vliruos

sharing minds, changing lives

Kenya

Country Reference Framework

(Updated version of February 2026)

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Country reference framework Kenya

Background

In FYP1 the VLIRUOS country strategies presented the strategic niche for future VLIRUOS cooperation in a specific country, leading to strategy-based calls for proposals.

In FYP2, however, we shift towards an approach whereby a country reference framework provides information rather than strategic guidance. The country reference frameworks will be used mainly to support teams of academics when identifying and formulating project proposals, by providing a context analysis focused on Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development and the higher education sector in a given country, and by providing an overview of Belgian actors, their ongoing projects and partners in that country in view of exploration of opportunities for synergy and complementarity.

The country reference frameworks consist of three components:

(i) overview of VLIRUOS projects in the country;
(ii) context analysis focused on the Agenda 2030 framework and the higher education sector;
(iii) overview of Belgian cooperation actors (ANGCs involved in thematic or geographic JSFs & Enabel), their local partners and their regional/thematic focus.

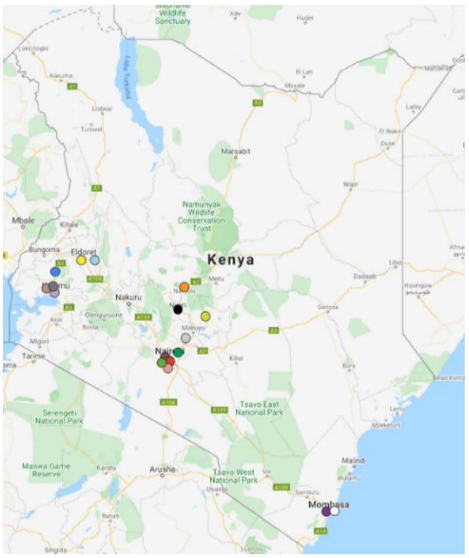
The frameworks have been elaborated based on information available at the time of drafting this actor programme and through consultations with both Flemish and local project promotors and with geographic JSFs, when applicable, to ensure relevant information for coherent project formulation is included.

Prior to the launch of competitive calls, the ANGCs active in the country/region will be invited to list a number of research themes/questions that can be addressed by HE&SIs in the framework of VLIRUOS funded projects or scholarships. Synergy and complementarity will be integrated as an element in the selection of project proposals, more in particular when discussing the (developmental) relevance and coherence of the proposals and the extent to which the multi-stakeholder partnership principle has been reflected in the project's implementation set-up. By this mode of operation, the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development links up with the other geographic JSFs.

Evidently, the frameworks will be updated regularly in consultation with the HEI&SI stakeholders and with the respective geographical JSFs and, where appropriate, also with ARES, and especially prior to the launch of competitive calls by VLIR-UOS, to be compatible and responsive to evolving/emerging needs and priorities of academic and international actors active in the country/region/sector.

1. VLIRUOS in Kenya

1.1. Overview projects & scholarships (1999 – 2025)



Legend

- Moi University
- Kenyatta University
- Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology
- University of Nairobi
- Pwani University College
- University of ELdoret
- Technical University of Kenya
- Meru University of Science and Technology
- Dedan Kimathi University of Technology
- Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology
- University of Embu
- Kenya Marine and Fisheries Institute
- Kenya Wildlife Service
- Maseno University
- Kenya Agricultural Research Institute
- Kenya Medical Research Institute
- Technical University of Mombasa

Projects 1999-2025		
Type	**Budget (€)**	**Number**
Total	***26.315.354***	***72***
IUC	16.568.695	5
TEAM	6.448.548	23
SI	1.215.232	19
JOINT	359.192	3
Crosscutting (ICT) and other (RIP, INCO)	1.099.603	15
ITP	624.084	7

Scholarship Type	Finished	Ongoing	Total
ICP	336	46	382
ICPPHD	19		19
ITP/KOI	178		178
SRS	32		32
Total	**565**	**46**	**611**

Kenya is an important partner country of VLIRUOS. From 1999 to 2025, VLIRUOS spent over **€ 26 million** in projects with Kenya, including several long-term Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) partnerships. If we would count also the scholars, then the budget is over €40 million.

The IUC with the University of Nairobi and Moi University (MU-K, Eldoret) already came to an end. The IUC partnership with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) started in 2017 and is running its 2nd phase. In 2022, another IUC partnership with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) has started. Recently a new IUC project with Technical University of Mombasa has been selected and is starting with a fully-fledged cooperation as of 2026. These IUCs and numerous SI/TEAM and ITP projects form the core of the cooperation with Kenya.

More detailed information can be found on our VLIRUOS website vliruostats (statistics) .

