



**Mid-term evaluation of the  
Incremental Funding to  
International Master  
Programmes (ICP)**

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## Preface

*It has been a pleasure and privilege for the team to interview so many enthusiastic people committed to ensuring quality education which integrates a clear South dimension.*

*We do hope that the overall report sufficiently captures the rich spectrum of choices that have been made to develop a South dimension that both benefits students from North and South and clearly stimulates to consider and to develop new types of interaction with partners in the South.*

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# Executive summary

**Focus of this mid-term evaluation** is the incremental funding (IF) allocated by the VLIR-UOS to 15 selected International Master Programmes (ICPs) for the years 2017-2021. IF was introduced with the 2017 call for *project* funding to ICPs and presented a major change as compared to the funding modalities of ICPs in the past (based on a lump sum for the host institution/department). The IF requires ICP host institutions to develop a project with activities, expected results and budget. The allocated budgets per year coincide with whether the ICP concerns a one-year or 2-year programme. For a 2-year programme (10/15 ICPs) the budget ranges from 612,255 euro to 750,000 euro for 5 years. For a 1-year master, the budgets are between 386,171 euro and 492,744 euro for these 5 years. In total there are 3/15 interuniversity programmes (IUP), each of which have a longer history of cooperation, and have benefitted from VLIR UOS support to at least one of their precursor programmes. In total 10/15 of the funded ICPs benefitted from ICP funding in the previous funding cycle (2001-2016), 5 others were new to ICP funding. The IF comes with a scholarship modality. For each intake year of the IF funding period, each ICP is entitled to select 12 applicants that are nationals from the VLIR-UOS list of eligible countries and is entitled to grant them a full scholarship.

ICPs are conceived to add development relevance to the core business activities of Flemish Universities and the incremental funding was introduced to strengthen their South dimension. A South dimension implies, according to VLIR-UOS developing a strategy to spur the internationalisation of the programme by linking it with the local context of one or more developing countries by means of student and/or professor mobility and/or partial delocalisation of the programme to (one of) these developing countries.

A key assumption behind the funding scheme is that through the professional impact of students after their graduation, the ICPs and the IF will contribute to the development of these students' countries of origin. The students will have increased individual performance and will manifest this through changes in knowledge and behaviour acting as change agents. The IF funding also aims to support a contribution to development by Southern institutions having a link with the ICP host institution and receiving capacity building support.

The tables in annexes 1 and 2 provide an overview of the ICPs in the current funding cycle with their partners in the South. With 'partners', the evaluators refer to those institutions in the South that have an explicit role in the execution of the IF project that is beyond ad-hoc interventions or the support of individual academic colleagues (for e.g. for master thesis supervision) and with whom a strong interaction is envisaged in the IF project.

**The objective of this mid-term evaluation** is to support learning, steering and decision making and accountability. It is expected that the evaluation provides:

- A mapping of ICPs IF projects providing insight in what is being done and how it is working. This is the main objective of the evaluation;
- An analysis of how the incremental funding is used and how it relates to working with institutions and organisations in the South, the contribution to capacity development and the management of the partnerships in order to strengthen the South dimension;
- Characteristics of interuniversity collaboration (advantages and disadvantages);
- Analysis of emerging changes;

- Recommendations for the next call.

Not included in this mid-term evaluation is the question to what extent the scholarship strategy or the IF project is contributing to capacity development in the South. It may be clear that educating several cohorts of students coming from the South, more in particular carefully selected ICP scholars that generally perform quite good and offer a pool of future PhD students, can be expected to contribute to capacity in the South upon return of these scholars. To assess this (impact) was however not within the objectives of this evaluation.

The evaluators acknowledge that ICP host institutions have many more other activities to support capacity building and development in the South, next to the IF project. Assessing or even mapping all these other initiatives was not amongst the objectives of the evaluation. However, efforts of the ICP host institutions to strengthen synergy have been highlighted.

**The execution of the mid-term evaluation** was based on qualitative methods and analysis. Methods applied were the following:

- Analysis of documents (general and related to each ICP);
- Interviews (one-on-one, working sessions and focus group discussions) with ICP stakeholders present at campus (teachers, researchers, other academic staff, students, alumni) and with (academic) partner institutions of ICPs in the South. Over 200 interviews with selected stakeholders were conducted. The evaluators proposed a list of respondents for each ICP;
- Cross-case analysis to identify appropriate categories and identify generic trends. It was explicitly stated by VLIR-UOS in the ToR for this assignment that the mid-term evaluation was not expected to rank the 15 ICPs or to compare them in detail. Specific information related to the ICPs and an appraisal of stronger and weaker points can be found in the individual sheets that were drafted by the evaluators and were only sent to VLIR-UOS and the ICP concerned;
- Sense-making meeting with all ICP promoters;
- Written feedback on the overall report (by VLIR-UOS and the ICPs) and the individual sheets per ICP (by the ICPs).

**Limitations** to the evaluation. The evaluation was challenged in some ways by:

- Limited time allocated to the assignment: the ToR required an analysis and report for each ICP and an overall report with generic findings. The wealth and uniqueness of each ICP has put the evaluators before the challenge to find appropriate categories for structuring the information. This was complicated by the fact that the ICPs were not obliged to present a concise project description with clear milestones and indicators to measure at the level of objectives. Although there was a common budget format, it proved difficult to compare budget use over the various ICPs.
- The interviews with partners in the South allowed to explore their respective interaction with the ICP and their contribution. As the evaluation assignment did not provide for visits to partners at their South premises, and as only a few partners for each ICP were interviewed via skype or WhatsApp, the evaluators cannot be fully conclusive on the added value of the ICPs for the development of capacity at the partner institutions.



- Perspective of students: evaluators could only consult current cohort students and at best a few recent alumni that stayed on to start a PhD track. This limited the possibility to compare student's appreciations before and since incremental funding with the information received from the ICPs.
- Quality assurance systems at the ICP host institutions guarantees constant changes already (for e.g. in curricula), not always possible to relate exclusively to IF. Influence of other VLIR-UOS support modalities should also be taken into account (Network programmes, IUC programmes, South Initiatives, ...). Where possible the contribution of IF to particular emerging changes was highlighted. Table 7 provides an overview of the links between the IF project and other VLIR-UOS support modalities.

The conclusions of this mid-term evaluation consider, first, the **effectiveness** and **sustainability** of the changes implemented with the IF. Then the question on **relevance** is answered and conclusions on **efficiency** are described. **Recommendations** focus on the adaptation of the new IF call and, as such are primarily aimed at VLIR-UOS.

**Conclusion on effectiveness** - The evaluators observed that all of the ICPs have taken concrete steps related to the IF project activities specified in their application form, and that the majority of them can already demonstrate clear outputs and emerging changes. Being incremental, the funding allows for gradual developments wherein the ICPs can experiment, try and test what works well, adapt the direction of the project towards scenarios that appear to work well and discard others. The extensive mapping exercise has allowed to gather evidence to determine the effectiveness of the IF: it is fit for purpose.

Overall, respondents confirm that the IF project has allowed them to work in a less fragmented manner, that fieldwork and other activities with partners is getting better organised, and that the interaction with partners and alumni is structured more adequately. The budget rules for IF have created appropriate space to make these changes possible, that is for hiring committed staff ('coordinator'), for supporting the mobility of staff and South students, and for carrying costs implied in the organisation of delocalised curriculum components in the South.

The IF modality has also been effective to strengthen aspects of ICP South component development that are not entirely new to the programmes, but are now becoming more frequent, visible and impacting, and/or are being organized differently: guest lecturers from the South (including but not restricted to ICP's South partner institutions) are being integrated better in courses. In some ICPs, visiting South partner staff is given an actual co-teaching responsibility, which is a recognition of the partners' role as co-producers of educational content.

Notwithstanding their different starting situations, IF thus proves a modality that allows both newcomers and more established ICPs alike to develop their South components in a way that each sees fit, and to adapt where necessary, such as in the choice of partners. IF is proving sufficiently flexible to seize new partnership opportunities and probe the ground for other partnership modalities still. All 5 newcomer ICPs report that they were able to set support measures to ensure South students' quality participation – the one component of the IF projects wherein (older) ICPs are seen to innovate least. The 5 new ICPs report that the presence of 12 high quality scholars in each (year) of the programme is key to the effectiveness of their IF projects. Some lecturers to the new ICPs reported they had stepped up their act, and/or altered their didactic style so as to allow for more participative class interaction and more adequately valorise that "wisdom of the class" (which is also performing a key function in the majority of the older ICPs).

The most concrete results enabled by the IF modality are the delocalised curriculum components, that are newly emerging at both newcomer and established ICPs (12/15 ICPs thus far). There is no one-size-fits-all South curriculum component development, and several ICPs operate more than one of these. Only 5/15 ICPS are developing a type of credit exchange opportunity: whereas this option has the

potential to greatly increase the attractiveness of the educational programme (both in North and in South), it is also quite challenging as it depends on factors on which the ICP host in the North has little control (such as the institutional processes needed in the South).

Other than their time-span, ICPs spread out over 2 full years do not operate significantly differently from those contained in one year. Practice that does emerge at 2-year ICPs is to operationalise the summer break between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, for interning, for actual course taking (IMRD's case study in rural Vietnam, SUST Living Lab) and/or to begin data collection for the dissertation. Several of the 2-year programmes encourage ICP-scholars to collect data at their home country. 1-year programme students, in comparison, are more challenged to wrap up their dissertation process in that short time-span, particularly so if they perform field work in the South to inform that dissertation.

By mid-term in this funding cycle, ICPs South component developments are seen to have coincided with an **increase in student numbers** in almost all programmes under review: more (self-paying) students enrol in ICPs simply because IF allowed for changes that made the programmes more attractive.

Course content developed on IF is also seen to **reach beyond the actual ICP and its students**. This broader diffusion is happening in different ways. An increasing number of students at partner institutions (but also from elsewhere in the region) are benefitting from the delocalised course components or from satellite trainings organised for local students. ICP stakeholders from the partner institutions in the South have reported benefits to their research, increased capacity to draft research proposals and to apply for complementary funding arrangements to strengthen educational capacity. Some increased their educational capacity: the delocalised curricula that the ICPs developed in their proximity were seen to inspire them, to then later emulate the same didactic approaches.

More (anecdotal) evidence was provided of some spill-over effect of the IF activity to the faculty or institute in the North (for e.g. increased attention for topic of development cooperation, reflex to verify the potential relevance of what they are teaching/taking as initiatives for students from the South). Overall, ICP stakeholders acknowledge that the IF project has created new opportunities for establishing networks and contacts beyond the usual bilateral relations between professors or between professors and their PhD students.

**Conclusion on sustainability** - The ICP stakeholders in the North are mindful and concerned about the sustainability of the benefits of the incremental funding projects. The constant and endless efforts to write new projects and to seek synergy with other funds and results from other projects provides strong arguments for the commitment of ICP stakeholders. More visibility and attractivity of the ICP can certainly contribute to institutional ownership in the host institution. The enabling environment paying attention to quality, internationalisation and alumni work is equally supporting sustainability. The increased attention for outreach and development work in the ZAP matrix is no longer punishing research and lecturing staff for their investment in development cooperation and this could attract more people gaining experience in the matter as such broadening the HR base for development cooperation (albeit probably still limited). Finally, it seems that efforts for coordination (currently on the IF budget) might require less funding support in the future once the different components are developed.

When looking at the South, there are strong indications that results of the IF funding, as the delocalised components might be copied (fully or partially) by the partners in the South for their students (and maybe could produce outputs that might be used by the ICP in the North). Sustainability of local masters is difficult to predict at this stage and is very depending upon the institutional and political conditions in the South. At the least, ICP stakeholders underline that a period of 5 years might be necessary to integrate a master in the institution and then more work needs to be done to ensure financial sustainability. Helping the partner in the South in defining a financial sustainability strategy was identified as a good practice.



The efforts of various ICPs to support partners in developing their own networks and connecting them to global networks are laudable.

The evaluators can conclude that financial sustainability is a risk, more in particular for the following components of the strategy that have been introduced with IF to strengthen the South dimension: the **diversity of the classroom** (without the (12) scholarships, it would become difficult to ensure a similar high-quality critical mass of participants from the South, sufficient diversity and, more in particular, to attract 'change makers' from low income countries), **the mobility aspect of delocalized components in the South**, **alumni activities** (further funding will however be required to continue to organize further meetings at national and regional level in the South, which are relevant to connect the ICPs to the world of employment, to support actors of change in their environment and to promote the ICP).

**Conclusion on relevance** - The IF call set the following objectives: (i) Link ICP with the development context, (ii) Strategy to strengthen South dimension through cooperation with partners, (iii) Activities that can ensure quality participation by students and staff from the South in the ICP. In general, the evaluators find that the ICPs demonstrate their relevance by responding to each of the three mentioned objectives (with a few ICPs needing more time to fully develop their South components).

(i) Linking ICP with development context: to start with, having better structured exchanges with the South allows to tap in more intensively in the knowledge and expertise of partners in the South which can connect the ICP better to the development context. It is not possible for the evaluators to state at this point whether other budget choices would have been more appropriate to strengthen the link with the development context. Yet, there seems to be room for more growth for alumni work and for using this to inform needed curriculum changes in a more systematic way. A smaller group of ICPs can inspire the others in this field.

(ii) Cooperation with partners: using expertise from the South ranges from loose contacts through guest lecturers to more established collaboration agreements looking at co-creation. For ICPs with developed partnerships and various financial sources to combine, more opportunities are there to strengthen the South dimension as appears from the sections on capacity development of partners in the South, curriculum developments and synergy. In the majority of the ICPs, South partners are explicitly recognized to add value to the curricula, beyond what the North-based ICP could possibly offer on its own.

Supporting the development of local masters and delocalised curriculum components in combination with structured alumni work thus present a relevant alternative strategy besides the long preferred but longer-term pathway of 'student – PhD scholar – returnee in the host institution' to influence and develop capacity in the partner institution. More capacity at the level of the partners for teaching and research also means more opportunities for using South expertise to strengthen the development relevance of the ICP, for e.g. as credit exchange schemes become possible. The findings under the section of curriculum developments is a clear demonstration of this.

The concept of 'partner institution' in the South and/or (contribution to) capacity building and its potential link to the ICP is not clearly defined by the ICP call. Although all ICPs aim (though often implicit or in general terms) to develop capacity of partner institutions (as highlighted in application and in the annual reports of the ICPs), there is no evidence of explicit capacity development plans nor of detailed analysis of partners' needs. This does not mean that interventions to strengthen the South component of the ICP were not relevant. The following activities financed through IF can be identified as activities that (either implicit or explicit, either as a primary or secondary objective) can contribute to the development of capacity of partners in the South: co-production of curricula components, support to the development of a Master in the South, providing access to a network, additional training in the South and online platforms providing particular content. The evaluators would like to highlight that the practice of supporting partners' staff costs

(with IF as seed-money) can be seen as providing partners with an opportunity to be genuine co-promotor of the IF project and be involved as equal partners in the delivery of the ICP.

From the experiences of the 15 ICPs, it appears that future ICPs might be mindful of a number of conditions situated at the level of partner institutions in the South that influence their effective collaboration. It can be of use when screening potential partners to assess these conditions (and to identify possible risks that need to be addressed in case these conditions are only weakly present): degree of operationalisation of internationalisation policies at the level of the university, track record in collaboration aimed at developing educational programmes, openness to consider added value of developing support at master's level (for dissertation and internships), openness to consider interdisciplinary approaches and methods of group working (with a diverse student population), presence of academic staff at influential positions that can support and act as change agent, experience with alumni work (or aspiration to invest more).

(iii) Quality participation: investing more in partner relations and modalities such as guest lecturing, co-developing course contents and creating deliberate space for the wisdom of the class to play its role can contribute to increased quality of participation. A challenge, more in particular for younger staff, both in North and South is to find sufficient time to work on this. The investment in support to students (more in particular for the new ICPs) is appropriate as is the monitoring of their progress and well-being. A point of attention is the monitoring of the process in the South related to thesis work and internship. The focus on a smaller number of partners with view to clear objectives provides a framework to interact more effectively with partners, taking into account their needs. Partners that are new to the ICP or to cooperation for educational programmes (and not research programmes) might find it difficult to understand what benefit they can have from investing in an ICP and in strengthening South components, such as hosting master thesis and internships.

**Conclusion on efficiency** - The evaluators conclude that execution of the IF project is strongly oriented by a focus on what was promised in the application and by the wider educational objectives of the ICPs concerned. Although clear objectives for the IF project as such have not been defined, activities to strengthen the South dimension were clear and can be considered as building blocks of a strategy. Interaction with partners in the South is important, especially for the development of delocalised components. This is mainly organised on an informal basis and regular interaction through skype/visits involving the main contact person in the South. This seems to be working fine for all ICP's.

The evaluators have no information indicating that task division and execution of the project would not be efficient for the majority of the ICPs. In a few cases only, staff turn-over and weaker relations with partners have hampered a more efficient execution.

Budget (and other) rules are found to be sufficiently flexible for ICPs to use and to change whenever the circumstances demand for adaptations. There is a significant difference in the budget allocation related to staff costs: 8/15 ICPs have chosen to spend more than 40% of the budget to fund the cost of staff (for academic coordination and non-academic support) in the North, with 2 ICPs clearly describing the specific tasks and task division. Majority of respondents find budget support for dedicated staff essential and the evaluators would not contradict this. Practice of 7/15 ICPs however indicates that other ways of organising the ICP might be interesting to consider: integration of academic coordination in regular teaching tasks, supporting staff costs of partners in the South, entrusting some tasks to another institution (at the host university).

Monitoring of results of the ICP is best organised at the level of ICP students but far less systematic when it concerns contribution to capacity building at the level of partner institutions in the South.

Factors that have contributed to efficient execution are many, not in the least personal commitment of ICP stakeholders (and promoters) and existing relations with partners in the South with focus on the elaboration

of educational programmes. The latter explains some challenges for new ICPs, where partner relations are often only based on personal contacts with a track record of research cooperation. Three other factors are to be considered: the enabling environment of the host university in the North, collaboration with other partners, such as inter-ICP or interuniversity cooperation (as hardly any ICP host operates as a stand-alone) and synergy with other programmes (VLIR-UOS and EU funding sources).

<b>Overview of recommendations</b>	
With view to strengthening effectiveness	<p>Recommendation 1: VLIR-UOS should continue the IF modality: the introduction of a project modality to ICP funding proves to have been a wise one. It brought about a dynamic allowing for sufficient flexibility. At the same time, the project modality forced the ICPs to remain focused on the longer-term developments they envisaged.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: ensure continuation of the 12 scholarships/year/ICP. This is recognised as a key enabling factor to many aspects of the South component development.</p>
With view to strengthening sustainability	<p>Recommendation 3: the (rare) practice of investing in formulating and supporting explicit financial sustainability strategies for local masters in the South (to be executed by the partners in the South of course) and of delocalised components should be stimulated more pro-actively by the next IF-call. Providing partners with funds to conduct the study themselves is a good way of creating ownership.</p>
With view to strengthening relevance	<p>Recommendation 4: the next IF-call should stimulate applicants to pay more attention to alumni work and more in particular have them work on a strategy to ensure input from alumni, for providing alumni with content and supporting them in finding their way in the world of employment and for identifying innovative ways of supporting alumni as actors of change in their environment.</p> <p>Recommendation 5: VLIR-UOS should invest in some mapping activity to ensure better and systematic data collection that allows to analyse the contribution of the ICP to the objectives of the IF. Together with the current ICP programmes, VLIR-UOS could identify objectives that are more relevant than the current three objectives that were formulated in the IF call. The identification could be based on an exercise to define a more explicit theory of change for the IF.</p> <p>Recommendation 6: ICP stakeholders could invest more in the analysis of the conditions for collaboration at the level of the partner institutions, thus allowing them in an early stage to identify potential risks and develop appropriate measures to address those risks.</p>
With view to strengthening efficiency	<p>Recommendation 7: a more explicit strategy for capacity building at partner institutions in the South (and the identification of the potential return on investment for them) might be useful from various perspectives: (i) to sustain the choice for capacity building with DGD funding allocated to 'North programmes', (ii) to be more clear on what partners in the South might expect (opportunities and limitations), (iii) to have some kind of framework to identify and monitor progress at the level of the partners in a more systematic way - which would help to identify and manage some (institutional) risks to the collaboration and the sustainability of the results achieved. VLIR-UOS could be more explicit in its call about what capacity building (within the limitations of IF) could mean, how it can benefit the South dimension of the ICP and propose some guidelines for monitoring of changes at the level of partners. Specific attention should be paid to the role of PhD students in this strategy (for e.g. based on an evaluation of the impact of the former ICP PhD scholarship scheme).</p> <p>Recommendation 8: VLIR-UOS should maintain the flexibility of how to allocate the budget and flexibility for adaptations, while at the same time be clearer about what is expected: clarifying budget rules, asking for more transparency about co-financing sources in relation to the components of the strategy.</p> <p>Recommendation 9: support monitoring and evaluation through adapted report formats (allowing for more systematic mapping as suggested in recommendation 5). VLIR-UOS</p>

	<p>should consider adapting the formats for application and reporting, paying more attention to the clear formulation of the IF project and the follow-up of progress in the realisation of specific components in the strategy. The connection to the objectives of the IF call should be more explicit in the reporting formats.</p>
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# Abbreviations

<b>CADES</b>	Master of Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies
<b>DEM</b>	Advanced Master of Science in Development Evaluation and Management
<b>ECTS</b>	European Credit Transfer System
<b>EPI</b>	Master of Epidemiology; also referred to as MEPI
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FTE</b>	Full-time equivalent
<b>GLOB</b>	Advanced Master of Science in Globalization and Development
<b>GOV</b>	Advanced Master of Science in Governance and Development
<b>HS</b>	Master of Human Settlements
<b>IAF</b>	Institutional Academic Fee
<b>ICP</b>	International Master Programme
<b>ICOS</b>	Institutional Coordinators for Development Cooperation
<b>IF</b>	Incremental Funding
<b>IMAQUA</b>	International Master of Science in Aquaculture
<b>IMOB</b>	Instituut voor Mobiliteit (UHasselt)
<b>IMRD</b>	International Master of Science in Rural Development – VLIR Learning Path
<b>INCO</b>	International Congress (financing modality)
<b>IOB</b>	Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid en -beheer (autonomous institution at UAntwerpen)
<b>IP</b>	Integrated Project
<b>ITC</b>	International Training Centre of the Faculty of Bioscience Engineering at UGent
<b>IUC</b>	Institutional University Cooperation
<b>IUP</b>	Inter-university programme
<b>IUPFOOD</b>	Inter-university Master of Science in Food Technology
<b>IUPWARE</b>	Inter-university Master of Science in Water Resources Engineering
<b>KOI</b>	Kort Opleidingsinitiatief (or STI, Short Training Initiative)
<b>KU LEUVEN</b>	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
<b>MSC</b>	Master of Science
<b>MOOC</b>	Massive Open Online Course
<b>NEMA</b>	ICP Nematology
<b>ODA</b>	Official Development Assistance
<b>OI</b>	Own Initiative project

<b>O&amp;L</b>	Master of Science in Marine and Lacustrine Science and Management – ‘Oceans & Lakes’
<b>PHD</b>	Philosophiae Doctor
<b>PTE</b>	Part-time equivalent
<b>SI</b>	South Initiative Project
<b>SIP</b>	Strategic International Partnership
<b>STAT</b>	Master of Statistics
<b>SUST</b>	Master of Science in Sustainable Development
<b>TRANS</b>	Master of Transportation Sciences, specialization Traffic Safety
<b>UANTWERPEN</b>	Universiteit Antwerpen
<b>UGENT</b>	Universiteit Gent
<b>UHASSELT</b>	Universiteit Hasselt
<b>VLIR-UOS</b>	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad – Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking
<b>VLIR-LIST COUNTRIES</b>	VLIR Country List for activities supported with incremental funding, comprising of 31 countries in the Global South, including the 14 official partner countries to Belgian bilateral development cooperation
<b>VUB</b>	Vrije Universiteit Brussel
<b>WRE</b>	Inter-university Master of Science in Water Resources Engineering (IUPWARE)



## Overview tables

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Focus and objectives of the evaluation

- <sup>1</sup> **Focus of the evaluation** – Focus of this evaluation is the incremental funding (IF) of 15 selected International Master Programmes (ICPs) that are conceived to add development relevance to the core business activities of the Flemish Universities.<sup>1</sup> The incremental funding is introduced as a means to the end of strengthening the South dimension of the VLIR funding programmes in support of ICPs. The funding is granted for a maximum of 10 years (starting from 2017) with a first 5-year timeframe to allow the programmes to develop a South strategy and to start the roll-out of that strategy. In case of re-selection, the second phase of 5 years is meant for the strategy to be fully rolled out and to make the programme with its delocalised components and other adaptations to strengthen the south dimension, sustainable. By the end of the 10 years, the programmes must be able to attract other funding for their continuation in the revised format.<sup>2</sup>
- <sup>2</sup> In best efforts to clarify expectations underlying this funding regime under evaluation, the evaluators see value in disambiguating terms in use. The educational core component of ICPs is funded on ministry of education resources, while Belgian ODA use under mid-term review concerns incremental funding projects to strengthen the South component of these programmes. The focus of the evaluators will be thus on the IF project and when discussing sustainability, only the post-project cycle sustainability of choices under IF will be discussed.
- <sup>3</sup> Strengthening the South dimension implies, according to VLIR-UOS, “*a strategy to spur the internationalisation of the programme by linking it with the local context of one or more developing countries by means of student and/or professor mobility and/or partial delocalisation of the programme to (one of) these developing countries*”.<sup>3</sup> This tacit definition of South dimension will guide the evaluators in answering the evaluation questions (see further below).
- <sup>4</sup> The objective of the IF and the ICPs was primarily formulated taking into account VLIR-UOS funded scholarship students, even though ICPs do not exclusively focus on participants from developing countries. The idea remains that through the professional impact of students after their graduation, the ICPs and the IF will contribute to the development of these students’ countries of origin. The students will have increased individual performance and will manifest this through changes in knowledge and behaviour acting as change agents. The IF funding also aims to support this contribution to development by Southern institutions having a link with the ICP host institution and receiving capacity building support.
- <sup>5</sup> Expected outcomes and outputs related to the IF, as mentioned in the IF call are the following:
- Link of the ICP with the development context is strengthened in a verifiable manner;

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<sup>1</sup> Terms of Reference - Mid-term Evaluation of the incremental funding of ICP programmes, June 2019, hereafter referred to as ToR. This section of the report is mainly based on the ToR for this evaluation assignment.

<sup>2</sup> ToR, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Ibidem.

- A strategy to strengthen the South dimension of the ICP is developed, through cooperation with partners in the South;
  - Activities that ensure quality participation by students and teaching/research staff from the South.
- 6 These objectives and expected outcomes and outputs will be used by the evaluators to assess the execution of the IF and emerging changes in their conclusions.
- 7 IF was introduced with the 2017 call for funding to ICPs. This introduced a major change as compared to the funding modalities of ICPs in the past. Funding of ICPs prior to 2017 was based on a lump sum for the host institution/department.
- 8 15 existing accredited English-language master programmes successfully applied to the VLIR UOS ICP call. 10 of these applicants benefitted from ICP funding in the previous funding cycle (2001-2016), 5 other successful applicants were new to ICP funding. As indicated in the ToR and underlined during the inception phase to this evaluation, the mid-term evaluation is mindful of the “newcomer” situation of these 5 ICPs.
- 9 The IF comes with a project, requiring a description of activities and budget for that project and with a scholarship modality. For each intake year of the IF funding period, each ICP is entitled to select 12 applicants that are nationals from the VLIR-UOS list of eligible countries and grant them a full scholarship. This scholarship sustains the students during the full length of the programme (24 months stipends for 2-year ICPs and 12 months stipends for 1-year ICPs). It also covers the standard tuition fee,<sup>4</sup> and costs to travel from the student’s country of residence to Belgium as well as a return ticket home. Eligibility of applicants and selection criteria<sup>5</sup> for the allocation of the scholarships are largely defined by VLIR-UOS (and the ICP host is allowed to add specific selection criteria). An assessment of the scholarship scheme as such is not part of this evaluation, only the way selection procedures and results are linked to the IF project need to be looked at.
- 10 Eligibility criteria for refundable costs include, amongst others, the nationality of the applicant. Scholarships are restricted to nationals from a list of 31 countries, that includes the 14 bilateral development cooperation partner countries as defined by the Belgian Federal Public Service for Development Cooperation.<sup>6</sup> The 31 countries list (hereafter referred to as the VLIR-UOS country list) also determines students’ eligibility to mobility support and the destiny countries for such mobility under incremental funding. Such mobility support can be extended to all ICP students that are nationals of the 31 listed countries (including self-sponsored students).
- 11 The evaluators will not address the question of contribution of the scholarship strategy or the IF project to capacity development in the countries of the South, in general. It may be clear that educating several cohorts of students from the South, more in particular carefully selected ICP scholars that generally perform quite good and offer a pool of future PhD students, can be expected to contribute to capacity in the South after these scholars’ return (rarely directly, however return rates are in general quite high

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<sup>4</sup> For the more costly advanced master programmes, only this lower tariff is covered by the ICP scholarship – for ICP scholarship holders, universities typically grant a waiver on the additional admission fee they may charge to other students.

<sup>5</sup> All eligibility criteria are described in the VLIR-UOS ICP call (June 2015).

<sup>6</sup> 2017 ICP Call – addendum: Country list for activities supported with incremental funding

according to data collected by VLIR-UOS).<sup>7</sup> To assess this (impact) was however not within the scope of the evaluation.

