



# **Country Reference Framework**

**DR Congo**

**February 2024**

# Content

- Country Reference framework DR Congo ..... 3**
- 1 VLIR-UOS in DR Congo ..... 4**
  - 1.1 *Overview projects & scholarships (2003 – 2021)* ..... 4
  - 1.2 *Ongoing projects and future calls (2022-...)* ..... 5
- 2 DR Congo and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development ..... 7**
  - 2.1 *DR Congo and the Sustainable Development Goals*..... 7
  - 2.2 *Higher education landscape in DR Congo*..... 9
  - 2.3 *Leaving no one behind*..... 11
  - 2.4 *Multistakeholderpartnership - Stakeholder analysis* ..... 12
- 3 Synergy and Complementarity with other (Belgian) development actors in DR Congo .... 158**
  - 3.1 *VLIR-UOS approaches to synergy and complementarity* ..... 17
  - 3.2 *Bilateral development cooperation (Enabel) in DR Congo* ..... 17
  - 3.3 *Belgian actors of the non-governmental cooperation in DR Congo* ..... 18
    - 3.3.1 *Thematic Joint Strategic Framework on Higher Education and Science* ..... 18
    - 3.3.2 *DR Congo Joint Strategic Framework (a mapping with intervention zones, more partnerinfo & other aspects of the JSF will be available by end 2021 or early 2022)* ..... 20
    - 3.3.3 *Other Thematic Joint Strategic Frameworks*..... 21

# Country reference framework DR Congo

## Background

In FYP1 the VLIR-UOS country strategies presented the strategic niche for future VLIR-UOS cooperation in a specific country, leading to strategy-based calls for proposals.

In FYP2, however, we shift towards an approach whereby a country reference framework provides information rather than strategic guidance. The country reference frameworks will be used mainly to support teams of academics when identifying and formulating project proposals, by providing a context analysis focused on Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and the higher education sector in a given country, and by providing an overview of Belgian development actors, their ongoing projects and partners in that country in view of exploration of opportunities for synergy and complementarity.

The country reference frameworks consist of three components:

- (i) overview of VLIR-UOS projects in the country;
- (ii) context analysis focused on the Agenda 2030 framework and the higher education sector;
- (iii) overview of Belgian development actors (ANGCs involved in thematic or geographic JSFs & Enabel), their local partners and their regional/thematic focus.

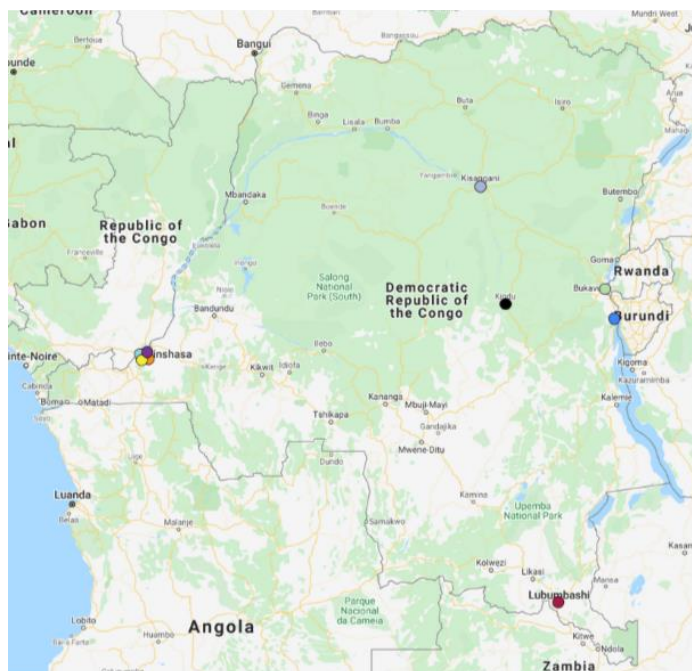
The frameworks have been elaborated based on information available at the time of drafting this actor programme (1st half of 2021) and through consultations with both Flemish and local project promoters in 2020-2021, and with geographic JSFs, when applicable, to ensure relevant information for coherent project formulation is included.

Prior to the launch of competitive calls, the ANGCs active in the country/region will be invited to list a number of research themes/questions that can be addressed by HE&SIs in the framework of VLIR-UOS funded projects or scholarships. Synergy and complementarity will be integrated as an element in the selection of project proposals, more in particular when discussing the (developmental) relevance and coherence of the proposals and the extent to which the multi-stakeholder partnership principle has been reflected in the project's implementation set-up. By this mode of operation, the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development links up with the other geographic JSFs.

Evidently, the frameworks will be updated regularly in consultation with the HEI&SI stakeholders and with the respective geographical JSFs and, where appropriate, also with ARES, and especially prior to the launch of competitive calls by VLIR-UOS, to be compatible and responsive to evolving/emerging needs and priorities of academic and development actors active in the country/region/sector.

# 1 VLIR-UOS in DR Congo

## 1.1 Overview projects & scholarships (2003 – 2023)



### Legend

Université de Kinshasa	
Université Catholique du Congo	
Université de Kisangani	
Université Catholique de Bukavu	
Université de Lubumbashi	
Institut Supérieur des techniques appliquées	
Université Pédagogique Nationale	
Centre de Recherche en Hydrobiologie	
Université de Kindu	

Projects 2003-2023		
Type	Budget (€)	Number
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,704,501</b>	<b>145</b>
IUC	9,740,000	4
TEAM	6,462,650	28
SI	8,331,279	89
JOINT	1,227,328	8
Crosscutting	3,943,245	16

Scholarships 2003-2023		
Type	Budget (€)	Number
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,507,251</b>	<b>309</b>
<b>Ph.D.</b>		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,131,420</b>	<b>7</b>
VLADOC	1,131,420	7
<b>Short term</b>		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>473,283</b>	<b>262</b>
ITP	101,880	23
KOI	57,800	33
REI	193,642	189
Other scholarships	119,961	17
<b>Study</b>		
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>902,549</b>	<b>40</b>
ICP	902,549	40

**DR Congo is one of the key partner countries of VLIR-UOS.** Between 2003 and 2023, the cooperation between VLIR-UOS and DR Congo represented more than €32,2 million, including 3 long term Institutional University Cooperation partnerships (IUC) and around 100 short-term projects. With 2 IUCs ended in Kisangani and Bukavu, another IUC has started in the **University of Lubumbashi** and forms now the heart of the DR Congo country programme.

