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Thematic evaluation of Belgian development co-operation in the education sector

Final Report



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Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of the Consultants only and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Belgian Directorate General for Development Cooperation.

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Abbreviations

APEFE	Association pour la Promotion de l'Education et de la Formation à l'Etranger (Association for promoting education and training abroad)
BTC	Belgian Technical Co-operation
CGRI	Commissariat général aux relations internationales de la Communauté française de Belgique (Belgian French Community General Commissariat to International Relations)
CIUF-CUD	Conseil interuniversitaire de la communauté française de Belgique – Commission universitaire pour le développement (the Inter-University Council of the French Community-University Commission for Development),
D1	Directorate 1 - Governmental Programmes, Directorate General of Development Co-operation, Belgium
D2	Directorate 2 - Special Programmes, Directorate General of Development Co-operation, Belgium
D3	Directorate 3 - Non-governmental Programmes, Directorate General of Development Co-operation, Belgium
D4	Directorate 4 - Multilateral and European Programmes, Directorate General of Development Co-operation, Belgium
DAC	(OECD) Development Assistance Committee
DFID	(UK) Department for International Development
DGDC	(Belgium) Directorate General of Development Co-operation (French: DGCD, Dutch: DGOS)
DMOS/COMIDE	Dienst Missionaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking / Service de Coopération Missionnaire au Développement (Service for Missionary Development Co-operation)
DTF	Dossier Technique et Financier
ECCE	Early Childhood Care and Education
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
FTI	Fast-track Initiative
HE	Higher Education
HIV-AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HQ	Headquarters
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
INGO	International Non Governmental Organisations
ITG/ITM	Prins Leopold Instituut voor Tropische Geneeskunde / Institut de Médecine Tropicale Prince Léopold (Prince Leopold Institute of Tropical Medicine)
IUC	Institutional University Co-operation (Coopération Universitaire Institutionnelle)
KBIN/IRScNB	Koninklijk Belgisch Instituut voor Natuurwetenschappen / Institut royal des Sciences naturelles de Belgique (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences).
KMMA/RMCA	Royal Museum for Central Africa
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MC	Mixed Commission
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIP	Micro-project

MoE	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIC	Programme Indicatif de Coopération (Indicative Program for Co-operation)
PIC	Projet(s) Interuniversitaire(s) Ciblé(s) (Targeted Inter-university Projects)
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RMCA	Royal Museum of Central Africa
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SBS	Sector Budget Support
SMCL	Structure Mixte de Concertation Locale
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach
TA	Technical Assistance
TORs	Terms of reference
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education
VLIR-UOS	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad - Universitaire Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (the Flemish Inter-University Council, University development co-operation),
VVOB	Vlaamse Vereniging voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking en technische Bijstand Flemish Association for Development Co-operation and Technical Assistance
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

Executive Summary

About the Evaluation

This is the synthesis report of *A Thematic Evaluation of Belgian Development Co-operation in the Education and Training Sector* undertaken by Education for Change Ltd (EFC) in partnership with South Research vzw. The evaluation took place between October 2006 and August 2007 and included visits to six case study countries¹ in early 2007. The evaluation covers Belgian federally funded interventions in the education and training sector² carried out between 2002 and 2006, including those through multilateral, direct bilateral and indirect channels³.

The TORs for the evaluation prioritised review of policies and practices that contribute to Coherence, Coordination and Complementarity (3Cs) within Belgium's aid to education.

The evaluation comprised four phases with corresponding deliverables⁴:

Phase 1 to gather policy and background documents to produce a **Critical Inventory** of documentation, contexts and issues (November 2006);

Phase 2 to interview actors and review documentation. This led to an **Inception Report** presenting preliminary conclusions and issues for the case studies (January 2007);

Phase 3 to conduct six country case studies resulting in **Case Study Reports** (March-June 2007);

Phase 4 to synthesise and produce this **Final Report** (July-August 2007).

This report has five Parts:

- Part A: About the evaluation
- Part B: Contexts
- Part C: Policy
- Part D: Practices
- Part E: Conclusions and recommendations

Separately bound Appendices are:

- Appendix 1: Country fact sheets of development and education contexts, including education indicators, and Belgium's education input;
- Appendix 2: Country Case Study Reports in the working language of the country;
- Appendix 3: Evaluation tools (evaluation framework, toolkit for Phase 2, toolkit for Phase 3);
- Appendix 4: Bibliography;

¹ Benin, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ecuador, Tanzania and Vietnam.

² As identified in the ODA.be purpose code.

³ Excluded are interventions funded by the Belgian Communities and development sensitisation work in Belgium.

⁴ All deliverables are available at http://www.efc.co.uk/projects/belgium_page/thematic_evaluation_belgium.jsp

Appendix 5: Comments received and responses.

Contexts

The evaluation outlines the changing contexts for education development over the evaluation period that have influenced Belgian policy, including those arising from international efforts in support of Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals.

The evaluation period has similarly seen international moves to improve aid-effectiveness, pursuing the agenda of the Paris Declaration. Such moves are manifested in coordinated donor support modalities such as sector-wide approaches (SWAp) and associated financial modalities including pooled funds and budget support. The Education sector has led this trend in many countries.

The period has also witnessed rapidly changing Belgian contexts, following the restructuring under the 1999 Education Law and attempts by all agencies to re-engineer their processes accordingly, including the move towards a more “programmatic” approach. DGDC/BTC have been piloting the use of budget support within SWAp, with the majority of the examples in the Education sector.

Policy

Architecture

The evaluation describes the “architecture” of education aid in Belgium, including the nature and roles of: DGDC and BTC; the university councils (VLIR and CIUF); APEFE and VVOB; and the various NGOs. It notes that this presents a unique challenge for coordination and monitoring of education aid, as well as providing resources and potential comparative advantage in some sub-sectors, including Higher Education and professional training. The evaluation also notes that, through the indirect channels, Belgium is active in the Education sector in many countries above and beyond those partner countries in which it has been identified as a priority.

The evaluation considers the *de facto* demarcation of these actors to their sub-sectors and suggests greater flexibility for collaboration, particularly between indirect actors and DGDC/BTC where institutional sub-sector experience needs to work alongside national sector development initiatives (e.g. for national HE-strengthening initiatives that address organisation, accreditation and standards).

Sector and country strategies

The evaluation describes how sector and country policy and strategy is generated and used by DGDC/BTC and by indirect actors. The potential importance of the Education Sector Strategy is recognised but the evaluation notes that it has not been renewed to reflect changing contexts; that it is seen by some actors as too general to guide decisions; and that it is not viewed as “mandatory” by indirect actors.

The evaluation finds that indirect actors accord little importance to DGDC sector strategy or to country strategy, except at the most general level. There is little evidence of policy coordination between actors in-country except where the national policy framework is clear and strong.

Responding to demands from local partners (governmental or institutional) often plays a bigger role in steering practice than does policy/strategy.

Critical country level decisions are made by attachés and the evaluation notes that only *ad hoc* technical and professional expertise is available to support attachés, who may not be education specialists.

The evaluation finds that policy/strategy decisions and statements at country level are confusing in their scope and authority over the Belgian actors.

Over the evaluation period, important policy changes have included:

- Commitment of DGDC to the (education parts of) the MDGs, in particular enrolment and completion of primary education;
- University cooperation working on institution building as well as individual research-oriented links;
- Decreasing role of NGOs in mainstream education.

Practice

Where the money goes

The evaluation has analysed Belgian financial contributions over the period. Important findings include:

- Approximately 55% of Belgian aid that is recorded as “education or training” goes to Higher Education. This is in stark contrast to stated policy in favour of Basic Education, which receives only 7%⁵;
- Nearly 75% of Belgian aid is channelled through indirect actors, compared to approximately 23% in direct bilateral aid;
- A tiny 1.7% is channelled through multilateral agencies (mainly to the Fast Track Initiative Catalytic Fund managed by the World Bank). There have been no “silent partnerships” with other agencies;
- NGOs have been discouraged from presenting their work as formal education: much of their work involves education and training but is recorded under different sector coding, for example “Health” or “Rural Development”.

The evaluation identifies that “education” is frequently a component of interventions supported by Emergency Special Funds and subsequent transitional support, for example in post-conflict situations.

It is noted here that Belgium commits no funding to Early Childhood Care and Education.

Identification, formulation and implementation

The evaluation notes the diversity of practice across agencies, and changing circumstances for DGDC and BTC in SWAps and budget support.

⁵ The evaluation recognises the range of activity included in the HE categorisation and different typologies of developmental aims.

Findings include:

- The importance of involving national and institutional partners (and other development partners) in formulation and implementation;
- The traditional roles of DGDC and BTC need to evolve to fit the needs of SWAps, in which there is convergence of political and technical roles;
- Although practices are changing, Belgian aid delivery remains very reliant on Belgian/European personnel working in the South, rather than on regional or national personnel;
- Indirect actors are constrained in programme and project design, as their institutional partners have limited power to make organisational or structural changes;
- Belgium's financial administration control systems are more demanding than many others and can cause frustration and delays. However, overall, the Belgian agencies are seen as efficient project managers, delivering inputs in a timely, cost-effective manner.

Evaluation and results-based management

The evaluation acknowledges changing practices but finds overall weakness in the evaluation of outcomes including the definition of outcome level indicators in design documents. Belgium's robust financial controls exacerbate a traditional culture that focuses more attention on the inputs - which are costed, procured and audited - than on outputs and outcomes.

As a consequence, DGDC has very weak data on outcomes and its systems for results-based management are not sufficiently compatible across different channels and types of action.

Scholarships

Scholarships are provided through 15 different routes (excluding those that are provided in the context of projects). There is evidence of some confusion in partner countries and missed opportunities to coordinate their administration. Although there have been important and interesting schemes to provide regional and national study opportunities, the majority of scholarships support study in Belgium.

Development practices

Belgium's aid architecture complicates the steps to improving aid-effectiveness by improving alignment with national policies and practices and harmonisation with development partners to improve coherence, coordination and complementarity.

- Indirect actors are not necessarily represented on the relevant Education coordination group forums, either directly or through mandated representation;
- In Belgium and in-country, the Belgian agencies have only informal mechanisms to share information and coordinate activities. Attachés have no mandate nor powers to do so;
- The roles and comparative strengths of the various Belgian agencies are unclear to potential partners, particularly those of the many indirect actors but also the respective roles of BTC and DGDC.

Recommendations

The report makes a number of recommendations. They are made within the context of the political realities inherent in the aid architecture and the changes that are in progress.

Recommendations include:

- Renew the strategy note to include all stakeholders and provide more supportive operational guidance for the key actors;
- Review the *de facto* demarcation of the work of the main agencies, including gearing that Belgian expertise in, for example, the HE and technical education sub sectors, into national SWApS that include those sub-sectors;
- Revise the strategy note to guide education service delivery and “normalisation” in emergency situations and ways of working in fragile states;
- Clarify in the strategy the position of NGOs working in education, including their advocacy role and the criteria for alignment with local non-governmental partners;
- Develop clearer criteria for the use of multilateral and silent partnership funding channels at central and country levels, which balance cost savings against the potential for Belgian added-value;
- Establish procedures to involve all agencies in country strategy-making and improve systems to ensure 3Cs between Belgian actors in Education, even in countries in which education is not a priority sector. Mandate attachés to take a lead in in-country coordination;
- Provide reliable tools and mechanisms to support attachés with technical expertise in formulation of education policy and working with partners in SWApS;
- Establish guidelines for all agencies to improve consultation with local partners, and development partners, throughout formulation and implementation;
- Monitor and review the role of BTC and DGDC in the implementation of SWApS and the delivery of specialist expertise to support SWApS;
- Work to common procedures and clearer identification of the objectives of scholarship programmes with some targeting of education professionals, managers and planners;
- Develop a taxonomy of university cooperation interventions that allows the data to be disaggregated into their different educational and developmental aims;
- Review the mechanisms used for HE institution-building and the implications of the staffing model;
- Continue work to support all agencies to develop proper indicators and mechanisms to measure the outcomes of their work, and a standardised reporting format that could feed into DGDC’s databases;
- Ensure independent evaluations and move to standardised reporting of evaluation results;
- Develop pro-active information dissemination systems, including on the web, about projects supported by DGDC, including publication of reports and evaluations.

PART A: About the Evaluation

A.1 Context of the evaluation

A.1.1 Background and objectives

The Belgian Directorate General of Development Co-operation (DGDC) contracted⁶ Education for Change Ltd (E/C) in partnership with South Research vzw (SR) to undertake *A Thematic Evaluation of Belgian Development Co-operation in the Education and Training Sector*.

The evaluation took place between October 2006 and August 2007, with field visits in early 2007.

The evaluation aims to improve the relevance of DGDC's actions and to inform a new education strategy note to ensure coherence, coordination, and complementarity of the work done by the various Belgian players and their partners from the South.

This evaluation is a result of the Evaluation Department's (D0.2.1) recommendation to identify and study in detail a particular theme or a major concern linked to Belgian development co-operation (DGDC 2006), in order to learn lessons from policy and practices.

A.1.2 Scope

The evaluation covers Belgian federally funded interventions in the education and training sector carried out between 2002 and 2006. The evaluation considers only interventions where the word 'education' and/or the word 'training' is contained in the description of the main sector CRS Purpose Code⁷ cited in the *ODA.be* database, and for which payments were made during the period 2001-2005. Interventions using multilateral, direct bilateral and indirect channels that are funded by Belgian federal aid are included.

The evaluation excludes aid financed by the Belgian Communities. It also excludes education/sensitisation activities funded by DGDC targeting Belgian beneficiaries.

Education and training activities undertaken in other sectors (health, governance etc) but not categorised with a 'training' or 'education' CRS Purpose Code are outside the scope of this evaluation. For example, interventions of NGOs classified as rural development often include significant literacy and vocational training.

Box 1: making sense of *ODA.be* data

In Ecuador interventions of direct cooperation with a clear education component, are not earmarked as such in the database but put under their other sector codes: a postgraduate course on aquaculture at the *Escuela Superior Politécnica del Litoral* is coded as "agricultural development", a health education program at secondary school level as "health".

⁶ Contract D0.4/45944 of October 5th 2006

⁷ CRS: Creditor Reporting System, see <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/40/23/34384375.doc> (accessed 19/06/2007)

Activities funded with Special Funds, typically for emergency and post-emergency rehabilitation responses, may provide education support for concerned children, but these are not included in the evaluation data (although are noted and discussed in case studies).

An Evaluation Steering Committee decision restricted the country case studies to representatives of the 18 partner countries; there is no study of countries in which only indirect actors are involved in education.

A.2 Evaluation Methodology

A.2.1 Tools

The enquiry framework (Appendix 3) has three parts: (i) Policy and strategy, (ii) Practice, and (iii) Effects.

In response to the TORs, the evaluation focuses on Coherence, Coordination and Complementarity (3 Cs) in Belgian aid to education. The 3 Cs epitomise a changing approach to development assistance, particularly within the EU and in the aid harmonisation agreements supported by the OECD. The enquiry framework considers them separately, however, the evaluation recognises that the 3Cs represent vertices of a triangular framework supporting harmonisation and effectiveness, and that they usually manifest jointly in policy and operational practices.

The framework was used as a basis for the development of evaluation instruments, including investigation toolkits for Phase 2 (interviews and data collection in Belgium) and Phase 3 (country case studies). All evaluation tools are at Appendix 3.

A.2.2 Phases and deliverables

The evaluation comprised 4 phases with corresponding deliverables⁸:

Phase 1 was to gather policy and background documents from Belgian actors and information on Belgian interventions in the sector and to produce a **Critical Inventory** of documentation, contexts and issues (November 2006);

Phase 2 was to interview Belgian direct and indirect actors and review documentation which led to an **Inception Report** presenting preliminary conclusions and identifying issues for the case studies (January 2007);

Phase 3 comprised six country case studies: Benin, Burundi, DR Congo, Ecuador, Tanzania and Vietnam, resulting in **Case-Study Reports** (March-June 2007);

Phase 4 was for synthesising and report writing leading to this **Final Report** (July-August 2007).