- <sup>12</sup> The evaluators will also not address the contribution of the ICP host institution in general to capacity building in the South nor its other activities for development cooperation. The evaluators acknowledge that ICP host institutions are active in many ways; efforts to connect all the initiatives as to strengthen synergy will be highlighted in the chapter on universities as enabling environments and synergy.
- <sup>13</sup> The tables in annexes 1 and 2 provide an overview of the ICPs in the current funding cycle with their partners in the South. With 'partners', the evaluators refer to those institutions in the South that have an explicit role in the execution of the IF project that is beyond ad-hoc interventions or the support of individual academic colleagues (for e.g. for master thesis supervision) and with whom a strong interaction is envisaged. The tables demonstrate the variety of the ICPs. The names of the programmes are rendered by their acronym – full name description as published in the Flemish Decree List is found in the list of abbreviations. Overall, the budgets per year coincide with whether the ICP concerns a one-year or 2-year programme. For a 2-year programme (10/15 ICPs) the budget ranges from 612,255 euro to 750,000 euro for 5 years (2017-2021). For a 1-year master, the budgets are between 386,171 euro and 492,744 euro for these 5 years. In total there are 3/15 interuniversity programmes (IUP), each of which have a longer history of cooperation, and have benefitted from VLIR UOS support to at least one of their precursor programmes. These three programmes are indicated by their IUP prefix in the table below, and subsequent tables, inserted here for the ease of further reading of the report.
- <sup>14</sup> **The objectives of the evaluation** – The evaluation aims to support learning, steering and decision making and accountability. It is expected that the evaluation provides:
- A mapping allowing to gain insight in what is being done and how it is working. This is the main focus of the evaluation
  - Analysis of how the funding is used and how it relates to working with institutions and organisations in the South, the contribution to capacity development and the management of the partnerships in order to strengthen the South dimension
  - Characteristics of interuniversity collaboration (advantages and disadvantages)
  - Analysis of changes
  - Recommendations for the next call

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<sup>7</sup> This is based on the findings of an impact evaluation study in which it was stated: '(...) a systematic brain drain caused by sending scholarship holders abroad cannot be observed in the case of the Belgian scholarship programmes. Of those actively working, 92% work either in their home country or its neighbouring countries (n = 988)'. The study also reveals that in the longer term, while 96.4% of the recent graduates work in their home country or its neighbouring countries (n = 188), only 94.2% of young professionals (n = 324) and 89.0% of professionals (n = 455) work in their home region'. See: YSPONS & NUFFIC, *Impactevaluatie van de Belgische universitaire ontwikkelingssamenwerking*, page 116.  
[https://diplomatie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/evaluation\\_belgian\\_udc\\_en.pdf](https://diplomatie.belgium.be/sites/default/files/downloads/evaluation_belgian_udc_en.pdf) .

## 1.2 Approach and methodology

- <sup>15</sup> The evaluation was based on an evaluation framework clarifying how the evaluators would look at the incremental funding for International Master programmes and how they would structure their data collection and analysis (see table further below). The evaluation questions consist of different judgment criteria and guiding questions or indicators. These indicators and guiding questions indicate what information was looked for and as such guided the data-collection and development of interview guidelines.
- <sup>16</sup> Methods applied were:
- Analysis of documents (general and related to each ICP);
  - Interviews (one-on-one, working sessions and focus group discussions) with ICP stakeholders present at campus and partners of ICPs in the South;
  - Cross-case analysis to identify appropriate categories and identify generic trends. It was explicitly stated by VLIR-UOS in the ToR for this assignment that the mid-term evaluation was not expected to rank the 15 ICPs or to compare them in detail. Specific information related to the ICPs and an appraisal of stronger and weaker points can be found in the individual sheets that were drafted by the evaluators and were only sent to VLIR-UOS and the ICP concerned.
  - Sense-making meeting with all ICP promoters.
  - Written feedback on the overall report (by VLIR-UOS and the ICPs) and the individual sheets (by the ICPs).

Evaluation questions	Judgement criteria (sub questions) and points of attention
EQ1 How and to what extent have South dimensions in 15 funded ICPs been developed/strengthened and how do various stakeholders appreciate the development relevance/added value?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strategies are being developed by the Flemish universities (ICP stakeholders) to develop and strengthen South dimensions in the ICP/ MSc course</li> <li>– Activities, instruments, methods, measures that are being developed and applied increase the development relevance of the ICP and link it more clearly to the development context</li> <li>– Involvement of partners in the South in the development of the ICP is ensured in order to strengthen relevance</li> </ul>
EQ2 To what extent has the incremental funding been managed/executed in an efficient way taking into account gender mainstreaming and sustainability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– The Flemish university/ICP ensures effective monitoring and assessment of gender mainstreaming, risks and (emerging) changes/results related to the incremental project</li> <li>– The Flemish University/ICP puts in place appropriate mechanisms to coordinate the incremental project within the academic structures of the ICP host university and with partners (other development players and educational institutes) in the North and in the South</li> <li>– The Flemish university/ICP puts in place measures to ensure/contribute to institutional and financial sustainability of the measures and strategies put in place by the incremental project</li> <li>– The organisation of the incremental project of the interuniversity ICPs allows to exploit the added value between various institutions with regards to development relevance</li> </ul>
EQ3 What does a mapping of ICPs tell us about emerging changes at the level of ICP scholars, partners in the South and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Changes (as defined by ICP participants and stakeholders in and observed by them in relation to the incremental project) can be identified</li> </ul>

networks/relations and about what works and does not work?

- Importance of these changes as compared with the objectives of incremental funding and/or according to stakeholder appreciation
- Explanatory factors according to stakeholders (internal/external)

*Table 3: Overview of evaluation questions for the ICP Mid Term Evaluation*

## 1.3 Execution of the evaluation and limitations

- <sup>17</sup> The evaluation consisted of the following phases: desk-phase and analysis of available documents, data-collection, analysis of data, report writing. During the data collection phase, all ICP stakeholders were visited at the ICP host institution for at least 1 day. During that day, not only the lecturers and staff directly involved were interviewed, but also enrolled students, colleagues from the department and staff from supporting departments at the ICP host institution. Additional time allowed to have skype interviews with staff that could not be present and with partners in the South (at least 2/ICP). Over 200 people have been interviewed for this evaluation.
- <sup>18</sup> The following outputs were produced:
- Proposal for the evaluation framework (June 2019);
  - Evaluation framework as proposed in inception meeting of 27/9/2019, which was discussed with all ICPs during a group meeting;
  - Final evaluation framework (feedback from ICPs and VLIR-UOS incorporated (October 2019);
  - 15 draft ICP-specific evaluation sheets (December 2019);
  - Draft synthesis report with conclusions and recommendations, inviting comments from VLIR-UOS and the ICPs (January 2019);
  - Final ICP-specific evaluation sheets with recommendations where appropriate;
  - Final synthesis report, with the 15 final ICP specific evaluation sheets attached, including annexes with overview of documents consulted and people interviewed.
- <sup>19</sup> Triangulation of information was ensured by comparing information coming from various sources.
- <sup>20</sup> There were no major limitations to the evaluation. The evaluation was nevertheless limited or challenged in some ways by:
- Limited time allocated to the assignment: the ToR required an analysis and report for each ICP and an overall report with generic findings. The wealth and uniqueness of each ICP has put the evaluators before the challenge to find appropriate categories for structuring the information. This was further complicated by the fact that the ICPs were not obliged to present a concise project description with clear milestones and indicators to measure at the level of objectives (which was a given to take into account and already highlighted in the ToR). Although there was a common budget format, it proved difficult to compare budget use over the various ICPs. Mind, the evaluators are not suggesting that this should be the case, however. This made it difficult to use the evaluation framework, as such, evaluators have worked a lot with what has emerged from the interviews (and is documented in the individual ICP sheets).



- The interviews with partners in the South allowed to explore their respective interaction with the ICP and their contribution. As the evaluation assignment did not provide for visits to partners at their South premises, and as only a few partners for each ICP were interviewed via skype or WhatsApp, the evaluators cannot be fully conclusive on the added value of the ICPs for the development of capacity at the partner institutions. It is possible that some particularities of activities and perspective of one (or more) partners were missed. Therefore, this evaluation presents some findings and indications of added value that might need to be further explored.
- Perspective of students: evaluators could only consult current cohort students and at best a few recent alumni that stayed on to start a PhD track. This limited the possibility to compare student's appreciations before and since incremental funding with the information received from the ICPs.
- Quality assurance systems at the ICP host institutions guarantees constant changes already (for e.g. in curricula), not always possible to relate exclusively to IF. Influence of other VLIR-UOSS support modalities should also be taken into account (Network programmes, IUC programmes, South Initiatives, ...). Where possible the contribution of IF on changes was highlighted. Table 7 provides an overview of the relations between the ICP/University department and other VLIR-UOSS support modalities.
- The IF call refers to the development of strategies to develop the South dimension. The evaluators have accepted that not all ICP-related departments have the habit to draft detailed strategic documents, for e.g. on gender or on capacity building or on South dimensions as such. It required therefore many interviews and study of documents to identify the main elements constituting a strategy or providing building blocks.

<sup>21</sup> In the following chapters, the evaluators will first focus on the mapping of the choices made by the ICPs within their IF project. This will be followed by chapters on efficiency (execution of the IF project), effectiveness (emerging changes) and sustainability and conclusions and recommendations. In the narrative, the evaluators have tried to give as many examples as possible of all ICPs with the intention to give equal attention to all of the 15 ICPs. This means that we sometimes give one or two examples without being completely exhaustive. In the tables however, we aimed to be exhaustive.

## 2 Mapping of incremental funding project choices

### 2.1 Introduction

- <sup>23</sup> Analysis of all the 15 ICPs has allowed to identify the elements that constitute a strategy for strengthening the South dimension of the ICP. The evaluators have found that the following elements were shared by the 15 ICPs although in different combinations and with other accents:
- Design of a budget allowing to develop a South dimension;
  - Interacting with the South: through using the expertise of the South, developing capacity of partner institutions and interacting with alumni;
  - Developing the curriculum in a specific way;
  - Supporting ICP and other students to participate in what is offered.
- <sup>24</sup> Important changes in the elaboration of the ICP compared to the pre-IF period (for those ICPs concerned) are recognised in relation to the four elements described in the above, and the least in the element 'supporting ICP and other students'. The reason is that all the ICP host institutions with existing ICPs already invested in such support. Except for the 5 newly supported ICPs, the IF is also making a difference here.
- <sup>25</sup> The evaluators have found that the ICP scholarship modality has its role to play in the strengthening of the South dimension but that the ICP host institutions have little manoeuvring space to use it in a specific or strategic way, as may be clear from the next section, after which the above-mentioned elements will be described in more detail.
- <sup>26</sup> This chapter on mapping will be concluded with an appreciation by various stakeholders (ICP coordinators, South partners and students) of the set-up of the ICP, an assessment of the extent to which the current ICPs are seen to respond to the objectives of the IF call and an overview of factors that have played a role (positive and negative) in the development and roll-out of the strategy.

### 2.2 Scholarship strategy and gender

- <sup>27</sup> In this section, the evaluators describe how scholarship strategies are linked to the ICPs and efforts to strengthen the South dimension. This section also integrates information on gender, as attention for gender within ICPs is mainly connected to the selection of scholars.
- <sup>28</sup> The eligibility criteria that ICPs use to determine the admissibility of candidates for the 12 VLIR-UOS scholarships are strongly determined by VLIR-UOS instructions. As to the actual selection of admissible candidates, examples were found of ICP host institutions adding criteria or allocating more weight to one of the criteria: e.g. the three ICP's at IOB share the same strategy for ranking applicants and selecting

such candidates. In this process they pay special attention to matching the motivation of the applicant to the content of the ICP curricula offered. The value obtained on this “matching criterion” is awarded double weight in this exercise, as it proves the best predictor to ICP students’ success rate.

- 29 Selection of scholarship beneficiaries is identified as the main aspect in which ICPs bear witness to gender considerations. For most ICPs, this consideration does not (need to) weigh in very prominently, nor very early in the process of ranking and shortlisting candidates. Several ICPs go by the instruction that from candidates ranked in *ex aequo* position, the candidate will be chosen of the gender group that is represented at less than 1/3 of total scholarship beneficiaries.<sup>8</sup> For many ICPs, no adjusting whatsoever is needed, as equally high-quality candidates from all genders are seen to apply for the scholarships. Quite many actually have more female candidates than males, as well as more female South students that enrol on a self-supporting basis or equal numbers. For O&L some adjusting is reported to happen, as far more male than female students from East Africa apply for the scholarship. This bias is evened out by the selection of candidates and also by the more evenly distributed inpour of applications from other South regions. For the three ICPs at IOB too, selection of scholars is used as a ‘corrective’ measure, as male candidates are more numerous than are female candidates, yet actual student populations in the three ICPs is gender balanced, including in the scholarship portion of that student population.
- 30 In general, there is no direct link envisaged or pursued between the selection of scholarship beneficiaries and the identified partner institutions, except for STATS, an ICP that explicitly seeks to strengthen a direct link between the scholar selection and partner institutions (with effects to be awaited), however without compromising the quality of the selected scholars. For other ICPs, the selection of scholars is not directly linked to the partner institutions, although such South partners are invited to present their candidates and are in several cases seen to be given an explicit role to promote the ICP. The latter was observed e.g. in the newcomer ICPs SUST and CADES, but also in IMAQUA, where the 3 South partners are additionally expected to (and actually quite keen on) getting some of their ‘own’ students participate in the credit exchange arrangements that IMAQUA has under construction (but for which other than IF will need to be used, for e.g. from the network programme). The assumption that ICPs could lead to a critical mass of master students in a partner institution which would then contribute to the capacity of that institutional is not validated by practice.
- 31 The selection criteria guarantee a selection of 12 good to very good students per ICP. This contributes to the quality of the whole group of students and potentially creates a pool for future PhD tracks which are often key in building longer-term relations with institutions in the South. The fact that VLIR-UOS’ ICP PhD scholarship programme has been discontinued, has reduced the opportunities of the ICPs to pursue that goal, as commented by some ICP respondents. The ICPs see a risk in “losing” their best students to other universities (often outside Belgium), which seems to them a missed opportunity to capitalise on knowledge and research skills they successfully help instil in these ICP students.
- 32 Through their provenance and background (academic and professional), ICP scholars can strengthen the link between the ICP and the development context. ICP students are increasing the diversity of the class. It should be noted that some ICPs are seeking to ensure sufficient participation from the North, through enrolment for e.g. the three ICPs at IOB are seeking to attract at least 15% of students from the North

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<sup>8</sup> In their application files for the 2017 ICP Call, IMRD and IMAQUA understood this to be a VLIR-UOS instruction. The actual call is less explicit on this issue: “The selection committee will aim at a *relative balance* between the number of male and female candidates awarded a VLIR-UOS scholarship”. In principle VLIR-UOS aims at a 40-60% M-F balance.

(current number stands at 11%). Other ICPs (for e.g. IUPFOOD) have found other ways to ensure interaction between students from the North and the South.<sup>9</sup>

## 2.3 Overview of choices in IF budget

- <sup>33</sup> Because of the focus of the evaluation on IF, evaluators have looked at the choices that have been made by the 15 ICPs in how to use the budget in their application files. Focus here is not on the ICP scholarship scheme but on the IF budget.
- <sup>34</sup> A number of parameters have been considered to analyse the budgets: these parameters were identified based on feasibility (what can be derived from the budget documentation provided to the evaluators and can be compared over the various ICPs) and information the ICPs offered to map and understand the strengthening of the South dimension through the incremental funding. An overview of the figures is presented in table 3 below
- (Academic) coordination and staff;
  - Other staff costs;
  - Staff costs South partners (both academic and administrative);
  - South-bound staff mobility;
  - North-bound staff mobility;
  - Student mobility: IF student mobility is restricted to nationals from the 31 VLIR-UOS List countries. Some ICPs cover costs for other students in a different way (for e.g. using the 10% overhead to the incremental funding project: GLOB, GOV, DEM);
  - Support to alumni and alumni activities;
  - Tuition fees other than for enrolment in the ICP.
- <sup>35</sup> For the calculation of mobility only international travel costs have been taken into account.
- <sup>36</sup> The main elements of the budget analysis are presented for the above-mentioned parameters in the following paragraphs. As the pre-2017 financing was a lump sum, there are no data available to analyse in detail **shifts in how the budget is now used with the IF** (by previously funded ICPs). However, appreciation of ICP stakeholders suggests that the IF made a difference first of all in staff and student mobility (in general, more funding is allocated to this than before) and in the allocation of specific staff costs for coordination of activities. The analysis of budget figures is not contesting this. A general finding is that staff costs in the North generally consume a large part of the budget. The analysis cannot identify significant differences between interuniversity ICPs and other ICPs, or between new and previously funded ICPs. One noticeable difference is rather the choice to also fund staff costs in the South as specified in the budget lines: this decision was only taken by 4/5 (TRANS and the 3 ICP's from IOB) ICP

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<sup>9</sup> Courses taught in IUPFOOD are attended by exchange students (for e.g. Erasmus students) and some courses are part of the bioscience engineering programmes as elective courses.

programmes that received funding for the first time, see further below. Three additional ICPs (NEMA, IMAQUA and IMRD) allocate some funds to partners to pay for staff time or organisational costs (case of NEMA) in organising delocalised course components.

- <sup>37</sup> Overall, there is a significant **variation** in choices related to funding of South partner staff costs (only the case for IOB ICPs, TRANS, NEMA to some degree), investing in alumni activity (significantly higher budget % for IUPWARE, TRANS and STATS) and supporting North-bound (and South-South) staff mobility which is significantly higher for HS and TRANS as compared to the other ICPs. In case of HS this promotes partners jointly working together in the North.
- <sup>38</sup> **Staff costs** – 11/15 of the ICPS have budgeted staff costs indicated as ‘academic’ personnel (mainly for coordination with partners, follow-up of content and ICP scholars). For 10 of the ICPs this represents more than 30% of their budget; this includes the inter-university ICPs, IUPWARE, IUPFOOD and O&L. 4/15 ICPs did not budget IF funding for academic personnel or coordination: GOV, GLOB, DEM and IMRD. 11/15 ICPs have budgeted costs for admin and technical personnel, for 2/15 this is about ¼ of the budget (EPI, IMAQUA). Overall, this means that 8/15 ICPs have used more than 40% of the available budget to fund staff costs. 2 ICPs (TRANS and NEMA) have allocated the costs through detailed description of tasks and calculation of days per task.
- <sup>39</sup> As already mentioned in the above, 4/15 ICPS have budgeted a contribution to staff costs in the South (both academic and administrative): GOV, GLOB, DEM and TRANS, between 15% up to 33%. These funds were considered to be essential to cover the intensive input of South partners in the development of activities, such as the development of new masters (or parts of it), the development of case materials or delocalised components of the curriculum in the South, the strengthening of a network on road safety (TRANS in Vietnam).
- <sup>40</sup> **Mobility of staff** – All 15 ICPs have budgeted funds for international travel of staff, majority academic, both Southbound<sup>10</sup> and Northbound (except for O&L that did not budget Northbound mobility but only South-South mobility). North bound mobility is often related to the organisation of guest lectures. North bound mobility can also cover South-South mobility and this was explicitly mentioned in the budget of 7/15 ICPs: DEM, GOV, GLOB, NEMA, HS, O&L, IUPWARE. 4/15 ICPS have budgeted more than 10% of their budget for staff mobility (Northbound and Southbound): IUPWARE, HS, SUST, TRANS; all the others have budgeted less.
- <sup>41</sup> In 10/15 ICPs, the budget for South bound mobility is clearly higher than the budget for North bound mobility, except for the following 5 ICPs: Imaqua, Nema, Cades and Trans and HS (that did not budget for south bound mobility),
- <sup>42</sup> **Mobility of students** – 4 ICPs have budgeted more than 10% of incremental funding to student mobility: IMRD, O&L, HS and TRANS. Student mobility is at 9,5% for SUST.
- <sup>43</sup> This mobility (also calculated on the basis of international travel tickets) mainly concerns mobility of ICP students to the South (VLIR List countries) to follow delocalised curriculum components (some of which operate under credit exchange arrangements), take internships, participate in group research in a delocalised curriculum component (SUST, IUPWARE, O&L), conduct research for their master thesis, or collaborate individually on field research with a South partner (the latter type is found in the context of the ‘mobility window’ in the three ICPs organised by IOB).

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<sup>10</sup> Southbound mobility = staff based in the North travelling to the South. Northbound mobility is the opposite.

### Interesting practice: transparent use of the student mobility support budget (IMRD)

ICP students at IMRD are appreciative of the ICP organisers' transparency on the mobility support budget. IMRD in fact awards a maximum mobility budget to each of its students, that each can choose to use in support of their individual mobility preferences. They can opt to use that budget to travel to the location of the Case Study module in Vietnam, or do their South-bound mobility in support of a semester exchange with a South partner. They can opt to do both, and self-sponsor costs exceeding the allocated maximum-budget. This practice is also allowing for ease of budgeting at the side of IMRD.

#### **Box 1:** transparent use of the student mobility support budget (IMRD)

- <sup>44</sup> South-South mobility support for students from the South who are not enrolled in the ICP is possible to a limited extent within the ICPs of HS, SUST, CADES and NEMA.
- <sup>45</sup> To enable the mobility of students, some ICPs support more than international flights and accommodation costs. Such additional support can concern a contribution in tuition fees or costs (for 4/15 ICPs: GOV, GLOB, NEMA and IMRD when following parts of the curriculum), bench fees (for academic staff in the South supporting students with master thesis or lab work (NEMA, DEM, IMAQUA, EPI),<sup>11</sup> or using IF overhead to cover travel costs for students that are not nationals from a country on the VLIR-UOS countries list (practice at IOB).
- <sup>46</sup> **Alumni activity** – The content of alumni activity will be addressed in a different section. In this section, the evaluators have looked at budget lines that refer to 'alumni'.
- <sup>47</sup> 12/15 ICPs have budgeted funds to support alumni activities or interaction with alumni (including support to mobility in general and North bound mobility in particular). The %s are in general quite low (around 1 or 2% for 6/15), except for IUPWARE (17%), TRANS (6%) and STATS (7,5%).
- <sup>48</sup> **Other elements related to budget** - It is not directly clear from the budget documentation presented to the evaluators for most of the IF budgets, what is contributed in addition by the ICP hosting institution either by proper funds (for e.g. in terms of additional staff time on the costs of the faculty or other inputs) or other projects. Only one ICP has the practice to specify the co-funding and synergies with other projects per planned activity (TRANS, see box 10 in the chapter on efficiency). The synergy with other projects will be described under the section about 'enabling environment' in the chapter on efficiency.
- <sup>49</sup> Three ICP are seen to have made atypical choices in the allocation of the budget and have allocated funds to the development of extracurricular project type of interventions that are not directly (or only) connected to the educational programme: DEM (project on action research on community based monitoring in Tanzania, using alumni and staff of partners as co-evaluators, in synergy with an IUC

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<sup>11</sup> Only the host institution for STATS has made a deliberate choice not to work with bench fees. Further to bench fees, some ICPs, such as IMRD, use IF to pay the South partner institute (in this case there is a contribution for the time its staff spends on hosting the Case Study in rural Vietnam for ICP students. A pro-rotta fee is paid (400 EUR per participating student. These payments are always supported by receipts/declaration of receipt).



programme), HS (focus on dissemination of knowledge through a World Urbanism Forum and Papers) and TRANS (support to a network of excellence in Vietnam that aims at developing fundable projects that translate tools for road safety to concrete applications in the local context). The action research of DEM presents an interesting example of how education, application of knowledge and research needs of partners are connected and integrated.

<sup>50</sup> For 6/15 ICPs important shifts in using the budget have been reported. Particularly in the case of GOV and GLOB this shift was quite significant:

- GOV and GLOB found an important part of their IF project hampered by serious political upheaval in Nicaragua, where they had envisaged setting up a full master programme. Budget earmarked for that activity, and for supporting local students to follow parts of the curriculum in Nicaragua, was reallocated to other activities organized in the South. For GOV, the budget was shifted to the organisation of a summer school in RDC (Bukavu) opening up participation for students from the region and to other activities in Belgium and Latin-America benefiting both staff, pilot research and a limited number of student internships.
- CADES: increase of admin support to cover 20% instead of 10% of a 0,5 FTE and increase to 0,5 FTE of the coordinator, previously 0,4 FTE.
- TRANS: decrease of budget for student mobility (as part is already covered by the scholarship), which allowed to finance 0,25% of the time of a researcher at IMOB (the ICP host institution) to be involved in the development of a transportation network in Vietnam.
- EPI: decrease in budget for outbound student mobility (because of lower demand amongst the students) and connected bench fees with EPI, to cover more travel costs of (academic) staff.

ICP/% of budget for	(ac) coord. /staff	Other staff costs	Staff costs South partner s <sup>12</sup>	South bound staff mobility	North bound staff mobility	Student mobility <sup>13</sup>	Support to alumni and alumni activity	Tuition fees for other than ICP scholars
CADES	35% of the budget is usedFor a PTE	5,5%	/	2%	5%	4%	4%	/
DEM	/	6,5%	33%	3%	2%	5%	1,5%	/
EPI	39% For an FTE	26,5% FTE	/	2%	Included in the 2%	8,5%	1,5%	/
GLOB	/	17% + 7,5% <sup>14</sup>	28%	4%	2%	4%	1,5%	12,5% <sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> This can be administrative and academic.

<sup>13</sup> For enrolled students in the ICP to the South.

<sup>14</sup> Coordinator + other staff in support (of students, alumni, ...), this is also the case for the 2 other ICPs taught at IOB

<sup>15</sup> This concerned partial scholarships for Nicaraguan students to follow part of the GLOB program in Nicaragua as full-time students. Due to political upheaval in Nicaragua this budget was shifted to other activities.

GOV	/	10,5%	25%	4,5%	4,5%	3%	1,5%	16% <sup>16</sup>
HS	40% For a PTE	/ <sup>17</sup>	/	/	17% <sup>18</sup>	14%	3,5	/
IMAQUA	0,33% For a PTE	24,5% <sup>19</sup>	/	2,5%	3%	8,5%	/	/
IMRD	/	16% <sup>20</sup>	/ <sup>21</sup>	2,5%	2%	14%	/	13,5% <sup>22</sup>
IUP FOOD	30% For an FTE <sup>23</sup>	6% 2 PTE	/	4%	3%	3%	3,5%	/
IUP WARE	40% For a PTE	/	/	6%	5,5%?	10 stud/ year <sup>24</sup>	17%	/
O&L	60% For PTE (80%) <sup>25</sup>	/	/	2,5%	/	19%	1%	/
NEMA	43,5% Based on tasks	Included in the 43,5%	/ <sup>26</sup>	1,5%	5%	5,5%	1,5%	Over 10% (estimate)
STATS	58% For 1FTE	14% PTE	/	7%	2%	3,5%	7,5	/
SUST	44% For a PTE	/	/	5%	5%	9,5%	/	/
TRANS	23,5% Based on tasks	Included in 23,6%	15% FTE <sup>27</sup>	4%	9%	14%	6%	/

Table 4: Overview of budget allocation (based on project application files)

<sup>16</sup> This concerned partial scholarships for Nicaraguan students to follow part of the GOV program in Antwerp (and for students in Antwerp to go to Nicaragua). Due to political upheaval in Nicaragua this budget was shifted.

<sup>17</sup> Not budgeted on incremental funding but provided by the faculty as PTE.

<sup>18</sup> Estimate by the evaluators as the budget does not provide a clear overview, this also includes South-South mobility

<sup>19</sup> This includes a fee for the ITC (International Training Centre of the UGent), supported by salary slips and contracts as requested by VLIR-UOS.

<sup>20</sup> This is the total of the pro-rata fee for the ITC

<sup>21</sup> Some support for staff time of the partners in the South in organizing activities – comparable to bench fees

<sup>22</sup> This covers Institutional Academic Fees (IAF) to be paid by UGent for participation of VLIR-UOS scholars in the courses that are taught in other universities of the consortium (whose members accepted a lower tariff for these scholars).

<sup>23</sup> The research department at the ICP host institution is co-funding and as such ensures 1 FTE in total for the academic coordination.

<sup>24</sup> No separate budget line, is included in the budget line on the costs for the integrated project (IP)

<sup>25</sup> O&L is adding funds for another FTE to manage the ICP

<sup>26</sup> Some support for staff time of the partners in the South in organizing the Kenya track – comparable to bench fees.

<sup>27</sup> + 50% of the salary is co-funded by Vietnamese universities, involved in the development of a network.

## 2.4 Curriculum developments

### 2.4.1 Introduction

- <sup>51</sup> Focus of this section is on curriculum developments to strengthen the ICP's South dimension. The evaluators are aware that university curricula are in constant development, as a reflection of factors that include scientific developments, didactic innovations, and feedback obtained from evaluation of these curricula by peers and students. In this evaluation, the evaluators attempt to focus on curriculum developments in the interest of strengthening their South dimension and South-relevance. As some of these developments prove difficult to differentiate from regular curriculum developments, and 'might have taken place' anyway, with or without an incremental funding project, this section of the evaluation considers developments deemed South-relevant even if these are not explicitly reflected in the IF budget. In some cases, such developments have been announced in the IF application file and/or have been described in the annual progress reports as being realised through the IF project. The heading 'curriculum developments' is deliberately broad, as the evaluators saw value in covering a wide range of developments that also reach beyond formal, faculty-sanctioned changes in an ICP curriculum reflected in course titles, addition or disappearance of some titles from that curriculum, and/or reorganisation of the programme in separate mayors.
- <sup>52</sup> Sources informing this section obviously did include documentation of the ICP curricula documentation and IF budget use documentation. The evaluation is informed additionally by the ICP IF application files that announce certain changes, as well as the narrative sections of the ICP's annual progress reporting (2017 and 2018) and planning documents. As mentioned in the above, far from all curriculum developments relevant to strengthen the South dimension are reflected in the budget. They are not guaranteed either to be described in full in the annual reports that were made available to the evaluators. As such, key consulted sources on curriculum developments have been the interactions with ICP core staff (some of which supported the information with additional documentation), as well as some of their students and South partner key contact persons that the evaluators had the pleasure to consult while visiting the ICP host universities and reaching out to partners in the Global South over skype and WhatsApp. Full references on these sources, per ICP, are found in the ICP-specific individual evaluation sheets, in the annexes with this synthesis report.
- <sup>53</sup> Organisation of this section has sought to group the ICP's curriculum developments by type. A first such type explored, relates to curricula components delocalised to the South, specifying duration, for whom these are developed, whether these are open to ICP students on compulsory, optional or competitive basis, whether and to what degree South partners are involved in these developments, and whether these developments are reflected on the degree documentation. Such South component developments are grouped in a first large sub-section (2.4.2). The remaining curricula developments explored in the next subsections relate to organisation, course contents and didactics.

### 2.4.2 Delocalised curriculum components

- <sup>54</sup> A wide range of practices are found across the ICPs that **delocalize** curricula, or components thereof, to the South. At mid term in the IF cycle, 12/15 ICP are operating or at the least developing such delocalised component. For one ICP, HS, this delocalized activity is a continuation of a practice that existed before 2017, for the 11/15 other ICPs this is a new practice. 6/15 ICPs have developed more than one delocalised component. The three ICPs at IOB are jointly co-developing one and the same

delocalised component. The forms in which curriculum components are developed, and offered to ICP students (or others) are described in the remainder of this sub-section.

