



Annual Results 2024

Municipal Cooperation: Key to Tackling Local Impact of Global Challenges

The world continues to change rapidly, presenting local governments with challenges that require resilience, adaptability, and collaboration. Armed conflicts, climate change, migration, and resource scarcity increasingly impact communities worldwide. At VNG International, we operate at the crucial intersection where global challenges meet local policies, forging partnerships that strengthen governance and promote sustainable solutions.

I am therefore incredibly proud to present our results over the annual year 2024, which have been achieved in these challenging circumstances. Whether supporting municipalities in crisis-stricken regions, strengthening democratic governance, or improving essential public services, every project we undertake has a tangible impact on people's lives. Our efforts in the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Egypt and Ethiopia show the power of strong local governance in providing stability and essential services to their communities. You can read more about these efforts in this document.

These results are inspirational examples of what can be achieved with (international) solidarity. Thanks to the financial support to the VNG Fund for Emergency Aid, Reconstruction, and Peacebuilding and expertise provided by Dutch municipalities, their counterparts in Ukraine, Turkey and Morocco are supported with rebuilding their municipal services after being hit by disaster.

Dutch municipalities have also contributed to our strategic partnership with the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs which has continued into its third year. This partnership is a joint commitment to strengthen local governance in 14 countries through which we contribute to address the root causes of fragility and migration and to improve performance on local revenues and water management. By actively involving municipalities, councilors, civil society organizations, and private sector partners, we ensured that our programs remain impactful and relevant to the needs of communities.

The mission of VNG International is more relevant than ever as global developments are increasingly felt at the local level. International solidarity and cooperation are crucial in preparing local governments for the challenges of today and tomorrow. It is in this volatile context that VNG International firmly supports local governments worldwide to stand united and to support each other in serving their communities to the best of their abilities and building better futures.

I hope our results over 2024 are a source of inspiration to you!

