



Annual Results 2025

Municipalities at the Forefront of Managing the Local Impact of Global Challenges

Global developments are increasingly shaping daily life in communities around the world. Climate change, armed conflicts, and rising geopolitical tensions place growing pressure on local services and communities. Whether it concerns extreme weather events, displacement, economic uncertainty, or access to basic services, municipalities are often the first to respond to the local impact of these global challenges.

This reinforces the critical role of local governments. At VNG International, we are proud to work alongside municipalities worldwide to strengthen their resilience, adaptability, and capacity to serve their communities. Our Annual Results 2025 reflect the commitment, solidarity, and practical solutions that emerge when local governments collaborate in times of challenge.

Strong support from Dutch municipalities is essential to this work. Through their financial contributions to the VNG Fund for Emergency Aid, Reconstruction, and Peacebuilding, as well as their technical expertise, municipalities help support communities in Morocco in their recovery following the devastating earthquake of 2023.

Cooperation with Dutch municipalities also plays a key role in our strategic partnership with the Netherlands' Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Implemented across 15 countries, this partnership focuses on addressing the root causes of fragility and migration, while strengthening local governance in areas such as revenue mobilisation and water management. Through these joint efforts, we contribute to peace and security worldwide, aligned with Dutch foreign policy priorities.

The examples highlighted in our Annual Results demonstrate how municipalities are not only essential in responding to today's challenges, but also in building more resilient and sustainable communities for the future. They underline the value of international municipal cooperation, knowledge exchange, and solidarity between local governments worldwide.

In a rapidly changing world, the mission of VNG International is more relevant than ever. Together with our partners, we remain committed to empowering local governments to create inclusive, resilient, and sustainable futures for their communities.

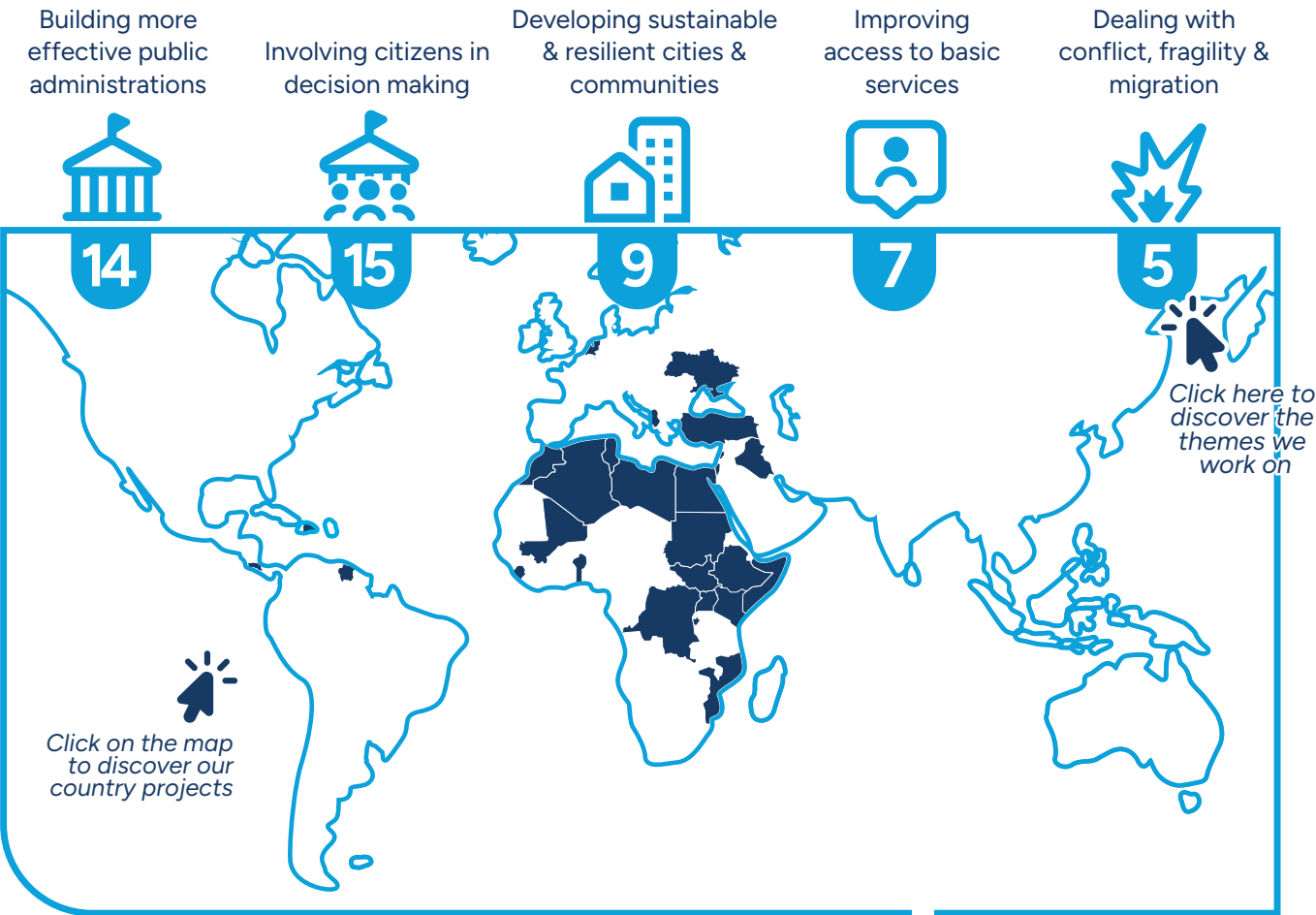
I hope our results over 2025 are a source of inspiration to you!