More detailed information can be found on our [DR Congo country page](#) on the VLIR-UOS website.

## 1.2 Ongoing projects and future calls (2022-...)

List of ongoing projects in 2022						
Type	Runtime	Title	Flemish promoter	Local promoter	Local institution	Total budget (€)
IUC	2021-2023	Institutional University Cooperation with Université Catholique de Bukavu (UCB) (phase out)	Benoit Nemery de Belle-vaux (KUL)	Wenceslas Ruhana Mirindi Busane	Université Catholique de Bukavu	20.000,00
IUC	2021-2023	Institutional University Cooperation with Université de Kisangani (UNIKIS) (phase out)	Johan Ackaert (UH)	René Oleko Woto	Université de Kisangani	20.000,00
IUC	2022-2027	Institutional University Cooperation with Université de Lubumbashi (UNLILU) (phase 1)	Virginie Bito (UH)	César Nkuku Khonde	Université de Lubumbashi	3.000.000
	<i>Subproject 1</i>	<i>Biodiversity and climate change</i>	P. Boeckx (UGent)	B. M. Bazirake		
	<i>Subproject 2</i>	<i>Environment and health</i>	V. Bito (UH)	S. B. Amuri		
	<i>Subproject 3</i>	<i>Governance and security</i>	S. Geenen (UA)	L. N. Ndjibu		
	<i>Subproject 4</i>	<i>Entrepreneurship</i>	N. Dentchev (VUB)	P. S. Mbimbi		
	<i>Subproject 5</i>	<i>Climate smart agriculture for sustainable food systems</i>	G. Haesaert (UGent)	F. K. Mujinga		
	<i>Subproject 6</i>	<i>Institutional capacity building</i>	J-M. Rigo (UH)	D. D. D. Mwembu		
SI	2022-2024	The use of virtual reality in the management of children and teenagers with sickle cell disease after stroke in Democratic Republic of Congo: clinical implementation, users' acceptance and validation study.	Bruno Bonnechère, (UH)	Panda Mulefu	Institut de Recherche en sciences de la santé, Lubumbashi	63.479,9
SI	2022-2024	Mastering ICT tools by the University of Kisangani education actors	Jean-Michel Rigo, (UH)	Augustin Isoy	Université de Kisangani	70.000
SI	2022-2024	A study of the Lake Mai-Ndombe ecosystem for the protection of its biodiversity and the sustainable exploitation of its fishery resources (ECOSYM)	Jos Snoeks, (KUL)	Pascal I.Mwapu	Institut Supérieur Pédagogique de la Gombe	69.326,40
TEAM	2022-2027	Rethink and reform education of medical doctors to enhance patient care in KINDU, through the renewal of the medical curriculum at the Faculty of Medicine at UNIKI (University of KINDU, DR Congo)	Virginie Bito, (UH)	Ali Bulabula	Université de Kindu	300.000
TEAM	2022-2027	From handmade gravel to handmade urbanism: humans, nature and materials in South Kivu's sand and stone value chains	Sara Geenen, (UA)	Bossissi Nkuba	Université Catholique de Bukavu	299.993,10
TEAM	2022-2027	Social resilience after sexual violence in Eastern DR Congo: from decay over reparations to accountable governance	Maria Iniesta, (UG)	Germaine Furaha	Université Evangélique en Afrique	275.389,40
TEAM	2022-2027	Improving treatment and outcome of newborns with asphyxia in the Global South	Gunnar Naulaers, (KUL)	Therese Biselele	Université de Kinshasa	275.546,70

Table 1 Ongoing VLIR-UOS projects that will continue in FYP II

SI	2023-2025	Enhancing research on (tick-borne) zoonotic infections in the Congo Basin with molecular laboratory tools	S. Gryseels (UA)	Guy-Crispin Gembu Tungaluna	Université de Kisangani	69.918,20
SI	2023-2025	Impact of trace elements exposure on the incidence of congenital malformations in newborn in the mining areas of South-Kivu, D.R. Congo.	Philippe De Vloo (KUL)	Patrick De Marie Katoto Chimusa	Université Catholique de Bukavu	69.997,40
SI	2023-2025	Protecting biocultural diversity in DR Congo: amplifying the voices of indigenous/local communities in nature conservation research and policy	K. Titeca (UA)	Papy Bambu Liena	Université de Kisangani	69.998,50
SI	2023-2025	Reducing severe malaria related child mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) by improving the management and control of malaria associated kidney injury (MAKI)	P. Van den Steen (KUL)	Pepe Ekulu Mfutu	Université de Kinshasa	69.998,50
SI	2023-2025	Solar Cookers for All	S. Abrams (UH)	Bonaventure Banza wa Banza	Université de Lubumbashi	69.854,60

Abbreviations (type): IUC=Institutional University Cooperation; SI=Short Initiatives, TEAM projects. Abréviations (Institutions flamandes): KUL=Université Catholique de Louvain; UG=Université de Gand; UA=Université d'Anvers; UH=Université d'Hasselt.

Competitive calls for new SI, TEAM and ITP projects will be launched and announced on our website. Nationals of DR Congo are eligible<sup>1</sup> to apply for scholarships for the International Master Programmes (ICP) and International Training Programmes (ITP).

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<sup>1</sup> Admission requirements, application procedures and selection procedures differ across the programmes and host institutions.

# 2 DR Congo and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## 2.1 DR Congo and the Sustainable Development Goals

Following the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in 2016 the DRC started the creation of the Congolese Observatory for Sustainable Development, a structure that can monitor, assess and report on the implementation of the SDGs. The country has achieved the contextualization and prioritization of SDG targets; the geographic location of the SDGs at the sub-national level; and the alignment of the National Strategic Development Plan and sectoral and provincial strategies with the prioritised SDG targets.

A report on the sustainable development goals, the [Voluntary National Review 2020](#) (in French only), was published in 2020. Overall, the implementation of the SDGs is based on a multi-stakeholder partnership. Apart from the evolution per SDG, focus has been put on leaving no one behind and on the implication of civil society in public life and challenges of public interest. However, additional efforts are required. A framework for accelerating implementation of the SDGs is being considered. But the important challenge remains the mobilization of resources.

