



Dear schools,

The Belgian summer holiday is a fact. Pupils, students and teachers have worked long and hard to reach this point. Now they are enjoying two months of rest and leisure time. The SchoolLinks newsletter will also take a two-month break. In this last edition, we zoom into an interesting activity of the last couple of weeks, and we look ahead to what the rest of 2012 will bring. The SchoolLinks team wishes you all a very good vacation. See you again in September!

We deeply regret informing you of **Catherine Mwaba's** passing, a teacher from the Buyantanshi Open Christian Community School in Kabwe, Zambia. Catherine was highly involved in the school link with De Belhamel and just recently visited the Belgian partner school. At the end of this newsletter you can read their travel report and a short tribute to this special lady.



VVOB blows out 30 candles

During the ceremony of VVOB's 30th anniversary on 21 June 2012, a beautiful **photo book** was launched. At the beginning of 2012, ten locally recruited photographers set out on a journey in their own country. Their mission was extremely challenging; to grasp the impact of VVOB's education programmes on the everyday lives of children and youngsters. The result is an impressive and colourful range of interpretations, perspectives and ideas. **'Education changes lives'** has an online version and a video-introduction. Take a look at www.vvob.be/vvob/en.



During this event, the Flemish winners of the **ATL competition** received their award. Sarah De Raedt from primary school De Regenboog (Ghent); Irene Indemans from **H.Hartinstituut Bree** and Jan Stas from the University of Antwerp came first in the categories primary education, secondary education and teacher training. Other schools within the SchoolLinks programme that were rewarded were **Koninklijk Atheneum Mariakerke** and **St-Jozefsinstituut Essen**. Congratulations to all!

A few prospects

July

- Two teachers from GBS Stokkel are currently visiting their Surinamese partner school OS Balona. This is a first, and indeed very exciting, encounter between the schools.

September

- After the Flemish school's visit to Suriname last year, OS Domburg will now visit Wijdeland in Belgium.
- The principal of Waveren Hoërskool in South Africa will come on a visit to St.-Jozefsinstituut, Essen.
- E.S. Kiruhura, the Rwandese partner of Koninklijk Atheneum Mariakerke, will most likely come to Belgium in September.

October

- 5 October: *Saved by the Bell* on the International Teachers Day. For the sixth year in a row, Studio Globo calls upon all schools to massively ring their school bells at the end of the day, to make people aware of the Right to Education worldwide.
- Two science teachers and one English teacher of Institute Sint-Maria plan a visit to the Cambodian partner school HS Sereyphiap.

November

- VBS De Ark will travel with a four-member delegation to the Polanenschool, Suriname.

December

- Students and teachers from Xaveriuscollege will go on their 'Congo trip' to the partner Ntemo college in Kasongo Lunda.
- Submission of the financial/technical report and drafting a new action plan for 2013.





Testimony

Teachers Gift Kalulu and Catherine Mwaba testify, together with the school head of the Buyantanshi school, Mr. Kahangu, about their stay at the Flemish partner school De Belhamel, Schellebelle. A nice report we did not want to keep from you:

Definitely, we had a safe flight back to Zambia. But it was sad to realize that time was so short with such an overwhelming welcome by all the hospitable teachers and other staff of our partner school. Our visit lasted from 18th to 27th May, 2012. We appreciate the good time we spent together during our SchoolLinks visit to De Belhamel in Belgium.

*The field trip to the village of Schellebelle with pupils of the 5h Grade was very interesting. The pupils had to do a **Treasure Hunt** on the history of their town. This was one of the most exciting activities as this taught pupils how to find their own way. Also highly interactive were the times when kids performed games (gymnastics) and music with the visiting teachers. This made them sample some other ways of learning. We Zambian teachers conducted music and Gymnastic lessons and we taught the pupils of all grades basic **Bemba words!***

*We also observed the lessons of different teachers in different classes. The visit to the infant school was very necessary in that it enabled us to **compare different methodologies used** by the teachers in Flanders. We learned a lot about the challenges faced in handling infants and how they managed it due to good motivation. Having observed how teachers deal with pupils in and outside the class, we acquired various methodologies that are necessary to be implemented in our school too.*

*During the visit, the School Manager for Buyantanshi gave a presentation on Zambia, in order to enlighten his fellow-colleagues in the Belhamel on their perception and anxieties about Zambia. He explained about **Zambia's schooling system** in comparison with that of Belgium, as well as its economy and political situation. This helped to clear away the possible fears that their partners have once they visit Zambia.*

*The accomplishment of the '**peace song**', composed by both students at Buyantanshi and Schellebelle, is truly motivational! Some members of the community, parents, teachers and pupils were present at the official presentation of the song and video clip. This joint activity was a great achievement indeed!*

*After school and during the weekend, we visited various **historical places**, and enjoyed Belgium's rich history. We were especially fond of the uncountable number of historical buildings and other features of your country, such as the castle of Ghent, the canals, the chapels during the visit to Bruges, the North sea, etc. We miss every minute that passed by because we learnt a lot!*



Rest in Peace Catherine

Two weeks ago, De Belhamel and VVOB Zambia received the sad news that Catherine Mwaba has passed away. Not long after her visit to Belgium in May, she was hospitalised. Catherine, mother of two, was buried on June 22nd.

The first encounter between the schools has brought about a lot of good vibes and exciting plans for the future. This sad news came as a big shock. The teachers of De Belhamel will remember Catherine as a kind and warm woman, who joyfully danced in the North Sea.

We wish her family and friends the strength and courage to go on. May she rest in peace.



Contact

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

www.scholenbanden.be

Met steun van de Vlaamse overheid



Vlaams Agentschap voor Internationale Samenwerking