Annual Report 2019

Inspiring future talents and leaders

Preface



Adapt to a changing world with global research
Right now, we are all still struggling with the vast impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global health and many other aspects of our lives. The current crisis perfectly illustrates the way in which the future of the North and South are connected. It shows how research is organised globally, and interacts with policymaking and civil society at large, based on the scientific right to initiate as well as societal demands. More than ever, it has become clear that we need to act on a global scale if we want to address the impact of global challenges. This is exactly what the VLIR-UOS collaboration model is designed to do: connect people and their expertise in sustainable international academic networks beyond continents, countries and communities.

Funding change…
By funding projects and scholarships, we aim to fund change. We contribute to agents of growth and change drivers who, with great commitment and ambition, will share and use their unique talents and knowledge within local and international networks, to impact future generations and local communities. VLIR-UOS is committed to all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) on the 2030 Agenda. In this edition of our annual report, we are focusing on gender equality and diversity, which was also the theme of our 2020 New Year's Event. We are also highlighting climate change as a key issue that has emerged as an urgent global challenge over the past few years, and especially in 2019. With several projects, we aim to illustrate how we are responding to this climate change.

Celebrating impact…
To be able to adapt to a changing world, VLIR-UOS promotes innovation and the creation of links between higher education institutions with governments, civil society actors and private partners in Belgium as well as in our partner countries. At our honorary degrees event on 15 May 2019, which closed off our 20th anniversary celebrations in 2018, we paid tribute to five experts from the South for their exceptional scientific and social impact.

Sharing minds, changing lives…
Shared knowledge and joint commitment and ambition make our world more resilient. This is what drives our world to adapt and to evolve. By sharing minds, we can change lives and inspire future talents and leaders to transform communities into safer, more sustainable places to live.
I would like to thank all the academics, students, alumni and other VLIR-UOS advocates who put their minds and hearts into building university cooperation for development work.
In this report, we present you some of their stories and other highlights of the year 2019.

Happy reading!
Kristien Verbrugghen, VLIR-UOS Director

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01



Community

VLIR-UOS community

Evaluation report ‘Creating the conditions for impact’ published

VLIR-UOS community

On the occasion of our 20th anniversary, we felt the time had come to look back and focus on the value and diversity of the results generated over time, which had a sustainable impact on people, institutions and communities in many countries across three continents. Throughout 2018 and 2019, we have been compiling success stories for our brand new publication 'Sharing minds, changing lives. 20 years of impact'.
The publication focuses on the specific added value, diversity and true impact of numerous projects within Flemish university cooperation for development. It is a testimony to the shared commitment, hard work, but also the passion and added value of working on this together. Because it is not only about sharing minds and changing lives. It is also about changing minds and sharing lives. We wanted to inspire academics to join the VLIR-UOS community and make a contribution to society through research, education and service to society. Furthermore, we wanted to illustrate the fact that universities and university colleges have an important role to play within development cooperation and the overall SDG challenges framework.
After a highly regrettable delay caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, our 20-year publication will soon be available as a tribute to the people who have helped make university cooperation for development into what it is today. It serves as a platform to tell their story, as they, together with many others, have been the driving force behind all the impact that university cooperation for development has generated. You may have previously seen a glimpse of these success stories, prior to publication. Keep an eye on our website, as there are many more to come!



VLIR-UOS enduring history

VLIR-UOS community

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VLIR-UOS enduring history

University cooperation for development at Flemish universities has existed for many decades. As of 1 January 1998, as part of a big reform in Belgian development cooperation, VLIR-UOS took over responsibility from the Belgian government for the policy to develop this specific type of development cooperation, and the budget to manage it. Since then, the organisation, its portfolio and funding opportunities, and its network have grown and changed considerably. VLIR-UOS has been able to innovate and multiply its funding and platform opportunities. As of 2003, university colleges have been gradually integrated into the VLIR-UOS network.

Close



VLIR-UOS enduring history

VLIR-UOS community

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Factoid

50
interviews

We conducted over **50 interviews** in our global community in order to obtain valuable input for our new publication: Sharing Minds, changing lives: 20 years of impact

2000
likes

Much to our satisfaction, we noticed that our community has been growing tremendously over the years, and continues to grow. Social media channels (such as Facebook and Twitter) are playing an important role in this respect. For example, our Facebook page reached the milestone of **2000 likes**. in May 2019!

Close



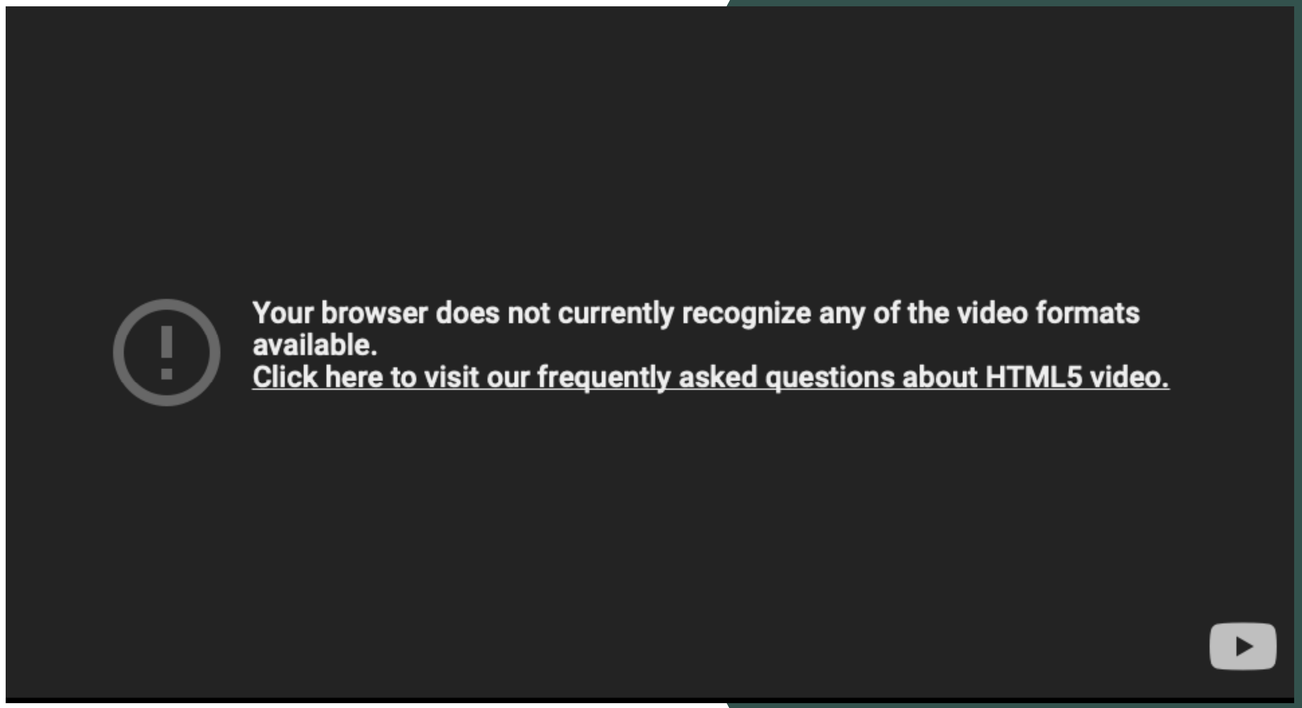
VLIR-UOS enduring history

Discover our corporate film

Finding innovative answers to global and local challenges, and positively impacting communities…

How does that work? Find the answer in five minutes, in our new corporate film.

Feel free to share with your networks!
Copy link: https://youtu.be/dhKBMqZgasI



Evaluation report ‘Creating the conditions for impact’ published

In December 2019, we published the evaluation report ‘Creating the conditions for impact’, organised by VLIR-UOS. This evaluation focused on a sample of concluded VLIR-UOS departmental projects and had two main objectives. First of all, it aimed to develop a clear conceptual framework clarifying different potential strategies linked to creating the conditions for uptake of new knowledge, services and/or applications generated through our projects. Secondly, the evaluation assessed the effectiveness and impact of a sample of VLIR-UOS-supported departmental projects, including field visits to nine projects.

The evaluation identified a number of (pre-)conditions and mechanisms which are conducive to the uptake of new knowledge, services and applications outside the academic context. By identifying and validating these preconditions and mechanisms, the evaluation has provided us with invaluable input regarding uptake strategies of VLIR-UOS projects. This will allow us to take the impact agenda one step further. This evaluation will be used to develop a toolbox that will help promoters and projects create conditions for uptake and eventually: impact in society.

infographic “creating the conditions for impact”

Syspons methodology

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Syspons methodology

The evaluation design was based on a contribution analysis in combination with process tracing. The contribution analysis was used to explore ‘established’ hypotheses for successful uptake from the conceptual framework; process tracing was based on alternative or ‘contested’ hypotheses from the framework, in order to identify or eliminate alternative explanatory factors for (putative) successful uptake.

The evaluation was implemented between March and October 2019. Within this period, the Syspons evaluation team conducted a literature review on research and knowledge uptake and valorisation, analysed VLIR-UOS documents, and conducted interviews. Furthermore, the evaluation team organised an online survey among the involved promoters of 47 departmental projects and conducted numerous interviews with stakeholders from nine selected departmental projects during field missions to Uganda, South Africa and Cuba. Incorporation of the conceptual framework in the chosen evaluation design allowed the evaluation team to test and refine it based on the evidence collected, and develop recommendations for how projects supported by VLIR-UOS can generate better conditions for research uptake and, therefore, have greater impact.

Close

02



Special focus on gender

Employee in the Spotlight

VLIR-UOS Gender policy 2020-2024

Setting the stage for Gender at New Year's Event

Two extraordinary women changing lives together in Mozambique

Celebrating female impact champions with honorary degrees

Employee in the spotlight

Inge Vandevyvere **has been a Programme Manager with VLIR-UOS since 2016. She is also our Gender Focal Point, a role she took up with determination to encourage and challenge project partners in making sure their development projects deliver on the engagements towards gender equality.**



Inge Vandevyvere

How would you describe your role as Gender Focal Point?
As gender focal point, I came across so many initiatives and possibilities to work on the topic. It was expected of me as focal point to pick out those relevant to our organization and translate them to our way of working. I really wanted to be capable of turning all the different inputs into one clear, shared focus. So in 2019, I decided, and was given the opportunity, to follow a course at the interuniversity Master of Gender and Diversity at the Institute of Development Policy (IOB). My goal as focal point is to create a clear and shared focus on gender within the VLIR-UOS community. I want to share good practices on integrating gender from and for university cooperation for development.

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Factoid

Close

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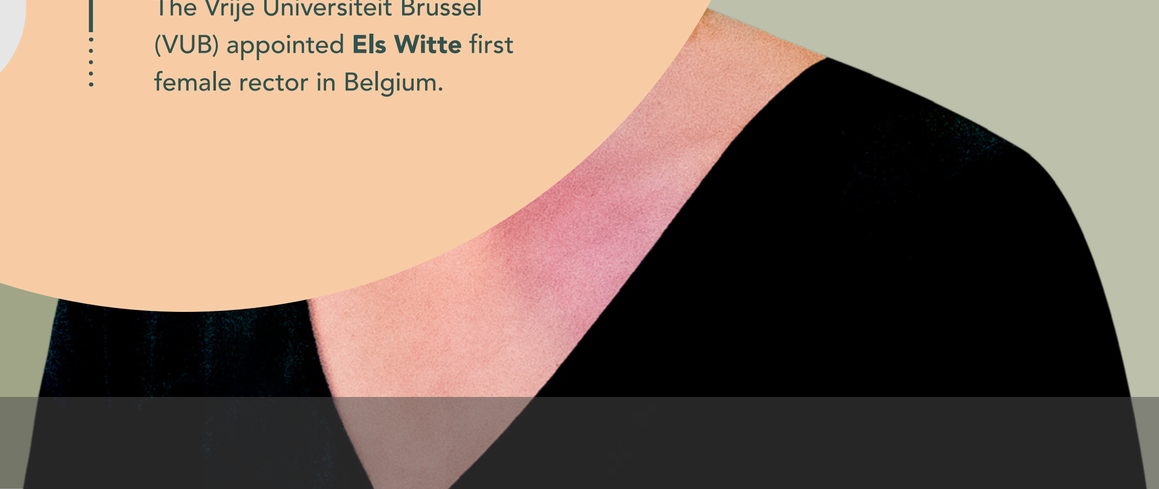
Ghent University opened its doors for female students at the first Flemish university.

1925

Irène Van der Bracht was appointed first female professor at Ghent University.

1994

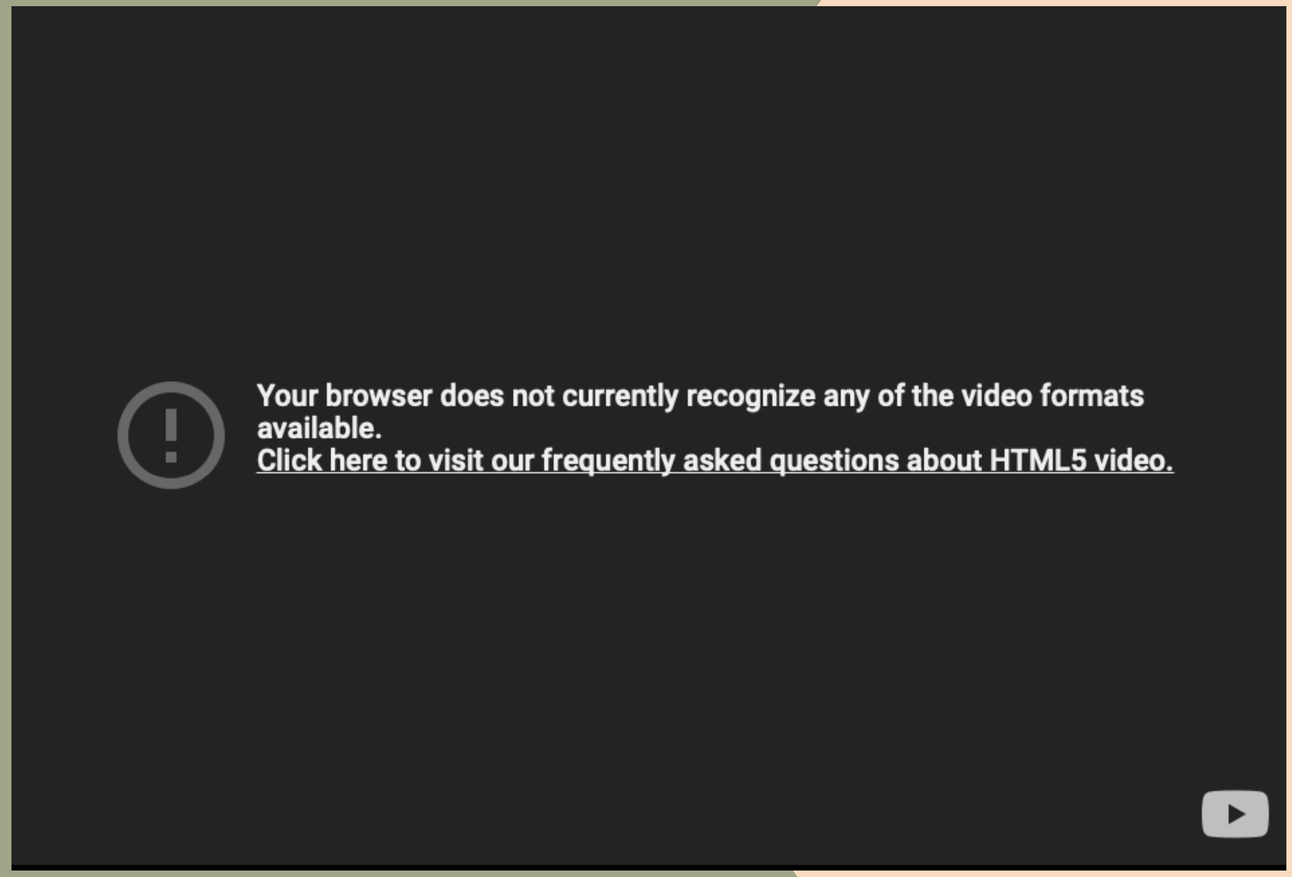
The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) appointed **Els Witte** first female rector in Belgium.



