

IMPACT

REPORT

2020

WATER JUSTICE
FUND
**Supporting
communities
ready for
action**

PAGE 16

Climate justice

**Locally-led
solutions to
tackle the
water crisis**

PRASHANNA PRADHAN:
**'We want to
strengthen
the whole system'**

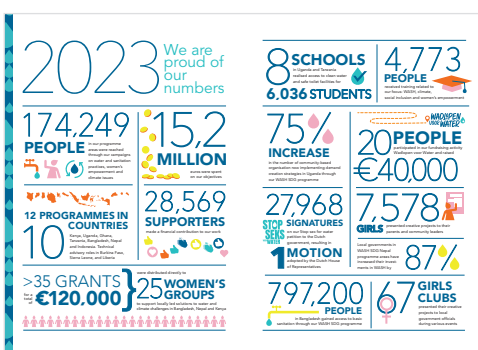
PAGE 20

SABINE BRUSSE:
**'We must work
together to stop
sextortion'**

PAGE 18

10

Impact is more than counting toilets, but we are proud to present a brief overview of our results.



26

The first time ever: a mud walking expedition raised funds for women's groups in Kenya, Nepal and Bangladesh.



18

Stop sex for water: nearly 30,000 people signed our petition, resulting in political success.



On the cover: Bimala Dangi lives in Bangalachuli rural community in Nepal. Together with her daughter-in-law Pabitra Dangi she is part of the Baagi Bikash Women's Group that is working with the Water Justice Fund. 'The real challenge lies not in availability alone, but in the availability of clean water. We are ready to take action on our challenges.'

PHOTO: SHIRISH BAJRACHARYA

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CREDITS

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SIMAVI, MAY 2024

GLOSSARY

CSOs	Civil Society Organisations
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HRWS	Human Rights to Water and Sanitation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SRHR	Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Side by side

In mid-2023, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said: 'Climate change is here. It is terrifying. And it is just the beginning.' The global stocktake taking place at the UN Water Conference in March, the SDG Summit in September and the UN Climate Conference (COP28) confirmed there is no time left for hesitancy, for making excuses or for waiting for others to move first.

As the climate crisis is foremost a water crisis, it is essential to bring the experiences of the women and girls most affected to where decisions are being made and budgets are allocated. And this is exactly what Simavi has done in 2023. Side by side with the women and partners from our programmes we made ourselves heard in New York, in Stockholm, in Dubai, in the Netherlands and in the countries we work in.

Putting women and girls at the centre and working on locally-led solutions to tackle the water crisis is Simavi's unique way of working. A great example of this is the Water Justice Fund that we co-created with our partners in Kenya, Nepal and Bangladesh, and which became fully operational in 2023.

We have been positioning women's groups at the forefront of climate action. Our goal is to use innovative shared governance and participatory grant making mechanisms to shift power and decision making to the women and girls who are living in remote, underserved and oppressive environments, and are most likely to experience water vulnerability.

We used our campaigns in the Netherlands to strengthen our message and gather support for our programmes. Through our Stop Sex for Water campaign, we collected nearly 30,000 signatures to pressure Dutch politicians to designate climate budget to local water solutions. We organised a multi-day sponsored hiking event on the mudflats in the Netherlands for the Water Justice Fund, and with the online movie festival Best of HER we drew attention to women's rights.

We also put a lot of effort into our ongoing programmes, the most prominent being Our Lives, Our Health and Our Futures, which closed at the end of 2023, and WASH SDG, which runs till the end of March 2024. Despite very good results these two programmes have not received renewed funding, and the ensuing decrease in our income means that Simavi will enter a period of transition.

In 2024 we bring more focus to our organisation by concentrating on three overarching programmes, of



PHOTO BY SANDER STOEPPER

'The world keeps changing and working side by side is more important than ever.'

which the Water Justice Fund, the new WASH, Learn & Share programme and Sarwacha as a project under the Sustainable and Gender Responsive WASH+ System programme, are all part.

We will adapt to our financial situation by adjusting the organisational structure and by working more efficiently, resulting in lower costs. Looking at the great results of our programmes we continue to invest in our fundraising capacity, because we believe in the relevance and potential of our mission.

2024 will no doubt be a challenging year for Simavi. The world in which we operate keeps changing and working side by side is more important than ever. Together, we will continue to contribute towards climate, gender and water justice.

Dieneke van der Wijk
Director

Simavi's 2023

in review

We had an eventful year with many highlights. Not only in our programmes but also beyond. A big thank you to everyone who supported Simavi this year.



MARCH
21

Sacha de Boer presents her photo exposition at the first-ever Petition Bar in Utrecht, where we ask visitors to sign our petition against sextortion.

MARCH

28 On behalf of 16,000 signatories, we present the petition *Dit is de Druppel* (*This is the last straw*) to Dutch MPs, urging them to make water justice for women and girls a pillar of international climate policy.



2023

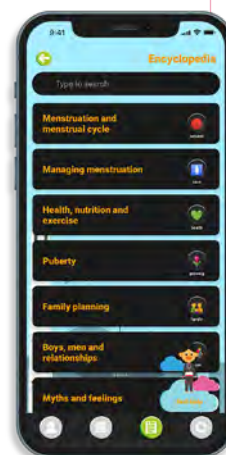


MARCH
22-24

On World Water Day, we launch our Water Justice Fund at the UN Water Conference in New York.

MAY
28

Simavi, together with UNICEF and NFCC Nepal, launches the *Oky Nepal* app. A period tracker specifically contextualised with young Nepalese girls in mind.



JUNE
15

Girls Poop Too! Simavi brings a 'total toilet experience' to the Bootstock and Kidsstock festivals in Rotterdam to raise awareness for the need for clean toilets.

AUGUST 20-24

Together with partners from Kenya, Bangladesh and Nepal, we take to the stage at the World Water Week in Stockholm to present our work and successes.



OCTOBER 8-15

Celebrating three years of HER Film Festival with Best of HER. We give viewers a selection of our three favourite empowering HER movies.

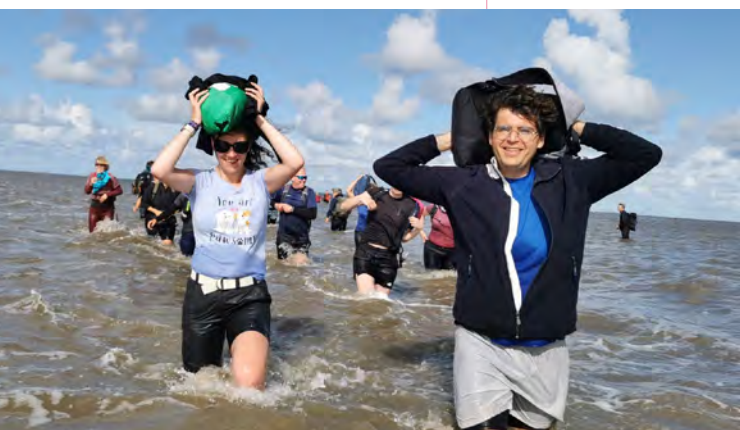
NOVEMBER

12 Together with over 85,000 people we take to the streets of Amsterdam to demand climate justice during the Climate March.



AUGUST 30

A challenging two-day trek through the Wadden Sea: The participants of the first edition of Wadlopen voor Water raise almost EUR 40,000 for women and girls in Kenya, Nepal and Bangladesh.



NOVEMBER 30- DECEMBER 20

We attend COP28 in Dubai as one of the Dutch NGO delegates, where we advocate to make gender and water an integral part of the global goal on adaptation.

Women and girls enjoying their rights to water and sanitation:

How Simavi strives for system change

Simavi's mission is simple and at the same time very ambitious. We fight for equality and climate justice, and for women and girls to overcome barriers and claim their human rights to water and sanitation. Our Theory of Change guides us towards our goal.

At Simavi, we want all our activities to contribute to our ultimate goal: a world in which all women and girls can enjoy their human rights to water and sanitation. We focus on women and girls because they are hit the hardest by climate change and inadequate access to water and sanitation. At the same time, women are often excluded from decision-making processes. We strongly believe that not only women and girls themselves, but society as a whole will benefit if women and girls have equal opportunities.

What role do we want to play?

We believe that states are ultimately responsible to realise the human rights to water and sanitation. At the same time, we see it as the role of civil society to hold states accountable to the people and communities they serve. We believe civil society, women and girls, and their communities understand best what is needed in their country or community. We want all stakeholders – civil society, private sector and governmental organisations – to work together towards system change so long-term sustainability is guaranteed.

That is why Simavi does not see it as its end goal to provide communities with water and sanitation services directly. We see it as our role to support civil society, women and girls, and their communities to claim their

rights. For example, by supporting influencing activities or by gathering evidence to support the claims of women and girls and community-based organisations. We work to overcome gender inequality, among others by ensuring women and girls take part in decision making on water and sanitation and by ensuring their needs are being considered.

What is our Theory of Change?

In 2021 Simavi developed a new Theory of Change (ToC). Our ToC helps us to ensure focus and describes how our key strategies contribute to our ultimate goal. Two mutually reinforcing strategies form the core of our work. Strategy 1: influencing. With like-minded organisations we influence local officials, policymakers, funders, civil society actors and private actors to take responsibility for women and girls' rights to water and sanitation. We want them to own their roles and responsibilities. We want to challenge existing power imbalances. And we want to make sure access to water is not merely seen as a technical problem but as a human rights issue that is related to other global problems, such as climate change and gender inequality. Strategy 2: collaboration. We collaborate with civil society organisations, such as community groups and NGOs, to strengthen their efficiency and leadership in achieving human rights to water and sanitation for women and girls. We do this through funding and supporting these organisations, networks, movements and feminist groups. We want to enable them to work and advocate more effectively, strengthening knowledge, skills, data collection and collaboration. And we want them to shift the power towards women and girls and amplify their voices. In our ToC, we identify four levels of change: short-term outcomes; mid-term outcomes; long-term outcomes and impact, which is the ultimate goal of our work and the combined result of the long-term outcomes that represent a broader change in the system.

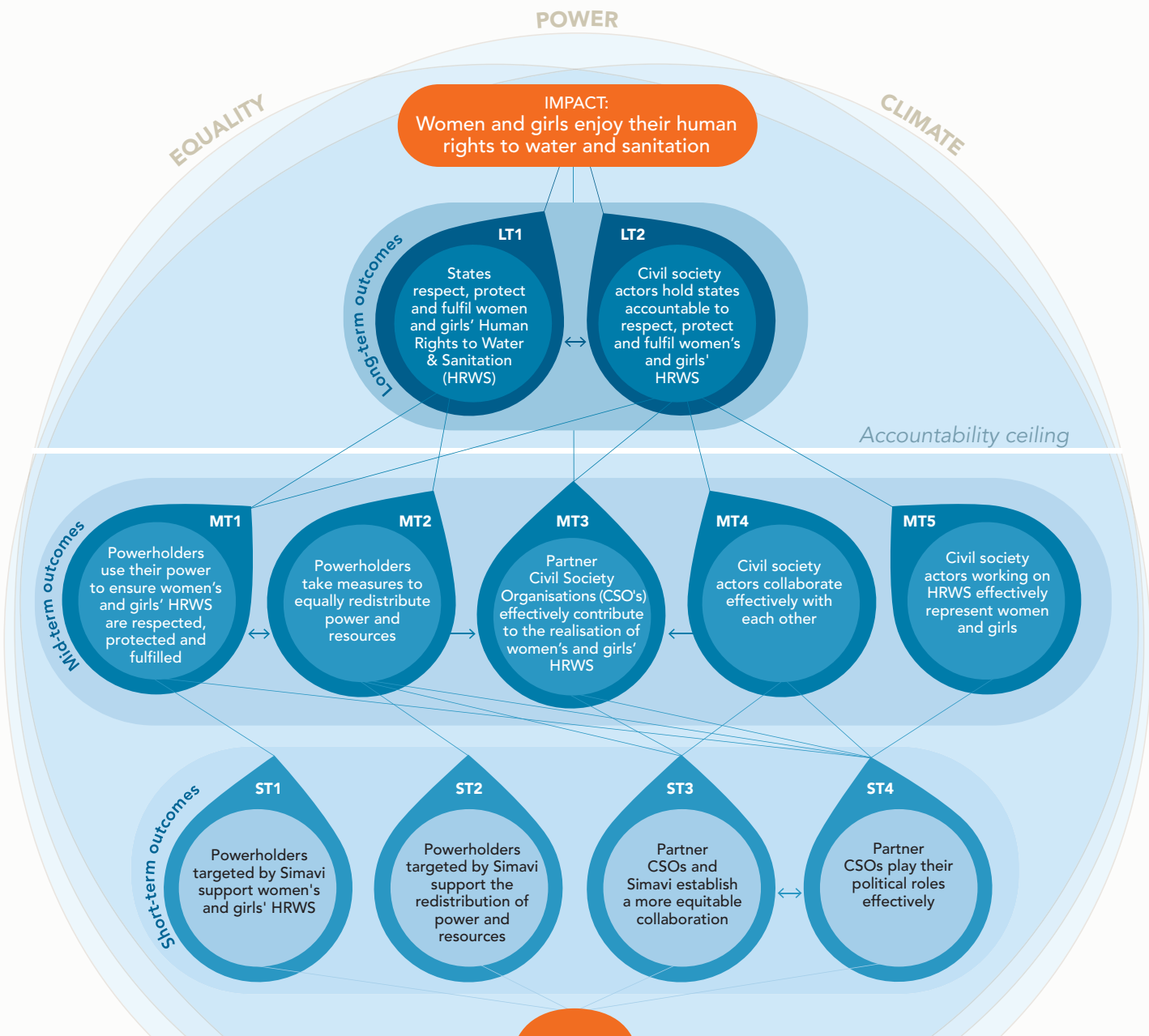
How do we measure our progress?

