

Improving the capacity to manage & drill water wells in sub-Saharan Africa: 16 years of collaboration & experiences

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Dr Kerstin Danert, Topic Lead
Professional Drilling - Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN)
<https://tinyurl.com/waterdrilling>

Ask for Water GmbH, Switzerland
kerstin.danert @ ask-for-water.ch



Ask for Water

The reality

Drilled boreholes are vital for SDG 6.1, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.



Image: Ensuring that water supplies last requires every borehole to be constructed in a professional manner (Source: Kerstin Danert, DRC).

The problem

- Poor quality siting, borehole design, drilling and completion leads to premature failure of water supplies.
- Inadequate technical and managerial competence alongside challenges in the operating environment undermines borehole drilling quality.

A multi-stakeholder initiative

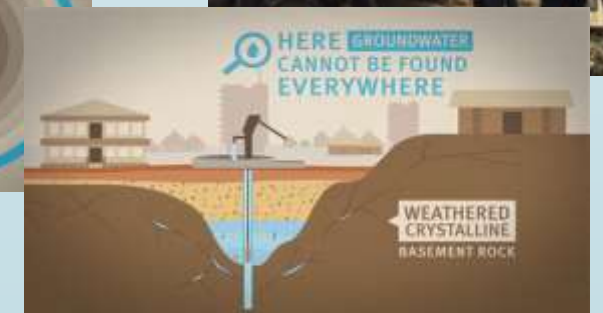
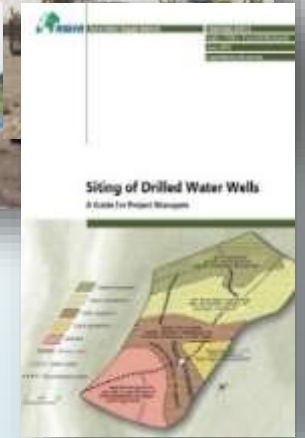
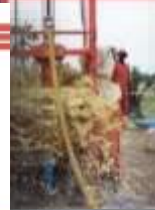
- From: 2004 to 2020
- By: Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN)
- To: raise the professionalism of borehole drilling and its management
- Focus: sub-Saharan Africa.

What did the initiative do?

- Assessments in 13 SSA countries
- Face-to-face training courses
- Online training courses
- Guidelines, manuals, training materials
- Short animated films
- Blogs & webinars
- Seminars & forums

What did it take?

- Cost ≈ USD 1 million in total
- Different funders (core partners: UNICEF, Skat & WaterAid)
- Consistent leadership
- Continuous learning & harnessing opportunities



Methods used



Image: Learning about sampling drilling cuttings at the drilling supervision course in Sierra Leone, 2014 (Source: Kerstin Danert).

- **Informing:** RWSN Professional Drilling Website, newsletter, & online community (Dgroups)
- **Understanding:** in-country assessments/studies, lessons from the online courses
- **Materials:** Documents & films providing technical guidance
- **Training:** Face-to-face syllabus – 3 courses; online course (2018 & 2019)
- **Sharing & Inspiring:** Online course, blogs, webinars on what others are doing, encouraging others to write and share
- See: <https://tinyurl.com/waterdrilling>

Achievements



Image: Screen shot from drilling film (Source: <https://vimeo.com/channels/drilling/185289895>)

- ▶ **Drilling professionalism*** is 'on the map'!
- ▶ Wealth of materials published and free
- ▶ Others inspired to take action
- ▶ Hundreds of professionals exposed to the topic of professional drilling
- ▶ UNICEF, WaterAid and UNHCR have made changes to their procurement and project management practices
- ▶ Interest in the topic by academic researchers is growing

***Drilling professionalism** is defined as the skill, good judgement and behavior expected from a person or organization who can undertake a job well.

...but

Reliable, long-term **funding** for in-country training and professional development, & addressing constraints in the operational environment remains inadequate.

Investments in capacity strengthening still remain marginal.

New platforms and partnerships

- Capacity strengthening of groundwater management and drilling professionalism is an action group in the Africa Ministers Council on Water (AMCOW) Pan African Groundwater Programme (APAGroP).

Call to action

- **Join hands & invest to raise drilling standards in a systematic and long-term manner.**
- **Support in-country training and mentoring that is fully embedded within local institutions and development programmes.**



*Image: Driller cools off in Ogun State, Nigeria
(Source: Kerstin Danert)*

RWSN - professional drilling - partners and funders

Thank you!

► <https://tinyurl.com/waterdrilling>

Contact

kerstin.danert @ ask-for-water.ch
ruralwater @ skat.ch

- Africa Groundwater Network (AGW-Net)
- British Geological Survey (BGS)
- Bundesanstalt für Geowissenschaften und Rohstoffe (BGR)
- Department for International Development (DFID) and Adam Smith International
- Lotteriefonds St. Gallen
- National Groundwater Association
- Oxfam UK
- **Skat Consulting AG & Skat Foundation**
- **Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)**
- **UNICEF**
- **WaterAid UK**
- Water Integrity Network (WIN)
- World Bank Water and Sanitation Programme Africa (WSP- AF)
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Cap-Net
- United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR)
- UPGro Programme (Unlocking the Potential of Groundwater for the Poor)
- USAID