A.2.3 Limitations

This thematic evaluation covers interventions and projects that were designed at the end of the nineties and implemented over 2002-2006. Such interventions are not representative of more

⁸ All deliverables are available at http://www.efc.co.uk/projects/belgium_page/thematic_evaluation_belgium.jsp

recent approaches to design. Conversely new approaches in the last couple of years have not yet translated into actions and results on the ground. However, they are manifesting in policy, and the practice of design and implementation, which are subjects of the evaluation.

A.3 About the final report

The final report is a stand-alone document that summarises contexts and issues and aggregates findings, conclusions and recommendations from the Critical Inventory, the Inception Report, and the Country Case-Study Reports.

The Final Report consists of the following Parts:

Part A:	About the evaluation
Part B:	Contexts
Part C:	Policy
Part D:	Practices
Part E:	Conclusions and recommendations

Appended to the Final Report are 5 documents, bound separately:

Appendix 1:	Updated country fact sheets presenting country-wise analysis of development and education contexts, including education indicators, and Belgian's education input in terms of funding and type of interventions.
Appendix 2:	Country Case-Study Reports, in the working language of the country.
Appendix 3:	Evaluation methodological tools (evaluation framework, toolkit for Phase 2, toolkit for Phase 3).
Appendix 4:	Bibliography
Appendix 5:	Comments on the report and responses

PART B: Contexts

B.1 International contexts

B.1.1 International education initiatives

Two international commitments made in 2000 have been the drivers for Official Development Assistance (ODA) to education in developing countries.

The World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal, reaffirmed countries' collective commitment to Education for All (EFA)⁹. The *Dakar Framework for Action, Education for All: Meeting our Collective Commitments* (UNESCO 2000) introduced six goals to be achieved by 2015 and made the pledge for external assistance to support countries lacking resources.

Box 2: Education for All goals

EFA goals

1. Expanding and improving comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Ensuring that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities, have access to and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality.
3. Ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programmes.
4. Achieving a 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women, and equitable access to basic and continuing education for all adults.
5. Eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015, with a focus on ensuring girls' full and equal access to and achievement in basic education of good quality.
6. Improving all aspects of the quality of education and ensuring excellence of all so that recognised and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all, especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills.

In the same year, the *UN Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) were agreed, setting poverty reduction targets for 2015. Goals 2 and 3 are directly related to education: the indicators for Goal 2 focus on the completion rates for primary education, those for Goal 3 on eliminating gender disparities, with a 2005 target. The MDGs are integrated into assistance frameworks and programmes, including the poverty reduction strategies.

Box 3: MDGs

Millennium Development Goals for 2015

1. Halving extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieving universal primary education
3. Achieving gender equality
4. Reducing child mortality by two-thirds
5. Reducing maternal mortality by three-quarters
6. Reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other major diseases
7. Ensuring environmental sustainability
8. Creating a global partnership for development

⁹ Originally made in 1900 in Jomtien, Thailand

EFA and the MDGs seemingly provide coherent thrusts, but in their prioritisation and the international machineries around them there has been some tension. The MDGs do not include early-childhood education nor education and training outside the formal system, for example for literacy and life-skills: the proponents of EFA, led by UNESCO, consider these integrated and interdependent and EFA is more specific in seeking “quality”, although this has proved an elusive concept to describe and measure. The MDGs have been interpreted as driving for Universal Primary Education (UPE).

Financial pledges were made by the rich countries in 2002 at the Monterrey Consensus to support the EFA commitment that “No country with a viable plan for EFA would be allowed to fail for lack of funds”. In support of these declarations the international community, led by the World Bank (WB) introduced a fund to support countries to achieve the educational MDGs, known (confusingly, in light of the above) as the EFA Fast Track Initiative (EFA-FTI or FTI).

B.1.2 Education development trends

Basic Education

Basic Education is not clearly defined in terms of years of compulsory schooling – or of outcomes, and depends on countries’ definitions. The Dakar definition stipulates basic education “must lead to the acquisition of: (i) key skills, used as personal development tools and, later on, as a basis for lifelong learning; (ii) initial vocational guidance; (iii) the knowledge, values and abilities that are needed for individual development, and for the exercise of participatory and responsible citizenship in a democracy”. This encompasses activities for boys and girls, men and women who need literacy and skills, and children from 3 years old.

Universal Primary Education

Universal Primary Education (UPE) is one of the main objectives of the MDGs. Some countries have made progress in the last decade in enrolment but challenges remain in ensuring completion and “hard-to-reach” groups. The cost of education to parents has been one focus and fees have been lifted or proscribed in a number of countries, particularly in Africa, since 2000, but associated costs (uniforms, textbooks etc) often remain and discourage families from sending children to school. Where school fees have been abolished and led to dramatically increased enrolment, countries have had to engage with the balance between quantity and quality.

Rights-based approach to education

The MDGs take education as a weapon against poverty. EFA, and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) are predicated on education as a human right. The “rights-based approach is articulated around the “4As”: availability (free education and parental freedom with the best interests of the child at heart), accessibility (eliminate exclusion, ensure enjoyment of all human rights), acceptability (minimum standards, improve quality), and adaptability (education for children outside formal schooling, education to the best interests of each child).

A rights-based approach provides an unequivocal rationale for equitable provision for boys and girls, men and women and children with different needs.

Post-primary

The 1990s witnessed increasing commitments to primary education by the development community and growth in primary enrolment, dramatically helped by abolition of fees in some

countries. This has since raised the need for post-primary provision for those seeking progression to secondary schooling or seeking further preparation for the world of work and citizenship.

Technical and Vocational Education and Training

Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is a generic term designating the “acquisition of knowledge and skills for the world of work” and covering education and training, formal education, non-formal education and informal learning, delivered through public, private or community providers. TVET is marginalised in the EFA goals and MDGs and has its own problems ensuring relevance to the labour market, justifying the high cost of investment and maintenance. However there is renewed interest in TVET, particularly in Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Higher Education

The 1998 World Declaration and the Framework for Priority Action for Change and Development in Higher Education states the core missions of higher education- to educate, to train, to undertake research and to provide services to the community- its role in the 21st century, and the reforms needed to ensure the sector plays its full role. The Bologna Declaration, signed in 1999 by 29 European countries to harmonise higher education, has had significant impact beyond Europe.

A number of issues for HE have been identified, including: “brain drain”; international co-operation, student mobility, accreditation, university governance and management, equity, higher education in post-crisis countries and those with high incidence of HIV/AIDS; research dissemination and collaboration; ICT; etc. National governments, agencies and institutions are addressing them and it is accepted that higher education institutions can contribute to overall social development and poverty reduction, and have a particular contribution to the rest of the education sector through teacher education, research, strengthening management capacity and contributing to advocacy and policy-formulation on education.

Teachers

Teachers are the largest recurrent cost in nearly all education systems. Increasing enrolment and quality imperatives emphasize the importance of teachers. The issues of professional development support, recruitment, deployment, retention, and salaries are numerous and central to planning at all levels. Limited resources for salary expenditure and weak recruitment and career development systems remain a challenge for planners and for development partners, particularly as they move to sector wide approaches (SWAs) and budget support.

B.1.3 Changing governance contexts ***Decentralisation***

Administrative and political decentralisation attracts support as a way to improve social accountability, efficiency, legitimacy and political participation. Decentralisation of service delivery sectors, including education, is widely espoused as one way to improve performance particularly by developing community accountability around schools and giving school communities increasing responsibility for planning and financial decision-making.

Governance

Education is often one of the largest public sector employers and aid beneficiaries. General concerns for improved governance therefore apply. Governance is interpreted over a wide spectrum of concerns that in education may include corrupt procurement, patronage and rent seeking in appointments and improving transparency and accountability to civil society.

Management and planning

Both EFA and the MDGs predicate additional support to beneficiary countries having robust Education National Plans and demonstrable capacity to manage the system. The scrutiny, analysis and support provided to management and planning in this sector has grown.

B.1.4 Finance mechanisms, aid instruments and modalities ***Sectoral approach***

Since the mid-1990s there has been a concerted movement to improve aid effectiveness with new modalities and approaches: education has been at the forefront of this trend. The arguments for sector-wide planning in education are particularly strong given the interdependence of the sub-sectors, a history of uncoordinated and incoherent interventions and the recognition of the need to work with and strengthen national systems for education for sustainable development impact.

A SWAp is intended to ensure coherent action across the whole sector and develop the role of partner governments in sector planning, decision-making and implementation. SWAps are common in the education sector because demographic forecasts and resource needs have been identified and costed, and because the sector needs medium to long-term planning.

SWAps in the education sector can become much more complex where there are multiple ministries (e.g. Education, Higher Education, Industry and Social Affairs), and sub-SWAps may be more practical ways to bring the same discipline and co-operation, typically to the formal school sub-sector.

SWAp financing may include budget support, basket funds or project aid or a combination, and may or may not be disbursed using government systems. The defining feature is a set of sector policy reforms and a single expenditure program. However SWAps that disburse funds separately from the recipient country's system represent a lower level of commitment to using and strengthening government capacity, at least in the short term.

Budget support

Budget support is therefore a logical conclusion in that external funds are mixed with the partner country's funds and administered using their procedures, including those for disbursement, procurement, financial control and audit. Development partners need these processes to be adequate for their agency's needs and those of the home political constituency: where necessary they will work to augment and strengthen them as necessary.

Budget support is seen as a route to reducing transaction costs, strengthening capacity and ensuring national political accountability for education. It is the stated preference of many agencies subject to assessments of national capacity.

Paris Declaration

Whilst the Monterrey Consensus made the financial commitment to support the MDGs with a suitable “quantity” of aid, it left concerns about the “quality”. The OECD DAC was the forum for international work on aid-effectiveness that culminated in the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* signed in 2005, where institutions and countries committed to increase their efforts in harmonisation, alignment with country policy-making, and management for results¹⁰.

The Declaration proposes the increased use of local capacity to support development, including the use of national or regional consultants, professional development and other service providers. The Declaration also proposed management by results, and the use of results data by all partners: monitoring, performance auditing and evaluation have become critical to bring timely and accurate evidence for negotiations between partners and for reporting back to HQ.

In addition the Declaration makes a pledge for untied aid and monitors this through its alignment indicators of progress.

The evaluation recognises the Belgian commitment to the Paris agenda, and the way that education is leading the international response to it.

Fragile states

The changes and initiatives described are predicated on the existence and capability of the beneficiary government to engage in partnership, planning and implementation. Some agencies take this as the lead criterion for selecting partner countries.

Others, including Belgium, have re-examined how to engage effectively in countries in which the usual partnership framework cannot be applied and government structures are too weak to implement agreed policies. Engaging in “difficult partnerships” or with “fragile states” requires innovative and flexible approaches that help to build public institutions and structures, whilst delivering the service to the poorest. OECD-DAC and DFID have been specifically involved in this reflection.

B.2 Belgian development co-operation in education

B.2.1 Belgian context

Pursuant to the 25 May 1999 Belgian law, education and training are defined as one of the five priority sectors for Belgian direct bilateral development co-operation, and must also be reflected in the priority sectors of the other partners of the Belgian government. In 2002, the strategy note for the education and training sector was released, with an expected renewal date four years afterwards.

In 2001, the education sector had the lowest rate of expenditure in Belgian direct aid, with only 10% of the total. DGDC recognised in the 2002 education strategy the existing contradiction between this expenditure rate and the Belgian political will to invest in the education sector, which it had identified as a major tool to fight poverty.

Belgium has played its full part in international education and harmonisation commitments.

¹⁰ <http://www.aidharmonization.org/secondary-pages/Paris2005>

The Belgian aid context is complicated, reflecting the national political structures, the history of aid practice and organisational changes since the 1999 law. The roles of key organisations are changing in ways that lead to uncertainty and potential friction. The issues are familiar and well-aided in, for example, the OECD DAC Peer Review and *Evaluatie van de directe bilaterale ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1999-2005*.

Budget support has only been used by Belgium since 2003, under the framework of a three-year (2005-2007) trial agreement between the Ministry of Budget and the Minister of Development Co-operation. Out of the seven countries selected to pilot the system, six have budget support (or pool funding) in the education sector: Tanzania, Vietnam, Niger, Rwanda, Mali and Burkina Faso. The tentative implementation of this new aid instrument is conducted carefully: Belgium has only stepped into existing programmes, and a maximum of 20% of the total of direct bilateral aid can go to budget support, with a maximum of 50% per country¹¹.

PART C: The policy framework

C.1 The architecture of education aid

Belgian federal development co-operation is delivered through three categories of channels. (Special funds, such as the Emergency fund and Survival fund are also used for education outside these channels and outside the data captured on *ODA.be*, for example in the post-conflict situation of Burundi.)

Direct bilateral co-operation

Direct bilateral co-operation is planned and administered by DGDC in Brussels (D.0, D.1, D.2) and in-country through the Attachés in negotiation with the government. By law, it is implemented by BTC. The principle, established in 1999 is that DGDC is responsible for policy and BTC responsible for implementation. Since 1999, the working relationship between DGDC and BTC has been developing and the third management agreement (2007) encapsulates the current situation and attempts to fine-tune their roles in project identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation.

The separation of policy work from implementation responsibilities, which perhaps seemed logical in 1998/99 in the context of traditional projects, is not as well matched to the changing modalities. The duality has made it difficult for Belgium to adapt to changing practices in which there is a need for a coherent approach in the political and the technical dialogue throughout the programme. This is a challenge for all development agencies, compounded by pressures to reduce transaction costs and to untie their provision of expertise. Other agencies are also struggling to find ways in which technical assistance should be managed into sector programmes, be it to build the partners capacity, undertake a discrete task or to validate financial and progress reports.

¹¹ Ministerial instruction, included in the note introducing the Vademecum for budget support.

Divergence of views¹², financial pressures (budget spending and control) and interests (BTC being the only implementing agency of direct bilateral aid) that characterise the relationship between DGDC and BTC in Brussels risk drowning these important and difficult questions¹³.

Indirect co-operation

Indirect co-operation channels federal funds through:

- NGOs (DGDC department D.3.1),
- Universities and other scientific institutions (DGDC department D.3.2): VLIR-UOS, CIUF-CUD, the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), the Royal Museum of Central Africa (RMCA), Royal Institute of Natural Sciences (RINS); and,
- Other partners (DGDC department D.3.3), mainly represented in the education sector by APEFE and VVOB, although some trade unions, local councils and other education institutions might sometimes be involved.

Multilateral co-operation

Multilateral co-operation consists of contributions to international agencies. D.4 in DGDC in Brussels is responsible for this type of co-operation.

This architecture is a result of historical development and political demands for parallel and equal structures for each community... The agencies protect their autonomy in identification and implementation and there are agreements on demarcation of responsibilities by sub-sector.

The architecture is evidently over-elaborated. It complicates administration and accountability, and challenges attempts to ensure Belgian funds are used coherently in accordance with policy.

C.2 Policy and strategies

C.2.1 General framework

The Belgian policy landscape is framed by laws, policy and strategy notes:

The **Law on International Co-operation of 25th May 1999** laid the foundation of sectoral, thematic and geographical concentration of Belgian development co-operation. The law stated that *direct* bilateral co-operation would concentrate on a maximum of 25 targets (typically countries)¹⁴, three transversal themes, and five sectors, “education and training” being one of them. For each target country, sectors and theme a strategy note would be developed, and revised after four years.

The **General Policy Note** of the Minister of Development Co-operation, Mr. A. De Decker, defining the overall objectives and priorities for Belgian Development Co-operation during the next four-year period, was presented to the Parliament in October 2003. In 2004, it was translated into a more operational Policy Plan that emphasises the need for improving the quality and effectiveness of development co-operation, by simplifying procedures, concentrating resources and by increasing the coherence between the different channels of aid.

¹² Evaluatie van de directe bilaterale ontwikkelingssamenwerking, 1999-2005, Eindrapport, Ecorys and South Research, 2006.

¹³ In-country relationships are much more dependent on personalities and informal working relationships.

¹⁴ Reduced to 18 countries in 2003, as specified in the Policy Note of the Minister of Development Co-operation.

