



The SDGs in practice: concrete actions by Flemish municipalities

The SDGs in practice

Concrete actions by Flemish municipalities

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. This universal, inclusive and transformative agenda addresses the most pressing global challenges and is designed to guide the world towards a sustainable future by 2030, ecologically, economically and socially.

It is a global agenda, but make no mistake: as a first-line government, local governments are crucial to the realisation of the SDGs. The active involvement of the local level is necessary for the realisation of no less than 65% of the Agenda 2030¹. Not only does each SDG touches on local competences, municipalities also set a good example. Local authorities are the key to initiate bottom-up dynamics that drive the transition to a sustainable world.

The Flemish municipalities are quite active and are international frontrunners in the local translation of the SDGs. Civil servants raise awareness among the population, politicians integrate the framework in their coalition agreements and management teams use the SDGs as a framework for the multi-annual strategic plan. Five years after the signing of the agenda, two out of three Flemish municipalities work with the SDGs.

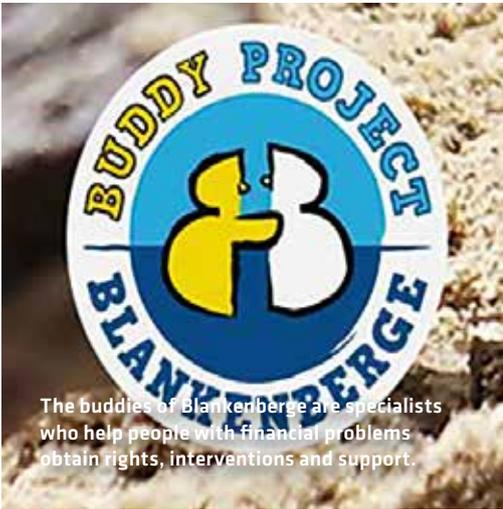
Advancing the SDGs of course requires concrete projects and actions. Municipalities contribute to the SDGs on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for the citizens and globally through international cooperation. To show how Flemish municipalities put the SDGs into practice and inspire other local governments, we collected three practical examples for each of the 17 SDGs on each of these three levels: internal, local and global.

The practical examples mentioned under 1 SDG usually have an impact on other SDGs as well. After all, the 2030 Agenda is indivisible: if you work on 1 SDG, you also work on other SDGs. There is also overlap between the three levels. You often contribute to international justice through internal and local actions, for example when you, as a local government, buy sustainably or take climate action. Conversely, municipal international cooperation also has a local impact. Each of the 51 good practices is unique and takes place within the specific local context of the municipality. They are therefore not always directly replicable, but inspire to roll out similar initiatives adapted to the own local context. They show that local authorities can accelerate the sustainability transition by adopting the integrated, transversal and multi-stakeholder approach set out in the 2030 Agenda. Together with citizens, schools, businesses and other levels of government, municipalities around the world are implementing SDGs.

¹ Cities Alliance Discussion Paper – N° 3, Sustainable Development Goals and Habitat III: Opportunities for a successful New Urban Agenda. <https://www.citiesalliance.org/sites/default/files/Opportunities%20for%20the%20New%20Urban%20Agenda.pdf>



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



The buddies of Blankenberge are specialists who help people with financial problems obtain rights, interventions and support.



The farmers' market guarantees income security for twenty families in Santo Tomás.



People learn to work in Menen's nursing home.



Eradicate poverty everywhere and in all its manifestations

Currently many people in developing countries have to make do with less than 1.25 USD a day. Poverty continues to be a pressing problem in Belgium, with almost no progress made. The first strategic development goal consists of reducing national poverty by half by 2030. Ultimately, the goal is to end poverty, in all its forms, everywhere.

Jules De Winter, advisor VVSG-International

Work placement: a powerful arm to combat poverty

Target audiences that have difficulty finding an employer on the regular job market can increase their chances of a proper job and a better quality of life through coaching and assistance. Menen's social services prove this every day. The public social welfare centre maps the various areas of life (living, finances, network, health...) whenever someone applies for benefits to develop an approach that will help structurally improve the applicant's life. Activation plays an important role in this integrated approach. As a result, the public social welfare centre ensures that all the preliminaries for employment are in place. This may include financial support for child-care, as well as learning Dutch, or psychological assistance in case of substance abuse for example. The number of people who are employed under Article 60 has increased exponentially in recent years. In 2006, an average of 57 people worked in nursing homes, technical services, the recycling shop and so on, under Article 60. By 2016, this figure had increased to 70, with another 50 people receiving preliminary training. These are impressive figures for a tiny town like Menen!

Blankenberge uses buddies to end poverty

An endless slew of invoices, not knowing how to set a direct debit or not daring to ask help from a municipal service... These are often small but important obstacles that prevent people living in poverty from improving their situation. That is why Blankenberge families with young children and newcomers who speak a different language can rely on a buddy since this summer. Volunteers on other buddy projects usually work with one single client or even an entire family. In Blankenberge, the buddies are purposefully asked to work with different people and households. This creates sufficient distance, the buddies don't have unrealistic expectations and they do not experience excessive pressure. This also has several advantages for the people who request assistance: their self-sufficiency and their financial situation improves, meaning they obtain more rights, interventions and support. Moreover, this is an easy way to introduce them to several people and services. This case-by-case approach, the expert deployment of these buddies and the close collaboration and communication between the various municipal services have all contributed to the success of Blankenberge's unique buddy project.

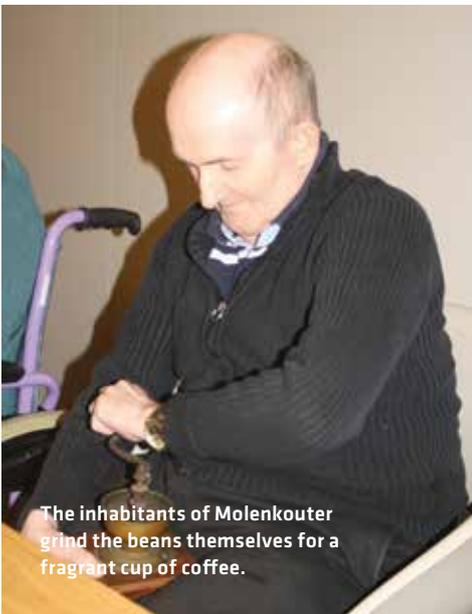
Mol and Santo Tomás put the "Poverty Declaration" into practice with a farmers' market

More money, a more secure income and social recognition. That is what the farmers' market has come to represent for 20 households in Santo Tomás, Nicaragua. Every Sunday they sell their products directly to consumers in the main square. The twinning between Santo Tomás and Mol provided the breeding ground for this initiative.

Mol supplied the infrastructure for the market, and invested in a model farm where local farmers can test new techniques with an agricultural engineer. These techniques, combined with better seeds, ensure farmers can now grow crops throughout the year. Their income security has increased exponentially as a result. Moreover, the farmers are now paid more for their products, as the intermediaries don't take a cut. They also sell better quality products and they received training to better market their products. With this initiative, Santo Tomás and Mol show that they are serious about the "Poverty Declaration", which they signed with several other twinned cities in Flanders, Guatemala and Nicaragua in 2015. In it, they stress that the SDGs are a universal agenda, which can only be achieved if local governments and community organisations are involved.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



The inhabitants of Molenkouter grind the beans themselves for a fragrant cup of coffee.



Residents of Dilsen-Stokkem rent in the Maasmoesem project plots where they grow their own organic vegetables.



In the Food Smart Cities network, Bruges shares all experiences about city gardening, food surpluses and education about sustainable food.



Come and Eat 2.0. inclusive, durable and honest

The second sustainable development goal aims at food security and the eradication of hunger and malnutrition worldwide. At the same time, it aims at promoting sustainable agriculture that focuses on nature and the climate.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Ecological and inclusive gardening in Stokkem

The Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW) of Dilsen-Stokkem works with other partners and volunteers on the realization of allotments. For this purpose, it has the support of the Flemish Land Company (VLM) which is a public agency of the Flemish government. The sustainable agriculture project was called 'Maasmoosem'. Residents from Dilsen-Stokkem rent plots or use an elevated bin to grow their own organic vegetables. In order to give the participants a boost, the service center organized training on ecological gardening, followed by practical guidance in their own allotment. In addition to responsible agriculture, 'Maasmoosem' devotes much attention to the social aspect. One wants to involve people from the neighborhood and promote social cohesion while at the same time promoting healthy nutrition and movement. The people's garden is in the immediate vicinity of assistant homes and of the Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW)'s residential care center. There is collaboration with many partners such as Velt, Limburg.net, the city, the PXL College and the volunteers, but the non-profit organization, Terra Therapeutica, is also an important partner. This organization connects people and nature to positively influence the well-being of vulnerable persons. For example, the Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW) not only focuses on sustainable gardening, but also on garden therapy. An ecological and inclusive approach, it is possible.

