



Mid-Term Evaluation of the Global Minds Programme

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ACRONYMS

ANGC	Actors in the non-governmental cooperation
DGD	Directorate-General Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid
E&S	Education and Scholarships
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
GM	Global Minds
GEO	Global Engagement Officers
ICOS	Institutional Coordinators for Development Cooperation
ICP	International Master Programme
IOB	Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid (Institute for Development Policy at the UAntwerp)
IUC	Institutional University Cooperation
ITN	International Thematic Networks
JSF	Joint Strategic Framework
KU Leuven	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
NGO	Non-governmental organization
PSR	Policy-supporting research
RP	Regional Platforms
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SI	South Initiative
SIP	Small Intensive Projects
SIP	Strategic International Partnerships
ToC	Theory of Change
UAntwerp	University of Antwerp
UASA	Universities of Applied Science and Arts
UCOS	University Centre for Development Cooperation
UDC	University Development Cooperation
UGhent	Ghent University
UHasselt	Hasselt University
USOS	University Foundation for Development Cooperation
VLIR-UOS	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad – Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking
VLHORA	Vlaamse Hogescholenraad (association of thirteen Flemish Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts)
VUB	Vrije Universiteit Brussel

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I. Context, challenges and objectives of the evaluation

VLIR-UOS supports partnerships between universities and university colleges in Flanders and in the Global South, looking for innovative responses to global and local challenges and strengthening higher education in the Global South as well as the globalisation of higher education in Flanders. The Global Minds programme, which was launched in 2017, is part of the organisation's Belgium programme.

The programme is characterised by a decentralised approach, i.e. it is implemented through six institutional Global Minds programmes that differ in scope and focus. Nevertheless, they are envisioned to contribute to a common framework and objectives: Global Minds aims to build, strengthen, deepen or retain the development-relevant academic capacity at the level of Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in Flanders. Each Flemish university and the consortium of university colleges (*Vlaamse Hogeschool-enraad*, VLHORA) therefore implement a set of different instruments aiming at maintaining and strengthening development-relevant research and education in order to be able to engage in effective university development cooperation. Moreover, activities are supposed to raise awareness and sensitize for development cooperation and for development-related problems. Global Minds is thus linked to and should support the whole portfolio of VLIR-UOS as its goal is to create an enabling environment for university development cooperation in Flanders.

In this context, the *Mid-Term Evaluation of the Global Minds Programme* served three main objectives: Firstly, it should foster learning with regards to the different instruments' or approaches' potential to enable effective capacity building for university cooperation for development. Secondly, recommendations should be formulated based on the evaluations' findings to support decision-making processes with regards to the Global Minds programme. Thirdly, the performance of the Global Minds programme in general was assessed to serve accountability purposes. The mid-term evaluation was thus both summative and formative with a strong focus on joint learning.

II. Evaluation approach

The mid-term evaluation was conducted by Syspons GmbH between December 2019 and June 2020. As part of the evaluation's inception phase, the Syspons evaluation team analysed background documents on the common framework and objectives and on the six institutional Global Minds programmes. It moreover conducted explorative interviews to gain a better understanding of the programme(s). In order to give consideration to the decentralised character of the Global Minds programme and to analyse the "mechanisms of change" of the programme in sufficient depth, the evaluation design concentrated on two selected impact hypotheses and corresponding instruments per institutional programme. Using consensus-oriented methods, this selection was made jointly with representatives of each of the five university programmes and VLHORA as well as the Directorate-general Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) and VLIR-UOS during the inception workshop. In order to collect a valid and comprehensive data base on which the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the programme could be evaluated, six short (remote) field missions were conducted at all five Flemish universities and the VLHORA. These included numerous in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries and broader stakeholders of the Global Minds programme. The evaluation was concluded with a synthesis and reporting phase in which Syspons summarized the findings in this evaluation report. On the

basis of the collected evidence, the evaluation team developed recommendations targeted towards VLIR-UOS and DGD as well as towards the Flemish universities and university colleges.

III. Main findings

The evaluation revealed the Global Minds programme, overall, is relevant to its beneficiaries. The decentralization of the responsibility to implement the programme for each institution based on their own needs and policy ambitions – within a common framework and objectives – allowed Flemish HEI to respond to **different “levels” of experience in development cooperation**. In this regard, institutions that were more experienced in implementing development cooperation use Global Minds to reinforce existing thematic or regional foci by embedding the programme into the institutional policies and strategies; and to broaden the University Development Cooperation’s (UDC’s) reach at the universities, extending it to new departments, faculties, professors and, especially, junior researchers. Institutions less experienced in development cooperation, in contrast, pointed towards the objective to inform, sensitize and mobilize more stakeholders of HEI for university development cooperation. An eventual growth in numbers of those being active in UDC - including “newcomers” from both experienced and less experienced institutions - however raised concerns about the “size of the cake” to be distributed: Capacity building for UDC, all in all, can only be relevant if new capacities can also be valorised. Institutions therefore expressed a need to also explore new avenues to (larger) UDC projects in the Global South that go beyond limited budgets for UDC in Belgium, for example through collaborations/consortia with other universities in Europe.

Different “levels” of experience in development cooperation and different institutional priorities also accounted for **varying foci of the institutions’ own Global Minds programmes**, even though they can generally be considered in line with the overarching specific and general objectives. Overall, the collected evidence reveals a strong tendency towards research at the expense of education and sensitization. Consequently, universities successfully integrated a development dimension into their research through instruments like incoming and outgoing mobility, PhD scholarships, alumni activities and small research grants, as well as thematic networks and conferences. Integrating a development-dimension into the educational offer, however, was not pursued to the same extent by most Global Minds programmes. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that more development-relevant education (e.g. through the set-up of development-related training components or incoming and outgoing (student) mobility) was offered as compared to the start of Global Minds. Similarly, the information, sensitization and mobilization of researchers and students for development cooperation has not yet been given the necessary attention. While mobilization of researchers for UDC is pursued through “spill-over” effects from the research component, very few instruments (beyond the educational offer) explicitly target awareness raising and sensitization among students and the general public.

Looking at the **effectiveness and efficiency of the analysed instruments**, the evaluation revealed that the vast majority of instruments targeted more than one specific objective of the Global Minds programme (education, research, sensitization). Some approaches were moreover found to aim for another objective of Global Minds that, so far, is not formally depicted the programme’s ToC: Interuniversity cooperation (between Flemish universities and the university colleges) and joint learning. An in depth-analysis of the selected instruments’ contribution to the (specific) objectives in relation to their costs, however, revealed more diverse results. Whereas smaller grants, such as conferences, small research grants, or incoming and outgoing mobility for academics and staff members were highly impactful, cost-effectiveness was more limited for the rather “expensive” full PhD scholarships. (Cost-) effectiveness of

travel grants alone furthermore was criticized as the manifestation of their intended effect on sensitization depends on preparatory and follow-up formats. Co-funding for instruments as well as their integration into institutional structures and policies, finally, increase both effectiveness and efficiency, e.g. by providing enough funds to ensure a reasonable success rate in light of a growing demand, or by making an instrument (e.g. a mobility) more attractive. In this regard, thematic networks and platforms were particularly successful.

Based on the analysis, the evaluation team hence concludes that the variety in Global Minds is both a strength and a weakness. In this respect, three fundamental dilemmas within Global Minds appear repeatedly in the evaluation. First, while sufficient breadth and flexibility in the programme's conception allow to respond to varying needs and capacities of the beneficiaries, it compromises the internal coherence of the overall programme. Second, while the programme's decentralised character allows institutions to take up responsibility for their own programmes and to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions, these currently come at the expense of coherent programme level (outcome-) monitoring. Third, while the programme's decentralised character was found essential to ensure the programme was relevant to the institutions, relevance, however, was sometimes found at odds with cost-effectiveness: The same instrument can be highly relevant, e.g. with regard to institutional policies, while ranking poorly on cost-effectiveness. These three dilemmas are taken up – to the extent possible – by the following recommendations.

IV. Recommendations

Recommendations at strategic level

1. Integrate “**global engagement**” as a strategic orientation in the conceptual framework

The evaluation reveals that Global Minds meets a need to innovate and explore new approaches. The programme allows the institutions to take up and work on new trends in development cooperation. These include for instance a “decolonization of knowledge”, “global citizenship education” and a more holistic approach to “global engagement”. In contrast to the “classic” North/South divide, “global engagement” emphasizes the reciprocity of North/South relationships and strives for a committed, meaningful interaction with the world as a whole. The more holistic approach of “global engagement” thereby is equally in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We recommend to more strongly align the programme with the SDGs by focussing more on “global engagement” instead of a narrower understanding of “development cooperation” and to assign Flemish HEI to explore, as part of their Global Minds programmes, how to better integrate these aspects into UDC. In this regard, we also recommend to strengthen the reciprocity of the Global Minds programme to allow for more exchange between academics and students from the Global South and North (see also recommendation 7).

2. Use Global Minds to **strengthen Belgian UDC through activities outside Belgium**

Capacity building can only be relevant if new capacities can also be valorised. A need was therefore expressed to also explore new avenues to (larger) UDC projects in the Global South beyond limited budgets for UDC in Belgium, for example through collaborations/consortia with other universities, non-governmental organisations, or the private sector. It is hence recommended to recognize possibilities to explore and initiate UDC projects not only with HEIs in the Global South, but also including other actors, e.g. other HEI, private sector and civil society actors, through Global Minds. This means that the project's target system and funding applicability would have to be expanded so that preparatory missions between these actors, if they aim to submit a joint application for a UDC project, could be funded.

3. Ensure more **internal coherence** through results-oriented monitoring

The Global Minds programme's decentralised character was found essential to ensure it is relevant to the institutions. However, the evaluation also shows that internal coherence regarding the individual programmes' orientation towards the common framework and objectives of Global Minds is limited and that a clearer framework is needed to provide for more results orientation. The evaluation team therefore recommends that VLIR-UOS should take over the role of overseeing and guaranteeing the quality of the (implementation of) the programme, which is reflected in the individual programmes' alignment with the common framework and objectives, the quality of the monitoring systems and indicators used, compliance with the reporting requirements, etc. (see also recommendation 8). At the same time, autonomy of the Flemish HEI to choose the specific instruments to contribute to the objectives set and define institutional foci should be preserved.

Instead of an input based financial monitoring and controlling (see also recommendation 8), we recommend to concentrate on results-oriented monitoring by setting up Theories of Change for each of the programmes and formulating joint outcome-level indicators for all Global Minds programmes (see recommendation 10). These would allow VLIR-UOS to evaluate the allocation of funds based on the different instruments' actual contribution to the common objectives, taking into account that one instrument is likely to contribute to more than one objective and/or to create spill-over effects.

4. Try to fund **PhD scholarships** outside Global Minds

Due to the way universities function, PhDs are an important instrument and relevant for most institutions. Yet, the evaluation concluded that sustainability concerns, the uncertainty of the expected long-term effects of networks with alumni as well as the fact that the expected effect on education could not be confirmed question the significant investment of (full/"sandwich") PhD scholarships. Moreover, small(er) research grants were identified as contributing to the same specific objective of promoting concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas in a more cost-effective way. We thus recommend – aiming for achieving the greatest possible impact with the least amount of money – to give those other instruments that proved to be more cost-effective priority over funding for PhDs. Taking into account that PhDs are central to universities and that PhD scholarships for students from the Global South do make a valuable contribution to the wider objectives of UDC, funding for (sandwich) PhDs should, however, be guaranteed elsewhere (e.g. from a different programme).

5. Make preparatory and follow-up formats obligatory for travel grants

The evaluation demonstrates that the (cost-) effectiveness of travel grants alone is limited because their intended effect on sensitization depends on preparatory and follow-up formats. We thus recommend maintaining funding for preparatory and follow-up formats in the Global Minds programme, and to integrate these formats as an obligatory component of the grant. This would not only strengthen the instrument's contribution to informing, sensitizing and mobilizing Flemish students, but also increase overall appreciation for the third dimension of the programme (sensitization). Further reflection, however, is needed on how to improve participation, especially in follow-up formats. Options are, for instance, providing of a certificate for completion of the full trajectory or linking the full payment of the grant and/or receipt of credit points to participation in preparatory and follow-up formats. Moreover, it is recommended that avenues are explored how to make preparatory and follow-up formats accessible also for HEI's staff benefiting from a mobility grant to foster critical reflection of North-South relationships and hence gradually advance a more equal, fair and sustainable approach to development cooperation.

6. Integrate **interuniversity cooperation and joint learning** into a future ToC at programme level

The evaluation demonstrated that some instruments explicitly aim at improving interuniversity cooperation even though it is not yet a definite objective of the programme. We thus recommend to explicitly formulate an objective “Interuniversity cooperation (between Flemish universities und the university colleges) and joint learning” for the next phase of Global Minds and to integrate the objective into a future ToC at overall programme level. Strengthened interuniversity cooperation, however, is not (only) an end in itself but it strengthens networks for UDC at the individual institutions and facilitates joint learning through creating opportunities to exchange, e.g. on good practice examples and lessons learned. These ultimately contribute to the objective of better (instruments for) UDC. By overseeing all six Global Minds programmes, VLIR-UOS, besides individual initiatives and exchanges, has a prominent role to play in facilitating more systematic interuniversity cooperation.

Recommendations at operational level

7. Strengthen **reciprocity** within the programme

In line with the recommendation to strengthen the programme’s orientation towards global engagement and to overcome the “classic” North/South divide, the evaluation revealed a need for more reciprocity within specific instruments (XREI and REI). We thus recommend aiming for more South-North mobility in a future Global Minds programme, both for students and academics. Incoming mobility for academics hereby proved effective for integrating a development-dimension in education (e.g. through guest lectures) and research (e.g. through providing an opportunity to work out potential South projects). Incoming mobility for students, in addition, is expected to contribute to the sensitization objective and to strengthen (new) partnerships with HEI in the Global South.

8. **Increase the efficiency of financial controlling** (incl. through lump sum agreements and through making use of the institutions’ auditing) and focus on **quality control in terms of the programmes’ contents and implementation**

The field missions revealed that, at the moment, Global Minds’ funds are audited two to three times (by the institution’s own internal and external audit and by VLIR-UOS). It was hence questioned whether this duplication of efforts constitute a justified use of resources as it creates huge costs on the side of the universities and university colleges and at VLIR-UOS in terms of personnel. We recommend that while financial control could be covered by the institutions’ auditing (single audit principle), VLIR-UOS could be responsible for a quality control regarding, e.g., individual programmes’ alignment with the common framework and objectives, the quality of the monitoring systems and indicators used, compliance with the reporting requirements, etc. In this regard, joint outcome-level indicators for all participating universities and VLHORA, developed under the guidance of VLIR-UOS (see recommendation 10), are essential.

Financial control, in addition, could be simplified through an increased use of lump sum agreements, e.g. per travel day, including average per diems, travel and transport costs as well as accommodation.

9. Allow for more flexibility regarding the **annual budget / annual budgets**

The evaluation revealed that the annual budgeting makes long-term planning difficult and hinders the ability of universities and colleges to react flexibly to challenges or windows of opportunity in the programmes’ implementation. As it is suggested to keep or even stress the programme’s innovative and exploratory character (see recommendation 1), the evaluation team recommends allowing – well-founded – transfers of funds between the annual budgets within the programme period/multi-annual budgets. This would further allow to set-up instruments and whole programmes with a more long-term, i.e. multi-year, perspective.

10. Set-up **joint outcome-level monitoring** with uniform indicators

The monitoring systems of the GM programmes are – with few exceptions – not capable of measuring the objectives of the GM programme. Here, the evaluation team identifies a need for more guidance from VLIR-UOS with regard to implementing a coherent M&E system across all Global Minds programmes. Given that all programmes are required to serve the same common objectives, the evaluation team recommends to implement this jointly, under the guidance of VLIR-UOS, formulating uniform indicators for all participating universities and VLHORA at the level of the common (outcome) objectives.

11. Increase Global Minds' valorisation for **South projects**

Mobility of academics, especially outgoing, to explore and initiate partnerships is a main means to increase the number of project proposals, their quality and hence the number of South projects being (successfully) implemented. Consequently, we recommend to further strengthen the valorisation of Global Minds' instruments for exploring and initiating new partnerships for VLIR-UOS funded UDC projects (South portfolio) by making allowance for fact finding missions in the selection criteria for South projects.

1. Introduction

VLIR-UOS commissioned Syspons GmbH to conduct the *Mid-Term Evaluation of the Global Minds Programme*. The evaluation served **three main objectives**: Firstly, to capture learning with regards to the different instruments' or approaches' potential to enable effective capacity building for university cooperation for development. Secondly, to make recommendations based on the evaluations' findings to support decision-making processes with regards to the Global Minds (GM) programme, both at the level of VLIR-UOS and the Directorate-general Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) (policy framework) and of the Flemish universities and university colleges. As a corollary to this objective, the evaluation should also generate insights on how to better integrate the Theory of Change (ToC) of the GM programme with the overall VLIR-UOS portfolio in Belgium and the Global South. A third objective of this evaluation was to assess the performance of the GM programme in general in order to ensure accountability of the programme. The mid-term evaluation was thus both summative and formative with a strong focus on joint learning.

The mid-term evaluation was conducted between December 2019 and June 2020. Within this period, the Syspons evaluation team analysed background documents on the GM programme (VLIR-UOS level) and the individual GM programmes (institutional level), conducted exploratory interviews with VLIR-UOS personnel, DGD and the Institutional Coordinators for Development Cooperation (ICOS), and engaged stakeholders of this evaluation in an inception workshop. This workshop resulted in the joint selection of impact hypotheses for this evaluation. The evaluation team furthermore implemented numerous in-depth interviews and focus group discussions during short field missions at all five Flemish universities and the consortium of university colleges (*Vlaamse Hogescholenraad*, VLHORA). On the basis of the data collected, Syspons developed recommendations to support decision-making processes with regards to the current and next phase of the GM programme. Users of the evaluation are envisaged to be VLIR-UOS as well as stakeholders of the six institutional GM programmes, DGD as well as the general public.

The evaluation report is structured as follows:

- [Chapter 2](#) contains an overview of the Global Minds Programme, including the initial Theory of Change of the GM programme;
- [Chapter 3](#) provides an overview of the evaluation methodology and process;
- [Chapter 4](#) outlines the findings of the evaluation team concerning relevance, effectiveness and efficiency;
- [Chapter 5](#) outlines the conclusions of the mid-term evaluation;
- [Chapter 6](#) outlines recommendations for VLIR-UOS and the Flemish Higher Education Institutions.

2. The Global Minds Programme

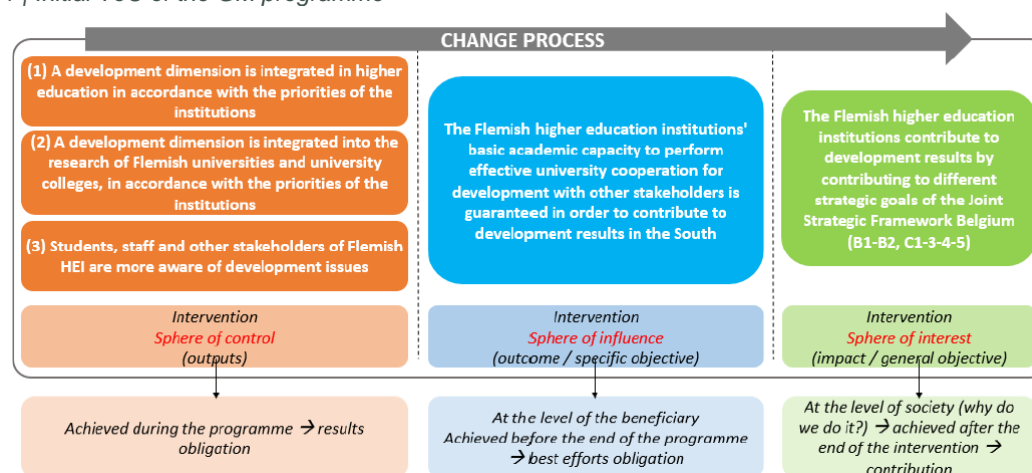
VLIR-UOS supports partnerships between universities and university colleges in Flanders and in the Global South. The organization facilitates research on innovative responses to global and local challenges and strengthens higher education in the Global South as well as the globalisation of higher education in Flanders. Under the Belgium programme, the Global Minds (GM) programme contributes – complementary to Education and Scholarships (E&S) and Policy-supporting research (PSR) – to the strategic goals of the Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) Belgium.

In 2016/2017, VLIR-UOS responded to the reform of the Belgian development cooperation and subsequent necessity to realign the previous “organisation costs programme” (*Opleidingskosten*) to new criteria for DGD programme financing (e.g. the existence of a strategy, fitting within a country strategy and programme, results framework, indicators, etc.) with the development and launch of the Global Minds (GM) programme. At the same time, there was a plea for decentralisation of a number of VLIR-UOS interventions to the level of the individual universities.

The Global Minds programme has implemented taking up responsibility for university cooperation for development by all institutions, as well as innovation and diversification between institutions. It has allowed the institutions to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions. Consequently, no exhaustive list of outputs or activities was established for Global Minds by VLIR-UOS (within three jointly identified result areas) and the institutions remained free to propose new activities or include existing instruments in their proposals.

Despite its decentralised character, the GM programme is however guided by a common framework and objectives: GM aims to build, strengthen, deepen or retain the development-relevant academic capacity at the level of HEI in Flanders. Under the programme, each Flemish university and the VLHORA implement a set of different instruments aiming at maintaining and strengthening their capacity (development-relevant research and education) in order to be able to engage in effective UDC, e.g. with partner universities in the Global South. Moreover, activities are supposed to raise awareness and sensitize, both for UDC and for development-related problems (e.g. among students, researchers). GM is thus linked to and should support the whole portfolio of VLIR-UOS as its goal is to create an enabling environment for UDC within the Flemish HEIs. These objectives are depicted in the initial, schematic ToC of the GM programme as it was presented to and approved by DGD (see figure 1).

Figure 1 | Initial ToC of the GM programme



Source: VLIR-UOS 2016, Call for proposals

3. Evaluation methodology and process

3.1 Evaluation design

This mid-term evaluation was based on the assessment of the three OECD-DAC criteria relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the GM programme. This assessment was, however, not an end in itself but was aimed at learning with regards to the different instruments' potential to enable effective capacity building for university cooperation for development. To meet this demand, the evaluation design of this mid-term evaluation was conceptualised as a contribution analysis combined with a SWOT and RACI analysis.

A **contribution analysis** is an applied analytical approach which assesses whether a realized outcome (e.g. increased awareness on development challenges among students, personnel and other stakeholders) can possibly be ascribed to an intervention and which factors functioned as drivers and inhibitors to realizing the desired outcome. The approach has originally been developed by J. Mayne¹ to assess the performance of policies and programmes towards an impact or several impacts and was developed for situations where designing an “experiment” to test cause and effect is impractical. A contribution analysis attempts to address this by focusing on questions of “contribution”, specifically to what extent observed results (whether positive or negative) are the consequence of the programme, in this case of GM. By developing a ToC showing the links between the outputs, outcomes, impacts and the contexts of the intervention and collecting evidence from various sources to test this theory, the aim is to build a credible (or plausible) “performance or contribution story”. This can demonstrate whether the selected intervention, e.g. a specific instrument, was indeed an important influencing factor, perhaps along with other factors, in driving change.

In line with the Terms of Reference, the mid-term evaluation thereby concentrated on the question to what extent the different instruments under the GM programme (level of activities at the ToC) contribute to the attainment of the specific and general objective of the programme. The advantage of this evaluation design is that it offers an in-depth analysis of the selected instruments regarding their causal mechanisms to contribute to (1) the integration of a development dimension into Flemish higher education and into (2) the research of the Flemish HEI as well as (3) stronger awareness of students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs for development cooperation and global challenges. For this purpose, the contribution analysis was based on reconstructed ToCs for each university programme, out of which two impact hypotheses – including corresponding “mechanisms of change” between the instruments and the output level – per university programme were chosen (see [chapter 3.2](#) for a detailed description of the selection process and selected impact hypotheses). This allowed for an in-depth analysis of the “mechanisms of change” of the GM programme and at the same time paid tribute to the diversity of the programme’s implementation between the different HEI.

In practice, the contribution analysis was implemented – in line with the approach articulated by Mayne – using the following six steps:

¹ Mayne, J. (2001). Addressing attribution through contribution analysis: using performance measures sensibly. *Canadian Journal of Programme Evaluation*, 16, 1-24.;
Mayne, J. (2011). Contribution analysis: addressing cause and effect, in K. Forss, M. and Schwartz, R. (eds.). *Evaluating the Complex*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.;
Mayne, J. (2008). *Contribution Analysis: An Approach to Exploring Cause and Effect*. Institutional Learning and Change Brief No. 7. Available at: http://www.cgiar-ilac.org/files/publications/briefs/ILAC_Brief16_Contribution_Analysis.pdf.