1.2. Project overview FYP 2 (2022-...)

List of projects during FYP 2 (2022-2027, including also finalizing FYP1 projects)						
Type	**Runtime**	**Title**	**Flemish promoter**	**Local promoter**	**Local institution**	**Total budget**
IUC	2022-2027	Institutional University Cooperation with Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology (JKUAT) (phase 2)	Marc Hendrickx (KUL)	Daniel Ndaka Sila	Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology	1.650.000,00
	Subproject 1	*Legume breeding for improved quality*	*G. Angenon (VUB)*	*S. G. Mwangi*		
	Subproject 2	*Storage and processing of legumes for convenient products of high nutritional value*	*M. Hendrickx (KUL)*	*D. N. Sila*		
	Subproject 3	*Legumes in nutrition and health*	*C. Matthys (KUL)*	*F. M. Kyallo*		
	Subproject 4	*ICT support for legume research*	*W. De Meuter (VUB)*	*S. Kimani*		
	Subproject 5	*Programme support unit*	*M. Hendrickx (KUL)*	*D. N. Sila*		
IUC	2022-2027	Institutional University Cooperation with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology (JOOUST) (phase 1)	Ann Van Griensven (VUB)	Benson Estambale	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	3.000.000,00
	Subproject 1	*Management of the Lake Victoria Basin Natural Resources*	*S. Bouillon (KUL)*	*D. O. Ochuodho*		
	Subproject 2	*Building Capacity for Transformative Agri-Food Systems for Resilience in the Lake Victoria Basin of Kenya*	*M. D'Haese (UG)*	*C. Olweny*		
	Subproject 3	*Building Capacity for Research, Management and Control of Communicable and Non-Communicable Diseases*	*J-P. Bogers (UA)*	*D. Osok*		
	Subproject 4	*Strengthening ICT infrastructure to Enhance Research, Teaching and Learning*	*J. Loeckx (VUB)*	*S. Abeka*		

List of projects during FYP 2 (2022-2027, including also finalizing FYP1 projects)						
Type	**Runtime**	**Title**	**Flemish promoter**	**Local promoter**	**Local institution**	**Total budget**
	Subproject 5	*Strengthening Climate Change Resilience among Communities and Ecosystems in the Lake Victoria Basin*	*S. Van Passel (UA)*	*B. Muok*		
IUC	2025-2026	Institutional University Cooperation with Technical University of Mombasa (Phase-in 2025-2026)	Marc Heijde (UG)	R. Udu M. Yusuf	Technical University of Mombasa (TUM)	140.000
TEAM	2019-2023	Climate smart options allowing agricultural intensification for smallholders in the dry zones of the Central Highlands of Kenya	Jan Diels (KUL)	Daniel Mugendi	University of Embu	34.561,00
TEAM	2019-2023	Insects for Nutrition and Health: Development and Evaluation of Insect-based Complementary Foods for Children in Kenya	Xavier Gellynck (UG)	Judith Kimiywe	Kenyatta University	18.048,40
TEAM	2019-2023	Determining nematode damage and mitigation for increased finger millet productivity for food and nutritional security in Kenya	Godelieve Gheysen (UG)	Njira Pili	Moi University	43.481,00
TEAM	2024-2029	Cervical Cancer Management in Kenya: A Clinical Audit of the Process and Outcome of Radiotherapy Treatment	Geert Molenberghs (UH)	Primus Ochieng' Apamo	University of Nairobi	299999,7
TEAM	2024-2029	Intersectoral Synergy for Maternal and Child Health: A Collaborative Endeavor Across Kenyan Universities	Tony Claeys (Vives Noord)	William Okedi , Kaibui Mwikamba	Alupe University , Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology , Maseno University , University	280912,5
TEAM	2024-2029	Towards high-quality drinking water for the Kenyan rural and informal settlements population: training and capacity building for water research and on-site treatment	Kristof Demeestere (UG)	Maurice Okoth	University of Eldoret	299956,8
TEAM	2022-2027	Adapting to climate-resilient farming systems in Western Kenya: the sustainable path by embedding agroecology in research, education and outreach (ADCLIM)	Jan Diels (KUL)	Abigael Otinga	University of Eldoret	279.977,50

