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Belgian public know-how for international cooperation

Brussels, 30 September | International cooperation is a matter of partnerships. Enabel, the Belgian development agency, works with more than sixty Belgian public service departments, universities and research centres that put their know-how at the service of the partner countries in Africa and the Middle East.

On Thursday 30 September, Enabel brings together more than 140 representatives of dozens of government departments and universities to showcase the added value and results of the partnerships. One of the keynote speakers is Anna Terron, director of the Spanish agency FIIAPP, which sets up peer-to-peer exchanges between Spanish and foreign public services in more than 100 countries.

Enabel wants to enhance the impact of Belgium's international cooperation in view of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Thanks to the partnerships, Enabel fully assumes its role as broker and facilitator. *"The partnerships allow us to share the most advanced expertise with our partners in Africa and the Middle East and boost the impact of international cooperation projects,"* says Enabel's Managing director Jean Van Wetter. He adds, *"officials from one country who engage with officials from another country share a common understanding of the public service and of the challenges they face".*

Enabel calls on the knowledge and experience of Belgium's Public Health Federal Public Service to prepare new Belgian climate projects in the Sahel. Geert Fremout, head of International Cooperation, sees only benefits: *"Climate change is a global challenge with an obvious development dimension. Our partnership with Enabel creates a win-win situation, in which Enabel's experience with development cooperation and field knowledge is linked to our expertise and networks on climate change and climate policy."*

Ghent University and the Université Catholique de Louvain cooperate with the University of Kisangani in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to fight sexual violence. Researchers and health workers join forces to improve the medical follow-up of victims and to help them on a psychosocial, legal and socio-economic level. *"We conduct social-anthropological research into sexual violence in Tshopo Province and we aim to evaluate and improve the protocols for hosting and caring for victims. The exchange also has an added value because it improves the quality of scientific research and of the data collected,"* says Olivier Schmitz, researcher at UCL.

The Belgian federal police train the police forces of Burkina Faso and Benin to improve security in general and to restore trust with the population. The police share own experiences in getting concepts such as neighbourhood policing or community policing accepted and thus bring police services closer to the population. Training and exchange between police forces also deals with cross-border problems such as computer crime or financial and economic crime. *"The urgent security issues in those countries, which can also have an impact on our security, are often rooted in other issues such as poverty, the tensions between communities, economic crises and also climate change,"* says Peter De Buysscher, International director at the Federal Police.

The partnerships of Enabel and the public service cover a wide range of areas: health care, social security, human rights, culture, the environment and climate, waste management, biodiversity, vocational training and employment, justice, police, port security, mobility, etc. The partnerships are key to supporting projects that strengthen partner country public institutions.

Partnership to combat sexual violence in DR Congo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfsrLYCTU6I>

Partnership with the Belgian federal police and the police of Benin and Burkina Faso

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gCrYNBj-nng>

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Jean Van Wetter
Managing director of Enabel

ABOUT ENABEL

The Belgian development agency Enabel implements the Belgian governmental cooperation policy, i.e. Belgian cooperation with other states. The agency also works for other national and international donors. With its partners in Belgium and abroad Enabel offers solutions to address pressing global challenges – Climate Change, Urbanisation, Human Mobility, Peace and Security, Economic and Social Inequality – and to promote Global Citizenship. With 1900 staff, Enabel manages about 150 projects in twenty countries, in Belgium, Africa and the Middle East.

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