Pieter Jeroense
Director, VNG International



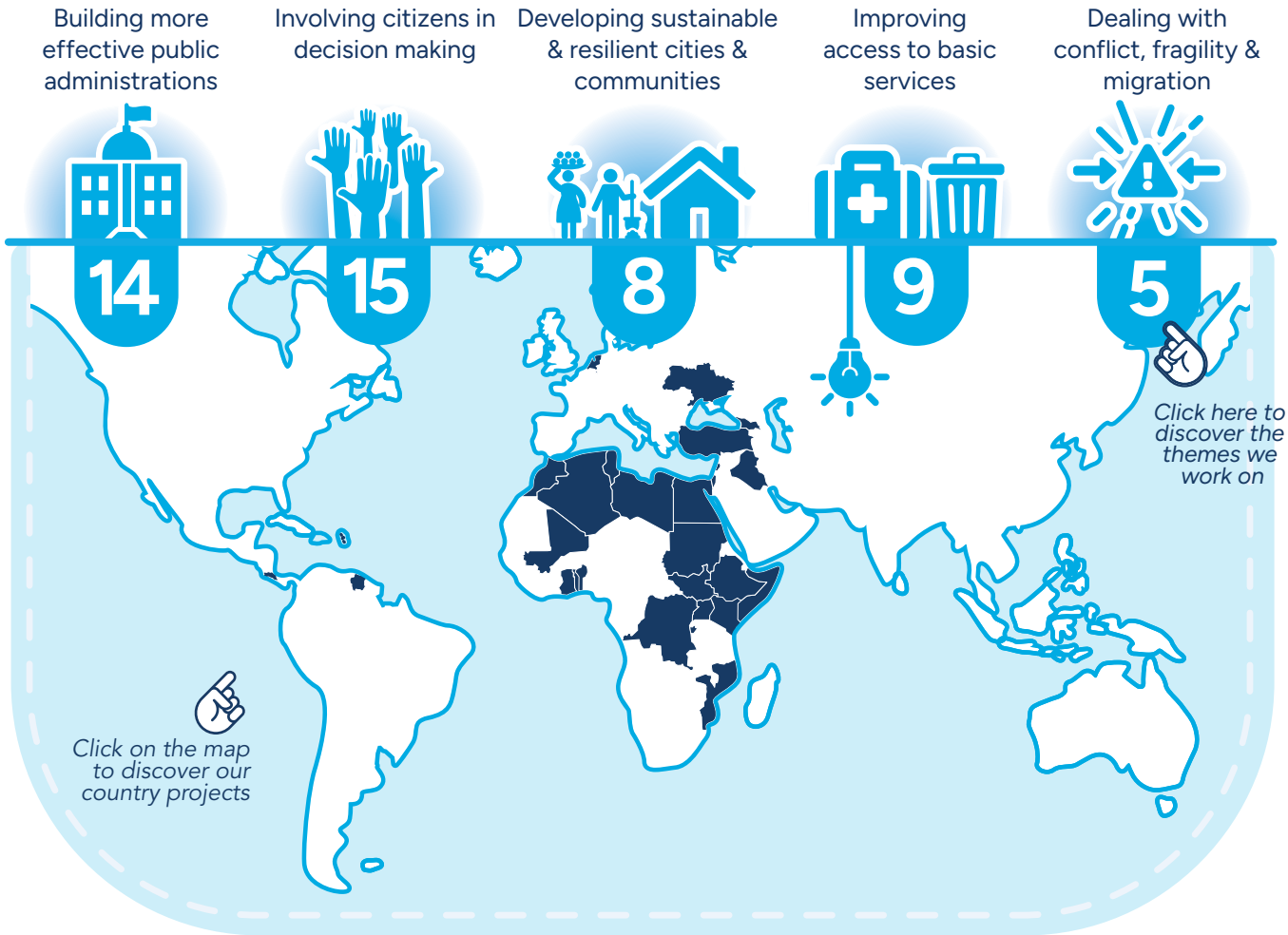
Discover our key figures
for 2024 below

Jump straight to our
achievements of 2024



VNG International in key figures:

In 2024 VNG international supported local governance through **52 projects** across the world.



Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ghana, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Palestine, Sint Maarten, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Suriname, Togo, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine.

We contribute to the following SDGs





64

140



20



284

Dutch municipalities actively contribute to our international work

Participate in the Gemeenten4GlobalGoals network

An initiative by VNG to support Dutch municipalities to integrate SDGs in their work.

VNG International offices in partner countries

Algeria	Morocco
Bénin	Palestine
Burundi	Puntland
DR Congo	Somaliland
Egypt	South Sudan
Ethiopia	St Maarten
Iraq	Togo
Kenya	Tunesia
Lebanon	Uganda
Mali	United States

VNG International staff members

In-country staff: 227



140 male



87 female

The Hague: 69



22 male



47 female



Mobilising Dutch municipality expertise for the Caribbean

Across the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of The Netherlands, public administrations face a shared reality: limited staff capacity and scarce specialized expertise to deliver the necessary services to their inhabitants. The Caribbean Exchange Facility, funded by the Dutch Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, was established to respond directly to these needs, through a flexible, demand-driven model. Each island defines its priorities for the Exchange Facility, VNG International matches them with Dutch municipal professionals and other experts who bring the right experience to the table. This approach ensures ownership, relevance and added value.

VNG International leverages its network of Dutch municipalities to deliver hands-on, peer-to-peer support. Local government experts contribute with practical know-how, often based on similar challenges faced in The Netherlands. It is a model that blends solidarity with professionalism and shows how local government collaboration can cross oceans and deliver results.

