

**Joint Communiqué of the Seventh Flanders - South Africa
Joint Committee
24 March 2022**

1. The Seventh Joint Committee between Flanders and South Africa was held virtually on 24 March 2022. The Meeting was chaired by Ms Julie Bynens, Secretary-General of Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office, while the South African Delegation was led by Ambassador Maud Dlomo, Deputy Director-General: Americas and Europe at the Department of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa.
2. The Joint Committee (JC) was set up through the *Agreement on Cooperation*, signed in Pretoria on 27 November 2000 and in Brussels on 22 January 2002. This Agreement is the principal instrument for managing relations between Flanders and South Africa.
3. The Seventh JC comprises five Working Groups, established to review the status of bilateral relations within specific areas and to consider ways in which these could be enhanced. The Working Groups are the following:
 - Arts and Culture
 - Higher Education, Science and Innovation
 - Human Rights
 - Trade and Investment
 - Youth

4. The Joint Committee considered the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on their respective populations and economies, and shared information on the measures taken by their Governments.

5. The Joint Committee considered the reports of the five Working Groups and expressed its satisfaction with the growth in substance and diversity of the relationship between Flanders and South Africa. The following reports were tabled:

6. **Arts and Culture**

The cooperation in the areas of arts and culture is aimed at building sustainable, mutual and cooperative cultural relations, by fostering reciprocal cultural exchanges. Therefore, both Parties commit to strengthen their collaboration in all areas related to arts and culture, and agree on the following for the years 2022- 2024:

- exchange of information and facilitation of partnerships;
- cooperation in community art centres and amateur arts;
- cooperation in the field of language and language technology.

7. **Higher Education, Science and Innovation**

Building on the existing cooperation in the areas of higher education, science and innovation, in particular joint research and human capacity building, as well as academic exchange in the form of scholarships, fellowships and exchange programmes, both Parties agree to:

- continue the cooperation between the National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO) by renewing the Memorandum of Understanding (2022) and implementing a fifth joint call for integrated research projects (2023);
- continue and expand the cooperation between the CSIR and VITO in fields such as, but not limited to, chemicals and materials, biobased materials, lignin beneficiation, hydrogen, mining and metallurgy, sustainable energy, climate, environment, water, land use and remote sensing;

- explore new cooperation in the areas of 1) marine research, 2) data science for official statistics and 3) green hydrogen.

8. **Human Rights**

Flanders and South Africa attach great importance to the respect for human rights as a cornerstone within their respective foreign policy. Both Parties agree to explore cooperation and share best practices in the areas of:

- gender-based violence;
- the fight against child labour;
- national human rights institutions.

Furthermore, both Parties will explore cooperation around inclusion and accessibility of people with disabilities, tackling (racial) discrimination and South Africa's multilateral efforts on private military groups.

9. **Trade and Investment**

Both Parties agree to exchange information regarding trade events and missions in order to increase trade between South Africa and Flanders.

In the area of investment cooperation, the Parties agree to increase communication around investments between Flanders and South Africa, investment incentives and barriers, and to organise an annual planning meeting.

The signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Trade and Investment Cooperation between Flanders and South Africa might be considered.

Building on the Flemish Development Cooperation projects in the areas of job creation and SME development, both Parties see potential for further discussion and possible collaboration on social economy and social entrepreneurship, with a particular interest in SME development in the green economy.

10. **Youth**

Flanders and South Africa have been cooperating in the area of youth development since 2000 in order to promote, support and upscale youth volunteering within civil society organisations in South Africa.

Building on the past cooperation and taking into account the recommendations of the evaluation report of 2018, both Parties agree to explore further collaboration in the area of promoting and scaling-up of youth volunteering in local government and civil society organisations in South Africa, implementing the Action Plan 2021-2025.