1. *Set out the attribution problem to be addressed:* In the case of the GM programme this includes instruments and approaches that contribute to guaranteeing or strengthening the capacity of Flemish HEI to perform effective university cooperation for development.
2. *Develop (or reconstruct) a theory of change:* In close cooperation with the respective HEI ToC for each individual GM programme were reconstructed, based on the general ToC.
3. *Populate the model with existing data and evidence:* Data to populate the models was collected during six two-day (online) field missions to the respective universities and VLHORA as well as through document analysis.
4. *Assemble and assess the “performance story”:* Based on the data and evidence assembled during the evaluation, the selected impact hypotheses were critically assessed in discussion with the HEI, DGD and VLIR-UOS.
5. *Seek out additional evidence:* During the data collection phase, the evaluation team continuously assessed to what extent the gathered data confirms or rejects the impact hypotheses in the ToCs. Based on this assessment, we identified for which hypotheses additional data was needed in order to arrive at a clear judgement.
6. *Make recommendations for the future:* Based on the collected data and evidence from the mid-term evaluation, recommendations for a future GM programme were developed. Moreover, the overall ToC for the GM programme was revised in line with these findings.

Complementary to the contribution analysis, the **SWOT** (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis offered to gather additional information on the strengths and weaknesses, (better, cheaper, more appropriate) alternatives to realize the proposed objectives (opportunities) and threats to the attainment of outcomes. Like that, the SWOT analysis contributes to identify potentials and alternatives of/to the selected instruments and can identify risks or threats to the attainment of outcomes. In the context of this mid-term evaluation, a SWOT analysis was conducted for selected activities or instruments (e.g. staff mobility, organisation of thematic conferences, development of training components). The four components of the SWOT analysis, for the purpose of this evaluation, were designed as follows:

- **Strengths:** Strengths are enhancers to the desired change and lie within the control of an organisation. (“How does the instrument contribute to the intended objective?”)
- **Weaknesses:** Weaknesses are inhibitors to the desired change and lie within the control of an organisation (“What hinders the instrument to contribute to the intended objective, e.g. what are shortcomings?”)
- **Opportunities:** Opportunities are (internal or external) possibilities that could be pursued to increase the instrument’s contribution to the desired objective (“What could be improved about the instrument in order to better achieve the intended objective?”)
- **Threats:** Threats are external factors that potentially reduce the instrument’s contribution to the desired objective (“What could potentially happen that threatens the achievement of the intended objective?”)

Using a contingency table, strengths and weaknesses of the chosen instruments as well as opportunities to improve the instrument and threats to the attainment of objectives were identified jointly with direct beneficiaries of the respective instrument (e.g. PhD candidates and supervisors, academic staff, students) in a focus group setting. In this context, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were explored using the afore mentioned guiding questions for each instrument (associated with the afore selected impact hypotheses) and categorized using a 2x2 matrix (contingency table) before conclusions were drawn by the evaluators based on the synthesis of all data. If necessary, two focus groups were

conducted per instrument in order to address potential power imbalances among participants thus allowing all participants to speak openly (e.g. professors for and participants in development-relevant courses). The approach thereby also allowed for immediate reflection and learning among the participating institutions.

Finally, a **RACI analysis** complemented the evaluation design by directing attention to the implementation efficiency of the programme. It thereby accounted specifically for evaluation questions on the distribution of roles between stakeholders and on mechanisms for coordination and communication as well as on the (potential) future role of VLIR-UOS (see also evaluation matrix in the annex). RACI (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed) is an acronym derived from the four key responsibilities that are necessary to establish efficient programme and project management between different stakeholders. The responsibilities in the RACI-analysis were defined as follows:

- **Responsible:** Regarding an activity or deliverable the responsibility lies upon the stakeholder(s) that actually work(s) to complete and achieve the tasks. Although there is typically only one stakeholder responsible for a task, responsibility can be shared. In such a case, the degree of responsibility is determined by the degree of accountability of the responsible stakeholder.
- **Accountable:** A stakeholder is accountable when it is ultimately answerable for the activity or decision. This includes the authority and veto to approve a task or deliverable. There should be only one accountable actor specified for each task or deliverable.
- **Consulted:** This role involves consulting stakeholders prior to a final decision or action.
- **Informed:** This relates to stakeholders who need to be kept up to date regarding programme and/or project processes. Stakeholders are sometimes only informed after a decision or action has taken place. These stakeholders however may be required to react as a result of the information, decision, or action.

Through these responsibilities, it was possible to illustrate and clarify roles and responsibilities of the GM programme's stakeholders (e.g. academic authorities, academics in charge of a funded activity, programme managers, DGD and VLIR-UOS). Thereby, the approach permitted checking for potential sources of (in)efficiency, e.g. minimize the risk of responsibility gaps, overlaps, duplications and confusions regarding responsibility, accountability, consultation and information in a programme (at the level of the institutions and of VLIR-UOS) activity. The results of the RACI analysis are part of the interview data and were thus incorporated into the analysis and synthesis thereof.

3.1.1 Evaluation criteria and indicators

Evaluation criteria and indicators are outlined in the evaluation grid in the **annex**. It specifies the questions to be examined during data collection and synthesis and allocates indicators and/or descriptors as well as sources of verification to the evaluation questions.

3.1.2 Data collection methods

Methods of data collection for this mid-term evaluation included document analysis, explorative interviews with VLIR-UOS personnel and DGD, as well as qualitative in-depth interviews and focus group discussions with the programme managers, university management, direct beneficiaries and broader stakeholders of GM. Five of the six short field missions were conducted remotely due to restrictions in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak. The evaluation therefore used video conferencing and other online tools (e.g. to conduct the SWOT analysis). Interview partners, nevertheless, remained available as initially planned.

3.1.3 Approach to triangulation

In order to generate valid and reliable evaluation results on which conclusions and recommendations could be developed, the evaluation incorporated three different triangulation approaches in the design of this mid-term evaluation. First, data collection was carried out using different methods (e.g. interviews, SWOT analysis etc.) (*methodological triangulation*). Second, the evaluation applied a *data triangulation* by comparing the different perspectives of different stakeholders (e.g. ICOS, beneficiaries, external stakeholders to the projects, etc.). Finally, a *researcher triangulation* was implemented by conducting an internal synthesis workshop, in which – based on synthesized data – judgements with all involved evaluators were considered. The central objective of triangulation therefore was to minimize systematic mistakes within individual data collection techniques by comparing different perspectives and thereby increasing the reliability of the evaluation results, conclusions and recommendations.

3.1.4 Quality assurance

Quality of the evaluation is assured through the structure of the evaluation team, composed of three international (Syspons) consultants and one academic expert in evaluation, who also is familiar with university management. The Syspons core team has been responsible for all activities related to the evaluation. All analytical tools, interview guidelines etc. were developed by this team, ensuring knowledge sharing between the team members and a harmonised approach in the implementation of field missions. A shared understanding of the findings was further guaranteed by an internal synthesis workshop. The team lead, an experienced expert in evaluation methodology, as well as the academic expert were responsible for the quality assurance of the methodology, the inception note and the evaluation report.

3.1.5 Limitations

As described in [chapter 3.1](#), a tailor-made evaluation design was developed for this mid-term evaluation that considered the specificities of the assignment and of the Global Minds programme. Nevertheless, each evaluation design also has its limits, which are as follows:

- Striking a balance between the general and the specific has been a key challenge for this mid-term evaluation. In order to give consideration to the decentralised nature of the GM programme and at the same time analyse the ‘mechanisms of change’ underlying the programme in sufficient depth, the evaluation concentrated on two selected impact hypotheses per university programme (see also [chapter 3.2](#)). The selection of these hypotheses thereby strived to represent the overall GM programme’s priorities as well as the diversity of approaches under the GM programme and was decided upon jointly by the HEI, DGD and VLIR-UOS. Nevertheless, it remains a challenge to draw conclusions for one instrument, in particular if it is implemented at several institutions, based on empirical observations at only one institution. The evaluation team addressed this challenge, firstly, by sharing a preliminary version of the evaluation report with all six institutions. This gave them the opportunity to comment and, if necessary, rectify the evaluation results. Secondly, the findings of the evaluation report were presented to VLIR-UOS, Bureau members, representatives of the respective GM programmes and DGD in a restitution session. This meeting was used to discuss and to further develop the suggested recommendations. All received feedback was incorporated into the report (see [chapter 3.3.3](#)).
- As indicated in [chapter 3.1.2](#), the findings of this evaluation report rely mostly on data collected from six (remote) field missions. These allowed to analyse the selected ‘mechanisms of change’

(see above) in sufficient depth to make the most of the resources available to this evaluation. A more comprehensive analysis of all individual GM programmes, for example through a more profound desk research, had to be compromised for the chosen approach focussing on an overall assessment of the GM programme (in terms of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency). Analysis of individual GM programmes, moreover, concentrated on selected impact hypotheses due to time constraints of this evaluation.

- Due to restrictions in relation to the Covid-19 outbreak in spring 2020, five of the six short field missions that had initially been foreseen as in-person meetings were conducted remotely. Even though limitations were minimised as far as possible by using videoconferencing tools (instead of telephone calls) and additional online tools allowing for an interactive component in the SWOT analysis, general limitations of online research prevail. As such, face-to-face research – as compared to online research – certainly has advantages in terms of identifying more nuanced reactions to questions and interactions between participants and in building rapport with the research subjects.

3.2 Selection of impact hypotheses

As part of the evaluation's inception phase (see the following chapter), the evaluation team developed an overall ToC for the GM programme as well as one ToC for each of the five university programmes and VLHORA (see annex). These constituted, as explained in the previous chapter, the theoretical basis for the contribution analysis. In order to give consideration to the decentralised nature of the GM programme and to analyse the 'mechanisms of change' of the GM programme in sufficient depth, the evaluation concentrated on two selected impact hypotheses – including corresponding "mechanisms of change" between the instruments and the output level – per university programme.

To select impact hypotheses per programme that not only represent the overall GM programme's priorities and the diversity of approaches under the GM programme but that are also relevant to the respective university programmes, short telephone interviews were conducted prior to the final selection of hypotheses. Those interviews with the ICOS of the six GM programmes were used to validate and, if necessary, adapt, the developed ToC, and to gather information on the knowledge interests and priorities perceived for each university programme. Based on these interviews, Syspons made suggestions as to which two impact hypotheses per programme the evaluation should focus on. The evaluation team thereby took into account that the overall selection of impact hypotheses represents both the programme's priorities as well as the diversity of approaches under the GM programme. This suggestion was presented and discussed with representatives of all six GM programmes and VLIR-UOS during the inception workshop on February 6th, 2020. Using consensus-oriented methods this suggestion was discussed and consolidated with representatives of each of the five university programmes and the VLHORA as well as DGD and VLIR-UOS during the inception workshop. Based on the workshop's results, the following **twelve impact hypotheses** were selected to be analysed in detail during the field missions (see table 1²).

² The following table additionally indicates whether the selected instrument had already existed prior to GM and it provides an overview of the distribution of reviewed instruments across universities.

Table 1 | Selected impact hypotheses

#	Impact hypothesis (related to specific instruments funded by GM)	Institution implementing the instrument that was selected for a field mission (focus of analysis)	Existence of the instrument prior to GM ³	Other institutions implementing the same ⁴ or a similar instrument ⁵
a.	If development-relevant courses (e.g. English-taught interdisciplinary course 'Global Justice' or 'Debating Development') are integrated into current curricula, a development dimension is integrated into the existing educational offer.	University of Antwerp	Yes	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Hasselt University, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
b.	If alumni activities for Alumni from the Global South are organized (from the funding to the 'Small Great Projects'), the institutions' capacity to organize high quality (international) development-relevant training and/or to integrate development-relevant aspects into (existing) trainings is built/strengthened/deepened/retained and a development dimension is integrated into higher education.	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	No	/
c.	If the institution supports staff/group mobility, exchange between students and staff from the South and students and staff from the institution is enhanced and a development dimension is integrated into higher education and research.	Vrije Universiteit Brussel	Yes	All Flemish HEI
d.1	If PhD scholarships are granted, concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas takes place and knowledge and expertise are generated through PhD-research in a coherent and focused way in Belgium and in the South. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Yes	University of Antwerp, Hasselt University, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
d.2	If predoctoral visits for potential PhD candidates from UOS-developing countries are supported, the institutions' expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up and the quality of PhD research is improved. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Hasselt University	No	/
e.	If capacity is built among junior PhD researchers and postdoc researchers through Operational Grants, development related research is promoted among junior researchers and	Ghent University	No	/

³ The statement only concerns the implementation of the specific instrument at the institution selected as focus of analysis, i.e. for a field mission.

⁴ Only applicable to the 'standardized' instruments XREI (outgoing and incoming staff mobility), the REI (travel grants for students) and PhD grants for students from the North or the South for research with a specific development focus (incl. sandwich PhDs) although specific modalities of implementation (e.g. selection systems) can vary.

⁵ Due to varying modalities and conditions at the respective HEI, comparability of the instruments is however limited (see also chapter 3.1.5).

#	Impact hypothesis (related to specific instruments funded by GM)	Institution implementing the instrument that was selected for a field mission (focus of analysis)	Existence of the instrument prior to GM ³	Other institutions implementing the same ⁴ or a similar instrument ⁵
	additional means help them to overcome the extra costs related to development related topics. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.			
f.1	If staff mobility for initiating international partnerships is supported, research-based partnerships with institutions in developing countries are strengthened/deepened and new international partnerships/thematic networks are explored. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges.	Hasselt University	Yes	All Flemish HEI
f.2	Through multi-stakeholder calls, high-quality research proposals for development-relevant research are developed in cooperation with non-governmental organisations (NGO)s. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	No	/
g.	Through Centres of Expertise on Sustainable (Interuniversity) Development Cooperation (RP/ITN/SIP), development-relevant research and policy studies are implemented, and the institution enhances its expertise on development-related subjects. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Ghent University	No ⁶	/
h.	If the institution organizes one thematic conference per year, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	VLHORA	No ⁷	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, University of Antwerp, Vrije Universiteit Brussel
i.	If travel grants are given out (in combination with preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. for travel grant recipients), students are informed, sensitized, and mobilized and become more aware of development cooperation problems.	VLHORA	Yes	All Flemish HEI
j.	Through awareness-raising campus initiatives, development education and solidarity-based global citizenship are strengthened. Like that, students, employees, and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs are more aware of development cooperation problems.	University of Antwerp	Yes	VLHORA, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Ghent University, University of Hasselt

⁶ An exception are the regional platforms (RP), which already existed prior to GM. ITN and SIP were created through GM.

⁷ Only related to the VLHORA's annual thematic conference.

3.3 Implementation of the evaluation

The *Mid-term Evaluation of the Global Minds Programme* was implemented in three phases: an inception phase, a data collection (including six short remote field missions) phase, and a synthesis, analysis and reporting phase.

Figure 2 | Implementation of the evaluation



Source: Syspons, 2020

3.3.1 Inception Phase

The objective of the inception phase was to get a detailed overview over the GM programme, to identify all relevant analytical aspects for the evaluation and summarize them in an analytical framework and evaluation grid for this evaluation.

The evaluation was started with a kick-off meeting in Brussels on December 20th, 2019. At this meeting, Syspons presented its proposed evaluation design and detailed planning of the mid-term evaluation and clarified the methodological and organizational aspects of the evaluation. The kick-off meeting also contributed to a better understanding of the GM programme, including its genesis and institutional history.

Subsequently, the evaluation team carried out a desk research of strategic and programme documents of the GM programme such as the call for proposals, the report of the GM assessment commission and corresponding management responses, the overview document of application and selection procedures, proposals, annual progress reports, etc. This desk research served the purpose of gaining a thorough understanding of the concepts, objectives, the organization, and the processes of the programme, both at the level of the overall GM programme (VLIR-UOS) and at the level of the individual programmes (Flemish institutions). In addition, it served as a first step to develop a categorisation of the funded instruments, which formed the basis of the SWOT analysis (see [chapter 3.1](#)) and was also reflected in the evaluation grid. The Flemish HEI were thereby given the opportunity – in addition to general background documentation from VLIR-UOS – to provide the evaluation team with additional information, so the data set on each individual programme is slightly different.

Based on the results of the desk research, the evaluation team developed a ToC for each of the five university programmes and VLHORA that constituted the theoretical basis for the contribution analysis. These ToCs were validated with the ICOS of the respective programme in telephone interviews, which took place before the inception workshop. Moreover, these interviews were used to gather information on the knowledge interests and priorities perceived for each university programme, in particular with regard to the impact hypotheses outlined in the ToC (see [chapter 3.2](#) for more information on the impact hypotheses). The final selection of hypotheses was decided upon jointly by the HEI, DGD and VLIR-UOS as part of the inception workshop. The aim was thereby to ensure that – to the extent possible – the overall selection of impact hypotheses represents both the programme's priorities as well as the diversity of approaches under the GM programme.

Based on these previous steps, the team developed an evaluation grid which summarized all evaluation questions, their operationalisation and data collection methods. The evaluation grid can be found in the annex of this report.

A first draft of the inception note was presented and discussed in a workshop with VLIR-UOS and representatives of each of the five university programmes and VLHORA on February 6th, 2020. All comments and written feedback were incorporated into the final inception note, which was submitted by February 27th, 2020.

3.3.2 Data Collection Phase

The objective of the subsequent data collection phase was to collect a valid and comprehensive data base on which the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the GM programme could be evaluated.

The main means to collect the necessary data to answer the evaluation questions, were six two-day (online) field missions to the respective universities and VLHORA. For these field missions, the evaluation team developed a portfolio consisting of interview guides, a template for internal documentation as well as concepts and data collection tools for the implementation of focus groups and the SWOT analysis. Relevant interview partners and participants in focus group discussions were identified based on an “ideal informant profile” developed by Syspons to ensure comparability between the field missions.

All six missions started with an interview with the respective programme manager (ICOS) and, eventually, other staff (previously) involved in the implementation of GM. Further interviews were conducted with the academic authorities (rector, vice-rectors, etc.), general manager(s) of the university, members of the Bureau UOS, academic staff responsible for GM and/or representative(s) from the financial office, personnel office or international students’ office. These interviews served the purpose to get an overview on how the institution chose to implement and interpret GM and to answer questions related to the relevance of the overall programme to the respective institution. During the second day of each mission, 1-2 focus group discussions per impact hypothesis were conducted with academics and/or (PhD) students involved in the respective activities (beneficiaries). The focus group discussions were framed by the guiding questions of the SWOT analysis and gathered further in-depth evidence on the selected impact hypotheses, i.e. the effectiveness of the chosen instruments. They also allowed to address questions related to the selection systems for the respective instruments as well as their “value for money”. Finally, one focus group discussion with broader stakeholders who did not directly benefit from GM, was conducted per field mission. This discussion was expected to provide information on the selection process, alternative funding sources or the broader perception of GM at the institution. All missions ended with a debriefing with the relevant stakeholders, incl. the GM programme manager at VLIR-UOS.

3.3.3 Synthesis, Analysis and Reporting Phase

The objective of the reporting phase was to analyse, synthesize and systematize all evaluation findings in a clear and concise report.

Once the field missions were concluded, the evaluation team systematically aggregated and synthesized all collected data using the evaluation grid. The analysis was carried out along the evaluation criteria, evaluation questions as well as indicators or descriptors. Thereby, a data and method triangulation took place, including an internal synthesis workshop. This internal workshop was equally used to identify first options for recommendations which resulted from the findings of the evaluation. On the basis of these options, the evaluation team developed recommendations by taking into consideration all perspectives of the involved experts and the findings of the different data collection methods. In this

regard, particular attention was paid to the fact that all recommendations are specific, measurable, acceptable, relevant as well as time bound and address specific stakeholders, thus being usable for both VLIR-UOS and the universities and university colleges. Moreover, the evaluation team updated the overall ToC of the Global Minds programme in order to fit both the VLIR-UOS Belgium programme and its South portfolio. It is based on the evidence collected through the evaluation.

On the basis of the synthesized results, Syspons submitted a draft of the evaluation report to VLIR-UOS on May 3rd, 2020. The findings of the evaluation report were presented to VLIR-UOS, Bureau members and representatives of the respective GM programmes and other relevant stakeholders in a restitution session on May 18th, 2020. In this session, the suggested recommendations were discussed and developed further with all stakeholders in order to generate broad ownership for the evaluation's results. A future ToC for the Global Minds programme was developed based on the results of the restitution session. All received feedback was incorporated into the report by Syspons and a and the final evaluation report was submitted by June 30th, 2020.

4. Evaluation results

4.1 Evaluation criteria: Relevance

The evaluation criterion of relevance focusses on the extent to which an intervention's objectives and practical implementation correspond to the beneficiaries' needs and priorities as well as their strategic requirements. In short, it asks the question: "Are we doing the right thing?". Therefore, the evaluation examined whether the GM programme met the needs of its beneficiaries, i.e. academics and students of Flemish HEI (in accordance with the overall GM objective, as defined by the Flemish HEI and VLIR-UOS and approved by DGD). With respect to the institutions, it assessed whether the GM programme provided added value as compared to other or previous funding sources, and to what extent the programme could be linked to or anchored in the institutions' own policy ambitions. Finally, the evaluation team assessed the GM programme's internal and external coherence and alignment with strategic reference frameworks.

4.1.1 Analysis of the Global Minds programme's relevance

4.1.1.1 Needs orientation and added value of the Global Minds programme

Due to its decentralised character (see [chapter 2](#)), the GM programme was designed to meet different needs at the level of the institutions, their researchers and staff members, and students. At the level of the institutions, first, these include the initiation of international or UDC partnerships, an increase in research or student mobility, linking up with "bright minds" from the Global South (international students, researchers and teachers), and profile building. The programme, moreover, aims to address specific needs of academics and researchers, namely an intensification of research on development-relevant research and exploration of new or innovative development-relevant research topics, and the establishment of relevant networks or contacts for either development-relevant research or performance of university cooperation for development. With regards to education, another need was identified with the development of new didactic methods and training components, and the diversification of the study body and content. Third, also students were identified as beneficiaries of the programme. In this regard, needs identified from the desk research included an expansion of the educational offer with regards to development-related questions and a broadening of perspective through opportunities to engage with global topics regardless of the own study programme. Opportunities to conduct small research projects (e.g. master's theses) or internships abroad and to participate in study trips as well as an increased interculturality complete the list of students' needs.

Interviews with HEI's **staff and management** confirmed the overall relevance of the programme to strengthen capacities to perform effective university cooperation. Those capacities were, however, found to vary to a large degree between the different institutions: Whereas some have vast experience both in development cooperation and development-related research, others, although they have been active in development cooperation for years, have not integrated development-orientation as part of their "institutional DNA". A third group of institutions described a need to "catch up" with the other Flemish HEI with regards to the implementation of UDC. As the programme allows universities to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions, GM was found flexible enough to respond to different "levels" of experience in development cooperation of the Flemish HEI: Institutions that are more experienced in implementing development cooperation highlighted that GM would allow them to broaden the network for UDC at the universities, including "new" faculties and departments, "new" professors and especially

young researchers, and to make UDC issues accessible and known beyond specialized study and research programmes. In addition, interview partners stressed that GM provides an opportunity to reinforce existing thematic or regional foci of the individual institutions, e.g. on Sub-Saharan Africa or development policy research. Experienced institutions also expressed a need to explore new avenues to (larger, e.g. EU funded) UDC projects implemented in the Global South, for example through collaborations and exchange with other universities in Europe. This would be necessary, it was argued, to account for limited budgets for UDC in Belgium vis-à-vis the growing network for UDC. This need still can currently not be met through GM as it focusses on partnerships with HEI in the Global South.

Good practice example: Broadening the “audience” of UDC

Due to decades of experience in conducting UDC projects in the Global South, the University of Antwerp belongs to the more experienced institutions in development cooperation. However, before Global Minds, UDC as well as related debates almost exclusively occurred at the Institute of Development Policy (Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsbeleid, IOB) and the Global Health Institute. During the field mission, it was acknowledged that today applicants for UDC projects stem from a wider circle of faculties. The “audience” of UDC is further broadened as students from all study programmes have access to development-related, university-wide elective courses. On the other side, university colleges tend to be relatively new actors in UDC. Nevertheless, GM equally allowed them to become more active in UDC (see the next box) and to increase the reach of UDC beyond the “usual suspects”. HOGENT provides an example therefore: Here, the agro-biotechnology department had been most active in DC. But more recently, and at least partly through GM funded staff (XREI) and student mobility (Small Intensive Programmes, SIP), engagement in UDC could be extended to the faculty of business management, which is shown in a SIP organized with an Ugandan HEI in January 2020.

For institutions less experienced in development cooperation, in contrast, a main focus lay on “catching up” through increasing the number of proposals, their quality (e.g. their alignment with the requirements of VLIR-UOS and logic of development cooperation projects) and hence the number of South projects being (successfully) implemented. In that regard, mobility of academics to explore and initiate partnerships were seen as the main means to this end (e.g. through networking, joint proposal writing). Other instruments, for example thematic conferences, were further mentioned as allowing less experienced institutions to learn, but also to build a reputation as (new) actors in Belgian UDC.

