

VLIR-UOS

Flemish University Council

University Development Cooperation



Mid-term evaluation of the ongoing cooperation with Universidad de Cuenca, Ecuador

May 2011

Ruddi Vaes (Coord.) & Bart Delvaux

sharing minds, changing lives



Disclaimer:

This report represents the views of the UCuenca Evaluation Commission, and does not necessary reflect the opinion of VLIR-UOS. The Evaluation Commission bears the sole responsibility for the report in terms of its content.

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
1. INTRODUCTION	8
1.1. Background Information on the Evaluation Exercise	8
1.1.1. The VLIR Institutional University Cooperation	8
1.1.2. The Terms of Reference of the Evaluation	10
1.1.3. The Evaluation Methodology Applied by the Evaluation Commission	11
1.1.4. The Mission Programme	12
1.2. Contextual Information	13
1.2.1. Some Socio-Economic Context Information	13
1.2.2. Education in Ecuador	14
1.2.3. The Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca)	16
1.2.4. The VLIR-IUC Programme with UCuenca	17
2. EVALUATION FINDINGS	18
2.1. Programme Progress	18
2.1.1. Overall Implementation Status of the Programme	18
2.1.2. Evaluation of Programme Key Result Areas	21
2.1.3. Programme Performance on IUC Processes of Change	41
2.2. Higher Level Programme Performance	44
2.2.1. The Constituent Projects / Sub-Programmes	45
2.2.2. The Programme as a Whole	61
2.3. Overall Added Value of the IUC Programme vis-à-vis Other Donor Supported Programmes	61
2.4. Programme Management	64
2.4.1. Overall Assessment	64
2.4.2. Assessment of Specific Management Aspects	67
2.5. Cooperation between the Different Parties Involved	78
2.6. Strategic Priorities for IUC Programme Phase II	81
3. SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	86
3.1. Concerning the Programme and its Projects	86
3.2. Concerning the Management of the Programme	89
3.3. Concerning the Coordination between All Parties Involved	91
3.4. Towards Phase II of the UCuenca IUC Programme and VLIR-UOS	92
LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	98
LIST OF ANNEXES	102

Executive Summary

The UCuenca IUC Mid-Term Evaluation

The Evaluation Organisation and Process: The present is the final report by the Evaluation Commission on the Mid-Term Evaluation of the VLIR IUC partnership programme with the Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca) in Ecuador covering the period from mid 2007 to mid 2010 covering the three Activity Programmes (APs) of respectively 2007, 2008 and 2009¹. The evaluation took place in December 2010 – February 2011, including briefing discussion with the Flemish Key Stakeholders in December 2010 and an evaluation mission to UCuenca in Ecuador from 30 January to 09 February 2011. The two member Evaluation Commission consisted of an international cooperation expert / team leader and a country expert. The programme of meetings and activities of the Evaluation Commission is included under Annex 3 to this report.

The Evaluation Findings: The presentation of the evaluation findings consists of six main parts in accordance with the provisions of the Terms of Reference. An in-depth analysis is made of programme progress, focusing on both strengths and challenges / issues needing attention. The assessments are based on structured factual analysis of programme and individual projects progress and results on key performance indicators presented in summary overview tables (see compilation under Annex 4). After the analysis of the overall implementation status of the programme, detailed analyses are made for each of the seven programme Key Result Areas (KRAs): (i) research; (ii) teaching; (iii) extension and outreach; (iv) management; (v) human resources development; (vi) infrastructure management, and; (vii) mobilisation of additional resources and opportunities. This programme progress evaluation is completed by an analysis of programme performance on IUC processes of change, measured along a battery of change indicators. Whereas the analysis of the KRAs in first instance relates to the achievements / accomplishments in terms of executed activities and their direct outputs (with both quantitative and qualitative analyses), the evaluation of higher level programme performance is presented on the universally applied set of higher level development performance assessment criteria consisting of: (i) quality; (ii) effectiveness; (iii) efficiency; (iv) outcomes and impact; (v) development relevance, and; (vi) sustainability. While the analysis relates to the individual projects / sub-programmes of the UCuenca IUC programme, strengths / good practices and challenges / points needing attention are presented in such way as to transcend the level of the individual interventions and thus enhancing their relevance for the UCuenca IUC programme as a whole, and even beyond for the IUC programme in general whenever possible.

The Annexes: The compilation of 15 sets of annexes forms integral part of the report. These annexes include amongst others: Practical and methodological background information on the evaluation; Summary tables on KRA accomplishments and on change processes; The sets of guiding questions for the evaluation interviews and selections of

¹ Including part of AP 2010 until the middle of 2010 for the period covered by the Mid-Term Evaluation Self Assessment Reports prepared by the UCuenca IUC North and South partners.

important, interesting and/or especially relevant answers; Financial analysis tables of the UCuenca-IUC programme budget and expenditures; Financial management analysis; Additional background information, tables and figures for the UCuenca IUC contextual analysis; Summary tables on mobility between Flanders and UCuenca; The debriefing note / Aide Mémoire of the evaluation visit to Cuenca; Selected excerpts of the Evaluation Commission's debriefing presentation, etc.

General Assessment of the UCuenca IUC Programme Overall

Implementation Status and Results Achievement

A Solid Groundwork Laid: In the about three year and a quarter period covered by this mid-term evaluation of the UCuenca IUC programme, a generally solid basis has been laid for a results-oriented institutional reform cooperation programme as envisioned in the VLIR UCuenca programme document. This in first instance is due to the initiatives under the innovative and encompassing transversal project on institutional change to strengthen research and education. Under the impulse of this cross-cutting project, the gradual transition of UCuenca from a traditional teaching institute to a balanced research based education institute has been successfully initiated. This particularly is owed to the very substantive efforts in information technology and library upgrading, procedural strengthening, organisation of multi-disciplinary teaching and research clusters, and related institutional strengthening initiatives. Programme implementation status and programme at the level of the individual six vertical projects is somewhat mixed, with two projects having experienced a substantially delayed start due to project leaders turnover issues and with one project abandoned in the process. Some projects also needed to go through a strategic reorientation and focusing process before actual programme implementation activities could be initiated. Upgrading of infrastructure (laboratories and information technology) is highly appreciated in all projects.

With Substantive Challenges Still Ahead: The delays in the launching of the academic Human Resources Development (HRD) programmes at Doctoral and Masters level impacted and will further impact on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the IUC programme in the fields of both research and education. Academic upgrading of UCuenca academic staff remains a critical success factor for the whole IUC programme. As regional university with an explicit social responsibility for local and regional development, UCuenca traditionally has strong institutional and operational links with broader society. Under the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme, priority attention has been given to internal quality and performance upgrading of the University as basis for a stronger position in society as a whole and for international networking in the next phase. But most of the vertical projects already have outreach and extension as a most appreciated integral component of their activities and initiatives under the IUC programme. Generally, the groundwork has been laid during the first phase of the VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme for strengthened programme efficiency, effectiveness, outcomes and impact with tangible multiplier effects during the second phase.

UCuenca IUC Summary KRA and Higher Level Performance Scores: At this early stage of IUC programme implementation, the UCuenca IUC programme succeeded in obtaining relatively high scores for both the Key Result Areas (KRA) performance criteria and the higher level performance criteria. The average score for all KRAs is 69.4%. Highest

average scores for all projects are on KRA 6 infrastructure which should come as no surprise in view of the heavy investments on Information and Communication Technology (ICT), laboratory and other equipments at the onset of the programme. An intermediate average score is obtained by the KRAs research, outreach and HRD. The Key Result Areas of teaching, management and resources mobilisation have an average score. With the exception of three, these scores are within the sufficient (score 3) to Good/High (score 4) range. About the same average overall UCuenca IUC programme score is noted for the higher level performance indicators (70.2%). The UCuenca IUC programme excels in its development relevance as reflected by its comparatively high average score on this dimension. Intermediate level average scores are arrived at for the programme higher level performance criteria of potential impact (and outcomes), for overall quality and (potential) sustainability. The criterion for which substantive challenges still need to be addressed are efficiency and effectiveness.

Programme Management: Generally overall satisfaction with programme management was expressed to the Evaluation Commission, both by the UCuenca and Flemish partners and stakeholders. The diversity of the projects and the inherent diversity of project and Faculty academic and management cultures under one umbrella programme are a special challenge and appeal to overall managerial skills. The decentralised programme management with maximum responsibilities vested in the individual projects is widely appreciated. This also pertains to the efforts to strengthen inter-projects and multidisciplinary coordination and approaches transcending the individual projects and Faculties/Institutes they are anchored in, basically through / facilitated by Programme Management in close coordination with the transversal project. Some (substantive) challenges are noted for further strengthening overall programme orientation towards an institutional strengthening and change programme which is more than the sum of its individual components. This for example also pertains to consolidated programme progress and results reporting at overall programme level transcending the individual projects. The special management tools developed as for example the procedures manual are highly appreciated.

Cooperation between the different parties involved: The cooperation between the North and South parties in the UCuenca IUC programme in general has been warmly and highly appreciated by all parties and stakeholders concerned. There generally has been a very positive and amicable cooperation, both professionally and personally, throughout the period covered by the IUC phase I of the programme so far. This very positive and lasting cooperation between Flanders and UCuenca goes back to the years before the IUC programme. The academic cooperation between the transatlantic partners has been generally good to excellent, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. With few exceptions, this pertains to all components of the academic cooperation (exchange visits, scholarships, guest lectures, thesis students, etc.). The strengthening of the multidisciplinary academic cooperation promoted by the programme (e.g. through the Multidisciplinary Teacher-Research Teams) is widely appreciated and already starts having multiplier effects in other Faculties / Institutes. Also within the individual IUC projects, multi-disciplinary approaches and inter-projects cooperation are starting to be pursued. At Flemish side, interuniversity cooperation facilitated by the UCuenca IUC project is also widely appreciated, even if some of the “traditional” back and forth between the alpha and beta sciences seems to linger on. But also here the UCuenca IUC programme design appears to promote breakthroughs away from traditional prejudices

and other misconceptions. There reportedly is still room for more intensified inter-university academic cooperation at programme level in general and within some projects in particular. The bi-directional mobility analysis based on the ICOS mobility database shows a VLIR-IUC programme strongly concentrated in one Flemish University, pleading for a stronger diversification and more intensive involvement of the other Flemish Universities in the UCuenca IUC programme.

Summary Recommendations for Phase II of the UCuenca IUC Programme

The main summary recommendations as further elaborated in the concluding report chapter concerned amongst others relate to: (i) The challenge of effective results delivery in all seven Key Results Areas now that a solid groundwork thereto is laid in the first years of UCuenca IUC programme implementation, and this at overall programme level and at the level of the constituting individual projects; (ii) A strategic structuring and focusing, and institutional anchoring of the transversal project; (iii) The consideration of possible additional vertical project(s); (iv) The main challenges in solidly addressing HRD and academic upgrading particularly also in view of the requirements concerned in the new legal framework for higher education in Ecuador; (v) More systematic pursuit and effective university-wide operationalisation of the innovations successfully introduced in the IUC Key Result Areas of teaching and research in Phase I; (vi) Infrastructure KRA focus on software upgrading; (vii) Outreach, extension and networking as Phase II prime priorities; (viii) Pursuit of financial sustainability and spin-offs, and; (ix) IUC linking with the national policy and strategy level.

A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme mid-term evaluation recommendations includes the following: (i) Fully grasping the favourable momentum and conducive opportunities for institutional reform at UCuenca (new law on higher education, new management, new strategic planning cycle, reform support and eagerness of university management and academic staff alike, ...); (ii) Building on the solid investment groundwork of the IUC 1st phase (infrastructure, HRD, procedures, etc.) to achieve the academic rate of return aspired for in terms of research outputs, further capacitated academic staff, outreach and networking, etc. and to enhance programme cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness; (iii) IUC transversal support to the operationalisation of the new UCuenca organisational chart along the main transversal thematic priority areas / programme dimensions with main focus on the support to the operationalisation of strategic planning and institutional reform; (iv) Institutional anchoring of the IUC T1 transversal project in the UCuenca Planning Department, with direct reporting to the UCuenca Rector and Vice-Rector. A similar formal institutional anchoring of the vertical projects in the respective Faculties / Centres concerned is recommended; (v) The creation and operationalisation of a UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform Think Tank (Secretariat with the UCuenca Planning Department), with 8 (Sub-)Committees on the above thematic areas; (vi) Intensified support to UCuenca transition to research based teaching institution (rejuvenation, PhD/masters degree, full-time, full-fledged academic (balanced teaching and research tasks) staff in line with the new policy framework for higher education; (vii) Reintegration, retention and career planning of staff benefiting from IUC HRD opportunities; (viii) More extensive scholarship programme to Belgium /Flanders, including short-term courses, and stronger performance management of the scholarships; (ix) Further intensification of Flemish inputs and exchanges (both professors and thesis students); (x) Stronger results orientation and performance management of the UCuenca IUC programme (outputs and

outcomes along the KRA indicators) and intensified actual results delivery in the second phase (PhDs, Masters, publications, conferences, extension services and contract research, etc); (xi) Further strengthening of results planning, monitoring and reporting of IUC projects and programme to VLIR (especially consolidated results reporting); (xii) Maintenance of the programme configuration of one transversal and six vertical projects, with further strengthened complementarity and multi-disciplinarity amongst them; (xiii) Consideration of an additional vertical project on a priority development theme.

With regard to the IUC support to the strengthened positioning of UCuenca as an academic regional development network hub and strengthened alignment with the national sectoral strategic and policy framework, the following are suggested, amongst others: (i) Intensified support to UCuenca as a catalyst of regional development: services to community and development organisations (both government and non-state actors) through stronger extension and outreach orientation of research and teaching; (ii) More proactive networking with other institutions: local, regional, national, international (incl. North-South-South); (iii) Alignment and integration of UCuenca IUC programme into the (projected / envisioned) overall VLIR-IUC national programme level and strengthened coordination and networking with other VLIR IUC's (ESPOL and in the region); (iv) Support to the creation of National Think Thank on Sector-Wide Strategic Institutional Reform of Higher Education in Ecuador and to the bi-directional strategic exchanges and cross-fertilisation with the UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform process.

Acknowledgements

The Evaluation Commission would like to express its deepest appreciation to all those persons, both in Ecuador at the Universidad de Cuenca and in Flanders at VLIR and the Flemish Universities, who have directly or indirectly contributed to this evaluation report. Without their commitment, overall support and invaluable contributions this evaluation report could never have been compiled.

Ruddi Vaes, Team Leader

Bart Delvaux, Country Expert

1. Introduction

1.1. Background Information on the Evaluation Exercise

1.1.1. The VLIR Institutional University Cooperation¹

The Vision: The vision of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR) on institutional strengthening of selective *partner universities as academic catalysts of local and regional development* is laid down in the University Development Cooperation (UOS) mission statement's listing of priority fields of cooperation: "The object of the cooperation in general, and of the research in particular, is to meet local needs and requirements, and it is set within the context of the international community's efforts with respect to sustainable development, combating poverty, food security, the development of education, basic health care, essential infrastructure, conflict prevention and respect for human dignity and human rights. By building capacities, the cooperation wishes to contribute to enlarging the accessibility and improving the quality of local education and research. It is oriented towards a maximum opening up of knowledge, expansion of research facilities, and development and support of the management instruments and means."

Base Principles: The Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme is an inter-university cooperation programme of the Flemish universities, focused on the institutional needs and priorities of partner universities in the South. The IUC programme is in principle demand-oriented, and seeks to promote local ownership through the full involvement of the partner both in the design and implementation of the programme. The programme relates to only a few carefully selected partner universities in the South, hoping that synergy, added value and greater institutional impact can be achieved through the different IUC projects located in the same partner university. The support is geared towards:

- the institutional development of the partner university;
- the improvement of the quality of local education;
- the development of local postgraduate education in the South;
- the encouragement of south-south linkages.

Partnership: Each IUC partnership is broad in orientation, and is based on the following principles:

- Different components (projects) make up the partnership;
- All projects aim at a maximum of institutional impact;
- The activities which are organised in the context of the partnership can involve all constituent parts of the university;
- Apart from direct support to the improvement of education and research the partnership can also contain projects which are aimed at improving the

¹ This brief introductory presentation on the VLIR-IUC programme is based on documents made available by the VLIR-UOS Secretariat to the Evaluation Commission, and furthermore is derived from information available on the VLIR-UOS website (<http://www.vliruos.be>). Further details are also available from the evaluation Terms of Reference under Annex 1 to this report.

organisation, the administration and the management of the university as a whole;

- The identification of the fields of cooperation within the partner programme is in principle based on the partner university's demands; these demands obviously can only be met in so far that the required expertise can be provided by the Flemish universities (demand driven approach);
- Each partner programme consists of a coherent set of interventions geared towards the development of the teaching and research capacity of the partner university, as well as its institutional management.

Main principles and core requirements forming the basis of the IUC programme include the following: (1) Long-term cooperation; (2) Focus on the institutional needs and priorities of the partner universities in the South; (3) Ownership; (4) Concentration, and; (5) Donor co-ordination.

IUC Programming Cycle: In 2003, VLIR-UOS has introduced the Programme/Project Cycle Management (PCM) methodology in VLIR-UOS funded activities. This approach has called for a much more focused and results-oriented approach framed by the formulation of a logical framework matrix spanning a 5-year period and including measurable indicators. VLIR is committed to provide the necessary resources (financial and human) to strengthen PCM capacities of all partners involved, both in the North and in the South. The full IUC cycle covers a total of 17 years and consists of five phases as follows: (i) Pre-partner programme – year 0; (ii) Phase I of partner programme – years 1 to 5; (iii) Phase II of partner programme – years 6 to 10; (iv) Phase out partner programme – years 11 and 12; (v) Post IUC support – years 13 to 16.

A Unique Enduring Partnership: This long-term partnership makes the VLIR-IUC a unique programme highly appreciated by the different stakeholders involved, and as was learned from international contacts, is envied by other international academic cooperation and funding entities.

VLIR-UOS Updating of IUC Policies and Strategies: In March 2008, VLIR-UOS held an international IUC Policy Workshop in Brussels. The workshop focused on strategic issues of international cooperation models. Specific policy issues included amongst others: North-South joint degrees; balancing education, research and services to society; South-South cooperation and the role of the North; Cooperation with NGOs and industry; New models of cooperation; Networking; Funding opportunities, etc. Starting late 2010, VLIR-UOS organised think tank meetings on an updating and reorganisation of its IUC programmes. This is a still ongoing process, with discussions strongly focusing on themes as:

- Linking of the individual IUCs to the national higher education policy and strategy level of the partner country;
- Concentration of IUC programmes;
- IUC focus on the local and regional development relevance of partner universities as catalyst of local and regional development, with stronger emphasis on extension and outreach programme components;

- Local, regional, national and international networking: Flemish and IUC partner universities as academic network hubs;
- IUC spin-offs and consultancies, and post-assistance financial sustainability;
- Enhancement / maximization of IUC win-win situations for both the Flemish and South Partners; etc.;

The Coverage: The IUC programme relates to only a few carefully selected partner universities in the South. Up till now, 20 partner universities have been selected as IUC partner university, making up for 19 *partner programmes* (one partner programme has the set-up of a network). Of these, 8 have been phased out (completed the IUC cycle), 7 are in the first phase, and the other 4 are in the second phase. 10 IUC partner programme are in Africa, 6 in Latin America and 3 in Asia. The current IUC mid-term evaluations cluster covers apart from the University of UCuenca also two other Phase 1 IUCs: Jimma University in Ethiopia and Moi University in Kenya.

IUC Timeframe and External Evaluations: In principle the cooperation with a partner university covers a period of maximum ten years: two time blocks of five years each. For each time block of five years a partner programme is to be drafted. Objectives have to be defined within a timeframe of five years. Every three to five years the IUC cooperation with a partner is evaluated. Each year at least three partner universities are evaluated.

1.1.2. The Terms of Reference of the Evaluation

LogFrame / PCM and Performance Measurement Related Tools: The current mid-term evaluation of the IUC Partnership with the University of Cuenca (UCuenca) has been conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference (ToR) issued by VLIR in July 2010. These ToR serve as basis not only for the present UCuenca evaluation but also for two other IUC evaluations commissioned by VLIR in the calendar years 2010-2011. A copy of these standard Terms of Reference are attached under Annex 1 to this report. An important update in VLIR's evaluation methodology is the more explicit use of evaluation tools related to the Logical Framework / Programme Cycle Management (PCM) methodology introduced across the board all IUC programmes since 2003. These include the use of objective verifiable indicators and performance scores, results oriented monitoring and evaluation, programme approach (rather than sets of unconnected "island" projects), more pronounced focus on partnership and ownership dimension (along the principles of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the follow-up Accra Agenda of Action), networking and institutional strengthening, etc.

Balance between Reflective and Forward Looking Components of the Evaluation: As a mid-term evaluation, the current evaluation both has a reflective component (assessment of past performance and results) and a forward looking component: Learning from the 1st phase to further improve performance in the future, thus in the 2nd five-year phase of the IUC programme, with concrete suggestions and recommendations. This forward looking angle of the evaluation is prominently present in the objectives of the evaluation as stated in the ToR. All three elements incorporated under the objective of the evaluation (Chapter 2.2) in fact refer to the future, the next

phase of the UCuenca IUC programme: “The mid-term evaluation is meant to generate conclusions which will allow:

1. VLIR-UOS to make a decision regarding the formulation of a second phase of the collaboration;
2. the formulation of recommendations to all stakeholders in terms of the content and management of the programme, including the overall policy framework;
3. to identify and comment upon possible venues for the future of the programme.

The IUC Self-Assessment Reports: Basis of the evaluation exercise is the *self-assessment process* by both the North and South stakeholders. The self-assessment process ensures that the evaluation is not looked at by the parties concerned as an external control / policing mechanism, but in a positive perspective as a management tool to learn from past experiences and to document good / best practices in order to even further improve cooperation and general (networking) performance in the future. VLIR stresses in this regard that these self-assessments are (learning) processes, in which as many stakeholders as possible, both in the North and in the South, are to be involved. These self-assessment reports are developed at the level of the individual projects (7 in total) plus a collective self-assessment by all stakeholders (both Southern and Northern), thus at the overall programme level. The information provided in these self-assessment reports at the same time is a crucial basis for the external evaluation work by the Evaluation Commission.

Recent VLIR-UOS IUC Evaluation Methodological Developments: Furthermore, the evaluation took into account the additional evaluation tools and dimensions VLIR-UOS is introducing more recently with regard to: (i) A three-layered approach whereby the projects fit into the programme that in turn fits into the partner institution, which in turn fits into a country context; (ii) Indicators that relate to broad based managerial issues, and; (iii) An evaluation model that takes the LogFrame as a reference.

1.1.3. The Evaluation Methodology Applied by the Evaluation Commission

The VLIR Evaluation Methodology as Basis: The Evaluation Commission executed its work in accordance with the methodological requirements formally laid down in the evaluation Terms of Reference. Some minor modifications in the evaluation framework were applied in order to enhance overall coherence, consistency and analytical strength and secondly to avoid possible duplications and overlaps. The Evaluation Commission appreciates the clear and analytical evaluation framework developed under the auspices of the VLIR-UOS Secretariat. This pertains especially to the comprehensiveness of the analysis: not only processes and direct outputs are to be assessed but even more importantly, in accordance with the principles of PCM and LFA (Logical Framework Analysis), the higher level results in terms of programme outcomes (effects) and impact.

Evaluation as Participatory Exercise and Evaluation Ownership: For the UCuenca Evaluation Commission, programme evaluations in first instance are *management and learning instruments*: Learning from past experiences to improve design, planning and

programming and implementation in the future. This also puts the evaluator in a co-thinking, *partner role* with the programme managers and coordinators, be it of course in a fully independent manner to ensure critical objectivity of the investigative evaluation exercise. This management functional perspective of evaluation requires evaluation to be a truly participatory exercise, involving all main stakeholders. Such participation strengthens *ownership* of the exercise so that the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation are easier internalised and adopted, thus ensuring effective follow-up and thus improved sustainability and lasting impact. The self-assessments by both the North and South stakeholders prior to the external evaluation by the Evaluation Commission are an important instrument in this connection.

New Special Tools Developed by the Evaluation Commission for the Evaluation: To enhance the analytical strength of the evaluation and the refinement and relevance of its assessments, conclusions and recommendations, the Evaluation Commission has prepared a number of new, special tools especially for this UCuenca mid-term evaluation which have a wider applicability and utility than for the current MTE only. This particularly pertains to the following tools of which a copy is incorporated under the annexes and of which the results are incorporated in the evaluation report itself: (i) The UCuenca IUC Key Results Areas (KRAs) performance measurement, scoring and rating tool with scorecard and dashboard features based on the IUC KRA batteries of Key Performance Indicators – See tool and explanations under Annex 15; (ii) The tool for the ranked determination of the strategic priorities for UCuenca IUC programme phase II – Both questionnaires for individual IUC projects and consolidated tables at overall programme level - See the consolidated priorities under Annex 10; (iii) The summary tables on UCuenca IUC programme performance on IUC Key Result Areas (KRAs), measured on KRA Key Performance Indicators - See the summary tables under Annex 4; (iv) The summary scorecard table of UCuenca IUC programme performance of IUC processes of change in relation to the baseline situation, assessed on change indicators defined at project formulation (by IUC project and project intermediate result) - See the summary scorecard table under Annex 5; (v) The sets of guiding questions for the semi-structured evaluation interviews with Flemish and UCuenca partners, by UCuenca IUC programme and constituent projects - See the sets of questions under Annex 6 and the selection of questions of replies under Annex 7 (voluntary replies by both the South and North programme and projects stakeholders). A selection of these replies are integrated in Q&A (question and answer) boxes in the main evaluation report as direct, concrete illustrations of the evaluation analysis; (vi) The summary analytical tables on mobility between UCuenca and Flanders based on the mobility database developed and maintained by the UCOS Administrative and Finance Officer supporting the Flemish Programme Coordinator – See the summary tables under Annex 14.

1.1.4. The Mission Programme

The briefing interviews with the Flemish key stakeholders took place over three days in early December 2010. The schedule of meetings is attached under Annex 3.1 to this report. These briefings included the director and key officers of VLIR-UOS Secretariat, the VLIR-UCuenca IUC Programme Coordinator and all Project Team Leaders from KUL, UGent, VUB and UAntwerpen. These meetings took place at the VLIR-UOS Secretariat, except the interview with the Team Leader of the V.5 City Preservation project which

took place at the R. Lemaire International Centre for Conservation in Heverlee-Leuven.