11. The Annual Consultation on Development Cooperation between Flanders and South Africa took place on 15 March 2022. Both parties concluded that the implementation of the projects under the 2nd and 3rd Country Strategy Papers on Development Cooperation, although delayed in part due to the Covid-19 pandemic, is yielding good results.

The Government of Flanders has decided to reorient its cooperation with South Africa and to phase out its current Development Cooperation, but will honour existing commitments as agreed within the Country Strategy Papers on development cooperation. In this framework, both Parties expressed their interest in exploring the option of further cooperation opportunities built on past and current development cooperation projects. Both Parties agreed to hold further discussions around possible cooperation instruments, potential funding sources, and potential partnerships between organisations or institutions in Flanders and South Africa.

12. Both Parties further discussed potential cooperation in the areas of Climate and Environment.
13. The Joint Committee welcomed the intended visit to South Africa by H.E. Mr. Jan Jambon, the Minister-President of Flanders, during the first week of April 2022. The purpose of the visit is to explore new areas of cooperation between Flanders and South Africa following the termination of the Flemish Development Programme in South Africa.

14. It was agreed that the Eighth Joint Committee between Flanders and South Africa will be held in Brussels in 2023.

Signed in Brussels and in Pretoria on ...³¹... May 2022



Ms Julie Bynens
Secretary-General of Flanders
Chancellery and Foreign Office



Amb Maud Dromo
Deputy Director-General: Americas and
Europe at the Department of
International Relations and Cooperation
of the Republic of South Africa

Annexure 1: List of attendees

Annexure 2: Conclusions of the Technical Working Group on Arts and Culture

Annexure 3: Conclusions of the Technical Working Group on Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Annexure 4: Conclusions of the Technical Working Group on Human Rights

Annexure 5: Conclusions of the Technical Working Group on Trade and Investment

Annexure 6: Conclusions of the Technical Working Group on Youth

Annexure 7: Conclusions of the Bilateral Consultation on Development Cooperation

**SEVENTH FLANDERS - SOUTH AFRICA JOINT COMMITTEE
24 MARCH 2022, HYBRID FORMAT
BRUSSELS/PRETORIA**

Composition of the South African Delegation

Amb Maud Dlomo
Deputy Director-General: Americas and Europe

Amb Tokozile Xasa
Ambassador of South Africa in Belgium

Department of International Relations and Cooperation

Amb Martin Slabber
Director: Benelux and German-Speaking Countries

Ms Sewela Nkgapele
Counsellor at the Embassy of South Africa in Brussels

Mr Allan Wright
Deputy Director: Benelux and German-Speaking Countries

Ms AM Makhubedu, Dir: Benelux and German-Speaking Countries

Mr W Crowley, Dir: Human Rights

Department of Higher Education, Science and Innovation

Mr Khaya Sishuba
Director: Europe Bilateral Relations

Ms Kagiso Masete
Assistant Director: Bilateral Cooperation

National Treasury

Ms Seema Naran
Director: International Development Cooperation

Department of Sport, Arts and Culture

Ms Thapi Segoati

Deputy Director: Bilateral Relations at the Department of Sport, Arts and Culture

Department of Trade, Industry and Competition

Ms Yandeya Mashau

Director: Europe Bilateral Relations

National Youth Development Agency

Mr Phuti Semanya, Stakeholder relations

Composition of the Flemish Delegation

Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office

Ms Julie Bynens

Secretary General (head of delegation)

Mr Wouter Nachtergaele

Head of International Relations Division

Dr Geraldine Reymanants

Diplomatic Representative of Flanders in South Africa

Mr Sam Vandenabeele

Director

Mr Zvi Raman

Deputy Diplomatic Representative of Flanders in South Africa

Mr Nikolas Bosscher

Diplomatic Representative of Flanders in South Africa (Development Cooperation)

Ms Rhiannon Buyens

Policy officer

Department of Economy, Science and Innovation

Mr Johan Hanssens

Secretary General

Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO-Vlaanderen)