Good practice example: Increasing the number of South projects

Both at the level of VLHORA and at the level of individual university colleges, the number of South projects increased over the last three years: Whereas in 2010, only one university college implemented a South project, the number increased to 11 new projects in 2019 and 2020 respectively (19 submitted proposals in 2019). This overall picture was found reflected by the two university colleges that were part of the field mission. As such, AP Antwerpen mentioned that prior to GM no South projects were organised, this number rose to three South Initiatives currently being implemented.

Regarding the programme’s ability to respond to the institutions’ own policy priorities, analysis also examined to what extent (capacity for) development cooperation is embedded within the institutions’ internationalisation policies. Here, data from the field missions revealed that, again, a difference is visible between more and less (in UDC) experienced institutions. For experienced institutions, also the institutional integration and recognition of development cooperation was high. In contrast, less experienced institutions still struggled with a relative isolation of development cooperation at the institutional level. Recognition, however, increases gradually, e.g. through institutional structures being set-up through GM (see below). Nevertheless, all interviewees agreed that cooperation with the Global South constitutes

an integral part of their institution's efforts towards more internationalisation (with, eventually, different expectation towards partner HEI from the Global South and from the North in terms of resources and reciprocity) and that the enhancement of capacities is therefore an outcome of the GM programme.

Irrespective of the level of experience of the universities, GM furthermore meets a need at the level of individuals. **Professors and researchers** – especially those less experienced with UDC – pointed out that GM is relevant as it sets a low threshold to participate in development cooperation. “Newcomers” to development cooperation, furthermore, saw GM as a steppingstone for smaller South projects such as the VLIR-UOS funded South Initiatives (SI). More experienced professors added that GM creates a momentum for UDC, and that the programme allowed them to “recruit”, in particular, new researchers for UDC or to increase awareness for UDC and development-related topics (e.g. in research). Furthermore, interviewees confirmed that GM met a need to innovate and explore new approaches to strengthening global engagement. Here, academics with a long-term background in development cooperation highlighted that GM functions as an innovator, allowing them and the institution to take up new trends in development cooperation such as working on a “decolonization of knowledge”, or a more holistic approach to global engagement⁸ or sustainability as compared to the “classic” North/South divide. In this regard, GM also fills a gap as compared to other funding sources. Interviewed professors and researchers stated that GM offers funding for activities for which funds previously did not exist, or which are not funded by other funding parties. A need is filled, in particular, by providing funds for the preparation for proposals or the exploration of new programmes, and for research stays and work placements in developing countries that are excluded by the eligibility criteria of other funding sources. Other gaps left by other funding sources are closer linked to the institutions' level of experience and own policies. An indicator therefore is that individual GM programmes including such “unique” instruments as pre-doctoral visits for future PhD candidates from the Global South, specific funding instruments to get Post-Docs acquainted with UDC, the opportunity for reciprocal (North-South and South-North) mobility (e.g. to build new partnerships), or to fund alumni activities. In line with GM's “image” as an innovator, those activities were referred to as “pilots” that may – in case they are successful – be taken over through budgets made available by the universities and university colleges. As perceived by some interviewed academics, a need persists in the recognition of UDC for their personal career. In light of the objectives of GM, this is not only a personal matter, but an important hindering factor in getting more, especially young, researchers interested in development cooperation. However, it should be noted positively here, that some HEI have already reacted to this demand by including UDC in the staff evaluation criteria (e.g. Ghent University, KU Leuven, the University of Antwerp, or, very recently, VUB).

Needs were furthermore met for a third group of beneficiaries: the **students**. According to the interviewed students, travel grants were perceived as highly relevant as they provide valuable support for their undertaking to do research or an internship abroad and to adequately prepare for the mobility (see [chapter 4.2.1.8](#) for a more detailed assessment). In addition, new study programmes were perceived as highly relevant by responding to a need to expand the range of a specialized development-oriented educational offer; and thematically related courses that are available to a broader group of students were said to respond to a need to sensitize students on their own relation to global challenges. A majority of interviewed students, however, was already interested in development cooperation before their initial contact with a GM funded activity.

⁸ During the field missions, the framework “Global Engagement in Higher Education: An Inspirational Framework” (see https://globalminds.vlirhora.be/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/FINAL-TXT-Global-Engagement_EN.pdf) used by the university colleges was mentioned as a good practice example in this regard.

When asked for the main added values of Global Minds as compared to the previous ‘Operational Costs Programme’, interviewees from the Flemish HEI overall pointed out **three main added values** of the current programme:

1. Starting from a multitude of previous funding instruments (including but not limited to the ‘Operational Costs Programme’) and a fragmented “landscape” of stakeholders of UDC at the institutions, the application process for GM encouraged institutions to **take stock of existing initiatives** and reflect on their added value. It moreover allowed to unite actors in UDC under one roof. This argument was brought forward in particular by interview partners from more experienced institutions. Less experienced institutions as well as their more experienced counterparts highlighted that GM was used to set-up institutional structures or (better) coordination mechanisms for a more strategic approach towards UDC, which is inter alia reflected in a growing recognition of development cooperation in the institutions’ internationalisation strategies and criteria for staff evaluation.
2. GM allowed institutions to **keep instruments that were important to them** (e.g. PhDs, mobilities, travel grants). The programme’s breadth and flexibility (see [chapter 2](#)) allowed to flexibly integrate it in the already existing policies and strategies of the institutions. In this regard it could be adjusted in terms of goals and objectives to the needs of the university. Therefore, the ownership for GM is high at the universities and VLHORA due to its decentralised design and relative openness to adapt to changing needs.
3. GM met a need to **innovate and explore new approaches** to strengthening global engagement. As indicated earlier, interview partners highlighted that GM functions as an innovator allowing researchers and institutions to take up new trends in development cooperation (e.g. working on a “decolonization of knowledge” or aligning UDC to the SDGs). In this regard, it was indicated that GM also fills a gap left by other, including previous, funding sources.

On the other hand, interviewed professors and researchers also stated that they would need more funding for PhDs, and it was criticized that PhDs have to “share” the budget with a variety of other instruments. Here, the argument was made that although the GM programme in general offers the opportunity to include sandwich PhDs into the institutions’ own programmes, it cannot fully substitute for the previous VLADOC and ICP PhDs funding.

4.1.1.2 Internal coherence of Global Minds

Internal coherence analyses the results orientation of the programme as well as the contribution of the chosen activities to contribute to the objectives of the overarching GM programme, including Global Citizenship. As the latter question will be analysed in more depth in chapter 4.2 with regards to the specific instruments (see impact hypotheses, [chapter 3.2](#)), this chapter analyses internal coherence only at the level of the individual programme’s orientation towards the common framework and objectives of Global Minds as outlined by the ToC (see [chapter 2](#) and annex). Cooperation among each other, in addition, increases the individual programme’s impact with regard to the overall programme logic and is therefore also analysed from the point of view of internal coherence.

At the level of the specific and general objectives, the GM programmes can be considered in line with the overarching ToC of VLIR-UOS (see also reconstructed ToC in the annex). Overall, all three elements – research, education, and sensitization – are reflected in the programmes, although to varying degrees.⁹ By leaving the institutions room to work out programmes that fit their institutional priorities and

⁹ The overall ToC and ToCs for all six GM programmes are included in the annex.

allow them to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions, the GM programme has spawned a wide variety of approaches to fostering (academic) capacity to effectively implement and sensitize for development cooperation. The collected evidence, however, reveals a strong overall tendency towards research in the Flemish HEI' GM programmes. Spill-overs exist from research-oriented instruments (e.g. research-oriented scholarships, outgoing mobility for academics, small research grants for Post-Docs) towards the specific objective to integrate a development-dimension into the education of the Flemish HEI. But education, overall, is not implemented with the same level of ambition as the research objective. Sensitization of students, as part of the third specific objective, also plays a subordinate role in the programmes. The only exemptions from this picture are the University of Antwerp, which through the University Foundation for Development Cooperation (USOS) already had a strong tradition in awareness raising long before GM, and VLHORA, where travel grants make up the largest part of the funding. Sensitization and awareness raising among researchers or teachers for development cooperation, in contrast, is a focus in all institutional GM programmes.

Some approaches were found not only fitting the (initial) set of specific and general objectives of GM but also another (implicit or potential future) objective of Global Minds (see recommendations): Inter-university cooperation between Flemish universities and university colleges, and joint learning. Conferences, in addition to contributing to the research objective, improve collaboration among the institutions and the quality of the implementation of UDC instruments (see [chapter 4.2.1.4](#) for a detailed analysis). The latter is also an aim of small research projects that capitalize on previous initiatives carried out in the past (namely, ICP) and hence facilitate learning for improving the implementation of specific instruments.

Cooperation, finally, increases the individual programme's impact with regard to the overall programme logic and subsequently contributes to internal coherence. According to the interviewed GM programme managers, contact with and knowledge of other GM programmes, is still relatively limited but increasing: Besides formal ICOS meetings, also informal exchanges are organised. Some more institutionalised sharing of expertise moreover exists with the university colleges through regional "associations" as well as within VLHORA. In individual cases, instruments offered by universities were also accessible for students of the university colleges, e.g. development-relevant course or calls for awareness-raising activities. Anecdotal evidence was moreover found that, on a case-by-case basis, costs are shared for incoming mobilities, and GM funds are used or pulled together to fund common activities. All in all, synergies or complementarity, however, are not (yet) actively or systematically pursued. Nevertheless, institutions voiced some openness towards more exchange or collaboration in the future.

4.1.1.3 External coherence of Global Minds and alignment with strategic reference frameworks

External coherence analyses to what extent the individual GM programmes are in synergy or complementarity with the VLIR-UOS South portfolio, the Belgium programme of VLIR-UOS, and the actions of other Belgian actors of non-governmental cooperation (ANGC).

Regarding the **VLIR-UOS South portfolio**, Global Minds functions as a catalyst for better UDC projects. Therefore, the data suggests that fact finding missions and other activities, which contribute to developing proposals for South projects, are the main link between the GM programmes and the VLIR-UOS South portfolio. In addition, increased capacity in development-relevant research and education as well as awareness for development cooperation among researchers and students are a prerequisite to perform effective university cooperation with partners in the Global South (see also [chapter 2](#)). Several GM programmes, moreover, comprise funding mechanisms – small research grants for junior researchers

(see [chapter 4.2.1.3](#)) – which are partly implemented in the Global South. In contrast to the VLIR-UOS South portfolio, the primary objective here is, however, not developmental impact but to allow young researchers to gather experience in the implementation of UDC and thematically related research projects. GM funding is also – on a case-by-case basis – used to supplement South projects with travel grants that are not available in other project funding (e.g. due to limitations to mobilities or lack of funding for mobilities) and to bridge the gap between initial contacts and more sophisticated UDC projects (e.g. through the afore mentioned funding mechanisms for small research projects, or setting up a student exchange). Again, the finality of the activities here mainly lies in building sustainable partnerships with partners in the South and hence contributes to the objectives of Global Minds. GM funding, finally, is also aligned with regulations regarding the South portfolio as funding is only provided for activities (e.g. mobilities) related to countries from the VLIR-UOS country list.

Regarding the **Belgium programme of VLIR-UOS**, tangible linkages were only mentioned with regards to the International Master Programme (ICP) funding master courses of one to two years on a development-oriented subject at a Flemish university. These equally contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the education of the Flemish universities. On a more general level, GM programmes were found broadly in line with the JSF for Belgium: Development-relevant scientific research (B2) is generally deployed by all GM programmes except for VLHORA. The same accounts for the training of scholars from the South as change-makers in their own society (and Belgium) (C3). This broad objective is mainly pursued through PhD scholarships. The objective to mainstream and embed a solidarity-based global citizenship (B1), in contrast, was only explicitly referred to by stakeholders of VLHORA's and the University of Antwerp's institutional programmes. It is however plausible that the other GM programmes can contribute to the objective through activities in the field of sensitization even though this has not been explicitly stated. The GM programme's contributions to the objective C1 (Belgians are informed and their awareness is raised for justice, solidarity, sustainability as well as equality in the world) equally has not been stated explicitly except for a few programmes who open up activities to the general public. Finally, GM programmes were found to contribute to the objective to strengthen ANGIC in selected cases (collaborations with the University Foundation for Development Cooperation (UCOS) and USOS, for example, strengthens the capacities or increases the professionalisation of those organisations; campus initiatives are often eligible for funding from GM) although this is not a priority to the programmes.

Regarding **complementarity and synergy to actions of other Belgian ANGIC**, again, complementarity is not pursued systematically. Synergies, however, are realized with regards to awareness-raising activities. At the University of Antwerp, for example, it was mentioned that a collaboration was established with the Flemish non-governmental organisation (NGO) 11.11.11 for movie screenings through which both parties could a larger and new audience while pooling resources.

4.1.2 Assessment of the Global Minds Programme's relevance

Based on the analysis above, the evaluators conclude that the Global Minds programme, overall, meets the needs of its beneficiaries, i.e. academics and students at Flemish HEI. At the institutional level, the programme's decentralised character furthermore allows to respond to different "levels" of experience in development cooperation of the Flemish HEI and hence to meet the needs of the institutions. Like that, institutions that are more experienced in implementing development cooperation use GM to broaden the "audience" for UDC at the universities by extending UDC to new departments, faculties, professors and, especially, junior researchers. For institutions less experienced in development cooperation, in contrast, a main focus lay on "catching up" through increasing the number of proposals, the proposals' quality and hence the number of South projects they implement.

Integration of GM into the universities' own policies and formats, however, varies: Whereas more experienced universities tend to use GM to actively reinforce their "comparative advantages" (e.g. a general research, a regional or a thematic focus), less experienced institutions emphasized Global Minds' "programme character" with the main objective to inform, sensitize and mobilize more stakeholders of HEI for UDC. The field missions moreover proved that another added value of GM consists in allowing institutions to take stock of existing initiatives and setting up institutional structures and coordination mechanisms that unite all stakeholders of UDC under one roof.

With regard to internal coherence, GM programmes are considered in line with the overarching specific and general objectives. The collected evidence, however, reveals a strong tendency towards research – at the expense of education and sensitization – in the Flemish HEI' GM programmes, as well as wide variety of different approaches aiming at the given objectives. Some approaches, moreover, proved to fit not only the (initial) set of specific and general objectives of GM but also another (implicit) objective of Global Minds, which we recommend to make more explicit in the future (see [chapter 6](#)): Interuniversity cooperation between Flemish universities und university colleges and joint learning.

Overall, this diversity of individual GM programmes strictly speaking is at odds with internal coherence. However, as stated above, the decentralised character of Global Minds was found essential to ensure the programme is relevant to the institutions. This points towards a first fundamental dilemma within GM: While sufficient breadth and flexibility in the programme's conception allow to respond to varying needs and capacities of the beneficiaries, it compromises the internal coherence of the overall programme. With regard to external coherence, GM functions as a catalyst for better UDC projects, including those funded from the VLIR-UOS South portfolio. Synergies or complementarity with the Belgium programme or the actions of other Belgian ANGK (external coherence) are, however, not (yet) actively or systematically pursued.

4.2 Evaluation criteria: Effectiveness

The criterion of effectiveness centres on the extent to which the programme's objectives are expected to be achieved and which factors mainly influence this achievement or non-achievement. Therefore, the evaluation examined twelve selected impact hypotheses that overall represent the variety of approaches funded by GM. The analysis thereby concentrated on their (expected) contribution to the programme's objectives as well as success and hindering factors in their implementation. In addition, the evaluation team assessed to what extent the programme's monitoring of results and outcomes is being done on the basis of objectively verifiable indicators and to what extent risk management is considered.

4.2.1 Analysis of the Global Minds programme's effectiveness based on impact hypotheses

As shown in the initial ToC (see [chapter 2](#)), the GM programme tries to enhance Flemish HEI's capacities with regard to development cooperation in three dimensions: Research, education and sensitization (through at least one intervention being realized per dimension). To achieve the specific objective related to research (*"A development dimension is integrated into the research of the Flemish HEI in accordance with the priorities of the institutions"*), it funds different instruments reaching from incoming and outgoing mobility, PhD scholarships, alumni activities and small research grants, to thematic networks and conferences. The field missions hereby showed that most programmes and programmes' instruments focus on the research component and that universities successfully integrate a development dimension into their research (see also below). Moreover, the field missions showed that this integration was even more

successful when the instruments were embedded into the institutional structures and policies of the institution and when they were co-financed (see below).

The second dimension of the GM programme focusses on education (*“A development dimension is integrated into the education of the Flemish HEI in accordance with the priorities of the institutions”*). This objective is pursued through the set-up of development-related training components, incoming and outgoing (student) mobility and “spill-overs” from development-related research. Hereby, the field missions revealed an overall positive tendency, meaning that more development-relevant education is offered as compared to the start of GM. However, the education dimension is not pursued to the same extent as the research dimension by most GM programmes.

The third dimension of Global Minds is sensitization (*“Students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs are more aware of development cooperation problems”*). This objective is, mainly, pursued through outgoing mobility that is linked to preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. as well as awareness-raising campus events or initiatives. “Spill-overs” from the other two dimensions (e.g. mobilities being linked to developing proposals for South projects, or PhDs and small research grants creating opportunities for new partnerships), moreover, are foreseen to inform, sensitize and mobilize researchers and students for development cooperation. The latter objective is an integral part of all GM programmes. Sensitization and awareness raising among students and the general public, as data gathered during the field missions shows, in most cases is still in its infancy. The accessibility of instruments and their reach among students are a main hindering factor here (see below).

As a programme evaluation comprising a total of six Global Minds programmes with various and varying interventions realized from the GM funding, conclusions on the programme’s effectiveness can only be drawn on a general level (see also [chapter 3.1.5](#)). A closer look is taken at the twelve selected impact hypotheses and corresponding instruments (see [chapter 3.2](#)) with regards to their contribution to the programme’s objectives. Good practice examples thereby illustrate the findings and are intended to initiate an exchange between GM programmes.

4.2.1.1 Incoming and outgoing staff mobility

For the instrument of incoming and outgoing staff mobility, two complementary impact hypotheses were analysed:

- *If staff mobility for initiating international partnerships is supported, research-based partnerships with institutions in developing countries are strengthened/deepened and new international partnerships/thematic networks are explored. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges.*
- *If the institution supports staff/group mobility, exchange between students and staff from the South and students and staff from the institution is enhanced and a development dimension is integrated into higher education and research.*

Data gathered during the field missions shows that outgoing staff mobility, which had been the focus of the discussions, is used to look for potential research collaborations or internship options, to prepare project proposals and to conduct field research.

Staff mobility hence contributes to the objective of more and better UDC through initiating proposals or projects and through preparing researchers for the application of funding on the field of DC. Across institutions, the “low (financial) risk – high gain”-logic hereby was highlighted, meaning that with limited financial resources the instrument of incoming and outgoing staff mobility provides a gateway to more

intensive collaboration. This includes but is not limited to VLIR-UOS funded South projects such as South Initiatives (SI) and TEAM projects. To make the most of the instrument with regards to the initiation of new partnerships and projects, a mandatory formalization of (new) collaborations, e.g. in the form of project proposals submitted after the mobility, was identified as a success factor. In contrast, data gathered during the field missions suggests that the instrument is less suitable to conduct field research as per diem and travel costs are limited to a maximum of 21 days¹⁰ and researchers often need more time in the region to do field research.

In addition to the initial impact hypothesis, further attention was given to the fact that staff mobility provides a low threshold to gather experience in a developing country context and hence contributes to attracting (young) researchers to UDC. This potential is, however, restrained by the risk that it does not reach out to the target group, or that the instrument is not sufficiently attractive to them, which manifests itself for example in the fact that it attracts less applicants to the calls than desired. The institutions provided several good practice examples to react to the given challenge: First, application, selection, (financial) administration and reporting for the mobility programmes are kept simple to keep the threshold low enough for researchers. Second, co-funding of per diems from the institution's own resources facilitates the financial administration and provides for a more "comfortable" budget (although it was stated by beneficiaries that the fixed budget still does not always fully cover expenses in more remote areas). Third, further simplification can be provided by calls that do not differentiate between countries eligible to VLIR-UOS funding and others, as this differentiation was perceived as not always clear, especially to newcomers in development cooperation. Another hindering factor that was named especially by less experienced institutions and researchers is a perceived "gap" between GM funding for mobilities to initiate partnerships or funding for field work in the Global South and the next "level" of development cooperation, i.e. smaller South projects. Small research grants (see [chapter 4.2.1.3](#)), however, could bridge this gap to a certain extent.

Good practice example: Co-funding GM funding for outgoing staff mobility with own funding for non-eligible destinations

The "DIOS mobility programme" of the University of Hasselt provides funding for incoming and outgoing mobilities for researchers and staff members of the International Office. The funding from Global Minds thereby is integrated into the general activities/policy of the university. This means the programme provides for applications both to countries being and not being part of the VLIR-UOS country list (and hence mobilities eligible and non-eligible for GM funding). In the case a mobility is not eligible for GM, it is funded from the university's own resources. Moreover, co-funding from the faculty and research group makes up a part of each mobility to fund per diems. (Newer) mobility calls of the University of Hasselt, moreover, explicitly advise researchers to formalize collaboration when they visit new possible partners. This change was made based on the observation that in the past, this was not always automatically been thought off.

Apart from the instrument's contribution to initiating new research partnerships, the field missions further showed that outgoing staff mobility is also used to look for internship options or to explore opportunities for group travels that both integrate development-related training components in curricula. Therefore, staff mobility is linked up with other GM funded instruments such as international internships or study trips for students. The mobility thereby is used to initiate or explore institutional partnerships suitable for the respective instruments that contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the educational offer. Development-relevance in education is further pursued through incoming academics (funding for

¹⁰ For the university colleges (VLHORA), the maximum duration of an XREI is 7 days.

incoming mobility) from the Global South. Finally, the argument was made that that through teachers' own experience (e.g. mobility, DC projects), students are increasingly being confronted with a broader reality. However, the intended effect here is subject to a relatively long impact chain. Only anecdotal evidence could be found for a more immediate effect in this regard, i.e. using mobility to update curricula. In one case, for example, a faculty used incoming mobility to invite a group of experts from the South on topics related to interculturality and digitalization. The outcomes of the discussions were integrated in two new mandatory courses. The second hypothesis that outgoing and incoming staff mobility enhances exchange between students and staff from the South and students and staff from the institution can nevertheless be confirmed.

In light of the collected evidence it is suggested to combine both “use cases”, i.e. the initiation or exploration of research collaborations and the initiation or exploration of internship options and “destinations” for study trips, in one updated impact hypothesis.

Updated impact hypothesis:

Outgoing staff mobility (for researchers and other university staff) aims at exploring or initiating (new) partnerships with HEI and other relevant actors (e.g. NGOs) in the Global South. Outgoing staff mobility, moreover, can contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the education of the institution through, e.g. staff accompanying and facilitating students' study trips, or through integrating their experiences into their education.

4.2.1.2 PhD scholarships

For the instrument of PhD scholarships, two complementary impact hypotheses were analysed:

- *If PhD scholarships are granted, concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas takes place and knowledge and expertise are generated through PhD-research in a coherent and focused way in Belgium and in the South. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*
- *If predoctoral visits for potential PhD candidates from UOS-developing countries are supported, the institutions' expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up and the quality of PhD research is improved. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*

Through Global Minds, PhD scholarships for candidates from the Global South are mostly provided as so-called sandwich PhDs meaning that only two years of the four-year PhD are spent at a Flemish HEI. The other two years, PhD candidates work at their home institution.

With regard to the first impact hypothesis, data gathered during the field missions indeed shows that funding for the PhDs means that research in development-relevant thematic areas is conducted. That means, the GM funding contributes to the existence of such research projects. Moreover, the field missions revealed that an added value of PhD candidates from the Global South – and hence contribution to the overall objective of delivering innovative solutions to global challenges through concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas – consist in bringing in new perspectives on developmental challenges, as well as a better understanding of the respective context. Sandwich PhDs were thereby seen as particularly suitable for projects that require field work in the respective country. On the other hand, the sandwich model was, however, also seen as a potential hindering factor regarding the research quality in more lab-intensive research projects for which the Southern partner often lacks comparable equipment. In this case, GM funded PhD students' time to complete their experiments is shorter

than that of other PhD students that have four years to complete their research. Time – or the lack thereof – was furthermore found a hindering factor for research quality at the home institution: As interviewed PhD students indicated, the scholarship includes less money for living expenses for the time spent at the home university. However, the assumption that living costs would be significantly lower for the students than in Belgium does not always hold. Moreover, due to administrative procedures the scholarship (which has to be disbursed by the home institutions) is often further reduced. Both forces PhD students to work part time (e.g. as teachers at the university), which gives them less time to work on their PhD thesis. This means PhD students are often pressed to complete the research in Flanders within two years. Being able to flexibly adapt the time span spent in Belgium to the research field could – according to the conducted interviews – hence increase the quality of the research conducted.