Renske Steenbergen
Director, VNG International



VNG International in key figures:

In 2025 VNG International supported local governance through **50 projects** across the world.



Albania, Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iraq, Kenya, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Palestine, Sierra Leone, Somalia, South Sudan, Suriname, Tunesia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine

We contribute to the following SDGs

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

1 NO POVERTY

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

13 CLIMATE ACTION

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS





Dutch municipalities actively contribute to our international work

Aalsmeer	Groningen	Rheden
Amstelveen	Heerenveen	Rotterdam
Amsterdam	Kaag en Braassem	Soest
Arnhem	Leeuwarden	Stadskanaal
Assen	Losser	Utrecht
Breda	Middelburg	Venlo
Den Haag	Molenlanden	Wassenaar
Deventer	Nijmegen	Winterswijk
Dijk en Waard	Opsterland	Zandvoort
Enschede	Purmerend	Zutphen



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	Iraq	Puntland
Bénin	Kenya	Somaliland
Burundi	Lebanon	South Sudan
DR Congo	Mali	Tunesia
Egypt	Morocco	Uganda
Ethiopia	Palestine	



VNG International staff members

In-country staff: 189

♂ 116 male ♀ 73 female

The Hague: 62

♂ 18 male ♀ 44 female

Local Water Management in Benin: setting the preconditions for economic growth

The coastal area of the Lower and Middle Ouémé Valley in Benin faces serious flood management challenges that threaten both rural communities and the urban centres of the Greater Nokoué region, where 2.7 million people live. Over the past five years, the Grand Nokoué region has experienced near annual flooding, with the record flood of 2022 marking an unprecedented rise in water levels. At the same time, continued urban growth in Benin, combined with its role as a regional trade and logistics hub linked to the Port of Cotonou, is placing increasing pressure on land, infrastructure, and water systems.

Recurring floods affect agriculture, road access, public infrastructure, and the wider economy. They also make clear how closely local water management is linked to economic resilience and daily life.

Building local systems for water management

DRURAGIE programme of VNG International, launched in 2024, supports this by strengthening community led Local Water Committees (CLEs) and helping them set priorities for improving water management together with local governments. This is done, for example, by supporting the CLEs in drafting & implementing their own Local Water Management Plans and equipping them with skills to generate their own financial resources for maintenance of smaller water infrastructure (e.g. cleaning canals).

Linking local action to early warning and prevention

Moreover, the programme contributed to establishing a Community Early Warning System (EWS) including the installation of beacons, linked to a mobile app, detecting rising water levels at the community level. Data obtained is communicated to municipalities and the Beninese national agency for civil protection (ABPC); when required, evacuation plans are implemented to protect the lives of people and cattle.

