



Annual Report 2008

Good development aid evolves

Colophon

This annual report is the result of a joint effort of all VVOB staff members all over the world. It was originally published in Dutch in June 2009.

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<u>Maneno</u>	
Shu	
mwu	
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themanini	
na vyoo	
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gwanide	
ngatanga	
ewa	Ewu
gwo	gwi
bwo	bwi

<u>Moja</u>	<u>Wingi</u>
Chukula	vyakula
chura	vyura
Chombo	vyombo
choo	vyoo
Chumba	vyumba
Cherehani	vyerehani
Chandarua	vyandarua
chepeo	vyepeo
chuma	vyuma
ndizi	rdizi
nyasi	nyasi
chupa	chupa
meza	meza
kalamu	kalamu
kengele	kengele
samaki	samaki
nguo	nguo
chaki	chaki

<u>Imoja</u>	<u>Wingi</u>
Mdomo	midomo
Mkate	mikate
Mshale	mishale
Mkanda	mikanda
mshumaa	mishumaa
mkeka	mikeka
mti	miti
mkebe	mikebe
mlango	milango
mpira	mipira
mwezi	miezi
mwaka	miaka
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Todas
wash
Loop
Jump
Clear
Open
play
Pick
finish
Learn
push
Walk
pray
work
Change
cry
try
try

Number
100 — one
200 — two
300 — three
400 — four
500 — five
600 — six
700 — seven
800 — eight
900 — nine
105 — one
113 — one
128 — one
134 — one
246 — two
367 — three



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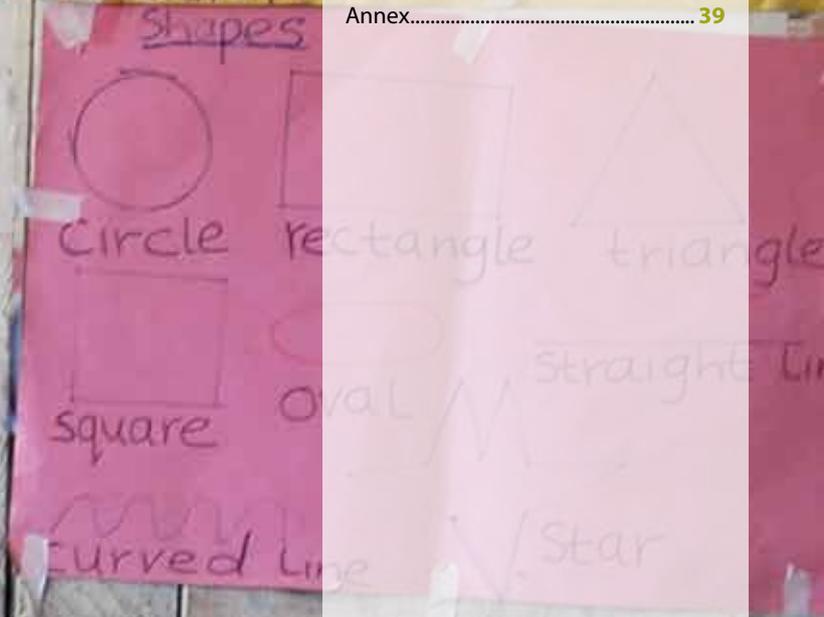
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legally bound by it.*

Yesterday
— washed
— Looked
— jumped
— cleaned
— opened
— played
— picked
— finished
— learned
— pushed
— walked
— prayed
— worked
— changed
— cried
— tried
— said

an egg
an apple
an axe
an arrow
an ox
an orange
an elephant
an eagle
an ink-pot
an owl
an umbrella
an aeroplane

one hundred
two hundred
three hundred
four hundred
five hundred
six hundred
seven hundred
eight hundred
nine hundred
one hundred and five
one hundred and thirteen
one hundred and twenty eight
one hundred and thirty four
one hundred and forty six
one hundred and sixty seven





Preface

2008 has been a memorable year for VVOB vzw

I have gladly accepted the proposal of the Flemish government to take up the presidency of the VVOB. Upon entering the board of directors I had already returned to the association which I well knew professionally since a couple of years but I somewhat lost track of the association during a period characterized by a lot of reorganization, operational as well as concerning content.

Our activities in the Third World went well but could be improved. This was the conclusion last year of the multi-year programme 2003-2007, which was implemented in close cooperation with the federal Directorate-General for Development Cooperation. By focusing on less objectives in fewer countries, and by using different 'instruments' it is possible to get better results with the same efforts. This is in a nutshell the logic behind the VVOB programme which has been put into practice since 2008. Our objectives are mainly focusing on one sector: the formal primary and secondary education. In accordance with the *Declaration of Paris* the objectives are located and accomplished in dialogue with strategic partners, like for example the services of the local departments of the Ministry of Education and teacher colleges. Though the VVOB associates play an important role, activities are not solely their undertaking. There are at least as many local co-workers. Besides the deployment of personnel there is space for minor investments and especially for capacity building among our partners.

2008 is the year in which VVOB not only came to the front in the Third World but also in Flanders. VVOB is in close dialogue with the Flemish International Cooperation Agency responsible for the drawing out of the programme *SchoolLinks*. The Flemish primary and secondary schools have the opportunity to develop a sustainable relationship with a school in the Third World. The main focus rests on education and solidarity. VVOB develops the necessary contacts and offers inspiration for possible activities, but the schools themselves decide on the process to follow and the eventual deployment of means. During the preliminary inquiry it seemed that a lot of schools already are interested in this new model. We are convinced that this is a necessary and excellent addition to the already existing programme of development education.

2008 is a year of contradictions when we are talking about indicators of development. On the one hand one places the threshold for absolute poverty a little bit higher (from 1 dollar a day to 2 dollars) which results in a broadening of the objective to ban poverty with hundreds of millions of people. On the other hand there is also positive news about successes thanks to past efforts, like the progress being made in the battle against HIV/AIDS or about the globally expanding number of students that attend primary education. Both these conclusions are motivating us to contribute to that what development aid really needs and deserves: a broadening and more active support. That is why the VVOB increases its efforts on the field of external communication, besides its exertions in the forging of school links.

I am convinced that this annual report offers an image of a dynamic, dedicated association with a vision of the future. It remains an extreme challenge to give form to these dynamics in accordance with the Board of Directors and the General Assembly of VVOB, our partners of the Flemish and federal government, and our partners in our associated countries.

Stefaan Van Mulders
President VVOB vzw





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Introduction

What is 'good development cooperation'?

It may seem odd for development organizations to ask this question. It is however common knowledge for those active in this market of well-being and happiness that this reflection is back on the agenda. A series of trends and developments have turned the question "what is good aid" again into a hot topic.

Dealing with change

Today everyone feels the impact of a globalized world. Our view on the world has broadened, whether we want it or not. Research into public support in Flanders (11.11.11, 2007) shows that the Flemish public has an increasingly positive attitude towards development cooperation. And the readiness to make personal efforts in this field has increased as well.

The main driving forces are solidarity and self development (the desire to make a personal contribution). At the same time the Flemish public has developed a more critical attitude towards classic ways of development cooperation and the well-known actors working in this field. At the same time, the South as well makes itself heard more emphatically. Our partners in the South increasingly demand more ownership of our common actions, of course not everywhere in the same way or with the same intensity, but the trend is clear.

Not surprisingly VVOB has reviewed its own role in this changed environment, as precisely in this context opportunities arise for a more efficient and more contemporary development cooperation. Central notions in the actual context are: room for own, personalized contribution, reciprocity and dialogue between equal players.

Premises of the Declaration of Paris

After 25 years of operating in the field of education and training in the South, VVOB has acquired a wealth of experience and hence occupies a unique position in the Belgian, Flemish and international environment of development actors.

Nevertheless, we react to the changed environment and the debate on the relevance of development cooperation, by continuing investment in change in our programmes in the South. We have adopted the principles of aid effectiveness in the *Declaration of Paris* as guidelines in order to increase the quality and effectiveness of our concrete day to day support. More specifically this involves more room for ownership and leadership for our partners, align our choices to local policies, harmonising our actions with those of other actors, strengthening of result oriented management by our partners, the ploughing in of reciprocal responsibility. In the chapter *VVOB in the 'South'* (p. 15) one can discover how we deal with this in practice.

Building fundamentals in Flanders

Apart from that, we exploit since 2008 the substantial activities based in the South for the further development of our programmes in Flanders ('North operations'). These consist of an offer for trainees as well as the programme *SchoolLinks*. Both are aimed at the Flemish educational world. As such VVOB most specifically wants to respond to the increasing need for international contact and for North-South cooperation in Flanders. Because in the end we strive for a more solidarity based society, with a substantial level of support for the educational talents and capabilities that live and thrive in the South. More information can be found in the chapter *'North operations'* (p. 9).





'North operations'

VVOB Programmes in Flanders

VVOB strives for a sustainable World with equal opportunities for everyone. We try to contribute to this objective by means of our educational programmes in the South. But we also have a mission in Flanders where we try to increase the social basis for more solidarity in our society. We call this our *North operations* although it's somehow artificial to split up North and South in this way. Both are increasingly interwoven in today's global society.

Globalization has also its consequences for education. Correct perception of the South and the North-South issues and appropriate knowledge and skills regarding interculturality and world citizenship are becoming increasingly important. Educational institutions take advantage of this growing need and try to integrate international cooperation into their organization and operations. This cooperation between North and South can be of great value for both parties.

VVOB considers it as its mission to support this growing need for international contact and cooperation and to look for an added value for all parties involved. Therefore, we extend a framework to these initiatives of the education sector to increase their chances of success and to develop them in a more qualitative and sustainable way.

At the end of 2008, a new important step was taken in the development of the *North operations* of VVOB. Two new employees were recruited. The first is responsible for the implementation of the operations here in Flanders. The other one is a communication officer who is responsible for streamlining the internal VVOB communication and the communication to our diverse target group in Flanders.

The *North operations* in Flanders are actually made concrete into two programmes. There is the *Traineeship Programme* which is specifically oriented towards the Flemish colleges of higher education. The programme *SchoolLinks* is oriented towards primary and secondary schools. While our programmes in the *South* focus on the improvement of the quality of education and poverty reduction, the main objective of these two programmes is to enlarge in Flanders the social basis and support for development cooperation and international solidarity. It is obvious however that we strive to maximize all of these goals. Both the *North* and the *South* programmes should mutually reinforce each other and should contribute to each other's objectives.



SchoolLinks

School in the North is looking for a school in the South for a long term and interesting relationship

In September 2008, the Flemish International Cooperation Agency (FICA) approved the subsidy dossier of the VVOB consolidating the North-South *SchoolLinks*. This programme will run for a period of three years. However, our aim is to continue and, if possible, to enlarge this programme. A school link is a commitment between a primary or secondary school in Flanders and a partner school in the South. Supporting each other, both schools work together in a process focusing on educational targets. How a school link will develop, depends on the school's own reality and that of the partner school.

Exploration

This programme will start as from September 2008 with an explorative phase. During this phase, we will list the visions, interests and possibilities of the schools in Flanders. In the South, the same process is set up in the different partner countries with which the VVOB is working. Both in the North and in the South, it seems to be that many schools are very interested in this programme. During 2009, if the initiative continues to go well, we will be able to initiate the first school links.

Added value

Such link is a concrete and realistic added value for Flemish schools willing to embrace and to focus on the South. It can be considered as a tool for teachers who want their kids and students to explore differences and similarities with 'the other' in the South. This leads to a

clearer image of 'the other', and alters their conception of their own reality.

Simultaneously, it creates an opportunity to approach themes about globalization in a less abstract way. Via the school link, students will be able to undertake something against the world injustice. In such way they can contribute to a sustainable world where there are equal opportunities for everybody.

The globalising society is also for schools in the South the occasion to devote to more international contacts and exchange. For students, broadening their horizons and obtaining new skills are an important and new challenges. Teachers have a strong need for experience exchanges with Flemish teachers, who have often better training opportunities.

A school link may not burn too quickly

The link which is formed between schools should be clearly identified in advance. What are the expectations, what are the targets? After kick off, one of the partners in the school link may not be disappointed by the other who is not respecting the agreement. In Suriname, there is an expression: "A sang e brong leki karoe wiri faya." This means: "Light a fire by using dry grains, and it will burn very quickly." I do not expect this situation from a school link. In fact, it should be something developing. It should continue for a very long term, not only today or tomorrow.

Miss Ilse Goedhoop
Head Teacher Sint-Thadeusschool Saramaca, Suriname





Interculturality is an enrichment, not a threat

The education project of my school has these main objectives: overall education of the person and values for life. We focus on broad interests in world events, tolerance, respecting the opinion of others, positive attitude towards the society, values like charity and equality of all people. A partnership with the South forms an added value in the realization of our own education project.