Wichelen combats malnutrition among the elderly

Malnutrition of the elderly is a real problem in our society. Molenkouter which is the assisted living center of the Public Centre for Social Welfare (OCMW) in the municipality of Wichelen therefore devotes special attention to the nutrition of its residents. In 2014, Molenkouter started a project about taste and memory. The appetite was taken into account when setting up 36 new rooms for residents with dementia. The dining room is equipped with adapted lighting, furniture and colors. The residential assisted living center also offers breeding boxes with forgotten vegetables used in the meals of the center. The residents can also prepare the vegetables. Residents and relatives can provide recipes of 'old' dishes for the kitchen. Molenkouter received a prize of 1000 Euros from the King Baudouin Foundation in 2014 for this project. Since then, the assisted living center has undertaken additional actions. This allows residents to enjoy a delicious cup of beans that are ground on location with an old coffee mill. Through a suggestion box, residents can also have their favorite menu on their birthday. Molenkouter is now also looking at how to get started with finger food in the assisted living center.

Bruges is 'food smart'

In December 2014, Bruges together with Ghent joined the two-year European project Food Smart Cities. The aim was to develop new, local food strategies that are sustainable, fair, inclusive and efficient via a European network tailor-made for the city. Bruges focused on sensitization and participation. For example, the food festival under the name (H)eerlijk Brugge (honest and wonderful Bruges) organized competitions and a fair trade expo to get citizens excited about sustainable, fair food. A Bruges' Food Lab has also been established, a participatory platform that brings together stakeholders and local policy makers around urban agriculture, short chain, fair trade and food loss. The city also attaches great importance to networking. Good practices have been shared through the Food Smart Cities network, and joint guidelines have been made in connection with food surpluses, city gardens and education on sustainable nutrition. Other local governments can use these guidelines to work out or refine a sustainable food strategy. Bruges gained success with the Food Smart Cities project. It received the climate award of the Flemish Government in 2016 and was nominated for the Food Waste Awards. In addition, the city can build on its European network and international contacts.

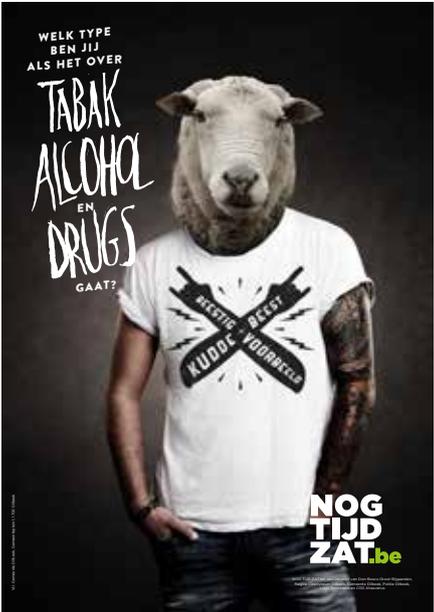


In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



The annual sports and culture day of the municipal staff encourages the Herental staff to exercise.

HERENTALS



DILBEEK



Trained nurses move from Genk to Francistown for their internship.

LESELY MAES EN STEFANIA D'ANGELO



Good health and well-being: a right for everyone

With 'Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages' the UN targets less illnesses by 2030, with special attention for both physical and mental well-being. In addition, alcohol and drug abuse need to be combatted and the number of traffic deaths has to drop sharply.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Healthy employees, healthy council in Herentals

As a participant of the *Gezonde Gemeente* campaign (healthy municipality campaign) the municipality and the Public Centre of Social Welfare of Herentals are taking care of their employees' health. When civil servants start working they receive a health pass to go swimming or to use the sports centre. At regular times, they can also participate in health walks, Nordic walking, badminton and petanque. Each employee is also given a pedometer and is encouraged to register his or her steps on the online step registration tool of www.10000stappen.be. By rewarding the best 'walkers' and the most active department every year, the personnel is given extra motivation to pursue an active lifestyle. The annual sports and culture day for municipal employees also encourages them to move. During this excursion, no motorised transport is allowed and all locations need to be reached by bike or on foot. And finally, at the annual personnel meeting a healthy and safe work posture and equipment are fixed items on the agenda: experienced speakers explain and discuss topics such as lifting heavy loads, workstation ergonomics, but also how to avoid stress.

Dilbeek aims for less alcohol consumption

Following the amendment to an Act in 2010 which further restricts the alcohol consumption of young people, the town of Dilbeek invested in raising the population's awareness. The youth department, the health department, the police, a number of schools and local organisations in Dilbeek joined forces. In 2011, the 'Nog Tijd Zat' (Plenty of Time) campaign was launched, which dissuades youngsters to drink alcohol at an early age. In the context of this campaign, the town of Dilbeek supports associations to take measures whereby youngsters under the age of 16 are unable to obtain alcohol and youngsters under the age of 18 are unable to obtain spirits. Organisers of events, such as youth clubs, are receiving awareness raising material for free from the youth department. Beer mats, posters, wristbands and stickers which primarily want to draw youngsters' attention to alcohol consumption and its negative effects, are provided. Since 2015, the campaign has also focused on the immediate surroundings of young people. It is proven that when parents or friends use a product, chances are greater young people will follow this example. From 2017, the parents of youngsters will also be able to attend awareness information evenings.

Nursing students from Genk and Francistown learn from one another

In its city-to-city twinning with Francistown in Botswana, Genk focuses on healthcare, in which the support of nursing courses is key. Since 2008 the Nurse Training College at Regina Mundi in Genk and the Institute of Health Sciences in Francistown have worked together. They exchange curriculums, but the main activity is without a doubt the internships that are organised every year. A number of students from Genk work in the district hospitals and the Nyangabwe Referral Hospital in Francistown for four weeks. Due to the lack of doctors in Botswana a nurse's job is very varied which means the students can learn a lot. And in turn the students from Francistown follow an internship at the Wit-Gele Kruis and the hospital of Oost-Limburg. The years of co-operation between the school in Genk and Francistown have resulted in a positive experience exchange on the level of the students and the school leading to a network of teachers. In addition, students from Genk and Francistown share their experiences during information sessions. The success of the co-operation has meant that in the future nursing students of the University Colleges Leuven Limburg (UCLL) will also go to Francistown for a three-month internship.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Mindy Willems received the necessary training to become a childcare assistant, her dream job.



Antwerp supports the establishment of 'media libraries' at the Universities of Kinshasa, Kisangani and Goma.



The World Multi-Day Event submerges pupils and teachers in the first phase of secondary education in a global bath for half a school day.



Everyone in school: good education and lifelong learning

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population, and through international cooperation. The fourth objective aims to promote equal access to good education and life-long learning for everyone. This is a prerequisite for an inclusive and prosperous society. Education is, after all, a fundamental human right, and the key to equal opportunities. No matter their age, everyone must be able to develop to their full potential.

Jules Dewinter, advisor VVSG-International

Retraining during working hours, with retention of salary

Mindy Willems was employed as a cleaner at De Speelboom after-school childcare centre in Lovendegem and was able to re-train as a childcare assistant thanks to Diverscity. She was able to go back to school, free of charge and with retention of salary, and is now employed in her dream job. This is only one of many success stories.

People who are employed in home care, family care or childcare can participate in part-time adult education to train as a certified healthcare worker or childcare assistant. This programme allows them to develop the skills they need for their dream job. While they are in training, their employer can arrange for a substitute, for which funding is available from the Flemish government. This is made possible thanks to the fourth Flemish Intersectoral Agreement (VIA4-akkoord) concluded by the trade unions, the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) and the Flemish government. Partnerships like this are needed to facilitate lifelong learning for everyone and to enable everyone to achieve their full potential. Everyone must be given the opportunity to find their place in society, based on their unique talents and competencies. Not only that, sustainable and dynamic careers are indispensable for a good balance between work and home life, as well as for a prosperous and resilient society. www.diverscity.be

World multi-day event becomes global bath

Raising awareness among youth of the global society in which they live is also contributing to the fourth development objective of good education. The World Multi-Day Event submerges pupils and teachers in the first phase of secondary education for half a school day in a global bath with a world film and an interactive 'world market' with forty stands featuring plenty of activities.

