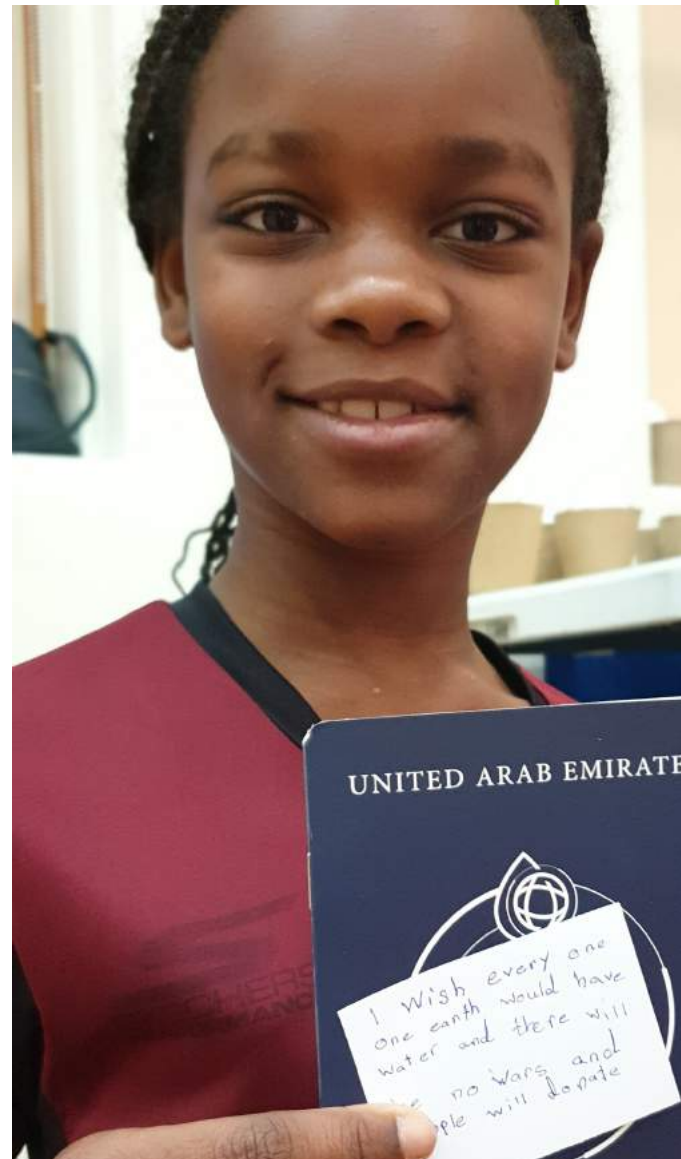


2019

ANNUAL REPORT

giving water a voice



A TRANSITION YEAR

A new chapter begins under the leadership of Linda Merieau, Executive Director

A transformative transition year

In December 2018, Surge Dubai was informed by the Community Development Authority (CDA) that the organization could not maintain their affiliation with Surge for Water (US 501c3 charity) and would have to establish a separate identity to continue its local work in the UAE.

At the start of 2019, the board members of Surge, as well as its Manager, decided to exit the organization and proposed to the Program Director that she become the organization's new Manager.

A new chapter begins under the leadership of Linda Merieau, Executive Director, Water Alliance Association. The imposed separation required the organization to register a new manager, new name and a new board of Directors. The organization was renamed to Water Alliance Association and, in February 2019, the new board members were accepted by the CDA and legitimized by act of the notary public.



RESTRUCTURING

Our Board Members:

- Noora Al Mulla
- Abdullah Alatrash
- Rania Barakat
- Grant Bateman
- Khadija Behzad
- Khalid Shafar

The new entity required a new brand identity, a new website and new social media platforms. The organization's new logo was developed pro bono by Brand Creative and rolled out across new accounts on Instagram, Facebook and LinkedIn (@waterallianceuae). As prior followers were previously connected to the Surge for Water accounts managed by the US-based charity, Water Alliance started the year with a blank slate. A new domain (wateralliance.org) was purchased in January 2019 and the new website design was completed by June.

The association also began the year with a limited database of school and corporate contacts previously approached for the educational programs. We are grateful to Surge for Water for communicating the transition to all UAE-based contacts in their database. In 2019, an online accounting system, not previously used, was set up for the organization. Registration with the Federal Tax Authority had been completed at the end of 2018 by the Surge team and TLB Advisory processed the name change on behalf of Water Alliance management for the issuance of a new VAT certificate.



Quarterly VAT returns have been successfully submitted since the first return in May 2019. After obtaining necessary authorization from the Ministry of Community Development, Water Alliance was able to open a bank account with Emirates NBD from July 2019.

Our marketing materials were re-branded and enhanced thanks to in-kind support from our corporate member, Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group. Finally, all program collaterals were updated to match the new branding by the team in the second half of the year.