It is a way to learn more about another culture, and simultaneously a search for similarities and a discovery of differences. The students learn to look with respect to another culture. With these activities we can help constructing a dam against arising racism. Children and youngsters should be raised with a vision that multiculturalism or interculturality is an enrichment for our society and not a threat.

Miss Gilberte Verbeeck
Teacher St-Jozefinstituut Essen, Belgium

Challenge

We realize that there will be challenges when setting up such link in a sustainable way. It is certainly a slow growth process where a lot of obstacles have to be overcome. With this programme the VVOB is supporting those schools that are willing to start this challenging and fascinating adventure. Due to the presence of our associates in nine partner countries, we are capable to support also the schools in the South during the process. In this way they can help to make the link more sustainable.

More

Step by step, you can follow the evolution of the programme on the website www.scholenbanden.be.



Cultural added value

Our motivation is building a bridge between cultures which has advantages to both. We want to exchange knowledge and a wide range of ideas. Simultaneously this offers chances to learn to respect each other and to create fantastic friendships.

Miss Danielle Van de Vel
Head Teacher Shim Merksem, Belgium



Traineeship Programme

Towards a more active involvement

Youth traineeships to the South have been strongly on the rise in the last few years. Students have the opportunity to experience both an immersion into a culture other than their own and an initial taste of working life. Through a traineeship with one of VVOB's programmes, the students are offered a solid structure and a decent accompaniment.

Focus on colleges

Whereas university students have already been going on traineeships to the South for relatively a long time, for students at the colleges of higher education it is a rather new phenomenon. Therefore they have often more difficulties with finding a suitable location. VVOB tries to meet this need and therefore focuses its traineeship programme primarily on colleges. By doing this, VVOB wants to support the internationalization movement in the colleges.

Added Value

Due to the relative short duration of the traineeship, the minimal professional experience of the student and the highly specific context, the added value for either the South or for VVOB is rather limited. Still, we are convinced that for the student in question a traineeship abroad is definitely an enrichment because he or she is offered a first professional experience. More importantly, the added value for the student's personal development is not to be underestimated. Competences like

Bread and Tomatoes

In January 2008 I leave for Zimbabwe on a traineeship connected with my degree as a primary school teacher. I live in Harare for three months with the Belgian associate Michel and his wife Mia. I start to work at ZimPATH, a project that offers workshops for the educational colleges in Zimbabwe. These workshops are primarily focused on HIV/AIDS and how to live with it. Apart from that, I visit some primary schools. It is very interesting to have a closer look at other educational systems! With my roommates and colleagues Wadzanai and Charlotte, I shop for groceries and meet a lot of new people from everywhere in the world.

Through these experiences I learn more about daily life in Zimbabwe, a country that has many economical problems at the moment when I am there. Daily life is harsh. Sometimes the stores are well supplied, sometimes they are not. One day, you're lucky to eat a tomato, the other day you can only find bread. The inflation is huge, but the people's joy of living is even greater! Although they have to fight to stay alive, they do it with a smile. As for me, I learn a lot from the local people and I hope many others will follow my trail.

Evelien Geeraerts, trainee in the ZimPATH project in Zimbabwe





No Regrets

My name is Annemie Symons. I am a student Agricultural Engineering at the Katholieke Hogeschool Kempen in Geel. From June to September 2008 I am a trainee in Vietnam in one of VVOB's programmes.

I go to Vietnam to investigate in the Mekong Delta and South East Vietnam the relationships between agricultural extension work on the one hand and the organization of small pig farms on the other. I interview both farmers and extension workers. Together with my colleagues I visit these people at their homes. We are always most welcome so that the interviews are carried off in a nice and comfortable atmosphere. We are always offered something to drink, like for instance iced coffee with milk. Sometimes, when the interview takes place in the morning, we can even enjoy a delicious lunch at noon, always accompanied with rice wine.

On my way to the farmers or extension workers, I encounter situations that I cannot possibly imagine to happen back in Belgium, like for instance having to shelter for a heavy monsoon rain for two hours at some stranger's place, having to take a boat to get to the farmer's front door or having to eat soup for breakfast in a restaurant along the way.

My traineeship in Vietnam is a one of a kind experience that I'm sure will linger in my mind for a very long time. The Vietnamese I work with, are very progressive people and show a lot of interest in new knowledge and techniques that could help them to improve their living standards. I hope that my little contribution as a trainee can really help them.

The university curriculum offers very little practical courses. Whereas a traineeship in Belgium would have consisted of a mere application of the theory I learned, my traineeship in Vietnam allowed me to get to know a lot of different agricultural methods previously unknown to me, which was quite challenging. That's why I have no regrets whatsoever about my experience abroad.

Annemie Symons, trainee for VVOB's agricultural programme in Vietnam

self-consciousness, self-sufficiency, social and cultural skills, etc. are often more important in one's later life than any technical baggage. The VVOB team closely accompanies the student in his or her experience in the South. Part of the staff has feeling with 'both worlds'. Together with the local staff, they aid the student in getting to know the local culture and customs. This way, VVOB hopes to contribute both to the fundamentals of development cooperation in Flanders and to a more correct representation of and a more open conduct towards the South.

A More Active Involvement

In 2008 five students leave with VVOB. They will be assigned to projects in Vietnam, Cambodia, Zimbabwe and Suriname for three to five months. These students were selected in 2007 in deliberation with the Flemish College Board (VLHORA). The traineeship programme was already in existence then, but with limited funding.

Late 2008, new staff is recruited to reinforce the *North operations* of VVOB. This gives us some opportunities to become more actively involved in the traineeship programme and to develop it more thoroughly.

» Browse to www.vvob.be for more information on traineeships and for more reports





Working in harmony with others

Apart from the major themes 'ownership' (the local partner leads) and 'alignment to local policy plans', the *Declaration of Paris* also pays attention to what they call 'harmonization'. This is more aimed at complementary cooperation and coordination between the different development organizations (donors) so that together they can be more transparent and efficient. Because VVOB almost exclusively works in the educational sector, this means harmonization with other organizations active in this field in our partner countries.

The organizations concerned will rarely be NGOs (Plan International...), but will mostly be bilateral (Belgian, Japanese, Spanish, Luxembourg, German, British,... bilateral cooperations) and multilateral organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, WFP,...). Sometimes Belgian actors are concerned (BTC, APEFE, VLIR-UOS, CDI Bwamanda, Flemisch Colleges of Higher Education), but more often not. It all depends on whom one meets in one's field and range of operation.

Cooperation becomes a much broader and more complex story as it does not only consist of cooperation with our local partners in the South. One look at reality makes it clear that harmonization in all countries has become the order of the day. How this occurs, is however very diverse and depends on the presence of other donors, on the existence of public authorities coordinating initiatives, of the willingness to harmonize and whether harmonization is limited to certain organizations (bilateral cooperation and multilateral organizations),...

In a number of countries regular and structural consultation exists with all the development organizations present, often it has even been started through a clear public authority initiative or through involvement of that public authority. This is the case in Cambodia, DR Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Suriname, Vietnam and Zambia. In other countries the challenge to harmonize is rather more taken up directly between organizations (mostly because of a lack of public initiative or a limited presence of coordination forums linked to bilateral and multilateral institutions). This is the case in Ecuador and Zimbabwe.

VVOB in the 'South'

2008, transition from project based to programme based approach

2008 is a year full of opportunities for our operations in the field and for their management at our headquarters in Brussels. In 2007 we started drafting the new sector programs within a new strategic multi-year plan for 6 years (2008-2013). At the beginning of the second quarter of 2008 we will be able to close this intensive preparatory period.

Finishing touch

We received final approval of the programs by DGCD together with a multi-year financing for the first three years (2008-2010). This was followed by a renewal of the General Agreement between VVOB and the Belgian State for a period of 12 years. The long transitory phase is thus rewarded and validated.

Start-up of new programmes and completion of current projects

We can state that 2008 was mostly characterized by the start-up of new programmes and the completion of current projects. Of the twenty three projects in phase of completion which were yet included in the multi-year plan 2008-2010, sixteen were effectively completed in 2008. In 2009 only seven of those projects will remain. The remaining three projects will come to an end in 2010.

The twelve new sector programmes (ten of which are in the educational sector) are all being started up. The efficiency of the start-ups differs from one programme to the other. In a number of countries more time is needed to further refine the data of the baseline study. Sometimes it is not easy to compose the programme team as well as the other structures or to raise the awareness of the target group about the start of the programme. Once ever so often we are still fine-tuning the objectives, strategy and activities of the programme through consultation or we have to fine-tune the programme because of new developments in the field. These are all slightly cost-intensive but necessary processes. They provide the foundations to increase our cooperation with our partners in 2009.

An organization on the move

As said, we are growing towards a sector based programme approach. A programme is a combination of structured interventions which are linked to the local sector policy plans. These interventions have a common approach and method. Thus VVOB makes another step towards greater professionalism. Doing this, we also adapt to recent 'technical' evolutions in development cooperation as well as to reflections on what good aid can and should be.

In order to realize this we work with a battery of instruments and concepts, amongst others: ownership and partnership, specialization, integration, coherence, complementarity, decentralization, logical framework, result based management, evaluation and meta-evaluation, increases of scale, etc. We are looking for and are experimenting with new aid modalities and the appropriate terminology. A lot of expensive words at first sight but they are all obtaining new meaning. The new programmes contribute to clearly defined result areas and common overall or specific objectives.

In short, we are an organization on the move. We are permanently in search of the best and for different contexts most relevant answer to the question if through our programmes we are effectively supporting educational development in our partner countries.



Overview

Programmes and closing projects in 2008

Ecuador

Multi-year programme

- Escuelas Gestoras del Cambio (schools as actors in change)

Closing projects

- PROMEBAZ (quality basic education in Azuay)
- PROCETAL (strengthening technical and agricultural education in the south)
- CEA (environmental management systems in SMEs in Azuay and Cañar)
- PlanTel → PLANTELplus

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DR Congo

Multi-year programme

- Strengthening primary and technical agricultural education

Closing projects

- Entrepreneurship and management in agricultural schools

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Zambia

Multi-year programme

- CPD (Continuous Professional Development at College and at School level)

Closing projects

- Skills Lab
- PTDDL (Primary Teacher Diploma through Distance Learning)

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Suriname

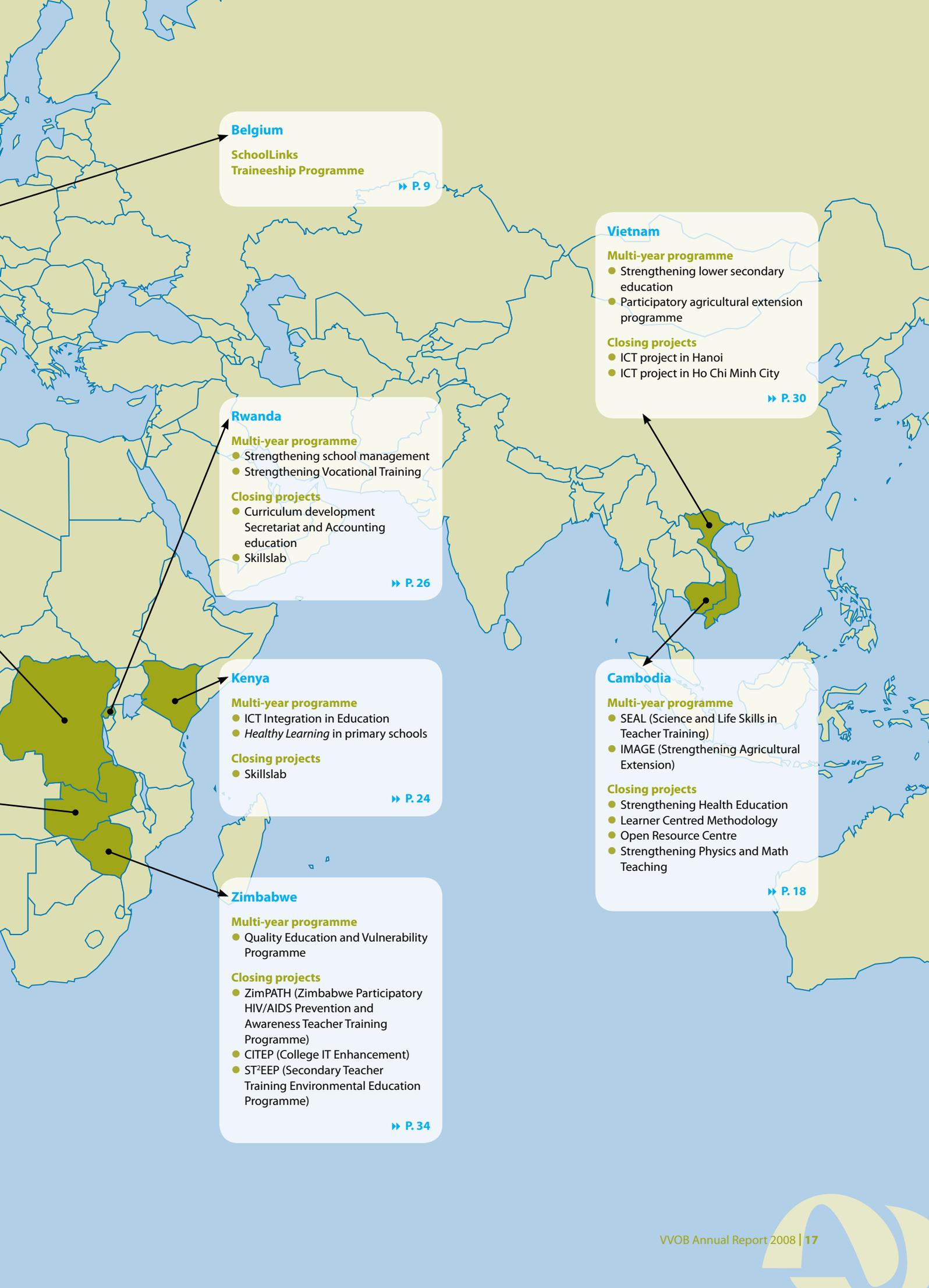
Multi-year programme

- PROGRESS (Programme more Effective Schools Suriname)

