ZAHRUNNISA FAWZIA

Country of origin: Indonesia

Programme: Master Transportation Sciences (ICP Connect scholarship)

Graduated: 2026



Why did you choose the Master of Transportation Sciences at UHasselt?

Three years ago, during my third year of working at the Department of Transportation in Indonesia, I felt I had hit a plateau and was no longer satisfied with my performance at work. I felt I needed a different approach to tackle transportation issues in my city, particularly when it came to encouraging safer road user behaviour.

I strongly believed that the human factor plays a substantial role in the development of transportation systems. I was fascinated by the idea that infrastructure and policy alone do not necessarily influence how people behave on the road, and I wanted to better understand what is often overlooked and what is truly needed.

This is where the Master of Transportation Sciences at Hasselt University caught my attention. I noticed that the programme incorporates various aspects of transportation system development. The behavioural approach attracted me the most, as I felt it could answer many of the questions I had. In addition, the VLIR-UOS scholarship opportunity made the programme even more appealing.

What was the most valuable aspect of the programme for you?

First and foremost, I greatly appreciate the collaboration between the Master of Transportation Sciences programme and VLIR-UOS, which makes opportunities like this possible. It reflects the idea that knowledge and education should be accessible to everyone.

The programme gave me the opportunity to immerse myself in an international environment, from working on group projects with classmates from different countries to participating in projects with external organisations. This experience taught me how to translate knowledge into practical action. I also appreciated the flexibility offered by the elective courses, which allowed me to explore new interests and broaden my perspective.

Finally, having the chance to live abroad, visit different countries, and experience their transportation systems firsthand gave me valuable insights into how transport is managed in different contexts around the world.

Which knowledge or skills gained during the programme do you still use in your current job?

The skills that are most relevant to my current role are collaboration, communication, and the ability to work with different perspectives. During my studies, I was involved in many group projects, which taught me how to work effectively both as part of a team and independently.

These experiences closely mirror my current responsibilities, which require collaboration with both internal and external stakeholders. I learned how to listen to different viewpoints, understand the reasoning behind them, and avoid dismissing ideas too quickly. These skills are especially valuable when participating in discussions with government institutions and other stakeholders, where I need to communicate my ideas while taking local contexts and concerns into account.

How has the programme contributed to your professional career?

After graduation, I returned to my previous institution as a Road Safety Project Manager. In addition to my regular responsibilities, I am frequently invited to participate in focus group discussions with government institutions and other stakeholders to contribute new perspectives on transportation system development.

I enjoy sharing these perspectives, integrating them with the priorities of different organisations, and translating theoretical concepts into practical interventions that are appropriate and effective in the local context.

What advice would you give to future students?

Make the most of every opportunity available to you. Immerse yourself in the local culture, learn the language, and explore the world around you. Don't limit your growth.

From an academic perspective, share your experiences with classmates and fellow students. Sometimes, you learn just as much from each other as you do from your courses.

Continue developing both your technical and interpersonal skills, and be active in class. You may be surprised by how much professors and teaching staff are willing to share when students engage and participate.