

TOGETHER WE BUILD A BRIGHTER FUTURE

UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION IN WORDS AND IMAGES



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International masters students at the 2016 Get Together Night at UHasselt (Photo: Liesbeth Driessen)

You know the cliché. That academics are unworldly in their ivory towers, high above, and most of all, far away from society. Science that mostly serves itself. We challenge you by saying that you will find no trace of ivory towers in this annual report.

LEAVING THE IVORY TOWERS

With university development cooperation we stand with both our feet in the real world. We seek answers to global and local challenges through research, education and service provision. And through cooperation, between Flanders and the South and within Flanders, we find more specific answers.

We see a clear shift: when VLIR-UOS was established around twenty years ago we mainly worked within academia – universities and later university colleges in Flanders and the South – but now other partners, such as governments, businesses, NGOs and other development cooperation actors, are increasingly getting involved. That is a trend we applaud: we badly need those other actors to translate scientific knowledge into something that benefits society and to keep asking the right questions.

In this annual report we discuss the projects in which we, together with those other actors, make a difference. By joining forces in a project we can achieve much better results than when we all work individually. That often produces a chain reaction: one idea inspires others and in turn generates new ideas and initiatives.

In 2015 minister of development cooperation Alexander De Croo called on non-governmental actors in Belgian development cooperation to work together more. In 2016 we worked with other actors in Belgian development cooperation to draw up a joint strategy for each individual country and align our interventions. VLIR-UOS actively encourages the universities and university colleges to involve other actors from home and abroad in their projects, so as to broaden the impact on the ground as much as possible.

Clearly, we achieve more together. But not with just any partner. It has to be a good match. We need to have a click. And it is vital that everyone benefits. The partnership must not end when a memorandum of understanding is signed. The challenge for university development cooperation is clearly to involve more external actors within our projects but on the other hand also make more and more concrete steps in branding good practices, knowledge and products as the outcome result of our projects 'Sharing minds, changing lives' is where our success lies – both on and off campus.

What about those ivory towers? It's best not to wait until they collapse or turn to ruin. We should repurpose them in accordance with the principles of sustainable heritage management. As a watchtower, say, looking out over all individuals and groups in society, so we can identify where action needs to be taken. We would then come back down from the tower to find appropriate solutions in today's society and world, with both feet firmly on the ground.

We wish you a great deal of inspiration!

Paul Janssen,
Chair VLIR-UOS

Kristien Verbruggen,
director VLIR-UOS



INNOVATIVE TALENT COMPETES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE



Imagine a competition in which you bring students and researchers together for 12 hours and ask them to develop innovative technological solutions to pressing challenges in our society. This is the premise of the BIO Hackathon, which was held for the first time at the National Agrarian University La Molina (UNALM) in Peru in December 2016. The BIO Hackathon is a partnership between VLIR-UOS and UNALM.

Co-organizer **José Maria Espinoza Bueno** of the Open Learning Centre at UNALM sets out her experiences and the results of the initiative.

What is the BIO Hackathon?

In the BIO Hackathon students and teachers look for innovative technological solutions for social challenges. They are given a time span of 12 hours. The participants develop new software or prototypes and combine knowledge and techniques, art and mathematics. A panel of academics and business people select the winners.

Preparatory work sessions are held a few weeks beforehand to give the participants the opportunity to put forward ideas and study techniques like 3D printing in more depth.

What's the point of a BIO Hackathon?

The organizers sum it up as follows: 'Making something is the best way to learn'. 'We need innovative solutions in the fields of environment, responsible enterprise, organic production, digital culture and open data,' says José Maria Espinoza Bueno. 'The BIO Hackathon creates

a dynamic environment in which UNALM students and teachers are able to develop interdisciplinary projects together with other universities and businesses connected with technological innovation. We work to give our students a greater awareness of the need to protect the environment, with each individual approaching the issue from the perspective of his or her own discipline.'

What's the prize?

'The winners are given the opportunity to follow training at an UNALM unit that supports entrepreneurship. The teams will be coached to enable them to flesh out their ideas, draw up a business plan and take part in funding calls through government innovation programmes.'

What is the added value of the Bio Hackathon?

'The BIO Hackathon uses the Open Learning Centre's technological 3D printing and multimedia facilities.

The competition fits in well with the educational innovation and technological development goals of the VLIR-UOS programme and has also received support and assistance from the board of UNALM and six departments and units within the university. External parties were also involved, including 'Start Up Peru', a government project that supports innovation in society.'

Does it have a future?

'It certainly does. The second BIO Hackathon will be held in July 2017. In 2018 we want to hold UNALM's first Science and Technology Fair, with participation by universities, as well as businesses, civil society and government.'



The winning team of G-EcoBlock, the ecological brick (Photo: Centro de Aprendizaje Abierto, UNALM)

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The BIO Hackathon was set up through the VLIR-UOS Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme with UNALM and UNALM's Open Learning Centre, which the VLIR-UOS programme played a role in establishing. The National Agrarian University La Molina (UNALM) in Lima is Peru's biggest agrarian university. The IUC programme with UNALM began in 2010, with the participation of KU Leuven, UHasselt and UGent. Carmen Velzmoro Sanchez (UNALM) and Eddie Schrevers (KU Leuven) are the programme coordinators. The BIO Hackathon is part of the innovation project for the sustainable management of agro-eco systems and rural development, with the cooperation of the Education Innovation Centre headed by Elva Rios, Carlos Gomez and Jan Elen, and the Open Learning Centre project, which Stephan Sas, Jan Elen and Eddie Schrevers of KU Leuven are involved in.

The winning ideas

First place: 'G-EcoBlock', an ecological brick according to the Lego principle, made from compressed household waste. The production of conventional bricks produces a large amount of greenhouse gases, which is not the case with the G-EcoBlock. The ecological brick is also very easy to lay, which means homes can be built faster and more cheaply and they are also better insulated and better able to withstand earthquakes.

Second place: 'ECO-Charger', a mobile phone prototype that works without electrical power, getting its energy from the interaction between plants and microbes in the soil. This project makes it possible to supply power for lighting or internet access to remote areas in the mountains and forests of Peru in an environmentally sustainable way.

Third place: 'Hulk POWER', a natural energy drink based on wheat germ and fermented kombucha tea, whose positive characteristics make it a healthy alternative to conventional energy drinks that have been proven to be harmful.

The BIO Hackathon in figures

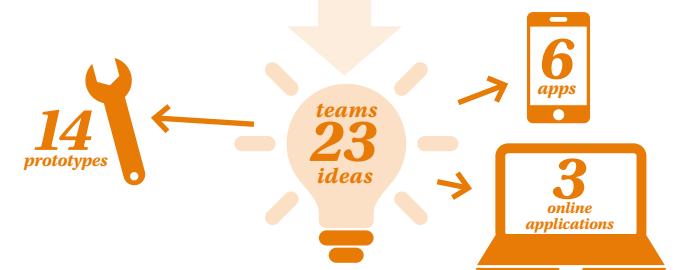
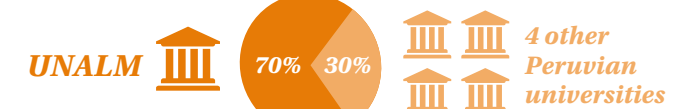
3 preceding work sessions



56 ideas

BIO Hackathon

students & researchers



MMU is located in the hilly Rwenzori region in the west of Uganda (Photo: Herman Diels)

HOWEST GOES UGANDA EYE-OPENER AND LIFE CHANGING EXPERIENCE

In Uganda, University College West Flanders (Howest) has proven that university colleges also have a role to play in VLIR-UOS university development cooperation. Together with UGent, VUB, KU Leuven and Thomas More they have provided a boost to the Mountains of the Moon University (MMU). But Howest does not want to stop there. Initiator from the very beginning, Ivo De Pauw, tells us a story about obstacles, breakthroughs and above all solidarity. Or how a small player can achieve the greatest results.



On the MMU campus (left to right): local programme coordinator Edmond Kagambe, vice-rector - Education and International Affairs Frederik D'hulster and Howest lector Ivo De Pauw (Photo: Ann Deraedt)

Ivo De Pauw is lector in applied mathematics, outreach officer and ICT advisor. In 2012 he was the driving force behind Howest's decision to work with the Mountains of the Moon University (MMU) in Uganda. The university is situated in Fort Portal, a town in the west of Uganda with a population of 57,000 that is forecasted to be home to some 600,000 inhabitants by 2040. The young university was founded in 2005 on the initiative of the local community.