- 55 A first useful differentiation is between the integration into the ICP of (access to) curricula that **already exist** at South partner institutes, versus development of new courses that IF helps organise in the South. The former are currently found at 2/15 ICPs, which are offering students the option to take a semester (or even more) at one such South partner institute, under an ECTS exchange system. While at the partner institute, ICP students follow local, already existing curricula, where some course contents may have been further developed jointly with the ICP host in Flanders. **Such dual programme arrangement is already found at IMRD and IMAQUA**, while a relatively new partner to O&L in Ecuador is moving to make itself available to a similar ECTS exchange arrangement (outside of the IF arrangement and within an EU funding modality, the so-called Capacity Building grant). The Ecuadorian partner to IUPWARE is likewise moving forward to accommodate a dual programme, where IUPWARE students and local Ecuadorian students in a newly created local advanced research master programme will eventually be able to spend up to one year of the 2-year programme abroad. Local students from IMAQUA and IMRD South partner institutes as well are envisaged to eventually also gain access to curricula components taught at the ICP's base in Flanders.
- 56 Some modules at the semester courses that IMRD students can opt to take at 3 South partner institutes are further being developed under the IF project. Additionally, IMRD's IF project has created an inter-semester case study course at one of the South partner institutes, which presents one of many examples of **newly** created curriculum components further addressed in the remainder of this subsection.
- 57 Relevant further distinctions to make are in reference to the degree to which newly developed curriculum components are open to ICP students (only), and whether these components are conceived as one-off events rather than as a permanent feature on the curriculum, that is envisaged to be organized in the next year(s) in the same or similar format.
- 58 Several examples are found of curricula that mid-term in the funding cycle **are yet to be opened to ICP students**:
- DEM: a Master in Development Evaluation is currently being developed with/at Mzumbe University in Tanzania and will mostly likely take off in November 2020. This will include a module on community-based monitoring (CBM)
  - GOV is developing a 2-week course on natural resources governance in Bukavu, that until 2020 has only been open to researchers from the wider region rather than GOV ICP students. In a later phase of the IF project, this developed curriculum is envisaged to become open to ICP students (either in Bukavu or at the GOV host institute, the IOB at UAntwerpen).
  - GLOB and the other 2 ICPs hosted by IOB are jointly creating curriculum content with its partner in Nicaragua. This (proto-)curriculum component has thus far only been open to local students (from Central America), and that as of 2020 will be open to students from all three IOB ICPs that opt to take a module on Local Institutions and Poverty Reduction (LIPR).
  - IUPFOOD is noted for having contributed to a first full mirror of its 2-year English-language programme in Vietnam, that it successfully built on the bedrock of a VLIR-UOS supported NETWORK programme,<sup>28</sup> that in turn, is built on an IUC with Can Tho University. The IUPFOOD programme that

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<sup>28</sup> And in synergy with it. The specifics of this synergy, and the segments of this development that are effectively on incremental funding, are described in detail in the individual evaluation sheet on IUPFOOD.

was delocalized to Vietnam is for students from the South (from VLIR List countries and others) with a profile that is similar to IUPFOOD's own ICP students. Several of these mirror programme students that enrolled in 2018 and 2019 were shortlisted applicants to the ICP that could not be fitted within the 12 VLIR-UOS scholarship package. These students are foreign to Vietnam, as local Vietnamese students can study a similar programme in Vietnamese. A second IUPFOOD mirror programme is in development in East Africa from a base in Kenya, that is envisaged to absorb yet more South students with this same profile, though especially from that geographical region. At mid-term, students from the mirror programme cannot as yet interact (on IF) with students at the ICP's bases in Flanders, nor vice versa. Later in the IF project development, IUPFOOD students that enrol at the Flemish host universities are envisaged to be offered the option to take specialized "tropical food technology" courses that are currently already taught in the second year of the Vietnamese mirror programme.

<sup>59</sup> One ICP has developed three different delocalised curricula, only one of which is fully open (optionally) to its own ICP students, while another implies these students indirectly. NEMA uses IF in support of satellite training grounds in Ethiopia and Kenya. The first of the satellites is a 6-weeks course open to Ethiopian students (10 of which are financially supported on NEMA's IF) and is operated in very close collaboration with local NEMA alumni. The second satellite training absorbs students from Kenya and elsewhere in Africa, 10 of which NEMA supports to attend the training. ICP students are involved in this last satellite operation, in that they assist in the teaching of a Basic Crash Course in Nematology (BCCN) to these satellite training students. Learning to teach nematology basics is an explicit element of the NEMA curriculum, and as such, the development of this training ground' for that course component is deemed of note in this section on curriculum development.

<sup>60</sup> Other differences are noted in the duration of the delocalised curriculum component:

- NEMA has delocalized 10 weeks of its curriculum to Kenya. The ICP involves non-academic partners from international organizations in this delocalized "Kenya Track", as well as local research institutes and for-profit companies (e.g. a Kenyan branch from the Swiss conglomerate Syngenta). The latter host 4-weeks internships that constitute an integral and obligatory part of the delocalized curriculum.<sup>29</sup>
- The 3 ICPs hosted by IOB envisage 6-weeks delocalized course modules to become available in Nicaragua and the DRC, that are not yet operational at the time of the mid-term evaluation.
- 5/15 ICPs limit the duration of the delocalised South activity to 2 weeks, even if preparative course load and reporting/presentation on that activity keeps students and staff occupied for many more weeks or even months.

<sup>61</sup> A relevant further differentiation for these newly developed delocalised curriculum components is whether participation is compulsory for all ICP students, optional or open to a handful of students only on a competitive basis. These modalities will be specified in examples described below and in the full overview presented in table 5.

- SUST stands out for having a delocalized curriculum component that is compulsory for all ICP students. This course, known as the Living Lab, has thus far been organized in South Africa, with logistical and organizational support of a South African partner institute. The Living Lab is envisaged to be organized in the country of another South partner (in Vietnam and Peru) at a later time. The fact that the course is compulsory is seen to correlate with a rather significant share of SUST budget

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<sup>29</sup> O&L and IMRD and IUPFOOD are also seen to have pre-defined non-academic partners in the Global South where students can opt to intern, but these arrangements are not slotted into the organized South curriculum component as they are in NEMA. At IUPFOOD and IMAQUA, students can opt to intern in industry as well, but in this case the internship hosts are no predefined partners to the IF project, nor are they localized in VLIR List countries in the South.

allocation in support of VLIR List country students' mobility support to travel to the site of the Living Lab. This budget covers the implied South-bound mobility needs of all ICP students that are nationals of VLIR List countries. The ICP organisers go to great length to raise funds to help cover the other ICP students' South-bound mobility costs (e.g. their faculty's Global Minds modality, in 2018 and 2019)<sup>30</sup> and cover local transport within South Africa for all participants, including local students.

- In IMRD, students have the obligation to take at least one of the delocalized curricula components that the ICP currently has in one of the South partner countries. They can take a "case study module" in rural Vietnam over their summer break (between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semester) or/and study an entire semester at one of these South partners (Vietnam, South Africa, Ecuador).<sup>31</sup>
- One of more delocalized components on the curricula of all 3 ICPs that are hosted at IOB, is only open to a small number of students and on the basis of merit: As of 2018, these ICPs can give some students a "waiver" for the larger part of the first module (that is a common curriculum "trunk" for the 3 ICPs and covers development theories and research methods). Students whose prior studies or work experience has made them sufficiently proficient in research methods, can opt to spend up to 6 weeks of that first curriculum module on a "mobility window" instead. They can then travel to a South partner location and work with that partner on a research project where they **apply** the research methods in which their peers are still being instructed at IOB in Antwerp. This modality is recognized to be 'internship-like' even if it does not go by that name.
- CADES operates a system of restricted access to its delocalized curriculum component, that is the Field School. 4 students from VLIR List countries only were admitted to the 2018 Field School that CADES staged in Ethiopia, another 4 such students are envisaged to participate in the 2020 Field School that will take place in Mozambique. Access to these limited places is on competitive basis. As the 2019 Field School explored Molenbeek in Belgium, the course qualifies with difficulty as a "delocalized curriculum component in the South", although it has thus far always taken place beyond a university campus. The Field School in Molenbeek was open to 8 ICP students, as well as to 2 students and one staff member from each of CADES' South partner institutions (from Ethiopia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa). In these first phase of the IF, CADES Field Schools developed as exclusive, intensive collaborative efforts of max 2 members of staff and another such maximum number of students, from 5 different countries and institutions in CADES' IF project partnership. In subsequent phases, the Field School is envisaged to be open to more ICP students, and will then become a fully 'optional' curriculum component for all.

<sup>62</sup> Most of the 8/15 ICPs that have placed optional participation in a delocalised course in the South on their curricula, offer students an alternative curriculum component in the North of equal size - as becomes clear from the following examples:

- At NEMA, students can opt to spend 10 weeks of their 3<sup>rd</sup> semester to perform either the Kenya Track or take a near-full semester European Mobility Track, e.g. at WUR in Wageningen, with which NEMA operates an Erasmus Mundus programme (cf. section 3.4.2).
- As of 2020, GLOB students are envisaged to have a choice between Managua and Antwerp for the Local Institutions and Poverty Reduction (LIPR) course that constitutes the 3<sup>rd</sup> module of this ICP. As this LIPR module is also open to GOV and DEM, students from both of the latter ICPs will have three options for their 3<sup>rd</sup> module: LIPR in Managua, LIPR in Antwerp, or an Antwerp-based ICP-specific module on National Institutions, Poverty Reduction and Aid (DEM), or one From Violent Conflict to

<sup>30</sup> As of 2020, Global Minds can no longer support mobility of others than nationals of 31 VLIR List countries.

<sup>31</sup> Students of this ICP have an additional, formal obligation to spend at least one entire semester at another European partner (to a global 15-partner consortium that runs IMRD as an Erasmus Mundus programme).



Peace and State Reconstruction (GOV) that is currently taught in Antwerp and is envisaged to become on offer at the GOV partner institute in Bukavu, DRC, later in the IF project cycle.

- IUPWARE's signature 2-week Integrated Project (IP) course can be taken in two options, only one of which is delocalized to the Global South. This intense course formula was already on IUPWARE's curriculum prior to incremental funding, when it was organized in Belgium, France or Poland. While one such temperate climate version of the IP continues to be organized after 2017, the course is now also being organized in a tropical climate in collaboration with IUPWARE's South partners (Ethiopia, Ecuador and Tanzania). These three South partners are taking turns in organizing the Integrated Project, that is open to both ICP students and to their local students.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>63</sup> All of the above-described features are wrapped up in the following table, that provides a typology of delocalized curriculum components. The three ICPs without such a component (EPI, STATS and TRANS) have not been included in the table.

ICP	Description delocalized Curriculum component	Compulsive, optional or other participation For ICP and/or (which?) other participants	Duration
CADES	Field School	4 – 8 ICP students, currently competitive entry, to later become optional for all ICP students + 2 students per South partner	2 weeks
DEM	Mobility Window	ICP students already proficient in research skills	6 weeks
	Module LIPR Nicaragua	Optional participation ICP students + local Central America students	
GLOB	Mobility Window	ICP students already proficient in research skills	6 weeks
	Module LIPR Nicaragua	Optional participation ICP students + local Central America students	
GOV	Mobility Window	ICP students proficient in research skills	6 weeks
	Module LIPR Nicaragua	Optional ICP students + local students	
	Advanced Course in Governance of Natural Resources	Currently restricted to students from wider Central African region, to additionally open up to ICP Students in later phase (2021?)	2 weeks, to expand to 6 weeks module
IMAQUA	Semester credit exchange	Optional participation for ICP students	1 semester
IMRD <sup>33</sup>	Vietnam Case Study	ICP students + local students + IMRD-EM students	4 weeks over summer break
	Semester exchange at South Partner	ICP students + IMRD-EM students	1 semester
IUPFOOD	Mirror programmes Asia & East Africa	Currently restricted to non-ICP South students <sup>34</sup>	2 years
IUPWARE	South ('tropical') case study for Integrated	Integrated Project course compulsory for all ICP students, choice of South/temperate climate case	2 weeks

<sup>32</sup> A rotational system for organizing the ICP's South curriculum component is found in O&L as well, where Tanzanian partners have supported the organization of the 2-week Monsoon School in 2019 and Kenyan partners will do the same for the 2020 Monsoon School. CADES envisages a similar rotational system whereby its African partners take turns hosting and co-organizing the delocalized curriculum component. CADES participated in the rotation as well, organizing the second Field School in Belgium.

<sup>33</sup> Compulsory South mobility: students must take at least one of these 2 South components

<sup>34</sup> Second year specialized courses on the mirror programme in Vietnam are envisaged to be opened as a specialization option to South-mobile ICP students in the longer run.

	Project (IP)	+ local students from the South partner	
HS	Studios <sup>35</sup>	Optional participation ICP students + local students from the South partner	2 weeks
NEMA	Summer Course Ethiopia	Local (Ethiopian) students	6 weeks
	Satellite training BCCN Kenya	Local (Kenyan) + other African students + ICP students assist in training while on their Kenya Track	1-2 weeks
	Kenya Track	Optional participation ICP students	10 weeks
O&L	Monsoon School	Compulsory for scholarship holders, optional for other students, local and regional students invited	2 weeks
SUST	Living Lab	Compulsory for all ICP students + local students from the South partner	2 weeks

Table 5: typology of delocalized curriculum developments in 12/15 ICPs

## 2.4.3 Course contents development

<sup>64</sup> A range of other South-relevant curriculum developments are ongoing at the ICPs' Flemish host universities rather than in the South. New courses have been put on the ICP curricula as either elective or compulsive courses. In the cases described below, such North course developments are in turn related to a delocalised component in the ICP's curriculum:

- SUST students participate in workshops that prepare the Living Lab, the delocalised course they take at a South location in their second year. After students return from that South location, the curriculum reserves time allowing students to digest and present on their Living Lab experience (to the next cohort, preparing to participate in the next run of the Living Lab).
- IUPWARE allows for follow-on activity of the IP course, where the teams of participants integrate different types of findings and present these findings at the Belgian host universities. Additionally, several of IUPWARE's own (North-based) lecturers further elaborate on the case study that was examined on the ground in the South during that year's run of the IP. As such, the case study serves as 'glue' that brings coherence in the curriculum, and makes the South case study findings also available to students who did not participate in the tropical version of the project.
- NEMA has introduced new courses on soil ecology, soil health and biomonitoring (6 ECTS) and an additional 3 ECTS module on Nematology Didactics and Capacity Building, all of which are programmed at the start of 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, with the explicit goal of preparing students for the activities they engage in whilst on the (equally new) Kenya Track for the remainder of that semester.
- The three ICPs at IOB placed a new course on Community-Based Monitoring (CBM) on their curriculum from 2017. A first run of that course was followed by visiting lecturers from Tanzanian and Nicaraguan partner institutions, that later placed a similar course on the curricula that was under development at their home institutes. This CBM is among the curriculum components that students from the three ICPs can find on offer in the Master in Development Evaluation that is currently being developed with/at Mzumbe University and that will mostly likely take off in November 2020.

<sup>35</sup> HS organized Studios in the Global South prior to 2017, and continues to organize these under IF. As such it is not a newly delocalized curriculum component.

<sup>65</sup> **Guest lecturers from the South** are found to feature more frequently on ICP curricula. ICP curriculum components that have either been newly minted on IF or were already on the programme prior to 2017 are also seen to use South guest lecturers in a more systematic and integrated way.

- At STATS, lecturers from the South (including South Africa, Uganda and Kenya) from both university and non-university institutes, are hired to teach new curriculum components, that is design of agricultural experiments, planning of health studies and *capita selecta* in computational biology.<sup>36</sup>
- TRANS created a new course on Road Safety in the South, for which it systematically invites guest speakers to focus on emerging countries. The Vietnamese partner is developing a case that will be worked on by the ICP students.
- O&L: guest lecturers from the South (mostly alumni) are invited to contribute in O&L in a compulsory course for all ICP students (every two years).
- A guest lecturer from DEM's South partner, the University de la Salle in the Philippines, was invited to make a significant contribution to the development of course content at the Local Institutions and Poverty Reduction (LIPR) track. This curriculum component is taught at IOB at the three ICPs – for GLOB as a sole option, for GOV and DEM as one of two options. A substantial sub-unit to the Community-Based Monitoring course in this LIPR track is being taught by this guest lecturer in collaboration with the ICP promotor.

<sup>66</sup> Regular lecturing contributions made to the shared ICP curricula of the three ICPs at IOB by a Nicaraguan guest lecturer strongly contribute to the South relevance of these curricula, and such course materials brought in by this guest lecturer continue to be used by IOB's own lecturers after the Nicaraguan guest returned to her home institution. In other ICPs as well, the more frequent and impacting presence of lecturers from the South is noted, and their curricula have integrated such South lecturers in a systematic way. Over the board it is safe to say ICP curricula have moved beyond occasional one-off contributions of a South lecturer who happens to swing by for reasons unrelated to the ICP, even if over the years these guest lecturer slots may be filled by different guests, from different partner institutions and/or non-academic alumni, as is the frequent case at CADES and HS. Special mention is due here of O&L that recruits South experts to its Monsoon Schools, mainly, but not exclusively from the wider regional area where the School takes place. As the Monsoon Schools are organised at different South locations in the course of the IF funding years, O&L is keen to deploy different South lecturers at each Monsoon School. In this way the ICP seeks to ensure that the expertise brought to the ICP by each of the invited South experts can be built on and develop further.

<sup>67</sup> Guest lecturers from the South are but one of several modalities whereby ICPs aspire at “decolonizing” their curricula. This aspiration is strongly motivating developments at course content level for the three ICPs at IOB, CADES and HS. Such developments move beyond merely adding course content “about the South”. They seek to reframe and redefine their field, development studies in the case of the ICPs at IOB, “as seen and lived from and in the South”. In several other ICPs as well, existing and newly introduced courses are absorbing more contents explicitly relating to the Global South, such as case study findings that ICP students and staff explore first-hand in the delocalised curriculum component (e.g. the aforementioned example of IUPWARE's “tropical version” of the Integrated Project course, as well as O&L output from its Monsoon Schools). Numerous North lecturers (also beyond the ICP nucleus) report that they now go to greater lengths to prepare course materials with examples from the Global South. They deem such course content more relevant to bring up in classes that are graced with the

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<sup>36</sup> One of these three courses existed before 2017 but is now more geared towards ICP scholars. All three courses have been made compulsory to ICP scholars; they are optional for other STATS students.

“wisdom of the class” that the ICP scholars provide. O&L reports the practice experience that virtually all of its South students have, significantly enriches the courses for the North students, few of which have practice experience.

## 2.4.4 Curriculum features allowing for application of what is learned

- <sup>68</sup> 2/15 ICPs have obligatory internships on the curriculum (EPI and NEMA). 10/15 ICPs have an optional internship on their curricula at ECTS value. In some of these cases, this arrangement is new since incremental funding, in the sense that until this change in curriculum, their students could only perform internships as an extra-curricular option.
- <sup>69</sup> ICP students are seen to intern at research institutes, non-governmental organisations and private sector actors – including industry. For most ICPs there is at least some novelty to the internship option, except for TRANS where it existed since 2012, and (M)EPI, that had a compulsory internship since its start, in 2015. In creating or expanding the internship option, some ICPs comply with students’ explicit requests to gain hands-on experience. In the case of IUPFOOD, where (optional) interning is new to the curriculum and now represents 9 ECTS (8 weeks) to be performed in the last phase of the programme, South students are particularly keen to get practice experience with state-of-the-art technology in industry. This implies they seek internship opportunities mainly in the North (which they find, in IUPFOOD hosts’ extensive networks), or at research centres (in rare cases found in VLIR List countries, e.g. Indonesia). IMAQUA students are seen to intern at e.g. aquaculture farms abroad but in locations rarely found in VLIR List countries, preventing that travel to that internship location is supported by IF. O&L, IMRD and IMAQUA internships are performed over the summer break of these 2-year programmes. At NEMA, a four-week internship (5 ECTS) is comprised in the (optional) Kenya Track in the third semester.
- <sup>70</sup> Several ICP curricula contain additional arrangements that serve an application-of-knowledge goal, but are not referred to as ‘internship’.
- At the IOB, this is the restricted-access 6-weeks mobility window allowing students, who are already proficient in research methods, to go apply those methods at a South partner location.<sup>37</sup>
  - At EPI, practical courses on data analysis and statistics have appeared on the curriculum. The ICP is now hiring an additional lecturer (also connected to the Center for Statistics at the UHasselt) who strengthened the teaching capacity (in terms of numbers and specific expertise) of the Global Health Institute.
  - At SUST, ICP students can use the Portfolio course (6 ECTS, of which 3 are taken in 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, 3 are taken in 4<sup>th</sup> semester) for activities that help them apply or deepen aspects of what they learned in other courses. In this course, students are coached in the execution of a learning track that they design by themselves, in line with their personal interests and learning goals. This can entail attendance of conferences and workshops, but also intern-like activities, e.g. at NGOs in Belgium or abroad.

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<sup>37</sup> The Mobility Window has the same ECTS value as the module 1 that other ICP students take at IOB in Antwerp.

- IUPFOOD organises an annual week-long Workshop Food Technology, where all ICP students cooperate in groups, applying much of what they have learned that far to solve specified food technology problems (most of which are brought to the workshop by the South students).

**Interesting practice: NEMA students apply what they learn, assisting in the Basic Crash Course Nematology**

In the one-week Basic Crash Course Nematology (BCCN), ICP students assist rather than sit in to learn. While on their delocalised Kenya Track, NEMA students assist in teaching the BCCN, that NEMA then organises for local and other South students in Kenya. The coincidental organisation of two delocalised activities provides the ICP students with ample opportunity to apply what they themselves have learned in the course Nematology Didactics and Capacity Building (3 ECTS) that is key to NEMA's mission to raise awareness about the dangers of nematodes beyond academia. It allows NEMA to have teaching assistants in place for its satellite training in Kenya. For its second satellite operation, a 6-week Summer Course in Ethiopia, NEMA calls in alumni from a previous run of that Summer Course to assist in teaching the BCCN module, allowing those alumni to practice-in-applying their Nematology Didactics skills.

*Box 2: NEMA students apply what they learn, assisting in the Basic Crash Course Nematology (BCCN)*

<sup>71</sup> Several ICPs (3/15) have (re)organized the sequence of courses on the programme to allow students to spend extended time away from the host university campus to intern and/or do dissertation research abroad.<sup>38</sup> In some cases, this opens up the additional possibility to combine travel to a South location that hosts their internship and/or dissertation research with travel implied for a delocalised course. Following are examples:

- At IUPWARE, students opting to take the 15 ECTS Integrated Project at a South location, can stay the remainder of that semester at this same location to do dissertation research under co-supervision of the ICP's local partner institute.
- TRANS has reduced the number of elective courses, in best efforts to make it more practical for students to organize their time away from UHasselt for activities in the South.

<sup>38</sup> In several others, students are encouraged to intern and/or conduct dissertation research away from the Flemish host institutes over the summer break (for 2-year programmes).

#### Interesting practice: Curriculum organisation to allow students can spend an entire semester abroad

At SUST, the entire 3<sup>th</sup> semester is free from courses requiring students' mandatory presence at KU Leuven. This makes it possible for them to organise their semester as each of them sees fit, including by spending extended time abroad. Students can opt to stay on at a South location after participating in the Living Lab course organised at that location in September, between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. The third semester can then be spent there interning with local actors or doing field research relevant to their dissertation.

*Box 3: curriculum organisation allowing students to spend an entire semester abroad*

### 2.4.5. Adapted didactics

<sup>72</sup> At least 4/15 ICP curricula bear evidence of increased use of blended learning incorporating e-tracks and other digital support the development of which is funded by IF. E-learning materials are additionally proving a way to see to the “decolonisation” of ICP curriculum content, where South partners are involved in the creation of such materials for use in classes at the ICP host in Flanders and in the South. As e-learning materials allow for continued and delocalised use, their time-consuming on IF is anticipated to pay off on the longer term. In several cases, the use (benefit) of newly-created digital support is not restricted to the ICP-students only. It allows these materials be used in the South, by partner institutions and others, including beyond academia. This makes e-learning materials a modality with the potential to expand the reach of the ICPs and help sustain the benefits of IF-supported curriculum developments beyond the duration of the IF project, as seen in the examples below.

- IMRD's key contact person in Ecuador is co-developing e-learning materials with one of the ICP's lecturers at the Flemish host university. That module will be used by students in the IMRD global network of 15 institutions.
- IUPWARE is co-developing e-learning modules with lecturers from its South partners. These modules support a course that was newly put on the IUPWARE curriculum. ICP students taking this first run of the course at VUB-campus in the fall of 2019 were accompanied by 2 invited lecturers from Ethiopia and Tanzania (both alumni). The visiting South lecturers' take on this course is wrought into e-learning materials, that the visitors co-developed with IUPWARE's own staff. They foresee using these co-developed materials in the future, in blended learning arrangements with their own students in Tanzania and Ethiopia.
- Using additional Global Minds support, IUPWARE produced two Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) that accommodate the requests of IUPWARE alumni for contents covering low-cost sensor technologies. MOOC access through the IUPWARE alumni network platform proves an efficient means to deliver such content.<sup>39</sup>
- TRANS created a MOOC in support of students' preparation to the ICP, that was further developed to serve the ICP curriculum. With the start of the new curriculum (2019-2020) it is now offered as a

<sup>39</sup> Both the articulation of that request, and the benefits of the MOOC are confirmed by consulted alumni. The harvesting of these requests and the delivery over the alumni network are supported by incremental funding.

voluntary prep course to ensure that the students can prepare themselves before joining the curriculum (and in order not to burden them with additional study load once they get started).

- NEMA began developing a Nematology Digital Learning Platform (NDLP) before 2017, with financial and technical staff support from its host faculty. That support continues, while NEMA develops contents on IF. The NDLP is proving valuable to others than ICP students. It contains reference materials for alumni and other nematologists afield. Introductions to the use of the platform are also systematically included in the satellite trainings that NEMA is supporting in East Africa. All of the above-mentioned curriculum developments introduced under IF expand the reach of the ICP, including beyond academia. E-learning materials can also help sustain the benefits of IF-supported developments beyond the duration of the IF project.
- STAT ICP did not develop e-learning on the IF budget but is making use of different e-learning materials which support blended learning and are also to the benefit of the ICP scholars and students, for e.g. the maths for Stats E-Summer school which is a 3-week preparatory online course, online materials on the Blackboard and eR-BioStat materials available to all students and teachers in the South to be used to support both undergraduate and master programs in the South.

<sup>73</sup> Intensive, multiple-day, mixed group work is a preferred mode of delivery for ICP course contents, in the North (e.g. Food Technology Workshop at IUPFOOD) and course components delocalized to the South (CADES Field Schools, IUPWARE Integrated Project case studies, SUST Living Lab, HS Studios, TRANS Integrated Transportation Case course, O&L Monsoon Schools). While this didactic modality is not new for all pre-2017 ICPs, it is new to the newcomer ICPs, and it has become more prominent in the curricula of all, and/or is now also taking place at South partners locations, where interdisciplinary mixed groups are appreciated by partners for being innovative (SUST, HS). In its ICP documentation, HS refers for these didactics to several publications, including a handbook for integrated fieldwork in the Global South (2016) that this ICP already used before at its design studios, and continues to do since 2017 on IF. Several ICPs that have taken on or extended their use of this didactic modality are also finding ways to include local South students (IUPWARE, CADES, SUST, IMRD, O&L). Such peer interaction at the level of the students is deemed highly beneficial for both ICP and local students. In addition to group work, the three ICP's at IOB have introduced the practice of linking students on Southbound mobility to students in the South, a practice that is much appreciated by their professors as the students bring with them new ideas and methodologies (respondents from partners). For EPI, the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is taking the lead in considering more appropriate educational approaches and methodologies.



#### Interesting (emerging) practice: EPI and the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences of the UA

As part of its quality assurance, the Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is developing its knowledge on and expertise with appropriate education approaches and methods for mixed groups and online joint learning with different universities. There is an opportunity to connect the ICP to this process and to develop jointly new approaches: EPI has seen a significant rise in students from the Global South and is looking for ways to strengthen the South dimensions with partners in the South. These relations are currently mainly research-based. It is seen that additional input from an educational point of view could strengthen the development of the South dimension of the ICP. This is further supported by the strong policy on internationalisation at the faculty. The faculty is taking various initiatives not specifically looking at a North-South divide but taking into account diversity, in collaboration with other faculties. There are for e.g. educational guidelines on how to compose heterogenic groups (<https://www.uantwerpen.be/nl/centra/expertisecentrum-hoger-onderwijs/didactische-info/onderwijstips-chronologisch/tip-82--heterogeen-g/>), there is an interfaculty working group on diversity developing guidelines on how to ensure that content is sufficiently taking into account diversity, south bound mobility of students is supported by debriefing and reflection sessions on cultural differences and power relations (by support) and this would be extended to cover also scholarship students coming from the South.

*Box 4: Education approaches for mixed groups*

## 2.5 Support to students allowing for their participation to be of high quality

### 2.5.1 Introduction

- <sup>74</sup> The ToR to this assignment describes ICPs as “programmes hav[ing] a specific but non-exclusive focus on participants from developing countries, to whose specific needs the teaching methods are adapted and to a number of which VLIR-UOS awards fully fledged scholarships for the duration of the programme”.<sup>40</sup> This section of the synthesis report summarizes practices found at the 15 ICPs to ensure its participants from the South find their specific needs met. Where possible, the evaluators indicate to what degree the measures are new since IF, and whether this funding modality is allowing ICPs to do things differently from before.
- <sup>75</sup> Information relevant to this section proved difficult to glean from the ICP application files and reporting documents. The section is informed mainly by interviews with ICP core staff (particularly the coordinators), lecturers and students, during the evaluators’ visits to the ICP’s seat at the Flemish universities. Follow-on mail correspondence complemented that information for a number of the ICPs. Where available, formal task description of the ICP’s coordinators, served further triangulation of this information. The latter also served to raise awareness that far from all support required by and given to ICP scholars and other South students is within the remit of the coordinator. In several ICPs, staff employed on general faculty budgets rather than on IF play a significant role (see also further under the section about enabling environment).

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<sup>40</sup> ToR, p. 6.