The ToC helps us to stay focused on our work. All our activities should contribute to achieving our ultimate goal.



'The Theory of Change helps us stay focused on our mission and vision of women and girls enjoying their human rights to water and sanitation'

Sabiha Siddique, MEL officer



Influencing

duty bearers, policy makers, funders, civil society actors, Dutch public and private actors

- Lobby and advocacy
- Engagement in relevant platforms and processes
- Mobilising support and generating funding



Collaborating

with civil society

- Funding CSOs, networks and feminist groups in partner countries
- Facilitating linking and learning
- Co-creation of projects

We aim to design our activities such as our advocacy work and the programmes we work on with partner organisations in Africa and Asia, in line with our ToC. To achieve structural impact, Simavi's approach is to address financial, institutional, environmental, technological and social sustainability (FIETS). We also make use of gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) tools to achieve our goals.

To measure and showcase how programmes contribute to our ultimate goal, we developed indicators that are

aligned with each of the outcomes in our ToC. Where possible we align these to the human rights framework or the sustainable development goals (SDG) and targets. To inform these indicators we collect all sorts of evidence from our activities and programmes, through surveys, mobile tools, interviews or feedback from stakeholders and other means. Where possible we make use of established tools.

For example, when evaluating sanitation services, we follow the human rights' AAAQ framework which stands



- > for availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of services. To collect this information we interview stakeholders, including women and girls, or have external evaluators collect information against international standards.

How do we increase our impact?

We continually work to improve our impact. We make use of a variety of evidence, from our monitoring systems, evaluations and consultations with key stakeholders, to inform programmes and our lobby and advocacy work. And we invest in learning during the programme cycle with stakeholders and partner organisations, within specific areas and between countries. We are open to feedback on our goals and ways of working. Shifting the power is at the core of our strategy: shifting leadership to our partners and the women and girls themselves. For us, feminist leadership is about mutual respect, working and learning together with an open mind.

Long-term outcomes, which ultimately lead to all women and girls being able to enjoy their human rights to water and sanitation, are placed above the accountability ceiling in our ToC. This is because Simavi is only one of many players that contribute to these outcomes. By cooperating with and influencing other stakeholders we try to maximise our impact on this level. Always with our ultimate goal in mind: making sure that all women and girls enjoy their human rights to water and sanitation. •

SHORT-TERM OUTCOME

From WASH volunteer to powerholder

In her determination to make a difference in her community in the Nepalese Baharatal rural municipality, Laxmi Pun Magar decided to volunteer at one of Simavi's partners in the WASH SDG programme. With the training she received from this partner, the Environment and Public Health Organisation (ENPHO), she became an expert in vital issues such as sanitation and drinking water. She then visited households to teach people more about the importance of clean water and sanitation.

'Often men do not take into account the effects that certain policies have on women,' said Laxmi. 'I saw this during the household visits as well. When women have decision power in the household, you see a huge difference in prosperity compared to households where this was not the case.'

That is why she decided to run for



Laxmi Pun Magar behind her desk at the municipality.

vice-chairperson of her municipality, which led to an impressive result for her. Laxmi received even more votes than the chairman. 'Now I can ensure that women are not overlooked when we draft new policies', Laxmi said. And she's not done yet. For the next election, she is planning on running for chairperson or the local parliament.



Hellen Mollel (fifth person from the right) during a visit to a water point.

MID-TERM OUTCOME

Training CSOs on feminist leadership

As the only woman on the Moktaiso water committee covering 10 villages in Tanzania, Hellen Mollel is always on the go. The 40-year-old resident of the village Siwandet was elected to the committee in 2021 and has since been dedicated to solving water problems of women and girls. 'Due to poor management and maintenance of water sources, some had dried up', said Hellen. 'Women were spending six to seven hours a day to find water. The urgency was not felt as much because all decisions were made by men.' At the initiative of Hellen, the committee now regularly cleans the water sources and inspects the water tanks from which the water is transported to the water points near the villages. Hellen also visits these water points in the villages to talk to the women there and share information about the importance of water, sanitation and hygiene. Hellen further grew into this role of advocate after she had completed several training sessions provided by Simavi's partner E-MAC. E-MAC implemented Simavi's WASH & Learn programme in Tanzania. As part of this programme, Simavi trained E-MAC on feminist leadership in WASH practices.



PHOTO BY ATHIMANI MATATA

Shifting the power is at the core of our strategy: shifting leadership to our partners and the women and girls themselves.

COLLABORATING

Working together on the Oky Nepal app for girls

Under its motto: For girls. By girls. Period., the Oky Nepal app helps young adolescent Nepalese girls learn more about their periods. It is a tracker of their menstruation cycle with a countdown to the end of the current period – or to the beginning of the next one. It is also an information resource with answers about menstruation, puberty, mood and body – including quizzes to test a girl's knowledge.

'This app provides young Nepalese girls with age-appropriate content and support', said Pragati Bajracharya, who is Simavi's programme and communication officer in Nepal. 'It addresses the unique needs of young girls during their menstrual journey and empowers them with knowledge and resources to navigate this important phase of their lives with confidence and comfort.'

The launch of the app – on Menstrual Hygiene Day (28 May) – was the result of a collaboration between the Nepal Fertility Care Centre, Simavi and Unicef. Bajracharya said, 'Together we can make a real difference in the lives of young girls across Nepal. This app contributes to a world where every girl can embrace her menstrual cycle with dignity, knowledge and pride.' Until now 696 users have downloaded the Oky app and promotional activities to reach more young adolescent Nepalese girls are ongoing.



Women and girls learn to advocate for themselves in relation to their sexual health and reproductive rights. Photo taken in vKhagrachori, Bangladesh.

INFLUENCING

Successful advocacy for menstrual health

In the Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures (OLHF) programme, Simavi promoted gender equality in the Chitragong Hill Tracts area of Bangladesh. An aspect of this was to get the local government to finance menstrual health friendly toilets in schools. Such toilets ensure young women and girls can manage their periods safely and hygienically. To achieve this, Simavi and its partners lobbied, among others, members of the Khagrachhari Hill district council. The first aspect of their strategy was advocacy by the girls themselves. They gave presentations to government officials and other stakeholders. In these presentations, they raised their voices about their needs.

The other aspect of the strategy was more traditional: frequent communication with the council members. Simultaneously, lobby and advocacy officers from Simavi and its partners got in touch with different school managements as well. 'We aimed to get them to allocate more from their existing budgets to menstrual health friendly facilities', said Ishaque Faruquee, Simavi's lobby and advocacy officer in the OLHF programme. The importance of a consistent advocacy strategy was demonstrated when the Khagrachhari Hill district council allocated BDT 50 Lakh (EUR 42,000) for the instalment of menstrual health friendly toilets in eight schools, including a pledge for continuous support.

2023

We are proud of our numbers

174,249

PEOPLE

in our programme areas were reached through our campaigns on water and sanitation practices, women's empowerment and climate issues



15,2

MILLION

euros were spent on our objectives



12 PROGRAMMES IN COUNTRIES

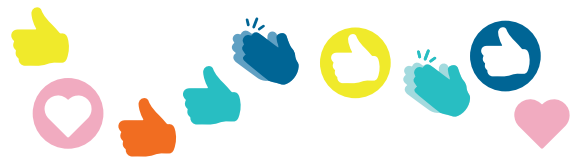
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Kenya, Uganda, Ghana, Tanzania, Bangladesh, Nepal and Indonesia. Technical advisory roles in Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, and Liberia

28,569

SUPPORTERS

made a financial contribution to our work



>35 GRANTS

for a total of

€120,000

were distributed directly to

25 WOMEN'S GROUPS

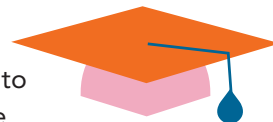
to support locally led solutions to water and climate challenges in Bangladesh, Nepal and Kenya



8 SCHOOLS
in Uganda and Tanzania
realised access to clean water
and safe toilet facilities for
6,036 STUDENTS



4,773 PEOPLE
received training related to
our focus: WASH, climate,
social inclusion and women's empowerment



75% INCREASE

in the number of community-based
organisation now implementing demand
creation strategies in Uganda through
our WASH SDG programme

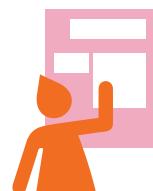
20 PEOPLE
participated in our fundraising activity
Wadlopen voor Water and raised
€40,000



27,968 SIGNATURES
on our Stop sex for water
petition to the Dutch
government, resulting in
1 MOTION
adopted by the Dutch House
of Representatives



7,578 GIRLS
presented creative projects to their
parents and community leaders



Local governments in
WASH SDG Nepal
programme areas have
increased their invest-
ments in WASH by

87%

797,200 PEOPLE
in Bangladesh gained access to basic
sanitation through our WASH SDG programme



67 GIRLS CLUBS
presented their creative
projects to local
government officials
during various events



What programmes did we work on in 2023?

Simavi works together with women and girls in Africa and Asia on equality and climate justice. On clean drinking water and safe toilets for all. We work in close collaboration with civil society organisations and provide technical support to partners. In our programmes we focus on local solutions to tackle the climate and water crisis.



Two members of the
Bed Ki Igen Dream Girls



Men from the Rangamati Hill

WASH SDG

Location Bangladesh, Nepal, Uganda (Ethiopia, Indonesia, Tanzania and Zambia through partners)

Period Six years (2017–2022) + 15 months extension until March 2024

Donor Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Consortium partners SNV, Plan International Netherlands and WASH Alliance International (WAI) partners Simavi (consortium lead), Amref, Akvo, RAIN (Aidenvironment), WASTE (via Nedworc-STIP), IRC, Wetlands International, PRACTICA Foundation and RUAF (Hivos)

In-country partners All partners from the Bangladesh WASH Alliance, Nepal WASH Alliance and the Uganda WASH Alliance.

Goal Sustainably improve the water, sanitation and hygiene situation for all by ensuring local civil society organisations and communities can advocate for the realisation of their right to water and sanitation, and work with the duty bearers and service providers to improve the quality-of-service provision and the governance of the sector.

< Bed Ki Igen dream girls

When HEWASA, Simavi's partner in the WASH SDG sub-programme in Uganda, wanted to use existing community structures to increase the knowledge of menstrual health among schoolgirls, they got involved with the Bed ki Igen Dream Girls women's group. The Dream Girls make reusable sanitary pads, which they sell at local schools, and provide education about menstrual health at schools and in communities. Because of the HEWASA sponsorship, they are now also able to provide WASH loans which can be used to construct latrines. The story of the Bed ki Gen Dream Girls demonstrates the importance of leveraging the strengths of existing community structures and strengthening them further to promote WASH.

Our lives, Our Health, Our Futures

Location Bangladesh

Period Five years (2019–2023)

Donor European Union.

Consortium partners Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS).

In-country partners Progressive, Hill Flower, Taungya, Weave, Ananya, Gram Unnayan Sa, Tahzingong, Zabarang, Khagrapur Mahila Kalyan Samity, Trinamul Unnayan Sangstha.

Goal Enable and support young women and adolescent girls from indigenous groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh to transition into adulthood with dignity and bodily and sexual autonomy, without violence, coercion and/or discrimination.

^ A father who learned about menstrual health

Priyo Sankar, a father of two daughters from Hubbang Tega in Bangladesh, took part in various sessions organised by the Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures programme. In one session about menstruation, he learned more about the health of his daughters. He realised one of his daughters suffered from an abnormal amount of pain during her menstruation and often missed school because of it. After talking with her, he took her to a health centre to be examined by a doctor. Afterwards, he purchased medication and healthy foods for his daughter which helped her feel better. He hopes that his daughters get to finish their education and have a good life. And he wants to encourage them to talk to him about their physical problems so he can help them, and they no longer have to miss school when they have their period.

Water by Women

Location Nepal

Period Three years (2022–2025)

Donor Made Blue, Activist

Consortium partner SEBAC Nepal

Goal To ensure access to inclusive, sustainable and resilient WASH facilities and services. And enhancing the entrepreneurial capacity and participation of women and girls.

EWI Empowerment in WASH Index

Location Bangladesh

Period One year (July 2022–June 2023)

Donor Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)

In-country partner WASH SDG WAI programme Bangladesh

Goal This collaboration aims to have a better understanding of the level of empowerment in WASH in the context of a climate change and gender programme led by Simavi in the district of Satkhira in southwestern Bangladesh.

Sarwacha

Location Nepal

Period Three years (2023-2026)

Donor Dopper

In-country partners ENPHO, Biruwa

Goal Ensure that all people living in Changunarayan municipality have sustainable and equitable access to safe water supply and sanitation services. This will lead to an improvement in overall health and well-being, specifically for women and other underrepresented groups.