The evaluation field visit to the Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca) in Cuenca, Ecuador, covered the period from 30 January to 09 February 2011. The debriefing presentation and discussion at the end of the mission with both the North and South stakeholders served as input into the preparations for the Joint Steering Committee Meeting (JSCM) in the days thereafter. A detailed programme of the evaluation mission activities in Cuenca is attached under Annex 3.2 to this report.

1.2. Contextual Information¹

1.2.1. Some Socio-Economic Context Information

Geography and Administration: Ecuador is located in the North-West of South America. Its equatorial location (latitude 00, 0', 0'') and the presence of the Andes Mountain range produce a geography of contrasts. The country, covering 256,370 km², has four natural regions: (i) the coastal area (Costa), warm to tropical lowlands; (ii) the Andes region (Sierra), a mountain chain running from North to South; (iii) the Amazon Region (Oriente), tropical jungle and lowlands, and finally; (iv) the small insular Galapagos area. These geographical regions are the basis for clusters of Provinces, a total of 24 for the whole country (See Annex 13.1). Ecuador's official language is Spanish. Kichwa (Quechua) and Shuar are official languages of intercultural relations.

General Profile and History: The Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca) is based in Cuenca, which is at the heart of the so-called Austral Region that includes the Southern Provinces of Azuay, Cañar and Morona, actually Zone 6 for the Development Ministry of SENPLADES. In the 19th century, this region, as well as the rest of the country, went through a severe, prolonged economic crisis as a consequence of the independence wars. Thereafter an economic recovery evolved thanks to the exploitation of "cascarilla" to obtain quinine and due to the making of "toquilla" hats (Panama Hats). The economy of the region was relatively strong due to mining, textiles, handcrafts and incipient industrialization supported by crude oil exportation which started in 1972. The Austral Region suffered a severe economic contraction, related to the bank, financial and economic crisis of 1999, which even more increased emigration of thousands of poor peasants. The Austro Zone is one of the first emigration zones of the Country since the late seventies. International destinies were in the first place the United States of America, and later in the nineties Spain.

The City of Cuenca, Cañar Province and Zone VI: Cuenca, the third largest city of Ecuador, is the capital of the province of Azuay and key for the development of the Austral Region and for the south of Ecuador. Cuenca is located at 2.542 meters of altitude. It was founded on 12 April 1557. It is called the Ecuadorian Athens due to its strong cultural tradition, home of writers, scientists, poets, musicians, philosophers and politicians. Azuay Province is divided into 14 counties. The preliminary results of the 2010 census show 702.893 inhabitants. The neighbouring Cañar province has 223.563 inhabitants and Morona Santiago 147.866. This adds up to 1.074.322 inhabitants for Senplades

¹ More detailed contextual information, including graphs and tables, is presented under Annex 13 to this report.

Planification Zone VI. According to the previous census from 2001, it has a population of 650.000 inhabitants, of which 52.14% urban and 47.86% rural. The province covers 8,124.7 km². Illiteracy reaches 11.02%, population served with drinking water is 75.7%, and sewage only 57.03%.

Migration Issues: The first migration waves towards the United States in the seventies used their contacts with Cuenca traders that already lived there since the forties for the toquilla hat business, especially in New York. The economic crisis of the eighties in the entire South American region, and the “Josefina” disaster in the Azuay province in 1992 aggravated the migration trend. Migration basically is a masculine activity, leaving women and children at home. Later, also women started to migrate, leaving the children with grand parents or other relatives. Migrating people also tend to become younger, which has a strong incidence on the population pyramid of the region and a negative effect on its productive population. Schooling on average is higher among migrants, resulting in a real brain drain for the region. In the nineties, Spain became a very important destination country. In the 2001 census the provinces of Cañar, Azuay and Morona Santiago represent respectively the first, third and fifth highest migration expulsion rates. Second and fourth place are for Loja and Zamora Chinchipe, in the South.

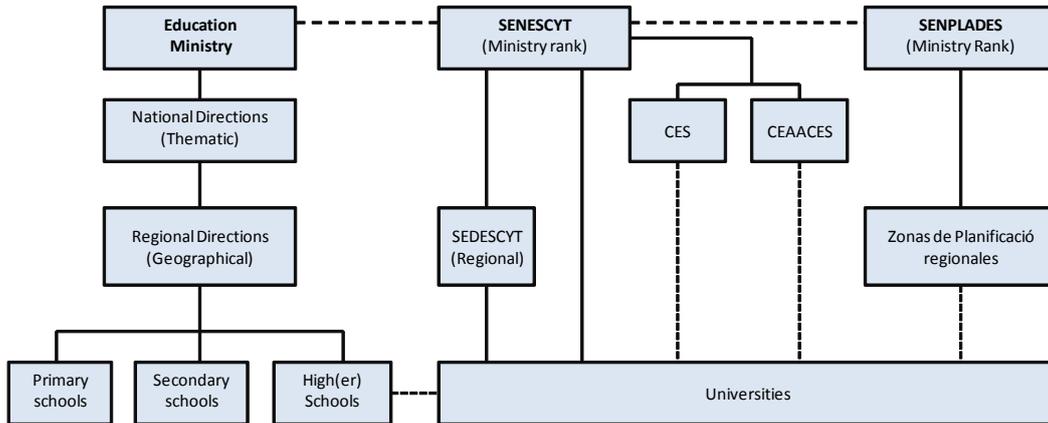
1.2.2. Education in Ecuador

General: The Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) is responsible for the quality of education in Ecuador, for all levels with exception of the tertiary level. After the deactivation of the CONESUP, the University system is directed by the National Council of Higher Education (CES) and SENESCYT (see Annex 13.6). In accordance with the Constitution and the Ecuadorian Law for the Higher Education, universities have autonomy to govern themselves. The structure of the educational system (primary and secondary is reflected in this same chart under Annex 13.6. For higher education CONESUP disappeared and is now replaced by SENESCYT and related institutions.

The Education System in Ecuador: In the late nineties, a fundamental educational reform took place, where schooling was changed from 6 years primary (age 6 to 12) and 6 years secondary education (age 12 to 18), more or less the same as in Belgium, to a system of ten years basic education (age 5 to 14) and three years of secondary education. Implementation is still ongoing, is as much as almost none of the schools yet offers the complete basic educational offer, except for those schools that offered secondary as well as primary education in the former system. So in many cases, schools offer from year 2 to 7, but for the subsequent studying years 8 to 10, children have to change schools where they then can complete secondary from grade 1 to 3. The first year of basic education corresponds to the last year of kindergarten, which is not without problems in rural areas where there has never been a kindergarten section. In practice, children in the countryside often start to study in year 2. Recent reforms are aiming at grouping old primary schools with a secondary school in one school-group. In some cases financial unification is already the case, with managerial, pedagogic and organisational grouping to follow. For children under five, nursery education (educación inicial) is organised. It basically existed already in urban areas, but the intention is to guarantee overall access in the entire country. After the educational reform, three types of secondary education (“bachillerato”) are organised: (i) arts, (ii) sciences, and (iii) international. Nevertheless,

most institutions still function under the previous scheme of 6 years of secondary education, and also are using still older curricula. Higher Education is provided by universities, polytechnics and, at non-university level, “Institutos Pedagógicos” and “Institutos Técnicos Superiores”. All universities whether public or private, are autonomous. Higher education institutions are now supervised by CES/ SENESCYT.

Figure 1 : Institutional Chart of the Organisation of Higher Education in Ecuador at Present



The CONEA Report: On 22 July 2008, the National Assembly (Parliament) issued Constitutional Mandate 14 giving the mandate to the National Council on Evaluation and Accreditation (CONEA) to elaborate a technical report with respect to the level of performance of the superior education establishments to guarantee quality. It corresponds to CONESUP’s authority and responsibility to determine the academic and legal situation of all establishments. Indicators used by CONEA for the assessment of Universities and other higher education establishments were: (i) Teacher training, (ii) Budget for scholarships, (iii) Mobility of students and credit acknowledgment, (iv) Investment in libraries, (v) Financial resources and budget performance, (vi) Coherence between academic processes and mission and objectives of the University, (vii) Use and creation of extensions to guarantee academic quality and infrastructure (classroom spaces). In the CONEA final report of November 2009, five categories were distinguished for the classification of 68 universities and poly-technical high schools (See the classification under Annex 13.7 to this report). Apart from the central university headquarters assessed in the report, the system counts about 145 more or less independent extensions in 107 cities. The report classifies the University of Cuenca in the highest A Category. The ranking UCuenca was given in this classification challenges the University to keep this qualification and to play a leading role in the region. Higher Education in the Austro Region is offered by the 37 institutions (16 Universities and extensions and 21 higher institutions) located in the zone 6 consisting of the Provinces of Azuay, Cañar and Morona Santiago (see Table 10 under Annex 13.1).

1.2.3. The Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca)¹

The UCuenca Strategic Plan and Update: The University of Cuenca elaborated a Strategic Plan at the start of the VLIR-IUC programme. The plan was updated for the 2009-2013 period. It consists of 8 strategic areas of intervention. For all of these, strategic objectives were defined. The eight strategic areas are respectively: (i) Academic management, (ii) Scientific and Technological management, (iii) ITC management, (iv) Link with the “collectivity”, (v) University wellbeing, (vi) Administrative management, (vii) Financial management, and (viii) Infrastructure development. For each strategic area, five to fifteen strategic objectives are elaborated, including responsible parties, tasks, strategic views, indicators and financing.

Plan Financing: As far as financing is concerned, the Plan distinguishes four types: (i) own resources (public endowment), (ii) (international) cooperation, (iii) gifts and (iv) generation of own resources. All interventions / operations are supported with own resources from the public endowment. Gifts and (international) cooperation are seen as more fit for equipment, (specific) training (of professors), general agreements with other universities, specific items such as a follow-up system for graduates, research and know-how, etc. Infrastructure is considered an entirely internal affair, to be financed entirely from own resources. In a few areas, VLIR and the transversal project T1 are explicitly mentioned for support: indexing reviews, implementing of the Information System for Research, training for research, reorganisation of the University and implementation of a postgraduate in University Management. Non endowment resources are to be obtained by selling of services, especially training and consulting.

Overall Objectives: In general, the plan aims at overall academic quality improvement with respect to (i) programmes and teachers, (ii) research based education, (iii) application of up to date methods and technologies, (iv) a better positioning of the University in the Region, (v) a “bigger” University, (vi) incorporation of e-learning in standard programmes, and (vii) an overall assessment system. (viii) Furthermore, better and more productive international contacts are considered important. (ix) Another item of importance is transparent and efficient management to effectively achieve these purposes. These overall priorities are very well in line with the purpose of the transversal VLIR project, and with the opportunities offered by the present legal, legislative and political context.

Outreach / Social Service Activities: As a part of its social mission, the University offers several services to the community in general, such as legal assistance in civil and criminal legal matters, tax and labour questions, migration and administrative support. Some of the laboratories such as the water quality laboratory of the engineering faculty offer services to municipalities, rural communities and private businesses. The medical clinic laboratory offers hematologic, blood chemistry, serological, microbiological and other diagnosis to the general public. The medicine and the dentistry faculties also offer their medical services, apart from the in house services to students, teachers and University personnel. Provided services are encompassing, including for example: General

¹ A brief history of the Universidad de Cuenca and a summary description of its basic structure and services are provided under Annex 13.5

medicine, physiotherapy, speech therapy, nutrition, neurology, psychology and there is also an acupuncture centre. Sports infrastructure like swimming pool and sports fields are accessible to general public. A University store completes the offer. All these services are offered in a spirit of social service, and in general do not generate extra income for the University. UCuenca's relevance for regional and national development also brings with it necessary links with National Institutions responsible for Development as for example SENPLADES / SENESCYT.¹

VLIR Interventions: The first VLIR-UOS Own Initiative (OI) project started in 1996. In total the UCuenca successfully acquired 6 VLIR-UOS OI projects and 2 VLIR-UOS SI projects. For more details on these 8 VLIR interventions in UCuenca in the period 1999 – 2010, please see the list under Annex 13.11. International cooperation support to a large extent is a Belgian / Flemish affair. This can be explained as a kind of mutual loyalty towards each other, but obviously in the long run this can create undesirable dependencies hampering sustainability. ACORDES and PROMAS are two of the Institutes created with the support of VLIR-IUC.

1.2.4. The VLIR-IUC Programme with UCuenca

IUC Programme Objectives: The general objective of the VLIR Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme is empowering local partner universities as institutions to better fulfil their role as development actors in society. This objective is to be attained through the implementation of a coherent set of interventions, guided by the strategic plan of the partner university, aimed at improving institutional policies and management, and the quality of local education, research and societal service delivery.

IUC Programme Guiding Principles: The guiding principles of the IUC programme can be summarized under four items as follows:

1. *Academic Leadership:* The IUC programme is about academic collaboration henceforth leadership and overall responsibility rest with the academic authorities, and with the individual academics that are tasked with responsibilities for coordination and implementation.
2. *Process Facilitation:* While having components of technical assistance, IUC facilitates and supports processes of change such that its implementation needs to be considered against a background of ongoing and contextualised process facilitation.
3. *Pragmatic and Transparent Institutional Arrangements:* Each IUC programme is unique in terms of its managerial set-up and organisation. VLIR in general is encouraging a pragmatic approach insofar that it proves to be effective and transparent.
4. *Incorporation into Local Structures and Systems:* VLIR encourages arrangements that build upon existing structures and practices at the level of the partner university.

¹ Further details under Annex 13.3.

2. Evaluation Findings

A performance evaluation along the three “E’s” of performance in a Logical Framework context is pursued for this UCuenca IUC mid-term evaluation, as such equally focusing on the Economy (inputs), Efficiency (activities and direct results) and Effectiveness (effects and impact) dimensions of performance. The evaluation findings are presented in accordance with the content requirements and format stipulated in the Terms of Reference¹. Focus of the evaluation findings in first instance is on the performance of the UCuenca IUC programme as a whole. Keeping the programme logic in mind, programme concerns and value added have been assessed in a broader perspective than just the sum of its individual, constituent 7 projects / sub-programmes.

In addition, evaluation findings are presented on three crucial, cross-cutting issues: (1) The added value of the IUC programme vis-à-vis other donor supported programmes; (2) Programme management both at the side of the Universidad de Cuenca and of the Flemish co-ordinating university, and; (3) The cooperation between the different parties involved, both North and South.

2.1. Programme Progress

The evaluation assessment of UCuenca IUC programme progress and results in first instance concentrates on the direct outputs of the programme and its constituent sub-programmes and to the processes which have led to the generation, the production of these outputs. As such, the analysis focuses on progress in (planned) activities and processes (process analysis) and their direct results (outputs), and incorporates both quantitative and qualitative aspects.

2.1.1. Overall Implementation Status of the Programme

Overall Implementation Status: General Appreciation

A Solid Groundwork Laid: In the about three year and a quarter period² covered by this mid-term evaluation of the UCuenca IUC programme, a generally solid basis has been laid for a results-oriented institutional reform cooperation programme as envisioned in the VLIR UCuenca programme document. This in first instance is due to the initiatives under the innovative and encompassing transversal project on institutional change to strengthen research and education. Under the impulse of this cross-cutting project, the gradual transition of UCuenca from a traditional teaching institute to a balanced research based education institute has been successfully initiated. This particularly is

¹ Terms of Reference are attached as Annex 1 to this report.

² Consisting of the 9 months of the IUC Pre-Partner Programme (01 July 2007 – 31 March 2008) and the about two and a half years of the UCuenca IUC Programme Phase I (from 01 April 2008 to about end September 2010 – period covered by the UCuenca-IUC self assessment reports).

owed to the very substantive efforts in information technology and library upgrading, procedural strengthening, organisation of multi-disciplinary teaching and research clusters, and related institutional strengthening initiatives. Programme implementation status and programme at the level of the individual six vertical projects is somewhat mixed, with two projects having experienced a substantially delayed start due to project leaders turnover issues and with one project abandoned in the process. Some projects also needed to go through a strategic reorientation and focusing process before actual programme implementation activities could be initiated. Upgrading of infrastructure (laboratories and information technology) is highly appreciated in all projects.

With Substantive Challenges Still Ahead: The delays in the launching of the academic Human Resources Development (HRD) programmes at Doctoral and Masters level impacted and will further impact on the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the IUC programme in the fields of both research and education. Academic upgrading of UCuenca academic staff remains a critical success factor for the whole IUC programme. As regional university with an explicit social responsibility for local and regional development, UCuenca traditionally has strong institutional and operational links with broader society. Under the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme, priority attention has been given to internal quality and performance upgrading of the University as basis for a stronger position in society as a whole and for international networking in the next phase. But most of the vertical projects already have outreach and extension as a most appreciated integral component of their activities and initiatives under the IUC programme. Generally, the groundwork has been laid during the first phase of the VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme for strengthened programme efficiency, effectiveness, outcomes and impact with tangible multiplier effects during the second phase.

Summary Implementation Assessment of Programme Key Result Areas (KRAs)

The Key Result Areas and their Indicators: The mid-term assessment of the UCuenca IUC programme implementation status is made along the *seven IUC programme Key Result Areas* (KRAs). In turn, each of the KRAs has been assessed on a number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The below table gives an overview of the KRAs and the number of KPIs determined for each. An eighth KRA “Others” has been added as a rest category for aspects and concerns which cannot be accommodated easily or uniquely in any of the above individual KRAs. This also is the case for an additional indicator “other” as a rest category for each of the KRA sets of indicators.

Table 1 : UCuenca IUC Evaluation Key Result Areas and Number of Indicators

UCuenca-IUC Key Result Areas	Number of KPIs
1. Research	9
2. Teaching	6
3. Extension and outreach	6
4. Management	4
5. Human resources development of staff	5
6. Infrastructure management	5
7. Mobilisation of additional resources / opportunities	4
Total	39

The Five Points Assessment Scale: Each of these programme KRAs has been assessed on a five point evaluation scale (1 – 5 scale) for each of the projects / sub-programmes . The ensuing summary scores are presented in the below table 2.

Table 2 : Summary Scoring Sheet on UCuenca IUC Programme Key Result Areas (KRAs), by Project / Sub-Programme (as of mid-2010) (1) (2)

UCuenca IUC Project / Sub-Programme	KRA 1 Research	KRA 2 Teaching	KRA 3 Outreach	KRA 4 Management	KRA 5 HRD	KRA 6 Infrastructure	KRA 7 Resources Mobilisat.
T.1 Institutional Change	3	3	2	4	4	5	3
V.1 Nutrition and Health	4	3	4	3	3	4	3
V.2 Human Sexuality	3	4	4	3	3	3	3
V.3 Water Quality	4	3	3	3	3	4	4
V.4 Medicinal Plants	4	3	3	3	4	4	3
V.5 City Preservation	4	4	5	4	4	4	4
V.6 Migration and Development	3	3	4	3	3	3	3
Total score UCuenca Programme / N° of Sub-Programmes	25 / 7	23 / 7	25 / 7	23 / 7	24 / 7	27 / 7	23 / 7
Average score UCuenca Sub-Programmes (1-5 scale)	3.57	3.28	3.57	3.28	3.42	3.86	3.28
Average score UCuenca Sub-Programmes (in %) (3))	71 %	66 %	71 %	66 %	69 %	77 %	66 %

Notes : (1) N.A. = Not Applicable

N.I. = No / Insufficient Information Available

(2) Scores are on a five-point evaluation scale, with:

1 = (very)poor

2 = insufficient / low

3 = sufficient

4 = good / high

5 = excellent / very high

(3) Percentage calculated on the basis of the average score on the 1-5 scale, by a simple multiplication by factor 20. It is understood that this is strictly speaking an overrating since the 0-20% interval has no equivalent in the 1-5 scale in the absence of a 0 value.

UCuenca IUC Summary KRA Scores: Highest average scores for all projects are on KRA 6 infrastructure (with 77%) which should come as no surprise in view of the heavy investments on Information and Communication Technology (ICT), laboratory and other equipments at the onset of the programme. An intermediate average score is obtained by the KRAs research, outreach and HRD with respectively 71%, 71% and 69%. The Key Result Areas of teaching, management and resources mobilisation, have an average score of 66%. As can be gleaned from the above, with the exception of three, all scores

are within the sufficient (score 3) to Good/High (score 4) range.

2.1.2. Evaluation of Programme Key Result Areas

Main Sources of Information: The evaluation of the UCuenca-IUC programme on the seven Key Result Areas individually is based on information from four main sources: (i) The Annual Activity Reports (AARs) prepared by the projects and programme, and submitted to VLIR-UOS Secretariat for approval; (ii) The self-assessment reports of both north and south stakeholders; (iii) The answers prepared by the programme coordinators and the project team leaders (both Flemish and UCuenca) on the list of guiding questions prepared by the Evaluation Commission for the semi-structured evaluation interviews;¹ (iv) The discussions with the different stakeholders (at both general programme and individual projects / sub-programmes levels) both with the Flemish partners in Belgium and with the UCuenca partners during the evaluation visit to Cuenca.

The Main Contents of the Presentation of KRA Evaluation Findings: The presentations hereafter of the main evaluation findings on the progress accomplished and direct results produced by the programme with regard to these Key Result Areas (KRAs) consist of:

- A summary presentation of the main KRA accomplishments in relation to the KRA indicators identified by VLIR², based on the KRA summary tables under Annex 4 to this report.
- Selective Questions and Answers (Q&A) of special relevance in relation to the KRA, taken from the lists of questions prepared for the semi-structured interviews with the key North and South UCuenca IUC partners;
- A shortlist of main summary findings (mostly in strengths & challenges / issues needing attention format) on the KRAs by the Evaluation Commission also presented to and discussed with the North and South Partners on the occasion of the Evaluation Debriefing session of 8 February and included in the Evaluation Commission's Aide Mémoire / Debriefing Note.

1. Research

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 1 (KRA-1) on "Research" have been assessed along the 10 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 2 to 4 of Annex 4.

¹ The full list of questions is under Annex 6 to this report. Selective answers to these questions are under Annex 7.

² As identified in the Evaluation Terms of Reference.

General Observations: Research output as a result of the VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme is still somewhat limited at this early stage of the programme. Moreover, the IUC programme had to face the actual situation of a university very much focused on traditional education tasks without a research culture. This gradual conversion of UCuenca into a research based education institute proved the first priority. Moreover, the HRD upgrading of the academic staff (very limited PhD and masters level academic staff only) has only started with some delays. The same for the upgrading of research skills. Also laboratory and ICT equipment upgrading needed to be prioritized first before concentrating on actual research.

Research Achievements: A total of five articles have been published or are in an advanced stage of acceptance in international peer reviewed journals (projects V2, V4 and V6). Efforts in this initial programme stage are more directed to national peer reviewed papers, also in accordance with UCuenca's prime status as a regional university with its responsibilities for contributing to national and regional development explicitly incorporated in its mission, vision and goals. Seven such articles have been published, with 4 originating from V5 City Preservation project. A total of seven conference proceedings have been prepared with especially V6 Migration and Local Development performing in this respect, for example in connection with its 27-29 October 2010 international symposium in Cuenca, and also V3 Water Quality Management for example in relation to a world congress in Loja in June 2009. A total of six completed conference abstracts are reported in the database, with some more reported under "other" status. V5 City Preservation published a comprehensive reader on the occasion of the inauguration of the UNESCO PREC³OMOS chair in Cuenca.

Research Related Indicators Achievements: Conform their preoccupation with extension and outreach relevance of their research work, the different projects under the IUC programme were proficient in the production of working papers, technical papers, popularising literature, articles in national journals, electronic journals and the like. V5 City Preservation (with 11 documents), V2 Human Sexuality (with 9 documents) and V6 Migration and Development (with 6 documents) have been most productive in this area. Substantive activity and outputs have also been registered (15 outputs reported) with regard to the production of conference contributions, reported by all vertical projects except V4 Medicinal Plants. No patent has been registered in this period, the issue being a major element of debate (and controversy) in the programme phase 1 up to now with resonance at national level, beyond the borders of the UCuenca IUC programme. The research related activities in the period under review beyond the above hard VLIR-IUC indicators proved relatively significant as may be illustrated by the 65 or so initiatives of a different nature. Under this "other" category are especially reported the research related initiatives of the transversal project T1, with not less than 27 such outputs reported, followed by V1 Food and Nutrition with 14.

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Research can be summarized as follows:

- The gradual across-the-board introduction of a research culture in UCuenca facilitated by the T1 transversal and the six V vertical projects;

- Research based teaching and laboratory use / analyses is being enhanced;
- Survey methodologies and statistical analysis are being strengthened;
- Tangible research outputs have been produced particularly related to working / technical papers, popularising literature, articles in national journals, electronic journals, etc. (total of 29 in KRA database) with total of 51 items in research KRA database;
- 5 papers reportedly have appeared in international peer reviewed journals (8 more have been submitted for approval / publication);
- The organisation of the auto-financed international symposium /workshop and holding of UNESCO PREC³OMOS chair by City Preservation has been a success story;
- 2 books with international distribution have been published;
- Research capacities have been / are being enhanced through ICT, library and lab facilities provided under VLIR-IUC;
- There are notable achievements in the conversion of research findings in extension / outreach messages, tools and actions;
- Under / related to IUC projects, there is the initiation of (research) centres of excellence and one is established (PROMAS – with history going back to the pre-IUC period);
- Exposure of scholars to international research culture and facilities in Flanders and elsewhere is widely appreciated;
- Scholars attested that there has been a positive incorporation of PhD/Master students in IUC project teams;
- There overall is a relevant identification of research topics;
- Generally, positive links of the research topics with the socio-economic reality (applied investigation) and with the local / regional institutions (basis for extension) has been established.

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention:

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Research can be summarized as follows:

- There generally is very limited time available for research (on average 10-20% of total time);
- Most staff are still teaching only (and moreover part-time only), without research initiatives or actual engagement in research;
- Intellectual property rights and patenting (e.g. affecting medicinal plants and city preservation) remain a main issues (particularly in project V.4 on medicinal plants, but is also an upcoming issues under project V.5 on city preservation) ;
- Bi-directional intellectual property rights, patents, authorships and related legal issues need to be addressed in mutual trust and understanding based on clear policies and guidelines subscribed by both the Flemish and UCuenca partners;
- Sandwich PhDs reportedly do not guarantee enough time to do research while in UCuenca;

- Research is not yet prominently enough presented in the academic performance appraisals (need for higher weight) and the system may need to be adjusted accordingly;
- Technical / academic writing skills in English have improved considerably but remain
- a challenge;
- Research (cycle) management needs to be given further attention;
- The quality and quantity of proposals writing asks for special action to be taken in terms of capacity building;
- Institutional anchoring of research centres in Faculties / University needs to be ensured in order for these not to become “islands or kingdoms in their own right”;
- Delayed start of projects (in a number of cases due to turnover of project leaders) restricted the effective production of research outputs so far;
- There appear to be insufficient incentives for rewarding research excellence;
- Sustainable incorporation of research (results) in the institution (teaching, extension, sustainability after project) remains a main challenge;
- The mission of DIUC is not well enough defined in relation to the proactive promotion of a research culture at the University (research financing, scouting, advising, proposal development, and/or ...?).