Inge Vandevyvere

Where do you find inspiration?
Two experts in gender issues have been very inspiring for my work as a gender focal point. ***Dr Londa Schiebinge***r, an American professor and expert in gender & science, developed the **3-fixes-model**, an interesting entry point for looking at gender in the academic world.

How do you apply your learnings from Dr Schiebinger to your own work?
When I apply her model to the realities of VLIR-UOS, the first approach looks at the number of women. For example, I examine current gender balance in the projects and organisations involved. Then we implement measures that contribute to achieving a more positive balance. The second approach, fix the organization, consists of reflecting on what gender means, also implicitly, for VLIR-UOS and its partner organisations, in Flanders and the partner countries, and how this translates to organisational culture and way of working. There are two ways of looking at fixing the knowledge. Gender can be integrated into the content of VLIR-UOS projects, within the research, educational and uptake activities. The second way is to integrate gender throughout the entire project cycle, from formulation to evaluation. In both cases, as Dr Schiebinger explains, the aim is to support people in understanding how to integrate the gender element into the experimental or intervention design from the beginning.





Dr Jemimah Njuki

You said you had a second source of inspiration?
Yes, ***Dr Jemimah Njuki*** at Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Founded in 1970, IDRC funds research in developing countries to promote growth, reduce poverty, and drive large-scale positive change. That sounds a bit like our 'sharing minds, changing lives', although IDRC functions quite differently, and on a larger scale.
Dr Njuki works as a senior programme officer at the regional office in Nairobi Kenya, where I had a very interesting talk with her.

What are the main lessons you learned from Dr Njuki's experience?
One of the key lessons highlighted by Dr Njuki is that, even when you close gender gaps in access to information or health systems, real impact is only going to come from addressing the underlying causes of gender inequality, whether they are norms and cultural beliefs, policy frameworks or structural and systemic inequalities. A second lesson is that partnerships will be very critical. We have to create partnerships with civil society organisations, with women's and men's movements.
A third lesson is about getting gender into other aspects of our work as an organisation, because if we don't look at our internal processes as well, that can also compromise the extent to which we integrate gender in our external programming.

What are the biggest challenges to gender equality?
Many gender issues are also cultural issues. As Dr Njuki explains, there is the capacity to understand that culture is constantly changing. Our role as development and research organisations is to facilitate and accelerate that change and support local movements that are already striving for it. The second biggest challenge is how to arrive at systemic change. This is fundamental because, until the whole of humanity also starts to see marginalized groups as humans worthy of living meaningful lives, lives of dignity, we still really have a long way to go.

What personal lesson have you learned in your role as gender focal point?
As gender focal point, I was very soon confronted with the sensitivity of the subject: Although not my intention, I often felt how the subject personally affects many people. Sometimes even leading to individuals feeling attacked simply for being men. Or, the other way round, people might attack me as they see me as an 'angry feminist'. That's why I think the intersectional perspective is so important. It overcomes traditional binary thinking. which categorizes men and women, masculinity and femininity. This is too often associated with feelings of 'us against them'. Intersectionality allows the making of connections between people instead of dividing people.

Intersectionality



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Intersectionality

Intersectionality refers to the way in which multiple forms of discrimination – based on, for example, for example, gender, race, sexuality, disability and class – overlap and interact with one another to shape how different individuals and groups experience discrimination. For example, when a woman is subject to discrimination, it is not only her gender that shapes her experience of discrimination, but also her race, socio-economic class and other factors.

Close

Intersectionality

VLIR-UOS
Gender policy 2020-2024

In 2019, VLIR-UOS has started the process of updating its gender policy for the period 2020-2024. The policy reflects how VLIR-UOS wants to contribute to more gender equality in line with the aspirations of the Flemish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and international and Belgian development cooperation. The policy is also considered as an instrument for conducting a dialogue with partners on gender-sensitive issues and for putting gender on the agenda. The gender policy focuses on interventions (programmes, projects and scholarships) on the one hand and the organisation VLIR-UOS on the other. It is part of a broader policy development trajectory which will include various diversity issues, with the ambition of realising enhanced equality and inclusion in society.



"Ideally, there should be no need for a specific gender policy as every person in the world should have the opportunity to fully develop their unique self", says ***Veerle Draulans***, professor at the Faculty of Social Sciences at KU Leuven and chairperson of the VLIR-UOS Expert Group on Gender, Diversity and Development. "But when we look at the facts and society, we find that some groups are privileged while others face disadvantage and discrimination. Against this reality, it is often forgotten that women are not a numeric minority but they represent half of the world population. This is what makes gender studies so particular. Whatever the project, if you leave out half of your society's potential talent, you lose a huge amount of capacity, opportunities and development with them."

Given a context of gender inequality in higher education, our operating area, VLIR-UOS saw the need to develop a gender policy. Since 2015, VLIR-UOS has a formal gender policy with the commitment to achieving gender equity and equality both in the VLIR-UOS partner countries and Belgium by funding interventions in the higher education sector and in society in general. To take up this challenge, we need an ambitious gender policy that is adapted to the current reality.

VLIR-UOS
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Factoid

In Flanders in 2018, **28% of staff at professorial** level were women. Looking at the level of full professors, the **balance lowers to 23%.**

At the level of **Flemish university colleges**, women **represent 59% of staff**.

Close

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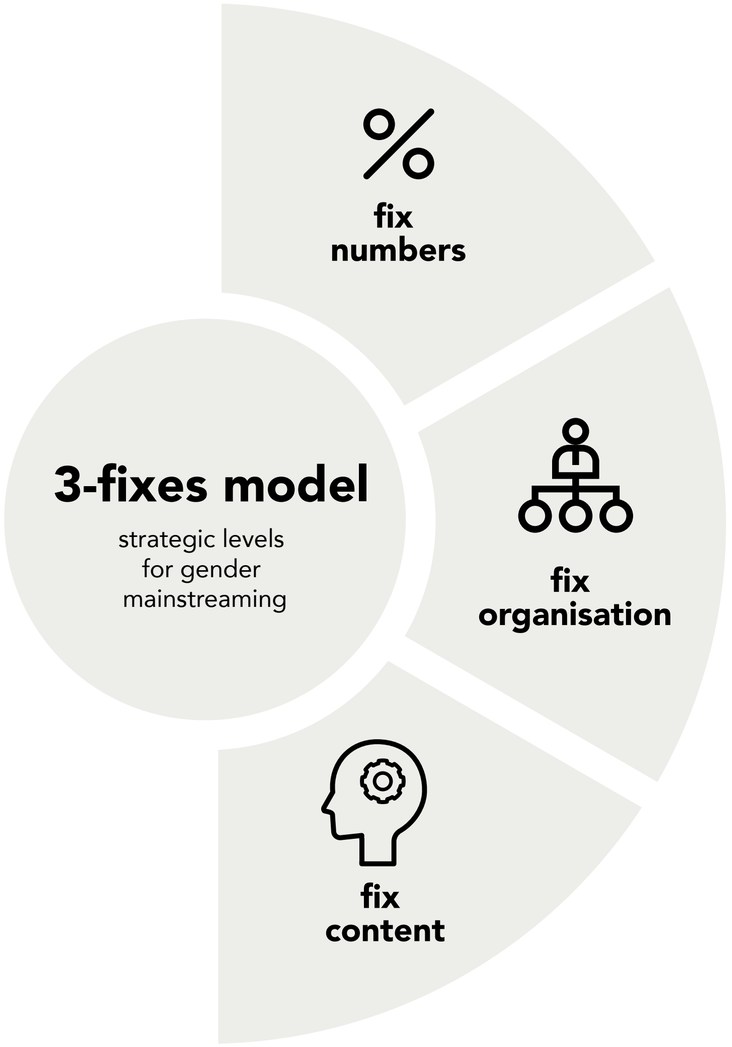


I hope we have come to a point where it is no longer necessary to convince the academic world of why gender matters. I hope everybody realises that missing out the perspective of half of the population does not match with the idea of academic excellence; that gender equality is an accelerator for sustainable development, as put forward by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), with an ambition of leaving no one behind. And this sustainable development is exactly what VLIR-UOS intends to contribute to.

- Luc Sels, Rector KULeuven and VLIR Chairperson

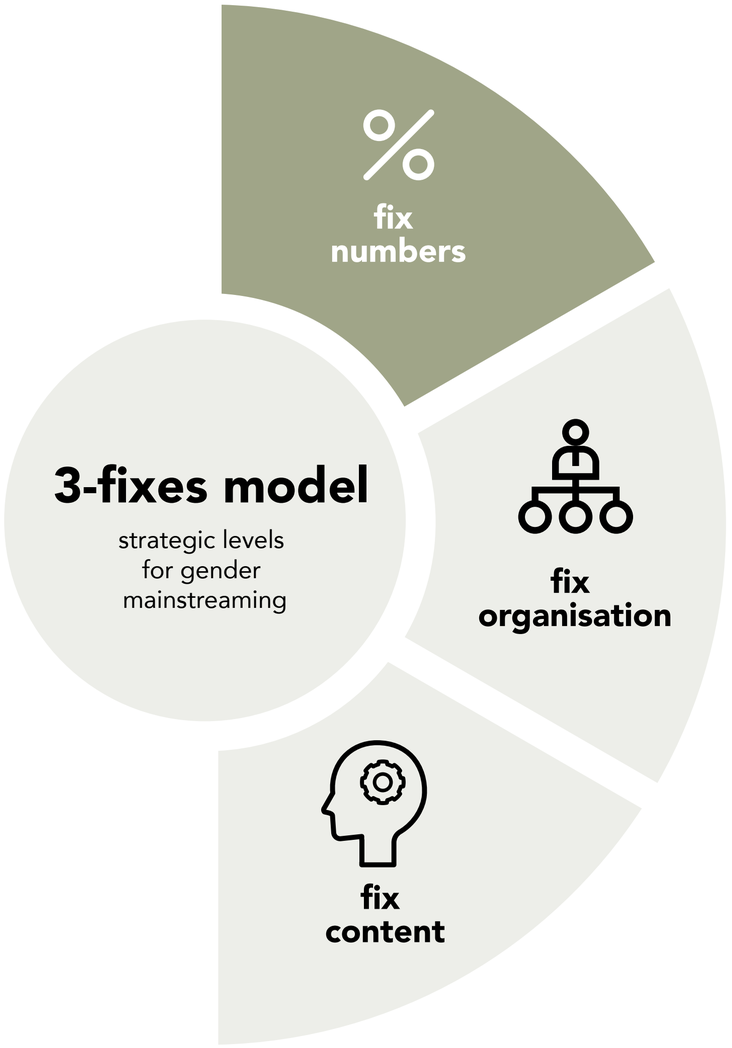
3-fixes model: three strategic levels for gender mainstreaming

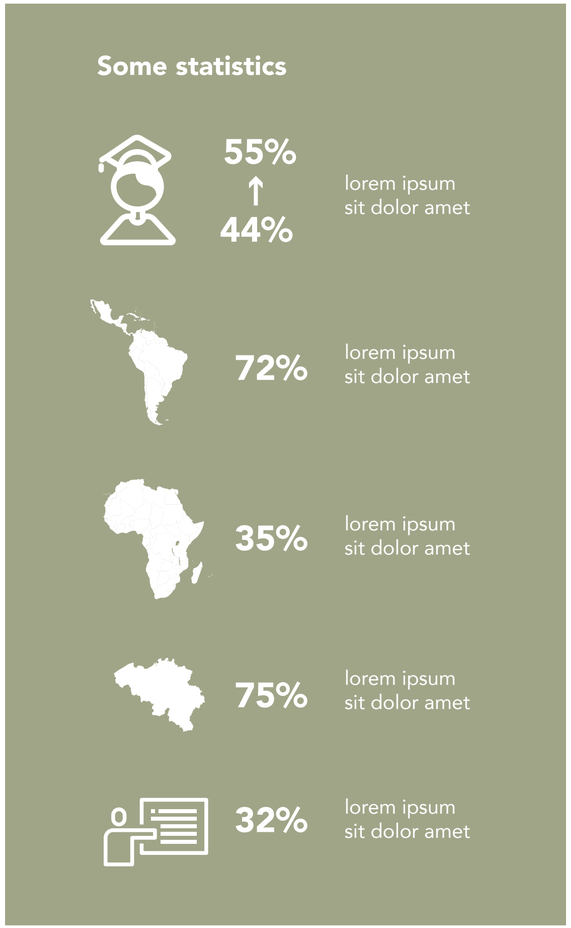
A new feature used for updating the gender policy is the introduction of the "3-fixes model" developed by Londa Schiebinger in 2010. The model with three strategic levels for gender mainstreaming is translated to the context of VLIR-UOS and used throughout the policy.
Inge Vandevyvere, our Gender Focal Point, explains: the first level "fix the numbers" looks at the current gender balance in the projects and organisations involved and puts in place measures that contribute to achieving a more positive balance. The second level "fix the organisation" reflects on what gender means for VLIR-UOS and its partner organisations and how this is translated in the organisational culture. Finally, the third level "fixing the content" looks at the way gender is integrated into the VLIR-UOS projects, within the research, educational and uptake activities, and aims to support people in understanding how to get the gender element into the intervention design (education, research, uptake) from the beginning.



