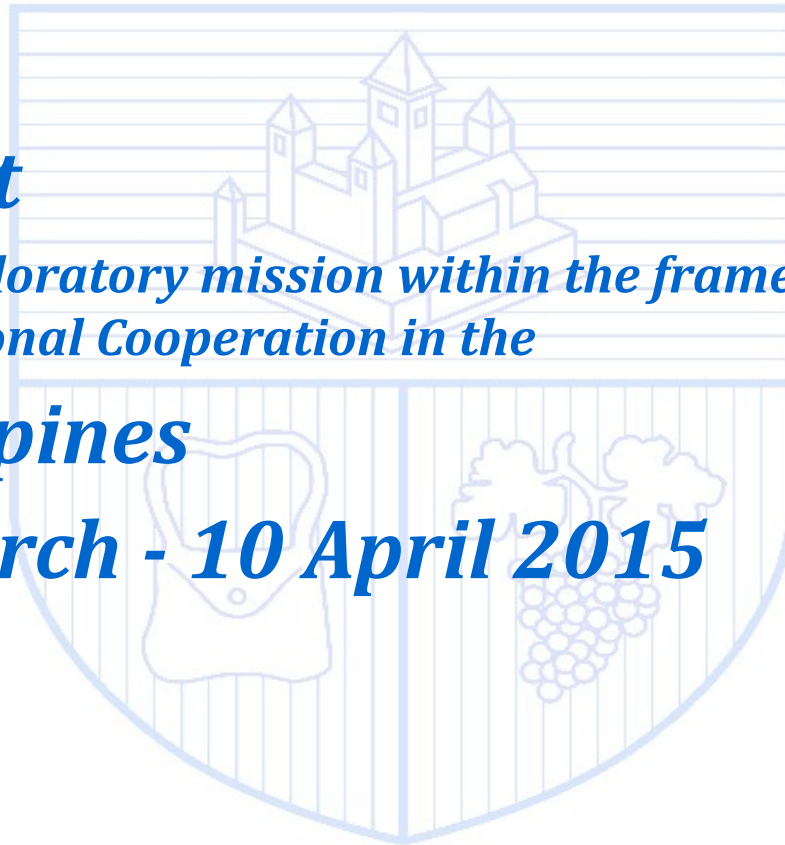


Report

***of the exploratory mission within the framework of
International Cooperation in the***

Philippines

29 March - 10 April 2015



SAINT-JOSSE
SINT-JOOST



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1 Introduction – the mission background

For several years, the Municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode has concluded **International Cooperation** projects with North Africa and more specifically with Morocco's Oriental region. In this context, in 2011, it concluded a cooperation agreement with the urban municipality of Ain Bni Mathar and the rural municipality of Bni Mathar, both of which are in the province of Jerada.

In 2014, the Board formed of the Mayor and Councillors also decided to sign twinning agreements with the cities of Tangier (Morocco) and Eskisehir (Turkey).

In January 2013, the municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode set up an **Advisory Council of North-South Solidarity**, with the aim of promoting awareness of North-South solidarity within the municipality.

The Advisory Council quickly decided to develop new forms of solidarity with other continents, offering the opportunity to exchange experiences with the South.

Indeed, the municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode has far-reaching expertise in social matters and wishes to share its know-how with other municipalities across the world as part of its international social action programme, designed according to a cross-cutting approach.

We had to find a country whose territorial and political structure was comparable to ours with a view to **decentralised international cooperation** where each partner can exchange on an equal footing, even if they are different.

It so happened that, parallel to the work of the Advisory Council, the authorities in charge of International Cooperation within the Flemish Government offered us the possibility of a subsidy for our international cooperation activities.

A debate took place within the Advisory Council to select a country eligible by the Flemish Government, and it did not take long for the balance to tip in favour of Southeast Asia, where two countries were eligible: China and the Philippines.

However, overtures were also made to the Embassy of **Laos**. It turned out that their political system is fundamentally different from ours. In actual fact, the territorial division means that there are no municipalities as such but administrative areas run by senior officials appointed by the Government. There are therefore no democratically elected mayors or councillors. This option was therefore dropped.

Subsequently, the Embassy of the **Philippines** in Brussels was approached and we met the Ambassador, Ms Victoria S. BATACLAN, on the 10th of October 2014.

