

PLAY

*Annual report
2015*

LEARN

WORK



Preface

Education, a powerful vehicle for sustainable development

Key in the discourse related to the *Sustainable Development Goals* is the interrelationship between the 17 goals and the reaffirmation that education is one of the most powerful vehicles for sustainable development. Hence quality education takes a centre-piece in the new development agenda, almost a prerequisite for progressing in the other domains and for cementing the diverse *Sustainable Development Goals*.

This implies that teachers and school leaders, who are central in the learning of children and adolescents, are now expected to take the floor as agents for sustainable development. If we want them to address the economic, social, environmental and political priorities of the new sustainable development agenda, these teachers and school leaders will need renewed attention.

This plays at different levels. At the pedagogical level, for the literacy, mathematical and other skills and competences, a specific array of support for teachers and school leaders is required, helping to internalise the concept of sustainability and to acquire skills and competences that will improve the teaching. Enhancing capacities in sustainable development requires lifelong learning opportunities for teachers and school leaders, plays at the level of management. Finally, at the level of strategic envisioning, this learning should also be about the world's interconnectedness and in particular its environmental threats and the snowballing inequality between and within countries. Teachers and school leaders must be enabled to touch upon the complex interrelationships between the education sector and other key development areas.

To prepare for such tasks in our programming, we need to build on sound organisational fundamentals. In 2015, we created more value for our direct stakeholders, in terms of solutions for systemic educational challenges at the level of ministries of education and training institutions for teachers and school leaders. We extended our technical expertise by pooling resources with over 20 educational service providers. We attracted new donors and renewed contracts with existing institutional funders. We substantially increased our turnover.

These fundamentals make us ready to gear up for the new development agenda and era. We consider the matter of a sustainable, equal world as a pressing concern that needs interventions now and in which education is integral to the new development agenda. We can assure donors and partners that VVOB is ready to contribute to achieving the *Sustainable Development Goals*.

Bart Dewaele
Director-General VVOB



Content

3 *Preface*

4 *Content*

5 *Introduction*

7 **Early childhood education**

- 8 Communities in Zambia appreciate early education
- 10 Early Education in Vietnam: from partnership to result
- 12 Providing Zambia's early learners with quality teachers
- 14 A good mentor increases teaching practice quality in Zambia
- 16 A step towards inclusivity in Zimbabwean Education
- 18 Flemish students on South internships: good Samaritans?

21 **Primary education**

- 22 Mentoring and feedback skills: towards better teaching practice in Cambodia
- 24 Ensuring Zambia's vulnerable children are also learning
- 26 Researching Moli in South Africa
- 28 Professional Learning Networks for Rwandan head teachers
- 30 Innovation for education in Rwanda
- 31 A dialogue on equity in education between teacher educators from Belgium and the Global South

33 **Secondary technical and vocational education**

- 34 Strategic plans put the agricultural schools in the driver seats of their own development in the DR Congo
- 36 Improving the quality of Ecuadorian technical education through community networks
- 38 Vocational education and private sector are drawing closer together in Suriname
- 40 Upscaling of quality career guidance in Vietnam
- 42 Biodiversity in the DR Congo's agricultural education
- 43 Elaboration of a strategy for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in the DR Congo
- 44 Strengthening technical education by aligning to labour market needs in Ecuador
- 45 Ecuadorian youngsters learn about cacao and gain entrepreneurial skills
- 46 Belgian Common Programme on Technical and Vocational Education in Rwanda
- 47 Active teaching and learning in teacher education in Uganda
- 48 Agricultural schools in Flanders, Ecuador and the DR Congo join hands
- 49 Work group of *Educaid.be* works on principles for transition to the labour market

51 *Financial report*

54 *Management of VVOB in 2015*

55 *Acknowledgements*



Introduction

After the deadline of the *Millennium Development Goals*, in September 2015, heads of state and government agreed in New York upon 17 new goals, the *Sustainable Development Goals*. These must be achieved by 2030. As the fourth goal, education takes a prominent place in the global development agenda.

Unlike the previous *Millennium Development Goals* the targets in education are not limited to access to primary education. From now on countries worldwide will have to pay additional attention to the quality of education, from early childhood to secondary education.

Quality education for all children and youngsters

VVOB is pleased with this evolution. After all, we are already committed for years to improving the quality of education in three continents. In recent years we also inspire education closer to home, in Flanders, through good examples from our partner countries. Thus we contribute to equity in education. The *Sustainable Development Goals* are very clear on this: quality education can only be achieved if all children and youngsters have equal opportunities to participate.

On the following pages you can read how VVOB contributed concretely the past year to this goal, at the levels of early childhood, primary, and secondary technical and vocational education. These are after all the subsectors on which VVOB focuses successfully since 2011. The choice of these subsectors is not accidental. It provides an answer to the greatest educational challenges of the countries in which VVOB operates. Moreover, it is a choice that makes explicit that equity in education is not a hollow concept for VVOB.

Equal start through early education

In Vietnam, Zambia and Zimbabwe, VVOB focuses on early childhood education. In the fight for equity in education the choice for early childhood education is nothing less than self-evident. Good early childhood education promotes the youngest in all areas so that they are well prepared for the rest of their school ca-

reer. Especially children from disadvantaged groups benefit from this. Through participation in early childhood education, they can catch up to other children and get an equal start in primary education. This way the chances they complete their schooling increase significantly, which decreases the number of drop-outs drastically.

Clear learning outcomes in primary education

Thanks to the *Millennium Development Goals* more children than ever go to primary school. However, research shows that the earlier 'access crisis' is now replaced by a 'learning crisis'. Many children who go to school learn little to nothing. It mainly involves children from disadvantaged groups, who before would not go to school. That is why VVOB emphasizes concrete learning outcomes, ranging from literacy to numeracy and life skills, in the professionalisation of teachers and school leaders in Cambodia, Rwanda and South Africa.

Access to the labour market and a focus on entrepreneurship through strong technical and vocational education

Through support of technical and vocational education, young people, often from socio-economically disadvantaged groups, get better job opportunities. Since a formal labour market is not always developed strong VVOB also focuses on the development of entrepreneurship. This way young people can shape their own future. Last year VVOB deployed a lot of interventions in the DR Congo, Ecuador, Rwanda and Suriname to achieve a better connection between education and work opportunities. This way, technical and vocational education becomes more relevant and attractive to young people.

I wish you a pleasant reading.

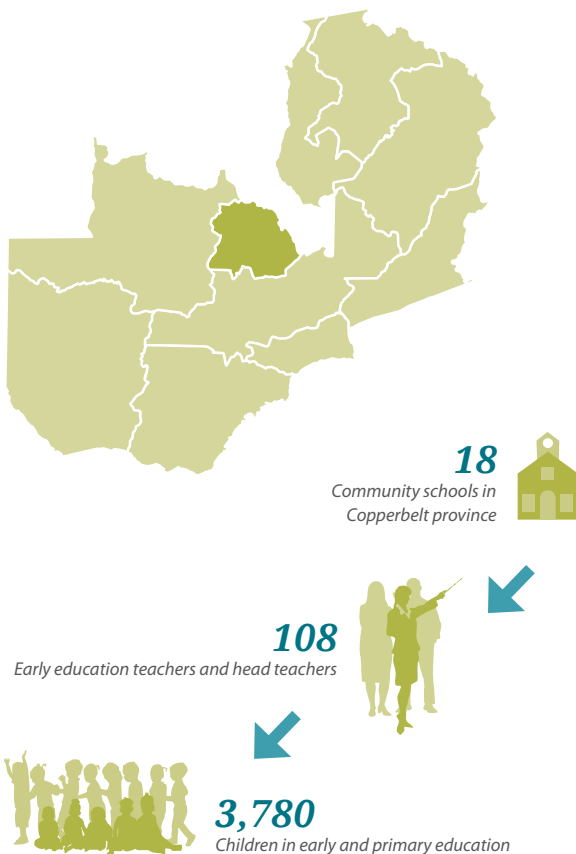
Sven Rooms
Programme Director



Early childhood education



Communities in Zambia appreciate early education



Community schools are founded by communities to meet the basic education needs of children who are not in formal schools. The low income urban areas of Zambia have many community schools that also offer early childhood education, mainly for working parents. However, because the teachers are largely untrained, the early childhood classes amount to mere day care, with little or no active learning through play and where very young children are often taught in a very academic manner with little attention to their well-being and involvement in school activities.

The QEECS project involves infrastructure development and teacher education with a focus on early childhood education and the first two grades of primary education. VVOB implements this project together with Zambia Open Community Schools in 18 schools located in Kitwe and Ndola districts. It began in January 2015 and will come to an end in June 2016. It is co-funded by the European Union and the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Improvement of the learning environment

The QEECS project works on the quality of early childhood education in community schools in Zambia. One school that benefits from this support is Kaloko Kantanshi Community School. The deputy head, Derrick Chimfwembe explains interventions in the school as a result of the project since January 2015. "It is amazing how our interaction with the project over the past year has made a huge difference. Not only have teachers benefited from the training activities and resources, parents have profited as well. The training on early childhood education, gender awareness and parenting improved the way parents interact with their children and with teachers. It has enhanced school management and our cooperation with parents." This means a better learning environment for young learners aged three to eight in the early learning classroom.