3-fixes model: three strategic levels for gender mainstreaming

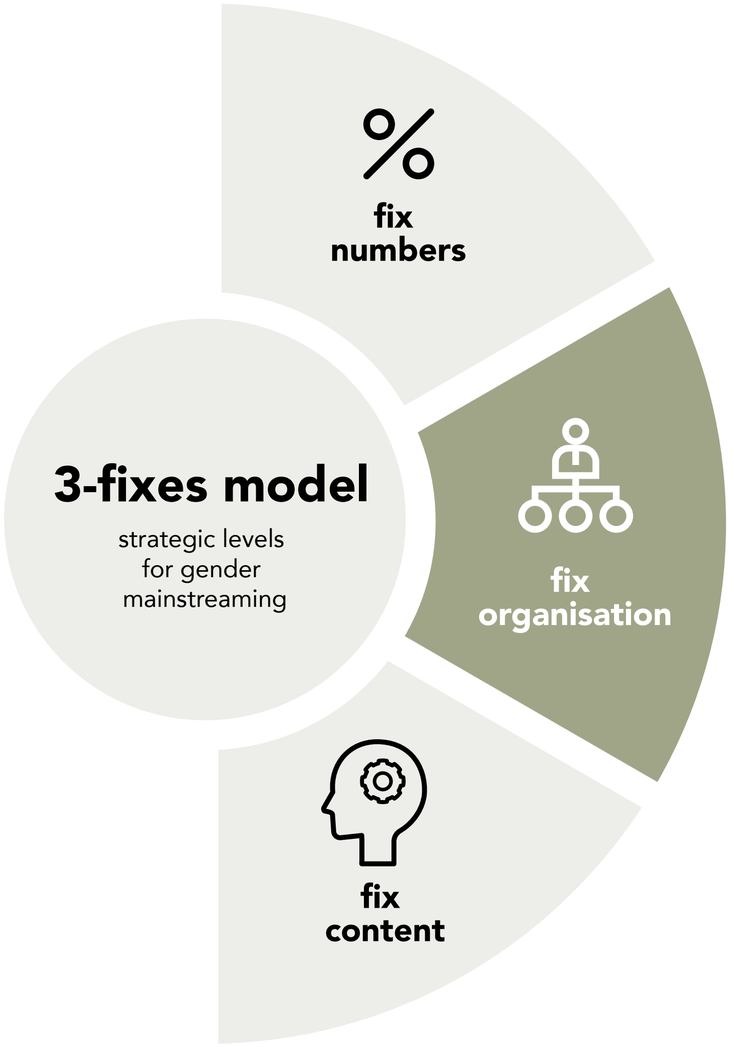
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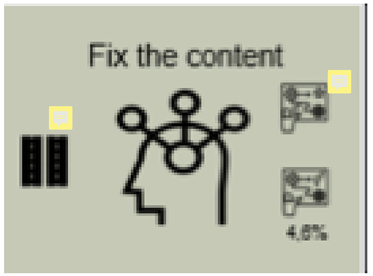




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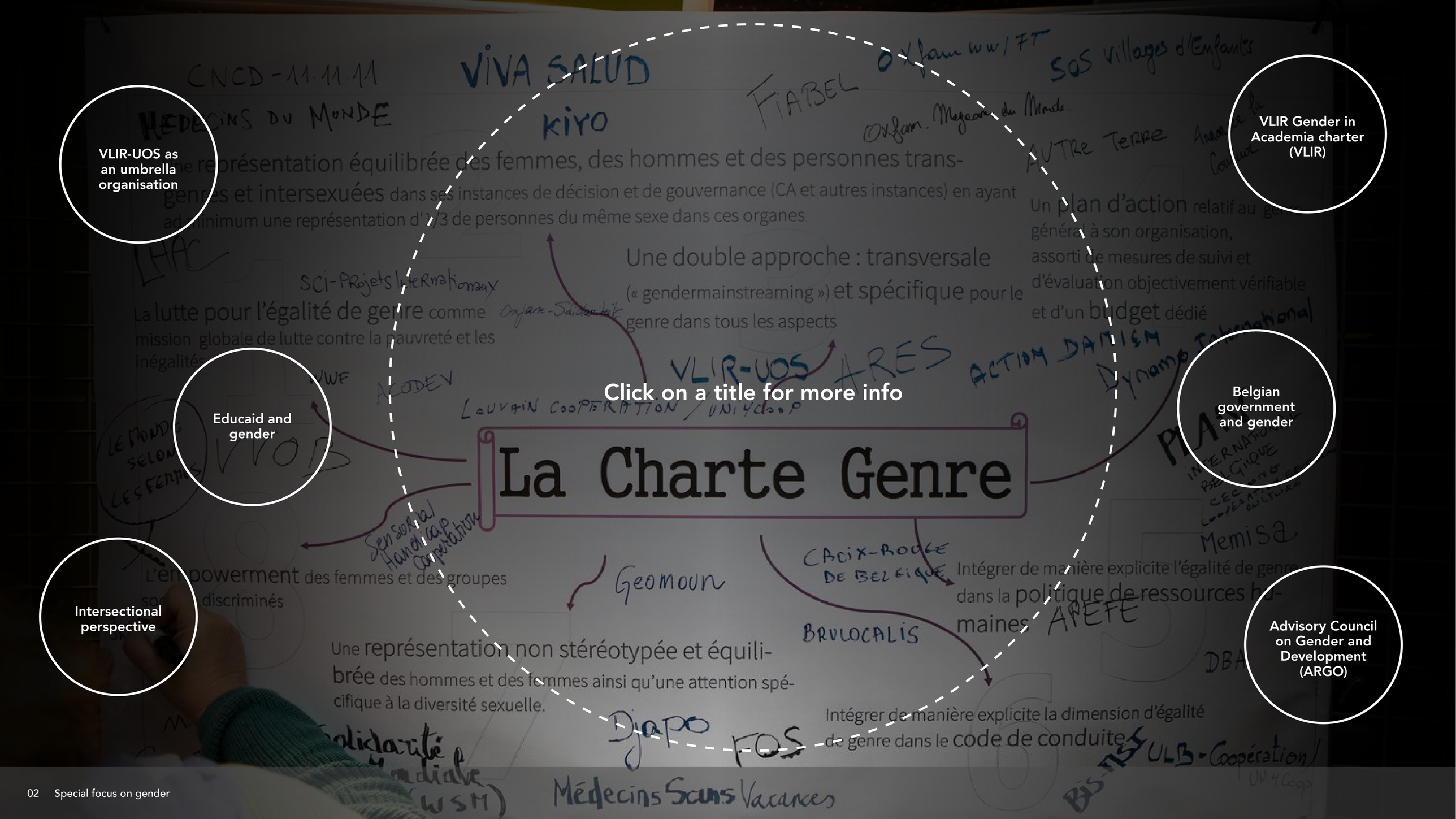


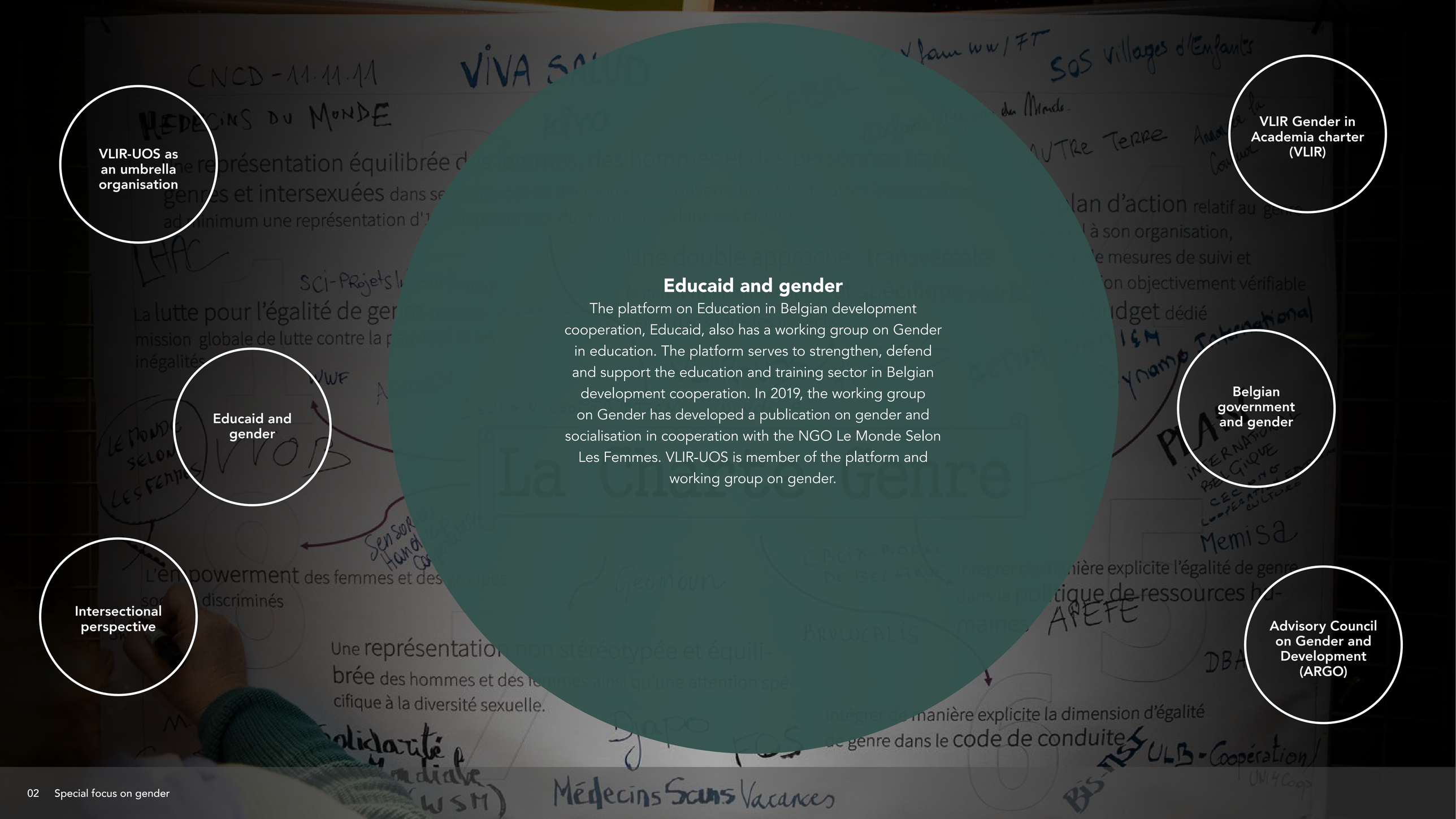


Some statistics

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10 out of 24
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VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation
VLIR Gender in Academia charter (VLIR)
Educaid and gender
Belgian government and gender
Intersectional perspective
Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)
une représentation équilibrée des femmes, des hommes et des personnes trans-genres et intersexuées dans ses instances de décision et de gouvernance (CA et autres instances) en ayant au minimum une représentation d'1/3 de personnes du même sexe dans ces organes
Une double approche : transversale (« gendermainstreaming ») et spécifique pour le genre dans tous les aspects
Un plan d'action relatif au général à son organisation, assorti de mesures de suivi et d'évaluation objectivement vérifiable et d'un budget dédié
La lutte pour l'égalité de genre comme mission globale de lutte contre la pauvreté et les inégalités
L'empowerment des femmes et des groupes discriminés
Intégrer de manière explicite l'égalité de genre dans la politique de ressources humaines
Une représentation non stéréotypée et équilibrée des hommes et des femmes ainsi qu'une attention spécifique à la diversité sexuelle.
Intégrer de manière explicite la dimension d'égalité de genre dans le code de conduite



Educaid and gender

The platform on Education in Belgian development cooperation, Educaid, also has a working group on Gender in education. The platform serves to strengthen, defend and support the education and training sector in Belgian development cooperation. In 2019, the working group on Gender has developed a publication on gender and socialisation in cooperation with the NGO Le Monde Selon Les Femmes. VLIR-UOS is member of the platform and working group on gender.

VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation

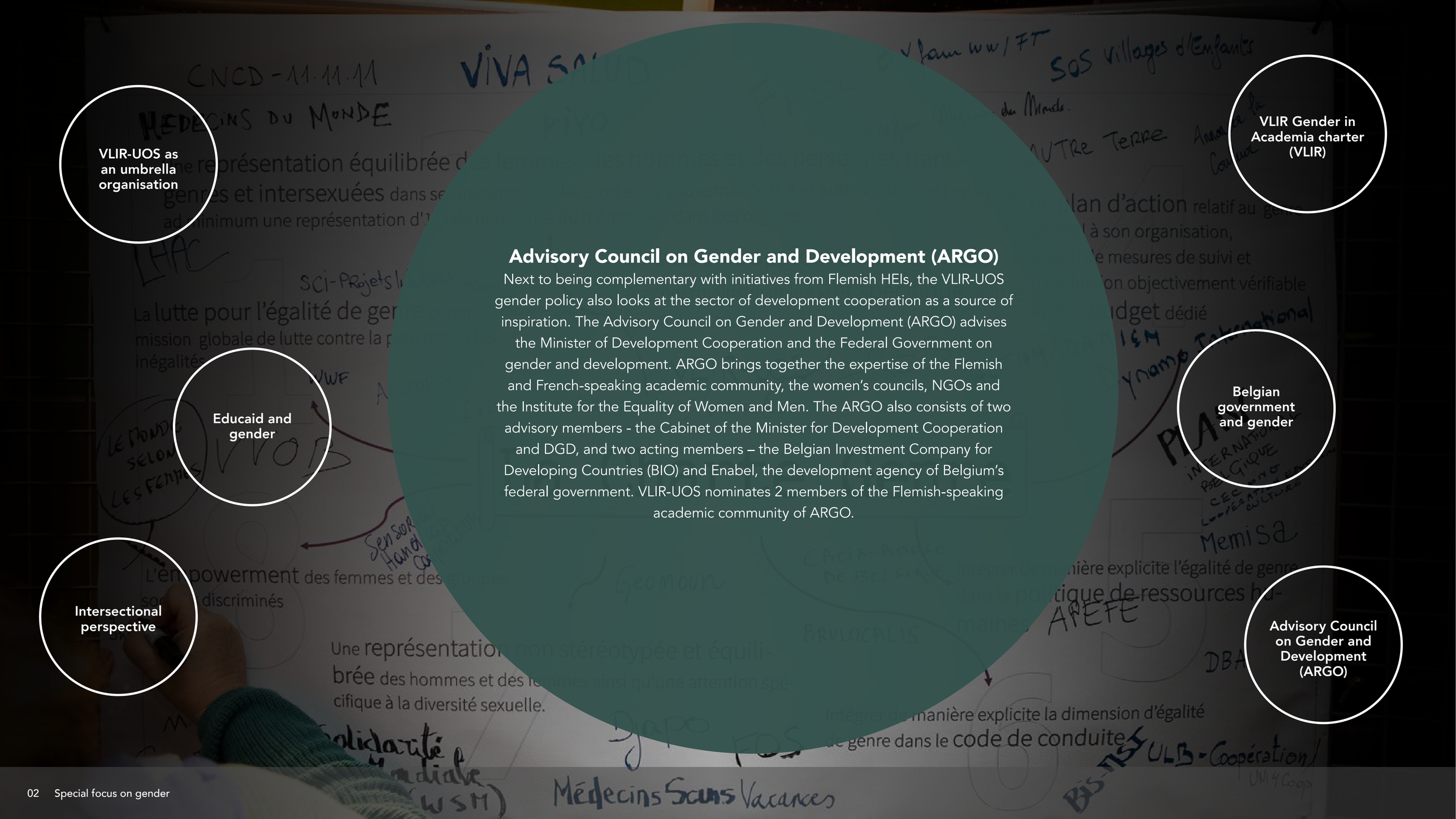
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Intersectional perspective

Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)



Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)

Next to being complementary with initiatives from Flemish HEIs, the VLIR-UOS gender policy also looks at the sector of development cooperation as a source of inspiration. The Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO) advises the Minister of Development Cooperation and the Federal Government on gender and development. ARGO brings together the expertise of the Flemish and French-speaking academic community, the women's councils, NGOs and the Institute for the Equality of Women and Men. The ARGO also consists of two advisory members - the Cabinet of the Minister for Development Cooperation and DGD, and two acting members – the Belgian Investment Company for Developing Countries (BIO) and Enabel, the development agency of Belgium's federal government. VLIR-UOS nominates 2 members of the Flemish-speaking academic community of ARGO.



VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation

VLIR Gender in Academia charter (VLIR)

Educaid and gender

Belgian government and gender

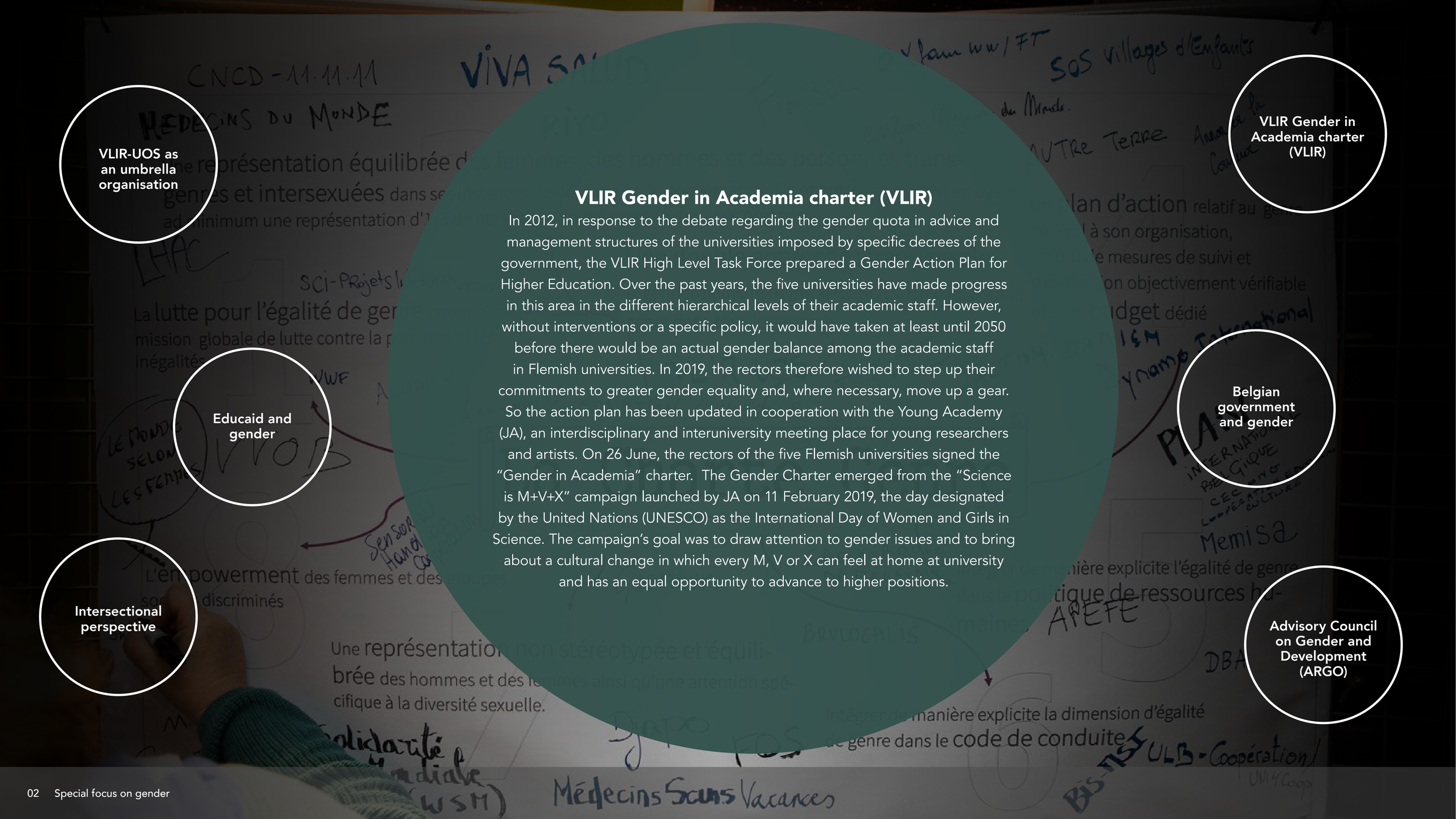
Intersectional perspective

Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)

Belgian government and gender

According to the Belgian law on development cooperation of 2013 (modified in 2016), gender needs to be integrated in a transversal way within all interventions of the Belgian development cooperation. Therefore, the Royal Decree (April 2014) regarding the subsidisation of the non-governmental development cooperation actors, stipulates that the integration of gender as a transversal theme is one of the 10 criteria on which the quality of the organisational management of a non-governmental actor would be measured. A strategy note on Gender in Belgian Development Cooperation was published in 2016, putting forward the two-track approach of gender mainstreaming mixed with specific actions.

In 2019, a policy supporting research project started to strengthen DGD at the level of the implementation of its gender policy, financed by VLIR-UOS. The project aims to support and strengthen the integration of gender into the Belgian development cooperation policy.



VLIR Gender in Academia charter (VLIR)

In 2012, in response to the debate regarding the gender quota in advice and management structures of the universities imposed by specific decrees of the government, the VLIR High Level Task Force prepared a Gender Action Plan for Higher Education. Over the past years, the five universities have made progress in this area in the different hierarchical levels of their academic staff. However, without interventions or a specific policy, it would have taken at least until 2050 before there would be an actual gender balance among the academic staff in Flemish universities. In 2019, the rectors therefore wished to step up their commitments to greater gender equality and, where necessary, move up a gear. So the action plan has been updated in cooperation with the Young Academy (JA), an interdisciplinary and interuniversity meeting place for young researchers and artists. On 26 June, the rectors of the five Flemish universities signed the "Gender in Academia" charter. The Gender Charter emerged from the "Science is M+V+X" campaign launched by JA on 11 February 2019, the day designated by the United Nations (UNESCO) as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. The campaign's goal was to draw attention to gender issues and to bring about a cultural change in which every M, V or X can feel at home at university and has an equal opportunity to advance to higher positions.

VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation



Intersectional perspective

Intersectionality is an approach developed by American civil rights advocate, **Kimberlé Crenshaw**, distinguished professor of Law at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and professor at the Columbia Law School, where she specialises in race and gender issues. Crenshaw describes intersectionality as "a metaphor for understanding the ways that multiple forms of inequality and disadvantage sometimes compound themselves and create obstacles". Intersectionality emphasises that vulnerability and discrimination are often the result of a combination of characteristics, with gender being worldwide an important one in this combination of what makes people vulnerable.

Defining the crucial vulnerabilities in specific contexts is the first necessary step for trying to minimise these vulnerabilities. So the gender policy also tries to take other factors into account, next to gender, like country of origin or age. However, the precarious position of women at universities in many partner countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, makes a specific gender focus legitimate. The encouragement of the reflex to adopt a gender perspective also contributes to increased attention for other factors of intersectionality. Raising awareness of implicit gender prejudices provides insight into similar mechanisms concerning other aspects of identity that increase people's vulnerability in certain situations. Updating the gender policy is a first step in a longer trajectory, as VLIR-UOS also aims to develop policies regarding other diversity issues based on a common perspective on intersectionality and inclusion, starting from an analysis of the dimensions that increase people's vulnerability.

VLIR Gender in Academia charter (VLIR)

Educaid and gender

Belgian government and gender

Intersectional perspective

Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)



VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation

The complexity of VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation which does not implement interventions itself is an important feature for each policy developed by VLIR-UOS. VLIR-UOS sets out the framework for Flemish university cooperation for development. Higher education institutions in Flanders and the partner countries implement the interventions. The gender policy should take into account both levels, reflecting a realistic level of ambition with a difference between the own organisation (VLIR-UOS) and the higher education institutions involved.

An important starting principle for updating the policy is the complementarity with already existing initiatives, commitments or engagements made and policy documents elaborated for example at the level of the Flemish HEIs, through the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR). VLIR aims at promoting dialogue and cooperation between the Flemish universities. Within the policy domain, Diversity and Social Policy, the Flemish universities design common standards and action plans related to diversity and equal opportunities' policy for their students and staff. A specific working group has been set up for Gender. These existing frameworks have been a source of inspiration for VLIR-UOS but needed translation to the very specific context of university cooperation for development.

VLIR-UOS as an umbrella organisation

VLIR Gender in Academia charter (VLIR)

Educaid and gender

Belgian government and gender

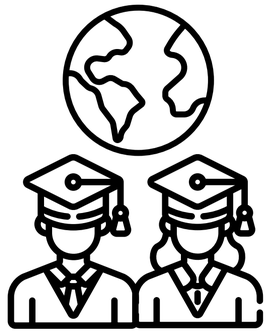
Intersectional perspective

Advisory Council on Gender and Development (ARGO)

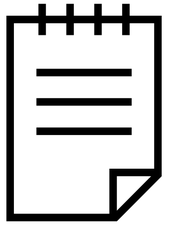
International Women's Day 2019

On 8 March 2019, we celebrated International Women's Day and joined social media networks with the hashtag #Balanceforbetter. We also took the opportunity to highlight some of our achievements in terms of gender balance.

With still a lot of work ahead of us, we are happy to report on some of the direct results of VLIR-UOS commitment to promoting gender equity and equality in higher education.



Since 1990, more women than men complete tertiary education in most countries. Yet, **54% of PhD graduates** and **71% of all researchers are men**.



50% balance

For the **scholarships intake of 2018**, there was a **50-50 balance** between male and female students.



Three of our most important partner universities in **Cuba** have **female rectors**

University 1

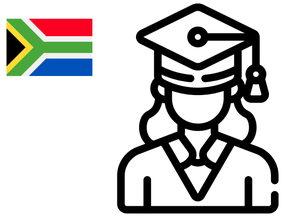
University 2

University 3



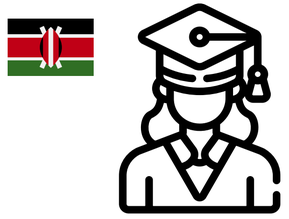
13 out of 19

Out of 19 **Philippine scholars** for the Master-scholarships intake in 2018, 13 were women.



5 out of 8

Out of 8 **Kenyan scholars** for the short training programme scholarships intake in 2018, 5 were women.



48%

of the **South-African (co-) promoters** who submitted a project for the call in 2018 were women.

Setting the stage for Gender at New Year's Event

While developing the new gender policy for 2020-2024, we decided to put gender at the centre of our 2020 New Year's Event. This event would not only be the starting point of communicating about renewing our gender policy, but also an exciting opportunity to gain and share insights on gender in academic cooperation for development.

A set of goals were set to achieve the intended outcome. The event would offer a stage to demonstrate, illustrate, inspire and bring together: demonstrate the importance of gender for the academic research community; illustrate how gender can be integrated into various projects and how it fits with our slogan 'sharing minds, changing lives'; inspire academic researchers by unfolding the work done in formulating VLIR-UOS commitments and ambitions in gender equality and bring together a wide network by expanding the knowledge to the Belgian and international development cooperation. Once the outlines were defined, it was time to assemble a distinguished crew of academics, experts and researchers to bring the event to life. On the scene would be our guest speakers Luc Sels, Inge Vandevyvere, Johan De Tavernier, keynote speaker Amanda Austin and our director, Kristien Verbrugghen.

Click on the pictures for highlights of their reflections.



Kristien Verbrugghen



Luc Sels



Johan Tavernier



Amanda Austin



Inge Vandevyvere

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Kristien Verbrugghe

Click on the pictures for highlights of their reflections.

Factoid

In 2017, **42% of academic staff in tertiary education** worldwide were women and **only 29% of researchers** were women. Only **13% of HEIs** in 27 EU countries who occupy leadership positions were women.

Close



Luc Sels



Johan Tavernier



Inge Vandevyvere

Setting the stage for Gender at New Year's Event

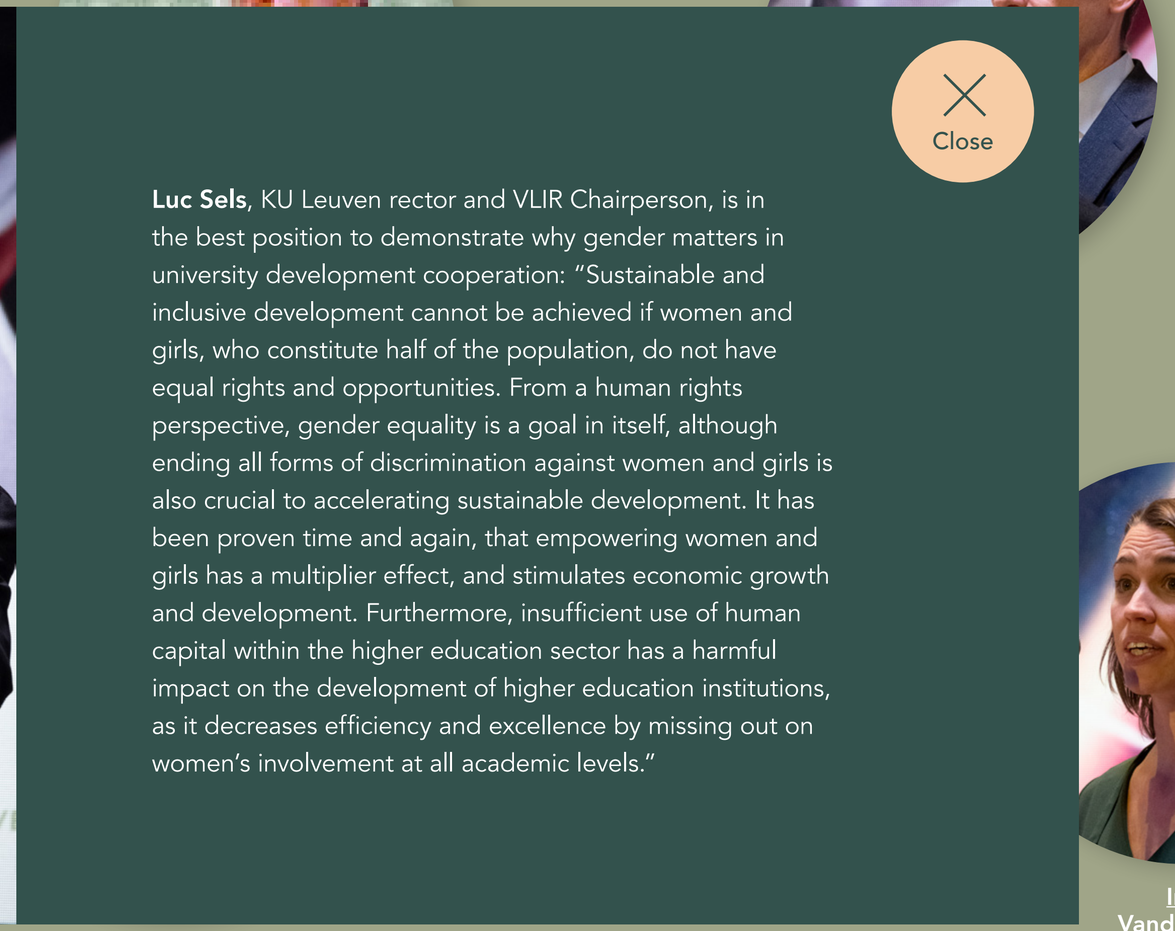
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highlights of their reflections.