NGOs and fourth-pillar organisations man the interactive stands while volunteers provide the student coaching with brief assignments. Playful, exciting, active but – above all – an experience that participants will remember for a long time! More than 11,000 young adults from almost 60 schools discover what the problems and opportunities facing the world of today are, and additionally how we can set to work in seeking solutions for global challenges. An extensive educational package with files, videos, folders and other didactic material is available to prepare the class for this project and to serve as a discussion tool after the event. Vzw Mundio created the multi-day event together with the Antwerp Global Policy provincial authority with the support of the Municipality of Brasschaat and the City of Mechelen. The World Multi-Day Event will kick off in February 2019 in the Ruiterhal of CC Brasschaat and will move to Transit M in Mechelen in March. www.mundio.be

Antwerp sets up media libraries in the democratic republic of congo

Access to information is a fundamental requirement for good education. Nevertheless, this is not matter-of-course for many students in the DR Congo. This is why the City of Antwerp has provided support for the establishment of media libraries at the universities of Kinshasa, Kisangani and Goma. These media libraries give the students access to professional literature, the internet and computers – indispensable tools for writing adequate papers. Students are also given the opportunity to take computer courses. This will enable these young people to improve the quality of their academic work and expand their opportunities on the labour market. A wide range of partners was involved in setting up the media libraries, in which an important part was played by three non-profit organisations: NTBS, Amuka and IYAD. These associations are firmly embedded in the Belgian-Congolese community in Antwerp and each works from its own perspective towards improving education in the DR Congo. The Antwerp global partnership focuses on countries with a large community in Antwerp: the DR Congo, Ghana, Senegal and Morocco. These communities are an asset because of the extensive contact they maintain with the country where their roots lie and they are often already involved in numerous projects that demonstrate their solidarity with their family or community in these countries.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



The Schaarbeek parks and gardens service was one of the first services to sign up for the Gender Mainstreaming project.



The ANCB organises gender training in twelve municipalities.

ASSOCIATION NATIONALE DES COMMUNES DU BRUNN



Genk actively works to develop a gay and trans-friendly policy by actively encouraging LGBTs to organise their own network for activities and a schools project.



De holebi- en transgender groep met een voor iedereen.



Gender-equal municipal policy

On 8 March, we celebrate International Women's Day, which is why we want to put municipal gender-related initiatives in the spotlight this month. This continues to be a sensitive theme around the world, which deserves more attention. Efforts must be made to combat the glass ceiling, the gender pay gap and gender-based violence on all levels. Like men, women are entitled to good health and knowledge about sexuality and reproduction.

Heleen Voeten & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Schaarbeek appoints a gender manager

Gender equality challenges occur on all levels of our society, at work, in management, sport, leisure and parenthood. A few years ago, the municipality of Schaarbeek developed a gender mainstreaming policy to implement a transversal gender policy. Under the supervision of Gender@Work, various municipal services identified their good practices and points for improvement in terms of equal opportunities, after which they drew up a targeted action plan. Since 2014, Schaarbeek is a member of the Gender Budgeting working group of the Brussels-Capital Region. In the past two years, all the municipal services reviewed their budgets to measure their gender impact.

The municipality is now stepping up its efforts, and recently appointed a gender manager. Amélie Servotte will work with all the municipal services, to ensure gender equality is a priority in all policy areas. She is also responsible for the municipal staff's diversity plan. As a gender manager, she can continue develop the municipality's policy, which has focused on gender equality for several years already. Since 2015, the municipality offers additional sports vouchers to girls, to encourage them to exercise more, while also introducing a label in the municipal library, which highlights children's books that do away with gender stereotypes.

Genk: LGBT-friendly city

While UN SDG 5 only refers to men and women, we always like to share examples of good practices of Flemish municipalities that strive for gender equality in every sense of the word. Genk is one such example. The city has developed a LGBT-friendly policy, with a seven-point action plan, together with Genk schools and LGBT associations. This means that the city focuses on positive image building in its communication channels and strives for an open organisational culture among others. Genk literally brings the theme to the population's doorstep: in February, the city installed its very first rainbow crosswalk, and the first in Limburg.

The city also encourages Genk's LGBTs to group themselves in OGWA (Ook Genk Wel Anders; Also Genk But Different), a network for gays, transgenders and their supporters, which organises activities and school projects.

The city also invests in education, promoting classroom workshops, which are given by LGBT associations, and has also developed a kit with educational material. Together with OGWA and Unia Genk, the city also organises an annual IDAHOT week (around the International Day against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia). During this week, a pop-up rainbow café is opened and the municipality and the library hoist the rainbow flag.

Efforts by municipalities in Benin to promote gender equality

Flemish municipalities and cities are taking a more global approach, partnering with local municipalities around the world. But the VVSG also works directly with its partner associations. One of these is the Association Nationale du Bénin (ANCB). This umbrella association is working to increase gender awareness in local government in Benin, together with the VVSG. To this end, the two partners launched a test project with twelve municipal councils in Benin in 2017. The ANCB supports these councils and examines with them how gender can be integrated transversally in these municipalities and in their local multiannual plans. The umbrella association will provide all the recommendations from the project to all 77 local councils in Benin. At the same time, the ANCB will also provide support to a network in which all female elected politicians can exchange experiences and meet. This knowledge sharing and behavioural influencing will encourage women to play their role as politicians in Benin's society.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Walk for Water in Peer and Zonhoven.



Ledegem buildings are waterproof.

ISABELLE PATEER



Berlare is working on access to potable water in Ecuador.



Every drop counts! Access to clean water and sanitation for all

Sustainable Development Goal 6 addresses the issues relating to access to drinking water and sanitation for all. But it also addresses the quality and sustainability of water resources worldwide. This is possible by reducing pollution, stopping the dumping of chemicals and a good treatment of waste water.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Buildings in Ledegem are 'waterproof'

In the context of a pilot project with the Province of West-Vlaanderen, the Flemish Water Knowledge Centre (Vlakwa) studied the water consumption of five municipalities in Flanders, Belgium. Using relatively simple procedures, it was possible to reduce the water consumption in municipal buildings up to 30%. Municipalities were able to save hundreds of thousands of euros on their drinking water bill. Ledegem has pursued a sustainable energy policy since 2008 and took part in the pilot project. Following a tour of the municipal buildings with a checklist, Ledegem was given an inventory of all the water consumption points in their buildings. Every problem and all the leaks were brought to light. Ledegem replaced the conventional taps with push-buttons in the sports hall and installed more economical shower heads. This measure alone already reduced the water consumption by more than 20%. In co-operation with VVSG, Vlakwa will roll out this project to all 300 Flemish municipalities.

Walk for Water in Peer and Zonhoven

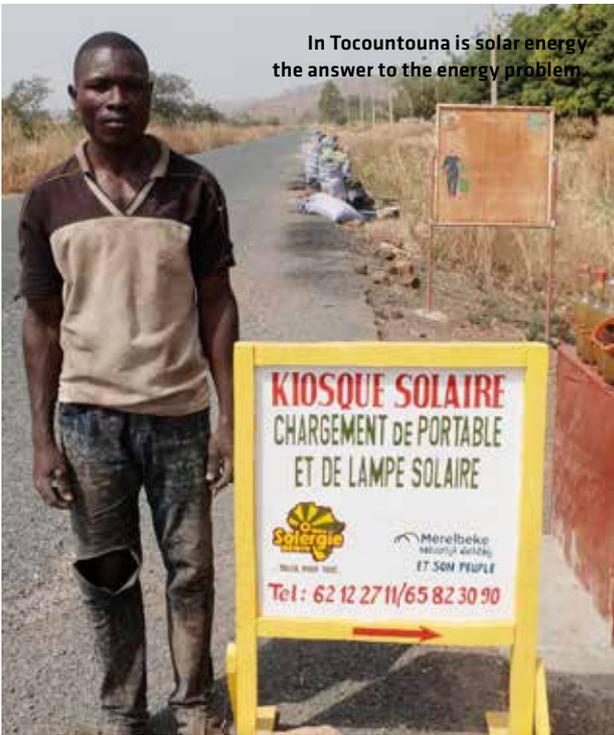
Many towns and cities organise events for World Water Day in Flanders, Belgium. Peer and Zonhoven supported the Walk for Water in March 2015. Worldwide, millions of people, often young girls, have to walk more than 6 kilometres every day to obtain drinking water. To show their support, about 800 students from Peer and Zonhoven put on their walking shoes. Each student also carried a litre of water. In Peer the city reused this water to water the plants in the city. In Zonhoven the councillors of environment and development co-operation publicly signed a charter which commits the municipality to reducing its water consumption with 20% by 2020. The students were shocked by some of the ordeals many people their age have to undergo worldwide. Walking with water for miles and miles is quite something. Following the World Water Day, Peer also worked out a tourist water walk through the city. This walk takes you along different water spots in Peer and creates awareness about the water problem.