Another added value of the sandwich format, according to interviewed staff members, consists in the fact that candidates remain engaged with their home universities. This objective, however, does not only lie beyond the Flemish HEI and hence beyond the specific objectives of Global Minds, it also questions the sustainability of the effects at the Flemish universities: PhD students leaving the Flemish universities after completion of their PhDs for their universities is undoubtedly desirable with regards to the developmental impact of higher education cooperation. However, there is a high risk that specific knowledge in development-relevant thematic areas gathered during the PhD research is lost with the graduates. To react to this problem, data gathered for this evaluation suggests that alumni activities (see [chapter 4.2.1.7](#)) could be used to tap alumni's knowledge for inputs to research projects, modules, courses or curricula. The events moreover foster networking between the Flemish university and the alumni which in some cases result in new developmentally relevant research projects and proposals.

In addition, several obstacles were found during the field missions regarding a potential integration of a developmental dimension into the institutions' educational offer. According to the programme logic, PhD students should also contribute to the education objective through teaching and supervising bachelor and master students' theses. The field missions, however, showed that GM-funded PhDs only occasionally take over the supervision of Bachelor or Master theses or contribute to the organisation of study trips. In this regard, the fact that the PhDs only spent two years of their time researching at a Flemish university was considered a challenge, in particular in the case of lab intensive research (see above), as it increases the time pressure for students. In addition, the interviewed supervisors mentioned that PhD candidates from the Global South often do not have the same academic level as Flemish PhD candidates. Catching up with the required level, e.g. through participating in methods courses, in combination with higher time pressure, prevents them from having time to teach themselves. The hypothesis that sandwich PhDs contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the education of the university therefore cannot be confirmed, whereas the hypothesis that sandwich PhDs contribute to more development-relevant research holds true.

Predocutorial visits are another instrument funded by Global Minds which, overall, has the aim to contribute to the same objective, namely promoting that research in development-relevant thematic areas is conducted. At the same time, the instrument offers an opportunity to respond to some of the challenges associated with PhD scholarships: First, according to interviewed university staff and PhD supervisors, predocutorial visits of PhD candidates prior to the PhD – and as part of the application process – allow to screen out applicants who do not fulfil the academic requirements. This means, the future PhD candidates have a higher likelihood to be able to engage in (development-relevant) training for Flemish students. According to the interview partners, conclusions on the academic level hereby are not only possible for individual PhD candidates but also for (future) partner institutions. Thereby they also facilitate the recruitment of future suitable PhD candidates (synergy with the initiation of new partnerships). The

field missions further showed that the predoctoral visits increase the quality of PhD research through providing both candidates and supervisors time to jointly develop high quality research proposals. This is particularly relevant for students from developing countries as they often struggle to find the time to develop their proposals at their home university due to other jobs.

Good practice example: Predoctoral visits to prepare PhDs

Preparatory predoctoral visits are a new instrument initiated through GM at the University of Hasselt. Potential PhD candidates thereby apply for a two-months scholarship at UHasselt to further explore PhD topics and/or finalize their PhD proposal. An added value thereby is the potential to fail: Not all predoctoral “visitors” apply for a PhD – e.g. because expectations were found not matching one another – and not all automatically get accepted by the institution.

The second assumption of the hypothesis that institutions’ expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up through predoctoral visits, however, cannot be confirmed: Supervisors as well as candidates stated that the two months candidates spend in Belgium, are not enough to have an effect at institutional level. The incidence of the intended effect rather depends on the realization of a (sandwich) PhD scholarship (for impact hypotheses see above). It is therefore suggested to update the related impact hypothesis accordingly.

Updated impact hypothesis:

PhD scholarships (incl. pre-doc scholarships, Sandwich PhDs, etc.) contribute to building up HEI’s expertise in specialized development-relevant research and to the actual implementation of concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas. If PhD students’ academic level is sufficient, they are further expected to contribute to increasing developmental relevance in education through teaching and supervision of bachelor or master theses in related research fields. PhD alumni from the Global South may also become partners in future South projects if networks between alumni and Flemish HEI are retained.

4.2.1.3 Small research grants for junior, PhD and Post-Doc researchers

For the instrument of small research funds for junior, PhD and Post-Doc researchers, two impact hypotheses were analysed:

- *If capacity is built among junior PhD researchers and Post-Doc researchers through Operational Grants, development related research is promoted among junior researchers and additional means help them to overcome the extra costs related to development related topics. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*
- *Through multi-stakeholder calls, high-quality research proposals for development-relevant research are developed in cooperation with NGOs. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*

Small research grants, as shown by the field missions, are used to build young researchers’ capacity for future development cooperation projects and development-relevant research. The instruments thereby explicitly target young researchers as only PhD students and Post-Docs and/or researchers who obtained their PhD no longer than 5 years prior to the application are eligible for a grant.

The first hypothesis that development-relevant research is promoted among young researchers is reflected in the statement made by grantees that development-relevant research encouraged them to work further in the field of development cooperation. A simple application procedure and a high chance of

winning thereby, were found to offer a particularly low threshold or incentive for young researchers to work in the field of development cooperation. Furthermore, the instrument successfully supports the integration of developmental research into the research of PhDs and Post-Docs by providing them with funding for field work in the Global South, allowing to conduct and embed research in a development context and get access to research subjects of developmental relevance via NGOs. Expectations with regard to the research output, it was said, must however take into account the relatively limited budget and duration of small research grants. All in all, small research grants were found to successfully provide an incentive for (future/further) research in development-relevant thematic areas.

Good practice examples: Operational Grants and Multi-Stakeholder Projects

With the call for “Operational Grants for doctoral and postdoctoral fellows (OPG)” Ghent University wishes to provide funding to PhD students as well as young postdoctoral fellows to either support and expand their ongoing research on development-related research issues, promote the inclusion of a development cooperation dimension in their ongoing research or initiate university development cooperation research within their department. Therefore, only PhD students and Post-Docs are eligible for a grant.

The Multi-stakeholder projects of KU Leuven are an experimental way to stimulate young researchers to start formulating development relevant research questions in cooperation with other stakeholders from the civil society, both Belgian NGA's, and local NGO's and HEI. Therefore, the respective call only allows for applications from researchers who obtained their PhD no longer than 5 years ago. A particularity of the instrument is that it fosters cooperation with other stakeholders from the civil society. Here, it was argued that these tend to be more flexible to work with than (higher education) institutions and hence offer a suitable “playing field” for inexperienced researchers.

Incentives, however, are sometimes retained through limited recognition for engagement in UDC vis-à-vis publications, etc. (see also [chapter 4.1.1.1](#)) and a relatively high administrative burden connected to the instrument, especially given its short-term nature. An eventual effect of the instrument on institutional capacity building, furthermore, is threatened by the fact that PhDs and Post-Docs have a relatively high chance to leave the university sooner or later, as stated by the interviewed supervisors.

With regard to high quality research proposals, university managers pointed out that the small research grants, moreover, have an effect on the number of proposals submitted and the success rate in VLIR-UOS calls for South projects. For example, it was mentioned that KU Leuven increased their share of successful application from around 22% to 55% on average for SI, TEAMS, JOINT and Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) projects in the last four years. This may not only be due to the given instrument. However, (young) researchers equally mentioned to use or see the grant as a steppingstone for further applications for VLIR-UOS or other (e.g. EU) grants in the field of development. As outlined in [chapter 4.1.1.3](#), the ability to gather first experiences in (smaller) research projects in the South, for obvious reasons creates an overlap with (VLIR-UOS funded) South projects and hence makes it, in individual cases, difficult to draw a clear line between small research grants and small South projects. The same accounts for the reporting, which tends to focus on the developmental impact of the small research grants and not on impact for the researcher and Flemish HEI. However, the finality of the grants, as data from the field missions shows, clearly lies with capacity development for young researchers for whom small research grants often are a first experience of working outside the university.

In addition to the original impact hypothesis, small research grants are also found successful in building individual researchers' capacity outside development cooperation: Here, the experience of having benefited from a small research grants was said to work as a boost for young researchers' confidence. These findings are taken into account by the new impact hypothesis:

Updated impact hypothesis:

Small research grants for junior, PhD and Post-Doc researchers equally aim at building up HEI's expertise in specialized development-relevant research and implementing concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas, especially with regards to field research. The grants additionally promote UDC and development-related research among young researchers and hence contribute to building a 'critical mass' of researchers with an affinity with development cooperation. This includes the initiation of new South projects.

4.2.1.4 Thematic networks and platforms on development-relevant research

For the instrument of thematic networks and platforms, the following impact hypothesis was analysed:

- *Through Centres of Expertise on Sustainable (Interuniversity) Development Cooperation (RP/ITN/SIP), development-relevant research and policy studies are implemented and the institution enhances its expertise on development-related subjects. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*

Thematic networks and regional platforms can take various shapes: They may build partnerships around the institutions' strategic partnerships, e.g. successful IUC. By partnering up with its partners from the South and eventually external stakeholders to find third party funding, they promote research on development-relevant topics and integrate it through lectures, symposia, etc. of the PhDs into the education of the Flemish institution. mo

As found through the field missions, a strength of the thematic networks and platforms lies within their ability to contribute to all three dimensions of the GM programme: They were found to successfully integrate development-relevant topics into the research and education of the institutions and to contribute to the sensitization objective of Global Minds, e.g. through public events. Like that, thematic networks and platforms were said to act as an advocate for development cooperation within the university and for engagement among students, professors and researchers by making development-related research particularly visible at the institution.

Good practice example: Co-funding GM for research foci

A specificity – but also a good practice – of the Centres of Expertise on Sustainable (Interuniversity) Development Cooperation of Ghent University is that they are only partly funded by GM and partly by core funding from the university's internationalization budget. Like that, each International Thematic Networks (ITN) yearly receives 45.000 Euro from the GM budget and 15.000 Euro from general Ghent University funds. Regional Platforms (RP) (the Africa platform, CESAM on Latin America, and the ASEANplus platform) are financed half from the GM budget and half from the institution's own resources. Four Strategic International Partnerships (SIP) based on a former long-standing development cooperation projects, finally, are fully funded by GM whereas Ghent University funds another six SIP from its internationalization budget.

Another strength of the instrument lies in the flexibility of the networks and platforms that account for a wide variety of functions, from sensitizing students, academics and the broader public to facilitating networking within and beyond the institution. Promoters therefore must, by definition, be relatively free to decide how to implement their 'broker role' which creates, as shown in the field missions, room for innovation (see also [chapter 4.1.1.1](#) for a discussion of GM's role as an innovator). All in all, the hypothesis can therefore be confirmed, but it should be expanded to include the educational and sensitization dimension.

Updated impact hypothesis:

Thematic networks and platforms on development-relevant research contribute to the implementation of development-relevant research and policy studies and an enhancement of the institutions' expertise in development-related subjects. Thematic networks and platforms contribute to all three dimensions of Global Minds through the broad variety of activities they conduct (e.g. conferences, mobility, sensitization events).

4.2.1.5 Congresses, conferences etc. on development-related topics or UDC

For the instrument of congresses or conferences on development-related topics or development cooperation, the following impact hypothesis was analysed:

- *If the institution organizes one thematic conference per year, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.*

Data gathered during the field missions cannot confirm the impact hypotheses, at least for the instrument and institution selected to provide an in-depth assessment of the impact hypothesis. Instead, the data shows that the conferences follow another, but not less relevant logic: Through awareness raising among teachers, staff and students as well as networking among the institutions and beyond, the conferences contribute to increasing the capacity of the institutions for development cooperation.

Good practice example: Establishing interuniversity cooperation on UDC through thematic conferences

VLHORA's annual thematic conferences, according to the interviewees, improve collaboration among the participating institutions – mostly university colleges – and connect researchers and teachers from the university colleges to researchers from universities. Thereby, they create networks for UDC: In the past three years, conferences were held/prepared on applied research and its ability to tackle developmental problems, on a more strategic approach (among the university colleges and beyond) to global engagement, and on increased employability and the role of higher education. As those conferences are joined by the university colleges, but also representatives of the Flemish universities, they can be seen – besides making the university colleges more visible as actors of UDC in Flanders and raising awareness for UDC – as a contribution to interuniversity cooperation and to building networks among those working or wanting to work in UDC. Finally, thematic conferences can be seen as an innovator, pushing for further reflection on UDC and existing practices. The first Global Minds Conference of VLHORA “Connecting World, Applied Research” illustrates this argument as it proposed new aspects of development cooperation at the HEIs to strengthen the attention towards interconnectivity, equal partnerships and South-driven projects, SDGs and sustainable partnerships.

Collaboration among the participating institutions thereby is improved both through the conference itself and through the joint conceptualisation and planning. Moreover, interview partners stated that thematic conferences or congresses connected researchers and teachers from different universities and university colleges hence creating networks for UDC in Flanders. A further potential, as pointed out by researchers and university managers, lies in reaching out beyond Belgium and creating networks for development cooperation with HEI in, e.g., Europe or the Global South. In this regard, conferences and congresses were also identified as a vital tool to retain close ties with alumni (see [chapter 4.2.1.7](#)). Exchanging good practices and strategies with other research institutes and HEI, moreover, was found to contribute to increasing the participants' capacity for (better) UDC and may open up new funding opportunities or collaborations for South projects. Like that, the conferences contribute to the general objective of Global Minds to contribute to more effective UDC.

Updated impact hypothesis:

(International) congresses, conferences etc. on development-related topics build up the HEI's expertise in development-relevant research. Congresses and conferences also carry the potential to engage in interuniversity cooperation, to exchange lessons learned as well as good practices and to connect actors in UDC. Like that, awareness is raised for development cooperation and a contribution is made to more effective UDC.

4.2.1.6 Integration of development-related courses into curricula

For the instrument of development-related training courses, the following two complementary impact hypotheses were analysed:

- *If development-relevant courses (e.g. English-taught interdisciplinary courses 'Global Justice' and 'Debating Development') are integrated into current curricula, a development dimension is integrated into the existing educational offer.*
- *Through the integration of development relevant courses, academic staff and students from the North and the South mutually influence each other, enrich each other's knowledge and encourage interest towards developing a jointly established agenda of change/UDC.*

Courses teaching specialised knowledge in development-relevant thematic areas are only one instrument to integrate a development-dimension into the institutions' education besides, for example, internships in the Global South, study trips for students or the set-up of a study programme specialised in development. Due to the nature of the field missions and the selection of impact hypotheses, the evaluators hereby focussed on courses that make development-related topics available to a broader audience, including students from different faculties but also the general public.

Good practice example: A university-wide basket of broadening courses about society

The University of Antwerp initiated a university-wide basket of broadening courses about society. Starting from the academic year 2019-2020, this new offer was introduced in all bachelor programmes. Hereby, two development-related courses were included to this university wide through GM funding (used, e.g., for inviting speakers): A new course "Global Justice" as part of the so-called "A series" (courses obligatory for all bachelor level students) and the already existing course "Debating Development" as part of a set of extra elective courses ("B-series").

The field missions revealed that through obligatory and elective modules being integrated in an institution's educational offer, development-related training content becomes available to a broad number of students. This is particularly the case for obligatory modules. For example, the course "Global Justice" (see good practice example) with about 250 participants per semester means that many students will learn about development and human rights in the next years.

With regard to the second impact hypothesis, the evaluation found that, on the one side, teaching these courses in English increases participation of international students thereby creating opportunities for students from the Global South and North to exchange and influence each other on development-related issues. On the other side, interviewed students also indicated that the fact that the courses are taught in English limits the courses' outreach to or attractiveness for (Flemish) students with little interest for and experience in UDC.

In addition to the original impact hypotheses, development-relevant courses were also found to offer a platform for reflection on current topics of development and hence can also be seen as contributing to

the sensitization dimension of Global Minds (“spread the message of ‘global citizenship’ across the university and outside”, as indicated by one interviewee). Depending on the set-up of the course, this can even include the broader public, as the following good practice example illustrates. In this case, the courses may also serve as a forum for mutual exchange and learning, and for including perspectives (“voices”) of the South.

Good practice example: Evening courses

Through its set-up as an evening course open to public participation, the “Debating Development” course offers a platform for reflection on current topics of development with a broader public. Besides students who took the full series as an elective course, the series of debates was also promoted to a well-targeted audience external to the university, including other Flemish HEI, alumni, NGOs, companies and associations related to development. Like that, 503 persons attended at least one session of “Debating Development” in 2018.

Using the courses to network beyond the respective institution, moreover, showed that the courses also offer an avenue to establishing new partnerships and networks that could, over the longer run, result in new collaborations, including development-related research and UDC projects. The analysed courses invite renowned speakers, inter alia from international institutes, civil society and academia, for an introductory presentation to the topic. Interviewed researchers, who are involved in the organisation of the courses, highlighted that through the possibility to invite guest speakers, the courses provided a low threshold to get in contact with interesting researchers, experts etc. Finally, the courses were found to offer an opportunity for young researchers to increase their personal capacities and networks in development cooperation: As the analysed courses were prepared and facilitated by a group of young researchers in collaboration with other institutional stakeholders. The course hence successfully linked together young researchers with an interest in development-relevant thematic research areas to another, to more experienced academics at the institution or renowned researchers outside the institution as well as to actors in development cooperation (e.g. practitioners from other ANGC) and the interested public. Gathering experience in facilitating debates, moreover, was said to have increased the researcher’s personal capacities.

The latter aspects are reflected in the second impact hypothesis stating that “through the integration of development relevant courses, academic staff and students from the North and the South mutually influence each other, enrich each other’s knowledge and encourage interest towards developing a jointly established agenda of change/UDC.” Both initial impact hypotheses are combined in an updated one:

Updated impact hypothesis:

Through the integration of development-related training components (e.g. courses, internships) in curricula and/or the set-up of specialised development-relevant training programmes, the educational offer of Flemish HEI regarding development and related research areas is built up or broadened and students obtain an opportunity to gather (first) experiences in development-related research and practice.

4.2.1.7 Alumni actives for alumni coming from the Global South

For the instrument of alumni activities, the following impact hypothesis was analysed:

- *If alumni actives for Alumni coming from the Global South are organized, the institutions’ capacity to organize high quality (international) development-relevant training and/or to integrate development-relevant aspects into (existing) trainings is built/strengthened/deepened/retained and a development dimension is integrated into higher education.*

Data from field missions shows that alumni events are used to make courses at the institution more development relevant. During networking events or similar formats targeted towards alumni, input is shared by the alumni from the Global South which professors use to align their research or courses by adjusting the respective module, course or curricula. Alumni's input is further used on a strategic level, e.g. regarding the institution's internationalization strategy.

Good practice example: Setting up an “Alumni Advisory Board”

The Alumni Advisory Board of KU Leuven is a body initiated at a central level, which occasionally meets to give advice, e.g. on the institution's alumni chapters and related local opportunities. Moreover, the members of the alumni board formed a panel during the multi-stakeholder event to comment on multi-stakeholdership from their perspectives and exchanged with GM PhD students during an informal networking event. Having linked the board meeting with an international conference is thus another good practice. Overall, the board is meant to retain close relationships to alumni from the Global South and to valorize their expertise with regard to development-relevant research and education components.

At the same time, alumni activities were seen as useful to enhance research collaboration between graduates and researchers at Flemish HEI by supervisors, current PhD students and alumni. Hereby, it was pointed out that graduated alumni become “ambassadors” of their former universities or colleges and form part of the institution's international networks when working at their home university or, more broadly, becoming “agents of change” in their home countries. Interviewees stressed that alumni activities help to maintain the relation between the alumni and the Flemish institution(s) and to improve the Flemish institution's reputation abroad. As most (research) collaborations start from an individual contact before expanding further to collaboration between groups, or even departments or faculties, alumni activities therefore play a crucial role in initiating such new partnerships. However, interviewees also noted critically that the instrument of alumni activities, if it merely concerns mobility associated with physical meetings, would not suffice to establish long-standing collaborations; these would need different (funding) instruments. In this regard a success factor was found for instance in linking an alumni event to an international conference as this increases alumni events' impact on the research dimension and additionally fosters (interuniversity) cooperation for better UDC. Consequently, the research dimension should be included into the impact hypothesis.

In addition to the original impact hypothesis, alumni activities, moreover, were found to foster South-South cooperation between alumni regarding research, exchange (of information relevant to one another's research) or funding opportunities. This contributes to the overall objective of development cooperation (of HEI) to strengthen research capacity in the Global South.

Updated impact hypothesis:

Alumni activities strengthen/retain networks between alumni and Flemish HEI. Like that, (PhD) alumni from the Global South remain part of the HEI's network, can share their expertise for research and education and may become partners in future South projects.

4.2.1.8 Travel grants in combination with preparatory and follow-up seminars/workshops

For the instrument of travel grants, the following impact hypothesis was analysed:

- *If travel grants are given out (in combination with preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. for travel grant recipients), students are informed, sensitized and mobilized, and become more aware of development cooperation problems.*

Travel grants provide funding for students who do an internship or small research project (mostly master thesis) abroad. Across all institutions, the same instrument (REI) is used for travel grants providing up to 1.000 Euro per mobility.

In contrast to the initial impact hypothesis, travel grants (REI) as well as group mobility for students, according to the interviewed university staff, contribute not only to the sensitization objective but also to integrating development dimension into education. Like that, study trips are also rewarded with credit points, and internships and first small research projects (bachelor and master theses) are a mandatory part of the curricula.

In order to effectively contribute to the sensitization objective, preparatory seminars, workshops etc. and debriefings were, however, found to be essential as they ensure that grantees develop a sense of global citizenship and/or of belonging to the global community. According to interviewed students and staff, the preparatory formats and debriefing, first, contribute to leaving well prepared – practically as well as culturally – and to properly reflect on the experience when returning (referred to as the "intellectual luggage needed for the journey to make sense of it" by one interviewee). Another supporting factor is that contents are sufficiently abstract to allow students to reflect on a more general level on their own mobility as the formats generally address all students going on a mobility to the Global South rather than focusing on particular country contexts. The effect of the formats could, however, be increased by giving more attention to debriefings: Whereas elaborate formats exist for the preparation¹¹, the debriefings were said to still leave room for improvement in the form of a more structured exchange. According to the interviewed staff and students, travel grants alone hence *may* have the same effect on the intended objective but whether students make enlightening experiences and reflect appropriately is left to chance.

Good practice examples: Preparatory courses, workshops etc.

A relatively extensive format is organised by the University of Antwerp's University Foundation for Development Cooperation (USOS): Candidates for the intensive exposure programme to the Global South attend several training weekends and give their own presentations on their topic of observation. Throughout the preparation they take part in interactive sessions on intercultural communication, development cooperation, and processes of poverty and social exclusion, which includes an internship (> 10 hours in a social organisation in Belgium). Furthermore, students select a topic linked to their field of study for observation during the stay (e.g. "urban planning in the city of Managua"). This topic gives extra focus to the preparation as well as the debriefing and links the programme to their field of study, which was evaluated as very useful by the students.

At VLHORA, most university colleges rely on the training provided by the University Centre for Development Cooperation (UCOS). Others have developed their own preparatory training formats. Hereby, the "Go South" programme at AP Antwerpen and the "Connecting Worlds" course at UC Leuven Limburg (UCLL) are noteworthy. The university colleges' selection systems, moreover, oblige all students who *want* to do an internship to do the preparatory training prior to the application. As a consequence, interviewees noted that the quality of the applications has improved.

Data from the field missions further reveals that the mobility does have an impact on the participating students, both on their perspective of global interdependencies and engagement as well as on career decisions. One student, for example, decided to apply for a master's degree in anthropology due to her

¹¹ The formats vary between the universities and the university colleges; and while most rely on the training provided by UCOS, others have developed their own preparatory training formats (e.g. "Go South" programme at AP Antwerpen, "Connecting Worlds" course at UCLL).

experience, another one concentrated her PhD topic on a development-related question and engaged in UDC projects. Overall, the hypothesis that the travel grants contribute to students being informed, sensitized, and mobilized and become more aware of development co-operation problems, can hence be confirmed (see also below).

Regarding the value added of the mobility, the scholarship (travel grant) was confirmed to be valuable for students and their parents. Even though the grant had not been the main motivation for the interviewed students and a larger share of students goes on a mobility without external or GM funding, it was argued that the REI scholarship can help making the final decision to go on the mobility. Access for less advantaged students, however, was found retained by application deadlines or timelines: Like that, the final decision regarding the application for the GM funding was often reported relatively late, leaving students in a more difficult financial situation with an insecure outlook and it even discouraged some from applying for a – relatively competitive – call. Students were found further discouraged by the relatively – as compared to similar founding opportunities – demanding application process.

The field missions also revealed potentials to improve or extent the impact of the travel grants and mobilities: Preparatory and debriefing formats, first, could also help staff – if they were available, which is not yet the case – to critically reflect North-South relationships and hence gradually advance a more equal, fair and sustainable approach to development cooperation. Moreover, options how to expand coverage of the preparatory and especially follow-up formats could be improved. Options discussed here include linking the payment of the full grant and/or the receipt of credit points to participation in the full trajectory, including the debriefing, or providing a certificate for the completion of the full trajectory.

Beyond the initial impact hypothesis, the field missions, moreover, revealed differences in the institutional ‘potential’ of individual and group mobility: Whereas individual mobility was found affecting students’ personal views and career decisions and hence contributing to the objective of global citizenship, its institutional potential is limited as it often takes place at the end of the study programme (e.g. field research for the master thesis, obligatory internship). Study trips, in contrast, were found providing a lower threshold for students to gather first experiences in a developing country context which could then be followed up by an individual mobility. As these, typically, target younger students or students less advanced in their study programmes, they allow for more capitalization on an institutional level, for example by being followed up by an individual mobility and deepening a relationship to a South partner.