Previously, the association was managed by a volunteer network with paid roles on a project-funded basis. Water Alliance is currently managed by a regular staff of three persons holding part-time positions. From January 2019, this includes the Executive Director, Program Director and Program Coordinator. The core team is supported by a Board of Directors and team of volunteers.



By the end of the year, our roster of volunteers had increased by 19% to 369 persons

VOLUNTEERING - SHAPING NEW WATER HEROES

At the start of 2019, the Association had around 310 casual volunteers.

Volunteers come out, one or more times a year, to help run our school programs

The primary school program is powered by ten volunteers who sign up for each new school booking.

Administratively, in 2019, Water Alliance has strived to comply with new UAE volunteering law and CDA regulations for volunteer management. This process requires significant coordination with the CDA and the volunteers to obtain the authority's prior approvals and register the individual's attendance for each activity. The CDA portal provides us with an excellent source of new volunteers, however, we have encountered a few challenges to understand the procedure and to ensure timely posting of the volunteer opportunity. We aim to further streamline this process in 2020.

CORE VOLUNTEERS

**Team work makes
the dream work**

Core volunteers are selected from our large pool of occasional volunteers based on their ability to support Water Alliance activities on a regular basis throughout the year. These core volunteers assist with regular program facilitation and also, on an ad hoc basis depending on their skill set, with event organization, identification of potential corporate sponsors or support for growing the brand recognition of Water Alliance.

We wish to thank Mandy Arthur, Cecilia Braidy, Liz Chan-a-Sue, Carlo Garrido and Catherine Leach for their unconditional support.

**"I'm so happy to have
teamed up with Water
Alliance to increase
awareness about the
worldwide water crisis
and educate younger
generations to be more
mindful of their water
usage."**

-- Dr Maysoon



In 2019, we have impacted 2,683 individuals to protect and preserve our world's water !

PROGRAMS

Enhancements and new activities

Given the need to update our program materials to match our new brand identity, we took the opportunity to enhance some of the existing activities and reinforce our emphasis on the Sustainable Development Goals.. This was our main focus during the second half of the year.

During 2019, we added many new activations to our portfolio:

- Bear My Burden (SDG6&10 - water access for vulnerable groups)
- Every Drop Counts (SDG6 - awareness of water loss)
- Innovation with Nature (SDG9 - emphasis on biomimicry and importance of nature as a role model for sustainable solutions)
- Earth Challenge (SDG17- need for collaboration/partnership)
- Your Bag for Good (SDG12 - promotes repurposing and reusing materials)
- Water for All (SDG6,11&16 - on community water conflicts)
- Leave No One Behind (SDG6&12 - self-awareness to not pollute or waste water)
- Truth or Dare (SDG12 - water footprint of packaging)
- Make Magic with the 5Rs (SDG12 on Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Remove)



PROGRAMS

- Water: The Global Passport
- H2O Games
- Blue Squads
- Water Workshop & SDGs



Water: The Global Passport

is the organization's signature program for primary schools and has been running for the last five years. The program was adapted from a successful workshop run by Surge for Water in the USA. In 2019, Water Alliance has updated the stations to make them even more relevant in the local context and added new station activities to cater to different age groups. This year, 45 sessions were delivered at 15 schools reaching 2,283 students.

The H2O Games

was developed in 2018 by the team at Surge Dubai as a team-building workshop for the corporate sector. In 2019, the program was adapted for secondary school students and piloted at Lycée Français Georges Pompidou in the 1st quarter and subsequently run with students from RAK National School at The Sustainable City's Mindspace venue. Furthermore, the Water Alliance team held the adult version of the H2O Games with Xylem in 2019.

Water Workshop & the SDGs

was developed in 2019 for a smaller group of corporate staff and hosted for Edrington.

The Blue Squads

is an after-school program made available for free to all schools participating in either the primary or secondary school workshops. The Blue Squads consists of a toolkit providing a combination of knowledge, fun activities and school-wide campaign proposals to support the school in its sustainability journey, using water as a common thread. Topics are organized in modules, and relate to 'Health & Hygiene', 'Your Water Footprint', 'Innovations in Water', and 'Why Waste Water'. Thanks to funding received from Colgate and Bel Foundation the previous year, the first module was completed and shared with interested teachers in late 2019 and the second module is under development. In mid-2019, Water Alliance received a grant from Herman Miller to complete a third module of the Blue Squad program. We aim to circulate the third module content among our school contacts in early 2020.



Thank you both for an inspiring and informative session with my staff. (We'll now aim) to restrict the number of harmful products that are thrown into landfills.

**-- S. Chander, HR Manager,
Sucden ME**

SPECIAL EVENTS

Highlight: Dubai Chamber World Without Waste

Promoting sustainable behaviors

Special Events to promote awareness of the global water crisis and the need to conserve water in the UAE are an integral part of our program work.

