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# Uganda

## Country Reference Framework

*(Updated version of February 2026)*

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# Country reference framework Uganda

## 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 cooperation 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:

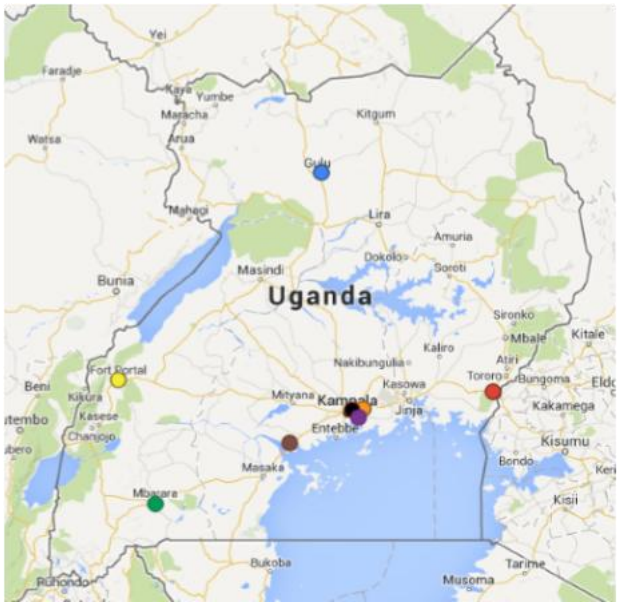
1. overview of VLIRUOS projects in the country;
2. context analysis focused on the Agenda 2030 framework and the higher education sector;
3. overview of Belgian cooperation actors (ANGCs involved in thematic or geographic JSFs & Enabel), their local partners and their regional/thematic focus.

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 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 VLIRUOS, to be compatible and responsive to evolving/emerging needs and priorities of academic and international cooperation actors active in the country/region/sector.

# 1. VLIRUOS in Uganda

## 1.1. Overview projects & scholarships (1999 – 2025)




**Legend**

- Mountains of the Moon University
- Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- Busitema University
- Uganda Christian University
- Gulu University
- Uganda Martyrs University
- Kyambogo University
- Makerere University

| Projects 1999-2025 | | | | Scholarship Type | Finished | Ongoing | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Budget (€) | Number | | ICP | 294 | 38 | 332 |
| ***Total*** | ***15.687.190*** | ***67*** | | ICPPHD | 7 | | 7 |
| IUC | 6.361.202 | 3 | | ITP/KOI | 213 | | 213 |
| TEAM | 6.314.224 | 21 | | SRS | 26 | | 26 |
| SI | 2.405.404 | 35 | | Total | 540 | 38 | 578 |
| Crosscutting | 576.264 | 5 | | | | | |
| ITP | 30096 | 3 | | | | | |

**Uganda is an important VLIRUOS partner country**. Between 1999 and 2025, the project cooperation between VLIRUOS and Uganda represented more than € 15,6 million. This includes long-term Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) projects with **Mountains of the Moon University** (MMU) (finalised) and **Mbarara University for Science and Technology (MUST)** (Phase 1 ongoing), and the identification of a new IUC with **Gulu University** (GU) (Phase-in year 2025-2026), representing the cornerstone of the Uganda-portfolio, next to numerous SI and TEAM projects.
More detailed information can be found on our VLIRUOS website vliruostats (statistics).