The water committee in Changunarayan >

Bimala Pariyar, Niru Nepala and Sabita Nepali form the water committee for the Changunarayan municipality. Through engaging with water committees and women's groups, the Sarwacha programme aims to ensure safe water access to all people in Changunarayan.

The water committee in Changunarayan: Bimala Pariyar, Niru Nepala and Sabita Nepali



PHOTO: MARYANNA MUTCH

Perfect Fit

Location Indonesia

Period Five years (2019–2023)

Donor Stichting Merk Biologisch Plus, Stichting Valleij, Schmallhausen, De Johanna Donk-Grote Foundation, Anna Muntz St, Stichting Familiefonds Jan Waal Gz, St. Majoh, St. Boaz, St. Vierhout, St. Dando Felix, St. Voor uit- en inwendige zending, Flexiplan, St. Main, Rooms Katholiek Weeshuis Bergen op Zoom, Steunfonds Fajans

In-country partners Kopernik, PT Putri Fajar Inspirasi (Perfect Fit Indonesia)

Goal Women and girls in Indonesia have a better menstrual experience through enhanced knowledge of menstrual health management and the provision of alternative, affordable and eco-friendly menstrual products. Women and girls are socially and economically empowered in the community through the Perfect Fit sustainable business model.

Pro-poor WASH Access in Kenya Reducing Inequalities through Partnerships

Location Kenya

Period Two years (2022-2024)

Donor EU (via UN-HABITAT)

Consortium partner Kisumu Water and Sanitation Company Limited (lead mentor partner), Water Service Providers Association (co-mentor) and Simavi (external partner).

Goal The WOP (Water Operator Partnerships) Kenya programme aims to improve water and sanitation services for approximately 250,000 people living in low-income areas that have been targeted by the five mentee water utilities in Kenya.

MHM++ Bringing Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights to life in Menstrual Health Management training in Uganda

Location Uganda

Period Two years (June 2021–March 2023)

Donor Nuffic

Consortium partner SHE Collaborates - Maastricht University (lead)

In-country partners partners of the SRHR Alliance Uganda and the WASH Alliance Uganda

Goal A mixed group of 28 participants will receive training and coaching during the project. The cohort will be involved in developing and implementing the training on menstrual health management (MHM) with integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), as well as on pedagogy and deductive skills.

Check2gether (GC_1000)

Location Ghana

Period 4.5 years (2020–2024)

Donor EU (Horizon 2020)

Consortium partners

Netherlands Organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) (Lead), Academic Hospital Leiden (LUMC), Free University Brussel (Belgium), Group Care Global (US), City University of London (UK), University of Cape Town (South Africa), Action for Mothers and Children (Kosovo), Perisur (Surinam), Presbyterian Church of Ghana Health Service (PHS/PCG, Ghana)

Goal Co-create and disseminate evidence-based implementation strategies and tools to support successful implementation and scale-up of group care in the first 1,000 days in health systems throughout the world, with particular attention to the needs of vulnerable populations.

Gender & WASH

Location Bangladesh, Nepal, Uganda

Period Three years (end 2020-2023)

Donor Simavi

In-country partners Nepal, Uganda and Bangladesh WASH Alliances

Goal This research aims to explore the connection between the availability of water, sanitation and hygiene and gender-based violence in Bangladesh, Nepal and Uganda.

Her WASH

Location Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Pakistan

Period Four years (2019-2023)

Donor Global Affairs Canada

Consortium partner WaterAid Canada (lead), Canada World Youth

Goal Improved comprehensive sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), with a focus on women and adolescent girls, through menstrual health interventions in Burkina Faso, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Pakistan.

Water Justice Fund

Location Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal

Period Eight years (2022-2030)

Donor Legacy of Peter Dicke, and other donors

Strategic Partner Women Win

In-country partners NIA (Kenya), Uttaran (Bangladesh), Sahakarmi Samaj (Nepal)

Goal Supporting local women groups in Bangladesh, Kenya and Nepal in order to realise locally-led and women-owned solutions to water and climate challenges. The Water Justice Fund provides access to small grants for water-stressed communities. The fund supports locally led climate actions which tackle water vulnerability and invests in collaborative learning.

Lobbying in the Satkhira district

In the Satkhira district in Bangladesh, the community received support from Uttaran and five community-based organisations to enhance their advocacy capacity for WASH services. As a result, a successful lobby was conducted which resulted in sanitary latrines as well as 10 tube wells being installed in the district, and a strategy was adapted to harvest rainwater in tanks for 75 individual households. The success of this collaborative action empowered the community, specifically the women, to assert their rights and engage with the government and local NGOs to create a long-lasting strategy to fulfil their needs for water and sanitation.



A 'disaster-proof' toilet in Satkhira district



PHOTO: ATHUMANI MATATA

Margreth Augustino

WASH & Learn 3.0

Location Uganda, Tanzania.

Period Three years (Sept 2020-Aug 2023).

Donor Made Blue, Wandelen voor Water.

Country partners E-MAC (Empowerment of Marginalised Communities - Tanzania), CEMDO (Community Environmental Management and Development Organisation -Tanzania), HEWASA (Health Water & Sanitation - Caritas Fort Portal -Uganda), JESE (Joint Effort to Save the Environment - Uganda), WASEU (Water and Sanitation Entrepreneurs Association – Uganda).

Goal Girls and women have increased well-being and are socially and economically empowered through an effective learning environment that includes sustainable, quality and female-friendly WASH and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) services in schools.



The story of Magreth Augustino

Magreth Augustino lives in Ilkirevi in Olturoto ward in Tanzania. When women were encouraged to become active in local water committees in the Simavi-supported WASH & Learn project, she stood for election in 2019. She won and became the only woman on the committee. Much as Magreth tried to get the interests of women and girls on the agenda, most were ignored. But she did not give up. Instead of running for re-election in 2021, she used her resilience, knowledge and savings to dig a well for women in her community. Thanks to her, two hundred households now have access to water.

The first year of the Water Justice Fund: Realising locally-led and women-owned solutions

In 2022, a devastating flood inundated the lands and homes of people living in the Mehenatisheel community in Nepal. The flash flood knocked out the existing river embankments and it eroded the fields on which the community relies for their food supply. The Mehenatisheel women's group stepped in with support from the Water Justice Fund (WJF).

Together with partner organisations in Bangladesh, Kenya and Nepal, Simavi and Women Win launched the WJF at the UN Water Conference, which took place in New York in March 2023 (see text box). The fund supports community-based women's groups to realise locally-led and women-owned solutions to water and climate challenges. This is necessary because as climate change increases water scarcity around the world, women and girls are responsible for securing water in many countries. With the WJF, resources are either directly placed in the hands of women and girls who live in the areas affected or allocated to community-based organisations in

these same areas. The WJF works on the basis of participatory grant making, which means that decision-making power is held by the communities who are affected by funding decisions. Using input from the community directly through tools such as community consultations, Simavi's partners in Bangladesh, Kenya and Nepal set the course.

In the first year of the fund, 25 women-led groups in Bangladesh, Kenya and Nepal received a total of EUR 120,000 in support of locally-led solutions to water and climate challenges. In 2024, the WJF aims to scale up and support more women's groups. It is Simavi's ambition that a self-sustaining WJF supports women in 10 countries by 2030.

Cheaper water, closer to home

In Kenya, Simavi collaborates with the Kenyan CSO Neighbours Initiatives Alliance (NIA), of which Jane Nyamwamu is the programme manager. She describes some of the work which the WJF made possible in 2023.

'The women-led Naishorua group in Kajiado County received a grant from the WJF to facilitate a pipeline extension from the water source to a community kiosk. This reduced the distance women must cover to fetch water from four kilometres to one, providing them with more time to get involved in economic activities. Plus, water has become ten times cheaper, from 50 shillings per 20-litre jerry can to five shillings. The pipeline extension also supports a drip irrigation system, which utilises the water to improve the quality and productivity of the growing vegetables, fruit trees and pasture. As a result, it also increases the income of women while households have been able to improve their nutrition.' Nyamwamu describes how large the demand for funding is. 'Kajiado County is vast, and we are currently only working in three small regions,' she said. 'So far, we have received a lot of good proposals but the budget available was limited



Nirmale Chaudhary, the leader of the Mehenatisheel community group in Nepal.

PHOTO BY SHIRISH BAIRACHARYA



'When we get involved, we can protect our villages'

Nirmala Chaudhary

so we had to select the best. There are many more groups who will benefit from the fund. Because these women's groups utilise these small grants and do miracles with it. They not only empower themselves, they also empower their societies.'

Advocating for government resources

In Bangladesh, where Uttaran is Simavi's overarching CSO partner, the WJF similarly transferred grants to women's groups for direct solutions. It also supported CSOs to enhance women's groups' advocacy work. Take the story of Basanti Mandol and her women's group in Dayarghat village in the Satkhira district. Supported by the WJF, Shapla, a local CSO, advised Basanti and her group on how to advocate with the local government for a rainwater harvesting tank, which ensures that an additional water supply is available in

times of drought. The women and Shapla collaborated in informative weekly yard meetings, which led to the group's access to government resources to obtain a water tank. The tank was installed in October 2023, providing increased safe access to water for Basanti, the other women in her group and their families.

Mobilising the entire community

And what about the people of the Mehenatisheel community group in Nepal, where Simavi collaborates with Sahakarmi Samaj? The Mehenatisheel women's group received a grant of EUR 690 from the WJF. The group's persistent lobbying and advocacy convinced the local government to match this amount. The women subsequently mobilised the entire community, comprising 57 households. Together, they worked tirelessly to build a long new bio-embankment along the river. Using their indigenous knowledge, they planted vetiver grass along the embankment—a strategic choice because of the robust root structure of the grass.

'These reinforcements last longer than dykes of concrete', Nirmala Chaudhary, leader of the women's group, said. 'It goes to show that when we get involved as a community, we can protect our village.' •

High-level discussions on reaching SDG6 at the UN Water Conference

More than 10,000 participants from 193 countries gathered in New York to discuss worldwide water issues from 22 to 24 March 2023. It was the first conference on water specifically in nearly 50 years. Simavi joined the conference together with four of its partners from Bangladesh, Ghana, Kenya and Uganda. It organised side sessions and followed the high-level discussions on reaching SDG6, the sustainable development goal for water and sanitation for all by 2030. Achieving SDG6 is the reason why the Water Justice Fund (WJF) was launched by Simavi and Women Win at this conference. The WJF will run until 2030.

Stop sex for water!

Achieving impact through campaigning

Nearly 30,000 signatures on our petition and a motion about gender climate justice passed by the Dutch parliament: the results of Simavi's campaign Stop Sex for Water speak for themselves.



Sylvia Mwenesi lives in Kibera, Nairobi. She has experienced sexual harassment while collecting water. The men who controlled the water points tried to rape her. Thankfully, she was able to escape



PHOTO: SACHA DE BOER

In 2023, Simavi continued the Water Wake-up Call campaign under a new name: Stop Sex for Water. With the Water Wake-up call we addressed the consequences of the water crisis. The Stop Sex for Water campaign specifically demands action to stop a highly concerning development that we see happening as a result of climate change and water scarcity: some women and girls have no other choice than to trade sex for water, a practice known as sextortion. Others are being bullied, sexually harassed or abused while they are collecting water.

'When we first heard about the practice of sextortion in relation to drinking water, we were deeply shocked. The feelings of anger, frustration and sadness inspired us to conduct global research on this problem and to make an urgent appeal to the Dutch audience: this needs to stop,' said Sabine Brusse, campaign lead at Simavi. 'We strongly believe we must work together to end this reality and therefore we decided to campaign on this topic.' One of the goals is to raise awareness on the issue and to influence policy makers to support actions and invest funds on the softer side of water and climate investments, adds Simavi director Dieneke van der Wijk. 'This is aligned to the human rights to water and sanitation ambition we have to create a safe environment where there is respect for women and where they are treated equally.'

The sisterhood as inspiration

For this campaign, photographer Sacha de Boer travelled to Kenya to capture the effects of the water crisis on women and girls. In Kibera, a neighbourhood in Nairobi, she documented the experiences of many women and girls and the impact of the water crisis on their lives. Many of them had been harassed while collecting water and some were coerced into sex for water. Their stories illustrate how the water crisis impacts women and girls differently due to the unequal power structures and their disadvantaged position in patriarchal societies. Women also show incredible resilience in combatting this silent crisis. Sacha de Boer was inspired by the sisterhood: the power of women to form a collective through which they support each other and stand up for their rights together. In Kajiado county, where water has become very scarce, she met with women's groups who work together to tackle water problems. Their strength and resourcefulness are proof of Simavi's core belief that women and girls hold the key to solving the climate crisis.

Above and beyond our goal

The photos from Kenya were first shown in the petition bar in Utrecht. Many visitors were very moved by the

'We strongly believe we must work together to end the practice of sextortion'

stories of the women in Kajiado and Kibera. Anybody that walked past could stop by to view the exhibition and enjoy a water cocktail. The only accepted form of payment? Signing our petition Stop Sex for Water! Through the success of the petition bar and the online campaign, we reached our initial target of 10,000 signatures on the opening day, ultimately managing to collect almost 30,000 signatures throughout the whole campaign.