Teaching young children

Not only have there been improvements in the learning environment, but the quality of teaching has also changed. The early childhood education teacher at Buyantanshi Community School, a model school, has learnt how to apply different methodologies of teaching. For example she has learnt how to make use

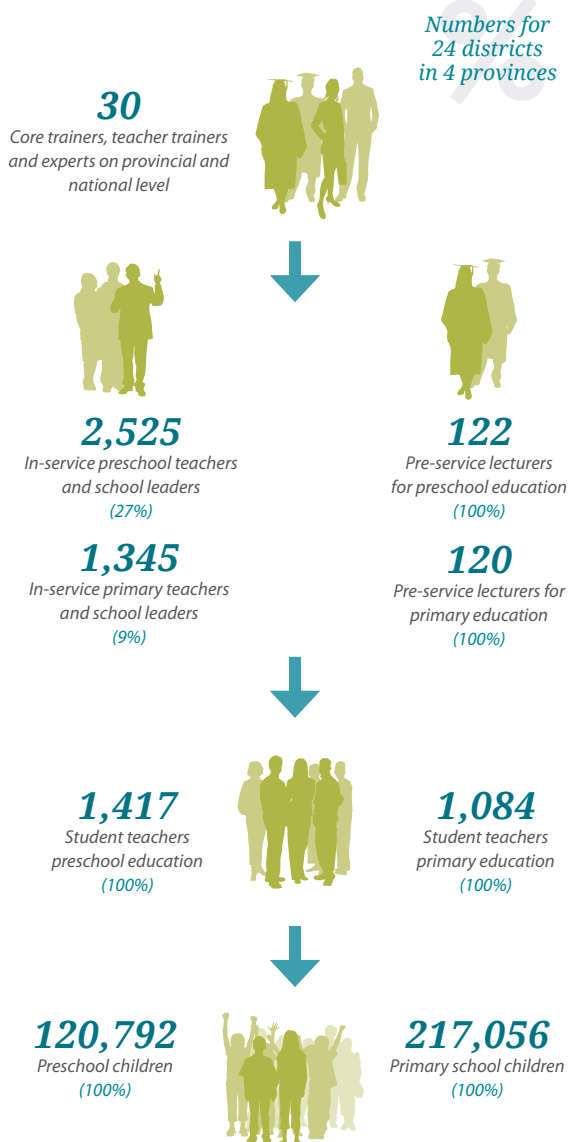
of learning corners. The learning corners are proving to be very popular among all the teachers of the school as a methodology to improve classroom management and meaningful interaction among the learners. As Sister Regina, head teacher at Buyantanshi school states: "At Buyantanshi, we believe early education is important to give children a strong start. The focus in our early childhood classes is on learning through play and exploration."

Government support to education

Early childhood education has been decentralised to the local government structures. As such, one of the interventions of the project is to improve how local government structures support educational projects in their communities. Kaloko Kantanshi Community School is a good example of how this can translate into positive change. The school received support from the local councillor, to ferry building sand and roofing sheets bought by QEECS for the construction of the walls and roof of the early childhood education classroom. This support meant the building works at the school were able to continue without prolonged delays. The chairperson of the school committee, Mr Sitali, greatly appreciates that cooperation with the area leader made it possible to speed up this community project, and says the people in the area are really encouraged by this development.



Early Education in Vietnam: from partnership to result



Quality teaching is the factor that contributes most directly to the learning outcomes of all children. Many Vietnamese preschool teachers face challenges to come to quality teaching. As a result, up to 75% of the children show low levels of class involvement and well-being. These children encounter barriers to develop to their full potential. We identified two priorities for preschool teachers to address these challenges: child observation and transition to primary education. To set up a learning network, we established successful partnerships between our Vietnamese partners (Departments of Education and Training, and Teacher Training Institutes) and our Flemish partners (Karel de Grote University College and Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen, the Flemish network of catholic schools).

The Early Education programme in Vietnam is a partnership programme between the Ministry of Education and Training and VVOB. It runs from 2014 to 2016. The specific objective is: 'Early education teachers and school leaders provide all learners equal opportunities to enhance their further education and future success.' Particular attention goes to active teaching and learning, gender awareness and transition from early childhood education to primary education. The operational partners of the programme are the Department of Teachers and Educational Administrators and the National Women Union at the national level, and the Departments of Education and Training, the Teacher Training Institutes and the Provincial Women's Union at province level.

Child observation

In April 2015, teacher training institutes, Karel de Grote University College and VVOB set up a training programme on 'process-oriented child monitoring' for teacher trainers and national experts. They learnt how to observe children's levels of well-being and involvement, and how to develop and implement actions to increase these levels.

Participants found that the concepts of well-being and involvement are easy to absorb. There was a high interest to implement and test the approach through action research. So to translate the concept into a contextualised local practice, the Ministry of Education and Training and VVOB discussed an action research design. In December 2015, the action research was kicked off. The participating schools are engaged in a half year research and capacity development trajectory.

Transition to primary education

Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen's input to our Early Education programme focused on supporting the development of modules for teachers and parents to support children's transition from pre-school to primary school. Based on the first drafts of the modules, a consultation workshop was organised with teacher trainers to

contextualise the modules. During the workshop participants agreed to use the concept of 'powerful learning environments' as the approach for transition. Participants shared concrete examples and ideas for establishing these powerful learning environments in Vietnamese pre- and primary schools. The modules were enriched with local practice and were used to train the trainers of the in-service teachers. Teacher training institutes used the workshop results to develop teacher training resources on transition for pre- and primary school student teachers.

The learning network

In 2015, the input of the two main Flemish partners of our operations in Vietnam helped our Vietnamese partners on key areas of quality teaching. At the same time, these Flemish organisations learnt from the existing Vietnamese expertise and experiences. This two-way exchange with mutual benefits is a crucial element of developing sustainable relationships between education institutes around the globe. These institutes face common challenges and needs regarding quality-driven innovation in the classroom. VVOB can take up the role of bridging expertise. This way we can maximize the benefits for teachers because they contribute the most direct to the learning outcomes of all children.





Providing Zambia's early learners with quality teachers

In 2013, the **Zambian Ministry of General Education** took up the responsibility for early childhood education. Prior to this, early childhood education was provided only by the private sector, with varying degrees of quality. There is a significant need to invest in teacher training colleges to adequately train teachers as previous experience is limited. The new standards for early childhood education quality also apply to private schools and colleges.

In 2015, VVOB's LITTLE programme supported the Ministry to develop a lecturers' guide. This helped the lecturers to explore in depth the five learning areas of the revised early education curriculum. Capacity development is also centred on the demonstration class, which plays a key role in providing student teachers with an opportunity to experience live teaching. The Belgian Development Cooperation funds this programme.

Through the *Learning Improvements for Teachers and Lecturers in Early Education (LITTLE)* Programme VVOB Zambia provides support to the Ministry of General Education to deliver Early Childhood Education (ECE) in Zambia. Currently only about 15.4% of children entering grade one in Zambia have preschool experience. Especially in rural areas this number gets really low.

Working with the Early Childhood Colleges of Education, VVOB is developing the capacity of the colleges to train quality early childhood teachers. VVOB also supports the establishment of demonstration schools that provide quality ECE for student teachers to learn from during teaching practice, a situation rarely available in existing ECE centres.



113

Lecturers of 7 Colleges of Education offering ECE



The growth of a demonstration class teacher

Demonstration schools at the colleges serve as models for quality ECE teaching and learning. Student teachers are able to learn from and practice at these schools.

The demonstration school at the Kitwe College of Education has gained a reputation as a centre of excellence for ECE amongst the other colleges, thanks largely to its innovative and dynamic teacher, Phyllis Mwelwa. VVOB equipped her with skills to deliver quality teaching and learning in her class, by extensive coaching and support on teaching methodologies for young children and on interpreting the new curriculum. The demo class is a colourful, vibrant hive of activity with a variety of teaching aids made of local low-cost materials. Learning through play, the core of the ECE curriculum, is now routine for the teacher.

Learning through play

One key technique that Mrs Mwelwa has mastered is the use of educational learning corners. She has become proficient in organising and using learning corners to manage the classroom and ensure interaction of each and every one of the children in classroom activities. Children are never bored and while playing they are learning. Moreover, the playpark outside the classroom has become a very attractive feature for parents and children alike. The demo class teacher is very proud of her class.

My growth as a teacher

"At first I faced a lot of challenges teaching ECE", Mrs Mwelwa explains. "I was not able to keep my children busy and interested. Now I am full of pride because I have come a long way in developing my skills. I am able to integrate all the learning areas in the syllabus in one lesson without losing track.

At first I had problems in preparing and delivering lessons effectively. I did not know how to set up and use learning corners. This changed dramatically after I attended VVOB training sessions. Lesson preparations are easier and now I weave the lessons together effectively and my play corners are based on the lesson theme. Children enjoy themselves in these corners as they play and learn. I learnt how to make teaching aids with local materials. Indeed, teaching is easier and real learning is taking place in my class. I am so happy and so are the children", concludes Mrs Mwelwa.



545

ECE student teachers

285

ECE teachers and school leaders



140,000

Children entering first grade *with*
preschool experience



2014

15%

2015

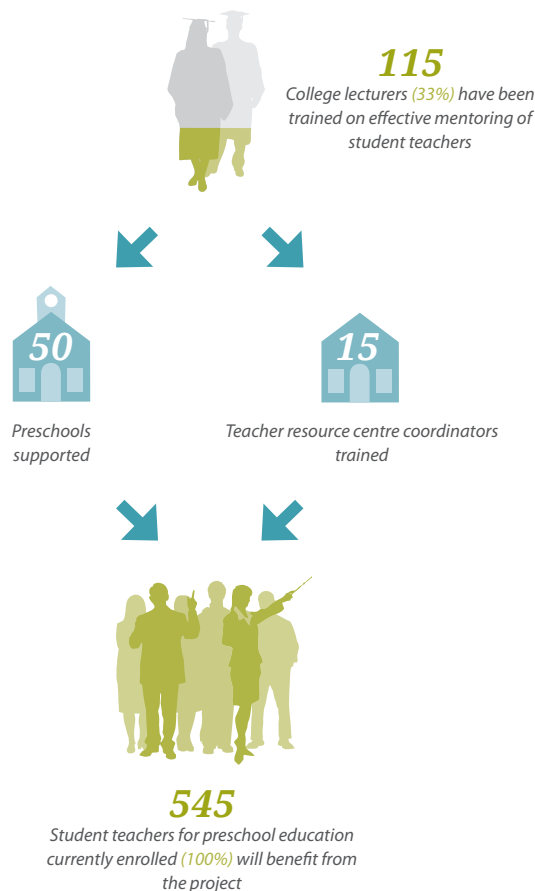
23%

“The standardised tools will improve the teaching practice structure in Zambia.”