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

| List of projects FYP 2022-2027 | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type** | **Runtime** | **Title** | **Flemish promoter** | **Local promoter** | **Local institution** | **Total budget (FYP 2) (€)** |
| IUC | 2022-2027 | Institutional University Cooperation with Mbarara University of Science and Technology (phase-in & phase 1) | G. Coene (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) | C. Tushabomwe-Kazooba | Mbarara University of Science and Technology | 3.000.000 |
| *Subproject 1* | | *Improved conservation practices of the environment and natural resources* | *S. Smis (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)* | *M. Twinamatsiko* | | |
| *Subproject 2* | | *Mechanisms for climate change adaptation for sustainable food production* | *M. Kervyn (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)* | *G. Kagoro* | | |
| *Subproject 3* | | *Increased access and utilization of affordable energy technologies* | *M. Vanierschot (KU Leuven)* | *J. Obungoloch* | | |
| *Subproject 4* | | *Improved sexual and reproductive health and rights of women, children and adolescents* | *Y. Jacquemyn (Antwerp University)* | *J. Ngonzi* | | |
| *Subproject 5* | | *Increased youth employability through skilling, innovation, experiential learning and technology transfer* | *T. Martens (University College West Flanders)* | *M. Tumuhimbise* | | |
| *Subproject 6* | | *Improved institutional and community ICT capacity to access and utilise information* | *R. Gevaert (Ghent University)* | *F. Kaggwa* | | |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| IUC | 2019-2024 | Institutional University Cooperation with Mountains of the Moon University (phase 2 & phase out) | X. Gellynck (Ghent University) | Edmond Kagambe | Mountains of the Moon University | 365.000 |
| *Subproject 1* | | *Agricultural action research and community engagement for development* | *B. Van der Bruggen (KU Leuven)* | *R. Kabbiri* | | |
| *Subproject 2* | | *Transversal institutional strengthening* | *C. Zhu (Vrije Universiteit Brussel)* | *J. K. Mugenyi* | | |
| TEAM | 2019-2023 | Digital citizen science for community-based resilient environmental management | M. Kervyn (VUB) | Grace R. Kagoro | Mbarara University of Science and Technology | 83.895 |
| TEAM | 2019-2022 | Making Refugee Integration Sustainable: In Search of Durable Relations with Host Populations In Uganda | B. Ingelaere * (UA) | Frank Ahimbisibwe | Mbarara University of Science and Technology | 45.842 |
| TEAM | 2019-2022 | Improving Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health through a Participatory Parent-Child Communication Intervention in Uganda | K. Michielsen (UG) | Viola N. Nyakato | Mbarara University of Science and Technology | 59.892 |
| TEAM | 2022-2027 | Up -scaling mass-rearing of edible grasshopper and edible cricket species (Acheta domesticus and Scapsipedus icipe) for improved food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture in northern Uganda (MASEDIN) | S. Van Miert (TMk) | Geoffrey Maxwell Malinga | Gulu University | 299.999,70 |
| TEAM | 2024-2029 | EMPowering Ugandan REfugee–host COmmunities in becoming climate resilient (EMPURECO) | K. Titeca (UA) | Ronald Twongyirwe | Mbarara University of Science and Technology | 300000 |
| TEAM | 2024-2029 | Project title Building Socio-ecological resilience of communities to Flash Flooding in the Rwenzori Mountains (B-SaFFeR) | M. Kervyn (VUB) | Bosco Bwambale , John Sekajugo | Uganda Martyrs University , Mountains of the Moon University | 299974,4 |
| TEAM | 2024-2029 | Enhancing Food Security and Livelihoods through Virus-Free Vitamin A-rich Sweet Potato Vines: A Demand-Driven and Multi-actor Approach in Uganda's Refugee Settlements and Host Communities | C. Yung Hung (UG) | Joshua Wesana | Mountains of the Moon University | 299999,7 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TEAM | 2024-2029 | Harnessing local traditional knowledge and experiences on production and consumption of fruits and vegetables-based diets to optimize cardiometabolic health and undernutrition in Rwenzori region | C. Matthys (KUL) | Joweria Nambooze , Joshua Wesana | Kyambogo University , Mountains of the Moon University | 299999,67 |
| SI | 2022-2024 | KamuKamu ("One by one makes a bundle."): Empowering schools and students to reduce the mental health burden in Uganda | D. Vancampfort (KUL) | James Mugisha | Kyambogo University | 69.931,40 |
| SI | 2022-2024 | Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B virus by launching an antenatal screening facility and viral load testing in North-Eastern Uganda | T. Vanwolleghem (UA) | Mark Okwir | Lira University College | 69.817,00 |
| SI | 2022-2024 | Feasibility assessment of selected point of use water treatment systems applicable for rural households of the Rwenzori region, Uganda (FAST) | B. Defloor (UG) | Violet Kisakye | Mountains of the Moon University | 69.909,40 |
| SI | 2022-2024 | Strengthening training and research capacity in Epidemiology and biostatistics to enhance Public Health research at Mountains of the Moon University (MMU) | P. Coorevits (UG) | John Rubaihayo | Mountains of the Moon University | 70.000,00 |
| SI | 2023-2025 | Conserving the past, nourishing the future: unlocking the agronomical potential of traditional food systems in Northern Uganda with two famine crops | E. de la Peña (UG) | Jackie Epila | Lira University College | 69.990,44 |
| SI | 2023-2025 | Enhancing the Reproductive Autonomy of Girls in Uganda (ERAGU) | S. Vindevogel (HoGent) | Emmanuel Kimera | Mountains of the Moon University | 69.938,00 |
| SI | 2023-2025 | Harnessing circular and carbon-sequestering local feed resources to close the nutrition gap of cross-bred dairy cattle in Uganda supported by metabolic biomarkers in blood spot samples | V. Fievez (UG) | Fred Kabi | Makerere University | 69.999,82 |
| SI | 2025-2027 | Tweyagale (Let's unite): Uniting for Self-Care and Compassionate Care in Healthcare Workers across Uganda | D. Vancampfort (KUL) | James Mugisha | Kyambogo University | 69.624,52 |
| SI | 2025-2027 | Improved worm management for improved goat production, sustainable livelihood and food security in vulnerable populations in northern Uganda - WORMTRANSFORMER | B. Levecke (UG) | Harriet Angwech | Gulu University | 69.983,10 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SI | 2025-2027 | Biogas production as Key Technology to Facilitate On-farm Milk Cooling in Off-Grid Cattle Farming Communities of Uganda | E. Meers (UG) | Elizabeth Ahikiriza | Makerere University | 69.558,10 |
| SI | 2025-2027 | ZIKUKA (ZImba obugumu, KUuma obulamu, Kasawo Akalungi) ("Build Resilience, Protect Health, and Strengthen Well-being"): co-designing a community-based family intervention for vulnerable adolescents in Uganda | T. Van Damme (KUL) | James Mugisha | Kyambogo University | 69.900,60 |
| SI | 2025-2027 | SMATCH-Soroti: Strengthening Maternal Antenatal Testing and Community Health for Hepatitis B in Soroti | T. Vanwolleghem (UA) | Simon Eleku | Soroti University | 69.999,67 |