Influencing international climate strategy

In March, the petition was not only received by a delegation of members of parliament, but it also led to a motion submitted by the ChristenUnie (Christian Union). The motion called upon the Dutch government to guarantee access to water for women and girls, and to ensure climate financing reaches the women and girls most vulnerable from the effects of climate change. This motion was adopted with broad support by the House of Representatives.

After the success of our campaign in the Netherlands, Simavi will take the Stop sex for water campaign to the United Nations in 2024. With our goal to collect a total of 80,000 signatures and present them to the Special Rapporteur on the universal human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Mr. Pedro Arrojo-Agudo, we want to continue to influence international climate strategy, work together with strategic partners and make sextortion a thing of the past. •



Visitors of the petition bar in Utrecht.

PHOTO: BEN HOUDIK

Prashanna Pradhan (ENPHO)

'Lasting change in the WASH sector starts with system strengthening'

Prashanna Pradhan, from Simavi's partner ENPHO in Nepal, works on two important programmes: the WASH SDG sub-programme in Nepal and the Sarwacha programme. While the first one is winding down, the second one is getting started. Both focus on something that Pradhan is passionate about: the strengthening of WASH systems. 'We are taking it one step further.'

Prashanna Pradhan has experienced first-hand how water supply systems can be built and then collapse after a just few years. 'In the past I have been involved in several projects that didn't last', Pradhan said. 'When there is no ownership, investments get lost. And then new projects need to start from scratch.' That is not what ENPHO envisions. 'We want to work on programmes that strengthen the whole system. So that when a programme ends, things keep improving and don't start breaking down.' Two of the programmes that Pradhan worked on for Simavi in 2023 – the WASH SDG sub-programme Nepal and

the Sarwacha programme with Doppler – are good examples of this systems strengthening approach.

Having all the parts in place

It is about having all the parts of a machine being in place and functioning. According to Prashanna, this means you do not only have to guarantee access to water services, but you also have to make sure there is a proper financing system, the right institutional mechanisms and a good legal framework. 'Only then you can start talking about the sustainability of a programme,' said Pradhan.

But what does that mean in practice when trying to reach communities in rural areas where people have no choice but to drink contaminated water? In many areas in Nepal it is a huge problem. People drink seemingly clean water which is in fact not drinkable and causes health problems. 'Making people aware of this and having them understand their right to drinking water is the first step.'

Training women to set up their own business


Where necessary ENPHO also works on creating a better supply of water services and products. 'We provide training to women so they can develop their own water filter business. And we also link them

to cooperatives that can provide loans so people are capable of actually buying these products.'

Another piece of the puzzle has been to set up mini testing labs. 'Officially the volunteer water user committees in rural communities have to test the quality of the water twice a year. But when the only testing laboratory is far away in the valley this doesn't happen. The challenge was to set up mini testing labs close to the communities and making sure they can be profitably operated by the private sector.'

Strengthening the capacity of local government

The final challenge has been to strengthen the capacity of the local government. 'Nepal has national regulations regarding water resource management and drinking water, but local governments are also allowed to develop their own policies. Since municipalities often lack the capacity, we have supported them in making these policies and in developing guidelines on how to enforce the rules. Some elements have to be in place in order to make the machine run properly,' says Pradhan. 'Each municipality needs to have a WASH unit and a dedicated focal person with the right expertise.' With the end of the five-year WASH SDG sub-programme in Nepal, Pradhan is proud



'Having people understand their right to drinking water is the first step'



PHOTO: PRAMIN MANANDHAR

A WASH bazaar in the Surkhet District in Nepal.

‘We will make sure the municipality allocates budget to the demands of women’

to say that this has been accomplished in the programme areas in Nepal. ‘This means that we are ready to exit. All the elements of the system are set and I expect that in five more years the situation will have improved even more, following the WASH plan that has been developed.’

Learnings of the WASH SDG programme

Some of the learnings of the WASH SDG sub-programme will be directly implemented in other programmes as well. In the WASH SDG sub-programme it was ENPHO who went to the communities to

create awareness and demand for better water services. ‘In the new Sarwacha programme we want to take this one step further and make sure that WASH entrepreneurs and private providers of WASH services go directly to the communities to create this awareness’, explains Pradhan. ‘Because they will be around long after the programme ends, we want to change that entrepreneurs who offer water filters stay in their shops and wait for customers to arrive. And we also want to make sure that the municipality recognises this role of the private sector in their policies.’

‘Another learning has been that in the WASH SDG sub-programme we have worked hard on having women meaningfully participate in the water user committees. But supporting women to understand their rights and helping them voice their needs is not enough. In the Sarwacha programme we will make sure that the municipality will also understand these rights and allocate budget to the demands of women. And we also want to work on developing women-only self-help groups, so there will a women-led network that can connect directly to the municipality and apply for support.’ •



Who is Prashanna Pradhan

Prashanna Pradhan is senior programme manager at ENPHO. As an environmentalist he has been working on water and sanitation for more than 20 years. He has been working for more than 13 years for ENPHO, a Nepalese NGO specialised in water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and sustainable community development. ENPHO is an important partner of Simavi in Nepal, working together in the WASH SDG sub-programme and the new Sarwacha programme.



United Nations
Climate Change



COP28UAE

DUBAI 2023



COP28 president Sultan Al Jaber and other participants during the closing plenary

PHOTO: COP28 / CHRISTOPHER PIKE VIA FLICKR

Simavi's work in the international arena

Collaborating and influencing at COP28

The United Nations Climate Conference is an annual event where world leaders convene to tackle the climate crisis. In 2023, the conference (COP28) took place in Dubai from 30 November to 13 December. Simavi was there to prompt policies toward universal WASH services, gender equality and climate justice. What did our efforts lead to?

At COP28, Simavi worked with a small delegation on its goals - in plenary and meeting rooms influencing policymakers, at government pavilions networking with officials, always collaborating with other CSOs and private sector allies. Programme and communications officer Hanifah Kasule and country coordinator Rashidah Kulanyi were present on invitation from the Ugandan government delegation. Simavi's strategic partner Sareen Malik, executive director of the African Civil Society Network on Water and Sanitation (ANEW) from Kenya came

to join forces with Simavi director of fundraising and engagement Veerle Ver Loren van Themaat. Esin Erdoğan, Simavi's policy and advocacy officer, was present as one of the two elected representatives of the Dutch International Climate Coalition to the Dutch COP28 delegation. This coalition consisted of 16 Dutch CSOs. As Erdoğan recognised, 'The climate crisis is by default a matter of justice. We see that countries and societies that have contributed least to the causes are hit hardest and are least resilient to

cope with the consequences. Looking and listening more closely, we find that the most vulnerable people among them are women and girls.'

Influencing for climate adaptation funds

As a result, one of Simavi's aims is to make sure that high income countries, such as the Netherlands, who are responsible for the climate crisis make more funds available for climate adaptation strategies that prioritise women and girls in the most climate-vulnerable countries. To achieve

'Our ambition was to have clearly defined targets backed by clear financial commitments'

Esin Erdoğan, Simavi's policy and advocacy officer

this, these strategies should be what is called gender transformative. For example, funding for climate-resilient clean water supplies will reduce time poverty, which women and girls in particular are affected by. Time poverty means that women and girls as caregivers cannot go to work or school because fetching water takes an increasing amount of time.

'Our main ambition for COP28 was to have clearly defined targets on gender-transformative WASH services backed by clear financial commitments', Erdoğan explains. The advocacy work to realise this ambition already started about a year before COP28. Erdoğan: 'At COP itself, you regularly speak with negotiators from your home country. However, the higher up in government the negotiations take place, the less transparent these

discussions become. So a considerable part of the influencing process took place before COP28.'

Presentations to the negotiators

'For example, we gave several presentations to the negotiators of the Dutch government before the EU formalised its priorities for COP28', Erdoğan said. 'With 'we' I refer to the 15 other Dutch CSOs with whom we formed the Dutch International Climate Coalition.'

Together, this coalition collected all its policy recommendations for the entire spectrum of COP subjects into several position papers. These papers were presented to the Dutch delegation throughout the year and were sent to, among others, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (Liesje Schreinemacher), Climate and Energy Policy (Rob Jetten) and Finance (Sigrid Kaag at the time).

Erdoğan: 'This ultimately led to separate meetings with Rob Jetten and Deputy Director-General for Development Cooperation Steven Collet in preparation of COP28. In those meetings, we defined our mutual goals.'

No financial commitments

The negotiations at COP28 led to a closing agreement among 198 governments which Erdoğan describes as 'some progress being made but overall disappointing to say the least.' No financial commitments for the so-called Global Goal on Adaptation plan were agreed upon, and the agreement only encourages countries to take gender transformative approaches into account 'where possible'. It did include more pressing text related to WASH, 'but without financial commitments these targets cannot be met', Erdoğan adds.

Showcasing the successes of WASH SDG

At COP28, Simavi organised an event on the WASH SDG programme in collaboration with Plan International and the Ugandan government. The goal was to showcase the successes and lessons learned in the programme, which was implemented by a consortium led by Simavi. Attended by CSO and government officials, the event also highlighted the work of the consortium on reducing the impacts of climate change on WASH services in Uganda and increased Simavi's visibility at COP28.



Veerle Ver Loren van Themaat, Esin Erdoğan and Sareen Malik at COP28 in Dubai.

Prioritising local knowledge

'But there was a lot of attention directed to prioritising local knowledge, with terms such as locally-led adaptation', she continues. 'This is something that we at Simavi very much support as part of our Shift the Power ambition. Locally-led climate adaptation means that measures are both initiated and implemented by communities facing climate challenges and that the resources needed are directed to them. This wasn't written as committed as we would have liked, but it is a baseline which we can work with.'

As for the Global Goal on Adaptation, Simavi will continue its fight for better climate policies in 2024. 'CSOs have been given an opening between March and May to submit input to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change saying what they think the global climate adaptation targets and measurements should be', Erdoğan says. 'As Simavi, we have a lot to add there, especially in terms of making the link with gender equality. We will work with the Climate Action Network - a global network of over 1,900 CSOs - to make gender an indispensable part of the goal.' •

The Universal Periodic Review:

Holding states accountable to the human rights to water and sanitation

Water and sanitation are human rights and the main angle from which we work at Simavi. Last year, Simavi successfully advocated for these rights using the Universal Periodic Review mechanism. 'Geneva offers a unique opportunity to get nations, such as Bangladesh, to recommend each other on the realisation of these rights', says Sabiha Siddique.

'Although Bangladesh is surrounded by water, access to clean and safe water that is free from contamination is still scarce, especially for rural populations, ethnic minorities, and women and girls,' explains Sabiha Siddique, MEL advisor at Simavi. 'The government of Bangladesh has made good progress in achieving SDG6, yet more effort and serious attention is required towards the water and sanitation sector with allocation of adequate budget, regular monitoring and implementing the policies effectively while ensuring services are reaching the most in need.'

Holding states accountable

The good news is that there is a way to make governments accountable for their obligation to uphold the human rights to water and sanitation. Human rights are the cornerstone of the United Nations. In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution which recognised the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights. This recognition means that the rights to water and sanitation are covered by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), a unique

process which involves a review of the human rights records of all 193 UN member states. Bangladesh was under periodic review four years ago and made a commitment to take actions and fulfil its human rights obligation on water.

UPR = peer review

The UPR is set up as a peer review process. Member states of the UN can make recommendations to the state under review. Other stakeholders, such as NGOs, can submit their own input before the review in the UPR pre-sessions.

This offers entry points for lobbying and advocacy work. Historically, the proportion of WASH-related recommendations was low (less than 1%), so it is crucial to make sure these human rights are not forgotten. As part of the WASH SDG sub-programme, Simavi has been working for years on exerting as much influence as possible on the human rights recommendations that Bangladesh will have to answer to. This year, Simavi was the only organisation representing and advocating for the right to water and sanitation at the United Nations headquarters in Geneva to push Bangladesh one step forward in the realisation of human rights to water and sanitation at the global level.

UPR stakeholder report

The work was started in 2022 by Lenka Kruckova from Simavi who led the overall UPR process, and developed the report together with the WASH SDG Bangladesh team and local partners DORP, Practical Action, Uttaran, Hope for the Poorest (HP), Tahzindong and GRAUS, with concrete recommendations for the UPR stakeholder report. Delegates from other



Sabiha Siddique was the only one presenting on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation during the 4th cycle of the UPR.



Feroza Khatun lives in the Satkhira District in Bangladesh, which is inundated for about seven months of the year due to floods and cyclones. The situation is exacerbated by the climate crisis

PHOTO: TAREQ MAHAMUD

'Keeping the pressure on is the way forward'

member states were identified as the ones that were most promising to talk to. For example, Algeria, Egypt and Slovenia had made recommendations on water and sanitation to Bangladesh before.

Before the UPR meeting of states in November, NGOs were given the opportunity to present their findings and recommendations in the pre-sessions in Geneva in August 2023. Along with the presentation, Simavi did a series of bilateral discussions with UN member state representatives on the importance of water and sanitation in Bangladesh, especially access to water for all, water quality and the right to sanitation.

