



Final Report

Wehubit 1.0 (2018-2023)

Enabels flagship programme
on Digital Social Innovation

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1. Intro

Since 2018 Wehubit has been Enabel's flagship programme aiming to facilitate sustainable development through the use of social innovations. With a focus on leveraging digital solutions, Wehubit has, through its partners, navigated challenges and successes, leaving a tangible impact in the partnercountries of the Belgian Development Cooperation.

This report presents an overview of the Wehubit program's set-up, activities, achievements and outcomes. It reflects the program's commitment to fostering positive change through digital social innovation. Through this documentation, we aim to provide insights into the program's focus, way of working, effectiveness, challenges faced and lessons learned.

This document is the formal final report to report internally within Enabel, the Belgian administration and cabinet for development cooperation. That explains why it is rather sec, straight forward and quite comprehensive. This document comes along with a much more attractive webpage, which is much more concise and illustrated with pictures, visuals and many hyperlinks. This webpage will also be used for external communication.

In this report we will shortly zoom into the context, strategic framework and the structure and roles within the programme before coming to the core of the report: the results. In line with the original result framework we will focus on the 5 formulated results, although only 4 of them refer directly to activities of Enabel. Result 3 refers directly to activities within the framework of BIO's operations and is therefore not covered by this report. We conclude with the most important findings of the external evaluation and do a concise looking ahead to Wehubit 2.0.



"Over the years, we've honed our focus and evolved into Enabels Innovation Hub, dedicated to identifying and supporting the scaling of social innovations among non-profit and public entities. Today, the Wehubit Call for Proposals mechanism and our Knowledge Exchange Network stand as pillars of excellence in the sector of international cooperation, garnering widespread respect and being regularly consulted by other stakeholders."
Jan Verschueren, Wehubit coordinator



"The genesis of the Wehubit initiative stemmed from several fundamental convictions: the conviction that digital technology holds promise in addressing societal challenges within Belgium's partner countries, coupled with a recognition of the expertise residing within lesser-known entities and a drive to engage with them. This vision culminated in the formation of a dynamic community comprising more than fifty organisations, united by their fervor to exchange insights and experiences in the realm of digital social innovation." Arnaud Leclercq, portfolio manager, global projects and previously Wehubit coordinator

2. Context

2.1 Societal context

During the second decade of the 21st century, digital technologies were spreading rapidly in much of the world. In 2016 the mobile internet surpassed the desktop in developed countries. The International Telecoms Union calculated that 830 million young people, representing more than 80% of the youth population in 104 countries were online.

Innovators (also non-profit and public actors) across Africa were harnessing digital technology to develop new ways of tackling social and economic challenges. From the rise of Silicon Savannah to the launch of M-PESA, the continent had a burgeoning tech sector that became increasingly an important driver for development.

There was a strong belief that the digital revolution could bring solutions for socio-economic development and contributes to inclusive growth. It could:

- create “digital” and “mobile” solutions reducing the need for (new) expensive physical infrastructures (schools, training centres, incubators, banks...);
- democratise and increase access to products and services becoming more affordable;
- create opportunities for lower-income segments to generate wealth and well-being;
- be a strong enabler to achieve the overarching priorities of the Belgian development cooperation, which were sustainable inclusive economic growth, human rights and the promotion of gender equality.

2.2 D4D Strategic Policy

In September 2016, the Belgian Development Cooperation presented the Strategic Policy on ‘Digital for Development’. The Belgian D4D policy did not consider digitalization as a goal in itself, but as a crosscutting enabler to achieve better results for more people. Meaning that the D4D Programme’s would focus on initiatives whose final objective was to contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals, such as reducing poverty, eradicating hunger, improving education and health care, etc.

The Belgian D4D policy aimed at connecting the different types of actors on the ground to promote exchange of knowledge and to foster innovative partnerships. Their three strategic priorities were:

- Better use of (big) data, drawn from traditional and innovative sources. The Belgian development cooperation would invest in the tools and policies needed to use real-time (big) data to produce actionable insights for development actors, and thus to increase their impact. Equal attention would be given to 'open data', freely accessible to the public, to promote good governance and facilitate humanitarian relief and development, natural resource management and disaster risk reduction.
- Digital for inclusive societies. The Belgian development cooperation would use the potential of digitalization to both maximize the number of beneficiaries of an intervention and to lower the threshold for vulnerable groups to enjoy democratic rights, to have equal access to basic services, to participate in public life, and to be financially and economically included in society.
- Digital for inclusive and sustainable economic growth. The Belgian development cooperation would deliberately support interventions that turn digitalization into a positive force to create (self-)employment and to promote socially responsible entrepreneurship.

Within this context and policy framework emerged Enabel's first Wehubit programme, aiming to identify and support the scaling of digital social innovations in the partnercountries of the Belgian development cooperation.

