

University cooperation for development between Peru and Flanders (Belgium)

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Peru continues to be an important partner country of VLIR-UOS with a lot of potential. From 2003 to 2020 VLIR-UOS spent over € 12 million in cooperation with Peru, including a long-term Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) Programme with **Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina (UNALM)**.

The finalising IUC with UNALM has been the cornerstone of the Peru country programme until 2020, next to 13 ongoing short-term projects.

Higher education as a driving force for sustainable development

There is a **longstanding history of cooperation** between Peruvian and Belgian higher education institutions which goes back to programmes of the Belgian technical cooperation in the Cajamarca region and university cooperation with the **Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina** which was even founded through a cooperation with the university department of Gembloux.

The Peru **Country Strategy** is aligned with national development and higher education priorities, which is translated in the country strategy by means of following central themes: **'environment', 'food security and agriculture', 'health', 'economy'** and **'government & society'**. Transversal support themes are **'institutional strengthening', 'quality of research and education'** and **'academic English'**.

VLIR-UOS supports interventions that **strengthen higher education institutions** in their role as actor of change by improving education, research and extension of new knowledge, applications and services in various domains. This is in line with the **Joint Strategic Framework for Peru**, which was developed in 2016 by the Belgian Non-Governmental Actors active in Peru. More synergy and complementarity with other Belgian actors in Peru will be sought for.

Institutional Capacity Building

IUC with Universidad Nacional Agraria La Molina

The institutional university cooperation (IUC) programme with the Universidad Agraria La Molina (UNALM) started in 2010 and will be finalising in 2021. The programme aims to develop, increase, consolidate and internationalize UNALM's **academic capacity** in research, education, knowledge-transfer and technological innovation in **sustainable management of agro-ecosystems**. UNALM aspires to become one of the nation's preeminent public research universities within the next decade. At **impact** level, the programme wants to contribute to improving food security, local income, stability and competitiveness of the agro-ecosystems and thus the overall **livelihood situation of small scale family based agriculture in Peru**.

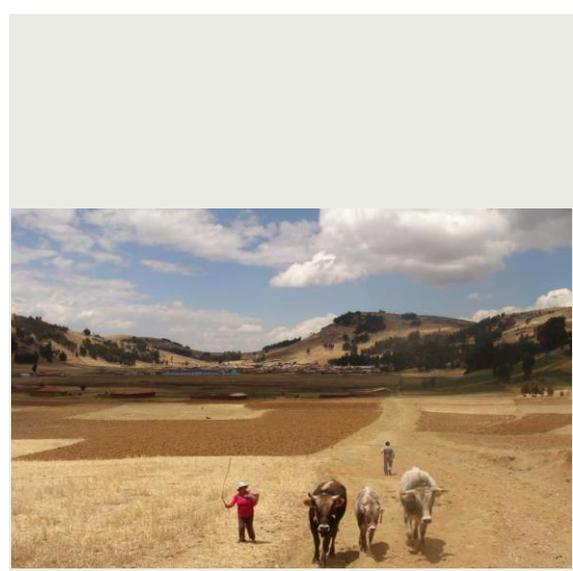
At the start of the IUC, UNALM had no institutional experience of large-scale international cooperation initiatives, and little experience of cross-disciplinary collaboration. The mid-term evaluation of the IUC could already identify the “**significant contributions** to introducing **innovation** in the university's education and training programmes, and delivered dramatically **improved research, teaching and learning facilities and infrastructure**”.

The programme is structured in **three clusters**:

- Research on sustainable management of agro-ecosystems, with two different projects on **farming systems** and **native grains and vegetables**
- Institutional capacity building and infrastructure development, with focus on **research & innovation management** and **logistics & facilities**
- Education and extension with focus on developing **educational models** for agrarian sciences and training of agrarian **professionals**.

VLIR-UOS partnerships

The IUC programme with UNALM is based on a partnership with two Flemish universities. The goal of these partnerships is capacity building based on **long term investments in human capital** and **building up networks**. Focusing on capacity building and the building of (inter)national networks allows our partners to use expanding networks to sustainably acquire new skills and new sources of funding. This leads to both academic and financial self-reliance.