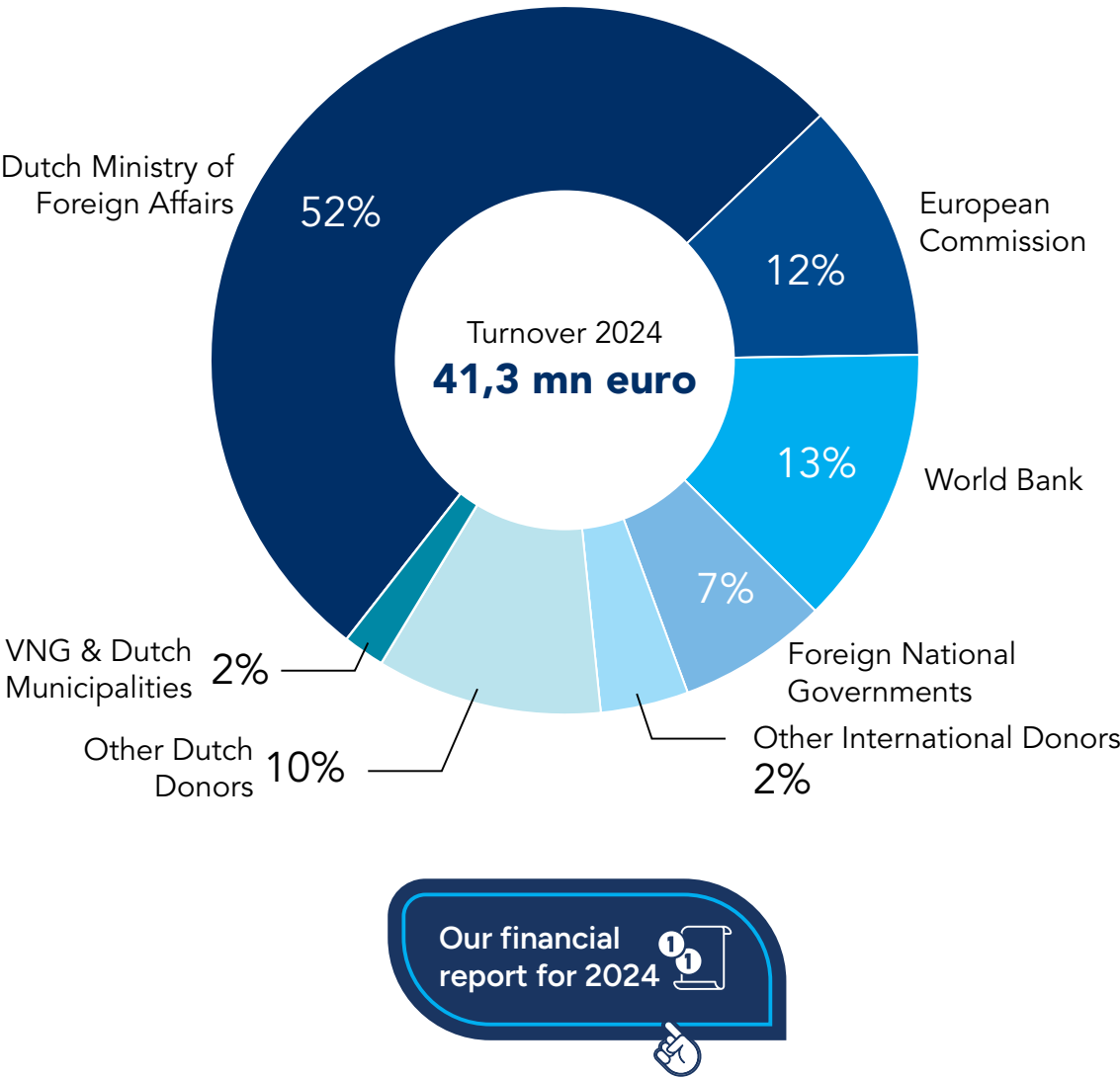
Since the programme's start, 36 assignments have been completed— 23 on the BES islands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius, Saba) and 13 on the CAS islands (Curaçao, Aruba, St. Maarten) with the next achievements:

- Bonaire: Strengthening of the International Desk led to successful EU funding applications and improved project design capacity;
- Saba: A major upgrade in waste management systems, including coaching, logistics, and inter-island collaboration;
- Kingdom-wide: Legislative updates on mental health and pandemic preparedness are aligning local laws with international standards;
- Civil Affairs departments: Now better equipped through digital system upgrades, peer exchange, and workflow improvements—leading to more accessible, efficient public services.

Increasing mutual exchange and co-creating practical tools will further strengthen resilience and autonomy across the islands in the future.

"By focusing VNG's support on areas where we truly need expertise, we gain real added value from the network - and ensure long-term knowledge is secured." — Bram Streppel, Island Secretary, Public Entity Saba

Our turnover per donor in 2024:



Fostering peace and justice in the Democratic Republic Congo

The Peace and Security programme (ESPER) is a joint initiative of VNG International and the Dutch NGO Cordaid to improve the living and security conditions of around 4,6 million people in three eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic Congo (DRC). The programme works with Local Security Committees consisting of municipal civil servants, police & military representatives and members of civil society including women groups. Through citizen participation, these committees draw up and monitor Local Security Action Plans on how to reduce violence and insecurity (e.g. drug trafficking, alcohol abuse and illegal taxation).

ESPER encourages the implementation of these plans through the establishment of result-based financing (RBF) contracts with the committees: based on realization of agreed performance indicators the programme subsidizes police, military and their supervising bodies in proportion to the scale of results achieved. This goes hand-in-hand with extensive training and coaching trajectories of national, provincial and military government actors as well as civil society organisations. In total 81 RBF contracts were signed with local administration, police, military justice and civil society. Performance increased from 69% in 2021 to 80% in 2024. A percentage of 75% of community members reported a positive experience with the services provided by administrative, security and judicial authorities (e.g. call for intervention in case of suspicious movement and services of common interest such as cordon off). This was 29% at the start of the project in 2021.