Berlare is working on access to drinking water in Ecuador

In many countries, clean drinking water is not self-evident. This is why the municipality of Berlare in the Flemish region of Belgium engaged in a 'waterschap' (town twinning 'light') with the municipality of Rio Verde in Ecuador. In collaboration with the Province of Oost-Vlaanderen, the Belgian non-governmental organisation PROTOS and CEFODI, an organisation in Ecuador itself, Berlare offers financial support to different projects, such as the construction and maintenance of water installations and water pumps. In addition, Berlare places great importance on raising the awareness of its population about the 'waterschap' and the access to drinking water. With a water walk, the water situation in Berlare and Ecuador are explained. Berlare also organises so-called water days for the children in the fourth grade of primary school. They go on a water walk adapted to children and follow a workshop about Ecuador. There are also photograph exhibitions and lectures and the municipalities of Berlare and Rio Verde exchange letters and films. In the future, Berlare will continue to focus on this 'waterschap' aiming to tackle the most pressing needs.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



In Tocountouna is solar energy the answer to the energy problem.



Eeklo is committed to sustainable energy policy.



The Damport refurbishes.



Switching to affordable and sustainable energy for all

Sustainable Development Goal 7 ensures access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. We need to combat energy poverty and produce and use our energy more efficiently. In addition, renewable sources of energy are becoming increasingly important.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Eeklo on land and in the air

The city of Eeklo already decided on a sustainable energy policy around the turn of the century. It opted for wind energy as the engine for its renewable energy projects. A visit of the inhabitants of Eeklo to the wind turbine of Middelkerke in the Netherlands and clear communication about the project helped to convince the population to opt for renewable energy. The citizens could also make a direct financial investment. This option raised the involvement of the participants who consider the wind turbines their property, and it prompted them to reconsider their use of energy.

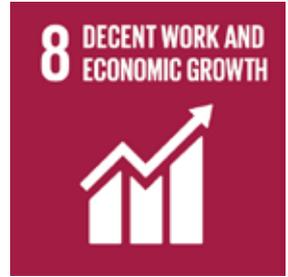
Over the years, Eeklo has broadened its view of sustainable energy continuously. The city targeted solar power, the production of rapeseed oil and the use of wood residues. Making the buildings more sustainable was also very important. Eeklo installed solar panels on the municipal buildings, invested in renewable energy and energy saving techniques in the municipal offices, and is currently working on a heat grid using residual heat, e.g. of an incinerator, to heat buildings. Energy which is otherwise lost is thus reused sustainably. Also for this project the city is offering the possibility for direct financial participation of their citizens.

Dampoort renovates!

Owners of qualitatively inferior housing do not always have the financial leeway and knowledge to carry out renovation works. Bad insulation and loss of energy have a negative effect on the monthly energy invoice, which in the long term can cause energy poverty. To find a structural solution for these problems vulnerable households are facing, the Public Centre of Social Welfare of Ghent launched the 'Dampoort knapt op' project. It started with a pilot phase: ten houses in the Dampoort area each received EUR 30,000 for renovation works such as the repair or the replacement of leaking or non-insulated roofs, external woodwork and unsafe electricity. The owners received intensive social and technical support to manage the renovations. The emphasis is on energy savings, as a result of which average power consumption of the houses was already halved to 243.6 kWh/m²/year. When the owners sell their renovated house, they repay the renovation grant, in most cases with a little extra to the Public Centre of Social Welfare. This approach allows the Public Centre of Social Welfare to help other families to undertake renovations.

Merelbeke shines its light on Toucountouna

For us it is quite normal to cook, charge our mobiles and switch on the light at any time of day. In a low-income country such as Benin access to energy is not quite so self-evident. In Toucountouna, the town twinning partner of Merelbeke since 2014, only the centre is connected to the electricity grid. In the countryside, the light of an oil lamp is often the only light source to study, cook and even give birth. An expansion of the existing network would be too time-consuming and too expensive. This is why last year Merelbeke, in joint consultation with the Toucountouna town council, joined forces with the non-governmental organisation Solar Without Boundaries to install a solar kiosk. Solar power is an ideal solution for the energy problems in sunny Benin. The kiosk is managed by a local self-employed person who has been trained by Solar Without Boundaries. The population can go there to rent and recharge rechargeable lamps. Other batteries, e.g. of mobiles, can be charged on payment of a small fee. The solar kiosk is a massive success, in just one week all the lamps were rented. Merelbeke is looking at the possibilities to expand this initiative in the future.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



The People Made pop-up store in Leuven sells products made by social economical and employment care organisations.



A team detects feelings that team members cannot always express in words using the Energy Barometer. Energy providers and energy eaters become visible.



Tourists in Stellenbosch can admire and buy crockery at local producer Elvis Potina.



Economic growth and decent work go hand in hand

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population, and through international cooperation. A sustainable world by 2030 cannot be achieved without focussing on sustainable and inclusive economic growth with decent work for everyone. This includes good working conditions, sustainable tourism, addressing youth unemployment and supporting entrepreneurship.

Hanne Albers & Heleen Voeten, advisors VVSG-International

Resilient work with the energy barometer

We spend a lot of time at work, and it is important that we feel good there. The Energy Barometer, developed by Diverscity, identifies energy providers and energy eaters at the workplace. It is a method to talk about work with colleagues: what fascinates them and is satisfying, and what bores and tires them? It gives managers a foundation to work on change, as they can use the Barometer to look for ways to remain more resilient and work together with their team. Once the questions on the game board have been discussed, a plan of approach will be drawn up as part of which each participant chooses one action to address in the near future to improve his or her energy barometer. Diverscity has already successfully distributed more than thousand Energy Barometer posters to local authorities throughout Flanders. Katia Sette, Department Manager Local Services Centre Ghent: 'The Energy Barometer gives good insight into what people feel but cannot always express in words. We will certainly continue using it.' The Energy Barometer is an excellent tool for taking steps towards decent work. You can order the Energy Barometer from www.diverscity.be.

Leuven gives the creative industry a boost with popstart

The City of Leuven hits two birds with one stone with Popstart: creative, innovative entrepreneurs are given space and the Leuven shopping streets become more attractive. The initiative was introduced in the spring of 2017 with two buildings rented by the city itself, but private owners have now also joined. The city grants an exemption from vacancy taxes to encourage them to temporarily rent out vacant buildings at an affordable price. This enables starters to test out a new idea or concept and increase their visibility in the streetscape without major risks. High rents are often the biggest obstacle to starting a company. Popstart supports them with free advice, promotion and an extensive network of entrepreneurs. Soon, everyone who dreams of starting a company can visit an innovative entrepreneurial café, which not only offers support but also gives creators, designers and artists the opportunity to meet. The city assisted a dozen starters with their dream of starting a company over the course of a year. A ceramist and a cabinet maker offer their unique services and products in the Artisan Hub, the first pop-up store. They have now grown and moved to a new location. People Made, the newest pop-up store, sells products and services made or provided by social economical and employment care organisations. It shows how economic growth and decent work go hand in hand.

Sustainable tourism in the Stellenbosch townships

Tourism focussed on sustainability and local entrepreneurs is the goal of the Municipality of Dilbeek together with Stellenbosch in South Africa. Dilbeek has been supporting entrepreneurs from the townships since 2016 by helping them with their education and focussing on the tourism in the townships. Together with people in the field, Dilbeek made a first inventory of entrepreneurs who can be linked to sustainable development. These have been collected on the website www.viaviastellenbosch.travel. The next step is bringing tourists to these entrepreneurs. The incorporation of a ViaVia café is being studied together with ViaVia Tourism Academy (VVTA). Five students from the University of Stellenbosch have carried out an opportunity analysis and looked for a suitable location for this café and the possible partners. VVTA is currently reviewing the next steps after a positive result. Dilbeek also works with the tourism department of Stellenbosch for this project. They will organise a cook training programme for inhabitants of the townships in the context of 'Dining with Locals' with the support of Dilbeek. Dilbeek is also interested in supporting a starter programme for inhabitants of the townships who want to start their own business but do not have the funds to attend a course.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Dogbo in Benin has received six times as much tax since the introduction of a digital one-stop shop system.