Closing projects

- LEARN (Learner centred and Experiential Approach in the Regular National primary education of Suriname)
- Quality management at the NATIN-MBO institute
- KALBOBIS (improve opportunities of primary students in inland Suriname)
- Education Information System
- Training traineeship mentors in secondary education

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Belgium

**SchoolLinks
Traineeship Programme**

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Rwanda

Multi-year programme

- Strengthening school management
- Strengthening Vocational Training

Closing projects

- Curriculum development Secretariat and Accounting education
- Skillslab

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Kenya

Multi-year programme

- ICT Integration in Education
- *Healthy Learning* in primary schools

Closing projects

- Skillslab

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Zimbabwe

Multi-year programme

- Quality Education and Vulnerability Programme

Closing projects

- ZimPATH (Zimbabwe Participatory HIV/AIDS Prevention and Awareness Teacher Training Programme)
- CITEP (College IT Enhancement)
- ST²EOP (Secondary Teacher Training Environmental Education Programme)

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Vietnam

Multi-year programme

- Strengthening lower secondary education
- Participatory agricultural extension programme

Closing projects

- ICT project in Hanoi
- ICT project in Ho Chi Minh City

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Cambodia

Multi-year programme

- SEAL (Science and Life Skills in Teacher Training)
- IMAGE (Strengthening Agricultural Extension)

Closing projects

- Strengthening Health Education
- Learner Centred Methodology
- Open Resource Centre
- Strengthening Physics and Math Teaching

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Cambodia

Making learning useful

Since the cooperation between VVOB and Cambodia is relatively young, four projects of the programme 2003-2007 are still ongoing. As these projects are currently being phased out, the new multi-year programme 2008-2013 is gradually starting up. This new programme focuses on two main sectors: agriculture and education.



Multi-year programme

Education

The educational component of the programme aims to strengthen the teacher training. The main goal is to ensure that graduate students of selected teacher training institutes master an improved applied methodology for teaching science, technology and life skills. The focus lies on a practical approach of environmental education and agricultural life skills as cross-curricular themes in the four science subjects of the core curriculum. For example, children learn about natural pest management techniques to protect crops from insects in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way during their biology lessons.

Alignment

During the start-up phase of the programme a baseline study was done to map the current situation in education. By cooperating with the Cambodian Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport we assured that the new programme is aligned with other donors who are also active in the sector of teacher training.



Science

In 2008 the science component started at the Regional Teacher Training Centre of Kandal province. The emphasis of this component lies on learner centred methodologies while applying simple and low-cost science experiments. We made an inventory of existing materials, the library is extended and new learner centred methodologies are developed for science education. Examples include the development of scientific reading skills and the use of low-cost experiments.

Agricultural extension

The start of the component in agricultural extension is a gradual process: the selection of a local team, the set up of the programme management unit as well as the baseline study and fine-tuning of the operational plan takes more time than planned. As a consequence the capacity building activities will start as of 2009.

Closing projects

Health

The health education project at the teacher training centres of Battambang has been running since 2005. The critical mid-term evaluation led to a reformulation of the project in 2008. A thorough feasibility study led to a reduction of the scope of the project to the integration of health themes in the subjects Biology and Home Economics of the teacher training curriculum.

Sustainable exit strategy

The *Learner Centred Methodology* (LCM) and *Open Resource Centre* (ORC) projects are situated at the teacher training centres of Siem Reap and Kampong Cham provinces. The focus in 2008 was on increasing the sustainability and mainstreaming of previously obtained project results. Building on an intensified cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport the impact of the LCM project was increased through a nationwide training. The ORC project developed a DVD

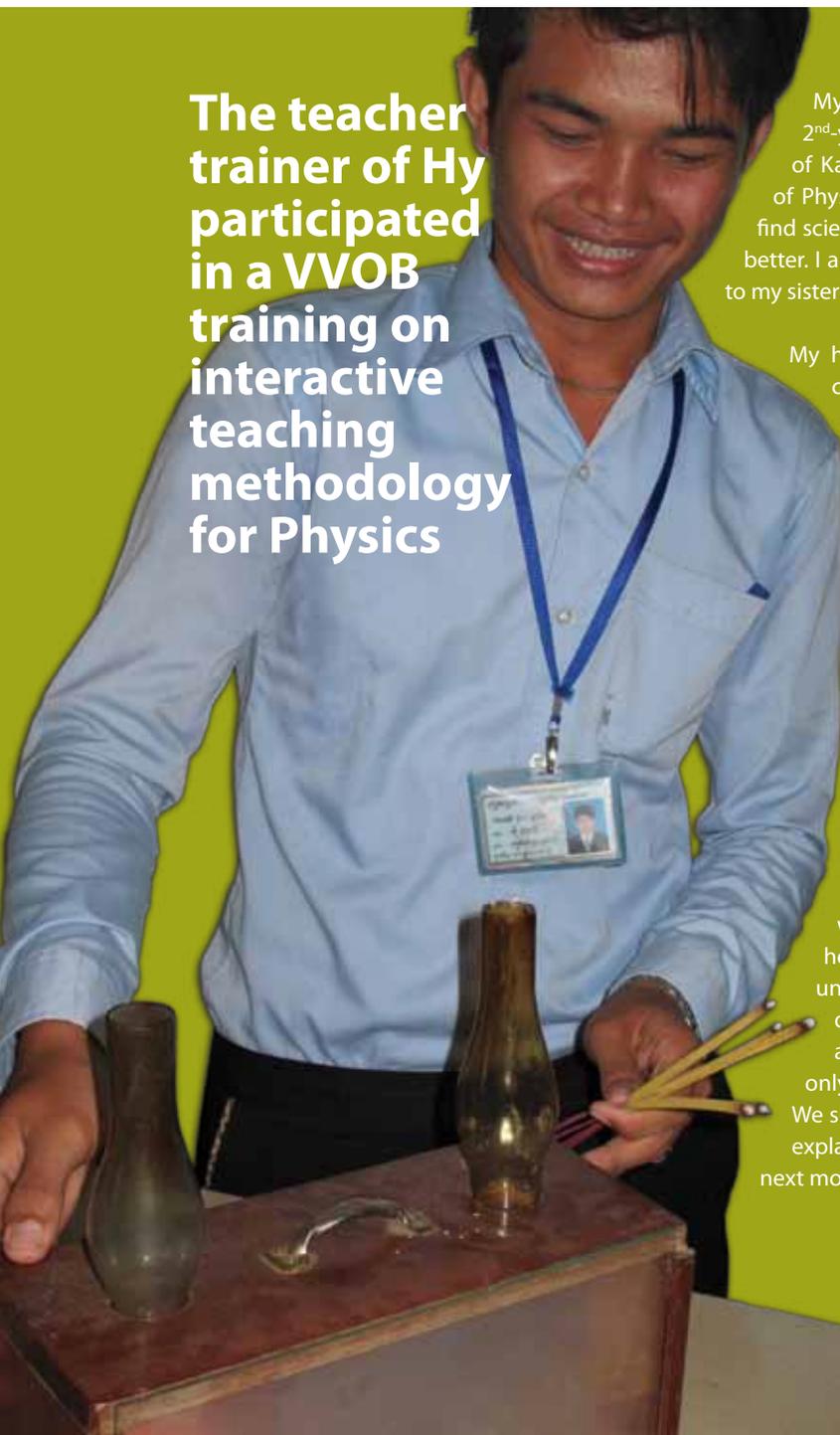


box containing around 60 video fragments of lesson activities highlighting learner centred methodologies in primary education. Teacher trainers will be trained in the use of the DVD box supported by task sheets to use in their lessons on general and applied pedagogy. The aim is to integrate the LCM manual with the DVD box in the teacher training curriculum after approval by the Ministry in order to promote the use in all teacher training centres of Cambodia.

Mathematics and physics

The project for improvement of the mathematics and physics in lower secondary education at the Regional Teacher Training centre of Kampong Cham is handed over to the Cambodian partners at the end of 2008. The targeted goals were reached, such as the development of a teacher training manual in mathematics and physics in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. The manuals are used for a nationwide training to teacher trainers of all Cambodian regional teacher training centres.

The teacher trainer of Hy participated in a VVOB training on interactive teaching methodology for Physics



My name is Hy Ratheany, I am 19 years old and a 2nd-year student at the Regional Teacher Training Centre of Kampong Cham. My dream is to become a teacher of Physics at the lower secondary school in my village. I find science very interesting; it helps me understand things better. I also think it is fun when I can explain what I learned to my sisters at home.

My house is 120 kilometre from the teacher training centre. I only visit my family during school holidays. I take the bus together with my friends although I would prefer to stay here and hang around with my friends at the campus. At home I have to help my father in the rice fields. Luckily I am allowed to assist my sister in the shop once in a while. She has a tailor workshop. I enjoy helping customers choose their wedding dresses. When I graduate I can earn money as a teacher and help my family.

I like studying here at the teacher training centre. I enjoy the Physics classes of Mr. Vanna the most. Usually we go to the new science lab on the campus. He does not use his textbook to teach but he explains new lesson topics by performing experiments. Sometimes it does not work as planned and he has to start over again. That is why he transpires the whole lesson. But in the end he always gets the right result and this helps us to understand difficult topics more easily. Last week he did an experiment on convection. Afterwards, we all got the opportunity to try it out ourselves. We only needed some glass bottles, incense and matches. We succeeded at the first time! I already look forward to explain this to my pupils during my practical training next month.



DR Congo

Playtime is over!



Between 1996 and the peace treaty in 2003, several Congolese and foreign rebels and government troops fought for power. The fight was especially focussed around acquisition of the wealth of natural resources in the East of the country. Millions of people fled or died as a result of the war. After the elections in 2006, Joseph Kabila became the first chosen Head of Government since more than forty years. Nevertheless, in 2008 the armed violence is still going on. In the last quarter of 2009 alone, 250,000 people were on the run for the increasing violence in the province of North-Kivu.

The economy of the country is very unstable. The wealth is being sold - often illegally - to foreign companies and governments. Corruption takes place on a large scale. There is almost no infrastructure and the unemployment is enormous. The building up of the democratic institutions is a priority. There is a dire absence of social services such as basis health care and education. A number of 4.7 million children, almost half of all children at primary school age, does not go to school. And even though the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) subscribes to the different agreements for the promotion of education, the education sector hardly receives an allocation of 8.22% of the national budget. This amount does not allow to pay the teachers a decent salary, nor to build new educational structures, certainly not these who are apt for the education of vulnerable groups, nor to reorganize and maintain the existing structures, and nor to make didactically and pedagogical material available to teachers and students,... let alone to train a sufficient number of teachers and give them further in-service training.

2008 is our first concrete functioning year in DRC as a programme. The programme for DRC is aligned with the priority action plan and the project of the 'Année Pédagogique', proclaimed by the minister for the second consecutive year. The aim of the programme is to contribute to a better quality of the primary and the technical agricultural education. For this end we commit ourselves to four topics: optimising the inspection sheets and procedures; the resurgence of the pedagogical entities in the schools as instruments of training and accompaniment of teachers; the rewriting of the curricula of the technical agricultural education and the investment in training, equipment and ICT for the central and decentralized inspection services.

Off to a good start

We work with and by means of the national and provincial structures of the Congolese school inspection, which, in principle, reaches each individual school in this giant country, on the one hand, and with the service for developing learning programmes and didactic material, on the other. By doing so, we integrate our functioning in the existing local structures and we ensure the most possible efficient use of the financial resources.