2. Teaching

The Summary “Teaching” Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 1 (KRA-1) on “Research” have been assessed along the seven main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 5 and 6 of Annex 4.

Some Background Information on UCuenca IUC Teaching Activities and Outputs: UCuenca has a strong teaching tradition in the Austro region as comprehensive university. Almost 15.000 students are studying an undergraduate programme. The 12 faculties organise more than 40 different studies. The University offers about 70 postgraduate formations (4th grade education). The only programme at the moment organised in distance modality is gender and development. However, the academic qualifications of the teaching staff need upgrading (one a few have a doctorate or a masters degree) and teaching is basically in the traditional ex-cathedra style. Moreover, with the exception of a few studies, the link with research in most cases is very weak or non-existing. Under the impulse of the T1 Transversal project on institutional change to strengthen research and education, multi-disciplinary teaching-research teams were created, special attention was given to the upgrading of courses and introduction of new teaching / instruction techniques and methodologies with more active participation of the students. Special attention was also given to by the Vertical Projects to the feasibility of introducing courses at post-graduate / masters level. A major resistance to change in teaching however is reported at the part of the settled “older” teaching staff and a rejuvenation of the academic cadre is put forward by many as a necessary condition for effective reform and sustainable change at UCuenca. The successful introduction of a credit system proved a major breakthrough for a quality academic teaching offer more in

line with the requirements of a changing society.

Research Outputs Indicators Achievements: A total 49 initiatives, activities and processes have been reported in the UCuenca IUC Key Result Areas accomplishments database. Almost half of these (or 24 in total) refer to the development of new courses / training programmes. The Transversal Project (T1) report on 5 series of workshops implemented in relation to (i) curriculum design; (ii) new education / teaching methods; (iii) Implementation of the credit system; (iv) development of new training materials, and (v) diffusion / dissemination of new academic and organic functional requirements (for AAR 2009: a total of 40 workshops and related capacity strengthening activities). Human sexuality reported on seven new courses, and both V1 Food and nutrition and V5 City preservation reported 5 new (training) courses. Eight new or substantially updated curricula have been developed (of which 4 by V2 Human sexuality and 3 by V4 Medicinal plants). A total of four textbooks have been developed by V4 Medicinal plants (4), and by V1 Food and Nutrition and by V4 Medicinal plant (both 2). Two e-learning packages have been completed by the transversal project T1 on institutional change, more particularly the management sub-system on performance evaluation of academic staff (SGE), and the credits system. The projects benefiting from laboratory upgrading (V1 Food and nutrition, V3 Water quality management and V4 Medicinal plants) all reported to have developed laboratory manuals to adequately utilize the new equipment. As was witnessed during the evaluation ocular inspections to the labs, for each of the main equipment items Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been prepared which are well displayed with each equipment item to ensure proper use. Also the use of these labs for teaching purposes and practicums is being broadened to ensure their cost-effectiveness. Five operational full-time teacher-researcher teams are reported in the self-assessment reports, while five more departments / faculties expected to be covered in a second phase of system broadening.

Main Summary Findings KRA 2 “Teaching”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Teaching can be summarized as follows:

- The university wide introduction and operationalisation of the credit system (incl. automated monitoring system);
- The organisation and capacitation of (inter-faculty) full-time research-teaching multi-disciplinary teams (5 have been implemented and 5 more are under development);
- The organisation of workshops on curriculum design, new education methods, new training materials, etc.;
- The harmonisation of curricula for common, practical aspects (calendar, hours, etc.) to ensure more uniformity and convergence;
- The actual introduction of ICT, research and lab practice in curricula and the actual use of labs for teaching;
- The dissemination / diffusion of new Academic and Organisational functional requirements;

- The successful introduction of performance evaluation of academic staff and its application and monitoring across-the-board;
- The total of 19 courses / training programmes which reportedly have been developed;
- Five new curricula developed (4 by human sexuality);
- Host courses / teaching by Flemish professors are very appreciated by all concerned;
- Guidelines for new education methods have been issued in February 2008;
- The link between research and master curricula is being strengthened .

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Research can be summarized as follows:

- Only a relatively small minority of teaching staff has a PhD or Masters degree;
- Most teachers are active at the University on a part-time basis only;
- The high average age of teaching staff;
- The initial plans to introduce masters courses are not realistic in a number of cases (for example, there has been no needs/market assessment, there is no qualified staff);
- Infrastructure limitations (e.g. small auditoria) make it impossible to teach common credit courses to large audiences (resulting in reduced cost-efficiency of teaching);
- No / limited follow-up is given to T1 workshops and training (e.g. refresher courses, monitoring of results / effects), which are not seldom limited to one shot events without further follow-up.;
- The introduction of new teaching methodologies (group work, problem solving, project work, case studies, etc.);
- Basic computing is now standard part of every curriculum (credit system points) but in its present format (content-wise: computer basics) is not found appropriate;
- The rationality of teachers allocation to classes and other activities is not always clear (“too many” professors for some subjects, or still missing for others?);
- More systematic involvement of researchers and project teams in curriculum development (especially for masters level curricula) is necessary;
- Mission and main functions of the Centro de Postgrado are not very clear, as such hampering its role;
- The VLIR-IUC vertical projects basically are seen by the team members and stakeholders as research / investigation project(s). The link to teaching is not always clear to many;
- Master degree development has been rather weak so far, for the indicated reasons (incl. support from transversal projectT1);
- Distance education: There appears a need for more systematic integration of e-learning, on-line library and distance education;
- Improvement of Monitoring and Evaluation and quality control at lower levels (curricula, facilities,...) needing to be ensured;

- The weak programme impact so far on curriculum design at 3th grade level, and the weak involvement of the Faculties in curriculum design (limited to credit system?).

3. Extension and Outreach

Outreach as Common UCuenca and VLIR-IUC Priority Concern: For VLIR-UOS development relevance is a fundamental characteristic of its programmes, projects and activities and this holds a priori for its Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes which aim at solidly linking / anchoring its Partner Universities as proactive protagonists in national and regional development processes. Each IUC programme has two main objectives: an academic objective and, at par with that, a development objective. This is not new to the University of Cuenca. On the contrary, UCuenca has a longstanding and rich tradition in extension and outreach programmes and initiatives as integral part of its trust as regional and local development actor. It almost is UCuenca's "raison d'être". This tradition continues to be cultivated as a prime concern in virtually all Faculties and Institutes, and in this context it is UCuenca guiding the Flemish partners, rather than the other way around. On the other hand, it is asserted that during this initial phase of the UCuenca programme, priority efforts first need to be directed at an internal strengthening of the University in terms of its academic staff (HRD) and of its research and education capacities and quality, so that it even more meaningfully and forcefully can reach out to its development stakeholders in the region, both in the public and private sectors.

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 3 (KRA-3) on "Extension and Outreach" have been assessed along the 7 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 7 and 8 of Annex 4.

Extension and Outreach Outputs Indicators Achievements: During the evaluation visit to Cuenca, the Evaluation Commission was invited to attend different ongoing extension and outreach activities and projects implemented by IUC vertical projects (including V1 Food and nutrition, V3 Water quality management, V4 Medicinal plants and V5 City preservation). The other projects (V2 Human sexuality and V6 Migration and Development) included key external stakeholders / beneficiaries in the interview sessions. As such, the Evaluation Commission was able to have a direct, first hand appreciation of the extent and quality of the extension and outreach activities component of the different projects. The outreach component is particularly strong in V1 Food and Nutrition, V2 Human sexuality, V5 City preservation and V6 Migration and local development. A total of 13 set of leaflets, flyers and/or posters are reported by the projects, with outstanding materials prepared under the V1 Food and nutrition, V2 Human sexuality and the V5 City preservation projects. The V6 Migration and development project has been very active in the production of manuals and technical guides with six psycho-pedagogical manuals developed for its extension work. The manuals produced by V5 City preservation are related to its heritage and preventive conservation inventory, maintenance and monitoring work. A total of sixteen workshop /

training module package have been produced in the period under review (of which four each under V2, V5 and V6 and three under V1). V5 City preservation has produced a number of audio-visual extension materials for different audiences and during the evaluation meeting at V6 also an audio-visual presentation on the psycho-social aspects of migration was shown. As far as consultancy contracts / researches are concerned, this still in first instance is the terrain of PROMAS, the executing entity of the V3 Water quality management project, which has developed a long-standing, internationally recognized reputation on the subject matter. It reported 3 such researches as a spin-off of the IUC programme, including a research project with ETAPA, a city para-statal company. V5 City preservation is further strengthening its spin-off consultancy capacities and reported two such assignments with INPC, the national conservation authority. V5 is even more active in policy advisory services and reported to have prepared six policy advice papers under the UNESCO Chair of PRECOMOS. V6 Migration and local development has submitted one proposal to the National Statistics and Census Institute to improve the migration section in the next national census. In addition, the conclusion of cooperation agreements / Memoranda of Understanding with external parties are reported by V3 Water quality management (e.g. with EMAPAL) and V6 Migration and development (e.g. with the University of Azuay and the Universidad Católica de Cuenca).

Main Summary Findings KRA 3 “Extension and Outreach”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Extension and Outreach can be summarized as follows:

- The status of UCuenca as a catalyst for regional development is enshrined in its mission and goals;
- Strong relations have been established on a sustained and sustainable basis at both university and IUC projects level with institutional stakeholders (public authorities, development organisations and para-statal companies);
- All 6 vertical projects have an extension / outreach component, with some truly excelling in this field as appreciated by the different stakeholder parties concerned;
- Generally, there is a broad interest of staff in and commitment to the extension / outreach dimension of work;
- A total of 16 extension workshop / training module packages reportedly have been produced in the period under review;
- 13 (sets) of leaflets, flyers, posters for extension produced, plus 3 audio-visual extension materials are reported;
- Furthermore reported: the production of 10 manuals / technical guides;
- A total of 5 consultancy / contract researches concluded in the period under review (3 under IWQM and 2 under city preservation);
- 7 policy advice / papers have been produced;
- Memoranda of Understanding (MoU’s) have been concluded under IWQM, city pres and migration projects;
- Relevant inputs from research(ers) into extension materials and activities is reported and also has been noted during the visits to the projects and/or the field..

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Extension and Outreach can be summarized as follows:

- There is a tendency of projects to do outreach / extension at the level of the target groups themselves and not through intermediary (specialised) organisations, which also involves cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness issues;
- There most often is a lack of a formal basis of extension services and/or contract research with the organisations concerned (MoU, contracts);
- Pressing intellectual property (incl. patenting) issues e.g. with medicinal plants and city preservation projects, linger on and need decision making / breakthroughs;
- Extension materials are most often in Spanish and in certain cases need to be translated and adapted further to local circumstances;
- Tapping of / networking with other (higher education) institutes and organisations as intermediaries for extension / outreach need special priority attention;
- Contract research / spin-offs are mostly still in infant shoes, but the potentials are recognized and the active interest is growing;
- A central entity at the university and/or special entity within the Faculties / Centres especially looking after outreach opportunities and their management may be desirable and opted for;
- University level policy, strategy and regulatory framework for outreach, extension & spin-offs needing to be updated and further strengthened;
- The relations between the (existing) independent centres and faculties may need to be analysed further and better defined;
- For the time being, no or only a few institutional links exist for extension activities (mostly based on rather personal contacts, incentives).

4. Management

Management Development as Central, Essential IUC Key Result Area: Management development especially the action terrain of the transversal T1 project on institutional change to strengthen research and teaching. This T1 is an innovative cross-cutting project which started being introduced more systematically by VLIR-UOS into its IUC programmes with partner universities in the South with this new batch of IUCs of which the UCuenca IUC forms part (together with for example Jimma University in Ethiopia and Moi University in Kenya). The transversal project T1 under the UCuenca IUC has two main objectives: The first one relates to the institutional strengthening of UCuenca on the whole, the second one relates to the support function on these matters to the vertical projects under the IUC programme. Management capacity strengthening under T1 refers to both human capacity strengthening (e.g. planning and monitoring skills upgrading, proposals writing, technical writing skills upgrading, individual performance planning and appraisals, interdisciplinary team coordination, etc.) and institutional capacity strengthening (e.g. one university with all noses in the same direction, strategic planning, translation of strategic plans in operational plans, monitoring and follow-up of

plan execution, legal framework and specific matters as intellectual property and, ICT upgrading and policy, administrative procedures, credit system, academic performance appraisal system, research document management system, etc.).

Management Development Challenges: But obviously, management development is not a matter of T1 project alone, as it necessarily pervades all individual vertical projects as well. In fact, it is there (and by extension within the broader faculties and institutes they form part of) that the real management impact is manifested. Some project for example in this regard report on strengthened communication systems, including for example weekly team meetings. One of the main challenges is to ensure multiplier effects of these management strengthening initiatives, to avoid creation of “modern institutional islands” amidst a remaining traditional environment (hence the importance of a strong link, strong embedding of IUC projects within the respective Faculties / Departments and thus ensuring IUC programme multiplier effects. The other challenge is to have the management tools and processes designed and developed under the IUC programme also effectively approved officially and then operationalised on a University-wide scale. The new law on higher education in Ecuador entail new challenges for the institutional development of UCuenca.

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 4 (KRA-4) on “*Management*” have been assessed along the 5 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 9 and 10 of Annex 4.

Management Outputs Indicators Achievements: Central in the institutional reform process of the Universidad of Cuenca spearheaded by the IUC transversal project T1 is the participatory development of new institutional procedures, policies and strategies (the first standard indicator under IUC KRA 4 on management development. The transversal project reports on three accomplishments in this regard and two in the pipeline. Accomplishments: KRA Database: (1) Updated organisational chart, function and job descriptions; (2) Increasing the well-being of the university community; (3) UCuenca Research Information System: Database analysis, construction and implementation for registration of investigations and publications. Under preparation: (1) Proposal to strengthen institutional communication, and (2) Proposal for policy on intellectual property and patents. Two projects (V1 Food and nutrition and V5 City preservation) report on the introduction of management processes (e.g. weekly team meetings, regular planning and monitoring meetings with sub-projects). V2 Human sexuality reports on the strategic design of a Centre for Research and Sexual Education. Regarding Departmental management, T1 reports on the development of a database system with research information and the decentralised accessibility to the on-line library. More intense activity in the different projects is noted with regard to the development of e-systems. Not less than 5 out of the 7 projects (all but V2 and V3) report on customized software or other e-tools development. A best practice success story is the design and operationalisation of the Management Sub-System on Performance Evaluation of Academic Staff(SGE) as part of the Integrated System of the University of Cuenca (SIUC). This system is widely appreciated by both system administrators / coordinators and users (Deans, academic staff and students), although

that is recognized that some content elements need updating.

V1 Food and nutrition reports a special food intake calculation programme with database, while specialized customized database programmes development are also reported by V4 medicinal plants (2 database systems), by V5 City preservation (3 database systems) and V6 migration and development. V6 Migration and development also especially reports on the development and maintenance of its website. The development of research protocols is also taking off, partly thanks to the capacity development support provided by T1 on technical proposals writing and technical reporting. V1 Food and nutrition and V4 Medicinal plants take the lead with respectively 5 and 4 proposals prepared and approved. T1 transversal project reports that preparations are underway for an updating of the strategic plan of the University. All in all, a total of 34 items are reported on by the UCuenca IUC projects in connection with IUC Key Result Area 4 on Management Development.

Main Summary Findings KRA 4 “Management”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Management can be summarized as follows:

- The ongoing development process of the updated organisational chart for UCuenca and function descriptions for its (main) organisational entities;
- The ongoing harmonisation and standardization of university procedures, rules and regulations and the works done to that effect (“one university” policy) – Reglamento Academico, 2008;
- The development of the policy and strategy for increasing the well-being of the University community;
- The issuance of guidelines on the operationalisation and monitoring of the credit system, including automation;
- The distribution of instructions for the operationalisation of research-based teaching;
- The across-the-board introduction and operationalisation of a standard evaluation system of academic staff;
- The publication and dissemination of the “Ley Orgánica de Educación Superior” of 12 Oct 2010;
- The design, development and operationalisation of an Automated UCuenca Research Information System;
- The establishment and operationalisation of an on-line library and ICT network (wireless over campuses);
- The development and actual organisation of a post graduate on University Management (ongoing with 23 students);
- The holding of weekly team meetings in a number of (most) projects;
- A total of 9 e-systems reportedly have been developed and operationalised (in 4 projects);

- A total of 7 research protocols has been prepared and a number are still in the pipeline.

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Management can be summarized as follows:

- A major and immediate challenge is fully grasping the momentum and opportunities for institutional reform at the moment (new organic law HE, new management, new strategic plan period, preparations for phase 2 of VLIR-IUC programme);
- The updating of the strategic plan of the university (within 3 months in line with requirement of new Ley) and of the Faculties / Centres is another immediate priority;
- A more systematic translation of the strategic plans in annual plans needs to be ensured including their alignment;
- More systematic and integrated plans implementation management, monitoring and reporting (based on use of key results / performance indicators) and the automation of the integrated planning and monitoring system (incl. VLIR-IUC programme). This particularly pertains to the management and the M&E of the programme key results reported by the different projects and their integration / consolidation at overall programme level;
- The design and actual implementation of integrated human resources development (preferably institutionally anchored in a special office / department), including HRD planning, performance appraisals and incentives, with special attention for the needs and ambitions of returning graduated PhD students;
- The organisation of a technical review and updating of the academic performance appraisal system (indicators and criteria);
- The development of an institutional networking policy and strategy (local, regional, national and international levels);
- The development of a strategy for outreach, extension and spin-offs and institutional anchoring of services;
- The further strengthening of T1 transversal services to the individual vertical projects. This pertains especially to follow-up services to base trainings;
- A more systematic diffusions / dissemination of knowledge, lessons learned, skills and practices in the projects to the Faculties they belong to and beyond is to be strived for;
- The institutional anchoring / incorporation of T1 transversal project in the University structure / organisational chart is an absolute priority of high importance in order to ensure sustainability of the reform processes facilitated through the UCuenca IUC programme;
- It is not always clear to team leaders and members (S and N) what their responsibility / competence is regarding budget management. Further explanations and clarifications are needed.
- The vision of the university on “responsible autonomy” as included in the new law on Higher Education needs further clarification.

5. Human Resources Development of Staff

The Major Challenges Regarding HRD of UCuenca Academic Staff: It is widely acknowledged by both UCuenca and Flemish IUC stakeholders that the University faces major challenges with regard to the upgrading, the Human Resources Development (HRD) of its academic staff. Of the almost 900 professor teaching at Cuenca, only 25 (or 2.78% of the total) are at PhD doctorate level while also staff at masters level is still a minority only. Furthermore, the average age of the academic staff is high (with a disproportionate percentage at about retirement age, with some even de facto retired), calling for a drastic rejuvenation of the academic corps. Moreover, only a minority of the UCuenca academic staff is active on a full-time basis, with most of the professors only fulfilling education tasks only without any engagement in research. The enormous challenges UCuenca faces with regard to HRD of its academic staff is further aggravated by the new law on higher education posing strict norms on the academic achievement of academics, on their research activities and outputs, and on their full-time engagement at the university.

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 4 (KRA-4) on “*Human Resources Development*” have been assessed along the 5 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 11 and 12 of Annex 4.

Main Observation and Challenge regarding HRD Outputs Indicators Achievements: It is realized that the VLIR-UOS indicators for measuring performance on the Human Resources Development KRA are maybe not so appropriate for process monitoring and even for mid-term evaluations as the present one. HRD outputs especially of PhD and MSc degrees area only realized after a minimum of five years or so, thus largely beyond the timeframe of the current period under review of the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme (covering a period of 39 months, including the pre-partner programme, thus only good three years only). Process indicators instead of output indicators in this context would appear more appropriate to more accurately and meaningfully measure actual performance on the HRD Key Result Area of the IUC programme. Moreover, and a source of major concern, is that in most projects the HRD component encountered substantive delays, with quite a number of scholarships in Belgium only started towards the end of the period under review, and some even still need to be started up. Needless to say that these delays put a serious burden on the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness, not to say the overall ultimate success of the entire programme, since obviously also performance on the UCuenca IUC teaching and research KRAs is strongly affected by the success of the HRD component. This implies that the effective implementation and further strengthening of the HRD component of the IUC programme needs to be given high priority and urgency in the period to come.

HRD Outputs Indicators Achievements: No activities are reported regarding Bachelor degrees, except for V6 Migration and development which reports local scholarships to finance the execution of 3 BA dissertation projects. A total of five (5) Masters degrees

have been successfully completed in Flanders (2 in V2 Human sexuality, 2 in V4 Medicinal plants and 1 in V5 City preservation). A total of 12 master degree scholarships are reported as still ongoing or being started up (4 in V2 Human sexuality, 4 in V3 Water quality and 2 in V5 City preservation). With regard to the PhD doctorates, none has been completed so far, neither under the full cycle modality nor under the abridged “sandwich” system version. But as per the latest update of the UCuenca IUC KRA database provided to the Evaluation Commission, 13 doctorate scholarship studies in Flanders are ongoing (2 in T1 Institutional change, 2 in V2 Food and nutrition, 2 in V2 Human sexuality, 4 in V3 Water quality, 2 in V4 Medicinal plants, 1 in V5 City preservation and 1 in V6 Migration and development). Hence all six UCuenca IUC projects have at least one ongoing PhD scholarship with V3 Water quality largely outnumbering the other individual projects with 4 ongoing PhD scholarships on its own. The PhD study reported by V6 Migration and development is executed in Mexico (started in February 2011). A total of three pre-doctoral degrees have been finished (1 each under V1 Food and Nutrition, V2 Human sexuality and V3 Water quality).

The 2 pre-docs under V4 Medicinal plants has been changed de facto for master degrees. There is a generally growing interest and need for short-term training courses. A total of 14 such ST courses in Flanders have been reported on, most of which (6) under V6 Food and nutrition. Course themes and also durations vary considerably, from a week / few weeks to several months. A considerable number of not less than 24 other Human Resources Development activities and outputs are reported, other than those executed in Flanders / Belgium. This includes the Post-graduate on University Management which started at UCuenca and is ongoing with 23 students. Other HRD activities include for example: The CREATE and EUROFIR training courses attended by V1 Food and nutrition team members; The international congresses on sexual education in Quito and on sexuality in Guayaquil attended by V2 Human sexuality staff; The four civil engineering studies with thesis completed under V3 Water quality; The statistical and validation courses attended under V4 Medicinal plants; And the training courses in Mexico and Ecuador on migration subjects under V6 Migration and development.

The UCuenca – Flanders Summary Mobility Tables: The Evaluation Commission further processed the base mobility tables for Annual Programme 2010 prepared by the ICOS of KULeuven on the UCuenca IUC programme. The processed tables can be found under Annex 14 to this report. Expressed in number of days, by far most of the UCuenca to Flanders mobility is related to Human Resources Development of UCuenca staff (mostly PhD, MSc and short courses). Table 14.1 has a breakdown of UCuenca mobility to Flanders by IUC project. It shows that most HRD mobility (counted in number of person/days involved) is under the V.6 Migration and Development project followed by V4 Medicinal plants and V3 Water Quality projects. Table 14.1 gives a breakdown of this UCuenca – Flanders and vice versa mobility by purpose and shows that both PhDs and Masters scholarships in Flanders take up by far the largest amount of mobility days, the two together thus three quarters of all bi-directional mobility between UCuenca and Flanders. The breakdown by hosting university in Flanders under Table 14.3 shows that the largest percentage of all UCuenca – Flanders mobility is directed to the KU Leuven as coordinating Flemish University, which is a common phenomenon amongst the IUCs as was learned from the VLIR-UOS Secretariat. It should be noted that these tables are based on the mobility data made available by ICOS Leuven through the Flemish Programme Coordinator to the Evaluation Commission on 26 January 2011 and concern

AP 2010 up to 20 January 2011 and thus do not cover the last 2.5 months (21 January 2011 – 31 March 2011) of AP 2010. No further completed figures of the detailed mobility tables for the whole AP 2010 have been received. On the other hand, two additional mobility tables for the whole AP 2010 provided in conjunction with the stakeholders comments on the draft final report are included under Annex 14.4. These concern mobility expressed in number of travels, regardless the type, purpose or duration of the respective mobility events.

Main Summary Findings on KRA 5 “Human Resources Development”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Human Resources Development can be summarized as follows:

- The Human Resources Development (HRD) component under the VLIR-IUC programme is highly appreciated by UCuenca management, academics and students alike;
- Scholars are highly appreciative of their experiences in Belgium / Flanders, both academically and personally;
- Especially appreciated: The exposure to advanced research culture; international environment; state-of-the-art equipment; research team work; concentration on research work.
- In some cases, scholarships resulted in lasting international contacts / networks;
- Accomplishments so far at PhD level: None finished yet and 12 in progress / about to start;
- Accomplishments at Masters level: 5 completed and 9 ongoing;
- A total of 10 short term courses / activities were attended in Flanders;
- A further 23 other HRD activities are reported on;
- The post-graduate at UCuenca on University management is ongoing with 23 students;
- Initial exchanges of thesis students;
- Research topics of PhD / master students generally well adapted to / in line with Faculty/Centre (priority) work at UCuenca;
- PhD programmes well developed, good link between team / project topics and PhD research themes;
- A high impact of PhD, Master studies on the UCuenca university human resources in general is guaranteed, due to low percentage of fourth grade professors at present;
- The plans for the creation of a PhD Department would enable meeting part of the huge needs for additional qualified academic staff at UCuenca.

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Extension and Outreach can be summarized as follows:

- Meeting the challenges and opportunities provided by the new Law on HE (70% of staff at PhD level within 7 years);
- Delays in start of IUC scholarship programme, with limited results so far for the doctorate level (understandable since multi-year cycle);
- Planning and monitoring of scholarships (both overall programme and individual scholarships) with progress and results reporting.
- Closer guidance and monitoring of the PhD scholars by the promoters (based on progress and results reporting by the scholars) more in function of overall programme improvement rather than to assess individual scholar performance;
- Further expansion of scholarship programme, including short-term courses;
- Strengthened exchange of academic staff between Flanders and UCuenca;
- Strengthened exchange of thesis students between Flanders and UCuenca (bi-directional);
- Strengthened networking with and between the different Flanders Universities for the HRD programme;
- Assessment of the pre-doc scholarship programme vis-à-vis fully-fledged masters degree;
- Transparent and objective selection process of most qualified scholars;
- English proficiency as pre-condition for scholarship eligibility (UCuenca institutional guarantees)
- Also regarding scholarship, the thesis topics should be related to overall research lines of the projects;
- In the same way, it is advisable that Flemish post-graduate students may develop their theses or research activities at UCuenca;
- There need to be guarantees for sandwich PhDs that they can concentrate on research when in Cuenca (minimum hours in contract);
- Reinsertion strategy of scholars in UCuenca to be included standard in scholarship contracts;
- Procedures about the graduates from the University need to be clarified. There could be an issue following changes in national legislation, but as the situation is it would be recommendable that the University defines the parameters for the submission of the documentation of post-graduates and that the institution is responsible for its management and administration in front of the national organisms (the post-graduates must not be private persons, nor of faculties, but university institutions within the frame of their educational policies).
- Turnover of capacitated staff having benefited from PhD scholarship opportunities in Flanders (e.g. IWQM);
- Follow-up (e.g. refresher courses) and monitoring (e.g. ex-post effects and impact) of workshops given;
- (System for) Monitoring of returning PhDs and their incorporation in UCuenca.