List of projects during FYP 2 (2022-2027, including also finalizing FYP1 projects)						
Type	**Runtime**	**Title**	**Flemish promoter**	**Local promoter**	**Local institution**	**Total budget**
TEAM	2022-2027	Understanding the influence of land use and catchment characteristics on riverine carbon and nutrient dynamics for improved water resource	Steven Bouillon (KUL)	Fredrick Tamooh	Kenyatta University	279.954,40
TEAM	2022-2027	Supporting marine small-scale fisheries sustainability as a basis of safeguarding food security and livelihoods in East African region (SAVE-FISH)	Marc Kochzius (VUB)	Levy Otwoma	Kenya Marine and Fisheries Research Institute	300.000,00
SI	2022-2024	Novel biomarkers of rabies virus infection of the central nervous system	Koen Poesen (KUL)	Eric Ogola Ogeu	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	69.989,70
SI	2023-2025	Harnessing plant tissue culture technologies for education, research and improved livelihoods in Kenya	Marc Heijde (UG)	Steven Runo	Kenyatta University	69.897,20
SI	2023-2025	C-BIRD: Tackling Climate change-based food and economic instability in rural regions by directed crop and poultry Breeding programs for Improved genetic bioinformatics Research and Development in Kenya	Dirk Valkenborg (UH)	Johnstone Neondo / Sheila	Kenyatta University	69.867,60
SI	2025-2027	WASH-HPV: The role of Water, Sanitation & Hygiene on HPV infection among women in Kenya	John-Paul Bogers (UA)	AKINYI IVY	Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science and Technology	68992,00
SI	2025-2027	Factors Influencing Treatment Drop Out and Its Impact on Outcomes and Quality of Life Among Women Diagnosed with Cervical Cancer in Kenya	John-Paul Bogers (UA)	Primus Ochieng	University of Nairobi	69975,4
SI	2025-2027	River Contract: Co-Designing a River Contract Approach to Enhance Water Quality in the Sondu Miriu River, Kenya	Tine Compernolle (UA)	Stephen Mureithi	University of Nairobi	68640,00

List of projects during FYP 2 (2022-2027, including also finalizing FYP1 projects)						
Type	**Runtime**	**Title**	**Flemish promoter**	**Local promoter**	**Local institution**	**Total budget**
SI	2025-2027	Strengthening Recordkeeping for more Sustainable and Resilient Smallholder Farming in Western Kenya (FarmRecord4SD)	Miet Maertens (KU Leuven)	Ruth Njoroge	University of Eldoret	69973,42
SI	2025-2027	Raising Awareness on Antibiotic Resistance through Improved Education and Scientific Research "Moving Minds to Action in Kenya	Maarten Hendrickx (UC Leuven)	Clement Likhovole	Uzima University	69957,80
ITP	2022-2025	Improving the capacity in biotechnology/molecular biology of trainers to resolve challenges to the Kenyan society	Geert Angenon (VUB)	Atunga Nyachieo	Institute of Primate Research	149.704,50
ITP	2023-2026	International Molecular Biology Lab (MoBiLab)Training Programme in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia	Marc Heijde (UG)	/	/	149.592,30
ITP	2023-2026	The eR-BioStat ITP: Development of local E-learning platforms in (bio)statistics.	Ziv Shkedy (UH)	Ann Mwangi	Moi University	147.107,40
ITP	*2024-2027*	*Strengthening Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) - Building Mentors Capacity by (medium fidelity) Simulation Based Learning and enhance delivery of sustainable critical lifesaving interventions.4*	*Marianne Vanbellinghen (Erasmus-hogeschool)*	*Elizabeth Omondi*	*JOOUST*	*149.963,00*

Abbreviations (type): IUC=Institutional University Cooperation; SI=Short Initiatives, TEAM projects; ITP=International Training Programs. Abbreviations (Flemish institutions): KUL= Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; UG=Ghent University; VUB=Vrije Universiteit Brussel, UH = University of Hasselt.

Competitive calls for new projects will be launched and announced on ours website. Nationals of Kenya are eligible[1] to apply for scholarships for the International Master Programmes (ICP).

[1] Admission requirements, application procedures and selection procedures differ across the programmes and host institutions.

2. Kenya and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2.1. Kenya and the Sustainable Development Goals

Kenya has reported on progress made in implementing the sustainable development goals through the Voluntary National Review 2024 (VNR). The outlined next steps for enhanced SDGs implementation align with the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), which focuses on economic turnaround and inclusive growth.

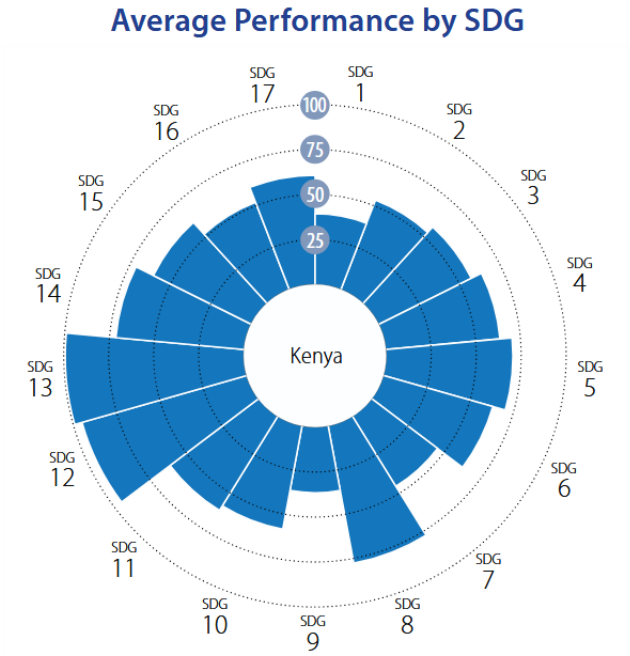
The Kenya Vision 2030 aims to transform Kenya into a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens by 2030 in a clean and secure environment. The current Final Midterm Plan IV 2023-2027 of Kenya Vision 2030 is the primary instrument to drive the SDGs implementation.