Lecturer Fakeya Ngwenya giving a training on mentorship skills

A good mentor increases teaching practice quality in Zambia



Teaching practice is the make or break phase for student teachers. In Zambia there is no structured system in place to guide early childhood education students who are on teaching practice. College lecturers are not always well placed to support students on teaching practice. A coordinated, cascading mentorship training approach is being rolled out. It involves college lecturers, district level ministry staff and teachers at teaching practice schools. The mentorship training activities will be pivotal in bringing out the best in the student teachers.

The ELMA mentorship programme began in July 2015. It aims at institutionalising teaching practice and mentoring for early childhood education student teachers so they receive improved guidance and feedback during their teaching practice. It is implemented in five Colleges of Education. The target groups are the early childhood education lecturers, and the demo school teachers of the Colleges, the College leadership, teachers at the practice schools and the Directorate of Teacher Education of the Ministry of General Education. The programme will run for 18 months and is jointly funded by the ELMA Foundation and the Belgian Development Cooperation.

Skills and attitudes of a mentor

A key intervention is to make lecturers aware of the skills required to be a good mentor. The programme organised a series of training activities on mentorship of student teachers in early childhood education for lecturers. Sanford Kalito, lecturer, found the training an eye opener: "We now realise that mentoring is not an easy task. It requires certain attitudes and skills. I have learnt a lot, especially on models of mentorship. The training was very useful, it provided a new understanding on the professional growth of both the mentor and mentee."

Developing instruments

As part of the mentorship package, the programme works with Colleges of Education and the Ministry of Education to develop tools that can be used during teaching practice and for mentoring. A variety of instruments ranging from student assessment tools to guidance documents have been drafted. Lecturers can-

not wait to start using the tools with their students. Lecturer Fakeya Ngwenya was involved in designing the instruments: "I am confident that the standardised tools will go a long way in improving the teaching practice structure in Zambia and I am excited to begin using them."

Teaching practice schools

The Ministry of Education was involved from the inception in the planning and design of mentorship training activities and drafting of the tools. The mentorship trainings are driven by the colleges and rolled out to local structures of the Ministry. District Resource Centre Coordinators are currently being trained as trainers for mentorship. They in turn, will tailor the trainings and tools to suit local needs and schools before they train teacher mentors at teaching practice schools, who are best placed to provide a conducive learning experience for student teachers.





Mr Ben Mtambudzi, principal of Masvingo Teachers' College

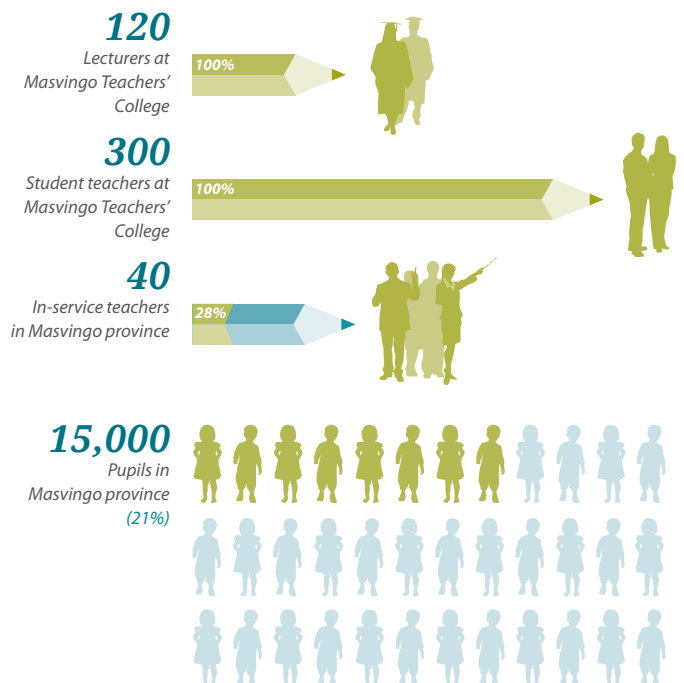
“We have put ourselves on the map as the first college to develop this process-oriented child monitoring system.”

A step towards inclusivity in Zimbabwean Education

Documentation and tracking of pupil's progress in schools is not a new practice in the Zimbabwean education system, evidenced by numerous documents and record books kept by teachers. Whilst most teachers, particularly in early childhood education, are exceptionally good at keeping the record books up to date, observations have exposed minimal use of the tools in identification of pupils' learning needs.

Masvingo Teachers' College made the same observation and questioned this practice. Hence it became the first college to express interest to work on the theme of 'early identification of children's needs'. Together with VVOB, they started a trajectory to develop a monitoring tool that helps teachers identify children's learning needs.

The objective of the *Teachers for Inclusive Education in Zimbabwe* Programme is that early education teachers and school leaders provide all pupils in early childhood education with equal opportunities for improving their further education and future success. VVOB helps in providing support for the development of technical and functional capacities of the involved actors, which are the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development; the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education; the Department of Teacher Education of the University of Zimbabwe; and Teacher Education Colleges.



Preparing the ground

The initiative began with an exchange visit between Masvingo Teachers' College and VIVES University College, which was organised by VVOB. The aim of the VIVES visit was for Masvingo early childhood education lecturers to experience good practices in colleges that had already established a viable child monitoring system. After this exposure Masvingo teachers embarked on a needs assessment. This led to a critical reflection on what needed to improve for them to be able to have a child monitoring system that works. The areas identified were sent to VIVES and a training package to build the capacity of Masvingo lecturers was developed. VVOB supported the college in creating a trajectory to guide the change process. The ground had been cleared... ready for action.

Planting the seeds

In 2015, VIVES guided the Masvingo early childhood education lecturers through two training activities. The activities aimed at enhancing the lecturers' capacity with skills and knowledge on how to develop a child monitoring system. Follow-up by the VVOB team resulted in the development of the first child process-oriented monitoring tool in Zimbabwe. Through workshops the tool was shared with early childhood education teachers. They pre-tested the tool and gave feedback.

A teacher from Victoria Government School said: "This tool empowers the teacher to know the learners in depth as individuals. It enables the teacher to know children who need assistance, check learners progress easily and to also plan appropriate interventions for each child, making teaching more fulfilling."

The result

The college launched the first process-oriented child monitoring system. "We have put ourselves on the map as the first college to develop this system. Remember the purpose of education today, is to promote learning for all children and our students will be capable of doing just that", beamed Mr Mutambudzi, the principal, whilst addressing the early childhood education lecturers during the launch.

Following this success, two other Zimbabwean teacher education colleges (Madziwa and United College of Education) have engaged Masvingo to get assistance in integration of early identification in their teacher development programmes. The Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, which recently reviewed its curriculum framework, has also expressed interest in the process-oriented child monitoring assessment tool. This innovation is a first step towards inclusive education in Zimbabwe.





Interns Sanne and Laura with an early childhood education teacher of the demonstration school of Kitwe College of Education in Zambia

Flemish students on South internships: good Samaritans?

The internship programme of VVOB annually offers about forty students of Flemish educational institutions the opportunity to do an internship in one of VVOB's programmes or at one of our partner institutions in the Global South. Students mainly come from teacher training colleges for early, primary and secondary education, or other pedagogical studies. VVOB is strongly committed to a thorough preparation and aftereffect of the internships. In addition to the added value for the host country and for the student, we attach considerable importance to public support of the students' network. This way, students can bring added value for development cooperation both where they live and where the internship took place.

Added value in the Global South

The internships for Flemish students that VVOB offers in the South, are developed in collaboration with our local partners. Even though students have limited experience prior to the internship, we do believe that they can still valuably contribute to development cooperation, provided that they carry out a well-defined task within an existing development programme and given that they are properly supervised on the spot. For instance, Sanne and Laura, two Flemish student teachers, didn't just teach at a nursery school in Kitwe, Zambia. Video clips they made of the classroom practices, are now teaching materials that local teach-

ers use and also spread to other teachers in Zambia during VVOB trainings. The students could also deliver sustainable results by cooperating with students from a local teacher training college.

Added value in Flanders

International internships of Flemish students also have an effect in Flanders. Returning students have gained valuable international competences, which benefits the internationalisation of the Flemish education system. A survey among returning students has taught us that they have a more positive attitude towards diversity than before their internship, and they pay more attention to equity in education in Flanders.

Finally, we ask students to conduct an awareness raising activity to sensitise the public about development issues and about opportunities and challenges in education elsewhere in the world. This way, we try to increase public support in Flanders for a more solidary society. For instance Michelle, a communication management student made a video with interviews about South Africa that she afterwards showed in Flemish schools to try to reduce children's prejudices. Kevin and Steffie, two students primary education established an exchange between a class in Cambodia and a class in Flanders, through a blog page 'the world in my classroom'. Another student of educational sciences, Ellen, had a column in a Belgian newspaper during her internship in Zambia.