3. Strategic framework

3.1 Strategic orientations

The programme aimed to support projects that provide and facilitate access and usage of reliable, resilient, and sustainable digital solutions in emerging and developing countries and foster partnerships between those actors that share the same vision. Its main dimensions were:

- **Create a unique window** and therefore provide a new impulse to the action of the Belgian Cooperation in digital for development.
- **Putting people first & do no harm:** The intervention aligned itself with the D4D Strategic Policy Note which was guided by two overarching principles of 'Putting people first' and 'Do no harm'. Supported projects needed to ensure that these principles are respected.
- **Human Rights Based Approach:** Human rights determine the relationship between State and non-state actors with correlative obligations and individuals and groups with valid claims. It identifies these duty-bearers (and their obligations) and their corresponding rights-holders (and their entitlements). When applicable, the intervention supported projects that work towards strengthening the capacities of rights-holders to make their claims, and of dutybearers to meet their obligations.
- **Support scaling-up and replicability:** The intervention focused on (a) projects scale-up existing digital solutions so that these are rolled-out at larger scale and become more available, affordable and performing; and on (b) projects that replicate proven digital solutions in other contexts (sectors, geographic,...).
- **Direct and indirect financing instruments:** A major barrier to access digital tools in developing countries is the lack of access to seed, mid- and long-term financings. The programme was created as a financing scheme to bridge the gaps in structuring and financing and mobilise financiers while having a catalysing role when possible.

- **Creation and strengthening of partnerships:** To promote exchange of knowledge and fostering partnerships, the intervention aimed to contribute to the creation and the strengthening of interactions between the different actors such as the beneficiaries of the financing instruments, the technology providers, and facilitate the transfer of technology to organizations and end-users.
- **External funding:** The programme aimed to actively promote its activities among other donors and funding institutions. The tools and processes developed could be of interest for other actors willing to invest in D4D initiatives. The intervention aimed to position itself as a reliable fund manager.

3.2 Objectives

The **general objective** of the Wehubit programme is to support the priority countries of the Belgian cooperation and contribute to achieving their SDGs through digitalization.

The **specific objective** of the Wehubit programme is to increase the use and access to digital solutions offering better living conditions in developing and emerging countries. This is concretised in a number of sub-objectives such as:

- Financing and support of partner projects with the aim to scale-up proven digital solutions
- Facilitating knowledge exchange, thanks to analysis and production of best practices and specific knowledge sharing actions
- Brokering of partnerships and reinforcement of governance, thanks to strengthening synergies between partners and within the digital social innovation community

4. Structures & roles

4.1 Steering Committee

A Steering Committee was in charge of the strategic steering of the intervention. Its main responsibilities were:

- Defining the intervention strategy including the geographic and thematic scopes of each CfP, validating main changes in the intervention strategy and ensuring their alignment with Belgian Development Cooperation policies and priorities;
- Assessing the development results obtained by the intervention (strategic quality assurance and control) and approve intervention reports and planning;
- Solving problems that cannot be solved at the operational level of the PMU;
- Enhancing collaboration between BIO, Enabel and other Belgian Development Actors, as well as among other European and multilateral actors;
- Strategic advice and support to additional activities linked to the broker role (visibility, support partnerships and networking).

The permanent members of the SC were:

- o One representative of DGD (Chairman) - Filip Vandenbroeke
- o One representative of BIO Invest – Pierre Harkey
- o One representative of Enabel – Arnaud Leclercq (most recent)
- o One representative of the Cabinet of the Minister of Development Cooperation and Large Cities – Joris Totté

The Secretariat of the Steering Committee was ensured by the Intervention Manager (Jan Verschueren – most recent).

In total the Steering Committee met 10 times during the implementation period: 03/2018, 06/2018, 09/2018, 12/2018, 04/2019, 02/2020, 12/2020, 05/2021, 01/2023, 05/2023.

Decisions of the SC were always taken by consensus.

4.2 Project Management Unit (PMU)

The PMU is the operational level in the intervention and was based within Enabel's premises in Brussels. It was managed by Enabel. It took the operational decisions and actions on a day-to-day basis in order that the strategy is fully implemented, in time and within budget, as approved by the Steering Committee.

Operationally, the programme started in April 2018, with only one FTE until June (and 2 FTE foreseen) – it was then reinforced by half time administrative and financial assistants.

In its last phase, the Programme Management Unit (PMU) of Wehubit is composed of:

- Intervention Manager – Jan Verschueren
- Communication Officer – Lucie Bricout
- Innovation Officer – Michel Seto
- Knowledge Management Officer – Maureen Leyen
- D4D Officer – Maxime Heyndrickx (parttime)
- Programme Support Officer – Amandine Van der Aa (Only 01/02/2023-30/09/2023)
- Financial Officer – Pieter Koens (parttime)
- Administrative Assistant – Marie Genette (parttime)
- Project & Event Officer – Alice Bonjean (parttime)

With the creation of the Global Projects department within Enabel (2022-2023) the Financial Officer, Administrative Assistant and Project & Event Officer became part of the “Shared Services” of the department.

4.3 Selection committees

For the final selection of the grant applications during each Call for Proposals, the PMU organized and invited the members to participate in the Joint Selection Committee. This Joint Selection Committee was composed of Enabel staff (internal experts on the topic) and, if needed, also external experts. The committee evaluated the concept notes and full project proposals provided by the applicants and was responsible for selecting the final grantees.

4.4 Focal points

During the implementation period of the programme a number of Focal Points (Enabel colleagues) provided support and input across all pillars of the programme. Amongst a few other, their main responsibilities were:

- To review of intermediary and final narrative reports, together with Wehubit's geographic technical focal points
- To provide technical and/or geographical expertise related to the project's topic during follow-up calls or other knowledge sharing activities
- To inform the Wehubit team and projects of opportunities to develop synergies between the projects/organisations and Enabel

4.5 KEN Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is consisted of 6 members from different partner projects belonging to various Calls for Proposals, as well as representatives from the PMU and two Enabel experts in Innovation and Digitalisation. The Advisory Board guides the programme team by suggesting orientations for the KEN, but also by providing fresh ideas on the practical modalities of the network.

