

# IUC review event – Online session with partners from the Global South

## 23 April 2024

*Venue: Online, Zoom*

**Facilitators:** Patrick Stoop, C Lever Consortium; VLIR-UOS (Peter De Lannoy, Kathleen Wuytack, Geraldine Mabbe, Laura Uwase)

### **Partner institutions/representatives**

Le Van Khoa (Can Tho University, Vietnam)  
Ngan Vu Thi (Quy Nhon University, Vietnam)  
Ngoc Do (Quy Nhon University, Vietnam)  
Nguyen Van Thang (Hue University, Vietnam)  
Charles Tushabomwe (Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Uganda)  
James Marandu (Mzumbe University, Tanzania)  
Jennifer Sesabo (Mzumbe University, Tanzania)  
Albogast Musabila (Mzumbe University, Tanzania)  
Ronald Kabbiri (Mountains of the Moon University, Uganda)  
Kintu Mugeni Justice (Mountains of the Moon University, Uganda)  
Joyce Rugakingila (NM-AIST, Tanzania)  
Tesfaye Bogale (Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia)  
Mara-Saada Mwinzigogo Rajab (Ardhi University, Tanzania)  
Lhoussaine El Rhaffari (UMI, Morocco)

Note: the delegation from UCLV, Cuba, already took part in the event in Brussels on 16/4/2024. With a number of representatives from UCB – Bolivia and ESPOL – Ecuador email exchange took place with exchange of information on the event of 16/4/2024, but because of the time difference they were not able to take part in the event.

### **Objective:**

The aim of this meeting was twofold:

#### **1. Restitution of the final evaluation of 8 IUC/NETWORK partnerships**

the lessons learned identified in the evaluation of 8 IUC/NETWORK partnerships which are in phase-out status at present, will be presented by the external evaluation team. The lessons learned are organised around a number of collective learning questions identified by the IUC/NETWORK partnerships under evaluation.

- 2. Open brainstorm:** to harness peer-to-peer learning between IUC projects from different intakes and to create collective knowledge out of it. We want to integrate lessons learned from the evaluation and from brainstorm sessions on 16 and 23 April into the new IUC call that will be launched in summer 2024. The brainstorm is not limited to the evaluation scope, but also tackles policy questions that have been identified in the current IUC policy development.

## Programme of the session

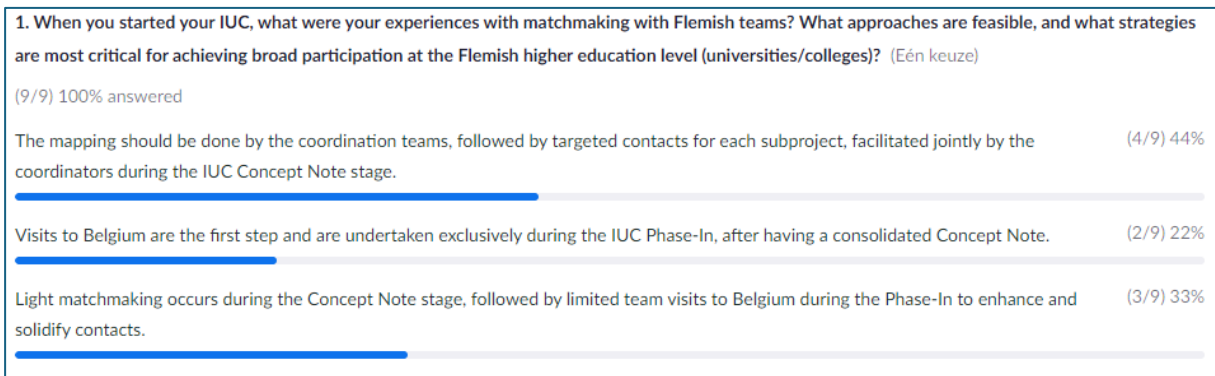
9:55 – 10:05	Opening of session and introduction <i>Peter De Lannoy; Global Partnerships Coordinator</i>
10:05 - 10:50	Synthesis of 8 IUC/NETWORK evaluations, followed by a Q&A: Lessons learned and future pathways. <i>Presentation by Patrick Stoop (C-Lever) from the evaluation consortium</i>
10:50 – 11:00	<b>Organizing break outs / &amp; 5 min health break</b>
11:00 – 11:45	<b>Brainstorm along a number of guiding questions, organized via a poll</b>
11:45 – 12:00	Closing by VLIR-UOS: Key takeaways and way forward