6. Infrastructure Management

Substantive Investments on Infrastructure and Equipment: During the initial phases of the IUC programme cycle substantive investments are made on selective infrastructure and equipment upgrading, particularly in terms of laboratories upgrading and purchase of ICT equipment. The UCuenca IUC programme is not different in this respect. The total investment costs in the three year period 2007 – 2009 under UCuenca IUC phase I amounted to € 730.448 which is 38.61% of the total programme expenditures in the period. Virtually all these expenditures (98.83%) were made in the South, in UCuenca. With these actual expenditures, the original budget line B budget allocation for investment costs was overshoot by 160.1% (partly due to the budget reallocation caused by the discontinuation of the family violence project and to the additional resource allocation for ICT equipment purchases made by VLIR-UOS. The investments in the first phase particularly pertained to the UCuenca computer network covering all Faculties and Institutes, the library upgrading (both books and e-catalogue) and the laboratory upgrading of three projects / Faculties. All equipment and facilities upgrading are strongly appreciated by the users and administrators, as was conveyed to the Evaluation Commission. Their functionality for both enhanced research and teaching was emphasized.

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 6 (KRA-6) on “Infrastructure Management” have been assessed along the 6 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 13 and 14 of Annex 4.

Infrastructure Management Outputs Indicators Achievements: As far as the indicator on physical infrastructure purchase, construction and/or upgrading is concerned, five projects reported on completed and/or ongoing infra projects. V1 Food and nutrition reported on the installation of the food analysis lab, the land plot and building being provided by Cuenca University. V3 Water quality reported the construction of flumes and meteorological stations in the field. In its Annual Report AP 2009, V4 Medicinal plants report the completion of its laboratory for the development and maintenance of zebrafishes. The upgrading of three workspaces for researchers was reported by V5 City preservation, whereas V6 migration and development mentioned the design of its Regional Centre of Excellence on International Migration and Development. Detailed lists of ICT equipment procured are reported by all seven projects, with the transversal project T1 reporting on the network and data centre of the University and the upgrading of the e-library. For APs 2008 and 2009 the Transversal Project TA reported that, new computers, digitalization resources, security and communicational resources were implemented in all libraries, in order to improve the use of digital resources and ICT. All vertical projects reported on the purchase of books with detailed figures. Purchase and installation of laboratory equipment are reported by V1 Food and nutrition with regard to its Food And Nutrition Laboratory, by V3 Water quality for its sanitary laboratory, by V4 Medicinal Plants for four labs: microbiology lab, phytochemistry lab, lab for plant processing, and its zebrafish facility. V5 City preservation provided a detailed list of purchased equipment items including digital cameras, GPS equipment, hydrometer, etc. No vehicles have been purchased under the IUC programme.

Main Summary Findings KRA 6 “Infrastructure Management”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Infrastructure Management can be summarized as follows:

- Substantive upgrading of the UCuenca ICT, library and laboratory equipment under the first phase of the IUC programme;
- Total investments over the 2007-2009 three year period amount to 730,448 Euro (or 38.61% of the total IUC programme expenditures in that period);
- State-of-the-art ICT networks cover all 4 campuses with the Department of IT Development as the overall coordination centre;
- Computerization of the 4 UCuenca libraries;
- 3 laboratories equipped and/or upgraded: Microbiology (Medicinal Plants project), Food and Nutrition Laboratory (Food, Nutrition and Health project), and upgrading of sanitary laboratory (Water Quality Management project);
- Local purchase of most equipment items, with provisions for guaranteed operation and maintenance services and supplies;
- 5 laboratory manuals developed;
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) developed and displayed for virtually all purchased equipment items;
- Clean and orderly ICT central nerve centre, laboratories and libraries;
- Actual use of ICT, lab and library equipments;
- Accessibility of equipment;
- Special software design and development in projects (e.g. in city preservation – patenting issues).

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Extension and Outreach can be summarized as follows:

- With hardware requirements to large extent met, strong need for customized software development / upgrading in 2nd phase of project (e.g. for integrated planning, budgeting, accounting and reporting, various databases);
- Operationalisation of ICT help desk function (including permanent staff) as a matter of priority;
- Choice of software / standardization of software (open source or branded, ...);
- Further strengthening of on-line access to Flemish libraries network;
- Guaranteed accessibility of the laboratories and use for research-based teaching;

- Aspects associated with isolated location of the Food and Nutrition laboratory remote from the Central campus (use for teaching?);
- Need for a UCuenca ICT policy and strategy, including security policy (back-ups, firewalls, passwords, etc.);
- Needs assessment of distance education programmes, incl. feasibility;
- Development and updating of University procurement policy and plans;
- Guaranteed access to facilities and equipment (especially for infrastructure and equipment on located on other campuses).

7. Mobilisation of Additional Resources / Opportunities

Sustainability and Additional Resources Mobilisation Concerns under Phase I: During the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme, institutional reform attention so far has been basically directly to internal capacity strengthening of the University, both managerial and academically (teaching and research aspects). Moreover at this early stage of the programme there is not yet a real pressure to mobilise additional resources or to scout for such opportunities. This however does not mean that this mobilisation of additional resources KRA can be neglected, on the contrary it should be incorporated as a key concern and inherent part of any strategic plan or action plan, particularly in the light of assuring financial sustainability once external funding as VLIR's is ending. So far, this has not been systematically the case in the phase I of the UCuenca IUC programme, also not under the transversal T1 project on institutional change. Under this chapter only the KRA 7 results are discussed in relation to the VLIR identified indicators for this KRA which in first instance refer to additional resources mobilisation in Flanders. Financial sustainability and the need for additional resources generation from other sources are discussed in a later chapter on sustainability as dimension / criterion of higher level programme performance.

The Summary Results Table per Project: The results of the respective projects / sub-programmes in terms of Key Result Area 7 (KRA-7) on "Mobilisation of Additional Resources" have been assessed along the 5 main indicators (KPIs) included in the ToR. The summary table of results of the respective UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes on these research outputs/results indicators is included on pages 15 and 16 of Annex 4.

Mobilisation of Additional Resources Outputs Indicators Achievements: With regard to the Flemish travel grants, V1 Food and nutrition project mentions 5 North – South (N-S) exchanges outside of the IUC with a duration varying from 2 weeks to six months. Furthermore there has been a South – South (S-S) exchange with Vietnam on a S-S VLIR scholarship for 3.5 months. V2 Human sexuality reports on 5 masters students from Belgium who came to UCuenca for their BA thesis research (e.g. on adobe resistance issues, comparison of archaeological practices of Cuenca and Flanders, etc.). T1 Institutional Change hosted the internship of one Flemish academic for four months. V1 Food and nutrition received 3 Flemish PhD for a total of 8 months outside of the scope of the IUC programme (for resp. 6 months and two times one month). Spin-offs are still in their infant shoes at UCuenca. Two such spin-off researches area reported by the V4 medicinal plants project. V5 mentions a preventive conservation spin-off with the city

government of Cuenca. Under additional resources – other, one Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) scholarship is mentioned for Master in Conservation of Monuments. V6 Migration and development showed an IOB research fund granted and 4 scholarships offered by the COLEF (Mexico) in the field of migration and a number of N-S research exchanges with Flemish Universities. Internships or thesis students are also mentioned by T1 Institutional change, V2 human sexuality and V3 Water quality management.

Main Summary Findings KRA 7 “Mobilisation of Additional Resources / Opportunities”

Strengths

The main summary findings regarding the Strengths of the IUC Programme regarding KRA Mobilisation of Additional Resources can be summarized as follows:

- Growing awareness of importance of consultancy services, contract research and commercial/industrial spin-offs to enhance financial sustainability of University, Faculties, Departments and Research Centres;
- Creation of (research) centres of excellence with special attention for sustainable resources mobilisation (e.g. food, nutrition and health; human sexuality, city preservation), with PROMAS as established good example case;
- 9 Flemish travel grants (3 N-S VLIR scholarships, 1 S-S VLIR scholarship with Vietnam; 5 masters students from Belgium coming to UCuenca for their master thesis research;
- 1 Flemish internship and 2 N-S research exchange visits to UCuenca;
- 4 reported spin-off projects of which 2 by medicinal plants, 1 preventive conservation tools development contract by city preservation, and 1 scholarship programme by OLEF of Mexico under migration and local development (1 PhD and 4 masters);
- BTC scholarship for a master in conservation of monuments;
- Access by projects to DIUC research funds after successful competitive bidding;
- Growing awareness of the importance and need for proactive external resources generation with / from key institutional stakeholders (public authorities, development organisations, for profit commercial / industrial sector);
- Total of 40 research projects funded from UCuenca external sources in the period 2003-2010, with a total value of 6,273 million USD of which 2,886 million USD (or 46,0%) from Flemish sources (VLIR-IUC, VLIR-OI, VLIR-other, VVOB, Flemish Universities, etc.)

Challenges / Issues Needing Attention

The main summary findings regarding the challenges and issues needing special attention still in the IUC Programme with regard to KRA Extension and Outreach can be summarized as follows:

- Institutionalisation in UCuenca of proactive search and mobilisation of additional resources / opportunities with external parties (both at UCuenca central level and at the level of critical capacity Faculties, Departments and/or Centres;

- Capacity strengthening of academic and administrative staff in resources mobilisation and management (e.g. proposals writing, project cycle management, budgeting, etc.)
- UCuenca policy and guidelines for additional resources mobilisation (for preparation under transversal T1);
- Mission of DIUC is not clear with regard to its responsibilities for research (both for overall programme and for individual researches);
- Ensuring a better spread / diversification of donor sources / countries;

8. Other

The KRAs rest category “Other” covers all outputs / results brought about by the programme and/or its 7 constituent projects, directly or indirectly as spin-offs, which cannot be classified explicitly under any of the previous seven main IUC Key Results Areas. No items are reported by the UCuenca IUC projects under this rest KRA “Other”, neither in the self-assessment reports nor in any other document.

2.1.3. Programme Performance on IUC Processes of Change

The Introduction of Change Indicators as IUC Programme Management Tool: VLIR-UOS has introduced reporting on change indicators as a standard component in the Annual Activity Reports (AARs) by the projects under IUC Programmes. These change indicators are derived from the projects’ LogFrames and refer to the Intermediate Results level in the LogFrames. Processes of change by the end of the reporting year are expressed in percentage change in relation to the baseline situation as defined at the project formulation stage.

The Change Indicators Scorecard Developed by the Evaluation Commission: The Evaluation Commission has developed a special evaluation tool to visualize the achievements of the respective projects along these identified change indicators derived from the LogFrames. This tool takes the format of a scorecard with “traffic light” dashboard features, with three rating colours for the change performance self-assessment performance scores on the change indicators. The applied change performance rating categories and corresponding rating colours are summarized in the below table.

Table 3 : UCuenca IUC Phase I - Performance Thresholds of AAR Change Indicators

Change Performance Self-Assessment Score	Change Performance Rating Category	Rating Colour
score \geq 75%	H = Highly Satisfactory	 Green
60% \leq score < 75%	S = Satisfactory	 Green
40% \leq score < 60%	P = Partially Satisfactory	 Amber
score < 40%	U = Unsatisfactory	 Red

The Scorecard as IUC Programme and Project Management Tool: The full scorecard for all six UCuenca IUC projects is reflected under Annex 5 to this report.

Table 4 : Excerpt from the UCuenca IUC Programme Performance Scorecard on IUC Processes of Change in Relation to the Baseline Situation (Full table under Annex 5)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
IUC Project / Sub-Programme		Project Intermediate Result (IR) Code		Indicator of Change		Self-Estimated Percentage Cumulative Change by End of AP 2009 (by 31 March 2010)		Change Performance Rating Category and Colour (2)		Comments / Narrative Reporting on Situation at End of AP 2009 (by 31 March 2010)					
Code	Short Title	Code	Code	Definition / Description											
T.1	Transversal Project on Institutional Change to Strengthen Research and Education	IR-1	1.1	A developed proposal for the implementation of teams of teachers.		55%		H		100% of proposal is done					
			1.2	At the middle of the Fourth year there are 4 teams of teachers going on.		75%		H		75 % of the indicator is completed. (3 teams of teachers-researchers in 3 faculties)					
			1.3	At the middle of the Fifth year 8 teams of teachers-researchers have been established		40%		P		40 % of the indicator is completed (At this moment there are three more teams in process of being installed in other faculties)					
		IR-2	2.1	2 approved regulations adapted to the institutional change.		?		?		100% of the proposal of change is developed 1 Presentation of the proposal was developed					
		IR-3	3.1	At the end of the project a theoretical and methodological framework of the issue "Organizational Change in Higher Education Institutions" has been developed.		40%		P		40% of the theoretical and methodological framework is done					
			3.2	A proposal for an institutional improvement based on the outcomes of the Phd research.		35%		U		35% of proposal is done (The PhD started in October 2009)					
			3.3	At the end of the project, 2 articles related with the issue of the university change have been published.		15%		U		30% of the first article is done					
			3.4	A student has finished his/her Fourth year of PhD.		30%		U		30% of the PhD is completed (The PhD started in October 2009)					
		IR-4	4.1	50 teachers (deans, subdeans, bosses of schools) of 10 faculties trained in curricular design.		100%		H		2 workshops on Monitoring and evaluation of Credit System and generic model for the development of the course plans were derived - 50 attendees - 100% of training is done					
		IR-5	5.1	An implemented software to record investigations and publications on permanent updating.		90%		H		90% is done (Integrated System of the University of Cuenca (SIUC))					
			5.2	At the end of the project 60 teachers and/or researchers trained in new methods of research, scientific articles writing and english writing.		150%		H		4 Workshops on Statistical Analysis, Qualitative Research, English writing and Formulation of Proposal for European Union. - 30 attendees in each workshop					
		IR-6	6.1	At the end of the project 60 teachers and/or researchers trained in new methods of teaching, development of training material and ICTs.		100%		H		1 Workshop on "New methods of student evaluation" 50 attendees 100% of training proces is done					

The mid-term evaluation assessment on UCuenca IUC programme performance on IUC processes of change in relation to the baseline situation (columns 6 to 8) covers the situation up to 31 March 2010 as reported in the Annual Activity Reports (AARs) for AP 2009. Amendments received from the projects on the draft summary performance table V.1 up to 05 February 2011 and in reaction to the draft final evaluation report are incorporated in the version of the table incorporated under Annex 5. The scorecard immediately draws the attention of the Programme Coordinator and Project Team Leaders on the indicators which need (priority) attention and follow-up still (the red and amber colours), while at the same time also providing an overview of what has been successfully accomplished already (the green colours). The scorecard thus in first

instance is an IUC programme internal management tool. A more refined change monitoring system is recommended by the Evaluation Commission.

The Full Scorecard Table under Annex 5 and Summary Observations: The scorecard table under Annex 5 is self-explanatory. An excerpt of the table related to the transversal project T1 (related to T1 Intermediate Results 1 to 6) is shown above on the previous page just for illustration purposes only. Some observations on the change processes reporting include the following: (i) The number and selection of the change indicators of the different projects need to be reviewed as not all are indicative for actual change processes (e.g. the three V4 Medicinal plants indicators are very selective and only related to the collection of plants and analysis of extraction and thus are selective activity indicators only, not representative for the envisioned VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme change processes aimed at through the project); (ii) The percentage progress reporting on the change indicators in the ARRs needs to be further objectivated, as for the moment still highly subjective for a number of indicators in the absence of change benchmarks / thresholds; (iii) There is mixed compliance only with the AAR reporting requirements on the change indicators (e.g. V1 Food and nutrition has no reporting on the change indicators).

2.2. Higher Level Programme Performance

Some Introductory Notes and Methodological Aspects: The first main evaluation focus, discussed above, concentrated on the progress of the VLIR-IUC programme, on its activities, processes and direct results related to the seven Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the VLIR-IUC programme. The *second main evaluation focus* is on the higher level programme performance. This higher level programme performance is assessed on the following six criteria¹: (i) Quality; (ii) Effectiveness; (iii) Efficiency; (iv) Outcomes and impact; (v) Development relevance; and (vi) Sustainability. The discussion of the above six evaluation criteria is presented in more general terms, with concrete references made to individual projects / sub-programmes when necessary and/or for illustrative purposes.

Programme and Projects Assessment: For the evaluation of the programme as a whole, the assessment of higher performance in accordance with the Terms of Reference concentrates on four of the above-mentioned DAC criteria: Efficiency, impact, development relevance and sustainability. Since the below assessment of the higher level performance of the UCuenca-IUC projects / sub-programmes transcends the

¹ With the exception of “quality”, these criteria are the more or less standard set of evaluation criteria from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for the evaluation of development cooperation programmes and projects.

In the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2 March 2005, the following are identified as main effectiveness concerns / criteria: ownership, alignment, harmonisation, managing for results and, mutual accountability. For each of these concerns a number of key progress indicators are identified.

individual projects as such and concentrates on common denominators for lessons learned and best practices, the chapter on the assessment of the programme as a whole is merely a succinct summary of the most salient findings and observations. This also helps to avoid repetitions in the evaluation reporting. The programme level evaluation criterion of “Change” is discussed earlier already under chapter 2.1.3 on Programme Performance on IUC Processes of Change by means of the change scorecard.

2.2.1. The Constituent Projects / Sub-Programmes

Summary Scoring Sheet: The summary scores of the respective UCuenca IUC projects / sub-programmes on the VLIR IUC programme higher level performance criteria as per the ToR are presented in Table 8 here below. The UCuenca IUC programme excels in its development relevance as reflected by its high 83% average score. Intermediate level average scores are arrived at for the programme higher level performance criteria of potential impact (and outcomes) with 71%, and by overall quality and (potential) sustainability both with 69%. The criterion for which substantive challenges still need to be addressed are efficiency (with an average 63%) and effectiveness (with 66%). All scores range within “sufficient” score 3 and “good/high” score 4.

Table 5 : Summary Scoring Sheet on UCuenca IUC Programme Higher Level Performance Criteria, by Project / Sub-Programme (as of mid-2010) ^{(2) (3)}

UCuenca IUC Project / Sub-Programme	Criterion 1 Overall Quality	Criterion 2 Effectiveness	Criterion 3 Efficiency	Criterion 4 Potential Impact	Criterion 5 Development Relevance	Criterion 6 Sustainability
T.1 Institutional Change	4	3	3	4	4	4
V.1 Nutrition and Health	4	4	3	4	4	3
V.2 Human Sexuality	3	3	3	4	4	4
V.3 Water Quality	3	3	3	3	4	3
V.4 Medicinal Plants	3	3	3	3	4	3
V.5 City Preservation	4	4	4	4	5	4
V.6 Migration and Development	3	3	3	3	4	3
Total score UCuenca Programme / N° of Sub-Programmes	24 / 7	23 / 7	22 / 7	25 / 7	29 / 7	24 / 7
Average score UCuenca Sub-Programmes (1-5 scale)	3.42	3.28	3.22	3.57	4.14	3.42
Average score UCuenca Sub-Programmes (in %) (4)	69 %	66%	63 %	71 %	83 %	69 %

Notes : (1) N.I. = no / insufficient information available

(2) Scores are on a five-point evaluation scale, with: 1 = (very)poor
2 = insufficient / low

3 = sufficient

4 = good / high

5 = excellent / very high

- (3) *The above scores relate to actual performance so far by mid 2010, the fourth year of Phase 1 of the UCuenca IUC Programme , but at the same time to a certain extent also reflect an assessment of potentials with regard to anticipated future performance during the 2nd phase of the 10 year IUC assistance cycle. This anticipation dimension particularly pertains to the outcome/impact and sustainability criteria, which can only be meaningfully measured after external funding and support has terminated (and thus the scores basically relate to anticipated outcomes/impact and sustainability.*
- (4) *Percentage calculated on the basis of the average score on the 1-5 scale, by a simple multiplication by factor 20. It is understood that this is strictly speaking an overrating since the 0-20% interval has no equivalent in the 1-5 scale in the absence of a 0 value.*

Important Achievements and Equally Important Challenges: This confirms the general observation of important achievements already realized and a considerable way already gone on the right path, but with equally important challenges still ahead with regard to these IUC programme higher level performance criteria. This overall finding / preliminary conclusion regarding programme performance on the higher level criteria confirms the earlier overall finding in relation to programme performance on the Key Result Areas of solid groundwork having been done during UCuenca IUC phase I so far to facilitate, if not ensure, stronger performance achievements on these higher end criteria during the next phase. This however requires strong(er) and consequent performance oriented programme and projects management at all levels throughout the programme/project cycle. It at the same time attributes major responsibilities to the transversal project T1 on institutional change to strengthen research and education, for which the promotion and facilitation of performance / results management exactly constitutes one of its main services to the individual vertical projects under the programme.

1. Quality

Some General Observations on Quality: Based on the ToR, the quality criterion is a kind of summary criterion, encompassing all other project/sub-programme higher performance criteria¹. As per a recent ranking exercise by the official national quality control and accreditation agency (CONEA at that time ²) of all higher education institutes of Ecuador, UCuenca ranks fourth of all universities in the country and first of all comprehensive universities. Of course this in first instance is due to the own intrinsic merits and characteristics of the university as such, but as attested to during the Evaluation Commission's interviews with the UCuenca South partners part of this achievement may be confidently attributed to the institutional reform work under the

¹ For the higher performance / qualitative assessment, the evaluation ToR do not provide a clear cut definition of the respective criteria to be used, neither a fixed short-list of indicators operationalising these rather abstract criteria. The indicators listed under each of the criteria are described as "possible" indicators only. This flexibility is conform with VLIR-UDC's general philosophy of evaluations being learning exercises, not only content wise, but also with regard to the methodological aspects of evaluations themselves.

² Now since the recent reorganisation replaced by CEAACES, the Consejo Nacional De Evaluación Y Acreditación De La Educación Superior Del Ecuador.

UCuenca IUC programme and its constituting projects. A major qualitative improvement in this reform process is the gradual transition from a traditional teaching institute to a modern research based education institute, under the inspiration of the T1 projects and pro-actively pursued in the different projects. The creation and operationalisation of multidisciplinary research-teacher teams has been a major factor of change. This change however is still at its initial stages and a long way has to be gone still. Another major factor has been the introduction and operationalisation of a performance appraisal system of academic staff, widely appreciated by all levels.

The upgrading of the ICT equipment and network throughout the university, the establishment of the e-library with on-line access by both academic staff and students, and the creation and/or upgrading of laboratories in different Faculties / Institutes also signified substantive support to higher quality teaching and research. Outputs and results of these processes still need to be strengthened, both quantitatively and qualitatively. HRD of academic staff remains a major challenge, particularly in view of the substantive delays encountered in different projects on this IUC Key Result Area and especially in the light of the very substantive challenges the University is facing in this regard as a result of the new law on higher education. Outreach and extension traditionally is a strong asset of UCuenca as this is strongly anchored in its overall vision, mission and goals. This also pervades the IUC projects but still needs to be given more systematic and structured attention, particularly also with regard to the institutional aspects of the organisation of the extension and outreach tasks (e.g. through the mobilisation of intermediate organisations). Overall it appears that both the academic and development objectives have been attended to during the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme, but that tangible results are still limited so far (limited cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency for the time being), however with positive potentials for the next phase of the programme.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Overall Quality Strengths and Challenges: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme overall quality, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths

- UCuenca reportedly is the 4th quality ranked university of the country by the official national quality control and accreditation agency (CONEA) and the 1st of all comprehensive universities;
- The gradual transition from an education institute to a research based education institute;
- The gradual development of a research culture at the university (empirical research, quantitative and qualitative research) spearheaded and facilitated by UCuenca IUC programme, T1 transversal project and the six vertical (research) projects;
- The strengthened academic human capacities / HRD thanks to IUC scholarships (PhDs and masters scholarships, training activities and workshops, interdisciplinary research-teaching teams;

- The across-the-board harmonisation and standardization of University procedures, rules and regulations (e.g. curricula, credit system, communication, etc.);
- The state-of-the-art ICT network and library services;
- The upgrading of three laboratories;
- The mastering of laboratory, library and ICT equipment;
- The successful introduction of performance appraisals system of academic staff;
- The growing interest in adopting innovative teaching methodologies (important side-effect of academic and technical HRD activities in Flanders);
- The fact that some academic units are attaining centre of excellence status and as such are recognized regionally and nationally.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- The rejuvenation of full-time and post-graduate academic staff;
- The challenge of 70% of academic staff at PhD / doctoral level within 7 years in accordance with the new law on HE;
- The assurance of increased time allocation for research tasks of academic staff;
- The qualitative improvement of strategic and operational planning, management, monitoring and reporting at all levels;
- The improvement of technical / scientific writing skills and of proposals writing;
- The fact that there are large varieties in professionalism, dynamism, pro-activism, results-orientation between the different Faculties and Departments;
- The delayed start of some projects and turn-over of project leaders;
- The limited number of (international) publications still;
- The limited quality control (both internal and external) of teaching and research;
- The absence of merit / performance based incentive systems;
- The research outcomes not fed back to undergraduate curricula.

