Sustainable
WASH projects

Tackling water scarcity together

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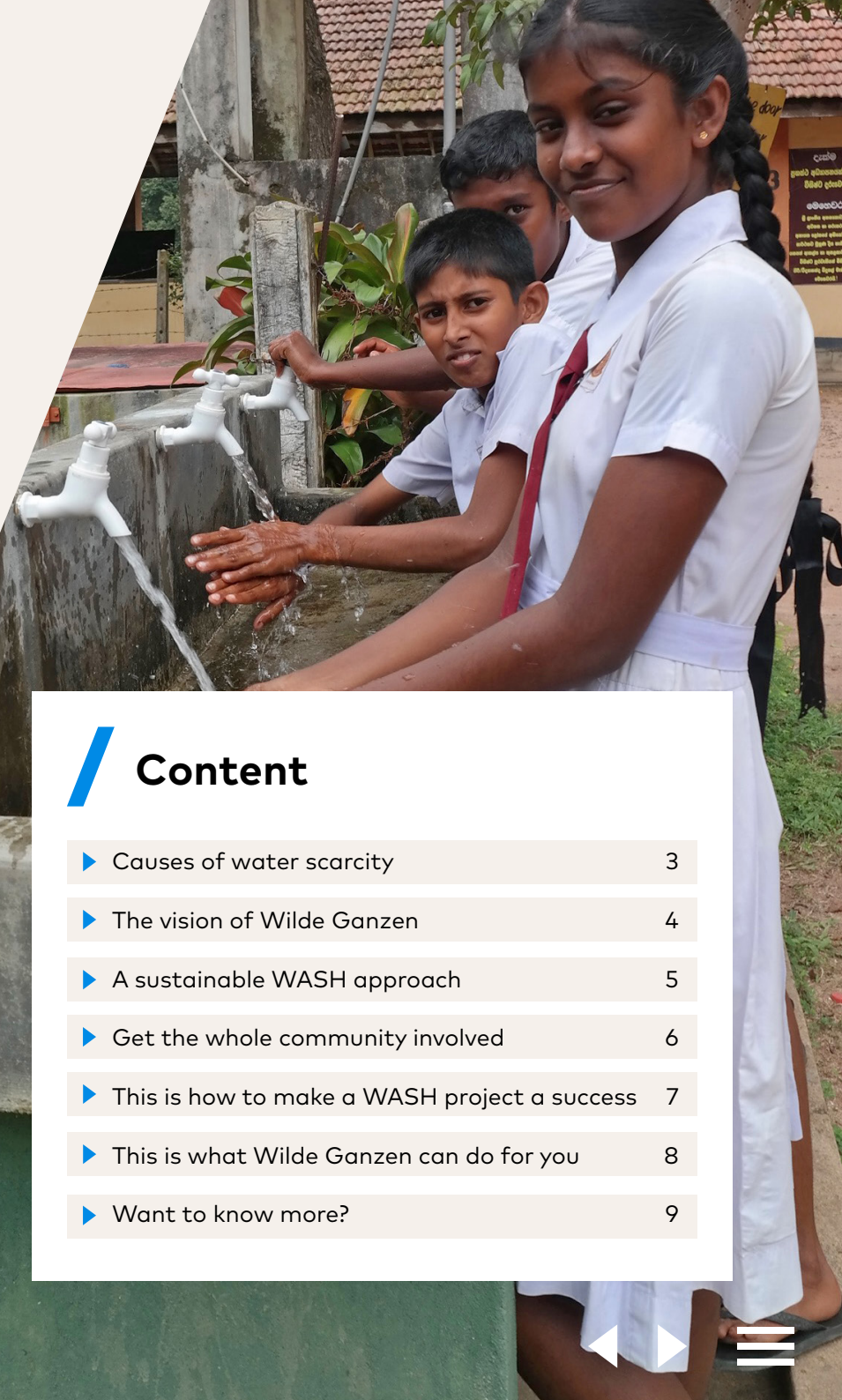
WILDE GANZEN

Ensuring clean drinking water together

Globally, millions of people live in areas where access to clean water is limited. A shortage of clean drinking water touches the core of our lives. Unfortunately, we see that water scarcity is on the rise. Now more than ever, we need to work together to address water scarcity and come up with new adaptations.

We focus in this paper on WASH: water (and we are talking about clean drinking water), sanitation and hygiene. We draw on the insights of our partners and networks such as Aqua for All International and Unicef.

We will tell you about partners tackling access to clean drinking water, advocating for water needed for agriculture and using innovative irrigation techniques to adapt to the climate crisis. All this is done on the basis of sustainability, equality, inclusiveness and resilience, so that together we can work globally to improve access to drinking water that is clean and affordable.