Following various contacts, we were put in touch with a native of the Philippines, **Necie LUCERO**, who had worked in Belgium, more specifically in Brussels, for six years where she held the position of General Secretary of the International Trade Union Confederation. Currently, she is serving in the Philippines where she has a well-developed network of contacts.

This person proved to be an ideal contact for us for the purpose of developing international cooperation. By November 2014, we had built up a strong enough relationship for her to have a clear idea of the objectives we are pursuing. With her help, we could identify a municipality with which to develop decentralised international cooperation.

The purpose of this first exploratory mission to the Philippines was therefore to approach different municipalities, government administrations and agencies, through Mr Lucero, with a view to creating a partnership with one of them. Mrs Lucero was responsible for the necessary preliminary contacts with various municipalities to establish our exploration program.

2 Goals of the exploratory mission to the Philippines

For its 2012-2018 term of office, the municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode has, among others, taken it upon itself to strengthen its international solidarity policy.

Our action and exploratory mission in the Philippines clearly come within this framework.

As we mentioned above, we could not consider an exploratory mission to the Philippines without financial support in the form of a subsidy.

This prompted us to answer the call for projects launched by the Flemish Government in the field of international cooperation.

The strategic purpose of the subsidy programme is to support and strengthen the cities and municipalities of the South with the development of their social policy.

The Flemish Government provides in its programme for three-year exploratory missions. However, the municipality of Saint-Josse was eager to reduce this period to one year so as to be operational as quickly as possible.

One of the programme's eligibility criteria was the establishment of an Advisory Council of North-South solidarity. Saint-Josse already met this condition.

At a more operational level, the goal is to conclude agreements for exchange and cooperation with countries of the South to fight against the insecurity that prevails there and to strengthen local government. This entails in particular:

- Representing and serving the public interest.
- Being a catalyst for social development.
- Supporting governments in the South to shore up their local actions.

Our mission entered into this framework and its main objective was to explore the Philippines in order to identify a local entity with which to develop a decentralised cooperation partnership.

3 Belgian delegation of the exploratory mission

The mission was comprised of **Eric Jassin**, Councillor in charge of International Relations and Cooperation and **Ola Abdallah**, officer in charge of International Relations and Cooperation in the municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Node.

Locally, we were accompanied on a voluntary basis by Ms **Necie Lucero**.

4 Working method for the selection of partner

After meeting the different municipalities included in our mission programme¹, we could better formulate the **criteria and indicators** to be used to determine the selection of our partner.

We retained the **following criteria, in descending order of importance** :

- the motivation of local elected officials and the interest they showed in working in the context of decentralised international cooperation.
As an indicator, we selected their presence and participation in meetings with the Belgian delegation;
- the size of the municipality and the number of its inhabitants;
- the municipal budget of the future partner;
- the existence of a social service;
- the existence of a social programme;
- the existence of social projects and the budget allocated to these projects;
- the priorities of local social policy in the field of the fight against insecurity, social support, municipal infrastructure;
- projects concerning local economic development to improve people's incomes;
- the possibility of building up the skills of elected officials and civil servants in the different areas that affect municipal management, including social policy;
- the ability to conduct social actions via a cross-cutting approach, that is to say with positive repercussions for the economy, culture, sports, etc.

5 Territorial organisation of the Philippines

To understand our progress in the Philippines, it is important that we explain briefly the territorial organisation and administrative structure of the territory.

The Philippines are structured into local units of government.

The **Province** (*Lalawigan* in Filipino) is the basic unit.

The provinces are subdivided into **Cities and Municipalities**, themselves composed of **Barangays** (*Baranggay*).

All provinces are grouped into **Regions** (*rehiyon*).

Cities and municipalities are governed by a "Chairman", "Captain" or "President" who alone constitutes the executive body.

A "Vice President" and 8-10 "Councillors" make up the legislative body of the city, municipality or barangay.

¹ You can find the detailed account of our visits under point 6 in the form of visit sheets.

6 Details of visits

6.1 Barangay 696

Description of the Barangay 696

Date	31/03/2015
Location	Malate, one of 16 geographical districts of the City of Manila
Population	8,000 inhabitants
Area	1.9 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	

Visit report

We meet the **President Erlinda Divinagracia** .

The town hall of the barangay 696 was recently built at the initiative of the President and is very cramped (about 10 square meters).

The staff of the barangay 696 is composed of 48 people: policemen, street cleaners, drivers, guards and gardeners.

The budget of the barangay is \$ 54,000/annum and is awarded by the municipality of Manila.