For the follow up in the (agricultural) schools, we rework, print, disseminate and introduce the inspection sheets. We released also four pedagogical brochures. At national level there are trainings for a team of trainers. The management of a school, entrepreneurship and the use of the inspection sheets, among others, are taken up as subjects for training. Then the trainers on their turn deliver the same trainings at provincial level (cascade

system). We also try to provide laptops and printers at provincial level. Also, an internet site will be launched where the inspection sheets, pedagogical brochures and training modules can easily be downloaded (see: www.ige-rdc.cd). A relatively smooth communication with at least half of the educational provinces has consequently become a fact. This is an enormous step forward.

Concerning the technical agricultural education we reflected about the different existing graduation options. Two reports were written with regards to the state of affairs of the learning programmes and the strategy for rewriting them. Moreover an analysis was made of the examination results and the numbers of students in the respective graduations options.

We distribute a didactic working tool and a methodological guide with the aim of clarifying the use of a reference work in the field of agriculture. Likewise, the actualized learning programme 'general agriculture' is further distributed. A ministerial instruction makes this programme obligatory in all technical agricultural schools as from the school year 2008-2009.

Ownership and harmonization

The developed pedagogical material is considered as 'being of the inspection self'. Our Congolese partners are really proud of it. VVOB helps to monitor the quality of the produced material, something the partner sometimes overlooks in their desire to produce material in abundance. It is obvious that the partners are clearly in the driver's seat what concerns the designing of the pedagogical material.



In order to render the development aid more effective, VVOB cooperate actively in the harmonization of the efforts of the different donors in the field of education. This coordination takes place in several platforms: both international and Belgian consultation bodies and ad hoc working teams, among which these concerning school inspection. We want to continuously keep ourselves informed about “who does what” and to create collaborations to make our voice heard in terms of supporting the quality of education in DR Congo.

The big challenges

The partnership in RDC has not yet achieved the meaning that it could ideally have. Values such as transparency, flexibility and trust are sometimes missing. This is partly

due to the financial situation of the Congolese state, partly to the mentality of the top of the civil servants and partly on the inheritance from the past. The challenge for VVOB exists in finding a balance between the striving towards an optimum partnership and the achievement of concrete results.

Another big challenge is and remains the estimation of the magnitude of our influence on the cascade system (see above), a system known for its multiple problems. Creative use of alternative systems to examine the impact of our efforts, such as working with pilot schools, must certainly deserve our attention. There is also a necessity to monitor the distribution of didactical and pedagogical material financed by VVOB, so as to ensure that each school receives the material it is entitled to.

Capacity building must be embedded within a broader perspective of institutional strengthening. We could choose for an analysis or organizational audit to identify the capacity gaps of the institutions and to remedy them. A last challenge is and remains the sustainability of the ICT means that are being invested within a difficult context such as Congo.

For inspector Dagoberte Kikonga it is important to identify the needs in the field

My name is Dagoberte, I work for the Congolese education inspection in Matadi. I am responsible for the inspection of nine primary schools. I have the advantage that I work in an urban environment, where the schools are located close to one another. My colleagues in the rural areas sometimes have to walk two or more days to visit their next school.

By means of the provincial head inspector, I receive the pedagogical brochures which are distributed by VVOB. Such instruments are essential in more than one way. Most schools do not have manuals, not for the teacher nor for the pupils. Often pupils don't even have an exercise-book, nor a ballpoint to take notes. So they have to remember everything and they can not rehearse their lessons by any visual support. Some children cannot recognize the printed letter 'a' because they have only seen the handwritten version throughout their schooling years. The teachers are frequently under-qualified. You have to know that in Congo you can become a primary school teacher immediately after completing secondary education. You must, however, have followed the option pedagogy, but you do not need a higher degree. As a result many teachers have difficulties to teach certain subjects. In former days it happened that teachers just simply skipped these subjects. Now we try to train them using these brochures. We discuss the topics in the pedagogical entities, whereby teachers exchange experiences and learn from each other. Although the brochures have been conceived centrally by the national training service in Kinshasa, they nevertheless give a good picture of the problems which we encounter here in the schools.

It is important that the area inspectors can indicate the needs in the field. Likewise is the documentation with regard to the cross-cutting themes, such as gender and the prevention of HIV/AIDS, extremely important. A child cannot be informed early enough concerning such important questions. Teachers try to make these topics, which are sensitive and culturally loaded themes, as much as possible open to discussion in the class.



Ecuador

Schools as actors in change



With the current government, in power since November 2006, decennia of strict limitations on investments in the social sector come to an end. In 2008 this translates itself into important investments in favour of the educational sector and it insures the continuity of the policies involved. Some of the new measures are: abandonment of the 'voluntary' financial contribution of 25 USD parents had to pay for primary school, financing 12000 new jobs for school teachers, improvement of the educational infrastructure and free distribution of new uniforms and school books. These efforts made by the government are an important backing for the realization of the new VVOB cooperation programme.

The transition from project to programme operation has been realized successfully in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Five parts of the current programme for the ten provinces have been added to 10-Year Plan for Education 2006-2015. Thus it completely corresponds with local policies.

The school as actor in change

Escuelas Gestoras del Cambio (Schools as Actors in Change) is the multi-year programme of VVOB Ecuador. This programme focuses on schools as a whole. This is in line with the vision and mission of VVOB and it partially builds on the existing experience of VVOB within the sub sector of elementary school (see finished educational projects like *PROMEBAZ*, *PROCETAL* and *Green Schools*). The programme supports the role of the school principals, the teachers and the other school personnel; as well as the school environment in which the parents and the local community play a central role.

There is a special focus on the end users of the education, in particular the people who participate in and around the schools. Therefore we continuously strive for schools which are capable to act as an actor in change to obtain a better education, a higher quality and a warranty for equal opportunities.

To preserve the individuality of the programme there have been contacts with a great number of entities of the ministry, on policy and on executive level. The government officials are always co-organising the events, with the local programme director as responsible and equal counterpart of the programme manager of VVOB.

Alignment with the local policies

The alignment with the local policies increases the relevance of the programme for the partner. The reverse of this situation is that the programme has to take into

account any possible changes of the policies. For the associates it is a challenge to find a suitable balance for both the educational programme and the currently running *PLANTElplus* project. On the one hand they need to assist the policy makers and offer support to the national plans; on the other hand they have to bear in mind the realization of their own goals. This is not always easy, especially in an ever changing context as the one in Ecuador. The architecture of the educational sector is still not stable. For example there is some uncertainty concerning the role of superior education in the new policies. This implicates that we are not sure if the organizations and persons involved will be able to continue their mandates.

Capacity building

The whole country, including the sector of education, is on the move. Therefore this is the appropriate moment for VVOB to assist the capacity building in Ecuador. Within the realization of the programme the team and the partners at the Ministry of Education mainly work on the operations in the provinces; both concerning the education of teachers, training and assistance as concerning the inspection. This is realized for example through the organization of national and local workshops. In 2008 these workshops result in the publication and the presentation of the baseline study of the programme: 'Yo miro, yo sueño, yo cambio' ('I see, I dream, I change'). The participatory approach of the programme surprises and motivates the participants. The cooperation serves as an educational process for all stakeholders. The programme also succeeds – through the meso level – to reach the schools through interviews with students, teachers and parents.

Cooperation with other donors

Wherever possible the programme collaborates with other donors to obtain a higher impact. We exchange



developed didactic materials and good examples of activities on the meso and local level and we coordinate programme activities. This is the case with the present bilateral Luxembourg and Spanish development organizations.

Handing over of projects

The projects are handed over to the local partners. All closing projects (*PROMEBAZ*, *PROCETAL* and *CEA*) have finished in 2008 with the exception of *PlanTel*. Upon explicit request of the government this project is extended under the name *PLANTELplus*. On the national level it is amplified with a new and strategic partner: *SENPLADES* (National Secretary for Planning and Development). There are two fundamental cooperation lines. On the

one hand there is technical assistance and further capacity building of the partners. On the other hand it concerns the start of reflections by the different partners concerning the infrastructural planning to obtain a national planning system which provides clarity concerning the responsibilities at different levels.

Challenges in 2009

Based on the results obtained in 2008 the programme Learning Communities would like to start with the national and provincial services of the Ministry of Education in the ten provinces. The goal is to increase the collaboration with and between the schools.

Nele puts her shoulders under the professionalization of the teachers

I'm Nele De Backer, one of the three Flemish associates of VVOB in the programme *Escuelas Gestoras del Cambio* in Ecuador. The goal of our programme is ambitious: improve the quality of elementary education in the ten provinces of Ecuador. In line with the vision of VVOB we don't work on micro level to obtain this (e.g. in a school); but on meso level, at the Ministry. This is a big challenge as bad communication and differing visions have led to very few or even no cooperation between the different departments. A big part of our task is to bring those persons together and put their noses in the same direction. Luckily a new dynamic has been growing wherefore many people want to support our programme.

Escuelas Gestoras del Cambio focuses on three subjects: the professionalization of teachers, the teachers education and the inspection. I am responsible for the professionalization, a polemical subject. At this moment several institutions are authorized to give training. But there is little or no follow-up wherefore the learned skills hardly get in the classrooms, since many teachers follow training as this gives them the opportunity to get a raise of salary. It is my job and ambition to support the construction of a system which ensures the results of the training really enter the classrooms, so the necessary innovation can get introduced.



Kenya

Opportunities for innovation

It is the end of 2007 and we are enthusiastic and ready for a smooth start of our new programme.

Who could have predicted the violent aftermath of the national elections of December, resulting in more than 1,000 deaths and 300,000 internally displaced persons?

The education sector is a major victim of the unrest: schools are plundered or burnt, pupils and teachers flee with their families to other regions.

Calm is gradually restored when, through international mediation, a Grand Coalition Government is formed, in March 2008.



Education technology through coordination and capacity development

The new programme for Kenya contributes to the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP 2005-2010). KESSP joins ministries, donors, NGOs and other partners for improved quality of education in Kenya. Due to the creation of two ministries from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology the signing of the programme document is delayed till August.

The start of the sub-programme on **ICT Integration in Education** is affected by the transfer of senior staff to the new Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. But changes also create opportunities for innovation. ICT Integration is cross-cutting and works with all directorates and units within the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Education takes the bold - and important- step to set up a ministerial ICT Integration team. This team is responsible for coordination and harmonization of all ICT initiatives within the KESSP. And there are plenty of those: all staff at headquarters start using e-mail to communicate, curriculums are converted into digital format and distributed on dvd, teachers learn how to use computers for better teaching and learning, an education management system offers relevant statistics, computers are purchased for various institutions and many more. This is a big task in a country with about 24,000 primary and 5,000 secondary schools that are, overall, centrally managed. However, since the introduction of free primary education, in 2003, measures are being taken to give districts and schools more management responsibilities.

Beginning is not always easy...

Integration of technology in teaching and learning requires changes in attitudes. It also requires policies and guidelines. Strategic planning is crucial. To support this change process, VVOB staff members are interacting, on a daily basis, with managers and the technical unit at the Ministry's headquarters. VVOB also supports two

semi-autonomous agencies with mandates for in-service training of education managers and teachers in mathematics and sciences. The focus of this approach is capacity development of our partners. Where required, and to speed up processes, we also purchase hardware to strengthen the basic technical infrastructure. In this all, we underscore the importance of technology and pedagogy going hand in hand.

In 2008, we give priority to appropriate service to the staff of the ministerial headquarters such as: e-mail, anti-virus, access to shared documents, intranet, back-up, server configuration etc. Most improvements are done by the staff of the ICT unit, through coaching and on-the-job training.

Healthy Learning

The other part of the VVOB programme pays attention to the link between the quality of learning and the health status of children in primary schools. We focus on elementary insights and skills such as washing hands before eating, visiting toilets rather than the bushes, preparing nutritious meals at school and at home, keeping the environment clean,...

Healthy Learning is active in 25 "model" schools. Five schools in five different arid and semi- arid districts are enrolled. The schools and the districts are responsible for the financial management, using the existing systems of the ministry of education. The initial budgets are relatively small, but the programme creates opportunities to learn valuable lessons.

Healthy Learning stimulates collaboration between schools, other ministries (such as health, water, agriculture, livestock...) and non-governmental organizations. The ministry of education, healthy learning, World Food Programme and Unicef regularly exchange experiences. We all learn from each other and this will lead to adopting more appropriate approaches.