Ivo De Pauw explains that the Mountains of the Moon University has a powerful mission but faces huge organisational and structural challenges: 'The inclination for their own region is in their DNA. But capacity is very low, although it is now increasing. I was there not long ago. When I think back to how it was in 2012, after five years the difference is clear to see.'

How did you come into contact with MMU?

'That was through friends who work at NGO Broederlijk Delen. I was in Fort Portal and happened to walk past the MMU's ICT faculty. I wanted to see it close up. I spoke with the coordinators there and was given permission to have a look at some courses. The content looked to be very out of date, like we had in the seventies.'

During the VLIR-UOS matchmaking in 2012 a Mountains of the Moon

"Colleagues I take to the annual meeting in Uganda always come back a changed person. It is a life-changing experience."

University delegation visited the Flemish universities and university colleges looking for partners for a twelve-year cooperation programme.

Ivo De Pauw, Bart Leenknecht and Kristel Balcaen took part on behalf of Howest. 'Those contacts eventually led to the creation of the IUC programme. I was to be involved in the ICT part.'

It took a full minute to open an email

'To give you some idea of the situation at the university in 2012: the ICT faculty did not have a firewall or local network infrastructure. In Belgium we would have long replaced the computers in the server room. The registration of new students was a fully manual process. They submitted their documents in brown envelopes, which regularly went missing. They had internet back then, but it was extremely slow. It took a full minute to open an email. So no one used the university email. Even the vice rector emailed from his Hotmail account.'

Five years later the server room is just like one you would find in Belgium and fast internet was recently rolled out over the whole campus. 'Emails open as fast as they do here,' says Ivo De Pauw. Thanks to the partnership with Close The Gap* all members of staff have a laptop of their own. And with the support of the province of West Flanders we have been able to lay a ten-kilometre optical cable between the campus and the Ugandan university network.'

Institutional cooperation as driver

The first phase of the Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) with Mountains of the Moon University began in 2013, with the involvement of UGent, KU Leuven, VUB, Thomas More and Howest. 'Howest is a small player within the IUC, but programme

coordinator Xavier Gellynck (UGent) has always considered us as fully fledged partners,' says Ivo De Pauw. 'I have never noticed any distinction.'

The IUC programme comprises two components, the first dedicated to socio-economic development

"It certainly hasn't been an easy journey, but my experience is that everything will come right if we persevere."

in the western region of Uganda, with dairy and aqua culture projects among other things. Ivo de Pauw: 'Howest is involved in the second component of this IUC programme which specifically focuses on the institutional reinforcement of the Mountains of the Moon University,

and more specifically in the domain of ICT,' says Ivo De Pauw. 'You could say the university is the body and ICT is the wheels. Take e-learning, financial management and student registration – they all involve ICT.'

But it did not end with the cooperation in the IUC programme. 'We were a little frustrated, because as a university college we have much more to offer that fits within the framework of the IUC,' says Ivo De Pauw. 'For instance, there were requests from Ugandan partners to collaborate with education programmes in the domains of nursing and tourism. That's why we decided to sign a partnership agreement with Mountains of the Moon University.'

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* Close The Gap is a VLIR-UOS partner organization that collects old computers and gives them a new lease of life in development projects in developing countries



The MMU radio team (Photo: Simon Desmet)

What message would you like to give to others who want to set up this type of cooperation?

'It certainly hasn't been an easy journey,' says Ivo De Pauw. 'There are hurdles you have to take, especially early on. In our case there were having to ship equipment, a government that did not always want to cooperate, a lack of local know-how... Sometimes it feels like flogging a dead horse, but my experience is that everything will come right if we persevere.'

The board is now seeing a big return in the cooperation. Our rector Lode De Geyter has supported the initiative from the very beginning, as has vice-rector - Education and International Affairs Frederik D'hulster. And among other things because the Uganda initiatives increased all the time, our ICOS Kurt Debaere even set up a new department, Howest Outreach.'

What added value does the project give to Howest?

'In the first place there is added value for our students. We want to train them to have an open outlook on the world. For that we need internship partners we can trust. Mountains of the Moon University gives us the confidence that they are taking good care of our students. And the students are very satisfied too.'

Uganda is also an eye-opener and a life-changing experience for Howest staff. 'The Uganda story has spread round here very fast. Colleagues come up and ask what's needed. I take colleagues to the IUC meetings in Uganda every year. They always



Ivo De Pauw on MMU: 'The inclination for their own region is in their DNA' (Photo: MMU)

come back a changed person. And they often stay involved in the programme. The positive impact on staff is surely shown by the fact that they come and ask if they can come with us?'

What changes can be seen at MMU compared with five years ago?

'The enlargement of the campus building, the improved infrastructure – the computer lab now deserves that name – the faster internet and the way of working is much more structured and methodical than it used to be. The VLIR-UOS programme has also enabled them to attract other international donors.'

"We want to train our students to have an open outlook on the world."

members of staff from Uganda for IT training at Howest but we have not yet had any Ugandan students. I want that to change.'

We have found each other

Thomas More University College is also involved in the Mountains of the Moon University programme, alongside Howest. Together with the VUB and local teachers, they set up a radio station on the campus in Uganda. 'Thomas More and Howest found each other through VLIR-UOS,' says Ivo De Pauw. 'We now work together in a very meaningful and constructive way.' Thomas More supplied the equipment for the radio studio and Howest deployed its expertise to set up the station. As well as teachers, a lot of students are also involved.



Howest informatics teacher Jef Daels trains MMU staff (Photo: Ivo De Pauw)

MMU SOARING THANKS TO BRIDGE BUILDER XAVIER GELLYNCK



(Photo: MMU)

What began in 2012 as a partnership between a select number of Flemish universities and university colleges with the Mountains of the Moon University (MMU) has grown over the past five years into a broad programme involving an array of private businesses, governments, farmer groups and NGOs. Flemish programme coordinator **Xavier Gellynck**, professor agro-marketing at UGent, found an ally in Belgian honorary consul to Uganda Bernard Dossche. Together they managed to persuade external parties to invest in MMU.

'Within the IUC programme we encourage the local community to strengthen the dairy and aqua culture sector, especially in the west of Uganda,' says Xavier Gellynck. 'There is a great need for funds to fulfil all the goals of the programme.'



Strong together. Left to right: local programme coordinator Edmond Kagambe, Flemish programme coordinator Xavier Gellynck, vice-rector - Education and International Affairs Frederik D'hulster and MMU rector John Kasenene (Photo: MMU)

That's why we endeavour to work with external private and public institutions to obtain supplementary resources to support our activities.'

A few examples of support through external partners:

- Ugandan masters and PhD students received a scholarship through the South Korean government, Nuffic in the Netherlands and NORAD in Norway, among others.
- TEAM projects and South Initiatives, with funding by VLIR-UOS, fit in with the institutional cooperation with MMU.
- A drinking water supply project in Fort Portal, developed by an MMU researcher, is funded by the Flemish Partnership Water for Development.
- There is a cooperation with various Belgian NGO's, including PROTOS, in which MMU's water laboratory is used to conduct water analyses.
- Belgian companies support and fund the development of a dairy centre in Uganda to attract dairy companies in the region. Packo Inox donated milk cooling tanks and milking machines. An MMU team visited Packo Inox in Belgium in 2015.
- The Province of West Flanders donated an internet cable worth 37,500 euros through Howest.

CONFERENCE KEEPS BELGIAN-VIETNAMESE TIES STRONG



As well as keynote lectures, researchers were also able to present posters about their projects (Photo: Sonia Beeckmans)

In September 2016 an international conference on molecular biology and its use in health care and food and feed production was held at Can Tho University in Vietnam. The conference was oriented to alumni from Vietnam and the Philippines who over the past twenty years have taken the master's course in molecular biology, jointly organized by VUB, KU Leuven and UAntwerpen. Both alumni and professors presented their research and current activities.

Organizer professor **Eddy Van Driessche** (VUB): 'The aim of the conference is to update the alumni's knowledge and give them a platform to share their experiences and current activities in research, education and service provision.'

One of the more than 60 participants was **Trung Anh Nguyen**, research & development project director at the Vietnamese company The Pan Group: 'I have learned a huge amount from this conference. It has really helped me make the connection between academia and the business community. I hope I can also take part in this type of event in the future.'

The participants came from Vietnamese and Filipino universities, research institutions, businesses and government. Belgian ambassador Ms Jehanne Roccas and representatives from VUB, KU Leuven and UAntwerpen were also present.