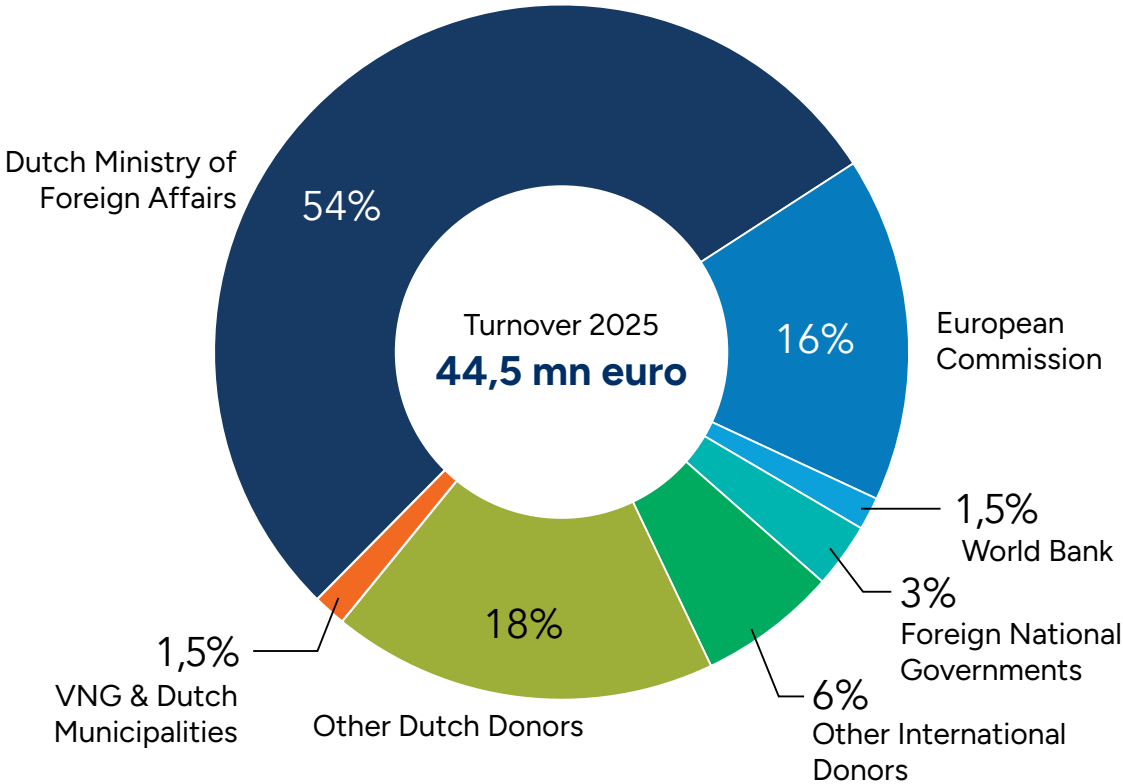
From local practice to wider impact

The positive experiences with EWS and CLEs are some of the achievements used by VNG's sister organisation Association Nationale des Communes du Bénin (ANCB) to disseminate good practices at national level. As such, the programme connects community knowledge with local & national government programming for accomplishing a sustainable water management system as a condition for economic growth.

"Wealth is not found in material abundance, but in the ability to solve each problem as it arises"

Deputy Mayor of Zogbodomey

Our turnover per donor in 2025:



“Building back better” in Morocco.

On 8 September 2023, Morocco was struck by a 6.8 magnitude earthquake that primarily affected small rural villages in the High Atlas Mountains. Over 3,000 people lost their lives, more than 5,500 were injured, and around 26,800 homes were partially or completely destroyed. Critical infrastructure, including roads, water systems, schools, health centres and electricity networks were severely damaged, with total losses estimated at €10 billion. Two years later, the impact remains visible: while many homes have been rebuilt through private efforts, collective infrastructure and basic services are still largely lacking, leaving communities in a vulnerable position.

Supporting local governments in reconstruction

In the aftermath, VNG International launched a reconstruction programme directed at four earthquake-hit local governments in the High Atlas mountain range and at the old city centre of Marrakesh. Over 40 Dutch municipalities provided financial support, contributing more than €4.2 million. This is channelled through the VNG Fund for Relief, Reconstruction and Peacebuilding which enables VNG International to strengthen local capacity in times of crisis.

Across four municipalities, the programme focuses on reconstructing irrigation canals, drinking water and irrigation reservoirs, and water pumping systems. In Marrakesh, efforts are directed at restoring and greening the historic city centre. In 2025, the programme invested €1.2 million in infrastructure works.

Alongside these investments, municipal technicians were trained in earthquake-resistant eco-construction, and new methods for green reconstruction are being piloted. In this way, the programme combines immediate recovery with longer term capacity building for more resilient local development.

Combining safety and sustainability

The big advantage of earthquake-resistant eco-construction is that it combines structural safety with sustainable materials and techniques to minimize environmental impact while enhancing resilience. Modern green reconstruction focuses on “building back better” by reusing disaster debris, optimizing energy efficiency, and employing low-carbon materials.