Taking into account the global aspect of the SDGs, the [Sustainable Development Report](#) of 2021<sup>2</sup> assesses where each country stands regarding the achievements of the SDGs. DR Congo ranks 158<sup>th</sup> out of 165 countries included in the report. The [DR Congo Country Profile](#) shows that the majority of goals is facing major or significant challenges.



<sup>2</sup> Sachs et al. (2021): The Decade of Action for the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Report 2021. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

As an umbrella organization that works with calls for proposals, VLIR-UOS supports interventions for and through higher education institutes, supporting them in the areas of education, research and uptake and thereby strengthening them in their role as development actor. Doing so, the impact of the interventions supported by VLIR-UOS can be found in a large variety of sectors. In line with its major intervention area, VLIR-UOS positions itself within the education sector, especially Focused on higher education, research and innovation (SDG 4 and 9). However, through its interventions, VLIR-UOS intervenes in different sectors as well. VLIR-UOS recognises that given the complexity, scale and interconnectedness of current societal challenges, meaningful social, economic and ecological transformations can only be realised by starting from a holistic and integrated approach to the SDGs. When translated into SDGs, the projects that were financed by VLIR-UOS in DR Congo covered mainly, apart from SDG 4 and 9, SDGs 2, 3 and 15. Top sectors for VLIR-UOS in this country for the past decade are health, sustainable agriculture and food security, biodiversity/environment and natural resources, education and technology transfer.

More background information and context analysis on DR Congo can be found in the **geographic Joint Strategic Framework** for DR Congo.

#### **Additional sources on progress related to higher education & science (SDG 4)**

- [UNESCO-UIS](#): overview data resources indicators [related to SDG4](#)
- [Our World in data](#):
  - Indicators related to [educational mobility and inequality](#)
  - Indicators related to [tertiary education](#)
  - Indicators related to [projections of future education](#) (demand)
  - Indicators related to [science](#) and [research](#)



## 2.2 Higher education landscape in DR Congo

The Higher education sector is governed by the Ministry of Higher and University Education (<https://www.minesu.gouv.cd/>), which manages universities, higher educational institutes and higher technical institutes. These 3 categories of higher education and university establishments are grouped together into public and private establishments, together with more than 400,000 students and nearly 3,000 qualified teachers at the end of 2018. The higher education and university establishments of the DRC are managed by a management committee made up of a Rector / Director General who is assisted by two General Secretaries (academic and administrative) and a Budget Administrator.

The human sciences are more in demand than the exact and applied sciences, except medicine. Men (students) appear to be in the majority in all faculties. However, women (students) are more present in the fields of communication sciences or public health. Higher education and university establishments in the DRC are recording a large drop out in students when the academic year progresses, the main reason being the inability of many parents to pay academic fees. Overall, the proportion of students enrolled in the third cycle (recruitment in principle based on the performance achieved in the first two cycles) is too low (0.5%), which limits rapid academic succession and the training of senior executives for companies. Efforts are being made to encourage women to take postgraduate enrollment.

For almost 10 years, measures and reforms have been adopted to reduce the difficulties facing the Congolese education system. These reforms are based on the Government's vision for education expressed in the Framework Law on national education promulgated in 2014 and in the Sector Strategy for Education and Training (2016-2025) endorsed by the Technical and Financial Partners, which can be found [through this link](#). In the Framework Law, the Government undertakes to "build an inclusive and quality education system that effectively contributes to national development, the promotion of peace and active democratic citizenship".

The Framework Law adopted twenty-three fundamental options for national education, including "basic education for all", "environmental education, training in sustainable development and climate change", "education in technologies information and communication", "the use of national languages and / or languages of the environment as a medium and discipline of teaching and learning", "the adequacy between training and employment", "the mastery and control of science and technology as essential factors of economic power" and "the promotion of intelligence and critical thinking". We note here the importance given to the teaching of STEM (Science, Technology, Computer Science and Mathematics) disciplines to support a sustainable development of the nation.

For about twenty years, the political orientations of Congolese universities per academic year, have been produced (in the form of circular notes) by the national ministry of higher and university education and published then applied in higher education for a harmonious and quasi-uniform operation. To improve the governance of universities, the technical bodies of the Ministry of Higher and University Education are developing in an evolving and adaptive way a handbook for managers.

In the Sectoral Strategy for Education and Training (2016-2025), three strategic axes have been decided, it is about "Promoting a more equitable education system, at the service of growth and employment", "Creating the conditions for a quality education system" and "Establishing transparent and

effective governance". For the higher and university level, it offers "openness to the world and to modern technologies", "the use of ICT, open and distance learning" and "the strengthening of research". The UNIVERSITIC project, funded by VLIR-UOS and ARES-CCD, has improved the IT infrastructure of 7 Congolese universities and opened them up to the world thanks to new technologies.

In 2011, the modalities of operation and organization of the National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher and University Education were created and defined. Supported by VLIR-UOS since 2012, it was extended to all HEIs in the country by decree n ° 18/003 of February 2018. This structure aims to support and assist all higher education and university establishments in the country in the process of setting up internal quality assurance units, strengthening their capacities and drawing up, on the basis of other models, internal evaluation reference systems and training, research and doctoral studies programs. It also aims to build and develop with the Ministry of Higher and University Education the reference standards and quality assurance standards for the evaluation and self-assessment of the quality of higher education establishments and University. In this regard, this agency will also be the interface of higher education and university establishments in the external evaluation of quality assurance.

