



akvo.org

Annual report
2010

Akvo uses the internet to tackle international development issues.

We create open source web and mobile software and build networks of skilled partners that can change the way development aid is allocated and reported.

This is important because it improves the way projects are implemented, making them more sustainable, effective, efficient and visible.

Our systems are designed to work on a very large scale. Many of our partners focus on water and sanitation, but we now also cover health, education, economic development and IT projects.

Akvo

See it happen

2010 will be remembered as the moment when we all realised that the Internet meant you couldn't hide the past for long. Despite the arguments around about the right and wrongs of Wikileaks, it leaves everyone clear on one thing – over time a fuller story will emerge online.

Taking control of your story is what Akvo is about. For years, decades, centuries even, the people working on infrastructure and other development projects in the poorest parts of the world have been hidden from view by their paymasters. When money has been spent on things that obviously don't work, it's been hard for them to stand up and be counted. When things go wrong, they've been too scared to say so, because it may jeopardise future funding – or worse.

Akvo is entering a market that contains a lot of historical baggage. International development aid, infrastructure improvement for the poor, philanthropy – there is much to learn from the past. Even success stories like Live Aid face scrutiny – 2010 was the year that Bob Geldof was forced to defend his work in the late 1980s, amid accusations that money meant to tackle famine may have been diverted to buy arms.

In 2010 Akvo went from being an internet project reliant on startup finance to a services business paid to operate systems on behalf of major development aid consortia. In November we secured two five year agreements with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs that will see almost €100 million of development aid projects go online using the Akvo system between now and 2015. All of the partners involved in funding, supporting and implementing projects will use Akvo to share progress online openly, using the internet and mobile phones.

This was the year, too, that Akvo stepped beyond its core market of water and sanitation projects to embrace new development categories. Many of our partners work to fix water and sanitation early in the process of helping a community improve living conditions, with parallel or follow-on projects emerging in areas such as health, education, economic development, agriculture and information and



WASH Alliance

In 2010 Akvo became established in two consortia as part of MFSII, the Dutch government's development aid spending commitments for 2011-2015.

The Dutch WASH Alliance (Simavi, ICCO, WASTE, AMREF, Rain, Akvo) empowers communities to bring about sustainable water and sanitation solutions for two million people in 11 developing countries, using Akvo.org to publish and share project information. Our role is to train more than 130 local partners in internet and SMS reporting, using film as a reporting tool and sharing knowledge using Akvopedia and other tools.

Connect4Change

Our other MFSII consortium is Connect4Change (IICD, Cordaid, ICCO, Edukans, Text to Change, Akvo). It aims to strengthen 136 partner organisations in Bolivia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Peru, Zambia, Ghana, Malawi, Tanzania, Burkina Faso and Uganda through the sustainable use of ICT in health, economic development and education. We are using the related funding to expand and improve the Akvo platform for use in these sectors, with the addition of new software features.

In total, the two consortia will bring around €100 million worth of development projects into Akvo RSR between 2011-2015.

communications technology. We've responded to their requests to open up our system to embrace these areas and in November we added a brace of new focus areas.

I'm pleased to say that as we enter 2011 Akvo is on target on the key metrics – project volumes, value, revenues – against the business plan we created back in 2007. Anyone familiar with the computer industry will know how hard that can be. I'd like to thank our early stage funders for having confidence in our team to deliver – and I want to welcome our new customers who we'll work hard to support in the years to come.

In the end, the good will out and our work is about helping those who do great work share it without having to hire their own PR or software gurus. Describing your work as it happens, simply and authentically, is the best way to respond to this modern world where change seems so bewildering. Many who live in the rich North assume that poverty will always exist as it does today in the South. But some of our grandparents faced grinding poverty even in “developed” countries like the Netherlands, Britain and the United States, with no access to safe water and often no toilet in their own house. Just as that world has been consigned to history, many of the poorest parts of our world today can be transformed in our lifetime. Akvo is part of that change.

As ever, I'm grateful to each of you who has backed us, shared our story or helped us adapt and learn along the way, on this incredible journey.

Jeroen van der Sommen

Chairman of board, Akvo Foundation

May 2011



What Akvo did in 2010

At the start of year, we had our first meeting with the people behind the International Aid Transparency Initiative. By **May** our team would descend in force on the first Aid Information Challenge at the Guardian newspaper's offices in London. In **February** we made it possible to fund projects via iDeal, the most important consumer payment mechanism in the Netherlands.