The field missions further pointed out potential synergies with institutions’ strategic partnerships if they are integrated into the partner structure of the institution. For example, the university colleges are encouraged to organize the internships (REI) related to VLIR-UOS projects in cooperation with other actors of the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Updated impact hypothesis:

Individual travel grants (research stays or work placements in developing countries by students of Flemish HEI) and study trips offer students the opportunity to gather (first) experiences in development-related research and practice in the Global South. Especially when combined with preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc., students are informed, sensitized and mobilized, and become more aware of development cooperation problems.

4.2.1.9 Awareness-raising campus initiatives

For the instrument of awareness-raising (campus) initiatives or sensitization events, the following impact hypothesis was analysed:

- *Through awareness-raising campus initiatives, development education and solidarity-based global citizenship are strengthened. Like that, students, employees, and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs are more aware of development cooperation problems.*

Sensitization events and awareness-raising campus initiatives are implemented in a very decentralized way with lots of small funded projects. These were found ranging from so-called “immersion trips”¹² to a buddy programme for international students, to events such as a fair-trade week or movie screenings. The latter, i.e. awareness-raising events, were reported to generally increase awareness at the institutions about global challenges and sustainability, both by students and university staff. Moreover, the field missions showed that these provide an opportunity to reach out and hence network with other Belgian ANGK (see also [chapter 4.1.1.3](#)). At the same time, interviewed students mentioned that promotion of such events should further be extended in order to reach beyond those already interested in international cooperation or intercultural exchange. The buddy programme was said to sensitize Flemish students for the situation of international students from the Global South and to narrow the gap between Flemish and international students as well as to improve the quality of reception at the Flemish institution and to lower the threshold for Flemish “buddies” to go on a mobility themselves.

Good practice examples: Digital buddy programme

In order to reach a relatively large number of students with limited personnel capacities and still ensure effective “matchmaking”, a digital buddy application was developed by the University of Antwerp through funding from GM. Like that, an algorithm – instead of IO staff – matched profiles of Flemish and incoming students from the Global South who register for the buddy programme automatically. During the field mission, it was said this benefited the overall effectiveness of the programme as it ensured that expectations of both buddies matched. Additionally, it reduced management costs and generated an online meeting platform – with unprecedented benefits during the Covid-19 outbreak. Interviewees, moreover, saw a potential to expand the app to other Flemish HEI.

Both instruments consequently also contribute to the overall objective of GM to build a “critical mass” of students and researchers with an affinity for development cooperation. Regarding potentials, the SWOT analysis identified opportunities in making funding more available for student initiatives that often result from the experience of an individual or group mobility (see [chapter 4.2.1.8](#)). Like that, sensitization could be further promoted at the institution. A weakness, however, was identified within the fragmentation of numerous initiatives. Interviewees therefore recommended to identify and focus on “core areas” or instruments for awareness-raising. Interview partners moreover argued for more information sharing and synergies between the sensitization activities.

Updated impact hypothesis:

Awareness-raising campus events and/or initiatives contribute to development education and solidarity-based global citizenship. Initiatives, e.g. buddy programmes, may also improve support for students from developing countries.

4.2.2 Effectiveness of the programme’s monitoring system

The monitoring system of the GM programme consists of “key performance indicators” formulated by the institutions in their initial proposal. These are updated on a regular basis and reported with the annual

¹² These were found to better match the impact hypothesis underlying student mobility outlined in [chapter 4.2.1.8](#) and are hence not discussed in this chapter.

programme reporting. Within the conceptual framework of the programme, the HEI had autonomy to formulate their own indicators. A non-extensive list of potential indicators was shared with the institutions with the initial call. However, the field missions show that this was understood as a source of inspiration and not as binding.

Therefore, no coherent monitoring at the level of the specific and general objectives exists at the overarching programme level. According to interviews with institutions staff and management, individual monitoring systems of the GM programmes mostly concentrate on inputs, activities and outputs (number of events, grantees, participants etc.), while monitoring systems are – with few exceptions – not capable to measure the envisioned changes in the three dimensions of the GM programme, i.e. the specific objectives. On outcome level, most monitoring systems concentrate at the number or (successful) project proposals submitted to VLIR-UOS (as an indicator for the institutions' capacity to perform effective UDC); others additionally monitor if proposals came from professors or researchers new to the field of UDC (as an indicator for a stronger basis for development cooperation among researchers). Nevertheless, the evaluators also identified one good practice example, which is illustrated below.

Good practice examples: Monitoring the (joint) specific objectives and outcomes

KU Leuven's monitoring system for Global Minds provides several good practices as how to monitor progress beyond the immediate outputs of activities. This includes monitoring e.g. the number of courses with an important South dimension (changes to the courses' content integrating realities of a South context, going beyond isolated lectures and seminars given by experts from the South); the number of VLIR-UOS project proposals and selections at KU Leuven and the percentage of VLIR-UOS proposals for South projects (TEAM/SI/JOINT) mentioning Global Minds; and the percentage of students with a top scores on cultural nuance after travel grant, that did not score high before departure and the number of persons with whom the travel students shared their experience upon return.

In this regard, interviewed staff across institutions, including those more experienced with development cooperation projects, shared a need for more quantitative and qualitative indicators ("descriptors") that grasp changes at the level of the three specific objectives and outcomes. Hereby, the need was expressed for more guidance from VLIR-UOS with regard to implementing a coherent M&E system across all GM programmes, with joint or uniform indicators for all participating universities and VLHORA at the level of the three joint specific and the general objectives. Risks, finally, do not play a large role in the actual implementation and are only described and updated in the annual reports.

4.2.3 Assessment of the Global Minds programme's effectiveness

Overall, the programme's effectiveness varies for the three dimensions research, education and sensitization. The field missions hereby show that most programmes and programmes' instruments focus on the research component; and that universities successfully integrate a development dimension into their research through instruments like incoming and outgoing mobility, PhD scholarships, alumni activities and small research grants as well as thematic networks and conferences. The field missions, moreover, show that this integration is even more successful when the instruments were embedded into the institutional structures and policies of the institution and co-financed.

Regarding the education-related specific objective of GM, the field missions reveal an overall a positive tendency, meaning that more development-relevant education (e.g. through the set-up of development-related training components, incoming and outgoing (student) mobility) is offered as compared to the

start of GM. However, the education dimension is not pursued to the same extent as the research component by most GM programmes.

The third dimension of GM, sensitization, is mainly pursued through outgoing student mobility that is linked to preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. as well as awareness-raising campus events or initiatives. The analysis moreover showed that “spill-overs” from the other two dimensions (e.g. mobilities being linked to developing proposals for South projects, or PhDs and small research grants creating opportunities for new partnerships) are foreseen to inform, sensitize and mobilize researchers and students for development cooperation. While the latter objective is an integral part of the individual GM programmes, sensitization and awareness raising among students and the general public in most cases is, however, is still in its infancy.

Looking at the effectiveness of the analysed instruments, the evaluation revealed that the vast majority of instruments targets more than one dimension (education, research, sensitization), either directly or through spill-over effects. Therefore, most impact hypotheses regarding the instruments (likely) contribution to the specific and general objectives could be confirmed. The following table provides an overview of the selected impact hypotheses including suggestions how to reformulate them to account for the GM programme on an overarching level.

Table 2 | Assessment of impact hypotheses

	Hypothesis	Result	Updated hypothesis
a.	If development-relevant courses (e.g. English-taught interdisciplinary course ‘Global Justice’ or ‘Debating Development’) are integrated into current curricula, a development dimension is integrated into the existing educational offer.	Confirmed (reformulated to account for the GM programme on an overarching level)	Through the integration of development-related training components (e.g. courses, internships) in curricula and/or the set-up of specialised development-relevant training programmes, the educational offer of Flemish HEI regarding development and related research areas is built up or broadened and students obtain an opportunity to gather (first) experiences in development-related research and practice.
b.	If alumni actives for Alumni coming from the Global South are organized (from the funding to the ‘Small Great Projects’), the institutions’ capacity to organize high quality (international) development-relevant training and/or to integrate development-relevant aspects into (existing) trainings is built/strengthened/ deepened/retained and a development dimension is integrated into higher education.	Confirmed and expanded to the research dimension.	Alumni activities strengthen/retain networks between alumni and Flemish HEI. Like that, (PhD) alumni from the Global South remain part of the HEI’s network, can share they expertise for research and education and may become partners in future South projects.
c.	If the institution supports staff/group mobility, exchange between students and staff from the South and students and staff from the institution is enhanced and a	Confirmed (both “use cases” are combined in one hypothesis)	Outgoing staff mobility (for researchers and other university staff) aims at exploring or initiating (new) partnerships with HEI and other relevant actors (e.g. NGOs) in the Global South.

	Hypothesis	Result	Updated hypothesis
	development dimension is integrated into higher education and research.		Outgoing staff mobility, moreover, can contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the education of the institution through, e.g. staff accompanying and facilitating students' study trips, or through integrating their experiences into their education.
f.1	If staff mobility for initiating international partnerships is supported, research-based partnerships with institutions in developing countries are strengthened/deepened and new international partnerships/thematic networks are explored. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges.	Confirmed (both "use cases" are combined in one hypothesis)	
d.1	If PhD scholarships are granted, concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas takes place and knowledge and expertise are generated through PhD-research in a coherent and focused way in Belgium and in the South. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Partly confirmed (Sandwich PhDs do not contribute to integrating a development-dimension into the education of the university, whereas they contribute to more development-relevant research; both "use cases" are combined in one hypothesis)	PhD scholarships (incl. pre-doc scholarships, Sandwich PhDs, etc.) contribute to building up HEI's expertise in specialized development-relevant research and to the actual implementation of concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas. If PhD students' academic level is sufficient, they are further expected to contribute to increasing developmental relevance in education through teaching and supervision of bachelor or master thesis in related research fields. PhD alumni from the Global South may also become partners in future South projects if networks between alumni and Flemish HEI are retained.
d.2	If predoctoral visits for potential PhD candidates from UOS-developing countries are supported, the institutions' expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up and the quality of PhD research is improved. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Partly confirmed (The assumption of the hypothesis that institutions' expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up through predoctoral visits, however, cannot be confirmed; ; both "use cases" are combined in one hypothesis)	
e.	If capacity is built among junior PhD researchers and postdoc researchers through Operational Grants, development related research is promoted among junior researchers and additional means help them to overcome the extra costs related to development related topics. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Confirmed (both "use cases" are combined in one hypothesis)	Small research grants for junior, PhD and Post-Doc researchers equally aim at building up HEI's expertise in specialized development-relevant research and implementing concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas, especially with regards to field research. The grants additionally promote UDC and development-related research among young researchers and hence contribute to building a 'critical mass' researchers with an affinity with development cooperation. This includes the initiation of new South projects.
f.2	Through multi-stakeholder calls, high-quality research proposals for development-relevant research are developed in cooperation with	Confirmed (both "use cases" are combined in one hypothesis)	

	Hypothesis	Result	Updated hypothesis
	NGOs. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.		
g.	Through Centres of Expertise on Sustainable (Interuniversity) Development Cooperation (RP/ITN/SIP), development-relevant research and policy studies are implemented, and the institution enhances its expertise on development-related subjects. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Confirmed and expanded to include the educational and sensitization dimension.	Thematic networks and platforms on development-relevant research contribute to the implementation of development-relevant research and policy studies and an enhancement of the institutions' expertise in development-related subjects. Thematic networks and platforms, through the broad variety of activities they conduct (e.g. conferences, mobility, sensitization events), contribute to all three dimensions of Global Minds.
h.	If the institution organizes one thematic conference per year, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution.	Not confirmed (a different objective was identified for thematic conferences)	(International) congresses, conferences etc. on development-related topics build up the HEI's expertise in development-relevant research. Congresses and conferences also carry the potential to engage in interuniversity cooperation, to exchange lessons learned and good practices and to connect actors in UDC. Like that, awareness is raised for development cooperation and a contribution is made to more effective UDC.
i.	If travel grants are given out (in combination with preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. for travel grant recipients), students are informed, sensitized, and mobilized and become more aware of development cooperation problems.	Confirmed	Individual travel grants (research stays or work placements in developing countries by students of Flemish HEI) and study trips offer students the opportunity to gather (first) experiences in development-related research and practice in the Global South. Especially when combined with preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc., students are informed, sensitized, and mobilized and become more aware of development cooperation problems.
j.	Through awareness-raising campus initiatives, development education and solidarity-based global citizenship are strengthened. Like that, students, employees, and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs are more aware of development cooperation problems.	Confirmed	Awareness-raising campus events and/or initiatives contribute to development education and solidarity-based global citizenship. Initiatives, e.g. buddy programmes, may also improve support for students from developing countries.

The fact that the majority of instruments targets more than one dimension as well the instruments overall contribution to the programme's specific objectives, however, is not yet fully grasped in the programme's

monitoring system(s). Here, the evaluation reveals that individual monitoring systems of the GM programmes mostly concentrate on inputs, activities and outputs while they are – with few exceptions – not capable of measuring the envisioned changes in the three dimensions of the GM programme. Reasons for this deficiency are, however, not only to be found in lacking capacity at institutional level, but also relate to another fundamental dilemma within GM: While the programme's decentralised character allows institutions to take up responsibility for their own programmes and to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions, this approach currently comes at the expense of coherent programme level (outcome-) monitoring.

4.3 Evaluation criteria: Efficiency

The criterion efficiency measures the extent to which an intervention has used its resources to maximize its intended impact.. An intervention is thus efficient when a maximum of results is achieved with the available financial resources. Therefore, the evaluation team analysed the financial resources behind the instruments in light of their effect on the three dimensions. In addition, implementation efficiency was examined with regard to the criteria and transparency of the selection systems. The analysis, again, is mostly based on the impact hypotheses (see [chapter 3.2](#)).

4.3.1 Analysis of the Global Minds programme's efficiency

4.3.1.1 Selection systems

On an overarching level, data collected from the field missions demonstrated that selection systems for instrument funded by GM are highly decentralised. That means that selection is done at the level of each institution, partly even at department or faculty level, which uses its own selection criteria.

Good selection systems, according to the World Bank and the European Economic Area's basic principles, are **impartial** and **transparent**, they should **strengthen learning processes**, and work **efficiently**.¹³ In addition, **competitiveness** of the calls and the subsequent selection is taken into account below, as claimed in the Terms of Reference for this evaluation. Overall, the quality of selection systems is very diverse and hence difficult to assess on an overall level. Here, all five criteria are more or less fulfilled, whereas shortcomings exist but are limited to individual instruments.

With regard to the first criterion, **impartiality**, the institutions were found to, broadly, differentiate between two different modalities for the assessment of applications: Selection is done either by (interdisciplinary) selection committees, advisory boards or comparable bodies; or at the level of the international offices, the development cooperation unit etc. This depends, generally speaking, on the competitiveness of the call and the financial volume of the grant. Both models, however, ensure that those who do the selection do not have any direct or indirect interests in the call and exercise their mandate in an impartial manner. In addition, several institutions also appoint external actors to their selection bodies, e.g. UCOS or a representative from the other institution part of an association. One case, however, was identified where the selection for staff mobility was done at the level of the faculties and hence the supervisors. Here, the selection, was perceived as dependent on the superiors' or applicants' own networks at the institution and their ability and experience in proposal writing. A challenge to the impartiality of the se-

¹³ Syspons GmbH (forthcoming). Study Report. Study on Selections Systems for Projects on University Cooperation for Development. Brussels, Belgium, VLIR-UOS.

lection systems, however, is a high workload of members of the selecting bodies as interviewees reported that multiple assessments of one application are not always possible. In most cases, this is however balanced by clear selection criteria (see below), which were also reported to be understandable and easy to use by most interviewed members of selection commissions. Only for one instrument were the selection criteria found to be insufficiently clear.

Satisfaction with the selection systems on the second criterion, **transparency**, overall, was high. In most cases, selection systems were found transparent and selection and eligibility criteria were clear to the applicants. Specific criteria thereby depend on the instrument: Applicants for travel grants, for example, are selected based on their motivation, necessary language skills, and socio-economic indicators, whereas selection systems for PhD students or small research grants give more attention to the academic qualification and quality of its proposals. The selection criteria, moreover, generally account for combined scientific and development goals (including, for instance, the diversity within research teams). Also, where less formalized selection systems are applied (e.g. when applicants are selected by the ICOS/GEO¹⁴ or the international office), interview partners stated that they would evaluate the relevance of proposals for achieving the overall objectives of GM and for the internationalisation strategy or institutions' priorities (e.g. regarding strategic partnerships). Applications that are expected to contribute to this by e.g. addressing underrepresented thematic areas or target groups may receive additional points in the assessment. Two instruments, however, proved to be insufficiently clear and transparent: Here, interview partners – both successful and non-successful applicants – criticized the process because they did not know on which basis they were or were not selected. This concerned both the basis for the selection (e.g. the proposal, or the study results) and the criteria for a “good” proposal.

Learning processes, as the third criterion, were found addressed by the selection systems in two ways: First, not only specific instruments (e.g. small research grants) but also selection systems put special focus on less experienced researchers (with e.g. junior researchers being preferred in calls over more experienced researchers). In at least one case, trainings are funded by GM that provide support to less experienced researchers for drafting proposals; however, these target rather proposals for South projects than proposals for GM funded activities. Moreover, the international offices and those responsible for GM were said to be very supportive, which is highlighted as a supporting factor further below (see [chapter 4.4](#)). Second, feedback and notifications on the success of an application were generally perceived as timely and adequate. Two instruments deviate from this generally positive picture: With regard to travel grant, it had already been stated in [chapter 4.2.1.8](#) that the final decision regarding the application for the GM funding was often reported relatively late, leaving students in a more difficult financial situation with an insecure outlook and even discouraged some from applying for the relatively competitive call. Interviewees for another instrument, moreover, were undecided on the adequacy of the feedback (whereas it was stated that feedback could be more substantial, it was equally acknowledged that this would increase the burden for the ICOS/GEO).

A fourth criteria for the quality of the selection process is **efficiency**, which addresses proportionality of workload and funding. In that regard, GM programmes' selection processes were generally found efficient as they aim for lean processes. For instance, selection for smaller grants were said to be simplified (e.g. using a google form in which applicants enter only the most relevant information) in order to maintain a proportionality of workload and funding (see also [chapter 4.2.1.1](#)). Some institutions were moreover found to restrict the countries or institutions which are eligible for XREI (staff mobility) funding with the call to align staff mobility with institutional priorities for UDC. Pre-selection procedures, in addition,

¹⁴ Global Engagement Officers; a specific job title used by the university colleges

can simplify the selection process, both for the applicants and the selecting bodies: In the case of travel grants, for example, applicants are screened if they receive another grant. Some institutions, however, do this only afterwards which is less favourable in terms of efficiency (see above). Socio-economic indicators (travel grants) that result into a “ranking” of applicants, in contrast, did not lead to screening out students nor were students notified of their ranking. With regard to efficiency, this was criticized by some interviewees as it keeps the workload high for students that have only a small chance of getting selected.

4.3.1.2 Finally, with regard to the criterion of competitiveness, grantees for all instruments (except for the integration of development-related training components in curricula and thematic conferences) are – in principle – being selected based on competitive calls. The strong fragmentation of instruments and decentralisation of selection systems, however, favour that some instruments in practice experience only few or no competition. At least one case, moreover, showed low competition due to the relatively high workload associated with the application procedure as reflected also in the efficiency criterion for selection systems. In these cases, selection concentrates on eligibility criteria. Low competitiveness and consequently relatively high success rates, however, not necessarily constitute a shortcoming of selection systems: In contrast, both were said to increase researchers’ motivation to apply for GM funded instruments, making the programme more attractive in particular to those researchers with little experience in UDC (see also [chapter 4.4](#)). Qualitative cost-effectiveness analysis

As already discussed in the previous chapter, the GM programme tries to enhance Flemish HEI’s capacities with regard to development cooperation in three dimensions: Research, education and sensitization. In order to assess the efficiency of the overall programme, the distribution of costs among the instruments and their contribution to the specific and general objectives were analysed.

On an overarching level, the field missions and document analysis show that by far the largest share of the individual budgets is spent on research. Only one programme spends the largest share of its budget on education; and only one programme distributes the budget equally across the three dimensions. Moreover, in four of the six programmes travel grants make up more than 50% of the budget for sensitization (in two cases, even 100% of the formal budget for sensitization comes from travel grants) whereas in only two cases an equally large budget is spent on other sensitization initiatives. This supports the analysis in [chapter 4.2](#) that most programmes and programmes’ instruments focus on the research component while education is regarded as a secondary objective and sensitization, in most cases, is still in its infancy.

To achieve the specific objective of promoting research in development-relevant thematic areas, chapter 4.2 outlined that institutions – through their institutional GM programmes – fund a large variety of instruments reaching from PhD scholarships to small research grants for junior researchers to thematic networks and conferences. Effects with regard to the research objective are moreover expected from outgoing and incoming mobility of academics (see below), e.g. for alumni activities or the preparation for proposals or exploration of new programmes. The field missions and desk research hereby show that **small research grants**, for which different instruments provide between 5.000 and 20.000 Euro per researcher for field work or small research projects in the Global South, are particularly cost-effective:

Chapter 4.2.1.4 outlined that the instrument successfully builds up HEI's expertise in specialized development-relevant research among young researchers. Moreover, they were found to promote, overall, the conduct of research in development-relevant thematic areas at the institutions and sensitize young researchers for UDC. Like that they contribute to both objectives of promoting development-related research and of building a critical mass of researchers with an affinity with development cooperation. This is achieved with relatively little, targeted financial means (see above).

PhD scholarships, which cost about 25.000 Euro per PhD student per year, in contrast, were found to contribute to the same objective of promoting concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas. Sustainability concerns, the uncertainty of the expected long-term effects of networks with alumni as well as the fact that the expected effect on education could not be confirmed however question the investment. Predoctoral visits, in contrast, constitute a relatively small investment with about 4.500 Euro spent per candidate. Their effect to a certain degree depends on the availability of funding for the subsequent PhD position; but the predoctoral scholarships (alone) already proved to attract professors to working (with candidates from the Global South) on development-related research.

Thematic networks and platforms were found cost-effective, in particular because the instrument lends itself to leveraging additional funds for development-related research topics through co-funding, e.g. by the institution itself (see [chapter 4.2.1.4](#)). In the case analysed, between 45.000 Euro and 90.000 Euro are made available per network/platform from the GM budget; between 15.000 and 45.000 Euro were added from the institution's own resources. Thematic networks and platforms, moreover, were found to contribute – depending how each network decides to use its budget – to all three dimensions of GM and are hence a particularly flexible instrument (to make up, e.g., for spending difficulties in a given area).

Thematic conferences, finally, in the case analysed showed to have a high impact on the general objectives of GM (better UDC and higher capacity therefore through interuniversity cooperation and exchange) with relatively little resources: In the two cases analysed, 17.000 Euro were reserved for national conferences whereas additional funds to cover travel costs of guest speakers from the Global South were made available using the XREI budget for incoming experts. Given that conferences function as an enabler for effects in all three dimensions and at the outcome level, the instrument's cost-effectiveness is evaluated high.

The promotion of development related issues in education, as the second specific objective, is pursued through setting up development-related courses or integrating development-related training components into curricula, through incoming guest lecturers and outgoing staff mobility. "Spill-overs" from development-related research were also identified, e.g. in the form of updated curricula, or supervision of bachelor and master theses. Cost-effectiveness for **courses**, as one focus of the field missions, however, is difficult to evaluate as these are typically very integrated in the funding structures of the universities and the university colleges. In the case analysed, operational costs for courses amount to 8.000-10.000 Euro per year, which are used *inter alia* to invite experts. A budget was also calculated for elaborating and coordinating the contents of these courses. The efficiency of the investment, however, depends on the question if courses reach the targeted audience. For the courses analysed this is the case with more than 250 participants in one and more than 503 participants or listeners in the other course (see also [chapter 4.2.1.6](#)). In addition, the field missions reveal that the XREI instrument (**incoming and outgoing mobility of academics and staff members**) is particularly cost-effective: Outgoing mobility is typically funded with 1.500 Euro per mobility; an incoming mobility is funded with 2.500 Euro. This amount was found adequate for a 7-day travel, which is used to look for potential research collaborations or internship options, to prepare project proposals or conduct field research, and to accompany study trips. It should

be highlighted here, that interview partners indicated to often use one mobility for more than one purpose. For example, even though a mobility is primarily “only” used to accompany a study trip, academics indicated to try to make the most by arranging meetings with researchers or representatives from Southern HEI, NGOs etc.

The third specific objective, sensitization of students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs for development cooperation problems, is pursued through outgoing mobility that is linked to preparatory and follow-up seminars, workshops etc. as well as awareness-raising campus events or initiatives. The first instrument, the **travel grants**, are typically funded with up to 1.000 Euro per mobility. The field missions and desk research hereby show that the instrument, despite the low costs per mobility, is only partly (cost-) efficient as the realization of the intended effect to a large part depends on the preparatory and follow-up seminars. These are not in all cases part of and hence not guaranteed with the GM funding. Efficiency of the instrument is, however, increased through “spill-overs” to the education objective realized through bachelor or master thesis and internships being done in the Global South.