Content

Causes of water scarcity

To achieve a sustainable approach, it is good to know the root causes of water scarcity. Unicef identifies the following 'drivers':

Climate change
The water cycle is affected, resulting in heavy rainfall, severe droughts and deterioration of water quality. With shorter rainy seasons and faster evaporation, there is an increasing demand from agriculture for water. Extreme weather causes damage to water pipes and toilet buildings, for example.

Poor governance
Water resources are threatened by unsustainable forms of agriculture, industry and domestic use. Inefficient water management is closely linked to poor governance around water management and a lack of political will to address difficult challenges around water resources.

Undervaluing water
The basic human right to sufficient quantities of water is often not recognised. There is not enough water to meet the demands of all sectors and there is unequal distribution worldwide.

Urbanisation and population growth
Globally, the population is growing. In the Middle East and North Africa in particular, people are moving from rural to urban areas partly due to water scarcity. This creates more demand for water and puts pressure on sewerage and sanitation networks, causing more hygiene problems.

Declining water quality
80% of wastewater washes away without proper treatment. Pollution leads to water scarcity and inefficient use of water resources. But the climate crisis is also causing problems: from overflowing sewers to storm damage and salinisation, for example.

Cross-border tensions
Countries that depend on transboundary waters have little control over decisions made by their neighbours. You often see countries unable to resolve these issues, which creates increased risk of conflict.

Technical issues
Developing water facilities can be technically challenging and costly. This limits the availability of water in some areas. Poor functionality of water facilities and infrastructure also cause water scarcity in communities.
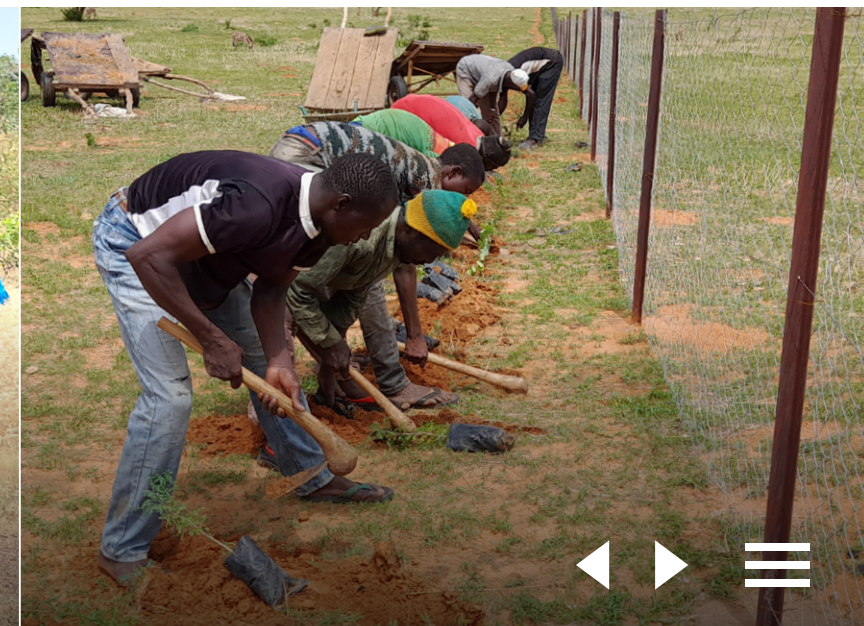
The vision of Wilde Ganzen

We underline the importance of thinking and working from the dot on the horizon: the dream that the community has of providing people, animals and nature with access to clean (drinking) water and thus also safe sanitation and hygiene. We believe that everyone in the world should have access to WASH because it is critical for child and adult development. This is why we support sustainable water projects.

The context in which a water project is set up can change. We see this in the Horn of Africa, for example. Usually, drilling for water is done. But now groundwater levels are often so low that even deep drilling does not yield results. Then it is important to think about what your desired long-term outcome is before starting all kinds of activities. We support our partners in coming up with innovative solutions.

Scarcity makes innovative
In Mali, Partner Pays Dogon is working on the Green Desert Initiative. Step by step, green zones are being created, eventually leading to a landscape with a closed deck of vegetation. Combined with sustainable farming techniques, the population will get enough food and part of the harvest can be sold. Thus, this project contributes to nature restoration, nature management, agricultural improvement, livelihood security for the population and a sustainable solution for timber production.

A sustainable WASH approach

Wilde Ganzen values the sustainability of WASH projects. In our view, a project is sustainable if the results are lasting, i.e. even after the project itself has stopped. With our partners, we work towards sustainable results, from formulation to project closure. We encourage our partners to apply the five elements of the Fiets Duurzaamheidsmodel, from the WASH Alliance International:

1

Financial sustainability

Activities are financed locally and do not depend on (foreign) subsidies.