The **Sectoral Strategic Note on Education and Training** was approved in September 2002. It analyses Belgium's performance in the education sector and prioritises education for poverty reduction and the MDGs. In line with DAC directives, priority is given to basic education, as the most important contributor to human development and poverty eradication. Other education sub-sectors (including early childhood and higher education) are recognised for their potential supportive contribution and as part of approaches to cross-cutting issues.

(Specific development programmes such as the Belgian Survival Fund¹⁵ or the scholarship programme are shaped by their own laws, royal decrees, conventions and documents, rather than by these overall policy documents.)

The strategic note on education and training takes a holistic approach to education, focusing on the EFA agenda. However, the Political Note written a year later¹⁶ states the Belgian Government's commitment to the MDGs. In policy, the MDGs take priority.

The education strategy, although it is supposed to be the basic reference document for education and training, is hardly used in practice for policy-making and implementation. The Note is considered too general to be a useful guide and there has been no attempt to ensure that policies and practice are compliant with the strategy¹⁷. It is seen as an extensive descriptive summary of what Belgium is doing in the field of education and training, rather than a strategy to guide future action. The note does not propose or identify instruments to enable implementation in line with the policy guidelines. Case studies find that the Strategy Note is not used at country level.

The relevance of the Strategy Note, particularly to the indirect actors is weakened by inadequate participation in its formulation. Although DGDC sought to include them, their practitioner culture and autonomy militates against such strategic engagement. The Strategy Note itself leaves ambiguity on its application to indirect actors..

The note has become outdated through changing contexts and modalities since 2002. This need to respond to changing circumstances was foreseen: but the intended 4-year renewal has slipped.

C.2.2 Country policy-making concerning direct aid

Eighteen countries are now on the priority list for direct bilateral aid, but an additional 54 countries received Belgian federal aid between 2001 and 2006. Policy-making in country has two main routes:

The **Mixed Commission** (MC) is a meeting between the Belgian government and the government of the partner country, where both parties agree upon the broad contents of the direct bilateral co-operation for the coming three or four years, and an indicative budget for implementation. The MC should be organised every three years, but in practice the period is four to five years. An **Indicative Co-operation Programme** (PIC - *Programme Indicatif de Coopération*) is annexed to the minutes of the MC. Task division and responsibilities with regard to the preparation of the PIC vary, including the extent to which DGD-Brussels (D1) is involved, the extent to which the note should be prepared in consultation with the partner country, and whether the document should be agreed upon by both parties before the MC or at the end of it. However, once completed, the

¹⁵ Royal decree signed in February 1999.

¹⁶ Belgische Kamer van Volksvertegenwoordigers 2003

¹⁷ This observation had already been made in an advisory note of the Federal Council for Sustainable Development, in December 2005. It was confirmed by several other actors during the interviews.

official document for development co-operation during the next period then becomes the *Act of the Mixed Commission* signed by the governments of both countries.

Since 2002, a **Country Strategy Note** (also referred to as Country Strategy Note) is formulated by the Attachés in consultation with the main country stakeholders and presented to the Belgian Parliament: the Note covers only direct bilateral cooperation. According to law country strategies are valid for a maximum of four years after which they are to be revised. Not all countries have prepared a Country Strategy Note.

The Notes define the strategic orientations for development co-operation in the country and investigate its potential contribution depending on development priorities, international commitments and the country's priorities and socio-economic context. The Country Strategy Note has been produced by a more participatory process than the PIC in the involvement of Belgian actors other than DGDC and BTC, although much depends on individual relationships in country.

The Country Strategy Note is descriptive: it is an inventory of what Belgium is doing in country, with analysis of the context and description of donor involvement. It dedicates a section to lessons learned from previous years, showing the importance of evaluation and lesson learning. However, the country note is not perceived as being strategic enough by most of the Belgian partners, nor, even within DGDC, to be useful as a tool to guide policy decisions and operational approaches on the ground. Moreover, there is little on sectoral issues, and the themes are not linked to an integrated vision of the Belgium role(s).

Although policy-making is at country level there are general guidelines that limit what can be supported. For instance direct aid is limited to two sectors per partner country, except for the partner countries in Central Africa¹⁸.

Country Attachés have a general brief and few are education specialists: sources of expertise for education policy making has included DGDC HQ, and BTC experts, where available.

The evaluation notes:

- The lack of clarity with regards to the status of the sectoral policy notes and the extent to which they should be taken into account in the policy-making process at country level. This may be related to lack of clarity on the scope and role of policy department D0.1 within DGDC;
- The different status of the PIC and the Country Strategy Note, the latter is approved by Parliament while the former is approved in the Mixed Commission, but country activities refer to the PIC, not to the Strategy Note.
- The lack of coherence, in certain cases, between the PIC and the Country Strategy Note (due to a change of Attaché between the formulation of the note and of the PIC, or to a change in situation or context, new aid modalities or the change of Belgian regulations). There is no clear relationship in the timing of revising the Country Strategy Note and the organisation of the MCs;
- The participation of DGDC departments in country policy-making is not institutionalised although Attachés may, at their own initiative, involve sector experts from DGDC (or BTC): DGDC respondents suggested that this was less likely to happen in the education sector, as many Attachés consider themselves competent;

¹⁸ DGDC internal guideline for the preparation of the Mixed Commissions.

- Although the decentralisation of policy-making to country level allows for more responsiveness to country needs and aid effectiveness demands, there might still be a role for DGDC in setting priority, especially in countries where there is no PRSP or where policy-making is weak. This would be helped by better operational guidance.
- The decentralisation of policy preparation goes with a strong centralisation of final decision-making. Final decision making, for example on the sectoral concentration in a particular country, is the formal responsibility of the Minister. The criteria and process for identifying sector priorities and strategies during the MC is unclear.

Evidence from the field shows that action plans are sometimes devised to guide the work of the Attachés (in DRC for instance), confirming that the Country Strategy Note does not provide an adequate framework for Belgian co-operation on the ground.

C.2.3 Concerning multilateral aid

The evaluation finds no explicit policy towards the multilateral agencies concerned with education. Belgium maintains core financial commitments and representation in concerned agencies. Over the period it has reduced the funding of projects to be implemented by UNESCO and UNICEF (although the latter remains an important channel for implementation of emergency programmes). DGDC has played a full part in the FTI management, including chairing Working Groups, and committed to the FTI Catalytic Fund with earmarked support for DRC.

The evaluation investigated why so little Belgian aid to education is directed to the established facilities within multilateral agencies¹⁹ or to “silent” funding administered alongside those of other agencies: these are ways in which other countries, particularly smaller countries, have sought to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Some respondents suggested that there is political value in the public profile associated with visible aid, and for the Belgian contribution to be seen to bring the added-value of Belgian expertise. There are, of course, traditions and the financial and institutional drivers for Belgian aid to be implemented by Belgian agencies.

C.2.4 Concerning indirect aid

Most of the policy documents and guidelines listed above primarily refer to *direct* bilateral co-operation, and, to a lesser degree, to multilateral co-operation. Indirect co-operation is mentioned in each policy document, but emphasising that indirect partners are autonomous. The evaluation notes that recent policy documents, especially the General Policy Note and the Policy Plan of the Minister of Development Co-operation make a pledge for more coherence and coordination between the different channels.

Sectoral and Country Strategy Notes are only indicative for the indirect actors, who therefore establish their own education development priorities.

NGOs

There have been several royal decrees on indirect co-operation by NGOs, the last one dating from October 2006. Presently, NGOs (and federations of NGOs) are subsidised by DGDC on the basis of a five-year programme, which can comprise four types of actions:

- financing of partners in low-income countries;

¹⁹ The only identified instance being the contribution to the FTI catalytic fund, targeting DRC and Benin.

- awareness-raising of the Belgian population;
- provision of services to support the work of Belgian NGOs or local partners; and,
- the deployment of NGO development aid workers and the granting of scholarships and traineeship opportunities to subjects of low-income countries.

No documents have been produced for overall policies or guidelines for NGO interventions in education. However, NGO policies and practices in the field of education seem to be strongly influenced by an unwritten rule arising from debates in the 1990s to the effect that NGOs no longer support (basic) education through investments and/or teaching. This is intended to avoid substitution/overlap and to reassert the principle that basic education is the responsibility of the state. A role for NGOs remains in informal education and education/training within rural development.

There are no criteria for NGO interventions that can or cannot be supported by DGDC. However, DGDC officials occasionally impose “rules” such as: “Belgian teachers cannot be supported”; “maximum 15% of the budget can be invested in school infrastructure”, “support to formal education cannot be accepted”. Examples have been found of contradictory “rules” imposed upon different NGOs.

Box 4: contradictions for NGOs

VOLENS received the message that DGDC cannot finance Technical assistants working as teachers in schools. Until two years ago, the NGO LIVOS did nothing other than send young people as teachers to schools in South Africa, within the DGDC action plan.

It has been said that NGOs can have an important added value in formal education, although DMOS/COMIDE has repeatedly been told in the past that DGDC cannot finance activities in formal education.

NGOs’ strategies are reflected in 5-year programs and annual action plans. (DMOS-COMIDE has developed an extensive stand-alone policy note on education, describing priorities, areas of interventions and the relevance of the policy choices.) The recent policy shift of several NGOs, moving from an intervention-based towards a rights-based approach, implies, in the education sector, that NGOs will lobby national and local governments to ensure they take up their responsibilities as providers of basic education. However, only a few Belgian NGOs have education as a core strategy:

- Two NGOs, DMOS-COMIDE and ACTEC, specialise in partner financing in the field of education. They mainly give support to programs of technical and professional secondary education, including infrastructure, equipment, teacher training, organisational strengthening;
- A-COR-D is a network of 3 Belgian NGOs, specialised in information sharing and capitalisation of experiences. One of their core strategies is granting scholarships to persons in low-income countries;
- VOLENS, an NGO specialised in personnel cooperation, sent a lot of teachers to developing countries in the past (VOLENS means “*Volontaires d’Enseignement*”, or “Volunteers for Teaching”). After debate in the early nineties, VOLENS drastically reduced its education interventions. It is still supporting a number of interventions under the sector code of education but the development workers now support teachers rather than teach.

From 2008 onwards, and following the Royal Decree of October 2006, NGOs will be divided into two categories: programme NGOs, being co-financed on the basis of six-year programmes and

three-year action plans; and project NGOs, co-financed on the basis of individual projects that fit into the overall strategy as designed by the NGO.

Universities and other scientific institutions

VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD, the university councils, signed conventions with the Belgian government²⁰ that give them responsibilities for design and implementation of development programmes including research, education/training programmes, institutional co-operation programmes, scholarly exchange, and research for policy preparation and sensitisation. The objectives of university development co-operation is to support education and research establishments in the developing world in three main functions: (i) Knowledge creation (through research), (ii) Knowledge transfer (through education and training), and (iii) Supporting the wider society.

Five-year plans define geographical and thematic priorities of university co-operation, and provide the framework for all VLIR/UOS and CIUF/CUD development co-operation activities such as: (i) Institutional University Co-operation (IUC) programmes which establish a partnership between a university in the South and a Belgian university to implement a number of activities, (ii) targeted inter-university projects (PIC projects/*Projets inter-universitaires ciblés* referred to as *Own Initiative* projects by the Flemish council), which are projects arising from a partnership between two professors in a South and Belgian university (iii) scholarships, and (iv) Masters and post-graduate programmes in Belgium for students coming from the South, known as North Actions.

The Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences (KBINS), the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) and the Royal Museum for Central Africa (RMCA) are internationally acknowledged centres of excellence in their domains and offer highly specialised training, through seminars, courses and workshops, and opportunities for hands-on research and experience. They work on the basis of five-year plans that focus on general and specific objectives to be achieved. They also participate in institutional capacity building through long-term collaboration with partners.

The evaluation finds:

- The policy framework of university co-operation allows for different types of intervention with different aims. Some explicitly seek institutional development of the Southern partner university and provide a range of inputs to that end. Others are supporting academic co-operation with mutual benefit to the partners but with less explicit developmental aims for the partner university (or country). International academic networking is a valuable contribution to knowledge creation and sharing but not *a priori* a contribution to the stated developmental priorities of Belgium or the partner country.²¹
- The University councils and scientific institutions do not have specific country policy-making processes, except for the special arrangements in DRC (Box 5).
- The councils are the *de facto* channel for all Belgian aid to the higher education sector, and is a significant portion of all Belgian aid to education. Their operational paradigm challenges principles espoused by the international community to increase the use of

²⁰ General convention of 18 May 1995 on university development co-operation (renewed in 1997), Specific convention on institutional university co-operation of 18 December 1997, Specific convention on North Actions, 19 December 1997, Specific convention of 19 December 1997 on own initiatives, Specific convention of 30 June 1998 on scholarships, Specific convention of 19 December 1997 on training fees and expenses.

²¹ For some universities in South America, contribution to social development projects is seen as a key function. It is also an important indirect effect of cooperation with VLIR or CIUF. However, no or limited attention is given to it in the cooperation framework signed with VLIR. In "own initiatives", relevance for development is an important selection criterion for projects, but finally little attention is given to it in the formulation of objectives and indicators, or in the development of the intervention strategy.

national or regional systems and personnel. For example, the arrangement whereby South and North universities pair up to get projects effectively ties that assistance to a Belgian provider and does not develop regional or national providers of expertise from Southern institutions.

Box 5: VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD country programme in DRC

VLIR and CIUF have decided to develop a “Congo Programme” to be implemented jointly in the area of ICT and that would include 7 Congolese universities. This strategy, fairly new in the area of university co-operation, is supported by DGDC.

Other partners: APEFE and VVOB

VVOB and APEFE both have conventions with DGDC that describe the objectives and conditions of their partnership. Their remit is based on capacity-building, institutional strengthening of organisations the role of which is to train trainers, teachers etc. Their work focuses mainly on basic education, secondary education and technical and vocational training, in institutions or in programmes aimed at people in employment.

APEFE aims to reinforce partners’ training, research and management capacities. While its interventions cover the whole “education sector”, they specifically focus (per the convention signed in 2003 with DGDC) on initial training, training of trainers, in-service (or on the job) training and management. In practice, most partners’ requests to APEFE are related to professional development and vocational training.

VVOB’s federally funded work is framed by a global programme for 2003-2007, which should actively follow federal priorities and should ensure all interventions have an impact on poverty reduction. VVOB activities include education and training projects in agriculture and environment, health and welfare, IT and technology, economics and employment. VVOB pays particular attention to basic training in technical courses and education. VVOB has policies on cross-sectoral concerns including gender, HIV-AIDS, and the environment.

APEFE and VVOB define the list of countries in which they operate in five-year plans, according to conventions with DGDC that the organisations operate on three continents with at least half of the interventions geared towards sub-Saharan Africa. On the basis of their five-year plans, APEFE and VVOB must develop a multi-annual country strategy with yearly action plans reflecting changes in the local contexts, and lessons learned from implementation and evaluation of activities. Budgets are submitted alongside the action plans. From 2008, a six-year programme with two triennial action plans will replace the five-year programme and triennial planning will also be introduced at the level of each country.

The evaluation finds:

- Evidence from the case studies suggests that APEFE and VVOB have a bottom-up approach to country planning, in which they first identify possible partners, interventions or niches before they consolidate them in a country programme. This programming process provides many opportunities for responding to particular needs and situations, and for developing tailored activities that match expertise against the needs of capable partners. How this reality fits with the overall policies and strategies of the organisation is less clear, as country programming documents tend to be embedded in the main strategies of the organisation.

- The sectoral note on education is not used by the indirect actors to inform global or country strategies in detail, although broadly their strategies and interventions are in line with the Belgian development co-operation framework.
- In country, relations between indirect partners and MCs, PICs and Country Strategy Notes vary greatly. In some countries the MC only considers direct bilateral aid, in others indirect partners are involved in discussions and are mentioned in the PIC, although not their interventions and budgets. Where coordination and complementarity among direct and indirect actors are well articulated, it increases the legitimacy of the indirect partners.