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 Uganda 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. Uganda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

## 2.1. Uganda and the Sustainable Development Goals

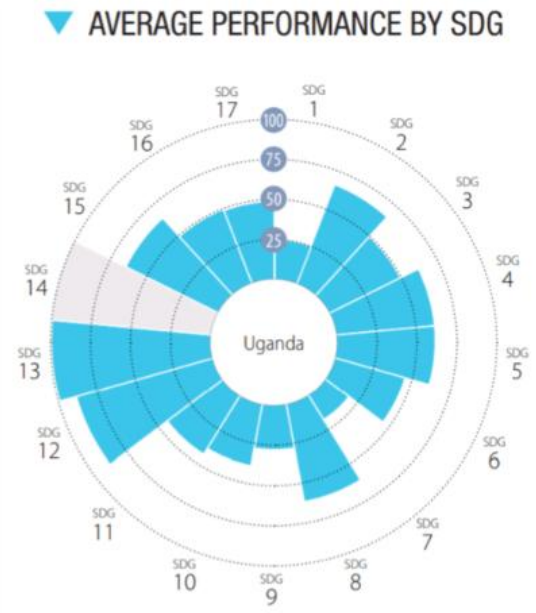
By joining the global dynamic of adoption and ownership of the 2030 agenda, Uganda remains committed to integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as outlined in the Uganda's voluntary national review (VNR) 2024 and the Third National Development Plan 2020/21-2024/25 (NDPIII)

The VNR 2024 highlights Uganda's efforts and progress toward achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The national SDG secretariat continues to strengthen coordination and implementation of the SDGs under the guidance of the NDP. At the midpoint of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, Uganda has made gains on SDG implementation. Progress has been made in reducing both monetary and multidimensional poverty among the population. The incidence of monetary poverty (all ages) declined due to Uganda's policy frameworks on poverty reduction, which consists of laws, regulations, and programs that target the root causes of poverty and increase access to resources and opportunities for all. Key to highlight is the implementation acceleration of the parish development model. This model aims to accelerate socio-economic transformation at the grassroots level by creating wealth and jobs by moving 39% of the households in the subsistence economy, who are the most poverty-stricken, into the money economy by 2030.

However, this progress and implementation of SDGs has also faced a number of challenges including gaps in institutionalization of SDGs; limited financial resources to finance national development priorities; slow technological advancement; data gaps; low production and productivity in some key potential transformative sectors; institutional challenges including bureaucratic red-tape; social-cultural rigidities among sections of the citizenry; negative effects of climate change; effects of Covid-19 pandemic; and corruption tendencies among some public officials.