2

Institutional sustainability

Projects are functional and meet demand. There is clarity on roles, tasks and responsibilities and organisations work together.

3

Ecological sustainability

There is sustainable management of water, waste streams and resources.

4

Technological sustainability

Installations continue to function, are maintained, repaired and replaced by local people. Natural resources are not depleted.

5

Social sustainability

Present and future generations are able to build liveable communities. Projects are accessible to all, take into account culture and people's needs.

See also this video for more information.

Working together

In Benin, the PlanFutur Foundation is working on clean drinking water for four villages. People here have to walk miles for water and surface water is polluted. The government does not take its responsibility. The inhabitants themselves have raised their problem and PlanFutur encourages them to find their own solutions by using local knowledge, technology and innovation. Several maintenance committees have also been set up.

Get the whole community involved

When setting up a WASH project, it is important to know how relevant the problem is.

Has the community investigated whether this project addresses the root causes of their problem or are other interventions needed first? By finding this out properly, you ensure that the choice of approach remains relevant and that the community is committed to it.

Does the community see choosing a WASH project as a top priority? People in poverty often have limited access to other basic services as well. What are their dreams and priorities? Next, it is important to involve the community in all phases of the project.

The importance of community participation
Involving people and organisations close to a project goes much further, in our view, than simply asking for a (financial) contribution. It is about people setting their own priorities and making decisions.

Everyone is involved
Cameroon, LiveBuild is working on the Buea Town Water Project. A water supply system is being built for six communities. To ensure local ownership, the project starts at the roots of the problem: building an organisation in the local community to ensure that the water system is well managed and that everyone is involved. Only then does the actual construction of the water pipeline follow.

This is how to make a WASH project a success

★ **Active community participation (1)**
Consult with the community, make the community responsible for project implementation as much as possible. This encourages local ownership.

★ **Active community participation (2)**
Unite residents in a water management committee. This committee submits their WASH problems to the local authority and NGOs (local and international such as **Wilde Ganzen**) and together seek solutions. It also ensures sustainable continuation of the project, monitoring and community education.

★ **Assigning owner**
Who will be the owner of the WASH facility? This owner plays a key role during and after project implementation.

★ **Alignment with the government**
This alignment is not only necessary for government approval, but also important for local government participation.

★ **Monitoring**
How is monitoring done? Who carries out the monitoring? Who receives the data and who ensures that any identified problems are passed on so that they can be resolved?

★ **Combination school/WASH**
Wilde Ganzen prefers projects that combine education and WASH facilities. Schools are important meeting places in a village. Clean drinking water, toilets and taps in schools provide good basic facilities and pupils take home knowledge about WASH.

★ **Transfer knowledge**
Encourage knowledge transfer between local NGOs, private sector and local governments to keep WASH facilities functioning.

★ **Highlight the benefits**
Understanding the benefits of a WASH facility encourages people to continue WASH habits and maintain the facilities.

★ **Evaluate**
During and after the project, discuss the roles and responsibilities of everyone involved in the project, from schools to community people and from local NGOs to the local government.

This is what Wilde Ganzen can do for you

Wilde Ganzen wants to contribute to a world where people in poverty are more self-reliant in their basic needs. We support organisations in countries on the DAC list who work with the community to build sustainable WASH facilities. This requires specific competences from organisations. Therefore, in addition to co-financing initiatives, we can also use co-financing for organisational development. This puts the community itself increasingly at the helm of the change they want.

In addition, we believe it is important for people to speak out themselves and, together with their organisations, hold local government accountable. We offer training courses and toolkits for this purpose through Change the Game Academy. In the Netherlands and Belgium, **Wilde Ganzen** calls attention to equal water distribution. We also pull together with other NGOs in Europe.

Our focus aligns with Sustainable Development Goals SDG 6.1, SDG 6.2 and SDG 6b.

CHANGE THE GAME ACADEMY

Want to know more?

More information

Contact **Wilde Ganzen** at

servicedesk@wildeganzen.nl or call

+31 (0)33 204 5555 and select option 1.

Change the Game Academy

Do you want to map who makes up the community and which stakeholders are involved? Then you can use these (free) toolkits:

Stakeholder Analysis

Module Mobilising Support

Participatory Action Research

UNICEF

United Nations Children's Organisation, with lots of information on WASH.

Aqua for All

International foundation operating primarily in Africa and Asia, working towards catalysing an innovative, sustainable and inclusive water and sanitation economy worldwide.

IDS

Institute of Development Studies in the UK. This institute has extensive experience in community participation.

World Bank

The World Bank offers many WASH documents in various areas.