

UNESCO GREEN CITIZENS

A GLOBAL VOICE FOR LOCAL ACTORS OF CHANGE



In 2015, as part of its commitment to [Biodiversity](#), [Education for Sustainable Development](#), [Hydrology](#), [Indigenous and Local Knowledge](#) and [Ocean](#), UNESCO launched the Green Citizens initiative to support and highlight citizen projects that shape new ways of inhabiting the world, in harmony with nature.

UNESCO champions inspiring citizens from all around the world, with concrete and innovative local solutions to global challenges that have been scientifically identified by the Organization.

UNESCO Green Citizens offers opportunities for partnerships and spreads best practices, innovations, and ideas. By putting the local actors of change in the spotlight, UNESCO hopes to create a chain reaction to ensure a better future for a greener planet.

The initiative enables people to reach out to projects' teams and propose voluntary actions, bringing closer those who are willing to act with those who are already doing. Somebody embark on projects, remotely or on site, others travel from project to project to discover the force of committed local people, and gain trust into our collective ability to drive change.

UNESCO Green Citizens is the bridge between UNESCO's scientific expertise, local citizen solutions and young people's willingness to act against climate change.

Since 2015, [UNESCO has identified more than 150 local initiatives across 65 countries](#) which are citizen driven, innovative, impactful, and replicable solutions across five key themes for the fight against global warming and to preserve the environment: Biodiversity, Ocean, Education for Sustainable Development, Indigenous and Local.

The website of the Initiative offers the interested partners the way to get involved with different projects of interest of the UNESCO Green Citizens. [For each project there are 23 expressed needs to which interested people can answer according to their skills:](#) *Communication strategy design, Crowdfunding, Digital Communication, Equipment Supply, Financial Management, Financial Reporting, Graphic Design, In Search of Financial Partners, Legal, Logistical Support, Monitoring and Evaluation, Partnerships Development, Press Relations, Project*



Management, Research, Social Media, Sponsorship/Philanthropy, Strategy/Advocacy, Technical Support, Training, Translation Services, Volunteer Workforce, Web Design. Once the potential partners have chosen a project of interest, they can propose to offer their help [according to their skills](#) and the project needs.

One of the initiatives updated in April 2023 is the [Green School Bali Biobus Initiative](#), which constitutes an example of a project offered by UNESCO Green Citizens to establish an active partnership with interested actors.

In 2015, students at the Green School in Bali committed to clean energy, decided to tackle the carbon footprint generated by their school buses and launched the Bio Bus – the first 100% biofuelled transport in Indonesia. The students with help from the teachers, created a Bio Bus running on biodiesel made from used cooking oil. Following a successful pilot, the School and the students expanded the project, developing a social enterprise and a learning centre.

During 2020, 7 Bio Buses have travelled thousands of kilometres every month, saving 14 tons of CO2 emission in total that year. This solution has repurposed 500 litres of used cooking oil every month, which was previously sold on the black market or thrown in drains or waterways. Each week, the students collected the future fuel from hotels, restaurants and cafés, offering them a more environmentally friendly way to get rid of the used oil. The success of the Bio Bus has helped to raise awareness in Indonesia about clean energy and, in particular, the health and environmental problems created by non-regulated use of used cooking oil – often used well beyond its sell-by date and mixed with other chemical products before being sold back to restaurants. The Bio Bus project has already been extended to 4 other Indonesian schools.

UNESCO Green Citizens initiative offers the opportunity to participate in the Bio Bus Project and help reduce waste and emissions, establishing contacts [with the UNESCO project website](#) and with the Bali [Green School](#).

Another initiative of interest is the [Maji project](#) designed in 2016 in rural Ghana by Sunil Lalvani to provide sustainable access to clean water in Africa through a model of a solar powered water kiosk, innovative in its design and management. She has developed and deployed a solar-powered kiosk to provide sustainable clean water to a village in rural Ghana into a pan-African water donation NGO that has impacted the lives of over 115,000 people across Ghana and Kenya.

Project Maji designs, develops and installs solar-powered water kiosks. These kiosks and small piped systems are fit-for-purpose to withstand harsh environments. They are modular, customizable, mobile-enabled, affordable, and durable. They are self-sustaining and community-driven on a social enterprise model. The community through an inclusive consultation process agrees on the price. This modest charge is collected through an automated e-payment system that supports accountability and sustainability of operations. It covers operating expenses, technical support and a reserve fund for long-term repairs. The NGO is expanding to Uganda by the end of 2022. It aims to double its impact every year, hoping to reach 1 million people by 2025 in involved countries as Ghana, Kenya and Uganda.



The mechanisms for involving new actors through the Green Citizens initiative are also adopted by UNESCO in many projects that are promoted and managed within several large international initiatives of the Organization. An example is given by the project [Mangrove Restoration as a Nature-Based Solution in Biosphere Reserves in Latin America](#). This three-year project (2022-2025) is made possible through the financial support of the Government of Flanders and it will focus on actions in Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Panama, and Peru. The Green Citizens UNESCO website presents the objectives and activities of this project aiming to carry out an assessment of the state of mangrove ecosystems and their restoration potential, as well as to implement restoration campaigns using local knowledge and science, promoting education for sustainable development [in the framework of the Man and Biosphere MAB Programme](#).

With its [over 150 local initiatives across 65 countries identified to offer a wide choice of partnerships, UNESCO is managing a wide platform of exchange which](#) allows involving different interested actors in projects oriented to a green and sustainable development.

To know more

[UNESCO Green-Citizens Projects](#)

[A global voice for local actors of change.](#)

[Discover and support projects](#)

[Corentin de Chatelperron: low-tech for a sustainable future](#)

[Launch-UNESCO-green-citizens-podcast](#)

[The Goldman Environmental Prize honors 2 UNESCO Green Citizens](#)

[UNESCO Green Citizens pathfinders are winners at the Deauville Green Awards](#)

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[Launch of the UNESCO Green Citizens podcast](#)

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