5. Reporting Results

5.1 Result 1: A financing Facility accessible to D4D projects contributing to the achievement of the SDGs is operational

The first and main level of action of Wehubit was to finance projects through a competitive fund. The identification of projects was made thanks to thematic Calls for Proposals (CfP). Before launching a new CfP, the theme was decided within the Steering Committee. After selection of the theme, a note of introduction to the was drafted, containing the objectives and rationale behind each of the calls, followed by a large communication campaign to assure a proper number of responses from applicants.

In accordance with Enabel's grants procedures, Wehubit organised each call for proposals in two rounds. Only non-profit and public actors doing interventions in the partnercountries of the Belgian development cooperation could apply. Any grant application had to fall between the following minimum of 100.000 EUR and maximum amounts of 350.000 EUR. Wehubit would finance a maximum of 90% of eligible expenditures, while the contracting-beneficiary had to bear the remaining 10%. The term of an action could not be less than 12 months or exceed 24 months.

During the first round, the applicants had to demonstrate their eligibility, their alignment with the guiding dimensions of the programme and their overall capacity to manage a grant under public funding. The guidelines of the Calls for Proposals contained all specific legal information regarding the eligibility and selection criteria. Only a small percentage of the applications (concept notes) were selected by a selection committee for the 2nd round. Decisions were based on a strict and rigid assessment procedure and evaluation grid.

Also during the final selection (2nd round) a selection committee assessed the full proposals of the selected applicants and made a final decision based on a strict and rigid assessment procedure, evaluation grid and ofcourse the budget foreseen for the call in casu. The duration between the launch of the Call and the start of the implementation was around 6 to 8 months.



**WOMEN AND YOUNG
PEOPLE'S RIGHTS,
INCLUSION
AND EMPOWERMENT
JUNE 2018**



**CLIMATE-SMART
AGRICULTURE
JANUARY 2019**



**EHEALTH
MAY 2019**



**CLOSING THE DIGITAL
DIVIDE THROUGH
EDUCATION, TRAINING AND
THE WORLD OF WORK
JANUARY 2020**



**RESILIENT CITIES: TOWARDS
INCLUSIVE AND
SUSTAINABLE
URBAN DEVELOPMENT
SEPTEMBER 2020**



**EDTECH – USE OF
EDUCATION TECHNOLOGY
TO IMPROVE QUALITY AND
CONTINUITY OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING
JUNE 2021**

6 Call for Proposals were launched with the following themes:

Women And Young People's Rights, Inclusion and Empowerment aimed to increase women and young people's rights, inclusion and empowerment by means of digital solutions. The goal of this first call was to support projects' reach and train more beneficiaries as well as for activities/deliverables related to the scale-up of the digital solutions to inform or influence policy development in the countries of intervention.

Climate-Smart Agriculture integrated the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) by jointly addressing the challenges of food security and climate. It was based on three main pillars:

- Sustainable increase in agricultural productivity and income.
- Adaptation and strengthening of resilience to the impacts of climate change.
- Reduction and/or elimination of greenhouse gas emissions, where appropriate.

The general objective of this call for proposals was "to develop the use of and broaden access to digital solutions offering better living conditions in developing and emerging countries". Its specific objective was to encourage the adoption and generalization of best practices advocated by climate-smart agriculture in partner countries of the Belgian bilateral development cooperation. This call aimed to encourage the use of digital products or services that allow techniques or technologies with proven effectiveness advocated by climate-smart agriculture to become established in the minds of farmers and in their activities.

Ehealth encompassed mobile health (or m-health), a sub-category that included medical and public health services on mobile devices. The general objective of this call for proposals was to increase the use of and access to digital solutions offering better living conditions in the partner countries of the Belgian cooperation. The specific objective of this call for proposals was to ensure that everyone benefits from universal health coverage, with access to quality essential health services (including access to information), safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines, including protection against financial risks.

Closing the Digital Divide Through Education, Training and the World Of Work: The general objective of this call for proposals was to increase the use of and access to digital solutions in order to provide better living conditions in the partner countries of the Belgian Cooperation. The specific objective of the call for proposals was to foster the scaling up or replication of initiatives that bridge the digital divide faced by vulnerable groups (youth, women, unemployed, refugees and migrants) by improving literacy and digital skills through D4D initiatives in education, training and the world of work.

Resilient Cities: Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Development: The general objective of this call for proposals was to increase the use of and access to digital solutions for better living conditions in the partner countries of the Belgian cooperation. The specific objective of the call for proposals was to strengthen, through the digital tool, the resilience of cities for a sustainable and inclusive urban development.

Edtech – Use of Education Technology to Improve Quality and Continuity of Teaching and Learning: The overall objective of this call for proposals was to ensure the continuity of educational services to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 crisis in the partner countries targeted by the call. The specific objective of the call for proposals was to strengthen digital

solutions to support the continuity and quality of public education services and extend them to vulnerable groups.