### Meeting Notes:

#### **Presentation of “Synthesis of 8 IUC/NETWORK evaluations, followed by a Q&A: Lessons learned and future pathways” by Patrick Stoop: Q&A:**

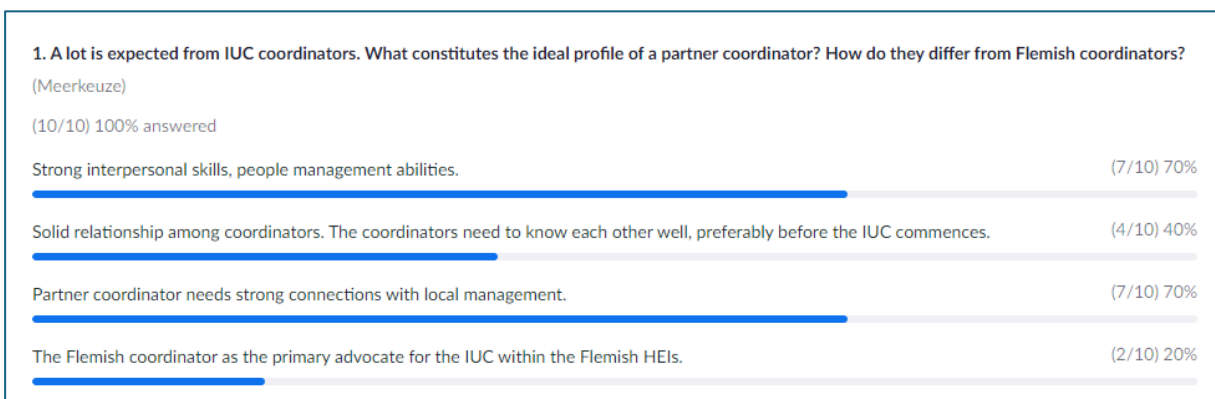
- Financial uncertainty may still exist after an IUC, therefore it is necessary to build capacity on good research and proposal writing to attract funding so that enhanced expertise and excellence can be sold. Thereby it is also necessary to connect and network so that the research finds its way. The evaluations demonstrated that this dimension improved but not systematically and that it needs to be tackled further.
- PhDs may lack diversity and therefore it is important to have a pre-doctoral policy. Those who have less opportunities but have high potential should be supported and a pre-doctoral programme can enhance the level of candidates and spot the high potential ones.
- Policy uptake from government seems a challenge. What can be best practices to improve this? What can we expect from Flemish partners and coordinator?
  - o For policy uptake one should not be too ambitious, it is better to have priorities on the kind and nature of uptake that is wished for: can vary depending on societal, economic and political level; once the choice is made, the necessary investment needs to be done
  - o For policy and other uptake: Scholars can be trained to have policy advisory skills, be part of advisory groups, the partner institution can provide coaching on it; coaching in combination with a clear focus on societal changes may be very beneficial; it is also important to have a good understanding of the needs that come from research
  - o Expectations from Flemish partners: Express well your own needs and priorities as an institution and see how Flemish expertise can fill that gap, have a common understanding and develop together, inspire each other: the partnership paradigm is fundamental!
- How can success stories be better disseminated? Can VLIR-UOS contribute to this? Examples are given with regards to learning among IUC partners from different institutions, the monthly Community Talks that VLIR-UOS organizes. Examples should be made accessible, in the synthesis of the evaluations, examples are given and should be accessed easily.