The school is responsible

Each school is offered the opportunity to start its own project to improve the health of the pupils and to make learning practical and more relevant. This can be done, directly, through initiatives such as growing their own vegetables or, indirectly, through income generating activities. At the end of 2008, we receive a variety of proposals: to build a water tank or a new toilet; to keep chicken, steers or bees; to develop a vegetable garden; to plant trees,... The whole school and the parents are involved in all steps of the project that offers opportunities for learning (weighing, measuring, calculating volumes, using water carefully, how do tomatoes grow?...) It is encouraging to notice that at the end of the year, several people involved in healthy learning have already experienced changes. Staff at the ministry headquarters say that they are working more systematically and are preparing their activities better. Heads of school and members of school committees who participated in training, already initiated healthy learning activities at school and at home. A certain, stimulating, rivalry is growing between the participating districts. District staff will make two 'study visits' per year to exchange ideas and experiences. In 2009, the 25 projects will kick off: it will be a busy year!

Skilled para-medical staff

VVOB is also active in the medical sector in Kenya. The year 2008 is crucial for the National Skillslab Expansion project that started in 2005. Over the past three years, skillslabs have been set up and the capacity of staff of the Kenya Medical Training College has been developed. In 2008, the focus is on sustainability, as the project will be concluded in December 2009. The curriculums for nurses and clinical officers ('assistant doctors') are reviewed and the skillslab methodology is being applied. The trainees now develop their practical skills before they meet the real patients, by using dummies or manikins and 'simulated patients'.

All colleges of the Kenya Medical Training College (KMTC), countrywide, use the skillslab manuals and learning guides. The exam systems are harmonized. A platform for e-learning is available. It gives trainers and students opportunities to study independently through computer and Internet to offer and consult learning materials.

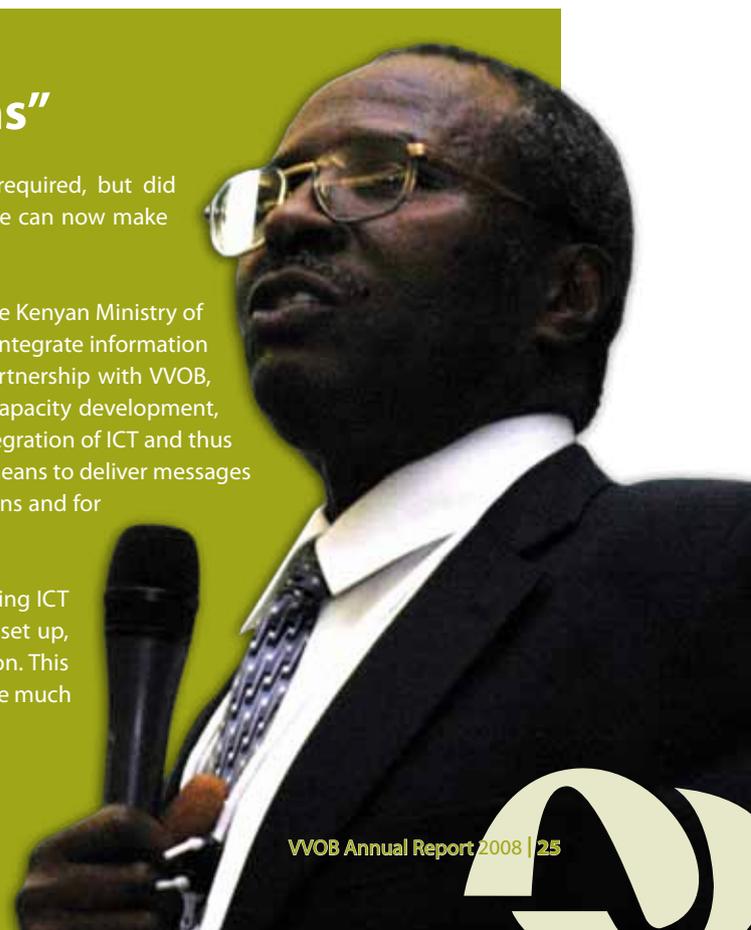
There is, however, one final task: to transform the current Skillslab National Coordination centre into a semi-independent unit that will continue to support innovation of medical education, to the benefit of KMTC and other providers in Kenya and the region.

"We can now make decisions"

"We knew what we wanted, we knew what activities were required, but did not have the expertise. Thanks to the VVOB experts 'in house', we can now make decisions."

Permanent Secretary, Karega Mutahi, the most senior officer in the Kenyan Ministry of Education, is very positive about the collaboration with VVOB to integrate information communication technology (ICT) in education. "Through our partnership with VVOB, we see very significant progress. Not only in terms of our own capacity development, but also through putting in place the mechanisms to address integration of ICT and thus moving away from using the computer as a typewriter and as a means to deliver messages through e-mail. We want to use ICT for management of institutions and for delivery of curriculum by teachers. This is a joint process.

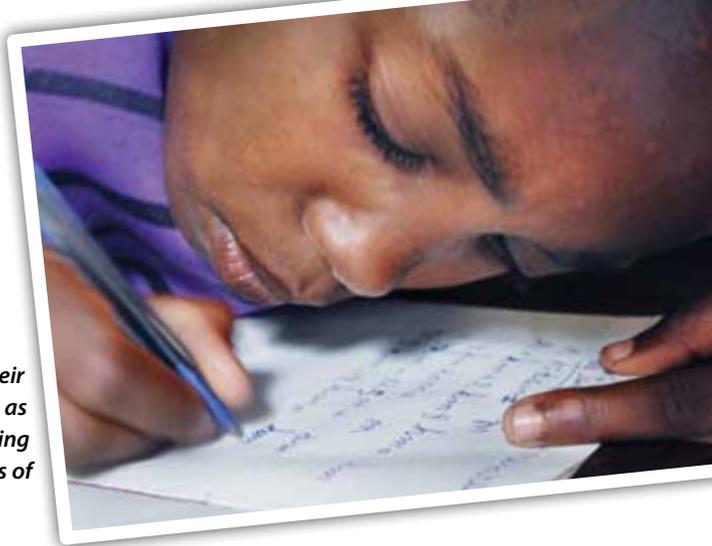
We have taken the important step of coordinating and harmonizing ICT initiatives in our sector plan. The ICT Integration team has been set up, with representatives of all directorates of the ministry of education. This helps to avoid duplication and undue competition. We can achieve much more, since many partners join forces."



Rwanda

Fundamental changes

The policy-makers and citizens of Rwanda are intent on getting their country off the list of least developed countries world-wide, as soon as possible. The country's ambitions are phenomenal. Many plans are being made and a lot of hard work is being carried out. The sustained efforts of the past few years seem to be garnering their first, promising results.



English as the language of instruction

The field of education too has seen some fundamental changes in 2008. The government has taken important strategic decisions which will be put to practice from 2009 onwards. One of the most striking measures was the decision to establish English as the language of instruction. In the next couple of years, the language of Shakespeare (and Madonna) is to become the language of instruction from the first school year onwards. With this decision, policy-makers hope to establish closer contacts with the primarily English-speaking East African Community.

Great ambition

Other policies which were furthered by the Ministry of Education in 2008, are: an ambitious plan to have classrooms built, the integration of ICT in education, the improvement of curricula, the distribution of schoolbooks, the training of school managers, the reform of the teacher training programme, and the fine-tuning of the decentralized system of financing, which basically means that every school receives around 10 euro per pupil.

Nine Year Basic Education

However, without a doubt the most important change in the field of education was the introduction of the Nine Year Basic Education (9YBE) concept. In order to achieve the millennium development goal on universal primary education, the ministry is having the field of education dramatically reformed. The idea is to make primary school free for all children. Unlike the Flemish system, the primary school system of Rwanda comprises nine years. This period is comparable to our combined six school years in primary and the first three years of secondary school (called 'tronc commun' in Rwanda).

By stretching primary education over a period of nine years, authorities want to instil so-called 'life-skills' in the children. These are practical skills, directly applicable in everyday life (arithmetic, writing, foreign languages, but -to a certain extent- also technical insight, good citizenship, general hygiene, etc.). Having taken 9YBE, pupils graduate 'well-equipped' to either set out their

lives or to continue to post basic education or vocational training.'

Reform of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

Finally, in 2008, the reform of, on the one hand, technical and professional (secondary) education, and, on the other hand, advanced vocational training, was instigated. Learning methods, learning objectives, even the use of infrastructure and facilities in both fields are integrated in a sole national strategy for technical education and vocational training. Ties are created between primary education, technical secondary education, advanced vocational training, professional training for adults and continuing education, making it possible to move from one level onto the next.

School management training

In this context, it is not always easy for VVOB and other international agents to operate. The reforms are not always easy to understand and they are sometimes implemented too swiftly on top of each other. Occasionally, information to clarify important measures is lacking. Especially the continuous adjustment to the shifting context poses a great challenge.

However, in 2008, VVOB has again managed to remain well-positioned to carry out the priorities of policy, set out by the Ministry of Education. The ministry mandates us with the training of all secondary schools in school management. In over 700 schools, VVOB and our Rwandan partners are training headmasters, school prefects, pedagogic officials and bursars and secretary-based employers.

Expansion of advanced vocational training policy

Together with our colleagues from the Belgian Technical Cooperation (BTC) - the bilateral Belgian development co-operation - we are working hard at the expansion of policies concerning advanced vocational training. With their joint intervention, VVOB and BTC are actively contributing to policy-prospecting work at a national level (at meetings, but also by financing a number of strategic studies) as well as to the further expansion of



the public vocational training centre in the southern province. Technical/professional (secondary) education and advanced technical/vocational training are both very much in development in 2008. That is why we should regularly stop to look back and temporize. All in all, the balance is positive. A new national Workforce Development Agency was founded in the second half of the year. In the mean time, the government is promoting the public vocational training centre in the south, which has attained the status of a regional training centre. In the

future, all training initiatives in the south are expected to be instigated and coordinated from there.

Closing projects

2008 is also the year in which a chapter was concluded: the chapter concerning curriculum development for secretarial studies and accountancy. From 2009 onwards, VVOB will focus on the further development of training programmes in the field of tourism.

Together with the Kigali Health Institute, we are organising a skillslab in the departments of nursing and obstetrics. At a skillslab, active learning methods are introduced in the health training programmes. We do this by, for example, organising practical lessons with adjusted didactic tools. Together, we are preparing the transfer of these practices to other paramedic training programmes.

Sigurd Vangermeersch, Programme Manager for VVOB in Rwanda, likes to gleam, on occasion

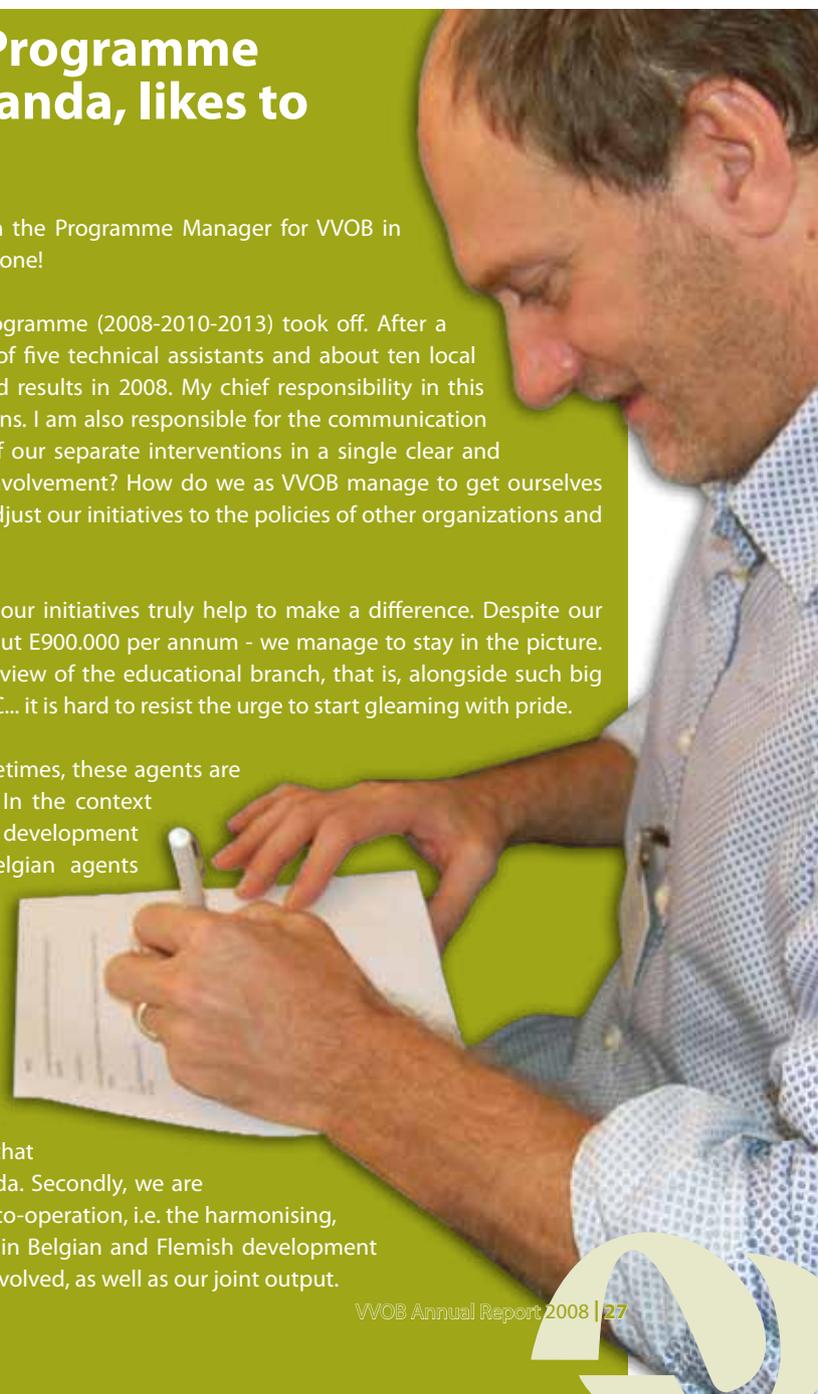
I am Sigurd Vangermeersch. Since July 2006 I have been the Programme Manager for VVOB in Rwanda. A fascinating, challenging job - but never an easy one!