This year, Water Alliance collaborated with Dubai Chamber to celebrate their annual sustainability event for a 'World Without Waste'. In November, companies were encouraged to make extra efforts to recycle, repurpose and reuse waste.

Our team conceived a special one-hour, interactive talk entitled 'Journey to a Zero Waste Lifestyle'. Four companies - Grand Hyatt, Sucden, The Box and Pepsico - as well as Manipal University hosted the talk involving some 150 individuals in a few days.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Highlight:
World Water Day
'Leaving No One Behind'

Water Alliance participates in public events to inspire sustainable living habits that protect and preserve water. We were present at The Sustainable City and Emirates Soil Museum to celebrate World Water Day in March, at Raffles World Academy for Eco Week in April, The Lakes Reform restaurant for their annual Sustainability Social in September, at DEWA for their Staff Family Day event during Green Week in October and at Dubai International Academy for their Winter Carnival in November.

“I learned that there is a water crisis all around the world and not just in certain places. I now make sure not to keep the water running while brushing my teeth and not to throw away water.”

**-- Z. Ali, Year 3 student
Raffles World Academy**



BESPOKE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Our gamified methodology delivers results and is sought after as a model program.

Collaboration with DEWA

In 2019, Water Alliance began work on a new bespoke school program especially conceived for DEWA under a consultancy agreement. The program is called 'Youth: For Generations to Come' and is conceived as a journey through time to consider the importance of sustainability.

The student participants will be taken back in time to revisit how UAE ancestors lived in harmony with their natural surroundings, explore the present day Dubai with a look inside some of the city's iconic landmarks to discover their sustainability features, consider nature and how she provides us with sustainable solutions to current and future problems and finally, travel to the future to offer their own ideas on how Dubai can sustainably manage resources as a Smart city. The program is designed using our characteristic gamified methodology and will deliver a fun, immersive experience to the students.

Water Alliance has worked closely with DEWA's Sustainability and Business Excellence team on the new program which is expected to kick off in early 2020.



2019 SCHOOL VISITS

- Lycee Francais International Georges Pompidou Primary School
- Lycee Francais International Georges Pompidou Secondary School
- RAK National School (secondary)
- GEMS Metropole School
- Southview School
- Greenfield Community School
- The Arbor School
- Dubai International Academy Emirates Hills
- Safa British School
- GEMS Wellington International School
- Arab Unity School
- Raffles World Academy
- New Academy School
- Dwight School
- Dubai International School



MARKETING & PR

**41% of our
Instagram
followers are in
Dubai and 60%
are women**

Brand recognition

Our 2019 social media focus was on Instagram. We went from zero to 1,138 followers during the year. We held an online awareness competition 'Give Thanks and Win' connected to World Environment Day on 5 June. Individuals shared a post to say why they were thankful for water and winners were chosen at random to receive a prize. We partnered with local businesses promoting sustainable products and CSR: Liquid of Life, Cling Nature and Oasis Dental Care.

On Facebook, we grew organically from zero to 155 followers in the year. We posted just a few times on LinkedIn and our current followers total 20.

Our Executive Director and Program Director also hosted public talks for the Nordic Business Council, the German Ladies Club, the Dubai Natural History Group, and joined a panel discussion with Dubai Modern at Dubai Design Week. She was also invited to participate in a Pecha Kucha night at Al Serkal Avenue and to join a panel discussion at the global 2019 Association Conference on the 'Societal Impact of Associations'.



MARKETING & PR

Talks and brand recognition

This year, our Executive Director was invited to join the Swiss Business Council Environmental Group. Thanks to this involvement, Water Alliance was present at the relaunch of the Sustainability Series talks at the Swiss Embassy with our water bottles offered to all guests to promote individual action for water conservation.

Furthermore, Water Alliance has written a case study about our work and the evolution of the organization in collaboration with the Mohammed bin Rashid School of Government. We expect this to be published in 2020.

"Your session was very well received and [...] it definitely delivered a positive, sustainable, and enduring impact on our audience."

-- H. Al Hashemi, Member of the Executive Steering Committee, Dubai Association Centre





Encouraging hotel guests to drink filtered water and go plastic free with a reusable bottle

INFLUENCING UAE VISITORS

Impressing on tourists the water stress level and their water footprint while visiting

A model partnership with Studio One Hotel

Hotels represent the first contact visitors have with the city of Dubai. By teaming up with the Water Alliance, Studio One hotel is promoting sustainable water usage to their guests and visitors year round.

Our aim is to sensitize travelers about their impact on local water supplies and encourage them to lessen their water footprint while visiting the Emirate. In room, guests are offered refillable water containers that carry facts on the global water crisis and encouraged to drop single use plastic bottles for good. They have the option to purchase a Water Alliance refillable bottle to take home in order to carry on the good habits they began in Dubai.