2. Effectiveness

Effectiveness and PCM & LogFrame: Effectiveness refers to the extent to which the stated objectives have been achieved / accomplished¹. It pre-supposes that these objectives have been formulated in such way as to make possible measurement of actual achievements / accomplishment in relation to the stated targets on these objectives. Thanks to the special efforts from VLIR-UOS and its Secretariat, a number of initiatives and tools have been introduced to further rationalize processes and especially to enhance overall results orientation and performance management. This for example pertains to the introduction of Logical Frameworks, including indicators and target setting thereon for the different levels of the results chain, including the identification of

¹ UNDP definition of effectiveness in the context of international co-operation programmes and projects :
"the extent to which a programme or project achieves its immediate objectives or produces its desired outcome"

means of verification, progress reporting based on these indicators, etc. However, while formally introduced, the actual use of these tools for project / programme management and monitoring still remains somehow relatively limited. It for example is rather remarkable that the transversal project T1 has not introduced more systematic training and other forms of support regarding PCM, LogFrames, indicators use, performance / results planning and management, although that capacity strengthening (both institutional and human) and services to the vertical projects are at the very centre of its mandate and tasks package. The Evaluation Commission has developed a special evaluation tool to report and assess the actual accomplishments of the UCuenca IUC programme on the different IUC Key Result Areas (KRAs), objectively measured by means of the sets of Key Performance Indicators defined for each of these KRAs. This IUC-KRAs automated scorecard tool is included under Annex 15 to this report for easy reference. It however proved not possible to complete this scorecard report, basically because neither Annual Activity Reporting (AAR) nor mid-term self-assessment reporting is systematically done on these KRA indicators. It also appeared that there is no clear and consequent target setting done on the indicators as basis for actual performance reporting and comparison against the targets. Hence, the substantive challenges ahead still in the second phase in this respect.

General Appreciation of Effectiveness: With the initial heavy investments in human resources (scholarships, training, etc.), in infrastructure and equipment (ICT, library, laboratories), and in procedures, tools and systems (credit system, academic staff performance evaluation system, multi-disciplinary teams, etc.), the stage is set for enhanced programme and projects cost-effectiveness with tangible research, education and HRD outputs in the second phase. This however cannot be taken for granted and requires more systematic attention for results / performance management throughout the programme and its projects. This requires further strengthened performance management tools and procedures and their proactive use at all levels of the programme. Both the transversal project and IUC programme management (both programme coordinators and project manager) fulfill crucial roles in this respect and would need to engage more pro-actively to that effect.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Effectiveness: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme effectiveness, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths

- With the initial heavy investments in human resources (scholarships, training, etc.) in infrastructure and equipment (ICT, library, laboratories), and in procedures, tools and systems (credit system, academic staff performance evaluation system, multi-disciplinary teams, etc.), the stage is set now for enhanced programme and projects cost-effectiveness with tangible research, education and HRD outputs in the second phase;

- Particularly with the younger staff and the newly graduated there is eagerness to enhance performance and aspiration to strengthen overall programme effectiveness;
- The incorporation of responsibilities for regional development in the University mission, goals and programmes and the internationalisation of these values by the academic staff make development effectiveness a driving source of inspiration;
- Improved use of results management tools in the VLIR programme (e.g. use of indicators, LogFrame, risk management, etc.);
- Improved multidisciplinary coordination and collaboration between different Departments / Institutes within UCuenca enhance the potential delivery of the intended results;
- Enhanced consultations, coordination and networking with partner institutes to achieve objectives.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- The lack of systematic target setting in the strategic plans and annual plans of the IUC programme and projects makes effectiveness measurement and/or assessments very difficult;
- The tool prepared by the Evaluation Commission to measure UCuenca-IUC Key Results Areas performance through the batteries of KRA indicators could not be used since no target setting neither systematic use of indicators. Consequently also no performance scores and ratings could be determined;
- Programme and projects cost-effectiveness and cost-efficiency need to be improved on as outputs production and results generation typically are intensifying during the second phase of the 10 year IUC cycle;
- More systematic use of (integrated) performance planning, measurement, monitoring and reporting tools is necessary to keep the programme and projects focused on results generation;
- Target setting (both final and interim) on indicators needs to be strengthened / ensured in order to facilitate effectiveness monitoring and evaluation (necessary baseline and targets benchmarks);
- Main challenges are remaining still with regard to multi-disciplinary and interfaculty coordination within the UCuenca;
- Main challenges are also there still with regard to strengthened networking with external institutional partners (horizontal and vertical).

3. Efficiency

Some Methodological Reflections: Efficiency refers to the manner in which inputs are processed for the production / delivery of the expected outputs / results in a timely and cost-efficient manner. Efficiency therefore relates to the processes, to the activities executed for the production of the planned results in the pursuit of higher level(s) objectives. For the VLIR-IUC programme, efficiency is defined as “the degree to which

the installed capacity (human / physical / financial) is used; goals/means ratio in human, physical and financial resources¹”.

And Limitations: As such, efficiency is another important dimension of results based management / performance management. Efficiency analysis therefore also requires operational definitions of objectives with target setting and time schedules in order to assess how well and how cost-efficient the executed activities contribute to the achievement of the long-term (LogFrame goal level) and immediate (LogFrame purpose level) objectives of the sub-programme. In the above discussion on the effectiveness criterion, a number of limitations, inadequacies and shortcomings have been summed up in this regard which thus to a certain extent also affect efficiency assessment. The other limiting factor is that the inputs, the resources (= economy in the 3E's analytical framework) dimension has not been included in the VLIR-IUC evaluation framework. Obviously, quantity, quality and timeliness of inputs have a crucial impact on (sub-) programme efficiency and ultimately on (sub-)programme effectiveness.

Financial Analysis and Efficiency: Summary financial analysis tables on the VLIR-IUC programme with UCuenca and its constituting sub-programmes are provided under Annex 8 to this report. Above is a financial analysis table for the three year period covered by the three APs for 2007, 2008 and 2009, under review with the programme expenditures related to the main IUC programme budget lines concerned with the expenditures furthermore broken down by North and South. It shows total expenses in this three year period amounting to 1,892,025 Euro of which 71.5% made in the South / done by the Partners in the South. A further detailed financial analysis is provided under Chapter 2.4.2.3 hereafter on financial management. When related to the actual outputs on the KRAs of teaching, research, outreach and HRD reported on in the AARs and self-assessment reports, one cannot conclude yet to a cost-efficient use of the invested resources yet. But this is only but normal at this early stage of the IUC programme cycle which is basically characterized by IUC programme investments so far in human resources (capacity building, training, HRD), infrastructure (ICT, laboratories, library) and in organisational development (procedures, systems, multi-disciplinary teams, etc.), which would pay-off in terms of tangible outputs and results regarding research, teaching, outreach, HRD and the other IUC Key Result Areas in the next phase of the IUC programme. The processes leading to these results have been set in motion thanks to the preparatory work in the first phase of the IUC programme currently under review.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Efficiency: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme efficiency, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

¹ Evaluation Terms of Reference, section 3.4.3 criterion 3. See Annex 1 to this report.

Strengths

- Generally, throughout UCuenca and particularly also in the IUC programme there is a most laudable overall commitment of management and staff, and an enthusiasm to take on new challenges and assignments;
- Standardization of procedures, rules and regulations under the impulse of T1 transversal project;
- Intensive and efficient use of upgraded ICT and networking equipment, library, laboratories, lab equipment, etc.
- Flexibility of programme management in adapting to changed circumstances (e.g. re-budgeting and redesign of programme configuration of projects after discontinuation of family violence project
- Intense consultation and follow-up contacts between Flemish and UCuenca partners (by e-mail, skype, etc.)
- Weekly team meetings in most projects.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Delayed effective start of some projects due to turnover of project leaders;
- Most staff only on part-time basis;
- Delayed start of HRD scholarships (Masters and especially PhD's) is hampering and will further hamper the cost-efficiency of the investments in human capital under the IUC programme;
- High burden of other tasks has strong negative impact on efficiency and effectiveness of Human Resources Development (HRD) programme component;
- High teaching workload affecting efficiency of research processes;
- Teaching efficiency of common credit system courses hampered by limitations in infrastructure (small classes / aulas only);
- Limited use of intermediary organisations affects the efficiency of the extension / outreach programmes (limited multiplier effects);
- Number of staff abroad in staff development programmes affects operations at UCuenca mother units concerned (non-filled vacancies) – this is anticipated to be further deteriorating during the 2nd phase with an intensified HRD drive;
- Level of salaries, emoluments and incentives of UCuenca staff and lack of positive incentives for good performance.

Table 6 : VLIR - UCuenca IUC Mid-Term Evaluation Financial Report ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾ : Breakdown of VLIR-UCuenca IUC Total Expenses by Main Type of Budgeted Costs / Expenses, by the South Partners in relation to the Total Expenses, by Programme Year (in % of total N&S expenses) - In Euro and %

1 Main Budget Line of IUC Programme	2 AP 2007				3 AP 2008				4 AP 2009				5 Totals AP 2007 - 2009			6 Approved Budget	
	7 Approved Budget AP (July 2007)	8 Total Expenses	9 Of Which South Expenses	10 Expenses South in % of Total	11 Approved Realigned Budget (26 Sep 08)	12 Total Expenses	13 Of Which South Expenses	14 Expenses South in % of Total	15 Approved Budget	16 Total Expenses	17 Of Which South Expenses	18 Expenses South in % of Total	19 Total Expenses	20 Of Which South Expenses	21 Expenses South in % of Total	22 AP 2010	23 AP 2011
B. Investment costs	147,510	255,522	252,459	98.8%	192,178	289,684	284,453	98.2%	129,128	185,242	184,965	99.9%	730,448	721,877	98.8%	93,525	69,950
C. Operational costs	153,438	72,557	61,046	84.1%	243,533	136,528	98,793	72.4%	244,920	198,111	174,989	88.3%	407,196	334,828	82.2%	218,008	236,124
D. Personnel costs	18,900	18,914	18,914	100.0%	25,200	28,365	28,365	100.0%	25,200	29,524	29,524	100.0%	76,803	76,803	100.0%	25,200	25,200
E. Scholarship costs	53,644	43,897	9,597	21.9%	120,476	89,240	20,646	23.1%	181,792	162,501	27,004	16.6%	295,638	57,246	19.4%	215,166	210,913
F. International travel costs	51,000	33,737	11,107	32.9%	54,500	35,197	14,537	41.3%	53,000	64,093	25,403	39.6%	133,028	51,047	38.4%	69,000	74,100
G. Residential costs	45,308	23,558	2,857	12.1%	48,550	28,690	5,337	18.6%	49,961	45,456	7,171	15.8%	97,704	15,365	15.7%	62,601	67,213
H. Shipment costs	0	0	0	0.0%	0	1,009	1,009	100.0%	1,000	0	0	0.0%	1,009	1,009	100.0%	1500	1500
Total Operational Expenses	469,800	448,186	355,980	79.4%	684,437	608,713	453,139	74.4%	685,000	684,926	449,055	65.6%	1,741,825	1,258,175	72.2%	685,000	685,000
K1. Administrative costs Belgium (max5%)	11,300	11,300	0	0.0%	22,500	22,500	0	0.0%	22,500	22,500	0	0.0%	56,300	0	0.0%	22,500	22,500
K2. Local administrative costs (max5%)	18,900	18,900	18,900	100.0%	37,500	37,500	37,500	100.0%	37,500	37,500	37,500	100.0%	93,900	93,900	100.0%	37,500	37,500
Total Admin. Expenses max 10%	30,200	30,200	18,900	62.6%	60,000	60,000	37,500	62.5%	60,000	60,000	37,500	62.5%	150,200	93,900	62.5%	60,000	60,000
Total Programme Expenses	500,000	478,386	374,880	78.4%	744,437	668,713	490,639	73.4%	745,000	744,926	486,555	65.3%	1,892,025	1,352,075	71.5%	745,000	745,000

⁽¹⁾ Sources : IUC Annual Financial Reports AP 2007, AP 2008 and AP 2009 - Models 1B "General Statement of Expenses (EUR)" - Update by VLIR-UOS Secretariat dtd. 02 feb 11

⁽²⁾ Note: Note in the summary financial tables on the distinction between South (local) and North (Belgian) budget: "Artificial division of local and Belgian budget: Scholarships and half of international/residential in Belgium; rest local (operational, investments.)"

4. Impact

On the Impact Evaluation Criterion: Impact concerns the (sub-)programme results at the highest level of the VLIR-IUC programme vertical intervention logic, thus at the level of the (sub-)programme goals. Impact therefore relates to the results in terms of institutional strengthening of UCuenca and of socio-economic development of the Azuay Province / Austro Region / Zone. As such at this early stage of the IUC cycle, impact assessment is rather premature, since impact is only manifested with a time lag at best towards the end of a programme cycle only (end-of-programme impact evaluation), if not basically after the programme has already terminated (ex-post impact evaluation). For this reason, impact assessment at this end stage of the programme basically relates to *impact potentials*.

Potential Outcome and Impact Assessment Scores: Potential outcome and impact got a relatively high average 71% score for the entire UCuenca IUC programme, with four of the seven projects having a high 4 score on the 1-5 scale. These high scores at this early stage of the IUC programme cycle refer to potentialities indeed, not to actual accomplishments obviously. These strong outcome and impact potentialities are related to / the consequence of both UCuenca IUC programme design aspects and to the groundwork laid during the initial phases of programme implementation.

Programme Design and Potential Outcomes and Impact: Strong programme design aspects vis-à-vis potential impact creation going back to the early identification, formulation and appraisal phases of the UCuenca IUC programme include for example: (i) The due importance and attention given in the programme cycle to the preparation of the IUC programme; (ii) The pre-partner programme phase which enabled further anchoring of the programme in the regional and local development needs; (iii) The involvement of the main stakeholders in the design of the IUC programme and its constituent project as evidenced by the stakeholders analysis and the stakeholders needs assessment included in the programme formulation documents and the Partner Programme (PP) document; (iv) The maintenance of close contacts with the key stakeholders and beneficiary groups during programme implementation, particularly at the level of most vertical projects; (v) and obviously and most importantly: the intrinsic characteristics and strengths of the Universidad de Cuenca as a catalyst for local and regional development as enshrined in its statutes, vision, mission and goals and its actual operations accordingly.

Phase I IUC Programme Implementation and Potential Outcomes and Impact: Amongst the main factors and aspects of UCuenca IUC programme implementation in the first phase contribution to substantive impact potentialities of the programme in the end should be mentioned: (i) The concentration on institutional reform procedures covering the whole university (and not just the IUC project only); (ii) The active interest of other than pilot entities of change processes initiated under the IUC programme triggering off programme multiplier effects (e.g. the multidisciplinary teaching-research teams now also being pursued in other Faculties / Institutes); (iii) The concentration of HRD and training activities under the IUC programme especially on young academics with a long career perspective still ahead of them; (iv) The university-wide introduction of the

academic performance appraisal system having a medium and long-term impact on the quality of academic staff and their outputs (both in terms of research and teaching); (v) The almost inherent provisions for outreach and extension in almost all of the vertical projects ensuring strong linkages between research and extension / outreach and their pro-active pursuit by the whole project teams, team leaders and team members alike; (vi) The new law on higher education providing additional support and a solid legal framework for the institutional change process initiated under / by the UCuenca IUC programme.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Outcomes and Impact: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme outcomes and impact, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths

- Curriculum and courses development from the viewpoint of / taking into consideration their facilitation of regional and local development;
- Continued care for the adaptation of curricula to make them better suit the development needs of the Azuay Province and Austro Region / Zone;
- General access to internet and libraries at campus, opening the global academic world to students and staff;
- Increased demands for research from the public and private sectors based on recognized excellence;
- Capacities of strengthened units by the IUC programme spilling over to other units through interdisciplinary collaborations and learning from examples dynamics (multiplier effects);
- Capacity strengthening of institutional outreach / extension stakeholders as indirect effect of the extension / outreach programme components is starting to take off
- Direct effects of city preservation project tools on actual cultural heritage and state of city preservation of Cuenca city;
- Direct or indirect impact of outreach / extension services applications on sustainable development and enhanced quality of life and wellbeing (Food, nutrition and health; Human sexuality; Migration and local development projects);
- Spin-off potentials of the research under the medical plants projects.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Further strengthening of inter-projects and multidisciplinary coordination;
- Further enhancement of development outcome and impact of applied research through extension;
- Further development of UCuenca into a national and international centre of excellence;

- UCuenca further developing into a network hub for NSS cooperation with Flemish Universities and vice-versa;
- More proactive pursuit of research spin-offs (by a special University entity across-the-board and/or by special outreach units within the Faculties);
- Enhanced marketing of / public relations for academic development in Belgium / Flanders and of the Belgian / Flemish academic development cooperation excellence.

5. Development Relevance

Development Relevance as Higher Level Performance Criterion: Development relevance is defined in the evaluation's ToR as "the extent to which the planned collaboration is addressing immediate and significant problems and needs of the concerned partners as well as regional and national policy makers." For the programme level development relevance is added: "... with reference to the MDGs, PRSP and other multilateral policy papers (e.g. PASDEP)." ¹ As such, content wise the criterion is related to the outreach criterion under the programme progress key result areas (see earlier Chapter 2.1.2.3.) and also to the effectiveness, impact and sustainability criteria discussed in this present chapter on higher level programme performance.

High Development Relevance Assessment Scores: Development relevance got a very high average 83% score for the entire UCuenca IUC programme, with all projects having a high 4 score on the 1-5 scale, and V5 City preservation even an excellent / very high 5 score. These high scores at this early stage of the IUC programme cycle refer to potentialities indeed, not to actual accomplishments already obviously. As for impact, these strong outcome and impact potentialities are related to both UCuenca IUC programme design aspects and to the groundwork laid during the initial phases of programme implementation.

The Almost "Natural" Character of Development Relevance at UCuenca: But most importantly they are the result of inherent characteristics of the Universidad de Cuenca as proactive development actor par excellence in the Azuay Province and beyond in the whole Austro region / zone. Moreover, because of its links with the national policy and strategy level regarding higher education its development relevance has a national resonance. The Evaluation Commission was impressed about the almost natural and automatic character of outreach and extension within almost all IUC projects as such enthusiastically internalized and pro-actively pursued by all members of the projects teams. A good / best practice which deserves further study, documentation and dissemination within the VLIR-IUC community of south partners and beyond.

¹ See Terms of Reference Chapters 3.4.2 and 3.4.3. The ToR are attached as Annex 1 to this report.

The Need for the IUC Projects to More Explicitly and Pro-Actively Pursue Development Relevance: Whereas extension and outreach and development relevance are almost inherent, natural part of the UCuenca philosophy, programmes and activities this, remarkably, is less stressed and less prominently present in the IUC documents and projects themselves. At Flemish side it not exceptionally is even put forward that the IUC programme in first instance should focus on the internal strengthening of the University itself, in order to be able to reach out even more meaningfully to the surrounding communities and region. While there obviously is wisdom in this assertion, it on the other hand does not mean that the one component / dimension automatically excludes the other, or that they need to be attended to in a necessarily sequential chronological order. On the contrary, both academic excellence and development relevance excellence need to go hand in hand, as the two sides of the same IUC coin. This is also prominently featured in the VLIR-UOS philosophy as evidenced by the two overall IUC programme objectives of equal value and importance: on the one hand the academic objective and the developmental objective on the other.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Development Relevance: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme development relevance, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths

- UCuenca IUC programme design based on a programming mission covering the national context, interrelations with development actors in society, position and reputation of UCuenca in the national and regional higher education and research context, and on the development relevance of UCuenca in the national and regional context;
- UCuenca IUC programme reportedly in line with / anchored in the UCuenca strategic plan;
- UCuenca assuming direct responsibilities for regional development as enshrined in its mission statement and strategy documents;
- New national law on higher education strongly confirming universities as catalysts of national and/or regional development;
- UCuenca as regional university strongly pursuing to contribute to regional and local development;
- Strong development relevance of the UCuenca-IUC programme and of its component projects;
- Gender, governance and environment as cross-cutting issues prominently present in the programme (be it in various degrees in the different projects);
- UCuenca IUC projects all have a strong outreach / extension component (based on needs assessments and stakeholder analyses)
- UCuenca academic staff showing concerns and commitment to regional development and actively engaged in outreach and extension work;

- UCuenca appreciated by the external institutional stakeholders for its outreach / extension services, as witnessed during the evaluation field visits and interviews with the stakeholders.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- More explicit poverty alleviation and overall welfare orientation of the UCuenca IUC programme;
- Further strengthening of institutional networks at local, regional, national and international levels;
- Linking of the UCuenca micro HE level to the national HE sectoral level;
- More systematic translation of research findings into (development) policy advisory services, when applicable, feasible and desirable;
- More systematic translation of research findings into extension and outreach messages and dissemination through specialised intermediary organisations (local government, schools, NGOs, people organisations, etc.) to reach out to the ultimate target groups and beneficiaries;
- Stronger mobilisation and active involvement of intermediary actors for extension and outreach
- More systematic promotion and pursuit of contract research and spin offs of research with commercial and industrial sectors;
- Solving intellectual property and licensing issues;
- Stronger anchoring of research topics and curricula in regional development priorities;
- More systematic addressing of gender issues in research, teaching and outreach programme components;
- Gender imbalance in IUC programme management: All Flemish project leaders and the coordinator are male, all except two at UCuenca side;
- Further strengthened South-South cooperation and networking for staff development, teaching and research;
- Strengthened coordination with other development partners' programmes at UCuenca.
- Further strengthening of South-South and North-South-South cooperation.

6. Sustainability

Financial and Institutional Sustainability, Ownership and Replicability: Under this sixth programme high level performance criterion of sustainability, particular attention is paid to both financial and institutional sustainability aspects. In the evaluation ToR sustainability is also described in terms of mutual interest in the programme at both Flemish and Ecuadorian sides, e.g. in terms of commitment of own funds / resources to the programme, or the initiation of joint researches or joint academic degrees. Closely related to the sustainability criterion is (sub-)programme *ownership*. Ownership of the IUC programme by the UCuenca stakeholders is strongly present as observed by the Evaluation Commission during the many interviews and visits with programme key

stakeholders during the evaluation visit to UCuenca. It for example are the UCuenca partners taking a pro-active, initiating role of the institutional reform processes or in the selection of projects and sub-projects. Another criterion related to sustainability is *replicability*. There indeed is strong empirical evidence of replication of what has been learned under the VLIR-IUC programme outside the UCuenca entities covered by the programme. This for example pertains to the multidisciplinary teacher-research teams as illustrated earlier. Laboratory teaching and research already has wider applications in the tutelage Faculties or Institutions of the IUC projects than aimed for by the individual projects. Innovative teaching methods are also pursued by other than academic staff in the IUC projects.

Reflections on Financial Sustainability: Assurance of financial sustainability remains a priority concern for the University as a whole and of the IUC programme in particular. As further illustrated in the chapter hereafter on programme overall added value¹, Belgian / Flemish funding has remained the single most important funding sources of UCuenca research project in the last eight year period 2003 – 2010, with almost half (46.0%) of the total research budget funded from Belgian sources (primarily VLIR), even higher than from Ecuadorian national public funding. Funding diversification is a must and needs to be more proactively pursued. This concern has not yet been sufficiently accommodated under the T1 transversal project and thus needs to be given priority attention. Apart from (international) cooperation (public) financing, funding diversification may be pursued through for example contract research and consultancies, remunerated policy advice, commercial spin-offs and/or advisory services, and the like for as long academic ethics, standards and independence stay intact and uncompromised. T1 may explore the feasibility and desirability of a central special unit at university level or a network of decentralised units within the Faculties / Institutes proactively scouting and pursuing such opportunities in a systematic and professional manner. Proposals writing and academic marketing also may need to be more systematically included in the HRD and training activities under T1 and possibly be funded by University resources. Generally an openness and active interest was sensed during the evaluation interviews for such approaches and initiatives.

Reflections on Institutional Sustainability: Institutional strengthening for institutional sustainability is the very heart of the transversal T1 project and covers issues as university-wide standard procedures and systems, rationalization of the organisational chart, function and job descriptions, strengthening of the operational organisation of education and research functions and tasks, performance appraisals, etc. It would appear that the mother of all these institutional reform processes, namely strategic planning and their operationalisation in annual plans and monitoring & reporting based thereon, might need to be given more prominent, if not priority attention. This urgency gets further support from the new law on higher education requiring all universities to submit an updated strategic plan adequately addressing the different provisions of the law². It would appear that under this umbrella priority concern of strategic planning and institutional reform the following sub-components would need to be incorporated in the

¹ See Chapter 2.3 and the UCuenca overall budget and financing tables under Annex 8.4.

² For the summary contents of the new law on higher education of October 2010, pls. refer to Annex 13.9.

broader context of ensuring institutional and financial sustainability of the UCuenca IUC programme and of the University as a whole: (i) Strategic planning; (ii) Operational planning; (iii) Performance budgeting; (iv) Performance monitoring and evaluation; (v) Organisational chart and function descriptions; (vi) Organisational performance; (vii) Strategic procurement planning, amongst others. Of special importance in this all is a strong linking / anchoring of the UCuenca IUC programme within the national policies and strategies for higher education.

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Sustainability: A summary overview of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths and challenges / issues needing attention in relation to programme sustainability, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths

- First and foremost: commitment, enthusiasm, dynamism, competencies and qualities of UCuenca staff;
- Same for the Flemish partners involved in the programme;
- Link-up with local authorities and other stakeholders for education and research priority setting;
- Active interest of local stakeholders (from both public and private sectors) in UCuenca research and extension / outreach services
- Spin-offs from research are starting to take off to enhance financial sustainability of Faculties, Departments and/or Research Centres.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- It is noted that there are no clear rules for self-sufficiency and sustainability of future projects. It needs to be clarified if this depends on actions of the Transversal Project or on the institutional changes that should be promoted internally, which includes updating of the strategic plan of UCuenca, including long-term financing;
- Development / updating of strategic plans of the Faculties, Departments and Centres, including (rolling) business plans where appropriate;
- More productive proposals writing for local, national and international funding;
- More proactive and assertive pursuit by UCuenca of research and other financing available under Senescyt and other public organisations;
- Enhanced networking with other institutions in Ecuador and the Andean region to maximize complementarities and reduce costs (e.g. shared labs and equipment, exchanges or sharing of staff, visiting professors, etc.);
- Strategizing spin-offs of (applied) research, including social and commercial marketing, commercialisation, patenting/licensing, etc.;
- Rejuvenation of academic staff;
- Reintegration policy and strategy of project personnel in regular academic staff positions.

2.2.2. The Programme as a Whole

The higher level performance assessment of the UCuenca IUC programme as a whole has already been covered to a large extent in the preceding discussions on the projects / sub-programmes. Obviously, a programme is more than the sum of its components and just herein lies the surplus added value of the programme approach as compared to the more traditional international development cooperation model based on individual projects. Nevertheless, most programme issues have already been covered in the discussions of the constituent projects / sub-programmes in the preceding chapters. The analysis has been done and presented in such way as to transcend the particularities of the individual projects and to focus on generic issues at the programme level.

Moreover, the Terms of Reference refer to four main OECD-DAC evaluation criteria for the assessment of overall programme performance / quality, namely: efficiency, impact, development relevance and sustainability. And these have been discussed in detail already in the preceding chapter 2.2.1. In order to avoid duplications, the reader therefore is referred to this chapter concerned for more details. For an assessment on the change criterion, please refer to chapter 2.1.3 on programme performance on IUC processes of change, under which also the change performance scorecard tool developed by the Evaluation Commission is discussed.