**Low cost
teaching materials**
for language development

KVC

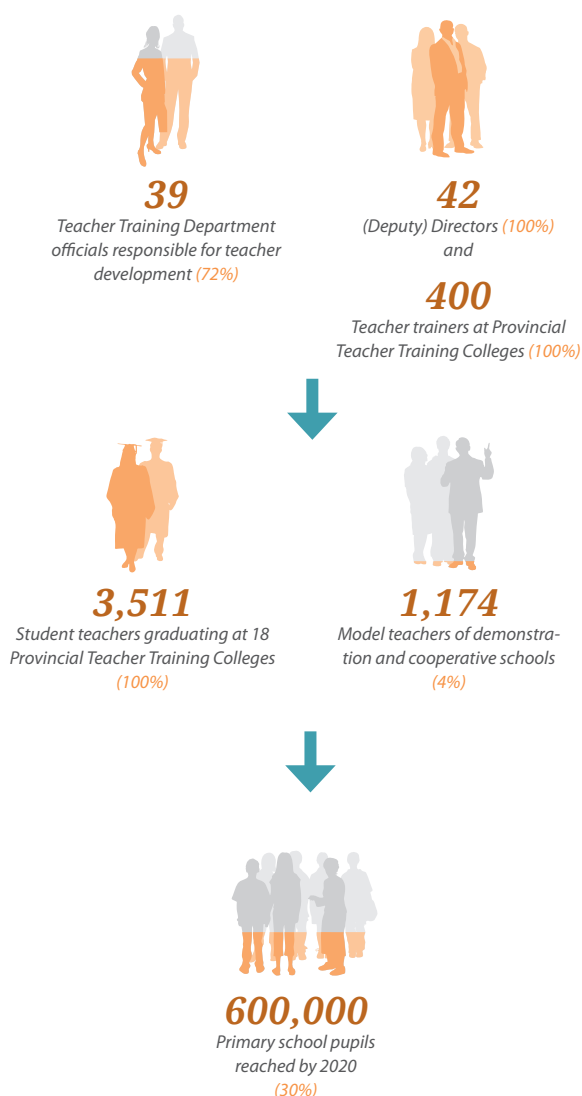


**Primary
education**



A student teacher gives a mathematics lesson during his teaching practice

Mentoring and feedback skills: towards better teaching practice in Cambodia



Student teachers in primary education have 14 weeks of teaching practice during their two-year training programme. The aim is to practice what they have learnt in a real classroom setting, and use their lessons learnt to further develop their own teaching methods.

Teacher trainers and model teachers play an essential role in guiding the students during this teaching practice. In 2014, interviews at teacher training centres and observations showed that teacher trainers and model teachers find it difficult to provide feedback. Additionally, they face difficulties in teaching mathematics and science. Therefore, the VVOB programme in Cambodia focuses on improving the feedback skills of mentors and on strengthening mathematics and science teaching.

In 2014, the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and VVOB started a three-year programme on primary teacher training. This programme aims at developing the initial teacher training for science and mathematics. It also strengthens the Provincial Teacher Training Colleges and their affiliated primary schools for teaching practice. Finally it supports the Teacher Training Department in assuring teaching quality.

Learning-by-design approach

For improving teaching practice as well as for improving science and mathematics teaching at the 18 Teacher Training Centres, VVOB works with core teams. They use the *learning-by-design* approach which means that the members jointly work on strengthening their capacity and developing training resources to train others. The core team teaching practice for example has developed a training manual on how to provide constructive feedback, and also revised the official Ministry's guidelines for teaching practice, integrating the Teacher Professional Standards in these guidelines and improved assessment forms.

All 650 staff members of all 18 teacher training centres and 1,170 school teachers for primary education have been trained so far in feedback skills and the renewed guidelines, by the core team. The core teams *Science and Maths* trained 76 mathematics teacher trainers and 52 science teacher trainers.

Towards better teaching practice

Joint follow-up visits of the Ministry and VVOB have shown improvements in the quality of feedback sessions. Mentors apply the introduced six steps for quality feedback sessions. This begins with creating a good dialogue atmosphere for feedback, followed by creating room for the student teachers' own reflection on their teaching, feedback provided by the mentor, discussion on improvement, and wrapping-up by asking if the student has questions and making a follow-up appointment.

After the training activities on mathematics and science, the teacher trainers have recently demonstrated to have improved their pedagogical content knowledge. Through this, students will be able to teach these subjects in an interactive way, using teaching aids in their lessons during teaching practice and in their future schools.

Optimism for the future

Training manuals for teaching practicum, mathematics and science, as well as the revised guidelines for teaching practice have been officially approved by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. Improvements in feedback skills and in mathematics and science teaching have been observed, and managers of the teacher training centres have been supportive of the changes.

Currently, model teachers are also being trained in mathematics and science, so they can support their student teachers better and they can apply what they have learnt in their own lessons as well.

Therefore there are reasons for being optimistic that the impact of the programme will continue also after it finishes, in order for the Cambodian children to receive meaningful and interactive education by the current student teachers and the graduated teachers.



“The pedagogical skills training activities of the project have improved my competences as a teacher.”



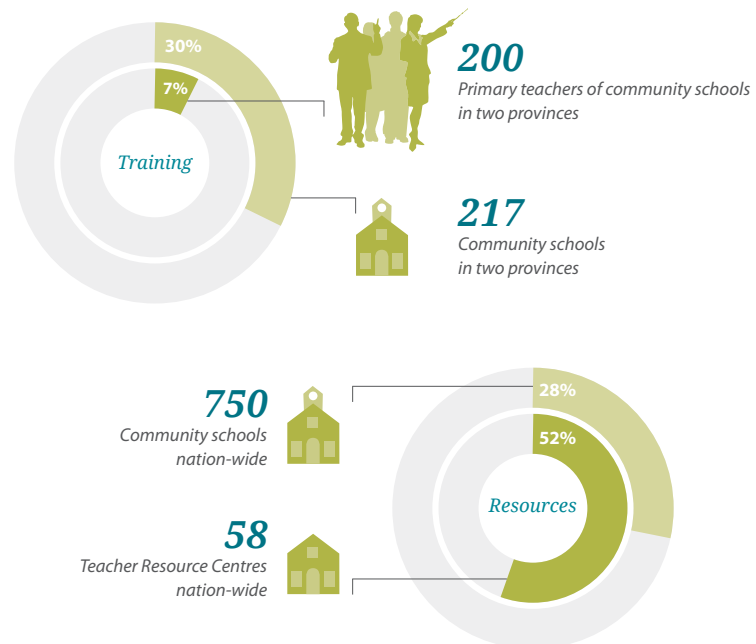
Teacher Andrew Chinyama during a lesson of home economics

Ensuring Zambia's vulnerable children are also learning

The ECSITE project successfully completed its operations end of 2015. It focussed on community schools. Teachers at community schools are largely unqualified volunteers from within the community. The project improved the quality of learning in community schools through training of teach-

ers, school leaders and the community, as well as provision of teaching and learning materials. It also lobbied the Ministry to allocate resources and trained teachers to community schools.

Community schools in Zambia are largely founded by communities to meet the basic education needs of the most vulnerable children who are not in formal schools. Community schools are usually in very basic structures with few teaching and learning materials. The goal of the ECSITE project (Empowering Community School In-Service Teachers through Education), was to improve the quality of teaching and learning in community schools. It was implemented with Zambia Open Community Schools (ZOCS) and the Ministry of Education (Teacher Education Directorate) in six districts in two provinces of Zambia from January 2013 to December 2015 and its target was teachers and parents at 250 community schools. The project, co-funded by the European Union and the Belgian Development Cooperation, received a positive end-evaluation from the European Union.



Increasing education quality

Through the ECSITE project, teachers in charge at community schools undertook a course on active teaching and learning. This knowledge was passed on to other teachers. Volunteer community school teachers were also empowered with skills on teaching methodologies, planning of lessons and classroom management. Some teachers were further supported with tuition to enable them to acquire the minimum qualification to enrol into a College of Education and begin training as teachers.

Andrew Chinyama is a teacher at Charles Lwanga Community School. He is now more confident in his ability to handle a class: "I have been teaching for 16 years without any relevant training. So I was lacking some skills. The pedagogical skills training activities of the project have improved my competences as a teacher. They also strengthened my understanding of the changes in the education system in Zambia."

Teaching and learning resources

As part of the project, the Ministry of Education teacher resource centres at local level were better equipped. They received for example computers, printers, copiers, laminators and books. These teaching and learning tools are used extensively by community school teachers, who face a chronic shortage of reference books and teaching equipment. In addition, the project distributed

relevant teaching and learning materials to community schools, which were in dire need of these materials. A grade six pupil at Kamisamba Community School was ecstatic: "I am so happy with these books. They help me to learn better and now I look forward to going to school."

Community involvement

The project trained parents and the communities to support and manage community schools through income generating initiatives. This made parents more aware of the challenges in their schools and they came together to find creative ways to solve them. A number of schools successfully negotiated with local education authorities to allocate them with trained teachers and more resources. In one community school the parent committee built a house for the government trained teacher to stay at the school.

Parent committees are the cornerstones of community schools. They realised the importance of education, particularly for girls and children with disabilities, through awareness raising meetings and radio programmes. A nice example is that, encouraged by a parent committee, a student teacher at Handbar Kapotwe Community School took the initiative to start a much desired special needs class.





Olga Lekitlane, Norman Proctor and Anna-Marié Jonker

“We start thinking more critically. We realise that our support to the schools is not just a one-way street.”

Researching Moli in South Africa

Have you ever seen Moli? She can be seen in rural areas on dusty roads. She is colourful, strong and determined. Moli is a Mobile Library (*Mobile Library*).

Since 2007 ten mobile libraries were donated to the Free State Department of Education as a strategy to improve literacy levels. In 2012 the department suggested to analyse the impact of the mobile libraries on their schools, teachers and learners.

The mobile library impact study is a means to strengthen monitoring and evaluation skills of 13 officials from the teacher development centres to strengthen their support to schools. The evaluation follows an action research methodology. Action research is a process in which researchers investigate their own practice with the intention to improve their actions. Officials reflect on the question how the service offered by the MoLis can be improved.

The VVOB programme in South Africa aims to improve learning outcomes in numeracy of primary school children. We work with the National Department of Basic Education and the Council of Educators to develop sound professional development mechanisms for teachers and school leaders. We also work on a local level in the Free State province on school leadership, mathematics teaching and monitoring and evaluation.



Reflective attitude

"We start thinking more critically. We realise that our support to the schools is not just a one-way street", said Anna-Marié Jonker, who is working as a counsellor at a teacher development centre. Their plans state that they should serve farm schools with resources, for example via mobile libraries. Looking at the effect of these interventions on the educators and ultimately on the learners in the schools they serve, is not part of that plan. Engaging in an action research cycle through hands-on data collection and processing, made the officials realise that a reflective attitude towards their work can help them to identify gaps in their interventions, to improve their service to schools and to yield better results.

Changes in our work culture

A result of such a reflective attitude is the way officials engage with teachers. At first, teachers were sceptical to open up their classroom doors to the officials. The action research trajectory however paved the way for a better and more trusting relation-

ship between officials and teachers. Officials can now engage directly with learners and observe what teachers are doing. This is an important change in their daily work culture.