- <sup>76</sup> The remainder of this section covers two types of support, that are not always possible to nearly set apart. The first relates to the modus operandi of the ICPs to help ensure students adequately understand, digest and apply what they learn in the courses. The second refers to measures whereby ICPs try to ensure that these students' time spent at the Flemish universities is as bearable to them as possible, so that they can fully concentrate on the learning process.

## 2.5.2 Overview of modalities to enhance the quality of the learning process

- <sup>77</sup> The overview lists practices in chronological order of the study programme, starting with the first step whereby the programmes and their hosts ensure they recruit students with a profile likely to benefit (most) from these programmes (see in the above under scholarship strategy).
- <sup>78</sup> A second type of step towards allowing for maximum quality relates to preparation of selected applicants. Some ICPs provide materials for the students to digest even before they arrive in Belgium, e.g. STATS (see e-learning materials mentioned in the above) and the three ICPs at IOB. Others have students take a series of refresher courses immediately upon arrival. The more elaborate preparatory courses arrangement is offered at UGent, where a 3-week Preparatory Programme BE PrePared (short, Be-Prep) is organised for international students (not only ICP-students) to enrol upon arrival in September before the start of their first semester of first year. NEMA, IMAQUA, IMRD and IUPFOOD all tap into IF to pay the enrollment fee for their first-year scholarship students to Be-Prep, that has general introductory modules, refresher and preparatory courses in physics, mathematics, statistics and economy. All VLIR-UOS scholarship beneficiaries enrolling in IUPFOOD have to compulsory take the first three of these refresher courses; IMRD VLIR-UOS scholarship beneficiaries have to take the latter three.
- <sup>79</sup> Be-Prep also provides a session on inter-cultural challenges for all enrolled international students. At IOB too, introductory activities are organised for the three ICPs to raise awareness on the possibility that inter-cultural and inter-gender communication flaws may come up in the course of the year, so as to try avoid these, and keep a 'code' at hand for how to deal with such issues, should these come up. At UHasselt, students of STATS and TRANS can take a one evening per week course that serves an even more profound integration and social integration endeavour.<sup>41</sup>
- <sup>80</sup> O&L students (not only ICP-scholars) take a compulsory levelling course in the first semester on "data mining", that consulted students deemed of high relevance and quality. At SUST a course entitled "academic levelling" is one of two courses created for the ICP, and evaluated very positively at a student hearing".<sup>42</sup> This first semester course is reportedly particularly relevant for students whose prior study career has been low on beta-sciences, that are rather pertinent to SUST students opting for the "Ecology Track". At TRANS a more implicit levelling endeavour is recognized in the sequencing of course load at the start of the curriculum to ensure that the differences in the students' start situations are levelled out and a more homogeneous group for teaching is created: the ICP starts with 5 courses (on modelling, policy, behaviour, infrastructure and technology), students with an advance in for e.g. psychology need to catch up in infrastructure. All the new knowledge is already applied in the same semester on a real-life case from the South, working in groups allows students to bring in the knowledge from their specific background and as such complement the knowledge of others.
- <sup>81</sup> ICPs are making constant adjustments to the curricula, their mode of delivery, and their sequencing, often in response to feedback obtained from the ICP students. To that end, the programmes organise

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<sup>41</sup> Organized by the Flemish *Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering*. The course covers amongst others politics, history, work, housing, transport and health care.

<sup>42</sup> SUST Annual Progress Report on 2018, p. 5.

consultation processes that are more than a mere formal evaluation sheet on course level. Several ICPs also have the students evaluate relevance and appropriateness of didactics at the end of a programme segment (sometimes including the 'take-in' procedure, even prior to the ICP students' formal start of the programme). The inclusion (at ETCS value) of internships on the curricula is one such significant adjustment, made in response to student feedback and after discussion in the relevant *Onderwijs Commissie*. To capture students' feedback, all ICP's applied at the least the VLIR-UOS questionnaire for ICP scholars,<sup>43</sup> which is rarely integrated or aligned with the own evaluation instruments and primarily served accountability towards VLIR-UOS.

- <sup>82</sup> To ensure that students understand and digest what they learn in class, ICPs deploy largely the same modalities as do other programmes for other students. Few of these initiatives have taken a new turn since IF, but it is of value to capture what support practices are being continued since 2017. In some programmes they can rely on a *Monitoraat*, that is only to a minor extend carried on IF and is but one among more modalities where e.g. IUPFOOD students can receive such support (including sessions on 'how to study', 'how to plan your exams', facilitation of interaction with staff teaching specific courses). In others (e.g. CADES), students find a dedicated *Praktijk Assistent* with an open-door policy, to whom ICP students feel confident enough to present their papers before they submit these to the professor that actually assigned these papers.<sup>44</sup> Such support staff is not, or at least not entirely, reflected in the IF budget.<sup>45</sup> In many other ICPs, students are strongly encouraged to seek clarifications – if needed – by the actual lecturers, including the ICP promoters. E.g. at IMAQUA, students reportedly can "at all times" turn to the IMAQUA corps of lecturers".<sup>46</sup> In this and many other ICPs, students appear particularly prone on peer-tutoring. Those studying at departments having a large corps of South PhD students (e.g. IUPWARE and IUPFOOD) may seek such PhD student's aid, particularly if these are from the same geographical area and may share languages other than English.
- <sup>83</sup> Specific to ICPs and IF is the support students receive from the coordinators. At some ICPs, the role of the coordinator contains several, if not all, of the support services described in the previous paragraph. Several of these coordinators are revealed to be ICP students' to-go-to person for both course content-related assistance and guidance to move around other obstacles that get in the way of these scholars and other South students, that are rarely related to a lack of knowledge or capacity for learning. These obstacles can concern unfamiliarity with didactic styles and specific expectations that not all students have been equally well prepared for in their preliminary studies, or have 'gotten out of' while gaining practice experience away from academia. Some of the personnel employed in this capacity are themselves alumni of an international programme (not necessarily from the same programme). The threshold to seeking support from the coordinator is reportedly very low, e.g. at IUPWARE, where one of its two part-time coordinators is an alumna from a VLIR List country, who has lived through the same experience as do current generations of ICP scholars.
- <sup>84</sup> Several ICPs have arrangements in place to help students prepare for exam practices. STATS organizes specific info sessions to prepare students for exams and even made short movies on how to do exams. O&L is particularly mindful that many of its South students had never seen a professor from any distance closer than from the back of a large and crowded auditorium, and that some may be intimidated having to "look a professor in the eyes" at a one-on-one oral exam. To help students overcome this hurdle, the first

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<sup>43</sup> VLIR-UOS no longer requires that ICPs use this survey, and now queries scholarship beneficiaries with its own pre- and post-survey.

<sup>44</sup> This is not the part-time post doc hired as ICP coordinator, but an assistant funded on the faculty's own resources.

<sup>45</sup> The CADES Praktijk Assistent is not on IF.

<sup>46</sup> Email from IMAQUA coordinator Ir. Jean Dhont, 26/11/2019: "including more specifically both promoters, Prof. Nancy Nevejan, Programme secretary Tom Baelemans and coordinator Ir. Jean Dhont". IMAQUA is seen to budget part of the salary of Scientific staff member Dr. Nevejan, for providing such support to ICP students.

exam scheduled for all is on a course taught by a professor with a long ICP-track history who is particularly mindful of this issue.

- <sup>85</sup> ICPs have a standard practice of formative evaluation. Exams are treated less as an end by itself and more as a means to closely monitor student progress, with the possibility to offer additional support and encouragement when deemed necessary. ICP organisers are nevertheless mindful of the importance that South students do accomplish what they have been given the possibility to study in Belgium, and in many cases go another extra mile to help ensure these students do graduate. IUPFOOD's promoters report giving personal attention to this process, for which they call in students for periodic one-on-one exchanges, alerting those who appear lacking in effort. The new ICP TRANS reports that it is seeing to students' progress with similar close attention, by way of its Exam Board.
- <sup>86</sup> While they follow delocalised curriculum components in the South, particularly the longer semester exchange arrangements at IMRD and IMAQUA, ICP students reportedly find support from the local ICP coordinator. For IMRD that is Dr. Peñafiel (who herself is an IMRD alumna) at the Ecuadorean partner institute, or Dr. Jordaan at the one in South Africa. While on the Vietnam Case Study, IMRD students find local support as well.<sup>47</sup> This type of delocalized support to students is obviously new since incremental funding, as the exchange modality with South partners only operates since 2017, and IMRD is a newcomer ICP.
- <sup>87</sup> ICPs may support students in their quest for appropriate MSc dissertation project arrangements. This may entail identifying and facilitating access to (co-)promoters,<sup>48</sup> including at South partner institutes and/or alumni from the programme. Some ICPs provide similar support to help students identify internship possibilities, in the South or closer by (in reply to e.g. IUPFOOD students' requests to intern at industrial facilities in Belgium). Since IF, GOV, NEMA, O&L and IMRD have engaged in new formal partnership relations with non-academic actors (including international and non-governmental organisations and for-profit companies), that can host such internships.
- <sup>88</sup> Extra-curricular English language courses, on offer elsewhere at its host university campus, are open free of charge to ICP students at (M)EPI,<sup>49</sup> STAT and TRANS (English conversation), and are only in part (or not at all) funded with IF. CADES uses IF funding to fully pay the KU Leuven language institute a pro-rotta fee for each of its students in need of 5 sessions academic English writing. CADES ICP scholars are strongly encouraged (though not under an obligation) to make good use of this option. Many of them are found in dire need of that support, as CADES is also recruiting development practitioners next to academics who might be less familiar with standard Western-style social science academic practice, including the assignment of numerous papers. This support in developing writing skills (and critical thinking) is highly valued (as became clear of the latest steering committee involving development practitioners). These (and many of the afore-listed) linguist support measures are not new in kind since IF begun. What is new is that new ICPs such as MEPI and CADES now have the possibility to arrange for and cover such support at least in part on a budget that became newly available to these programmes in ensuring high quality participation of South students in the ICPs relates to the systems the programmes and their hosts have in place to ensure they recruit students with a profile likely to benefit (most) from these programmes (see in the above under scholarship strategy).

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<sup>47</sup> IMRD uses IF to pay the South partner institute for the time its staff spends on hosting the Case Study in rural Vietnam for ICP students. A pro-rotta fee is paid (400 EUR per participating student).

<sup>48</sup> Some ICPs in turn support the host that facilitates the dissertation research with a bench fee (NEMA, EPI, IMAQUA).

<sup>49</sup> E.g. in the case of (M)EPI, part of the costs incurred to get U Antwerpen's Linguapolis support for ICP students is covered by IF, the host Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences is co-sponsoring the remainder of the costs. O&L encourages students to take a language test, organised by O&L (not on the IF), students scoring low are informed about language courses they can follow.

## 2.5.3 Support to the well-being of South students

- <sup>89</sup> A wide range of measures is found in place to help ensure students' wellbeing, in the understanding that the more bearable their time spent in Belgium, the more fully they can concentrate on the learning process. These measures are new to newcomer ICPs. For the programmes that benefitted from ICP funding prior to 2017, this is rather business as usual, that is presently sustained under incremental funding.
- <sup>90</sup> Special care covers the entire duration of the ICP students' stay in Belgium, starting with personal pick-up at the airport, as is the case for NEMA and O&L. The latter ICP deploys second-year ICP students in its airport welcome team, who then help the newcomers find their way around VUB campus and Brussels (referred to as "buddies"). TRANS and STATS refer to a similar buddy system, organised on an UHasselt-wide level, whereby incoming international students (including but not only ICP students) get matched to other students. In practice, TRANS matches incoming ICP students with its ICP students that settled in a year earlier.
- At UGent's ITC, staff provides a "winter talk" to help ICP and other South students prepare for and deal with cold and the psychological effects of darker, shortening days.
  - Psychological problems are nevertheless seen to come up and force some students to interrupt the ICP, e.g. to return home to reunite with their children or deal with urgent family issues. The coordinators are the more likely in the ICP core staff teams to help make such arrangements, that may come to provide for an extension of the scholarship. At VUB, the central office in support of University Development Cooperation nevertheless indicates that office rather than the ICP coordinator tends to be South students' first stop to seek advice for dealing with e.g. pregnancy or medical issues. At UGent ICPs (co-)hosted by the Bioscience engineering faculty, ITC intendedly tends to be such first stop, with the possibility for the students to be referred to the university's centrally organized medical and psychological support services (although first access also frequently passes through the coordinator, according to the ICP host institution).

## 2.6 Interaction with the South to strengthen South dimension of the ICP

### 2.6.1 Introduction

- <sup>91</sup> In this section, the evaluators look at activities that have been developed to valorise and use expertise from the South, activities aiming at developing capacity of partners in the South and activities related to alumni. These three building blocks are present in each ICP.

### 2.6.2 Using the expertise from the South

- <sup>92</sup> All ICPs use expertise from the South. For ICPs existing before 2017 this is grounded practice which tends to be based on the relations between professors and their PhD alumni from the South and/or on institutional partnerships. For some ICPs (HS, CADES and the three ICPs at IOB) bringing in expertise

from the South and allowing the South perspective to be articulated is one of the main characteristics of their ICP (explicitly inspired by the principle of decolonisation of knowledge).

- 93 The main sources of South expertise are partner institutions, alumni and students from the South enrolled in the ICP ('wisdom of the class' - see the box on CADES below). Some ICPs (SUST, IUPWARE, IUPFOOD, IMRD, HS and CADES) use expertise from other institutions in the South (other than the academic partner institutions), some of which are non-academic. The majority of the ICPs combine various sources, whereas O&L and STATS primarily use (young professional) alumni as a source of expertise from the South. Most ICPs organise various events either in the North or in the South to bring together colleagues from partner institutions, alumni and students at the same time. For e.g. HS has used the IF to develop a new initiative, the world urbanism forum, and the World Urbanism Papers to bring together expertise from various sources in South and North. On this intersection of regions and expertise, new ideas can develop.

#### Interesting practice: CADES wisdom of the class and getting things done South-wise

At the Master in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies (CADES), the content of what is discussed in class is affected and to a considerable extent 'made' by the presence of the 12 ICP scholars and several other students from the Global South. Expertise relevant to such discussions is not restricted to things pertaining to specific realities found in the South that some of the students can testify about. Some bring skills to "get things done South-wise", that prove relevant to others at CADES, including in their capacity as students. To name but one example, a scholar from Burundi with professional experience as a journalist demonstrated to his CADES peers how to use low budget tools and techniques for making documentary movies – "as one does back home". The students then used these on their assignment for the visual anthropology course and recorded an entire documentary movie to explore and narrate the specifics of their experience of South people in the North. In the meantime, that documentary (Mahal, 2017) won an award at a documentary festival in the Philippines.

#### Box 5: using the wisdom of the South

- 94 Expertise from the South is used for various purposes, as described in more detail in the previous section on curriculum developments:
- Involvement from partners in the South and alumni in the supervision of internships and master thesis. This was already common practice and did not change a lot with IF.
  - Guest lecturing both in the North and in the South (for delocalized curriculum components). The number of guest lecturers clearly increased as compared to pre-IF funding. The practice of working with guest lecturers in an integrated manner is starting to be shaped in the new ICPs EPI and TRANS and in O&L (integration in seminars). The courses taught and other inputs made by guest lecturers are integrated to a different degree in the various ICPs (from ad hoc and stand-alone modules which are in some cases (for e.g. STATS) elective to modules that are essential to the curriculum (such as for example with the 3 ICPs at IOB).
  - Involvement of academic staff from the South to co-develop and co-organise delocalised curriculum components. This practice is clearly strengthened with IF. Clearly, organising the delocalised course components in the South with partners in the South (12/15 ICPs) offers a particular opportunity for both



staff and students to discover expertise in the South and for the South to articulate the expertise that is present.

- The practice to use the expertise of the South to allow for systematic feedback on the curriculum and the way of working is clearly present in 6/15 group of ICPs: for e.g. including experts from the South to benchmark scoring master theses at the IOB, inviting feedback during world urbanism forum at HS, evaluating staff appreciation participating in field schools (CADES), organizing evaluations and feedback with NEMA.

### 2.6.3 Support to capacity development of partner institutes

- <sup>95</sup> The concept of ‘partner institution’ in the South and/or (contribution to) capacity building and its potential link to the ICP is not clearly defined by the ICP call. The call instructs that applications should clarify how the IF project will contribute to objectives of partner institutes and their capacity building, but it does not give further orientation on the matter. In their application forms, the applicants listed the partners in the South that might be involved in various roles (such as thesis supervision, co-organisation of ICP components in the South, co-organisation of staff and students exchange, ...), explained relevance of the project to partners in the South and clarified their track record (and that of their staff) on how to apply knowledge and expertise in the South.<sup>50</sup>
- <sup>96</sup> Although all ICPs aim (though often implicit or in general terms) to develop capacity of partner institutions (as highlighted in their application file and in annual progress reports), there is no evidence of explicit capacity development plans nor of detailed analysis of partners’ needs. This does not mean that interventions to strengthen the South component of the ICP would not be relevant. In general, the ICP application forms include clear and convincing references to relevant contextual elements of the concerned countries. The forms also refer to VLIR-UOS strategic papers that already indicate the needs for capacity at the level of the partner institutions. Several ICPs that selected for their incremental funding project some long-time South partners, have interacted with these partners prior to the project start, to define and elaborate possible IF project activities, so as to ensure the relevance of the project activities (as confirmed by interviews with partners). Some ICPs ensured this exchange with their partners only at the start of the IF project or in the elaboration of the delocalised teaching components (for e.g. O&L and the Monsoon Schools). A particular initiative taken by the ICP HS is to use the IF to organise summer schools and workshops with partners in the South to explore new topics for collaboration in a structured way, as such creating stepping stones for strengthening institutional relations.
- <sup>97</sup> In what follows, the evaluators comment on the overview of partners and identify IF activities with the potential to contribute to capacity building of partners institutions in the South.
- <sup>98</sup> **Overview of partners** - In the overview in table 2 (annex 2), the evaluators have listed partners in the South<sup>51</sup> with whom interaction is currently organised on a more regular basis. The interaction with these partners listed is seen to go beyond their potential role of partners in the South as supervisors of master thesis or guest lecturers. This list is generally shorter than what was mentioned and envisaged in the application forms.<sup>52</sup> Respondents from various ICPs (HS, EPI, STATS, TRANS, IUPWARE) have

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<sup>50</sup> Point 2.2. in the application form under the heading of relevance.

<sup>51</sup> The evaluators are aware of the fact that other relations exist with partners in the North, some in the framework of hosting internships. These have not been taken into account in this section relating to support to capacity development

<sup>52</sup> This means that other institutions from the South are involved in the ICP but not (yet) on a regular basis. The evaluators have considered these partners under ‘using expertise from the south’. Further, many collaborations are existing for the majority of ICP host institutions which are not necessarily under the IF project budget, although they can influence. The evaluators have addressed this under the section on ‘enabling environment’.



explicitly confirmed and repeated during interviews that the IF project motivated them to invest in a limited number of partners. The ICP O&L however is seen to go for many partners, in the interest of nourishing global networks. In various cases, attention of the ICP has shifted to already identified or even new partners that are more responsive (looking for the energy to collaborate).

<sup>99</sup> In the majority of cases, partners for the IF project have been selected on the basis of existing collaboration funded by other VLIR-UOS support modalities or EU funding. Synergy that is thus created will be described under the chapter on efficiency. ICP host institutions clearly prefer to work with partners that are known and trusted to ease the development of ICP components, and most often this is based on relations with (PhD alumni). The exception is NEMA: the ICP is developing new partnerships in Kenya - including with non-academic actors, while it continues and strengthens an existing partnership in Ethiopia with an institute that hosts NEMA PhD alumni.

<sup>100</sup> From the overview in table 2, the following appears:

- 6/15 ICPs have relations with academic partners in Vietnam (of which IMAQUA, IMRD and IUPFOOD with Can Tho University) and at least 4 ICPs have developed relations with ESPOL in Ecuador (IMRD, IMAQUA, IUPWARE and O&L), without, to the knowledge of evaluators, having coordinated between the activities, most probably because relations are with different departments of Can Tho or ESPOL.
- It thus appears that ICPs have each their specific partnerships with parts of universities in the South, except for the ICPs of IOB that share some of the partners but have divided the responsibilities for management of the relations with the partners.
- Fewer ICPs (5/15 ICPs) have developed closer relations with non-academic actors in the South, mainly to host internships: O&L actually does report on NGOs in the capacity of formal ICP South partners to its IF project. These are locally-grown South partners based in Peru (Pro-Delphinus) and Senegal (Wetlands International Africa). These partners contribute to the project in the capacity of hosts to internships. GOV is seen to have a similar type of local partner, that is the Virunga Alliance in the DRC. Two not-for profit international organizations are seen to cooperate with and actually be considered fully declared ICP South partners to NEMA. These are the Kenya branches of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA) and the International Centre for Insect Pests and Ecology (ICIPE). In its annual progress reports, NEMA has taken to reporting on cooperation with additional partners to its delocalized Kenya Track, that are local private companies (either locally grown or local outposts of international companies such as Swiss-based Syngenta). These for-profit actors offer 4-week internship opportunities, that are a mandatory part of this delocalized NEMA course component. TRANS is developing relations in Vietnam with a variety of actors in the multi-stakeholder network of excellence on Road safety and STATS will continue working closely with the South African Medical Research Council (supported by IF and other projects outside of VLIR-UOS).

<sup>101</sup> **Contribution to capacity development** - The following activities financed through IF can be identified as activities that (either implicit or explicit, either as a primary or secondary objective) can contribute to the development of capacity of partners in the South: co-production of curricula components, support to the development of a Master in the South, providing access to a network, additional training and online platforms. They are described further below. A firm and conclusive appreciation of their effectiveness (for realising strengthened capacity at the level of partners) however cannot be made as the scope of the evaluation did not allow for this. Some indications of effectiveness are primarily anecdotal. The evaluators would like to highlight that the practice of supporting partners' staff costs (with IF as seed-money) can be seen as providing partners with an opportunity to be genuine co-promoters of the IF project and be involved as equal partners in the delivery of the ICP (as such creating conditions that can support capacity building of partners).

<sup>102</sup> **The co-production and co-organisation of delocalised curriculum components for the ICP in the South** - This is the case for 12/15 ICPs most of which allow and stimulate participation of staff and students from the partner institutions (see in greater detail in the section on curriculum developments in previous sections). This can be seen to support capacity building in various ways:

- The fact that local students have access, strengthens the educational content of what the partner co-organiser offered to its students.
- To the extent that these components answer to the research interests of the partners in the South, they can contribute to the execution and quality of the research of the South partner. To start with, outputs produced remain useful for other lecturers and students (which was confirmed by interviews with partners from the South). Examples are the Field Schools and Studios in which CADES' and HS' South partners participate, NEMA satellite training in Ethiopia, O&L Monsoon Schools that reportedly provide an opportunity for local South participant staff to get an update on new technological developments.
- To the extent that the partners have a role in the organisation of the course, they can gain capacity to stage similar project-based work or apply project-based teaching approaches. This is quite explicitly the case for IUPWARE and SUST (in the latter case, the partner in South Africa confirms they 'learned the recipe by now' to continue organising Living Lab).
- To the extent that other actors in the South are involved in the activity and/or presentation of results of the field work (e.g. in the case of O&L Monsoon Schools), results of research activities might be used by government actors and other players, as such enhancing their capacity to address development challenges and supporting the image of the South partners.

<sup>103</sup> **Support to the development of full master programme** - IF projects have contributed to the development of full master programmes or curriculum components in the South to be rolled out by the partner institutions for their own students (and on their costs). Explicit efforts to develop capacity of a partner institution in the South is thus seen in the development of a local master or its strengthening by adding specific modules or supporting the development of a system for quality assurance (9/15 ICPs). The (aspiration of) development of local masters in the South (of which operational costs should be carried by the partner) is the case in the following ICPs:<sup>53</sup> EPI, DEM, GLOB, GOV, IMAQUA, IUPFOOD, IUPWARE, O&L, TRANS. In some cases this was supported by additional training for staff from the South. Such is the case for DEM,<sup>54</sup> GLOB and IUPFOOD (offering refresher courses,<sup>55</sup> strengthening of English proficiency and didactic skills). Majority of these investments are expected to have also a return on the curricula of the ICP in the North (see in greater detail in section on curriculum developments). Only for STATS, the evaluators have found in the application file a description of a deliberate/explicit pathway with several phases for institutional collaboration leading to the creation of local masters. For the time being, there is no concrete South capacity development under the IF project, but the Center is heavily involved in supporting master programmes in the South (Ethiopia, Cuba) through other programmes (VLIR-UOS IUC and other) which demonstrates its capacity for and expertise with capacity development.

<sup>104</sup> The formulation and/or further development of the following local masters is supported:

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<sup>53</sup> O&L is also facilitating the creation of a programme much like its own in Cuenca but not under the IF project. Therefore, we did not mention it in the list. Also, STATS is working on a local master in E. Mondlane University in Mozambique

<sup>54</sup> Also using IF funding to allow colleagues from Cuenca university in Ecuador to exchange with their colleagues in Nicaragua)

<sup>55</sup> The ICP is leaning on alumni to develop mirror programmes; they return to Belgium for refreshing their knowledge of the course they are/will be teaching in the mirror programme.

- DEM: staff mobility and strategic meetings are funded to feed into the set-up of a master programme (connected to the IUC programme with Mzumbe University). The take-off was postponed because the accreditation body in Tanzania introduced a new qualification framework which required all universities to adopt the system for both existing and new programmes. The department of Economics that will host the new masters in development Evaluation prioritized the existing programme over the new; take off is now planned for November 2020.
- GLOB: a Central-American version of the master is envisaged, but serious political upheaval in partner country Nicaragua has forced GLOB (and GOV and DEM as such) to scale down this ambition for the time being. The more modest ambition is presently to integrate a bilingual (English-Spanish) module on Local Institutions and Poverty Reduction (LIPR), including a unit on community-based monitoring, in an existing research course taught at Nitlapan, the partner institute at the Universidad Centroamericana (UCA) in Managua, Nicaragua. Interestingly, this initiative is supported by the development of a financial sustainability plan for the local master and a Nicaraguan task force to ensure that the module and eventual master is not simply a duplication but a locally-grown initiative that uses expertise from IOB.
- GOV: embedment of a course module in a master *Diplôme d'Etudes Approfondies* in the section of *Economie et Gestion* of Bukavu University. Because of difficulties with management at the side of Bukavu, the strategy was shifted towards the development of a stand-alone advanced course in governance and natural resources (to be hosted in another institution – to be decided). 4 units were developed, and a first run took place as a Winter school in Bukavu. 2 of these units were taught by IOB staff the 2 remaining units were taught by local scholars. The Winter school attracted students not only from Bukavu but also the wider region. A second run is planned early 2020, and is envisaged to have two additional units.
- IMAQUA: strengthening and expanding an existing credit exchange system through the development of local systems of quality control.
- IUPFOOD: support to the development and co-management of mirror programmes to the ICP, making optimal use of synergies with ongoing VLIR-UOS supported programmes: the mirror programme in Vietnam is one of the objectives of the NETWORK programme involving the 4 Vietnamese universities that offer different specialization courses to the mirror programme's second year students.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile, a second IUPFOOD mirror programme is under construction in East Africa, from a basis at Jomo Kenyatta University in Kenya, to which the Flemish host university is tied in an ongoing IUC programme. For this second mirror programme development, second year specialization courses are envisaged to become available at universities elsewhere in East Africa (Tanzania, Uganda).
- IUPWARE: support to the development and content development of a new 2-year research master at the university of Cuenca.
- TRANS: preparation of a dual degree programme at the Ton Duc Thang University in Vietnam. All is in place, but a change of staff is delaying implementation.
- O&L partner in Ecuador aspires to create an O&L-like master, largely on EU funding (obtained independently from O&L's IF). The ICP commits to supporting that development, even if such activity was not yet envisaged at the start of the IF.

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<sup>56</sup> The reader is referred to the individual evaluation sheet for the IUPFOOD incremental funding programme for a detailed description of the synergy, the win-win for both the incremental funding AND the Vietnam NETWORK programme, and the costs and efforts that incremental funding carries to enable the Vietnamese mirror programme.

<sup>105</sup> **Applying a network approach to the design and execution of IF project activities** - A specific contribution to capacity is the contribution to (global or regional) networking facilitated by the IF project having the potential to connect the partners in the South to other research and teaching institutes at local, regional and global level. Having stronger networks is key for research and teaching institutes and their academic staff as they can offer gateways to joint research and joint publications. Examples of this have been found in 8/15 ICPs (with several other host institutions applying this approach outside of the IF project and sometimes using ICP alumni, as for e.g. STATS). Some examples are presented below:

- O&L: the (new) Ecuadorean partner's participation in the O&L network was reportedly conducive to making a successful application to significant EU capacity building support funding whereby it will, in turn, extend its collaboration with partners in its own geographical region;
- HS: more attention is going to the coordination of collaboration of all partners (a network-setting) beyond the bilateral contacts managed by professors with 'their' contacts or research topics. For e.g. ensuring that a Chinese university can be part of the studio, co-produced by the Vietnamese partner; allowing the partner from South Africa to participate with 1 lecturer and 2 students in the studio that will be organized in Kenya. Although the network setting is not yet fully functional, the project is evolving in the direction of increased South-South discourse and debate for e.g. during the World Urbanism forum which can further contribute to the development relevance.
- TRANS: is developing and supporting the functioning of an (existing) network of excellence within Vietnam which include 4 Vietnamese universities and stakeholders from government, industry and other sectors (multi-stakeholder network). With the network, the ICP is working towards nine fundable and concrete project ideas. The setting of a multi-stakeholder network offers already opportunities for resource mobilization from various stakeholders (such as the government). It is expected that the network can offer consultancy services. Further to that, the ICP is organising academic conferences that link academics and experts from various global regions including students and alumni.<sup>57</sup>
- IUPFOOD: the IF supports South-South mobility allowing the Vietnamese partner to coach the development of the programme in East Africa, and the coordinator of the future East Africa mirror programme to be invited as lecturer and observer of the IUPFOOD mirror in Vietnam.<sup>58</sup>
- DEM and GLOB (to a lesser extent acknowledged by the respondents from the South): connecting expertise from Philippines to partners in Nicaragua and Ecuador is emerging although not yet fully functional (still strongly based on bilateral relations).

<sup>106</sup> Return from respondents from the South underlines high appreciation for this network setting as it supports South-South exchange which is more relevant in some cases (for e.g. as both South partners of IUPFOOD stated, they see their mutual exchanges as 'the opportunity to find tropical solutions for tropical problems').