In the MTP IV 2023–2027, the objective is to stimulate sustainable economic growth and support economic recovery through five key sectors: finance and production; infrastructure; social development; environment and natural resources; and governance and public administration. The plan is anchored on the theme ***"Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda for Inclusive Growth"*** and focuses on five strategic pillars: **agriculture, housing and settlement, healthcare, the digital superhighway, and the creative economy**. These pillars are expected to accelerate progress towards SDGs **2, 3, 8, 10, and 11,** each contributing significant multiplier effects that will advance the achievement of the remaining SDGs.

Although progress has been booked, several challenges remain. The impact of climate change, COVID-19 pandemic, geo-economic realignment and geopolitical conflicts have significantly reduced Kenya's fiscal space, undermining its ability to invest in recovery efforts and leaving fewer options and even less resources to make the SDGs a reality. The global financial landscape continues to impede the country's ability to bridge the current financial gap in the implementation of the Goals.

Taking into account the global aspect of the SDGs, the sustainable development report 2025 assess where each country stands with regard to achieving the SDGs. Kenya ranks 123rd out of 167 countries included in the report. The Kenya country profile SDG dashboard 2025 shows that there are still some challenges.





As an umbrella organization that works with calls for proposals, VLIRUOS supports interventions for and through higher education institutions, supporting them in the areas of education, research and uptake and thereby strengthening them in their role as development actor. Doing so, the impact of the interventions supported by VLIRUOS can be found in a large variety of sectors. In line with its major intervention area, VLIRUOS positions itself within the education sector, especially focused on higher education, research and innovation (SDG 4 and 9). However, through its interventions, VLIRUOS intervenes in different sectors as well. VLIRUOS recognizes that given the complexity, scale and interconnectedness of current societal challenges, meaningful social, economic and ecological transformations can only be realized by starting from a holistic and integrated approach to the SDGs. When translated into SDGs, the projects that were financed by VLIRUOS in Kenya covered mainly, apart from SDG 4 and 9, SDGs 2, 3, 6, 13 and 15. Top sectors for VLIRUOS in this country for the past decade are health (e.g. reproductive health, disease surveillance), natural resources management and development (e.g. water, biodiversity, oil and gas, textile), food and nutrition security (e.g., agriculture, food processing, nutrition, marketing, and food safety) and the cross-cutting theme ICT development and statistics (e.g. data analysis, ICT infrastructure).

More background information and context analysis on Kenya can be found in the **geographic Joint Strategic Framework** for Kenya, which will be shared with (potential) project promotors when new calls are launched.

Additional sources on progress related to higher education & science (SDG 4)

- UNESCO-UIS: overview data resources indicators related to SDG4
- Our World in data:
  - Indicators related to educational mobility and inequality
  - Indicators related to tertiary education
  - Indicators related to projections of future education (demand)
  - Indicators related to science and research

2.2. Higher education landscape in Kenya

The higher education sector in Kenya is regulated by the Commission for University Education. The Commission was established to make better provisions for the advancement of quality university education in Kenya, which entails regulating and accrediting universities and universities academic programmes, among other functions. This was introduced to ensure reforms to regulate and assure quality, to promote the objectives of university education, by regulating and accrediting universities and programmes, among other functions. Kenya has over 78 universities—comprising public, private, and constituent colleges—offering diverse academic programs and increasingly focused on digitisation, work-integrated learning (WIL), and strengthened technical skills for better employment opportunities.

The Ministry of Education in Kenya is responsible for national policies and programmes that help Kenyans access quality and affordable, school education, post-school, higher education and academic research. Its national education strategic plan 2023-2027, which is part of the Kenya Vision 2030, includes:

1. **Equitable Access** and Inclusion which ensure that every learner, regardless of background or circumstance, has access to high-quality education, training and research. This will be achieved by promoting inclusive practices that celebrate diversity and provide equal opportunities for success.
2. **Data-Driven Decision-Making** by harnessing the power of data to inform policies, track progress, and make evidence-based decisions. The plan will establish a robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure accountability and transparency.
3. **Professional Development** by investing in the continuous growth and well-being of educators. The plan seeks to establishing mechanisms for ongoing training and support to keep pace with evolving educational practices.
4. **Innovative Pedagogies** by promoting cutting-edge teaching and learning methodologies that foster critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills. The plan also emphasizes integrating technology to enhance the educational experience and prepare learners for the digital age.
5. **Community Engagement** by recognizing the pivotal role of communities in the educational journey. Through the plan schools, families, and local stakeholders are encourage collaborate to create a supportive and enriching environment for learners.