Mr Hans Willems

Secretary General

Flanders Investment and Trade Agency

Mr Luc Fabry
Trade and Invest Commissioner of Flanders in South Africa

Department of Culture, Youth and Media

Mr Andries Clement
Policy officer International Cultural Relations

Department of Education and Training

Ms Marie-Anne Persoons
Advisor International Policy

VITO

Mr Bruno Reyntjens
Commercial Director

JOINT COMMITTEE FLANDERS - SOUTH-AFRICA

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON ARTS AND CULTURE COOPERATION

The government of the Republic of South Africa and the government of Flanders (hereinafter jointly referred to as 'the Parties' and in the singular as a 'Party') signed an agreement on cooperation, in Pretoria in 2000, and in Brussels in 2002. This agreement details the cooperation between the Parties in the fields of education, arts, culture, science, technology and sport.

Both Parties have a rich and a diverse culture. The cooperation is aimed at building sustainable, mutual and cooperative cultural relations by fostering reciprocal cultural exchanges. Therefore, both Parties commit to strengthen their collaboration in all areas related to arts and culture and agree to cooperate in the following areas for the years 2022- 2024:

1. Exchange of information and facilitation of partnerships

- Both Parties will share information on the development of arts and culture policies at different policy levels, among others by hosting and attending conferences and policy dialogues.
- The Parties aim to facilitate partnerships between cultural institutions and organizations, by exchanging experts and sharing skills.

2. Cooperation in community art centres and amateur arts

- The Parties aim to conduct reciprocal working visits in the period 2022-2024 in order to develop, deepen cooperation, share knowledge and experience in the areas of community arts centres and the amateur arts. During these study visits, the Parties will share a recently adopted policy on community arts centres in South-Africa and assist in the process of drafting and/or implementing a new decree regulating amateur arts in Flanders.

- The Parties aim to organize exchange programmes in the field of amateur arts and community arts centres. They will also share relevant administration policies related to community arts centres and amateur arts.
- The Parties aim to strengthen the networks and associations of the community arts centres and amateur arts forums, in close coordination with representatives from the sector, and ensure that programmes delivered address community needs and are relevant.
- The Parties also aim to facilitate capacity building and training programmes.

3. Cooperation in the field of language and language technology

- The Parties will cooperate on language related matters, especially in language technologies for assisting and supporting learners with auditory and visual impairments in teaching and learning environment.
- The Parties will share the knowledge, skills and experiences in promotion and preservation of their languages (sign language included).
- The Parties aim to collaborate on a programme that will focus on promotion and teaching of the Dutch language and South-African official languages in South Africa and Flanders respectively.

The Parties express the hope that this Joint Declaration can be a first step to a more concrete implementation plan and closer cooperation in the field of culture.

JOINT COMMITTEE FLANDERS - SOUTH-AFRICA
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON HIGHER EDUCATION,
SCIENCE AND INNOVATION
MARCH 2022

The South African government and the government of Flanders signed an Agreement on Cooperation on 27 November 2000 (Pretoria) and 22 January 2002 (Brussels). Bilateral activities are currently implemented mainly through joint calls for research proposals. In addition, there is also an emphasis on human capacity building and academic exchange in the form of scholarships, fellowships and exchange programmes. South African students are welcomed to pursue their studies at Flemish Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences, making use of existing mobility programmes and scholarships both for short-term and degree mobility in higher education.

Both sides hosted a successful Technical Working Group (TWG) Meeting on Thursday, 17 March 2022. The TWG reviewed bilateral work in the field of science and technology and further discussed new areas of cooperation.

Since 2010 there has been a strong cooperation between the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa and the Fonds Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (FWO) in Belgium. Both parties value international cooperation and have an elaborated strategy to ensure that their respective research communities can collaborate with the best colleagues abroad.

The two funding agencies started cooperating in 2010, signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which governs the regular launch of joint calls for supporting collaborative research projects between South African researchers and their Flemish partners.