Awareness raising initiatives, finally, are funded with an overall annual budget of 12.000 Euro¹⁵ in the case analysed. The field missions showed that a great variety of initiatives are funded from the overall budget while it was not possible for the evaluators to trace costs for each type of initiative to account for different mechanisms of change (i.e. the results logic for a buddy programme, for example, is different than the one for a fair trade week). However, it is noticeable that the budget for coordination of these activities exceeds the budget for the initiatives themselves, indicating that the coordination of a high number of very small grants is highly labour intensive. These additional efforts, however, were said to pay off in the quantity of persons reached, the quality of the interventions, and broader synergy effects with the coordinating unit serving as a “centre of expertise” for development cooperation at the institution that also benefits, for example, the quality of proposals for South projects. Nevertheless, a focus on “core areas”, as also indicated in [chapter 4.2.1.9](#), could reduce fragmentation and hence increase implementation efficiency.

4.3.2 Assessment of the Global Minds programme’s efficiency

With regard to **implementation efficiency**, the analysis showed that the quality of selection systems, overall, is high. Impartiality was in most cases ensured through selection being done at bodies, units etc. that do not have a direct or indirect interest in the call and hence exercise their mandate in an impartial manner. Only one instrument was found to deviate from this model. Impartiality, moreover, is challenged by the high workload of those responsible for the selection that often does not allow for multiple assessments of an application (i.e. the application is assessed by minimum two persons). Also transparency of the selection systems as well as their ability to foster learning was generally rated high – with few exceptions (see above) – with selection and eligibility criteria being clear to the applicants and those who use them, and adequate feedback being given in a timely manner. With regard to efficiency of the selection systems, it can be noted positively that all programmes aim for a lean application process that reduces the workload for all parties involved. In contrast, competition is theoretically built into the systems through competitive calls, but the strong fragmentation of instruments and decentralisation of selection systems favour that some instruments in practice experience only few or no competition. In these cases, only eligibility criteria are applied. It should be noted though that the evaluation also identified low competitiveness and consequently high success rates as one of the programme’s supporting factors, increasing its attractiveness for researchers (see [chapter 4.4](#)). With regard to **cost-**

¹⁵ Excl. the so-called “immersion trips” as these rather follow the “mechanism of change” of student mobility, see [chapter 4.2.1.9](#).

effectiveness, the qualitative analysis of the data gathered during the field missions and document analysis revealed that, except for two cases, the largest share of the individual budgets is spent on research. This supports the analysis in [chapter 4.2](#) that most programmes and programmes' instruments focus on the research component. Education, in contrast, also with regard to the programme costs ranks only as a secondary objective. Sensitization, finally, is pursued by very few initiatives apart from travel grants, which is equally reflected in the programmes' budgets. The qualitative cost-effectiveness analysis further revealed that small grants, such as conferences, small research grants, or incoming and outgoing mobility for academics and staff members, can have a high impact. Cost-effectiveness, in contrast, was found limited for PhD scholarships given sustainability concerns, the uncertainty of the expected long-term effects of networks with alumni and a claimed but non-confirmed effect on education vis-à-vis the relatively high costs of the instrument. This finding, however, hints towards a third dilemma identified within in the GM programme: Due to the way universities function, PhDs are an important instrument and relevant for most institutions whereas their cost-effectiveness regarding the objectives of GM is limited. More generally speaking it can be concluded that the same instrument can be highly relevant, e.g. with regard to institutional policies, while ranking poorly on cost-effectiveness. The matching of GM funds with co-funding from the institution or other funding sources, finally, was found to increase efficiency. In this regard, thematic networks and platforms were identified as particularly successful.

4.4 Supporting and hindering factors

Summing up the most important, overarching, supporting and hindering factors in the implementation of Global Minds, this chapter shall enhance learning both at the level of the overarching GM programme (VLIR-UOS level) and the individual GM programmes (institutional level). Instrument-specific success and hindering factors are discussed in the respective chapters (see [chapter 4.2.1](#)).

Supporting and hindering factors were, first, found in the organisation of selection processes and handling of the grants. Thereby, **simplified selection, (financial) administration and reporting procedures** for the grantees were found to encourage researchers to apply for GM funding. High success rates through **low competition** for the instruments further increased researchers' motivation to apply. Proportionality of the success rate and the workload for the application may, however, be affected if, for example, the number of applicants increases significantly while the budget for the grants remains the same. Consequently, frustration among (unsuccessful) applicants might rise and damage the overall reputation of the programme. Clear, transparent and fair **selection procedures** equally were found to encourage beneficiaries to apply for grants, whereas less transparent selection procedures – even more in combination with high competition – were found to discourage applicants. This, however, concerned only few cases; for a majority of instruments selection criteria were perceived transparent, fair and clear. The fact that some selection systems take into account the experience of the applicants (e.g. giving higher points to junior researchers) is another supporting factor with regard to the objectives of GM.

Other supporting and hindering factors are to be found in **clear roles and responsibilities**, especially within the institutions. Across all field missions, beneficiaries pointed out to perceive the staff responsible for the (financial) management of the GM programme as very accessible and helpful. In addition, also the support structures at VLIR-UOS were perceived as helpful and accessible with regards to day-to-day communication and ad hoc questions. The very **complex financial reporting**, in contrast, had univocally been named as a hindering factor that uses up resources of those responsible for the management of the GM programme (ICOS/GEO, international offices etc.). Those could otherwise be used to

support applicants or to communicate about the possibilities the programme offers and its achievements. The latter, it was said, could increase the programmes' reach at the universities and the university colleges. In at least one case, the strong financial controlling also hindered the engagement of students in the programme (as grantees) as the financial reporting was deemed to complex.

The overarching **programme concept**, third, accounts for further supporting and (fewer) hindering factors. Hereby, the programme's **decentralised character** was found to allow institutions to respond to specific needs, including different "levels" of experience in development cooperation. Sufficient **flexibility** to adapt instruments over time and to experiment with new approaches was referred to as another supporting factor, whereas fewer interview partners criticized the **vague character** of the programme (in terms of not being sure whether an instrument could be funded or not). Related to the programme concept although beyond the GM programme's immediate sphere of influence, the possibility of follow-up financing/a follow-up project was discussed. In this regard, especially less experienced institutions and researchers felt a "gap" between GM funding for mobilities to initiate partnerships or funding for field work in the Global South and smaller South projects such as SI.

Fourth, the field missions showed that **co-funding** from the institutions' own budget along with embedding GM instruments within the institutional structures and policies increased the success of instruments, e.g. by providing enough funds to ensure a reasonable success rate (in light of the demand or the number of applicants), or by making an instrument (e.g. a mobility) more attractive.

Finally, supporting and hindering factors are also to be found in **external factors**, which partly lie outside the programme's (VLIR-UOS') sphere influence. **Budget cuts and delays** were found a hindering factor, as well as the **annual budgeting** that makes long-term planning difficult and hinders to flexibly react to problems or windows of opportunity in the programmes' implementation. The restrictions in countries eligible for funding ("**VLIR-UOS country list**") and changes therein make it furthermore difficult to maintain sustainable partnerships both with institutions and with individuals (e.g. alumni). Finally, **funding regulations of South projects** (e.g. South Initiatives), which do not cover administrative support costs, use up resources at the available support structures at Flemish HEI and reduce those instruments attractiveness for researchers new to the field. The same accounts for an **insufficient recognition of development cooperation activities** in the institutions' career evaluation. In light of the objectives of GM, this is not only a personal matter, but an important hindering factor in getting more, especially young, researchers interested in development cooperation. However, it should be noted positively here, that some HEI have already reacted to this demand by including UDC in the staff evaluation criteria (e.g. Ghent University, KU Leuven, UA, or, very recently, VUB).

5. Conclusion

The evaluation team concludes that the Global Minds programme, overall, is relevant to its beneficiaries. The decentralization of the responsibility to implement the programme for each institution based on their own needs and policy ambitions – within a common framework and objectives – thereby allowed Flemish HEI to respond to different “levels” of experience in development cooperation. In this regard, institutions that are more experienced in implementing development cooperation use GM to reinforce existing thematic or regional foci by embedding the programme into the institutional policies and strategies; and to broaden UDC’s reach at the universities, extending it to new departments, faculties, professors and, especially, junior researchers. Institutions less experienced in development cooperation, in contrast, pointed towards the objective to inform, sensitize and mobilize more stakeholders of HEI for university development cooperation. An eventual growth in numbers of those being active in UDC, including “new-comers” from both experienced and less experienced institutions, however raised concerns about the “size of the cake” to be distributed: Capacity building for UDC, all in all, can only be relevant if new capacities can also be valorised. Institutions therefore expressed a need to also explore new avenues to (larger) UDC projects in the Global South that go beyond limited budgets for UDC in Belgium, for example through collaborations/consortia with other universities in Europe.

Different “levels” of experience in development cooperation and different institutional priorities also accounted for varying foci of the institutions’ own GM programmes, even though they can generally be considered in line with the overarching specific and general objectives. Like that, the collected evidence reveals a strong overall tendency towards research at the expense of education and sensitization. Consequently, universities successfully integrate a development dimension into their research through instruments like incoming and outgoing mobility, PhD scholarships, alumni activities and small research grants as well as thematic networks and conferences. Integrating a development-dimension into the educational offer, however, is not pursued to the same extent by most GM programmes. Nevertheless, it should be acknowledged that more development-relevant education (e.g. through the set-up of development-related training components or incoming and outgoing (student) mobility) is offered as compared to the start of GM. Similarly, the information, sensitization and mobilization of researchers and students for development cooperation is not yet given the necessary attention: While mobilization of researchers for UDC is pursued through “spill-over” effects from the research component, very few instruments (beyond the educational offer) explicitly target sensitization and awareness raising among students and the general public.

Looking at the effectiveness and efficiency of the analysed instruments, the evaluation revealed that the vast majority of instruments targets more than one specific objective of GM (education, research, sensitization). Some approaches were moreover found to aim at another objective of GM that, so far, is not formally depicted in the programme’s ToC: Interuniversity cooperation (between Flemish universities and the university colleges) and joint learning. An in-depth analysis of the selected instruments’ contribution to the (specific) objectives in relation to their costs, however, revealed more diverse results. Whereas smaller grants, such as conferences, small research grants, or incoming and outgoing mobility for academics and staff members, were highly impactful, cost-effectiveness was more limited for the rather “expensive” full PhD scholarships. (Cost-) effectiveness of travel grants alone furthermore is criticized as the manifestation of their intended effect on sensitization depends on preparatory and follow-up formats. Co-funding for instruments as well as their integration into institutional structures and policies,

finally, increase both effectiveness and efficiency, e.g. by providing enough funds to ensure a reasonable success rate in light of a growing demand, or by making an instrument (e.g. a mobility) more attractive. In this regard, thematic networks and platforms were particularly successful.

Based on the analysis, the evaluation team hence concludes that the variety in GM is both a strength and a weakness. In this respect, three fundamental dilemmas within Global Minds appear repeatedly in the evaluation. First, while sufficient breadth and flexibility in the programme's conception allow to respond to varying needs and capacities of the beneficiaries, it compromises the internal coherence of the overall programme. Second, while the programme's decentralised character allows institutions to take up responsibility for their own programmes and to specialise on the basis of their own policy ambitions, these currently come at the expense of coherent programme level (outcome-) monitoring. Third, while the programme's decentralised character was found essential to ensure the programme was relevant to the institutions, relevance, however, was sometimes found at odds with cost-effectiveness: The same instrument can be highly relevant, e.g. with regard to institutional policies, while ranking poorly on cost-effectiveness. These three dilemmas are taken up – to the extent possible – by the following recommendations.

6. Recommendations

Recommendations¹⁶ are targeted towards VLIR-UOS and DGD as well as towards the Flemish universities and university colleges. We thereby differentiate between recommendations at strategic and operational level.

6.1 Recommendations at strategic level

1. Integrate “**global engagement**” as a strategic orientation in the conceptual framework

The evaluation reveals that Global Minds meets a need to innovate and explore new approaches. The programme allows the institutions to take up and work on new trends in development cooperation. These include for instance a “decolonization of knowledge”, “global citizenship education” and a more holistic approach to “global engagement”. In contrast to the “classic” North/South divide, “global engagement” emphasizes the reciprocity of North/South relationships and strives for a committed, meaningful interaction with the world as a whole. The more holistic approach of “global engagement” thereby is equally in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We recommend to more strongly align the programme with the SDGs by focussing more on “global engagement” instead of a narrower understanding of “development cooperation” and to assign Flemish HEI to explore, as part of their Global Minds programmes, how to better integrate these aspects into UDC. In this regard, we also recommend to strengthen the reciprocity of the GM programme to allow for more exchange between academics and students from the Global South and North (see also recommendation 7).

2. Use Global Minds to **strengthen Belgian UDC through activities outside Belgium**

Capacity building can only be relevant if new capacities can also be valorised. A need was therefore expressed to also explore new avenues to (larger) UDC projects in the Global South beyond limited budgets for UDC in Belgium, for example through collaborations/consortia with other universities, non-governmental organisations, or the private sector. It is hence recommended to recognize possibilities to explore and initiate UDC projects not only with HEIs in the Global South, but also including other actors, e.g. other HEI, private sector and civil society actors, through Global Minds. This means that the project's target system and funding applicability would have to be expanded so that preparatory missions between these actors, if they aim to submit a joint application for a UDC project, could be funded.

3. Ensure more **internal coherence** through results-oriented monitoring

The Global Minds programme's decentralised character was found essential to ensure it is relevant to the institutions. However, the evaluation also shows that internal coherence regarding the individual programmes' orientation towards the common framework and objectives of Global Minds is limited and that a clearer framework is needed to provide for more results orientation. The evaluation team therefore recommends that VLIR-UOS should take over the role of overseeing and guaranteeing the quality of the (implementation of) the programme, which is reflected in the individual programmes' alignment with the common framework and objectives, the quality of the monitoring systems and indicators used, compliance with the reporting requirements, etc. (see also recommendation 8). At the same time, autonomy of the Flemish HEI to choose the specific instruments to contribute to the set objectives and define institutional foci should be preserved.

¹⁶ As indicated in [chapter 3.3.3.](#), the recommendation are subject to discussion with all stakeholders as part of the restitution meeting, which should generate broad ownership for the evaluation's results.

Instead of an input based financial monitoring and controlling (see also recommendation 8), we recommend to concentrate on results-oriented monitoring by setting up Theories of Change for each of the programmes and formulating joint outcome-level indicators for all Global Minds programmes (see recommendation 10). These would allow VLIR-UOS to evaluate the allocation of funds based on the different instruments' actual contribution to the common objectives, taking into account that one instrument is likely to contribute to more than one objective and/or to create spill-over effects.

4. Try to fund **PhD scholarships** outside Global Minds

Due to the way universities function, PhDs are an important instrument and relevant for most institutions. However, the evaluation concluded that sustainability concerns, the uncertainty of the expected long-term effects of networks with alumni as well as the fact that the expected effect on education could not be confirmed question the significant investment of (full/"sandwich") PhD scholarships. Moreover, small(er) research grants were identified as contributing to the same specific objective of promoting concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas in a more cost-effective way. We thus recommend – aiming for achieving the greatest possible impact with the least amount of money – to give those other instruments that proved to be more cost-effective priority over funding for (sandwich) PhDs. Taking into account that PhDs are central to universities and that PhD scholarships for students from the Global South do make a valuable contribution to the wider objectives of UDC, funding for (sandwich) PhDs should, however, be guaranteed elsewhere.

5. Make preparatory and follow-up formats obligatory for travel grants

The evaluation demonstrates that the (cost-) effectiveness of travel grants alone is limited because their intended effect on sensitization depends on preparatory and follow-up formats. We thus recommend maintaining funding for preparatory and follow-up formats in the Global Minds programme, and to integrate these formats as an obligatory component of the grant. This would not only strengthen the instrument's contribution to informing, sensitizing and mobilizing Flemish students, but also increase overall appreciation for the third dimension of the programme (sensitization). Further reflection is, however, needed on how to improve participation, especially in follow-up formats. Options are for instance the provision of a certificate for completion of the full trajectory or linking the full payment of the grant and/or receipt of credit points to participation in preparatory and follow-up formats. Moreover, it is recommended that avenues are explored how to make preparatory and follow-up formats accessible also for HEI's staff benefiting from a mobility grant to foster critical reflection of North-South relationships and hence gradually advance a more equal, fair and sustainable approach to development cooperation.

6. Integrate **interuniversity cooperation and joint learning** into a future ToC at programme level

The evaluation demonstrated that some instruments explicitly aim at improving interuniversity cooperation even though it is not yet a definite objective of the programme. We thus recommend to explicitly formulate an objective "Interuniversity cooperation (between Flemish universities and the university colleges) and joint learning" for the next phase of Global Minds and to integrate the objective into a future ToC at overall programme level. Strengthened interuniversity cooperation, however, is not (only) an end in itself but it strengthens networks for UDC at the individual institutions and facilitates joint learning through creating opportunities to exchange, e.g. on good practice examples and lessons learned. These ultimately contribute to the objective of better (instruments for) UDC. By overseeing all six Global Minds programmes, VLIR-UOS, besides individual initiatives and exchanges, has a prominent role to play in facilitating more systematic interuniversity cooperation.

6.2 Recommendations at operational level

7. Strengthen **reciprocity** within the programme

In line with the recommendation to strengthen the programme's orientation towards global engagement and to overcome the "classic" North/South divide, the evaluation revealed a need for more reciprocity within specific instruments (XREI and REI). We thus recommend aiming for more South-North mobility in a future Global Minds programme, both for students and academics. Incoming mobility for academics hereby proved effective for integrating a development-dimension in education (e.g. through guest lectures) and research (e.g. through providing an opportunity to work out potential South projects). Incoming mobility for students, in addition, is expected to contribute to the sensitization objective and to strengthen (new) partnerships with HEI in the Global South.

8. **Increase the efficiency of financial controlling** (incl. through lump sum agreements and through making use of the institutions' auditing) and focus on **quality control in terms of the programmes' contents and implementation**

The field missions revealed that, at the moment, Global Minds' funds are audited two to three times (by the institution's own internal and external audit and by VLIR-UOS). It was hence questioned whether this duplication of efforts constitute a justified use of resources as it creates huge costs on the side of the universities and university colleges and at VLIR-UOS in terms of personnel. We recommend that while financial control could be covered by the institutions' auditing (single audit principle), VLIR-UOS could be responsible for a quality control regarding, e.g., individual programmes' alignment with the common framework and objectives, the quality of the monitoring systems and indicators used, compliance with the reporting requirements, etc. In this regard, joint outcome-level indicators for all participating universities and VLHORA, developed under the guidance of VLIR-UOS (see recommendation 10), are essential. Financial control, in addition, could be simplified through an increased use of lump sum agreements, e.g. per travel day, including average per diems, travel and transport costs as well as accommodation.

9. Allow for more flexibility regarding the **annual budget / multi-annual budgets**

[Chapter 4.4](#) on supporting and hindering factors outlines that the annual budgeting makes long-term planning difficult and hinders the ability of universities and colleges to react flexibly to challenges or windows of opportunity in the programmes' implementation. As it is suggested to keep or even stress the programme's innovative and exploratory character (see recommendation 1), the evaluation team recommends allowing – well-founded – transfers of funds between the annual budgets within the programme period/multi-annual budgets. This would further allow to set-up instruments and whole programmes with a more long-term, i.e. multi-year, perspective.

10. Set-up a **joint outcome-level monitoring** with uniform indicators

As outlined in [chapter 4.2.2](#), the monitoring systems of the GM programmes are – with few exceptions – not capable of measuring the envisioned changes in the three dimensions of the GM programme, i.e. the specific objectives. Here, the evaluation team identifies a need for more guidance from VLIR-UOS with regard to implementing a coherent M&E system across all Global Minds programmes. Given that all programmes are required to serve the same common objectives, the evaluation team recommends to implement this jointly, under the guidance of VLIR-UOS, formulating uniform indicators for all participating universities and VLHORA at the level of the common (outcome) objectives.

11. Increase Global Minds' valorisation for **South projects**

Mobility of academics, especially outgoing, to explore and initiate partnerships is a main means to increase the number of project proposals, their quality and hence the number of South projects being (successfully) implemented. Consequently, we recommend to further strengthen the valorisation of Global Minds' instruments for exploring and initiating new partnerships for VLIR-UOS funded UDC projects (South portfolio) by making allowance for fact finding missions in the selection criteria for South projects.

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ANNEXES

- Annex 1: List of interview partners (separate document; for internal use only)
- Annex 2: List of documents analysed
- Annex 3: Evaluation grid
- Annex 4: Theories of change (GM programme overall, and individual GM programmes) as used for the evaluation (not updated based on evaluation results)
- Annex 5: Interview guidelines

Annex 2: List of documents analysed

- Ghent University (2017). Global Minds 2017-2021 Management response 2017 , *Ghent University*, Gent, VLIR-UOS
- Ghent University (2018). Global Minds Annual Programme(AP) 2019, *Ghent University*, Gent, VLIR-UOS
- Ghent University (2018). Annual Progress Report (APR) 2017, *Ghent University*, Ghent, VLIR-UOS
- Ghent University (2018). Global Minds 2017-2021 Financial Report 2017, *Ghent University*, Ghent
- Ghent University (2019). Global Minds Annual Programme(AP) 2020, *Ghent University*, Ghent, VLIR-UOS
- Ghent University (2019). Annual Progress Report (APR) 2018, *Ghent University*, Ghent, VLIR-UOS
- Ghent University (2019). Global Minds 2017-2021 Financial Report 2018, *Ghent University*, Ghent
- Ghent University (2019). Integrated Policy Plan for Internationalization 2019-23, *Ghent University*, Ghent
- Ghent University (n.d.). Monitoring & Quality Assurance Plan Global Minds Ghent University 2017-2021, *Ghent University*, Ghent
- Hasselt University (2017). Global Minds 2017-2021 Management response 2017 , *Hasselt University*, Hasselt, VLIR-UOS
- Hasselt University (2018). Global Minds Annual Programme(AP) 2019, *Hasselt University*, Hasselt, VLIR-UOS
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- KU Leuven (2019). Global Minds Annual Programme(AP) 2020, *KU Leuven*, Leuven, VLIR-UOS
- KU Leuven (2019). Annual Progress Report (APR) 2018, *KU Leuven*, Leuven, VLIR-UOS
- KU Leuven (2019). Global Minds 2017-2021 Financial Report 2018, *KU Leuven*, Leuven
- KU Leuven (n.d.). Strategic Plan KU Leuven, *KU Leuven*, Leuven
- University of Antwerp (2017). Global Minds 2017-2021 Management response 2017 , *University of Antwerp*, Antwerp, VLIR-UOS
- University of Antwerp (2018). Global Minds Annual Programme(AP) 2019, *University of Antwerp*, Antwerp, VLIR-UOS
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VLIR-UOS and Hasselt University (n.d.). Global Minds 2017-2021 Institutional proposal, *Hasselt University*, Brussels, VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS and KU Leuven (n.d.). Global Minds 2017-2021 Institutional proposal, *KU Leuven*, Brussels, VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS and University of Antwerp (n.d.). Global Minds 2017-2021 Institutional proposal, *University of Antwerp*, Brussels, VLIR-UOS

VLIR-UOS and University of Antwerp (n.d.). Global Minds 2017-2021 revised Institutional proposal, *University of Antwerp*, Brussels, VLIR-UOS

