



Dear schools,

While in most countries the school year has not yet reached the end, the Flemish schools however, have by now closed their doors... **The Belgian school year 2009-2010 is finally over.**

In this newsletter, we **look back** at the first SchoolLinks year. But we also **look ahead**, as our programme is still growing: next school year, we will cooperate with new schools, in the North and in the South, and **create more school links!** Simultaneously, this newsletter will also give you more detailed information on the **financial and substantial reporting procedure**, expected from each school link, as the cooperation of the first year has (almost) come to an end. This way, you are well prepared to get writing!

We deeply regret informing you of the death of **Doris Kagendo Kinuthia**, the SchoolLinks coordinator of Our Lady of Fatima, Kenya. This school has a school link with Maria Assumptalyceum in Laken. At the end of this newsletter you can read a tribute to this special lady.



End of the first SchoolLinks year

Two weeks ago, all Flemish schools within the SchoolLinks programme received an e-mail with a call to make a substantive and financial report of the previous year. We drew up a form for both the school in Flanders as the partner school in the VVOB partner country to work on. As the school year in Belgium has already ended, it is obvious that the **Flemish school first makes the financial accounts and evaluates** its activities, communication and cooperation experiences. Then they will send the form to you, their partner, to do the same.

Ultimately, **when you have finished filling in your part of the report, you need to send it back to your Flemish partner**, who will make arrangements to send it to the VVOB head office in Brussels. However, the VVOB in country office expects a **digital version** of the report, as well as a **paper version**, signed by the headmaster, preferably by **August 15th**. Briefly a few reminders and tips:

- The **budget** that was not spent this first year can stay in your school. If your subsidy for the new action plan next year is granted, the amount will be deducted from the total requested sum. Naturally we will give you more information on this procedure in September.
- Do not hesitate to report a possible problem or objection in the report. This report is obviously not the best communication tool for this, but it does offer the opportunity to **highlight** some issues or to **clarify** them. Obviously you should take this with you in the following cooperation year, and make new arrangements with your partner.
- The financial part of the report is also a more **detailed overview of your activities**. All performed actions, large and small, within the school and / or with the partner, may be listed, even if they did not cost any money. Next to the title, give an answer to 1) what?, 2) who? and 3) evaluation? Or: what purpose did you have in mind, who was involved and what results did you get?
- **Contact the VVOB office** in your country when you need questions answered or would like to have assistance when filling in the report. They will be happy to help you!

The joint substantial and financial report is a sort of **self-evaluation** by which we can assess how we can possibly support you better or more next year.





Thinking of linking...

Next year we want to expand the number of schools within our programme. We have room for **10 new school links!** In recent weeks, the VVOB team in Brussels was often on the road to visit new candidates in Flanders, and to discuss cooperation possibilities. Our VVOB teams in the partner countries did the same. We bring you good news: several Flemish schools signed a cooperation agreement. We are currently recruiting the ideal partner in the South and vice versa. By September we hope to have matched the 20 schools, forming 10 new and active school links!

Good to know when planning the following cooperation year:



- In **September - October 2010** the schools will need to make a joint action plan with a estimated budget for the second SchoolLinks year.
- The principles and conditions will normally be very similar to the ones applicable in the first operation year. However, the **template** for the action plan will be made more user-friendly.
- Off course, all schools will be informed of the details when the new cooperation year sets off. VVOB will certainly visit the new schools to provide more explanation on the formalisation of the partnership.

Tips



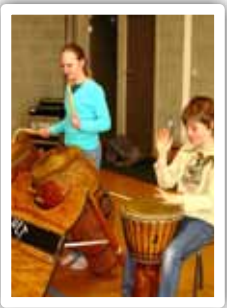
- The Belgian school activities may be in recess during the **summer holidays**, your activities, however, may continue without input from the Flemish partner. When making the financial report, you can bring in costs for your activities until **August 1st**. After this date, the expenses made will count for the following year.
- Know that your contact person might not be in school for a while, but this does not mean you should refrain from **keeping in touch**. When possible, it is good to have some contact with your partner school.
- Because the school holidays in Flanders are often not similar to those in the VVOB partner countries, we kindly ask you to note that the **Belgian holiday period is from July 1st until August 31st**.