The Sint-Truiden app brings everyone in contact with each other.



The Itterbeek business park opts for sustainability in all areas.



Innovation and industrialization can also be sustainable

The ninth Sustainable-Development Goal focuses on reliable and sustainable infrastructure, inclusive and sustainable industrialization and promotion of innovation. This is the foundation for a strong economy with social welfare. Access to ICT and the Internet for all is also essential.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Sint-Truiden apps

The city of Sint-Truiden strongly believes in the digital future. It therefore developed an innovative city app which was launched on February 1, 2017. Through this app, the city council, residents, traders and associations are now much more closely connected. For example, you can easily book a table at a restaurant or stay informed of what happens in your youth club. Communication with the city council is now much more fluid. Citizens can report and apply for documents such as a certificate of cohabitation or a birth certificate to city services. The app also simplifies the work of city officials. They can immediately follow up and respond to reports or respond quickly when a problem occurs. For example, electricity recently broke down in a number of Sint-Truiden neighborhoods. Via the app, the communications service was able to inform people immediately about this situation and to inform them about the state of affairs. In the future, the city wants to expand the app to areas such as mobility and tourism. In other domains, Sint-Truiden is also accelerating digitalization. For example, there is wifi available everywhere in the marketplace and the business areas are fitted with fiber optic to maximize internet access.

Duffel sustains business parks

On behalf of the municipality of Duffel, the intermunicipal cooperation for regional development, IMEGO, has undertaken many initiatives to ensure a sustainable business park for SMEs (small and medium sized enterprises) in Itterbeek. Enterprises that want to gain a certificate must demonstrate that sustainability is essential to them, including mobility, buildings, waste management and energy use. Enterprises can take small sustainability measures, such as good insulation, re-use of rainwater and the use of energy saving lamps and fair trade products. SMEs can also go one step further. They can install solar panels or install a green roof. IGEMO also provides its own contribution through the construction of a separate sewage system and a small-scale water treatment plant. In addition, it has provided the business park with energy-efficient public lighting and underground water reservoirs for fire-fighting purposes. Another distinctive feature of Itterbeek is the emphasis on green spaces. Despite the stringent sustainability standards, the reactions of the entrepreneurs are very positive. IGEMO continues to follow its course in relation to sustainability in the future. In Berlaar and Puurs, two municipalities that belong to the intermunicipal cooperation, IMEGO is constructing two new sustainable SME business parks in consultation with the municipalities concerned.

Benin municipal income transparent

A few years ago, Dogbo, the Benin city which is the partner of Roeselare, introduced a system that increases transparency in municipal revenue. Like most local governments in Benin, the various municipal services in Dogbo arranged their income separately. There was no central overview of the income market stall-holders received, the proceeds from issuing deeds (e.g. driving licenses) and other tax revenues for the city. Dogbo therefore installed a digital single-slot system. Thus, all municipal revenue from taxation comes through the municipal organization through one digital office and is managed with one software program. The mayor of Dogbo can therefore review the municipal income at any time and follow the planned expenses. This increases the transparency of resources, reduces corruption and leads to better management of municipal resources. According to the mayor, municipal income has even increased to six times since Dogbo introduced the system. Dogbo is the pioneer for the system in Benin, but also the Benin partner cities of Zoersel, Merelbeke and Hoogstraten have plans to develop this digital one-stop system in the coming years.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Mayor Bart Somers embraced the superdiversity in Mechelen as the new standard at the Global Conference on Cities and Migration.



Dendermonde approaches young people to participate in the playground initiative, first to play, and as an animator once they turn sixteen.



The inclusion official makes Maldegem more accessible with volunteers who take action against incorrectly parked bicycles on the sidewalk.



Everyone is equal: inclusive local policies

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population, and through international cooperation. Striving for a sustainable world by 2030 also means combating inequality, both between countries and within countries themselves. This is possible by increasing low wages faster and giving developing countries a greater say in the decision-making process of international institutions. The social, economic and political inclusion of all people must improve by 2030, regardless of age, gender, handicap, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or status.

Heleen Voeten & Saskia Van Driel, advisors VVSG-International

Maldegem inclusion official welcomes everyone

Back in 2010, the Public Centre for Social Welfare of Maldegem was one of the first local authorities to appoint an inclusion official who acts as a point of contact and reporting body for inhabitants with a disability. One of the first achievements was the Welcome accessibility label. Events and businesses that respect a number of accessibility criteria may be awarded the Blue Label. The inclusion official will always be asked for advice on planned works and renovations within the municipality. A range of adjustments have already been made to the public space. The spoken version of the municipal information leaflet and the audio induction loop for the hearing impaired in the municipal buildings are good examples of more accessible services. The inclusion official attempts to involve as many Maldegem inhabitants in the accessibility of the municipality as possible. Everyone can find out for themselves how accessible the public space and the buildings are using bottleneck walks, and businesses can screen themselves for free using the On Wheels app, after which they may be awarded the accessibility license. Inhabitants can also sign up as sidewalk custodian and take action against incorrectly parked bicycles and other annoying objects on the Maldegem sidewalks with the Save the Sidewalk Team (an initiative of Mobiel 21).

Dendermonde helps young refugees and newcomers

Dendermonde introduced the mobile playground project Den Vollen Bak in 2011. This initiative was supplemented with the Vollen Bak Vooruit project in 2017 by Uit de Marge, which aims to invest more in the integration of young refugees and foreign-language newcomers. Young people from this target group are approached to participate in the activities of the playground initiative, but also to organise activities themselves. Participation teaches the young people not only a lot of social skills, they also become co-owners of the project and develop a sense of responsibility. Young people from the target group aged 16 years or older are encouraged to keep working in the mobile playground initiative and work as animator at Den Vollen Bak themselves. This gives them their first work experience in a playful manner. The active involvement of animators with a different cultural background also increases the participation and possible professional development of new children and young people from a variety of target groups. The youth workers of Dendermonde dream of continuing to focus on this target group in the future. They are currently developing the follow-up project Jong Zijn, which aims to offer additional activities besides the current ones.

Mechelen declaration for migration

Mechelen hosted the Global Conference on Cities and Migration in November 2017. The conference wanted to create a positive migration story from the perspective of local and regional authorities. People tend to migrate to cities, which makes local government important players in the humane care for refugees, migration management and policy. 'Mechelen has an exceptional record when it comes to integrating migrants. The city has not only decided to accept its super-diversity with 138 nationalities on a total over 86,000 people, but also accepts this as the new standard,' says Mayor Bart Somers. Mechelen works on policies that give people opportunities for developing their future every day. The main outcome of the conference is the Mechelen declaration, which lays down the vote of mayors and governors of regional and local authorities concerning cities and migration. This is a first step towards a UN resolution on migration. The declaration was endorsed by more than 140 representatives from all over the world. The Belgian government has formally submitted the declaration to Louise Arbour, special representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for International Migration. The declaration was published on the UN website <https://refugees-migrants.un.org/general-contributions>.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



In the partner municipality of San Jeronimo in Edegem, the processing of empty plastic bottles now also ensures incomes.



To prevent flooding, the Duchess Henry I square in Baarle-Hertog becomes a pond during heavy rains.



In Ostend, the empty post office building has become a vibrant cultural centre.



Sustainability in public space

The 11th Sustainable Development Goal has been written on behalf of the municipalities. Inclusive, safe and sustainable cities and communities are essential for achieving sustainable development. It has to do with adequate and affordable housing, sustainable mobility and the environmental impact of cities and municipalities. In addition, safe and green public spaces, disaster relief, sustainable spatial planning and heritage management are part of SDG 11.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

From post office to lively cultural centre

A former post office in Ostend, a building of Gaston Eysselinck from 1947, has been a thorn in the side of the city council for years. In the early years of its existence, the building received little attention and only after 1963 it was recognized as one of the most powerful architectural achievements of the post-war period in Belgium. In 2005, the city decided to buy the protected architectural pearl and give it a new destination. The building has emerged as the vibrant cultural heart of Ostend under the name 'The Great Post'. With a total area of no less than 15,000 m², The Great Post is an imposing building, coated with rough grey granite. During the renovations, the architects maintained the authentic structure, materials and details. For example, the granite is contrasted by the old bronze windows, a material that is most resistant to salty sea air. Furthermore the revolving doors with the former postal logo and the beautiful ticket hall send you back in time.