C.3 Policy coherence, complementarity and coordination

C.3.1 International

Belgium has subscribed to all the major international agreements at EU-level (e.g. the Maastricht Treaty, the Cotonou Agreements, etc.), UN-level (e.g. the Declaration of the MDGs) and as a member of OECD/DAC (e.g. the OECD/DAC guidelines for poverty reduction, the Declaration of Paris for Harmonisation of Development Aid). International tendencies in development co-operation have a clear influence on policy notes produced at the Belgian level. In particular, the OECD/DAC guidelines for Poverty Reduction and the MDGs are a framework for development co-operation and the OECD/DAC guidelines are forming approaches to aid effectiveness.

In education/training, Belgium's perceived advantage is in technical and vocational training, training for adults, on-the-job training, and other forms of "*formation professionnelle*", and higher education. This builds on national systemic expertise and the experience of its specialist development agencies in these specific areas. These sub-sectors are not put forward in policy documents above the others but they are in many situations complementary to what other donors are doing.

C.3.2 In Belgium

The Belgian actors neatly complement each other in terms of sub-sector coverage, the indirect actors providing most of the other pieces of the jigsaw around direct support to formal school education. Informal agreements are in place to ensure that the indirect actors are not working in the same sub-sectors, providing a safeguard against overlapping. However, complementarity through demarcation helps only in regard to the "shape" of Belgian education co-operation. Specific objectives demand a more detailed analysis of the comparative strengths of each agency and synergy between them. There is no evidence of this at the HQ level and no processes to ensure complementarity between the actors' policies and plans.

The French-speaking Community and Flanders and Dutch-speaking community education systems and traditions bring diversity to the pool of expertise available to developing countries; however, the evaluation found no examples where this was exploited.

C.3.3 In partner countries

Belgian actors that have a country strategy (DGDC, APEFE and VVOB), look for synergies with other donors and, most importantly, seem in line with country priorities. Country policies are mainly developed by the agencies individually, without explicit reference or requirement to validate them against the Belgian and local policy frameworks.

The embassy takes no responsibility for ensuring policy coherence of the Belgian actors, and claims no mandate to do so. Participation of indirect actors in the MCs varies, limiting their potential role in the development of country strategies and Belgian aid priorities and wasting an opportunity to benefit from their experience.

Box 6: Tanzania: missed opportunity for coordination

Over 50% of Belgian assistance to the education sector in Tanzania was devoted to direct bilateral support to basic education, handled by the Attaché and BTC, with no input from other Belgian actors. However, over 25% of Belgian assistance went to higher education through the VLIR-UOS IUC programme, with minimal communication between the Belgian Attaché and no coordination with other Belgian initiatives that might have allowed the identification of synergies or opportunities of mutual interest.

As an example, the VLIR-UOS IUC Partner Programme at Sokoine University of Agriculture included a Basic Science project, which established the only BSc. programme in Environmental Sciences in Tanzania—the most popular science degree course in Tanzania from which graduates easily find employment. At the same time, the environment sector has been a priority for Belgian direct bilateral cooperation, but no links were established between the initiatives, despite obvious synergies and opportunities for maximising Belgian contributions in both.

The evaluation recognises the potential difficulties of common policy reflection and coherent development at country level, particularly where Belgian actors do not have representatives in the country. However, most have country desk officers in their HQ staff who could participate in such a process. It is in the details of strategic planning at the country level that complementarity and synergies will be identified.

Box 7: 2Cs in DRC

In DRC, coordination and complementarity between Belgian partners is quite strong due to the number of Belgian agencies on the ground and the need to approach challenges in a more coherent way in this fragile state. Although a common Belgian approach is not in place in this country, direct and indirect partners engaged with each other on a systematic basis before developing activities, at headquarters and country levels. Partnerships include: CIUF-CUD, CGRI, APEFE and the Walloon region for the CEDESURK higher education documentation centre (VLIR-UOS is not a member of the board but has participated in the project as well); VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD who have from 2006 a common Programme for DRC (UniversiTIC Programme); VVOB/APEFE and BTC (for vocational education). In addition DGDC Bruxelles and bilateral actors worked together on identification of activities (VVOB for instance).

PART D: Practices

D.1 Intervention characteristics

This section provides an overview of Belgian interventions in the education and training sector between 2002 and 2006, drawn from the analysis of the *ODA.be* database maintained by DGDC and the case-study findings.

The financial data²² presented below comprises interventions between 2001 and 2005 (the data for 2006 was not finalised, and 2001 data was kept to maintain trends over a 5-year period). Due to coding completeness and consistency issues, some education and training interventions are not included in the sample. The DAC5/CRS codes retained to select the interventions are presented in Table 1 below:

²² If not stated otherwise, monetary values in this section are rounded to thousand Euro units (indicated as K €) or million Euro units (indicated as M €).

Table 1: DAC5/CRS codes used to select interventions

111 - Education, level unspecified
11110 - Education policy and administrative management
11120 - Education facilities and training
11130 - Teacher training
11182 - Educational research
112 - Basic education
11220 - Primary education
11230 - Basic life skills for youth and adults
11240 - Early childhood education
113 - Secondary education
11320 - Secondary education
11330 - Vocational training
114 - Post-secondary education
11420 - Higher education
11430 - Advanced technical and managerial training
Other DAC5 codes (sector-specific education, training etc)
12181 - Medical education/training
12261 - Health education
14081 - Education and training in water supply / sanitation
31381 - Fishery education/training
33181 - Trade education/training
41081 - Environmental education/ training
43081 - Multisector education/training

D.1.1 Geographical coverage

Belgian aid is classified in the *ODA.be* under three geographical categories: (i) Universal / Country not specified / Belgium; (ii) Regional / continental groupings: Asian Continent, Latin America, South America, African Continent, Southern Africa, Central Africa, West Africa and Southern African Development Community (SADC); (iii) Specific country (partner or non-partner country).

Table 2 below shows aggregated data for all Belgian interventions from 2001 to 2005. It includes rankings indicating the monetary value for each country or region (an overall ranking and a partner country only ranking are provided).

In total, 72 countries received Belgian education aid over the period, of which 18 are partner countries and 54 non-partner countries. Belgium provided education aid to 28 least developed countries (LDCs) (10 partner, 18 non-partner countries); 22 lower middle-income countries (6 partner and 16 non-partner countries); 11 low-income countries (1 partner and 10 non-partner countries); and 11 upper middle-income countries (1 partner and 10 non-partner countries).

Out of the total of 477 M € of the Belgian aid budget in education and training, 179 M € (37.5% of total) has been allocated to the 18 partner countries, and 115 M € (24.0%) to 54 non-partner countries. 5.4 M € (1.1%) is allocated through interventions targeting the regional / continental groupings. Complementing the interventions targeted at specific countries or regions, is a substantial amount of approximately 178 M € (37.3%) of *Universal / Country not specified / Belgium* interventions. It appears that these mainly consist of allocations, administered through department D3, in particular D3.2 - for, for example, bursaries by Universities and Scientific institutions.

The evaluation notes:

- The essential similarity of the rankings in the two groups, suggesting not surprisingly that the identification of 18 partners in 2003 reflected established priorities and targeting;
- Education is not a priority sector for Belgian aid in all partner countries, and conversely, a number of non-partner countries received significant aid in the education sector between 2001 and 2006, including, Kenya (rank 10), Zimbabwe (rank 15), and Zambia (rank 17). This is due to the fact that a significant amount of aid is delivered through indirect channels;
- There are 3 countries (Algeria, Mozambique, and Uganda) that have not received the level of educational aid over the period consistent with being a target. The education sector has not been prioritised within these countries, increases have not yet come on stream or that aid has been channelled through budget support that has not been captured in this *ODA.be* data. It is understood that this is the case for Mozambique.

More detailed fact sheets for the 18 partner countries presenting country-wise analysis of development and education contexts, including education indicators, and Belgian's education funding and interventions are presented in Appendix 1.

Table 2: Aggregated data on all countries from 2001 to 2005 relating to Belgian education aid

Country / region	Rank (partner)	Rank (all)	Total	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
UNIVERSAL / Country UNSPECIFIED / Belgium		1	177,735 (37.3%)	33,306 (41.0%)	38,783 (39.2%)	35,005 (37.8%)	32,471 (30.3%)	38,170 (39.5%)
Regions / groups								
ASIAN CONTINENT multiple countries		49	819 (0.2%)	178 (0.2%)	152 (0.2%)	165 (0.2%)	159 (0.1%)	165 (0.2%)
REGION SOUTHERN AFRICA multiple countries		79	7 (0.0%)		7 (0.0%)			
REGION AFRICAN CONTINENT multiple countries		55	373 (0.1%)		373 (0.4%)			
REGION CENTRAL AFRICA multiple countries		64	150 (0.0%)					150 (0.2%)
REGION LATIN AMERICA multiple countries		71	90 (0.0%)		90 (0.1%)			
REGION SOUTH AMERICA multiple countries		53	490 (0.1%)			160 (0.2%)	151 (0.1%)	179 (0.2%)
REGION WEST AFRICA multiple countries		35	1,927 (0.4%)	409 (0.5%)	521 (0.5%)	297 (0.3%)	350 (0.3%)	350 (0.4%)
SADC Southern African Development Community		39	1,524 (0.3%)	443 (0.5%)	89 (0.1%)	437 (0.5%)	554 (0.5%)	
Total regions / groups			5,378 (1.1%)	1,030 (1.3%)	1,231 (1.2%)	1,059 (1.1%)	1,214 (1.1%)	844 (0.9%)
Partner countries								
Algeria	17	41	1,318 (0.3%)	195 (0.2%)	168 (0.2%)	174 (0.2%)	243 (0.2%)	537 (0.6%)
Benin	9	12	9,195 (1.9%)	1,827 (2.3%)	1,854 (1.9%)	1,446 (1.6%)	2,129 (2.0%)	1,939 (2.0%)
Bolivia	6	8	10,546 (2.2%)	1,490 (1.8%)	2,237 (2.3%)	2,446 (2.6%)	2,500 (2.3%)	1,873 (1.9%)
Burundi	8	11	9,699 (2.0%)	267 (0.3%)	4,332 (4.4%)	1,048 (1.1%)	1,772 (1.7%)	2,280 (2.4%)
Congo, Dem. Rep.	1	2	30,091 (6.3%)	3,475 (4.3%)	3,801 (3.8%)	6,147 (6.6%)	9,407 (8.8%)	7,261 (7.5%)
Ecuador	5	7	11,469 (2.4%)	2,106 (2.6%)	2,593 (2.6%)	2,639 (2.8%)	2,453 (2.3%)	1,678 (1.7%)
Mali	10	13	8,756 (1.8%)	3,347 (4.1%)	132 (0.1%)	443 (0.5%)	4,121 (3.8%)	714 (0.7%)

Country / region	Rank (partner)	Rank (all)	Total	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Morocco	12	19	7,493 (1.6%)	977 (1.2%)	1,614 (1.6%)	1,071 (1.2%)	2,355 (2.2%)	1,476 (1.5%)
Mozambique	18	50	805 (0.2%)		34 (0.0%)	29 (0.0%)	503 (0.5%)	240 (0.2%)
Niger	15	24	4,057 (0.9%)	258 (0.3%)	301 (0.3%)	372 (0.4%)	609 (0.6%)	2,517 (2.6%)
Palestinian Adm. Areas	7	9	9,992 (2.1%)	792 (1.0%)	2,486 (2.5%)	3,691 (4.0%)	1,593 (1.5%)	1,430 (1.5%)
Peru	14	22	5,429 (1.1%)	830 (1.0%)	1,071 (1.1%)	996 (1.1%)	1,364 (1.3%)	1,169 (1.2%)
Rwanda	3	4	18,001 (3.8%)	3,934 (4.8%)	3,729 (3.8%)	3,034 (3.3%)	3,099 (2.9%)	4,205 (4.3%)
Senegal	11	16	8,446 (1.8%)	1,564 (1.9%)	1,565 (1.6%)	1,957 (2.1%)	1,822 (1.7%)	1,536 (1.6%)
South Africa	13	21	5,708 (1.2%)	1,096 (1.4%)	882 (0.9%)	124 (0.1%)	1,679 (1.6%)	1,928 (2.0%)
Tanzania	4	5	16,696 (3.5%)	2,047 (2.5%)	2,443 (2.5%)	5,632 (6.1%)	5,140 (4.8%)	1,434 (1.5%)
Uganda	16	31	2,868 (0.6%)	615 (0.8%)	688 (0.7%)	476 (0.5%)	424 (0.4%)	666 (0.7%)
Viet Nam	2	3	18,381 (3.9%)	3,009 (3.7%)	4,076 (4.1%)	3,857 (4.2%)	3,478 (3.2%)	3,961 (4.1%)
All Partner countries			178,951 (37.5%)	27,830 (34.3%)	34,006 (34.3%)	35,581 (38.4%)	44,689 (41.7%)	36,845 (38.1%)
Non-partner Countries								
Afghanistan		51	764 (0.2%)	764 (0.9%)				
Angola		74	27 (0.0%)			26 (0.0%)	1 (0.0%)	
Argentina		54	396 (0.1%)	282 (0.3%)	114 (0.1%)			
Bangladesh		47	946 (0.2%)	46 (0.1%)	40 (0.0%)	152 (0.2%)	404 (0.4%)	303 (0.3%)
Botswana		44	1,173 (0.2%)	459 (0.6%)	409 (0.4%)	189 (0.2%)	116 (0.1%)	
Brazil		38	1,631 (0.3%)	571 (0.7%)	806 (0.8%)	91 (0.1%)	79 (0.1%)	85 (0.1%)
Burkina Faso		6	13,836 (2.9%)	1,325 (1.6%)	2,456 (2.5%)	2,872 (3.1%)	4,589 (4.3%)	2,594 (2.7%)
Cambodia		18	7,611 (1.6%)	303 (0.4%)	433 (0.4%)	1,041 (1.1%)	2,936 (2.7%)	2,898 (3.0%)

Country / region	Rank (partner)	Rank (all)	Total	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Cameroon		34	2,124 (0.4%)	268 (0.3%)	268 (0.3%)	500 (0.5%)	355 (0.3%)	732 (0.8%)
Chad		77	11 (0.0%)	11 (0.0%)				
Chile		48	935 (0.2%)	348 (0.4%)	338 (0.3%)	173 (0.2%)	77 (0.1%)	
China		45	1,106 (0.2%)	328 (0.4%)	321 (0.3%)	352 (0.4%)	91 (0.1%)	14 (0.0%)
Colombia		26	3,865 (0.8%)	462 (0.6%)	799 (0.8%)	1,027 (1.1%)	1,026 (1.0%)	551 (0.6%)
Congo, Rep.		52	521 (0.1%)	112 (0.1%)	109 (0.1%)	116 (0.1%)	119 (0.1%)	65 (0.1%)
Costa Rica		68	119 (0.0%)	66 (0.1%)	53 (0.1%)			
Côte d'Ivoire		28	3,479 (0.7%)	886 (1.1%)	812 (0.8%)	640 (0.7%)	833 (0.8%)	309 (0.3%)
Cuba		32	2,368 (0.5%)	11 (0.0%)	471 (0.5%)	52 (0.1%)	874 (0.8%)	959 (1.0%)
Djibouti		73	59 (0.0%)		44 (0.0%)	7 (0.0%)	8 (0.0%)	
Dominican Republic		66	132 (0.0%)	69 (0.1%)	63 (0.1%)			
El Salvador		46	1,048 (0.2%)	97 (0.1%)	198 (0.2%)	258 (0.3%)	321 (0.3%)	174 (0.2%)
Ethiopia		14	8,670 (1.8%)	295 (0.4%)	254 (0.3%)	1,162 (1.3%)	5,662 (5.3%)	1,297 (1.3%)
Gabon		67	131 (0.0%)	66 (0.1%)	40 (0.0%)	9 (0.0%)	16 (0.0%)	
Gambia		59	231 (0.0%)	131 (0.2%)	100 (0.1%)			
Guatemala		27	3,573 (0.7%)	440 (0.5%)	1,323 (1.3%)	763 (0.8%)	487 (0.5%)	560 (0.6%)
Guinea		56	346 (0.1%)	11 (0.0%)	34 (0.0%)	100 (0.1%)	100 (0.1%)	101 (0.1%)
Haiti		33	2,323 (0.5%)	353 (0.4%)	439 (0.4%)	659 (0.7%)	440 (0.4%)	431 (0.4%)
India		20	6,714 (1.4%)	1,713 (2.1%)	1,904 (1.9%)	1,001 (1.1%)	750 (0.7%)	1,345 (1.4%)
Indonesia		63	156 (0.0%)	59 (0.1%)				97 (0.1%)
Iran		76	22 (0.0%)	22 (0.0%)				