**Question 1: Matchmaking (MM): When you started your IUC, what were your experiences with matchmakings with Flemish teams? What approaches are feasible, and what strategies are most critical for achieving broad participation at the Flemish higher education level (universities/colleges)?**



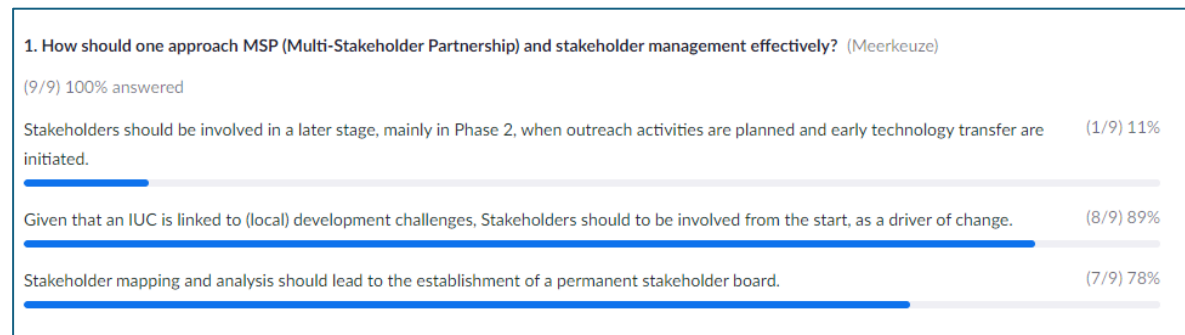
- QNU did a MM online during Covid. The right expertise had been found but it took a huge preparation from the coordination team. I would have been easier to meet in person and have the MM in light version with connections during the concept note stage, followed by limited team visits to Belgium during the Phase In.
- MM and mapping needs to be done early in the process, already in the concept stage. Prior understanding of the members and prior collaboration among Northern partners helps to come with a team.

**Question 2: Profile of IUC coordinators: A lot is expected from IUC coordinators. What constitutes the ideal profile of a partner coordinator? How do they differ from Flemish coordinators?**



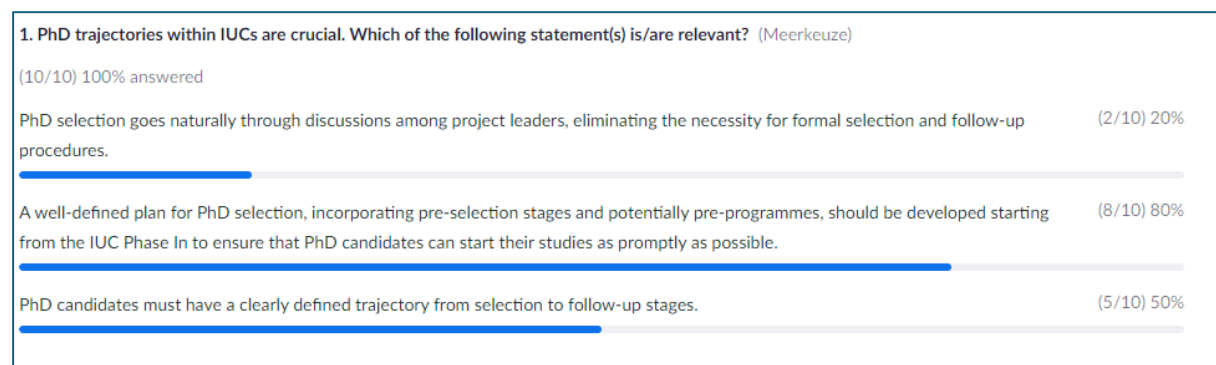
- A coordinator needs strong linkages and network skills to interact with other colleagues because most IUC TLs and team members come from different faculties, units and local institutions, so its needs to be steered well. Also strong links with the top management of the institution is paramount so that the project can be embedded.
- Interpersonal skills are equally important since individuals from different backgrounds are being brought together.

### Question 3: MSP and stakeholder management: How should one approach MSP (Multi-Stakeholder Partnership) and stakeholder management effectively?