According to the international Webometrics ranking, two Kenyan universities are ranked in the top 2000 worldwide: The University of Nairobi which takes a 1006th place and Kenyatta University with a 1923rd place.

2.3. Leaving no one behind

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the international community pledged to leave no one behind and to endeavor to reach the furthest behind first. The principle of leaving no one behind can be defined as a three-part imperative: to end absolute poverty in all its forms, to stop group-based discrimination that results in unequal outcomes for disadvantaged populations, and to take action to help the furthest behind.

The Voluntary national review 2024 also covers the Leaving No One Behind principle. The Government of Kenya has identified groups at risk of being left behind, including persons with disabilities, rural communities, ethnic minorities, street children and families, women and girls, youth, population living in ASALs, and mobile populations. To improve their livelihoods and ensure inclusive development, the government is implementing various programmes and projects. Moreover, the Government has established various institutions to advocate for the rights of women, persons with disabilities, youth, ethnic and other minorities, and marginalized communities.

These institutions include Kenya National Commission on Human Rights (KNCHR), National Gender and Equality Commission (NGEC), among others.

To address the needs of the most vulnerable, the government has formulated a national social protection policy, adopting a life-cycle approach as one of its guiding principles, which not only supports the implementation of the right to Social Protection for the people of Kenya, but also contributes to basic education, nutrition, food (security), healthcare, and employment. This Policy contextualizes Social Protection around four Pillars:

1/ Income Security; 2/ Social Health Protection; 3/ Shock-Responsive Social Protection; 4/ Complementary Programmes. Thes pillars ensure income security through contributory and non-contributory schemes, support access to social health protection, address vulnerability to climate change and other shocks, and foster access to complementary programmes towards the progressive realisation of Universal Social Protection. Its strategic objectives are: 1/ Expand the coverage of the Social Protection Sector to offer Income Security to all citizens throughout their life cycle; 2/ Facilitate access to Social Health Protection; 3/ Enhance the capacity of the Social Protection system to respond to shocks; 4/ Foster all citizens' human capital, capabilities, resilience, and well-being; 5/ Improve institutional capacity and coordination for Social Protection delivery.

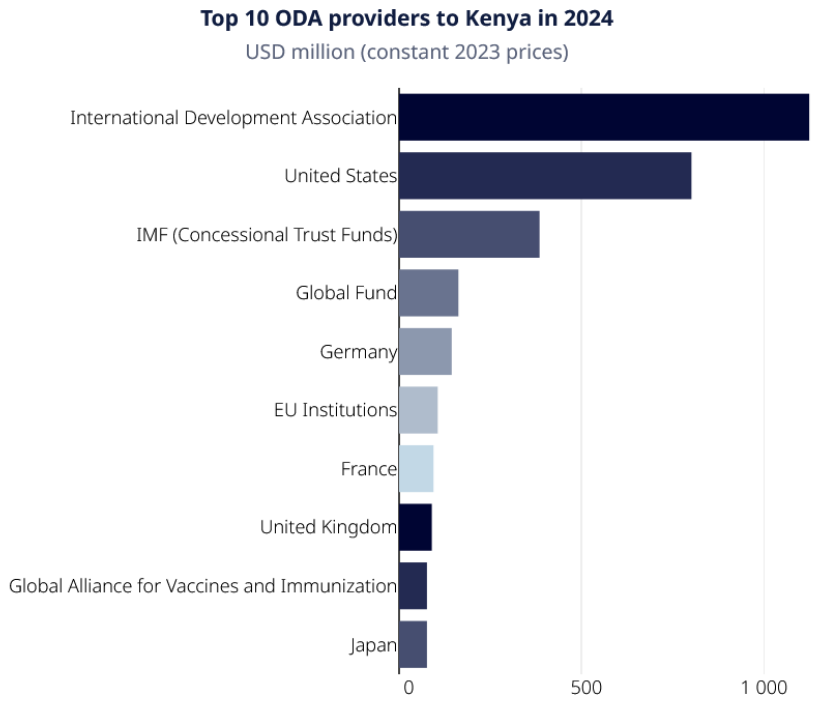
The Kenya National Bureau of Statistics delivers quality statistics for better lives. It provides essential economic indicators like GDP, inflation rates, and unemployment rates, enabling informed policy decisions. Beyond economics, it supports county governments, conducts population censuses, and addresses regional challenges such as water and sanitation needs. KNBS ensures data-driven approaches to education and environmental conservation.

The government also established institutions championing and safeguarding vulnerable groups' rights, such as the **National Council for Persons with Disability** (ncpwd) and the Network of African **National Human Rights Institutions (nanhri)**.