Considering the global aspect of the SDGs, the sustainable development report assesses where each country stands regarding achieving the SDGs. The Uganda Country Profile dashboard shows that the majority of goals is facing significant challenges, Uganda ranks 142nd out of 167 countries.






As an umbrella organization that works with calls for proposals, VLIRUOS supports interventions for and through higher education institutes, 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 recognises that given the complexity, scale and interconnectedness of current societal challenges, meaningful social, economic and ecological transformations can only be realised by starting from a holistic and integrated approach to the SDGs. When translated into SDGs, the projects that were financed by VLIRUOS in Uganda covered mainly, apart from SDG 4 and 9, SDGs 2, 3, 5 and 16. Top sectors for VLIRUOS in this country for the past decade are health, sustainable agriculture and food security, biodiversity/environment and natural resources, governance and justice, education and technology transfer.

More background information and context analysis on Uganda can be found in the **geographic Joint Strategic Framework** for Uganda, 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 Uganda

The education system in Uganda is administered by the Ministry of education and sports and is structured across several levels, beginning with pre-primary education—largely delivered by private providers—followed by primary education, secondary education, and ultimately higher education. Higher education encompasses both tertiary institutions and degree-awarding universities and colleges and plays a central role in national human capital development and socio-economic transformation.

According to Uganda's education statistics 2025, the country has a total of 73 higher education institutions, including 11 public universities, 55 private universities, and 18 Other Degree-Awarding Institutions (ODAs). The dominance of private institutions indicates significant sector expansion driven by non-state actors, but it also raises concerns regarding affordability, accessibility, and inclusivity of higher education. In addition, 48 of these institutions are in the Central Region, highlighting persistent regional disparities in access to higher education across the Western, Northern, and Eastern regions.

Enrolment patterns further illustrate gender and access dynamics within the sector. The national council for higher education(NCHE) data indicate enrolment of approximately 60,048 male students compared to 51,070 female students in 2025, reflecting persistent gender gap in participation at the higher education level. This national council, is mandated to regulate the establishment, accreditation, and quality assurance of higher education institutions in Uganda. Its long-term strategic objectives include strengthening research capacity, increasing the production of relevant and high-quality research, and promoting the training of employable graduates aligned with national development priorities.

Despite notable expansion in institutional numbers and enrolment, Uganda's higher education sector continues to face challenges related to regional inequality, financing constraints, quality assurance, research funding, and graduate employability. Addressing these issues remains critical for ensuring that higher education effectively contributes to sustainable development and national transformation.

According to the webometrics global web for ranking for universities, Makerere University is the only university in Uganda that falls within the Webometrics 2000 ranking worldwide, occupying a 925$^{th}$ 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.

Ugandan government is committed to achieve the leaving no one behind principle through the inclusive Parish development model PDM to accelerate socio-economic transformation detailed in VNR 2024 and NDPIII. The PDM seeks to ensure equitable participation and benefits for all groups, including women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities.

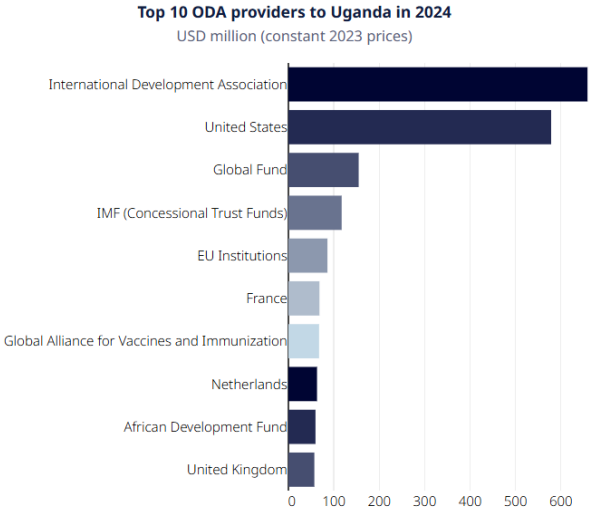
The model targets poverty reduction at the household level, focusing on agriculture modernization, value addition, and industrialization, given that most Ugandan households rely on agriculture for their livelihood. By linking local economic growth with inclusive development, the PDM is designed to systematically address inequalities and accelerate progress toward the goal of leaving no one behind by 2030.