March's World Water Day saw the most successful Walking for Water event in its 8-year history. Over 18,000 Dutch school children walked 6km carrying 6 litres of water, raising €1.2 million from friends, family and corporate and government sponsors, funding projects on Akvo.org.

In **April**, the Live Earth Run for Water took place in 150 countries, featuring concerts and water education activities. Amsterdam's spectacular 1928 Olympic stadium hosted the Prince of Orange and hundreds of others, running 6km to raise awareness of the global water crisis. The event was featured prominently on Dutch TV. From Cape Town to Hong Kong to Rio, the Akvo team worked to link video and photo feeds from around the world.

In late **May**, Akvo and its partners UNESCO-IHE, Arghyam and Live Earth briefed attendees at the World Congress on IT 2010 in Amsterdam on the role IT can play in helping achieve Millennium Development Goals.

We saw many talented campaigners during 2010, none more so than the two Dutch students who started Cycle for Water. On 4th **July** they began an epic 30,000 km bike ride from Alaska to Argentina, raising money for water projects in Latin America on Akvo.org.

In **July** our partnership with the Parade Festival in the Netherlands reached a new height with the launch of our GIVASHIT toilets, designed by the creative team at Get it Done. More than €40,000 was raised from people visiting the toilets through the festival's tour of four Dutch cities, with money funding Akvo projects online.

Through **summer** and **autumn** of 2010, we continued to meet with potential American partners that can drive large-scale adoption of Akvo in the United States. We developed new messaging and sales materials designed for the US market and spent time briefing

Setting the standard for transparency

In 2010 we began helping aid organisations achieve International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) compliance, so they can publish projects in a transparent way that meets new compliance standards. We've been working on making it easy to structure projects and bring data online in ways that are IATI compliant, without the need for complex and expensive working groups and data migration projects.

In 2011 we're working to bring the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs' entire water and sanitation aid spend portfolio online. We hope to expand this work to include other Foreign Affairs sector portfolios, and develop a model to let partners upload information directly themselves.



Water and toilets for a school

The purpose of this project is to give underprivileged children at a kindergarten and primary school in Uganda a better future through education and the provision of safe drinking water and hygienic sanitation. About 50 orphaned children live permanently at the school and 200 others attend daily. The construction of a rainwater harvesting system is providing safe drinking water and two new toilets will meet the needs of 80 kindergarten children. 2 sanitation systems and 1 water system.

325 people get access to safe drinking water.

Bukomansimbi, Southwest Uganda, East Africa

Partners: Aqua for All, UP4S

akvo.org/rsr/project/40

water and sanitation organisations in New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles and San Francisco.

September saw us return to Stockholm World Water Week with our second iteration of the WaterCube. Described by National Geographic as one of the highlights of the event, our unique approach to simple, event-based video proved a hit once more, with the team bringing over 130 interviews online in just five days. Reporters from India Water Portal joined those from Akvo, IRC and SIWI for the first time.

At the start of **November**, the Dutch government announced that Akvo will be used to bring almost €100 million of development aid projects online between 2011 and 2015, following a two-stage evaluation process lasting twelve months. Akvo successfully bid as part of two consortia – the WASH Alliance and Connect4Change – and both applications were successful.

A few days later we launched Akvo RSR 1.0, along with a complete redesign of the Akvo.org website. The new design and website were visually more attractive and easier to use and understand. The new system saw us step beyond water and sanitation projects for the first time, as we launched a set of new focus areas covering health, education, economic development and IT and communications projects.

In **December**, Akvo partner AIDFI won The World Challenge 2010, a global competition backed by BBC and Newsweek. A great example of the kind of partner Akvo is designed to support, AIDFI is a hard-working, successful organisation with a unique driving force behind it – Dutch engineer Auke Idzenga.



Handwashing

Hygiene is often not a priority in rural Burkina Faso: keeping your hands clean is difficult without easy, convenient access to soap and water. This project is installing hand-washing facilities at primary schools in nine villages. Children are learning to wash their hands before meals and after visiting the toilet, with knock-on effects for the community. A huge impact on the health of the children is becoming apparent, together with a change in behaviour of families as parents and siblings are influenced by their new good habits. 39 hygiene facilities. 2,750 children get improved sanitation.

**Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso,
West Africa**

Partners:

Akvo, ASAP, Earth Water

akvo.org/rsr/project/46

WaterCube.tv

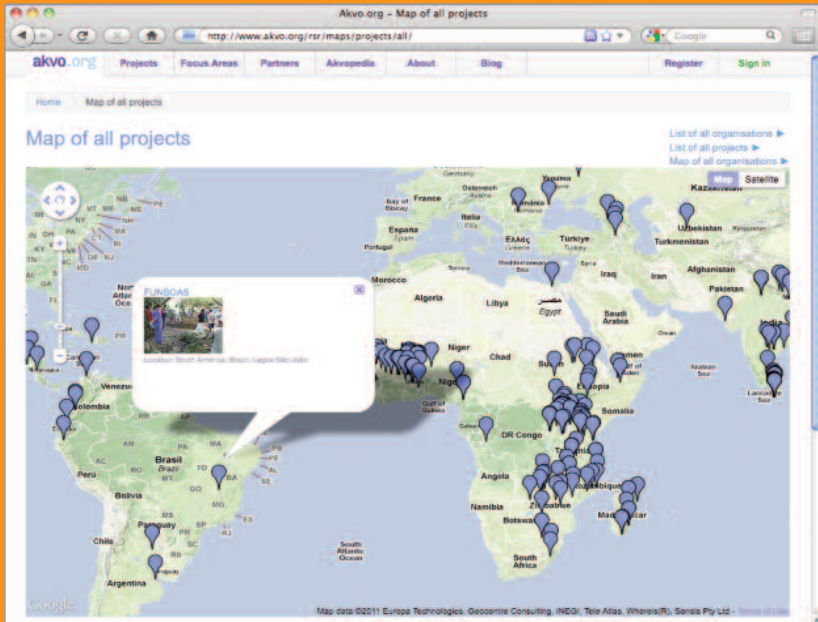
Our online video channel that lifts the lid on global events concerned with water and poverty issues has continued to rattle the development establishment.

Described by National Geographic as a highlight of World Water Week 2010, WaterCube has already brought online more than 300 video interviews from key international water and sanitation meetings, building a composite picture of a new generation of water and sanitation heroes and linking events across the globe via Skype.

WaterCube is led by Akvo and run in partnership with Stockholm International Water Institute, IRC, India Water Portal and UN Habitat.

<http://watercube.tv>

How Akvo's site developed during 2010



Software

The Akvo software platform is a key asset of Akvo around which the whole operation is structured. The Akvo Really Simple Reporting (Akvo RSR) application evolved significantly during 2010. In January an integration with the Dutch IDEAL payment system was released. In April a beta release of the Akvo RSR API (Application Programming Interface) was released. In November 2010 we went live with Akvo RSR 1.0, the most significant update to Akvo RSR since it was released in 2008. Akvo RSR 1.0 included among other things: a completely new user interface design, the ability to add projects beyond water and sanitation and an integration with mapping systems, with the first version being based on Google Maps.

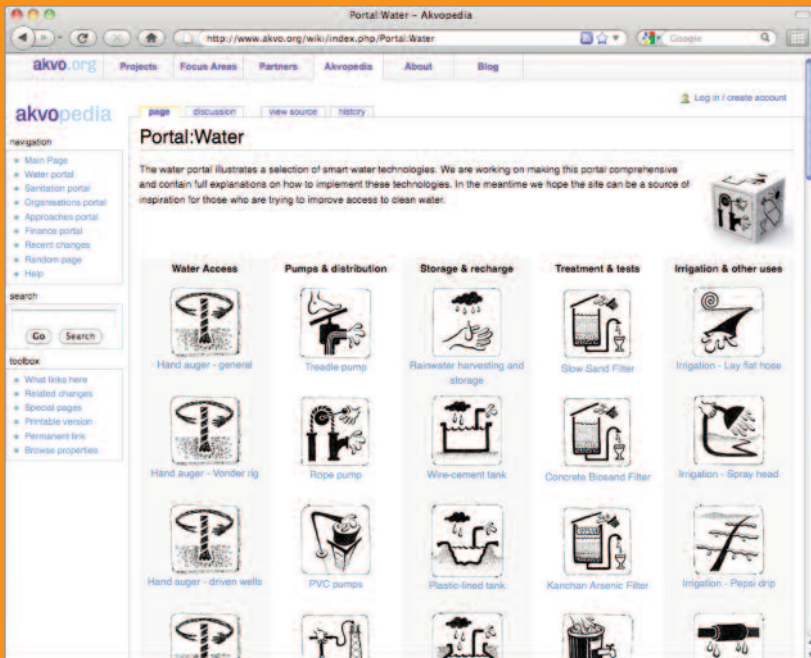


Marketplace

In 2010 the numbers of support and field partners that use the Akvo Platform increased from 135 to 220. The number of projects at the end of 2010 is 214 with a total project value of €10,200,000. Akvo expanded the marketplace to other focus areas besides Water & Sanitation, to embrace Economic Development, Education, Health and IT & Communication..