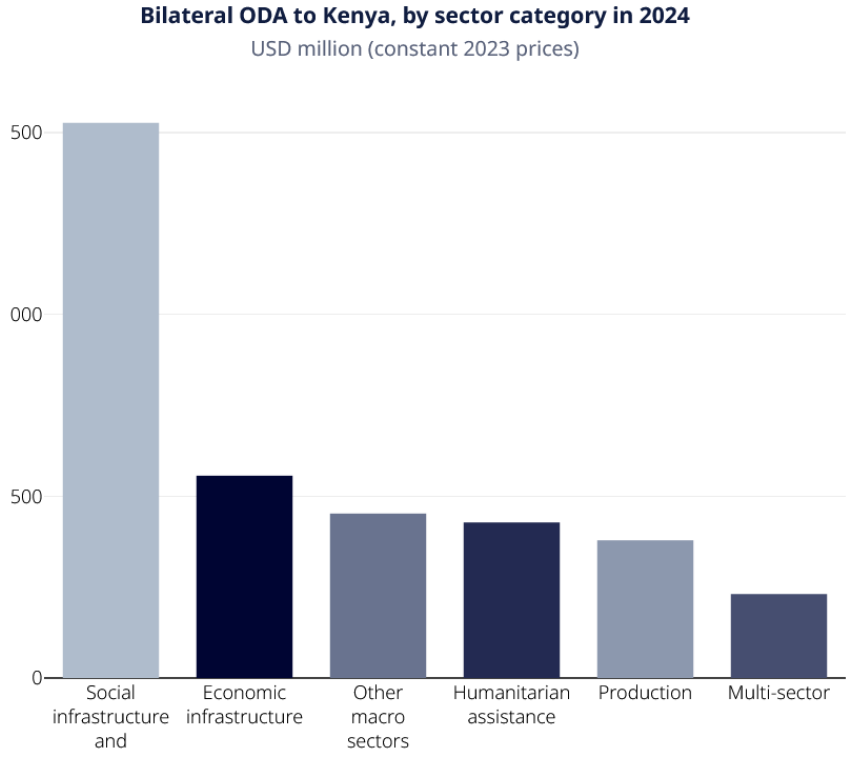
2.4. Multistakeholderpartnership - Stakeholder analysis

The complexity, scale, and interconnectedness of the current societal challenges that the SDG framework is seeking to address, requires a concerted effort of a wide variety of different stakeholders. As such, the principle of multistakeholderpartnership – which promotes cooperation and partnerships at different stages and spanning the boundaries of civil society, private sector, government, and academia – is ubiquitous across the 2030 Agenda. An analysis of these stakeholders is essential for each partnership.

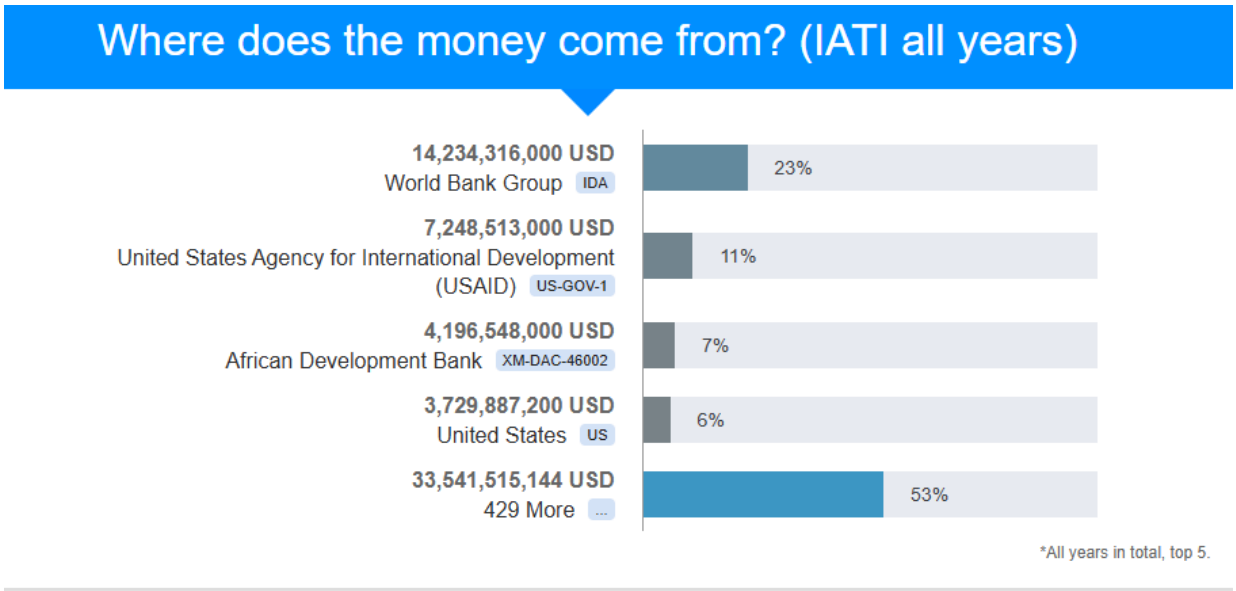
Looking at the international partners of Kenya, the International Development Association is by far the main donor of gross official development aid (ODA) in Kenya. With the withdrawal of USAID funds since the Trump administration took over in 2025, this situation is expected to change in the following years.