Country / region	Rank (partner)	Rank (all)	Total	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Kenya		10	9,864 (2.1%)	1,643 (2.0%)	2,201 (2.2%)	1,879 (2.0%)	2,196 (2.1%)	1,946 (2.0%)
Laos		36	1,824 (0.4%)	186 (0.2%)	289 (0.3%)	322 (0.3%)	526 (0.5%)	502 (0.5%)
Lebanon		42	1,258 (0.3%)	280 (0.3%)	279 (0.3%)	268 (0.3%)	232 (0.2%)	200 (0.2%)
Macedonia, Former Yugoslav		78	9 (0.0%)				9 (0.0%)	
Madagascar		40	1,387 (0.3%)	164 (0.2%)	440 (0.4%)	449 (0.5%)	284 (0.3%)	50 (0.1%)
Malaysia		81	2 (0.0%)				2 (0.0%)	
Mauritania		37	1,715 (0.4%)		1,615 (1.6%)	100 (0.1%)		
Mexico		65	141 (0.0%)		141 (0.1%)			
Namibia		62	162 (0.0%)				2 (0.0%)	160 (0.2%)
Nepal		69	100 (0.0%)					100 (0.1%)
Nicaragua		29	3,144 (0.7%)	1,319 (1.6%)	1,282 (1.3%)	315 (0.3%)	146 (0.1%)	83 (0.1%)
Nigeria		43	1,186 (0.2%)	274 (0.3%)	172 (0.2%)	314 (0.3%)	173 (0.2%)	254 (0.3%)
Pakistan		72	74 (0.0%)	30 (0.0%)	44 (0.0%)			
Panama		70	93 (0.0%)	93 (0.1%)				
Philippines		23	4,343 (0.9%)	742 (0.9%)	969 (1.0%)	1,054 (1.1%)	845 (0.8%)	733 (0.8%)
Sudan		61	176 (0.0%)		176 (0.2%)			
Suriname		25	3,968 (0.8%)	806 (1.0%)	801 (0.8%)	877 (0.9%)	631 (0.6%)	853 (0.9%)
Syria		60	219 (0.0%)	131 (0.2%)	88 (0.1%)			
Thailand		75	23 (0.0%)				23 (0.0%)	
Togo		58	300 (0.1%)	11 (0.0%)	74 (0.1%)	112 (0.1%)	42 (0.0%)	62 (0.1%)
Tunisia		30	2,950 (0.6%)	719 (0.9%)	1,098 (1.1%)	474 (0.5%)	558 (0.5%)	102 (0.1%)

Country / region	Rank (partner)	Rank (all)	Total	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Uruguay		57	301 (0.1%)	77 (0.1%)	77 (0.1%)	69 (0.1%)	46 (0.0%)	32 (0.0%)
Uzbekistan		80	3 (0.0%)				3 (0.0%)	
Zambia		17	8,325 (1.7%)	1,522 (1.9%)	1,811 (1.8%)	1,754 (1.9%)	1,721 (1.6%)	1,518 (1.6%)
Zimbabwe		15	8,625 (1.8%)	1,489 (1.8%)	1,624 (1.6%)	1,779 (1.9%)	1,975 (1.8%)	1,757 (1.8%)
All non-partner countries			114,512 (24.0%)	18,985 (23.4%)	25,007 (25.3%)	20,957 (22.6%)	28,695 (26.8%)	20,868 (21.6%)
All interventions			476,576 (100.0%)	81,151 (100%)	99,027 (100%)	92,602 (100%)	107,069 (100%)	96,726 (100%)

D.1.2 Direct, indirect and multilateral aid

Table 3 below shows aid disbursed through different DGDC departments, using these as proxy for coherent groups of channels: D1 Government Programmes and D2 Special Programmes for direct aid; D3 Non Governmental Programmes for indirect aid (D3.1 - NGO's, D3.2 -Universities / Scientific institutions, D3.3 - Others Partners, including APEFE and VVOB) and; D4 - Multilateral and European Programmes (D4.1 - Development Banks and D4.3 - United Nations).

Table 3: Overview of interventions by Directorate and Department (2001 – 2005)²³

Service (group)	TOTAL (2001 - 2005)	
D0.2 - Follow-up / Evaluation / Statistics	1,855	0.4%
D1 - Governmental Programmes	108,340	22.7%
D1 - Unspecified	38,060	8.0%
D1.1.1.a - North Africa, Middle East	11,075	2.3%
D1.1.1.b - Central Africa	19,491	4.1%
D1.1.1.c - West Africa	17,733	3.7%
D1.1.2 - Southern Africa, East Africa	15,430	3.2%
D1.2 - Latin America	1,368	0.3%
D1.3 - Asia	5,184	1.1%
D2 - Special Programmes	3,771	0.8%
D2.1 - Emergency aid / Rehabilitation / Food Aid	223	0.0%
D2.2 - Survival Fund	1,945	0.4%
D2.3 - Social Development	1,602	0.3%
D3 - Non-governmental Programmes	354,374	74.4%
D3.1 - NGO's	43,645	9.2%
D3.2 -Universities / Scientific institutions	223,230	46.8%
D3.3 - Others Partners	87,499	18.4%
D4 - Multilateral and European Programmes	8,237	1.7%
D4.1 - Development Banks	2,000	0.4%
D4.3 - United Nations	6,237	1.3%
TOTAL	476,576	100.0%

The evaluation notes:

- Most of the education aid is disbursed through non-governmental programmes, with 74.4% against 22.7% for direct bilateral aid.

²³ The database extract does not include disbursements via D4.2 (European Programmes and it shows “education-specific” contributions to multilateral and UN agencies, not the “core” funding, typically to special programmes such as the FTI fund. The nominal allocation of core-funds to education within those organisations, essentially on a pro-rata basis, has not been attempted.

- For direct bilateral aid, a very low percentage of education interventions is delivered through Special programmes (0.8%);
- For indirect aid, a very high percentage of education aid is delivered via universities and/or scientific institutions (the highest disbursement channel for education aid, with 46.8%), and a relatively low percentage of education interventions delivered by NGOs (9.2%).
- Although data does not appear in the above table, we found very few interventions in the education sector channelled through other scientific institutions in the *ODA.be* database (although these interventions may be coded as “training activities”, in other sector).

D.1.3 Education sub-sectors coverage

Table 4 below shows the breakdown of Belgian education aid by DAC5 and CRS codes. Comparison between the *ODA.be* database entries and the field reality confirms that the use of “unspecified levels” of education under 111 distorted slightly the total value of interventions in various education sub-sectors. Education facilities and training (11120) and teacher training (11130) for instance could have been integrated under a sub-sector code.

Table 4: Overview of interventions by sector (2001 – 2005)

All 1018 interventions	Value of interventions	
	K €	% of country / region disbursement
DAC5 and CRS Purpose Codes		
111 - Education, level unspecified	65,430	13.7%
11110 - Education policy and administrative management	1,805	0.4%
11120 - Education facilities and training	18,408	3.9%
11130 - Teacher training	44,300	9.3%
11182 - Educational research	917	0.2%
112 - Basic education	56,528	11.9%
11220 - Primary education	32,514	6.8%
11230 - Basic life skills for youth and adults	23,866	5.0%
11240 - Early childhood education	148	0.0%
113 - Secondary education	31,210	6.5%
11320 - Secondary education	3,000	0.6%
11330 - Vocational training	28,210	5.9%
114 - Post-secondary education	260,173	54.6%
11420 - Higher education	248,403	52.1%
11430 - Advanced technical and managerial training	11,769	2.5%
Other DAC5 codes (sector-specific education, training etc)	63,236	13.3%
12181 - Medical education/training	6,874	1.4%
12261 - Health education	16,481	3.5%
14081 - Education and training in water supply / sanitation	3,440	0.7%
31381 - Fishery education/training	4,048	0.8%
33181 - Trade education/training	719	0.2%
41081 - Environmental education/ training	894	0.2%
43081 - Multisector education/training	30,780	6.5%
TOTAL	476,576	100%

The evaluation notes:

- The high percentage of disbursement targeted at higher education (52.1%) contrasts with the relatively small percentage (11.9%) targeted at basic education (with 6.8% to primary education), which is the policy priority in pursuit of the MDG. This is an enormous, and ultimately untenable, mismatch between policy and practice;
- The education sub-sectors receiving the most aid are the post-secondary (54.6%) and the sector specific training category (13.3%), followed by basic education (11.9%);
- The very low percentages of funds geared toward education policy and administrative management (0.4%), and early childhood education (0.0%).

D.1.4 Typology of interventions

The evidence from the case studies and the 18 partner countries augments the categories used for quantitative analysis. The typology below shows types of activities and sub-sectors to reflect the perceptions of the work in the field.

Multilateral

Mainly FTI has been supported through multilateral channels during the evaluation period, for a total of 2 millions Euros. Other interventions include support to young professionals and UN volunteers in international organisations (WHO, UNICEF, UNESCO), distribution of school materials (Afghanistan) and training (health and trade).

Direct aid

Six types of interventions dominate those that are funded by DGDC and implemented by BTC:

1. **Budget support and pool funding:** Belgium participated in the pool funding in Niger and Tanzania, Rwanda and Mali, and in the sector or sub-sector budget support in Mozambique, and Vietnam;
2. **Projects** in different education sub-sectors:
 - in **basic education** (e.g. textbooks for primary education in DRC, teacher training in Northern Vietnam);
 - in **technical and vocational education at secondary school** level (support to TVET projects in Palestine, DRC, and Burundi);
 - in **vocational training/formation professionnelle** (technical support to training centres for water professionals in Algeria, capacity building in the Centre du Perfectionnement du Personnel des Entreprises in Benin, development of apprentice programmes in Morocco);
 - less commonly in **higher education** (Masters in Social Sciences on Indigenous issues/education *interculturelle bilingue* in Ecuador²⁴) and;
 - in **institutional support and strengthening** (support to design and implementation of Ministry's strategy for vocational training for adults in Rwanda, institutional support to the Ministry of Primary, Secondary and Vocational Education–formulation phase in DRC).
3. **Micro-projects** (MIPs), focus mainly on:
 - **infrastructure** (school building, latrines etc),

²⁴ The project was supported in the framework of the "Fondo Indígena" or Indigenous Fund, a regional program, not falling under the responsibility of the bilateral Mixed Commission.

- **equipment** (books and other materials, such as musical tapes in Palestine or audio-visual equipment in Mali),
 - and more rarely on **training** (training of classroom assistants in ECCE in DRC, adult literacy in Uganda, training of women to address physical violence in Mali).
4. **Scholarships and bursaries.** Scholarships are divided between:
- scholarships to study in Belgium,
 - mixed scholarships (in Belgium and in country, on a 3 or 6 months rotation basis, generally used for PhD scholarships),
 - scholarships to study in country (Ecuador, for instance),
 - short-term training bursaries in Belgium, and
 - local and regional bursaries (covering a wide range of activities, including workshops and seminars of less than one week)
5. **Facilitation of policy dialogue**, such as the organisation of education round tables and taking an active role in the education donor group and SWAp sub-group in DRC; chairing of the Education Donor Group in Tanzania. These activities are not necessarily translated into project type interventions, but are part of a role played by the Belgian embassy.
6. **Special programmes**, implemented by indirect actors on behalf of DGDC, such as the Diocese development of Inongo-Mai Ndombe in DRC (Belgian Survival Fund – D2).

Exceptionally, significant amounts of emergency funds are spent in the education sector, as noted in Burundi.

Box 8: PISEP in Burundi, making things normal

The *Projet d'Infrastructures Scolaires et d'Equipements Pédagogiques* was set up in 2003 to use unspent funds of closed projects to construct and equip secondary communal schools. The project is quite simple and was conceived in the context of emergency, but it has intelligently used local level dynamics emerging as the situation started to become normal. It responded to the urgent grassroots need to set up additional secondary schools as the number of children graduating from the primary schools rose sharply but, for security reasons, children could not be sent far away to continue their education.

Indirect aid

Defining education interventions for the indirect actors is a complex task, interventions that seem similar on the ground are assigned different DAC5/CRS codes, even to the extent of what is considered as “education”. This is particularly the case for NGOs, whose rural development activities often include interventions in literacy and vocational training for adults.

VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD have all their activities coded under education, regardless of their educational and development objectives.

These issues being taken into account, the typology of indirect aid interventions can be sketched as follows:

CIUF-CUD, VLIR-UOS

The university councils support projects through university links including:

1. **Institutional strengthening:**
 - Creation and support of 2nd and 3rd cycles: curriculum development and strengthening teaching capacity
 - Building-up a critical mass of teachers through PhDs/*relève académique*
 - Support to university co-operation and coordination units

- Support to ICT infrastructure, capacity building, academic and research development
 - Support to documentary resources
 - Equipment
2. **Research projects**, mainly in Sciences and Natural Sciences
3. **Scholarships**
- Doctorate scholarships in Belgium
 - Mixed scholarships (in Belgium and in country on a rotation basis)
 - Short-term courses / re-training courses
 - PIC-related PhDs (mostly CIUF-CUD)

Other scientific institutions have few activities coded under an education DAC5/CRS code. Most of their interventions are training in specialised institutes or universities, particularly ITM in health related issues. The RMAC supports educational activities in cultural organisations, mostly museums.

APEFE and VVOB

Despite similarities in their set up and conventions with DGDC, APEFE and VVOB undertake different types of activities, although TVET is a specialist area of both agencies. VVOB works more in formal education settings, including in basic education and education quality. APEFE has more interventions in higher education and its portfolio is more related to Francophone criteria.

APEFE

1. **Vocational training/formation professionnelle**
 - Support to vocational centres (DRC)
 - Institutional support and strengthening (Morocco, Palestine, Rwanda, Vietnam)
 - Curriculum development
 - Teacher training / training of trainers
 - On-going professional development for teachers (Bolivia, Vietnam – French teaching)
 - In-service teacher training for TVET (Burundi, DRC)
 - Training of trainers in vocational training/formation professionnelle
2. **Tertiary education**
 - Support to resource centre (CEDESURK in DRC)
 - Support to faculties (BA in Intercultural Bilingual education for school teachers (Bolivia, translation and French teaching, Palestine, Education Sciences, Senegal, Support to MA in Public Management, Vietnam)

VVOB

1. **Quality basic, secondary and TVET education**
 - Support to Inspectorate (DRC)
 - Quality education (Ecuador)
 - School management (Rwanda, South-Africa)
 - ICT in education (Vietnam)
 - Curriculum development for TVET agriculture section (DRC)
2. **Vocational training/formation professionnelle**
 - Support to women (Morocco)

NGOs

Most NGOs' interventions are projects or area-based programmes which fall under the following categories:

1. **Basic education**, under rural development coding, and not necessarily reflected in the 1018 interventions the evaluation is drawing from, or equipment associated with basic training projects (school libraries in DRC, Senegal)
2. **Vocational training/formation professionnelle:**
 - Support to vocational centres (NGOs in Bolivia)
 - Vocational training for vulnerable and marginalised young people and adults (6 Novembre in Bolivia, COMIDE-DMOS in many countries, MOAC-WSM in Peru, NGO Senegal)
 - Adult literacy:
 - Equipment
 - Training of trainers/educators (NGOs in DRC, ITINERANS)
 - Other support (NGO Senegal)
3. **Health education:**
 - Material development and associated training (NGO in DRC – Foncaba)
 - Medical care ECCE (NGO Rwanda)

The evaluation finds little evidence of Belgian NGOs and local partners being involved in lobbying, advocacy and civil society consultation activities in the education sector, which is an increasingly important role for NGOs working alongside the new international commitments.

The evaluation notes that:

- A number of partners work in similar areas: TVET with BTC, APEFE, VVOB and NGOs; higher education (BTC, CIUF-CUD, VLIR-UOS and APEFE); basic education (BTC, VVOB);
- None of the partners are involved in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE).