The barangay has developed projects directly for its inhabitants, such as "pedicabs" (bicycle taxis) and kiosks, which are small street shops.

The municipality is also known for its outreach programme on the environment, the management and sorting of waste and the improvement of public security by local police.



6.2 Meeting with Alfredo VARGAS

We meet Congressman Alfredo Vargas, representative of the 5th district of Quezon City.

Description of the 5th district of Quezon City

Date	31/03/2015
Location	Quezon City, 5th district
Population	536,553 inhabitants
Area	5,247 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	14 barangays Annual population growth: 2.8% Number of households: 112,129 Incidence of poverty: 36.98% Unemployment: 21%

Visit report

On this occasion, Mr Vargas told us about the situation in the district, of which he is elected representative, and about his work as a Congressman.

He provided a large amount of information on the policies and programmes he is conducting in the 5th district.

He offered to go to meet the barangay of Fairview (Quezon City).



6.3 Barangay of Fairview

Description of the barangay of Fairview

Date	31/03/2015
Location	Quezon City, 5th district
Population	80,000 inhabitants
Area	350 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	Number of voters: 18,000 Number of households: 15,000

Visit report

Via Alfredo Vargas, we met the Captain of Fairview, *Articer O. Quebal*. He has taken over his son who had finished his third term. In fact, according to the Philippine Constitution, an elected representative may exercise no more than three consecutive terms of three years each.

The barangay has a 150-strong workforce, including 20 policemen. There are 400 volunteers.

The barangay of Fairview has a budget of about \$ 700,000/annum.

Captain Quebal presented the priorities that he is developing in the field of social policy in his barangay, such as:

- Medical treatment for the disabled.
- Fighting violence against women.
- Establishment of mentoring for students.
- Support for street children, facing difficulties at home or at school.
- Setting up of a micro-credit cooperative.
- Wellness centre for pets.



6.4 Municipality of San Pablo City

Description of San Pablo City

Date	01/04/2015
Location	Laguna Province
Population	260,000 inhabitants (55,198 families)
Area	19,800 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	Composed of 80 barangays 7 hospitals 87 primary and secondary schools 6 universities

Visit report

We were unable to meet the mayor of the municipality, *Mr Loreto Amante*.

Instead, we met an official of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources, *Mr Ramon De Roma*, and other technical staff:

- *Helenita Yuson*, in charge of "barangay" affairs.
- *Melinda Bondad*, in charge of employment.
- *Donnalyn Eseo*, in charge of tourism in the city.
- *Purificacion Morales*, in charge of the communication department of the city.

Ramon De Roma described to us the city of San Pablo City, known as "the city of seven lakes". The city has water reservoirs and natural springs used for eco-tourism. This is the third biggest city in terms of graduate education in the Philippines, after Manila and Cebu.

The city has an annual budget of about \$ 15 million from property tax, corporate tax and the contribution from the national budget.



The city is developing several projects in the social field:

- Fisheries.
- Manufacture of eco-bags and other souvenirs to promote eco-tourism.
- Development of skills in the field of cosmetology and dressmaking.
- Care centre for young children.
- Facilities for the elderly.
- Women Protection Programme.
- Cultural exchanges.

The city has also signed various twinning agreements with Hanan (South Korea), Makati (Manila, Philippines),

Bolingbrook (Illinois, USA) and San Mateo (California, USA).

6.5 Barangay of Marawoy

Description of Marawoy

Date	01/04/2015
Location	Municipality of Lipa City, Batangas Province
Population	18,834 inhabitants
Area	540 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	

Visit report

The delegation visited the barangay of Marawoy in Lipa City.

Following a health problem suffered by the *President Rolando Olan*, we were greeted by his deputy, *Mr Venecer Morales*, and the members of the Council.



One feature of this barangay is that it has a very small budget, about \$ 30,000/annum, derived only from the contribution of the municipality of Lipa.

The local authority is developing projects related to the condition of women (cooking classes) and the elderly, for example in the field of medical assistance. It is developing an education programme for school dropouts with the assistance of the Agency for development of technical skills (TESDA).

Other programmes also cover the social development of the local population: sports tournaments for young people and the unemployed, vocational training for job seekers.

One of the priority concerns of the municipality is the sorting of waste in order to clean up their environment and improve the quality of life of the inhabitants, especially in terms of health.