OUR FAMILY

Thank You to our
Corporate Champions

- MAS Paints
- Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group

and all our supporters and
members

We are grateful for the support of our corporate members who have contributed generously to ensure that Water Alliance continues to spread the message of sustainable living and water conservation across schools and the community. Companies that agree to host our H2O Games corporate workshop have been granted de-facto membership at the corresponding level in 2019.

We wish to thank MAS Paints for their third year supporting our programs at the highest level as a Corporate Champion. They have been joined in 2019 by Easa Saleh Al Gurg Group who not only provided financial support but also made a significant in-kind contribution working with our team to enhance our marketing materials. At the level of Mobilizer, Herman Miller Cares has provided a grant to Water Alliance in 2019 that is devoted to further development of our after-school program, the Blue Squads. As an Ambassador, Colgate has now contributed to advancing our work at schools across Dubai for the second year in a row.

There are a number of companies, our Allies, who have been instrumental in many



different ways to support our educational efforts including: Brand Creative, Clyde & Co., Edrington, Liquid of Life, MMAC Design, Studio One, The Sustainable City and Xylem.

Schools that host our primary or secondary school workshops become members of the Water Alliance and gain free access to the Blue Squad after-school materials. In 2019, we are proud to have worked with fifteen schools. (See programs section for full list.)

Low-tuition schools can also benefit from our primary and secondary school workshops free of charge. Donations to our Impact Fund make this possible.

Thanks to MAS Paints and ESAG we held six sessions at the Arab Unity School. Our appreciation also goes to Colgate for the support of two free sessions at the New Academy School.

OUR FAMILY

We are forever grateful to our corporate, school and individual members for entrusting us to deliver quality educational and inspirational programs

Membership

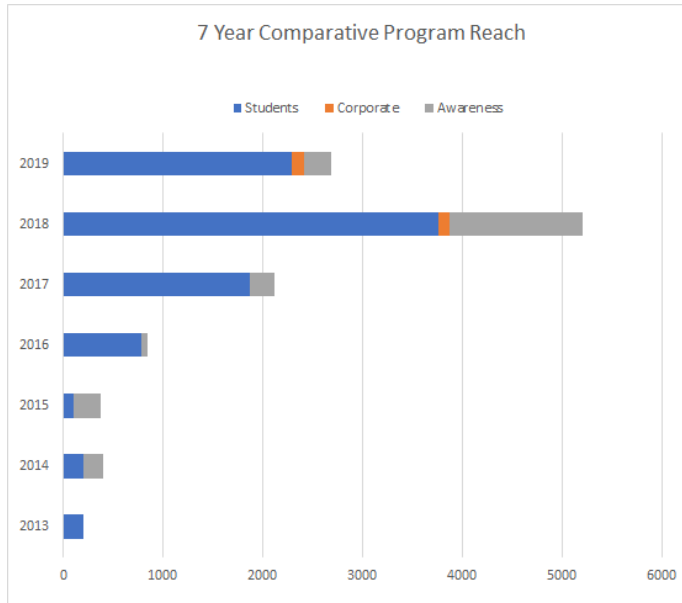
Individuals are invited to join the Water Alliance as Association members. In 2020, we have counted on a half-dozen core members that have worked alongside our team to develop new program activities, draft social media content, provide photography services, and facilitate workshops among many other things.

For 2020, we have announced our 'Impact Fund' that will allow Water Alliance to reach low-income schools in Dubai. All donations to our Impact Fund are used 100% to teach students free of charge that otherwise could not participate in our workshops. The Impact Fund ensures that Water Alliance can bridge the inequity gap across schools in the Emirate, addressing Sustainable Development Goal #10, Reduce Inequalities.

In 2020, we aim to increase our impact with an additional reach to 2020 pupils from underprivileged schools through our Impact Fund, to grow our base of members and to consolidate our programs.



credit: @mannyd_imagery



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights of 2019



TAKE THE PLEDGE

Join us in giving water a voice

Our Board of Directors provides us with the guidance, inspiration and motivation to reach higher and plant the sustainability seed in as many minds as possible. With their backing, we've achieved great results in 2019 and look forward to a successful year in 2020.

With thanks and gratitude to all those who have played a role, large or small, in helping Water Alliance to inspire others to take meaningful steps toward a more sustainable lifestyle, starting with water stewardship. We look forward to your continued support,

Linda, Edurne and Mayada

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Program Director
edurne@wateralliance.org

Program Coordinator
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credit: @mannyd_imagery

Unless otherwise noted, all photos in this report are from 2019 programs carried out by Water Alliance Association in Dubai and are to be credited as such. Parental permissions were obtained for photos of minors appearing in this report.

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