Above all, 2008 has been the year in which our new programme (2008-2010-2013) took off. After a long period of prospection and identification, our team of five technical assistants and about ten local collaborators finally started working towards our targeted results in 2008. My chief responsibility in this endeavour is to direct, monitor and adjust our interventions. I am also responsible for the communication with Brussels. The greatest challenge is to integrate all of our separate interventions in a single clear and relevant programme. How are we to maximize partner involvement? How do we as VVOB manage to get ourselves integrated in Rwanda's strategic options? How are we to adjust our initiatives to the policies of other organizations and institutions operative in Rwanda?

My job is extremely gratifying. I get the impression that our initiatives truly help to make a difference. Despite our modest size as a developmental agent -our budget is about E900.000 per annum - we manage to stay in the picture. When VVOB is explicitly mentioned at the annual joint review of the educational branch, that is, alongside such big brothers as the World Bank, UNESCO, UNICEF, DFID and BTC... it is hard to resist the urge to start gleaming with pride.

Belgium is operative in Rwanda with several agents. Sometimes, these agents are criticized for their failure to collaborate with each other. In the context of the so-called 'decompartmentalization' of Belgian development co-operation, the collaboration between the three Belgian agents involved in field of vocational training is becoming increasingly concrete. This is a long-term work-in-progress, the foundations of which were laid in the course of 2007-2008.

It is now clear that, in 2009, VVOB, BTC and our French-speaking colleagues at APEFE will articulate a joint Belgian programme of over 7,5 million euro. This too gives me a lot of personal satisfaction. First of all, I am convinced that we will program an intervention that is relevant to Rwanda. Secondly, we are tackling an important challenge for Belgian development co-operation, i.e. the harmonising, or rather, the attunement of the different modalities within Belgian and Flemish development co-operation, leading to surplus value for the modalities involved, as well as our joint output.



Suriname

Building the ship of educational reform

Suriname, the green country pressed between Brazil, Guyana and French Guiana. A country of 500,000 inhabitants, a multicultural society (Hindus, Creoles, Javanese, Chinese, White People, Indians, Maroons,...). Suriname, a Dutch-speaking outsider on the large Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking subcontinent.

Suriname is, just like any other country, a country with opportunities and threats, a country with pluses and minuses. This is also the case in the field of education. An at first sight manageable number of 322 elementary schools contrasts sharply with the logistic difficulties to reach schools in the interior. A multicultural group of pupils with different language backgrounds is confronted with a school language which they sometimes do not speak at home.

The figures for elementary education are therefore not always very good in comparison with other countries in the Caribbean Region. The percentage of repeaters is very high; for instance: about 27% in the first grade and 19% for grades two till six. The pass rate for the final test in the sixth school year is about 55%. The number of early drop-outs in primary education is high: every year almost 8% of the pupils... the result of a shortage of qualitative educational tools, obsolete curricula, deficient extra training and continuing education for teachers, insufficient competent teachers and a deficient system for testing, moving-up and selection.

In 2008 VVOB has several educational projects that come to an end. We integrate the most important educational and process findings of these projects in our new educational programme, called PROGRESS (see below). As such we can continue working on the sustainability of these project results. It also allows us to increase the efficiency of the new programme. Of course there is also sufficient attention for a qualitative exit-strategy and handover of these projects to the Ministry of Education.

PROGRESS!

The name has already been mentioned: *PROGRESS*. This acronym stands for *Programme (More) Effective Schools Suriname*. *PROGRESS* would like to enable schools to realize a higher qualitative education. We try to achieve this by aiming at capacity strengthening of departments of the Ministry of Education, the increasing of the quality of pedagogical institutes, the drawing-up of a sustainable professionalization system for the educational sector, and the collection and analysis of educational data.

For the development of the *PROGRESS*'s objectives we work with the Ministry of Education and other partners in the educational sector. We take care that the objectives of our programme are directly linked and embedded within the Surinamese educational policy. As a matter of fact

this is a continuing process that we will also pursue in the next years of the programme. Continuous consultation with the education policy makers is a necessity in order to guarantee the success of the programme.

'Attention for partnership and ownership' are therefore no hollow phrases within *PROGRESS*. We do everything in consultation with our partners. This is not always the quickest way, but it is certainly the most certain. We are convinced of that.

Ownership

Educational reform is a lengthy process, and *PROGRESS* has only just started. Therefore, we cannot present much spectacular results yet. In 2008 we lay the foundation for the elaboration of the programme. The biggest realization in 2008 is the enlarging of the ownership within the Surinamese educational sector. This happens in different ways: an elaborate study of the current situation, participative studies, the official launch of the programme by the Minister, the big media attention for this launch, the participative elaboration of a book about the future of the Surinamese education, ... Not really 'big' milestones, but still milestones that are much needed for the future of the programme.



Consultation with other donors and partners

Harmonization with other donors is important. Therefore, VVOB is actively involved in consultation processes with all main donors in the educational sector. This leads to concrete cooperation with UNICEF in 2008. VVOB and UNICEF develop, together with the Surinamese Ministry of Education, the book 'Ik geloof in jou' ('I believe in you'), which describes in a comprehensible way an ideal future for the Surinamese education system. The book will appear in 2009 in an edition of 10,000 copies. This is enough to provide everybody within the Surinamese educational sector with a copy. In that way everybody can go along on the ship of the fascinating educational reforms that the Ministry of Education would like to unfold in the coming years, together with VVOB and others.

Big challenges

The challenges PROGRESS will face in 2009 are no peanuts... For example: delineation of a professionalization policy, the elaboration of vision texts for a number of departments of the Ministry of Education, the drawing-up of a step-by-step plan for the reform of the teacher training colleges, the elaboration of a plan in order to expand the Surinamese Education Management Information System,... Furthermore, we would like to remain focused on good communication and consultation with our main partners.

Programme Assistant Saskia Plein is convinced of the progress that the VVOB programme will bring

I am Saskia Plein. Since March 2008 I am *Programme Assistant for PROGRESS* at VVOB. I am a jurist and used to work as a legal adviser at the Ilse Henar-Hewitt Foundation for Legal Assistance. A nice job, but, I needed a change. I wanted to do something with developing cooperation, preferably within the educational sector. I myself passed through the Surinamese school system. I experienced the need for educational change and reform. Also today, I still see that need. I immediately think of my daughter who will go to the primary school within four years... and of other small Surinamese children. That is why I am happy that I can work at VVOB.

VVOB is a good place to bring changes to the educational system in Suriname. VVOB supports the Ministry of Education for some years now, especially with the execution of educational reforms. As *Programme Assistant* I have the feeling that I really contribute to the reforms. I give two examples. I participate in the writing of a professionalization policy for the Surinamese educational sector. This policy will give teachers, instructors and education officials a chance to professionalize themselves. I already look forward to the application of this policy! Furthermore I also assist with the elaboration of Surinamese-Flemish school links. Via the school links we can create world citizens. We give the schools the chance to make more international contacts.

In that way we can give our pupils another view of the world outside their own country.

I am really proud about my job. Sometimes all these change processes go a bit slower than I would like, as we prefer to coordinate and cooperate with the Ministry. Sometimes that involves more work than we foresee, but we consider that fine-tuning essential. I am convinced that *PROGRESS* will bring progress to our educational system.



Vietnam

Active participants in education and agriculture



Vietnam is reviewing its strategy for education. The Education Sector Strategy Report 2008 – 2020 has become the EDSP 2009 – 2020 after 14 revisions. However there is still criticism from education experts concerning the ambitious goals. Possibly this version will be adapted again – some people advice to start from scratch – and the implementation will not start in 2009. Whatever the outcome, this document clearly illustrates that the quality of education in Vietnam is still a challenge.

Quantity was indeed the prime concern up to now: in the Strategy for 2001–2010, universalization of the Lower Secondary Education was an important goal. In the meantime there is (officially) hardly any illiteracy, Basic Education is universal and Lower Secondary Education is close too. In 2007 more than half of the students attended free education and in 2008 a start was made with a review of the funding of education. But education still is too costly for many people and many children stay home or are being sent to the country side where schools are cheaper.

Not only is there a lot of discussion about the new strategy but there are also a lot of initiative that illustrate the desire for better quality: e.g. Ha Noi National University plans development of 33 training specialties to address international standards by 2012, a.o. business management, computer science, telecommunication, biology and geology. Also the lack of command of foreign languages and in particular the English language, is a concern of the government. The objective of the government is that by 2020 all the graduates of vocational schools, colleges and universities would be fluent in one foreign language. According to some experts, this objective is not feasible due to the shortage of English teachers.

For agriculture and fisheries, 2008 was a good year, despite the unexpected rain and flooding. However a correct prediction of the markets and stability are important to agriculture and fisheries. In 2008 there were some initiatives to promote stability: in some provinces long term contracts were signed between rice and fish producers and industry. Market and value chain projects also receive more and more attention and extension services are requesting clear information and capacity building to be able to give farmers adequate information and appropriate training.

Two projects were finalized in 2008: an ICT-project (Hanoi) which started in 2004 with as the aim to support integration of ICT to improve quality of management, teaching and learning in schools of Hanoi. After 4 years all activities of the project have been completely integrated in the Hanoi Retraining College for Educational Managers. An ICT-project in Ho Chi Minh City was extended for 6 months in 2008 with the goal of multiplying and mainstreaming the results for more sustainability. The project was finalized with an event about ICT in Education and the results were compiled in a collection of good practices, available on DVD/CDR. These materials are very much appreciated by colleges and schools and are being used in the new programme.

The VVOB Programme 2008–2013 in Vietnam focuses on education and agricultural extension.

The education programme focuses on improving the quality of Lower Secondary Education in North and Central Vietnam. VVOB is supporting the change process of active learning and teaching. The entry point is Environmental Education and ICT and the targets are educational management, teacher training and the community. One by one, these are elements that are to be found in the EDSP 2009-2020: the lack of quality including environmental issues, the low quality of professional training, lack of innovative teaching methodologies in teacher training.

EDSP strategies which the VVOB programme is addressing: innovation of the teacher training concerning teaching methodologies, contextualization of the curriculum; innovation of teaching, learning and assessment methods, improved use of ICT in teaching and learning, institutionalization of community involvement in education, “creating a friendly school with active students” which was initiated in 2008 -2009 for a better learning environment and community involvement.

The agricultural extension programme aims at improving the extension skills of extension workers in two institutes and five provinces in South-Vietnam. The focus is on participatory skills and the goal is to come to a more efficient extension system in South-Vietnam.



The VVOB programme is in line with the objectives of the government to improve agriculture with an efficient extension system.

A comprehensive baseline study was conducted for the education programme. In total more than 1200 people from the five teacher training institutes, principals and educational managers, and parents were asked about their perception on teaching and learning, environment and ICT and involvement of the community in the school. Data analysis was supported by Prof. Van Petegem of the University of Antwerp. The results were disseminated to all stakeholders during a workshop in October. The planning for 2009 in December 2008 was based on these data. An agreement was signed with each of the five provinces. A team of two teacher trainers, a member of the Woman's Union and a member of DOET was formed in each province in September. These teams are at once part of the beneficiaries and our support to plan and implement the programme.

2009 is a very important year for the implementation of our 2008-2013 programme: activities that were postponed in 2008 have to be implemented this year; the conservatism in teaching and learning is still a challenge although individual differences are big; active teaching and learning has a different meaning to many people; and change processes take time.