News from the schools



For several years, **Wigo Elementary School** in Essen organises a **Global Day**. Traditionally we plan this during the fasting period. The Global Day of 2010 was part of the school cooperation with **our partner Mooi Uitsig** in the district of Bellavista, (district of Witzenberg, the sister city of Essen, in the Western Cape (South Africa)). A few years ago, we gave them a small financial input to modernise classrooms. Now Wigo helps the construction of a new school hall.

On Friday morning, March 19th, there was a bustle at the school gates. More than 150 children and parents came to school **on foot**. From different sides of the village they flocked to school, which started with a nice cup of hot chocolate milk or an honest (fair trade) cup of coffee. In Bella Vista, all pupils go to school on foot... and sometimes they have to walk more than an hour to arrive!



During the whole day, **South Africa was in the picture**. And what better to do than to introduce real African dancing to the pupils, taught by Nana Dankwa... The students could give a go on one of the authentic instruments. Both boys and girls could change into colorful outfits... Almost the real thing! The African monitor was very enthusiastic and everyone enjoyed the show.

After the necessary explanations the children could also go to work, painting cotton cloth with beautiful stitching. Part of the cloths will be used to make bags: one side painted by a pupil of Wigo, the other side by a pupil of Mooi Uitsig.



Of course we also sung! Every pupil from Wigo now knows the song “**Ek ‘s een dapper muis**”, a beautiful South African song, in Afrikaans, accompanied by the necessary accents and the right movements.

Oxfam Wereldwinkel, a fair trade shop in Essen, supported our Global Day. In the school lobby we had a large stand with all sorts of objects and products. The students and parents were given the chance to come and buy something. Provided the necessary explanations about Oxfam as an organisation, most students now know why **fair trade is so important**.

The **travelogue** of the visit of Miss Veronique and Miss Els to Mooi Uitsig attracted many children. Certainly the harrowing images of the slums and the often poor living conditions of the children brought the necessary reactions. The new daycare centre ‘Chris Hani’ was also addressed. This nursery is financially and materially supported by our community. A real improvement to what old one looked like...

The day ended with a **dance**. Many parents and grandparents were present to watch this last show. The Global Project finished on Friday, April 2nd, with the Wigo Walking and Cycling Sponsor Tour. We envisage gathering enough money to further support our partner school. Many thanks to those who contributed!



Rest in Peace Doris!

Our Lady of Fatima Secondary School in Kenya joined the SchoolLinks programme in July 2009. When the Principal was asked to select a coordinator among the teaching staff, someone who was active and able to be a champion of the programme, Doris was the first person that came to mind.

Ms Doris Kagendo Kinuthia was an inspiration and a role model to all the students and teaching fraternity at Our Lady of Fatima Secondary School. She was full of energy, lively and active in school activities. She was active in sports, drama, music and other clubs. She had a positive, faith-filled outlook on life and towards other people. She was cheerful and strong. She always had a smile on her face and had a kind word for those around her. Doris demonstrated a cooperative spirit. She was the student’s favourite teacher, as she was very engaged, and interacted and talked freely with them.

Doris was loyal and diligent in her responsibilities. She took it upon herself to drive the SchoolLinks programme in her school. She prepared all documentations, and she launched a SchoolLinks Club, involving the students in the selection of club members. She initiated communication with Maria Assumptalyceum in Flanders, a cooperation that became so successful that the two schools planned an exchange visit, that was to begin with two teachers from Maria Assumptalyceum visiting Our Lady of Fatima.

However, this visit was not to be as Doris passed away on the eve of the teachers’ arrival from Belgium. The news of her death was received with shock and great sorrow by all VVOB staff and the SchoolLinks fraternity at Maria Assumptalyceum.

Our heartfelt condolences goes out to her family, friends and Our Lady of Fatima fraternity. We will surely miss her energy, her determination and commitment to the SchoolLinks programme.

Contact

For more information, contact the regional VVOB office.
Details can be found on the SchoolLinks website:

www.scholenbanden.be/english

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Vlaamse overheid



Vlaams Agentschap voor
Internationale Samenwerking