Close

Luc Sels, KU Leuven rector and VLIR Chairperson, is in the best position to demonstrate why gender matters in university development cooperation: "Sustainable and inclusive development cannot be achieved if women and girls, who constitute half of the population, do not have equal rights and opportunities. From a human rights perspective, gender equality is a goal in itself, although ending all forms of discrimination against women and girls is also crucial to accelerating sustainable development. It has been proven time and again, that empowering women and girls has a multiplier effect, and stimulates economic growth and development. Furthermore, insufficient use of human capital within the higher education sector has a harmful impact on the development of higher education institutions, as it decreases efficiency and excellence by missing out on women's involvement at all academic levels."

Amanda Austin



Inge Vandevyvere

Setting the stage for Gender at New Year's Event

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highlights of their reflections.



Amanda Austin



Close

Preparing for the New Year's Event, our VLIR-UOS director, **Kristien Verbrugghen**, expressed her hope that, in 2020, the global challenges the world is facing will be the key reference when identifying priorities for policy work and action at Belgian level: "With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a guiding framework, having dreams and ambitions as to what universities and university colleges can and need to do in the search for sustainable answers to global and local challenges such as poverty, migration, climate change and worldwide conflicts, and as to their responsibility to train students to become world citizens with a critical, resilient stance in life… Having those dreams and ambitions is no luxury, but a necessity, and an urgent one."



Inge Vandevyvere

Setting the stage for Gender at New Year's Event

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Amanda Austin



Close

Amanda Austin, Head of Policy and Advocacy for Equal Measures 2030, was invited as our keynote speaker to talk about the SDG Gender Index 2019. To the fact that 2.1 billion girls and women live in countries that won't reach key gender equality targets by 2030 at the current pace, she adds: "Data is a buzz word, it's used everywhere and we get lost in what that really means. Equal Measures 2030 is about making data understandable and exciting by visualising it into something that you can use to make a change. We believe that gender data could be more powerful if put into the hands of organisations and people advocating for gender equality, who are properly supported and trained to use it more effectively."



Inge Vandevyvere

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Amanda Austin



Close

To get a clear picture of the current situation and the gender ambitions of VLIR-UOS, we turn to ***Johan De Tavernier***, professor at KU Leuven and VLIR-UOS Chairperson. With his analysis, based on the 3-fix-model, he sheds light on "gender and VLIR-UOS as it is today" and "as we want it to be":
"Some crucial steps have been taken to move in the direction of a better world to live in. More gender balance will take time and resources, but today we want to bring to the floor, a clear, shared focus in mind. It is our common responsibility to aim for the highest possible impact in our interventions. We want to share the gender mainstreaming inspiration with as many people as possible both in the North and the South, so "they and we" can make the changes needed for a better world to live in."
"Yes, we are contributing to gender equality, but we should and we will be even more ambitious"



Inge Vandevyvere

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Amanda Austin



Close

Inge Vandevyvere, Programme Manager at VLIR-UOS, is our Employee in the spotlight in this annual report. In her role as Gender Focal Point, she is invited as a guest speaker to share good practices on integrating gender from and for university cooperation for development: "My goal as a focal point is to create a clear and shared focus on gender within our VLIR-UOS community. I believe a focus on gender is justified. It does not mean that other dimensions are considered to be of less importance or are not taken into account at all. Raising awareness on implicit prejudices about gender also provides insights into comparable mechanisms concerning other aspects of identity that increase vulnerability. Another insight from the intersectional perspective is the importance of co-creation. In elaborating policies, in developing proposals, in doing science, co-creation is an opportunity to make our work more inclusive.



Inge Vandevyvere

Two extraordinary women changing lives together in Mozambique

For our new publication 'Sharing minds, changing lives. 20 years of impact', we started to put together our most inspiring content and ended up with a very precious compilation of impact stories. One of our scoop articles published on our website is related to gender equality. It is the story of two women with totally different backgrounds whose shared idealism led to the improvement of the fate of many women in the world.

Farida Mamad, lecturer at Eduardo Mondlane University (UEM) in Maputo, Mozambique, and ***Petra Foubert***, professor at Hasselt University's Faculty of Law, are both passionate about law and share a great amount of idealism about using their knowledge to improve the fate of many women, particularly in Mozambique. They met in 2013, when Foubert was leading a project of the Desafio programme at UEM involving social rights and social protection in particular, with a specific focus on health rights and rights for people with HIV/AIDS.
Mamad grew up in one of the world's poorest countries facing great social challenges in terms of social security, women's rights and HIV/AIDS. According to UNESCO estimates from 2014, **only about 32% of all girls in Mozambique made it to the last grade of primary education**. It is against this harsh reality that Mamad took a different path and contributed to raising awareness of women's rights in Mozambique and to building a gender equal world.

With Foubert as her supervisor, Mamad finished her PhD in 2018 at UEM as part of the Desafio project. She believes that education shaped her into the person she is today: "Education made me question everything that I had learned as a child. My life has changed. I hope people like me can open a window of hope to other people."



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Factoid

Mozambique

About the project:

- Universidade Eduardo Mondlane
- Budget **€ 6.160.000**
- Runtime **2008 - 2018**
- **53% female Master graduates** and **50% female PhD graduates** from the programme

- 100 — Ranking SDG Gender Index
- 30 % — Unesco Institute for Statistics: Proportion of women in science and technology research posititons (FTE), 2015
- VLIR-UOS scholars 2015-2018: **33% female students (n=9)**

Close



Celebrating female impact champions with honorary degrees

At the Honorary Degrees event in May, five academics received the "Doctor Honoris Causa" title for their societal impact in terms of development cooperation. As VLIR-UOS is committed to strive for gender equality at all levels, we considered gender balance a key factor in composing the list of honorary degree nominees.

Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio (Brazil) and ***Leymah Roberta Gbowee*** (Liberia) are among the five academics who have been awarded the honorary degree on 15 May 2019 at Brussels BOZAR for their distinctive contribution to international university cooperation for development.

Hasselt University paid tribute to Clarice Garcia Borges for her expertise in biometrics for which she achieved worldwide recognition. Ghent University awarded an honorary degree to Leymah Roberta Gbowee, a Nobel prize winner for Peace, for her relentless commitment to promoting peace and women's rights worldwide.

Read the full article on Honorary Degrees!





03



Special events

Honorary degrees for societal commitment

Sharing minds in the IUC Review consultation workshop

Congo Event

Gender workshop in Ethiopia

Honorary degrees for societal commitment

We held one of the impact-themed events organised for our 20th anniversary on May 15, 2019. On this occasion, our five Flemish universities and VLIR-UOS paid tribute to five impact champions from three different continents for their contribution to international university cooperation for development.

A unique joint ceremony was held at BOZAR, Brussels, where five academics from Brazil, Cuba, Liberia and DR Congo were awarded the title 'Doctor Honoris Causa' by the Flemish rectors, on behalf of their universities.
"The five Flemish universities are jointly awarding these honorary degrees to send a clear message that cooperation is the best way to bring expertise together," explains ***Herman Van Goethem***, rector of the University of Antwerp (UAntwerpen) and former chairperson of the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR). "Only in this way can we successfully address global challenges such as poverty, migration, climate change and global conflict."

Kristien Verbrugghen, director of VLIR-UOS, concludes: "Through this joint activity, the five universities are also making a clear statement about their societal commitment with regard to development cooperation."
The academics awarded the honorary degree are ***Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio*** (Brazil) by Hasselt University, ***José Ramón Saborido Loidi*** (Cuba) by Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), ***Leymah Roberta Gbowee*** (Liberia) by Ghent University (UGent), ***Nteranya Sanginga*** (DR Congo) by Catholic University of Leuven (KU Leuven) and ***Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum*** (DR Congo) by UAntwerpen.



This recognition is taken to an international level, thanks to our cooperation with the Flemish universities".

- Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum



> **With these five honorary doctorates, we are honouring five experts from the South, not primarily for their scientific merit, but for the exceptional social impact each has generated in their country, region, and even globally.**
>
> **Herman Van Goethem,** rector UAntwerpen, **Luc Sels,** rector KU Leuven, **Rik Van de Walle,** rector UGent, **Luc De Schepper,** rector Hasselt University, **Caroline Pauwels,** rector VUB

Rector's view

For 20 years now, Flemish universities, with the support of VLIR-UOS, have been demonstrating how development issues can be solved effectively through international scientific cooperation, driven by the commitment of numerous academics from Flanders and the South. In an opinion paper published on the occasion of the honorary degrees ceremony, the rectors call upon all governments "to secure appropriate funding for development cooperation, and support university cooperation for development in particular, by recognising our role, added value and impact". **Read the full paper**



> **"We ask the government to increase the shrunken budget for development cooperation again (we are far from the ambition of 0.7% GNI) and to secure it at the start of the new coalition period".**



Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio



Leymah Roberta Gbowee



José Ramón Saborido Loidi



Nteranya Sanginga



Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum

Rector's

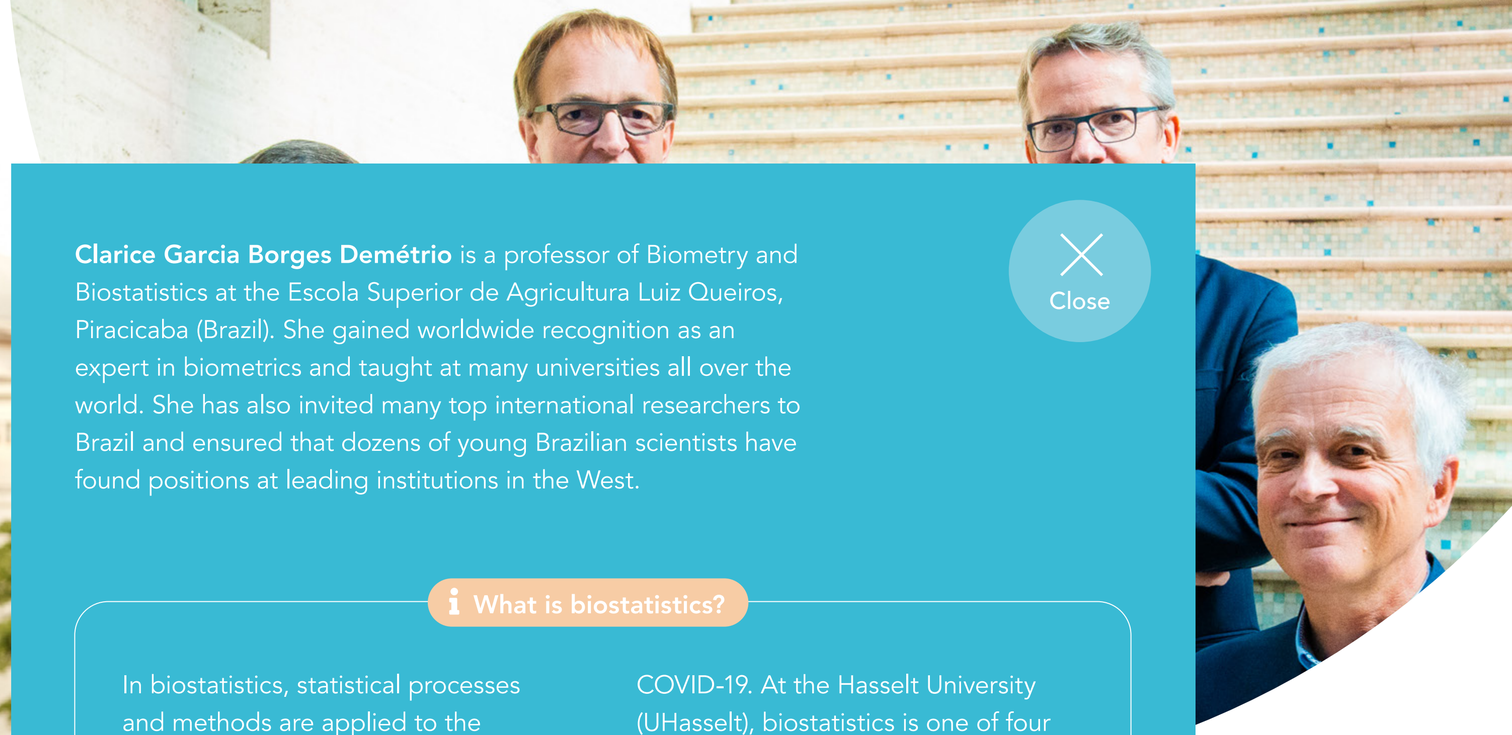
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Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio



Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio is a professor of Biometry and Biostatistics at the Escola Superior de Agricultura Luiz Queiros, Piracicaba (Brazil). She gained worldwide recognition as an expert in biometrics and taught at many universities all over the world. She has also invited many top international researchers to Brazil and ensured that dozens of young Brazilian scientists have found positions at leading institutions in the West.

Close

What is biostatistics?

In biostatistics, statistical processes and methods are applied to the collection, analysis, and interpretation of biological data, in particular data relating to human biology, health, and medicine. Biostatisticians have been in high demand over the last three decades. Together with epidemiologists, they play a crucial role in fighting the recent outbreaks of infectious diseases, such as swine flu, avian flu, Ebola, and COVID-19. At the Hasselt University (UHasselt), biostatistics is one of four specialisations offered in Master of Statistics and Data Science. Professor Niel Hens, biostatistician and mathematical epidemiologist, is the ICP promoter of the UHasselt Master of Statistics Programme. Many former graduates have become professors, conducting groundbreaking research and contributing to training the next generation.



Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum

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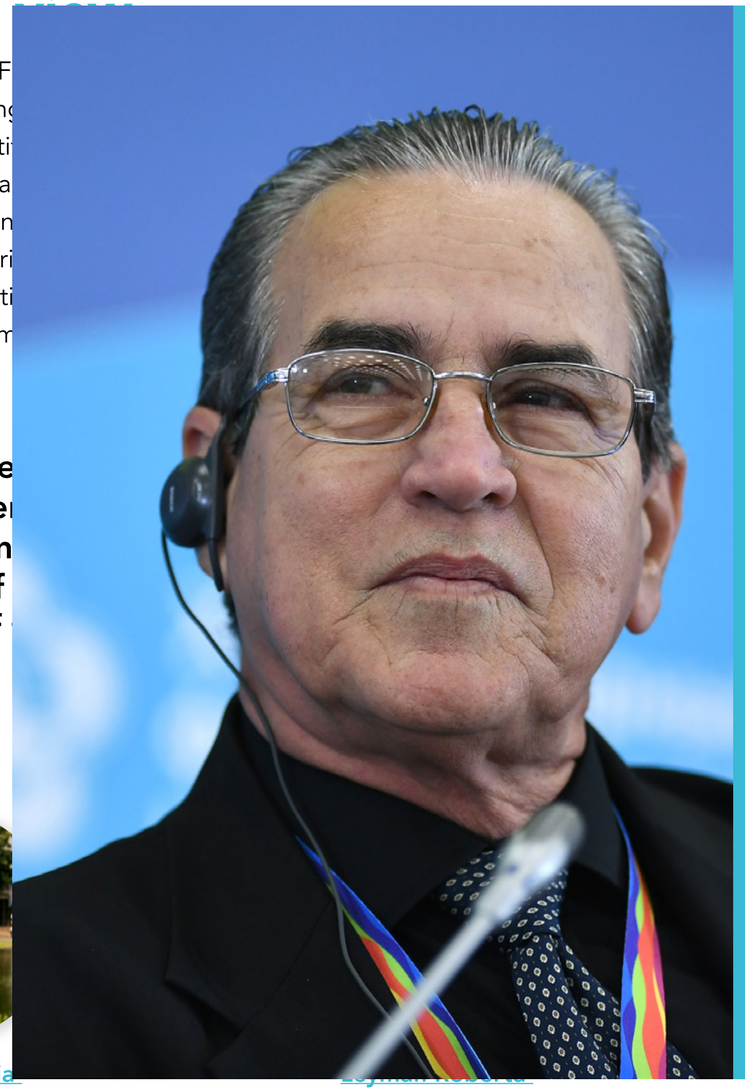
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Leymah Roberta Gbowee is a Liberian peace activist who contributed to the end of the civil war that ravaged her country. She was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 together with **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**. Since then, Gbowee has been committed to promoting peace and women's rights worldwide in various capacities, including acting as a United Nations ambassador for the Sustainable Development Goals. Through her foundation, she grants scholarships to girls and young women, emphasising the importance of education in development. She currently leads the Women, Peace and Security programme at Columbia University (USA).

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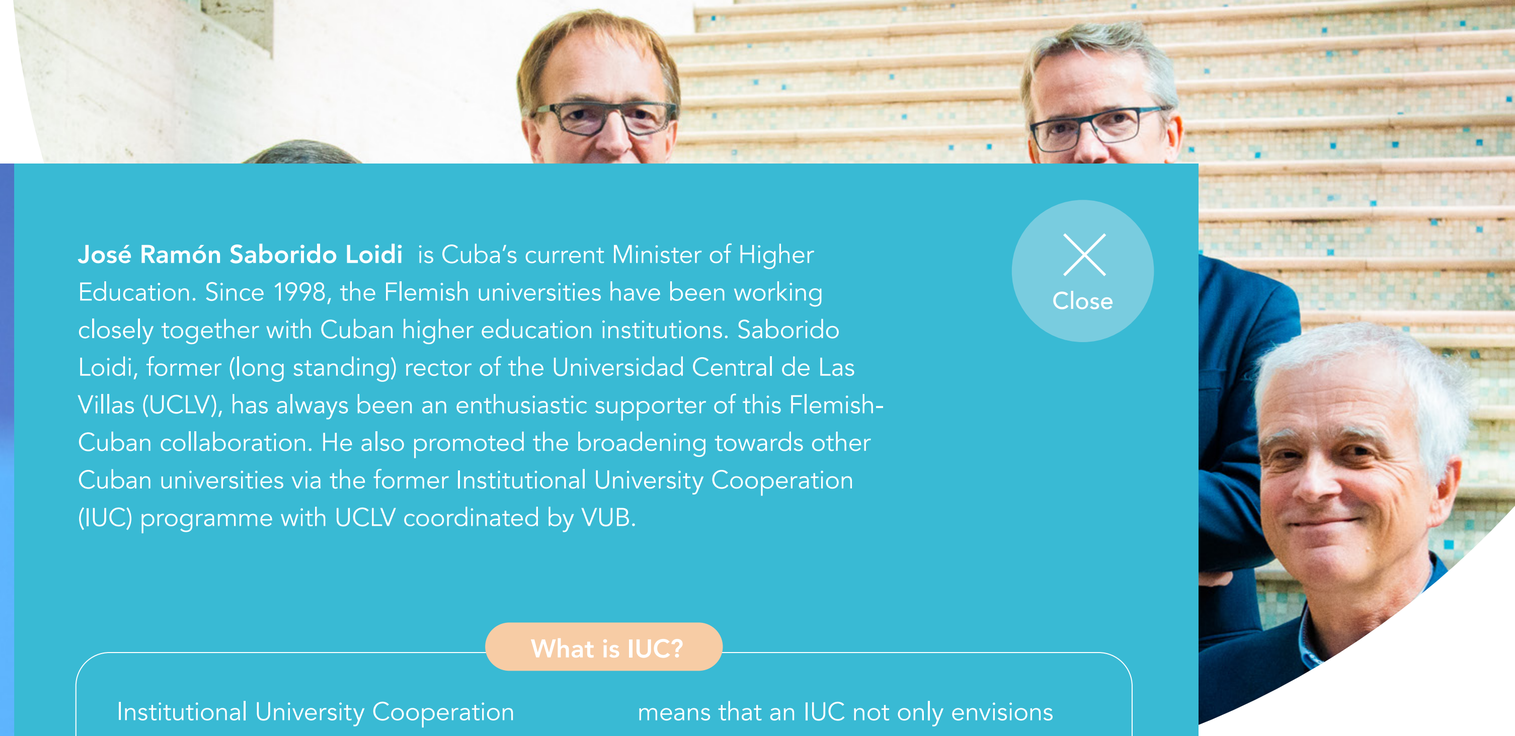
Gbowee

Saborido Loidi

Sanginga

Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum





José Ramón Saborido Loidi is Cuba's current Minister of Higher Education. Since 1998, the Flemish universities have been working closely together with Cuban higher education institutions. Saborido Loidi, former (long standing) rector of the Universidad Central de Las Villas (UCLV), has always been an enthusiastic supporter of this Flemish-Cuban collaboration. He also promoted the broadening towards other Cuban universities via the former Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programme with UCLV coordinated by VUB.

Close

What is IUC?

Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes are long-term institutional partnerships between a university in the South and the Flemish universities and university colleges in Flanders. The general objective of Institutional University Cooperation is 'Empowering the local university as institution to better fulfil its role as development actor in society'. This means that an IUC not only envisions a contribution to developmental change outside the university, linked to different academic priority domains, but also a change process within the university leading to improved performance of the higher education institution in a number of institutional priority domains.

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Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio

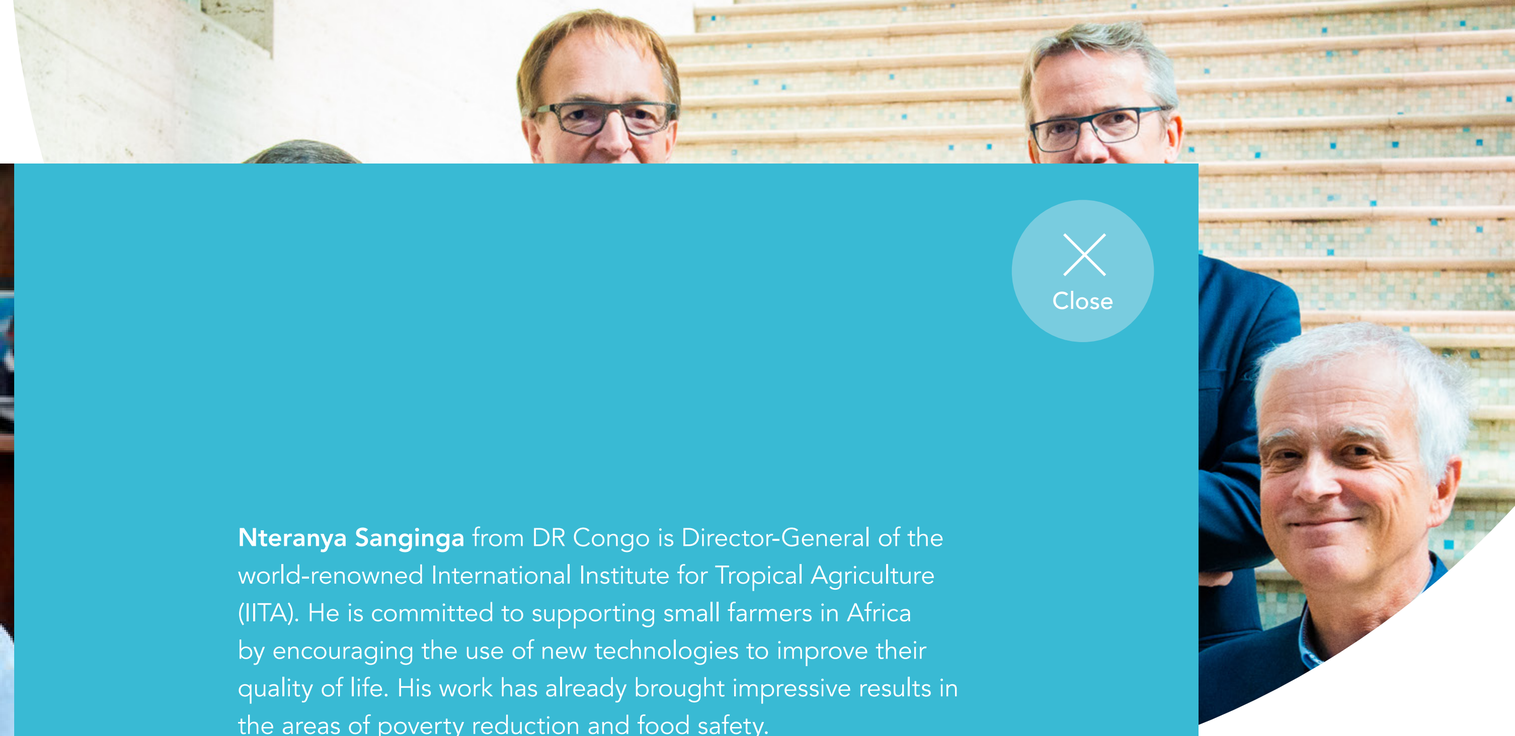
Gbowee

Saborido Loidi

Sanginga



Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum



Close

Nteranya Sanginga from DR Congo is Director-General of the world-renowned International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA). He is committed to supporting small farmers in Africa by encouraging the use of new technologies to improve their quality of life. His work has already brought impressive results in the areas of poverty reduction and food safety.

Rector's

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Gbowee

Saborido Loidi

Sanginga



Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum

Close

Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum is director of the Institut National de Recherche Biomédicale and a professor at the University of Kinshasa. Muyembe Tamfun is a highly active Congolese academic. In 1977 he was involved in the investigation of the first Ebola outbreak. Now, forty years later, he has become one of the leading authorities on infectious diseases.

Rector's view

For 20 years now, Flemish universities, with the support of VLIR-
been demonstrating how development issues can be solved
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Factoid

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0.7% GNI refers to the international target of raising official development assistance (ODA) to 0.7% of donors' gross national income (GNI). In 2005, the **15 countries that were members of the European Union by 2004 agreed to reach the 0.7% GNI target by 2015.**



Clarice Garcia Borges Demétrio



Leymah Roberta Gbowee



Nteranya Sanginga



Jean-Jacques Muyembe Tamfum

Sharing minds in the IUC Review consultation workshop

On April 1, 2019, we organised an IUC Review consultation workshop in Brussels, bringing together academics from the Flemish Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), a delegation of some of our partner countries in the South, and external stakeholders. The workshop's main goal: sharing thoughts on how to further optimise the IUC programme as one of the VLIR-UOS flagship programmes, to make it future-proof. Workshop topics were identified on the basis of a meta-analysis of lessons learned during earlier external evaluations of IUC and NETWORK programmes.

A wide range of topics geared towards optimising the IUC programme were clustered in several discussion workshops, such as '**Societal Change**' focusing on realising change outside the institution, '**I in IUC**' on change within the institution; '**Partnership**' on partnership concept, programme management and support; '**Phase In**' on getting to know the local & Flemish context, '**Change agents**' on the selection and guidance and role of PhDs within projects/ programmes and as agents of change in society, and the NETWORK model of linking national universities with each other and with Flemish HEIs.



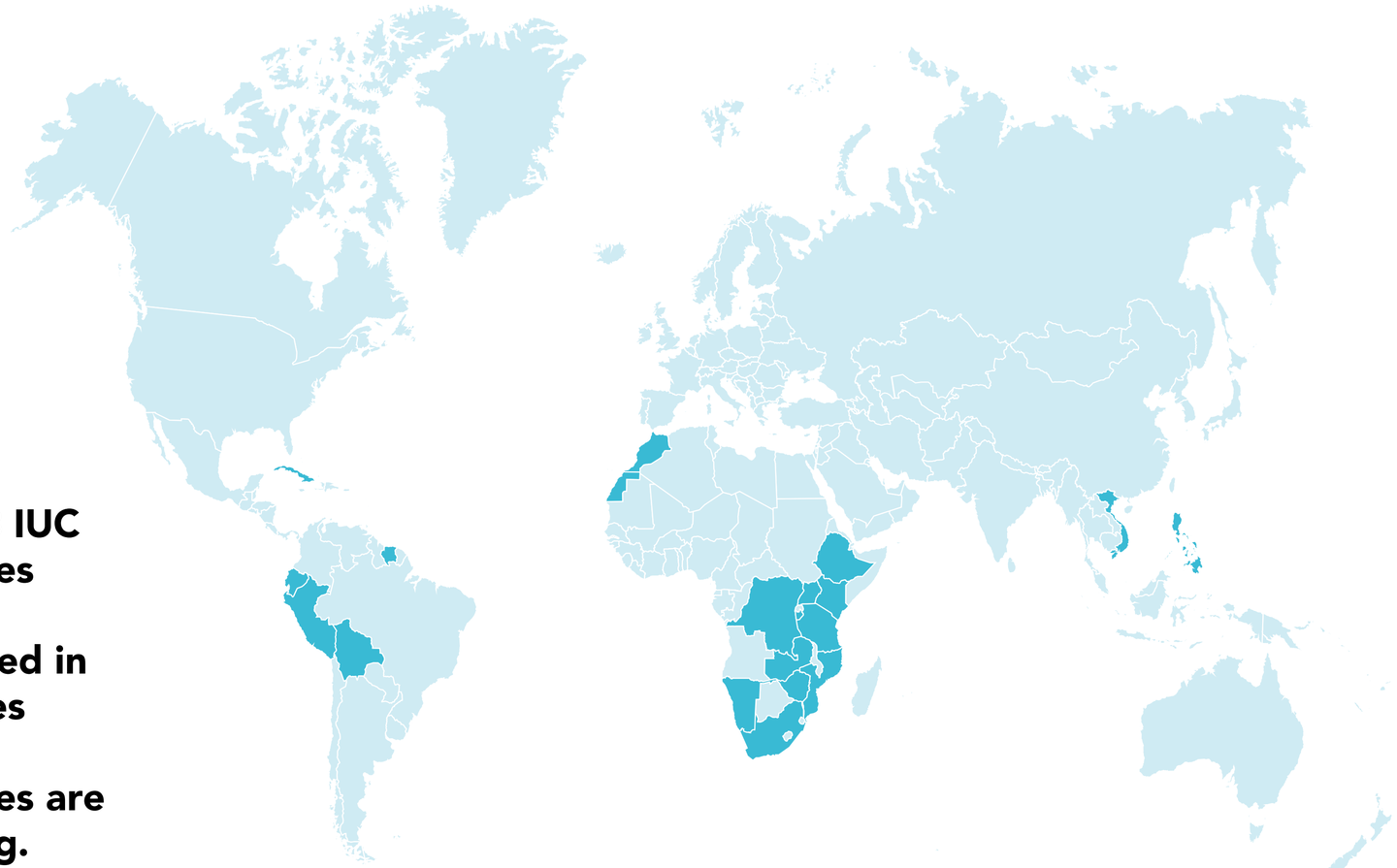
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Factoid

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In total, 33 IUC programmes have been implemented in 18 countries so far. 17 programmes are still running.