Since the signing of the MoU in 2010, four joint calls for research projects were launched, resulting in no less than 268 submitted research proposals of which 24 were funded. Worth mentioning is the open and transparent way of collaborating in which the evaluation process is integrated in order to prevent double jeopardy for the applicants. This means that the final selection of the most excellent proposals is performed by a joint evaluation panel composed of both Flemish and South African experts. This has been valuable for both funding agencies, and has facilitated the exchange of good practices between the two agencies. Both the NRF and FWO acknowledge the importance and relevance of the joint research call for their respective research communities. In the light of this, and as aligned to their respective strategies, the NRF and FWO will in 2022 determine the framework for future cooperation and lay out the principles of this framework in a renewed MoU. Within this MoU, the NRF and FWO intend to implement a fifth joint call for integrated research projects in 2023.

Furthermore, the cooperation between South Africa and Flanders also supports institutional cooperation on the renewable energy projects between the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of South Africa and the Flemish research organisation VITO. CSIR and VITO are research and technology organisations with a similar vocation. The CSIR undertakes directed, multidisciplinary research and technological innovation that contributes to the improved quality of life of South Africans. VITO accelerates the transition to a sustainable world, de-risking innovation for businesses and strengthening the economic and societal fabric of Flanders, with interdisciplinary research and large-scale pilot installations. CSIR and VITO are currently working together on an electrical storage testbed project which is seen as a good example of knowledge exchange and cooperation. CSIR and VITO intend to continue and expand this cooperation in fields like, but not limited to, chemicals and materials, biobased materials, lignin beneficiation, hydrogen, mining and metallurgy, sustainable energy, climate, environment, water, land use and remote sensing.

As a result, they will contribute to the modernization of sectors of the economy and exploiting new sources of growth.

New possible areas of cooperation were also discussed during the TWG. Firstly, Statistics Flanders is interested in collaborating with Statistics South Africa and other relevant partners on the application of new data sources and data science techniques for official statistics, such as co-creation and replication of data science for official statistics projects, data science upskilling for government employees, etc..

Secondly, the Flemish Marine Institute (VLIZ), which in general seeks to expand existing networks and international cooperation on ocean observation and data (e.g. Integrated Carbon Observation System (ICOS), European Ocean Biodiversity Information System (OBIS), European Marine Observation and Data Network (EMODnet), and LifeWatch) and build on its ocean research infrastructures (e.g. Marine Robotics, ICOS, LifeWatch and its wider network in the MarineLife2030 Ocean Decade setting), is interested in collaborations that can be developed in a research setting between Research Performing Organisations or in a public-private context with a solution-oriented goal with industrial partners in a blue economy context. Specifically for South-Africa, VLIZ sees cooperation opportunities in larger and long-term initiatives such as the South African Environmental Observation Network (SAEON), the Acoustic Tracking Array Platform (ATAP), the Southern Ocean Carbon and Climate Observatory (SOCCO), the Ocean Information Systems (OCIMS) and MarcoSouth. VLIZ is also interested in participating in the long-term research programme on ecosystem-wide plankton monitoring with Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) in cooperation with Sir Alister Hardy Foundation for Ocean Science (SAHFOS) in the context of the Benguela Current Commission and the Global Alliance of Continuous Plankton Recorder Surveys (GACS). GACS is an initiative of the SAHFOS and VLIZ is a partner of the Partnership for Observation of the Global Ocean (POGO), which is also involved in GACS.

Finally, other topics such as green hydrogen and the further exchange of students in higher education were stressed to be important. The parties intend to explore the possibilities for extending their cooperation in these areas.

To conclude, it should be noted that this cooperation between South Africa and Flanders contributes to a sustainable academic and research environment through capacity building. Fruitful partnerships between the various parties, such as scientific and knowledge institutes and research funding organisations can only be further encouraged. Moreover, this cooperation further contributes to strengthening of university cooperation between the two countries. Both sides expressed their satisfaction with the current bilateral cooperation.