With the newly adopted commitments for SDG acceleration and transformation towards 2030 the government will focus on actions to accelerate: (i)the leaving no one behind agenda through the inclusive Parish Development Model; (ii) inclusive actions for trade financing and climate-smart investments, (iii) leveraging science, technology, and innovation; (iv) inclusive economic and social development through climate change adaptation and mitigation; (v) harnessing the full potential of data, and (vi) strengthening SDG coordination and service delivery mechanisms.

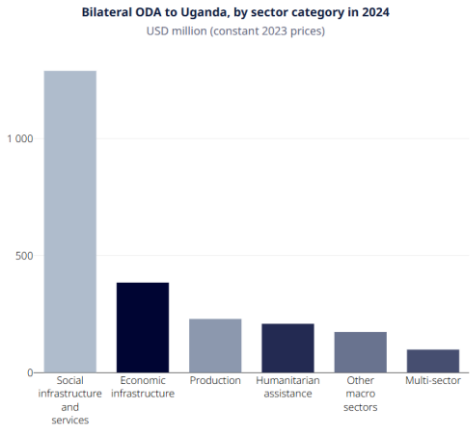
## 2.4. Multistakeholderpartnership - Stakeholder analysis

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 Uganda, the International Development Association and the United States are the main donor of gross official development aid (ODA) in Uganda. With the withdrawal of USAID funds since the Trump administration took over in 2025, this situation is expected to change in the following years.



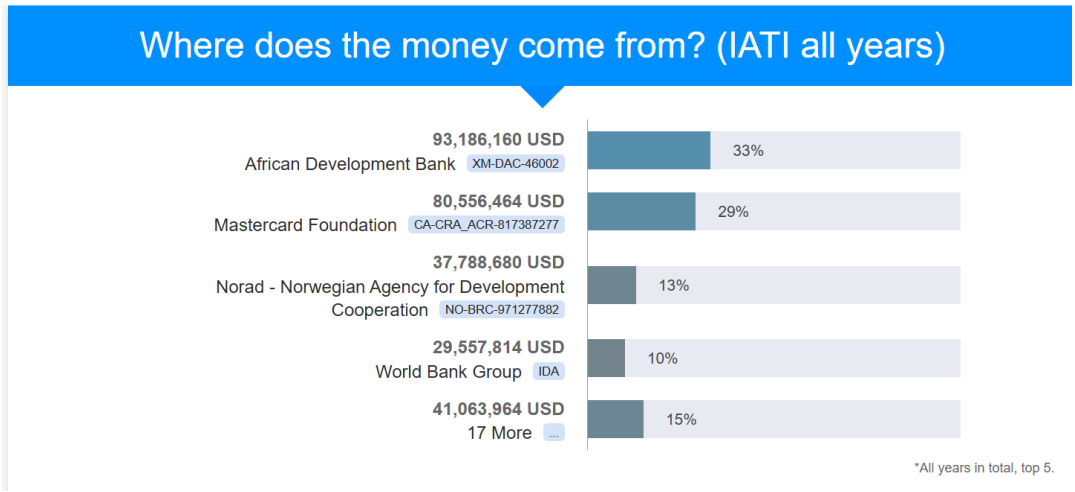

Sources: OECD (2025) , Aid (ODA) disbursements to countries and regions [DAC2a]




Sources: OECD (2025) , CRS: Creditor Reporting System (flows)

The sector receiving by far the biggest funding is Social infrastructure and services as can be observed in the graph above.

Based on data from the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI), the African Development Bank is the main donor in the higher education sector. The VLIRUOS funding is not categorised under HE in this graph, but spread over the sectors of project activity.