The results of the programme were put forward in the lobby towards the national government and resulted in the passing of nation-wide measures on the inclusion of a budget line on local security governance in the national budget. Moreover, all local security committees are now legally obliged to adopt a participatory, inclusive and gender-sensitive approach towards security governance.



What we achieved in 2024:

In 2024 VNG International's projects continued to build better futures by promoting local governance worldwide. In this section we outline our achievements and some cases of the past year.

Our impact

We partner with local governments to take up their leading role in local democratic development and with their constituencies to have them benefit from good service provision.

We do this in three ways:



Creating enabling environments

We work with local governments and their associations - both on national and international level - to ensure a proper mandate with concomitant funding as to fulfill their pivotal role in development.



Facilitating capacity strengthening

We support local governments in developing strong technical and political leadership, setting up participatory processes for citizens to meaningfully influence decision making, improving their capability to implement decisions against high standards, and raising sufficient resources to do so.



Encouraging citizen engagement

We encourage citizens and their leaders, and especially groups in a marginalised position, to come forward to express their needs, wishes and ambitions towards local governments and service providers.

As a result, we contributed to:

780

case of local governments taking up a pro-active role in local or regional development

Service delivery by local governments reached

92mn
citizens



Increasing tax revenues in Ethiopia

The Ethiopian government has put in place progressive legislation giving municipalities the room and mandate to increase their own source revenues. Yet, it has to find ways to translate this into practice.

It is for this reason VNG International – with the financial support from the European Commission –piloted with Yirgalem city an approach for boosting the municipality's own-source revenue, offering a potential model for replication in other municipalities across the country. The strength of this approach is in the simplicity of the IT solution implemented by VNG International. It allows for the easy collection of data of property valuation, instantly providing a clear overview of the property tax owed by each citizen. By speeding up the valuation of properties, more properties can be taxed.

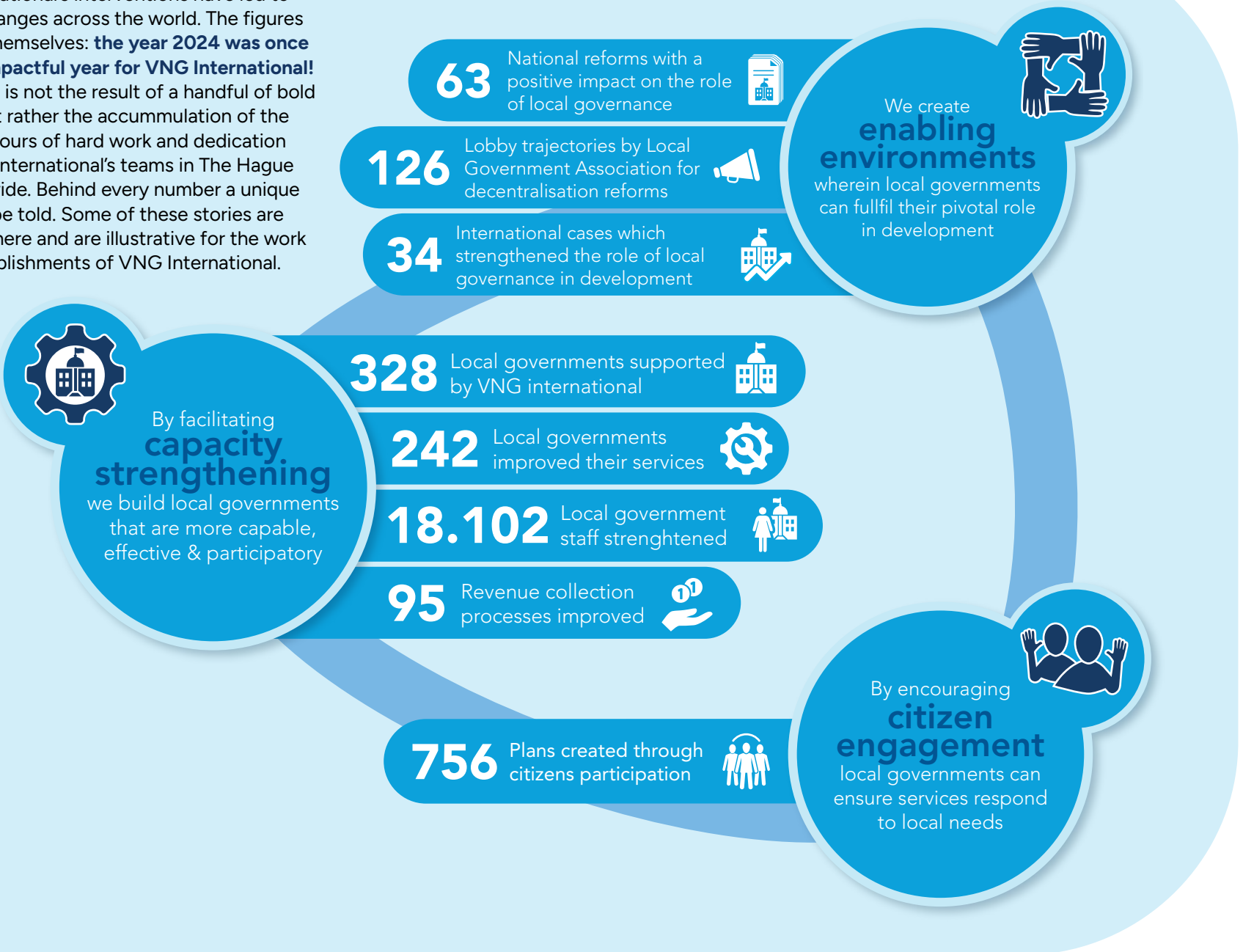
Equally important is that the municipality makes clear to its citizens what kind of improvements were (partially) paid for with local taxes. For example, a billboard was put up next to a road construction site showing how much of the costs were covered by revenues generated through local taxation.