The sector receiving most ODA is Social infrastructure and services.



Based on data from the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI D-Portal), the World Bank is the main donor in the higher education sector.



VLIRUOS contributes to the 2030 agenda by realizing a societal impact, implying an impact on local communities, civil society, governments, private sector or other higher education institutions. In what follows we list the role and the desired change among the main actors involved in the change process that VLIRUOS envisages to support through *its interventions*.

Actor	Role and interest/influence
Higher Education Institutions in Kenya	HEIs in Kenya are important boundary partners in the realization of VLIRUOS outcomes in terms of its contribution to Agenda 2030, and the potential contribution to local sustainable development. As project owners they are expected to contribute to HEIs' enhanced institutional performance in the core tasks relating to education, research and societal service delivery strengthening the HEI's visibility and recognition as a centre of excellence. In the long-term, partner HEIs are also expected to have a multiplier effect on the higher education system and development sector in the country or region through their engagement in (global) knowledge-driven partnerships with academic and non-academic stakeholders.
DGD (incl. Belgian embassies in partner countries)	DGD has an advisory role in the VLIRUOS selection commissions and follows-up on the VLIRUOS portfolio and the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development. The Belgian Embassy in Nairobi can play a role in facilitating the uptake of knowledge, the identification, mobilisation and relation building with other

	stakeholders (e.g. links with European Union, national government, other donors), the contextual updates etc.
Students, professionals, and alumni	**Students** can be direct (e.g. as a recipient of a PhD scholarship within a project) or indirect beneficiaries (e.g. enjoying improved/innovative didactical approaches) of the projects. As direct beneficiary, their changed role will be about the generation and use of newly acquired knowledge, competences (e.g. global citizenship) and networks in view of sustainable development. Alumni from VLIRUOS-projects in Kenya will be important stakeholders in connecting VLIRUOS projects with each other, with other actors, etc.
Academics/researchers	As direct beneficiaries of the projects, academics and researchers affiliated within Flemish and partner HE&SIs play an important role in co-creating, disseminating and creating conditions for uptake of knowledge relevant to the achievement of the SDGs in line with the needs, policies and priorities of the partner HE&SIs, local/national or regional stakeholders.
Members of the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development	VLIRUOS, ITM and ARES have initiated the JSF on HESD4SD to further unlock the developmental potential of higher education and science cooperation for sustainable development and make it accessible to other local, Belgian and international partners as scientific advisor to other partners' projects, partners or policy bodies, as a platform for sharing state of the art scientific results, information, expertise and experience and for exploration of possibilities for synergy and complementarity. In Kenya, only VLIRUOS is present.
Belgian Actors of the Non-governmental Cooperation	VLIRUOS continuously tries to identify and encourage synergy and complementarity between Belgian ANGCs and academic stakeholders. Through the uptake of research results, mobilisation of local stakeholders, participation in trainings or courses, identification and communication of relevant research questions/opportunities, hosting of international internships, facilitating student mobility… these actors play a critical role.
Belgian bilateral cooperation (BIO & Enabel)	VLIRUOS will regularly exchange with Enabel and BIO to identify and communicate opportunities for synergy and complementarity with academic projects of the partner HEIs (e.g. through country reference frameworks, JSF platform).
International organizations and other donors (e.g. WHO, UNESCO, World Bank, European Commission…)	Interventions undertaken by international organisations like UN agencies such as FAO or international donors active in higher education cooperation can be complementary in the achievement of the objectives of projects. They can, for instance, play a role in the use and upscaling of new knowledge or practices or serve as seed money for bigger interventions financed by these international organisations.
Academic/science (inter)national and regional networks	Regional or (inter)national academic/science networks (e.g. CAMES, IUCEA) are among the potential indirect beneficiary as targeted HE&SIs strengthened in their research/educational capacities can improve the functioning of the networks they are part of through the co-creation, exchange and uptake of knowledge among academic stakeholders.