Access to high level government officials

The permanent representative of Bangladesh also took time for a conversation. 'UPR is a great platform to directly interact with high government officials from Bangladesh and from different UN member states, which would be quite challenging to reach in Bangladesh,' said Sabiha. 'In Geneva, Simavi led on human rights to water and sanitation and we were able to present our work as an example of the work that needs to be done.'

'Talking about human rights is often politically sensitive, especially for our partners, but the permanent representative in Geneva appreciated our input. And since we made our recommendations very concrete, for

example on improving water quality and installing water labs, and improving sanitation systems through faecal sludge management (FSM) in climate vulnerable areas, the government is more open to respond to them.'

Advising states on recommendations

Between the two meetings, Sabina de Voogd from Simavi contacted delegates that expressed interest in making a recommendation on water and sanitation to Bangladesh. During the official UPR meeting of states, six states made recommendations on the rights to water and sanitation to Bangladesh in line with what we were proposing. As addressed in the report we submitted, one of them made the recommendation to adopt targeted measures aimed at accelerating access to safe drinking water for ethnic minorities, women and girls, older people and coastal populations within water-related national plans, policies and strategies.

After this successful lobbying, the UPR results were discussed with Simavi's partners in Bangladesh. The recommendations made to Bangladesh will be used by civil society organisations and NGOs in their demands at the national level. In this way, the demands to the Bangladesh governments come from two sides - from (sub)national and international level. Keeping the pressure on is the way forward. •

More information on the UPR process?

Watch our human rights lecture series at

www.simavi.nl/en/human-rights-lecture-series.

An extreme hike for charity close to home: Mudflat walking for water

Simavi organised a unique event in 2023: *Wadlopen voor Water*. Twenty participants took on a double challenge: to complete an arduous two-day mudflat expedition in the unique Wadden area and to raise at least €2,000 for women's groups in Kenya, Nepal and Bangladesh for Simavi's Water Justice Fund. The event was a huge success. Not only did they complete the expedition, but the participants raised €40,000. New expeditions are planned for 2024.

> Simavi director Dieneke van der Wijk talks to the participants about Simavi and the Water Justice Fund during one of the preparatory meetings.



✓ Ready for the challenge! The participants underway, safely led by the main guide, Peter Laagland, on the far right of the picture.



▼ There surely is no need to take a plane when you can explore one of the most beautiful areas in the world so close to home.



◀ The Wadden are full of nature (and good guides). The coastal areas were also explored. During the short breaks the guides shared their knowledge about the unique ecosystem of the Wadden area.



▼ A good meal and good company in the evenings. Well-deserved after walking 20 kilometres through the water and the mud.



▲ Exhausted but very happy at the finish line: €40,000 raised for Simavi and a lifetime experience for all participants.



Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures

Through collaboration, sustainability is secured

The year 2023 marked the end of the Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures (OLHF) programme. OLHF supported 12,000 women and girls between the age of 10 and 25 in their transition into adult womanhood without violence, coercion and discrimination. A relevant question now: how is the sustainability of the programme guaranteed?

The women and girls who participated in the OLHF programme live in the isolated Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) area of Bangladesh. One of them is Lalasing Marma, who said that after coming to one of the girls' clubs which were part of the programme, she became aware of her rights as a girl. In these clubs, run by trained mentors, women and girls gathered to learn more about topics such as sexual health, reproductive rights, gender equality and services for survivors of gender-based violence. These clubs were only one aspect of the programme, which resulted in a large increase (from 11% to 71.2%) of girls knowing where to get help after experiencing sexual harassment.

Gender equality

In 2023 alone, 7,578 girls in 300 girls' clubs gave creative presentations on topics discussed during sessions of these girls' clubs. These presentations were given to the girls' families and to community leaders. The creative ideas were anything from plays to self-designed posters the girls used to encourage their audience to support gender equality. In collaboration with its main CSO partner, Bangladesh Nari Progati Sangha (BNPS), Simavi has worked to facilitate the sustainability of the programme beyond its closure. Ishaque Faruquee, Simavi's lobby and advocacy officer in the OLHF programme said, 'These creative projects have proven to change the mindsets of community leaders so that they turn supportive to girls and young women in menstrual health management and in combatting gender-based violence and child marriage.' 'At least 119 girls' clubs will sustain beyond the programme', Faruquee added. 'Mentors and girls who have been part of these clubs have formed committees to continue to operate. Karbari, which is the title of the

most important community leader in Bangladeshi culture, and other leaders will support these clubs as advisors. As part of OLHF, we have initiated and supported these structures.'

'The sustainability of the programme is also apparent in the commitments community leaders and parents made after these creative presentations. They committed to raising awareness of menstrual hygiene management or to ensuring gender equality, for example. In practice, this meant that they pledged to activities such as organising meetings for discussions to further eliminate taboos and stigmas. This will mean that they will continue to hack away at the patriarchal structures.' A total of 680 community leaders, parents and other family members committed to improving issues identified by the girls themselves as priorities in their lives.

Sanitation

Besides discussions to eliminate stigmas surrounding menstrual hygiene management (MHM), it is crucial that sustainable facilities are available to women and girls to hygienically manage their menstruations. Over the course of the programme, MHM-friendly toilets at schools in the CHT area rose from 46.6% to 61.2%.

Faruquee: 'Together with our 10 in-country partners, we have lobbied government officials and school management committees. For instance, we have given training to head teachers regarding MHM and we have distributed circulars on MHM toilets at schools. The structure for sustainability is in place, because schools can manage the required funding to keep the facilities functional now these have been installed. Plus, all knowledge girls and women have acquired in the OLHF programme, whether it is on MHM, sexual and reproductive health and rights or something else, will remain with them. And



'Community leaders and parents will continue to hack away at the patriarchal structures.'

Ishaque Faruquee, lobby and advocacy officer in the OLHF programme

they tend to pass it on to other women and girls in their community. This way, the knowledge will be passed on to the next generation as well.'

Strengthening partnerships

As part of its shift the power ambition, Simavi initiated and established the Youth and Adolescent Right Network (YARN) in 2020, which consists of 10 Bangladeshi CSOs. With YARN, Simavi now closes the OLHF programme knowing that its sustainability is in good hands. 'We have collaborated a lot with these CSOs to increase the capacity of the network,' Faruquee says. 'For example, the CSOs attract their own donors now and take up advocacy work lobbying with the local government. We expect this network to grow to include even more CSOs in the future.'

This advocacy work was demonstrated at the closing conference of OLHF in Dhaka on 11 and 12 September 2023, where BNPS presented a declaration to government officials. This declaration encompassed 17 practical points for the local government to ensure the sustainability of the programme. 347 participants attended the conference including 80 girls who participated in the programme. •

The Our Lives, Our Health, Our Futures programme

The OLHF programme promoted gender equality and fostered an environment for girls and women to empower themselves in the Chittagong Hill Tracts area of Bangladesh. This is an area of conflict and patriarchal social structures which not only brought about gender inequality for the female indigenous Jummas but also made them vulnerable to sexual violence and assault. The programme ran from 2019 to 2023 and was funded by the European Union and Simavi.

A community leader engages with representatives from the partner organisations in the OLHF programme.



Mohammed Hammie interviews Hellen Mollel, one of the female WASH heroes of the WASH & Learn Programme

Simavi believes that states are ultimately responsible to realise the human rights to water and sanitation. And that civil society can play its part by holding them accountable to the people they serve. Making the voices of female WASH heroes heard was an important part of the work that was done in the WASH & Learn programme in Tanzania in 2023.



WASH & Learn in Tanzania

How female WASH heroes can inspire a nation

Fetching water for their families is still an arduous task for many women in the rural areas of Tanzania. Lack of piped water extensions or high water bills are forcing women and girls to walk for hours through dangerous areas to fetch water and face long waiting lines at the water point. This fact is often overlooked by politicians and government officials operating from the capital. One of the reasons for this is that people living in rural areas lack the opportunity to raise their voice in mainstream media. Mohammed Hammie, a Tanzanian journalist and storyteller for social change, worked on capturing the untold stories of women who heroically brought change

to their communities by simply not accepting the water situation and taking matters into their own hands. He did this for the WASH & Learn programme in which several women participated, implemented by Simavi in collaboration with the Tanzanian NGOs EMac and CEMDO and supported by Made Blue.

Water as a stepping stone

Hadija Rashid, chairperson of Tangini in Ifakara, is a strong, courageous woman and change-maker in her village. She successfully drilled 12 wells in her own area, and another eight in a neighbouring village. Experiencing the hardships of fetching water as a girl made her determined to ensure that one day her community would get safe and clean water. Not only has she kept the promise she made to herself, but she also encouraged women leaders in the village to work with her towards water delivery for everyone. Water can be the starting point for healthy lives and a steppingstone for women to realise their full potential.

‘Tanzania needs more female leaders in solving water challenges’



Who is Mohammed Hammie?

Hammie gained recognition through his book *Mandiga's Well*, receiving an honorary award from the Tanzania Literary Fund, being one of the top five award nominees at James Currey African Literature and nominated in Nigeria for the Quramo Writers' Prize 2022. In collaboration with Simavi, the book was also selected in the Partos Innovation Festival in the segment of Creative Storytelling for Social Change.

Margreth Augustino from the village of Illkireva in Olturtoto ward is another WASH hero that Mohammed Hammie captured on video. She was elected as the only woman on the water committee but was not able to convince her fellow members to pay more attention to the challenges women and girls face. Instead of giving up, she decided to take matters into her own hands. Thanks to her, 200 households now have access to free water. And she is not done yet.

There are many more stories. Mohammed talks of Hellen Mollel from Siwandet, a small village in the Kiranyi district. As the only woman on the Moktaiso water committee, which covers 10 villages, she is permanently on the go managing the water sources and encouraging the eight men on the committee to help her.

Inspiring communities

To celebrate these water heroes and inspire other communities, Hammie hosted several events in the region to showcase the videos. People from the villages in the area gathered to watch the videos and interact with the women on stage. More than 1000 people attended the most recent event and community members shared their learnings.

'Watching this video inspired me. I believe that women can do something great in the community, regardless of their gender. They can lead and bring a huge change', said Mustafa Lazaro from Kiberege village. The responses on the radio show about the women, reaching more than half a million listeners were also positive. 'Hadija is a role model to learn from, she has shown that women can do

Thanks to Margreth, 200 households now have access to free water. And she's not done yet.

it! Tanzania needs more female leaders in solving water challenges', texted a male listener from Namwala. Another one asked his fellow men to follow these women's example. "Women have been at the forefront of solving the water problem in the villages, and we must support and encourage them."

The goal is to not only inspire other women in these rural and under-served communities to take action, but to also get political leaders thinking. 'If a woman like Hadija, who started with absolutely nothing, manages to have such impact on improving the drinking water situation in her ward, how much more our political leaders could accomplish if they would set their mind to it and use the resources, skills and power available to them.'

On September 13, 2023, an article about these female WASH heroes was published in the Guardian, the leading newspaper in East Africa. Hammie is convinced that giving a platform to the voices of WASH heroes like Hadija, Margreth and Hellen, will not only empower other women and their communities, but also enlighten the political debate about the importance of investing in drinking water, sanitation and hygiene in even the most remote areas of Tanzania. •

Simavi and Dopper launch Sarwacha

'We want to see the whole system changed'

A world with clean water for all: the partnership between Simavi and corporate partner Dopper is grounded in this shared ambition. This collaboration dates to the very first Dopper bottle ever sold, and over the years we have worked together to create lasting impact for water-scarce communities in Nepal.

In 2023, Simavi and Dopper launched a new programme together: Sarwacha, meaning the highest. A name that reflects our aspiration to ensure structural systemic change and water justice. Dopper was founded with the aim of getting people to drink tap water and rid the world of all water packaging. But, as the CEO of Dopper Virginia Yanquilevich knows, this is impossible if people do not have access to safe drinking water from the tap. 'One in four people still don't have access to safely managed water. But access to water is a human right', said

Yanquilevich. 'How can we work towards a world with no packaged water if so many of our population do not currently have access to safe drinking water?'

A decade-long partnership

To help realise a world where everybody has access to safe water, Dopper first partnered with Simavi to collaborate on water programmes in Nepal in 2012. More than a decade later, this partnership has provided access to clean drinking water to nearly 70,000 people in Nepal. But only providing safe water is not enough

'We want the Sarwacha programme to be model for clean water access'

Bimala Pariyar is a member of the Water Committee in the Changunarayan municipality



PHOTO: MARYANNE MUTCH

Virginia Yanquilevich (left), CEO of Dopper, and Dienneke van der Wijk, Managing Director of Simavi, at the launch of the Sarwacha Programme



for either Dopper or Simavi - real lasting impact is made through system change. This is why, in 2023, we launched the Sarwacha programme. 'The Sarwacha programme came from the drive to really create system change at a large scale. For Dopper, it's not enough to provide water to X number of people, but we really want to see the whole system changed. That people can have water in their homes, schools and hospitals and that it's managed in the future by the government. This is how the programme idea really started', explains Yanquilevich.