Says Eddy Van Driessche: 'Thanks to the presence of the Belgian ambassador, it proved possible to convince the Vietnamese government of the importance of cooperation with Belgium in general and a scholarship programme in particular. The goal is to get even more Vietnamese students to come and study in Flanders through the Vietnamese government's scholarship programme. An information meeting was held in Hanoi to that end during the Belgian week in November 2016. It was attended by representatives of the Vietnamese ministry that is responsible for the scholarship programme and representatives of various Flemish universities and VLIR-UOS. University cooperation between Vietnam and Belgium was given prominence during the Belgian week.'

The conference came about with the support of VLIR-UOS, within the International Congresses programme.



Alumni of the master's course in Molecular biology (Photo: Sonia Beeckmans)

"This conference has really helped me make the connection between academia and the business community."



The spotlight was on university cooperation during the Belgian week in Hanoi (Photo: Christophe Goossens)

What are alumni activities?

Programme leaders keep in contact with alumni to check whether they effectively deploy their knowledge and experience to change lives. Alumni are also made co-responsible for keeping their own network active, for sharing information and experiences, and for setting up cooperation projects.



LOOKING FOR GENETIC DIVERSITY IN RICE IN VIETNAM WITH LOCAL FARMERS

The quality of the varieties of rice in Ca Mau province has fallen significantly in recent years (Photo: Mai Tran Thi Xuan)

Mai Tran Thi Xuan was one of the participants at the conference. She completed a master's in molecular biology in Belgium in 2001. And she is now drawing on that knowledge and experience in a rice protection and development project between Can Tho University and the Science and Technology department of Ca Mau province.

The quality of the varieties of rice in Ca Mau province has fallen significantly in recent years. As a result, the rice harvest is lower, as are farmers' incomes.

'The traditional cultivation techniques used by local farmers are inadequate,' says Mai Tran Thi Xuan. 'There is an urgent need for practical solutions to protect and develop rice varieties we can use to respond to stress factors, such as drought.'

Traditional or wild rice varieties are an important source of genetic material but most of them have now been lost. 'The farmers in the province have got used to growing new varieties of rice and ignoring varieties they have cultivated for generations,' says Mai Tran Thi Xuan. 'Wild rice varieties are also

threatened with extinction because their habitat is being destroyed by human activity.'

Mai Tran Thi Xuan works with a few hundred local rice farmers and agricultural advisors. She helps them track down important genetic sources to improve rice varieties so that they produce a bigger harvest and are better able to withstand the impacts of climate change.



'There is an urgent need for practical solutions to protect and develop genetic sources,' Mai Tran Thi Xuan during a workshop (Photo: Mai Tran Thi Xuan)

(Photo: Dimitri Tommissen)

DIMITRI TOMMISSEN:
**HOW LIONS AND
PEOPLE CAN LIVE
TOGETHER IN KENYA**

Dimitri Tommissen is doing a master's degree in biology at the University of Antwerp. For his thesis he travelled to Kenya for three months in 2016 to study the hunting and eating behaviour of lions in Nairobi National Park. Due to the increasing population growth in their country, more and more Kenyans are looking for a place to live close to the national parks. There they come into contact with wild animals from the parks. There is a problem when these animals prey on the new inhabitants' cattle. In recent years there have been regular cases of local cattle breeders killing lions after losing cattle.

How did you arrive at this topic?

As soon as they told us about human-wildlife conflicts at the university I felt I wanted to examine it further,' says **Dimitri Tommissen**. 'When professor De longh proposed research into the lions in and around Nairobi National Park in Kenya as a possible thesis topic it was an opportunity I could not pass up.'

'In July 2016 I went to Kenya with my fellow student Stijn Verschueren. The data we collected was not only used for our master's thesis, it was also part of the PhD research of Francis Lesilau at the Kenya Wildlife Service*.'

We spoke to Dimitri about his experiences in Kenya:

Was it your first experience of Africa?

'No. I had already been to Tanzania once, during the tropical placement arranged every two years by the biology course at the University of Antwerp. My arrival in Nairobi did entail a culture shock though. There is a huge amount of traffic in the city. That contrasts greatly with the typical idea of a relaxed African savannah. Thankfully we were immediately able to leave the chaos behind us, as we headed out to Nairobi National Park.'

What exactly did you do in the national park?

'In the first week we helped the staff of the Kenya Wildlife Service to place a GPS collar on a lion. We did field work in the weeks that followed. We counted the animals that lions hunt as prey, such as buffalos, zebras, impalas and gazelles. We did that to estimate whether there was enough available prey in the park. We also observed the lions to study their social structures and movements. That helps us get an idea of the interactions within and between the groups in the park. We can also check



Dimitri gives a guest lecture on environmental issues at Tangaza University College. (Photo: Dimitri Tommissen)

whether certain groups or individuals are causing problems when they leave the park. We collected droppings and looked for carcasses of animals that had been eaten to analyse the composition of the lions' diet.'

"We really had a sense that we were part of the team and not simply students."

How was the working relationship with the staff at the Kenya Wildlife Service?

'Very good. We had a lot of contacts with them and especially with our local supervisor Francis Lesilau. We really had a sense that we were part of the team and not simply students.'

Did you also come into contact with the locals?

'Yes, through a seminarian we got to know where we were staying. He took us to the poor neighbourhoods a few times so we could see how people live there. We also gave a guest lecture on environmental issues at Tangaza University College. The park keepers were always very hospitable, too, offering us cups

of tea in their camp. I have a lot of respect for what they do.'

What did you get out of the trip?

'We were able to contribute to the research and collect all the data needed, which the Kenya Wildlife Service will now analyse. The information on the lions' movements, from the GPS collar and other sources, gives better insight into the conflicts outside the park and can be used as a warning

system. The Kenya Wildlife Service sends its rangers out after the lions to prevent attacks. The information we collected on the availability of prey in the park also helps us form a better understanding of what drives lions to venture outside the park.'

And then the burning question: can lions and people live together better?

'As well as the purely scientific research to understand conflicts, it seems to me to be especially important to share knowledge with the local population. Educating the local farmers or setting up educational programmes for school students is essential, I think. That's how we can create awareness and understanding for the lions' situation.'

What is your strongest memory?

'The fieldwork was an unforgettable experience; doing research in such a stunning place every day. As well as lions, we also had the opportunity to admire other animals, like rhinos, giraffes, zebras and leopards. But I also have vivid memories of contacts with local people, who are very passionate about the National Park.'

If I had to choose one thing it would be putting the GPS collar on a lioness. It was not only important for the research, because it provided a lot of data, but it was a highly motivating experience also for me personally.'

Did anything go wrong?

'Yes. We had problems with our driver, who kept asking for more money than we had agreed in advance. The car regularly broke down too, meaning we couldn't do any work for days on end sometimes. We talked it out afterwards, but it did

give you the feeling that you were nothing but a cash cow, which makes the work less pleasant. Thankfully that didn't go on for the whole three months. That's why it's important to

with the techniques we would be using in Kenya and we attended a preparatory session for travel grant students. So we were pretty well prepared.'

"It's essential to create awareness and understanding for the lions' situation."

Is a three-month stay in Kenya not expensive?

'Yes. Fortunately I was able to count on the VLIR-UOS travel grant and support from the University of Leiden's research budget. The Municipal Council for Development Cooperation in Wijnegem also helped me, as did friends and family.'

Would you do it again?

'Definitely! I would recommend this experience to anyone. Researchers who do this for a living should feel very fortunate. I really hope I get the opportunity to do that some time too.'

make clear agreements about money before you start. That would have saved us a lot of time and frustration.'

How do you prepare for three months of fieldwork in Kenya?

'Stijn and I had various meetings with our supervisor at the University of Antwerp. We met our Kenyan supervisor Francis Lesilau in the Netherlands when he visited the University of Leiden. And students at the university told us about their earlier fieldwork experience in Kenya. We were already somewhat familiar

*The Kenya Wildlife Service is a government institution in Kenya.



'This photo captures the unforgettable moment when we put a transmitter on a lioness in Nairobi National Park. Being able to take part in that was a fantastic opportunity. This photo also illustrates the working relationship with the Kenya Wildlife Service and our supervisor Francis Lesilau.' (Photo: Dimitri Tommissen)

'ZONE-IT' APP OPENS DIGITAL DOORS FOR AFRICAN STUDENTS



Proud users of 'mfunzi', the app at Mzumbe University in Tanzania (Photo: Mzumbe University)

What began as a spin-off from the university cooperation with Mzumbe University in Tanzania has developed into a powerful online tool that makes the lives of African students much easier. This is the story of Zone-it, the app that puts both Mzumbe University and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa on the interactive map.