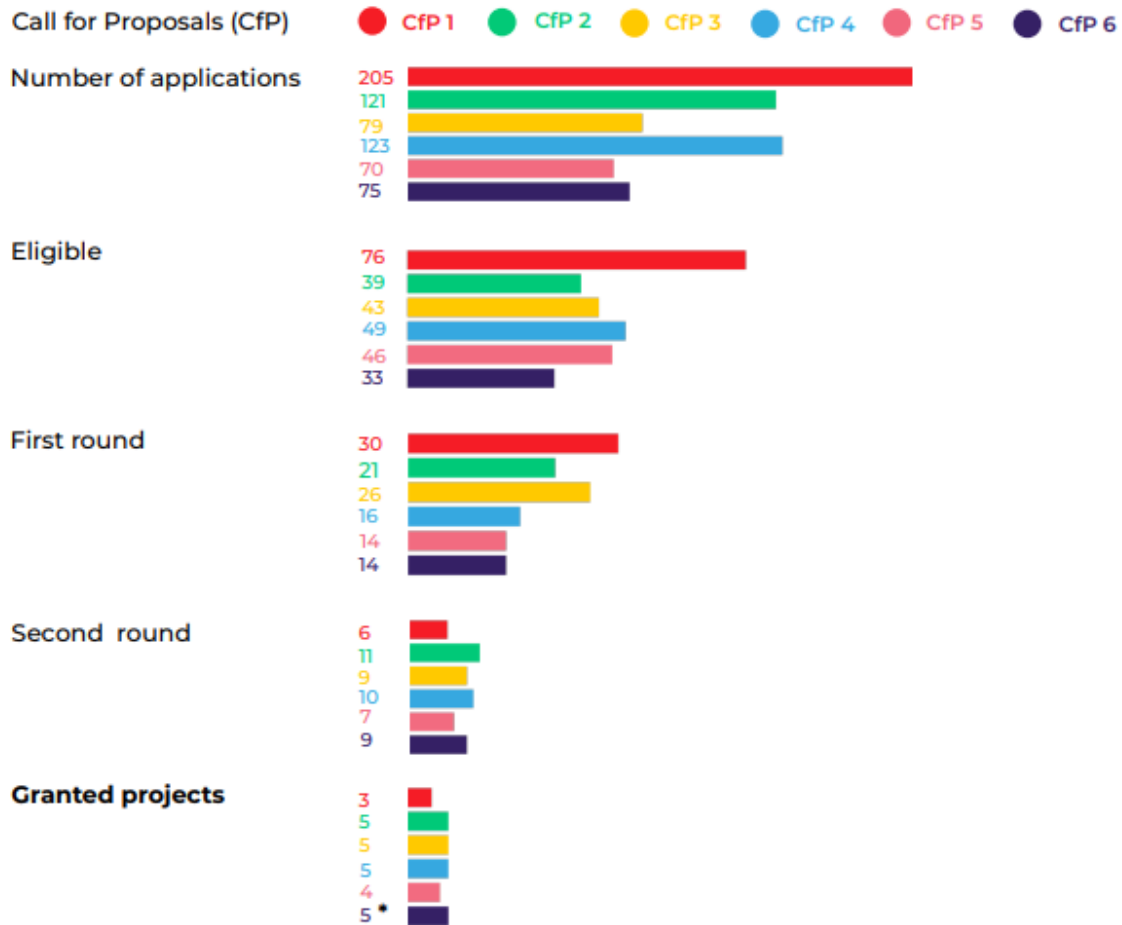
This last call for proposals was done within the framework (and budget) of a European initiative, called DIRECCT (Direct REspons Connecting CiTizens), an ACP-EU Programme of Digital Response to covid-19 crisis.

5.2 Result 2: Public entities, social businesses and non-profit organisations have implemented projects providing digital solutions through grants

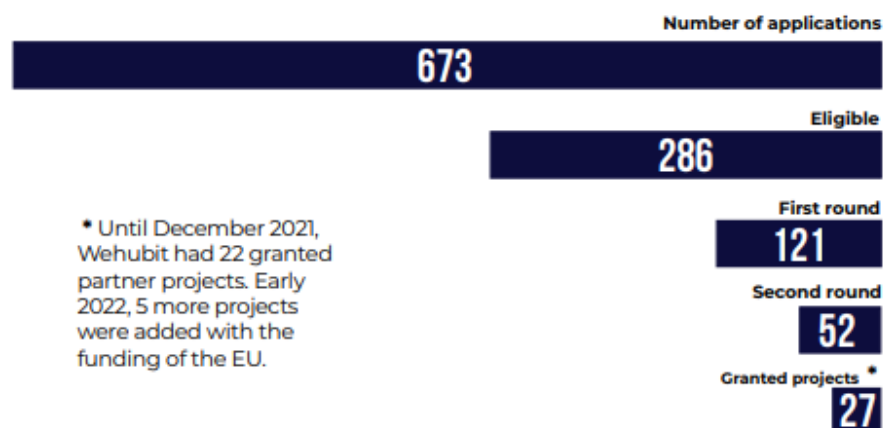
27 digital social innovations

Throughout the 6 call for proposals Wehubit supported 27 digital social innovations in 12 of the 14 partnercountries of the Belgian Development Cooperation.

SELECTION PROCESS PER CALL



SELECTION PROCESS OF ALL CALLS COMBINED



Hereunder we give you an overview of all 27 supported projects per Call for Proposals, with links to the webpage of each project and to the learning sheets (per call for proposals and per project). The purpose of the learning sheets will be explained in the chapter of Result 4.