Academic exposure

The officials celebrated this success by presenting their research at the South African Education Research Association Conference in October 2015 at the University of the Free State. This is the biggest research conference on education in South Africa and all higher education institutions are represented. This opportunity exposed the officials to the academic world, which is completely different from their daily environment in the schools. Bridging these two worlds was one of the challenges during the presentation. Despite this challenge, the academic exposure broadened the horizons of the participants. This was highlighted by Olga Lekitlane, who is also working at a teacher development centre: "We discovered that we could do things that we were not aware of we can do. We were not aware that we also contribute to national research to improve the quality of education."



13

Selected officials from all (100%) District Teacher Development Centres in Free State were trained in monitoring and evaluation



Free State
primary schools

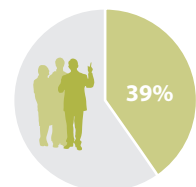


442

Primary schools received better support



Free State
primary school teachers

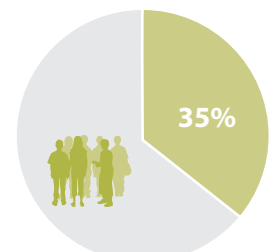


4,210

Primary school teachers reached



Free State
primary school pupils



113,121

Primary school pupils reached

“I had to put myself in the teachers’ shoes to understand their obstacles, their fears, their frustrations and their hopes.”



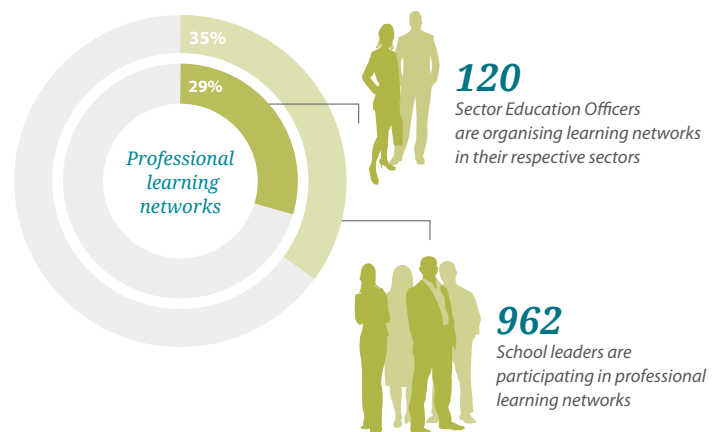
Cecile Ntakirutima, Sector Education Officer in Gataraga

Professional Learning Networks for Rwandan head teachers

VVOB has worked with the Rwanda Education Board since 2014 to establish well-led Professional Learning Networks for head teachers. The goal is to have them share their knowledge and experience to learn from and with each other. 30 Sector Education Officers, representing one sector per district, already went through a series of four trainings in 2014 on how to establish, lead and coach these kind of networks

for the head teachers in their sector. In 2015, three additional sectors per district received support, bringing the total number of Professional Learning Networks to 120. As a part of the training, all networks are monitored and evaluated regularly through field visits in order to provide feedback on the Sector Education Officers’ coaching performance.

The programme on Learning Outcomes in Primary Education (2014-2016) focuses on the quality of education and, through a comprehensive multifaceted approach, aims to improve learning outcomes in basic education in Rwanda. It targets effective school leadership and the professional development of head teachers and pre-service teacher trainers. This programme is funded by the Belgian Development Cooperation.



Effective school leadership

The idea that Professional Learning Networks have to be well-led comes from the knowledge that simply bringing professionals together doesn't guarantee growth and development. Some conditions have to be met to create a climate in which learning and changing opportunities can arise. The most important task for the leadership of these networks is therefore to ensure that all measures are taken to meet the required conditions.

The capacity development focuses on the standards of effective school leadership as adapted by the Rwanda Education Board, with VVOB's support. Within this framework, the building of trust is an intrinsic part of each of the core strategies and an essential part of the actions taken in support of strategies.

Key enablers to be successful

Cecile Ntakirutimana is among the Sector Education Officers trained by VVOB and the Rwanda Education Board. She shared her experiences of working in Gataraga, district Musanze, Northern Province. Mrs Ntakirutimana remembers having no support at first: "I had to put myself in the teachers' shoes to understand their obstacles, their fears, their frustrations and their hopes." Bringing different head teachers together to find common ground generated much resistance.

The four Professional Learning Networks workshops organised by VVOB helped her gain new skills including new insights on school leadership standards and key enablers to be successful. "These enablers deal with having purpose and focus, building strong relationships, fostering good collaboration, strengthening effective leadership, and encouraging accountability", Mrs Ntakirutimana explains.

Future opportunities

She believes that the Professional Learning Networks learning model helps head teachers to identify and acknowledge their weaknesses and limitations as they meet with and learn from their peers. She is very impressed by how these networks can be powerful tools in helping school leaders to articulate solutions to their problems: "As we address issues through the collective wisdom and the sharing of experiences by head teachers, we gain new perspectives on issues like school feeding, school sports, drop-outs, school performance and parental involvement. In this process, Sector Education Officers can be catalysts. So I really encourage my fellow Sector Education Officers to massively attend these workshops and other activities. I hope that more exercises in workshops and more school visits will be organised to help participants better grasp the theories."





Head teachers in a Professional Learning Network in Kigabiro Sector, Rwamagana District

Innovation for education in Rwanda

The Coaching School Leadership to achieve high-level learning outcomes project aimed to demonstrate that improving head teachers' school leadership competencies has a positive impact on pupils' learning outcomes. The project was implemented by VVOB, through a grant of the UK Department for International Development (DFID), as part of the Innovation for Education fund. It was an opportunity to test new ideas to improve the quality of education in Rwanda.

Project results

Through the project we learnt that head teachers perform a crucial role in the school's learning environment, creating conditions for effective classroom learning to take place. Emphasis on those head teachers' competences that support teaching and learning is required. We also learnt that a strict focus on head teachers' individual learning proved challenging and needs to be complemented by a stronger emphasis on group learning and dealing with shared professional problems.

The project provided a structured environment for Sector Education Officers and head teachers to meet with each other and interact around professional issues. This bringing together of decentralised level actors would otherwise not take place. Therefore, benefits of creating this mechanism go beyond the coaching of head teachers.

A dialogue on equity in education between teacher educators from Belgium and the Global South

The VVOB programme on equity in education builds dialogue between teacher educators in Flanders and VVOB's partner countries. In 2015, we organised four seminars for Flemish teacher educators. Topics were: entrance exams for teacher training, education in rural and urban areas, gender and school leadership, and intercultural pedagogy. Experts from Cambodia, Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Ecuador shared their inspiring educational practices. The cases presented during the seminars gave rise to reflection on equity in education in Flanders.

Intercultural pedagogy, an instructive exchange between Ecuador and Belgium

In December, Ángel Japón and Marcelo Quishpe from the University of Cuenca have visited Belgium. Both professors have expertise in intercultural pedagogy. They follow the developments on diversity in Ecuador, each from their own discipline, respectively pedagogy and historical science. During workshops and seminars, they met student teachers, teacher educators, pedagogical advisors and school leaders. In addition, they visited three primary schools in Brussels, Ghent and Minderhout, where they talked with teachers and school leaders. Although the contexts of diversity of the two countries are very different, the participants quickly discovered that the mechanisms to deal with diversity are very similar. Both countries face the exclusion of certain population groups from society. Both countries are searching for strategies to deal with diversity in education in a positive way.

Ángel Japón and Marcelo Quishpe from the University of Cuenca (Ecuador) in school Scharrel in Minderhout during their visit to Belgium





Secondary technical and vocational education



Strategic plans put the agricultural schools in the driver seats of their own development in the DR Congo



30

Agronomist inspectors of the three pilot provinces are involved in development and implementation of strategic plans



9

Pilot schools in the three pilot provinces have a strategic plan



9

School leaders of the pilot schools in the three pilot provinces reached



2,250

Learners of the 9 pilot schools in the three pilot provinces benefit

In the DR Congo, VVOB supports the Ministry of Education's commitment to improving its system of technical and vocational education in general and of agricultural education in particular. One of the activities in 2015 were trajectories for the development of strategic plans in nine pilot schools. For this the VVOB team collaborated with the Inspection Services. At the end of the year all pilot schools had developed strategic plans outlining their long-term vision. Implementation starts in 2016.

The VVOB programme in the DR Congo supports the development of technical agricultural education. Its aim is to ensure that technical education is a real lever for development of employment in the DR Congo by preparing students for decent work in accordance to the needs of society and the labour market. The programme's direct beneficiaries are the Inspection Services. A strengthened inspection can better support principals and teachers to improve their performance. This programme, supported by the Belgian Development Cooperation, runs from 2014 to 2016. It covers three educational provinces of the DR Congo and also the national level through departments of the Ministry of Education.

Developing Inspection Services develops schools

The programme team started by developing the capacity of the Inspection Services. The idea behind the intervention of VVOB is that the Inspection Services evolve from a control organisation towards an inspection that genuinely supports schools. The programme organised training sessions for inspectors. Aim was to share the supportive role they can play in schools and to show how they can accompany schools. Also, innovative practices were introduced to help the Inspection Services to improve their quality control system in schools, e.g. active and participative methods to increase the quality of education.

A strategic plan guides the development of the school

To enhance the performance of a school many decisions need to be taken on the management of the school and its pedagogical mission. In the case of an agricultural school, which produces goods and services, also the economic context of the school needs to be taken into account. This can be done through a strategic plan. It offers the opportunity to dream, to develop a clear vision and to set a course towards change. The Inspection Ser-

vices helped schools to identify the areas they must work on and they supported them to create the strategic plans that will guide them in this process.

Strong school, sound management

The horticulture and agricultural school of Kisantu is a good example of a school with a strong strategic plan. As soon as the school completed its plan and showed commitment to its implementation, doors to new partnerships were opened. To its credit, the school has several production units managed by the school management team and with the participation of students. Inspectors reinforce and support the school on educational aspects. For example, they organise pedagogical capacity development of teachers.