Annelies Verdoolaege, coordinator of the Association of University of Gent's Africa Platform, has been involved in developing the app from the very beginning.

Where did the idea come from?

'Professor Koen Stroeken of African Languages and Cultures had the idea of an app allowing students to talk with each other and access information about their

subject as well as extracurricular activities like sport and culture,' says Annelies Verdoolaege. 'The app dovetails with his research into digital anthropology, which looks at how people handle digitisation, especially in an African context.'

The cooperation with Mzumbe University in Tanzania and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa stemmed from earlier VLIR-UOS projects with both universities, co-initiated by Flemish academics.

What are the success factors of Zone-it?

'Basically there are two essential things about the app. First, it is dedicated to a so called trusted community. Only university students and staff have access, so the information is highly confidential. A second important aspect is that the app is about the here and now. Students can find useful information about things that interest them wherever they are on the campus at that moment.'

The app was launched at Mzumbe University in Tanzania in November 2016. 'It has been very positively received,' says Annelies Verdoolaege. 'This is still the beta version; the last bugs are being fixed. At the University of the Western Cape (UWC) they are ready to present the app to the general public.'

For what problems does the app offer solutions?

'Transport is a problem for students in Africa. How do you get to university safely? Can you find someone to give you a lift? Are there any minibuses running? Accommodation is another problem. How do you find an affordable place? Students will now be able to find all that information in the app. Providers like bus companies can promote their services and students can share useful information. So everyone wins. Safety is another aspect. Students can report suspicious situations through the app.'

The success factor: make the app unmissable

'This type of app can only work if it is useful to students. The University of the Western Cape has decided to use the app as official communication channel for the central administration. Teaching materials and messages to students, about changes to the schedule, say, will be distributed through the app, as will information about cultural and sporting activities on the campus. Students can also share their own activities with each other, as well as information about things they have lost or found. There was a thorough preparatory process involving all student bodies.'

Digital innovation hub

'Thanks among other things to VLIR-UOS funding, both universities have been able to grow into regional hubs for digital innovation and technologies to tackle social problems. We even recently introduced a university policy for mobile apps. Because apps are the future. Students will increasingly develop their own apps. So how

does a university respond? Well, they have now developed their policy.'

Synergy leads to capacity building

'We see that there has been a great deal of capacity building with regard to digital technologies at the two universities, on both the technical and research level. That expertise is there thanks

to Zone-it, through collaborations with external companies and students from Howest on internships.'

'We have also got other parties on board, like the VUB, Howest and an app developer from Dar es Salaam. Mzumbe University now has plans to roll out the app to other partner universities in Tanzania.'

'Tanzania and South Africa have overtaken us'

'Zone-it was developed at UGent years ago and tested in the Languages & Cultures and Geography departments. But it will be a while before our students can actually use the app, because the financial resources are currently lacking. The resources are needed to hire an administrative worker to manage the app. So you could say that Tanzania and South Africa have overtaken UGent. Hopefully we can make the new UGent board enthusiastic about it.'

Looking to the future

A Zone-it workshop was held in March 2016, attended by South Africa's then Deputy Minister of Telecommunications Hlengiwe Mkhize. It attracted a lot of interest from government bodies, NGOs and policymakers working with digital innovation for social inclusion. 'This is a good example of how a North-South-South project can go

a lot further than simply building capacity at two African universities,' says Annelies Verdoolaege.

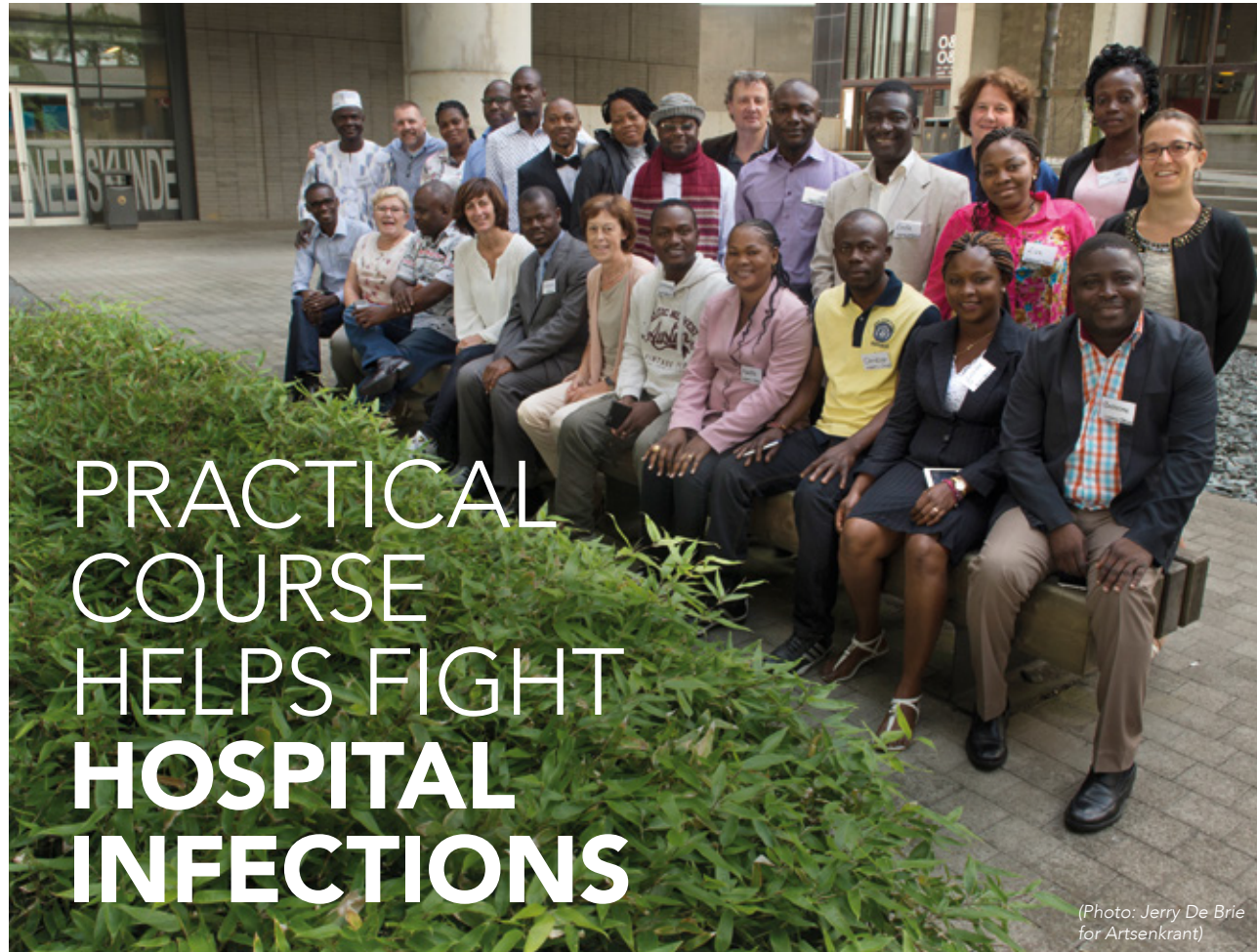
The project partners want to kick on: 'We are working on a follow-up project making Zone-it available to other target groups, such as farmers, people living in townships and business people in a given region. The principle remains the same: providing access to useful information and enabling users to communicate with each other in a trusted community.'

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The two-year North-South-South project 'Zone-it 2.0 – Building an Active Student Community in Africa Through Digital Innovation' (2015-2016) expands upon an earlier North-South-South project from 2013. The recent project focused on use of the app in the local student community at Mzumbe University and the University of the Western Cape, and on involving off-campus stakeholders in the fields of transport and accommodation.

The supervisors are Albogast Kilangi Musabila (Mzumbe University) and Koen Stroeken (UGent), with co-supervisors James Njenga (University of the Western Cape) and Leo Van Audenhove (VUB).

Through the North-South-South programme, VLIR-UOS offers universities the chance to build on the experience and knowledge from the Institutional University Cooperation by involving a foreign university. North-South-South cooperation is included in the JOINT programme from 2017.



PRACTICAL COURSE HELPS FIGHT HOSPITAL INFECTIONS

(Photo: Jerry De Brie for Artsenkrant)

Did you know ...

... that around one in four patients pick up an infection in a hospital in an area where health care resources are limited? In the event of pneumonia, those infections lead to the death of the patient in 25% of cases. 'Controlling hospital infections' is a medical discipline that fights against hospital infections. But its application is still very limited in many African countries and the discipline is not always included in medical training.