Both the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education (MEPSP) and the Ministry of Higher and University Education (MESU) set up the **Education Project for the Quality and Relevance of Teaching to Secondary and University levels, PEQPESU** in acronym. This 6-year project (2016-2021) is funded by the World Bank. For higher education, the aim is to strengthen relevance in the priority sectors of mining, construction and agriculture. One of the reforms is the introduction in higher education and university establishments of a new results-based management method. For higher education and university establishments, this is the introduction of the Performance Contract (CDP) signed between the institution and the Government. In this contract, the institution commits to improving its performance in agreed areas. In return, the Government, through PEQPESU, undertakes to pay it an endowment to finance this effort. This new management method aims to stimulate the development of higher and university education institutions, to help them carry out their strategic development plan, to enable them to develop short-term programs that meet the needs of the job market and help them to link to the LMD (licence-master-doctorat) system. The LMD system started in 2012 in a few universities through the opening of the renewable natural resources management discipline. This system has started to be extended progressively to other sectors and universities through the Framework Law no.14 / 004 of February 2014 on National Education (art. 98). Since 2018, a normative framework has been produced to provide guidance to the LMD system in the DRC.

Another reform concerns the organization of the third cycle (PhD) for which a decree on its organization has been published since 2015. This reform was completed by the one that targeted the 3 major universities of the country (Universities of Kinshasa, Lubumbashi and Kisangani) to organize postgraduate studies in all the fields they organize. A few other universities have also obtained authorization to organize postgraduate studies, but only in a few specific fields. Consequently, for academic succession, these universities capable of organizing the third cycle must train their own academic succession, but also those of other unqualified universities. Moreover, most Congolese universities have internationalized their research by developing the reception of master's and doctoral students and foreign researchers.

According to the [Webometrics Ranking of World Universities](#) , no Congolese University falls within the 2000 ranking worldwide. Within this ranking, the University of Kinshasa (UNIKIN) takes the 4433<sup>rd</sup> place, and the University of Lubumbashi (UNILU) the 5515<sup>th</sup> place.

## 2.3 Leaving no one behind

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community pledged to leave no one behind and to endeavor to reach the furthest behind first. The principle of leaving no one behind can be defined as a three-part imperative: to end absolute poverty in all its forms, to stop group-based discrimination that results in unequal outcomes for disadvantaged populations, and to take action to help the furthest behind.

Following the report on the sustainable development goals for DR Congo, ([VNR 2020 Report \[French\]](#) and [summary in French and English](#)), Agenda 2030 recognizes that everyone counts and deserves to have the right to equal opportunities, regardless of their income, gender, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, location, housing or other characteristics specific to the country context. Priority is therefore given to the interests of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginalized groups so that no one is deprived of their opportunities to fully express their potential because of who they are or where they live.

This principle has even led to the creation of a ministry taking into account the most vulnerable and marginalized people like persons living with a handicap, street children and native pygmy people, with a separate direction for these last ones with the aim to get them more integrated into society.

In 2019, the DRC integrated the handicap and vulnerability dimension into its decentralization program. She also took into account the needs of women living with disabilities in the action plan. In 2018, she ratified the recommendation to end all forms of violence against people with albinism and children accused of witchcraft and to punish the perpetrators.

The Education and Training Sector Strategy created a special education directorate to address issues of marginalization and inclusiveness. To facilitate education for all children, the government has launched free basic education. In the same perspective, the government has joined the dynamic of Universal Health Coverage.

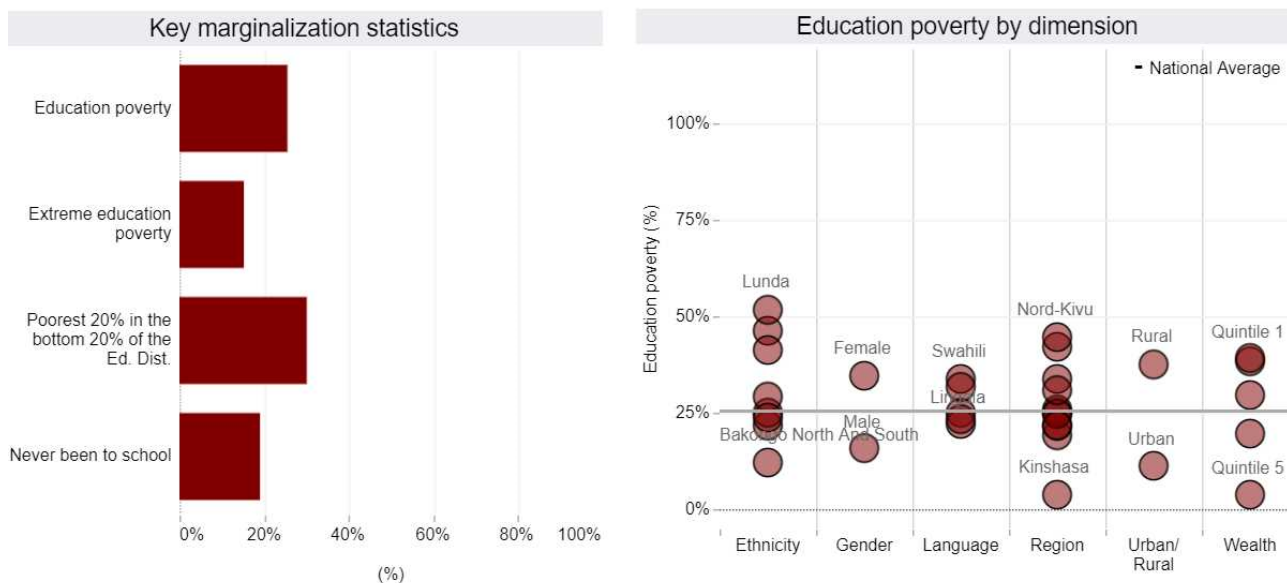
In other sectors, there is also a clear will on the part of the government to address this issue of inclusion and equity. To this end, there has been the adaptation of the legal arsenal in the field of both social protection and gender. However, there are still considerable challenges: targeting these vulnerable groups remains very difficult, especially as the disaggregation of the statistical apparatus remains sketchy. Moreover, the mobilization of financial resources relating to these vulnerable or marginalized groups is very low for the time being. This places particular emphasis on redistributive policies beyond the traditional stabilization and allocation policies. The DRC needs drastic and innovative reforms, requiring developmentalist political leadership to meet the ambition of this new agenda.

The UNESCO data on [Deprivation and Marginalization in Education](#) (DME)<sup>3</sup> presents the following scheme, showing that challenges remain between the two sexes, between rural and urban, as well as between regions.

