thematic clusters, promoted strategies to improve teaching, and resulted in considerable HR capacity building at the Master and PhD level. • The identification team proposes that the VLIR-UOS strategy follow the model set by IUCEA for this programme: project proposals from the two thematic platforms should be interdisciplinary and submitted by at least two different partner universities in Uganda; • There is no immediate match or synergy between the plans for Centres of Excellence of IUCEA and the proposed strategy for VLIR-UOS in Uganda. It is pro-

	<p>Uganda, with its disproportionate size, expertise and attractiveness to international partners, shows however that a Centre of Excellence can also be a distorting element, which inhibits the development of other institutions with a more local scope.</p>	<p>posed that the platform “hosts” will qualify for some institutional strengthening, but only in order to fulfil their role of coordinator at the service of the platforms, without monopolizing the academic arena.</p>
<p>ADB African Development Bank</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADB funds HR development country programmes primarily within two sectors: Health and Education; • Within Education in Uganda, a needs assessment has revealed a potentially catastrophic situation at the higher education level. As a result of sustained donor support over the years to the primary and secondary levels, huge numbers of candidates will in the short term access a critically under-developed university sector. • As requested by the Government of Uganda, the target institutions of the ADB are the public universities, with a focus on strengthening and expanding their research base within science and technology, and improving their infrastructure (connectivity, laboratories, libraries etc.). The funding programme will encourage universities to optimally share resources. • Responsiveness to the needs of industry and the acquisition of practical skills will also be stimulated by the ADB programme, in order to increase the employability and entrepreneurship ability of university graduates. • Another priority of the ADB programme is to propose funding for research platforms and linkages, and for related capacity building. This has been explicitly stated as a need in the surveys submitted to ADB by the targeted universities. 	<p>The proposal of the identification team to structure the VLIR-UOS strategy in Uganda along two main thematic, research-based platforms, with transversal support measures, is clearly in line with the impending programme of the ADB.</p> <p>The <i>Insecurity</i> platform, hosted at a public university, and with a significant science and technology component, might consider applying for ADB support.</p>

2.3.6. Contribution and opportunities for Flemish non-university HE institutions

In the proposed framework for collaboration proposed by the identification team, Flemish university colleges (hogescholen) are in principle welcome to participate, under the same conditions as the universities. Areas of particular interest for collaboration with hogescholen are community-based (and –focused) applied research, education and extension/services at MMU, and the transversal measure on the same topic within the two thematic platforms.

The identification team finds crucial that a collaboration with MMU should bring a clear added-value to the university, which has scarce resources. When developing a proposal for collaboration, relatively inexperienced candidates from the hogescholen-sector should therefore partner with a Flemish university with substantial capacity.

2.4. SWOT analysis of a VLIR-UOS strategy with Uganda

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Networking and forming thematic platforms is clearly supported by the Ugandan universities; • The themes and their content have been defined by the Ugandan universities themselves, as crucial for Uganda; • Committed and supportive Belgian Embassy and local BTC representation; • Relatively good internet connectivity in Uganda; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ugandan universities (except Makerere University) are not used to cooperate systematically with each other, although all are engaged in regional or international cooperation; • Up to now, limited networking on the Flemish side; • Universities located far away from each other and not well equipped for teleconferencing; • Universities not equipped for videoconferencing – and the VLIR-UOS programme does not include much funding for equipment; • No distinct strategy from the Ugandan Ministry of Education for its universities, to inform the VLIR-UOS identification; • The Ministry of Education has until now not been involved in the process of identification, and has not contributed to the seminar: it is unknown at this stage to what extent this proposal contributes to on-going plans. Further contacts are currently sought with ministry officials; • Limited regional scope of the programme, while, especially with regard to the <i>Insecurity</i> platform, challenges are cross-boundary; • Until now, no clear offer of expertise on the Flemish side within the area of Education;
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content of the thematic platforms corresponds well to the offer of expertise of the Flemish researchers; • Some Flemish researchers have already formed a thematic platform. The VLIR-UOS strategy for Uganda might be the catalyst for more inter-disciplinary platforms in Flanders; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uncertain financial management capacity at some of the universities; • Unpredictability: Platforms are a new modality for VLIR-UOS, where rules and regulations still need to be defined/refined and explained to the participants; • With its overriding expertise and many contacts with Flemish researchers, Makerere University is clearly

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows to reach to, and link together, strong elements within otherwise weak universities; • Uses alumni as leverage (environment, governance); • Capitalizes on the capabilities of RENU, the network of research and education of the universities, and brings it further. This may have a positive effect on the enabling environment of the thematic platforms; • Uses the same modality of inter-disciplinary, inter-university cooperation practiced by the universities under the VicRes programme of the IUCEA; • Platforms will be supported by ADB in its programme targeting the public universities; • Brings support to two promising regional universities, establishing them as poles of cooperation; • Hogescholen might find it easier to participate (for instance in cooperation projects within each thematic platform); • Also open to the participation of Belgian NGOs in Uganda, especially within activities linked to the transversal issues of gender and community engagement; • Targeted support to MMU as teacher training institution with a unique community focus, is a direct contribution to BTC's current sector support; 	<p>leading and might seize command of the platforms in terms of content;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VLIR-UOS decides which Ugandan universities will be the hosts of each thematic platform: risk that the other universities will lose interest and not cooperate? (On the other hand, leaving that decision to them might be time-consuming); • Many actors and no overall monitoring mechanism in Uganda to keep an overview on member participation and progress of activities;
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ANNEXES

- 1. Pré Mission Strategy Grid (see VLIR-UOS website – Uganda Country info)**
- 2. Country Fact Sheet (see VLIR-UOS website – Uganda Country info)**
- 3. Country Strategy Grid (already included in text p. 20-21)**