Akvopedia

The water and sanitation knowledge portals expanded to cover more than 130 low cost water and sanitation technologies. More than 1,000 Akvopedia pages are viewed everyday. The further development of a wide community of voluntary supporters has started but with some more time we believe we can improve on the input from the supporters. Three new portals were added to the Akvopedia – the Finance portal, Approaches portal and the Organisation portal. The sanitation portal is now also available in French and Spanish. Akvo developed the Sanitation Decision Support tool, that helps partners determine which sanitation technology or combination of technologies is right for their specific circumstances.





Walking for Water

After nine successful years in the Netherlands, this annual educational fundraising event is scaling up internationally with Akvo's help. In March 2010, 18,000 children from over 400 schools walked 6km, each carrying six litres of water in a backpack, raising €1.2 million for water projects around the world. Schools choose a project to fund and see progress online on Akvo.org, or publish it on their own site via an Akvo widget.

2011 sees the event spreading abroad, starting with the UK and South Africa. Our vision is to grow it into a truly global phenomenon with – eventually – hundreds of thousands of children learning about water issues and doing something positive to help.

Safe drinking water in slum

In February 2010, work was completed on a safe drinking water system for people living in a Bangladeshi slum. Water is collected by a deep tube well, stored in an overhead reservoir and piped to 17 distribution points. This has ended the need for locals to spend hours, often without success, begging for clean water in private homes, mosques and shops. It follows on from the recent installation of sanitation facilities in the area. 6 sanitation systems. 5 hygiene facilities. 17 water systems. 80 people trained in the importance of clean drinking water. 700 people get clean water for 15 years.

Gazipur, Bangladesh, Asia

Partners: Akvo, BASA, WASTE

akvo.org/rsr/project/47

Financials 2010*

Income in Euro

Income own fundraising

Fundraising activities	26.482
Project contributions	44.651

Total income own fundraising 71.133

Government grants 575.000

Interest 1.202

Other income 123.733

Total income (A) 771.068

Costs in Euro

Expenditure on behalf of the objectives

Projects	44.651
Akvo Platform	948.831

Total expenditure on behalf of the objectives 993.482

Expenditure fundraising

Costs obtaining government grants 9.236

Total costs (B) 1.002.718

*Audited and approved accounts available on request



Community Radio

A new community radio station and internet connection in the information-deprived area of Zabré, South East Burkina Faso, is informing the population about agriculture, health and culture in seven local languages. Email helps to exchange and gather information quickly, and the radio distributes it to a wide audience – around 250,000 people. The first station in the region, it's already helping to improve health awareness and keep farmers better informed on market prices.

Zabré, Burkina Faso, Africa

Partners: IICD, Pag-La-Yiri, SDC Burkina

akvo.org/rsr/project/193



GIVASHIT

Toilets at music and other public events are a great way to create awareness and raise funds for water and sanitation projects. Akvo has partnered since 2008 with Dutch theatre festival De Parade to expose 350,000 people to stylish, themed toilets featuring images and video of water projects.

Summer 2010's campaign featured bold, dynamic new "GIVASHIT" branding. Designed by our partner Get It Done, the toilets raised over €40,000 for water projects and were featured on Dutch TV.

Financials 2010*

Operational result (A - B)	-231.650
Revaluation Akvo platform	0
Result	-231.650
<i>Appropriation</i>	
designated reserve intangible fixed assets	-79.279
continuity reserve	-152.371
Result	-231.650*

*Audited and approved accounts available on request

*Part of the costs in 2010 were covered by an investment by the Rabobank

International Water

NWPP

Netherlands
Water Partnership


IRC

akvo.org

The open source for water and sanitation

PARTNERS VOOR WATER
Bundeling van krachten




co-operative programme
on water
and climate



innovatieprogr
watertechnolog

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You can reach us by email, telephone or using social networking tools like Twitter and Facebook. We all use iChat and Skype but we'd prefer to connect initially with you via other means.

Photo credits

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akvo.org

10

project value in millions
of Euro in Akvo RSR

number of web sites
with active Akvo
Widgets, Feb. 2011

48

number of projects
in Akvo RSR

185

475,000

people served, Nov. 2010

265

Akvo had project partners

All numbers for end of 2010, unless otherwise noted