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- Education poverty: the proportion of the population with less than 4 years of education
- Extreme education poverty: the proportion with less than 2 years
- Poorest 20% in the bottom 20% of the Ed. Dist.: what proportion of the poorest 20% are also in the bottom 20% of the education distribution
- Never been to school: what proportion of 7-16 year olds have never been to school



**Additional sources on Leaving No One Behind**

- *Gender parity index: [school enrolment](#)*
- *[Global Gender Gap Report 2020](#), including country profiles*
- *ODI leaving no one behind index: summary [report index 2019](#); annex [index 2019](#)*
- *World Inequality Database on Education: [Disparities in higher education attendance](#)*
- *Danish institute for human rights: [Human rights data explorer](#)*

## 2.4 Multistakeholderpartnership - Stakeholder analysis

The complexity, scale, and interconnectedness of the current societal challenges that the SDG framework is seeking to address, requires a concerted effort of a wide variety of different stakeholders. As such, the principle of multistakeholderpartnership – which promotes cooperation and partnerships at different stages and spanning the boundaries of civil society, private sector, government, and academia – is ubiquitous across the 2030 Agenda. An analysis of these stakeholders is essential for each partnership.

Since the start of the process of implementing the SDGs in the DRC, civil society has stood out through its involvement. She brought her field experience to support traditional development or humanitarian partners. Within companies, a dynamic around the SDGs had been set up under the impetus, among others, of civil society. Congolese companies have begun to convey good practices, especially in raising awareness around the SDGs. Civil society has also presented itself as an interlocutor who offers solutions to political challenges such as peacekeeping.

However, all stakeholders are unevenly informed about Agenda 2030, especially different ministries. The government should thus increase the popularization of contextualized SDGs to both public administration and the media. It should also develop the capacity of these actors. This will involve strengthening national capacities for better information and ownership of the strategies. Therefore, the future programmes to be worked out should be more unifying and include more the provinces. However, both low

financial means and a lack of statistics are a challenge. Therefore, the country has developed in the short and medium term several surveys to obtain data.

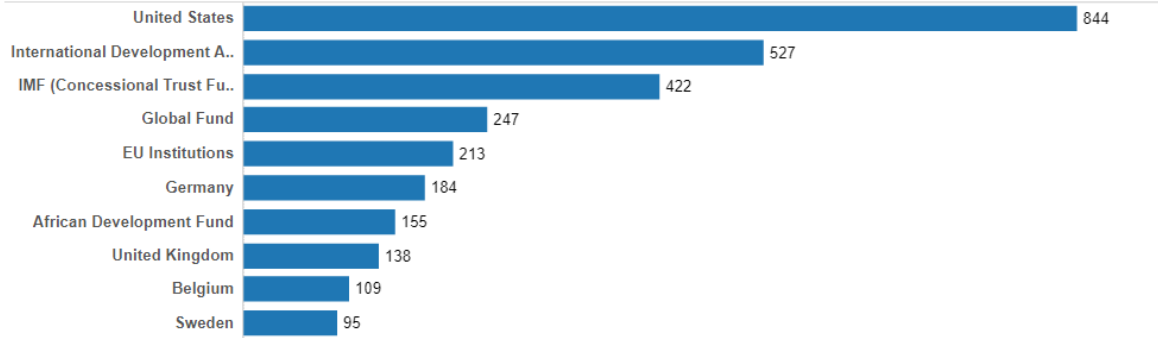
Although efforts have been made, significant challenges in democracy, human rights and governance remain. According to this report of Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/af-rica/democratic-republic-of-the-congo/> the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) continued to experience serious human rights violations, including mass killings in the context of armed conflict and inter-communal violence, a crackdown on dissent and ill-treatment of detainees. People from regions affected by armed conflict, including eastern DRC, were particularly affected amid mass displacement and a deepening humanitarian crisis. The authorities continued to show a lack of political will to hold the perpetrators of human rights violations to account. The right to education was violated.

Human Rights Watch (<https://www.hrw.org/africa/democratic-republic-congo>) states that the situation remains dire, with internal conflicts and poor governance contributing to a severe food crisis and the internal displacement of 5.8 million people, more than anywhere else in Africa. Over 100 armed groups are active in eastern Congo, and the imposition of martial law in North Kivu and Ituri provinces has facilitated abuses by government security forces.

Taking a look at the **development partners** of DR Congo

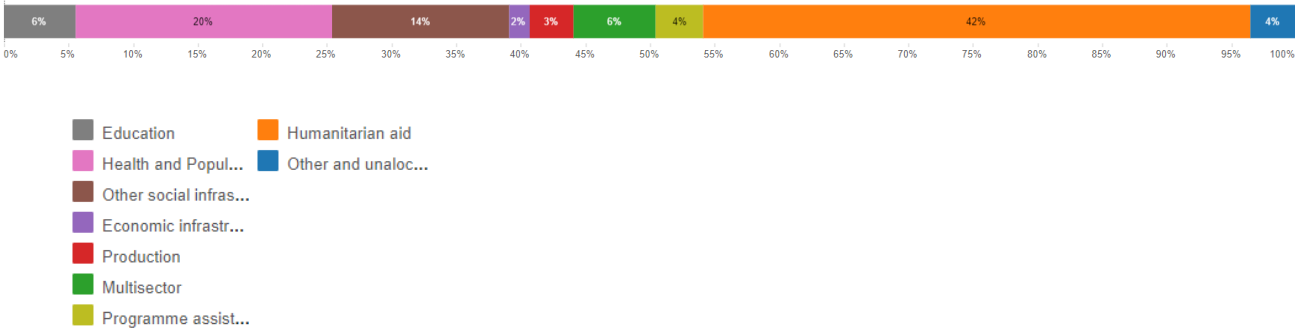
[https://public.tableau.com/profile/thielemans.v#!/vizhome/OECDDACAidatag glancebyrecipient\\_new/Recipients](https://public.tableau.com/profile/thielemans.v#!/vizhome/OECDDACAidatag glancebyrecipient_new/Recipients) the United States represent the main donor of gross official development aid (ODA) in DR Congo, followed by the International Development Association.