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<sup>57</sup> This is not a new initiative. With the IF however, more academic weight is given to the conferences.

<sup>58</sup> This South-South mobility is additionally supported by the IUC in which the Kenyan partner participates. The coordinators in Vietnam and East Africa have also found funding for their interactions through the Japan International Cooperation Agency, JICA, which is active at both campuses.

#### Interesting practice: thematic clustering in a global network setting (HS)

HS pursues with the IF to develop a partnership that is co-produced, research-oriented and policy-relevant, grounded in a transdisciplinary and multi-dimensional approach to human settlement design, where exchange and mobility between partners is as equivalent as possible. Each of the partners is expected to play a specific role and can gear shared teaching and research activities (for e.g. through Master thesis) to its specific needs and interests. There is a clear choice for strengthening South-South relations. As such it is envisaged to twin partners to develop content and to strengthen institutional capacities. For e.g. the partner in SA was twinned with the partner in Mozambique to work on territorial urbanism in relation to (post) industrial activities. For capacity building on curriculum development, a twinning between the partner in Kenya and Vietnam is envisaged. Joint workshops, summer schools and studios are used as tools to identify needs of partners and further develop the intensity of the relations. Outputs and experiences are then shared with the whole network (and others) during the World Urbanism Seminar organised in Belgium. The execution of this thematic clustering proves more difficult than expected, because of the difficulty to align timelines of the various institutions. The idea however remains and the efforts to facilitate and support a network setting has clear added value: it allows the educational programme to be continuously fed by various contexts, it allows for differentiation in the teaching and form improved understanding of various change dynamics in cities which can be used to enrich and critically look at own models and concepts.

#### *Box 6: thematic clustering in a global network setting with various partners*

- <sup>107</sup> **Organising trainings in the South (ToT or other)** - These are often organized in combination with larger (alumni) events. Some of these trainings are also reaching non-academic partners and professionals: this is the case for NEMA (satellite trainings in Kenya and Ethiopia), STATS (in Mozambique and the Philippines and Indonesia under the IF) and are in various cases co-funded by other VLIR-UOS budgets.<sup>59</sup>
- <sup>108</sup> **Using online platforms** - the main idea is to strengthen access of partners to a network of lecturers/researchers/alumni and to share course content: TRANS, Nematology Digital Learning Platform (NDLM), and IUPWARE. IUPWARE is sharing considerable content, especially on innovative technologies, by way of its digital alumni platform.
- <sup>109</sup> Finally, it should be highlighted that DEM has demonstrated creativity in organising activities involving the South and directly or indirectly aiming at increasing capacity (in an implicit way). Various examples can be mentioned: DEM used the IF budget to develop action research initiatives on community-based monitoring, involving also students from partner institutions in Tanzania (in synergy with the IUC programme with Mzumbe University) and the Philippines and research staff. DEM connected the mobility window to the partner in the Philippines and the database on community based-monitoring of one of the staff as such advancing local research and contributing to joint publications. DEM is involving partners in the set-up of the alumni impact survey (2019), which is largely financed by Global Minds<sup>60</sup> and the benchmarking of its procedures to score master thesis. As such, it creates various spaces and ways for staff from the South to gain experience with new/other ways of doing and maybe to consider adaptation of their own practices in the future. The fact that this strategy is implicit might explain why the evaluators did not get confirmation nor appraisal on the latter from the respondents from partner institutions.

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<sup>59</sup> These kinds of trainings are also organized by EPI but not under the IF project.

<sup>60</sup> But the part concerning the ICP partner institutions in the South was on the IF budget.

## 2.6.4 Interaction with alumni to strengthen development relevance

- <sup>110</sup> As already specified under the 'choices in the IF budget', the majority of the ICP's have budgeted funds for alumni activities, with 3/15 having budgeted a larger % of the overall budget. DEM shifted more funds to the support of national Alumni chapters after it appeared that the initial strategy to invite BE NGOs in the South to develop synergy in activities in the South did not receive sufficient response. It should be noticed that alumni activity for DEM, GLOB and GOV is largely shared by the three ICPs, being embedded in the IOB.
- <sup>111</sup> The table below gives an overview of the following items: what have been pre-IF funding activities, what is new with IF, what type of activities were developed and to what end have they served (function of alumni work).
- <sup>112</sup> The IF has changed the alumni work in variable degrees for most ICPs. First of all, for 3/15 ICPs alumni work is new as the ICP is new and the 2-year courses only have established a first pool of alumni in 2019. Secondly, a re-dynamisation and/or better structuring of contacts with alumni was realised for the majority of the ICPs; only 5/15 ICPs had a solid track record in interacting with their alumni. Better structuring was facilitated by using social media, databases and online tools on the one hand and organising specific events for alumni.
- <sup>113</sup> 7/15 ICPs currently organize specific alumni events (sometimes back-to-back with other activities), which can take place either in the North or in the South. 2/15 ICPs (O&L and HS) already had this experience prior to 2017. 5/15 ICPs have not organised specific alumni events but limit themselves to inviting alumni to events they (or others) organise in the South or in the North (sometimes with mobility support).

### Interesting practice: supporting networking of alumni in the South (IOB)

The three ICPs at IOB (DEM, GLOB and GOV) have already a lot of alumni working in interesting positions and with them (bilateral) interaction is dynamic. As an example, 44% of the IOB's publications (in 2018) with scholars from the South included at least 1 alumnus. From 2010 onwards, various alumni 'spaces' have been created. To support networking, IOB promotes the creation of 'chapters', loose networks that can be easily activated to share new content/information. IOB has created chapters in five countries (Tanzania, Uganda, Philippines, Ethiopia and Nicaragua) and several alumni seminars were organized since the start of IF: in Tanzania (2017, 2018, 2019), Uganda (2017, 2019), the Philippines (2018), Ethiopia (2019), Nicaragua (2019) and Vietnam (2019). These events include workshops and often also short trainings/ presentations were offered. IOB also awards one (or more) IOB alumni with the IOB alumni impact award for having made a contribution to development. After a broad call for applications, an alumnus/a is selected and invited to come to IOB and present his/her work for students and staff and livestreamed to the entire IOB alumni community. Interesting is the fact that the alumni meetings are organised in the countries, where space is offered for alumni to connect better with academic institutions, government institutions and other development actors (such as embassies) as such strengthening their national network in which they are expected to make a difference. This can also be seen as a strong support to connect alumni to the world of employers.

### Box 7: supporting alumni meetings in the South

- <sup>114</sup> Most of the ICPs tend to use their alumni in the educational ICP offer (as guest lecturers or contributor to courses in North and South) – mostly, this concerns former PhD students (with the exception of NEMA,



who besides former PhD students also invites other alumni). It is observed that many ICPs lean heavily on their alumni to develop the ICP activities. 3/15 ICPs (DEM, GLOB, GOV) have developed or are developing tracer studies to study the impact of the ICP on their alumni (in synergy with Global Minds funding).

<sup>115</sup> Some specific practices can be mentioned, as they could inspire other ICPs to try out new things:

- Set-up of a specific research project/alumni impact study mobilising alumni in the partner countries to participate as co-researcher. As such, in an implicit way, capacity of the alumni and connected partner institutes to develop their own alumni work is developed. (example of DEM, GLOB, GOV develop and execute under IF funding the barometer alumni research for Tanzania, the Philippines and Nicaragua and use Global Minds funding to cover Vietnam, Ethiopia and Uganda. The intention is to cover all UA ICPs in the long run);
- Supporting networking in the South, by supporting alumni chapters to organise alumni events where all important development actors (national, regional and international) are invited. (example of DEM, GLOB, GOV) – see box 8.
- Competitions and awards for alumni or including them, as is the case with HS (call for papers ‘voice from practice), Trans (transportation innovation challenge online), alumni impact award (DEM, GLOB, GOV)
- Using local alumni to develop and teach in a 6-weeks training, and as such giving them an opportunity to apply their didactic skills (NEMA) – see box 3.

<sup>116</sup> The ICPs are not very explicit about where they want to go/end with the alumni work. Often a variety of ‘functions’ of alumni work are mentioned. 4/15 ICPs have explicitly mentioned they want to use the alumni network to scout for internship opportunities and support from the South in supervising master thesis (TRANS, NEMA, IUPWARE, IUPFOOD and STAT), which is of course connected to their specific need. The ICPs from IOB generally give demonstration of extra efforts to connect the alumni chapters to their partner institutions in the concerned country.

<sup>117</sup> Some typical (potential) functions of alumni are noticed to be underdeveloped at present for most of the ICPs, but are emerging at others, such as using alumni to ensure a link with the world of employers (NEMA, CADES and IUPFOOD), to receive systematic feedback on local needs and relevance of the ICP curriculum (IUPFOOD, IUPWARE and HS), and to use the network to share educational content, e.g. refresher courses (IUPWARE).

ICP	Pre-IF activities	What is new with IF	Type of activities	Functions
CADES	Non-structured contacts	Organization of alumni event More guest lecturers (10/Year)	Alumni event (# 1, North) Inviting alumni to CADES events Guest lectures Input to Round Tables (exchange with students on career perspectives)	Increase participation of alumni in events Using expertise from the South



DEM	<p>Dynamic interaction, most often on bilateral basis: support for internships for IOB graduates, helping out with promotion for IOB masters, alumni as guest lecturers.</p> <p>Creation of national chapters (5 countries, since 2010) and alumni events</p> <p>Magazine</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Joint publications</p> <p>Alumni impact award</p> <p>Refresher workshops for alumni</p>	<p>More investment in national chapters of alumni</p> <p>Tracer studies</p> <p>Alumni events with chapters</p> <p>Involvement of alumni as co-researchers</p>	<p>Alumni events with chapters (#9, 3 per ICP, in S)</p> <p>Tracer study: alumni impact barometer involving alumni as co-researchers (in synergy with Global Minds funding)</p>	<p>Knowledge sharing</p> <p>Ensuring links between alumni and partner institutes</p> <p>Network (N-S, S-S and within the country)</p> <p>Contribute to capacity of partner institutes to develop alumni follow-up</p> <p>Working with alumni as IOB ambassadors</p>
EPI	/	<p>Developing social media</p> <p>Supporting mobility</p> <p>More structuring</p>	<p>Mobility of alumni (limited)</p> <p>Inviting alumni for events in N</p>	<p>Share employment and/or research experience</p> <p>Use expertise from the south in teaching activities in the North</p>
GLOB	See under DEM			
GOV	See under DEM			
HS	<p>Follow-up of PhD students and support to their academic careers</p> <p>Website</p> <p>Events during conferences in the South</p> <p>Co-production of studios</p>	<p>More structured interaction with alumni network</p> <p>Alumni event</p>	<p>Alumni events (#1, N)</p> <p>Inviting alumni for activities in the S</p> <p>Developing a community of practice through website (stage of idea)</p>	<p>Using expertise from the South in co-production of studios</p> <p>Knowledge sharing ('voices from practice')</p> <p>Getting feedback from the South on curriculum of ICP</p>
IMAQUA	<p>Tracer study</p> <p>Inviting alumni to international events</p> <p>Alumni mailing list</p>	<p>More structured approach through ITC</p>	<p>Tracer studies</p> <p>Inviting alumni to events</p> <p>Mailing list</p>	<p>Information sharing</p> <p>Promotion of masters, ICP in the South (through ITC)</p>
IMRD	Some initiatives under Erasmus mundus	More structured support through ITC	<p>Data management by ITC (to ensure follow-up of alumni)</p> <p>Bilateral contacts with alumni</p>	<p>Promotion of ICP in the South</p> <p>Support to the development of partnerships</p>
IUPFOOD	Some initiatives and non-structured contacts	<p>Added alumni section to website</p> <p>Mobility</p>	<p>Alumni return days (# 2)</p> <p>Discussion forum and webinars on website</p>	<p>Exchange of job experience and contacts with the professional world</p> <p>Identification of project ideas</p>

			Mobility Guest lecturers	Identifying the richest clusters of alumni to develop partnership Remain informed on local needs Using expertise from the South Identifying support for internships and dissertations both N and S
IUPWARE	Non structured bilateral contacts with some alumni	Re-dynamization of the network Mobility support (for) Alumni meetings Develop database	Mobility Alumni meetings (#3 N and S) Database and social media Guest lectures	Exchange of information Exchange and transfer of knowledge (refresher courses) Using expertise from the South Identifying co-promotors for master thesis Student recruitment Scout for partnership opportunities
NEMA	Non structured interaction with some alumni	Upscaling of the network and its functioning-	Mobility support to participate in EU meetings Summer course teaching	Using expertise from the South and contributing to didactic skills Link with future employers Support for internships and thesis supervision (organizing surveys in the South)
O&L	Long track record of organizing alumni activities (basis of current Monsoon school)	Not with IF	Alumni event (# 1) <sup>61</sup> Guest lectures Mobility for alumni as South experts in Monsoon schools	Developing ideas for new activities (as in the past for e.g. Monsoon schools) Using expertise from the South Sharing of knowledge, particularly on the use of new technologies
STATS	Non structured interaction with some alumni	Developing a more structured approach Alumni events	Mobility (limited) Events (# 2, N and S) Invite for contribution for workshops in the South	Using expertise from the South
SUST	/	Development of database	Database	(not identified)
TRANS	/	Developing online community and platform	Digital platform Contest ('transportation innovation challenge') Mobility Inviting alumni to network events in the South	Developing ideas for new activities Challenge experts worldwide Scout for internship and master thesis support Developing the demand in the South

Table 6: Overview of work with alumni

<sup>61</sup> With alternative funding.

## 2.7 Appreciation of the set-up of the ICP

### 2.7.1 Appreciation by the various stakeholders

- <sup>118</sup> The evaluators have interviewed many different stakeholders. It proved to be most difficult to get a good feedback from stakeholders, particularly South partners and students with regards to the alumni work. Both partners and current students were far less informed about this and only for few ICPs, it was possible to talk to alumni. It appeared that when alumni activities are more visible in the North (for e.g. for CADES, O&L, HS, Trans), more knowledge is present at the level of students.
- <sup>119</sup> **Appreciation of IF funding** - Overall, the IF and the contribution to staff costs (both academic and admin/technical) in the North is considered to be essential by a majority of respondents from the North; more in particular for ensuring efficient project management (and focus in the execution on what was promised) and for ensuring synergy in the use of other funding (both EU and VLIR-UOS) as such maximising what is possible (see further under the section about efficiency). As such, the IF is considered to work as a leverage to start new things (an opportunity to experiment and try out) and to act as a glue ensuring all international efforts come together.
- <sup>120</sup> Budget for staff mobility (outbound) is not considered to be essential by the ICP stakeholders but it has allowed them to do a lot more than was previously the case. The budget made it possible to develop more contacts with partners in the South and made it possible to include more members of staff (beyond the professor that developed the network with the South or with previous PhD students). Increased opportunity for interaction also contributed to the preparation of new projects (to be funded by other sources).
- <sup>121</sup> The ICP stakeholders appreciate the possibility to use the IF to support capacity development of the partner institutions in the South (through staff mobility, staff costs, organisational costs, ...). Although this is considered to be important and adequate to support capacity change it is at the same time considered to be inadequate (certainly if not used in combination with other funding programmes). At the same time, respondents ask the question to what extent IF should be aimed to explicit and comprehensive capacity building of partner institutions.
- <sup>122</sup> From the exchange with the various ICP coordinators it appeared that a number of issues related to eligibility of costs were unclear. For e.g. not all of the coordinators were aware of the fact that it was possible to have a FTE coordinator on the budget, or that staff costs for partners could be included in the budget. Some coordinators felt limited by the eligibility criteria, for e.g. the fact that it is not possible to budget travel for ICP scholar students for internship or master thesis to a country (in the South or elsewhere) that is not on the VLIR-UOS country list; this was an issue for IUPFOOD and STATS mainly because partners that are interesting for their students are not always situated in the South. However, IMRD succeeds in sending its ICP scholars to such (European) countries without IF funding. So did STATS without or supplemented by ICP funding. And others (NEMA) regret that some of the 31 countries from the VLIR List are not eligible for starting partner relations.
- <sup>123</sup> Surprisingly, majority of the respondents in the North (with the exception of O&L) did not point to the fact that ICP PhD scholarships are no longer possible during the interviews: between 2005 and 2016 (with a last intake in 2014) there was a budget for such scholars. However, this point was raised by all ICPs during a sense-making session of the first results of this evaluation. After 2016, universities received more means and freedom to decide for themselves on the PhD scholars they want to award which means that scholarships for students from the Global South enter in competition with others. From the interviews it also was clear that former PhD students offer a strong backbone for the development of

current activities within the ICP (such as delocalised curriculum components, preparation of programmes for credit exchange) and for the development of partner relations. In the longer term, it would thus seem, according to the evaluators that further developing both delocalised components and partner relations, and strengthening their sustainability could benefit from a constantly renewed pool of PhD students. It is not fully clear, to what extent the loss of PhD scholarships for students from the global South has been sufficiently covered by the current policy and practice of the own university. This element and the extent to which scholarships for students from the global South receive particular attention in the applied mechanism would need further research/monitoring (by VLIR-UOS).

<sup>124</sup> The partners in the South, generally do not have a full view of the IF budget. However, interviews with partners in the South suggest that most of them have been involved in the preparation of the IF project and were consulted on some of the choices made. The evaluators only received one comment on the acclaimed non-eligibility of funding for staff costs in the South; it is possible that the availability of bench fees (or coverage of costs related to the support to ICP students when coming to the South) is considered to be a fair contribution to their involvement. Majority of respondents from partners in the South however highlighted the limited possibility of the IF to support mobility of their students to the North (only witnessed this practice for limited numbers in the ICPs CADES and HS) or the South.

<sup>125</sup> **Other domains of appreciation** - In general, partners from the South have been very appreciative of the IF project and the open collaboration with the ICP staff and exchange with ICP students. More in particular following elements of appreciation of added value for the South were brought in by several respondents:

- Events (amongst which alumni events) and South-bound visits of staff have the capacity to increase the visibility of the staff in the South (within their institution and even country or region);
- Recognition of being co-producer of knowledge in combination with increased responsibility for some partners in co-organising activities in the South;
- Opportunities to internationalise their teaching and research work, team, department and as such the possibility for the educational offer and the degrees offered to gain prestige;
- Taking into account research needs and research topics that are relevant to the South;
- Appreciation for intercultural ability.

<sup>126</sup> Guest lecturers from the South that are invited to the North or South partner staff that is involved in field work with ICP students, feel challenged by the ICP environment, the often interdisciplinary approach and the diversity of the class, and consider ways to adapt their way of teaching. Guest lecturers appreciate the opportunity as a means to maintain (and expand) their academic network. At the same time, some lecturers highlight that they are the ones to help decolonise the production of knowledge and they can help to get some messages across to students (enjoying a particular legitimacy as being from the South).

<sup>127</sup> Very few respondents from partner institutions have mentioned and/or appreciated in particular their role as supervisors for master thesis or their role to offer or facilitate internships. A common challenge was related to the difficulty of motivating people to commit time. Several respondents argued that it is not always fully clear or understood what the win is or could be for the supervisor.

<sup>128</sup> (ICP) Students appreciate generally the wisdom of the class and its diversity, the opportunity for being together as a group in the field with local students and staff (for those ICPs offering this opportunity) and the inclusion of South lecturers, though they find there is room for more to be involved. Appreciation of

relevance is generally high with the exception of some parts/elements of the curriculum. Students acknowledge that they can always share their concerns and that their comments (for those that have been around for a longer time and are able to assess) are either taken into account or are at the least discussed and argued (in case there are no changes). The connections they see between science, society and policy interaction is very much appreciated at the level of IMAQUA, O&L, and the three ICPs at IOB.

- <sup>129</sup> Few students have commented on the weaker support or facilitation after graduation aimed at establishing contact with future employers.
- <sup>130</sup> The appreciation of internships in the South is mixed, which is depending on the nature of the topic that is taught in the ICP. As such, appreciation is very high for IOB, NEMA, O&L, IUPFOOD and IMAQUA and less for TRANS, EPI and STATS. This might require further analysis (as this evaluation was based on interviews with a smaller group of students).
- <sup>131</sup> Students generally struggle with the short time frame of a 1-year programme and the time for a master thesis, especially when executed in the South (where, as they explain, much more time is needed compared to the North to plan for fieldwork which is a costly and mostly one-time undertaking for ICP students, for e.g. booking flights well in advance, finding accommodation, establishing contacts, getting permission for field work/research permits, ensure access to data, ensure meetings with supervisors, ...)

## 2.7.2 What seems to work and what is challenging?

- <sup>132</sup> **Contributing factors** - Factors that have contributed to the elaboration of the IF project and the strengthening of the South dimension are the following (in no particular order) :
- The IF project modality in itself has been a contributing factor. Respondents from ICP host institutions state that this has helped them to stay focused on what was promised in the application form and to think over steps and necessary adaptations. They also state that the management of the project (unclearities about the budget rules notwithstanding) and the reporting was fairly easy. Some ICPs have used the opportunity to budget the project based on clear indications of tasks to be performed + estimate of days needed which supported efficient execution. The flexibility of the IF modality allowing them to identify relevant partners puts them in a position of relative strength, where they can target and honour commitments with those that are willing, and discard others with whom they initially envisaged to collaborate, that were not seen to deliver as they had hoped. Various ICPs are using this flexibility and have identified new or other partners in the course of the project.
  - The fact that the IF comes with an annual 12 full scholarships is proving an important factor by itself to deliver on the South component strengthening. At the same time, this intimate connection is recognized to present a challenge in terms of sustainability (see further under sustainability).
  - The budget rules create appropriate space for hiring committed staff ('coordinator'), for staff and student mobility (and in some cases for mobility support that extends to alumni from the South) and payment for organizational costs for the delocalized components both in the North and in the South. Thanks to the budget for mobility, it was possible for more staff at the host department to be involved and to interact more intensively with partners in the South and others.
  - For the majority of the ICPs, building further on (already) long-term relations that have created trust is an important factor contributing to the elaboration of the IF project. These relations tend to be built on PhD students and other alumni. Programmes that already benefited from ICP funding before 2017 are

the more likely to have existing ties with long-term tried and trusted partners, with whom they previously already collaborated on educational programmes. For TRANS however, this track record of VLIR-UOS funded programmes was not existing (see also table 7) and yet developing collaborations with various Vietnamese universities is going well. Working through individual PhD alumni contacts is certainly also here part of the explanatory factors, but also a more project-way of working for e.g. in collaboration with Ministries in the South (for e.g. Pakistan and Ethiopia).

- Personal commitment (both in North and South) combined with the position held in the hierarchy of the institution is an important contributing factor. More in particular for staff that still needs to add publications to the list in order to secure the academic career, investing in this kind of work can be a heavy burden. It should be noticed that Flemish host institutions are changing their way of appreciating investment of staff in outreach activities (such as development cooperation) which might help to create a more enabling environment.
- A highly-supportive enabling environment is found at the wider department/faculty/university in the North for all ICPs (cf. further elaborated below in the section on efficiency). Such support in some cases is seen to coincide with the presence of ICP scholars at the department and faculty: they made the ICP (and its international objectives) more visible. The opportunity of scholarships added value to the ICP in the eyes of other colleagues at the host department.
- The enabling environment in the South is recognized as a factor of importance as well, particularly when the ICP is envisaging delocalization of curriculum components. Examples of stronger or supportive academic environments have been identified for IMAQUA (South-African partner), IUPFOOD (both in Vietnam and Kenya), NEMA (Kenyan non-academic partner), DEM (partner in the Philippines), GLOB (Nicaraguan partner), EPI (Ugandan partner), and all three South partners of IMRD. Partners here have demonstrated their pro-activity. Many of these partners have strong internationalization policies of their own, as could be noticed in particular for partners from Ecuador, Vietnam and the Philippines. In cases where this supportive environment was weakened (or even actively undermined), e.g. by governance issues (such as for GOV in the DRC) this slowed down the whole process. In other cases (e.g. for the partner of SUST in Peru), a local environment reportedly less open to interdisciplinary group work, that just so happens to be a signature didactic style, can hamper the realization of the ambitions of some ICPs (delocalised components, credit exchange).
- South partners that are known to the ICP host and have been closely involved (at the time of the ICP application in the design of the IF project), have greater clarity on what the ICP hosts in the North expect from their partners, and on how they themselves can benefit from contributing to the realization of the IF project.
- Understanding of the partner in the South of the potential win of working with master students is part of that enabling environment: this point might need further attention in monitoring and evaluation of the IF project modality. Interviews with at least half of the partners left the evaluators with the impression that the possible added value of working with a master student is not sufficiently recognised (as compared to supervising a PhD student which comes along with higher benefits both in term of finances and academic career prospects). Yet, various examples of how ICP students are contributing/advancing research and publications have been identified (in the above). Clearly, more attention could be given to this to inspire and motivate.
- The practice of some ICPs to allocate budget to cover for staff time at the level of partners entails some risks but is a recognition of the role of partners as co-producers of educational content and as key players in ensuring access for the ICP to national and regional partners that can contribute to the South relevance of the ICP. Experiences of GLOB and TRANS have demonstrated that this can go hand in hand with home-grown and locally owned initiatives (such as a new master programme in Nicaragua

and a functional and output-oriented network of excellence in Vietnam that involves the Vietnamese government and other non-academic stakeholders).

**Conditions that can contribute to effective involvement of partners in the development of a stronger South dimension:**

From the experiences of the 15 ICPs, it appears that future ICPs might be mindful of a number of conditions situated at the level of partner institutions in the South. It can be of use when screening potential partners and when identifying possible risks that need to be addressed in case these conditions are only weakly present. The conditions are the following:

- (i) evidence of operationalisation of internationalisation policies at the level of the university,
- (ii) track record in collaboration aimed at developing educational programmes (for e.g. Network programmes funded by VLIR-UOS),
- (iii) openness to consider added value of developing support at master's level (for dissertation and internships)
- (iv) openness to consider interdisciplinary approaches and methods of group working (with a diverse student population),
- (v) presence of academic staff at influential positions that can support and act as change agent,
- (vi) experience with alumni work

Box 8: conditions for effective involvement of partners in development of South dimension

<sup>133</sup> **Challenges** - What did not work out very well or was challenging? From an overall perspective, there do not seem to be major challenges. The following minor challenges were identified by the respondents mostly on a more operational level:

- With respect to South partnership building, some newcomer ICPs are facing a larger challenge than others. Some do have a track record of research cooperation with partners in the Global South, but not all of these research partnerships are equally amenable to also participate in the development of an educational programme (e.g. EPI). TRANS on the other hand has known a very dynamic start in supporting the network of excellence in Vietnam even without having a strong track record in developing partnerships with other VLIR-UOS modalities, possibly because this initiative was aimed at outreach and identification of fundable projects that can translate existing research related to Road safety into solutions;
- Language barrier: limited knowledge of English was a specific challenge more in particular for students from Asia (Vietnam) and Latin-America, more in particular in relation to the development of credit exchange programmes in English;
- Aligning timeframes and change processes at the level of envisaged partner institutions to ambitions of ICP, more in particular for those ICPs that anticipate conceiving their actions in a network setting (for e.g. HS) and for ICP programmes that aim to develop credit exchange programmes (for parts of those programmes): IMAQUA, GLOB, DEM and GOV and IMRD or 5/15 ICPs are developing such initiatives. IMRD is building upon a scheme that already existed. For the other ICPs, it is clear that developing such schemes take a longer time and are dependent upon processes in the country on which the ICP has little control.
- Eligibility rules for student mobility: in particular for those ICPS where it would be more relevant for ICP students to have an internship in the North (minority of ICPs), the rules did not allow to use the IF to



this end. As such, the ICP host institution needs to find other sources to support this mobility (if found important/essential);

- Organising and ensuring follow-up of supervision of master thesis and internship in the South. The practice of this strategy is confirmed, with some challenges though for various ICPs. A particular challenge lies in ensuring the commitment of partners in the South for this task. Even for ICPs working with partners within a broader collaboration arrangement, it is noticed that staff at such partner institutes in the South find it difficult to commit sufficient time to this task. Some ICPs try to somewhat mitigate this issue by awarding (small) bench fees (see the section on budget). Although effectiveness of this measure could not be studied in the framework of this evaluation, it clearly cannot solve the challenge of finding time to dedicate to supervision. Involving South partners in the supervision can be beneficial to the concerned professor in the South where there is a clear effort to align the dissertation topics with the research topics in the South. We have seen a majority of ICPs making such efforts and asking partners to come up with their lists of topics.
- Supporting institutional change in the South and ensuring follow-up: clearly, some limitations to institutional change might need to be accepted. The IF project as such can contribute to but cannot realise as such institutional change.

## **3 Execution of the project funded with IF (efficiency)**

### **3.1 Introduction**

<sup>134</sup> In this chapter, the evaluators look at issues of execution of the IF project (including monitoring and evaluation). The evaluators have noticed that the execution of IF project has been supported in various ways through their embedment in the Flemish universities as such providing a strong enabling environment. Secondly, the way in which ICP host institutions and stakeholders have demonstrated capacity to make most efficient use of the incremental funding by finding synergy with other programmes and VLIR-UOS funding modalities is seen to have contributed to the execution of the IF project (and its effectiveness). Finally, hardly any ICP host operates as a stand-alone programme, there is evidence of a lot of collaboration between ICPs and not only within the interuniversity ICPs.

### **3.2. Execution of Incremental Funding as a project**

<sup>135</sup> Overall, ICPs executed their IF projects largely as foreseen in their application for such funding in 2016. Political upheaval, administrative hurdles and other unforeseen factors at their respective South partners slowed down some of the ICPs in achieving foreseen IF project results, without however altering their course. This is not to say nothing new has emerged since IF began in 2017, quite on the contrary, as was already clarified in the mapping section. The contours of ICP's South components are emerging clearly and rapidly for almost all ICPs, with one or two exceptions, due to staff turnover and weaker partnership relations. These put in evidence ICP's clarity of vision on how each in their own field could enhance their South dimension, the quality of their IF project design, the feasibility of the way they sought to execute their project, and the strength of the South partnerships on which (some of) these IF projects could build.