The baseline study of the agricultural extension programme consisted of 14 in-depth interviews of important stakeholders. In July the teams of MDI and IAS participated in workshops in the five targeted provinces. In these participatory workshops, the farmers, extension workers, district and provincial extension services proposed their activities and expectations for the coming year. The teams of MDI and IAS were there to advise. The training needs were mapped per province. The workshops and baseline study gave the necessary input for the activity plan for 2008 in the five provinces. The training centre is offering trainings based on the feedback of the extension services and farmer clubs and in the fall trainings were organized for five provinces.

The teams of IAS and MDI have build considerable capacity in the past years with regards to participatory extension methodologies and monitoring tools. What seems to be missing is the necessary management capacity to implement the programme independently. Simon Jeanmart started in November as the new programme coordinator. The cooperation and coordination between IAS and MDI will be in his hands in 2009.



More than 'education for development'

I am Dr. Nguyen Duy Can and I work at the Mekong Delta Development Research Institute (MDI) of Cantho University. Through my work I came into contact with VVOB because I am interested in agricultural extension, which provides education for extension workers and the rural poor.

In 2008, VVOB has supported a Participatory Extension (PAEX) programme in the Southern of Vietnam. Through the PAEX programme, VVOB enhances knowledge, skills and extension methods for extension workers by education and training, empowers leaders and farmer clubs by practicing participatory extension. As a result, VVOB achieved in 2008 a great success as five participating provinces in the South of Vietnam, are improving extension methods, and farmers become more active and participative.

To me, VVOB is doing more than 'education for development', it is doing education for the development of agriculture and rural poor in the South.



Zambia

Improving quality in basic education

New multi-year programme (2008 -2013)

In Zambia, 2008 started with the signing of an agreement between VVOB and the Ministry of Education for a multi-year programme (which will run from 2008 to 2013). The new programme with the Ministry of Education is called the "Teacher Training Support Programme". The central theme in the programme is improving teaching quality in basic education. The programme supports and compliments the Ministry of Education initiatives. Whilst priority was given to the expansion and improvement of the infrastructure for basic education, the Ministry remains committed to the improvement of quality education in basic schools. The VVOB-MOE multi-year programme consists of six components, which are briefly presented below. In addition to the six components, there are several cross-cutting themes like gender, HIV/AIDS, the environment and ICT. The programme will also promote school partnership between Zambia schools and schools in Flanders.



The use of ICT to enhance communication

The ICT programme aims to improve communication between all stakeholders in basic education. In 2008, the focus was on the establishment of an ICT network in all the colleges of basic education. ICT technical personnel in all the colleges were trained in installation and maintenance of ICT-network and are able to provide the same service in other learning institutions. In order to ensure sustainability of the programme, each College appointed an ICT responsible and formed an ICT committee. In most of the Colleges these people developed an ICT development plan. In 2009 attention will be given to the follow-up of these plans.

Continuous Professional Development at College-level

Strengthening of *Continuing Professional Development* (CPD) within the Colleges of Education is the programme second component. In 2008 a national Task Team was formed with representatives from all the Colleges of Basic Education, UNZA and the Ministry of Education. Through the Task Team, communication between key stakeholders in basic education was enhanced (see first component). The Task Team has the responsibility to plan and further develop the CPD activities at College-level.

In 2008, a study was undertaken to identify the CPD needs. In addition training was given to address change management. It was decided to focus CPD on quality improvement of teaching and learning. The national task team was supported to develop a strategic plan. In addition a monitoring and evaluation plan was developed to follow-up on this strategic plan.

Each College of Education has appointed a CPD committee. These CPD committees were asked to develop a CPD support plan for one specific CPD needs. The national Task Team evaluated these plans using some predetermined criteria. In November 2008, two plans were approved. Central themes in the support plans are: effective use of ICT, e-learning, contextualization of the curriculum and lesson study (see below).

Continuous Professional Development at school-level

The third and fourth components of the programme

relate to basic schools, including community schools. The main aim of the two components is to enhance the management of School-Based CPD activities and overall management and coordination of schools. The activities are organized and supported at provincial, district and zone levels. In 2008, the strengthening of CPD at school-level took place in the Central Province, through orientation training in INSET cycle for the Provincial and District Education Support Teams and training of community schools teachers in Lesson Study. The INSET cycle is a specific approach for in-service training of teachers based on identified needs.

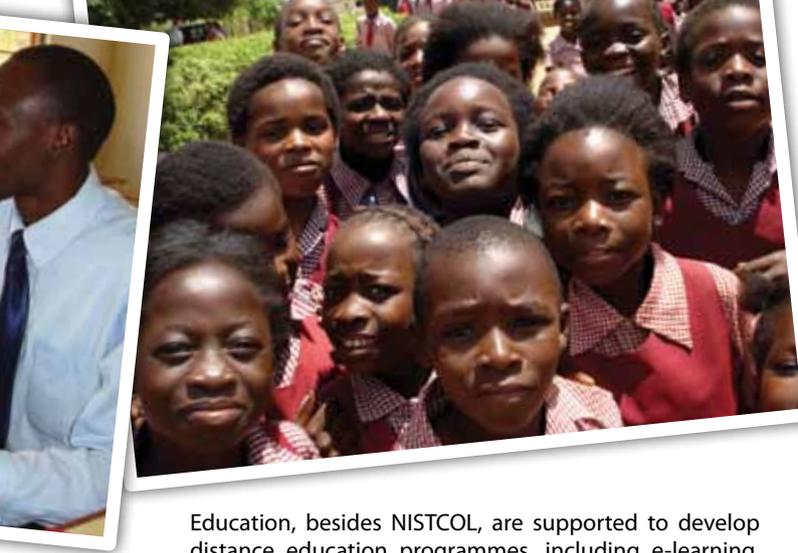
The lesson study is a teaching approach where one of the teachers in a school is requested to have demonstration lesson using the pupils, while her or his colleagues teachers observe with a view to analyze the lessons. After the demonstration, a discussion on the lesson will be held to improve the teachers' skills on conducting a better lesson.

In addition two baseline studies on School-Based CPD in community schools and ICT use in teacher's resource centres, regular and community schools were conducted. In order to strengthen the management capacity of the community schools specific workshops were organized for the Parents Community Schools Committees in 60 community schools. Data on school partnership was also collected in regular and community schools in Central province.

Pre-service and distance education of teachers

The fifth component of the programme focuses on capacity development for effective teaching, learning and assessment in face-to-face and distance education. It is within this component that VVOB continues to provide support to the closed "Primary Teacher Diploma through Distance Learning" (PTDDL) project. The National In-service Teachers' College (NISTCOL) is the coordinating College for the PTDDL programme, which now runs autonomously and upgrades about 5000 teachers on a yearly basis from certificate-level to diploma-level. In 2008 a plan was developed to monitor the PTDDL programme and assure its continuity.

Within the multi-year programme, other Colleges of Basic



Education, besides NISTCOL, are supported to develop distance education programmes, including e-learning. In 2008, VVOB undertook a baseline to find out about concrete plans by the Colleges. In 2009 further support will be given to realize these plans.

In addition, VVOB gives specific support to NISTCOL to become the centre of ICT training for the Ministry of Education. Investment was done in hardware and training of staff. The ICT staff members are able to maintain their computer centre off about 120 computers independently. Moreover, support was given to develop and ICT policy plan.

Monitoring and knowledge sharing

The sixth and last component of the programme relates to monitoring of results, knowledge sharing and the exchange of good practices. In early 2008, VVOB Zimbabwe took the lead to organize a Monitoring and Evaluation workshop with VVOB staff in Zambia. The purpose of this workshop was to develop a monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E plan) for the multi-year

programme. After the workshop all programme advisors sat with the programme's components partners and developed M&E plans. Since 2008, VVOB-Zambia has developed a culture of regular team meetings. The team meetings are used to learn and reflect on good practices among VVOB staff. The VVOB team in Zambia plans to share good practices via a newsletter which will be developed in 2009.

Closing projects

Education Sector

In 2008, the Primary Teaching Diploma through Distance Learning project (PTDDL) at the National In-service Teachers' College (NISTCOL) was closed. However NISTCOL continues to receive support for distance education through the new VVOB-MoE multi-year programme.

Health sector

Alongside with PDDL, the Skills-Lab project was closed in 2008. The Skills-Lab project was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. Skill Lab project dealt with the training of clinical officers, who are a specific group of medical personnel that has followed a practice-oriented medical training. In Zambia clinical officers have an important function in the treatment of patients, especially in the rural areas. VVOB supported cooperation and exchange of information between the provincial health centres. Also VVOB strengthened medical examination methodology and specific attention was given to the training of people who simulate at medial examinations.

Lois Mvula shares her IT knowledge with colleagues across the country

I am Lois Mvula and I work for the National in Service Teachers' College (NISTCOL) in Chalimbana. I used to work there as an office orderly before VVOB introduced ICT in the college. I have always been interested in computers, and used my own money to pay some short courses in basic computer training. VVOB has helped me to improve my knowledge through a hardware maintenance course, and I assisted with inventories and installations. Later on, I became the lab manager for the computer lab, and in 2008 I upgraded my ICT knowledge with training in ICT teaching methodology, a Cisco course, and the ICDL certification. I am now in charge of the computer lab, the PC maintenance room and the teaching room, leading a staff of 3 computer technicians. I also teach as a trainer in the VVOB network training and the NISTCOL basic computer courses.

In May 2008, I was recognized by the College as the Most Improved Worker and the Most Hardworking Staff Member.

Throughout these last years, I have learnt many things about computers. For me, this is just the beginning of a long learning process. I want and need to go on studying to keep up with modern technology. In the VVOB PTDDL project, I have managed to contribute to the ICT support for the programme. Now, with the VVOB Programme on a nationwide scale, I hope I can transfer my knowledge to others, so that teachers become more proficient in the use of computers, especially in teaching and learning. This will give them a chance to find learning materials on the Internet, and do computer based presentations in the classroom. Through the network training, the primary teacher's colleges have an easier access to education materials and can now quickly communicate with each other by e-mail.



Zimbabwe

Of good endings and promising beginnings...

The CITEP and ST²EOP projects have both been brought to a good end. CITEP supported ten polytechnic institutes and the three secondary teacher education colleges to improve management of their ICT. The project worked directly with the IT-departments in the colleges. It supported training by and for IT-personnel and encouraged exchange between the colleges. This approach allowed the colleges to find answers to the challenge of very high staff-turnover. Since 2003, the ST²EOP project has supported the integration of environmental education in the curriculum of the three secondary teacher training colleges. Elements of this project have been taken up in the new programme, as they are very relevant in the context of vulnerability, also for the primary teacher training colleges.

The ZimPATH project, working on awareness and prevention of HIV/AIDS in fifteen teacher education institutions continues to the end of 2009. It was very natural for this project to merge completely with the new programme on Quality Education and Vulnerability. It has allowed the programme to take off at full speed right from its start in 2008.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability has many faces in Zimbabwe. Children are made vulnerable by the HIV/AIDS pandemic, which

affects their family life in many ways. Increasing poverty makes it more and more difficult for people to make ends meet, and this affects the children too. Going to school, and actually learning something, is not obvious under such circumstances. Children with learning difficulties or a disability often don't get the opportunity to reach their full potential. Moreover, the teachers, lecturers and student-teachers are not spared. They also face many challenges in their day to day lives. How do you deal with your own vulnerability as a teacher? And how do you deal with the many faces of vulnerability that you are confronted with in your classroom?

Our programme supports teacher education in Zimbabwe to find answers to these questions. ZimPATH activities on life skills, discrimination, gender, positive living amongst other, allow us to immediately and practically work with student-teachers and lecturers on aspects of vulnerability. In 2008, the approaches of ZimPATH lay the foundation for the new programme. We choose to give a face to the concept of vulnerability together with our partners, starting from their own reality and context. The responsibility for the programme lies in the hands of the colleges. Every college has put in



The VVOB team is made up of ten Zimbabweans and three Belgians. We support all fourteen teacher education colleges of Zimbabwe. By working together on issues of vulnerability, we achieve two goals. The lecturers can strengthen their facilitation skills. At the same time they reflect on their own attitudes towards their students and become aware of how they can contribute (or the opposite!) to the vulnerability of their students. A strong team of motivated lecturers with good facilitation skills allows capacity building to happen from within the colleges. Relying on their skills, the programme can reach out to more student-teachers than would be possible if we were to rely on the VVOB team only.

Learning and reflecting with the entire team and all partners is definitely an added value to the programme. There is true team spirit and we think together about our vision. We have made first links with other organizations that work on the same themes, such as UNICEF, Plan International and SNV.



place a coordinating team and develops its own, specific action plan. College managers, lecturers, students, staff development committees, departments of early childhood development work on ideas and processes that they find important for their college. The dialogue

between the VVOB team and these partners is intensive. We work together for a future in which all children of Zimbabwe have access to quality education.

