

W.I.F.E.S – WINNING INITIATIVES FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

W.I.F.E.S was started by Green Waters Foundation Netherlands on March 2009 with an intention to create environmental sustainability projects within Rotterdam, IJsselmonde community. The first project to be created under W.I.F.E.S was creative recycling of household materials. This was implemented for the target groups of young people and the disabled.

The execution of the project for the year 2009 has been 60% successful.

The strong points of the project are:

Quantitative:

- 55 people successfully attended workshops in 2009.
- 3 artists join us and gave the creative recycling workshops.

Qualitative:

- Those who attended the workshops were enthusiastic to learn new skills.
- The groups were able to add their own creativity to the products
- The workshops focused on household materials and therefore those who learnt can easily use the knowledge at home.

The weak points of the project are :

Quantitative:

- Only 3 artists are so far working for the project
- Lack of financial aid limits workshops implementation

Qualitative:

- The workshops need more diversity of skills so that people can learn how to recycle a variety of different materials successfully from home.
- More artists are needed to give these workshops.
- This requires more funding.

The Short term goals for project WIFES have been realized by 60%. For the target groups which attended the courses in 2009, we have managed to raise environmental awareness. Project W.I.F.E.S is now established in IJsselmonde Rotterdam and the community is aware of our project. The remaining 40% is because we have not managed to establish product lines, and we have not managed to find outlets for the creative recycled products.

Our long term goals are not yet realized:

This includes:

1. The establishment of recycling Centres or waste collection centres that will also provide opportunities for internships, entrepreneurship and employment in sectors such as cleaning and sorting of waste, recycling art workshops, awareness workshops, production.
2. Having environmental sustainability awareness workshops that will offer various knowledge in environmental management.

Other results have come to light since the establishment of project W.I.F.E.S.

1. We now understand that in order for the creative recycling project to be sustainable, we need to have outlets for the products that are created by the target groups.
2. We also understand that there are many within community who are not established professional artists, but are blessed with creativity of which they would be happy to use in this recycling project if they can earn an income from it.
3. We understand that with right venue and committed partnership assistance, this project can be the backbone of the community especially during economic crisis.

Most activities for project WIFES 2009 were implemented as planned. We started the project with the idea that we can work with artists to implement creative recycling workshops in the community and this has been 100% successful.

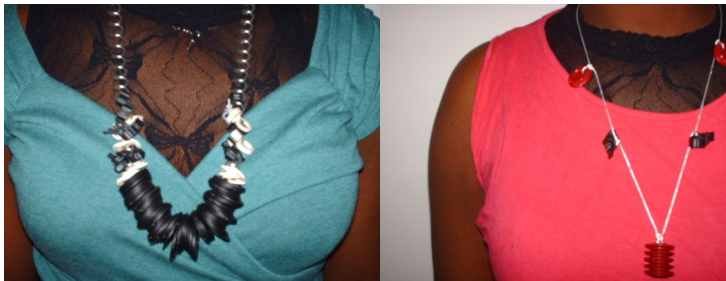
The strategy that has proven to be the most successful is that we let artists decide the type of workshop they want to give, and then offer the list of workshops to different target groups and they select according to their interest, available material and capabilities.

Workshops 2009:

1. Recycling old hats and bags by use of acryl paint:



2. Using scrap to create necklaces and armbands:



3. Recycling empty glass jars into candlelight holders:



Our external challenges:

Limited amount of Artists:

Most artists in the community are already busy on their personal projects during daytime.

Costs:

We don't have enough funding to arrange workshops for more target groups.

Target group:

Some target groups such as the children between 13 – 15 were not sure why they have to learn creative recycling .

The external factors that have had a positive influence include the following:

Internal:

However, due to the fact that I was 100% unemployed, I could spend my time coordinating and promoting project W.I.F.E.S .

Project challenges:

The challenges we encountered have made our team more experienced and we have become more closer and willing to take on the next challenges. We now consider ourselves experts.

Artists in Ijsselmonde:

Miranda Van Denzel, Judith Meskers and Denise Kruihof have proven to be valuable for project WIFES 2009.

In Rotterdam 2009:

The people who were reached directly are the target groups and those whom we work with. That is, 55 people who attended the workshops and an audience of 10 including the artists themselves. That is 65 people.

For the year 2009 this project has been promoted by Rimbu TV and has been introduced at city council Ijsselmonde events via creatieve ondernemers network.

At an event organized on November 4th 2009. A project presentation to the network of 85 people was prepared and made by photographer Hans de Vries.

Furthermore, we had a newspaper interview with the Echo newspaper (<http://www.green-waters.org/images/echodutch.pdf>), with which we made project WIFES known to the public.

We continuously try to involve our network of friends on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

The indirect number of people reached in 2009 are those within our networks Creatieve ondernemers Ijsselmonde, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Green Waters partners and readers of the echo. It is safe to say the number is not less than 1,000.

We wish to raise awareness for this year 2010. Therefore we have started a W.I.F.E.S campaign "turning crap into snap" which will be introduced to schools in Ijsselmonde.

The direct number of people we aim to reach for the year 2010 is 500. Indirectly we aim to reach 1500 people.

For project evaluation, we make sure that there is a representative of Green Waters when the workshop is being given.

This helps us to evaluate the skills of the artists and to judge the mood of the workshop recipients.

The target groups who attend the skills workshops are also asked for their feedback directly after the workshop is finished.

The products that are made usually give us an indication as to how much the target group has learnt.

More attention in the future will be given on acquiring funding and getting more artists involved in the project. We aim to find a central working place and outlets for the products that are made by our target groups so as to ensure sustainability.

In order to achieve sustainability we will require cooperation from our partners. Currently we make grant applications to various organizations working under Gemeente Rotterdam. Financial support has been given to us by Stichting Nieuwe Rotterdamse Cultuur and this has been very helpful.

W.I.F.E.S has empowered the target group with creative recycling skills of which they can use to create products at low costs. The products can be used or sold to create an additional income.

We encourage our groups not to view recycling as an additional burden, but rather as a way of saving money and making money in a way that also benefits the environment.