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Annex 3: Evaluation grid

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification							
					Desk research		On-site visits					
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis
Relevance	1a	To what extent does the GM programme meet the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries (academics, students of the Flemish institutions, ...)?	To what extent does the GM programme meet the needs of (direct and indirect) beneficiaries (academics, students of the Flemish institutions, ...)?	1. Share of individual programmes in which academics rate the GM programme to be meeting their needs: a. Research on development-relevant questions b. Exploration of new/innovative development-relevant (potential) research topics c. Development of new didactic methods and training components d. More diverse student body (more students from the Global South) e. Establishment of relevant networks or contacts for either development-relevant research or performance of university cooperation for development 2. Share of individual programmes in which students rate the GM programme to be meeting their needs: a. More interesting/relevant (global) topics in teaching b. Expansion of the range of studies c. Broadening of perspective through opportunities to engage with "global issues" outside their own study programme d. Interculturality e. Opportunities to conduct small research projects (e.g. Master's theses) abroad / participate in study trips f. Better support and supervision for incoming students from the Global South and for outgoing students (to field trips etc.) 3. Share of individual programmes in which the university management rate the GM programme to be meeting their needs: a. Recruitment of more international students, researchers and teachers b. Increase in researcher/student mobility c. Initiation of (university cooperation for development) partnerships d. Profile building								
	1b		To what degree do the individual programmes concepts incorporate capacity development measures on an institutional level?	1. Share of individual programmes' documents that refer to capacity development measures for the institutional level.	✓			✓	✓			
	2	To what extent are the realized/planned activities and results relevant to achieving the specific and general objectives of the GM programme?	/	Synthesis of evaluation results								
	3	To what extent can the GM programmes be considered as coherent and results-oriented (internal coherence)?	/	1. Share of individual programmes which are planned results-oriented. 2. Existence of an M&E-system at (overall) programme level. 3. Share of individual programmes which are coherent with the overall GM programme logic with respect to a. Impact hypotheses b. General objective (impact) c. Specific objective (outcome) d. Outputs	✓	✓		✓				
	4	To what extent are the GM programmes in synergy or complementarity with ... (external coherence)? a. ...each other (e.g by establishing interuniversity networks and pooling of expertise) b. ...the VLIR-UOS Southern portfolio c. ...the Belgium programme of VLIR-UOS d. ...the actions of other Belgian ANG5	/	1. Number of individual programmes which participated in (establishing) interuniversity networks in Belgium and pooling of expertise 2. Qualitative assessment of the coherence between the individual programmes and the VLIR-UOS Southern portfolio with regard to a. objectives b. impact hypothesis 3. Qualitative assessment of the coherence between the individual programmes and the VLIR-UOS Belgium portfolio a. objectives b. impact hypothesis 4. Description of realised synergies with other programmes/projects from the Begium/Southern portfolio 5. Existence of coordination mechanisms to ensure coherence with the VLIR-UOS Southern and Belgium portfolio 6. Qualitative assessment in on-site visits: Extent to which other actors provide similar support to universities	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification							
					Desk research		On-site visits					
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis
Relevance	5	To what extent are GM programmes in line with VLIR-UOS country strategies and Joint Strategic Frameworks in case of components aiming at a specific (set of) Southern country(/ies)?	/	<p>1. Qualitative assessment of components of individual programmes, which aim at specific Southern countries, coherence with the respective VLIR-UOS country strategies' objectives</p> <p>2. Qualitative assessment of individual programmes' coherence with the relevant objectives in the Joint Strategic Frameworks (B1, B2, C1, C3, C4)</p> <p>a. A solidarity-based global citizenship is embedded and mainstreamed in HEI (B1)</p> <p>b. Development-relevant scientific research is deployed (B2)</p> <p>c. Belgians are informed/their awareness is raised for justice, solidarity, sustainability and equality in the world (C1)</p> <p>d. Scholars from the South are trained as change-makers in their own society (and Belgium) (C3)</p> <p>e. ANGIC are strengthened (C4)</p>	✓	✓						
	6a	To what extent are GM programmes complementary to and clearly differentiated from the internationalization policy (in contrast to development cooperation) of the institution (i.e. clearly aiming at another finality and target group)?	To what extent are GM programmes complementary to and clearly differentiated from the internationalization policy (in contrast to development cooperation) of the institution (i.e. clearly aiming at another finality and target group)?	<p>1. Share of individual programmes which clearly differentiate between internationalization and the GM programme</p> <p>2. Share of individual programmes whose stakeholders consider development cooperation as a finality of the GM programme</p> <p>3. Share of individual programmes whose stakeholders consider Flemish institutions (academics, students...) as target group of the GM programme</p>	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		
	6b		To what extent are GM programmes in line with the universities'/university colleges' institutional policies and strategies in the field of development cooperation?	1. Qualitative assessment of of complementarity between GM programmes and universities'/university colleges' institutional policies and strategies in the field of development cooperation			✓	✓		✓		
	7	To what extent do the Global Minds programmes contribute to the concept of Global Citizenship?	/	<p>1. Conformity the GM programmes' instruments with the concept of Global Citizens, as defined in the Joint Strategic Framework</p> <p>a. Students, academics and other stakeholders develop a sense of belonging to the global community</p> <p>b. Students, academics and other stakeholders are aware of and reflect their relation to global problems</p> <p>c. Students, academics and other stakeholders take an active role within the university, and work with others to make the world more equal, fair and sustainable</p>	✓				✓			
	8	What is the relevance and added value of the Global Minds programme as compared to the "Opleidingskosten", the core funding before 2017 and other funding opportunities?	/	Synthesis of evaluation results								

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification								
					Desk research		On-site visits						
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis	
Efficiency	9a	To what degree do Flemish institutions use their own selection systems and procedures?	To what extent do Flemish institutions use their own selection systems and procedures?	1. Descripton of selection systems used by the individual programmes (where relevant, differentiated by instrument)	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	9b		To what extent are selection systems transparent, competitive and based on objective criteria?	1. Share of individual programmes whose selection system is based on objective criteria. 2. Share of individual programmes whose selection process is perceived transparent according to a. Students b. Academics	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓		
	10	What is the added value of decentralised selection systems for the different instruments/activities in terms of relevance and efficiency, as compared to the central selection system of VLIR-UOS? a. Integration of development-related training components (incl. 'development-relevant entrepreneurship') in curricula b. Alumni activities (alumni policy, alumni events) c. Incoming and outgoing staff mobility d. Research-oriented scholarships (pre-doc scholarships, PhD scholarships etc.) e. Small research grants f. Exploring/initiating/intensifying thematic networks/platforms g. International conferences/congresses h. Travel grants (research stays or work placements in developing countries by students of Flemish HEI) i. Awanress-raising campus initiatives	/	Qualitative assessment based on 1. Impartiality of the selection system 2. Transpaency of the selecltion system 3. Extent to which the selection system allows for learning processes 4. Efficiency of the selecltion system 5. Competitiveness	✓			✓	✓	✓			
	11	In how far is there a clear definition and distribution of the roles and tasks for all stakeholders involved? a. VLIR-UOS b. universities and university colleges	Are the responsibilities of the programme stakeholders clearly defined to enable efficient management of the programme?	1. Share of interview partners on individual programme level who describe the implementation of the GM programme as efficient with regards to: a. Clarity of roles and tasks of programme stakeholders (responsible / accountable) b. Interfaces between the parties involved in the programme (consulted / informed) c. Exchange of information (consulted / informed)									
	12	To what extent are there efficient mechanisms for coordination and communication between the stakeholders involved in the GM programme? A. VLIR-UOS-universities b. between the universities		2. Qualitative assessment of the competencies and responsibilities of the stakeholders at the side of VLIR-UOS and at the side of the universities and university colleges with regards to a. Common framework and objectives of the GM programme b. Selection of instruments to achieve the outputs c. Selection of specific activities financed through GM d. Implementation of specific activities financed through GM e. Monitoring and quality assurance									✓

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification							
					Desk research		On-site visits					
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis
Efficiency	13	To what extent do (previously existing) cooperation networks with Southern partners contribute to synergies regarding the GM programme's objectives?	/	1. Share of individual programmes where the previous use of cooperation networks with Southern partners financed through the GM programme facilitated a. The integration of a development dimension into Flemish higher education b. The integration of a development dimension into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges c. Grown awareness among students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs for development cooperation problems			✓	✓				
	14	To what extent are there no (better, cheaper, more appropriate) alternatives to realize the proposed objectives?	/	1. Qualitative assessment of a. strengths b. weaknesses c. opportunities d. threats associated with the given instrument (SWOT-analysis)							✓	
	15	To what degree are project costs reasonable and justified?	/	1. Qualitative comparison of cost allocation across the individual programmes with regards to costs allocated towards a. Integration of development-related training components (incl. 'development-relevant entrepreneurship') in curricula b. Alumni activities (alumni policy, alumni events) c. Incoming and outgoing staff mobility d. Research-oriented scholarships (pre-doc scholarships, PhD scholarships etc.) e. Small research grants f. Exploring/initiating/intensifying thematic networks/platforms g. International conferences/congresses h. Travel grants (research stays or work placements in developing countries by students of Flemish HEI) i. Awareness-raising campus initiatives	✓			✓			✓	
	16	To what extent do collaborations/synergies exist between Global Minds projects?	/	1. Description of collaborations/ synergies between individual GM projects	✓	✓	✓	✓				

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification						
					Desk research		On-site visits				
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis
Effectiveness	17	<p>To what extent do the different instruments, as based on the selected impact hypotheses, contribute to the attainment of the general objective of the GM programme?</p> <p>a. If development-relevant courses (e.g. English-taught interdisciplinary course, 'Voices from the Global South'-Programme) are integrated into current curricula, a development dimension is integrated into the existing educational offer. Furthermore, through the integration is development relevant courses, academic staff and students from the North and the South mutually influence each other, enrich each other's knowledge and encourage interest towards developing a jointly-established agenda of change / UDC. (UAntwerp)</p> <p>b. If alumni actives for Alumni coming from the Global South are organized from the funding to the 'Small Great Projects', the institutions' capacity to organize high quality (international) development-relevant training or to integrate development-relevant aspects into (existing) trainings is built/ strengthened/ deepened/ retained and a development dimension is integrated into higher education. (VUB)</p> <p>c. If the institution supports staff/group mobility, exchange between students and staff from the South and students and staff from the institution is enhanced and a development dimension is integrated into higher education and research. (VUB)</p> <p>d.1 If PhD scholarships are granted, concentrated research in development-relevant thematic areas takes place and knowledge and expertise are generated through PhD-research in a coherent and focused way in Belgium and in the South. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (KU Leuven)</p> <p>d.2 If predoctoral visits for potential PhD candidates from UOS-developing countries are supported, the institutions' expertise in specialized development-relevant research is built up and the quality of PhD research is improved. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (UHasselt)</p> <p>d. 3 If capacity is built among junior PhD researchers and postdoc researchers through Operational Grants, development related research is promoted among junior researchers and additional means help them to overcome the extra costs related to development related topics. Like that, A development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (UGent)</p> <p>e. If staff mobility for initiating international partnerships is supported, research-based partnerships with institutions in developing countries are strengthened/ deepened and new international partnerships/ thematic networks are explored. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges. (UHasselt)</p> <p>f.1 Through Centres of Expertise on Sustainable (Interuniversity) Development Cooperation (RP/ITN/SIP), development-relevant research and policy studies are implemented, and the institution enhances its expertise on development-related subjects. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (UGent)</p> <p>f.2 Through multi-stakeholder calls, high-quality research proposals for development-relevant research are developed in cooperation with NGOs. Like that, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (KU Leuven)</p> <p>g. If the institution organizes one thematic conference per year, a development dimension is integrated into the research of the institution. (VLHORA)</p> <p>h. If travel grants are given out (in combination with preparatory and</p>			Synthesis of evaluation results						

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification									
					Desk research		On-site visits							
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis		
Effectiveness	18a	To what extent can the GM programme, as represented through the selection of impact hypotheses, be considered effective in terms of the attainment of Outputs and Outcomes?	To what extent have the agreed outputs been achieved (or will be achieved until the end of the current phase of the GM programme) for selected impact hypothesis of the individual programmes, measured against the output indicators (as stated in the individual programmes logframes)?	1. Share of instruments that can be judged on the way of attaining the indicators formulated at output level for selected impact hypothesis as to a. last annual report of the individual programme b. Qualitative assessment of programme stakeholders	✓			✓	✓			✓		
	18b		To what extent have the agreed outcomes been achieved for selected impact hypothesis (or will be achieved until the end of the current phase of the GM programme), measured against the outcome indicators (as stated in the individual programmes' logframes)?	1. Share of instruments that can be judged on the way of attaining the indicators formulated at outcome level for selected impact hypothesis as to a. last annual report of the individual GM programme b. Qualitative assessment of programme stakeholders	✓			✓	✓			✓		
	18c		To what extent is it foreseeable that unachieved aspects of the individual programmes' objectives will be achieved by the end of the current phase of the GM programme?	1. Qualitative assessment by the interviewed stakeholders of the achievement of the GM specific objective ("The Flemish higher education institutions' basic academic capacity to perform effective university cooperation with other stakeholders is guaranteed in order to contribute to development results in the South") for the respective institution by the end of the current phase 2. Qualitative assessment by the interviewed stakeholders of achievement of output objectives of the respective institution by the end of the project phase regarding a. The integration of a development dimension is integrated into Flemish higher education b. The integration of a development dimension into the research of the Flemish universities and university colleges c. Increased awareness among students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish HEIs for development cooperation problems 3. Prognosis in last annual report on achievement of objective and indicators	✓			✓	✓			✓		
	18d		Which factors contribute successfully to or hinder the achievement of the programmes' objectives? (e.g. external factors, managerial setup of project and company, cooperation management)	Synthesis of evaluation results										
	19	How do the individual GM programmes contribute via activities (instruments) and outputs to the achievement of the specific objective of the GM programme (outcome)? (contribution-analysis approach)	/	Synthesis of evaluation results										
	20	To what extent are the individual programmes guided by clear strategies (Theories of Change) linking the different activities with their intended outcomes?	/	1. Share of individual programmes who have formulated a strategy for the individual GM projects to contribute to the overall and specific objectives of GM 2. Share of individual programmes whose strategies feature elements for defining a ToC. The strategies of the programmes clearly state a. inputs b. outputs c. outcomes d. impacts	✓			✓	✓					

Evaluation criteria	Nr.	Evaluation questions	Sub-questions	Indicators and / or descriptors	Sources of verification							
					Desk research		On-site visits					
					Desk research	Explorative interviews	Interviews university management	Interviews programme managers	Interviews with direct beneficiaries (students, academics)	Interviews with broader stakeholders / indirect beneficiaries	SWOT analysis	RACI analysis
Effectiveness	21	To what extent is there a balance between well-planned systems (calls, selection systems, longer term interventions, ...) and flexibility for new/bottom-up/innovative initiatives?	/	1. Share of the overall institutional GM budget which is targeted towards longer term intervention, which are distributed through calls, selection systems etc. 2. Share of the overall institutional GM budget which can be used flexible for new/bottom up initiatives?	✓		✓	✓				
	22	In how far is the monitoring of results and outcomes being done on the basis of objectively verifiable indicators?	/	1. Share of individual programmes that have defined objectively verifiable indicators monitoring results and outcomes of the GM programme 1. Qualitative assessment of the monitoring systems' ability to track progress with regards to results and outcomes	✓		✓	✓				
	23	To what extent does risk management take into account the most important risks and appropriately deals with them throughout the programme?	/	1. Share of GM individual programmes that have incorporated risk management into their project's' management and steering structures 2. Qualitative assessment of the the application of risk management tools	✓		✓	✓			✓	
Overarching	24	What are good practices of the GM programmes?	/		Synthesis of evaluation results							
	25	What instruments and/or methodologies are good examples of effective capacity building for university cooperation for development at the level of the Flemish institutions?	/		Synthesis of evaluation results							
	26	Which challenges do individual GM programmes face in terms of current practices?	/		Synthesis of evaluation results							
	27a	How could an overall ToC for the GM programme be (re)designed to fit both the VLIR-UOS Belgium programme and the overall VLIR-UOS programme?	What would be key ingredients of this ToC?		Synthesis of evaluation results							
	27b		Would it be preferred to strive towards a more detailed overall ToC rather than a generic one?		Synthesis of evaluation results							
	28	What role can VLIR-UOS play to contribute to the future success of the Global Minds programme?	/		Synthesis of evaluation results							

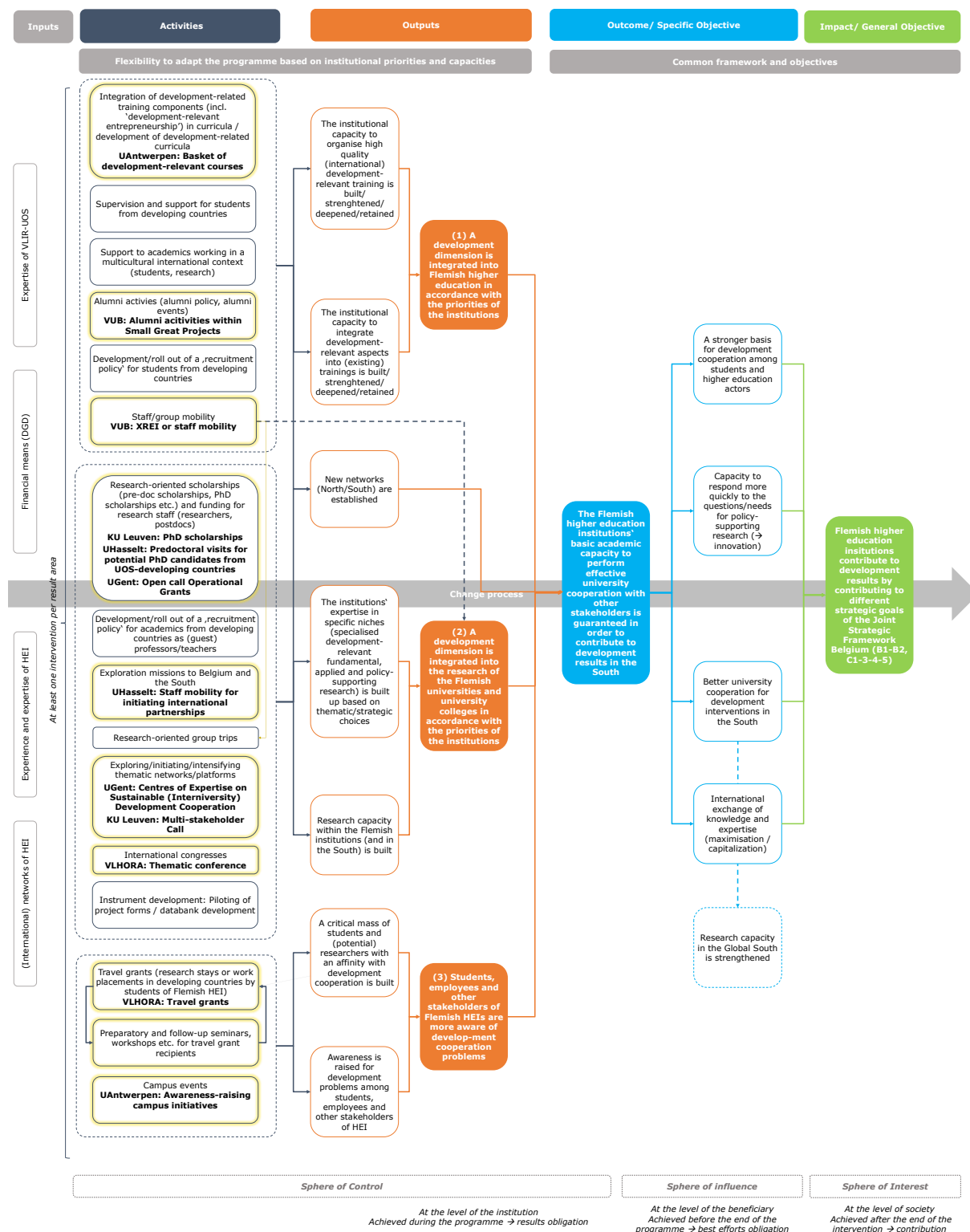
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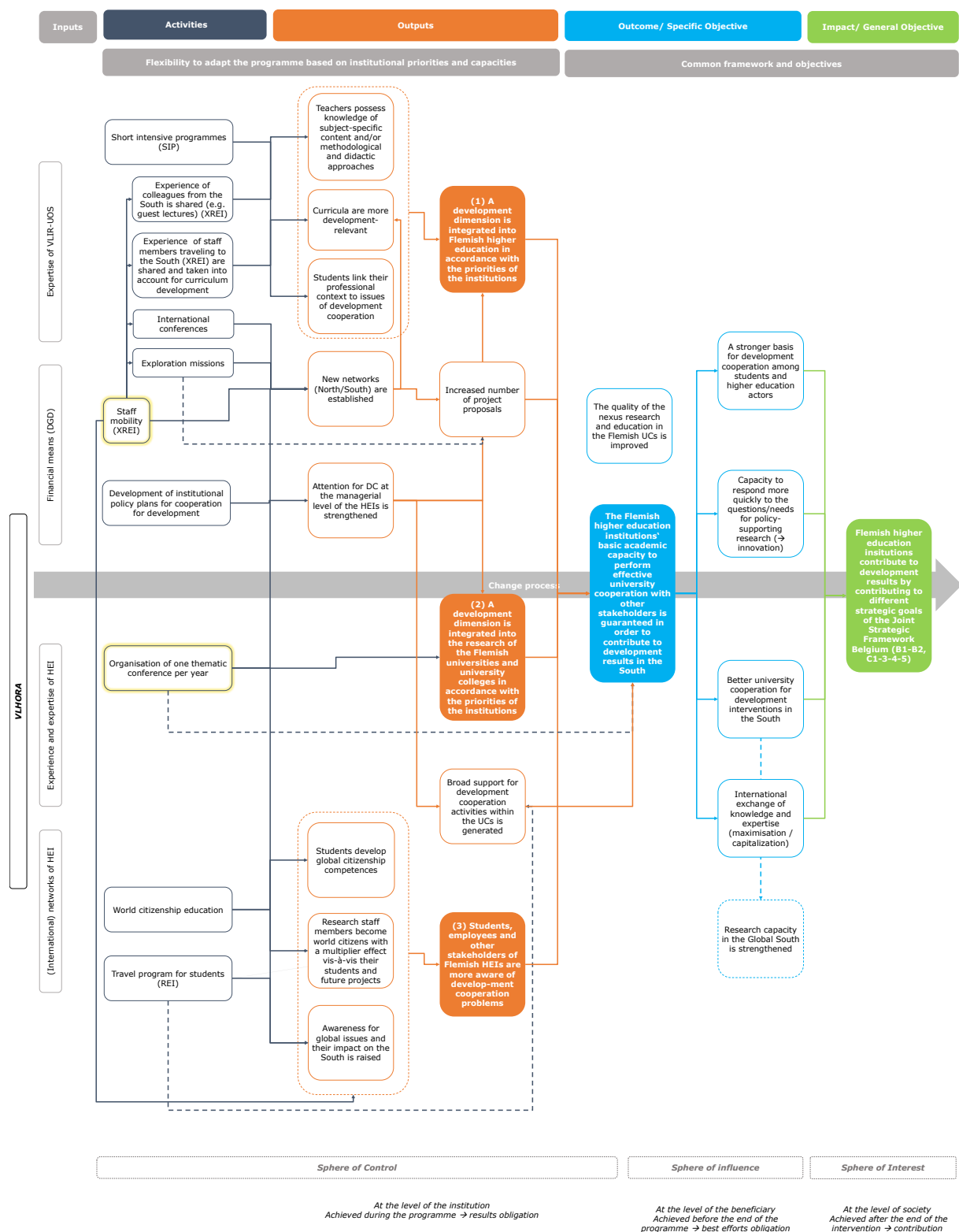
... as compared to the ToR

Annex 5: Theories of Change

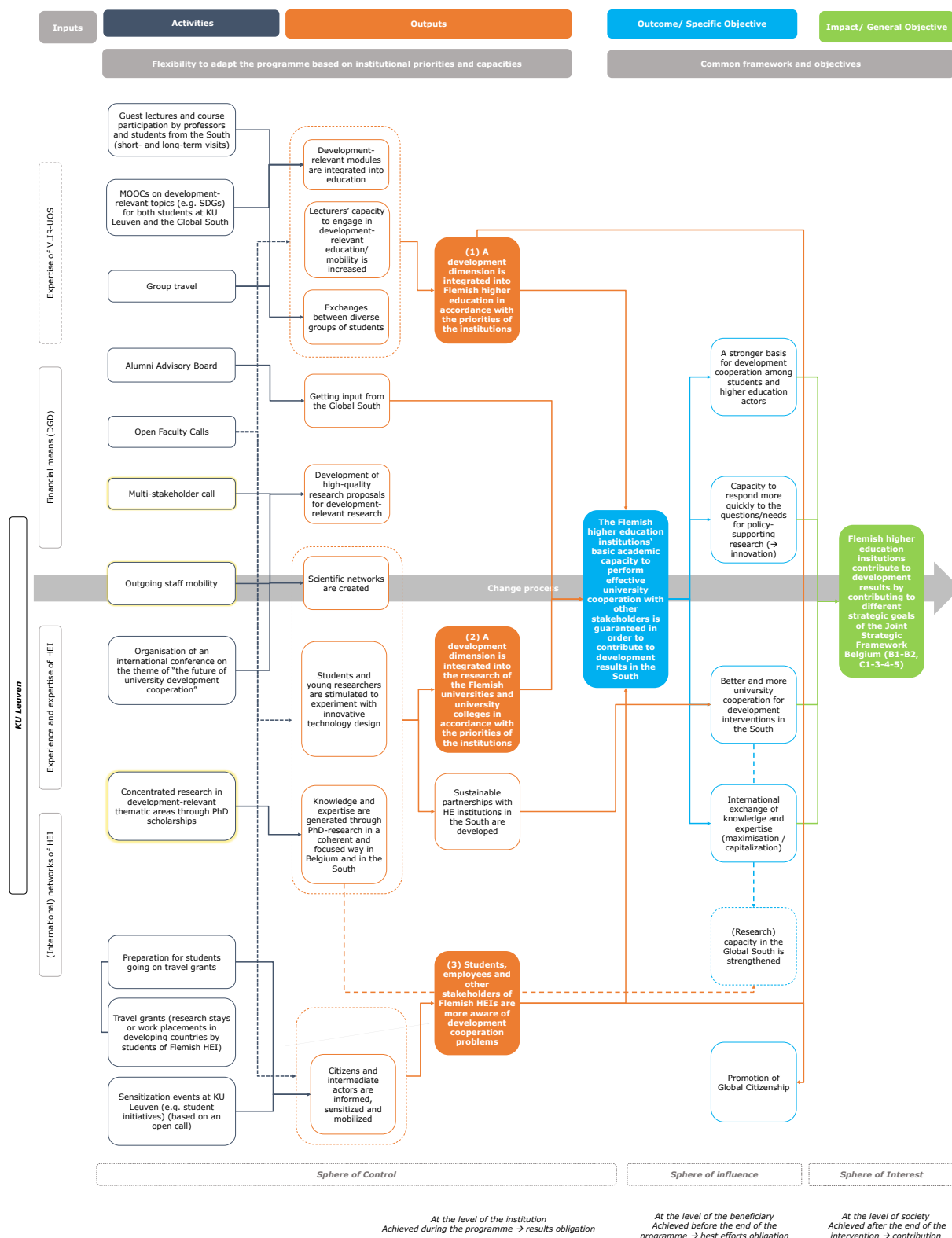
Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme with selected impact hypotheses (as of Feb. 2020)