2.3. Overall Added Value of the IUC Programme vis-à-vis Other Donor Supported Programmes

Summary Evaluation Scores of the UCuenca IUC Programme

KRA Scores: In summary, at this early stage of IUC programme implementation, the UCuenca IUC programme succeeded in obtaining relatively high scores for both the Key Result Areas (KRA) performance criteria and the higher level performance criteria. The average score for all KRAs is 69.4% with infrastructure management, research and outreach above the average score and teaching, management, HRD and resources mobilisation on or below the overall average.

Higher Level Performance Scores: About the same average overall UCuenca IUC programme score is noted for the higher level performance indicators (70.2%), with development relevance far above this average (with 83%) and also potential impact slightly above this average. Below this average percentage for all higher level performance criteria are the scores for effectiveness and efficiency, with overall quality and sustainability at about the average score for all higher level performance criteria.

Table 7 : Summary Evaluation Scores for UCuenca IUC Key Result Areas (KRAs)

Key Result Area	KRA 1 Research	KRA 2 Teaching	KRA 3 Outreach	KRA 4 Management	KRA 5 HRD	KRA 6 Infrastructure	KRA 7 Resources Mobilisation	Average All KRAs
Overall UCuenca IUC Programme Score	71 %	66 %	71 %	66 %	69 %	77 %	66 %	69.4 %

Table 8 : Summary Evaluation Scores for UCuenca IUC Higher level Performance Criteria

Higher Level Performance Criterion	Criterion 1 Quality	Criterion 2 Effectiveness	Criterion 3 Efficiency	Criterion 4 Potential Impact	Criterion 5 Development Relevance	Criterion 6 Sustainability	Average All Higher Level Performance Criteria
Overall UCuenca IUC Programme Score	69 %	66 %	63 %	71 %	83 %	69 %	70.2%

Performance Comparison with other Donor Supported Programmes: It is difficult to compare these performance scores with similar scores for other internationally assisted programmes, for the simple reason that there are no such comparable programmes.

Added Value of the Programme in terms of Financing Volume: The total actual VLIR-IUC programme investments in the three year period covered by the APs 2007, 2008 and 2009 amount to € 1,892,025 or an average of € 630,675 per year. The Evaluation Commission had prepared special financial analysis tools to compare this funding with the funding from other sources as indication of the added value from the financial angle and also to assess if there are significant changes over time in financing patterns, important for example to determine financial sustainability trends and/or potentials. These tools are included under Annex 8.4. to this report. Unfortunately, it has not been possible for the Evaluation Commission to obtain these crucial base financial data from the UCuenca finance department, which makes it difficult to objectively assess added value from that perspective.

Table 9 : Universidad de Cuenca (UCuenca) Research Projects ⁽¹⁾ in the Period 2003-2010 Financed by External Sources, by Main Type of Funding Source

Main Type of Funding Source		Number of Research Projects		Value of Research Projects		
Nº	Name / Description of Funding Source	#	In % of Total	In USD	In EUR ⁽²⁾	In % of Total
1	Ecuador national public funding	14	35.0%	2,394,051	1,651,895	38.2%
2	Ecuador provincial and local public funding	1	2.5%	10,000	6,900	0.2%
3	Belgian / Flemish international funding	12	30.0%	2,885,533	1,991,018	46.0%
4	Other international funding	9	22.5%	954,708	658,749	15.2%
5	UCuenca consultancies / spin-offs (PROMAS)	4	10.0%	28,235	19,482	0.5%
Totals		40	100.0%	6,272,527	4,328,044	100.0%

(1) Data source: Universidad de Cuenca; Informe de Actividades de La Direccion de Investigacion de La Universidad de Cuenca (DIUC). Periodo 2001 - 2010

(2) Applied exchange rate: 1USD = 0.69 EUR

External Financing of Research as Proxy: As can be gleaned from the above table 9, the total funding amount of almost 2 million Euro in the period 2003 to 2010 represents almost half (46.0%) of the total value of all externally funded research projects. It goes without saying that this budget provides substantive financial leverage for integrated programming in the pursuit of UCuenca's strategic objectives and also for effective impact generation along the base principles of the VLIR University Development Cooperation policy. Unfortunately, no data have been made available for the VLIR totals over the subsequent years so that it is not possible to make chronological / trend analyses covering the period under review or the make extrapolation for the period beyond.

Perceived Added Value: It was observed by the Evaluation Commission based on the numerous interviews with both internal and external UCuenca IUC stakeholders while on evaluation visit to Cuenca, that there is general consensus about the substantive added value of the IUC programme for the University and beyond, both in relation to the IUC Key Result Areas and to the higher end performance indicators. A comparison with other donor support programmes proved difficult in view of the non-availability of such comparable programmes. Meanwhile, be it in varying degrees, the different faculties, colleges, schools, institutes and departments are pro-actively scouting for additional international cooperation and funding programmes

2.4. Programme Management

2.4.1. Overall Assessment

*Institutional Provisions for IUC Programme Management*¹: During the Pre-Partner Programme, a Programme Support Unit (PSU) was created and an Office installed. The staff of this Programme Support Unit, which continued activities during the partner programme, consists of four persons: (i) a Local Coordinator (function corresponding to the Flemish Programme Coordinator), (ii) a Programme Manager, (iii) a Finance Officer, and (iv) a Secretary. The Programme Manager position is funded from VLIR-IUC programme resources, the other three positions are financed by UCuenca. Whereas initially the PSU was institutionally anchored in the Research Department (DIUC), it in the process got a further upgraded status through its incorporation in the University's Rectorate, with direct reporting lines to the Vice-Rector and Rector. To facilitate the interaction on institutional change the Vice-Rector is project leader for the transversal project, and is hereby assisted by the secretary of the "Consejo de Planificación" (Planning Bureau) and a taskforce.

PSU Responsibilities: The responsibilities of this local IUC co-ordination unit are in general to ensure the smooth implementation of the IUC programme, as planned with regard to chronology and budget. This includes overall IUC programme coordination and management responsibilities, as well as financial and administrative management. Financial control of the IUC-programme in accordance with the procedures and methodology established by VLIR, is with this local Programme Support Unit. The accounting control is mainstreamed in the UCuenca financial system and is the responsibility of the Financial Department of UCuenca, following its own methodology, rules and regulations.

Programme Administrative and Financial Management: The transfer of funds to Ecuador is governed by a request from the Local Programme Coordinator, and executed by the Financial Officer. There are about 3 transfers a year. No particular problems are reported regarding the transfer of funds, including timeliness. Regarding the purchase of equipment, as a general principle ordering in Ecuador is preferred and should be according to VLIR and local regulations. In some cases quotations could be asked in Belgium along with quotations in Ecuador. The main problem reported regarding equipment (and consumables) are delays in case of importation. The visits to and from Ecuador are based on the planning in the Activity Programme of the respective constituting projects and are decided jointly by both North and South Project Leaders. The Flemish Task Force must be informed. According to VLIR inter-university agreements, the Flemish host university should make all payments related to scholarships. For all scholarships the admission requirements according to the ruling academic regulations have to be complied with.

UCuenca IUC Internal Planning, Monitoring and Reporting Flows: After consultation with

¹ The provisions for UCuenca IUC programme policy direction and steering are discussed under chapter 2.5 hereafter on "Co-operation between the different parties involved".

his/her team members, the Project Leader reports to the Programme Manager. The Programme Manager reports to the Local Programme Coordinator, who in turn keeps the UCuenca authorities concerned duly informed. Per the VLIR-UOS IUC standard procedures, rules and regulations, the annual reporting obligations include: (i) Quarterly local reports based on a simple form; (ii) All mission reports; (iii) The minutes of the Steering Committee Meetings from both entities; (iv) The annual financial report, and (v) The annual activity report (AAR). The AAR then is accompanied by the proposed Activity Programme (AP) for the next year. The AP years run from 01 April to 31 March.

UCuenca IUC Management at Flemish Side: As stipulated in the IUC Partner Programme document¹, the university management of the Flemish coordinating university has only an indirect involvement in IUC policy matters and budget distribution. The university of the UCuenca IUC Flemish Programme Co-ordinator is the K.U.Leuven. Overall day-to-day administrative and financial management responsibilities are with the ICOS ("Instellingscoördinator voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking") of the K.U.Leuven, which is institutionalised within the University's International Relations Office. The IRO directly reports to the Vice-Rector. The daily management of the programme is under the responsibility of a Flemish Task Force² composed of the Flemish UCuenca IUC Programme Coordinator, the financial officer from his department and the K.U.Leuven ICOS.

The IUC Project Leaders: The Flemish and UCuenca Project Leaders share responsibilities for their respective projects. They are involved in / responsible for the formulation of the yearly activity programmes (AP's), cross checking of the monthly financial reports, follow-up the activities of their projects, contribute to the annual activity reports, and coordinate the project teams / team members.

Overall Assessment: Generally overall satisfaction with programme management was expressed to the Evaluation Commission, both by the UCuenca and Flemish partners and stakeholders. The diversity of the projects and the inherent diversity of project and Faculty academic and management cultures under one umbrella programme are a special challenge and appeal to overall managerial skills. The decentralised programme management with maximum responsibilities vested in the individual projects is widely appreciated. This also pertains to the efforts to strengthen inter-projects and multidisciplinary coordination and approaches transcending the individual projects and Faculties/Institutes they are anchored in, basically through / facilitated by Programme Management in close coordination with the transversal project. Some (substantive) challenges are noted for further strengthening overall programme orientation towards an institutional strengthening and change programme which is more than the sum of its individual components. This for example also pertains to consolidated programme progress and results reporting at overall programme level transcending the individual projects. The special management tools developed as for example the procedures manual are highly appreciated.

¹ Op. Cit.; pp. 20-21

² The general structure / organisational chart of the IUC Task Force is reflected under Annex 13.15 to this report (Source: IUC Partner Programme document of February 2007)

Summary Observations and Findings on UCuenca Programme Management in General :

A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of overall programme management, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Open, cordial relations of mutual trust and confidence between the UCuenca and Flemish partners;
- General satisfaction with UCuenca IUC overall programme coordination and management by both North and South partners;
- General positive appreciation of the functioning and quality of programme management by the IUC Project Support Unit (PSU) at UCuenca;
- Overall quality of VLIR IUC programme and project management tools;
- Continuity in overall programme management;
- Open and intense communications between the UCuenca and Flemish partners;
- Timely transfers of payments;
- Empowered financial management of South partner: Expenditures incurred by Flemish Universities (North – 28.5%) and by UCuenca (South - 71.5%);
- In general, compliance with VLIR-UOS planning and reporting requirements;
- Overall appreciation of the self-assessment process and tools;
- General compliance with PCM requirements, but more proactive and actual use of LogFrames as management tools remains a challenge.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Changes in project management (both UCuenca and Flemish Universities) and turnover of staff in UCuenca during the programme;
- Delayed start of some projects (1.5 years);
- Additional PCM training to enhance use of LogFrames as active management tools and for results reporting purposes (enhancement of LogFrames quality);
- (Automated) consolidation of plans and reports by the respective projects into IUC programme plans and reports;
- More systematic use of indicators throughout the programme cycle (overall and interim target setting and reporting of accomplishments thereon) → performance measurement, scoring and rating
- IUC Project Follow-up Plans in self-assessment reports are only slightly worked out;
- Hence initiative by Evaluation Commission to introduce a questionnaire for completion by the concerned Colleges, Institutes, Departments and Centres

2.4.2. Assessment of Specific Management Aspects

Specific Management Aspects: The assessment of programme management by the Evaluation Commission consisted of five main dimensions in accordance with the Terms of Reference: (i) System development with special focus on manuals, synergy approach, interim monitoring and reporting, etc.; (ii) Actual implementation management with special focus on financial info flows, procurement, facilitation of visits, progress and results reporting, etc.; (iii) Financial management; (iv) Academic cooperation; (v) Public relations and visibility, and; (vi) Synergy and coherence of the programme. The assessment covers programme management aspects at both the Flemish and the UCuenca Ecuadorian sides. Since most issues are already covered directly or indirectly in the previous chapters while discussing programme performance on the KRAs and the higher level criteria, the assessment is summarily presented by a listing of main strengths / good practices and of challenges / points of attention, preceded by some elaborations on points of special attention.

1. System Development: Programming, Planning, Manuals, etc.

The VLIR-UOS IUC Programme Management System and Tools: For the new batches of IUC programmes VLIR-UOS Secretariat has further developed and strengthened the standard programming, planning, monitoring and review/evaluation tools, encompassing the whole programme cycle from identification to evaluation. Central is the stronger focus on Logical Framework and PCM based results and performance management. Also the joint programme management aspects of the IUC programmes by both the South and North partners are further highlighted and facilitated. There are also the attempts to bring more synergy in the planning and monitoring tools and processes, for example by encouraging annual activity reporting along the LogFrame Intermediate Results and the Key Performance Indicators therein. The UCuenca IUC programme preparation phase has been given structured and extensive attention as evidenced for example by the programming mission and the pre-partner programme period in preparation of the full-blown IUC programme cycle.

The UCuenca IUC Management System and Tools: The further elaboration, strengthening and qualitative improvements of the UCuenca IUC management system and tools have been a collaborative effort of the North and South IUC Programme Coordinators, the IUC Programme Manager, the other 2 members of the Programme Support Unit and the ICOS / IUC Task Force at Flemish side. Especially the development and distribution of the "UCuenca-IUC Management Structure and Manual" in February 2010 was a major step in further strengthening and streamlining IUC programme management. The Programme Coordinators brought to the attention of the Evaluation Commission that even if the manual is not always effectively used by the different projects and partners in the programme, it always is an important authoritative reference tool in case of procedural, managerial, administrative or financial ambiguities or disputes. Another important system developed / under development is the mobility tracking database system designed by the ICOS of the Flemish IUC Task Force. It is a powerful management tool to keep track of and pro-actively steer all mobility (both management and HRD scholarships) between UCuenca and Flanders and vice versa. Some further processed

analytical mobility tables based on this mobility database are presented under Annex 14 to this report. Another important management tool initiated in the period under review is the Key Result Areas (KRAs) database system to keep track of all activities executed and results produced under each of the KRAs by the respective projects under the UCuenca IUC programme. It however was found out on the occasion of this mid-term evaluation that the design and functionality can / needs to be further elaborated in order to make it a strong management tool. This qualitative improvement refers to a more structured and standardized data entry module based on the KRA Key Performance Indicators, stronger updating functionality (and archiving of older entries and records) and, especially, further strengthened functionality for consolidated reports generation at programme level based on the data entry of the different individual projects. Since no KRA achievements are reported in the Self-Assessment Report but only references to the electronic database are included therein, the Evaluation Commission itself had to compile these consolidated KRA tables, as included under Annex 4 to this report. It also appears that the managerial and analytical strength of these KRA tables can be further enhanced by developing them into scorecards with dashboard features as is practically illustrated under Annex 15 to this report. The same pertains to the summary tables on the programme performance of IUC processes of change in relation to the baseline situation, of which practical scorecards have been worked out by the Evaluation Commission as reflected under Annex 5.

Summary Observations and Findings on System Development: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of system development (manuals, synergy approach, interim monitoring and reporting, etc.), as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Development and distribution of UCuenca-IUC Management Structure and Manual (Feb 2010)
- N-S Mobility tracking and other management and monitoring tools developed by the ICOS of the Flemish Coordinating University of the UCuenca IUC;
- Annual planning and reporting basically in accordance with the VLIR-UOS requirements, utilizing the prescribed tools;
- Generally, timely submission of plans and reports, but with substantive differences between the projects;
- Promotion of synergies between the projects essentially through the T1 transversal project;
- Joint Steering Committees are held as foreseen / planned.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Actual use of manual by the projects and other stakeholder concerned

- Automated integrated IUC strategic planning, operational (annual) planning and annual reporting system required
- Integrated results oriented performance planning and monitoring system to be based on standard VLIR-IUC KRA indicators complemented by project specific indicators from the LogFrames;
- Process indicators reporting to be objectivised and harmonized;
- KRA database to be developed into an effective management tool for the projects (at present basically an inventory only) and with automated consolidations at overall IUC programme level ;
- On-line real time data entry and reporting of accomplishments by the projects with annual generation of progress reports in accordance with the VLIR-UOS requirements;
- Programme management generates consolidated reports from database and contributions from the individual projects;
- Substantive variations in planning and reporting quality between the projects individually.

2. Actual Implementation Management and Reporting

VLIR-IUC Semi-Annual and Annual Reporting: In accordance with the VLIR guidelines concerning reporting in the Institutional University Cooperation programme, semi-annual and annual reports are the two main types of monitoring reporting foreseen. Both are reports on the activities that have been carried out in the framework of the implementation of an activity programme and both consist of an activity report and a financial report. Reporting is the joint responsibility of the two coordinators who are co-signatory parties. Both types of reports are progress monitoring reports on the delivery rate and quality of the implementation of activities planned under the annual activity programmes. Programme semi-annual and annual monitoring reporting is basically a compilation of the individual reports drafted by the constituent individual projects / sub-programmes. Results orientation and higher level performance assessment are focused on since progress reporting for the more recent batches of IUC programmes are related to the Projects' Logical Frameworks. But in essence, the higher level results reporting (on outcomes and impact for example) are reserved for the mid-term review and especially the final evaluation. In the process, the semi-annual and annual reports got more structured as VLIR-UOS Secretariat prescribed a more standardized format, which includes annual reporting related to higher level programme / projects performance, in addition to explicit reporting on change processes and even on institutional impact and sustainability, with due attention for both quantitative and qualitative aspects of accomplishments.

Compliance with and Quality of Progress and Results Reporting: Under Annex 13.13 a summary overview is presented of all key documents produced under the IUC VLIR-UCuenca programme period 2005 – 2001 so far, including the annual plans and reports (both financial and narrative). The reports for AP 2010 (IUC year 4) are not yet incorporated since not yet available at the time of this evaluation's desk study phase). Annual reporting requirements have been complied with by the individual projects, with

programme annual reporting, the “Annual Activity Reports - AARs”, consisting of a compilation of these annual reports by the individual projects, prepared by the PSU, Programme Manager and the two Programme Coordinators. Such reports have been submitted for the subsequent years of the two five year cycles. As reported earlier, the quality and relevance of these AAR reports has improved considerably since they are more intensely linked to the partner programme and annual programmes, and since they are based on the LogFrames in compliance with the PCM principles. As was brought to the attention of the Evaluation Commission, there however is room for substantive improvements by further structuring and automating reporting directly related to and derived from the work programme and work plans. This would substantially simplify the system and reduce reporting workload, and thus also make it more user-friendly. The second challenge is to automatically consolidate the reports from the individual projects into the overall IUC programme report. Under annex 15 such integrated reported system is described with a practical template provided with scorecard and “traffic light” dashboard features.

In Summary: Substantive work has been done on further improving the progress and results reporting system under UCuenca IUC, but important challenges still remain with regard to: (i) Further automation; (ii) Further integrating / automatic linking of reporting to planning, and; (iii) Consolidation of individual projects’ reports into overall programme reports. As far as procurement is concerned, most projects reported that this generally runs very smoothly indeed, but at the same time it appears there is a need for more comprehensive, multi-annual (strategic) procurement planning.

Summary Observations and Findings on Actual Implementation Management: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of actual programme implementation management (financial information flows, procurement, facilitation of visits, etc.), as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Further strengthening of programme and project management tools and of reporting;
- Smooth release of VLIR funds and timely arrival of transferred funds;
- Capacitated financial management of UCuenca (71.5% of programme expenditures in South);
- Decentralised procurement to UCuenca;
- Procurement priorities and specifications basically developed within the projects;
- N-S and S-N mobility management and monitoring facilitated by especially developed e-tools;
- Ticketing and accommodation efficiently managed by ICOS (North) and PSU (South).

Challenges / Points of Attention

- ICOS proposed revision of annual planning and reporting cycle: Annual reporting by mid-June and annual planning for the following year thereafter by December;
- Counterargument programme coordinators and manager: dissociation of annual planning from annual reporting;
- Not always clear to team leaders and members (S and N) what their responsibility / competence is regarding budget management;
- Annuity of budgeting runs counter to longer term planning and smooth implementation. Suggestion for roll-over planning (in line with VLIR-UOS proposed three years IUC planning and implementation cycles.
- Stronger involvement of projects in budgeting processes;
- Procurement priority setting between the projects deserving further consultations;
- Use of standard requisition form for purchases;
- Some visa issues for scholars reported.

3. Financial Management

The VLIR-IUC Procedures and Tools: For the newer batches of IUC programmes, more explicit attention is paid to the assessment of the financial management component. Financial reporting alongside the progress and results reporting is given more explicit and structured attention. Moreover, budgeting is more intensely related to performance planning (e.g. in relation to the projects' intermediate results), thus laying the groundwork for performance budgeting. Another illustration of the more systematic attention for financial management assessment for example is that Annex 2 to the mid-term evaluation Terms of Reference concerns a questionnaire to assess IUC programme financial management.

Financial Management Analysis in the Current Mid-Term Evaluation: This is an evaluation more looking at strategic and broader operational issues of the programme, rather than looking at accounting or auditing issues. For that purpose, a series of summary financial tables has been prepared to facilitate analysis of broad lines and trends from a more strategic perspective. These tables are incorporated under Annex 8 to this report. Overall, transparency has been noted in financial management with for example both updated budgets and expenditures reflected in the Self-Assessment Reports and the annual reporting by the projects and programmes. Some reformatting needed to be done to further strengthen the analytical strength of the financial tables, including also the automatic calculation of percentages which in many case are more revealing / useful as comparative basis than the absolute figures. Some difficulties were also encountered since some table related only to the operational budget, while others also included administrative costs. The Evaluation Commission learned that the ICOS at KULeuven runs the financial administration on the University's general SAP platform and that all orders and payment orders are decentralised. The original invoices are sent to the central financial services, where they are scanned and filed within the central administration. Also at UCuenca, payments are mainstreamed in the university's financial system.

Summary Findings of the Financial Analysis Tables: Total approved budget of the UCuenca IUC Programme for the period 2007 – 2009 (AP 2007 to AP 2009) is € 1,990,000 or an average € 663,000 per year. Total expenditures in this period amount to € 1,892,025 or 95.1% of the approved budget (thus implying a very high, almost full absorptive capacity of the programme). A budget breakdown by main budget line shows operational costs the largest budget line with 31.19%, followed by equipment with 22.93% and scholarship costs with 17.90%. International travel costs are allocated 8.61% of the total budget, residential costs 8.34% and personnel costs 3.48%. Administration costs take 7.55% (2.83% in Belgium / Flanders and 4.72% in UCuenca), thus below the 10.0% allowed by VLIR. The actual expenditures show a different picture with a boost of the investment expenditures to € 730,448 representing 38.61% of all expenditures in the three year period, which is an overshooting of 60.1% of the original budget (largely due to the reallocation due to the discontinuation of the Family Violence project), whereas operational costs are substantially lower than originally budgeted (21.52% of total expenditures and 65.6% of the original operational costs budget). Scholarship expenditures are 83.0% of the originally foreseen amount, basically explained by the late start of the HRD component in a number of projects.

Financial Breakdowns by Project: A breakdown of total expenditures by IUC project in the two year period 2008-2009 shows highest expenditures by Project Support Unit (PSU) with € 260,335 or 18.32% of the total expenditures closely followed by T1 Institutional change with 18.02% of all expenditures. Intermediate expenditures are reported by V1 Food and nutrition (15.97% of total), V4 Medicinal plants (14.85% of total) and V3 Water quality (with 13.58%). At the lower end of total expenditures in this period are: V5 City preservation (with 8.64% of total), V2 Human sexuality (with 7.28% of total) and V6 Migration and development (with 3.25%). In terms of project expenditures in relation to the approved budget, it appears that three projects have overshoot their original allocated budget with more than 10%: V4 Medicinal plants with 16.3%, V1 Food and nutrition with 14.1%, T1 Institutional change with 13.7%. V3 Water quality expenditures are more or less at par with the original approved budget (exceeding by 5.2%). The following projects have not fully utilized their allocated budget in the two year period of AP 2008 and AP 2009: The PSU with 91.2% total expenditures of the approved budget, V5 City preservation with 88.5%, V2 Human sexuality with 65.4% and V6 Migration and development with 36.8%.

North-South: As far as a breakdown of expenditures by North-South is concerned, the vast majority of expenditures over the 2007-2009 period was done in the South: a total of € 1,352,075 or 71.46% of all expenditures for the whole programme which provides firm evidence of the decentralisation of financial management to the UCuenca partner university. North expenditures in this period only account for 28.54% of the total and are in first instance related to scholarship costs in Flanders (80.64% of all IUC expenditures in the North).

Budget Revision and Resources Re-Allocation: The budget revision and re-allocations as a result of the discontinuation of the family violence project in September 2008 went smoothly and in a transparent manner, with most of the resources reallocated to the transversal project T1 on institutional change and to the V2 human sexuality projects as can be gleaned from table 8.2E under Annex 8. As far as budget line re-allocations are

concerned, most of the budget revision went to investments (especially ICT equipment) and a small amount to operational costs as shown in table 8.2D under Annex 8.

Programme Financial Management Questionnaire: Under Annex 9 to this report, the replies on the Evaluation Commission's questionnaire on IUC Programme Financial Management are reflected. This questionnaire is based on the Terms of Reference for the VLIR-IUC Evaluations (see Annex 1 of the ToR). The questionnaire has been filled-out by IUC Programme Management (jointly by the Flemish Coordinator, ICOS Coordinator, UCuenca Local Coordinator and Programme Manager). It is a closed questionnaire based on a 0-5 self-assessment scoring on a series of questions. The main financial management items covered are: (i) purchase cycle and cost control; (ii) Cash management, (iii) General items on administrative organisation, procedures, staff, vehicles and auditing; (iv) Accounting, including registration of transactions, supporting documents, monthly closing and specific issues, and; (v) Other areas of internal control. Unless not applicable (N/A), all questions got a point 4 score on the 0-5 scale which is described as "Control measures are being evaluated and adapted regularly. It is being effectively used (plan+ do+ check & act)." Two items got a "0" score reply for non-existent, namely: Item A.1.1.1: "Is a standard requisition form being used for purchases?" and Item B.1.2.2: "Are all available supporting documents original ones?". And two other items got a "1" score reply as being present on an ad hoc basis only, namely: Item A.3.5.2: "Are all audit reports available?" and Item A.3.3.2: "Did the project director always control accounting to obtain reasonable certainty about correctness before approving it?". Full report under Annex 9 hereafter.