Call for Proposals 1 - June 2018: Women And Young People's Rights, Inclusion and Empowerment

[Transversal learning sheet](#)

During this call **3 projects** were awarded:

- 1) [INCLUSION OF WOMEN AND YOUTH IN PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNANCE THROUGH ICT](#)

Country of implementation: **Mali**

[Learning Sheet](#)

- 2) [TA'BEER](#)

Country of implementation: **Palestine**

- 3) [LEWUTI](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

Call for Proposals 2 - January 2019: Climate-Smart Agriculture

[Transversal learning sheet](#)

During this call **5 projects** were awarded:

- 4) [AFRISCOUT](#)

Country of implementation: **Tanzania**

- 5) [SIT SAHEL LAFIA](#)

Country of implementation: **Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger**

[Learning sheet](#)

- 6) [IMAP4CSA](#)

Country of implementation: **Tanzania**

- 7) [DIGITAL ADVISORY SERVICES FOR CLIMATE SMART AGRICULTURE - DAS4CSA](#)

Country of implementation: **Senegal**

[Learning sheet](#)

8) [CAJULAB](#)

Country of implementation: **Benin**

[Learning sheet](#)

Call for Proposals 3 - May 2019: Ehealth

[Transversal learning sheet](#)

During this call **5 projects** were awarded:

9) [MAMA RESCUE](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

10) [SANCOTIC](#)

Country of implementation: **Burkina Faso**

[Learning sheet](#)

11) [MEDICAPT](#)

Country of implementation: **DRC**

[Learning sheet](#)

12) [SAFECARE](#)

Country of implementation: **Tanzania**

[Learning sheet](#)

13) [MACHINE LEARNING](#)

Country of implementation: **Tanzania**

[Learning sheet](#)

**Call for Proposals 4 – January 2020: Closing the Digital Divide Through Education,
Training and the World Of Work**

[Transversal learning sheet](#)

During this call **5 projects** were awarded:

14) [PAL TECH GROWTH](#)

Country of implementation: **Palestine**

[Learning sheet](#)

15) [TAKE IT FORWARD](#)

Country of implementation: **Morocco**

[Learning sheet](#)

16) [SCRATC²H 2050](#)

Country of implementation: **Rwanda**

[Learning sheet](#)

17) [DIGITAL SKILLS@YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

18) [RESOLAB](#)

Country of implementation: **Burkina Faso**

[Learning sheet](#)

Call for Proposals 5 - September 2020: Resilient Cities: Towards Inclusive and Sustainable Urban Development

During this call **4 projects** were awarded:

19) [DECENTRALISED DECISION ROOM-PLANNING DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM](#)

Country of implementation: **Rwanda**

[Learning sheet](#)

20) [AIRQO](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

21) [U-CLIP](#)

Country of implementation: **Niger**

[Learning sheet](#)

22) [VIP-MOZ](#)

Country of implementation: **Mozambique**

[Learning sheet](#)

(EU funded) Call for Proposals 6 – June 2021: Edtech – Use of Education Technology to Improve Quality and Continuity of Teaching and Learning

During this call **5 projects** were awarded:

23) [LET'S GO DIGITAL – VSOMO](#)

Country of implementation: **Tanzania**

[Learning sheet](#)

24) [DIGITAL CONTENT ENHANCED STEM EDUCATION IN RWANDA](#)

Country of implementation: **Rwanda**

25) [ASK THE TEACHER](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

26) [EDU-Q UP !](#)

Country of implementation: **Uganda**

[Learning sheet](#)

27) [FASAHA ZAMANI](#)