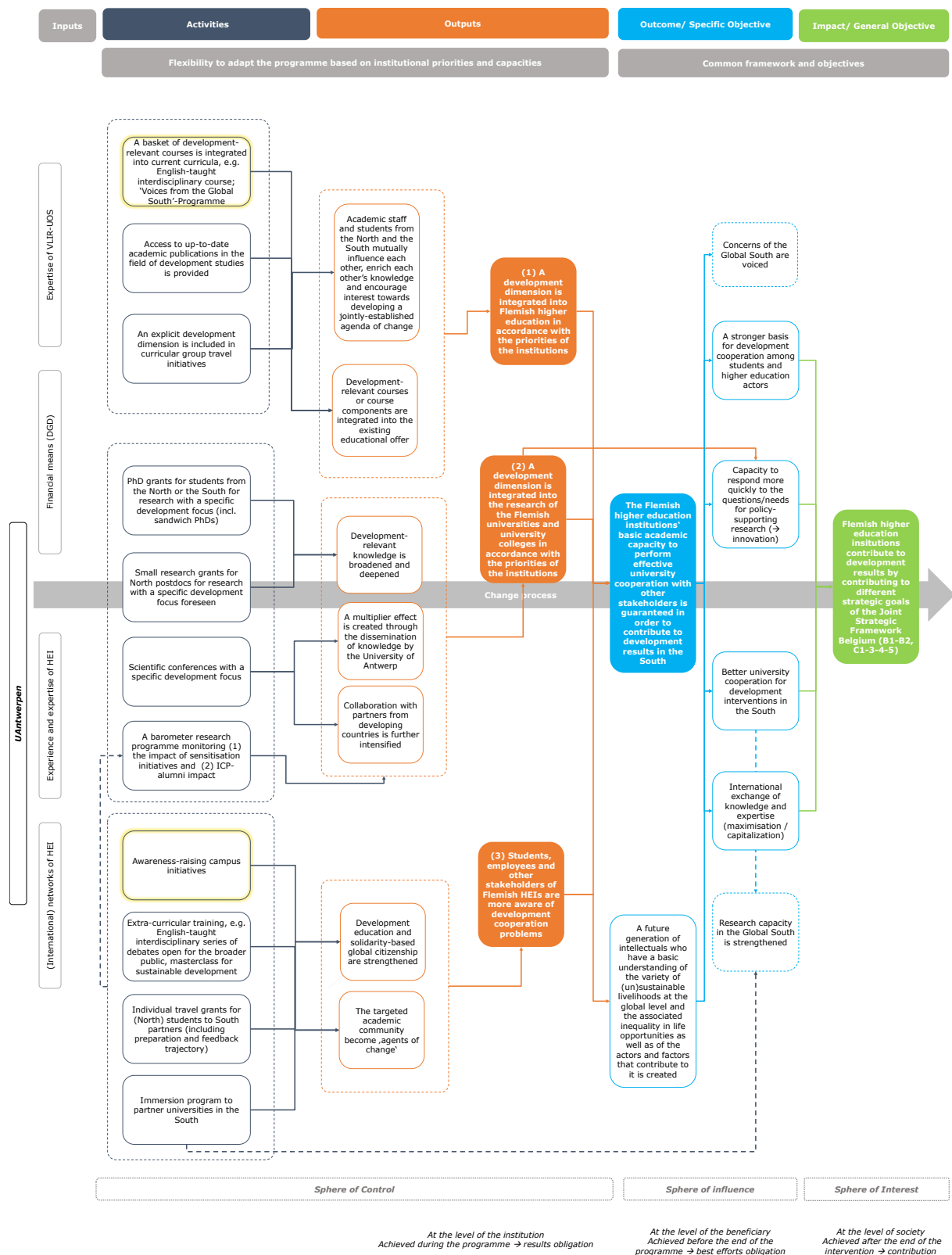
Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of VLHORA (as of Feb. 2020)



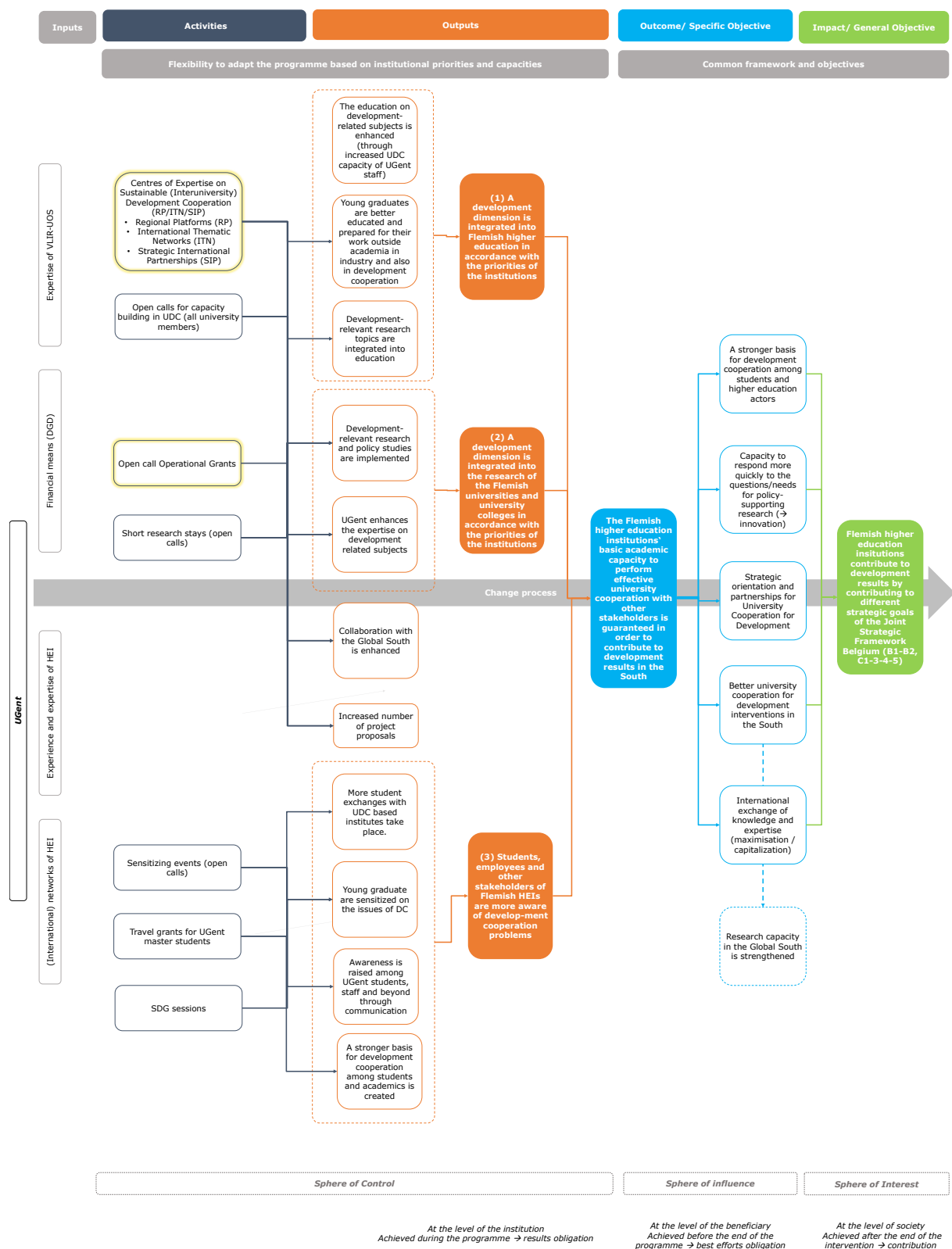
Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of KU Leuven (as of Feb. 2020)



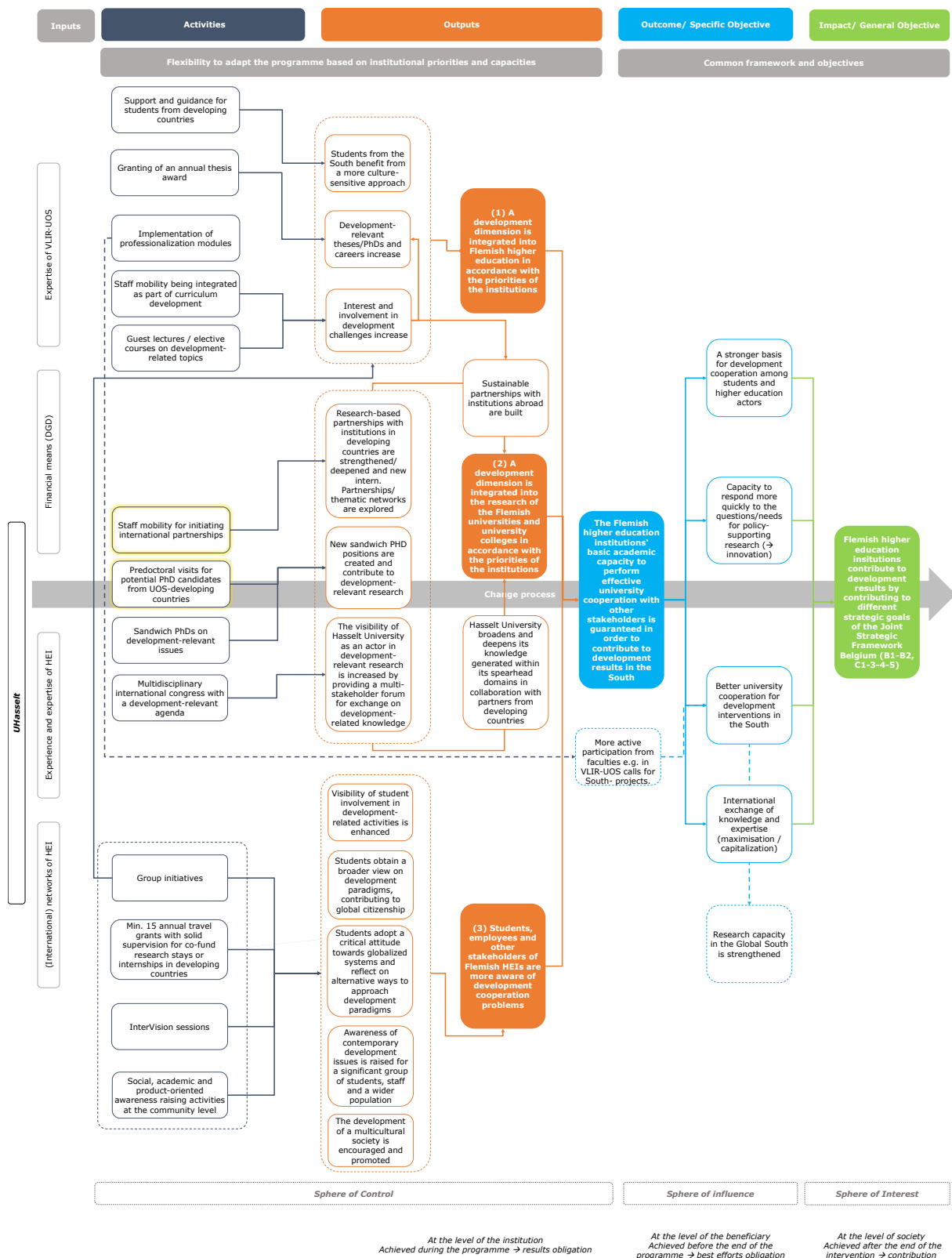
Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of the University of Antwerp (as of Feb. 2020)



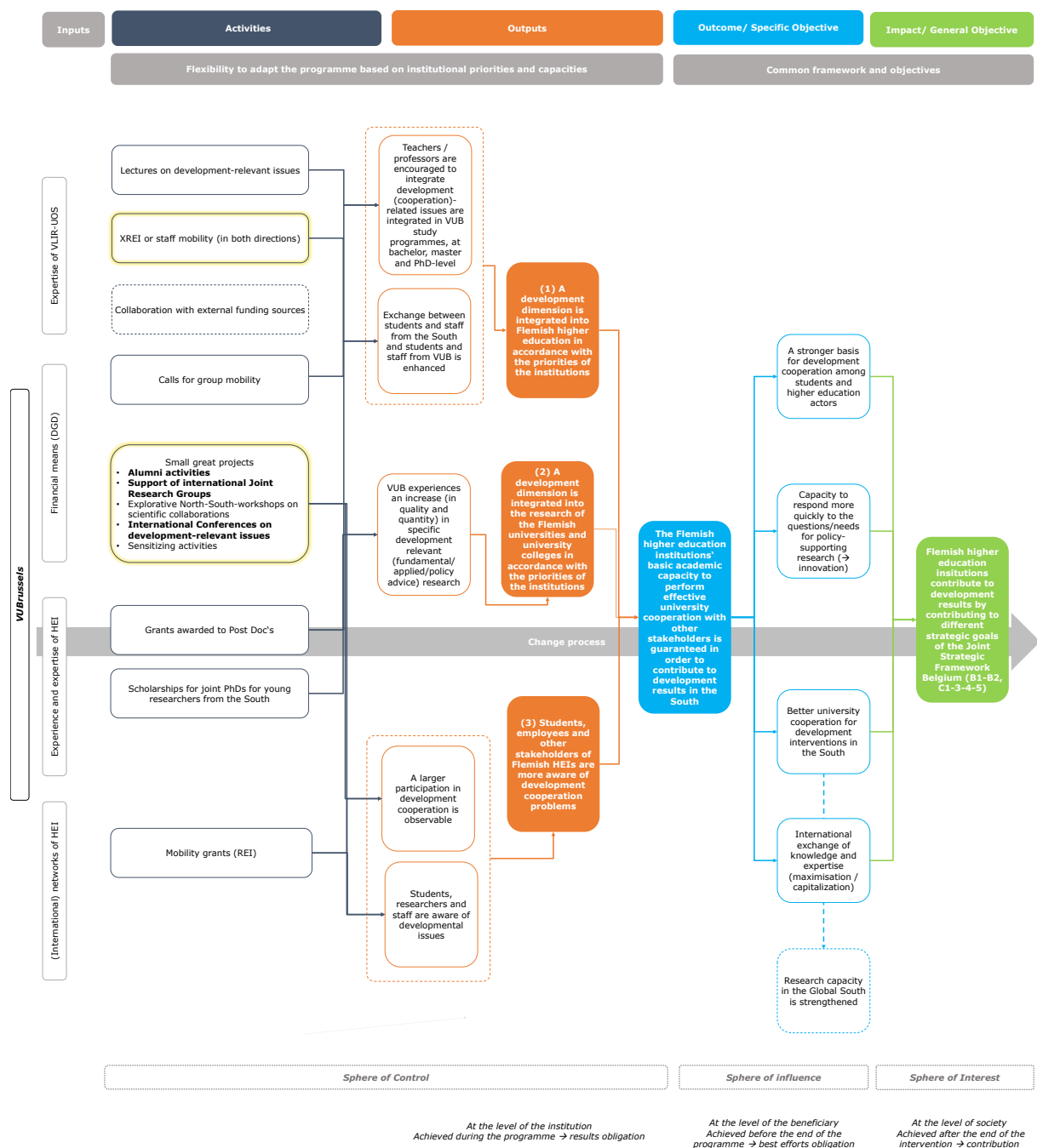
Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of Ghent University (as of Feb. 2020)



Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of Hasselt University (as of Feb. 2020)



Theory of Change of the Global Minds programme of VUB (as of Feb. 2020)



Annex 5: Interview guidelines

Explorative interviews

Personal information

- Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your role at VLIR-UOS.
- Please tell us about your expectations towards the evaluation.
 - o What potential challenges do you see for this evaluation?

2. VLIR-UOS Global Minds programme

- Please tell us about the organizational set-up and genesis of the GM programme.
- What are specific and general objectives of the GM programme?
- Please tell us about the different approaches and instruments used to attain the GM programme's objectives/intermediate results (outputs).
 - o If possible, could you rate the different approaches' and instruments' potential to contribute to the attainment of the programme's overall objectives?
- How does the GM programme relate to other types of VLIR-UOS' interventions, i.e. education and scholarships or policy-supporting research?
 - o In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the GM programme also in comparison to other VLIR-UOS interventions and interventions of other actors in higher education development cooperation?
- *[Only person responsible for M&E]* Please tell us about the monitoring and evaluation frameworks in place for the GM programme. In your view, what are its strengths and weaknesses?
- Please describe the different stages from the formulation of calls and the selection system to the projects' implementation, and which stakeholders are involved at each stage.
 - o How is coherence between the different university programmes ensured?

3. Global Minds programmes

- Please give us an overview of the five university programmes and the GM programme for the consortium of university colleges (GM University Colleges, GM Ghent University, GM U Hasselt, GM VUB, GM KU Leuven, GM Antwerpen University).
 - o Please describe what approaches and instruments the programmes use to contribute to the GM programme's overall objectives. What are foci of the individual programmes?
 - o What are the main differences, what are similarities between the different programmes?
- In your view, to what extent are the programmes effective, efficient and relevant?
 - o Are there programmes that perform(-ed) particularly well?
 - o What are supporting and what are hindering factors in the programmes implementation?

- Please tell us about political and logistical factors that have influenced the implementation of the GM programmes in the past, and/or that may affect carrying out an on-visit at the specific institution.

4. Final questions

- Did we miss an important topic you would like to discuss with us?
- Are there specific stakeholders whom we should take into account when carrying out this evaluation?
- Is there specific literature or documents to which you would like to draw our attention to for this evaluation?

Thank you very much for your time and effort!

Personal information

1. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your role within your organisation as well as your relation to the GM programme.
2. What are your expectations towards the evaluation that we are doing? Do you have any questions?

Instruments of Global Minds

3. Please describe what approaches and instruments at your institution are funded by the Global Minds programme.
4. What objectives does your institution pursue with the GM programme?
5. Please explain to us how your institution pursues the programme's specific and general objectives.
 - a) How do the two instruments selected as a focus for your institutional programme (as based on the selection of impact hypotheses) contribute to the attainment of the programme's objectives?

Please note: The interviewer will inform you about the selected instruments.

- b) Please *briefly* explain to us how the other approaches and instruments funded by the GM programme contribute to the attainment of the programme's objectives.
 - c) Which of the given instruments and approaches can be used flexibly for new/bottom up initiatives?
6. Please tell us about the monitoring and evaluation frameworks in place for the GM programme...
 - o ... at the level of the institution
 - o ... at the level of the overall GM programme (VLIR-UOS)
7. To what extent have the agreed outputs and outcomes been achieved or will be achieved until the end of the current phase of the GM programme, in particular with regards to the two selected instruments?
 - a) What are supporting and what are hindering factors in the programme's implementation?
 - b) Are there any (foreseeable) unintended (positive or negative) effects of the project? If so, which ones?

Context

8. How does the GM programme relate to...?
 - a) ... other types of projects funded by VLIR-UOS (e.g. projects in the Global South, policy-supporting research)
 - b) ... other Flemish HEI, in particular their GM programmes
 - c) ... the actions of other Belgian ANG

9. In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the GM programme, also in comparison to other funding sources?
10. How does the GM programme relate to the internationalization policy of the institution? Are there specific institutional policies/strategies in the field of development cooperation?

Coordination and implementation

11. Please tell us about the organizational set-up and genesis of the GM programme at your institution. What factors (e.g. political, logistic) influence(d) the implementation of the GM programme in the past and present?
 - a) Please describe the stakeholder's role in the conceptualisation of the programme.
 - b) Please describe each stakeholder's role in the implementation of the programme.
 - i) What selection system(s) do you use at your institution, in particular regarding the two instruments selected as a focus for your institutional programme?
 - c) Which modes of communication are you using between all stakeholders?
12. Which challenges associated with the implementation of the GM programme do you face in terms of current practices?

Final questions

13. If you could design a Global Minds Programme 2.0, what would it look like?
14. Did we miss an important topic you would like to discuss with us?
15. Are there specific documents to which you would like to draw our attention to for this evaluation?

Thank you very much for your time and effort!

Personal information

16. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your role within your organisation.
17. What are your expectations towards the evaluation that we are doing? Do you have any questions?
18. Please describe what approaches and instruments that are funded by the Global Minds programme you are/were involved with.

Instruments of Global Minds

19. In your opinion, what objectives does your institution pursue with the GM programme?
20. We would like to take a closer look at the instrument funded by the Global Minds programme that you are/were involved with.
 - Please explain how the instrument contributes to the objective(s) of Global Minds.
 - To what extent have the agreed outputs and outcomes been achieved or will be achieved until the end of the current phase of the GM programme?
 - i) What are supporting and what are hindering factors in the programme's implementation?
 - Please explain what opportunities you see to improve the given instrument.
 - Please explain what external factors, e.g. risks, threaten the exploitation of the instrument's ability to contribute to the intended objective.
21. Are there any (foreseeable) unintended (positive or negative) effects of the project?
22. Can the given instrument(s) be used in a flexible manner for new/bottom up initiatives, or does it require longer-term planning (calls, selection systems, longer term interventions, ...)?

Coordination and implementation

23. Please tell us about the organizational set-up and, if relevant, genesis of the GM programme at your institution. What factors (e.g. political, logistic) influence(d) the implementation of the GM programme in the past and present?
 - a) What selection system(s) do you use at your institution, in particular regarding the instrument funded by the Global Minds programme that you are/were involved with?
 - b) Who is involved in the implementation of specific activities?
 - c) Which modes of communication are you using between all stakeholders?
 - d) Which factors or circumstances have a positive or negative influence on the cooperation?
24. Which challenges associated with the implementation of the GM programme do you face in terms of current practices?

Context

25. Please *briefly* explain to us how the given instrument relates to...

- a) ... other approaches and instruments funded by the GM at your institution
- b) ... other types of projects funded by VLIR-UOS (e.g. projects in the Global South, policy-supporting research)
- c) ... other Flemish HEI, in particular their GM programmes
- d) ... the actions of other Belgian ANGSS

26. In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the GM programme, also in comparison to other funding sources?

27. How does the GM programme relate to the internationalization policy of the institution? Are there specific institutional policies/strategies in the field of development cooperation?

Final questions

28. If you could design a Global Minds Programme 2.0, what would it look like?

29. Did we miss an important topic you would like to discuss with us?

30. Are there specific documents to which you would like to draw our attention to for this evaluation?

Thank you very much for your time and effort!

Personal information

31. Please briefly introduce yourself and describe your role within your organisation.
32. What is your relation to the GM programme?
33. What are your expectations towards the evaluation that we are doing? Do you have any questions?

The Global Minds programme

34. In your opinion, what objectives does your institution pursue with the GM programme, or the specific instrument you are familiar with?
35. Are you familiar with the programme's overall (beyond your institution) specific and general objective? If yes, how would you describe the Global Mind programme's objectives?
36. Can you think of any unintended (positive or negative) effects of the project/instrument?
37. From your point of view, how does the GM programme relate to...?
 - a) ... other types of projects funded by VLIR-UOS (e.g. projects in the Global South, policy-supporting research)
 - b) ... other Flemish Higher Education Institutions
 - c) ... the actions of other Belgian ANGSS
38. In your view, what are the strengths and weaknesses of the GM programme...
 - a) ... in comparison to other funding sources?
 - b) ... in comparison to other VLIR-UOS interventions and interventions of other actors in university development cooperation?
39. How would you evaluate the flexibility of the funding instrument for new/bottom up initiatives?
40. What selection system(s) are used at your institution for the different instruments (e.g. open calls, mobility, ...) funded by the GM programme?
 - a) To what extent are these selection systems transparent, competitive and based on objective criteria?
41. How does the GM programme relate to the internationalization policy of the institution? Are there specific institutional policies/strategies in the field of development cooperation?

Final questions

42. Did we miss an important topic you would like to discuss with us?
43. Are there specific documents to which you would like to draw our attention to for this evaluation?

Thank you very much for your time and effort!

- phase and during the field mission)

VLIR-UOS supports partnerships
between universities and university colleges
in Flanders and the South
looking for innovative responses
to global and local challenges

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