JOINT COMMITTEE FLANDERS - SOUTH-AFRICA

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Context:

Both Flanders and South Africa attach great importance to the respect for human rights as corner stone in their respective foreign policy. In the near future both partners are planning multiple activities:

Agenda:

Flanders:

- Children's rights
- Gender equality, gender-based violence
- Sexual minorities rights
- National human rights institutes (interest to learn from good practices in that regard in South Africa)

South Africa:

- South Africa's campaign for the UN Human Rights Council seat for 2023-2025
- Reform of the Human Rights Council
- The follow-up to the outcomes of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action
- International norms and standards on:
 - Transnational Corporation (TNCs) and Other Business Enterprises (OBEs), and
 - Private military security companies (and their impact on human rights)
- Protection and advancement of the human rights of vulnerable groups (women, children and people with disabilities)

- Humanitarian affairs (e.g. assistance, people of concern, UN Humanitarian Response Depot)

Flanders explained the human rights focus of its foreign policy on: i) the rights of children, ii) people's physical integrity (and the abolishment of the death penalty), iii) the fight against discrimination, iv) labour rights, v) LGBTQI-rights, vi) women's rights and vii) the rights of people facing repression. In that framework, Flanders provides financial support to human rights organisations and projects, and raising human rights issues on the European and Multilateral level, where possible, as well as in its bilateral foreign policy. Human rights activities and projects of Flanders in South Africa have been focused on: i) human rights education, ii) children's rights, and iii) LGBTIQ rights. Flanders has mainly partnered with South African universities and civil society organisations, as well as with provincial government. In its development cooperation programmes with South Africa, inclusiveness, gender equality and good governance are considered basic conditions.

South Africa raised its campaign for the UN Human Rights Council seat for 2023-2025. In this regard, South Africa explained that it will use its tenure to support the planned reforms to enable the HRC to continue its important work on human rights. In addition, South Africa highlighted that it also intends to continue with its agenda with regards to the follow-up to the outcomes of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (World Conference against racism)

South Africa spoke of its efforts to influence international norms and standards in the area of Transnational Corporations (TNCs) and Other Business Enterprises (OBEs) corporations, as well as Private military security companies with respect to Human Rights. In this regard, there is a protection gap for victims of human rights violations.

In addition, South Africa spoke to its priorities of ensuring the protection and advancement of the human rights of vulnerable groups (women, children and persons with disabilities).

Possible joint action points:

1. Gender-Based Violence

The Covid pandemic saw a dramatic increase in gender-based violence (GBV). South Africa adopted a National Action Plan on GBV to tackle GBV, whereas in Flanders all relevant actors (social services, police, justice department, ...) were brought together under one roof in a 'Family Justice Center' to improve collaboration between services and to better fight GBV.

Both partners will continue highlighting the issue of GBV in the UN Committee on the Status of Women.

Flanders and South Africa will share best practices on this topic and will further elaborate about a possible collaboration.

2. Fighting Child Labour

Both partners highly value the fight against child labour, domestically and in their foreign policy. Children are too often also a victim of domestic violence and therefore in need of psychosocial support.

South Africa will host the fifth conference on eliminating Child Labour. Flanders can provide relevant input where possible to support South Africa.

Both partners will exchange good practices and further explore possible collaboration.

3. National Human Rights Institution

Flanders is currently setting up a human rights institution. This institution will focus on equal opportunities and anti-discrimination legislation and a complaints procedure will be set up to provide a remedy for people who are victim of discrimination. In addition, this human rights institution will focus on human rights in a broad way with the mandate amongst others to issue recommendations to the Flemish Government.

South Africa has a highly reputed Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) that holds an A-status according to the Paris Principles. In setting up its own HRC, Flanders would like to learn from the experience of the SAHRC.