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 Uganda** | HEIs in Uganda 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 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 Uganda 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 Uganda, 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** | To ensure that the resource-led sustainable industrialization process is both sustainable and beneficial, the government will work closely with the **private sector**. This includes developing both the private sector and human capital to build an educated, skillful, and productive labor force to drive industrialization. |
| **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.<br><br>Although efforts have been made, significant challenges in democracy, human rights and governance remain. According to reports of Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, the authorities continued to restrict the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association. References are made to unnecessary lethal force by security forces and different kinds of human rights violations. |

# 3. Synergy and Complementarity with other (Belgian) cooperation actors in Uganda

## 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 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 Uganda 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:

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

## 3.2. Bilateral cooperation (Enabel) in Uganda

**Belgium** is not within the top 10 ranking of the ODA overview for Uganda (2024). Yet, Uganda and Belgium have been partners for 21 years, collaborating to improve the quality of education and healthcare to ensure all Ugandans lead healthy and productive lives. This cooperation continues through Enabel and the main sectors of intervention are education and health. The quality of education is still insufficient, and the teaching profession is not highly valued. Together with the Ministry of Education and Sports, Enabel supports the (re)construction and (re)supplying of four National Teacher Colleges. Besides this, lecturers are trained on students-based teaching and learning methods. Moreover, the implementation of the 'Skilling Uganda Strategy' has been supported through better quality of instruction and learning in practical skills development with the aim to increase the employability of youth. Poor health service delivery remains a big challenge for the country. Together with the Ministry of Health, Enabel strengthens health services and primary health care on a local level in both public and private facilities through capacity building of staff and result based financing.

## 3.3. Belgian actors of the non-governmental cooperation in Uganda

### 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

However, ARES nor ITM have project activities in Uganda.

Collaboration with the geographic JSF of Uganda 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. Uganda Joint Strategic Framework

| | Description of the strategic goal | ANGCs (active members) |
|---|---|---|
| **SG1** | **Education and Health**: improved health leads to a more productive population, while equitable access to quality education, esp. for women and youth, enhances social equity, reduces poverty, and fosters long-term economic growth and resilience | VVOB, BRC-FL, Trias, HI, VVOB, Africalia |
| **SG2** | **Human Rights, Governance & Justice:** seeks to promote human rights, governance, and justice as per its Constitution (1995) and supplementary legislation, alongside informal customary law and international commitments | ASF, BD, CI.be, Humundi |
| **SG3** | **Sustainable agriculture and food systems**: Uganda's agriculture sector is pivotal for poverty reduction and economic growth. Government policy seeks to shift the sector from subsistence to commercial farming amid challenges like climate change, low productivity and limited market access | BD, BOS+, Eight, Humundi, IDP, JFW, Rikolto, Trias, VSF-B, VVOB |
| **SG4** | **Entrepreneurship and youth employment**: supports entrepreneurship, youth employment, financial inclusion, and green growth in alignment with key strategic frameworks | Africalia, BD, CI.be, Humundi, IDP, PIU, Rikolto, Trias, VSF-B, VVOB |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **SG5** | **Resilient Social-Ecological Systems**: building, maintaining, and protecting the resilience of Uganda's social-ecological systems for sustainable livelihoods, environmental health and social cohesion in communities | ASF, BOS+, CI.be, IDP, JFW, Rikolto, VSF-B |
| **SG6** | **Leave No One Behind**: a rights-based approach to end discrimination and exclusion, and reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities, such as age, socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion, political opinion, gender, geographical location, disability, and sexual orientation | ASF, BD, BOS+, CI.be, Eight, Humundi, JFW, PIU |

### 3.3.3 Other Thematic Joint Strategic Frameworks

Given the reduction of thematic JSFs, BNGA members will continue to actively collaborate with HES4SD (VLIRUOS-ARES-ITM); the only thematic JSF that will be implementing in Uganda during the 2027-2031 period. Moreover, the Uganda 2027-2031 JSF also includes the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) as Observer.

RMCA implements cooperation programs funded by the DGD to support collaborative research activities, build research capacity, and strengthen scientific partnerships between Belgian and African institutions. In Uganda, two such programs are currently running: Action Towards Reducing Aquatic Parasitic diseases (ATRAP), which focuses on monitoring freshwater snails that transmit schistosomiasis and the Natural Hazards, Risks, and Society in Africa (HARISSA), which focuses on addressing environmental hazards and disaster risk reduction.

Thematic JSF Decent Work does not have activities in Uganda. However, Members of the Entrepreneurship and Youth Employment strategic goal (#4) will continue to apply best practices from this thematic JSF, participate in regional workshops and learning events, and share lessons learned and knowledge from Uganda. In addition BNGA members will continue to actively collaborate with Enabel who is implementing a social protection programme aimed at ensuring access to decent work, protection of labour rights, and facilitating tripartite dialogue between workers, employers, and labour unions.