Another problem faced by the municipality is substance abuse and youth unemployment. Marawoy has set up a system to promote sport and computer games in order to fight more effectively against drug use.



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To complete the visit of Marawoy, the authorities wanted to show us two overcrowded slums (Toribio and San Jose) where poverty is rampant; they have no sidewalks or paved streets or sewage drainage system, or street lighting. One of them is on the edge of a disused railway line.

This brings us face to face with the duality of this country, torn between rich and poor.



6.6 Municipality of Binalonan

Description of the Municipality of Binalonan

Date	02/04/2015
Location	Province of Pangasinan
Population	58,000 inhabitants
Area	8,400 hectares
Other relevant characteristics	24 barangay 32,000 voters

Visit report

The last meeting to identify a partner is Binalonan, which is located in the province of Pangasinan, 200 kilometres from Manila.

The Belgian delegation met the mayor of Binalonan, *Mr Ramon Guico III*.

The municipality of Binalonan is known for its agricultural production, especially rice, corn, sugarcane, mango, garlic, onion, vinegar, livestock and others.



The mayor shared with us his vision of the development of his municipality: he wants to make it a university town and a city largely dedicated to education. In fact, he is behind the creation of the University of Pangasinan and the school for airline pilots, stewardesses and stewards. At present, this school ranks fourth in the Philippines in its field.

He explains that he implements an active policy in the field of construction of roads, bridges, parks and sports facilities. The municipality also promotes the distribution of food through short circuits, from farm to market.

In terms of human development, he has set up a health programme, sporting activities, scholarships and free access to Wi-Fi.

All this is made possible by an annual budget of \$ 1,800,000.

His future projects include the construction of a football stadium, an Olympic-size pool and a conference centre.



6.7 Ministry of Employment and Labour

Description

Date	07/04/2015
Location	Manila, Intramuros District

Visit report

The Ministry of Labour and Employment (DOLE) is located in Manila, in the Intramuros district.

We were greeted by the Deputy Minister of Labour and Employment, *Ms Rebecca Chato*, the director of the Office of External Relations of the Ministry of Employment and Labour *Atty. Benjo Benevidez*, and the head of the Registration Division (DOLE-BLR), *Ms Marivic Villa*.

We obtained information on programmes developed by the Ministry in the fields of employment, poverty alleviation, informal economy, etc.

Ms Villa also spoke to us about the importance of raising worker's awareness of the work of the trade union organisations.



6.8 Visit to the Belgian Embassy in the Philippines

Description

Date	08/04/2015
Location	Manila, Makati City District

Visit report

We went to the Embassy of Belgium to the Philippines, where we met the Advisor, *Mr Xavier Leblanc*.

We discussed with him the mission objectives and the method used to select the partner within the framework of our decentralised international cooperation.

Mr Leblanc, the Advisor, spoke to us about the general situation in the country and political developments. He also addressed socio-economic issues.

We also told him of our desire to set up an exchange with the selected municipality. This prompted Mr Leblanc to explain the conditions for



issuing visas by the Belgian Embassy, conditions that are identical to those of other European embassies in the Philippines.

6.9 Visit of the Social Security System

Description of the barangay

Date	08/04/2015
Location	Quezon City

Visit report

The Belgian delegation visited the buildings housing the Social Security System, where we met the Vice-President, Ms *Susie Bugante*.

We were able to learn about the various types of benefits and services offered to contributing members. It turns out that this social security system is one of the most efficient in Southeast Asia.

One such programme is the "Alkanssya" that is to say, a daily savings system, much like a piggy bank, specifically designed for informal economy workers. With the money earned, workers contribute on a day to day basis, at their place of work. This allows them to have a minimum social security cover.



7 The choice of partner

On 5 and 6 April 2015, the delegation was in Manila, in the District of Pasay.

Several meetings took place between the delegation and Mrs Lucero to choose the visited municipality that best matched our selection criteria²

On this basis, we have established the following ranking, in descending order of relevance:

- Binalonan, Pangasinan
- Fairview, Quezon City
- Barangay 696 Malate, Manila
- Barangay Marawoy, Lipa City
- San Pablo City, Laguna

For the choice of a locality to be relevant, the different entities visited were recontacted.

Four municipalities were excluded for various reasons.

San Pablo City, Laguna

The absence of politicians during our meetings gave us the impression that their motivation was low. Physically, they could meet us but they were in fact absent. Moreover, San Pablo City was much too vast to carry out a programme that can be identified by the partners.