2009?

In 2009 we will pay extra attention to new initiatives taken by the colleges, for example in the areas of early childhood development and support to mentors for teaching practice. We will explore new domains, such as counselling, environmental education and learning differences - together with the partners. At the same time, we will attempt to document our learning processes more explicitly. It promises to become a year of hope and growth.

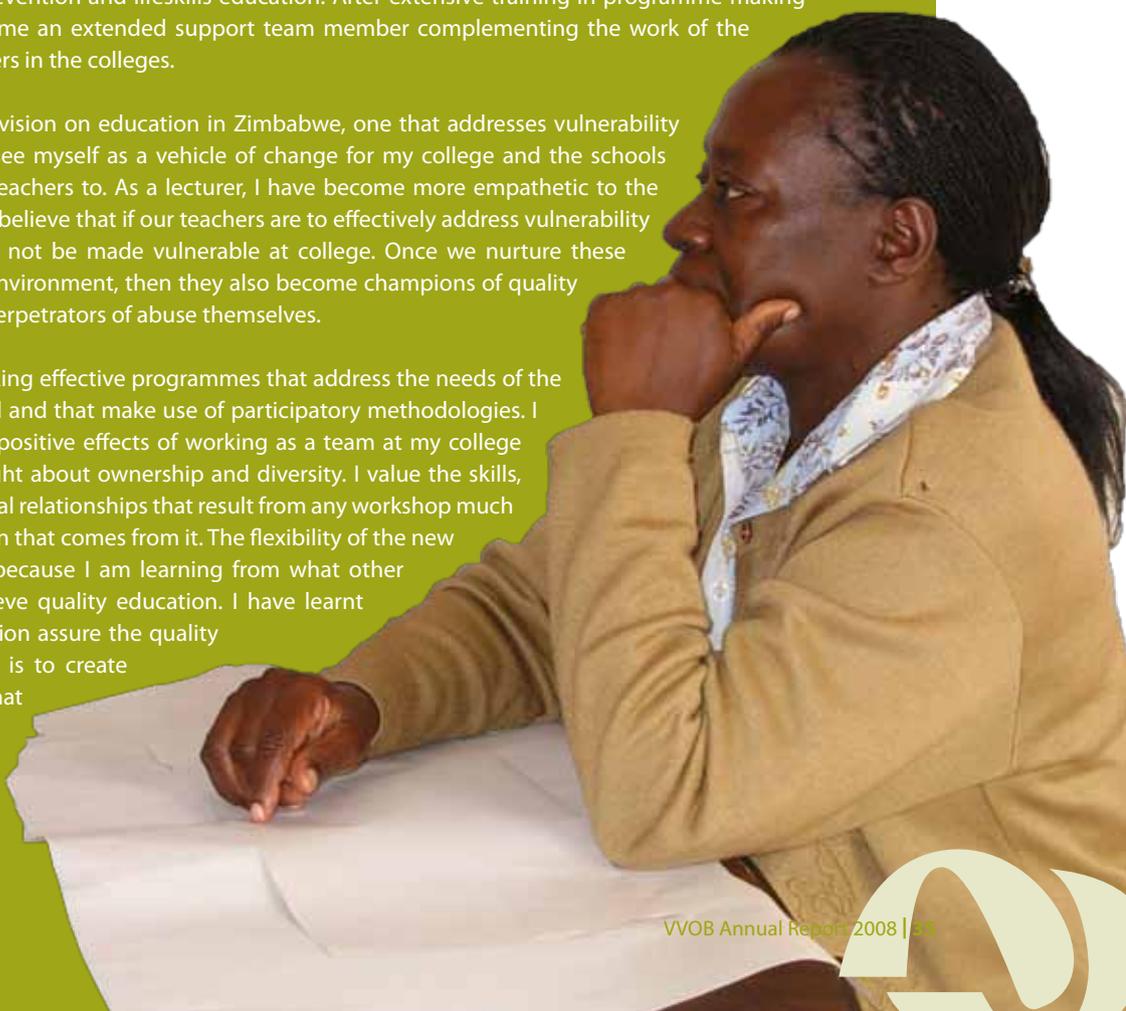
Lecturer Beata Chikwandha wants to empower students so they can be advocates of quality education

Capacity building, participation and ownership are what VVOB and the new programme on Quality Education and Vulnerability mean to me. My name is Mrs Beata Chikwandha and I am a lecturer at Morgan Zintec college in Harare. This college trains primary school teachers and I am a lecturer in Health and Lifeskills Education.

I first became involved with VVOB through their ZimPATH project, which was working with colleges on participatory approaches to HIV/AIDS prevention and lifeskills education. After extensive training in programme making and facilitation, I also became an extended support team member complementing the work of the VVOB support team members in the colleges.

VVOB has given me a new vision on education in Zimbabwe, one that addresses vulnerability to enhance quality. I now see myself as a vehicle of change for my college and the schools that we send our student-teachers to. As a lecturer, I have become more empathetic to the student teachers and I now believe that if our teachers are to effectively address vulnerability in schools, then they must not be made vulnerable at college. Once we nurture these students in an abuse-free environment, then they also become champions of quality education and will not be perpetrators of abuse themselves.

I have acquired skills in making effective programmes that address the needs of the target group on the ground and that make use of participatory methodologies. I have also experienced the positive effects of working as a team at my college where teamwork has brought about ownership and diversity. I value the skills, knowledge and interpersonal relationships that result from any workshop much more than any remuneration that comes from it. The flexibility of the new programme is motivating because I am learning from what other colleges are doing to achieve quality education. I have learnt that monitoring and reflection assure the quality of what we do. My dream is to create student-friendly colleges that will enhance quality education in schools free from child abuse.





Financial report

Development education

Development education is a new theme in our cooperation with the Flemish Government. Via the Flemish International Cooperation Agency (FICA), our programme *SchoolLinks* gets funded by a split credit line of €379.000, to be spent within three school years, of which we received €96.000 and spent €27.371 in 2008.

Programmes in the South

Our programmes in the South get almost entirely funded by the Federal Government, via the Directorate-Generale for Development Cooperation (DGDC). Since the beginning of 2008, we get funded by a split credit line of €26.999.997, to be spent by end 2010. This coincides with the first term of a strategic framework, running from 2008 to 2013. Of this credit line, an amount of €8.799.999 has been released, of which €6.435.204 has been spent. This for VVOB unusually low spending percentage of 73% is due to the late arrival of the first payment (half August) caused by the political situation of our Belgian government. In order to be able to start up the planned programme, the full equity of VVOB was used for prefinancing, and after exhaustion of our equity, we used bank credits.

Donor diversification

Zimbabwe and DR Congo started with donor diversification. In Zimbabwe we started a cooperation with UNICEF for an amount of €33.965. In DR Congo we could reinforce our agricultural education programme with financing from the Flemish Department for Agriculture and Fishery (credit line €100.000 allocated in 2007).

Structural and Management costs

Administrative costs of the headquarters are counted as structural costs as of 2008, or costs that, from a theoretical point of view, only indirectly are linked to the execution of programmes, but that are inherent to the existence of the organization. As management costs can be considered costs that come directly from the management of the programmes in the South. Management costs are made both in Brussels as in the South, and mounted up to €594.374 in 2008. Structural costs were €620.562, of which DGDC takes €361.392 on its account, and Flanders €250.000 (structural subsidy). This means that more than 90% of VVOB's expenses (€6.800.000) directly result from the realization of the organization goals, being development cooperation and development education.

Result

As the organization sometimes showed a negative result in the past years, and as we have a need for substantial means to prefinance our programmes in the South, we targeted a zero result in 2008. We achieved this (small surplus of €3.196). Balance sheet total mounts to €12.073.953. Our liquidity position is comfortable (Assets / Short term liabilities = 129%), but the ratio's Equity/Debt (29%) and Equity/Liabilities (22%) are acceptable but on the low side.

Audit

All programmes in the South are subject to a local audit exercise on a yearly basis. Where possible we contract big offices as PWC, Deloitte or Ernst & Young. The audit of our Brussels accounts is done by Ernst & Young.



Balance sheet

	2007	2008
Assets		
A. Fixed assets	10.537	49.541
B. Accounts receivable (due within 1 year)	8.302.186	6.565.014
C. Cash and investments	3.379.873	5.427.976
D. Prepaid expenses	44.883	31.422
Total Assets	11.737.479	12.073.953
Liabilities		
A. Reserves and accrued profit/loss	2.508.103	2.573.075
B. Provisions	110.000	110.000
C. Accounts payable (due within 1 year)	9.119.376	9.390.878
Total Liabilities	11.737.479	12.073.953

P&L

	2007	2008
Costs		
A. Structural costs	1.136.967	631.515
a. Services and diverse goods	274.369	239.639
b. Personnel costs	851.024	355.811
c. Depreciation	9.180	21.525
d. Other costs	2.394	14.540
B. Management costs	-	594.374
a. Personnel costs (North and South)	-	464.797
b. Audit, monitoring and evaluation, learning processes	-	114.422
c. Other	-	15.155
C. Operational costs (programme costs)	7.797.936	5.589.317
a. DGCD-programme		5.479.438
b. FICA-programme (<i>SchoolLinks</i>)		27.372
c. Other programmes		82.506
D. Adjustment reserves ⁽¹⁾	-	61.775
Total costs	8.934.903	6.876.982
Income		
a. Subsidy	8.721.891	6.807.450
b. Financial income	81.716	69.497
c. Other income	839	3.231
Total income	8.804.446	6.880.178
Result	-130.457	3.196
Result allocation ⁽¹⁾		
Profit (loss)	-130.457	3.196
Retained earnings	172.050	151.965
Subtotal	41.593	155.162
Adjustment reserves ⁽¹⁾	165.263	-
Allocation to working capital	-162.831	0
Extraction from working capital	107.940	0
Deferral of book year	151.965	155.162

(1) As of this year (book year 2008), we calculate the result by allocating the augmentation or reduction of reserves to the costs. This way, we will get a clear picture of the profit or loss, which will be added to/deducted from our equity.

Annex

Management of VVOB vzw

Below is a list of the members of the **General Assembly** of VVOB vzw. The members of the **Board of Directors** are on top of the list.

- **President:**

- Mr. Stefaan Van Mulders, General Administrator, Department of Welfare, Health and Family
- Mrs. Ann Breemersch, Director, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Mrs. Martine Caron, Delegate of VLHORA
- Mr. Piet De Bruyn, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mr. Kurt De Loor, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mrs. Maria De Smet, Delegate of VLHORA
- Mr. Jochen Devadder, Office of the Minister of Development Cooperation, Indirect Collaboration
- Mr. Jos Geysels, President of 11.11.11
- Mrs. Anne Marie Hoebeke, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mrs. Judith Kerkhof, Development Expert
- Mrs. Ruth Lamotte, Flemish Ministry of Employment, Education and Training; International Relations
- Mr. Luc Lathouwers, Secretary-General, Department of Administration Affairs
- Mr. Christophe Maréchal, BTC, Department of Quality Management
- Mr. Peter Michielsens, Coordinating Inspector General of the Flemish Ministry of Education and Training
- Mr. Peter Moors, Director-General, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation DGDC
- Mr. Marc Olivier, Founding member
- Mrs. Sabine Poleyn, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mrs. Inge Roggeman, V.I.W. Foundation
- Prof. Patrick Sorgeloos, Delegate of VLIR
- Mr. Jef Tavernier, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mrs. Heidi Vander Poorten, Flemish Ministry of Equal Opportunities
- Mr. Roland Van Goethem, Member of the Flemish parliament
- Mr. Raf Van Hoof, Communication Manager, Department of Finance and Budget
- Mrs. Kristien Verbrugghen, VLIR-UOS
- Mr. Koen Verlaeck, Secretary-General, International Flanders

- Mrs. Soetkin Bauwens, OVSG
- Mrs. Lisbet Colson, VSKO
- Mrs. Betty De Wachter, Coordinator VVSG International
- Mr. Jan Geens, Director Internationalization, VLHORA
- Prof. Marlies Lacante, KULeuven Psychology Department
- Mr. Urbain Lavigne, Managing Director of Community of the *Community Education*
- Prof. Stefaan Marysse, VLIR
- Prof. Marc Nyssen, VLIR
- Mr. Walter Thiebaut, V.I.W. Foundation
- Mr. Luc Van de Velde, Delegate VLHORA Foundation

General Assembly
Board of Directors

VVOB is a non-profit organization. Commissioned by the Flemish and Belgian government, we contribute to the quality of education in developing countries. Our core business is to provide technical assistance in educational programmes. This way VVOB makes a major contribution to local capacity building, a means to stimulate sustainable development and poverty reduction.

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