Prevention is better than cure

In September 2016 twenty health workers from DR Congo,

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Rwanda and Cameroon followed the international training on hospital hygiene and preventing hospital infections in Leuven. The goal of the practical training was for participants to share and transfer their new knowledge with colleagues at their own hospital.

Gutemberg Kpossou, a laboratory technician from Benin, is enthusiastic about putting his new knowledge to work: 'The most important thing is putting all the procedures we have developed here and all experience into practice in our own countries to reduce the number of transmitted infections in our hospitals.'

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The training was organized by KU Leuven under the supervision of professor Jan Jacobs, in close collaboration with Medics Without Vacation, the Institute of Tropical Medicine and LUMOS, an organization of Leuven University Hospital that coordinates the medical development cooperation. Says Sandy Groeninck, coordinator at LUMOS: 'We helped with the organizational, logistical and administrative aspects of the training. A number of LUMOS volunteers worked on the content.' LUMOS and partner MEMISA funded the participation of six employees from African partner hospitals.

A lot of children and adults suddenly fell ill in Tanzania in the summer of 2016. Thankfully, researchers at the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority were quickly able to identify the source as infected maize. They were familiar with the illness due to their cooperation with the University of Gent and the Sokoine University of Agriculture.

KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COOPERATION SAVES LIVES IN TANZANIA

Professor **Geert Haesaert** (UGent) coordinated the project on the Flemish side, together with professor **Bruno De Meulenaer** (UGent). We asked him a few questions about the illness and how the researchers intervened.

What was the disease exactly?

'It was an acute aflatoxicosis, which is a syndrome caused by poisonous moulds known as aflatoxins,' says Geert Haesaert. 'We use the term

when a large number of people are affected at the same time. If the mould is ingested over a long period it can lead to liver tumours, and liver damage, which causes nausea, bleeding or jaundice. The moulds usually grow on harvested grain, such as maize, wheat and sorghum, but also beans, nuts, dried fruit and coffee. The moulds especially like the warm and moisture conditions you often find in subtropical Africa.'

What impact did the outbreak have?

'Around thirty people ultimately died from the disease. It could easily have been ten times worse were it not for the local expertise that was built up through the VLIR-UOS project. The cooperation enabled the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority (TFDA) to act fast and save many lives.'

>>



Geert Haesaert (right), alongside researcher Richard Madege of SUA, at a maize plantation (Photo: Geert Haesaert)

What was it exactly that prompted the researchers to act fast?

'Through the project they knew that the moulds cause problems. They were immediately able to identify the symptoms shown by those who had been poisoned and so pinpoint the cause. After determining the type of aflatoxins, they were able to take the appropriate steps, tracking down the infected food and removing it from the food chain.'

What did the project tackle?

'In the project we wanted to study the infection of grain by toxins produced by fungi, which are known as mycotoxins. We were mainly concerned with maize, but we also looked at wheat and sorghum. We looked for ways to reduce the exposure to such toxins, first and foremost in infants, which are often given maize porridge alongside breast milk. We looked for alternative grains for the infants' diet.'



The aim of the project is to ensure infants do not ingest toxins through their maize porridge (Photo: van Dupont)

We also looked at possible steps farmers could take before and after the harvest, such as crop rotation, insect control and better grain storage.'

How can we avoid new infections in the future?

'A lot of knowledge was shared through the project, which means the focus can be on prevention in the future by passing on agricultural techniques, that lead to reduced

mycotoxin infections. There are also alternatives to maize porridge for infants and the monitoring network has been improved and expanded so the Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority can respond more quickly to outbreaks of infection.'

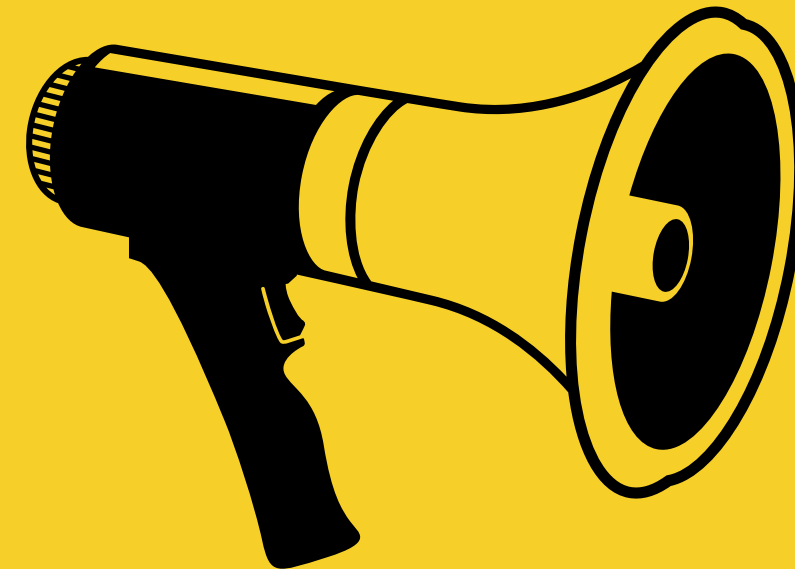
ABOUT THE PROJECT

'Developing effective strategies for minimizing exposure of fumonisins and aflatoxins in maize based complementary foods' benefited from the support of VLIR-UOS within the TEAM programme from 2011 through to 2015. In Tanzania, Professor Martin Kimanya (Tanzania Food and Drugs Authority and Sokoine University of Agriculture, SUA) was the supervisor and professor Bendantunguka Tiisekwa (SUA) co-supervisor.



"Around thirty people ultimately died from the disease. It could easily have been ten times worse were it not for the local expertise based on the VLIR-UOS project."

Mould on the maize can cause liver damage and tumours when ingested over a long period (Photo: Simone Berettoni)



KOM NAAR BUITEN

Science communication activity day

MONDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2016 BRUSSELS

In 2016 VLIR-UOS, FWO, Jonge Academie and KVAB organized the second edition of *Kom Naar Buiten*, the science communication activity day. Through *Kom Naar Buiten* we want to motivate scientists and their institutions to make more efforts to present their research to the general public and highlight its social benefits. The third edition will be held on 16 November 2017. More information: www.komnaarbuiten.be

Number 1 on Twitter

Kom Naar Buiten attracted huge interest on Twitter. The hashtag #komnaarbuiten was top of the Twitter trends in Belgium in the late afternoon of 14 November 2016. The attention of social media users helped us reach researchers as far away as the United States.

Trendinalia Belgium @trendinaliaBE

1. #komnaarbuiten
2. #Kazakhgate
3. #CHEurope
4. #diabetes...



The delegations from Ethiopia, Morocco, Bolivia and Kenya during the matchmaking (Photo: Liesbeth Driessen)

WHAT WILL THE WORLD LOOK LIKE IN TEN YEARS?

In 2016 six new institutional partnerships were set up between universities in Bolivia, Morocco, Kenya and Ethiopia on the one hand and Flemish universities and university colleges on the other. These partnerships will respond to academic and social challenges over the coming ten years. We travel into the future to see what we will have been achieved by 2027.

International cooperation between universities and university colleges is the ideal laboratory for the development of sustainable solutions to global and local challenges. But it does take time. That's why VLIR-UOS invests, with its Institutional University Cooperation programmes and Network University Cooperation programmes, in long-term cooperation

covering more than ten years.

Institutional University Cooperation and NETWORK

The aim of Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) is to set up partnerships between a university in a VLIR-UOS partner country in the South and Flemish universities and university colleges. The programme supports the

partner university in its triple function as provider of educational, research-related and societal services. It aims at empowering the local university as to better fulfil its role as development actor in society. Network University Cooperation (NETWORK) builds on earlier IUC cooperation in a given thematic domain where national impact can be obtained through the creation of a national network of a selected number of local universities that join forces in their contribution to a specific national developmental goal.

New partners

Five new IUC partner universities and one NETWORK university were pre-selected in 2015. In January 2016 representatives of these six universities travelled to Belgium for matchmaking. The aim of the visit was to match the needs and priorities from developing countries with the expertise and interest in cooperation offered by Flemish universities and university colleges. They visited the Flemish universities and met interested researchers. Based on the matchmaking, a team of local and Flemish coordinators and project leaders was identified that jointly engaged in a formulation phase of fully-fledged project proposals which were finally approved in June 2016. The programmes were launched in 2017.



The Bolivian delegation on a visit to VUB (Photo: VUB)

“You cannot predict the future, you have to build it.”