Safe and accessible water

Together with local partner ENPHO, Simavi and Dopper work in the Changu-narayan municipality. The area around Changuarayan is rapidly urbanizing, and the water infrastructure has quickly developed. However, the presence of hardware does not necessarily equate to equal access to safe water for everybody. In the context of Nepal, it is important to focus not only on building water pipelines and taps, but also to ensure the water

is safe and accessible. Specifically, the accessibility of water impacts women and girls, who are often responsible for collecting water. Yanquilevich explained, 'Nepal lays at the base of the Himalayas and has one of the greatest fresh drinking water reserves in the world. Still, 75% of households use water that is contaminated with E. coli and 40% of the population in Nepal spends more than 30 minutes every day to collect drinking water for the household. This is largely done by women and children.'

A best-case model

To develop water systems that are inclusive, climate resilient and regularly tested for bacteria such as E. coli, it is important to enhance the capacity of groups who will still be there after the programme finishes, such as water user committees who will play an important role in ensuring the sustainability and longevity of the programme. The aim is to create a model that can also be applied in more municipalities in Nepal. 'We want the Sarwacha programme to be a

'How can we work towards a world with no packaged water if so many currently have no access to safe drinking water?'

Virginia Yanquilevich,
CEO of Dopper

best-case model for clean water access across the country and abroad. When we succeed at creating one water-safe municipality through working together with the government, local people and the private sector, we envision making this scalable across the rest of Nepal,' said Yanquilevich. •

Our people

Maximising impact with an international team

Every day our international team is committed to maximising the impact of our programmes. Together with in-country partners, we're working on the fulfilment of the human rights to water and sanitation for women and girls.

Our colleagues work from all over the world, our teams are based in seven countries. The majority of our programmes team (22 consultants in 2023) were located in Indonesia, Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Uganda and Tanzania. They play a key role in the implementation and coordination of our programmes. Also, the director of the programmes team is based in Kenya.

Our office in the Netherlands is staffed by a dedicated team of 39 people (December 2023). The staff based in the Netherlands consist of support staff (HR, finance,

assistants), and the fundraising and engagement team alongside a small section of the programmes team.

The leadership team is based in the Netherlands and Kenya. In 2023, we hired a new finance and operations director (based in the Netherlands), and a new director of programmes (based in Kenya). As of 2023, every department has its own manager. The private fundraising circle and the communications circle were merged under one cluster led by the director of fundraising and engagement.

School girls from the Kinyampanika primary school go to collect water. Their school participates in Simavi's WASH & Learn programme.



Our staff turnover was 20.54% with 12 new employees (10 in the Amsterdam office and two in the country offices). A decrease from 34% in 2022. The staff turnover can be partly explained by the creation of new positions as well as a change in the number of programmes in 2023. The average sickness absence rate at our office in Amsterdam was 13.2%.

How do our employees feel?

Initiatives to promote employee engagement and colleagueship include weekly global catch up on Mondays, workouts, an annual yearly team-outing and lunch/coffee breaks, plus end of year festivities. We also introduced a hybrid work policy. Employees can come into the office for two days (or more) and can work the rest of the week from home. This has improved their work/life balance, according to the results of our Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Simavi's Employee Representative Body (ERB) consists of four elected employees, three of whom are based in the Netherlands. The ERB flags and discusses issues that are important to Simavi and its employees and shares them with the management on the employees' behalf. The ERB met six times in 2023. The ERB raised the issue of how to better include Simavi's colleagues abroad with the team and our work policies, as much as possible under the options available to Simavi. The ERB gave critical and constructive feedback to Simavi's leadership team on the process and content of the transition Simavi will go through in 2024.

Networked organisation

Simavi uses a cluster/circles-based structure as an agile organisation in a networked model with strategic

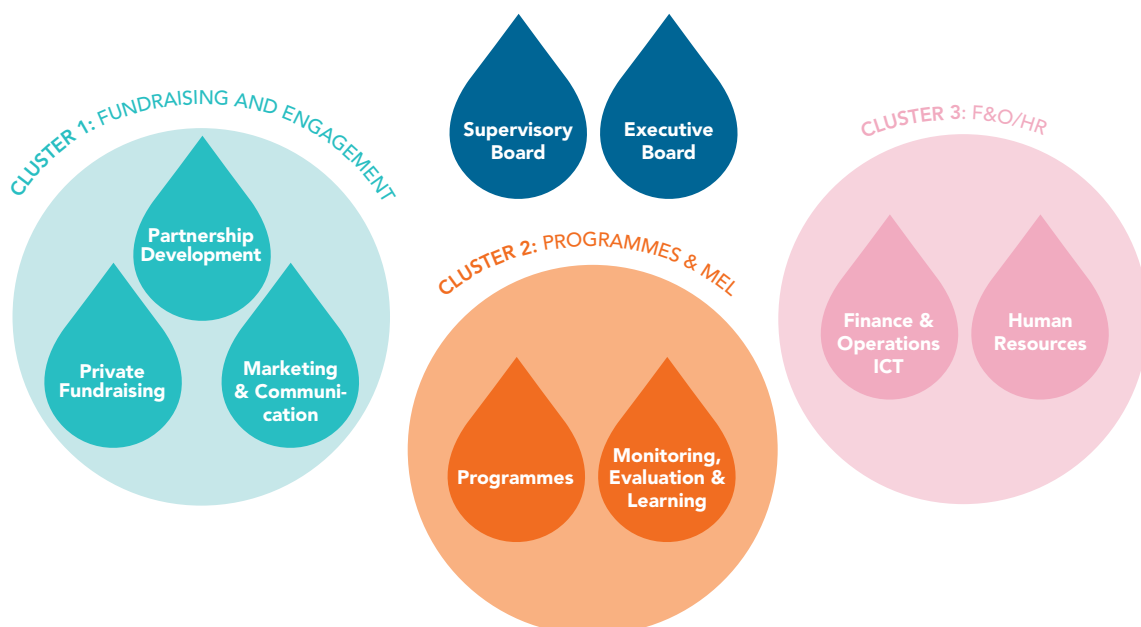
partnerships and a Shift the Power ambition. This networked way of working means that every employee is expected to work in collaboration with others on issues related to their role, matching their talents and expertise with the needs of the organisation. The ambition is to have decision making across all levels of the organisation. This organisational model empowers our staff and allows for more flexibility and rapid response. For Simavi, Shift the Power means shifting the leadership to women and girls themselves, and towards employees and partner organisations in the countries where we work.

The ambition is to have decision making across all levels of the organisation

Volunteers and interns

People who work at Simavi on a voluntary basis for at least four days per month are offered a volunteer contract that sets out their rights and obligations. We make verbal agreements with all other volunteers. Interns are given a chance to learn valuable skills for their future employment. For Simavi this is also a part of contributing to qualitative work being conducted in the development sector.

Both interns and volunteers are highly valued and all our circles greatly enjoy working with the volunteers and interns who support us. They help us achieve our ambitions and are an important part of the Simavi team. •



Where does our money come from?

How does Simavi generate the income to successfully implement programmes and other activities? And how much was spent on our objectives? What are our fundraising priorities? How do we build long-term relationships with our donors? And what were the challenges we faced in 2023? An overview.

In 2023 Simavi generated an income of EUR 15.7 million. Income from individual donors amounted to EUR 1.7m. This income was generated through a diverse fund-raising programme including revenues from legacies and bequests. Revenue from lotteries, companies and non-profit organisations amounted to EUR 1.5m, EUR 0.5m under budget, which is mainly due to a lower income than expected from companies and foundations. Government subsidies, which include grants from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the EU, made up EUR 12.4m of our income, of which EUR 8.8m was received by Simavi as the lead agent of the WASH SDG alliance. This amount was paid directly to the consortium partners. EUR 3.6m was received for Simavi's own programmes; EUR -1.6m less than budgeted, because the funds were received late. The income generated from lotteries, companies and governments are related to multi-year agreements. The income generated from individual donors is partly related to longer-term commitments.

Fundraising in 2023: a continued challenge

Raising funds to help us realise our impact is a continuous and ever-changing task, and we are always on the lookout for new opportunities and ways to diversify our funding. Our four main fundraising priorities in 2023 were to:

- increase our visibility with potential donors
- increase revenue from our Dutch constituency by intensifying our relationships with individual donors, the Dutch private sector and Dutch foundations
- explore new ways to raise funds.

Continued partnership with Postcode Lottery

In 2023 we again received EUR 900,000 from the Postcode Lottery. We are very happy and pleased with the confidence and support of the Postcode Lottery for Simavi. The funds we receive from the Postcode Lottery each year make a vital contribution towards realising our mission and developing new programmes.

Our business partners' continued commitment

In 2023 we received almost EUR 390,000 from corporate and business partners. An amazing contribution and a growing segment for collaboration towards the future. We were once again able to count on the indispensable support of our long-term strategic partners. Two fundamental partners in our network, Dopper and Made Blue, made it possible for us to provide thousands of families and schools in Nepal, Uganda and Tanzania with safe drinking water and decent toilets. Both partners have also given the green light in 2023 for a renewed multi-year collaboration. We launched a new programme with Dopper, named Sarwacha, in June 2023, focusing on water safe communities in the suburbs of Kathmandu. And together with Made Blue we will continue our WASH & Learn programme in Uganda. We are grateful and proud of this, because companies are the key to a sustainable future and they work with us to ensure that water is high on the agenda.

Building on a future-proof business network

To strengthen the role of companies in global water solutions, Simavi launched the Water Business Circle at the beginning of 2023. The ambition is to make more companies enthusiastic about investing in safe water and to contribute to water projects for communities

INCOME FROM: (X 1,000 EURO)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Private individuals	1,731	1,525	2,923
Companies	388	590	174
Lottery organisation	900	900	905
Government subsidies	3,610	5,292	4,419
Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs for alliance partners	8,832	5,232	4,077
Other non-profit organisations	220	553	422
Total income raised	15,681	14,092	12,920

For further details about Simavi's income, please refer to the annual accounts (To be found at simavi.nl/AR2023-A2)



PHOTO: SHARIF HUSSEIN

In October 2023, a team from Made Blue visited Fort Portal in Uganda to visit the WASH & Learn programme, which they continued to support in 2023.

that are hit hard by the water crisis. During the year, Simavi presented the Water Business Circle to a dozen companies, and it was met with broad enthusiasm and interest. This directly paid off in 2023 when we received a wonderful platform during the AquaTech 2023 expo in the RAI Amsterdam. As the social partner of this international water fair, Simavi was able to hold many constructive discussions with companies active in the water world. Furthermore, we received a donation for more than €10,000 from AquaTech. Additionally, Earth-water, a new business relationship of Simavi, made a substantial donation to kickstart our Stop Sex for Water campaign in 2024.

Simavi is committed to growing its business network in 2024 and leading the way in terms of collaborating with companies that are open to take steps towards a sustainable water future.



Fernando van der Brug (director of private fundraising), Maryanne Mutch (programme manager), and Dienneke van der Wijk (managing director) with the team from Doppler at the launch of the Sarwacha programme.

Engaging our supporters

In 2023 we engaged more than 64,000 supporters, of which 28,569 supporters made a financial contribution to our work. Gross turnover from private donors has been almost stable at around 1.7 million euros.

Individual donors are of great importance to Simavi. The financial support given by our supporters in the Netherlands funds a large part of our daily work. We are proud and happy to rely on the support of the people that believe in our way of working. But their engagement means more than just that; they also strengthen our visibility and are a powerful voice in spreading the message. In 2023 we saw a decline in our income from direct mail. It was a turbulent year during which many people saw their cost of living rise significantly. Another challenge in 2023 has been that the acceptgiro payment method has been discontinued. In order to fill the gap in payment methods left by the acceptgiro, a consortium of NGOs in the Netherlands collaborated to develop an alternative payment method. Although the acceptance rate of the new payment method was low at the beginning of the year, this increased over the course of 2023. We are confident that more and more donors will be open to using this new payment method, and we will regain the number of donors we lost due to the discontinuation of the acceptgiro.

Growing our structural donor base

In 2023 we welcomed more structural donors to our supporter base, and we will continue to invest in persuading people to make a long-term financial

commitment. Our strategic shift should result in growth in our financial and supporter base within the next couple of years. As a result, we will build a healthier and more committed relationship with the people that support our mission with their money, voices and time. By the end of 2023, we reached almost 6,500 structural supporters.

Stop Sex for Water

Throughout the year we provided opportunities for a broad audience to contribute to and engage in our work, by participating in our campaigns. We invested more in attracting a new and younger audience and increasing our supporter base through appealing public campaigns and other engaging activities.

In 2023 we started a campaign to raise awareness around the fact that the lack of and unequal distribution of water leads to situations where women worldwide face sexual exploitation and sexual harassment when fetching water for their households. In order to combat this growing problem of sextortion, we launched a petition demanding a stronger gender perspective from the Dutch government in our international WASH and climate policies.

The Stop Sex for Water petition was highly successful. Our petition was signed by almost 30,000 people – and was handed over to the Dutch government in March. Everyone that signed the petition was asked to join our movement by making a financial contribution. This resulted in approximately 500 new structural financial relationships in the long term. The success of this campaign illustrated how important our campaigns are. Many people are



School children in Zandvoort participate in Wandelen voor Water to collect money for our water projects.



A yellow jerrycan, typically used by women to collect water in water-scarce areas. Photograph by Sacha de Boer as part of the Dit is de Druppel campaign.