Baarle-Hertog buffers the risk of flooding

Our climate is changing. This means that we are facing more summer storms, while our sewage system is often not able to cope with such a large amount of water in a short period of time. The municipality of Baarle-Hertog is aware of this and therefore commenced the construction of a buffer and infiltration basin in 2007 on and under the Duke of Hendrik I square. This basin is aimed at relieving sewage and avoiding floods. Underground there is a buffer capacity for about 100 m³ of rainwater. Above ground, the lawn is sixty centimetres lower than the surrounding area, which yields an extra storage tank of 350 m³. Through a separate sewerage in the vicinity of the square, only the rainwater, and not the waste water, enters the buffer basins. Once or twice a year, the lawn changes into a pond, but it doesn't remain so for long. Due to the highly water-permeable sandy soil, the precipitation penetrates into the soil quickly, causing the lawn to dry and be used again for recreation or playing soccer.

Edegem works together for waste management

Edegem and the Peruvian municipality of San Jerónimo work together, among other things, on more efficient waste management. San Jerónimo urges its residents and market traders to recycle their waste. In the case of separate collection, the organic waste is brought to the composting plant. The compost is used by the local community and local farmers. At the composting plant, employees continually develop new initiatives, such as the establishment of a vegetable garden and conservatory. The products they grow and fertilize with their own compost serve as food for the employees. The ultimate goal is to establish a demonstration plant to demonstrate the compost process to visitors such as schools and other municipalities.

Co-operation on waste policy also has a social component. In addition to the municipal waste collection service, there are still "independent" waste collectors (ARESAJE), which are in a very vulnerable position. Recently they set up an Eco park where the waste collectors bring in plastic bottles which are compressed in a press and then sold to buyers in bales. This allows them to offer plastic in larger volumes and thus also get a better price. In this manner the waste management program works on sustainable development in all its aspects.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Inspiration visit by W13 to Foodsavers Gent where food surpluses are redistributed.



Old ventilators are transformed into new products in Kortrijk's twin city.



Sint-Truiden only drinks Fair trade coffee now.



Sustainable consumption and production is vital

The sustainable management and efficient use of raw materials is vital as our consumer society produces too much waste. In addition to this, we must also invest in less polluting production methods, that produce less waste, as well as a sustainable procurement policy and sustainable tourism. We can contribute to sustainable consumption by reducing food waste and recycling and reusing waste products.

Hanne Albers & Jules De Winter, advisors VVSG-International, Leen Van Der Meeren, advisor ??

Sint-Truiden resolutely opts in favour of sustainable public procurement

The City of Sint-Truiden hopes to use its own purchasing power to achieve the SDGs, by implementing its new vision on public procurement policy. At the end of 2016, the municipal council decided to systematically make its procurement policy more sustainable. The city thus hopes to reduce its ecological footprint and pay attention to the working conditions in which products are made. Some purchases were given priority, such as environment-friendly cleaning products, wood from sustainably managed forests, energy-efficient appliances and fair trade. Fundamentally, every tender will be subjected to a sustainability assessment. Moreover, Sint-Truiden also commits to making large projects and events more sustainable, thereby setting the example for its inhabitants and local businesses.

To this end, the city requested support from the VVSG's Centre for Sustainable Local Government Contracts. All the municipal services that buy products or services received a training course on sustainable public procurement. In addition to a refresher on the legislation regarding government contracts, the participants also followed a crash course on sustainable public procurement. Buyers can also contact the centre themselves for advice on specific public procurement contracts.

Distribute more fresh food surpluses through regional cooperation

Redistributing more and above all more fresh food surpluses. That is what W13 has set out to achieve. W13 is the umbrella association of the fourteen public social welfare centres and the regional CAW agency (Central for General Welfare) of the Province of West Flanders. Although many organisations already operate in the region, there is still plenty of surplus food, while less privileged people could really use it. W13 works with different partners to better match supply and demand and has developed a regional distribution platform. More products can be distributed among disadvantaged groups and social organisations through upscaling and efficiency gains. W13 also wants to make this target group more resilient. Employees will be given the opportunity to learn on the job, developing logistics skills, gaining work experience and increasing their opportunities on the regular job market by working for the distribution platform. The organisation is establishing a network of volunteers and civil servants in the region, so they can learn from each other and exchange good practices. All these actions will culminate in a self-managing network, which promotes social activation as well as the processing of food surpluses and ensuring everyone can enjoy a more balanced diet.

Transforming waste into design

Our current production mechanisms exhaust natural resources, while the mountain of waste continues to grow. But there is an alternative, as Sep Verboom, a former student in industrial product design at University College West-Vlaanderen, has proved. He travelled to Cebu City in the Philippines, a twin city of the City of Kortrijk, for his work placement. Cebu City aims to combat its huge waste problem by processing waste into new products. The city is always searching for innovative methods to tap into new markets, such as restaurants and pubs. Kortrijk paid the cost of Sep Verboom's training, to support its twin city. Sep developed the FANtasized project in Cebu. The local population uses its braiding skills to transform old ventilators, which the city procures directly from the local waste collector, into new products. Upon his return to Kortrijk, Sep received support from the town council to establish contacts with Kortrijk entrepreneurs. Since then, Sep has founded a company, called Livable World, which operates in various regions around the world. All the projects start from local involvement to create a new product.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Citizens share responsibility for the flooding emergency action plans, which is why they like to help.



Liesbeth Verstreken, the mayor of Zoersel, and Sanni Mama, the vice-mayor of Bohicon, sign the Covenant of Mayors.



The municipal staff in the town hall of Diest removed half of the lamps in corridors. This was just one of many actions that helped reduce energy consumption in the building by twelve percent.



Climate action also means local action

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population and through international cooperation. Preventative measures, such as actions to reduce CO₂ emissions, are needed because climate change affects every country in the world. At the same time, we must also adapt to the current climate change, among others by making countries, cities and communities more resilient against natural disasters.

Hanne Albers & Jules De Winter, advisors VVSG-International

Diest wins the Save@work-campaign

In Diest's town hall, they combat climate change every day, with small-scale yet creative actions. Municipal staff succeeded in reducing the town hall's energy consumption by twelve percent, with a fun and positive initiative, thus winning Save@work's award for "best campaign". Diest also came third in the "greatest energy savings" category.

Diest's energy team decided to focus on a change in behaviour without pointing fingers at anyone. The campaign kicked off with a video. The team then shared energy tips using posters and the town hall's Intranet. An artist designed a challenge cup to present to colleagues who came up with the best ideas. The energy team also implemented structural changes: they removed half of the lamps in the corridors, adapted the heating system's settings and distributed a manual to ensure PCs were used more energy-efficiently. They continued to deliver the campaign message throughout the summer with an energy picnic.

You can find countless energy tips and examples of specific actions you can take at www.saveatwork.be. Further information about the concept and the follow-up project: www.samenergievinnen.be.

Co-production makes Geraardsbergen more resilient

In Geraardsbergen they know all too well that climate change causes more extreme weather situations more often. The city experienced heavy flooding, in 2010 and in 2016. Therefore they have applied typical measures such as a water assessment in the city's permit policy and grants for a rainwater manhole for several years already. The city has done more, because it is situated in a region that is prone to flooding. In 2017, the water company developed a rainwater plan and the Flemish Environment Agency visited people's homes to see how they can better protect their house against water damage. Since 2011, the city has also allocated grants for water damage prevention works to houses. The population now receives a text message when heavy rain is forecast and social media will be used for crisis communication. The city continues to innovate by opting in favour of co-production. A brand-new local action plan contains measures, to be implemented by both the city and its inhabitants. Geraardsbergen has fifteen village councils and two neighbourhood platforms. The city is now also promoting "volunteer work related to flooding". The inhabitants develop their own local emergency action plans, and have more ownership and responsibility. The advantages: fewer complaint mails, a better relationship with citizens and a cost reduction of fifteen percent on average.