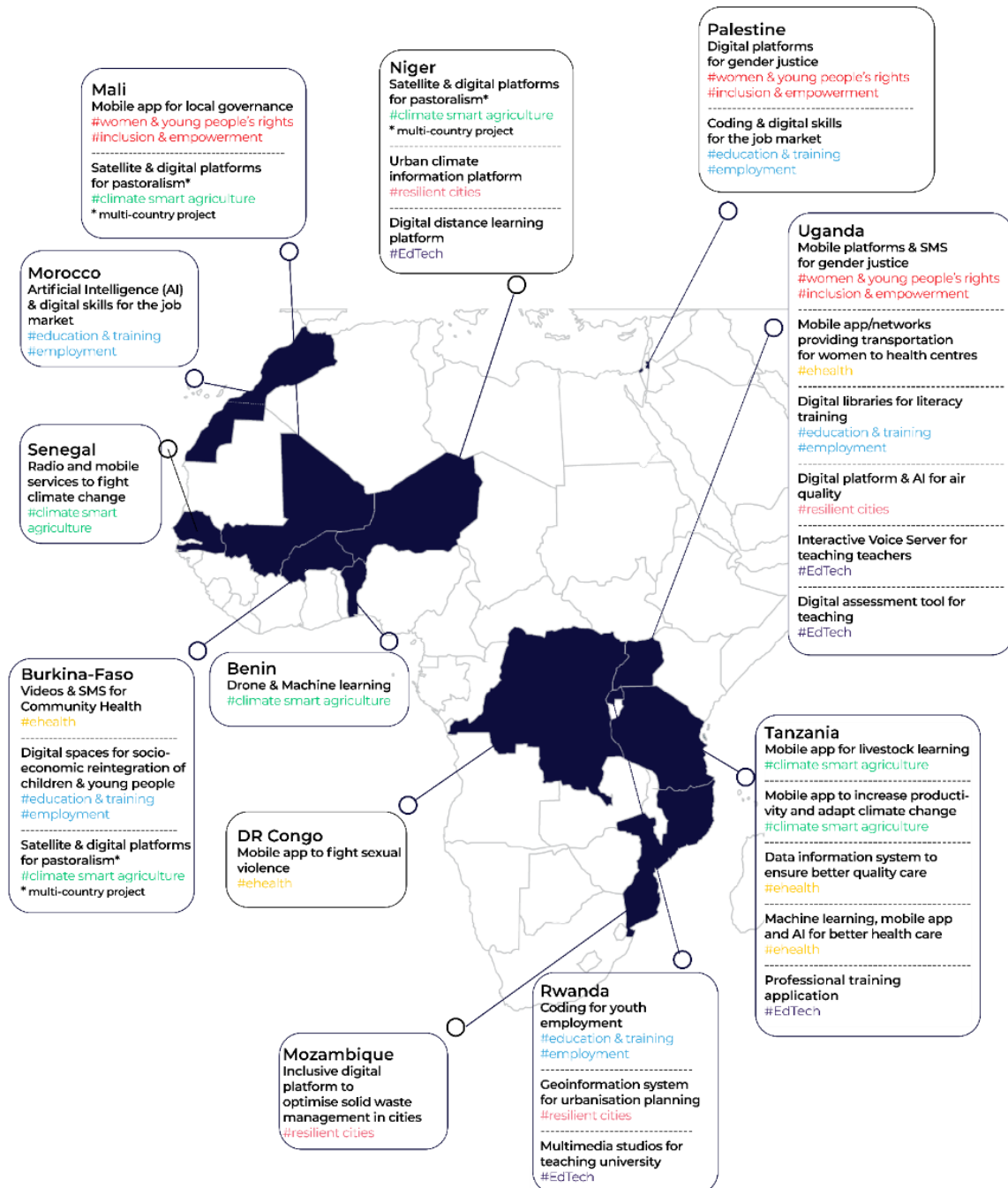
Country of implementation: **Niger**

WEHUBIT IN THE PARTNER COUNTRIES

27 projects in 12 countries



Belgium
Programme Management Unit (PMU)



A sample of the successes...

MEL Framework

In order to measure and demonstrate the achievement of its results at the programme and partner projects levels, Wehubit has developed a Monitoring and Evaluation system in 2021, and then a “MEL framework” validated in January 2021 by Wehubit Steering Committee. Due to the evolving nature of Wehubit partner project portfolio, said framework needs regular updating which was done last in June 2022. This framework intends to develop, standardise and implement an approach towards Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Learning (L) to be used by the Programme Management Unit (PMU) of the Wehubit programme.

At the impact and outcome levels this framework is organised around a monitoring matrix with 4 indicators linked to the general and specific objectives of the Wehubit programme and 3 indicators specific to each Call for Proposal. At the output level, 12 programme-level indicators monitor the direct results Wehubit.

The Wehubit program has set mechanisms to follow the MEL framework at its different levels of action:

At the project level, partners regularly share documented results (both quantitative and qualitative) through an M&E matrix and through intermediate and final narrative reports. Here is a summary of the most relevant numbers :

3.902.645 people having benefited directly from the Wehubit Digital Social Innovation

Over 40% of the users were women

210000 vulnerable people having received training on the access to and the use of digital solutions

The PMU also organises follow-up calls and field visits to collect information on the projects. They also organise qualitative monitoring missions with consultants that use Outcome Harvesting and Most Significant Change tools to identify unexpected results and actual changes of the DSI. Facilitated by external consultation from the consultancy firm Moving Development Forward (MDF), a pivotal OH/MSC mission was conducted in 2022, specifically focused on the

project involving decentralized urban decision and planning room in Rwanda. While in 2023 four OH/MSD missions have been performed: AirQo in Uganda, Sancotic in Burkina Faso, Resolab in Burkina Faso, and Helvetas in Tanzania.

These M&E activities not only serve as a means of accountability, but also allow for joint reflection on project direction and steering.

5.3 Result 3: More private actors have access to better financial solutions to implement their investment project

The result 3 refers directly to activities within the framework of BIO's operations and is not covered by this report.

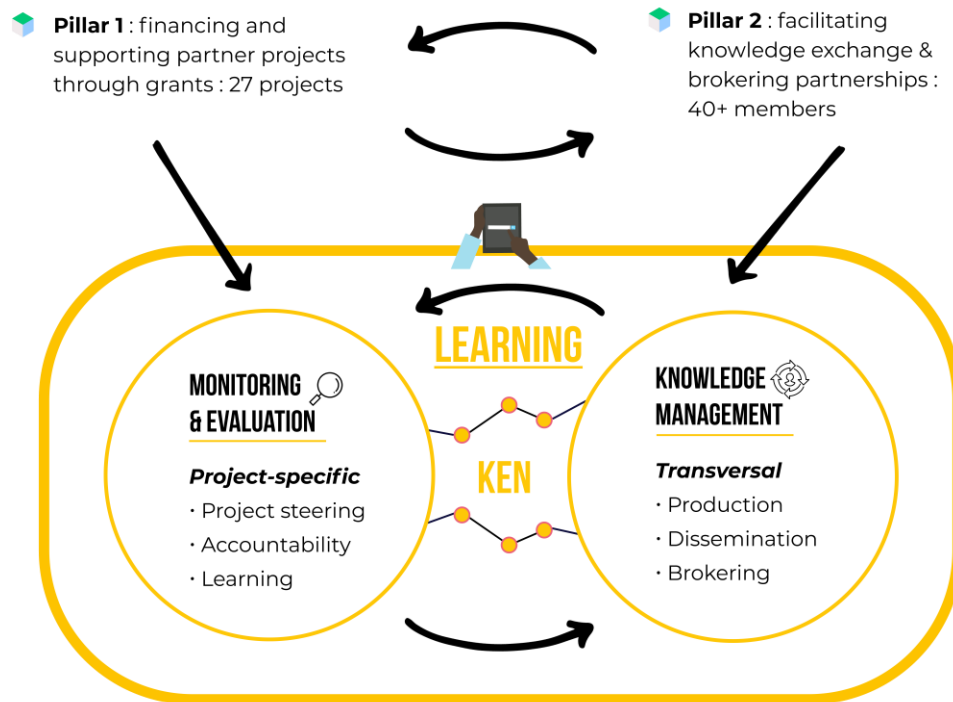
5.4 Result 4: Brokering partnerships and capitalization result in increased collaboration on D4D