	Similar effects can be realized in the case of alumni and scholarship networks/associations when former scholarship students act as agents of change within these networks.
Public sector: Local or central government and political community	Engage in evidence-based governance that puts knowledge to the test by being a stakeholder in the co-creation of inclusive (innovative) solutions and effective user of research results to foster good governance for sustainable and coherent policies.
State owned/Private sector	Individuals and companies who operate for profit within the boundaries of the specific country situation and emerging private sector development can play a role within projects as users of the knowledge, applications and services (co-)created as result of the project and therefore contribute in particular but not only to SDG 9 on industry, innovation and infrastructure.
Civil society, social movements and local communities	Civil society actors, social movements and local communities are expected to co-create, access and use the knowledge and research products generated within the framework of projects thereby making a potential contribution to the entire range of SDGs. Although Kenya has made remarkable progress in developing its governance structures, maintaining security, promoting reconciliation and strengthening the justice system, significant challenges in democracy, human rights and governance remain. According to Amnesty International. Draft legislation threatened to impose further restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. More than 600 protesters were arbitrarily arrested and detained, and dozens were forcibly disappeared. Extrajudicial executions continued to be reported. The government forcibly evicted thousands of people from the Mathare and Mukuru Kwa Njenga settlements, amid heavy rainfall and flooding.

3. Synergy and Complementarity with other (Belgian) actors in Kenya

3.1. VLIRUOS approaches to synergy and complementarity

Drawing upon their longstanding common history, VLIRUOS, ARES and the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) jointly developed the thematic Joint Strategic Framework on Higher Education and Science for Sustainable Development (JSF HES4SD). Through cooperation with civil society, private and public sector, the JSF initiators[2] aim to further unlock the huge developmental potential of higher education and science cooperation for sustainable development and make it accessible to other Belgian, local and international partners, in different ways: as partner in a multi-actor partnership, as scientific advisor to other partners' projects, partners or policy bodies, as a knowledge broker for sharing state of the art scientific results, information, expertise and experience and for exploration of possibilities for synergy and complementarity. This reference framework for Kenya will feed into the **platform** that the initiators of the JSF HES4SD plan to create to proactively communicate opportunities and facilitate such cooperation. More precisely, the platform can be used to:

1. communicate about the launch and results of competitive calls for projects;
2. communicate other opportunities for projects or scholarships;
3. gather/exchange on collaboration opportunities (e.g. requests for scientific advice);
4. share information about ongoing projects, events and seminars in the country/region.

3.2. Bilateral cooperation (Enabel) in Kenya

The country is a smaller beneficiary of Belgian cooperation. The most important sectors are transport, water and sanitation. Kenya is not a partner country of the direct bilateral cooperation of Belgium through Enabel.

3.3. Belgian actors of the non-governmental cooperation in Kenya

3.3.1. Thematic Joint Strategic Framework on Higher Education and Science

Together with ARES and ITM, VLIRUOS forms a thematic joint strategic framework on higher education and science for sustainable development (JSF HES4SD): hes4sd.be

Kenya is currently not a project country for ARES and ITM: they do not have any identified partners in Kenya.

Collaboration with the geographic JSF of Kenya will be facilitated by systematically sharing information on projects and grants, by allowing Belgian ANGC to submit their needs in applied research or training, and by encouraging multi-stakeholder partnerships through competitive calls for proposals (VLIRUOS).

3.3.2. Kenya Joint Strategic Framework

Building on the discussions of the Strategic Dialogue 2025, JSF Kenya members and partners identified a common area of work and interest, with high developmental relevance for Kenya. All actors have united and aligned into one Joint Strategic Goal on Youth Economic Empowerment & Development for Stability: "Improve skills development of youth, world-of-work opportunities for youth and societal engagement on matters of importance for youth in Kenya to contribute to a more stable society."

[2] The three JSF initiators represent 60 Belgian higher education institutions (HEIs), being 11 universities, 32 university colleges, 16 school of arts, and ITM.

	Description of the strategic goal	ANGCs (active members)
SG1	Youth & education	ACTEC, VVOB
SG2	Youth & the creative economy	ACTEC, VVOB, Africalia
SG3	Youth & Leaving no one behind, gender equality and climate action	ACTEC, VVOB, Africalia
SG4	Youth & stability	ACTEC, VVOB, Africalia

3.3.3 Other Thematic Joint Strategic Frameworks

Besides collaboration with the thematic JSF on Higher Education and Science, there will also be collaboration with the thematic JSF of Decent Work through the Belgian ANGC IFSI-ISVI.

The Joint Strategic Framework (JSF) on Decent Work contributes to the four inseparable pillars of the ILO Decent Work Agenda: (1) creating sustainable jobs and livelihoods, (2) ensuring rights at work, (3) extending social protection and (4) promoting social dialogue. These pillars are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and contribute to social and climate justice and the United Nations 2030 Agenda.
The JSF Decent Work contributes to four interdependent strategic targets that correspond to the pillars of the ILO Decent Work Agenda. Together, these areas provide an integrated framework for improving the quality of work and advancing social justice. The actors participating in the JSF Decent Work build on their complementary strengths and partnerships with Belgian actors to translate these objectives into tangible change at national, continental and international levels.