D.2 Implementation

The period of the evaluation has seen changing structures, approaches and contexts and all partners have been required to move towards a programmatic approach, characterised by longer term planning, clearer goals, indicators and evaluation tools for outcomes.

D.2.1 Direct bilateral aid

For DGDC the changes have usually meant joining other development partners (DPs) in (sub)-SWApS, predicated on national (or joint) implementation. There remain directly funded projects and whilst DGDC and BTC recognise that the design and approach to projects is changing to reflect the Paris agenda there is little evidence of Belgian projects that are integrated under the umbrellas of SWAp-like planning and implementation agreements.

Direct bilateral interventions include projects undertaken in the framework of emergency funds (Burundi, Rwanda), implemented by NGOs or multilateral organisations. The disciplines and resources typical of projects arguably allow for better response to the emergency needs.

Project /programme preparation

The project/programme cycle comprises the following phases: identification, formulation, implementation and evaluation, which vary in length and depth depending on contexts.

Country partners, in association with DGDC's representative, undertake identification, which may take several years to reconcile demands, negotiate areas of work and budgets.

Formulation is the responsibility of BTC and leads to a technical description of the project, with detailed budget and time planning. This has to be approved by DGDC and the partner government before implementation.

The formal split of responsibilities for identification and formulation is a unique feature of Belgian technical assistance²⁵, and makes it more difficult to engage partners for the entire planning period, as the details are worked out, and presents a risk to the coherence between the technical design and the political contexts. Formulation seem to be characterised as a purely "technical" process that can be detached from political realities of the partner country and DPs: this cannot be true in the new aid paradigms.

BTC is responsible for formulation and for subsequent implementation. This presents a potential conflict of interest for the agency and is at odds with international practice that prevents those involved in design competing for implementation work (e.g. WB, DFID and EU).

The current situation tends to reduce the project to the "lowest common denominator" of inputs that can be agreed between BTC/DGDC and the partner government, for example tangible inputs such as materials equipment and training. This is successful when such inputs serve the needs, such as the supply of textbooks and school desks in Burundi, but less so where the intended outcomes are institutional and qualitative change as in the Teacher Training project in Vietnam.

The evaluation notes the characteristic trajectory over time of BTC projects: phase 1 to get things in place; phase 2 to get some results; phase 3 to institutionalise and sustain. This is not explicit in project formulation but is common in practice. For the partner country it presents the worst case, in which the duration of support is not guaranteed and the expected phase-end outcomes are seen as mutable. Phase-end evaluation may be subject to pressures to continue.

Project and programme implementation

By law, BTC is responsible for the implementation of all direct aid projects and programmes.

For projects there is normally a steering group-the *Structure Mixte de Concertation Locale* (SMCL)-including representatives of the beneficiary and of the Belgian side. Under the second management agreement between DGDC and BTC, the Attaché attended the SMCL representing DGDC but from 2007 onwards, under the third agreement they will not.

The structures provide an opportunity for the partners to steer the projects and for some flexibility in implementation, although such responsiveness is dependent on the personality and position of representatives on the SMCL and, in many cases, the working relationships established by the individuals.

Day-to-day project management is typically the responsibility of a Project Management Unit (PMU) established jointly according to agreements in the project formulation document. It is usual practice to appoint at least one full-time technical assistant (*délégué à la co-gestion*) to the PMU, with the expectation that they will provide technical and professional advice as well as act on BTC's behalf to oversee fiduciary processes within the project; he or she works alongside the national project

²⁵ Changing minds and attitudes: Towards improved Belgian Technical Assistance, ECDPM and IACE Europe, July 2006.

manager (*directeur de l'intervention*). This can cause conflict of leadership between the Belgian appointed and locally appointed manager

Project management is BTC's core area of expertise, its main role and source of income. Questions of cost-effectiveness and quality of BTC services are not sector-specific and beyond the scope of this evaluation. However, there are specific challenges in the education sector, with the need to coordinate with other actors and to articulate with the development partnerships for education in the country, particularly in the contexts of changing modalities.

Box 9: Tanzania, implementation of the SWAp

In Tanzania the BTC Education Adviser took the role of Coordinator of the Education Donors Group, and thus the representation of the Group's views in the dialogue with the Government. This is a role that development partners and Government assume is normally filled by a person mandated to speak in an official (sometimes diplomatic) capacity on behalf a bilateral development partner.

Financial monitoring

The Belgian system of financial reporting, from the PMU to SMCL, and through BTC to DGDC and its financial controllers, is robust and required to secure subsequent financing. Detailed accounting and financial reporting means that all project stakeholders are informed of expenditures and expenditure-driven project activities. The accounting and financial record-keeping task is reported as onerous by those involved in implementation, and is a major function of the Technical Assistants in projects, in some cases the central rationale for their posts.

D.2.2 Indirect aid

Project preparation

NGOs typically identify and develop projects in collaboration with local partners and beneficiaries, under the framework of their five-year programme. NGOs often develop projects and programmes that can incorporate co-funding from other organisations and donors, with particular results attached to particular components. NGOs are required to spend 1% of budget on evaluation, which may include thematic or strategic evaluations as well as project evaluations. Typically external (mid-term and end-of-project) and DGDC evaluations are carried out for major projects.

University co-operation projects are usually undertaken on the basis of a tender. The aims and objectives are defined in the five-year programmes of VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD, and universities from the South with their Northern partners, submit a proposal. The use of "project" and "programme" terminology is loose, and a number of IUC programmes may be fragmented in ten or more projects not necessarily linked to each other or to a programme structure. For monitoring, the South promoters send monitoring reports first to their Northern partners who circulate them to VLIR-UOS or CIUF-CUD. A monitoring visit is usually undertaken every year by the Northern promoter to ensure the project is on track. A mid-term external evaluation often provides the basis for substantial project and programme adjustments.

For **APEFE and VVOB**, it is not specified what the role of country partner institutions is to be in identification and design as the agencies prepare a formulation document and log-frame that will be used for implementation. In recent years, both agencies have adopted an increasingly participatory approach to identification and formulation with the representatives of partner institutions, target groups and other stakeholders. The standard methodology used during these workshops is the log-frame approach, although VVOB is experimenting with "outcome-mapping".

In their yearly plan APEFE and VVOB consolidate projects status and forecasts. In addition, they use progress-monitoring tools that project coordinators regularly return to line managers (country representative and HQs).

Project and programme implementation

The indirect actors have effective implementation structures for inputs and financial management (they also have to satisfy the Belgian financial control systems), although they sometimes stretch the local partners' capacity. Similarly, there is expressed concern that the systems are burdensome, and add a time and cost burden that is disproportionate to small transactions. Follow-up and delays related to shipping, customs tax, and order checks are identified as a risk to timely action.

The agencies differ in the ways in which local partners are involved in project steering and day-to-day implementation, but all have joint implementation with active participation of local and Belgian partners. Where there is a Belgian consultant/*coopérant* in place much of the responsibility rests with him or her, not only for management, but also for relationships with the partner institution and oversight of finances.

Overall the evaluation finds that Belgian projects, both direct and indirect, are very effective in delivering inputs but need to continue the work to improve management by results.

D.2.3 Evaluation and managing by results

The evaluation finds serious shortcomings in the evaluation of projects and programmes and the use of results to inform their management.

It is acknowledged that the agencies (in common with those in other countries) are responding to the calls for a more robust approach to evaluation and results-based management: they have taken necessary steps but they are not sufficient.

The common weakness is the identification and quantification of intended outcomes, their indicators and the means that will be used to measure them. Evaluations have focussed on inputs -"number of computers installed" or "number of teacher training person-days"-or intended outputs -"number of children who have used a computer" or "number of teachers who completed the course"²⁶. Missing are the questions about the intended outcomes²⁷ and their indicators -"numbers of children able to search the internet" or "better results in standard literacy tests".

There are specific challenges for education, and education development, in attempting to improve evaluation of outcomes.

- Education priorities (and qualities) are culturally defined and subject to misinterpretation or disagreement. The aims of education for a developing country, as perceived by the parents or the government, may include employment, marriage, national and/or religious values. Liberal Northern cultures prioritise personal empowerment and "joy" in learning and child-centred approaches that imply a complicated synthesis of classroom practices, curricula, resources, attitudes and behaviour. Such different perceptions are most likely to be exposed and understood when partners specify and agree intended outcomes in detail;
- The international community is struggling for an internationally comparable measure of education "quality";
- Education systems are so slow: slow to respond to inputs and slow to yield their results;
- Educationalists, particularly those working with younger children are ambiguous about the use of testing to measure performance, because of its effect on classroom practice and, in many countries, because the systems for testing are technically flawed or corrupt;

²⁶ Teacher training course providers will, of course, augment this with statements of much the teachers liked the courses.

²⁷ Which some logical framework protocols call "purpose".

- Education results are politically sensitive, for example where they show regional, ethnic or social discrepancy or shortfall on targets. Partner governments may not support transparency of system results.

The problems are not unique to developing countries: much of Europe, particularly the UK, has seen political and professional struggles around the collection and publication of systemic performance data. .

Information about the outcomes is critical for DGDC to exercise proper oversight of public funds, not only in financial compliance but also in the effectiveness of their use.

For **direct bilateral aid**, evaluation is often commissioned and sometimes undertaken by BTC. As BTC is the agency responsible for formulation and implementation, and has interests in follow-up phases, this is a risk to independence.

The evaluation of SWAp-like programmes is usually better developed as it is central to partnership agreements, although it is often problematic in practice due to the information and evaluation capacity of the partner country. To date most SWAps are focusing on quantitative indicators particularly of access and completion²⁸.

Evaluation practices of **indirect partners** vary greatly. VLIR-UOS commissions some external evaluations for particular projects, and requests self-evaluation for others. All Institutional University Cooperation (IUC) programmes are subject to external evaluation during identification (*ex-ante*), at mid term and when the programme is finished. CIUF-CUD does not have the same culture of monitoring and evaluation, and little documentation is kept by the project or by the agency itself. In terms of lesson learning and knowledge management, it is not clear how both university councils make the most of universities' and individuals' experiences. VLIR-UOS has published evaluations on programmes and projects and has set up a number of thematic advisory committees where promoters can share project results and opportunities. The website disseminates evaluation reports and studies. A similar set-up is not in place at CIUF-CUD.

VVOB has recently introduced compulsory baseline data collection for all interventions, a mid and end-of intervention evaluation, and has embarked on an outcome mapping exercise. Both VVOB and APEFE commission external evaluations: and use open public recruitment for evaluation consultants.

DGDC has no mechanism for obtaining and using the results of evaluation undertaken by other actors: there is no performance assessment compulsorily included in the *ODA.be* project database, as is common in other agencies.

D.2.4 Technical Assistance

The provision of technical assistance (TA) is an important component of Belgian direct and indirect aid; most TA is undertaken by international consultants, usually Europeans. It is an expensive resource with risks of acceptance and effectiveness inherent in working within a foreign culture. The trends of the changing aid modalities argue against full time foreign personnel in this traditional role, towards task-oriented more locally recruited expertise.

Often TA persons work to two ends as technical/professional advisors and as financial managers, with fiduciary oversight. There is a risk that one function is compromised by the other, for example in terms of the time and/or personal relationships within the PMU.

Particular issues arise for TA in the context of SWAps and budget support.

²⁸ The international community (e.g. the Global Monitoring Report) has taken completion as a proxy for "quality", as the best internationally comparable indicator available.

Experiences of education sector budget support (SBS) in Ethiopia and Burkina Faso is reported to show the combination of SBS and sector policy advisor can work well²⁹ and assist in identifying additional services on specific tasks (curriculum development, EMIS, gender strategies etc).

However, there is a critical finding from the case studies about political exposure of TA taking a leading role within the SWAp. Relationships with the DPs and the beneficiary country are essentially political or diplomatic: it is inappropriate and ineffective to delegate such relationships to an externally contracted person who lacks the legitimacy and diplomatic structures to support the role. The SWAp/SBS paradigm seeks to reduce transaction costs, for Belgium the appointment of full time personnel for their implementation reduces the potential savings. The alternative may be to deploy short-term expertise for specific tasks, which is likely to be more cost-effective.

Indirect bilateral interventions rely mainly on Belgian technical expertise. In the case of APEFE³⁰, long-term TA is undertaken by *coopérants*, managing and running interventions or recruited for a training and capacity-building. Short-term TA is provided by these two agencies as well: in the education sector, because the Belgian experts are constrained by teaching commitments, the TA inputs *de-facto* happen mainly during holidays which distorts planning and risks extending the intervention time frame.

A similar situation was identified for **university co-operation** interventions where promoters are usually available only outside teaching periods, particularly because their involvement in development co-operation is voluntary, on top of their other commitments, and not remunerated. The willingness of university personnel to work in this way arguably provides a cost-effective additional resource. However, it weakens accountability to the ultimate client and limits the type of work (and even the target countries) to those which can attract such volunteers. As university cooperation strives for more ambitious institutional development goals, it is not clear whether the necessary expertise, for example in ICT organisational development, or management, will be available in this way.

VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD make use of TA on a short-term basis only, often for promoters advising projects or participating in teaching cycles in the South.

NGOs rely mainly on local partners and their own expertise. The role of external TA tends to be for very specific intervention where international expertise is required (such as micro-credit schemes). In addition, Belgium NGOs send staff for monitoring and evaluation, capacity-building and strengthening of the local partner. Some of the bigger NGOs that have multiple projects in a country have representatives who are responsible for strategic dialogue with partners and linkages with other agencies and stakeholders.

D.2.5 Scholarships *Scholarship programmes*

Belgium is a major provider of scholarships for study in Belgium. In addition to those within projects, more general scholarships programmes are managed by both DGDC/BTC and by the university councils as described above. In all there are 15 different scholarship schemes supported by DGDC.

²⁹ Evaluation of the Belgium contribution to the implementation of the Teacher Development Program (TDP) in Ethiopia and the "Programme Décennal de Développement de l'Éducation de Base" in Burkina Faso, Leo van der Zwan, MDF Training and Consultancy, May 2007.

³⁰ to a lesser extent VVOB who have reduced the number of long term experts in the field,

Box 10: Benin scholarships

At the Université d'Abomey-Calavi in Cotonou, Bénin, academic staff can benefit from at least seven different Belgian scholarship programmes/modalities, implemented by DGDC/BTC, CIUF, VLIR and CGRI.

There is no coordination between these programmes.

Belgium is increasingly making provision for local and regional scholarships. In 2006, 87%³¹ of the “outside-project” scholarships provided by DGCD/BTC worldwide were local or regional scholarships, corresponding with 41% of the total budget of the scholarship programme. Although the trend looks significant, local bursaries include also seminars and workshop attendance costs. A programme in Vietnam provides Belgian funding to support study in national and regional training institutions, targeting relevant courses for marginal groups and supporting the institutions to provide suitable courses. In Benin and Tanzania, local scholarships have been predominant in comparison with bursaries to study in Belgium, but this situation is reversed in DRC.

Direct bilateral scholarships should respond to overall selection criteria established by DGDC but within this framework priorities are decided in country and vary depending on country priorities and size of the budgetary envelopes. Many are geared towards State officers and other organisations and agencies in the country, such as NGOs, but applications are done on an individual basis. These are “mid-term career” scholarships, directed towards people with a working experience of at least 2 years in relevant sectors. This opportunity is highly appreciated by beneficiaries and fills a gap left by other donors.

VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD’s scholarships can be short or long term, and benefit students or academic staff. Most scholarships from university councils are awarded for PhDs, Masters or training courses in Belgium.

Other international agencies have reduced the number of general scholarships that they offer to developing countries, amidst concerns for their contribution to development and cost-effectiveness. Arguably, scholarships for study in Belgium have as much to do with long-term cultural and personal diplomacy as development. This evaluation takes no position on those aims but recognises mutual benefit in international study opportunities which expose influential persons to new perspectives.

Scholarship programmes are specifically directed at education personnel, such as teacher trainers, managers, planners and decision-makers, in only a few cases outside of projects.