Gratitude towards our donors

Simavi Director Dienneke van der Wijk: 'The personal and professional relationships we have with our donors are deep and warm. We see our donors as genuine partnerships in which we work together to achieve our mutual objective: the empowerment of women and girls to be able to enjoy their rights to water and sanitation. We appreciate the support from all our donors, personal givers and supporters. We also thank the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the European Union, the Postcode Lottery, Doppler and Made Blue for supporting our programmes. Thanks to all the support we receive, we can build a strong team and partnerships, invest in high-quality programmes, grow our fundraising and be bold in our influencing and advocacy.'

> introduced to Simavi through our campaigns, and this often results in new long-term commitments being made by new supporters.

Girls Poop Too – Festival activation

In the summer of 2023, we piloted a new approach by presenting Simavi at the Boothstock and Kidstock festivals in Rotterdam. We set up our booth next to the toilets where we interacted with the festival crowd with a Girls Poop Too toilet chat. Almost 90 people signed up as structural donors at the festival and it was a good first attempt to build upon in the next couple of years. We will explore more opportunities to attend other festivals in 2024.

Walking for Water

One of our core pillars for engaging with a broader audience – especially with children – is our Walking for Water event. For over 20 years, Walking for Water has been a leading event that involves primary school children in an educative programme in which they learn about water. In 2023, about 10,000 children took part in different school activities for Walking for Water, resulting in Simavi receiving over EUR 175,000 for our Wash & Learn programme.

Walking with the Tide

In August, Simavi organised a three-day mudflat hiking fundraising event in the Dutch Wadden Sea. A group of 20 people signed up for this fundraising challenge - resulting in an amazing contribution of more than EUR 40,000.

The unforgettable walk took our participants through an area of overwhelming nature. The arduous journey was tough, but it was a fantastic experience. All the participants were highly enthusiastic about this unique once-in-a-lifetime experience and the opportunity to be part of this first edition.

The 2023 edition was a pilot to explore the long-term fundraising potential. In 2024 we will add two more editions to the agenda.

Our income through legacies

In 2023 we received EUR 307,364 from legacies. Simavi published a new magazine in Dutch with the title: Water Means Life! (*Water Betekent Leven!*). It contains motivation and information about adding Simavi to your will. Income from legacies is extremely important for Simavi and other non-profit organisations. Many of our donors have supported and still support Simavi for many years and in many ways throughout their lifetime. We are deeply honoured and thankful that so many of them also include Simavi in their will. More information and the magazine can be found on the Simavi website.

Our thoughts go out to those who passed away in 2023 and contributed part of their legacy to fulfil our mission. Together with them we share the wish for a world where everyone has access to clean water and a toilet. A world where women do not have to spend several hours a day fetching water and where no girl misses school because she is menstruating. Through donating part of their legacy to Simavi, they pass on life, because water means life.

How did we spend the money?

We are proud of every euro invested in our work. Simavi's result for the 2023 financial year was EUR –1,035k negative (2022: EUR 151,000), compared to a budgeted deficit of EUR –1,669k. An important reason for this deficit is the conscious decision to invest from our own resources in the development and start-up of new programmes (such as the Water Justice Fund). Thanks to not budgeted income from legacies and carefully managed cost savings the deficit was substantively less than anticipated.

Expenditure on our objectives

In 2023 Simavi spent a total of €15.2 million (2022: €11.2 million) on our objectives, €1.5 million more than budgeted. This was to a large extent due to payments for alliance partners; early 2023, they received delayed payments from 2022, in addition to the 2023 contribution. In 2023, the ratio of Simavi's total expenditure on its objectives to its total expenditure was 96,9% (2022: 86,3%). We aim to spend at least 90% of our income on our objectives.

Expenditure not spent on our objectives

Simavi needs to invest to generate funds. We incur management and administration costs to ensure our continuity and proper operation. We are committed to strict control of these costs. Simavi uses two cost indicators to monitor its expenditure that is not spent on its objectives:

- the cost of generating funds, expressed as a percentage of the total income raised.
- management and administration costs, expressed as a percentage of total expenditure.

The percentage cost of generating funds has decreased to 6.2% (2022: 7.5%). This decrease is a result of a higher level of funds generated than budgeted. In monetary terms the costs are almost stable. Our total management and administration costs were 3.5% of our total expenditure (2022: 4.9%). This decrease is mostly attributable to the lower total expenditure on personnel costs. Both percentages were well within budget and in line with our policy.

EXPENDITURE (X 1,000 EURO)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Total spent on objectives	15,196	13,771	11,151
Total cost of generating funds	978	1,272	970
Total management & administration costs	584	720	613
Total Expenditure	16,758	15,763	12,752

EXPENDITURE ON OBJECTIVES (X 1,000 EURO)

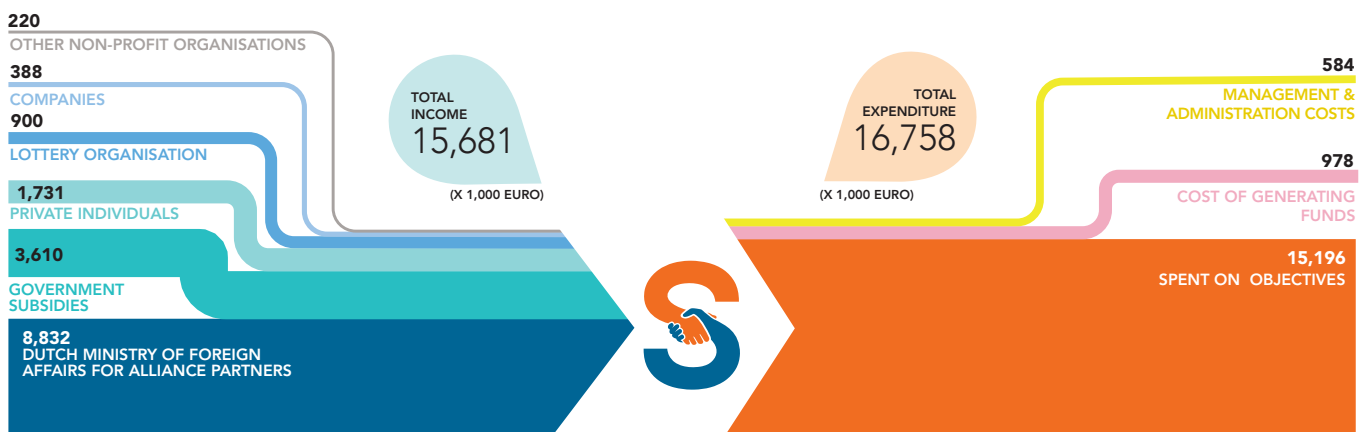
	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Total Income	15,681	14,092	12,920
Total Expenditure	16,758	15,763	12,752
Total spent on objectives	15,196	13,771	11,151
% total spent on objective/total income	96.9%	97.7%	86.3%

EXPENDITURE NOT ON OBJECTIVES (X 1,000 EURO)

	Actual 2023	Budget 2023	Actual 2022
Cost of generating funds	978	1,272	970
Total Income raised	15,681	14,092	12,920
% cost of generating funds	6.2%	9.0%	7.5%
Total management & administration cost	584	720	613
Total expenditure	16,758	15,763	12,752
% total M&A costs /total expenditure	3.5%	4.6%	4.9%

Accountability

Simavi's accounts for the financial year 2023, which form an integral part of this impact report, have been prepared in accordance with the Dutch Accounting Standard for Fundraising Institutions (RJ 650). They were audited by PricewaterhouseCoopers accountants N.V., who expressed an unqualified audit opinion on Simavi's financial statements. PricewaterhouseCoopers accountants N.V. does not perform non-auditing tasks for Simavi. Audit reports are discussed by the supervisory board's audit committee in a meeting with the auditors, which is also attended by Simavi's managing director and its director of finance and operations. The supervisory board has approved Simavi's annual report and accounts for 2023. •



Jharana Bishwokarma, 10, from Banglachuli rural municipality in Nepal. The nearest water point to her village is a 10-minute walk. However, safe water is not always accessible at the water point.



PHOTO: SHIRISH BAJRACHARYA

Safeguarding our operations

How does Simavi manage risks?

As an organisation that encourages innovation and entrepreneurship and depends on subsidies, donations and partnerships, Simavi encounters risks. Managing these risks is an integral part of our operations.

Simavi uses multiple strategies that shield our mission and objectives from harm. Our risk management framework and guidelines help us to systematically scrutinise risks, optimise our decision making and safeguard our operations.

Programmatic risks

Programme implementation is Simavi's core activity. This entails several aspects of

risk that might jeopardise the execution of programmes or the outcomes to be achieved, such as integrity issues, fraudulent partners, substandard partner performance and security, activities that are not rolled out according to plan, or that do not adhere to our quality standards, and safety or health incidents. In doing our work we cannot avoid taking risks. This is acceptable, provided we are aware of these risks and can manage them without jeopardising our continuity and goals. Overall, Simavi's risk tolerance is moderate. We have put several preventive controls in place to reduce the likelihood of a risk occurring and to mitigate the

consequences if it does. Clear internal policies on integrity, compliance and sanctions, the systematic screening of existing and new partners, and a safety and security policy are examples of these controls. We continue to work with our partners to ensure their effectiveness, high performance and good governance.

Organisational risks

Simavi is highly dependent on its employees and systems to achieve its goals and objectives. Inherent organisational risks are associated with data security, the availability of qualified staff and maintaining well-functioning information systems. Simavi's organisational risk tolerance is low.

Human resources

We are committed to responsible human resource management and have enacted policies to safeguard our employees' health and safety. Our ISO-certified quality management system is an important means of ensuring the controlled and reliable execution of Simavi's operations and mitigating the associated risks.

Data security

Data security, both from a cybercrime and privacy point of view, is critical to our operations. Simavi uses the Windows 365 cloud platform which provides flexibility and security. Simavi continuously stresses the importance of data security to its staff, as their alertness and caution is critical.

Financial risks

Fluctuations in income are Simavi's main financial risk. Our risk management aims at minimising fluctuations, especially downwards, but we are also dependent on external factors. Drastic changes could not only significantly affect individual programme continuity, but also the organisation as a whole.

Funding

Simavi continues to diversify its fundraising strategies to spread income sources and financial risk. To secure funding, we

make significant efforts to maintain good relationships with the private sector, institutional partners and governments. Funds from these donors constitute a large part of our income but are mostly earmarked for programmes.

Currency

Simavi's international operations entail some currency risks. To mitigate these risks Simavi strives to contract and commit only in euros. However, this shifts the risk of exchange rate losses onto our partners. Programme staff works with our implementing partners to ensure potential losses are taken into account in bi-annual budget updates. Some contracts, however, are denominated in US dollars. The resulting risk is sufficiently hedged by keeping liquidity in US dollars that match the US dollar obligations we have under these contracts.

Insurance

Simavi mitigates the financial risks arising from fire, burglary, accidents and liabilities through insurance. Simavi maintains a very strict treasury policy. Excess funds may only be placed in interest-bearing savings and deposit accounts with Dutch banks. The funds are spread over several banks to further minimise our exposure to credit risk.

Reputational risks

For an organisation like Simavi, a good reputation is essential, but at the same time, it is fragile. Any incident may pose a real threat to Simavi's reputation and affect our ability to achieve our goals and objectives, and even our continuity. Many factors can damage Simavi's reputation: inconsistent, incomplete, incorrect, low quality, or uncontrolled communication

To mitigate reputational risk, Simavi endeavours to communicate openly and with positivity

(online and offline); lack of transparency; involvement in controversial issues or debates; bad press; ethics and integrity issues; incidents in the fundraising or civil society sector; and environmental incidents.

Our reputational risk tolerance is low, as these risks may affect people's trust in Simavi, our partners and the people we work with, and eventually reduce the donations and funding we need to achieve our goals. To mitigate reputational risk, Simavi endeavours to communicate openly and with a positive tone. We seek not to be provocative but focus on constructive, transparent and positive messaging.

Our financial health

Simavi's financial position is sufficient to ensure continuity, thanks to prudent financial management in previous years, among other things. In 2024 Simavi will have less income than in previous years due to the closure of two large government-funded programmes. New funding is coming in but not yet at the same level as before.

Anticipating this, Simavi has started a restructuring process aimed at strengthening our fundraising capacity and cost-effectiveness, and by leveraging our impact by intensifying strategic collaboration with partners in the global south and east, and in the global north. This creates a basis for continuing our relevant and impactful activities and programs. For further explanation, we refer to the paragraph financial outlook for 2024. •

Please refer to the explanatory notes for the Annual Accounts for more information on our financial status (to be found at simavi.nl/AR2023-A2).

A key ingredient for impact

Integrity

Integrity is not just a handbook, a guideline or a set of rules – it is also an ongoing debate about morals and ethics. The work we do is very much based on trust. We use donors' money to get our job done and we are committed to spending their money in a fair and transparent way. At the same time, we work with marginalised groups. We cannot betray trust or harm people. All our stakeholders and colleagues must be able to rely on proper conduct, transparency and accountability.

Simavi's integrity system

Simavi's code of conduct clearly defines appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Our integrity system sets out what procedures are to be followed in the event of inappropriate behaviour and which proportionate sanctions are to be taken in such cases. Simavi has adopted a child safeguarding policy, an anti-fraud, anti-bribery and anti-corruption policy, a whistleblower policy and a complaints policy (available on our website or on request).