Both partners agree to exchange good practices on human rights institutions.

4. Other possible areas of cooperation:

- inclusion and accessibility of people with disabilities
- tackling (racial) discrimination
- SA's multilateral efforts on private military groups

JOINT COMMITTEE FLANDERS - SOUTH-AFRICA

TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON TRADE & INVESTMENT

Attendees: Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), InvestSA, FIT (Flanders Invest & Trade), Department of Small Business Development (DSBD), Delegation of Flanders in South Africa.

1. Trade Cooperation

There is a willingness on both sides to increase trade between South Africa and Flanders. South Africa notes however that it can only measure trade with Belgium and not with Flanders as a region.

Exchange of information such as activity calendars for trade events and mission is crucial to achieve that goal.

2. Investment Cooperation

A communication line should be established between DTIC , FIT and Invest SA about the following themes:

- Investments from Flanders into South Africa; investments from South Africa into Flanders.
- Investment incentives: There needs to be more knowledge about all the existing incentives on both sides so as to best inform the companies.
- Investment barriers: Issues such as work permits and visa's. InvestSA can play a role in facilitating those procedures.

Both sides agree to organize an annual planning meeting between Flanders (Delegation and FIT) and SA (DTIC and InvestSA). Contact details will be shared to organize this.

3. Cooperation for SME's

There might be potential for further discussion and possible collaboration on social economy and social entrepreneurship between Flanders and the Department of Small Business Development (DSBD) in South Africa. There is a particular interest in SME development in the green economy, possibly through EU funding.

The DBSD also expressed interest on cooperation in training and capacity building in innovation and trade export. The DSBD has partnered with the International Trade Centre to implement the SheTrades ZA Hub which aims to increase the economic growth and job creation by enabling increased participation of women owned business in trade. SheTrades is an online platform that serves as a unique opportunity for women owned business to participate in the regional and global value chains and markets.

The sides agreed that DSBD will be invited to the Steering committee of the project "Strengthened adaptation capacity for a green and resilient economy in South Africa", implemented by UNIDO with the financial support of the Government of Flanders.

4. Conclusion: Signage of a MOU – Memorandum of Understanding on Trade and Investment related issues

Flanders expressed its interest to sign a Memorandum of Understanding on Trade and Investment Cooperation during the visit of the Minister-President of Flanders to South Africa. The DTIC informed that it will consult with the relevant agencies regarding the possibility of concluding the MoU. InvestSA has shown interest to conclude a standalone Investment Cooperation while the trade elements will continue to be pursued under the SADC- EU EPA.

**JOINT COMMITTEE FLANDERS - SOUTH-AFRICA
TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP ON YOUTH**

NYDA - FLEMISH COOPERATION

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1. Background

The National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Government of Flanders have a Cooperation on Youth Development that has been in existence for 21 years. In 2015, the National Youth Development Agency (NYDA) and the Government of Flanders, signed a 5-year Framework of Cooperation. The five-year planning and implementation cycles drive the dynamism of the Cooperation. The partners develop and agree on a programme of activities with specific achievable goals and timelines.

The Cooperation was implemented through the theme “Five Years’ Framework” under the theme: **‘Up-scaling and promoting Youth Volunteering in Civil Society Organisations in South Africa’**.

The Cooperation developed the following building blocks for the five-year programme for implementation:

- **Building block one:** *Capacity Building*
- **Building block two:** *Knowledge Generation*
- **Building block three:** *Marketing and Communication*
- **Building block four:** *Lobbying and Advocacy*

These building blocks serve as a guiding framework to promote, support and scale up volunteering within Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in South Africa. Over the last 5 years of implementing the Framework, the NYSU at NYDA was given the responsibility of managing the Programme. This involved the translation of the plans into actions that ensured that the objectives of the Cooperation are met.

2. Outcomes of the cooperation

The partners identified the following outcomes when planning execution of the five years of Cooperation to guide implementation.