Management

Scholarship management is often limited to information sharing after awards have been made so as to ensure an individual does not benefit from two scholarships. The role of responsible agencies in country in proposing or selecting candidates varies and is sometimes unclear, as is their role in identifying priority areas for these scholarship programmes.

Study fellows or their institutions speak highly of Belgium administration and support for students, although some noted that language preparation was inadequate and that they had encountered language difficulties. In Peru, induction seminars are organised in partnership between BTC and the university councils to ensure all students about to go to Belgium have the necessary information. Such events are not organised on a systematic basis in each country.

³¹ Rapport de l'évaluation du Programme Annuel des bourses hors-projet; South Research and BIEF; 2007.

Project scholarship administration copes poorly with the risk of failure, most students are awarded funds and visas for the minimal length of the course, which does not allow re-submission of dissertations or re-sitting exams.

The weakest point of the management seems to be monitoring and evaluation. Data is gathered and but not usefully aggregated over different schemes to evaluate achievements and impact..

D.2.6 Transversal issues

Gender

Despite Belgian policy commitment to transversal issues, especially gender, the evaluation found little evidence of particular intervention's effects on gender: most Financial and Technical Fiches/*Dossiers Techniques et Financiers* do not include gender specific indicators and are gender neutral.

Direct bilateral scholarships for PhDs have made steps towards gender equity but not other types of scholarships. Overall, women were awarded about 30% of the scholarships, with differences between countries³². There are no clear gender mainstreaming strategies in the hors-projet bursary programme, and the evaluators did not come across specific gender equity strategies at university council level.

Although bilateral interventions and NGOs have made steps towards gender mainstreaming, there is little evidence of particular outcomes, or of comprehensive integration of gender issues in other indirect actors' interventions.

D.3 Development practices

D.3.1 Alignment

Direct bilateral

Alignment is a key concept and practice for Belgian direct aid. Attachés will ensure interventions respond to expressed government needs, PRSPs and other strategies/plans. Belgium's intentions are stated in policy documents, sectoral strategy notes and country strategies. Meetings and discussions around the MC and the PIC translate this into practical proposals. However, the evaluation has identified the importance to alignment of details and practical arrangements, which emerge in formulation and implementation..

MIPs, are demand-driven, and hence are operated in a parallel system, outside the main intervention modalities.

Indirect bilateral

Alignment is a stated aim of the indirect actors, especially APEFE and VVOB who seek to match their activities with country policy documents. NGOs are, by definition, willing to explore other ways of working, possibly outside the government system and alongside local NGOs. There is a clear role for NGOs in public accountability, awareness-raising and innovation, all of which imply a more critical relationship with government: alignment with government is a nuanced concept for an NGO. NGO-support to educational provision outside government structures, such as DMOS-COMIDE's vocational and technical colleges in Tanzania, also need to be assessed in the wider context, for example, of community or church provision. But it is important that such providers actively address their relationship to the national system and the ways they contribute to strengthening them.

³² Rapport de l'évaluation du Programme Annuel des bourses hors-projet; South Research and BIEF; 2007.

Box 11: Benin, a Belgian voice in education

In Benin, education is not a priority sector for direct bilateral cooperation. One of the consequences is that the embassy decided not to participate in the donors' consultation group on education, or in the subsectoral subgroups: basic education, technical education and professional training, and higher education. This is a missed opportunity, given that, through CIUF, VLIR and APEFE, Belgium is one of the principal donors, especially in the area of higher education. The possibility of delegating a representative of one of the indirect actors to the donors' consultation group has not been considered.

University co-operation projects do not cite alignment as a principle, because they address particular university needs rather than national needs in the higher education sector, in that sense they may be said to align with the institution's strategy. How far university planning in country is controlled by, or responds to, national plans and policies differs from country to country.

For indirect actors with small funds in a given country, alignment on national policies and country targets may be limited. However, indirect actors, with their variety of entry points in national or regional authorities and educational institutions, are often concerned with a level of "alignment" that will match the priorities and operational procedures of partners.

The evaluation notes:

- Alignment is often described in documentation as a commitment to broad country strategy statements (PRSPs etc) that are usually too general to be useful. Alignment should be meaningful in the details, the practical arrangements and the operationalisation of the concept.
- Alignment is meaningful when intervention outcomes are in line with country targets: agreements must be explicit about targets at formulation stage.
- An issue raised in Burundi and DRC was donor difficulties in countries that struggle to identify and rank their priorities, so that alignment is impossible in the sense implied above. This situation provided Belgium with an opportunity to identify education priorities for the PRSPs and other country strategies. In DRC, APEFE ensured that vocational training/*formation professionnelle* was retained in education priorities.
- We are using the term "alignment" here, in common with the use in the Paris Declaration, for the relationship between the aid intervention and the stated aims of the national government – the locus of bilateral policy. Other actors may properly seek to establish alignments with their partner institutions and, in the case of NGOs; with local NGOs, public advocates and others working outside the government domain. A legitimate and valuable role for NGOs and INGOs is to be "grit in the oyster".

D.3.2 Partnerships *Among Belgian actors*

Direct and indirect actors work together on a number of interventions at country levels. For example, there are partnerships between: APEFE and BTC (on technical and vocational education projects where APEFE deliver teacher training activities, in Burundi and DRC); VVOB and BTC (PROCETAL in Ecuador and TVET in Rwanda); and APEFE and CIUF-CUD (*Ecole de criminologie* in DRC, UNESCO chair in Burundi and Benin). VLIR-UOS and CIUF-CUD are also embarked on a new partnership at country level in DRC that is being concretised in the UniversiTIC project, developing IT infrastructure for administrative, academic and pedagogical purposes.

Factors hindering joint interventions include the difference in working culture, management systems and styles, and perceptions of staff status. More co-operation at HQ level would enhance and generalise collaboration through the establishment of common frameworks and agreed outcomes, and harmonisation of operational procedures.

With partners in country

Belgian partnerships of direct cooperation work within formal structures although the split of responsibilities between DGDC and BTC causes confusion. The day-to-day reality of working relationships within projects and some SWAps, is the responsibility of TA consultants and often depend on the personal attributes of the individuals.

The evaluation notes Belgian's lead role in the partnership in certain countries (DRC and Tanzania) and its contribution to emerging cooperation partnerships in other countries (e.g. Vietnam).

The partnerships established by indirect actors are varied; again in most cases the partnership is defined more by the presence of individuals than by the structures in place between the two parties. University cooperation explicitly seeks to build links and develop partnerships.

With other development agencies

The evaluation has identified a number of *ad hoc* partnerships between Belgian agencies and other agencies emerging at the country or regional levels. They include links with UNESCO, which has legitimacy and status in areas of common interest (ICT in schools, educational planning and non-formal education, for example)

APEFE and CIUF-CUD maintain working relationship with the international Francophone institutions including jointly planned and jointly funded initiatives, particularly concerning French language teaching and training.

There is potential to develop working links with other agencies, including other bilaterals.

D.3.3 Coordination, information transparency and accountability

There is no forum in Brussels for all Belgian actors to discuss strategies, share experiences, lessons and results, even within DGDC such information sharing is informal. Neither do such forums exist in country specifically for education (although Belgian actors' meetings occur regularly in Latin America through the FABEC, FABEB and FAPEP forums). In countries where all Belgian actors are part of the education donor group (DRC for instance), direct and indirect actors have a formal space for sharing and working together, but this situation is rare and usually only representatives of the direct actors participate to such meetings (in Vietnam and Tanzania for instance). Attachés without education expertise, and those in countries where education is not a priority sector, do not play an active role in the education sector.

Box 12: Ecuador, meeting in FABEC

In Ecuador, the Forum of Belgian Actors in Ecuador (FABEC) meets regularly to be informed on and discuss policies and strategies of Belgian cooperation in the country. This is an initiative of the Attaché. A unique feature is that the forum is not only open to country representatives of Belgian direct and indirect actors, but also to their local partners in case there is no Belgian representative in the country.

Although FABEC is considered valuable by the participants, it has contributed little to improved coordination and coherence in the education sector as meetings mostly consider policies and strategies of direct bilateral cooperation (where education is not a priority sector) and some important Belgian actors in education, or their partners, do not participate (e.g. DMOS/COMIDE; the IUC-program of VLIR in Guayaquil).

Respondents did not see improved coordination amongst Belgian actors in country as a priority, but stress the importance of coordinating with national and international actors in the same area or sub-sector. But this does not mean that Belgian actors cannot and do not coordinate some of their interventions or do not share information but it limits their opportunities to do so. Little use is made of information available to DGDC to inform Attachés of work within their country.

The evaluation found examples of poor coordination, from country officials being compensated differently to attend workshops and training sessions³³, to interventions not being presented coherently to partner countries and other donors. In Burundi, BTC and APEFE, despite working together on the TVET project, have separate log-frames and APEFE has only an observer role in the SMCL. In DRC where a similar project is implemented, APEFE was not allowed to participate in the formulation, despite its involvement in training in the implementation phase.

A contributing factor is the weakness, in country, of information dissemination between agencies on plans, activities and lessons. Websites are promotional rather than informational and although many documents are generated for internal purposes, there is little commitment to making them available to others for the sake of transparency and accountability.

D.3.4 Fragile states

Despite policy documents referring to a regional approach in Central Africa, Belgian actors do not have a particular methodology when intervening in post-conflict countries or fragile states. In the case of Burundi and DRC, political dialogue seems to be the way to frame the Belgian approach, but steps, successes and barriers are not documented, neither are the attempts to limit or overcome corruption, and increase transparency and governance in the education sector.

Analysis of projects on the ground however shows that Belgian partners seem to have adopted a similar approach in both countries with regards to education: projects focusing on material and infrastructure first, and projects aiming at training and strengthening capacity building second. Post-conflict projects have a strong humanitarian character that has faded over the years. The evaluation notes the apparent absence of experience and lesson sharing arising from particular interventions in these countries, whether linked to political dialogue, transparency and governance issues, or project operational issues.

Box 13: DRC, working to build the system

Since direct bilateral co-operation was re-established in 2002, three types of approaches have been undertaken, in line with the emerging and evolving priorities of a country in reconstruction:

- (i) support to infrastructure and equipment,
- (ii) training and
- (iii) institutional capacity building.

These approaches have been successive and not simultaneous. Two projects were initiated with a humanitarian character: the distribution of French and Mathematics textbooks in two levels in all primary schools of the country, and the refurbishment of workshops, including equipment in some vocational schools of selected provinces. Both these projects had a strong “hardware” feature. In their second phase, training and capacity building components associated to the delivery of equipment has been much more emphasised.

The latest interventions identified and discussed in the recent Mixed Commission have much stronger institutional and system-wide characteristics and include: (i) initiating and participating in a multi-donor support mechanism to primary education aiming at reducing school fees and/or in a multi-donor SWAP support mechanism; and (ii) institutional strengthening to the MoE (strategy, management, decentralisation).

³³ An issue that can have disproportionate repercussions.

PART E: Conclusions and recommendations

E.1 Overview

This is a thematic evaluation looking at education and training. The evaluation considers aspects of Belgian education development work and international contexts that present opportunities and challenges for Belgium, including the global initiatives and shared targets of EFA and the education MDGs. These introduce political imperatives and provide opportunities for international co-operation, common targets and new processes.

The education sector is in the forefront of moves towards new modalities, and changing practices for aid effectiveness. It is therefore within the education sector that international agencies are learning some of the earliest lessons about processes, relationships and their ways of working in beneficiary countries. Belgium seeks to improve aid-effectiveness as part of its international commitments to the MDGs, Monterrey and the Paris Declaration and the evaluation predicates recommendations on those commitments.

E.2 Policy framework

E.2.1 Architecture of education aid

Conclusion 1: The architecture through which Belgium delivers federal funds to education development dominates the evaluation. Irrespective of the strengths of individual agencies, the complexity and institutional relationships are a major challenge to improving complementarity, coherence and day-to-day coordination, and to DGDC's accountability for development effectiveness.

Conclusion 2: Belgium's architecture has contributed to Belgium establishing and maintaining expertise in important sub-sectors, notably HE and professional training (including teacher-training). This provides some comparative advantage for Belgium

Conclusion 3: The implicit demarcation that limits DGDC/BTC work in higher education or professional training prevents Belgium joining full SWAPs or supporting national initiatives in these sectors.

Conclusion 4: Partner countries and organisations are confused about the roles, purposes and comparative advantage of the agencies and their relationship to the Belgian federal aid system.

Conclusion 5: Demarcation by sub-sector hampers complementary working even in cases where it has been identified as potentially beneficial (APEFE's interventions in higher education, for instance).

1

The evaluation recommends policy and operational steps to improve co-operation, coordination and complementarity, and to develop better tools for the accountability and definition of roles and responsibilities of each agency. This might include steps to simplify and harmonise financial and administrative arrangements.

2

The evaluation recommends DGDC publish and disseminate an information leaflet and a web site explaining the Belgian actors funded by the Federal Government in education, their area of expertise, and type of interventions they are initiating.

3

Synergies and complementarity should be identified within the country strategy and exploited, making use of each agency's strengths, particularly in Belgium's sectors of comparative advantage.

E.2.2 Policy and strategies

General framework

Conclusion 6: The key document is the education strategy note, which reiterates international commitments to MDGs and effective aid management. The strategy note is conceived in the context of direct multilateral and bilateral aid and makes no attempt to set a strategic framework for the indirect actors. It is considered too "general" to inform decision-making for direct bilateral aid and of marginal relevance to the indirect actors. The delayed renewal has also eroded its perceived relevance and legitimacy.

Conclusion 7: There is no policy framework for emergency and post-conflict priorities for education support and its relationship to sector development. Similarly there is no policy guidance for work in fragile states.

4

The evaluation recommends that the education strategy note be revised so that it includes the work of all actors in the education sector and sets clearer strategic guidance on their work. The review should be participatory and address:

- Strategic priorities and the overall Belgian comparative advantage in expertise and sub-sectors;
- Processes and educational partnerships: the benefits of engaging with other actors.

The Strategy Note (or linked supporting documentation) should also provide operational advice and guidelines for key actors on:

- Identifying sector characteristics, the use of sector data, identification of access, equity and quality issues;
- Aligning with PRSP, national EFA Plan and local procedures etc;
- How to apply criteria for capacity and preparedness for new modalities in the education sector;
- Assessing Belgian comparative advantage in-country, including the work of indirect agencies, work in fragile states, existing partnerships and experience;
- Sector characteristics; policy work of other donors; evaluations; and operational guidelines.

5

The evaluation recommends education in emergency and post-conflict situation is addressed in the Country Strategy Note, alongside broader principles of working in such situations. Emergency planning of education provision should take positive steps to align with strategies and plans of other agencies and national education development policies and plans when they exist.

The Strategy Note may support Belgian partners to plan the transition from emergency to post-emergency education including the use of emergency funds.

Country policy-making processes

Conclusion 8: Country Strategy Notes provide general guidance on educational strategies and planning for Attachés and colleagues. The notes are often not well known by other Belgian actors in the country and there is no other tool by which national priorities for Belgium in the beneficiary country are available to steer the work of other agencies.

Conclusion 9: There is no formal support to non-specialist Attachés to develop their understanding of the sector, analyse options for co-operation and their fit with other education sector initiatives.

Conclusion 10: The most significant country policy decision is the identification of priority sectors. This decision is taken by Attachés based on local assessment, advice and, of course, the priorities expressed by the partner country in the PRSP etc.

Conclusion 11: In many countries Belgium is present in the education sector through the work of indirect actors even though education is not a priority sector.

Conclusion 12: PICs, when they exist, are inputs-focused, outlining the forthcoming activities in each sector with their associated budgets, without clear mention of intended outcomes. The status of PICs, for example compared to Country Strategy Notes, is confusing.

6

The evaluation recommends a further needs-analysis on the policy support tools (strategic options, guidelines, etc.) and sources of expertise (e.g. BTC, DGDC, consultant pool) for Attachés to help them analyse sectoral opportunities and prepare policy to reflect Belgian work in the sector.

7

The evaluation recommends that in selecting or changing priorities Attachés take into account that:

- Systemic development takes time, typically longer than the period of agreement;
- Country prioritisation and strategy processes that affect education should be properly informed by understanding the work of other agencies as well as responding to the demands of government and local institutions.