Top Ten Donors of Gross ODA for Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2020-2021 average, USD million



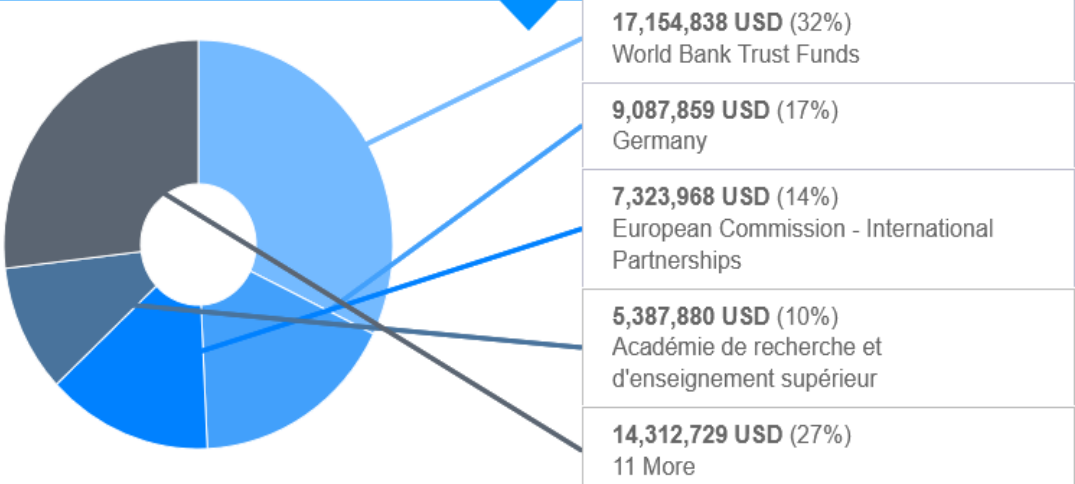
The sectors receiving the biggest funding are by far humanitarian aid, followed by health & population.

Bilateral ODA by Sector for Democratic Republic of the Congo, 2020-2021 average



Based on data from the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), the World Bank is the main donor in the higher education sector ([http://d-portal.org/ctrack.html#view=search&sector\\_code=11420](http://d-portal.org/ctrack.html#view=search&sector_code=11420)).

## Where does the money come from? (IATI all years)



VLIR-UOS contributes to the 2030 agenda by realizing a societal impact, implying an impact on local communities, civil society, governments, private sector or other higher education institutions. In what follows we list the role and the desired change among the main actors involved in the change process that VLIR-UOS envisages to support through *its interventions*.

Actor	Role and interest/influence
<b>Higher Education Institutions</b>	HEIs in DRC are important boundary partners in the realization of VLIR-UOS outcomes in terms of its contribution to Agenda 2030, and the potential contribution to local sustainable development. As project owners they are expected to contribute to HEIs' enhanced institutional performance in the core tasks relating to education, research and societal service delivery strengthening the HEI's visibility and recognition as a centre of excellence. In the long-term, partner HEIs are also expected to have a multiplier effect on the higher education system and development sector in the country or region through their engagement in (global) knowledge-driven partnerships with academic and non-academic stakeholders.
<b>DGD (incl. Belgian embassies in partner countries)</b>	DGD has an advisory role in the VLIR-UOS selection commissions and follows-up on the VLIR-UOS portfolio and the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development. The Belgian Embassies (e.g. Embabel) can play a role in facilitating the uptake of knowledge, the identification, mobilisation and relation building with other stakeholders (e.g. links with European Union, national government, other donors), the contextual updates etc.
<b>Students, professionals, and alumni</b>	<b>Students</b> can be direct (e.g. as a recipient of a PhD scholarship within a project) or indirect beneficiaries (e.g. enjoying improved/innovative didactical approaches) of the projects. As direct beneficiary, their changed role will be about the generation and use of newly acquired knowledge, competences (e.g. global citizenship) and networks in view of sustainable development. Alumni from VLIR-UOS-projects will be important stakeholders in connecting VLIR-UOS projects with each other, with other actors, etc.
<b>Academics/researchers</b>	As direct beneficiaries of the projects, academics and researchers affiliated within Flemish and partner HE&SIs play an important role in co-creating, disseminating and creating conditions for uptake of knowledge relevant to the achievement of the SDGs in line with the needs, policies and priorities of the partner HE&SIs, local/national or regional stakeholders.
<b>Members of the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development</b>	VLIR-UOS, ITM and ARES have initiated the JSF on HESD4SD to further unlock the developmental potential of higher education and science cooperation for sustainable development and make it accessible to other local, Belgian and international partners as scientific advisor to other partners' projects, partners or policy bodies, as a platform for sharing state of the art scientific results, information, expertise and experience and for exploration of possibilities for synergy and

	complementarity. In DRC, all 3 actors: ITM, ARES and VLIR-UOS are present and were in fact in terms of budget the main actors in the former geographic JSF which was discontinued
<b>Belgian Actors of the Non-governmental Cooperation</b>	VLIR-UOS continuously tries to identify and encourage synergy and complementarity between Belgian ANGCs and academic stakeholders. Through the uptake of research results, mobilisation of local stakeholders, participation in trainings or courses, identification and communication of relevant research questions/opportunities, hosting of international internships, facilitating student mobility... these actors play a critical role.
<b>International organizations and other donors (e.g. WHO, UNESCO, World Bank, European Commission...)</b>	Interventions undertaken by international organisations like UN agencies such as FAO or international donors active in higher education cooperation can be complementary in the achievement of the objectives of projects. They can, for instance, play a role in the use and upscaling of new knowledge or practices or serve as seed money for bigger interventions financed by these international organisations.
<b>Academic/science (inter)national and regional networks</b>	Regional or (inter)national academic/science networks (e.g. CAMES, IUCEA) are among the potential indirect beneficiary as targeted HE&SIs strengthened in their research/educational capacities can improve the functioning of the networks they are part of through the co-creation, exchange and uptake of knowledge among academic stakeholders. Similar effects can be realized in the case of alumni and scholarship networks/associations when former scholarship students act as agents of change within these networks.
<b>Public sector: Local or central government and political community</b>	Engage in evidence-based governance that puts knowledge to the test by being a stakeholder in the co-creation of inclusive (innovative) solutions and effective user of research results to foster good governance for sustainable and coherent policies.
<b>State owned/Private sector</b>	Individuals and companies who operate for profit within the boundaries of the specific country situation and emerging private sector development can play a role within projects as users of the knowledge, applications and services (co-)created as result of the project and therefore contribute in particular but not only to SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure.
<b>Civil society, social movements and local communities</b>	Civil society actors, social movements and local communities are expected to co-create, access and use the knowledge and research products generated within the framework of <i>projects</i> thereby making a potential contribution to the entire range of SDGs.