The strategic plan allows the school to keep control of its progress, while ensuring that no dimension of school development is forgotten. With a logical framework included in each plan, school inspectors have a tool to support the school for it to develop at best.



Improving the quality of Ecuadorian technical education through community networks

VVOB works closely with the Ministry of Education in Ecuador to increase the quality of secondary technical education in Ecuador. In 2014, we started a pilot on networks that connect schools and their communities. Among others, these networks activate and strengthen collaboration between the education and business sectors, as well as other institutions within the local labour markets. This way schools get access to expertise, machinery and training that are otherwise far beyond their reach.

The target of the VVOB programme on technical education in Ecuador is that technical education teachers and school leaders prepare students for their role in society and for decent work. Therefore, VVOB focuses on capacity development of partner organisations working in professional development of teachers, school leaders, counsellors, inspectors and mentors in technical education. This programme is financed by the Belgian Development Cooperation.

The main focus is to align, support and enhance technical education policy and programmes established by the Ministry of Education for *Teachers' Pedagogical and Technical Training, School Leadership with an Inclusive Approach and Student Vocational and Professional Counselling*. At the same time we promote cooperation and networking between the technical schools, the labour market and higher education institutions.



The teachers in technical education identified the components of the technical curriculum that are the most challenging. Afterwards, the networks started to improve the quality of the training in these components. These activities are implemented in three Educational Districts in *Santo Domingo de los Tsáchilas*. The model will be scaled up to a national level.





Teachers taking control

The teacher training courses implemented by the Ministry of Education had not yet focused on improving the technical skills of the teachers in technical education. Consequently, these teachers' technical training has been self-directed: they try to keep their technical skills up to date through afterhours work experiences or through courses they pay for themselves.

That is why the first step in the strategy of the networks is to create *Communities of Practice* of teachers who teach the same subjects. Each *Community of Practice* analyses the curriculum to identify specific training or infrastructural needs, such as access to machinery, high costs for training or outdated technical competences. Then, each *Community of Practice* reaches out in its region for the companies, universities and/or institutions that are knowledgeable on the selected competences or that have the technical equipment the schools lack.

Agricultural and industrial networks

Not only are the teachers' technical competences enhanced. Once a company has agreed to support the *Community of Practice*, teachers must negotiate on training details and on the equipment buying and borrowing conditions. In addition, teachers must define how all the schools in the network will benefit from the equipment and how the students will learn and practice the reinforced technical skills. All this hard work has big rewards: training sessions with the companies, competence-based lesson planning and working with (motivated!) students.

In 2015, five networks were already active: two for Welding and three for Agriculture. Through these collaborative partnerships have been established between participating schools, local businesses and institutions (public and private) and local education authorities.

VVOB as the axis between schools, companies and local and national education authorities

Quality technical education opens paths to fulfilling jobs for the students. VVOB's actions throughout the planning, implementation and evaluation stages of the networks have kept focus on this objective and on sustainability. Parallel lobbying at all levels of the Ministry of Education will allow for nation-wide upscaling, thus promoting these network activities all over the country.

Also, the training the teachers have completed through the networks gets official recognition as professional development, allowing access to salary upgrading. Teachers and pedagogical advisors developed resources, such as planning formats, model classes, observation guides and self-assessment tools. In the logic of peer learning and peer exchange in *Communities of Practice*, these publications are publicly available.



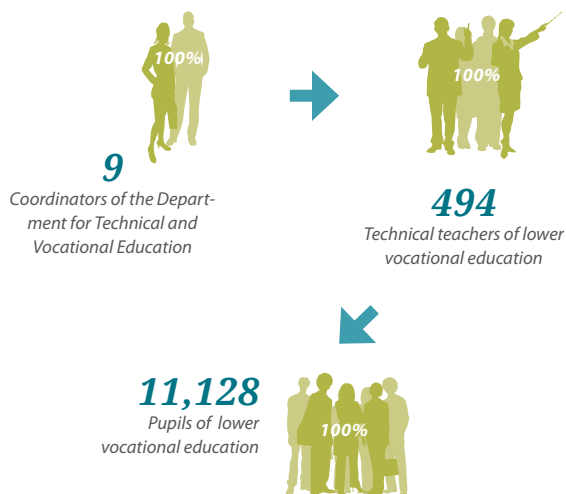
Mrs Laila Kariem, coordinator 'Construction' from the Department for Technical and Vocational Education

“The gap between education and the world of work will get smaller as the collaboration leads to better alignment.”

Vocational education and private sector are drawing closer together in Suriname

Within the current programme in Suriname, VVOB cooperates with the Department for Technical and Vocational Education on developing sustainable partnerships between education and the private sector. VVOB drew on the experience of the *Regional Technological Centre East Flanders* to support the coordinators of this department through workshops, study vis-

its and coaching. In the course of 2015 the coordinators started to take their own initiatives. Mrs Laila Kariem, coordinator 'Construction', for instance, approached representatives of the woodworking industry to provide training in blackboard sketching, bench carpentry and mechanical woodwork to 24 teachers of the lower vocational education.



Since 2015 VVOB Suriname supports the strengthening of 54 lower vocational education schools in the whole country. We invest in capacity development of the relevant institutes and departments of the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. With them we strengthen the collaboration between education and the private sector, competence based education, internal quality assurance, professional development of teachers, support for students who require additional assistance and the system of school-wide inspection.

No training without wood

Mrs Kariem relates: "The working group motivated me to have a conversation with the management of our department. Thanks to the VVOB training 'How to write project proposals' I was able to create a proposal. I contacted the Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KKF) as well as the representatives of the woodworking companies. The wood for the training we received from the timber companies, while the KKF provided us with wood glue. Together with the other trainers we determined the content of the training activities. Apart from technical skills the vocational teachers also learnt to effectively manage their classrooms." The trainers too, confirmed the success of the training: "Attendance was great and seeing the enthusiasm of the participants, we can consider these trainings a must."

Theory in practice: blackboard sketching and mechanical woodworking

The participating Building and Construction teachers highly appreciated this initiative as a refresher course for their knowledge and skills. "It was a good decision to include blackboard sketching in the training", a teacher recalls. "The students receive sketching lessons during their theoretical classes. When teaching practical classes, you don't always think of sketching as an important factor and tend to neglect it. Now I draw the sketch on the blackboard in

all my lessons and discuss it with the students. I also pay more attention to maintenance and safety. After class the students have to clean all the machines and grease the parts." Another teacher confirms the importance of practical classes: "During the training we worked a lot with wood working machines. In school we have also purchased machines for the students and I noticed that when we use them during practical classes, the students are more interested. We have to continue this collaboration between the industry and the education department so that the learning process of both teachers and their students can improve."

Plans for the future

Inspired by this first success, Mrs Kariem has already contacted Surinamese companies for a subsequent training on painting techniques. In this way we hope to reach all vocational teachers of the lower vocational education. "If this approach is extended in a sustainable way to other fields of study the teachers will be able to teach their subjects in a better way. On top of that the gap between education and the world of work will get smaller as the collaboration leads to better alignment between the two. Youngsters will be better prepared for work in a company, which is to the benefit of both the youngsters and the companies. I am proud of what I have accomplished", Mrs Kariem concludes.



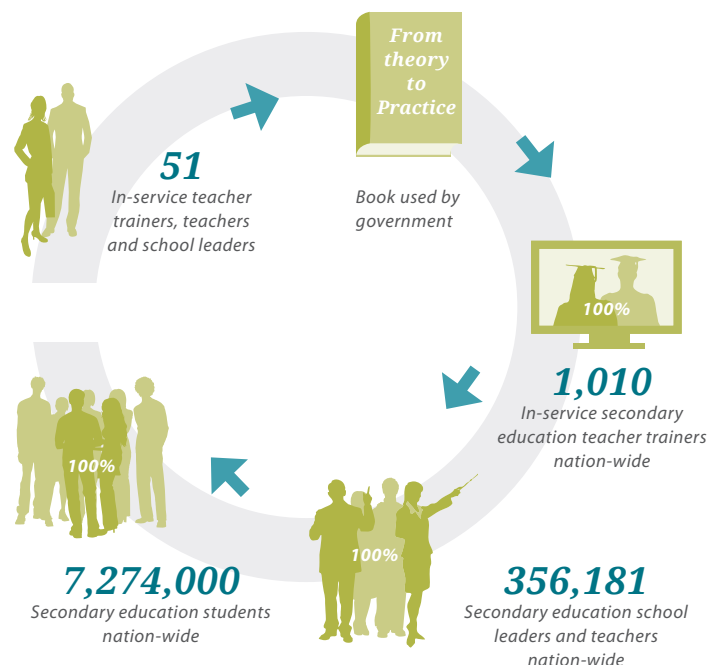


Upscaling of quality career guidance in Vietnam

The Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training emphasises the importance of career guidance in secondary education. In line with the national policy, the VVOB Career Guidance programme (2011-2015) strengthened the capacity to organise career guidance with provincial Departments of Education and Training, women organisations, communities,

secondary education teachers and school leaders in Quang Nam and Nghe An provinces. The Ministry of Education and Training integrated the programme's booklets and documented good practices into the new curriculum for nationwide use from 2017 onwards.

The two-year programme (2014-2015) on career guidance in Vietnam continued from a first phase (2011-2013). It is funded by the Belgian government and supports parents, teachers and school leaders in improving the quality and relevance of career guidance for secondary students. The programme focuses on extending the career guidance approach to a nation-wide scale; elaborating the student-centred and gender-sensitive career guidance approach with provincial partners; and guidance and support of partners in implementing plans at school level.



Learning from good practices

There is a wide gap between the education system's focus and the labour market's need. Career guidance helps students in making informed study and career choices. These should be based on their interests and abilities, and on an understanding of career and labour market conditions. After a VVOB capacity development trajectory, school leaders and teachers organised a variety of student-centred and gender-sensitive career guidance activities for students. In order to draw lessons from these activities, 51 in-service teacher trainers, school leaders and teachers analysed these career guidance experiences. The results of this exercise were published in the booklet *'From theory to practice'*. This booklet is used for further dissemination and application of career guidance.