8

In countries where education is not a priority sector for DGDC but indirect agencies are well represented, the Embassy should take responsibility for ensuring coordination, perhaps delegating the work to one of the indirect agencies.

9

The evaluation recommends PICs identify lessons-learned from previous experience, including those of other actors, more explicitly. Intended outcomes associated with interventions should be clearly stated and alignment at outcome level with national planning documents should be explicit.

Concerning multilateral aid

Conclusion 13: Little aid volume is disbursed through the multilateral channel, and most of it is support to FTI.

Conclusion 14: Little aid volume is disbursed through silent partnerships, even though Belgium, as a small donor would save costs in so doing.

10

It is recommended that DGDC review the circumstances and criteria in which Belgian federal aid to education should be deployed into multilateral facilities, such as the FTI, or administered by other bilateral agencies in parallel or silent partnerships. Indicative criteria for selecting alternative channels to support education may be included in the Education Strategy recognising the trade-offs between reduced transaction costs etc. and Belgian control, capacity and comparative advantage. .

Concerning indirect aid

Conclusion 15: The role of NGOs in innovative programmes, hard-to-reach groups and advocacy can complement mainstream activities and can be important in the education sector.

Conclusion 16: University co-operation covers a wide range of activities with qualitatively different developmental intentions.

Conclusion 17: University co-operation is geared towards universities but not necessarily towards other types of higher education institutions, especially technical institutions, with higher education missions to the community.

11

There is a need for clearer guidelines from DGDC on what can and cannot be funded in education by NGOs, so that their role in education is recognised and its value-added used at country level.

12

The evaluation recommends disaggregation of university co-operation activities and differentiation of the developmental aims of academic and institutional strengthening. This process should be monitored to identify expertise, niches, and good practice and inform discussions of Belgian strengths for higher education sector development.

13

The evaluation recommends that DGDC review within its strategies the scope of co-operation and modes of support to non-university, post-secondary institutions, in consultation with the university councils, APEFE and VVOB.

E.2.3 Policy coherence, complementarity and coordination

Conclusion 18: In-country policy-making by different actors lacks opportunities and structures to establish complementarity and coherence.

14

The evaluation recommends a process of common policy reflection in-country involving all concerned agencies. This process may be linked to the education platform at HQ level in Brussels recommended below. Where education is not a priority of direct bilateral aid, and for non-partner countries where indirect actors are nonetheless present, the process should take place with those indirect actors active in the country. The significant amount of education aid channelled through university co-operation and other indirect actors makes harmonisation and coordination a priority task.

E.3 Practices

E.3.1 Intervention characteristics

Conclusion 19: There is a stark discrepancy between policy commitments to the MDGs and the budget allocation, most notably for funding of higher education.

15

The evaluation recommends DGDC takes step to link practices to policy more tightly and to monitor it in terms of budgets and outcomes.

The budget commitment to HE must be disaggregated against different educational and developmental typologies.

E.3.2 Implementation

Project cycle: direct bilateral aid

Project preparation

Conclusion 20: It is unclear how DGDC ensures that demand-driven interventions match their own education strategy and the Country Strategy Notes, and includes lessons from similar interventions.

Conclusion 21: Project design risks being disconnected from national and development partners in the country.

Conclusion 22: The project preparation processes do not favour medium- to long-term planning, especially in countries in reconstruction phases. There has been a tendency to design projects on the implicit expectation of follow-on “phases”.

Conclusion 23: The criteria for deciding which modality is most appropriate to a given situation are not clear, although commitment to SWAps and to budget support have driven decisions. The complementary role of other modalities, including projects, and of other agencies has not been resolved.

16

The evaluation recommends that intervention approval processes, for all actors, include validating the proposed intervention against current strategies and plans and explicit assessment of its strategic fit at the outcome level.

17

The evaluation recommends an increased involvement of local partners beginning in the formulation stage to ensure ownership of the process and better management of implementation.

The evaluation recommends an improved formulation stage to avoid re-design at the beginning of the project and to ensure participation and buy-in from stakeholders and beneficiaries. This could be done via the finalisation of the DTF document at a later stage, for instance six months after the initiation of the intervention.

18

It is strongly recommended that DGDC review its approach to education projects in countries that are moving towards SWAp/joint funding modalities. There are circumstances and conditions in which project support may be the preferred modality to complement a government programme, for example for an innovation or outreach or to achieve a critical outcome such as an improved EMIS. Such projects may be agreed by partners and undertaken under the partnership “umbrella”.

Project and programme implementation

Conclusion 24: Belgian projects usually deliver inputs efficiently, but the culture and project management practices have sometimes set a lower priority on managing for outcomes.

Conclusion 25: The structure and approach to implementation of budget support/SWAp is ill-matched to meet the political and technical challenges. This is a risk to the Belgian mission to improve aid-effectiveness. Progress to change it is hampered by institutional politics and interests between DGDC and BTC.

19

The roles of BTC and DGDC in SWAp/common funding modalities be reviewed so as to take account of lessons learned (in education and other sectors) on the coherence of political and technical inputs, and the role, responsibilities and local accountability of experts.

The evaluation can see a clear role for high-level experts in education SWAp in areas such as financial management, information-management, institutional organisation and development etc. However, the ways forward must recognise that consultants should not be exposed in positions of political responsibility and that identification, management and deployment of technical consultants can no longer be a bilateral concern.

20

The Study Fund and the Expertise Fund could have a more strategic role, especially in a SWAp context, to provide in-depth studies on sub-sectors or particular topics and potential scenarios on ways forward.

Project cycle: indirect aid

Conclusion 26: In education, all development initiatives are interdependent but indirect actors tend to work independently.

Conclusion 27: Belgian projects are very dependent on Belgian/European (full-time) expertise. Such dependence on individuals is a risk to intended involvement of partners and commitments to support national and regional sources of expertise

Conclusion 28: Indirect actors have embarked in recent years on programmatic approaches, with various achievements to date and common obstacles to overcome.

21

Continuing and future projects in education need be better able to articulate with other activities in the sector, including those of other partners and Belgian actors. The evaluation recommends that areas of interdependence and ways to develop responsiveness are identified and recorded during design and implementation.

22

A more flexible and better defined management structure of interventions would:

- make provision for a more important role for the local institution, which itself should be in charge of running the intervention as part of its daily activities;
- define roles and responsibilities of each partner more clearly throughout the implementation phase, including for monitoring and evaluation, and;
- ensure the TA associated with the intervention makes maximum use of local and regional capacities and is designed to call upon various TA inputs at different stages of the project. TA should be for technical expertise more than managerial capacities.

23

The evaluation recommends that indirect actors share information and practice on transition from project to programme approaches in the education sector, bearing in mind imperatives of alignment and harmonisation of the Paris agenda. Challenges of the Belgian aid architecture could be more easily discussed and solved in a collegial response to the problem.

Evaluation and managing by results

Conclusion 29: Evaluation of outcomes is weak across all actors.

Conclusion 30: Where agencies are involved in formulation and implementation are also involved in the conduct of evaluations, there is potential conflict of interest.

Conclusion 31: There is weak knowledge management within the agencies and between them and DGDC, for sharing information about projects, intervention strategy, implementation and lessons.

Conclusion 32: There is inadequate public information about the intentions and outcomes of the work of the different agencies. Although all are working towards a programmatic, outcome-oriented approach, it is difficult for others to identify the developmental intention and impact of their work. The developmental aims are not adequately disaggregated and clarified in most project descriptions and there is a particular need to identify the range of development aims in university cooperation.

Conclusion 33: DGDC is not in a position to use the *ODA.be* database as a management and monitoring tool. The coding is not consistent and interventions of indirect partners are aggregated under one entry only per country. Interventions such as MIPs are not identified. Qualitative monitoring data and information on projects are not integrated in the database.

Conclusion 34: NGO activities are rarely coded under education, even if some of their components are education related. University co-operation interventions funded by DGDC under the same education DAC5/CRS code are a mix of developmental activities, education and teaching, and international academic partnerships for research.

Conclusion 35: There is no results-based management database in DGDC.

24	The evaluation recommends strong support be given in the revised education strategy to the assessment of outcomes, recognising and deconstructing the challenges for education and training and establishing common approaches in line with international practices.
25	The evaluation recommends that the importance of outcome indicators and valid baseline be emphasised by DGDC and supported by guidelines, and professional support to the agencies concerned.
26	The evaluation recommends protocols for ensuring independence in evaluation, perhaps based on budget-level triggers for external evaluations. The client for such evaluations should be DGDC..
27	The evaluation recommends the actors commit to becoming learning organisations through a re-organisation of their knowledge management systems for common, electronic reporting of work. They need to complement the detailed reporting of financial information with intended outcomes, progress and evaluation results.
28	<p>The evaluation recommends that accountability of Belgian interventions through <i>ODA.be</i> database be enhanced through a number of practices, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular and up-to-date data entry; • Development of coding rules; • Clear labelling of interventions; • Entry of narrative description of interventions and other qualitative data, including key planning, monitoring and evaluation documents; • Identification and entry of monitoring and evaluation data. <p>A more efficient monitoring of activities and results that would be recorded in the <i>ODA.be</i> database should be encouraged to increase its use as a management tool.</p>
29	The evaluation recommends DGDC move to a database for result-based management techniques and develop procedures and rules for data entry in the <i>ODA.be</i> database.

Technical Assistance

Conclusion 36: Belgian TA (both for direct and indirect aid) is a mix of technical and management support, although the same individuals often wear both hats. This is a difficult duality to perform well and limits the breadth and depth of technical expertise that could be secured.

Conclusion 37: TA is too rarely procured from regional or local consultants.

Conclusion 38: The reliance on voluntary TA by the indirect actors, especially around university co-operation, weakens the potential for proper project accountability.

30	<p>The evaluation recommends better identification and prioritisation of local capacity of partner organisations and regional or national structures so that the use of Belgian or international experts becomes the exception rather than the rule for professional and technical training assignments.</p> <p>TA support should be secured according to the needs of the intervention rather than the availability of experts. Options for short-term, task-related inputs need to be explored.</p>
31	<p>The evaluation recommends the establishment of an accountability system for all interventions funded by DGDC that will allow analysis of outputs and outcomes against inputs.</p>

Scholarships

Conclusion 39: Few bursaries are awarded to the education sector, for example, for ministry staff and policy-makers, middle-management personnel, education institution managers, and academics in the field of education policy, planning and finance, and pedagogy.

Conclusion 40: There is no centralised information or system in place that could help scholarship candidates fill in their application forms more effectively and choose Belgian or regional institutions better matched to their needs and expectations.

Conclusion 41: There is no analysis of outcomes of *hors-project* scholarships nor lessons learned about the type of scholarships that best fit needs or situations.

32	<p>The evaluation recommends a better identification of objectives for scholarship programmes to maximise their impact and ensure alignment with government priorities and complementarity with Belgian strategies in country. A taxonomy of purposes and criteria for scholarships would assist applicants and administrators.</p>
33	<p>Education planning and capacity building around SWApS and decentralisation should be a target for scholarships. Belgian scholarships in education could support individuals to access internationally recognised courses such as the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) courses.</p>
34	<p>The evaluation recommends DGDC instigate the development of a scholarship online portal that would provide information on all channels offering bursaries, on the different types of bursaries, on Belgian and regional providers, on country selection processes and on Belgian life.</p>
35	<p>The evaluation recommends DGDC set up a monitoring and evaluation system for the scholarship programmes of both direct and indirect actors, including a measure of impact and a strategy to share best practices and lessons learned.</p>

E.3.3 Development practices

Alignment

Conclusion 42: Alignment at macro-policy level is facilitated by PRSP and the common programming of SWAps: alignment in planning and implementation needs negotiation, explanation and compromise.

Conclusion 43: There is no discussion of how indirect actors should interpret and achieve alignment with national policy, systems or practices. The particular situation of NGOs for whom “alignment” has less to do with government systems needs special attention.

Conclusion 44: Government priorities and alignment strategies make it difficult to ensure that hard-to-reach communities benefit from alternative interventions that match their needs.

36

The Strategy Note should establish guidance and good practice for all actors to align at, and below the macro-policy level. Consideration must be given to the extra-governmental role of Belgian NGOs and their local partners.

37

The evaluation recommends APEFE, VVOB and NGOs in particular play a role in identifying gaps and hard-to-reach communities within formal provision that would benefit from innovative approaches and alternative delivery strategies.

It is recommended however that agencies, particularly NGOs, working outside the main government systems be required specifically to assess their systemic impact and potential for convergence.

Coordination, information transparency and accountability

Conclusion 45: Information dissemination in-country is *ad hoc* and does not serve the increasing range of potentially interested partners.

Conclusion 46: There is little coordination between the different channels or attempt to exploit their complementarity at HQ level. In countries, there is no imperative to coordinate activities, for example to reduce the burden on recipients. Coordination and information sharing between Belgian agencies depends on individuals.

Conclusion 47: Concrete coordination, information and complementarity initiatives hit organisational barriers such as budget cycles, work cultures and funding constraints.

38

Key documents, including planning and evaluation outputs, should be published in the language of the country and in the language of the international partners in the country.

In the context of the Paris Declaration, Belgian intervention in a country should be designed in such a way that it is a coherent response to country needs and priorities. This has a number of implications both for direct and indirect actors:

39

- Belgian intervention in the education sector should be integrated in an overall framework, established jointly and reflecting countries' identified priorities. This would provide more room for genuine innovation and opportunities that would benefit the education sector and exploit Belgium's comparative advantage;
- The demarcation of the role of actors should be relaxed to allow responsive partnerships;
- The framework should be used as a tool to inform governments and other donors about Belgian interventions;
- Normative costs should be harmonised between Belgian actors.

Coordination in countries will be more meaningful and have a greater impact if it is done in parallel to coordination activities in Brussels.

40

The evaluation therefore recommends the development of a platform or working group of Belgian partners involved in education and development. This platform shall not limit itself to exchange of general information but tackle key common issues faced by implementing actors such as: education approaches in different settings, interventions in fragile states, outcomes, programme approach, organisational assessment tools, and evaluation of results to improve practices.

Other actions to improve coordination both at Brussels and country levels, are recommended, including:

41

- The Attaché should be told formally of indirect actors' interventions in education and training and share information on all Belgian interventions with the education donor group, where only DGDC/BTC is usually represented.
- A sector focal point, in the embassy preferably, should be established and informed of all interventions in the education sector. In countries where education is not a priority, the embassy should still have this coordinating role.
- The coordinating role of the Attaché should lead to more coordinated efforts between Belgian actors in their implementation, and more coordination with national authorities.
- Common reporting formats on results and outcomes of evaluations should be established for Belgian actors to be linked to DGDC's database.

Institutional strengthening

Conclusion 48: Whilst agencies, particularly the university co-operation councils, have adopted an institutional development mission they do not have the capacity or capability to engage with organisational and political demands of development, particularly where these need to articulate with national systemic strengthening. Belgium's undoubted expertise in higher education co-operation is therefore rarely applied to national higher education development.

Conclusion 49: There is a tendency in some countries to respond to demands for interventions in a sub-sector in which a particular donor has traditionally been active. For example Belgium's established position as provider of support to TVET drives continuing demand to work in that sub-sector.

42

The evaluation recommends that DGDC collect lessons on how best to support institutional strengthening and administrative capacity building in the education sector, including identification of skill sets, gaps in knowledge and best approaches to tackling these in different contexts. The principles might be included in the Education Strategy.

43

Direct aid needs to be able to address organisational and institutional issues within the sectors that are identified as the responsibility of indirect agencies. A protocol between the concerned agencies and in-country processes are needed to ensure such complementarity.

Fragile states

Conclusion 50: Belgian actors have developed significant experience and expertise in supporting fragile states, including post-conflict situations. But the lessons and principles for the transition from humanitarian service and resource delivery through to system-building have not been articulated for the particular challenges of education.

44

The Education Strategy should cover principles guiding education development in fragile states, including: assessment of resource needs; using international standards and indicators for educational provision; assessing institutional capacities and points of action.



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