## 3 Synergy and Complementarity with other (Belgian) development actors in DR Congo

### 3.1 VLIR-UOS approaches to synergy and complementarity

Drawing upon their longstanding common history, VLIR-UOS, ARES and the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) jointly developed the thematic Joint Strategic Framework on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development (JSF HES4SD). Through cooperation with civil society, private and public sector, the JSF initiators<sup>4</sup> aim to further unlock the huge developmental potential of higher education and science cooperation for sustainable development and make it accessible to other Belgian, local and international partners, in different ways: as partner in a multi-actor partnership, as scientific advisor to other partners' projects, partners or policy bodies, as a knowledge broker for sharing state of the art scientific results, information, expertise and experience and for exploration of possibilities for synergy and complementarity. This reference framework for DR Congo will feed into the **platform** that the initiators of the JSF HES4SD plan to create to proactively communicate opportunities and facilitate such cooperation. More precisely, the platform can be used to:

- (i) communicate about the launch and results of competitive calls for projects;
- (ii) communicate other opportunities for projects or scholarships;
- (iii) gather/exchange on collaboration opportunities (e.g. requests for scientific advice);
- (iv) share information about ongoing projects, events and seminars in the country/region.

### 3.2 Bilateral development cooperation (Enabel) in DR Congo

DR Congo is one of the most important partners of the Belgian Development Cooperation. Since 2000, Belgium and Congo – through Enabel - have worked together to improve the living conditions and the income of 16 million people in Congo (<https://www.enabel.be/content/enabel-dr-congo>). They primarily intervene in the provinces in three sectors: 1/ Agriculture and rural development; 2/ Education and 3/ Health. Concerning agriculture, DRC aims to re-boost its rural areas by developing modern production entities and strengthening small businesses. The education tackles the development of a professional education and training offer that is adapted to the needs of society and business. The health program aims to improve access to quality health care whereby also the management of the health system is being taken into account. Special attention is paid to providing care to victims of sexual violence. Also, the central Ministry of Health is assisted by putting in place a quality medication distribution system, transparent financing of the sector and assuring competent medical staff.

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<sup>4</sup> The three JSF initiators represent 60 Belgian higher education institutions (HEIs), being 11 universities, 32 university colleges, 16 school of arts, and ITM.

### 3.3 Belgian actors of the non-governmental cooperation in DR Congo

#### 3.3.1 Thematic Joint Strategic Framework on Higher Education and Science

	Belgian HE&SI	Local partners	Topic/ thematic focus	Contact person
<b>ARES</b>	Université de Namur	Institut Supérieur pédagogique de Bukavu	Le Coltan du Kivu: Capacité de traitement Physico-chimique et études d'applications (2019-2024)	<b>Simon Hemptinne</b>
	Université de Liège	Université Evangélique en Afrique	Des pratiques de prise en charge au modèle holistique dit « One stop center » à l'hôpital et à la fondation Panzi : Défis et perspectives de construction d'une approche thérapeutique pour les victimes des violences sexuelles (2020-2025)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université de Kinshasa	Surveillance de la résistance aux antimicrobiens en RDC : Création d'un Centre Universitaire de Référence (2020-2025)	
	Université de Liège	Université de Lubumbashi	Renforcement des capacités de gestion durable de la forêt claire de miombo par l'évaluation de l'impact environnemental de la production de charbon de bois et l'amélioration des pratiques vis-à-vis des ressources forestières (CHARLU) 2020-2025)	
	Université Catholique de Louvain	Institut Supérieur de Techniques Médicales de Bukavu	Pérennisation des capacités de détection des maladies infectieuses diarrhéiques: focus sur la réduction de la morbidité et mortalité dues au choléra en province du Sud-Kivu (2020-2025)	
	Université Catholique de Louvain	Université catholique de Bukavu	DIRE (Droit, information, Recherches croisées) (2022-2027)	
	Université Catholique de Louvain	Institut supérieur de développement rural de Bukavu	Acteurs 'periphérisés' et luttes d'accès aux ressources naturelles en RDC : Vulnérabilités et résiliences (2022-2027)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université Evangélique en Afrique	Master de spécialisation en psychomotricité. Option psycho-trauma de type court. Soutien à la relève académique de UEA (Bukavu RDC) et projets de promotion de la santé en réseau avec des acteurs de la population civile (2022- 2027)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université de Lubumbashi	Renforcement de la capacité d'enseignement de l'anatomie humaine à l'Université de Lubumbashi pour une meilleure pratique médicale et chirurgicale en milieu rural (2022-2027)	
	Université de Mons	Université de Lubumbashi	Santé mentale dans le grand Katanga : cartographie des troubles et renforcement des capacités du personnel des universités et des acteurs de terrain (2023-2025)	

	Université de Liège	Université de Kinshasa	Capitalisation de l'approche d'Accompagnement Holistique et de Proximité d'Emancipation des jeunes dits « kuluna » pour leur sortie de violence par la réinsertion économique et socio-professionnelle (Approche AHPER) dans la ville province de Kinshasa (2023-2025)	
	Université de Liège	Université de Kinshasa	Développement des outils de gestion de l'eau et redéfinition des itinéraires techniques pour les cultures saisonnières dans le contexte de changement climatique (2023-2025)	
	Université de Liège		Projet d'amorce d'un consortium de recherche sur les pratiques durables de protection des cultures de Vigna sp. et de leurs graines en stockage (2023-2025)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université de Kinshasa	Les opportunités manquées de la prévention au VIH/sida en RDC : la PrEP et les migrations (ULB-UNIKIN) (2023-2025)	
	Université Catholique de Louvain	Université de Kinshasa	Le Service Learning au sein des universités congolaises (2023-2025)	
	Université de Namur		EntreComp Ya Bana Kin (2023-2025)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles		Bunkeya plurielle. Histoire et archéologie d'une capitale du 19e siècle au sud-est de l'Afrique centrale (2023-2025)	
	Université de Liège	Université de Kisangani	Mise en place d'un DESS Interuniversitaire de Pharmacien d'hôpital au Nord-Est de la RDC (2023-2028)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université de Lubumbashi	Vers la réappropriation psychosociale et la resocialisation par les communautés sources du Katanga des dépouilles d'anciens à rapatrier et des objets culturels à récupérer (2023-2028)	
	Université Libre de Bruxelles	Université de Lubumbashi	Université de Lubumbashi - Appui institutionnel (2022-2027)	
	Université de Liège	Université de Kinshasa	Université de Kinshasa (UNIKIN) - Appui institutionnel (2022-2027)	
<b>ITM</b>	ITM	Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale	Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS 2022-2026)	<b>Bram Riems</b>
	ITM	Ecole de Santé Publique – Université de Lubumbashi	Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS 2022-2026)	

