

Building a good team

The success of an innovation depends on many factors but one of them is whether the right people are involved. An effective team is comprised of individuals from different backgrounds who can contribute complementary expertise and knowledge to drive an innovative idea.

There are also challenges in building a diverse group of people to work together on a project. There can be conflicts of interest, personality clashes, undefined roles and divergent perspectives. This can negatively affect

the success and progress of an innovation from the start. Understanding how to surround yourself with the right people to work with is important.

Rather than working in isolation, many VIA Water-supported innovations have worked within teams to deliver solutions to tackle urban water challenges. Developing strong teams that are focused on collaboration is a key element to success. This can lead to high performance, creativity and efficiency in an innovation.

However, building a successful team requires an understanding of where a team's strengths and weaknesses lie and the types of people to work with to fill in the gaps in knowledge and expertise.

This has been a learning experience for many of our innovators and we have gathered their best practices on how to build a strong innovative team.

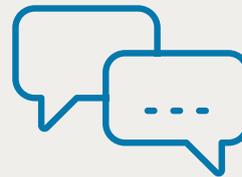
By sharing their insights, we hope to inspire other innovators starting their innovation journey.

Key lessons learnt



Build diversity

by working with different people with new approaches and expertise to you



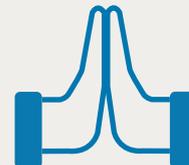
Communicate often

on progress and challenges to build trust and motivation



Define goals and roles

so that all team members know their responsibilities



Seek team members who complement each other

in skills and expertise, so that everyone plays to their unique strengths

The *Innovator Insights* series shares valuable best practices from our VIA Water-supported innovators to help guide other innovators embarking on a similar journey. This series will provide practical input in relation to different themed topics that are important to the success of early-stage innovators.

Tips from our innovators

More project updates at www.viawater.nl/projects



Innovators: Annemarieke Mooijman Consulting, LCS Promotion Int., CITT

Country: Mozambique

Biological Urban Sanitation (BUS) project

- Try to find people with qualifications that are needed in the team
- Work on people's strengths and make sure that all people know their role in the team
- Have fun together!



Innovators: Kaicedra Consulting, Akvo Mali, Aikio Corp., ADR Bamako

Country: Mali

Map Action

- Knowing your weakness and where you need people and what kind of expertise is missing



Innovators: RAIN Foundation, Association des Amis de la Nature (ANA), Rwanda Water and Forest Authority

Country: Rwanda

Rain4Sale

- Define a clear potential you are looking for in your team members
- Ensure diversity and work with a range of different people



Innovators: Rwanda Environment Care (REC), Sanitation Development Ltd., EFP Ltd., SNV

Country: Rwanda

Urban ecological sanitation in Kigali and Musanze

- Attract, select and hire the right talent with diverse styles and perspectives
- Establish common goals and create a collaborative sense of belonging
- Establish a channel of communication and conflict resolution



Innovators: Diaw Multiservices Sarl (DMS), Deltares, Lay Volunteers International Association

Country: Senegal

The Greening Plastic Project

- Know which expertise you lack/ what you're not good at
- Search for people who can contribute that part for you

About VIA Water:

VIA Water supports projects with innovative solutions for water problems facing cities in eight African countries. Through the programme, these solutions can be brought to life: with financial support, but also with the help of the (online) learning community. At the moment, VIA Water has a full portfolio: over 60 projects are being implemented in Mali, Benin, Ghana, Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Senegal and Mozambique.

VIA Water is executed by Aqua for All and funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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