Overview of the new partnerships

COUNTRY	PARTNER UNIVERSITY	PROGRAMME TITEL	FLEMISH PARTNERS (limited to project management)
Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)			
Bolivia	Universidad Católica Boliviana "San Pablo"	Inclusive community development to improve the quality of life in vulnerable rural and urban regions in Bolivia	VUB, Odisee, UGent, UAntwerpen, KU Leuven
Ethiopia	Arba Minch University	Forty springs, forty nations. Finding common ground for sustainable development in the South Ethiopian Rift Valley	KU Leuven, VUB, UAntwerpen, UGent
Ethiopia	Bahir Dar University	Wisdom at the source of the Blue Nile: Bahir Dar University spearheads climate-resilient green economy research in north-west Ethiopia	UGent, UHasselt, KU Leuven, UAntwerpen
Kenya	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	Legume Centre of Excellence in Food and Nutrition Security	KU Leuven, VUB
Morocco	Université Moulay Ismaïl	Université Moulay Ismaïl as regional development driver	UHasselt, KU Leuven, UGent
University Cooperation Networks (NETWORK)			
Ethiopia	Jimma University	University collaboration for better health in Ethiopia	UGent, UAntwerpen

LOOK AHEAD TO 2027

Time to step into the time machine. We asked a select number of coordinators in the new partnerships what impact they feel the cooperation will have in ten years. Let's look ahead to 2027.

The cooperation with Université Moulay Ismaïl (UMI) - Morocco

'You cannot predict the future, you have to build it.' That was the starting point when we launched our programme ten years ago. Our first dream was to achieve our academic goals and we did, but we are especially proud of the impact on the region and the community: UMI has become an important hub of innovation and socio-economic development in the Fes-Meknes region, especially with regard to health, water and food quality and traditional plants. In Morocco UMI is now seen as a model for cooperation between Africa and Europe. We also see that the relationship between Flemish and Moroccan project partners has developed from an academic cooperation to a close friendship and intercultural exchange. Even Arabic and Dutch are no longer mutually incomprehensible.'

Coordinators Samir El Jaafari (UMI) and Jean-Michel Rigo (UHasselt)

The cooperation with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) - Kenya

The programme has improved the human capital at JKUAT through PhD and master's degrees, and the infrastructure with ICT and analysis equipment. We now have a unique interdisciplinary, interdepartmental centre of excellence in legume research, covering the whole chain from agricultural production to processing and consumer health. The centre combines fundamental and applied research, with outreach activities for the community. The improved skills have made JKUAT much more visible on the international stage. We also see a clear social impact due to the development of affordable nutritious varieties of legume, awareness raising tools in which we respond to the idea that beans are hard to cook and the production of legume-based foodstuffs.

Coordinators Daniel Sila Ndaka (JKUAT) and Marc E.G. Hendrickx (KU Leuven)

NETWORK Ethiopia

Thanks to the NETWORK Ethiopia

- Fewer people are falling ill or dying as a consequence of malaria, tuberculosis and worms, due to the application of new knowledge, tools and technology to prevent, diagnose and treat patients;
- Children have better access to vitamin-rich food, due to multidisciplinary efforts by the public health services and agriculture;
- Access to further education has improved, due to the larger number of locally owned PhD programmes;
- The ICT and library services at the partner universities have been updated and offer a good service to staff, students and the community;
- There is scientific output with a great impact and influence on policy.

The NETWORK has evolved into a familiar platform that attracts important stakeholders and policymakers for policy dialogue and to share experiences.

Coordinators Kora Tushune (Jimma University) and Luc Duchateau (UGent)



(Photo: Liesbeth Driessen)

On 23 February 2016 queen Mathilde visited the University of Hasselt, where she was introduced to university development cooperation on the invitation of VLIR-UOS. She spoke with students and researchers from Flanders and the South about their experiences. The queen was clearly impressed. 'We need enthusiastic, inspiring academics like you,' she stressed.

What is university development cooperation exactly and how does it make a difference? In a roundtable discussion researchers and students spoke about their international

Sustainable Development Goals: getting a handle on an evolving future

Sustainable development is a subject dear to the queen. Former Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon made her an ambassador for the promotion of

the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fourth of the 17 goals concerns education. 'High-quality education is a vector for sustainable development,' the queen said.

Academic leadership

'We need young academic like you,' queen Mathilde said when speaking to students and researchers. 'Based on academic leadership and creativity you can make a difference for many people in society.' She called on everyone to put their shoulder to the wheel over the next 15 years to achieve the SDGs and thanked everyone for their efforts: 'Experiencing your passion and enthusiasm is a great gift.'

"Experiencing your passion and enthusiasm is a great gift."

research. Topics included sustainable agriculture in DR Congo, integrated water management in Bangladesh and ecotourism in Tanzania. Queen Mathilde showed great interest in the interuniversity projects and the personal motivation of those involved.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Queen Mathilde is ambassador of the Sustainable Development Goals (Photo: UN)

ARE YOU UP TO SPEED? THE FOUR BIGGEST CHANGES AT VLIR-UOS

There were a lot of changes at VLIR-UOS and in university development cooperation in 2016. We point out the four biggest changes for you:

1 Towards five-year funding

From 2017 the federal government will fund university development cooperation in five-year programmes. That is good news, because it provides more financial security for ongoing projects. VLIR-UOS used to have to submit funding programmes to the government every year.

In 2016 VLIR-UOS launched various calls for project proposals. The selected projects were given a place in the five-year programme for 2017-2021. Minister of Development Cooperation Alexander De Croo has already approved that programme.

Does this mean that VLIR-UOS will launch no new calls in 2017-2021? No. VLIR-UOS plans intermediate calls to meet the academic dynamic and the change in PhD generations.

The General Directorate of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid (DGD) screened the performance of all actors in Belgian development cooperation to assess their eligibility for the five-year funding. VLIR-UOS achieved the high score of 3.33 out of 4 and was given the recognition it needs to continue to receive funding over the next ten years. VLIR-UOS had already been awarded the EFQM Committed to Excellence label.



2

More intra-Belgian cooperation in the partner countries

Another part of the reform of the Belgian development cooperation is that each cooperation with a partner country in the South must now fit within the framework of the Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) for that country. A JSF is a document that contains a context analysis and describes the priorities for Belgian non-governmental development cooperation in a given country, based on the national development priorities. In 2016 VLIR-UOS and the other development organizations worked hard to put together a strategic framework for each partner country.

What does this mean for VLIR-UOS projects? In all new VLIR-UOS calls we ask applicants to align their project proposal to the context and problem analysis of the country in question and the priorities in the JSF. We also encourage cooperation with other Belgian development organizations, such as NGOs.

WHICH COUNTRIES ARE ELIGIBLE FOR VLIR-UOS FUNDING?

20 partner countries for project funding + 32 scholarship countries:

LATIN AMERICA

PARTNER COUNTRIES

Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Peru and Suriname

SCHOLARSHIP COUNTRIES

Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haïti, Nicaragua, Peru and Suriname*

AFRICA

PARTNER COUNTRIES

Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and South Africa

SCHOLARSHIP COUNTRIES

Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, DR Congo, Ethiopia, Guinea, Cameroon, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and South Africa

ASIA

PARTNER COUNTRIES

Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam

SCHOLARSHIP COUNTRIES

Cambodia, Philippines, Indonesia, Palestinian territories and Vietnam

* Scholarship countries are applied to both travel grant students (REI) as South scholars. India is only eligible for travel grants in 2017.

3

Less but better: subsidy programme update

In 2016 VLIR-UOS adjusted its programme portfolio to better meet the needs of the universities and university colleges in Flanders and the South and to simplify the portfolio, bearing in mind that everything will be organized through country programmes from now on.

JOINT

JOINT stands for 'Joint (inter)national academic networking'. It concerns exchange and networking projects within a broad international or national context. JOINT projects explore or capitalize on joint ideas and challenges, leading to the creation of national and international alliances or tools that are useful for other forms of university development cooperation. The projects have a maximum budget of €135,000 and do not last longer than three years.

JOINT is a new programme line that replaces the following VLIR-UOS intervention types:

- **North-South-South:** international exchange projects initiated through IUC programmes;
- **International crosscutting projects in transversal support domains, such as ICT, library, statistics and scientific writing;**
- **National crosscutting projects on such topics as quality assurance, academic English, education platforms & educational development and university management.**

TRAINING AND SCHOLARSHIPS: RATIONALIZED AND REVAMPED

The **International Training Programmes (ITP)** and the **Short Training Programmes (KOI)** have been merged into a single intervention type. The practical training programmes (ITP) are still oriented to participants with relevant professional experience in developing countries and can last between 14 days and 3 months. VLIR-UOS facilitates the participation of students from developing countries with 12 scholarships per programme.