Additional Clarifications Provided in Reaction to the Draft Final Report: "Two items got a "0" score reply for non-existent, namely: Item A.1.1.1: "Is a standard requisition form being used for purchases?" and Item B.1.2.2: "Are all available supporting documents original ones?" The practice is that local project leaders write a letter to the local coordinator for any substantial expense. In turn, orders are always checked and then approved in writing and signed by the local coordination/PSU. If there is any doubt on the request this is communicated to the Flemish coordinator and discussed. As such there is no form but all important expenses are requested in writing. If more than 1000 USD (well above the DGCD requirements) three quotations are required, a technical committee selects and a report is made on the comparison. The current practice works well without any known problems. The original invoices are safeguarded in the financial office of either the Universidad de Cuenca or the K.U.Leuven, depending on who pays the invoice. The PSU has a copy of every document of the UCuenca invoices and the Flemish coordinator has a scanned copy of all invoices from Cuenca. These copies are well organized and filled. All the financial controls (from AP2005, year 0, to AP2009) have been without any problems. The local audit by an Ecuadorian auditor had not found any problems in the functioning of the accounting. However, there were some queries outside of their TOR like interpretation of the budget lines (the external auditor had interpretations which were not in line with the VLIR-definitions) and that they were in their opinion that there was no official approval for the budget-change (as a result of the cancellation of the family violence project). Both queries were outside their mandate and ill-appropriate."

Summary Observations and Findings on Programme Financial Management: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of programme financial management, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Substantive total VLIR-IUC budget of 2,813,160 Euro for the five year UCuenca IUC Phase 1 provides financial leverage for effective strategic institutional reform at / of the University;
- Financial management by the Project Support Unit (PSU) at UCuenca and by the ICOS (Flanders);
- Overall coordination and supervision of financial management by the Flemish and UCuenca Programme Coordinators;
- Reallocation of resources following the discontinuation of the family violence project;
- Generally smooth procurement processes based on technical specification and requirements from the projects
- Special tools / spreadsheets developed for financial management, budgeting and expenditures tracking and reporting (both project wise and by main IUC budget lines);
- Overall programme absorptive capacity: 95.1% of budget (AP 2007 to AP 2009)
- Empowered financial management of South partner: Majority of expenditures (71.5%) incurred by UCuenca with only 28.5% in the North by the Flemish Universities;
- Compliance with VLIR regulation of administrative costs amounting to maximum of 10% of operational expenses (5% in North and 5% in South);
- Standard questionnaire on IUC programme financial management has been completed.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Automatic consolidations of financial reports by the individual projects at IUC programme level (now still basically manually);
- Investment costs amounting to 160.1% of revised budget;
- Issues raised by external audit attended to and internalised as lesson learned;
- Large variations between the projects in budgetary absorptive capacity (ranging from a low 36.8% to an overshooting up to 114.1% at the other end), but corrective actions and enhanced implementation performance over time;
- Information on the overall financing of UCuenca university is forthcoming (to assess financial sustainability and related issues);
- Summary graphics would add to understanding and enhanced use as management tools at the different levels;

- Record keeping, filing and archiving of all financial and auditing reports and supportive documents;
- Use of standard requisition form for purchases;
- Project coordinators always controlling accounting to obtain reasonable certainty about correctness before approving accounts.

Additional Clarifications by the Flemish Programme Coordinator in reaction to the Draft Evaluation Report: "... the management option taken is that the academic management is with the projects; while the administrative and financial support by the PSU and ICOS is of the highest quality feasible. Further devolvement of budget responsibilities requires the project leaders themselves become personally accountable and responsible for rejected expenditure. Currently it is the Flemish coordinator, who is accountable. The accounting is fully transparent and any stage expenditure can be checked by the projects. However, there are no on-line tools available. Developing such tools should be a higher level than an IUC. The satisfaction of the VLIR-database, which actually only has been used by UCuenca and to the best of my knowledge not by other IUC's appears to be mixed. The projects have full responsibility for yearly budgeting (AP20XX is submitted by the projects). For the VLIR/DGCD it is the Flemish coordinator who signs and is held responsible for the account until the approval by the "Rekenhof" (Belgian governmental auditing). The advantage of the PSU and ICOS support at programme level is outweighing the possible advantages of devolving the extra work of direct accounting by the projects themselves."

4. Academic Cooperation

General Appreciation: The self-assessment reports, the special questionnaires and also the interviews at UCuenca generally showed a relative satisfaction with the quality of the communication, but as confirmed by the reaction of the Local Steering Committee to the draft final evaluation report there clearly is room for improvement: "Communication between Flemish and Ecuadorian team members should improve".

As generally conveyed by the interviewed parties in both Flanders and at UCuenca to the Evaluation Commission, the academic cooperation between the transatlantic partners has been generally good to very good, both in quantitative and qualitative terms. With few exceptions, this pertains to all components of the academic cooperation (exchange visits, scholarships, guest lectures, thesis students, etc.). The strengthening of the multidisciplinary academic cooperation promoted by the programme (e.g. through the Multidisciplinary Teacher-Research Teams) spearheaded by the Transversal project is widely appreciated and already starts having multiplier effects in other Faculties / Institutes. Also within the individual IUC projects, multi-disciplinary approaches and inter-projects cooperation is starting to be pursued (e.g. between V1 Food and nutrition, V2 Human Sexuality and V6 Migration and Development project, or between V5 City preservation and V6 Migration and development projects). At Flemish side, interuniversity cooperation facilitated by the UCuenca IUC project is also widely appreciated, even if some of the "traditional" back and forth between the alpha and beta sciences seems to linger on. But also here the UCuenca IUC programme design

appears to promote breakthroughs away from traditional prejudices and other misconceptions. There reportedly is still room for more intensified inter-university academic cooperation at programme level in general and within some projects in general (e.g. V2 on Human sexuality, amongst others).

Summary Observations and Findings on Academic Cooperation: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of academic cooperation, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Quality and intensity of academic cooperation between UCuenca and the Flemish partner Universities generally is highly appreciated;
- This very positive assessment pertains to the different modalities of cooperation, including: academic exchange visits, scholarships, guest lectures, joint researches, thesis students, etc.
- ICOS keeping track very well of all mobility between N-S and vice versa (special tool developed).

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Priority alignment, harmonisation and strengthened synergy of VLIR and non-VLIR (Flemish) human resources inputs to UCuenca;
- All noses in the same direction remains a challenge both within UCuenca and amongst Flemish partners;
- Stronger networking, diversification and involvement of Flemish universities in some projects;
- On-line sharing of the mobility tool to develop it into a proactive planning and management tool for all parties concerned.
- Meeting the challenges of the massive HRD drive caused by the HRD provisions of the new law on Higher Education (70% PhD's within 7 years) and how can the UCuenca IUC programme and the Flemish Universities in general be of best support
- Intensified involvement and exchanges of thesis students in the IUC programme.

5. Public Relations and Visibility

General Appreciation: The featuring of the IUC programme on the UCuenca website is well taken care of and website maintenance and content uploads from the programme and projects are being intensified and improved. Generally, conform the general Flemish mentality, VLIR-IUC programme public relations and visibility are not the strongest feature of the programme. It was UCuenca executive management who on its own initiative conveyed to the Evaluation Commission that the VLIR-IUC programme should be further promoted beyond the confines of the Cuenca University and be better known

by the parties concerned with responsibilities for higher education at national level. While initial steps have been taken under the programme for networking with other institutions, this networking should be given priority attention in the next phase. This relates to networking at all levels, locally and nationally (e.g. with ESPOL and other reputable Universities), but also internationally in a South – South as well as in a North – South – South context. One of the challenges for the T1 Transversal project is to spearhead and support the actual development of (i) A UCuenca (IUC) public relations and visibility strategy, and (ii) UCuenca (IUC) Networking Strategy.

Summary Observations and Findings on Public Relations and Visibility: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of programme public relations and visibility, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- IUC programme prominently featured on the UCuenca Website;
- With some exceptions, all VLIR-UOS supported infrastructure, equipment, publications, computer programmes, extension materials, etc. have the VLIR-UOS logo visibly presented;
- Flanders general cultural and academic feature of concentrating on contents quality and less on the wrapping aspect is highly appreciated by the UCuenca partners.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- High quality of VLIR-UOS programme assessed by UCuenca partners as deserving more proactive and assertive Public Relations and strengthened visibility;
- This PR and visibility strategy deserves more systematic and focused attention when linking the local level of individual IUCs with the regional and national Higher Education policy and strategy levels, as is an overall strategic objective of VLIR-UOS.

6. Synergy and Coherence of the Programme

General Appreciation: Enhancing synergies and coherence of the programme needs to be a prime concern of IUC Programme Management (both IUC Programme Coordinators and the local Programme Manager) in tandem with the Transversal T1 project. Important steps have been taken in this direction as illustrated by the discussions of the different programme Key Results Areas, of the higher level programme performance criteria, and of the different management assessment dimension. But building bridges between the different projects and ensuring overall programme coherence remains a continuous concern of prime importance. This would invite overall programme management to take a more pro-active stand on overall programme coordination in strategic perspective beyond the administrative and financial aspects of IUC programme management, how valuable and appreciated in their own right the latter are.

Summary Observations and Findings on Synergy and Coherence: A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme strengths / good practices and challenges / points of attention in terms of synergy and coherence of the programme, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

Strengths / Good Practices

- Development of multi-disciplinary research and education team as one of the cornerstone of the institutional reform process spearhead by the T1 Transversal Project;
- General appreciation of this multidisciplinary set-up and its proactive pursuit by the different research projects;
- Strengthened coordination and collaboration amongst the Flemish partner universities as an important side-effect of the IUC programme is highly appreciated by all concerned;
- Diversity of IUC programme composition (both alpha and beta sciences) is appreciated, innovative and exemplary.

Challenges / Points of Attention

- Projects' learning from each other deserves further institutionalisation and more systematic attention;
- Innovative initiatives from IUC overall programme coordination and management to further enhance synergies which are favoured by all parties and stakeholders concerned.

2.5. Cooperation between the Different Parties Involved

General Appreciation by the UCuenca Stakeholders: As reported earlier on different occasions, the cooperation between the North and South parties in the UCuenca IUC programme in general has been warmly and highly appreciated by all parties and stakeholders concerned. There generally has been a very positive and amicable cooperation, both professionally and personally, throughout the period covered by the IUC phase 1 of the programme so far. This very positive and lasting cooperation between Flanders and UCuenca goes back to the years before the IUC programme with for example the individual VLIR supported Own Initiatives and the different VVOB personnel inputs.

Positive Appreciation but Room for Improvement: The self-assessment reports, the special questionnaires and also the interviews at UCuenca generally showed a relative satisfaction with the quality of the communication, but as confirmed by the reaction of the Local Steering Committee to the draft final evaluation report there clearly always is room for improvement: "Communication between Flemish and Ecuadorian team members should improve".

Turnover of Team Leaders: This overall appreciation pertains to both general programme co-ordination and individual constituent projects / sub-programmes. It relates to both managerial and academic aspects. This has been formally reflected as such in the self-assessment reports and was confirmed during the many consultations and meetings the Evaluation Commission had with the different stakeholders, both in Flanders and at the Universidad de Cuenca. The turnover of team leaders in a number of projects causing delayed starts and hampering effective delivery of results are considered as “accidents de parcours” related to personal characteristics of the incumbents. The replacement team leaders have succeeded remarkably well in putting the projects back on track again with renewed enthusiasm and zeal noticed in the project teams concerned. These experiences also invited to lessons to be learned regarding the profile of Team Leaders and the necessary selection procedures for suitable candidates beyond strictly academic qualifications.

Steering Committees: The strongest institutional programme coordination mechanisms are the Steering Committees, both local at UCuenca for the South Partners and in Flanders for the North Partners, and for the South and North Partners together in the Joint Steering Committee. These at the same time are the decision makers on the strategic directions of the programme and its constituent projects. The UCuenca Local Steering Committee meets every month, amongst others to monitor progress of activities. Besides that, there are provisions for weekly personal contacts of the Local Programme Coordinator and the Programme Manager, the weekly internal meetings of the Programme Manager with the staff of the Programme Support Unit. The Flemish Steering Committee is composed of the Flemish Coordinator (Chairman), the project leaders, the VLIR programme officer, the financial officer and the ICOS of K.U.Leuven (university of the coordinator). The intention is that the IUC Steering Committee meetings collate scientific content as well as financial / administrative information. The Evaluation Commission understands, as evidenced by the minutes of these meetings, that all procedurally foreseen Steering Committee Meetings (North, South and Joint) have taken place. From the different interviews it was learned that the different parties concerned are generally satisfied with the meetings although that some expressed the desirability of these meetings to concentrate more strongly on more strategic issues.

UCuenca – Flanders Mobility Analysis: The mobility database system developed by the ICOS financial officer is a powerful proactive management tool for planning and monitoring managerial, academic and HRD scholarships mobility between UCuenca and Flanders, and vice versa. It moreover gives quantitative information on the intensity and type of mobility, and also on the sending and recipient Universities in Flanders. Some analytical tables derived from the mobility database are presented on Annex 14 to this report, with mobility breakdowns by IUC project (Annex 14.1), by mobility purpose (Annex 14.2) and by sending / host university in Flanders (Annex 14.3). From the latter table is learned that the total number of mobility days from Flanders to UCuenca is about 255 days and the other way round from UCuenca to Flanders is about 12 times higher, or a total 3,058 days which obviously is principally due to the HRD scholarships (PhD, MSc and short term courses, besides the academic exchange visits and IUC management & coordination visits). Broken down by Flemish University, it appears that 41.2% (or 105 days) of the total number of 255 mobility days from Flanders to UCuenca

derives from the K.U.Leuven, the IUC coordinating university, as against 27.1% (or 69 days) for UGent, 12.5% (or 32 days) for the University of Antwerp, 8.2% (or 21 days) for the VUB and 11.0% (or 26 days) for other institutes. This concentration of mobility with the K.U.Leuven is even more outspoken if the UCuenca to Flanders mobility (basically HRD scholarships) is further looked at: 70.6% (or 2,158 days) of all 3,058 UCuenca – Flanders mobility days are directed to K.U.Leuven, from far followed by UGent with 27.5% of the total (or 840 days) and a negligible 2.0% (or 60 days) directed to the VUB. 7 mobility days are directed to another international university (Under V5 City preservation to Mexico).

Co-ordination between and Engagement of Flemish Universities: Although that the intensity and quality of the co-ordination and collaboration between the different Flemish Universities in the framework of the UCuenca IUC programme is generally well appreciated by the different Flemish partners interviewed, as confirmed in the different reports and other documents, the above mobility analysis shows a VLIR-IUC programme which is strongly concentrated in one Flemish University. This would appeal for a stronger diversification and involvement of the other Flemish Universities. On a few occasions this was also indicated during the interviews when discussing programme content matters, for example in relation to the V2 Human sexuality project.

Day-to-day Management and Technical Co-ordination: Co-ordination between the North and South stakeholders on programme operational matters is usually through exchanges of e-mails to the general satisfaction of both parties. An intense consultation process through e-mail exchanges is reported by most stakeholders.

Tactical and Strategic Management Co-ordination and Technical Inputs: Main instrument are the semi-annual meetings of the programme coordinators and the project promoters / spokesperson on the occasion of exchange visits: an average of once a year in respectively Cuenca and Flanders. During these semi-annual meetings, programme progress is reviewed and work plans and programmes are developed / updated. In order to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of these visits, it may be advisable to give them a more formal and structured procedural basis. The visits of the Flemish academics are taken advantage of by the constituent projects to also tap them at the same time for staff development and other academic purposes in the framework of their respective projects / sub-programmes (both teaching and research).

Students Involvement and Participation: While the co-ordination between the main North and South parties is highly appreciated, both in terms of intensity and quality, during the first years of UCuenca IUC cooperation this positive assessment was basically limited to management and staff only. With a few exceptions, no students have been involved so far substantially in the UCuenca IUC programme. And for few students who have been involved, these have been basically on budgetary resources from the respective individual Flemish Universities concerned (see the discussion under the chapter on additional resources mobilisation – Chapter 2.1.2.7). This situation clearly invites for special attention during the next years to come of the UCuenca IUC programme. This for example may take the format of not only UCuenca fellows getting their PhD or MSc degrees at Universities in Flanders, but also Flemish students doing

(part of) their thesis research at UCuenca. Because of the many positive effects of this exchange of students, such internship programmes have been given extra attention within VLIR-UOS for replication / more widespread application in the context of IUC or other programmes. This particularly also holds for North-South-South and South-South cooperation (ref. the concrete example of a Vietnamese student doing thesis research in UCuenca on a VLIR scholarship).

It should be further clarified that student involvement has been achieved within the VLIR cooperation with UCuenca. For this, non-IUC means have been used through the 'reisbeurzen' – travel fellowships and other university funding. It obviously is very positive that such linkages are successfully pursued with other VLIR-UOS programmes.

Opportunities for Students Involvement: Also the guided introduction of new scientific research techniques and laboratory equipment may provide opportunities for more active engagement of Flemish students in capacity building projects as IUC, mutually beneficial to both North and South partners. Furthermore, the consideration of joint degrees (based on complementary credit courses) provides most interesting and challenging perspectives for more active student involvement and participation in VLIR-IUC and related programmes. Another instrument for promoting more direct and active involvement of students in the IUC programme may be to broaden the participation in the annual programme review exercises (workshops) by including representatives of students. This has the benefit of getting direct feedback from the most important ultimate target group of the VLIR-IUC programme and has the additional positive effect that it at the same time strengthens their enthusiasm for the programme, if not their sense of ownership.

South-South Cooperation: The strengthening of South-South cooperation is one of the main objectives of the VLIR Institutional University Cooperation. As far as the IUC programme with the Universidad de Cuenca is concerned, the intensification of South-South cooperation has been prioritized by UCuenca general management and is being piloted successfully already in some projects (e.g. in V3 Water quality, V5 City preservation, and V6 Migration and development, amongst others).

2.6. Strategic Priorities for IUC Programme Phase II

The Follow-Up Plans in the Self-Assessment Reports: An integral part of the standard VLIR-IUC Self-Assessment Report format is the Follow-up Plan (Part III of the format), requesting the respective projects for follow-up priorities, but also for back-up scenario's in case of a discontinuation of IUC programme funding for the project. Unfortunately however, this section is only to a very limited extent completed by the different projects, if any information is provided at all. Also during the interviews with the North and South stakeholders in both Brussels and at UCuenca, no clear indications were / could be provided by programme coordinators and/or project leaders. While this aspect is integral part of the mid-term evaluation as per the ToR, this situation prompted the

Evaluation Commission to design a simple tool to determine the strategic priorities for IUC programme phase II by the respective projects.

The Phase II Strategic Priorities Determination Tool: This tool has been prepared by the Evaluation Commission in close coordination with the responsible IUC officers of the VLIR-UOS Secretariat. It has been distributed to the IUC Local Project Leaders by the UCuenca Programme Coordinator and Programme Manager in consultation with the Flemish Programme Coordinator. The Local Project Leaders were requested to fill them out in close consultation with their Flemish Partners and to send back to the Programme Coordinators for endorsement and consolidation. The completed questionnaires were received back by the Evaluation Commission from the Programme Coordinators in early March 2011. The processed summary tables and ranked priorities are presented under Annex 10 to this report. They are expected to provide a solid basis for the further discussions and final decision making on the strategic priorities and operational programming for the next phase II of the UCuenca IUC programme 2012 – 2016. Overall it is felt that the new law on higher education in Ecuador provides the broader overall policy and strategic framework for this strategic programming exercise and provides some extra challenges to the process and its outcomes.

The Outcome of the Phase II Strategic Priorities Determination Exercise: The questionnaire concerned has three main parts: (i) UCuenca extension / outreach and development functions in the region: Concrete examples and plan, projects and/or initiatives for the future; (ii) Networking plans, and; (iii) Strategic priorities for the next IUC phase II: Main objectives and scope, and first priorities / priority results for phase II. As the tables incorporated under Annex 10 are self-explanatory with regard to expectations, interests, plans and priorities, they do not need further clarifications. It however may be good to summarize some common main elements and highest priorities. These are presented in the below tables with (i) the most important main objectives per IUC project – table 10, the highest priority plan, project and/or initiative to strengthen extension / outreach - Table 11, and (iii) the highest priority networking plan – Table 12. What immediately catches the eye is the wide variety of first priorities per project, spanning over all 7 IUC Key Result Areas. It implies that quite some harmonization and synergy maximization consultations and strategic meetings / workshops will all Project Leaders led / facilitated by the two Programme Coordinators might prove to be necessary in the perspective of a coherent, integrated overall IUC strategy and programme for Phase 2.

**Table 10 : Most Important Main Objective of IUC Phase II
Identified by the 7 UCuenca IUC Projects**

T.1 INSTCHAN	Strengthening Human Resource Management
V.1 NUTHEAL	To finalize activities of phase I (Intervention program in adolescents and Mycotoxin contamination and Risk exposure assessment in infants) and from these results, to finalize 3 PhDs.
V.2 HUMSEX	The functioning of the CIFSEX with its lines of work with including community service, Research, Training and Networking: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Research</i>: the identification of main lines that will be taken • <i>Training</i>: to identify the needs in society (schools, parents, ...) about sex education and to create modules and materials (including evaluation of their impact) will be necessary. • <i>Network</i>: the creation of and the strengthening of the existent networks that have attention for adolescents and for violence.
V.3 WATQUAL	The PhD research initiated in Phase I of the Project will be consolidated
V.4 MEDPLANT	To get the support on legal advice from the University of Cuenca on bio-prospection, Intellectual Property and related issues.
V.5 CITYPRES	Writing and submission of Scientific articles. (Heritage Journals)
V.6 MIGDEV	Cooperation with PYDLOS (Centro de Población y Desarrollo Local Sustentable - University of Cuenca) in order to get access to complementary expertise, an independent location, external funding and administrative support.

Table 11 : Highest Priority Plan, Project and/or Initiative to Strengthen Extension / Outreach Identified by the 7 UCuenca IUC Projects

T.1 INSTCHAN.	To establish policies of institutional planning that enable the achievement of University objectives related to society.
V.1 NUTHEAL	Continuation of the intervention program, including impact evaluation and materials validation (booklets, leaflets) that is necessary for further dissemination. Moreover, long-term impact evaluation will be executed and new generation booklets will be developed.
V.2 HUMSEX	The creation of a Center of Excellence will give the opportunity to create new spaces of community service.
V.3 WATQUAL	Research will be carried out by PROMAS/ Faculty of Engineering of the UCuenca, on their own initiative, in view of providing insight in an actual water management problem of municipal, regional and/or national authorities.
V.4 MEDPLANT	Gathering of information on the use of plants as anticonvulsant herbal remedies.
V.5 CITYPRES	Development of a program based on Preventive Conservation in relation with the PRECOMOS network.
V.6 MIGDEV	Formalizing with regional educational authorities the provision of funds able to increase the coverage of the training programmes to other geographical areas affected by the international migration phenomenon.

Table 12 : Highest Priority Networking Plan by the 7 UCuenca IUC Projects

T.1 INSTCHAN.	Strengthening international linkages
V.1 NUTHEAL	Establish networking with governmental institutions, i.e. Minister of Health, Education, Social-Economic inclusion and Agriculture; Municipality of Cuenca and Nabon, and INFA.
V.2 HUMSEX	Listing of 13 local and national partners to network with on a priority basis, listed for three main programme components: (i) Adolescence: 6 priority networking partners; (ii) Education: 4 priority networking partners, and; (iii) Violence: 3 priority networking partners
V.3 WATQUAL	Master in Water Science , jointly by UCuenca and ESPOL
V.4 MEDPLANT	To establish a cooperation with the Public Health Ministry, Religious Organizations, and NGO's for transferring knowledge obtained on medicinal plants to the communities
V.5 CITYPRES	UNESCO Chair / PRECOM ³ OS: Development and dissemination of knowledge through this network.
V.6 MIGDEV	Materialize the exchange of information related to plans, policies and/or data related to international migration with the SENAMI (Migrant's National Secretary). A general agreement has been signed already with the University of Cuenca, but we aim to activate a more fluid exchange of information in the future.

Strategic Priorities of the T1 Transversal Project: In view of its special importance as cross-cutting project on institutional change, the main objectives and scope of IUC Phase II ranked in order of importance, as proposed by the Transversal Project T1 Institutional Change project are listed separately in Table 13 here below. The T1 ranked priority results strived for during phase II are presented in Table 14 thereafter.

Table 13 : T.1 Institutional Change Project: Main Objectives and Scope for IUC Phase 2

T.1 INSTCHAN : Main Objectives and Scope for IUC Phase 2 <i>(in descending order of importance)</i>	
1st	Strengthening Human Resource Management
2nd	Supporting activities about institutional development, planning and management
3rd	Strengthening policies and research processes through the development of PhD school, building research teams and intellectual property management.
4th	Extend the coverage of library services, training of users and strengthening the digital library.
5th	Extend the implementation of new information and communications technologies to improve the university processes

Table 14 : T.1 Institutional Change Project: Priorities / Priority Results for IUC Phase 2

T.1 INSTCHAN : Priorities / Priority Results for IUC Phase 2 <i>(in descending order of importance)</i>	
1st	<p><i>HRM:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Proposal of policies for Human Resource Management</i> • <i>Plan of development of Human Talent</i> • <i>Workshops for training Human Talent</i>
2nd	<p><i>Planning:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Facilitation by training workshops of the development of the University Strategic Plan;</i>
3rd	<p><i>Research:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Creation and strengthening of research teams</i> • <i>Proposal of establishment of PhD School</i> • <i>Accompanying the management of Intellectual Property</i> • <i>Development of policies of proposal thesis</i> • <i>Workshops for training in research, English and statistics</i>
4th	<p><i>Library:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Construction of indicators for use of library resources</i> • <i>Strengthening of the digital library and digital repository</i> • <i>Training workshops for teachers and researchers</i> • <i>Training workshops for students</i>
5th	<p><i>Information and Communication Technology (ICT):</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Implementation of computer systems for improving the university processes</i> • <i>Construction of indicators of ICT use</i> • <i>Proposal for a safety plan for the software resources</i> • <i>Workshops for the implementation of ICT in education, research and university management</i>

3. Summary Conclusions and Recommendations

3.1. Concerning the Programme and its Projects

UCuenca IUC Overall Programme Performance and Quality: Summary Evaluation Scores

KRA Scores: In summary, at this early stage of IUC programme implementation, the UCuenca IUC programme succeeded in obtaining relatively high scores for both the Key Result Areas (KRA) performance criteria and the higher level performance criteria. The average score for all KRAs is 69.4% with infrastructure management, research and outreach above the average score and teaching, management, HRD and resources mobilisation on or below the overall average score.