<sup>136</sup> For assessment of efficiency, the evaluators looked at the extent to which the IF has been executed and monitored/evaluated as a project with specific results anticipating changes at the level of individuals and organisations/institutions. This assessment was challenging for various reasons that are strongly related to the application and reporting formats and of which some were already highlighted by VLIR-UOS in the ToR for this evaluation:

- Budget format: the ICP documents offer limited visibility of own contribution to the IF. The evaluators have not been able, within the timeframe and budget of this evaluation, to generate a clear overview of how much North staff time actually is dedicated to the IF project. To start with, the IF budget only mentions the part that is funded on IF and not the co-funding: at least for CADES, IUPFOOD, O&L and TRANS it is clear that the hosting institute is contributing to cover costs for key staff time next to the IF in order to elaborate and support the IF project activities. Only TRANS has clarified co-funding in the application file. There is thus evidence of a lot of ‘hidden’ support from staff (both academic and non-academic) for various ICPs. Good practice is noticed in the ICPs where dedicated tasks have been identified and described in detail with calculation of time/task: O&L, TRANS (covering several people’s input), NEMA, IMAQUA (clear list of topics). This provides evidence of a project-way of working.

#### Interesting practice: specifying co-funding (TRANS)

In its application file, IMOB (the Transportation Research Institute of the U Hasselt) clearly specified a number of strategic choices for the IF project. Per strategic choice, activities were specified and for each activity the use of IF was clarified next to the sources of co-funding. This provided an immediate overview of the contribution of the centre, U Hasselt and the partners, thus articulating support and synergy. For e.g. it is immediately clear that the funding of the strategic choice to strengthen educational capacity on road safety in Vietnam through the development of a master is partly funded by IF (staff mobility, 50% of the costs of a curriculum designer at the partner university in Vietnam and 50 % of the cost of the curriculum designer counterpart at IMOB). The remaining 50% of the staff costs are carried by respectively the partner institution in Vietnam and IMOB. The staff costs were based on a calculation of time that was needed. Activities that were seen necessary (such as investing in acquisition of additional funding) but were not covered by the IF have been mentioned as part of the strategic choices. All of this increased transparency on the use of the budget and the strategy to execute the IF project.

#### Box 9: specifying co-funding (TRANS)

- Application format: the 2017 ICP call application file format does not explicitly invite the applicant to describe a project. The application format invites to elaborate a lot on the ICP and far less on the incremental funding project. The (short) section on IF requests applicants to describe vision, strategy and activities. This makes it difficult to discern a clear and explicit identification of anticipated results/changes strengthening the South dimension of the ICP and the capacity of partners from what is written in the application file.
- Report format: the reporting format does not invite to focus on what is IF-specific and new or to focus on the issue of capacity development, as such reporting is overall quite general, narrative and mainly activity based without activities being clearly connected to anticipated changes.
- Applications of the majority of ICPs are vague or mute about the changes expected at the level of partners and the methods for monitoring envisaged to be applied. At least 7/15 ICPs received negative

feedback in relation to this from the selection committee prior to 2017. There is no evidence that this comment related to the 'lack of measurable dimensions' was consequently addressed.

- Monitoring guidelines: the VLIR-UOS guidelines for monitoring were primarily aimed at measuring effects and changes at the level of ICP scholars (and programme graduates in general). At the start of the IF, a common evaluation sheet for ICP scholars was distributed amongst the 15 ICPs and consequently used by them to inform VLIR-UOS about the progress of the ICP scholars.<sup>62</sup> Guidance for monitoring changes in other domains, such as at the level of partners and related to support to capacity building was not provided by VLIR-UOS (not in the call and not afterwards as was the case with the guidelines for monitoring results at the level of students). As such, there are some 'blind spots' in reporting: for e.g. related to the process of anticipated capacity change at the level of partners (what are parameters to say they are stronger, how was change realised, what played a role in this, ...), related to the process (factors of success and difficulties) of conducting a master thesis in the South and internship in the South.

<sup>137</sup> ICPs do a more elaborate monitoring of progress and well-being of students than they were required to by way of the VLIR-UOS template form for the evaluation of ICP scholars (cf. supra in the section on support to students, with evaluations of all students (not only the scholarship beneficiaries) after each course and per semester, involvement of students in focus group discussions, representation of ICP scholars in POC meetings, with processing of data in university-wide educational quality control systems). This more elaborate practice is explained by the way the host universities are organised to ensure quality of the educational offer. Moreover, several ICPs continue seeking student feedback after their graduation. 8/15 of the ICPs are organising or have planned to organise alumni surveys. One interesting ambition can be highlighted: TRANS is looking for a way to ensure a more regular follow-up of students based on a specific model for learning acquisition. Some inspiration might be found in the practice of DEM, GOV and GLOB (IOB) working with a specific scheme of competences and skills that need to be present at the level of students to be able to act as brokers of development and to make a difference at policy level.

#### Interesting practice: Competences and skills of students to act as agent of change (DEM)

IOB in general and DEM specifically aims at educating 'brokers of development', providing them the skills needed to function as capable and more effective change agents. How do they train these brokers? Based on the work of Michael Woolcock (Harvard, World Bank, 2007) IOB has built the ICP learning outcomes and competencies around three sets of skills: detective skills (data-collection, analysis and interpretation), translator skills (reframing given ideas for diverse groups) and diplomatic skills (negotiation, conflict mediation, deal making). These have been translated into IOB learning outcomes and further detailed for DEM. Ability to gather reliable data, present results and form alliances is aimed at increasing the performance of the organisation the graduates belong to, thus leading to increased accountability and learning and better-informed policies. Specific attention for students' capacity to deal with policies is also increasingly noticed in the ICPs of HS, IMAQUA and TRANS.

*Box 10: students as agents of change: what competences to develop and monitor*

<sup>62</sup> In the meantime, VLIR-UOS adapted the mechanism of surveying the ICP scholars. Since 2 years, VLIR-UOS organises itself a survey amongst the VLIR-UOS scholars before the start, 9 months after and some years after (up to 10 years after having received the scholarship).

- <sup>138</sup> Notwithstanding weaker monitoring of the IF results and objectives and the fact that task division was not always that explicit in terms of budget, the evaluators have no information indicating that task division and execution of the project is inefficient (with maybe one or two exceptions due to weaker partnership relations and high turn-over of staff). In relation to the execution of the project involving students and partners, evaluators have received information and evidence about the implicit monitoring of progress with the partners through (informal) meetings and evidence of adaptations and reorientations on the basis of feedback received from partners and from students. This also appears from the reporting formats and the section of lessons learned and reorientations which is quite informative.
- <sup>139</sup> Overall, the evaluators conclude that all ICPs demonstrate a strong focus on the realisation of what they planned to strengthen the South dimension and that this focus is sufficiently orienting the ICP stakeholders in execution and adaptation to ensure relevance. A more explicit strategy for capacity development and its connection to the various building blocks might be useful to clarify benefits for partners in the South and support them to integrate this in their own capacity development strategies. The practice at the level of some ICPs to discuss progress of the ICP and the South components in a wider context is interesting as it allows for effective management and is stimulating reflection at a more strategic level (see box 11).
- <sup>140</sup> ICPs are all aware of the importance of reflecting on the sustainability of the components that strengthen the South dimension and apply various strategies to ensure this (see under the section on sustainability).

#### Interesting practice: shared responsibility of the ICP and IF at host institutions

IOB offers an environment for joint coordination of the three ICPs DEM, GOV and GLOB: a taskforce of promoters and one joint coordinator allow to jointly manage planning and challenges with (shared) South partners. This modality of cooperation is supporting the promoters in efficient management of their ICP. It allows them to learn from each other and to align support to students.

A second example is found in the Center for Statistics hosting the ICP STATS: partners are managed at the level of the Center. The centre organises South Policy Unit meetings bringing together all colleagues working on international projects to jointly reflect upon challenges, needs for data-analysis in the South and to grasp opportunities and share experiences. This allows for efficient use of the IF as an element that is connecting various projects.

Rather than share responsibilities bilaterally, IMAQUA and IMRD both lean on their host faculty's International Training Centre (ITC) for support to the wellbeing of the students of both programmes, to manage data on all their alumni and to promote all ICPs (and other international programmes) hosted at the UGent Bioscience Engineering Faculty abroad.<sup>63</sup>

#### Box 11: effective management of ICP and the IF

<sup>63</sup> The two ICPs also have South partners at the same universities in Vietnam and Ecuador, yet no evidence was brought to the attention of the evaluators that they may be sharing task load for engaging with/visiting these partners.

### 3.3 Flemish universities as enabling environments

- <sup>141</sup> All 15 ICPs are organized by well-established Flemish university departments, and avail of the best of their discipline's researchers and lecturers. The host departments dispose of adequate research and lecturing facilities, that are rendered available to ICP students quite in the same manner as to students on the regular North circuit. As such, there can be no doubt that the most significant synergy on which the ICPs thrive is with Flemish university funding of academic and auxiliary staff and of other university working costs. In several (if not all) ICPs, support staff (assistants, administrative support) who bear quite a significant task load in the IF project are at the least co-funded by the host department or higher up at faculty-level (even if not specified as such in the budget).
- <sup>142</sup> The evaluators are in awe for promoters and others implied in the management and actual delivery of ICPs, whose salaries and job descriptions resort very largely beyond IF. Management of an ICP is seen to be a "labour of love" that is demanding considerable time and effort of academic staff that have placed themselves in the role of (co-)promotor of the ICP. Quite a few of them are also observed to actively and often successfully seek additional resources in support of the international university cooperation programmes from EU and VLIR-UOS, and coordinate such programmes (e.g. at IUPFOOD and O&L).
- <sup>143</sup> Concern was noted that untenured academic staff may hesitate to get involved in the management of ICPs. The generation of academics currently publishing-not-to-perish, may not feel entirely encouraged to take over from retiring ICP promoters – and yet some ICPs are currently found to be steered by relatively young academics. Not all of the host universities have consistently valorized work on ICPs (and other VLIR-UOS supported programmes) in the evaluation of academic staff. Mid-term in this ICP funding, however, all host universities have adjusted their valorization systems in at least that respect, ensuring that the enabling environment welcomes ICP task load rather than discouraging Flemish university staff to try apply for ICP calls and other VLIR-UOS funding.
- <sup>144</sup> University promotion systems continue to valorize publications that ICP promoters and other lecturers involved in ICPs may find themselves underproducing. Time spent on the ICP also means less time to do their own research and publishing. ICP promoters and lecturers may mitigate this situation in part by co-authoring with (PhD) alumni at South partners (common practice at IOB ICPs).<sup>64</sup> In this respect, however, concern is raised about the ending of VLIR-UOS ICP PhD scholarship programme, making it harder for ICPs to keep their best alumni at close range on PhD tracks. This has made co-authoring publications with such alumni less of an evidence. The latter issue is prompting ICPs to probe the ground for other PhD support opportunities, some of which are considered in the next section.

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<sup>64</sup> The evaluators noted with interest that a recent study (the results of which were shown in an evaluation meeting at KU Leuven rectorate) revealed South co-authorship is a considerable boost to citation rates.

## 3.4. Synergy

### 3.4.1 Synergy through alignment with other university cooperation arrangements using VLIR-UOS support

<sup>145</sup> Delivery of several IF project results is benefitting from additional funding that the ICPs' respective host departments, faculties and universities successfully applied for from various sources. These additional and/or complementary arrangements in support of international cooperation are relevant to optimizing the enabling environment to (further) strengthen the South component of ICPs. In the remainder of this subsection, an appraisal is made of ICPs' alignment with past, present and upcoming programmes supported by VLIR-UOS.<sup>65</sup> Complementary arrangements are also supported by other sources, mainly the European Union,<sup>66</sup> and UNESCO (IUPWARE). The overview in table 7 below and in the narrative in the remainder of this section is restricted to VLIR-UOS supported arrangements only.

<sup>146</sup> **Global Minds** - a 5-year (2017-2021) budget package for universities and other institutions of higher education in Flanders to "strengthen and deepen their specific development-relevant expertise as well as establish it on a national and international level".<sup>67</sup> Institutions are at relative liberty to allocate the Global Minds funding package that they obtained from VLIR-UOS, to an agreed range of activities that intend to contribute to the strengthening of development-relevant academic minimum capacity at the level of higher education institutions. Global Minds is not restricted to education-relevant activities only, but this component is the more relevant for synergies with ICP's IF projects.

- ICPs are seen to apply to their respective host university's Global Minds programme for South-bound mobility support. An example of the latter is the support SUST has obtained from KU Leuven Global Minds under "group mobility" to enable students' compulsive participation to the delocalised curriculum component known as the Living Lab, and to support South partners' staff mobility to other South countries (again, SUST, in the same context). This modality is used by various other ICPs as co-funding for the IF project (for staff and student mobility and organisation of activities).
- A second use of Global Minds with immediate relevance to the ICPs is to support the development of partnerships and of academic capacity at partner institutes. To that end UGent is seen to tap into Global Minds funding to build Strategic International Partnerships (SIP) with 4 universities in the South, with which it operated particularly successful IUCs in the past. Relevant to note in this context is that 3 of the 4 universities in the global South comprised by these SIP are partners to ICPs that are (co-)hosted at UGent, that is Jimma University in Ethiopia (partner to NEMA), Can Tho University (partner to IUPFOOD, IMAQUA and IMRD) and ESPOL (partner to IMAQUA, IMRD and O&L). PhD grant opportunities that Global Minds can fund are promised to be more forthcoming to alumni from the 4 South institutes concerned in the SIP arrangements. PhD grants for South students are also provided for in the other Flemish universities' Global Minds programmes, that seem less focused on specific South institutes. One recent O&L alumnus from the Philippines is seen to benefit from a PhD grant, that came his way from the Global Minds budget allocated through O&L's UAntwerpen branch.
- ICPs are seen to successfully apply for support from Global Minds programmes for specific one-off activities: IUPWARE develops Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) with support of the KU

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<sup>65</sup> Even if most ICPs referred to some such synergies during the evaluation visits, the evaluators were grateful receiving from VLIR-UOS a comprehensive portfolio document listing all VLIR-UOS supported programmes. This document allowed for triangulation of information harvested during the individual ICP evaluation visits.

<sup>66</sup> For e.g. the O&L coordinator with the Ecuadorian partner to O&L successfully applied for a very substantial 3-year EU capacity building grant. NEMA unsuccessfully applied for a similar grant at the start of the IF period, and will reapply in February 2020.

<sup>67</sup> [https://www.vliu.be/en/project\\_funding/intervention\\_types\\_in\\_belgium/global\\_minds](https://www.vliu.be/en/project_funding/intervention_types_in_belgium/global_minds)



Leuven Global Minds programmes. With support of the UAntwerpen Global Minds programme, IOB initiated 4-year IOB alumni barometer research project (Promotor: Nathalie Holvoet, the promotor of DEM), to study the impact of the 3 ICP master programmes hosted at IOB. This multi-year multi-country study aims at studying the impact of IOB ICPs on alumni's knowledge, skills, attitudes and networks. For this research project, IOB has selected 16 DEM alumni from 5 country teams as co-researchers throughout the entire project, to be involved in all stages of the research (from design, to data collection, analysis and finally presentation of the results). IOB invited all alumni researchers to participate in a two-week training program and alumni are involved in data collection in their respective countries.

<sup>147</sup> **IUCs** – VLIR-UOS-supported Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes are a prime companion to ICP South component development. For the duration of an IUC funding cycle (around 12 years, all in), such programme can provide for mobility support for staff from all partners in the IUC, including the South partner, allow for PhD grants to be awarded to students from the South partner institute and support broader capacity development at the level of faculties and the university. Most ICPs have South partner institutes to their IF project proposals that are concerned in ongoing IUCs, or that were in an IUC partner capacity at the time of applying for ICP funding, such as the Eduardo Mondlane University in Mozambique, that is a partner to the IF project of STATS and to that of CADES.<sup>68</sup> Other CADES partners include Arba Minch university in Ethiopia, which is a current focus of KU Leuven cooperation and internationalisation activity, and a partner to more ICPs (co-)hosted by KU Leuven. A sandwich grant to work on an anthropology PhD has recently been awarded to an Ethiopian student with ties to this partner to CADES. Similar IUC-enabled PhD grants were awarded to Ethiopian alumni of IUPWARE, as well as to Kenyan IUPWARE graduates with links to Jomo Kenyatta (JKUAT), the university comprised in yet another ongoing IUC. IUPFOOD is found to partner up with JKUAT as well for the development of its East Asian mirror programme. In this, IUPFOOD is also seen to 'mirror' in East Africa the construction of the Asian mirror that this ICP constructed in Vietnam, largely on a foundation developed with other VLIR UOS support, that is an IUC with Can Tho University and the Vietnam Network programme (cf. infra). That core South partner university in Vietnam reportedly employs no less than 16 IUPFOOD alumni. As ICP partnership development is seen to rely quite heavily on PhD alumni, the relevance of IUC-ICP coincidence is obvious: it allows for capacity building of future South partnership strongholders. A more immediate use of IUC programme funding for ICP partnership building is derived from the mobility support that it allows for.

#### Interesting practice: combining funds to facilitate South-South exchange and co-production of content (IUPFOOD)

An interesting example of symbiotic IUC-ICP use is found at IUPFOOD, where the East African core partner, JKUAT, is enabled by the IUC-budget to invite the key staff member from IUPFOOD's other South core partner in Vietnam, to fly over for exchanges on course development ("finding tropical solutions to tropical problems") and to co-develop appropriate ('lower-tech') modalities to deliver such content in their respective South settings. The cooperation has received additional funding from the Japanese development agency

#### Box 12: combining funds to facilitate South-South exchange

<sup>148</sup> Another example of IUC-ICP synergy is found at DEM, where a new course unit on community-based monitoring was developed on IF. Action research on the added value of this kind of monitoring is partly

<sup>68</sup> The key contact person at the Mozambican partner institute worked on her PhD under supervision of the CADES promotor.



on the IF and partly funded under the IUC with Mzumbe university in Tanzania, one of DEM's South partners.

<sup>149</sup> **NETWORK programmes** – Network University Cooperation (NETWORK) programmes allow for synergy with ICP partnership-building, in a similar way as IUCs. These programmes are an extension (2x5 years) or follow-on to IUCs, where the South partner in a preceding IUC becomes the local coordinator of “a national level institutional network (...) that focuses on a priority theme within the country strategy (nationwide need-based) and that builds on previous cooperation experiences. The programme is about multiplying and levelling up capacity development efforts. In fact, a NETWORK aims to empower local universities to join forces and to work together in order to contribute to national goals in higher education and development”.<sup>69</sup>

- A prime example of ICP IF project – NETWORK symbiosis is found at IUPFOOD. The ICP's core partner in Vietnam benefitted from an IUC in the past and is currently coordinating a network of 4 Vietnamese universities. The VLIR-UOS supported NETWORK 'Biosciences for Food' enables their cooperation. One of the activities in that cooperation is the hosting of delocalised IUPFOOD curriculum components, that constitutes IUPFOOD's Asian Mirror Programme. One of the ICP's co-promotors at the Flemish host universities is also the Flemish coordinator that VLIR-UOS assigned to this NETWORK programme. As such, his efforts coordinating the VLIR-UOS Vietnam NETWORK programme pay off for his IUPFOOD co-promotion tasks, and vice-versa. Additionally, the NETWORK programme's annual 250K funding allows for support to e.g. mobility, serving tasks in both capacities.

<sup>150</sup> **JOINT networking project** - ICP South partnership development benefits from VLIR-UOS supported JOINT (Inter)national Academic Networking. Several ICPs are hosted at departments that have been in a position to successfully initiate such JOINT projects that provide “networking opportunities at a national and/or international level as well, so that ideas and concepts for development change can be cross-fertilised. Projects are often of a different, less scientific nature and focus primarily on the exchange of joint ideas, the creation of (inter)national alliances or tools or focus on domains of transversal expertise/support that are important to all academic projects in a given country or regional setting”.<sup>70</sup>

- IUPWARE is involved in JOINT projects allowing for synergy with its incremental funding project: the Open Water Network involves IUPWARE's core partner from Cuenca University (itself involved in an now-concluded IUC) alongside several other Ecuadorean universities. At mid-term evaluation, the IUPWARE core team could announce the start of a newly-approved JOINT project involving several of its ICP partnership countries, described in the box below:

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<sup>69</sup> [https://www.vliruos.be/en/project\\_funding/intervention\\_types\\_in\\_partner\\_countries/network\\_university\\_cooperation\\_\(network\)/87](https://www.vliruos.be/en/project_funding/intervention_types_in_partner_countries/network_university_cooperation_(network)/87)

<sup>70</sup> [https://www.vliruos.be/en/project\\_funding/intervention\\_types\\_in\\_partner\\_countries/joint\\_\(inter\)national\\_academic\\_networking\\_\(joint\)/90](https://www.vliruos.be/en/project_funding/intervention_types_in_partner_countries/joint_(inter)national_academic_networking_(joint)/90)

Interesting practice: creating content at the request of and to the interest of ICP alumni (IUPWARE)

IUPWARE is listening to its alumni. Specific interests related to the Internet of Things were picked up at an alumni meeting and will now be addressed. From 2020, IUPWARE is starting a JOINT project with several of its ICP IF project partnership countries and will work on “The Internet of Drops: Linking small water-related observations towards a cloud of data with IoT (Internet of Things’)-enabled sensor networks”. Its results are likely to be of interests to many alumni in the network. Additionally, many alumni and their institutions are partners in this project.

*Box 13: using a JOINT project to create content of interest to ICP alumni*

- <sup>151</sup> **South Initiatives (SI)** – ICP core teams are collaborating with their South partners to successfully apply for these short-term (max 2 year) limited budget support aimed at improving research and/or/or educational practices, and generating and exchanging (guaranteeing the uptake of) knowledge through research.<sup>71</sup> Content wise, SI cover practices that can contribute to the fight against poverty in the concerned region/country and in the end, to generate development change (impact) (mostly after the intervention). The explicitly stated goal of South Initiatives sits well with the speciality of SUST, sustainable territorial development. SUST partners are currently engaged in several such initiatives. Another example of ICP and SI synergy is found at HS, where a South initiative paved the way for a new studio, that was elaborated with the E. Mondlane University in Mozambique. The choice of the site was a result of a South initiative project in which E. Mondlane played an important role.
- <sup>152</sup> As is clear from the above and visualised in table 7,<sup>72</sup> the ICPs tap into a combination of the above-mentioned support arrangements. Examples thereof are found even with the newcomer ICPs which, through their partners, benefit from a combination of support.
- <sup>153</sup> The table below provides an overview of ICP’s respective partners and the VLIR-UOS support modalities these have been or currently are benefitting from, other than ICP IF. The evaluators repeat that ‘partners’ are those institutions in the South with an explicit role in executing the IF project (going beyond the individual support of for e.g. supervision of master thesis). It shows several ICPs as champions of partnering up with South institutes that benefit(ted) from other VLIR-UOS support modalities, potentially allowing for synergies with the incremental funding project. This is certainly the case for the pre-incremental funding ICPs IMAQUA, IUPFOOD, IUPWARE, and O&L, but also for the newcomer ICP IMRD – almost all of these ICPs are (co)hosted at UGent. And for EPI (although to a lesser extent), who is seen to use JOINT projects, South Initiatives and TEAM projects to develop institutional collaborations with the partner in Peru. In this particular case, the VLIR-UOS-supported arrangements have allowed the organisation of a course for researchers and lecturers at the Universidad Nacional de la Amazonia Peruana in collaboration with the Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima. Such organisation has in turn prepared the ground for considering to support the development of a master in epidemiology at the Universidad Nacional de la Amazonia Peruana, to be developed with support of IF.
- <sup>154</sup> The overview allows for identifying the ICPs that develop their incremental funding project on a partnership portfolio that overlaps only in minor ways or not at all with other VLIR-UOS supported

<sup>71</sup> [https://www.vliruos.be/en/project\\_funding/intervention\\_types\\_in\\_partner\\_countries/south\\_initiatives\\_\(si\)/89](https://www.vliruos.be/en/project_funding/intervention_types_in_partner_countries/south_initiatives_(si)/89)

<sup>72</sup> The table is compiled from VLIR-UOS portfolio documents updated in January 2020. The documents received from VLIR in January 2020 additionally list ICP VLADOC scholarships, from the programme reported to phase out. These have not been included in the table.

programmes. This includes a few of the newcomer ICPs, but also STATS, a pre-incremental funding ICP, STATS, EPI and TRANS are focusing mainly on new partners to further develop the ICP with IF funding (not ruling out contacts with ‘old’ partnerships).

ICP	Current South partners to the IF project	Partners' involvement in VLIR-UOS supported programmes and projects other than ICP IF
CADES	Arba Minch University (UAM), Ethiopia	2 Own Initiative, 1 TEAM
	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique	Former IUC, 2 Own Initiative
	University of Science and Technology of Zimbabwe	
	Regional collaboration with 3 South African Universities: Stellenbosch University (SU) University of Western Cape (UWC) and University of Cape Town (UCT)	SU: 4 INCO, 4 South Initiative UWC: Former IUC, 17 crosscutting, 4 INCO, 2 JOINT, 2 RIP, 5 South Initiatives, 4 TEAM, 1 VLADOC UCT: 2 TEAM, 1 South Initiatives, 1 Own Initiative, 1 INCO
DEM	De la Salle University in the Philippines	1 South Initiative
	Mzumbe University	Ongoing IUC, 1 ICT, 4 crosscutting, 2 South Initiatives
	Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua	1 South Initiative, 1 Own initiative, 1 ICP PhD
EPI	Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia, Peru	2 Own Initiatives, 3 South Initiative, 1 Team Projects, 1 Joint Initiative projects
	University of the Mountains of the Moon (MoM), Uganda	1 ongoing IUC, 3 South Initiatives, 5 Crosscutting, 2 TEAM, 1 JOINT
GLOB	Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua	see DEM + 1 ICP PhD
	Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca)	Former IUC, NETWORK partner, 4 Own Initiatives, 4 South Initiatives, 4 crosscutting, 1 ICT, 1 TEAM
	Université Catholique de Bukavu (UCB)	See GOV
GOV	Université Catholique de Bukavu (UCB)	Former IUC, 10 South Initiatives, 2 Own Initiatives, 1 TEAM, 1 JOINT, 2 INCO
	Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua	See DEM + ICP PhD
HS	Witwatersrand University, South Africa	1 South Initiatives
	Ho Chi Minh City School of Architecture (Vietnam)	1 TEAM
	Technical University of Kenya	1 TEAM

	University of Guayaquil, Ecuador	NETWORK partner, 2 South Initiatives, 1 KOI
	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique	Former IUC, 1 OI, 1 South Initiative, 1 VLADOC
IMAQUA	Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 4 Research Initiatives Programme, 1 South Initiative, 1 TEAM, 1 Crosscutting, 1 INCO, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 1 ICP PhD
	CENAIM at Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 2 INCO, 5 RIP, 3 Crosscutting, 1 TEAM, 2 South initiatives, 1 JOINT, GM UGent SIP Partnership+ 1 ICP PhD
	Stellenbosch University (SU), South Africa	4 INCO, 4 South Initiative
IMRD	Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 4 Research Initiatives Programme, 1 South Initiative, 1 TEAM, 1 Crosscutting, 1 INCO, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 3 ICP PhD
	Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 2 INCO, 5 RIP, 3 Crosscutting, 1 TEAM, 2 South Initiative, 1 JOINT, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 3 ICP PhD
	University of Pretoria (UPretoria), South Africa	1 Own Initiative
IUPFOOD	Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 5 Research Initiatives Programme, 1 South Initiative, 1 TEAM, 1 Crosscutting, 1 INCO, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 2 ICP PhD
	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya	ongoing IUC, 2 TEAM, 1 JOINT, 1 Own Initiative
IUPWARE	Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca), Ecuador	former IUC, NETWORK partner, 4 Own Initiative, 4 South Initiative, 1 ICT, 4 crosscutting, 1 TEAM
	(satellite partner) Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador	former IUC, Main partner NETWORK, 1 INCO, 5 RIP, 3 Crosscutting, 1 TEAM, 2 South Initiative, 1 JOINT + 1 ICP PhD
	(satellite partner) Escuela Politécnica Nacional (EPN), Peru	NETWORK partner, 2 TEAM, 1 South Initiative, 1 JOINT
	Arba Minch University, Ethiopia	ongoing IUC, 2 Own Initiatives, 1 TEAM
	(satellite partner) Bahir Dar, Ethiopia	1 JOINT, 1 TEAM, 1 Own Initiative, 1 INCO
	Nelson Mandela African Institute for Science and Technology (NM-AIST), Tanzania	ongoing IUC, 1 ICT, 4 crosscutting
	(satellite partner) Sokoine University of Agricultural (SUA), Tanzania	former IUC, 1 INCO, 5 South initiatives, 2 Own Initiatives, 3 RUP, 5 crosscutting, 1 JOINT + 2 ICP PhD

	(satellite partner) University of Dar es Salam (UDSM), Tanzania	former IUC
	Secondary partner envisaged with Vietnam National University in Hanoi	1 Si, 2 ICP PhD
NEMA	Jimma University, Ethiopia	Former IUC, 2 South Initiatives, 1 JOINT, 1 ICT, 1 INCO, 14 Crosscutting, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 2 ICP PhD
	International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Kenya	
	International Centre for Insect Pests and Ecology (ICIPE), Kenya	
O&L	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRRI)	1 Own Initiative, 3 KOI, 2 TEAM, 1 South Initiative + 7 ICP PhD
	Technical University of Mombasa (TUM), Kenya	1 South Initiative
	University of Nairobi, Kenya	former IUC, 1 Own Initiative, 2 RIP, 6 crosscutting, 2 TEAM, 1 JOINT + 1 ICP PhD
	State University of Zanzibar (SUZA), Tanzania	1 South Initiative
	University of Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania	former IUC
	University of the Western Cape (UWC), South Africa	Former IUC, 17 crosscutting, 4 INCO, 2 JOINT, 2 RIP, 5 South Initiatives, 4 TEAM, 1 VLADOC
	Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador	former IUC, main partner NETWORK, 4 INCO, 5 RIP, 3 Crosscutting, 1 TEAM, 2 South Initiative, 1 JOINT, GM UGent SIP Partnership + 4 ICP PhD
	Universidad Central del Ecuador	
	Universidad Científica del Sur, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia	2 Own Initiatives, 3 South Initiatives, 1 TEAM, 1 JOINT
STATS	Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique	former IUC, 2 Own Initiatives
	African Centre of Excellence in Data Science in Kigali, Rwanda	
	Central Luzon State University, the Philippines	
	Mindanao State University, the Philippines	1 ICP PhD, 1 South Initiatives
	Visayas State University, The Philippines	
SUST	North West University (NWU) Potchefstroom, South Africa	2 Own Initiatives, 2 TEAM, 1 South Initiatives
	Vietnam National University in Hanoi, Vietnam	1 South Initiative + 2 ICP PhD

	Pontificia Universidad Católica del Peru (PUCP)	1 TEAM, 3 South Initiatives
TRANS	Ton Duc Thang University (TDT-U)	
	Vietnamese German University (VGU)	
	Ardhi University, Tanzania	(new IUC proposal prepared 2022)

Table 7: ICP partner involvement in other VLIR-UOS-supported programmes and projects

### 3.4.2 Synergy through ICPs participating in ERASMUS programmes

<sup>155</sup> Two newcomer ICP are built on Erasmus Mundus programmes (IMRD and SUST). Two other programmes, that benefitted from ICP funding prior to 2017, operate in Erasmus programmes as well, that is NEMA and O&L. This partnership setting is of varied relevance for each of these 4/15 ICPs and their respective IF projects.