Upscaling good practices

The Ministry of Education and Training monitored the VVOB programme on career guidance. It acknowledged the programme's results: enhanced quality and relevance of career guidance activities. The Ministry of Education and Training organised career guidance training - direct and through e-learning - for more than 1,000 in-service secondary education teacher trainers. This way, they covered all 63 Vietnamese provinces and main cities. VVOB supported in the content development for and during this training. The training was based on VVOB's work and results in Nghe An and Quang Nam provinces. In addition, the Ministry of Educa-

tion and Training officially approved a set of ten student-centred and gender-sensitive career guidance booklets and has included them in the national reference list for in-service training.

The ball is rolling

In 2015, the national led training activities, which used the VVOB programme's educational resources, reached all provinces. Moreover, five departments of the Ministry of Education and Training, 15 provincial Departments of Education and Training and 16 educational universities and colleges participated in workshops on developing competences of teachers in training in career guidance for secondary students. In these workshops, the VVOB programme's experiences and results were used as a basis for in-depth discussions.

Furthermore, a national research report made use of VVOB's student competency framework for the development of study courses. This framework makes three logical steps explicit: know yourself, understand the career opportunities and develop your career plan. The courses introduce technical and professional careers to secondary education students. By the end of the programme 356,181 school leaders and teachers and 7,274,274 students benefitted from enhanced career guidance.





Biodiversity in the DR Congo's agricultural education

In 2015 we ran a project with the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences. For this we collaborated with the Congolese Ministries of Environment and Education to sensitise school leaders, teachers, students and the community on the importance of sustainable agriculture and biodiversity. The project organised open days in the nine pilot schools of our programme on technical education and in their neighbouring schools, in three provinces. This was done on the *International Day for Biological Diversity*.

First, the project organised a workshop to sensitise inspectors and teachers of the pilot schools on the importance of biodiversity and sustainable agriculture. The workshop participants planned activities for the open days and developed ideas for pedagogical resources. They wrote a story for a small theatre play and drew concepts for an accompanying poster. In the three project provinces the celebrations for the *International Day for Biological Diversity* started early with a procession of the schools in the streets to invite the community to participate. In the schools were speeches, the theatre play, songs, poetry, an exhibition of school products, tree planting, and games sensitising on environmental issues. The participation of the schools and their communities was high, and inspired other schools to organise this kind of activity themselves in future.

Elaboration of a strategy for technical and vocational education and training in the DR Congo

The situation of the system of technical and vocational education in the DR Congo is very complex. Seven ministries have responsibilities for this education subsector. VVOB executed an assignment for the Belgian Development Agency (BTC) to elaborate a common strategy for this subsector with all these stakeholders for the period 2016-2025. Preceding the strategy, VVOB guided, together with BIEF, a consultancy organisation, a diagnosis of the strengths and weaknesses of the current Congolese system of technical and vocational education.

Analysing technical and vocational education

The elaboration of a strategy demands a good knowledge of the state of the current system of technical and vocational education. VVOB organised four workshops in four provinces with the participation of all stakeholders: the seven ministries, employers'

federations, teachers, principals and parents. The results of the diagnosis are written down in a report that identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the system of this education subsector. This is the basis to develop the strategy.

A strategy for 2016-2025

The strategy defines the priority actions for technical and vocational education for the coming six years. The strategic plan first defines the vision of the DR Congo for the system of this education subsector. The strategy consists of three principal lines: access and equity, quality, and efficiency of the education system. The strategy contains concrete projections on improved access and retention in technical and vocational education. It estimated that the implementation of the strategy will cost 60 million USD for the period 2016-2025.



Strengthening technical education by aligning to labour market needs in Ecuador

In 2015, the Ministry of Education and VVOB started a short project to better align the supply of technical education programmes with the demand on the labour market. This was done by evaluating the existing supply together with other ministries and the productive sector, by updating the curricula, by determining where the labour market demand is situated geographically per programme and by looking for open source didactical materials to support the teachers of these programmes.

Twenty reformed curricula make a strong basis for a new supply of technical education

Via inter-ministerial meetings and inter-sectorial workshops with the productive sector, a new catalogue of technical education programmes was determined in which the existing programmes were validated and new programmes were added. From this list, 20 programmes were prioritised for having a particular importance for the changes of the economic reality of the country.

For the 20 programmes, professional profiles were written and validated in cooperation with schools, universities and companies. Finally, for every programme, the evolution in labour market demand was determined and where in the country employees from these programmes were needed.

In 2016, the curriculum will be written and open source didactical resources will be validated.





Ecuadorian youngsters learn about cacao and gain entrepreneurial skills

In 2015, VVOB cooperated in the framework of the synergy project of VECO/Vredeseilanden on cacao in the province of Esmeraldas in the North-West of Ecuador. We installed two didactical production units about cacao in two agricultural schools. The objective is to stimulate entrepreneurship with youngsters and to motivate them for working in the cacao industry. The didactical production units were designed in collaboration with local cacao producers, the Ministry of Education, the chocolate company Pacari and the Belgian company Bekaert.

Stimulating entrepreneurial skills and fostering collaboration

A manual on how to design and execute didactical production units for technical schools was validated and piloted in two agri-

cultural schools where a didactical production unit on cacao was implemented. Local cacao producers, teachers, parents and students of the two agricultural schools in Esmeraldas and a number of companies, like the organic chocolate company Pacari and the Belgian Company Bekaert, collaborated in the design and implementation of different modules that demonstrate various aspects of the cacao industry. Students play a vital role in the design, maintenance and marketing of the cacao products that result from these units.

All of this was executed in a didactical framework so that students learn on the different aspects of entrepreneurship. This way the didactical productive units stimulate entrepreneurial skills with youngsters and foster collaboration between technical agricultural schools and local companies.



Belgian Common Programme on Technical and Vocational Education in Rwanda

Till 2015 there was a Belgian common programme on technical and vocational education in Rwanda. It supported the implementation of the reform of this education subsector by spearheading a three-level approach.

The programme supported the Workforce Development Authority, on the macro level, in creating the required institutional and policy environment. On the next level, the Integrated Polytechnic Regional Centre-South was assisted to support and coordinate the reform of the technical and vocational education in the South. Finally, on the micro level, the programme developed capacities of 24 Centres for Technical and Vocational Education in the South for the implementation of a new competency-based training and assessment approach for improved quality and more alignment to labour market needs.

Achievements in 2015

As 2015 was the last year of this programme, all activities revolved around exit strategies to ensure the sustainability of the operations. Efforts were put on capitalising the programme approaches, sharing experiences and lessons learnt during its five-year implementation period.

Also, activities focused on the finalisation of started interventions especially to support the capacity development of 14 new pilot schools, added in 2014.

Experiences and lessons learnt were documented and shared with partners and other stakeholders at all levels during a symposium in October 2015. A booklet summarising school management and leadership approaches was developed and shared and working sessions to share experiences and to learn from each other were organised for the participants of the symposium.

Active teaching and learning in teacher education in Uganda

In 2014, VVOB started a consultancy assignment for the Belgian Development Agency in Uganda. Together with a group of Ugandan experts, a professional development trajectory and a training tool box for teacher trainers were developed. These aim at the teacher education in Technical and Vocational Education, Health Education and General Secondary Education. In 2015, this trajectory was finalised.

Increased Reflective Practice

In 2015, the project organised three training activities on Active Teaching and Learning (ATL), and disseminated them to nine teacher training institutions. Trained teacher trainers tried out

and applied ATL in their own teaching practice. They received systematic pedagogical support from the Ugandan experts involved in the development of the approach.

216 (out of 317 or 68%) trainees submitted a portfolio to showcase their ATL practice. These portfolios demonstrate that teacher trainers increasingly reflect on their own teaching practice. Through improved lesson planning, peer observations and action research, teacher trainers realise that there is a spectrum of pedagogical approaches. These teacher trainers in turn model this reflective practice to their students, future teachers in Technical and Vocational, Health, and General Secondary Education.



Agricultural schools in Flanders, Ecuador and the DR Congo join hands

The SchoolLinks programme supports the exchange and co-operation between schools in Flanders and schools abroad. This way, teachers and pupils improve the perception they have of each other, they develop intercultural competences and increase the connection and solidarity in the world. VVOB offers the schools tailored counselling, financial support, training, manuals, a website, newsletters and support through internships.

In 2015, VVOB and the Flemish Department of Environment, Nature and Energy signed a partnership agreement. Part of the collaboration is to set up a pilot project on school links between environmentally friendly agricultural schools. Two Flemish agri-

cultural schools started a school link with respective schools in the DR Congo and Ecuador. These schools are part of the VVOB programmes on technical and vocational education in these countries. The pupils of the schools exchange on issues related to global citizenship, biodiversity, monoculture and climate change. The teachers collaborate on learning tools and didactics for agricultural education. In Ecuador, VVOB took the lead in developing a method that strengthens technical and vocational education teachers in working with their students on issues of sustainability. Later on, this method will be tested in the schools involved in the DR Congo and Flanders.

www.scholenbanden.be/english





Principles for a smooth transition to the labour market

VVOB is a founding member of Educaid.be. This is the Belgian platform for education and development. The platform strengthens the capacity and expertise of its members - 45 Belgian organisations – through exchange of information and knowledge and promotion of cooperation and synergy. In addition, it supports Belgian policy making on education and development.

Highlights in 2015

Some examples ... In 2015, thirteen *Educaid.be* members, all technical and vocational education and training experts, worked together on a note about nine basic principles for a smooth transition from technical and vocational education and training to the labour market. The note will be published in 2016.

In October, the platform brought together Belgian higher education institutions and development actors that operate in the

education sector in the South. The meeting provided inspiration for collaboration between these actors through showcasing existing partnerships. It also created a space to meet each other and exchange experiences and interests. *Educaid.be* also organised a training for its members on gender-sensitive indicators in development projects.