Higher Level Performance Scores: About the same average overall UCuenca IUC programme score is noted for the higher level performance indicators (70.2%), with development far above this average (with 83%) and also potential impact slightly above this average. Below this average percentage for all higher level performance criteria are the scores for effectiveness and efficiency, with overall quality and sustainability at about the average score for all higher level performance criteria.

Summary Conclusions on the Programme and its Projects:

A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme mid-term evaluation overall conclusions, as presented and discussed during the evaluation debriefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

- High appreciation of the VLIR-IUC programme and of the inputs by the Flemish partner universities by UCuenca management and staff;
- Generally a strong basis has been laid during the first phase of the UCuenca IUC programme for strengthened outputs delivery and results achievement in the second phase;
- Despite project identification and start-up issues (incl. turnover of project leaders), a new dynamism has grown in the delayed projects already resulting in tangible outputs and commitment to further improve;
- Programme accomplishments most appreciated:
 - Strengthening of research culture (scientific approaches),
 - Research based teaching, interdisciplinary teams, streamlining,
 - Standardisation, harmonisation of procedures (one university),
 - Multidisciplinary teams, credit system, impacting on larger society (extension, outreach)

- But still major challenges ahead (consolidation and further strengthening / expansion);
- ICT, library and laboratory investments highly appreciated and actually used;
- Delays in HRD programme implementation resulting in limited accomplishments so far, but basis laid for outputs / results intensification in the second phase;
- HRD strengthening by Flemish scholarships and visiting Flemish professors very much appreciated;
- Development outreach and extension services integral part of most projects and highly appreciated by the stakeholders concerned (and also by UCuenca parties concerned);
- Strong interest in pursuing contract research and consultancy services for enhanced auto financing and financial sustainability, and need for further structuring: institutionally (centres), procedures (intellectual property);
- Need for enhanced institutional networking underscored at all levels (with other HE institutions, public authorities, intermediary organisations for extension, commercial / industrial sector, etc.), local, regional, national and international;
- High overall programme budget absorptive capacity of 95.1% (2007-09 period), but with large variations between the projects (varying from an overshoot 116.3% to a low 36.8%) and also with large variations between the types of expenditures: from on overshoot 160.1% for investment costs to a low 65.6% for operational costs);
- Self-assessed progress scoring by the projects varying from 51.9% to 150.0%, but the scoring indicators and system needs to be harmonized and objectivised further;
- Results achievement on the KRAs so far is relatively modest, but is understandable for first years of an institutional strengthening project. Moreover, large variations between the projects. But intensified outputs production towards the end of the cycle and all set for substantial enhanced outputs and results achievements in 2nd phase;
- Programme management and coordination generally well appreciated, both within UCuenca and between UCuenca and Flanders;
- Appreciated management and coordination initiatives and tools include: the handbook on programme and project management, the mobility assessment tool, a.o.;
- Further alignment, integration and automation of VLIR strategic planning, operational planning and reporting tools are desired.

Summary Recommendations on the Programme and its Projects:

A summary account of the main VLIR-UCuenca IUC programme mid-term evaluation recommendations, as presented and discussed during the evaluation de-briefing session with the IUC North and South Partners at the end of the evaluation visit to Cuenca, include the following:

- Fully grasping the favourable momentum and conducive opportunities for institutional reform at UCuenca (new law on higher education, new management,

new strategic planning cycle, reform support and eagerness of university management and academic staff alike, ...);

- Building on the solid investment groundwork of the IUC 1st phase (infrastructure, HRD, procedures, etc.), now challenge of strengthening academic rate of return (research outputs, further capacitated academic staff, outreach and networking, etc.) to enhance programme cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness;
- IUC transversal support to operationalisation of new UCuenca organisational chart along following main transversal thematic priority areas / programme dimensions:
 - A. Operationalisation of strategic planning and institutional reform
 1. Human Resources Development (HRD - holistic)
 2. Performance appraisal system (anchored)
 3. Curricula and credit system
 4. Research promotion and coordination
 5. Networking, outreach, extension and spin-offs
 6. Library and ICT services (customized software)
 7. Legal affairs
- Institutional anchoring of the IUC T1 transversal project in the UCuenca Planning Department, with direct reporting to the UCuenca Rector and Vice-Rector. Similar formal institutional anchoring of the vertical projects in the respective Faculties / Centres concerned;
- Interaction between transversal project team members with local team members of other Programme projects and specifically with other internal authorities, such as Deans, Directors of other Academic Units (Postgraduate and Research Departments) and student organizations should be further strengthened;
- Strengthened interaction between the transversal project team and the vertical project teams on the one hand and the latter's "mother" institutions (Faculty, Institute, ...) and key stakeholders (Deans, Directors, ...) needs to be ensured (institutional anchoring of VLIR-IUC projects in the Faculties / Institutes and strengthening of dissemination of lessons learned and of multiplier effects);
- Creation and operationalisation of a UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform Think Tank (Secretariat with the UCuenca Planning Department), with 8 (Sub-)Committees on the above thematic areas;
- Intensified support to UCuenca transition to research based teaching institution (rejuvenation, PhD/masters degree, full-time, full-fledged academic (balanced teaching and research tasks) staff in line with the new policy framework for higher education);
- Reintegration, retention and career planning of staff benefiting from IUC HRD opportunities;
- Intensified support to UCuenca as a catalyst of regional development: services to community and development organisations (both government and non-state actors) through stronger extension and outreach orientation of research and teaching;
- More proactive networking with other institutions: local, regional, national, international (incl. North-South-South);
- Stronger results orientation and performance management of the UCuenca IUC programme (outputs and outcomes along the KRA indicators) and intensified actual

results delivery in the second phase (PhDs, Masters, publications, conferences, extension services and contract research, etc);

- Stronger results planning, monitoring and reporting of IUC projects and programme to VLIR (especially consolidated results reporting);
- More extensive scholarship programme to Belgium /Flanders, including short-term courses, and stronger performance management of the scholarships;
- Further intensification of Flemish inputs and exchanges (both professors and thesis students);
- Priority alignment, harmonisation and strengthened synergy of VLIR and non-VLIR Flemish human resources inputs to UCuenca;
- Maintenance of the programme configuration of one transversal and six vertical projects, with further strengthened complementarity and multidisciplinary amongst them;
- Consideration of an additional vertical project on a priority development theme. Proposals for a possible additional vertical project should be in line with the UCuenca research institutional priorities and should be based on a maximum win-win situation for both the UCuenca and Flemish partners .Some examples, just for inspiration / consideration:
 - Educational reform and innovation implementation (secondary level);
 - Vocational and entrepreneurial lifelong learning systems
 - Institutional capacity strengthening for sustainable development (e.g. intermediary organisations for extension / outreach)
 - Ecosystems, biodiversity and climate change
 - Social and environmental impact of mining
 - ...
- Alignment and integration of UCuenca IUC programme into the (projected / envisioned) overall VLIR-IUC national programme level and strengthened coordination and networking with other VLIR IUC's (ESPOL and in the region);
- Support to the creation of National Think Thank on Sector-Wide Strategic Institutional Reform of Higher Education in Ecuador and to the bi-directional strategic exchanges and cross-fertilisation with the UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform process.
- It is noted that there are no clear rules for self-sufficiency and sustainability of future projects. It needs to be clarified if this depends on actions of the Transversal Project or on the institutional changes that should be promoted internally, which includes updating of the strategic plan of UCuenca, including long-term financing.

3.2. Concerning the Management of the Programme

A detailed assessment with conclusions of programme management is provided under Chapter 2.4. The sections on challenges / points of attention are recommendations for further enhancement and strengthening. Below are some selective summary conclusions and recommendations.

Summary Conclusions

- There is general satisfaction with UCuenca IUC overall programme coordination and management by both the North and South partners;
- In general, compliance with VLIR-UOS procedures, planning and reporting requirements has been observed;
- Inter-projects and multidisciplinary coordination promoted by programme management and T1 transversal project is highly appreciated;
- Alignment of IUC programme management with UCuenca strategic objectives and solid integration in the University's structures is a strong good practice;
- Changes in the management of the projects (at both UCuenca and Flemish Universities' sides) and turnover of staff have considerably affected performance of some projects, but the zeal and substantive efforts of the incumbent Project Leaders and their teams have resulted in considerable progress and results already compensating for the initial set-backs;
- Some projects had a delayed start of about 1.5 years having hampered overall programme performance in the first years of UCuenca IUC implementation but these initial inadequacies are being squarely redressed with strong prospects for the future regarding all IUC Key Results Areas.

Summary Recommendations

- Design and operationalisation of an automated integrated UCuenca IUC strategic planning (and updates), operational (annual) planning, and progress and results reporting and monitoring system
- Strengthening of the actual use and overall compliance with the provisions of the "UCuenca IUC Management Structure and Manual" by all parties concerned;
- Additional PCM training to enhance the use of LogFrames as active management tools and for results reporting purposes;
- (Automated) consolidation of plans and reports by the respective projects into IUC programme plans and reports;
- More systematic and actual use of indicators as management tools throughout the programme / project cycle, including overall and interim target setting and reporting of accomplishments thereon to enable performance measurement, scoring and rating;
- In line with the three years IUC rolling planning and budgeting cycles considered by VLIR-UOS, coordination with VLIR-UOS Secretariat for a possible revisiting of the annuity of the budget cycles which runs counter to longer term planning and strategic, results-oriented performance management;
- Development of an IUC strategic procurement plan with transparent and consultative procurement priority setting with the projects;
- Setting and keeping all noses in the same strategic direction for optimal IUC programme results delivery, both within UCuenca and amongst the Flemish partners;

- More explicit incorporation of outreach, extension and networking dimensions in the overall IUC programme strategy and management, particularly also in the transversal T1 project;
- Development and actual implementation of a UCuenca IUC public relations and visibility strategy including more prominent featuring of programme and projects' good/best practices;
- Further institutionalisation and more systematic attention for projects' learning from each other and exchanges of good/best practices, with further strengthening of synergies between the projects;
- Fully grasping the opportunities provided for sustainable institutional reform provided by the new law on higher education.

3.3. Concerning the Coordination between All Parties Involved

A detailed assessment with conclusions on the coordination between all parties involved in the UCuenca IUC programme is provided under Chapter 2.5. The sections on challenges / points of attention are recommendations for further enhancement and strengthening of this coordination. Below are some selective summary conclusions and recommendations.

Summary Conclusions

- There generally are open, cordial relations of mutual trust and confidence between the UCuenca and Flemish Partners at all levels and in the projects;
- Quality and intensity of both overall and academic cooperation between UCuenca and the Flemish Partner Universities generally is highly appreciated;
- There is a high appreciation of the VLIR-IUC programme and of the inputs by the Flemish Partner Universities by UCuenca management and academic staff;
- Both strategic and day-to-day operational coordination mechanisms between the North and South partners are generally functioning to the satisfaction of both parties;

Summary Recommendations

- Priority alignment, harmonisation and strengthened synergy of VLIR and non-VLIR (Flemish) human resources inputs to UCuenca;
- All UCuenca IUC noses in the same direction remains a challenge both within UCuenca and amongst Flemish Partners;
- Stronger networking, diversification and involvement of Flemish universities in some projects;
- Stronger diversified bi-directional UCuenca – Flanders mobility and actual engagement of the different Flemish universities in the UCuenca IUC programme;
- Intensified involvement and exchanges of (thesis) students in the IUC programme;

- Strategic thinking and operational planning about how to meet best the challenges of the massive HRD drive caused by the HRD provisions of the new law on Higher Education and on how the UCuenca IUC programme and the Flemish Universities in general can be of best support;
- Bi-directional intellectual property rights, patents, authorships and related legal issues need to be addressed in mutual trust and understanding based on clear policies and guidelines subscribed by both the Flemish and UCuenca partners;
- Stronger alignment of the UCuenca IUC programme with national, regional and local authorities in charge of policy making and strategic directions for higher education institutes;
- More prominent programme institutional link up with external partners and networks (local, regional, national and international), especially also in the context of the outreach and extension component and Key Result Area of the UCuenca IUC programme.

3.4 Towards Phase II of the UCuenca IUC Programme and VLIR-UOS

Summary Recommendations:

- *Results Delivery*: With the solid groundwork laid for IUC programme performance laid during the first years of the programme implementation (e.g. thanks to ICT, library and laboratory infrastructure upgrading; procedural and administrative strengthening; personnel and HRM enhancements, multidisciplinary teacher-researcher teams introduction, performance appraisals, credit system introduction, etc.), full concentration of effective results delivery in all seven Key Result Areas (KRAs) of the UCuenca IUC programme. This challenge for effective results delivery equally pertains to all projects.
- *Strategic Structuring and Anchoring of Transversal Project*: Further structuring of the strategic orientations of the transversal project T1 into transversal sub-projects and solid institutional anchoring of these different interrelated components / sub-projects in the UCuenca organisational chart. The suggestions summarized in Figure 2 below on the next page, discussed with UCuenca executive management and included in the evaluation debriefing meeting with both North and South partners may be found of use in this respect.
- *Possible Additional Vertical Project(s)*: Consideration of possible new vertical project(s) in addition to the configuration of the five existing ones. Just for consideration based on preliminary ideas: (i) Educational reform and innovation implementation (secondary level); (ii) Vocational and entrepreneurial lifelong learning systems; (iii) Institutional capacity strengthening for sustainable development (e.g. intermediary organisations for extension / outreach); (iv) Ecosystems, biodiversity and climate change; (v) Social and environmental impact of mining. Proposals for a possible additional vertical project should be in line with the

UCuenca research institutional priorities and should be based on a maximum win-win situation for both the UCuenca and Flemish partners.

- *Strengthened Anchoring of IUC Projects in the Regular Structures of UCuenca:* The interaction between transversal project team members with local team members of other Programme projects and specifically with other internal authorities, such as Deans, Directors of other Academic Units (Postgraduate and Research Departments) and student organizations should be further strengthened. In the same way, strengthened interaction between the transversal project team and the vertical project teams on the one hand and the vertical project teams' "mother" institutions (Faculty, Institute, ...) and key stakeholders (Deans, Directors, ...) needs to be ensured, including stronger institutional anchoring of VLIR-IUC projects in the Faculties / Institutes and strengthening of dissemination of lessons learned and of multiplier effects.
- *HRD and Academic Upgrading:* Solidly meeting the challenges and opportunities implied by the new legal framework for higher education in Ecuador, particularly also in terms of required human resources development and upgrading of academic personnel.
- *Results on KRAs Research and Education:* More systematic pursuit and effective university-wide operationalisation of the innovations successfully introduced in the IUC Key Result Areas of teaching and research during the first phase of the IUC programme, for example amongst others in relation to: the multi-disciplinary teacher-research teams; the academic performance appraisal system and incentives related to it; new teaching techniques and methodologies; the credit system; curriculum development; organisation of new demand based masters degrees where feasible and desirable; same for the creation and operationalisation of thematic centres of excellence however with maintenance of a strong mutually beneficial academic link with the "mother" Faculty; etc.

Infrastructure KRA Focus on Software Upgrading: Since in the first phase of the IUC Programme very substantive efforts have been successfully delivered in upgrading the library and the ICT infrastructure of the University and of the IUC projects, KRA infrastructure focus attention in phase II will need to be addressed to a maximum use of this upgraded ICT infrastructure. This involves an ICT shift from hardware to software, with priority focus attention for customized software design an development adapted to the specific needs of projects, university management, Faculties, academic personnel, students and other users. Particular attention needs to go to the design and development of an integrated performance planning, monitoring and reporting system for the UCuenca IUC programme and its projects with automatic consolidations from individual projects to programme level.

Figure 2 : Suggested Main Transversal Thematic Priority Areas / Programme Dimensions and their Institutional Anchoring in the UCuenca Organisational Chart

(with a proposed UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform Think Tank (Sub-)Committee for each of the themes)

IUC 2nd Phase Transversal Thematic Priority Areas / Programme Dimensions

Institutional Anchoring (*) in UCuenca Organisational Chart

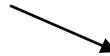
A. Strategic planning and institutional reform:



- Planning Department
- Strategic planning
 - Operational planning
 - Performance budgeting
 - Performance monitoring and evaluation
 - Organisational chart and function descriptions
 - Organisational performance
 - Strategic procurement planning
 - ...

1. Human Resources Development (HRD - holistic):

- Upgrading PhD & MSc
- Technical ST
- Implementation provisions concerned new Law
- HRD & training needs assessments
- HRD planning and monitoring
- Lifelong Learning (LLL)
- ...



HRD Department



2. Performance appraisal system (anchored):

- System and tools review and updating
- Broadening of coverage (all staff and students)
- Analysis and feedback
- Links to incentives system
- Career guidance and support
- ...

3. Curricula and credit system:



Education Department

- Quality control / assurance
- Reviews and updating
- Organisation of new masters programmes
- Post-graduate affairs

- Accreditation matters
- Link curriculum development and research
- ...

4. Research promotion and coordination:



Research Department

- Research needs assessment / scouting
- Research prioritization
- Research budgeting and financing
- Research quality policies and strategies
- (Inter-)national accreditation of laboratories
- ...

5. Networking outreach, extension and spin-offs:



External Relations

Community Relations:

- University networking and outreach policy and Strategy
- Implementation coordination and monitoring of networking and outreach strategy
- Research – extension/training (RET) continuum
- Extension services to the community / society via intermediary organisations / institutions
- Contract research
- Consulting services
- Commercial / industrial spin-offs
- Institutional networking
- Surveys coordination and feasibility studies

<i>IUC 2nd Phase Transversal Thematic Priority Areas / Programme Dimensions (continued)</i>	<i>Institutional Anchoring (*) in UCuenca Organisational Chart</i>
<p>6. Library and ICT services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Further digitalisation of library - Expansion of multi-media section in library - Expansion virtual library and e-knowledge centre - ICT focus on development and maintenance of customized software particularly in relation to the above 6 thematic reform areas - Upgrading of ICT hardware and network where necessary; - ... 	<p>→ ICT Department</p> <p>→ Library</p>
<p>7. Legal affairs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures - Harmonization and standardization - Intellectual property and patents - Spin-offs and consulting contracting - Institutional contracting (MoUs, etc.) - Legal support to creation of autonomous research centres / centres of excellence - Accreditation and certification of labs, research centres, etc. (ISO, ...) - ... 	<p>→ Legal Department</p>
<p>(*) <i>With a proposed UCuenca Strategic Institutional Reform Think Tank (Sub-) Committee for each of the themes</i></p>	

- ***Outreach, Extension and Networking as Phase II Prime Priorities:*** Priority attention is needed for more systematic outreach and extension services within the different IUC projects and as strategic objective for UCuenca through the transversal project. The more pro-active, effective and systematic pursuit of the development objective of the IUC programme constitutes one of the major challenges for the next phase II of the UCuenca IUC programme. This also includes more intensive and structured networking with relevant institutions at local, zonal, national and international levels and would benefit from the development of a outreach, extension and networking. This requires an outreach and networking strategic plan for the university as a whole (through T1) and at the level of the individual projects. The questions contained in below Box 25 on the next page may be found of use for the strategic brainstorming on these themes in preparation of the strategy.

- Financial Sustainability and Spin-Offs: IUC programme and by extension UCuenca financial and institutional sustainability may require a more proactive and systematic pursuit of contract research / consultancies and of commercial spin-offs. This requires strategizing and also consideration of the desirability and feasibility of a special university central entity on this subject, or alternatively of such units in the respective eligible Faculties / Institutes concerned.
- IUC Linking with the National Policy and Strategy Level: Conform the overall VLIR-UOS policy for a strengthening of the linking / of the integration of its IUC programmes in the national policies and strategies for higher education and the special opportunities and challenges provided hereto by the new legal framework for higher education in Ecuador, this structured linking deserves priority and urgent attention in the period to come for the UCuenca IUC programme. This strategy development and its effective operationalisation may prove a special challenge to the T1 transversal project, obviously in close collaboration with and with the full support of Cuenca University as full owner in the driver seat of the UCuenca IUC programme.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AAR	Annual Activity Report
ACORDES	(Programa de) Acompañamiento Organizacional para el Desarrollo
AP	Activity Programme
BA	Bachelor of Arts
BSc.	Bachelor of Science
BTCCTB	Belgian Technical Cooperation
CD	Compact Disk
CEA	Centro de Estudios Amb
CEAACES	Consejo Nacional De Evaluación Y Acreditación De La Educación Superior Del Ecuador
CES	National Council of Higher Education
CESPLA	Centro de Estudios Sociales y Politicos Latinoamericanos
CITYPRES	World Heritage City Preservation Management Project (V.5 vertical project)
CONACYT	Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología.
CONEA	National Council on Evaluation and Accreditation
CONESUP	Consejo Nacional de Educación Superior
CPI	Corruption Perception Index (Tranparency International)
CTG	Close the Gap (VLIR programme)
DAC	Development Assistance Committee (of the OECD)
DE	Distant Education
DGD	Directorate General for Development Cooperation (the former DGDC)
DGIC	Directorate General for International Cooperation
DIUC	Dirección de Investigaciones de la Universidad de Cuenca
DPG	Directorate for Post-Graduates
DR	Development Relevance
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
EC	European Commission
EE	Environmental Engineering
EI	Own Initiative Project (Eigen Initiatief Project)
EPN	Escuela Politécnica Nacional
ESPOL	Escuela Superior Polytécnica del Litoral
ETAPA	Empresa Municipal de Telecomunicaciones, Agua Potable, Alcantarillado y Saneamiento

EU	European Union
EUR	Euro
FWO	Research Foundation Flanders (Fonds voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek)
GIS	Geographic Information System
HDI	Human Development Index (UNDP)
HEI	Higher Education Institute
HUMSEX	Human Sexuality Project (V.2 Vertical Project)
ICOS	Instellingscoördinator Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (entity within the Flemish universities in charge of the coordination of university development cooperation)
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFS	International Foundation for Science (IFS)
INCO	European Union academic cooperation programme
INPC	Instituto Nacional del Patrimonio Cultural
INSTCHAN	Institutional Change to Strengthen Research and Education (T.1 Transversal Project)
IR	Intermediate Result
IS	Institutional Strengthening
IUC	Institutional University Cooperation
JU	Jimma University, Ethiopia
JSCM	Joint Steering Committee Meeting
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KRA	Key Result Area
KUL	University of Louvain (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven)
LAN	Local Area Network
LFA	Logical Framework Analysis / Approach
LogFrame	Logical Framework
LUC	Limburg University Centre (Limburgs Universitair Centrum)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEDPLAN	Pharmacological Characterization of Medicinal Plants Project (V.4 vertical project)
MIGDEV	International Migration and Local Development Project (V.6 vertical project)

MHO	Dutch programme on international university cooperation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MOV	Means of Verification (LogFrame)
MSc.	Master of Sciences
MTE	Mid-Term Evaluation
MU-K	Moi University, Kenya
N&S	North and South
N.A.	Not Applicable
N.I.	No Information available
NSSCF	North South South Cooperation Fund
NUFFIC	Dutch counterpart of the VLIR
NUTHEALTH	Food, Nutrition and Health Project (V.1 vertical project)
OD	Organisational Development
OECD	Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development
OVI	Objectively Verifiable Indicator
PC	Personal Computer
PCM	Programme/Project Cycle Management
Ph.D.	Doctor of Philosophy
PME	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation
PMES	Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System
PP	Partner Programme
PRECOM ³ OS	Preventive Conservation, Maintenance and Monitoring of Monuments and Sites
PROMAS	Programa para el Manejo del Agua y del Suelo
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSU	Programme Support Unit
PYDLOS	Población y Desarrollo Local Sustentable
Q&A	Question and Answer
RET	Research, Extension and Training
RIP	Research Initiative Programme
RUG	University of Ghent (Rijksuniversiteit Gent)
SENACYT	Secretaría Nacional de Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación
SENESCYT	Secretaría Nacional de Educación Superior, Ciencia, Tecnología e Innovación
SENPLADES	Secretaría Nacional de Planificación y Desarrollo
TOR / ToR	Terms of Reference

UA	University of Antwerp
UCOS	University Centre for Development Cooperation (Universitair Centrum voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking)
UCuenca	Universidad de Cuenca
UDC	University Development Cooperation
UNDP	United Nations Development Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UOS	Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (= UDC)
USD	United States Dollar
VLIR	Flemish Interuniversity Council (Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad)
VND	Vietnamese Dong
VUB	University of Brussels (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)
VVOB	Vereniging voor Opleidingsprogramma's in het Buitenland (Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance)
WAN	Wide Area Network
WATQUAL	Integrated Water Quality Management Project (V.3 vertical project)

List of Annexes

The annexes can be found on [our website](#), under 'publications'

1. Evaluation Terms of Reference
2. The evaluation process: Gantt chart of main phases and activities with outputs
3. Evaluation mission programme of activities (UCuenca field visit and interviews in Belgium)
4. UCuenca IUC programme performance on IUC Key Result Areas (KRAs), measured on KRA Key Performance Indicators: Summary tables by IUC KRA
5. UCuenca IUC programme performance of IUC processes of change in relation to the baseline situation, assessed on change indicators defined at project formulation (by IUC project and project intermediate result)
6. Sets of guiding questions for the semi-structured evaluation interviews with Flemish and UCuenca partners, by UCuenca IUC programme and constituent projects
7. Selective excerpts from North and South IUC programme stakeholders replies to (programme coordinators, project leaders and team members) to the sets of guiding questions / discussion topics prepared by the Evaluation Team to guide the semi-structured interviews (full versions on electronic file)
8. UCuenca IUC financial management: Summary budget, transfers and expenditures tables
9. VLIR-UOS questionnaire on IUC programme financial management completed by the UCuenca IUC Programme Support Unit (PSU)
10. Strategic priorities for UCuenca IUC Programme Phase II - Consolidation of priorities determined by the seven projects under the UCuenca IUC programme
11. Aide Mémoire / debriefing note prepared by the Evaluation Team for the evaluation debriefing session with the UCuenca and Flemish partners on 08 February 2011 in preparation of the Joint Steering Committee Meeting of 09 February 2011
12. Excerpts from the 09 February 2011 evaluation debriefing presentation by the Evaluation Commission (full version on electronic file)
13. Additional contextual background information on Ecuador, the Universidad de Cuenca, and the VLIR- UCuenca IUC programme
14. Summary tables on mobility between UCuenca and Flanders in Annual Programme 2010
15. UCuenca IUC Key Result Areas (KRAs) performance measurement, scoring and rating tool with scorecard and dashboard features developed by the evaluation team

VLIR-UOS

university cooperation for development

Bolwerksquare 1a

1050 Brussels

Belgium

Tel. +32 (0)2 289 05 50

info@vliruos.be

www.vliruos.be

Publisher: Flemish Interuniversity Council, University Cooperation for Development (VLIR-UOS)

Design: VLIR-UOS

Registration: D/2011/10.960/9