Barangay of Marawoy, Lipa City

The budget allocated by the programme would not have made it possible to meet the complex needs of this barangay.

Barangay 696, Malate

It was not selected despite its presence in the city of Manila and the dynamism of its mayor. Moreover, it has no municipal infrastructure: no meeting rooms, schools, sports facilities, etc.

Fairview, Quezon City

This barangay did not respond to our various attempts to contact it and so unfortunately could not be retained.

Binalonan, Pangasinan

Our choice fell on the municipality of Binalonan. Indeed, it responded favourably to our additional requests and agreed to study the possibility of signing a draft partnership protocol.

They have the financial means and therefore can meet the costs arising from the establishment of an international cooperation programme.

The choice of the municipality of Binalonan had the following consequences:

- Reworking of the draft protocol text.
- Setting of a budget to be granted to the municipality to develop its social action project.
- Proposal for a working framework including data sheets. These are intended to allow the partner to define its own needs. These sheets are the social action project that we will subsequently validate and justify the granting of the budget.
- Choice of Necie Lucero as representative of the municipality of Saint-Josse-ten-Node in the Philippines within the framework of the decentralised international cooperation project.
- Definition of a budget to be set as a fee for the services rendered by Necie Lucero.

² See [point 4](#).

8 End of the exploratory mission in the Philippines

The Belgian delegation went to Binalonan on the 9th of April 2015 accompanied by three people, including Necie Lucero, a professor from the University of Manila and the President of the Confederation of Democratic Workers of the Philippines-CDWP.

The Belgian delegation officially announced the selection of Binalonan as a partner within the framework of its cooperation.



We met the political and administrative authorities of the municipality.

The two partners presented their respective delegations. Discussions took place between the two municipalities regarding future strategies, the social action plan to be implemented by Binalonan and a draft memorandum of understanding for a year.

A new partnership has just been launched between Sint-Joost-ten-Node and the municipality of Binalonan.

9 Conclusion

Despite some misgivings, our exploratory mission to the Philippines proved a success.

We achieved our main objective, which was to detect and approach a municipality with a view to creating a partnership with it.

The decentralised international cooperation is being rolled out with the backing of the Board of the Mayor and Councillors of Saint-Josse-ten-Node and the Municipal Council. This is an approach that facilitates our initiatives.

Our method of selecting and preparing our exploratory mission with a native of the Philippines has helped us greatly in our work.

Moreover, this mission has enabled us to leverage our experience in municipal international cooperation: we have a global view of the methodology to be used, in terms of form and substance. The Belgian Municipal International Cooperation programme (CIC) provides us with tools that can be used anywhere in the field of international cooperation.

The enthusiasm shown by the municipality of Binalonan, and in particular by its mayor, strengthens our resolve to share and pursue this cooperation project which meets a very real need when you see the unemployment and the precariousness rife among the local population.

This project is rewarding to both sides: for Binalonan that will benefit from our expertise in a framework it will have chosen according to its needs; for Saint-Josse-ten-Node, which, through this project that serves the common good at international level demonstrates that it has all the makings of a Great municipality.

10 Attachments

10.1 Visit programme

DRAFT PROGRAM

DAY/DATE	<i>Mission of Belgian Delegation</i>
Day 1 29 Mar (Sun) 11:55AM	Arrival via TG 620 11:55HR, NAIA Terminal 3 Check-in at Traders Hotel, Pasay City
Day 2 30 Mar (Mon) 10:00 AM	Briefing on the Draft Program and Information on the Visits Free afternoon
Day 3 31 Mar (Tues) 09:00 AM	Departure from Hotel going to Malate, Manila
10:00	Meeting with Chairwoman Arlene Divinagracia
	Lunch
12:30	Departure for Batasan (House of Representatives) Commonwealth, Quezon City
02:00	Meeting with Congressman Alfred Vargas
	Back to the Hotel
Day 4 01 Apr (Wed) 06:00 AM	Departure for San Pablo City, Laguna
10:00	Meeting with Mayor Loreto "Amben" Amante
	Lunch
01:00	Departure for Lipa City, Batangas
02:00	Meeting with Chairman Rolando Olan
	Back to Manila