- A pre-2017 track record as a participant in an Erasmus Mundus programme (STeDe) allowed SUST to meet the precondition to successfully apply for ICP funding under IF. SUST progress reports refer to Erasmus partners in Padova, Paris and Campo Grande (Brazil) as co-hosts to the “sister programme” (STeDe) that presents a “partial overlap with the ICP’s Space and Society track in year 1: Besides the creation of a larger critical mass in these courses, this collaboration also offers opportunities in terms of potential collaborations for the set-up of the ICP alumni working and for the identification of internships. These opportunities remain to be explored”.<sup>73</sup>
- At IMRD, all ICP students have the formal obligation to spend an entire semester at one of 3 other European partner institutions in IMRD’s globe-spanning network of 15 institutions in as many countries. (Students have an additional mobility obligation to spend either an entire semester at one of 3 South partners in that network or participate in the case study organised by one of these South partners, that is set in rural Vietnam in the summer break between 2nd and 3rd semester). The 3 South partners to IMRD’s IF project, moreover, had already become full partners to the Erasmus Mundus programme by the time IMRD send in its application for the 2017 ICP call. Others within that programme are gradually obtaining access to curricula that the IF project helped develop at these 3 South partners institutions.
- NEMA makes interesting use of its host’s participation in an Erasmus Mundus programme with universities in Bonn, Wageningen (WUR), Salzburg, Evora and Pernambuco. This allows for bilateral agreements with the programme partner institutions, under which, NEMA students get a waiver for (hefty) WUR admission fees, if they choose to spend the better part of their 3rd semester at that university, rather than go on the (optional) Kenya Track.
- For O&L, its host’s participation in an Erasmus Mundus setting is reported to have increased its (South) partners’ chances to successfully apply for (European) funding for complementary capacity building programmes.

<sup>73</sup> SUST Annual Progress Report 2018, p. 2.

### 3.4.3 Examples of synergy with non-academic actors

- <sup>156</sup> The ICP funder, the Federal government through DGD, is keen on Belgian development actors working together in synergy. 3/15 ICPs are reported to have specific attention for this, albeit with mixed results.
- <sup>157</sup> IMRD is actively seeking cooperation with Belgian ODA receiving NGOs, in the interest of facilitating internship opportunities for the ICP students at these NGO's operations in the 3 IMRD IF project South partner countries (BOS+ in Ecuador, Rikolto in Vietnam and TRIAS in South Africa), as well as involve these NGOs in data-gathering. This is working in 2/3 countries (with some limitations in terms of language knowledge, location of the NGO projects, and alignment of calendars). The NGOs are not listed on IMRD's South partner portfolio.
- <sup>158</sup> DEM is reported to have taken steps (unsuccessful thus far), to engage with Belgian NGOs in the countries where partners are situated. It appeared very difficult to interest the NGOs (Brussels-based and their representations in the South countries) to connect their programme to the ICP, for reasons that are not fully clear.<sup>74</sup> DEM decided after several attempts to shift focus and to orient budget and efforts to supporting alumni work and connecting better to national evaluation societies.
- <sup>159</sup> TRANS is envisaging to develop relations with Handicap International and the Red Cross Belgium. This would be based on some existing contacts. So far, this is not yet operationalized.

## 3.5. Cooperation

- <sup>160</sup> The evaluators see value in compiling this section, having observed that hardly any ICP host operates as a stand-alone programme. Some sort of cooperation is quite common, be it with other ICPs, with other departments at Flemish universities (inter-university ICPs), or in a combination of these cooperation modalities. This section provides an overview, from a perspective that is mindful of efficiency.

### 3.5.1. Inter-ICP cooperation

- <sup>161</sup> ICPs are found to cooperate with other ICPs, either directly, or indirectly through dedicated enabling structures. This cooperation is found at the level of a faculty, or an institute, or in bilateral cooperation over course contents and finally, on a managerial level.
- <sup>162</sup> **Inter-ICP cooperation through an enabling faculty structure** is found at the UGent Bioscience Engineering faculty, that is home to ten different international master programmes, including 3 ICPs (IMRD, IMAQUA and IUPFOOD). The faculty created the International Training Center (ITC) to pool-so-as-to-rationalize on managerial and other support tasks specific to international programmes, such as the organisation of preparatory and refresher courses and organising alumni (net)works. Programmes using ITC support are then charged a pro-rotta fee per supported student. The 3 UGent Bioscience engineering ICPs are seen to use the modality of the ITC to various degrees – in a maximum format for IMRD-VLIR Track (the programme's founder also happens to have founded the ITC and is Academisch Directeur

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<sup>74</sup> The Belgian NGOs have not been interviewed for this mid-term evaluation.



Internationalising at UGent) – and in a minimum format for IUPFOOD. The latter inter-university ICP is currently managed from its KU Leuven location and uses UGent's ITC only as the provider of Be-Prep courses and to help promote the ICP abroad. IUPFOOD does not use the ITC for support to coordination, nor to managerial and administrative chores, that are the aspects on which IMRD can economize most with the help of the ITC. As was already seen in table 4, IMRD is the more cost-efficient ICP that the UGent's Bioscience engineering faculty hosts, in terms of North staff on the IF budget (allocating just 16% of IF).

<sup>163</sup> **Inter-ICP cooperation at the level of an institute** is practiced by DEM, GLOB and GOV. The 3 ICPs are hosted at the UAntwerpen IOB that enjoys a degree of autonomy similar to that of a Faculty. The 3 programmes consider different yet related aspects of development studies, and integrate and jointly organize large segments of their curricula as well as introductory activities. The 3 ICPs also share some of their South partners, and jointly support the latter's capacity development. IOB has an integrated alumni operation, and hires staff to coordinate and administrate the 3 ICPs in one go. Such staff helps students of all 3 ICPs in finding adequate housing, comply with registration duties and related chores. The IOB arrangement allows for some economies of scale and greater cost-efficiency. As a result, GLOB spends an equally slim slice of its IF budget on administrative support from North staff as does IMRD, while GOV and DEM allocate proportionally even less on such support.

<sup>164</sup> **Cooperation of ICPs over course contents** is found in several types of arrangements, over faculties and universities for 13/15 ICPs. This is obvious for the 3 Inter-university ICPs addressed below. Additionally, IMAQUA, is seen to have on its curriculum, courses taught at other universities, including from the inter-university ICP O&L. At KU Leuven, two 1-year programmes from different faculties (HS and CADES) run a joint extra-curricular series of lectures in which students from both 1-year ICPs can participate. (M)EPI at UAntwerpen's Global Health Institute reached out to the UHasselt Center for Statistics ICP for support in teaching capacity. A lecturer from the Center of Statistics is now hired by the Global Health Institute, allowing more practical courses on data analysis and statistics to be integrated in MEPI. The two ICPs have already organised joint workshops in 2018 and 2019; they invited alumni and colleagues from the South to speak about career opportunities in the South. Of further note is IUPWARE, where the two partners that co-organise the ICP are each at different faculties in their respective host universities (Bioscience Engineering at KU Leuven, Applied Sciences at VUB), while each of them, in turn, cooperates with other faculties at its host university (including their respective Faculty of Science).

<sup>165</sup> **Inter-faculty cooperation of ICPs on a managerial level** occurred at KU Leuven, where two 1-year programmes from different faculties jointly hired one post-doc staff member to coordinate both ICPs. The joint-coordinator function was terminated and replaced in 2019 by two part-time post-docs, one for each ICP. In 2019, the two ICPs hosted by UHasselt (TRANS and STATS) organised joint welcome activities for students enrolling at both ICPs.

### 3.5.2. Inter-university ICPs

<sup>166</sup> Formal inter-university ICPs are found on three counts under IF, that is IUPFOOD, IUPWARE and O&L. Each of these ICPs have a long track history, including as precursor programmes at one, or more, universities. VUB participates in two interuniversity ICPs, leading one such ICP as a three-university operation, that further involves UAntwerpen and UGent. UGent and KU Leuven each participate in two interuniversity ICPs as well. The evaluators observed core staff from these ICPs to operate very convivially, and to provide mutually consistent input allowing for the following appraisal of the pros and cons of operating as an inter-university ICP, and more particularly in their efforts to develop their South dimension:

<sup>167</sup> All consulted parties to the three inter-university ICPs identify added value in terms of **complementarity of the scientific** expertise available at its two constituent universities (and inter-faculty cooperation in each of its constituent parts). This makes it more likely that the array of courses contain specialisations of particular interest to South students:

- IUPFOOD, in its ICP 2017 application form, states that the “*added value of the interuniversity cooperation is evident from (i) the number of teaching staff involved to teach international students (better support of students), (ii) the scientific complementarity allows to offer a high- level broad programme in food science and technology (synergy), (iii) clear distribution of teaching tasks between the two universities (according to specialization). The added value of the interuniversity character of the IUPFOOD programme for the students, studying at the two participating universities, has been clearly confirmed in (...) questionnaires over the past years. Alumni, students and teaching staff consider the interuniversity character and international orientation of IUPFOOD as a high added value to the programme (average scores vary between 5.2 and 5.6/6)*”.<sup>75</sup> The evaluation visit to IUPFOOD and consultation with alumni and students provided strong reasons to support this claim.
- At IUPWARE, the two partners that co-organise the ICP are each at different faculties in their respective host universities (Bioscience Engineering at KU Leuven, Applied Sciences at VUB), while each of them, in turn, cooperates with other faculties at its host university (including their respective Faculty of Science). This extends the portfolio of (elective) courses, allowing for a richer choice, in line with South students’ interests.

<sup>168</sup> A second added value of inter-university cooperation is in providing such ICPs with **prime access to each of the constituent universities’ internationalization programmes and modalities**.

- Such combined benefit is strongly exemplified by IUPFOOD’s current mirror programme development: while the consolidation of the first mirror, in Vietnam, benefits maximally from a synergy with an ongoing VLIR-UOS-supported country network programme in which the ICP’s UGent branch was very involved; the construction of the second mirror in East Africa is largely driven by IUPFOOD’s KU Leuven branch and promotor, who happens to be the KU Leuven coordinator of an IUC with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (Kenya).
- Another IUC in which KU Leuven participates, with Arba Minch University in Ethiopia, gives IUPWARE as a whole access to the benefits of that IUC (e.g. the possibility to award “sandwich” PhD scholarships for students linked to Arba Minch) even if IUPWARE’s other host university, VUB, is not participating in the IUC with Arba Minch. The interuniversity character of the ICP is thus seen to be an advantage.
- In the case of O&L, its lead university deplores the diminishing possibilities to find PhD scholarships for excellent ICP alumni, yet one alumnus from this ICP was recently awarded a PhD grant funded through O&L’s UAntwerpen branch, from that university’s Global Minds budget. O&L’s UGent branch, meanwhile, is facilitating the ICP’s partnership development with universities in Ecuador, that had not as yet been on O&L’s radar at the time it submitted its ICP proposal; other UGent ICPs and its international office have a particularly long and trusted relationship with ESPOL in Ecuador.

<sup>169</sup> All three inter-university ICPs acknowledge **logistical challenges** (which have been induced by the policy of VLIR-UOS and the eligibility criteria for the creation of interuniversity programmes): students and staff have to move around to campi at more than one university/city – three in the case of O&L. This

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<sup>75</sup> IUPFOOD ICP application file annex 1, shared by VLIR-UOS.

ICP uses this logistic challenge as one to overcome with a team-building-like group tour of Flanders by public transport, in the introductory days at the start of its first semester.

- <sup>170</sup> Costs for public transport implied in inter-university commuting are reimbursed to the ICP scholars on the scholarship programme, and appear to be reimbursed to other South students as well. To minimize such costs and be mindful of time-efficiency, the inter-university ICPs tend to group the courses at one campus per year, semester or at the least per day. IUPWARE students spend their entire first year at KU Leuven, where they keep their accommodation during the second year, when they commute to VUB in Brussels a few days a week. IUPFOOD teaches all first semester courses at KU Leuven (where ICP-students are ensured accommodation during that first semester); all second semester courses are at UGent (where the same ICP students are ensured accommodation during that semester). Depending on the mayor in which they choose to specialize, IUPFOOD students spend that entire second year either at UGent or KU Leuven, without further need of inter-university commuting.

## **4. Wider effects of IF and sustainability**

### **4.1. Introduction**

- <sup>171</sup> The evaluators sought to identify the nature of the elements strengthening the South dimension that IF brought about. These were highlighted in the chapter on the mapping with respect to the process of change and the incremental nature of initiatives taken at various levels, including the wealth and variety of curriculum developments, the interaction with the South and the support to capacity building of partners in the South. Enabling factors were identified as well as challenges, and appreciation of the students, partners and the ICP stakeholders was collected. This chapter looks at the question if the IF and the strengthening of the South dimension has already brought about wider effects and to what extent sustainability of the new elements introduced with the IF is ensured.

### **4.2. Wider effects of IF**

- <sup>172</sup> As the ICPs are mid-way in this funding cycle it is not yet possible to identify and assess in detail wider effects of the incremental funding (and the strengthening of the South dimension).
- <sup>173</sup> Wider effects are strongly anticipated by all ICPs through their alumni and graduates, who can, upon their return (and return rates of VLIR-UOS scholars are generally quite high and above 90%) act as agents of change. Future tracer studies (planned for by half ICPs and also at the level of VLIR-UOS) should enable ICPs to assess the returnees' development impact.
- <sup>174</sup> Anticipated wide effects have not been specified in detail in the application files nor in the ICP's annual progress reports, which have given the evaluators little orientation on where to focus on. Questions about changes have therefore been open, inviting stakeholders to share what they have observed. These have informed the evaluators about the following indications of wider effects:

- Increasing numbers of students enrol in the ICPs. The increase is quite spectacular at newcomer ICP SUST: its very first intake cohort in 2017 was at 23 students, its third cohort, that enrolled in 2019, stands at 61 students – with self-sponsoring students at 4/5 of total intake, several of which from VLIR-UOS List countries. Student numbers increased as well at several programmes that received ICP funding prior to 2017, and in spite of a decrease in the number of VLIR-UOS scholarships as compared to that earlier funding cycle. STATS reports a 100% increase in applications following marketing of the ICP and scholarship opportunities in 2018 compared to 2017, IUPWARE intake numbers went up consistently as well, notwithstanding application criteria requiring a higher proficiency in English and mathematics.
- More in particular, newcomer ICPs have reported increased visibility of teaching staff and their research / educational topics in their institute.
- There are anecdotal examples of spill-over effect of the IF activity to the faculty or institute in the North (examples of EPI, TRANS and STATS, SUST). Especially in master programmes that gained ICP status only in 2017, such as SUST, some lecturers report they have altered their didactic style so as to allow for more class participation. They note that ICP students appear keener on participative class interaction than do the Belgian students to which these lecturers had been delivering the same course content before it became incorporated in an ICP. For e.g. at STATS: Lecturers at the Centre of Statistics acknowledge that the ICP and the focus of the work with partners has created new opportunities for establishing networks and contacts. More people now have a reflex to verify the potential relevance of what they are teaching for students from the South. The director of the Centre is keen to learn how to better structure work with alumni from the ICP. There is no evidence (yet) of any effect of the IF project on the way the university is operating.

<sup>175</sup> Interviews provided some information about changes at the level of partner institutions. Respondents have testified about:

- Contribution of the work on their research (three ICPs' at IOB, HS, TRANS);
- Increased capacity to write research proposals (TRANS and O&L);
- Increased capacity for South-South networking (IUPFOOD, management of multistakeholder network in Vietnam thanks to TRANS, inspiration at the level of the Vietnamese partner to copy the global network model conceived by HS);
- Increased capacity for education through a.o. the introduction of new approaches (studio approach of HS, using the TRANS feedback to develop courses, NEMA);
- Readiness to support the development of new curricula (UCuenca seeking to build an O&L-like programme).

### 4.3. Sustainability

<sup>176</sup> ICPs have specified their strategies for sustainability in their application forms. Information obtained through interviews with ICP promoters and support staff reveals that most of these strategies and measures are in the phase of elaboration.

<sup>177</sup> The table below gives an overview of the sustainability strategies and measures as specified in the ICP documents and as commented on during interviews. It is a combination of strategies aimed at financial sustainability and institutional sustainability (for e.g. integration of delocalised components at the level of partner institutions).

<sup>178</sup> Although not mentioned as an explicit strategy in the table below, evaluators have noticed that all ICPs are actively using the staff mobility to engage with partners to prepare project applications under various funds whenever the opportunity arises. The evaluators have also found that the host universities are working on their strategies for mobilisation of additional financial resources and to diversify income to become more independent from VLIR-UOS means. This quest for more independence, for e.g. is a clear and explicit message noted in the new UAntwerpen Internationalisation policy paper. Alumni work is also on the agenda of the host universities and this enabling environment, together with efforts for synergy and collaborations already described in the chapter on efficiency can without doubt contribute to stronger sustainability.

ICP	Sustainability strategies and measures
CADES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Strengthen partner relations beyond alumni relations or bilateral contacts (to be further developed)</li> <li>– Develop demand in the South at the level of development cooperation agencies and international NGOs (envisaged, not yet operational)</li> </ul>
DEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Integration of educational coordination in tasks at the Centre IOB</li> <li>– Explicit communication to partners about support to their staff costs being short-term (start-up costs)</li> <li>– Attracting (more) self-financing students</li> <li>– Offer new components as stand-alone trainings (requiring a financial contribution)</li> </ul>
EPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Attracting (more) self-financing students</li> <li>– Evolving towards a global network of master programmes (long-term objective)</li> </ul>
GLOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Support to the development of a financial sustainability strategy for the local master programme (partner in Nicaragua)</li> </ul>
GOV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Explicit communication to partners about support to their staff costs being short-term (start-up costs) – partner in Bukavu</li> <li>– Attracting (more) self-financing students</li> <li>– Offer curriculum components as stand-alone trainings (requiring a financial contribution) at regional level (for students from Bukavu region, as well as wider central African region)</li> </ul>
HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Actively using output produced with IF (World Urbanism Forum and the World Urbanism Papers) to market the ICP to (self-financing) students</li> <li>– Higher fee for self-financing students</li> <li>– Strengthen the collaboration with other institutions for them to co-fund (envisaged but not yet operationalised)</li> <li>– Integration of studio's in way of working of partner institutions: past experiences have demonstrated that this will happen</li> </ul>
IMAQUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Increase fee for non-ICP scholarship holders</li> <li>– Stimulating partners to run the local master programmes with their own means</li> </ul>
IMRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Being part of a global consortium allows to combine funding and to develop alternative fundraising strategies</li> <li>– New modules will be integrated in the offer for Erasmus Mundus students (who can benefit from EU funding), that may enable South partners to obtain additional fee income, to help sustain the curricula they built (Case study rural Vietnam) or make available under credit exchange arrangements</li> </ul>
IUPFOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stimulate and support partners to integrate in their own programmes: the mirror programme Vietnam is already integrated in the offer of the local universities – such was the objective of the VLIR-UOS supported Network programme on which the mirror programme is built</li> <li>– Mirror programme East Africa being developed with additional IUC support, envisaged to become integrated in local university offer in a similar way as already case for the Vietnam mirror.</li> </ul>

IUPWARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sustaining work with partner institutions is very much based on the potential for PhD tracks and ensuring the institutional collaboration through other funding programmes.</li> <li>- Dynamisms of alumni work is supported by providing them with content</li> <li>- Stimulating partners to operate local master programmes (for the partner in Ecuador, sustainability is already ensured as government agreed to fund the new masters as a research master)</li> </ul>
NEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Satellite trainings are already offered to paying participants</li> <li>- Satellite trainings are part of a strategy to raise awareness and as such attract new students and support</li> <li>- To the extent possible, universities (non-partner) are stimulated to integrate nematology modules in their existing curricula</li> </ul>
O&L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gives already evidence of effective fund-raising strategies</li> </ul>
STATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Move towards stronger institutional collaboration with the support from other funding sources, as such to move beyond the strategy of developing PhD tracks.</li> </ul>
SUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Planning for an alumni database</li> <li>- Through ICP selection process, select the best candidates and develop PhD tracks</li> <li>- Recruit additional self-funded students</li> <li>- Increase of enrolment fee is under consideration</li> <li>- Combining various funding sources (as is already the case, complementary sought with e.g. Global Minds and faculty own funding in support of (non-South) student mobility and to enable staff South-South mobility)</li> </ul>
TRANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- With the network of excellence in Vietnam: working on fundable projects, using the multi-stakeholder approach to pool resources, stimulating partners in the network to develop specific consulting services</li> <li>- Creating demand for developing solutions for road safety in the South, through the alumni</li> <li>- Developing a marketing strategy and business development team at IMOW working on proposal writing</li> </ul>

Table 8: overview of sustainability strategies and measures

<sup>179</sup> When looking at the specific new elements introduced with IF to strengthen the South dimension, the findings related to financial and institutional sustainability are the following:

- **Diversity of the classroom:** all respondents state that, without the (12) scholarships, it would become difficult to ensure a similar high-quality critical mass of participants from the South, with sufficient diversity and, more in particular, inclusive of 'change makers' from low income countries.
- For the **sustainability of local masters**, respondents assert that it might take at least 5 years before a new master programme at the partner institute in the South is sufficiently integrated in the institute. A systematic follow-up of progress and milestones of the particular process is only ensured by some ICPs, so it is hard to sustain this assertion. Some ICPs have supported their counterpart in formulating a local curriculum as well as in strengthening lecturers' didactic competences and new knowledge through additional training in the North (or in the South, as exemplified by support to Can Tho university's language training department). Various examples demonstrate that partners in the South (e.g. the three ICPs at IOB and IUPFOOD) are already taking measures to reorganise their educational offer to accommodate new elements/masters. This investment at the level of partners can be explained by the experience and capacity gained through previous projects and/or PhD alumni) or current institutional collaborations (supported by IUC/NETWORK programmes). However, we are reminded that sustainability of the master programme is not held to be ensured in a time-span under 5 year.

An interesting practice to highlight is that of GLOB, where, together with the partner in Nicaragua, a financial sustainability strategy was elaborated, studying various options and measures. ICPs that are connected to institutional collaborations supported by other VLIR-UOS funds (such as IUC) have additional strategies to work on institutional sustainability (having challenges of their own, such as to



really influence on institutional arrangements, policies and procedures within a partner institution). This demonstrates the importance of synergy between the IF project and other funds.

- **Delocalised components in the South:** thanks to the approach of co-organisation, ICPs are working to strengthen capacity of partners in the South to become more involved in the organisation and consider copying components and integrate them in their existing courses (and where relevant, feed in to the ICP in the North, but this is not really envisaged as a strategy). The strategy for a majority of ICPs is not explicit and there is little evidence of systematic follow-up. It seems that contacts with ICP alumni is key to develop and organise the components. Further monitoring should clarify to what extent more investment in PhD scholars would be needed to sustain the organisation of these components in the South. Clearly, course materials co-developed with a South partner can continue to be used by the next cohorts of students, both in North and South. The mobility aspect of the delocalised components will be difficult to sustain without IF. This is a challenge as the delocalised components are quite essential to the South dimension of ICPs that have developed them.
- **Alumni activities:** various ICPs are investing in more structured relations, supported by dedicated digital alumni platforms and social media. Some ICPs are actively seeking to give value to alumni through alumni events combined with refresher courses, conferences and access to content through online platforms. About half of the ICPs are executing alumni tracer studies or have planned for those. All these activities are expected to be sustained beyond IF, all the more because host universities are all articulating their willingness to invest more in alumni activities, including with and for the benefit of South alumni. Further funding will however be required to continue support to national chapters that some ICP hosts have set up in South countries, and to organise further meetings at national and regional level in the South (which are relevant to connect the ICPs to the world of employment, to support actors of change in their environment and to promote the ICP).
- **Mobility, more in particular of students** as applied with the IF, will need further financial support at the least to continue enabling them to travel to South locations where ICPs operate delocalised components. ICP host institutions are already doing their utmost to find additional sources (on their faculty funding, through EU funds, the Global Minds funds, ...), but it would seem unlikely such matching funding can become the sole source of students South-mobility support in the future.
- **Coordination** finally is a challenge to sustain without IF. Especially for the delocalised components a lot of input and effort is required from the coordination staff of the ICP, even in cases where partners in the South are becoming more involved. Only the three ICPs of IOB have largely integrated such coordination task load in teaching staff's regular tasks. Which is possible to a large extent because of additional core funding received (for e.g. from Flanders government). The majority of other ICPs that develop and operate delocalised components have allocated substantial proportion of the budget to coordination tasks as the development of the components requires substantial input from human resources. It would seem fair to suggest that once South components are developed, less time would be needed for coordination. The few ICPs that have divided tasks amongst several staff members, based on a clear description of those tasks, might be better prepared to start thinking about the integration of these tasks in the work load of lecturers and other staff. But this is not ensured as the workload for teaching staff is already quite high.

<sup>180</sup> Clearly, co-producing of teaching formats (to take this as an example) can contribute to capacity in the South, but is not sufficient, especially not from the perspective of sustainability of comparable formats. Contribution to the installation of reduced formats inspired by the ICP in the South is more likely to be in the range of the possible. The evaluators state that other interventions (next to ICP) are necessary to harness teaching quality control and educational processes in the South. Alumni PhD could play a role in this.



## 5. Conclusions and recommendations

<sup>181</sup> After extensive desk analysis, 20 days of evaluation visits, over 200 interviews and focus group sessions – some of which conducted over skype and Whatsapp - and the drafting of individual evaluation sheets for each of the 15 ICPs, the evaluators draw up conclusions. These consider, first, the **effectiveness** and **sustainability** of the incremental character of the use of the funding and of the ICP South dimension developments. Findings are then linked with the objectives articulated in the IF call (as recapitulated in the introduction of this report) to address the question on **relevance**. Conclusions on **efficiency** are described next. (Preliminary) recommendations with focus on the adaptation of the new IF call and with a view to strengthening the South dimension are formulated under each sub-heading. The recommendations are primarily aimed at VLIR-UOS.

### 5.1. ICPs in constant change and development (effectiveness)

<sup>182</sup> The evaluators observed that all of the ICPs have taken concrete steps related to the IF project activities specified in their application form, and that the majority of them can already demonstrate clear outputs and emerging changes. Being incremental, the funding allows for gradual developments wherein the ICPs can experiment, try and test what works well, adapt the direction of the project towards scenarios that appear to work well and discard others. The evaluators want to frame and appreciate these dynamics from a process logic. The extensive mapping exercise has allowed to gather evidence to determine the effectiveness of the IF: it is fit for purpose.

<sup>183</sup> Overall, respondents confirm that the IF project has allowed them to work in a less fragmented manner, that fieldwork and other activities with partners is getting better organised, and that the interaction with partners and alumni is structured more adequately. The budget rules for IF have created appropriate space to make these changes possible, that is for hiring committed staff ('coordinator'), for supporting the mobility of staff and South students, and for carrying costs implied in the organisation of delocalised curriculum components in the South.

<sup>184</sup> The IF modality has also been effective to strengthen aspects of ICP South component development that are not entirely new to the programmes, but are now becoming more frequent, visible and impacting, and/or are being organized differently: guest lecturers from the South (including but not restricted to ICP's South partner institutions) are being integrated better in courses. In some ICPs, visiting South partner staff is given an actual co-teaching responsibility, which is a recognition of the partners' role as co-producers of educational content.

<sup>185</sup> Notwithstanding their different starting situations, IF thus proves a modality that allows both newcomers and more established ICPs alike to develop their South components in a way that each sees fit, and to adapt where necessary, such as in the choice of partners.

<sup>186</sup> Some South institutes, that were announced to become core partners in the new ICP's 2016 application file, appear to have fallen off the radar since, to be replaced swiftly by other partners located in the same or other South countries. The flexibility of the IF modality is proving effective to encourage ICPs to

continue their process of identifying relevant partners. It puts them in a position of relative strength, where they can target and honour commitments with those in the South that are willing, and discard others with whom they initially envisaged to collaborate but that were not seen to deliver as hoped. Programmes that benefitted from pre-2017 ICP funding are adding new South partners to their IF project as well, but are not seen to 'lose' others in the way that some newcomer ICPs do. One ICP, O&L, is even preparing to support the development of a copy of the ICP at such a new South partner institute, that was not yet envisaged in its 2016 application file. IF is proving sufficiently flexible to seize such newly upcoming partnership opportunities and probe the ground for other partnership modalities still: two newcomer and several older ICPs are newly developing South partnerships and/or synergies beyond academia, with international and non-governmental organisations and even private sector actors.