In 2023 Simavi joined the international Misconduct Disclosure Scheme. (misconduct-disclosure-scheme.org) New employees are made familiar with Simavi's code of conduct and relevant policies and procedures. All employees are required to submit a certificate of good conduct (*Verklaring Omtrent het Gedrag*). Simavi strongly encourages the filing of complaints and reporting of suspected irregularities and is committed to act whenever its core principles are violated or threatened. Our duty is to protect the victims and restore justice, and to learn from and prevent any repetition of such violations. To keep the conversation going integrity issues are discussed in meetings (e.g. within the programmes, in cluster teams and in financial meetings).



Integrity and dilemmas

We regularly discuss issues we encounter in our work. These can present serious dilemmas. Simavi works in a variety of countries, including the Netherlands, where local laws and cultural norms may go against what we want to achieve, such as gender equality. Patriarchal systems often exclude women from certain decision-making processes, for example. We discuss such challenges, not only to find a way out of the predicament, but also to equip our staff with the resources and the tools to remain consistent in their day to day work.

In 2023 we received two complaints. In line with our complaints policy, both complaints were thoroughly investigated and dealt with. Measures were taken to prevent similar issues from happening again in the future. The two complaints reconfirm the need to stay alert and to continue to discuss and rethink our role in the development arena.

Corporate social responsibility

When selecting new partners and monitoring our work, we feel it is imperative that we share the same values and vision on what makes a world that works for everyone, including gender equality, LGBTQI+ rights, diversity and inclusion, cooperation among civil society organisations, financial management and sustainability. In accordance with our Theory of Change, sustainability is a core component of our work.

At our office in the Netherlands, we are fully aware of our responsibilities regarding the environment.



PHOTO: SHIRISH BAJRACHARYA

Women from the Mehnatisheel community group, which received funding from Simavi's Water Justice Fund in 2023.

We offset the CO2 emissions from our road and air travel through a compensation contract with Climate Neutral Group and monitor the number of flights we make per year. Our lunches largely consist of organic and Fair Trade certified products. We use biodegradable cleaning products, we separate out recyclables, we purchase green electricity and we use FSC-certified paper for printing and copying as well as for our correspondence and newsletters.

Double check on accountability

The quality of Simavi's operations is safeguarded by an ISO-certified quality management system. This system monitors and evaluates our internal processes. It is embedded in internal manuals, which specify the applicable policies, procedures and processes. More detailed information is available in our declaration of accountability at www.simavi.org/declaration-of-accountability. This document also describes Simavi's policy cycle. In October 2023, EIK Certificering BV conducted the external surveillance audit of our ISO 9001:2015 and Partos 9001:2018 certifications. Our certificates are valid until November 2024. The Central Bureau for Fundraising conducted its regular annual review and concluded we comply with their standards and extended our official recognition. In addition to external audits, in 2023 we performed two internal audits on our processes and procedures to ensure proper functioning of our system. The outcomes of these internal audits were discussed in the management review and followed up accordingly by the respective circles. •

IMPLEMENTING OUR VALUES: SHIFT THE POWER

As part of our Shift the Power strategy we want to promote equality by featuring it prominently in our programmes. Over the past year, the development of the Water Justice Fund put women's voice and agency at its heart to ensure they are in the driver's seat implementing locally-led climate adaptations that address their immediate needs with their own solutions - the ones they consider best.

Patrick Mwanzia, programme manager at Simavi, was involved in the process of developing the Water Justice Fund (WJF), in which the Shift the Power paradigm runs through all aspects of the programme. The WJF places resources and decision-making power directly in the hands of woman and girls. This grassroots grantmaking funding model was formed in the countries the WJF is implemented in: Nepal, Kenya and Bangladesh. Designing the fund took place in collaboration with local partners, but also the grassroots communities. Mwanzia helped develop this new approach to international development. 'A lot of patience and understanding is needed for this approach. We have to ask the communities "what issues do you want to address, and how do you want to do that?"'

The fact that the ambition of localisation is embedded from the beginning makes the WJF unique.' In order to work from a grass-roots perspective, Shift the Power had to be implemented at every level of the programme, including the outcome harvesting. 'We changed the conventional way of programme monitoring, because we want to document changes from the grassroots level from the perspective of the local communities. Therefore, we ask the communities about the results they see, in their own local dialects. When we translate their answers into English, they better reflect the perspective of the people on the results,' said Mwanzia.

Shift the Power is the underlying principle that runs through Simavi's Theory of Change. Mwanzia knows it is important to change mindsets, not only in donor countries, but also among local communities. 'Structures in international development have been created from a Western mindset. Now is the time to look at local perspectives. We need to facilitate people's own knowledge, even if they might have an inferiority complex due to existing power dynamics. But patience and understanding is needed to break through this and to come up with sustainable locally-led solutions that are embraced by local communities.'

'Success stories about Shift the Power principles will aid in influencing mindsets of donors. Hopefully, we can slowly move away from traditional funding models to innovative programming like the WJF that focus on unleashing the power of local communities including women-led initiatives where decision making and funding is bottom-up.'



Patrick Mwanzia

Who leads Simavi?

Simavi has a two-tier board. The supervisory board oversees the good governance of the organisation. The managing director, Dienneke van der Wijk, is appraised by the supervisory board. In 2023, Simavi welcomed a new board member, Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole.

The supervisory board is the managing director's employer and supervisor and acts as advisor to the managing director. The managing director is ultimately responsible for Simavi's strategy and operations, the decisions made and the results achieved. The supervisory board itself has no managerial or operational tasks. We are proud to have a supervisory board consisting of highly capable people, each with a unique background and set of talents. Their efforts help our organisation to realise its mission.



ANKIE VAN WERSCH-LENDERS chair
AREA OF EXPERTISE Strategy, international organisation and partnership building, corporate social responsibility
CURRENT POSITION Managing director/CEO of Powered by Enviu



JOYCE BROWNE vice-chair
AREA OF EXPERTISE Global health, maternal health, epidemiology, planetary health and climate justice
CURRENT POSITION Associate professor, UMC Utrecht



VERA ARNOLDUS audit committee
AREA OF EXPERTISE Legal, governance
CURRENT POSITION Company Secretary PharmAccess Foundation



WILLEM VAN DE PUT
AREA OF EXPERTISE International health development
CURRENT POSITION Senior research fellow at the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp



HANS VALKENBURG audit committee (till September 2023)
AREA OF EXPERTISE Planning and control, Theory of Change, international development, poverty alleviation, journalism
CURRENT POSITION Self-employed consultant on finance, strategy and planning



OLUTAYO BANKOLE-BOLAWOLE (since October 2023)
AREA OF EXPERTISE HR, institutional and organisational development, leadership development, transformational change, international development
CURRENT POSITION Global director of people and culture, Tearfund



JOCHEM SCHUURMAN audit committee (since March 2024)
AREA OF EXPERTISE: Financial management; financial reporting; risk assessment; due diligence; climate philanthropy
CURRENT POSITION: Grant operations manager, IKEA Foundation

How much does the managing director earn?

Our supervisory board has determined the managing director's compensation package in line with the guidelines for directors' salaries at charitable organisations issued by Goede Doelen Nederland. In 2023, managing director Dienneke van der Wijk received a gross salary of EUR 98,800. In accordance with the standards set by Goede Doelen Nederland, Simavi does not pay bonuses to its managing director or any other employee.

Newest member of the supervisory board

Olutayo Bankole-Bolawole:

'I represent the people on the ground'

Why did you decide to join the supervisory board of Simavi last October?

'I have known Simavi for a long time because of the player it has been in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector. I am passionate about the intersection between WASH, climate, health and gender equality Simavi focuses on. As a child growing up in Nigeria, I noticed the undue advantages given to boys. The unequal access to education for girls. Fortunately, my dad was more liberal. He treated all his kids equally. This woke up the feminist activist in me to make a difference.'

'I have worked in various roles in international development at WaterAid, ActionAid and now at Tearfund. I bring my expertise in organisational development, for example in transformational leadership and management, to the table. In what ways can you make your organisation healthier? Identifying those ways and turning them into clear plans of action has been a trait of mine across organisations I have worked at. I think those experiences have allowed me to connect with Simavi in this period of its existence in particular.'

What will your focus be as supervisory board member?

'We as Simavi are going through a change at the moment. With our Shift the Power approach, we want to increasingly contribute to locally-led solutions. As a result, we are scaling up working with partners. I will contribute to identifying and building partnerships. Finding partners which stand out in their niche areas is critical when we at Simavi want to stand out at the intersection between WASH, climate, health and gender equality specifically. By joining forces, we can make the most impact.'

What is a unique aspect which you bring to the role?

'I represent the people on the ground. Africa is my home. I have lived in many countries, most of which were in Africa. I will always keep the perspective of the people at the community level here in mind. Because I have lived in these communities. This perspective includes the nuances related to Africa which many people tend to miss. African countries are all very different from each other. Kenya is more progressive around women's rights and has passed laws which support women and girls in radical ways that I had never seen in most sub-Saharan African countries. Another country Simavi works in, Tanzania, is more patriarchal. This makes its government more difficult to collaborate with.'

'However, Simavi has the reputation of being able to develop effective relationships with most governments. This includes the Tanzanian one, which has a great deal of respect for Simavi thanks to activities such as its advocacy work with the government for WASH services in schools and communities. I really see it as a privilege and honour to have been allowed to serve on the board of such an organisation. It is not something that I take for granted.' •



'I will always keep the perspective of the people at the community level in mind'

The financial outlook for 2024

Looking forward

Simavi was founded in 1925 by two Dutch doctors with the aim of bringing medicine to Indonesia. In almost a century a lot has changed. As a development organisation working closely with women and girls and partner organisations in Asia and Africa, we have never been afraid to adjust and innovate. We are constantly adapting our working methods to suit the changing landscape of development and the needs and rights of women and girls.

Financial outlook for 2024

In 2023 we put a lot of effort into our ongoing programmes, the most prominent being Our Lives, Our Health and Our Futures, which closed at the end of 2023, and WASH SDG, which runs till the end of March 2024. Despite very good results these two programmes have not received renewed funding, and the ensuing decrease in our income means that Simavi will enter a period of transition.

Simavi will undergo a transformative change in line with our strategy and ambition to shift power. In 2024 we bring more focus to our organisation by concentrating on three overarching programmes, of which the Water Justice Fund, the new WASH, Learn & Share programme and Sarwacha as a project under the Sustainable and Gender Responsive WASH+ System programme, are all part. By building more strategic partnerships we will shift power and leverage our impact.

Financially, 2024 will also be a year of transition. Income from government grants will be significantly less than previous years, whereas we expect to be able to raise more funds from individual donors, companies and foundations in the Netherlands than in 2023. Total income raised in 2024 is thus expected to be EUR 4.9 million. In 2024 we anticipate spending EUR 4.6m on our objectives, partially funded with new income, partially with our project reserve. Looking at the great results of our programmes we will invest extra in our fundraising capacity, because we believe in the relevance and potential of our mission. Costs of generating funds will be EUR 1.3 million in 2024. With this, we expect our income to grow again in 2025 and beyond.

Further, we will adapt to our financial situation by adjusting the organisational structure and by working more efficiently, resulting in lower costs. Being determined to invest as much as we can into

our programmes and having trust in our fundraising activities, our expenditures will exceed our income in 2024, despite the adjustments. Having trust in the strength of our message and transition plan, Simavis Supervisory Board has approved the budget for 2024 and agreed to use our reserves to cover a projected end result of minus EUR 1.5m. Simavi's funding, liquidity and financial reserves are sufficient to finance the ending and ongoing programs, the operation and the transition plan (until the end of 2025) for the transformative change. •

BUDGET 2024

INCOME (X 1,000 EURO)

Income from private individuals	2,350
Income from corporate fundraising	495
Income from lottery organisations	900
Income from government subsidies	1,130
Other income	26
TOTAL INCOME	4,901

EXPENDITURE (X 1,000 EURO)

SPENT ON OBJECTIVES

Awareness raising	1,565
Programmes	2,714
Advocacy	340
TOTAL SPENT ON OBJECTIVES	4,619

OTHER EXPENDITURE

Cost of generating funds	1,279
Management & administration costs	529
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6,427

RESULT

-1,526

APPROPRIATION OF RESULTS

- Earmarked reserve for strategic development	-120
- Earmarked reserve for projects	-470
- Financing assets	-8
- Continuation reserve	-928
	-1,526



Simavi will undergo
a transformative
change in line with
our strategy and
ambition to shift
power

Jackline Saina in Kajiado County, Kenya, one of the areas where the Water Justice Fund supports local women groups.

PHOTO: JEROEN VAN LOON

Our Impact Report 2023 contains not only the most important facts and figures behind Simavi's programmes, but also many stories highlighting the impact of our work. The woman in the photo is Rebecca Selian, who lives in Kajiado County in Kenya where she is part of a women's group that works with the Water Justice Fund (WJF). The WJF works on the basis of participatory grantmaking: decision-making power is held by the communities who are affected by funding decisions. Simavi supports change while it is achieved by the communities themselves. Shift the power.



PHOTO BY SACHA DE BOER