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Day 5 02 Apr (Thurs) 05:00AM	Departure from Hotel going to Binalonan, Pangasinan
11:00	Meeting with Mayor Ramon V. Guico
	Lunch
04:00	Departure for Manila
Day 6 03 Apr (Fri) 10:00 AM	Field Visit to Manila and Quezon City (if necessary)
Day 7 04 Apr (Sat) 09:00 AM	Field Visit to San Pablo City (if necessary)
Day 8 05 Apr (Sun) 09:00AM	Field Visit to Lipa City (if necessary)
Day 9 06 Apr (Mon) 09:00AM	Selection of partner(s) by the Belgians (can be done at the Hotel)
Day 10 07 Apr (Tues) 09:00	Discussion of the terms and conditions of the partnership /contract with the partner(s) selected (can be done at the Hotel)
Day 11 08 Apr (Wed) 07:30AM	Departure from Hotel going to Makati City
10:00	Courtesy Visit to the Royal Belgian Embassy Meeting with Hon. Ambassador Roland van Remoortele and Mr. Xavier Leblanc
	Lunch
02:00	Courtesy Visit to the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) Meeting with Hon. Labor Minister Rosalinda Dimapilis-Baldoz and Hon. Deputy Labor Minister Rebecca Chato Intramuros, Manila

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07:00	Meeting with Social Security System Senior Vice President Ms. Susie Bugante Quezon City
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Day 12 09 Apr (Thurs) 10:00AM	Conclusion of the Mission (can be done at the Hotel)
06:00	Dinner hosted by the CDWP Board
Day 13 10 Apr (Fri) 08:00AM	Check-out from the Hotel/Leaving for the airport Flight TG 621 13:05HR at NAIA Terminal 3

Notes:

- a) On 01 April after the visit to Lipa City, the delegation can proceed to Binalonan, Pangasinan and check-in at the WCC Hotel overnight. This will cost around Php1,000.00 per head (equivalent to 20 Euros). The budget for an overnight stay in a hotel in Pangasinan will be around 140 Euros. This will accommodate 2 Belgians, 5 Filipinos (including the driver).
- b) On 04 April after conducting the field visit (if necessary) in San Pablo City, the delegation can check-in at the Auravel Resort and Hotel overnight so that the following morning on 05 April the delegation can do the field visit (if necessary) in Lipa City. This will cost Php1,250.00 per room (equivalent to 25 Euros). For four (4) rooms that will cost 100 Euros.
- c) Meals can be in-transit (drive-thru) in order to catch up with all the appointments in case of heavy traffic.

10.2 Municipalities and people met

Dates	Places/Institutions visited	People met
10/10/14	Embassy of the Philippines in Belgium	Ms Victoria S. Bataclan, Ambassador
03/29/15	Arrival of the delegation in Manila	
30/03/15	Hotel	•Ms Necie Lucero
	Christian Union of the University of the Philippines (PCUSU)	•Mr Romulo F. Jimeno, President of the PCUSU and CDWP •Ms Ellen Naluz, Secretary PCUSU •Ms Lita Comia, Treasurer PCUSU
31/03/15	Barangay 696 (Zone 76 - Municipality of Malate – a town in Greater Manila)	•Ms Erlinda Divinagracia, President
	Quezon City - 5th district	•Mr Alfredo Vargas, Congressman, representing the 5th district
	Barangay of Fairview	•Mr Articer O. Quebal, Captain of Fairview
01/04/15	San Pablo City	•Mr Ramon De Roma, official of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources of San Pablo City •Ms Helenita Yuson, in charge of "Barangay" matters •Ms Melinda Bondad, in charge of employment •Ms Donnalyn Eseo, in charge of tourism in the city •Ms Purificacion Morales, in charge of the communication department of the city
	Barangay of Marawoy	•Mr Venecer Morales, Deputy President
02/04/15	Municipality of Binalonan	•Mr Ramon Guico III, mayor of Binalonan
03 - 04/04/15	Weekend	
05 - 06/04/15	Work on the choice of partner	
07/04/15	Ministry of Labour and Employment (DOLE), Manila	•Ms Rebecca Chato, Deputy Minister of Employment and Labour •Mr Atty. Benjo Benevidez, Director, Office of External Relations of the Ministry of Employment and Labour •Ms Marivic Villa, Head of the Registration Division (DOLE-BLR)
08/04/15	Belgian Embassy in the Philippines, Manila, Makati City District	•Mr Xavier Leblanc, Advisor to the Belgian Embassy in the Philippines
	Social Security System, Quezon City	•Ms Susie Bugante, Vice-President of the Social Security System
09/04/15	Binalonan	•Visit by the Belgian delegation with Mrs Lucero, a professor at the University of Manila and the President of the Confederation of Democratic Workers of the Philippines-CDWP
04/10/15	Departure of the Belgian delegation – Return to Brussels	