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Congo event

On October 15, 2019, more than 70 participants attended our Congo Event at the Brussels Info Place (BIP). Through this initiative, VLIR-UOS wanted to give current programme and project promoters in DR Congo the opportunity to present their project/programme results, exchange experiences and relevant information, share good practices and challenges, and look for opportunities for collective learning and cooperation.

The main goal of the Congo event, as one of our first 'country forums', was to bring together experts that are active in the same country. This allows them to share knowledge, best practices, results and ideas to learn from and explore new ways of cooperating, within and beyond the borders of HEIs, for example with NGOs and other stakeholders.
The Congo Event was an exclusive gathering of academics and researchers from Flanders and DR Congo, demonstrating how sharing minds changed lives in DR Congo. It was also an opportunity to draw lessons for applications in other countries from these experiences and discuss evolutions in DR Congo's higher education sectors.

Dr Congo

Congo event

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DR Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DR Congo) is one of our key partner countries for IUC programmes (with *Université Catholique de Bukavu –(UCB) and Université de Kisangani - UNIKIS*) and transversal projects (education, ICT, quality assurance and academic English). Central themes in the country strategy are natural resources (agriculture, biodiversity, climate change), health, and social development (decentralisation, education, human rights).

Gender workshop in Ethiopia

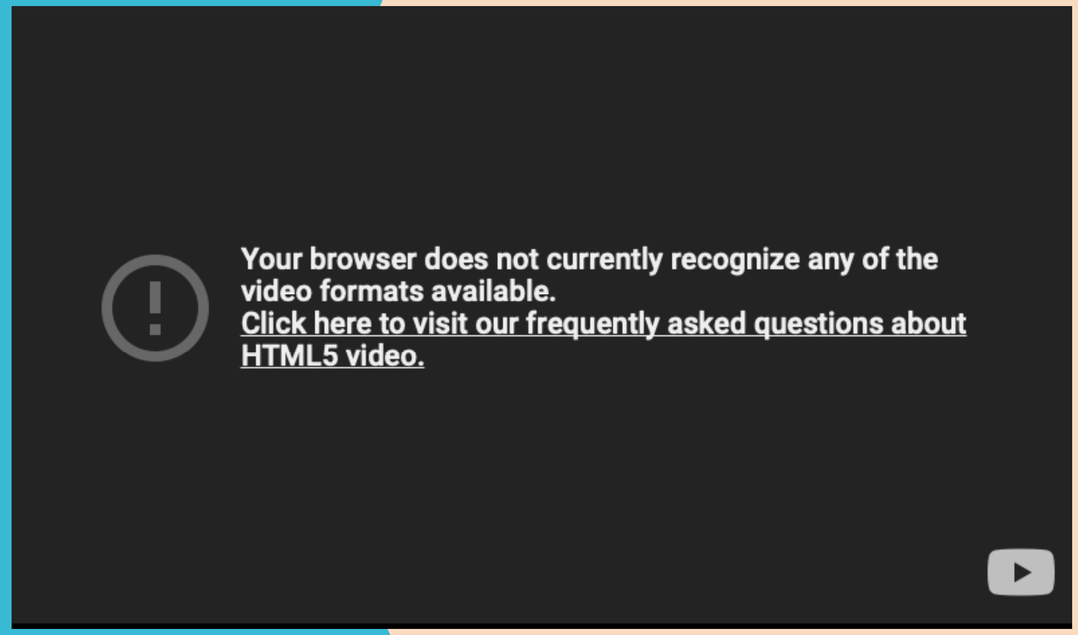
VLIR-UOS continues to build up expertise in gender. We organised a two-day gender workshop on 14 and 15 October 2019 together with the partners of 4 other Belgian non-governmental actors working in Ethiopia. The workshop took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and was led by prof. *Veerle Draulans* (KU Leuven) and supported by *Roman Moges Asefaha* (Ethiopian gender expert), *Inge Vandevyvere* (VLIR-UOS focal point for gender) and *Wannes Verbeeck* (VLIR-UOS programme manager for Ethiopia).

The workshop was the last phase in a learning fund project that started on the first of January 2018 and ended on 31 December 2019. Within this project, the gender track was the largest, consisting of different phases. The activities of the first two phases resulted in an improved understanding of the gender situation in Ethiopia, which enabled the organisation of a tailored gender workshop as the culminating activity of the gender track.

The objective of the workshop was to develop a draft gender action plan for the Ethiopian organisations together with various stakeholders. It included a discussion about the role of the Belgian partners in integrating gender equality programmes in partner countries such as Ethiopia. One of the highlights was the external pressure from international donors on gender mainstreaming as an important added value to achieve the necessary systemic change.

Congress on Gender

On 30 November 2019, the Advisory Council for Gender and Development organised an event on the occasion of finishing its first mandate. Future challenges related to gender and development, also for higher education and university cooperation, were discussed. VLIR-UOS was part of the organising committee together with Académie de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur (ARES), our counterpart in Wallonia and Brussels. A testimonial of a VLIR-UOS alumni and an ARES scholarship holder was the starting point for a discussion about studying at a Belgian university from a gender perspective.



04

Network Cooperation

IUC Call

IUC Phase 2 public launches

Supporting KLIMOS in the fight against climate change

IUC call

54	Concept Note South submissions	**8**	Concept Note South selected	**5 max.**	will start the preparatory phase for an IUC programme

In July 2019, the long-expected new IUC programme call was launched through a multi-step intake procedure that should lead to new IUC partner programmes in 2022.

The first step in the intake procedure was a call for IUC Concept Notes South, addressed to universities in a number of VLIR-UOS partner countries: Cambodia, Cuba, DR Congo, Ecuador, Indonesia, Kenya, Peru, Philippines, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam. This unique procedure allowed South partner institutions to submit their Concept Notes South directly to VLIR-UOS. Although they were asked to refer to previous experiences with Flemish HEIs, if they had had any, previous cooperation was not a requirement.

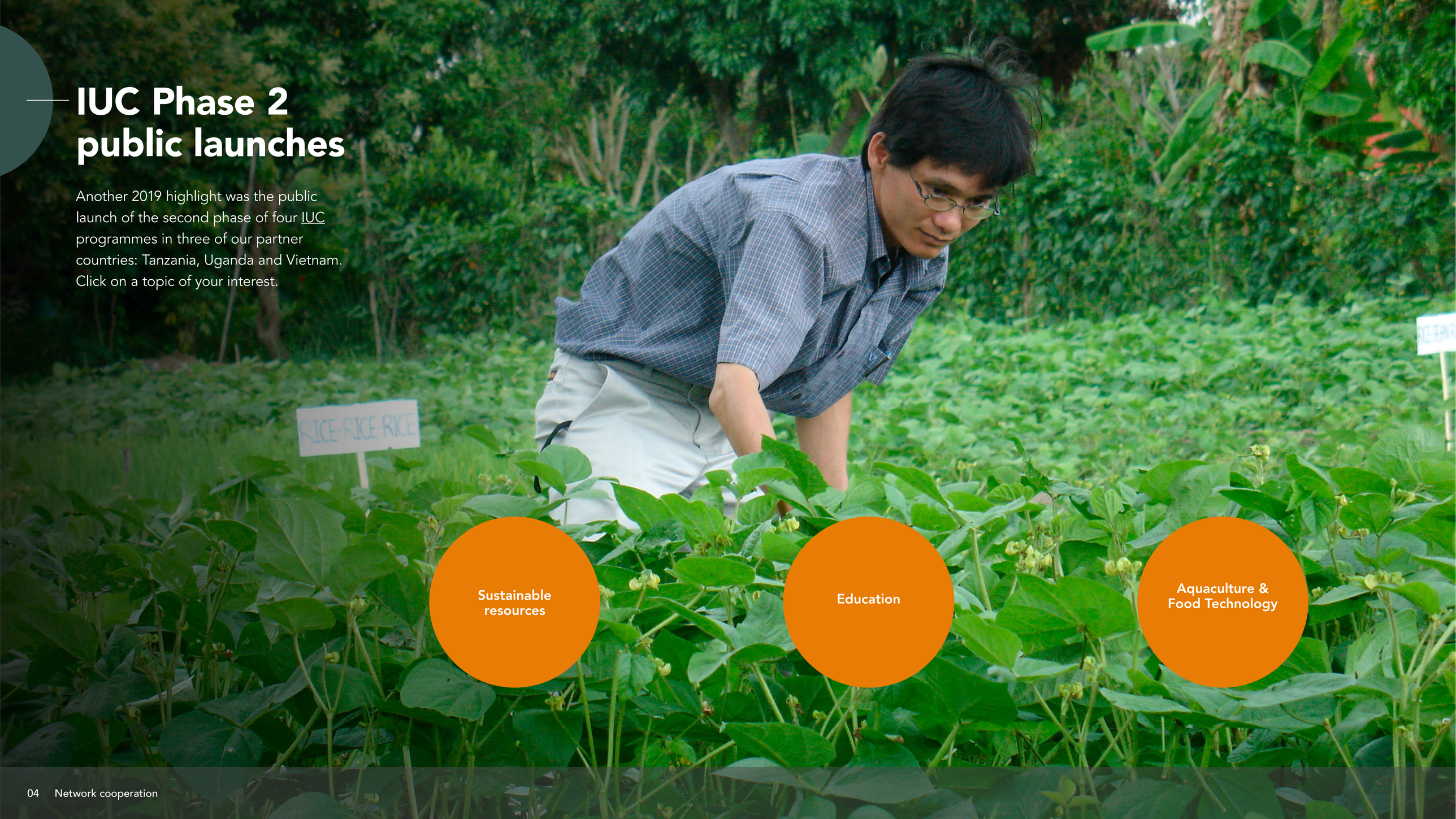
54 universities submitted an eligible Concept Note South for setting up a future long-term partnership with the Flemish universities and university colleges. In December, the first selection was made. Competition has been fierce, leading to a tough selection made by the newly established IUC selection commission, composed of five international experts. In the end, eight Concept Notes South were selected to be moved forward to the next stage, in which Flemish coordinators will team up with the preselected South partner institutions to jointly elaborate the Extended Concept Notes. Out of the eight potential IUC partner universities, a maximum of five will be selected to start the preparatory phase for an IUC programme - the 'IUC Phase In' - which will result in formulation of final Partner Programme proposals. Approved IUC programmes will start as of January 1, 2022, for the first five-year phase (2022-2026).



"Cooperation is the best way to bring expertise together."

IUC Phase 2 public launches

Another 2019 highlight was the public launch of the second phase of four IUC programmes in three of our partner countries: Tanzania, Uganda and Vietnam. Click on a topic of your interest.



Sustainable resources

Education

Aquaculture & Food Technology

IUC Phase 2 public

Another 2019 high
launch of the seco
programmes in thr
countries: Tanzania
Click on a topic of



Close

Sustainable resources

On February 3, we attended the launch of the second phase of the IUC programme with the Nelson Mandela African Institute of Science and Technology (NM-AIST) in Tanzania. This phase will continue to focus on the sustainable management of natural resources, benefiting local communities in Northern Tanzania. The project will also strengthen research and teaching on banana crops, water purification, soil fertility and biodiversity. It will also pay greater attention to transferring that knowledge to society by creating a new system to boost technology transfer and incubations.

In September 2019, we revisited Tanzania to launch the second phase of the IUC programme with Mzumbe University. The Permanent Secretary of the Minister of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, the Belgian ambassador to Tanzania, various local government representatives and the vice-rector of UGent were among those attending this special event. In this second phase, the VLIR-UOS IUC programme is continuing research for sustainable management of natural resources for the benefit of northern Tanzania's local communities. Study areas are food safety, safe water, and the sustainable allocation of water resources for people and environment.

At the start of the second IUC phase, a honey collection centre was installed for local beekeepers, who organised themselves in a cooperative. The centre allows for better organised collection of honeycomb and more professional honey extraction, processing and bottling. The new centre was officially inaugurated by the Belgian ambassador to Tanzania during a well-attended ceremony.

IUC Phase 2 public

Another 2019 high
launch of the seco
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Education

In Uganda, Mountains of the Moon University (MMU) and VLIR-UOS launched phase 2 of their IUC programme that will run up to 2022. Representatives from local authorities and farming communities as well as a representative from the Belgian embassy and Enabel (Belgian development agency) attended the event.

Education is one key sector the Belgian development cooperation in Uganda is focusing on. This is because we believe that education, at all levels, is the most important driving force for development. Quality education is a human right and academic curriculum development is crucial.

'Phase 2' is about the involvement of local actors in research and academic work and the resonance of aspirations of populations and communities. It opens the path to real applied research that contributes to the relevance and adequacy of outcomes adapted to specific local contexts.

The programme aims to strengthen the academic capacity of MMU by developing the culture of integration of research with teaching and community engagement. To commemorate this successful launch of 'Phase 2', a tree was planted at MMU's experimental site.

IUC Phase 2 public

Another 2019 high
launch of the seco
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Aquaculture & Food Technology

During the third week of April, a delegation of Flemish universities kicked off the second phase of the IUC programme with Hue University in Vietnam, at the same time as the 'Bioscience for Food' NETWORK programme. The main IUC research topics are livestock, aquaculture and natural resources management, while the NETWORK is working on the development of the international master programmes in Aquaculture and Food Technology.

IUC Phase 2 public launches

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Sustainable resources

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Supporting KLIMOS in the fight against climate change



Climate change threatens the lives and livelihoods of billions of people. It leads to increasing temperatures, changes in rainfall patterns, more frequent and severe floods and droughts and it triggers infectious diseases. Various university cooperation for development projects have been supporting the Belgian government as well as local communities in partner countries in addressing this pressing issue.