In 2020, Wehubit created its second pillar, which was operationalised through a **knowledge exchange network (KEN)**. Conceived as an extension of the knowledge management strategy of the programme, which was approved in the first semester of 2021, it is a voluntary network for partner organisations and Enabel focal points. As of 2022, it is comprised of 50 organisations, including Enabel.

The goal of this pillar is to share learnings, produce transversal knowledge, build capacities and foster new partnerships. To do so, Wehubit carried out the following activities:

- Manage the network and connect partner projects together as well as with other networks
- Organise meetings (events, webinars, thematic workshops...) to foster exchanges (3 per year)
- Maintain an e-library of resources (toolkits, capitalization products)

This KEN is conceived as an on-demand service and an annual survey (the Alliance Thermometer) is undertaken to collect needs from members. 6 organisations are also members of an Advisory Committee, meeting every two months and charged with steering the network.



KEN-activities:

- Online trainings:

- Broad Wehubit community event, presentation and brain storming on the KEN
- Meeting for Wehubit focal points: recap of the programme, KEN, their role and expectations
- EN+FR: communication for financial and institutional sustainability
- Session M&E
- Session MEL
- AI for social good introductory session
- AI for social good technical session
- Community Sessions
- 6 Wehubit Alumni Session (one per call) + 6 capitalisation workshops
- AI workgroup
- Workshop on Principles for Digital Development (PDDs)
- Trajectory on Scaling

- Events in person:

- [Wehubit Week in Brussels](#)
- [Wehubit Days in Kigali](#)

- **Capitalisation** (learning sheets & alumni sessions)

Projects that were closed or on the verge of closure were all given the opportunity to participate in sectoral capitalisation workshops. The objective of these workshops is to identify and share experiences and lessons learned from the Wehubit projects to better understand if, how and in which context digital social innovation can support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The methodology focuses on formulating key messages: what has the project shown? What changed? For whom and how? These learnings are publicly disseminated through (1) the learning sheets, available on the Wehubit e-library to read and share and (2) the Wehubit Alumni Sessions.

- **#WeScaleIt**

During its first 5-year programme (2018 – 2023), Wehubit specifically targeted the scaling-up phase of digital social innovations, whereby projects scaled-up existing digital solutions, rolling them out at larger scale and thus becoming more available, affordable and achieving.

Now the 2018 – 2023 programme has ended, Wehubit wants to share via an online guide its most important learnings about scaling to inform other social innovation enthusiasts and to facilitate – at least to some extent – their scaling journey.

Through a combination of practical, hands-on theory and concrete project examples, the goal is to be able to explore different scaling strategies, their good practices and learn from individual project experiences related to those strategies.

All this will be combined in guide, which will be ready by the time our new projects are selected to train them directly in scaling!

- **Other products:**

- [AI checklist](#)

5.5 Result 5: Additional funding is raised

Throughout the years the Wehubit mechanism was able to build a solid reputation within Enabel, Belgium and its partnercountries, but also within a European context. Wehubit has been increasingly requested to take up a role and provide its expertise within a European Action.

- DIRECCT (2020-2023): EU-programme of digital response to COVID-19 Crisis
- Data Governance for Africa Initiative (2023-2026): EU-programme facilitating, supporting and/or creating cross-border data flows between public, not-profit and/or private sector entities in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Digital & Green Innovation (2024-2025): EU-programme strengthening digital green and circular entrepreneurship and innovation across partner countries and regions.
- Regional Teacher Initiative in Africa (2024-2028): EU-programme improving the learning outcomes and the socio-emotional development of children in Africa, by having a more competent, motivated and inclusive teacher workforce in basic education.
- DeSIRA+ (2024-2028): EU-programme strengthening the agro-ecological transition in Central Africa (DRC, Burundi, Rwanda) for greater resilience and income for food system stakeholders.

Wehubit has become a multi-programme innovation hub, integrating all different kind of initiatives which have one thing in common: identifying and supporting the scaling-up of social innovations.

The Wehubit 2.0 programme has the objective to build further on that: By integrating the Wehubit mechanism in different initiatives (within Enabel and European level), we aim to become an even stronger catalysator of innovation within Enabel, within the Belgian development Cooperation, but also beyond.