10.3 Identity sheet of the Philippines³

Official name: Republic of the Philippines

Nature of the government: Republic - Institutions inspired by the American model of separation of powers

Head of State: Benigno Simeon "Noyoy" Aquino III, President of the Republic

Geographical data

Area: 300,000 km²

Capital: Manila

Main cities: the agglomeration of "Metro Manila" (11.9 million) includes 17 cities, including Manila (1.7 M), Caloocan (1.5M) and Makati, the largest being Quezon City (2.8 million), Davao, Cebu

Official languages: Filipino (Tagalog), English

Vernacular Languages: Cebuano, Tagalog, Ilocano

Currency: Philippine peso (exchange rate at 21 May 2013: € 1 = 53.15 pesos)

National Day: 12 June

Demographics

Population: 96.5 million inhabitants

Density: 316 inhabitants/ km²

Distribution: Luzon 46 million, Visayas 11.2 million, Mindanao 21,6 million

Population growth: 1.7%

Life expectancy (2011): 69 years

Literacy rate: 95.4%

Religions: Catholics (84%), Muslims (7%), Evangelical Protestant (4%), Buddhists (1.5%), many Christian churches: Iglesia ni Cristo, El Shaddai, Aglipayan

Human Development Index 2012: 0.654 (average human development, 114th world ranking)

Economic data

GDP (2012): \$ 250 billion

GDP per capita (2012): \$ 2,500

GDP per capita (in PPP): \$ 4,119

GDP growth rate (2012): 6.6% (4% in 2011)

Unemployment rate (according to the ILO, January 2013): 7.1%

Inflation rate (average 2012): 3.1%

Budget balance (2012): -1.9%

<Trade balance (2011): \$ -15.4 billion

Main customers (2012): Japan (19%), USA (14.2%), China (11.85%), Hong Kong (9.2%), Singapore (9.4%)

Main suppliers (2012): United States (11.5%), China (10.8%), Japan (10.4%), Taiwan (7.8%), Korea (7.3%), Singapore (7.1%)

Share of main sectors of activities in GDP:

•Agriculture: 12.8%

•Industry: 31.5%

•Services: 55.7%

³ Source : France-diplomatie - 2013

10.4 Cooperation protocol with the Philippines:



COOPERATION PROTOCOL BETWEEN

THE MUNICIPALITY OF SAINT-JOSSE-TEN-NOODE AND THE MUNICIPALITY OF BINALONAN

Considering that the municipality of Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode, after deliberation of the municipal council on the 28/01/2013, is willing to work actively in the field of development cooperation, more specifically in municipal cooperation development,

Considering that these relations can only be enhanced by a responsible partnership between both municipalities,

THE FOLLOWING WAS AGREED

BETWEEN

The municipality of Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode, here represented by its College of Mayor and Aldermen, on whose behalf Mr. Emir Kir, Mayor, acts, under the condition precedent of the approval of this protocol by the municipal council

AND

The municipality of Binalonan here represented by Sir Ramon V. Guico III the honorable Mayor,

Article 1. Principles

The partners undertake to enhance all the principles mentioned below, provided under appendix 1 of this protocol, in the development as well as in the execution of their cooperation actions:

- Equality, solidarity, reciprocity, subsidiarity;
- Wariness, prevention, reversibility;
- Partnership, participation, training, transversality, connection between places and generations;
- Transparency, information, evaluation, capitalization.

Article 2. Purposes

The purpose of this protocol is the collaboration on the enhancement of the local level, which is based on ***three inseparable pillars***:

- a good political government;
- an efficient administration;
- civil participation in the decision making process.

Article 3. Fields of action

The partners undertake to join forces in one or more of the following primary areas of action: The purpose is to take social actions in a transversal way, meaning that they can at the same time relate to economy, culture, sports etc.

Article 4. Action plans

Every year a joint action plan is drafted after consultation to achieve the objectives of this (these) action area (s) in the field of municipal cooperation development. The program of intervention should be included in the specific convention linked the both municipalities partnership.