The one-year and two-year master's degrees (ICP) will be revamped at the start of the 2017-2018 academic year. The selection was made in June 2016. Each specialised degree course has a right to 12 scholarships per year, for a period of 5 years (2017-2021). The recognition can be renewed for an additional five years, subject to a positive assessment.

The first call for development-relevant master's programmes in almost 15 years was launched in 2015. Fifteen one-year and two-year international master's programmes (ICP) were selected for a period of 5 years and will begin in the 2017-2018 academic year. As well as 12 scholarships per year, the ICPs also receive a project grant dependant on the development of a high-quality programme with a strong South dimension. The grant enables close collaboration with partner institutions and organizations in the South and relocation of parts of the educational programme to the South, where they will also be linked with ongoing South projects and enable capacity development of institutions and staff in the South.

GLOBAL MINDS GIVES INSTITUTIONS MORE AUTONOMY

The goal of **Global Minds** is to further expand and deepen the development cooperation capacity and knowledge of the Flemish universities and university colleges in three strategic areas: education, research and awareness-raising.

Examples of Global Minds actions:

- Integrating a development dimension into the regular Flemish curricula, among other things based on cases of South scholars and/or South projects, guest lecturers from South partners and/or development-relevant research or internship stays of Flemish students in a developing country;
- Conducting development-relevant research. Integrating development dimensions into fundamental, applied and policy-supporting research is essential to allow Flemish universities and university colleges to build the necessary capacity and gain experience in development cooperation (project work, role as centre of expertise for development cooperation and development problems in general). The institutions build up their own expertise in specific niches based on thematic/strategic choices;
- Training (PhD) students from Flanders / the EU, as well as (PhD) students from the South, insofar as they help build capacity at the level of the Flemish institutions;
- Awareness-raising initiatives for students, employees and other stakeholders of Flemish universities and university colleges;
- ...

Global Minds replaces the following previous VLIR-UOS programmes:

- **Travel grants (REI)**
- **Flemish PhD scholarships (VLADOC)**
- **ICP PhD**
- **International Congresses (INCO)**

Each of the Flemish universities and university colleges can flesh out their Global Minds programme to suit their own needs and opportunities and in line with their own institutional policy. One institution may find Flemish PhD scholarships more important, whereas others will focus more on research and internship stays for students, or on the exploration of future partners.

A programme has been drawn up at VLHORA level for university colleges. VLHORA represents and supports 13 university colleges, each of which will implement part of the Global Minds programme in line with their own goals and expertise.

Overview of VLIR-UOS programmes from 2017

PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGES IN FLANDERS AND THE SOUTH

NATIONAL LEVEL

University Cooperation Networks (NETWORK)

A NETWORK is led by a former IUC partner institution and brings together various higher education institutions in a partner country to join forces to respond to a national developmental challenge.

INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL

Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)

An IUC is a ten-year institutional partnership between a university in the South and various Flemish universities and university colleges to strengthen the partner university in its institutional processes and join forces to meet local and global development challenges.

DEPARTMENTAL LEVEL

TEAM

A TEAM project aims to strengthen the research and education capacity of departments/units in a partner universities in the South by means of generating and exchanging of knowledge, strengthening of local capacities and looking for sustainable solutions to targeted local and global development challenges. The projects have a duration of, in principle, four years.

South Initiatives

A South Initiative is a small-scale project to develop new partnerships ('seed money') or increase the impact ('harvest money') of earlier projects. They are also intervention types that lend themselves particularly to synergy and complementarity with other Belgian actors. The duration is up to two years.

JOINT

A JOINT project explores or capitalizes on joint ideas and challenges, foresee in cross-fertilising of ideas, concepts for developmental change, leading to the creation of national and international alliances or tools that are useful for other forms of university development cooperation. The duration is up to three years.

CAPACITY BUILDING BY AND AT THE FLEMISH UNIVERSITIES AND UNIVERSITY COLLEGES

GLOBAL MINDS

The goal of Global Minds is to further expand and deepen the development cooperation capacity and knowledge of the Flemish universities and university colleges. This occurs in the following three strategic areas: education, research and awareness-raising.

TRAINING AND SCHOLARSHIP IN FLANDERS

Students from the South are able to follow a master's programme or training on a development-relevant topic in Flanders with a scholarship.

POLICY-SUPPORTING RESEARCH

Research in topics that are important to Belgian development cooperation on the request of the federal government and conducted by consortia of Flemish and French-speaking researchers with the participation of researchers from the South. The topics:

- Agriculture and food security
- Integrated country policy
- Financing for development
- Implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda: Environmental dimension

4

VLIR-UOS has moved

In the summer of 2016 VLIR-UOS vacated its offices at Naamsepoort in Brussels and moved in to premises on Julien Dillensplein close to Brussels 'Hallepoort'. WVOB is housed in the same building.

On 26 October 2016 the new WVOB and VLIR-UOS offices were officially opened in the presence of Flemish rectors, representatives of the WVOB Board and Belgian development cooperation organizations. WVOB and VLIR-UOS want to work more closely in their new shared home in Brussels to the benefit of inclusive, high-quality education worldwide.

Julien Dillensplein 1, bus 1A, 1060, Brussels



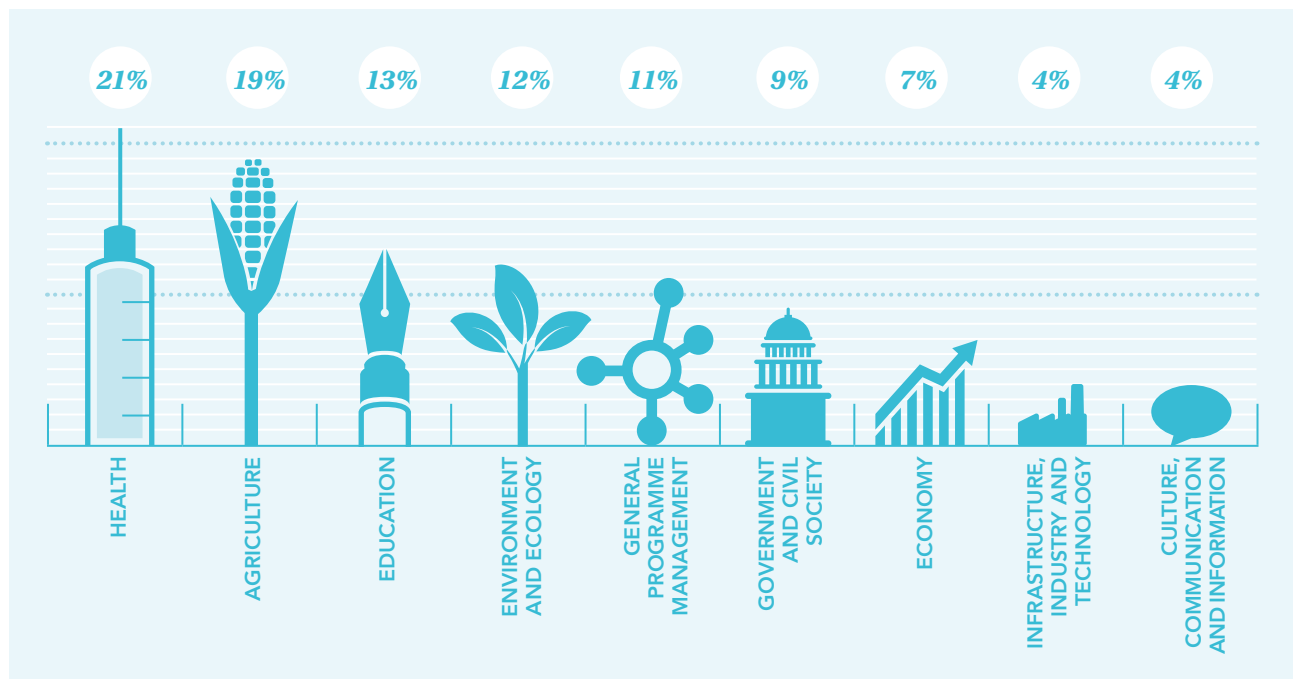
Official opening of the new offices of WVOB and VLIR-UOS, with Koen Verlaeckt (left), secretary-general of the Flemish Department of Foreign Affairs, and Herman Van Goethem (right), rector of UAntwerpen. (Photo: Hans Van de Water)

THE NEW CROP OF PROJECTS IN FIGURES

In 2016 the VLIR-UOS selection committee selected a large number of new projects. These got underway in 2017, as part of the new 2017-2021 five-year programme of VLIR-UOS. What do these new projects teach us? What trends can we discern?