As a PhD student at the University of Antwerp within the IUC programme at the University of Limpopo in South Africa, Elvis Modikela Nkoana has tested several climate adaptation toolkits from various development cooperation organisations within local communities. One of these toolkits was developed by KLIMOS (translated: Climate and Development Cooperation), a Belgian research group supported by VLIR-UOS and ARES. As tools for helping people in developing countries are often designed from a Western point of view, Nkoana investigated ways to make these climate adaptation efforts compatible with local communities' perspectives.

Like South-Africa, Vietnam is one of the five countries most vulnerable to climate change. As a national promoter and teacher of climate change course at Vietnam National University, Kim Chi Vu is involved in a VLIR-UOS TEAM project, which used expertise from KLIMOS for research on sustainable cities in Vietnam with the WAMADE project. Climate is an integral part of many projects supported by VLIR-UOS. Watch this video with Natalie Guillén, a PhD student in our IUC programme with Universidad Católica Boliviana, and her research on 'social water management' highlighting psychological perspective and gender dimension.

In Ecuador, phase 2 of the NETWORK IUC Programme for biodiversity was launched, under the supervision of by Prof. Goethals from UGent. Ecuador is a country with a high undiscovered potential but there is a lack of human talent with advanced degrees in natural resources and academia-stakeholders interactions are poor. After building capacities within the Network during phase 1, the programme as a whole expects to significantly contribute to the sustainable use of natural resources in support of the quality of life of the people from Ecuador. To achieve this dream, the integrative contributions from biodiscovery, water resource, and education-outreach experts will continue to be essential.

"The fact that climate change gets the attention it deserves is sometimes more important than ticking off a certain checklist. Nevertheless, it would be better if it were to be consistently applied."

05



Operations

VLIR-UOS Educational programmes and scholarships

‘Gentrification and the makeable city: Brussels Canal Zone’

Alumni meetings and events

VLIR-UOS Educational programmes and scholarships

VLIR-UOS offers scholarships to applicants from 31 eligible countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to attend one of the selected training (ITP) or master (ICP) programmes.

The ITPs are all practical programmes that are selected by a commission of external experts. The topics can differ from year to year. The ICPs are selected by the same commission for a period of five years and include one-year and two-year master programmes on a subject that is relevant to or specific for development, such as food technology, water resources and epidemiology, at one of our Flemish universities.

VLIRUOS supports a selection of 15 ICPs and provides 12 scholarships per ICP programme.





Gender ratio of Master and Training scholars in the top 3 countries per region

According to 2018 data, there is a worldwide trend of increasing female enrolment in and graduation of higher education. There are significant regional differences:

female **male**

Close

Asia

	female	male
Vietnam	68%	32%
Philippines	73%	27%
Bangladesh	29%	71%

Latin America

	female	male
Ecuador	49%	51%
Peru	67%	33%
Colombia	55%	45%

Africa

	female	male
Ethiopia	19%	81%
Uganda	39%	61%
Kenya	42%	58%

Events in Belgium



ICP Transportation Sciences (UHasselt)

The ‘International Symposium: Transportation in Emerging Countries’ was organised by the Transportation Research Institute (IMOB) at Hasselt University on 5-6 November 2019. International keynote speakers, alumni and students exchanged their experiences and research results on all aspects of Transportation in emerging countries. The event also provided an interdisciplinary platform to present and discuss the most recent innovations, trends and concerns as well as practical challenges encountered.



ICP Sustainable development (KU Leuven)

In May 2019, the “Sustainable Development Living Lab” course of the ICP Master in Sustainable Development was awarded the Prize of the Education Council of KU Leuven.

The Sustainable Development Living Lab is a field course integrated in the ICP master on Sustainable Development in which students work in small teams to develop a sustainable development strategy for a specific region in a Global South. The overall goal of the Living Lab is to stimulate the collective exploration of new ideas and the co-creation of solutions for a more sustainable future. It offers students an opportunity to connect their studies and training with relevant research on the field and with the most pressing needs of the Global South.



ITP International Module for Spatial Development Planning (KU Leuven)

ITP International Module for Spatial Development Planning (IMSDP) is a teaching and research programme for post-graduate students and researchers in urban studies and planning. Focusing on a case study, the theme of the research lab 2019 was recommoning. Participants were familiarized with action-research, through a ten-day workshop in a Flemish locality. During the research lab, participants were involved in the development of strategies to raise attention and upscale the network of slow paths in the South of Antwerp. The outputs of the reflections were materialized in ‘INSIST’, a website (www.insist.earth), in which the results of the students’ workshop are summarized.

Gentrification and the makeable city: Brussels Canal Zone’

Since 2017, VLIR-UOS has been supporting the one-year master programme in Cultural Anthropology and Development Studies (CADES) at KU Leuven to strengthen the south dimension of the programme. The programme is geared towards international students, but Belgians also take it.

In January 2019, the CADES team set up a Field School project in the Brussels Canal Zone, under the supervision of Ann Cassiman as the head of the masters programme and in collaboration with anthropologists from partner institutions in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and South-Africa. The Field School project in Molenbeek was called ‘gentrification and the makeable city: Brussels Canal Zone’.

The Field School combines lectures in relevant locations, debates, observations and intensive fieldwork, integrating several disciplines and allowing students to interact with experts and other students from all over the world on topics relevant to the context. Some twenty students, from countries such as Palestine, Mozambique, Ethiopia, the Philippines, South Africa and Belgium, collaborated to explore the Brussels Canal Zone. By interacting with locals, observing them and their environment and asking them questions, the ultimate goal for the students was to find answers to questions such as ‘how do you develop a neighbourhood without tensions’, ‘how do you build bridges between locals and wealthy newcomers’, or ‘how do you build liveable and safe cities’.

A great number of partner institutions participated to the Field School project and were also involved in the development and follow-up of the project: Arba Minch University, Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology (Ethiopia), Universidade Eduardo Mondlane, Department of Anthropology (Mozambique), University of Cape Town, Department of Social Anthropology (South Africa), National University of Science and Technology (NUST), Institute of Development Studies (Zimbabwe).



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Factoid

The Field School has as its main goal to study and discuss the ongoing urban transformations in the Brussels Canal Zone by means of intensive fieldwork in an international and interdisciplinary oriented community of lecturers, researchers and students of the various participating institutions.

Close



Alumni meetings and events

Over the years, thousands of students and professionals have received VLIR-UOS grants for ICPs. This has resulted in an active network of alumni across our partner and scholarship countries. Alumni act as ambassadors for our Flemish universities and therefore also for Flanders and Belgium. They strengthen our global network, as they go on to build international careers and become community-building and change agents.
In 2019, a variety of alumni events were held where alumni were given the opportunity to share their stories on how they contributed to the development of their countries. These informal meetings offer a platform for international cooperation and academic diplomacy by establishing links with partner institutions and the local economy.
We present you only a few of these special meetings where alumni, students and experts are brought together in 2019.



2nd ICP North Workshop Master of Statistics and Master of Epidemiology



ICP IUPWARE



IOB Alumni meet-and-greet sessions



Vietnam ICP Food Technology

Alumni meetings and events

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Factoid

The number of female academics involved in VLIR-UOS interventions has more than doubled during the past 20 years.

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IOB Alumni meet-and-greet sessions



ICP Food echnology

Alumni meetings and events

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An Alumni Return Event for ICP Food Technology (KU Leuven, UGent) was held at Can Tho University in Vietnam. The meeting included presentations of alumni on their background, current job, hurdles encountered during their career and suggestions for the future of the IUPFOOD programme.

Alumni meetings and events

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The Global Health Institute (UAntwerpen) organised the 2nd International Course Programme (ICP) North Workshop of the ICP's Master of Statistics (MStat, UHasselt) and Master of Epidemiology (MEPI, UAntwerpen). After highlighting the goals and initiatives of both ICP programmes, four alumni and research partners were invited to share their experiences, career paths, research activities and collaboration opportunities in their settings.



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Alumni meetings and events

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The ICP Water Resources Management (KU Leuven, VUB) alumni event 2019 took place in Arusha, Tanzania and was organised jointly with the Open Water Network (JOINT project). Alumni from Tanzania, South Africa, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia and Vietnam participated. It included a.o. networking events and refresher courses on the “Use of Internet of Things (IoT) technology for hydrological measurements” and “River basin management using SWAT”.

Alumni meetings and events

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Among the alumni meetings for the IOB master programmes (ICP Development evaluation and management, ICP globalisation and development, ICP governance and development, UAntwerpen) are a meet and greet session in Peru, in-country alumni seminars or network events in Ethiopia, the Philippines, Tanzania, Vietnam, Nicaragua and Uganda. These alumni events offered opportunities to attend short refresher seminars, share information about the ongoing and new projects at IOB, record alumni impact stories, while at the same time also facilitated networking among IOB alumni as well as with IOB staff and other (Belgian) development actors in the country.

Overview budget

Because of the **budget shift** from 2019 to 2021 imposed by the DGD, the VLIR-UOS budget for 2019 deviates slightly from the grant allocated by the DGD. The difference between the budget and the allocated grant could be accommodated through means including pre-funding by the Flemish HEIs.

OPERATIONAL COSTS	**28 652 689**	**88,98%**
SOUTH	**14 980 459**	**46,52%**
Institutional university cooperation (IUC)	6 590 000	20,46%
University Cooperation Network (NETWORK)	1 000 000	3,11%
TEAM	4 356 282	13,53%
South Initiatives (SI)	1 863 196	5,79%
JOINT	1 170 981	3,64%
BELGIUM	**13 672 230**	**42,46%**
Policy support	**478 568**	**1,49%**
Policy Supporting Research (PSR)	478 568	1,49%
Capacity-building, Flemish institutions	**5 131 867**	**15,94%**
Global Minds Universities	3 890 396	12,08%
Global Minds University colleges	682 698	2,12%
Flemish Doctoral Grants (VLADOC) + reserve	558 773	1,74%
Education	**2 172 551**	**6,75%**
International Master Programmes (ICP)	1 982 687	6,16%
Internationale Training Programmes (ITP)	189 864	0,59%
GRANTS	**5 889 244**	**18,29%**
ICP grants	5 622 192	17,46%
ITP grants	267 052	0,83%
MANAGEMENT COSTS	**443 703**	**1,38%**
Evaluatie & Audit	298 140	0,93%
Preparation, monitoring, general management (VOA)	145 563	0,45%
ADMINISTRATION COSTS	**3 106 401**	**9,65%**
TOTAL	**32 202 793**	**100,00%**

06



The people behind VLIR-UOS

Bureau UOS

Our staff

ICOS/GEO

Bureau UOS

Bureau UOS consists of a representative of each Flemish university and a representative of the university colleges. On 31 December, the members were: Johan De Tavernier, KU Leuven (Chair); Stefaan Smis, Vrije Universiteit Brussel (vice-chair); Peter Bols, UAntwerpen; Guido Van Huylenbroeck, UGent; Kurt Debaere, Howest (VLHORA Representative).
2019 was also a year of change at our Bureau UOS, with a new chairperson and two new members. In October, we said goodbye to Paul Janssen from Hasselt University, who had been VLIR-UOS chairperson for four years, and a member of the Bureau UOS for twelve years. We welcomed his successor, Johan De Tavernier, member of the Bureau UOS since 2017, as our new VLIR-UOS chairperson.
We also welcomed two new representative members to the Bureau UOS: Jean-Michel Rigo joined us from UHasselt as successor to Paul Janssen and Peter Bols took over from former UAntwerpen representative Herwig Leirs, who passed on his role as vice-chairperson to Stefaan Smis of VUB.



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Our staff

On 31 December 2019, 20 people were employed in the Brussels office.

General management

Kristien Verbrugghen, Director

Strategy and Quality

Koen De Koster, Strategy and Quality Advisor

Communication

- Anouk Courtin, Communication Advisor
- Charlotte Teunis, Communication Officer (temporary contract)

Programme Service

- Peter De Lannoy, Head of Programmes and responsible for Cuba and Ecuador
- Ragna Frans, Programme Manager Belgium (ICP and ITP) and Tanzania
- Christophe Goossens, Programme Manager Cambodia, Vietnam, South Africa and Mozambique
- Steven Schoofs, Programme Manager Belgium (Global Minds)
- Inge Vandevyvere, Programme Manager Belgium (PSR), Indonesia, the Philippines, Nicaragua, Rwanda and Kenya
- Wannes Verbeeck, Programme Manager Ethiopia, Bolivia, Peru and Suriname
- Kathleen Wuytack, Programme Manager DR Congo, Morocco, Uganda and Burundi

Support Service

Stefan Wellens, Head of Support

HR & Finance

- Els Celis, HR and Finance Officer
- Yannick Remans, Finance Advisor
- Bart Van den Bossche, Chief Accountant

Administration

- Dominique De Bondt, Administrative Officer
- Nicky Haezebrouck, Administrative Officer
- Kristof Van Der Perren, Administrative Officer
- Veerle Versele, Administrative Officer

Information

Tim Zeuwts, Information Manager

Our staff

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Factoid

Micheline De Schrevel, Chief Accountant

In April 2019, we said goodbye to our colleague Micheline, who retired after over 10 years of dedicated service at VLIR-UOS. After having worked in the private sector for many years, Micheline joined us as Accounting and Financial Assistant and later became Chief Accountant. She also took care of the payroll and insurance administration and acted as a true guardian of compliance in financial and legal matters. In this annual report, we would like to thank Micheline once again for the value she added, and wish her all the best in the new phase she has entered.

Close

Sup
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Head of Support

nance
s, HR and Finance Officer
emans, Finance Advisor
n Bossche, Chief Accountant

n
e Bondt, Administrative Officer
rouck, Administrative Officer
er Perren, Administrative Officer
e, Administrative Officer

nformation Manager

Me

ICOS/GEO

The Institutional Coordinators for Development Cooperation (abbreviated in Dutch to ICOS) serve as the VLIR-UOS contacts at the Flemish universities. They inform academics at their own universities and the associated university colleges concerning opportunities for cooperation. In addition they provide advice on designing project proposals and support in the implementation of projects.

The university colleges have Global Engagement Officers (GEO), who serve as VLIR-UOS contacts for their own institutions.

An overview of these contacts is available at our website.



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Factoid

Close

At VLIR-UOS, we have a **50% balance** at staff level – and a **female director**!



Colophon

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

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

Through these partnerships, higher education institutes evolve into key actors that shape the economic and societal systems in their countries. By supporting relevant, high-quality educational programmes in Flanders and by providing scholarships for students from the South, VLIR-UOS invests in future changemakers ,and contributes to the globalisation, diversity and quality of Flemish higher education.

Editor
Sevil Yigit, Yigit Communications

Coordination
Anouk Courtin, Kristien Verbrugghen, Inge Vandevyvere

Special thanks to all VLIR-UOS colleagues.

Design
Josworld.org

Responsible editor
Kristien Verbrugghen, VLIR-UOS, Julien Dillensplein 1, Box 1A, 1060 Brussels, Belgium

Additional information: **www.vliruos.be**