- Increased Capacity of CSOs and volunteers to increase the quality of youth volunteer experience and the quantity of young volunteers;
- An adequate, accessible support system for CSOs;
- The development of an Indigenous knowledge base around youth volunteering in South Africa to promote volunteering by young people and provide a wide variety of avenues for their civic engagement activities;
- Increased visibility and profiling of the Cooperation in the country;
- The development of a Volunteer Support Framework and Policy for South African Volunteers;
- The establishment of mechanisms for financial support to Youth Volunteers through youth-led CSOs.

3. Key achievements summarized

Building Block	Achievements
Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed the Volunteer Management Toolkit in 2015 and translated into other 10 languages spoken in South Africa in 2016, 2017, and 2018. • Held Capacity Building Workshops on the application of the Volunteer Management Toolkit with Youth-led NPOs in 2017 and 2018. • Designed and implemented the NPO Incubator Programme that enrolled 300 youth-led NPOs in South Africa in 2018. • These Youth-led NPOs were then supported with donation of R5000 each to cover expenses of involving Youth Volunteers in service activities.
Knowledge Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NYDA commissioned a study on the Volunteer Landscape in South Africa and a report was produced to inform future planning and upscaling of volunteerism in South Africa. • Conducted Knowledge Seminars, Volunteer Learning Forums and Conference to create platforms for knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices on Volunteerism. • Developed a publication, documenting the 20 Years of the Cooperation covering views and insights from a wide variety of key role players who took part in the implementation of the Cooperation over the years.
Marketing and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed an online database “myhandsandheart” as a platform where Youth Volunteers are matched with available volunteer opportunities was developed in 2016. • The Cooperation the database signed up 44,778 registered users. • The platform has grown since inception, reaching over 128,604 young people in over half a million sessions. • Through this online platform 2,439 volunteer opportunities were recorded and benefitted Youth Volunteers with skills. • The NYSU developed a Communication and Marketing Strategy in 2017. The strategy was then implemented in 2018 through various volunteer activation events.

Lobbying and Advocacy

- Partnerships with the Department of Public Works during the fiscus years 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18. This partnership saw the programme securing R 39 337 200 to fund and support volunteer work by NPOs in local communities.
- An agreement with National Development Agency was concluded to support the provision of ongoing Capacity Building interventions through skills gap analysis within the Civil Society Organisations, specifically with Youth-led NPOs.

Beyond the achievements from the cooperation as reported in the past five years, we have had an opportunity to implement programs as it relates to the different building blocks outside of the formal cooperation. We see that the program design, using the tools is adding value to the CSOs and targeted beneficiaries.

We have implemented the following programs in the past two years outside the formal cooperation:

- COVID-19 NPO campaigns in June 2020, targeting child headed households as part of responding to the impact of the pandemic as people lost jobs.
- Implemented the National Youth Service Challenge that targeted 100 NPO's with the aim of recognising the work they do and offering them further support through the NPO incubator program in 2021.
- Held the National Steering Committee for national youth service which is a platform for reporting, lobbying and advocacy across all sectors in 2021.
- Hosted the National Youth Service Summits inclusive of Civil Society to share best practice and to reflect on the implementation of the programme in 2021.
- The National Youth Service Challenge NPO's were taken through the first induction on National Youth Service and the Volunteer management tool kit which took place on the 28th of February 2022.
- The announcement of the revitalised National Youth Service program to benefit 50 000 young people through the NPO's awarded through the program.

4. Lessons learned

- The evaluation report published in 2018 stated that the programme policies and procedures remain relevant and useful for the successful implementation of the programme.
- The translated version of the volunteer management toolkit provides CSOs with practical tools and guidelines on volunteer management. The tool is designed

Conclusions of the Bilateral Consultation on Development Cooperation Flanders - South Africa

Attendees: National Treasury (NT), Flanders Department of Chancellery & Foreign Affairs, Delegation of Flanders in South Africa, Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE), Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (DTIC), Industrial Development Corporation (IDC), South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), South African Weather Service (SAWS), University of Cape Town (UCT), Water Research Commission (WRC), Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO). As a component of the project with UCT, the KU Leuven, University of Venda (Univen), University of Fort Hare (UFH) also participated.