Sectors

Looking at the project budgets of the projects that began in 2017, 40% of the total budget goes to health and agriculture. The top five, all accounting for more than 10% of the budget, are health, agriculture, education, environment and ecology, and general programme management.



Type of project

We distinguish 125 new projects in total, but that figure demands explanation. The Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme always comprises various projects. For instance, the new IUC programme with Bahir Dar University in Ethiopia comprises seven sub-projects, each of which focuses on a separate aspect, such as water management or socio-economic development.

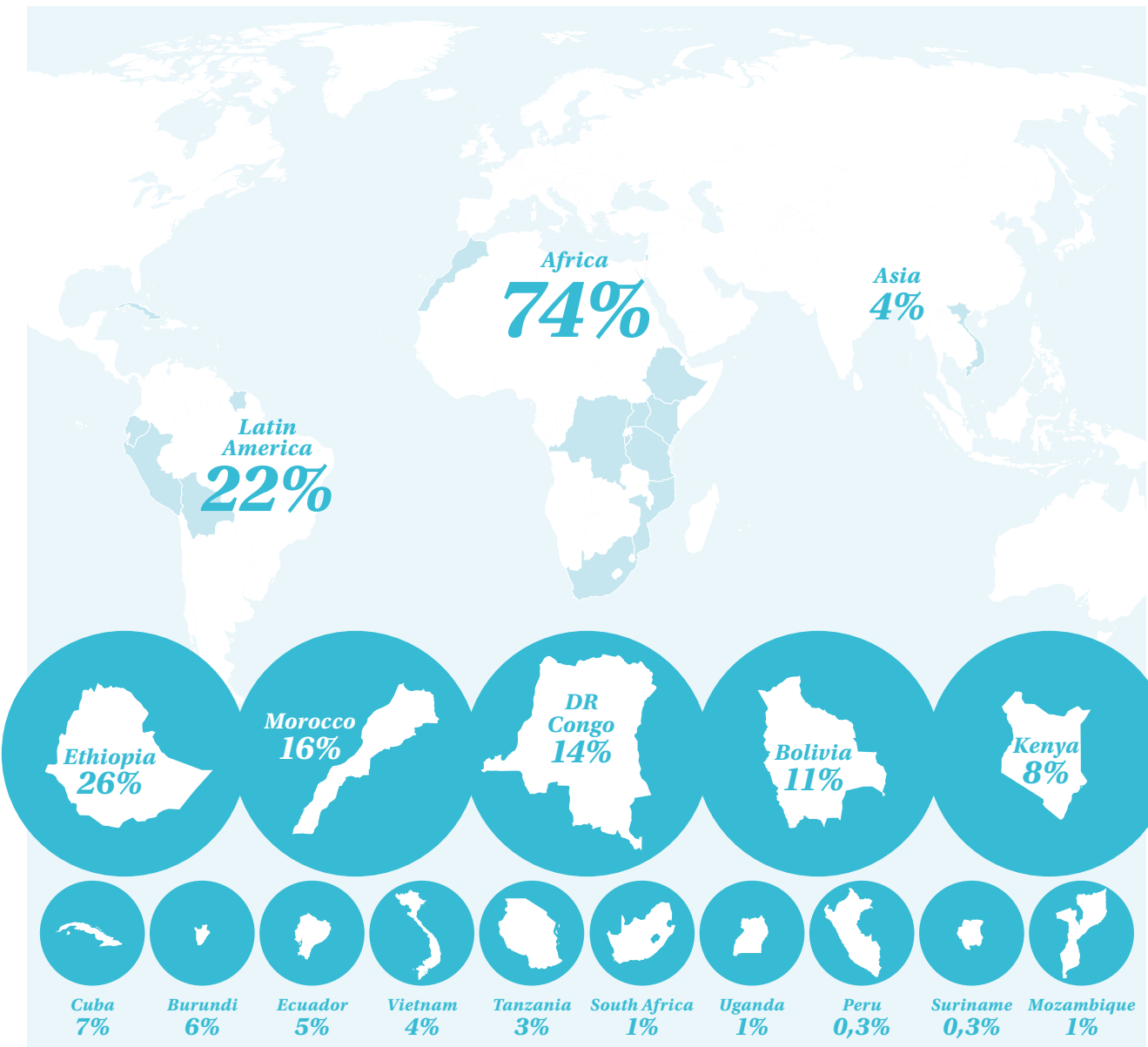
Here, we have counted each sub-project as a separate project. In 2016 five new IUC programmes were approved for the next five years, each comprising multiple sub-projects. New multi-year phases of ongoing IUC programmes were also approved. In the NETWORK programme there is one new network that comprises five sub-projects.

TYPE OF PROGRAMME	NUMBER OF (SUB)PROJECTS
Institutional University Cooperation (IUC)	51
TEAM	22
South Initiatives	15
Master's Programme ICP	15
Training Programme ITP	7
International Congresses	7
NETWORK	5
JOINT	3

Countries and continents

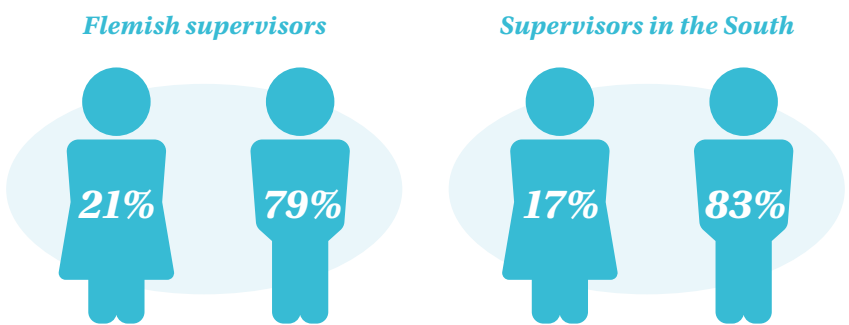
Which country cooperation receives most resources from these new projects? If we only look at the budgets for cooperation with developing countries, we see that Ethiopia is top of the list with 26%, followed by Morocco (16%) and DR Congo (14%).

When the budgets are calculated per continent, we see that around three quarters of all resources (74%) go to Africa. Latin America receives 22% and Asia 4%.



Gender (im)balance?

We see a small number of women among both the Flemish supervisors and the supervisors in the South. 21% of Flemish supervisors and 17% of the supervisors in the South are female. We are still a long way from gender equality, but 21% is a good start. Between 2003 and 2015 only 13% of Flemish supervisors were female.



BUDGET VLIR-UOS 2016

Below is a summary of the VLIR-UOS budget for 2016.

SOUTH PROGRAMMES	15.160.000	43,31%
Institutional university cooperation and country activities (IUC programmes, thematic networks, research platforms and other national/international crosscutting projects)	9.000.000	25,61%
Projects with a duration of 1-5 years (TEAM, Research Initiatives Programme, South Initiatives)	6.160.000	17,53%
RESEARCH PROGRAMME IN FLANDERS	630.458	1,79%
Policy-relevant research: Acropolis	487.438	1,39%
International Congresses (INCO)	143.020	0,41%
EDUCATION IN FLANDERS FOR STUDENTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES	2.861.685	8,14%
International Courses (ICP)	2.355.032	6,70%
International training programmes (ITP)	382.837	1,09%
Short education initiatives (KOI)	123.816	0,35%
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR STUDENTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES FOR EDUCATION IN FLANDERS	8.839.000	25,15%
ICP PhD scholarships for researchers from the South	723.200	2,06%
ICP scholarships	6.226.080	17,71%
ITP scholarships	719.966	2,05%
KOI scholarships	325.794	0,93%
Coordination costs and ICP Get Together Day	843.960	2,40%
SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FLEMISH STUDENTS	1.782.455	5,07%
Travel grants to developing countries (REI)	500.000	1,42%
Flemish PhD scholarships (VLADOC)	1.282.455	3,65%
STRUCTURAL COSTS	5.806.000	17,00%
Structural educational support through education costs	35.000	0,10%
VLIR-UOS secretariat and co-funding UOS	3.000.000	8,54%
Carbon offsetting	2.771.000	7,88%
MARGE UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES	66.402	0,19%
TOTAL	35.148.000	100%



ABOUT VLIR-UOS

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

We fund cooperation projects between professors, researchers and teachers. In addition, we award scholarships to students and professionals in Flanders and the South. Lastly, we contribute to strengthening higher education in the South and internationalizing higher education in Flanders.

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

More information: www.vliruos.be

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