6. External evaluation

In the second half of 2022 two consultants from Technopolis conducted an overall evaluation of the Wehubit 1.0-programme. Several key conclusions and recommendations were made that Wehubit can take into account in future programme development and implementation. The

findings also provide suggestions to strengthen the leading role of Enabel and Team Belgium in promoting social innovation and D4D in its partner countries.

Main conclusions of the evaluation:

The consultants assessed that Wehubit is a relevant programme with a comprehensive intervention logic and a flexible Call for Proposal (CfP) process. It responds to the demonstrated need of financing social innovations in emerging countries and building capacities through networking and knowledge sharing. The flexibility offered by Wehubit thematic CfPs allows Wehubit to maintain its relevance through time and changing contexts.

They also perceived that Wehubit is an effective and efficient programme, with continuous improvement processes in place and a strongly mobilised team. The programme contributes to the uptake of digital social innovations and it has put itself on the map as an expert in accelerating the middle phases of the scaling-up of digital social innovations implemented by public and/or not-for-profit organisations. It has detected concrete innovations in the field and contributed to the expansion of supported projects.

Strategic recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Continue funding the Wehubit programme and design a Wehubit 2.0 which draws on the first phase lessons learned and best practices

The programme may be ambitious. Being ambitious means supporting the scaling of social innovations in the middle stages (transition to scale) as it has done during Wehubit 1.0, but also looking beyond to support projects' later stages (e.g in creating co-financing schemes or pool-funding for large scaling).

Recommendation 2: Provide a well-defined interpretation of scaling social digital innovation and enhance the sustainability framework, while remaining flexible in implementation

It is recommended to review Wehubit's theoretical framework and establish proper definitions to clarify what digital social innovation is, what Wehubit means by scaling digital social innovations and sustainability measures.

Recommendation 3: Develop tools to foster internal synergies between country portfolios and Wehubit

Although Wehubit produces useful knowledge for Enabel, internal synergies are limited by the organisation's framework and focus on country programmes, from which Wehubit is currently absent. In the future, Wehubit should be involved in discussions leading up to new country programmes. Wehubit should also create regular instances of information sharing with each country representation to identify synergies between the Wehubit portfolio and bilateral portfolios.

Operational recommendations:

Recommendation 4: Revise project selection criteria

Wehubit displays a concern for sustainability as a principle of action and takes this into account in the project selection procedure. Some projects demonstrate good potential for sustainability through the involvement of local authorities, but there are few concrete mechanisms in place to ensure this sustainability after selection. It is recommended to reinforce the importance of the current sustainability questions in the selection process and to view it as a minimum criterium.

Recommendation 5: Support partners to plan their large-scale applications

Under Wehubit 1.0, several projects expressed unmet needs in terms of further scaling-up and expansion. Thus, when continuing support with Wehubit 2.0, project scaling should be an integrated and larger topic of focus. By formalizing specific support to scaling e.g. identifying specific scaling objectives together, conducting assessments on projects' scaling strategies and needs, as well as monitoring progress during implementation, Wehubit can better respond to projects' scaling requirements.

Recommendation 6: Formalise internal documents on the informal support brought to partner organisations in order to gain efficiency

It is recommended to formalise internal documents of what is expected of the Wehubit team in terms of informal support. In line with the revised theoretical framework, Wehubit could identify the most impactful areas of support with the most added value to partner organisations and agree on whether to add this support to Wehubit 2.0.

Recommendation 7: Adapt the MEL framework and develop an accessible dashboard

It is recommended to align the MEL with the impact pathways of Wehubit, once these are clarified in their framework. The MEL system currently used by Wehubit is overly robust. Opting for a data visualisation tool that links with the M&E Excel file could ensure easier monitoring of the results and impacts expected by the PMU.

These recommendations were taken into account during the formulation of the future wehubit programmes and will further be taking into account during the operationalisation of these new programmes.

7. Looking forward

In conclusion, the journey embarked upon by Wehubit has been one of innovation, collaboration and impact. Through our supporting activities and mechanisms, we have strived to bridge the digital divide, empower communities and catalyze sustainable development in the partner countries of the Belgian development cooperation.

As we reflect on the accomplishments outlined in this final report, we recognize that our work is far from over. The challenges ahead are great, but so too are the opportunities. As already highlighted in paragraph of Result 5, Wehubit has become a multi-programme innovation hub, integrating all different kind of initiatives which have one thing in common: identifying and supporting the scaling of social innovations.

The Wehubit 2.0 programme has the objective to build further on that: By integrating the Wehubit mechanism in different initiatives (within Enabel and European level), we aim to become an even stronger catalysator of innovation within Enabel, within the Belgian development Cooperation, but also beyond.

These opportunities and renewed strategy comes also with important challenges. A first challenge is the renewal and upgrade of the Wehubit mechanism (cfr. Call for Proposals and grants). While in 2017-2018 Wehubit was pioneering with its mechanism, in 2024 there are, from an international perspective, already many funding and support mechanisms to identify and support innovation established and the needs might slightly have changed. It is strategically important to take up our role again as pioneer and develop new, more flexible and more dynamic mechanisms to catalyse innovation.

Secondly it is strategically important to embed and integrate the wehubit mechanism within Enabel in a more sustainable way. While integrating several European Actions into our hub, the core of Wehubit is still financed by an Article 6 funding. It should be at least be explored how this set-up could be made more future proof in a sustainable way. After all, innovation is and will be at the heart of Enabel for the coming years...