On the policy front *Educaid.be* maintains an ongoing dialogue with the Belgian development cooperation on education issues. In May, for instance, the platform organised a session for Belgian parliamentarians on education and development. This session led to parliamentary questions on the education sector within the Belgian development cooperation.

www.educaid.be



Financial Report

Turnover dynamics

The total turnover of VVOB is 10,900,296 euro in 2015. The turnover of the association can fluctuate substantially over a period of three years. This is explained by the dynamics of the three-year programmes conducted with funding from the Belgian government (Directorate General for Development).

The spending rate within the DGD programme progresses from a relatively low turnover of 6,873,048 euro in 2014 to a turnover of 9,738,660 euro in 2015. The intended spending rate of the anticipated 28,500,000 euro for the DGD multi-year programme 2014-2016 is at least 95%. This assumes a turnover of at least 11,000,000 euro in 2016.

Funding

VVOB distinguishes three main sources of funding. In the order of magnitude, DGD takes the first place with 9,738,660 euro. The second source are education programmes financed by other donors, amounting to 888,401 euro. The third source is the Flemish government contributing 270,000 euro to the operating expenses of the head office in Brussels. This is 10% less than the previous year due to structural budget cuts in almost all domains of the Flemish government.

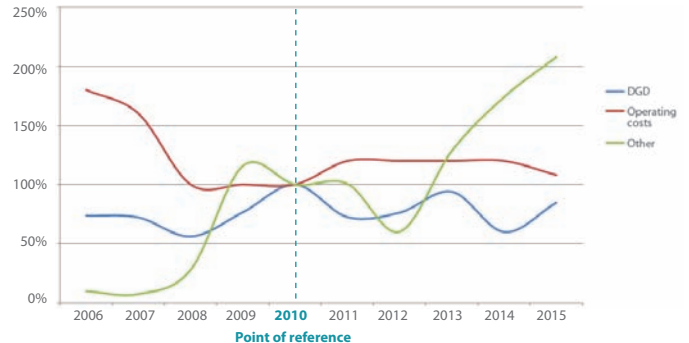
Hence in 2015, the funding by donors other than DGD was 1,158,401 euro or 10.63% of the total turnover. The share of other donors within the overall funding is steadily increasing the past ten years.

European Commission funding becomes a recurring value in our portfolio. In two EU programmes in Zambia 458,614 euro was spent.

Also in Zambia, 16,515 euro was spent in a project of 150,000 euro funded by the ELMA Foundation. In Rwanda, a pilot project of DFID was completed with an expenditure of 60,347 euro in 2015. For services to their programmes in the DR Congo and Uganda VVOB received 128,760 euro of BTC. In Ecuador VVOB cooperates with VECO through DGD funding and through national funding of the Ecuadorian Ministry of Education. A total of 41,060 euro was spent in this collaboration. The SchoolLinks programme is supported by the Flemish Government with 117,000 euro. This amount was affected by a budget cut of 10% as well compared to the previous year.

The below graph shows the evolution in terms of percentages of the three respective expenditure components with 2010 as the reference (100%) for each component. The DGD spending decreased as in the reference year 2010 the turnover was exceptionally high; 11,488,249 euro. The DGD grant is unchanged 9,500,000 euro in the period 2010-2015. Operating costs show a slight downward trend. The other income doubles in five years. In the total turnover, they are increasingly visible but they remain relatively limited.

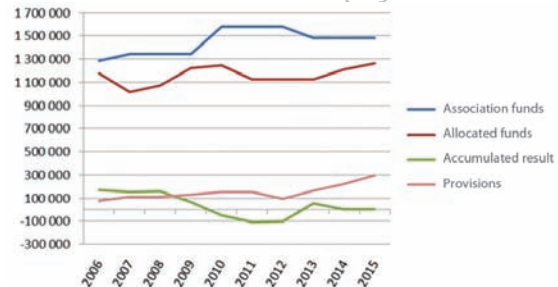
Evolution of the expenditures in terms of percentages



Equity

The capacity of pre-funding programmes, increased by 4.25% to 3,041,051 euro. This amount includes the association funds, allocated funds, accumulated result and provisions for liabilities. Because a growing number of donors are involved, substantial higher provisions are set for risks within the programmes in the South.

Evolution equity



Results and Balance

The profit of the financial year 2015 is 49,492 euro. The balance total amounts to 5,944,350 euro against 7,167,195 euro in 2014.

Audit

Audit firm Mazars carried out punctual audits in the programmes in the South to support internal financial control. In 2015, audits were carried out in Zimbabwe, Cambodia and South Africa.

The General Assembly of June 19th, 2014 has appointed BDO as company auditor for the financial years 2014, 2015 and 2016. BDO concludes without reservation that the financial statements give a true and fair view of the assets, the financial situation of the association, on December 31, 2015 and of its results for the financial year then ended, in accordance with the accounting principles framework applicable in Belgium.

Balance sheet

(all in euro)

	2015	2014	2013
Assets			
A. Fixed assets	50,058	58,002	48,302
B. Accounts receivable (due within 1 year)	306,113	204,123	115,619
C. Cash and investments	5,512,912	6,820,848	3,911,055
D. Prepaid expenses	75,267	84,222	61,231
Total Assets	5,944,350	7,167,195	4,136,207
Liabilities			
A. Reserves and accrued profit/loss	2,743,551	2,694,059	2,660,274
B. Provisions	297,500	222,888	165,000
C. Accounts payable (due within 1 year)	2,903,298	4,250,248	1,310,933
Total Liabilities	5,944,350	7,167,195	4,136,207

Profit and loss statement

(all in euro)

	2015	2014	2013
Costs			
A. Structural costs	840,726	721,153	908,434
a. Services and diverse goods	300,171	263,260	320,314
b. Personnel costs	435,539	377,702	383,568
c. Depreciation	21,158	16,791	12,909
d. Other costs	83,858	63,399	191,643
B. Management costs	967,235	820,309	1,076,630
a. Personnel costs	808,743	727,288	867,046
b. Audit, monitoring and evaluation, learning processes	87,346	51,063	112,056
c. Other	71,146	41,959	97,528
C. Operational costs (programme costs)	9,042,842	6,375,308	9,634,904
a. DGD programme	8,224,554	5,667,797	9,108,493
b. FICA programme (<i>SchoolLinks</i>)	117,124	129,627	126,953
c. ECSITE	248,290		
d. QEECS	178,059		
e. Other programmes	274,815	577,885	399,459
Total costs	10,850,804	7,916,771	11,619,969
Income			
a. Subsidy	10,897,061	7,917,884	11,640,226
b. Financial income	3,235	9,912	9,941
c. Other income	0	22,760	22,625
Total income	10,900,296	7,950,556	11,672,792
Appropriations and withdrawing			
Result before use	49,492	33,785	52,823
Profits / losses transferred from previous financial year	0	55,692	-102,211
Withdrawal of equity	0	0	102,211
	49,492	89,477	52,824
Use of result	49,492	89,477	-2,869
Deferral of fiscal year	0	0	55,692



Annex

Management of VVOB in 2015

Below is the list of the members of the General Assembly of VVOB in 2015.

The members of the Board of Directors are on top of the list.

Chairperson: Mr Stefaan Van Mulders, Administrator-General of Youth Welfare Agency

Mrs Barbara Bonte, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mrs Lynn De Groot, Department of Finance and Budget

Mrs Ingeborg De Meulemeester, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mrs Katelijn De Nijs, Advisor Cabinet Minister De Croo

Mr Jo De Ro, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mrs Caroline Gennez, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mr Jos Geysels, Chairperson of 11.11.11

Prof Paul Janssen, Delegate of VLIR-UOS, Hasselt University

Mrs Judith Kerkhof, Development and Education Expert

Mr Luc Lathouwers, Secretary-General Department of Administration Affairs

Mr Toon Martens, General Director of Leuven University College

Mrs Elisabeth Meuleman, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mr Marc Olivier, Honorary Chairperson of the Flemish parliament, Founding member

Dr Björn Possé, Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research

Mrs Micheline Scheys, Secretary-General Department of Education and Training

Mr Jef Tavernier, Development and Education Expert

Mrs Heidi Vander Poorten, Team leader Equal Opportunities, Flemish Agency for Home Governance

Mr Koen Van der Schaeghe, Director V.I.W. Foundation

Mr Luc Van de Velde, General Director of Erasmus University College Brussels

Mrs Kristien Verbrugghen, Director of VLIR-UOS

Mr Koen Verlaeckaert, Secretary-General Flanders International

Mr Johan Verstreken, Member of the Flemish parliament

Mr Lieven Viaene, Inspector-General of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training

Mr Patrick Blondé, Delegate of VLHORA

Mrs Gerda Bruneel, Educational Counselor *Katholiek Onderwijs Vlaanderen*

Mr Patriek Delbaere, General Director OVSG

Mrs Veerle Hendrickx, Delegate of VLHORA

Prof Herwig Leirs, member of VLIR-UOS, University of Antwerp

Prof Marc Nyssen, member of VLIR-UOS, VUB

Mr Rudi Schollaert, Development and Education Expert

Mr Roger Standaert, Development and Education Expert

Mr Jan Van Doren, Chairperson of V.I.W. Foundation

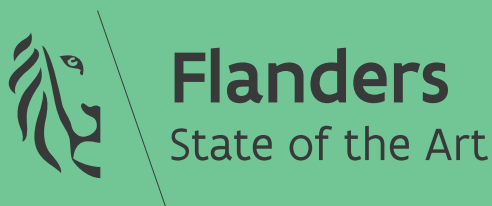
Mrs Raymonda Verdyck, Managing Director of GO!

Acknowledgements

VVOB is a Flemish development organisation specialised in increasing the quality of education. We work in four continents in early, primary and/or secondary technical and vocational education. In these three subsectors, we focus on strengthening local education actors to enable them to improve the professional development of teachers and school leaders. This capacity building is a means to sustainable development and poverty reduction.



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