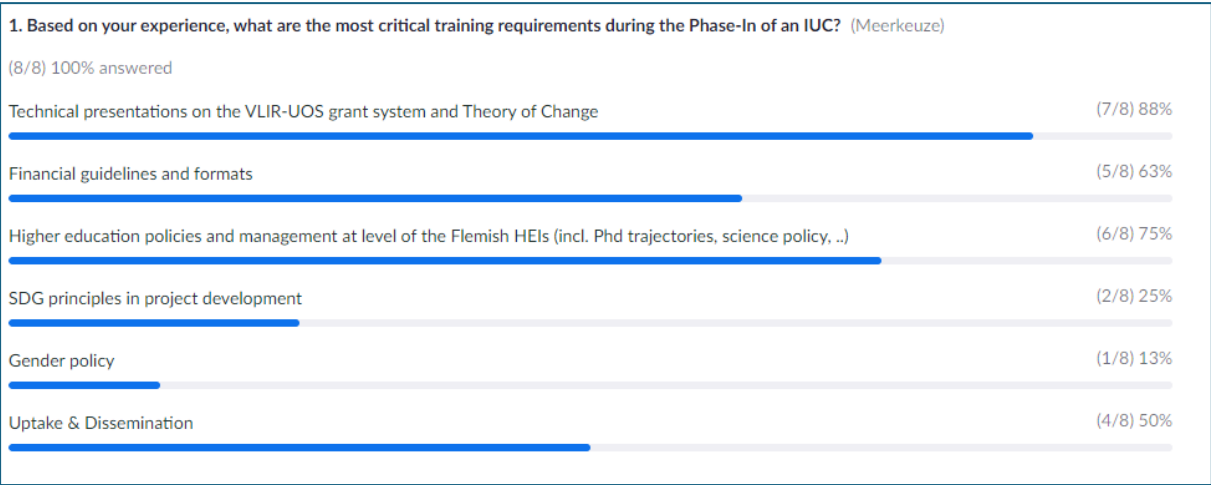
- Mapping of the needs should be done early and therefore stakeholders are needed to express them, they should contribute to the development of the concept note. The buy-in from stakeholders from the start is important for uptake, adoption of solutions and impact.
- While stakeholders should be taken up from the very start, it is sometimes difficult to keep them onboard if no incentives are being given. Therefore, the end users should see what can be achieved but it is not always very clear. So knowledge transfer is also important to progress to common understandings, but the question of incentives remains unclear.
- Stakeholders can be brought onboard early but rather at the extended concept note stage in order to have a good understanding of what the project may include and how it will be oriented. If brought onboard too early, it may be difficult to have a common understanding and it could also create false expectations.
- Having a stakeholder board is useful but the best way to make it sustainable is to have different boards on specific topics/interventions. They are tailor made and can therefore be sustained. Global boards for 10 years are complex and their life time seems limited because interests may be too diverse.

### Question 4: PhD trajectories: PhD trajectories within IUC are crucial. Which of the following statement(s) is/are relevant?



- The selection of PhD candidates needs to be formalized, from coordination to subproject. If not, it is difficult to include diversity. The selection should take place during Phase In so that candidates can start from year 1 of the IUC.
- An IUC should have representative teams that are inclusive and from where candidates can be selected. Selection should be done early but it is important to provide clear expectations and deliverables so that a candidate knows well what needs to be done. Therefore, it may be beneficial that the candidate already knows the project, along with its goals, in order to have him/her motivated and contribute to the success of the project.
- In project writing it can be relevant to outline the PhD selection system (in the Management Manual) so that once the IUC gets its Phase In, the PhDs can be selected.

**Question 5: Training needs: Based on your experiences, what are the most critical training requirements during the Phase-In of an IUC?**



Gender should go further and go along with diversity. Although VLIR-UOS has a policy on diversity, sometimes gender comes out to emphasize it. It would be good to have a definition for common understanding. The ToC should be more emphasized because if it is not understood well, the project may not take sufficiently into account the needs of society. There is also a need to monitor the ToC and measure progress quantitatively and qualitatively but in the new IUC generations this has already been integrated.