Zoersel and Bohicon sign the Covenant of Mayors

The Antwerp municipality Zoersel and its twin town Bohicon, in Benin, signed the Covenant of Mayors in November 2016. Zoersel was the first twinned town in Europe to do this. Zoersel and Bohicon are mapping out a climate action programme together, which perfectly ties in with their philosophy of peer-to-peer collaboration and finding structural solutions to local challenges together. Both partners share experiences about stakeholder and civic participation for the development of their climate plan, which must be finalised this year. They also take part in joint training opportunities on themes such as energy cooperatives and the implementation of the strategic development goals in local policy. As Zoersel is a member of the European Climate Alliance, the town's Romanian and Hungarian colleagues are now also developing climate adaptation initiatives in Bohicon. Zoersel also successfully supported the Province of Zou, where Bohicon is located, in its application for the EU pilot project "Covenant of Mayors Sub-Saharan Africa". The funding is also used to promote climate action in Bohicon. The joint signing of the Covenant of Mayors also helps raise awareness about climate action. As climate change is much more visible and palpable in Bohicon than Climate action in Zoersel.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



A sea container converted into a tunnel filled with waste visitors need to walk through, Bredene won 10,000 Euro as part of the Eneco Clean Beach Cup 2018 with this original project.



Koksijde playfully teaches children that litter must be cleaned up by hand to ensure dunes can form.



Flake ice enables fishers in Banjul, who sometimes spend days on sea, to keep their catch longer.



Local actions for a clean sea

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population, and through international cooperation. The 14th goal aims to stop the pollution of oceans and seas and to protect maritime ecosystems. The importance of SDG 14 cannot be emphasised enough, as the pollution of our seas and oceans threatens the biodiversity, results in health risks for humanity, and threatens activities like tourism and small-scale fishing. The fact that it is five minutes past midnight is clear from the growing 'plastic soup' in the Pacific, a floating rubbish dump of 79,000 tonnes of plastic fifty times the size of Belgium.

Saskia Van Driel & Jules Dewinter, advisors VVSG-International

Bredene increases its fight against plastics

Various Flemish coastal municipalities understand that it is time to increase their fight against plastic. Bredene, for example, which deploys one action after another. Awareness signs placed at the beach entrances show how long it takes before waste decays. The 'Do you have 5 minutes?' campaign calls on beach visitors to clean up litter. The beach bars in Bredene have signed a charter in which they commit themselves to reducing the amount of beach waste, and the municipality provided five thousand reusable carrier bags to local retailers at the end of June to discourage the use of plastic bags. In addition, associations in Bredene could borrow reusable cups for events. But the municipal authorities are also taking a good look at themselves to use as little plastic as possible during activities. As a cherry on top, the Eneco Clean Beach Cup 2018 awarded Bredene with a cheque of 10,000 euros for the originality of its Plastic Nightmare project: a sea container that was converted into a tunnel filled with waste through which visitors could walk and were literally engulfed by plastic. This is confronting, as we are indeed headed for a world in which we are surrounded by plastic.

Natural dune formation in Koksijde

Dunes are an excellent instrument for adapting to climate change, as they provide for water storage, buffer zones, and protect the coast against storms. They are also the habitat of coastal and dune species that are currently seriously threatened or have even disappeared, such as the crested lark. Natural coastal protection is in the interest of people and nature. They have understood this well in Koksijde. Koksijde was the first coastal municipality to decommission its beach sweeper in 2005 to give natural dune formation a chance. A beach sweeper costs a lot of money, but that is not all: it completely destroys the natural flood line and prevents young dunes from forming. This flood line contains stranded materials like seaweed, dead crabs and shells that are digested into strips of fertile soil. Perfect for pioneer plants such as marram grass and searocket that prepare the beach for a new dune. Koksijde playfully teaches children that waste on the beach must be cleaned up by hand to ensure dunes can form. Children can play a game in educational centre Duinenhuis in which they must place the different steps of the duneforming process in the right order. They need to get back to the start if they place the beach sweeper card.

Flake ice plant is an incentive for sustainable fishing in Banjul

Ostend (70,000 inhabitants) has had a twin city relationship with Banjul (35,000 inhabitants) for almost fifteen years. They collaborate on many projects to actively support the efficiency and public services of the Banjul city council (such as IT, waste, street lighting, fishing, urban agriculture and a bicycle workshop). Banjul is the capital of Gambia and is located on the coast of West Africa. The Gambia river which flows into the Atlantic Ocean in Banjul is the lifeline of the country. Fishing is an important part of the society. Fish is part of the daily diet and is the most important source of protein for most of the inhabitants. The flake ice plant has been working at full capacity since 2016 thanks to the partnership with Ostend. The availability of flake ice means that fishers, who sometimes spend days on sea, can store the caught fish for longer, which has a positive effect on food hygiene and the profitability of the activities of fishers and fish sellers. At least 250 people work in the fishing sector in Banjul as fishers, fish smokers and salters and fish sellers. This has an impact on the livelihoods of at least two thousand people every day. The fish is sold up to the hinterlands of Gambia, Senegal, Guinea and Mali.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Sand erosion in the mountainous areas around Guaranda, with a vicuña in the distance. This is where indigenous species are planted and fenced off.



The Beernem employment care centre De Klus created four bee hotels that are filled together with associations to place them in different green areas in the municipality.



The parsonage garden in Roosbeek was made more accessible to walking visitors.



Local authority working at nature's rhythms

Flemish municipalities contribute to the United Nations Strategic Development Goals on three levels: in their own administration, for their own population, and through international cooperation.

We must also protect our nature to give future generations the opportunity to develop themselves. The ecosystems of our country are an important part of this. We must protect our forests, marshes and mountains and restore affected areas. Preserving biodiversity is also a priority.

Hanne Albers & Heleen Voeten, advisors VVSG-International

Plant and animal-friendly renovation of parsonages in Boutersem

Fauna and flora improve the quality of the living environment and bring nature education closer to the schools, which saves transport costs. Two birds with one stone, thought the Municipality of Boutersem. The redevelopment of the three local parsonage gardens of Neervelp, Roosbeek and Kerkom offered great opportunities. The local free primary school created a vegetable and herb garden in the parsonage garden of Roosbeek with Nature at School subsidies. Together with the church factory and Natuurpunt, the Municipality added a small fruit garden with insect hotel, a fruit orchard, a flowery grassland, a pond, a coppice, and a pleasure garden with beautiful old trees. Kerkom mainly aimed to create a fruit garden with the planting of old, local tree varieties. Attention was also paid to the educational aspect: there are nameplates, information panels, practical assignments, and guided tours of the parsonages. Boutersem did not forget its dear neighbours (its local plant and animal species). When renovating the church, the brown long-eared bat was given its own entrance to the tower, and a colony of swifts was given a series of built-in nesting stones as a breeding ground.

Bee-friendly Beernem

Insect pollination is necessary for more than 75 percent of our food crops. Bees are indispensable to our society, and the Municipality of Beernem has understood this very well. With its Beernem Bee Plan, which runs from 2015 to 2020, the Municipality won the 'Most Bee-Friendly Municipality in Flanders' title in 2017. The bee plan has three objectives. First of all, Beernem wants to engage the entire municipality: residents, organisations and companies can sign a bee charter and commit to organise their garden or company premises in a bee-friendly (pollen-rich) manner. Their efforts are rewarded and published with a bee sign. The Municipality itself sets a good example by including a bee-friendly corner and a zone for extensive moving management in all green areas. All municipal cemeteries were also redeveloped with a focus on bee-friendly vegetation. Finally, the Municipality is committed to education and awareness-raising through an annual activity for the general public. This was a photo competition and the construction of four bee hotels in 2017. This year, the bee working group is dreaming of a bicycle tour past numerous bee-friendly initiatives.

Guaranda replanted to protect water sources

Access to drinking water is not a guarantee everywhere in the world. The Flemish Municipality of Evergem and the Ecuadorian Guaranda, who have had a twin city relationship since 2003, are aware of this. Attention must be paid to nature and its ecosystems to protect the natural water sources. If there is not enough afforestation and vegetation, water will not be properly retained by the soil and dries up faster. This has a negative effect on the water supply of cities and villages. Evergem and Guaranda have, therefore, decided to better protect the areas in the mountains with high levels of rainfall or where water sources are located. They do this by replanting these areas with native species. Hard choices must be made to protect the water sources. Wild animals, such as vicuñas (lama-like animals), often pose a threat to the natural vegetation around the water sources due to their grazing. The replanted areas are fenced off to give the young plants the time and space to grow. Similar actions are being implemented in the twin city relationship between Bierbeek and Ecuadorian Oña.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



Westerlo helps cocoa farmers in Colombia to obtain a fair trade label.



The police zone of Sint-Pieters-Leeuw (now the Zenne valley) was the first to draw up a sustainability report.



With an online tool, Zedelgem asked the inhabitants about their mobility needs.