Focus on country-strategic themes

TEAM and South Initiative (SI) projects are mutually reinforcing projects that aim to strengthen the research and education capacity and to bring into service this capacity to find sustainable solutions to local and global development challenges.

Environment

An ongoing TEAM project studies the impact of **mining** on the quantity and quality of the **water resources** in the region of Cajamarca. This project tries to reinforce the Universidad Nacional de Cajamarca as regional actor so that the **environmental impact** can be **assessed** in an objective and neutral way. The National University of Cajamarca will increase its human and instrumental capacity in water resources and biodiversity management, which will allow a better assessment and mitigation of the impact by open cast mining in the region. A new SI project with the Universidad Nacional de Trujillo will focus on **community based eco-tourism**.

Government and society

Socio-environmental conflicts in the Peruvian Amazon are increasingly linked to the access to and quality of water sources. Extractive activities and infrastructure projects carried out in indigenous territories without consultation seem to systematically violate **indigenous peoples' right to water**. An SI project with the Universidad Nacional de la Amazonía Peruana (UNAP) aims to analyse the causes and circumstances as well as local resistance strategies, in order to **build the capacity of the indigenous peoples and state functionaries** involved to defend their rights, and to strengthen the dialogue and negotiation processes.

Health

A short term VLIR-UOS project in Peru is working on **malaria transmission** in the Amazon. A Flemish university and a strong Peruvian institution (Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia) will strengthen jointly the **research and education capacity** on malaria molecular epidemiology of the UNAP. The projects wants to produce the relevant information for the development of **malaria control policies** in Peru.

Scholarships

Scholarships are powerful tools. It allows Peruvian students to broaden their horizon, learn to look at problems from the perspective of multiple disciplines and to grow into a skilful researcher. Also Flemish students spend time in a Peruvian institution and create close ties.

Uptake by stakeholders



As local communities are a crucial factor for the uptake of research outputs, different VLIR-

UOS projects in Peru worked on **improving computer literacy** in isolated primary schools. Belgian and Peruvian researchers provided the necessary technical support.



Main elements of the country strategy for Peru

Environment: mining impact, climate change, natural resources, biodiversity...

Food security and agriculture: farming systems, rural development, value chains, agribusiness, nutrition...

Health: nutrition, virology, public health/mental health and care, ...

Economy: SME & private sector development, financial inclusion, regional and sustainable development...

Government & society: good governance/civil society, social development, conflict prevention, indigenous communities, multi-ethnicity, ...

Transversal support themes:

Institutional strengthening: university management, improving quality of research and education (incl. statistics), academic English, ...

About the country strategy

During the reform of non-governmental development cooperation in 2016, VLIR-UOS updated its list of 20 partner countries, hereby reconfirming Peru as a partner country. For each partner country VLIR-UOS elaborated a country strategy, to serve as a road map for cooperation going forward.

A country strategy reflects the opportunities for university cooperation for development between the country in question and Belgium/Flanders. A country strategy serves as a reference framework for programming, leading to strategy based calls for proposals.

More information:

vliruos.be/peru

Total budget Peru 2003-2020 (in €)	
Projects	€ 9.911.420
Individual scholars	€ 2.310.785
Total	€ 12.222.205

Scholars from Peru in the context of VLIR-UOS cooperation (2003-2020)	
PhD*	/
Short Term*	46
Study/Master*	55
Total	101

*Only scholarships outside projects and programmes are shown; a lot of scholarships are included in projects or programmes.

In addition to Peruvian scholars coming to Belgium, 341 Belgian scholars were granted a travel grant (short term) to Peru and another 2 were granted a sandwich Ph.D. scholarship. More information on the scholarships of VLIR-UOS: www.vliruos.be/scholarships.

About VLIR-UOS

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

VLIR-UOS funds cooperation projects between professors, researchers and teachers. VLIR-UOS also awards scholarships to students and professionals in Flanders and the South. Lastly, VLIR-UOS helps to strengthen higher education in the South and the globalisation of higher education in Flanders.

VLIR-UOS is part of the Flemish Interuniversity Council and receives funding from the Belgian Development Cooperation. www.vliruos.be

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