In just two years, the revenue from property tax in Yirgalem increased with 550 percent, a clear indication of the pilot's success. This growth has enabled the municipality to invest in improved public services and the construction of new roads.

Mr. Terrefe Muluneh, Mayor of Yirgalem testifies: "The impact of this initiative extends beyond revenue generation. Yirgalem City is actively addressing governance issues, embarking on infrastructure projects, enhancing service delivery, and ensuring timely salary payments. The pivotal role played by VNG International and the European Commission cannot be overstated, catapulting our city towards progress."



VNG International's interventions have led to tangible changes across the world. The figures speak for themselves: **the year 2024 was once again an impactful year for VNG International!** This impact is not the result of a handful of bold actions, but rather the accumulation of the countless hours of hard work and dedication from VNG International's teams in The Hague and worldwide. Behind every number a unique story is to be told. Some of these stories are presented here and are illustrative for the work and accomplishments of VNG International.





Improving the water and sanitation sector in Egypt

Egypt faces serious challenges in water supply and sanitation (WASH)—especially in rural areas and urban slums. Water scarcity is rising, infrastructure is poorly maintained, and cost recovery remains a sensitive issue due to past subsidy cuts. The project 'Improving Sustainability of the WASH Sector in Upper Egypt (ISWS)' supports local and national actors to improve service delivery, governance, and long-term sustainability of the WASH sector.

ISWS entails close collaboration with the Egyptian Ministry of Local Development and the Holding Company for Water and Wastewater, as well as with local government stakeholders to co-develop solutions. Through technical assistance and practical training across four governorates in the Nile Delta, the project brought Dutch and Egyptian expertise together—bridging gaps and fostering peer-to-peer learning tailored to local needs.

The project yielded multiple key results such as strengthening citizen engagement with (local) government. One way to do so is establishing a citizen-driven accountability approach for the assessment, planning, monitoring, and evaluation of public services through Community Score Cards; 31 facilitators were trained on implementing the Community Score Card methodology, and 200 women were trained on basic plumbing skills and equipped with toolkits. Moreover, the integration of water utility complaints systems with district-level citizen service desks improved responsiveness towards inhabitants.

At the same time, the project contributed to improving energy efficiency within water companies and led to obtaining ISO 50001 certification for them. Dutch-Egyptian peer-to-peer utility exchange also boosted asset management and reduced water loss. The experiences obtained were reflected for a broader uptake in Egypt into a practical guide on financial sustainability for water utilities.

"Training and learning are among the most important elements of capacity building, and this of course has been greatly reflected in the efficiency of job performance, which has been reflected in providing better services to citizens. Abdel-Salam Mahmoud, Community Participation Department Manager – Sohag Water Company.



**Vereniging van
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