- <sup>187</sup> All 5 newcomer ICPs report that they were able to set support measures to ensure South students' quality participation – the one component of the IF projects wherein (older) ICPs are seen to innovate least. Even if they had occasional (self-sponsoring) South students prior to 2017, the new ICPs did not have dedicated support measures, as they did not have VLIR-UOS scholarship beneficiaries for whom such support measures are now put in place (and from which other South students are now seen to benefit as well). Of special note here is the possibility to support student mobility, allowing students to intern and/or do dissertation research at a South location, preferably at the ICP students' home country (although this is not always considered to be relevant by the students who are keen on gaining experience in the North).
- <sup>188</sup> The 5 new ICPs report that the presence of 12 high quality scholars in each (year) of the programme is key to the effectiveness of their IF projects. Apart from added value in terms of South-relevance, the scholars are observed to overall positively affect the level of the class and the quality of the learning process. As the scholarships are relatively generous, they are proving a means to attract the very best students to compete for this support (and as such are a quality-assurance modality of which the established, pre-2017-funded ICPs are well-aware). Several ICPs respondents note a significant difference, or even gap, between the experience horizon of scholarship beneficiaries (most of which have relevant prior work experience, mainly beyond academia) and other students, in the programme lacking such experience (particularly Belgian students, that enrol immediately after completing their bachelor degree). Some lecturers to the new ICPs reported they had stepped up their act, and/or altered their didactic style so as to allow for more participative class interaction and more adequately valorize that "wisdom of the class".
- <sup>189</sup> The most concrete results enabled by the IF modality are the delocalised curriculum components, that are newly emerging at both newcomer and established ICPs (12/15 ICPs thus far). There is no one-size-fits-all South curriculum component development, and several ICPs operate more than one of these. Mid-term into the IF cycle, some but not all delocalised curricula developed under incremental funding are open to ICP students. Those not open to ICP students yet continue being developed for and with local South students. Only 5/15 ICPS are developing a type of credit exchange opportunity: whereas this option has the potential to greatly increase the attractiveness of the educational programme (both in North and in South), it is also quite challenging as it depends on factors on which the ICP host in the North has little control (such as the institutional processes needed in the South).
- <sup>190</sup> Other than their time-span, ICPs spread out over 2 full years do not operate significantly differently from those contained in one year. One-year ICPs engage in South partnership building and delocalisation of curriculum components quite like the 2-year programmes do, and all support students in similar ways. Practice that does emerge at 2-year ICPs is to operationalise the summer break between 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> semester, for interning, for actual course taking (IMRD's case study in rural Vietnam, SUST Living Lab) and/or to begin data collection for the dissertation. Several of the 2-year programmes encourage ICP-scholars to collect data at their home country. This practice by itself is not new since IF, as mobility costs

implied in such “data-collection-at-home” could be covered by the “summer ticket home” arrangement of their scholarship scheme. Whether or not students collect these data in the South, it proves good practice to start the dissertation process over their summer break (or even earlier), after which 2-year programme students are allowed time in the final, 4<sup>th</sup> semester to conclude that process. 1-year programme students, in comparison, are more challenged to wrap up their dissertation process in that short time-span, particularly so if they perform field work in the South to inform that dissertation.

<sup>191</sup> By mid-term in this funding cycle, ICPs South component developments are seen to have coincided with an **increase in student numbers** in almost all programmes under review (for some quite substantial), except where enrolment is capped at a maximum number (beyond which assisting students with hands-on work becomes unpractical). In many cases, the evaluators were given reasons to believe this coincidence is rather a causality: more (self-paying) students enrol in ICPs simply because IF allowed for changes that made the programmes more attractive.

<sup>192</sup> Course content developed on IF is also seen to **reach beyond the actual ICP and its students**. This broader diffusion is happening in different ways. An increasing number of students at partner institutions (but also from elsewhere in the region) are benefitting from the delocalised course components (SUST, IUPWARE, CADES, DEM, GLOB, GOV), or from satellite trainings (NEMA) that are exclusively organised for local students. Additionally, at IMRD, course components that the ICP initially construed for restricted use of its own students, have in the meantime been opened to other students (including from the global South) participating in the IMRD Erasmus Mundus programme.

<sup>193</sup> Increase in beneficiaries is but one of some **wider effects** of IF that ICP stakeholders observed and that informed this evaluation. At the newcomer ICPs, some found that the presence of South students (scholars and others) increased the visibility of the ICP core team and other lecturers and of their topic in their respective host institute. Anecdotic evidence was provided of some spill-over effect of the IF activity to the faculty or institute in the North (examples found at EPI, TRANS, SUST and STATS). In newcomer ICPs such as SUST, some lecturers reported they altered their didactic style so as to allow for more class participation. ICP stakeholders acknowledge that the IF project has created new opportunities for establishing networks and contacts beyond the usual bilateral relations between professors or between professors and their PhD students. In one Centre, people reportedly have a reflex to verify the potential relevance of what they are teaching/taking as initiatives for students from the South.

<sup>194</sup> ICP stakeholders from the South have reported benefits to their research, increased capacity to draft research proposals and to apply for complementary funding arrangements to strengthen educational capacity. Some increased their educational capacity: the delocalised curricula that the ICPs developed in their proximity were seen to inspire them, to then later emulate the same didactic approaches.

<sup>195</sup> All of the above prompts the evaluators to formulate the following **recommendations**:

<sup>196</sup> **Recommendation 1:** VLIR-UOS should continue the IF modality: the introduction of a project modality to ICP funding proves to have been a wise one. It brought about a dynamic allowing for sufficient flexibility to identify adequate partners and build partnerships, that effectively allow for the development of delocalized curriculum components and that infuse the curriculum in general with more South-relevant contents. At the same time, the project modality forced the ICPs to remain focused on the longer-term developments they envisaged. As this evaluation focused on the mapping of IF project activities, VLIR-UOS might prepare for appraisal of effectiveness and impact.

<sup>197</sup> **Recommendation 2:** ensure continuation of the 12 scholarships/year/ICP. The accompanying scholarship arrangement allowing each ICP to admit 12 excellent students from VLIR List countries, is

recognised as a key enabling factor to many aspects of the South component development. VLIR UOS is thus recommended to help ensure continuation of this accompanying scholarship programme.

## 5.2. Sustainability

- <sup>198</sup> The ICP stakeholders in the North are mindful and concerned about the sustainability of the benefits of their incremental funding projects. They have specified their strategies for sustainability in their application forms which are being elaborated (sometimes complemented with implicit sustainability measures). The constant and endless efforts to write new projects and to seek synergy with other funds and results from other projects provides strong arguments for the commitment of ICP stakeholders. More visibility and attractivity of the ICP can certainly contribute to institutional ownership in the host institution. The enabling environment paying attention to quality, internationalisation and alumni work is equally supporting sustainability. The increased attention for outreach and development work in the ZAP matrix is no longer punishing research and lecturing staff for their investment in development cooperation and this could attract more people gaining experience in the matter as such broadening the HR base for development cooperation (albeit probably still limited). Finally, it seems that efforts for coordination (currently on the IF budget), once the different components are developed, might require less funding support in the future.
- <sup>199</sup> When looking at the South, there are strong indications that results of the IF funding, as the delocalised components might be copied (fully or partially) by the partners in the South for their students (and maybe producing outputs that might be used by the ICP in the North. Sustainability of local masters is difficult to predict at this stage and is very depending upon the institutional and political conditions in the South. At the least, ICP stakeholders underline that a period of 5 years might be necessary to integrate a master in the institution and then more work needs to be done to ensure financial sustainability. Helping the partner in the South in defining a financial sustainability strategy was identified as a good practice. The efforts of various ICPs to support partners in developing their own networks and connecting them to global networks are laudable.
- <sup>200</sup> The evaluators can conclude that financial sustainability is a risk, more in particular for the following components of the strategy that have been introduced with IF to strengthen the South dimension:
- **Diversity of the classroom:** all respondents state that, without the (12) scholarships, it would become difficult to ensure a similar high-quality critical mass of participants from the South, sufficient diversity and, more in particular, to attract 'change makers' from low income countries.
  - **The mobility aspect of delocalized components in the South:** the mobility aspect of the delocalized components will be difficult to sustain without IF. This is a challenge as the delocalized components are quite essential to the South dimension of ICPs that have developed them. ICP host institutions are already doing their utmost to find additional sources (on their faculty funding, through EU funds, the Global Minds funds, ...), but it would seem unlikely such matching funding can become the sole source of students South-mobility support in the future.
  - **Alumni activities:** the new activities to better structure the alumni work, are expected to be sustained beyond IF, all the more because host universities are all articulating their willingness to invest more in alumni activities, including with and for the benefit of South alumni. Further funding will however be required to continue to organize further meetings at national and regional level in the South (which are relevant to connect the ICPs to the world of employment, to support actors of change in their environment and to promote the ICP).

<sup>201</sup> **Recommendation 3:** the (rare) practice of investing in formulating and supporting explicit financial sustainability strategies for local masters in the South (to be executed by the partners in the South) and of delocalised components should be stimulated more pro-actively by the next IF-call. Providing partners with funds to conduct the study themselves is a good way of creating ownership.

### 5.3. Are the ICPs complying with the objectives of the IF call? (relevance)

<sup>202</sup> The IF call set the following objectives: (i) Link ICP with the development context, (ii) Strategy to strengthen South dimension through cooperation with partners, (iii) Activities that can ensure quality participation by students and staff from the South in the ICP

<sup>203</sup> In general, the evaluators find that the ICPs demonstrate their relevance by responding to each of the three mentioned objectives (with a few ICPs needing more time to fully develop their South components).

<sup>204</sup> **Link ICP with the development context** - Having better structured exchanges with the South allows to tap in more intensively in the knowledge and expertise of partners in the South which can connect the ICP better to the development context. Clearly, the IF allowed the ICPS to invest more in existing or new delocalised parts of the curriculum in the South (12/15 ICPs), to invite more guest lecturers, to invest in case development by the South and co-production of course materials, to reach out to and interact with local partners beyond academia, to create opportunities for ICP students to interact with local peers in the South and to organise interaction and events for and with alumni, all of which contributed to exchanges.

<sup>205</sup> It is not possible for the evaluators to state at this point whether other budget choices would have been more appropriate to strengthen the link with the development context. Yet, there seems to be room for more growth for alumni work and for using this to inform needed curriculum changes in a more systematic way. Alumni activities currently allow exchange of information, which could lead to a stronger link of the ICP with the development context (including the world of employers besides academic ones). However, using the alumni to serve this purpose is currently not yet strongly developed in the ICPs, with only a small number of ICP's stimulating in an explicit way feedback on curriculum, developing tracer studies and organising events allowing Alumni to network on a national or regional level in the South.

<sup>206</sup> Allocation of budget for bench fees and support to North bound mobility, staff costs and delocalising of components of the curriculum in the South can be a way to ensure more participation from teaching and research staff at the level of partners in the South but other conditions need to be considered as well, such as having a supportive environment in the South (as became clear from the identification of factors that have contributed to the execution of the ICP) – see further below.

<sup>207</sup> **Strategy to strengthen South dimension through cooperation with partners** - Using expertise from the South ranges from loose contacts through guest lecturers to more established collaboration agreements looking at co-creation. For ICPs with developed partnerships and various financial sources to combine, more opportunities are there to strengthen the South dimension as appears from the sections on capacity development of partners in the South, curriculum developments and synergy.

<sup>208</sup> In adapting their curriculum and in building and operating delocalized curriculum components, ICPs differ quite significantly. What is found across the board nevertheless is that all ICPs that are co-developing delocalized curricula do so together **with** South partners, rather than transfer ready-made programmes to

South locations. The evaluators would like to underline this. South partners are explicitly recognized to add value to the curricula, beyond what the North-based ICP could possibly offer on its own. Staff from South partner institutes is invited to visit the ICPs at their host universities in the North in the interest of concertation over the delocalised course to which they are co-organisers.

- <sup>209</sup> The evaluators witness that IF offers universities alternatives to the traditional, professor-professor or professor-PhD relation and allows to develop a wider network and wider support to development work in the institution. Supporting the development of local masters and delocalised curriculum components in combination with structured alumni work present a strong strategy that can be used besides the long preferred but longer-term pathway of 'student – PhD scholar – returnee in the host institution' to influence and develop capacity in the partner institution. More capacity at the level of the partners for teaching and research also means more opportunities for using South expertise to strengthen the development relevance of the ICP, for e.g. as credit exchange schemes become possible. The findings under the section of curriculum developments is a clear demonstration of this.
- <sup>210</sup> The concept of 'partner institution' in the South and/or (contribution to) capacity building and its potential link to the ICP is not clearly defined by the ICP call. Although all ICPs aim (though often implicit or in general terms) to develop capacity of partner institutions (as highlighted in application and in the annual reports of the ICPs), there is no evidence of explicit capacity development plans nor of detailed analysis of partners' needs. This does not mean that interventions to strengthen the South component of the ICP were not be relevant. ICPs, more in particular those that work with known partners have interacted with them to define and elaborate possible IF project activities to ensure their relevance (as confirmed by interviews with partners) or ensured this exchange in the course of the IF project.
- <sup>211</sup> The following activities financed through IF can be identified as activities that (either implicit or explicit, either as a primary or secondary objective) can contribute to the development of capacity of partners in the South: co-production of curricula components, support to the development of a Master in the South, providing access to a network, additional training in the South and online platforms providing particular content. The evaluators would like to highlight that the practice of supporting partners' staff costs (with IF as seed-money) can be seen as providing partners with an opportunity to be genuine co-promotor of the IF project and be involved as equal partners in the delivery of the ICP.
- <sup>212</sup> More in particular, the co-production and co-organisation of delocalised curriculum components for the ICP in the South is seen to have potential to support capacity building in various ways:
- The fact that local students have access, strengthens the educational content of the partner co-organiser offered to its students.
  - To the extent that these components answer to the research interests of the partners in the South, they can contribute to the execution and quality of the research of the South partner.
  - To the extent that the partners have a role in the organisation of the course, they can gain capacity to stage similar project-based work or apply project-based teaching approaches.
  - To the extent that other actors in the South are involved in the activity and/or presentation of results of the field work, results of research activities might be used by government actors and other players, as such enhancing their capacity to address development challenges and supporting the image of the South partners.
- <sup>213</sup> From the experiences of the 15 ICPs, it appears that future ICPs might be mindful of a number of conditions situated at the level of partner institutions in the South. It can be of use when screening



potential partners and when identifying possible risks that need to be addressed in case these conditions are only weakly present. The conditions are the following:

- evidence of operationalisation of internationalisation policies at the level of the university,
- track record in collaboration aimed at developing educational programmes (for e.g. Network programmes funded by VLIR-UOS),
- openness to consider added value of developing support at master's level (for dissertation and internships),
- openness to consider interdisciplinary approaches and methods of group working (with a diverse student population),
- presence of academic staff at influential positions that can support and act as change agent,
- experience with alumni work (or aspiration to invest more)

<sup>214</sup> **Activities that can ensure quality participation by students and staff from the South in the ICP -** Investing more in partner relations and modalities such as guest lecturing, co-developing course contents and creating deliberate space for the wisdom of the class to play its role can contribute to increased quality of participation. A challenge, more in particular for younger staff, both in North and South is to find sufficient time to work on this. The investment in support to students (more in particular for the new ICPs) is appropriate as is the monitoring of their progress and well-being. A point of attention is the monitoring of the process in the South related to thesis work and internship. The focus on a smaller number of partners with view to clear objectives provides a framework to interact with partners. Partners that are new to the ICP or to cooperation for educational programmes (and not research programmes) might find it difficult to understand what benefit they can have from investing in an ICP and in developing South components, such as hosting master thesis and internships.

<sup>215</sup> **Recommendation 4:** the next IF-call should stimulate applicants to pay more attention to alumni work and more in particular have them work on a strategy to ensure input from alumni, for providing alumni with content and supporting them in finding their way in the world of employment and for identifying innovative ways of supporting alumni as actors of change in their environment. As a sub-recommendation to the ICP host institutions: given the fact that students feel most connected to their programme (rather than to the university), universities should facilitate their faculties and programmes to develop their own alumni work.

<sup>216</sup> **Recommendation 5:** VLIR-UOS should invest in some mapping activity to ensure systematic data collection on a number of objectives and categories in the course of the programme execution. Together with the current ICP programmes, VLIR-UOS could identify precise objectives that are more relevant than the current three objectives that were formulated in the IF call. The identification could be based on an exercise to define a more explicit theory of change for the IF.

<sup>217</sup> **Recommendation 6:** ICP stakeholders could invest more in the analysis of the conditions for collaboration at the level of the partner institutions, thus more clearly and in an early stage identify potential risks and develop appropriate measures to address those risks. The conditions mentioned in the above could offer a first checklist.

## 5.4. Efficiency

<sup>218</sup> The evaluators conclude that execution of the IF project is strongly oriented by a focus on what was promised in the application and by the wider educational objectives of the ICPs concerned. Although



clear objectives for the IF project as such have not been defined, activities to strengthen the South dimension were clear and can be considered as building blocks of a strategy. Interaction with partners in the South is important, especially for the development of delocalised components. This is mainly organised on an informal basis and regular interaction through skype/visits involving the main contact person in the South. This seems to be working fine for all ICP's.

- <sup>219</sup> The evaluators have no information indicating that task division and execution of the project would not be efficient for the majority of the ICPs. In a few cases only, staff turn-over and weaker relations with partners have hampered a more efficient execution.
- <sup>220</sup> Budget (and other) rules are found to be sufficiently flexible for ICPs to use and to change whenever the circumstances demand for adaptations. There is a significant difference in the budget allocation related to staff costs: 8/15 ICPs have chosen to spend more than 40% of the budget to fund the cost of staff (for academic coordination and non-academic support) in the North, with 2 ICPs clearly describing the specific tasks. Majority of respondents find budget support for dedicated staff essential and the evaluators would not contradict this. Practice of 7/15 ICPs however indicates that other ways of organising the ICP might be interesting to consider: integration of academic coordination in regular teaching tasks, supporting staff costs of partners in the South, entrusting some tasks to another institution (at the host university).
- <sup>221</sup> Monitoring of results of the ICP is best organised at the level of ICP students: monitoring of effects on ICP scholars was supported by a tool provided for by VLIR-UOS,<sup>76</sup> but ICPs are doing much more to ensure that the educational offer is relevant and adapted. Half of the ICPs are also executing/planning for surveys amongst alumni to be better able to assess added value for development and to get feedback on needs in the South. IOB is also planning for an employer survey. Monitoring of contribution to capacity at the level of partners is far less systematic.
- <sup>222</sup> Factors that have contributed to efficient execution are many, not in the least personal commitment of ICP stakeholders (and promoters) and existing relations with partners in the South with focus on the elaboration of educational programmes. The latter explains some challenges for new ICPs, where partner relations are often only based on personal contacts with a track record of research cooperation (for e.g. EPI and CADES). Three other factors are to be considered:
- the enabling environment of the host university in the North, more in particular: the efforts to ensure quality education as a university, commitment of universities to internationalization and development cooperation (for e.g. rectors visiting partners in the South and as such stimulating their commitment and involvement), valuing staff's investment in development cooperation and outreach by evaluation criteria of academic staff's performance.
  - collaboration with other partners: hardly any ICP host operates as a stand-alone. There is evidence of inter-ICP cooperation, for example through an enabling faculty structure, at the level of one institute and over course contents. Further to that is the practice of the three inter-university ICPs which add value in terms of complementarity in scientific expertise, prime access to each of the constituent universities' internationalization programmes and modalities. Logistical challenges have been addressed in an efficient way.
  - Synergy with other programmes (and their funding sources): the synergy with Global Minds managed by the host university (and allowing for stronger partnerships with the South and additional mobility of

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<sup>76</sup> Required by VLIR-UOS in the first two years of the incremental funding programme. That requirement was abolished since.

students and staff), the synergy with other VLIR-UOS funds (team projects and South Initiatives mainly) and the synergy established for 4/15 ICPs participating in Erasmus cooperation programmes.

- 223 **Recommendation 7:** a more explicit strategy for capacity building at partner institutions in the South and the identification of the potential return on investment for them might be useful from various perspectives: (i) to sustain the choice for capacity building with DGD funding allocated to 'North programmes', (ii) to be more clear on what partners in the South might expect (opportunities and limitations) - which is particularly important for partners that have not been involved previously in educational programmes and might guide them in deciding to collaborate or not, (iii) to have some kind of framework to identify and monitor progress at the level of the partners in a more systematic way - which would help to identify and manage some (institutional) risks to the collaboration and the sustainability of the results achieved. VLIR-UOS could be more explicit in its call about what capacity building (within the limitations of IF) could mean, how it can benefit the South dimension of the ICP and propose some guidelines for monitoring of changes at the level of partners (as they did for monitoring students) that are relevant for strengthening the South dimension: such as organising alumni work to understand needs for education, capacity to ensure supervision and support to master theses and internships. Specific attention should be paid to the role of PhD students in this strategy (for e.g. based on an evaluation of the impact of the former ICP PhD scholarship scheme).
- 224 **Recommendation 8:** VLIR-UOS should maintain the flexibility of how to allocate the budget and flexibility for adaptations, while at the same time be more clear about what is expected: clarifying budget rules, asking for more transparency about co-financing in relation to the components of the strategy.
- 225 **Recommendation 9:** support monitoring and evaluation (allowing for more systematic mapping as suggested in recommendation 5). VLIR-UOS should consider adapting the formats for application and reporting, paying more attention to the IF project and the follow-up of progress in the realisation of specific components in the strategy. The connection to the objectives of the IF call should be more explicit in the reporting formats.

## 6. Annexes

### Annex 1: overview of ICPs

ICP	Duration in years	New ICP since 2017	1 <sup>st</sup> time VLIR-UOS funding for the programme	Origin as EN programme
CADES	1	Yes	Yes	1999
DEM	1	No	Yes	2007
EPI	2	Yes	Yes	2015
GLOB	1	No	Yes	2007
GOV	1	No	Yes	2007
HS	1	No	No	1992
IMAQUA	2	No	No	1991
IMRD	2	Yes	Yes	2004 (as Erasmus Mundus)
IUPFOOD	2	No	No	2002 in current 2-year format; 1-year precursor programmes since 1993
IUPWARE	2	No	No	1994, English language precursor programmes since 1980s
NEMA	2	No	No	1992
(IUP)O&L <sup>77</sup>	2	No	No	2010 in current format, precursor programmes since 1980s
STATS	2	No	No	1993
SUST	2	Yes	Yes	2011 (as Erasmus Mundus)
TRANS	2	Yes	Yes	2013

Table 1: Overview of ICPs

<sup>77</sup> O&L, short for Oceans and Lakes, is an interuniversity ICP, that does not consistently use this prefix. The ICP is referred to throughout this report without the prefix.

## Annexe 2: Overview of ICPs and their partners

ICP	Overview of current partners in the South involved in the ICP through the IF <sup>78</sup>
CADES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Arba Minch University (UAM), Ethiopia</li> <li>– Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique</li> <li>– University of Science and Technology of Zimbabwe</li> <li>– Regional collaboration with 3 South African Universities: Stellenbosch University (SU), University of Western Cape (UWC) and University of Cape Town (UCT)</li> </ul>
DEM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– De la Salle University in the Philippines</li> <li>– Mzumbe University in Tanzania</li> <li>– Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua</li> </ul>
EPI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia in Lima, Peru</li> <li>– University of the Mountains of the Moon (MoM), Uganda<sup>79</sup></li> </ul>
GLOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua</li> <li>– Universidad de Cuenca (Ecuador)</li> </ul>
GOV	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Université Catholique de Bukavu (UCB) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and its centre d'expertise en gestion manière (CEGEMI)</li> <li>– Nitlapan, Universidad Centroamericana (UCA), Nicaragua</li> <li>– Virunga Alliance, DRC</li> </ul>
HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Witwatersrand University (South Africa),</li> <li>– Ho Chi Minh City School of Architecture (Vietnam),</li> <li>– Technical University of, Kenya, School of the Built Environment, Department of Spatial Planning and Design</li> <li>– University of Guayaquil, Faculty of Architecture Urbanism, Ecuador</li> <li>– Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique</li> </ul>
IMAQUA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Stellenbosch University (SU), South Africa</li> <li>– Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam</li> <li>– CENAIM at Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador</li> </ul>
IMRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam</li> <li>– Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL), Ecuador</li> <li>– University of Pretoria (UPretoria), South Africa</li> </ul>
IUPFOOD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Can Tho University (CTU), Vietnam</li> <li>– Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT), Kenya</li> </ul>

<sup>78</sup> Table compiled on the basis of information obtained from ICP application files and annual progress reports and interviews with partners. The listed partners do not coincide in all instances with information obtained from VLIR UOS in January 2020.

<sup>79</sup> With Mbarara University (Uganda) it is envisaged, jointly with MoM and Martyrs University, to submit an Erasmus+ proposal to start a MEPI at MoM and strengthen the research methods capacity in all three universities.

IUPWARE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ecuador: Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca) + satellite partnerships with Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL) and Escuela Politécnica Nacional (EPN)</li> <li>- Ethiopia: Arba Minch University (AMU) + satellite partnership with Bahir Dar</li> <li>- Tanzania: Nelson Mandela African Institute for Science and Technology (NM-AIST) + satellite partnerships with Sokoine University of Agricultural (SUA) and University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM)</li> </ul> <p>Secondary partner envisaged with Vietnam National University in Hanoi</p>
NEMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Jimma University, Ethiopia</li> <li>- International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Kenya</li> <li>- International Centre for Insect Pests and Ecology (ICIPE), Kenya</li> </ul>
O&L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kenya: Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute (KMFRI), Technical University of Mombasa (TUM) and the University of Nairobi</li> <li>- Tanzania: University of Dar es Salaam, State University of Zanzibar (SUZA)</li> <li>- South Africa: University of the Western Cape (UWC)</li> <li>- Ecuador: Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral (ESPOL) &amp; Universidad Central del Ecuador</li> <li>- Peru: Universidad Científica del Sur, Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia</li> </ul>
STATS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Universidade Eduardo Mondlane (UEM), Mozambique</li> <li>- African Centre of Excellence in Data Science in Kigali, Rwanda</li> </ul> <p>A new collaboration was set up with universities in the Philippines: three universities in the Philippines: Central Luzon State University, Mindanao State University – Iligan Institute of Technology, and Visayas State University</p>
SUST	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- North West University (NWU) in Potchefstroom, South Africa,</li> <li>- Vietnam National University in Hanoi, Vietnam</li> <li>- Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP)</li> </ul>
TRANS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ton Duc Thang University, Vietnam</li> <li>- the Vietnamese-German University, Vietnam</li> </ul>

Table 2: Overview of current partners per ICP

## Annexe 3: programme of the Mid-term evaluation mission

This report is sourced by the evaluation of the 15 ICPs. The individual evaluation sheet for each of these ICPs identifies all interviewees.

ICP	Date
CADES	4/11/2019: KU Leuven Faculty of Social Science
DEM	17/11/2019: IOB, UAntwerpen

EPI	22/10/2019 and 12/12/2019: Global Health Institute and Faculty of Medicine of U Antwerpen
GLOB	4/11/2019: IOB, UAntwerpen
GOV	5/11/2019: IOB, UAntwerpen
HS	21/10/2019: KU Leuven, Faculty of Engineer Sciences
IMAQUA	7/11/2019: UGent Faculty of Bioscience Engineering
IMRD	8/11/2019: UGent Faculty of Bioscience Engineering
IUPFOOD	30/10/2019: KU Leuven Faculty of Bioscience Engineering 12/11/2019: KU Leuven International House (focus group with students and alumni)
IUPWARE	3/10/2019: VUB Faculty of Applied Sciences Hydrology Department 4/10/2019: KU Leuven Bioscience Engineering
NEMA	8/11/2019: UGent Faculty of Science
O&L	19/11/2019: VUB, meeting with all O&L promoters, from VUB, UGent and UAntwerpen
STATS	29/10/2019 and 15/11/2019: U Hasselt, Center of Statistics
SUST	21/10/2019: KU Leuven Faculty of Science
TRANS	25/10/2019 and 18/11/2019: IMOB, Instituut voor Mobiliteit
<b>Interviews with university central services</b> KUleuven	20/11/2019: Vice-rector internationalisering & alumniwerking & vice-rector <i>development cooperation</i> KU Leuven 4/10/2019: KU Leuven Admissions Unit, Dienst Onderwijsprocessen
<b>Interviews with university central services</b> UHasselt	15/11: Vice-rector Research and internationalisation 18/11/2019: ICOS UHasselt, exchange coordination VLIR-UOS
<b>Interviews with university central services</b> UGhent	26/11/2019: <i>Dienst Internationalisering</i> UGent
<b>Interviews with university central services</b> UAntwerpen	28/11/2019 <i>Vice-rector Dienstverlening en internationalisering + Dienst Internationale Samenwerking</i> UAntwerpen
<b>Interviews with university central services</b> VUBrussels	19/11/2019: VUB International Relations and Mobility Office (IRMO)
<b>Other activities</b>	
Briefing session at VLIR-UOS	2/09/2019
Presentation and discussion of evaluation framework all ICPs	25/09/2019
Sense-making meeting with all ICPs	2/12/2019

## Annexe 4: overview of documents consulted

This report is sourced by the evaluation of the 15 ICPs. The individual evaluation sheet for each of these ICPs comes with an extensive list of consulted documents and identifies all interviewees.

Additional documents consulted in this synthesis report are the following:

- SYSPONS & NUFFIC (authors: Lennart Raetzell, Olga Almqvist, Franziska Lammers, Matias Krämer en Jolie Franke) , Impactevaluatie van de Belgische universitaire ontwikkelingssamenwerking - *Lessen over de evalueerbaarheid van institutionele partnerschappen en beurzen*. Eindverslag, Juli 2018, 145p.
- Venäläinen, Raisa & Doh, Pascal, Identification of selection criteria and assessment grid for the selection of scholarship-based Master programmes targeting students from developing countries and aiming at human capacity development in these countries. Final Report, February 2015, 21p.
- VLIR-UOS, Terms of Reference - Mid-term Evaluation of the incremental funding of ICP programmes, June 2019, 25p.
- VLIR-UOS, ICP Mid-term evaluation – Preparatory meeting, ToR, 19/3/2019, 6p.
- VLIR-UOS, CALL International Master Programmes (ICP) 2017, launched 30 June 2015, 25p.
- VLIR-UOS, ICP 2017 call – addendum: Country list for activities supported with incremental funding, 2p.
- ICP South collaboration and partners, pdf, 4p.
- VLIR-UOS Portfolio, excel, updated January 2020.
- VLIR-UOS Main Partners, excel, updated January 2020.



## Colophon

VLIR-UOS – which is part of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR) – is the platform through which Flemish universities and university colleges pool expertise and efforts and work together in the context of university cooperation for development. VLIR-UOS supports partnerships between universities and university colleges, in Flanders and the South, that are searching for answers to global and local challenges. It is an international network of experienced and committed academics, researchers, institutional coordinators and students working across the boundaries of institutions, disciplines, languages, countries and continents.

Funded by the Belgian Federal Government, VLIR-UOS is the main sponsor of partnership projects between academics from Flanders and partner countries, as well as of scholarships for students and professionals from both Flanders and partner countries. These partnership projects aim at improving the research and educational performance of local higher education institutions through capacity building, while at the same time developing innovative solutions (new knowledge, applications or services) to global, developmental problems.

Through these partnerships, higher education institutes evolve into key actors that shape the economic and societal systems in their countries. The support to relevant, high-quality educational programmes in Flanders (e.g. by providing scholarships) not only allows VLIR-UOS to support future changemakers, but also contributes to the globalisation and quality of Flemish higher education.

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