

IUC4Connect session (online) – IUC Phase In UNILU – 15 September 2021

Abbreviations:

IUC: Institutional University Cooperation

UNILU: University of Lubumbashi

UNIKIS: University of Kisangani

DGD: Directorate-general of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid

Meeting objectives Connect4IUC: Power point presentation 1

- Online introduction to the IUC UNILU project & sub-projects
- Broadening up sub-project teams
- Connecting interested parties
- Connecting with academic, public, private and civil society actors in Belgium and the partner countries (Synergy and Complementarity)

IUC-project DR Congo: Strengthening UNILU: Power point presentations 2 to 8

- **Questions and remarks**
- A number of new Masters of Science (MSc) will be created within the IUC with UNILU among which an MSc in environmental science. A participant referred to the fact that this already exists at the VUB, so it would be interesting to exchange about this. Other MSc's can use input from others as well, this is open to discussion.
- Sub-project 2 in Environmental health:
 - How will this be oriented? The KU Leuven has had two South Initiatives (SI) in capacity building for a better biological assessment of mining impacts in Katanga. Their expertise could be very useful in this IUC.
 - A remark was made that mouth issues should be taken into account and dentists could be of added value.
 - The human fertility of people in smaller scale mining has come to the fore but could not be further developed in this session; however this will receive sufficient attention within sub-project 2.
- Sub-project 3 in Governance and security: how to tackle delicate subjects like corruption and violation of human rights for Flemish professors to intervene? A lot of research experience has been gained in conflict oriented issues, there are strategies to manage this and increasing awareness in how to deal with it.
- Sub-project 5 in Climate smart agriculture for sustainable food systems: this could use assistance from a project in Morocco that is treating the same subject, at the Moroccan Foundation for Advanced Science, Innovation & Research (Mascir).

Furthermore there were questions about getting aboard the IUC with different kinds of expertise from academics outside Flanders. It has been mentioned that everyone who can add value to an IUC sub-project – academic or non-academic, regardless of his or her nationality or affiliation, can theoretically become a team member. (note: composition of the subproject teams is the responsibility of the team leaders)

Synergies and lessons learned

▪ Power point presentation 9

A short explanation was given on the VLIR-UOS renewed approach for partner countries, together with a revised Theory of Change.

On the following VLIR-UOS website links, all information can be found about the IUC with UNILU & about VLIR-UOS-activities in DR Congo:

- IUC Phase In UNILU

<https://www.vliruos.be/en/projects/project/22?pid=4642>

- Country page DR Congo

https://www.vliruos.be/en/countries/africa/democratic_republic_of_the_congo/102

The following e-addresses are those of the IUC coordinators & project managers to whom future team members may express their interest and make contacts:

- o **Coordinators:**

- Congolese coordinator: César Nkuku Khonde: cesar.nkukukhonde@unilu.ac.cd

- Flemish coordinator: Virginie Bito: virginie.bito@uhasselt.be

- o **Managers:**

- Congolese manager: Yannick Useni: yannickuseni@gmail.com

- Flemish manager: Liesbeth Oeyen: liesbeth.oeyen@uhasselt.be

- **Power Point presentation 10**

This was about the communication of lessons learned of the IUC with UNIKIS – which is in its Phase Out. In brief this was about the importance of synergy and interdisciplinarity between projects of an IUC and also about synergy and complementarity with other projects and actors working in DR Congo. Stakeholders should be involved at all stages as from the very beginning (both during formulation & Joint steering committee meetings) and strategies for extension & valorisation should be developed from the start. The IUC should lead to results based management of income-generating activities in order to respond to collective needs of the university in terms of maintenance of equipment and the continuation of activities after the IUC.

- **The two interventions of resp. the Belgian Embassy in DR Congo and of DGD**

These were focussed on synergy and complementarity with other Belgian actors for development, active in DR Congo. Non-governmental actors and associations could be associated in academic research and care for the uptake of the research results in order to disseminate it to the populations. Also the importance of inter-university cooperation has been underlined within DR Congo. The Embassy is very willing to give information about Belgian actors working in DR Congo and to facilitate contacts with them.

- **Remarks**

A remark was given during the Q&A session on the importance of inter-university/inter-institutional cooperation among the 5 new IUC-projects, i.e. those in DR Congo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania and Vietnam. VLIR-UOS is developing a sharepoint tool to facilitate communication & exchange among these new 5 IUCs, this can be extended as well to other projects in the future.

A last remark came from the lead of the JSF for DR Congo who focussed on the importance of working together with non-governmental (Belgian) actors/NGOs. He thereby underlined the work in all aspects of mining, the long experience that some organizations have gained in the mining-sector, and to associate them with the IUC and its research.

Round up

For the 5 new IUC: new guidelines and formats will be shared soon; Preparations for formulation missions have been started or are ongoing; The final IUC proposals, based on the work done during the formulation missions, need to be submitted in March 2022.