Addressing social acceptance

Yet, the introduction of eco-construction techniques is not without challenges. Many residents associate the re-use of materials from rubble of demolished with the destruction caused by the earthquake. They are hesitant to accept these as it reminds them of the traumatic experience two years ago.

Looking ahead

In response, the programme will intensify awareness-raising efforts such as organising cultural heritage events. Moreover, training will also be expanded to architects and engineers to improve understanding and social acceptance of safe, resilient, and heritage-sensitive construction methods.

About our work:

In 2025 VNG International's projects continued to build better futures by promoting local governance worldwide.

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 express their needs, priorities and ambitions to local governments and service providers

As a result, we supported:

295 local governments across the world



Service delivery by local governments reached

61mn citizens

Supporting decentralisation in Surinam

Decentralization in Suriname is aimed at shifting administrative, political, and fiscal authority from the central government in Paramaribo to local district councils and sub-district (ressort) councils. The process is anchored in the 1987 Constitution which sets the framework for local governance. While district administrations are expected to play a stronger role in local governance, they often lack the institutional capacity, practical skills, and financial tools to fulfil these responsibilities effectively.

Citizen participation mechanisms are still underdeveloped, and district officials often have limited experience in facilitating dialogue with communities or translating citizen input into policy and action. Furthermore, financial management systems and leadership practices within districts require strengthening to support more efficient and accountable governance.

Building capacity for long term reform

The Makandra programme focussed on both training district officials as well as supporting further development of a national training institute for local governance, e.g. the Institute for Public Administration (IBAS) in order to sustain reforms in the long run. It provided training and coaching of more than 50 civil servants from all 10 districts of Suriname. Participants were equipped with practical skills in key areas such as citizen participation, financial management, leadership, and conflict resolution. Importantly, the use of a train-the-trainer approach ensured that knowledge could be further disseminated within each district, multiplying the impact of the intervention.

From training to local impact

A clear example is the case of Mr. Vijent, District Commissioner of the Marowijne North-East subdistrict. After completing a training trajectory under Makandra, Mr. Vijent took the initiative to advance sustainable energy provision in the Galibi villages. In close collaboration with traditional village authorities, donor organisations, and government institutions, approximately 130 households in the villages of Christiaankondre and Langamankondre were connected to a hybrid energy system consisting of solar panels, battery storage, and a generator.

This contributes to reducing energy poverty and creates enabling conditions for socio-economic development; access to 24-hour electricity allows, among other things, students to study in the evening, improves access to digital tools and internet, and enables small-scale economic activities such as retail, refrigeration-based businesses, and repair services.

Working towards a local inclusion agenda of people with disabilities

The five year We Are Able! programme has strengthened the socio-economic position of persons with disabilities in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Sudan, and Uganda. Together with a consortium of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), VNG International jointly contributed to transforming the role of persons with disabilities from aid recipients to active citizens. In many contexts, persons with disabilities face systemic exclusion from their rights as citizens, including access to land entitlements and opportunities to influence decision-making within local governments.

Supporting local governments to plan inclusively

VNG International's role in the programme was to roll out the Local Inclusion Agenda, a tool developed for local governments to work together with Organisations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and other stakeholders in developing concrete plans to strengthen the position of persons with disabilities within their communities.

The tool was successfully applied in Uganda, where district disability units played a central role in developing action plans in Arua City and Nwoya to address food security, land rights, health, and inclusive governance. Another example is found Ethiopia where Disability Mainstreaming Committees (DMCs) managed to have disability inclusion integrated into annual planning cycles of local governments. In this way, local governments started treating disability as a cross-cutting issue rather than a stand-alone welfare concern.

Progress, but more work ahead

As the programme ended in 2025, the final evaluation stated that in many countries persons with disabilities experienced greater visibility, recognition, and engagement in decision-making spaces of local governments during and after the WaA! project. However, there is more work to be done. Persons with disabilities and OPDs still have limited influence over matters such as how public financial resources are allocated, disability-inclusive policies are enforced and inclusion is prioritised within government agencies. Nonetheless, the programme boosted self-confidence of persons with a disability: Today I am an example of resilience and empowerment. My life has been transformed, as have those of many others. We can now stand with pride and say that 'We Are Able' - that we as disabled persons have dreams, talents and abilities." – Salvator Ndayikengurukiye, Burundi

Today I am an example of resilience and empowerment. My life has been transformed, as have those of many others. We can now stand with pride and say that 'We Are Able' - that we as disabled persons have dreams, talents and abilities."

Salvator Ndayikengurukiye, Burundi



International

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June 2026