Sustainable development relies on peaceful, inclusive societies

Peace, security and legal certainty are essential for promoting sustainable development. In addition, we think of combating crime, corruption and violence, also against children, but also of a strong constitutional state in which fundamental freedoms are protected. Furthermore, effective and transparent institutions with attention to citizenship participation and inclusive decision making are indispensable.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International; Tom De Schepper, advisor VVSG-security

Police zones accountable for social responsibility

More and more police zones in Belgium publish a social report with their annual accounts or include this in the service report of the past year. They account for the extent to which the organization takes into account its impact on sustainability (buildings), ecology (vehicles), residential traffic or purchases of copy paper and consumables. In the Belgian federal parliament on April 26, 2017 an amendment to the rules on the operation and organization of the police councils was approved. The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG) proposed that more police zones be allowed to publish a social report. It may be sufficient to include a brief overview of sustainable initiatives in the annual report. The police zone Sint-Pieters-Leeuw (today police zone Zennevallei) was a pioneer in the preparation of a sustainability report a few years ago. With this it won the Award for Best Belgian Sustainability Report in 2013. Since 2006, the Brussels municipalities are obliged to draw up a report on the extent to which they consider social, ethical and environmental aspects in their financial policies.

Everyone mobile in Zedelgem

Increase the mobility of people with a disability by promoting sustainable mobility for all, which is the goal of the 'Everyone Mobile' project in Zedelgem, starting in 2017. The project builds on a project by two organizations, Oranje and Vzw Curando, "Together for talent", but can count on the support of the social housing and the municipal council. Sustainability is interpreted and approached broadly. It is about transport options and solutions that are safe, easy, social, environmentally friendly and energy efficient. What characterizes the project further is civic co-creation. With the help of Createlli, the residents of Zedelgem were asked via an online tool about their mobility needs. Based on the results, project ideas were developed in May, including cycling streets, mobility for vulnerable groups, car and bicycle parts, and a digital platform that brings together supply and demand. A number of municipal officials have taken an active part and now put their shoulders under the elaboration of these ideas. To check which projects are feasible, they will be tested with citizens this summer. The created citizens' initiatives will be spread through local neighborhood events and social media. Thus, "Everyone Mobile" remains committed to civic co-creation.

Westerlo's alliance for peace

Colombia has been involved in an armed conflict for decades, which the recent fragile peace agreement is trying to end. Westerlo was not blind to this issue and in December 2006 joined an alliance for peace with the Colombian peace community of San José de Apartado. The municipality did this together with the federation of Herselt, Hulshout and Westerlo parishes. The Municipal Council of Westerlo offers practical support to the peace community. It promotes education, provides financial support to improve the homes and committed itself to acquiring a fair-trade label for cocoa and bananas. In addition, Westerlo also acts as an advocate to protect the interests of the peace community. Together with its partners it denounced the conflict and human rights violations to the Colombian authorities and the United Nations. In addition to direct support to the peace community, the municipality of Westerlo also regularly organizes information for its own inhabitants. Following the ten-year existence of the Alliance, two representatives of San José de Apartado were received at the town hall. This direct contact between the peace community and the Westerlo policy makers keeps the topic very much in the news within the municipality.



In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were signed, a set of 17 goals which makes every country in the world responsible for achieving those goals by 2030. Local authorities are essential to achieve this 2030 Agenda. Not only does every goal affect local competences and policy making, municipalities also have to set a good example. Flemish municipalities in Belgium already contribute to this global framework, but additional efforts are needed. Municipalities are able to contribute on three levels: internally within their own administration, locally for their population and globally through international co-operation. Over the coming years, VVSG (the Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities) will translate these international goals to the local level in close collaboration with the municipalities. In the VVSG- monthly magazine LOKAAL we are zooming in on each SDG pointing at examples of good practice that already exist today in Flanders. These examples can be a source of inspiration for other local authorities, both in Flanders and elsewhere.



In Lommel, companies receive guidance in the creation of gardens with local plants and animal-friendly flora.



In Torhout, the city and OCMW have been working together since 1 September in a new common organisational culture.



Cycling community Wevelgem collects old bicycles to have them repaired in training centres. They are then sold cheaply to schoolchildren or health workers in Uganda.



We strive for sustainable development together

Partnerships are essential in the pursuit of sustainable development, both socially, economically, ecologically and institutionally. Therefore, we need to work together, between and within countries. Companies, governments, organizations, associations and citizens join forces to set up and implement sustainable initiatives.

Hanne Albers & Karlien Gorissen, advisors VVSG-International

Stronger together in Torhout

On September 1, the start-up was given for the 'Local Authority Torhout'. From now on city and the Public Centre for Social Welfare Torhout are working together in a new common organizational structure. The goal is to work more efficiently to provide the citizens of Torhout with even better service and to benefit from economies of scale. Two clusters now provide service to the citizen: The Human Cluster encompasses all personal issues, such as leisure services, civil affairs and the social housing of the Public Centre for Social Welfare. All land-related issues, such as environment and infrastructure, fall under the Space Cluster. The internal operation is fully aligned: the staff services, financial services, but also the cleaning teams and the city and the Public Centre for Social Welfare kitchen combine their powers. These integrated services allow for a more efficient operation of the local government Torhout. Physically, the various administrative services were merged. On August 31, 2017, 'Local Authority Torhout' was launched with a musical lunch with all staff and the board. Torhout is ready for an integrated future!

Working citywide on a colourful Lommel

Without the input of companies and enterprises, effective sustainable development is impossible. The city of Lommel has understood this. In order to protect and strengthen their natural wealth, the City Council and the Entrepreneurs Club (LOC) of Lommel launched the project "Enterprises give colour to the city of Lommel" in 2014, with financial support from the Belgian Agency for Nature and Forestry. Companies and enterprises are encouraged to preserve the greenery on their terrain, including regional plants and animal-friendly flora. These companies will then receive guidance at the plant. Citizens are also involved in the project. Throughout the city, residents could obtain butterfly packages so they could create real butterfly crèches and nectar cafés with the help of butterfly and caterpillar-friendly plants in their surroundings. A steering committee with representatives of the city, the LOC and the Agency of Nature and Forest follows the project. Without the LOC, this initiative could not succeed. It was the ideal gateway to the companies and enterprises of Lommel. Meanwhile, the project has evolved into inter-municipal cooperation with Overpelt (Since January 1, 2019 merged with Neerpelt to Pelt) and Hechtel-Eksel. In addition, the authorised official of Lommel works together with the umbrella of enterprises and municipal councils.

The global power of cycling in Wevelgem

Wevelgem is a real cycling community. This is also reflected in their global policy. The municipality collects unused bicycles with its residents and repairs them in cooperation with CVO training centres. These bikes are then sold for the benefit of Coop Africa's social cycling projects without damaging the local economy. With this project, Wevelgem promotes not only sustainable consumption in its own population but also sustainable mobility and access to income, education and health care in Kenya and Uganda. Students can buy a bicycle through Coop Africa for a small amount, so they do not have to travel to school for hours on foot. Health workers can also buy a bike cheaply. This allows them to visit more and more patients faster and transport sick and pregnant women cheaply and comfortably to health centres using a cycling ambulance. Furthermore, local entrepreneurs can get a loan for a bicycle for free, with which they can start working as a bike taxi, street vendor or waste collector. In the future, Wevelgem will expand this project. The municipality will work on cooperation with more partners in Wevelgem and will organize exchanges between Ugandan bicycle repairers and CVO students.



This publication is a compilation of articles published in the VVSG magazine Lokaal in the period 2017-2018. It is part of a series of publications and tools developed by VVSG International to support municipalities with the local translation of the SDGs. Find more local actions per SDG in our publication 'Local Support for Global Challenges'. For more information visit <https://www.vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/sdg-documents-in-foreign-languages>

EDITORS

VVSG International

PHOTOGRAPHY

VVSG International, unless stated otherwise

LAYOUT

Ties Bekaert, Communications department
VVSG

MORE INFORMATION

internationaal@vvsg.be

Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (VVSG)
Bischoffsheimlaan 1-8
1000 Brussels

www.vvsg.be/sdgs
<https://www.vvsg.be/kennisitem/vvsg/sdg-documents-in-foreign-languages>
<https://www.facebook.com/be.vvsg/>
www.facebook.com/VVSGInternationaal/@VVSGInternat

DISCLAIMER

This publication is a product by the VVSG. The Flemish government and the federal government are not responsible for its contents.