	ITM	Centre de Recherche Sanitaire de Kimpese	Institutional Capacity Strengthening (ICS 2022-2026)	
	ITM	Programme National de Lutte contre la THA	National Programme Capacity Strengthening (CS 2022-2026)	

### 3.3.2 DR Congo Joint Strategic Framework

Description of the strategic goal		ANGCs (active members)
<b>SG1</b>	Promouvoir l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes	APEFE, BD, CNCD-11., Congodorpen, HI, Caritas, CRB, E&F, KBA-FONCABA, KIYO, LC, Oxfam Solidarité, Rotary, SOS Faim, SOS-VE, VSF, 11., ASF, LHAC, MdM, RCN J&D, WAPA, BAC, ACTEC, Dynamo, ETM, MMH, Via Don Bosco, M/F
<b>SG2</b>	Garantir une préservation et gestion durable de l'environnement et des ressources naturelles afin de contribuer au bien-être humain, à la résilience des populations au changement climatique et aux catastrophes naturelles et à une plus grande équité sociale	IPIS, LC, SOS VE, APEFE, Congodorpen, 11., CNCD-11., KBA-FONCABA, Oxfam Solidarité, CRB, MMH, BAC, VSF, Caritas, ASF
<b>SG3</b>	Garantir un enseignement inclusif et qualitatif pour tous respectant les droits de l'enfant	ACTEC, APEFE, CEC, Congodorpen, Dynamo, ETM, HI, KIYO, LHAC, LC, SOS-VE, Via Don Bosco, WAPA, LFTW, CODEART, ULB-C
<b>SG4</b>	Améliorer l'accès aux soins de santé de qualité et promouvoir le droit à la santé pour toutes et tous	MEMISA, LFTW, Rotary, Congodorpen, MSV, AD, VSF, BAC, CDEB, HI, ULB-C, ACTEC, MdM, Viva Salud, LC, M/F, SOS-VE, CRB, APEFE
<b>SG5</b>	Favoriser l'agriculture émancipatrice et durable, orientée vers le marché et une utilisation efficiente et durable de l'énorme potentiel qu'offre le Congo en matière de sylviculture, d'agriculture, d'élevage et de pêche, avec une attention particulière à l'agriculture familiale et l'augmentation des revenus des ménages agricoles	APEFE, BD, CAP Santé, Caritas, Congodorpen, CSA, E&F, KBA-FONCABA, KIYO, LC, MMH, Oxfam Solidarité, Rikolto, SOS Faim, Trias, ULB-C, Via Bon Bosco, VSF, CNCD-11., SOS-VE, RCN J&D, CODEART, Rotary
<b>SG6</b>	Renforcer la gouvernance à tous les niveaux politiques et améliorer le respect des droits humains	11., ASF, BRULOCALIS, BD, UVCW, RCN J&D, CNCD-11., VIVA SALUD, LHAC, KBA-FONCABA, ETM, Dynamo
<b>SG7</b>	Renforcer le secteur culturel	11., Africalia, CEC
<b>SG8</b>	Entreprenariat	VIA Don Bosco, ETM, ACTEC, LC, CODEART, E&F, KBA-FONCABA, Trias, Caritas, Congodorpen, VSF, APEFE, BD, WAPA, Dynamo, SOS-VE, Rotary, BAC

### 3.3.3 Other Thematic Joint Strategic Frameworks

ANGC	JSF	Approches	Local partners
<b>UVCW, Brulocalis, Rikolto, COTA</b>	Sustainable cities	<p>1. Les autorités locales co-construisent et mettent en œuvre avec d'autres acteurs une politique locale de développement durable</p> <p>2. Les capacités des gouvernements et acteurs locaux à concevoir la ville durable sont renforcées</p> <p>3. Les acteurs économiques locaux adoptent des pratiques d'approvisionnement inclusives qui stimulent la consommation et la production durables</p>	À identifier
<b>Join for Water, CebioS, WWF,</b>	Resilience	<p>1. Amélioration des droits des communautés, des politiques et de la gouvernance des écosystèmes et des ressources naturelles.</p> <p>2. Amélioration de la sensibilisation, des connaissances et des compétences en matière d'écosystèmes durables.</p> <p>3. Renforcement de l'accès durable aux services écosystémiques, de leur gestion et leur utilisation.</p>	CIDRI ; autres ONG peuvent s'associer ; SAGE – Structure d'Appui à la Gestion de l'Eau ; MEDD, ICCN, Centre de Surveillance de la Biodiversité, universités et centres de recherche publiques, des chercheurs individuels, des ONG locales, ainsi que d'autres ONG, populations locales ou indigènes, etc. à travers les partenaires directs ; WWF RDC ; autres ONG locales Instituts de recherche (exemple : recherche bonobos, recherche forestière/conservation communautaire)
<b>ACV-CSC International, ANMC/LCM, WSM, IFSI/ISVI, UNMS-Solidaris, Solsoc</b>	Decent Work	<p>1. Créer des emplois décents et productifs</p> <p>2. Promouvoir les droits des travailleurs</p> <p>3. Promouvoir l'accès à la protection sociale</p> <p>4. Renforcer le dialogue entre les partenaires sociaux. Ces piliers prennent en compte le genre et l'environnement.</p>	Les partenaires des ACNG belges dans ce domaine