For the municipality of Saint-Josse-Ten-Noode

Par ordonnance :
Le Secrétaire communal,

Patrick Neve

Le Collège des
Bourgmestre et Echevins,

Emir Kir

For the municipality of Binalonan

The Honorable Mayor

Ramon V. Guico III

Brussels,

DEFINITION OF THE COOPERATION PRINCIPLES
UNDERLYING THE DEVELOPMENT AND
THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PROTOCOL

1. PRINCIPLES OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Equality, solidarity, reciprocity, subsidiarity

Equality: decentralized cooperation links partners with the same rights, duties and responsibilities, despite possible political, social, cultural, civil, religious and environmental differences.

Solidarity: taking into account the connection between places and generations, partners must jointly analyse the needs of the concerned territories and, based on collective resources and consultation, work out development strategies and models to improve the lives of as many inhabitants as possible.

Reciprocity: decentralised cooperation is based on a logical division and includes more than traditional humanitarian aid or the provision of financial resources. The valuation of the involved parties, their knowledge and their skill serves as a basis for this principle, that is supported by the belief that the partnership should be mutually justified, and that the specificities of each partner are a source of enrichment for the other.

Subsidiarity: the local authorities play a prominent role in the implementation of this principle. In order to answer to the needs of the population in the most convenient and direct way, and hereby increase the involvement of local parties in the development of their territory, the cooperation will, while respecting the requirements of the relevant authorities, contribute to the establishment of autonomous and democratic local governments, but also to the installation of systems for local participatory governance.

2. ESTABLISHMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Wariness, prevention, reversibility

For each decentralized cooperation project a joint diagnosis must be drawn in advance with an estimate of the direct and indirect social, economic, cultural and environmental influences on short, medium and long term of the planned actions. Based on this diagnosis can be quite rightly decided to elaborate the project, to apply any modifications or rejection of the project or to develop another project. Moreover, based on a joint estimation that must be performed before the development of the project, potential negative effects can be prevised, limited, managed or avoided. Depending on the set objectives, it is necessary to take into consideration alternative solutions and to ensure the reversibility of the choices. These principles are beyond recovery.

Partnership, participation, training, transversality, connection in place and time

Partnership: for each collaboration project an appeal must be done to all the involved parties from the local authorities (economic and social parties, associations, institutions), which should be involved from the development to the implementation of the project. Moreover, the implementation of the partnership principle must enhance the consultation, the complementarity and the coherence of the initiatives of the involved parties at the various levels (local, regional, national, European and

international).

Participation: decentralized cooperation implies a territorial cooperation involving all present parties. By also involving the population, the factors that may play a role in the cooperation, can be better aligned and an international citizenship can be built.

Each cooperation project enhances the partnership and the active participation of the territorial involved parties, of the local population, of the users and the consumers in the elaboration and evaluation of the choices and programs.

Training: the training of the parties of the involved territories is absolutely necessary so that everyone understands what the stake is and that they can actively and knowingly participate in the elaboration of projects. The course should observe the characteristics of the territories and of the involved parties.

Transversality: every decentralized cooperation project has to take into account, from the development of the project, the economic, social, cultural and environmental endeavours of the territories. Therefore it is important to involve all officers and departments of the local authorities in the projects and to try to bring coherence to the initiatives of all involved parties.

Connection in place and time: each cooperation action should take into account the potential impact on other territorial levels as well as their regulation. Likewise, the consequences of these actions in the short, medium and long term should be estimated.

3. FOLLOW-UP OF THE PARTNERSHIP

Transparency, information, evaluation, capitalization

Transparency: the roles and responsibilities of each partner must be clearly defined. All parties of the local authorities should be able to have access to information about every aspect of the partnership and the projects.

Information: the inhabitants of the cooperating local authorities must be informed of the actions taken and to be involved in the implementation. A neutral communication and information system that is accessible to everyone must be established and, within the framework of this cooperation, is accompanied by a training program on the use of development.

Evaluation: in decentralized cooperation, ongoing evaluation of the partnership and the relevance of the projects is essential. From the development of the project the necessary tools should be provided for the development of an evaluation process in which each partner and each interested party has equal voting rights and right of control.

Capitalization: the partners of the project are to set themselves the task that what they experience from their collaboration is being capitalized, appreciated and used by any person involved in the decentralized cooperation. The result of this capitalization must be distributed within the local authorities concerned and must be applied on a larger scale with the active involvement of local authorities in the field of international cooperation.

In addition to the above, certain principles should give concrete form to the development by the achievement of the set objectives through international declarations, conventions and protocols that have been approved by the government, such as the Millennium Development Goals.