The meeting was held on MS Teams on the 15 March 2022.

1. Development Cooperation

The Government of Flanders has decided to reorient its cooperation with South Africa and to therefore phase out its current development cooperation with South Africa. Flanders will still honour existing commitments as agreed within the Country Strategy Papers on development cooperation.

The meeting discussed projects within CSP II and III. The purpose of the meeting was to take stock of where projects are currently, what went well, what were the challenges, how were they fixed and how to move forward. There was a presentation from each project, and discussion. The Government of Flanders also provided input on their collaboration with the multilateral agencies as well as civil society.

CSP II projects are almost all either closed or within the closure phase, with two ongoing. CSP II ran from 2012 to 2016. The majority of the 18 projects, implemented by 12 project partners were in the job creation sector, with a specific focus on social entrepreneurship.

CSP III between the Governments of Flanders and South Africa has been from 2017 to 2021. The focus of this CSP is climate change adaptation and the inclusive green economy.

Specific objectives of CSP III are: (1) to strengthen and enhance the knowledge base for climate change adaptation, (2) to foster the active participation of, and facilitate engagement between, multiple actors, and (3) to ensure that projects promote gender equality, good governance and social inclusion

The planned budget of 25 million is committed with 17 projects being funded. The Government of South Africa is the main implementer, followed by local NGO's & institutions and UN agencies.

Both in CSP II and III, there are projects that experience implementation delays.

Both parties expressed their interest in exploring the option of further cooperation opportunities built on past and current development cooperation projects. Both parties agreed to hold further discussions around possible cooperation instruments, potential funding sources, and potential partnerships between organisations or institutions in Flanders and South Africa. Partners expressed interest in collaboration around international climate finance and in academic cooperation. Furthermore, Flanders pointed to the possibility of joint Flemish-South African projects under the call for proposals of the G-STIC Climate Action Programme that will be launched in 2022.

2. Future of the Bilateral Consultation and Memorandum of Understanding on Development Cooperation

South Africa (National Treasury) and Flanders (Flanders Chancellery and Foreign Office/Delegation of Flanders) will jointly discuss the necessity, the opportunity and the format of the Bilateral Consultation on Development Cooperation in the coming years. With regard to the Memorandum on Development Cooperation between South Africa and Flanders (2001), further discussions are required between National Treasury and the Delegation of Flanders.

as a one stop shop and provides easy to use tips and strategies to CSOs with recruiting, training, managing and retaining volunteers.

- The evaluation report indicated a low number of CSO's that participated in the health services which continues to be a crisis in the country. This reveals that more needs to be done in this sector through Civil society.

5. Recommendations

- Scale up the interventions that promote employment or employability of young people through Civil society.
- Scale up NPO capacity building with a focus on Youth led CBO's, NPO's.
- In ensuring that the network of NPO's grows there is a need for more youth led NPO's to be taken through incubation.
- The building blocks still become relevant in the future implementation of the program.
- There is a need to train youth officers who really are the drivers of youth development at local level.
- Revive the myhands my heart network which can further be linked to other opportunity providers in and around the country.
- The advantage of the network is that the country does not have one specifically for NPO's.
- The expansion of the program becomes more relevant now more than ever because of the prioritisation of National Youth Service in the country and civil society.
- To design and implement adequate systems for monitoring and evaluation of the cooperation and to take these as obvious items on the agendas of all meetings.
- In view of the implementation of the Action Plan 2021-2025: 'In all elements of this cooperation the local level, including governmental and CSO actors, will be prioritised'!