2020 | Sustainability update

WIENERBERGER BELGIUM

"Durability is in the DNA of our company, and it is our tangible ambition. Our culture is based on strong values, with a distinct responsability for the generations to come, and with respect for the environment. A lot of our investments and innovations take place within that durable framework.

Also in 2020, we have realised numerous projects, and we continue to focus on the major themes that are decarbonisation, circular economy and biodiversity."

Caroline Van de Velde - CEO Wienerberger Belgium Anita Ory - Public Affairs Manager Sustainability

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The set-up of green buffers at Rumst-Terhagen

In recent years, Wienerberger Rumst has set up its buffer zones around the entire industrial site in function of the highest possible variety of species. It was essential for the green zones to form an ecological link between the Rupel and the former, current and future reclamation area behind it, which was destined for nature.

Before the start of the project, the industrial zone between the two green spaces still formed a barrier for less mobile species that need steppingstones to make the crossing. The aim of the development was therefore to improve mobility for these less-mobile species, such as the crested newt and the natterjack toad.

With this goal in mind, efforts were made to create the right conditions to attract these species (marshland situations, pools for crested newts, periodically drying canals with natural banks). In addition, local greenery was planted on the ecological buffers and adapted ecological management is applied to make the situation more sustainable, and exotics such as giant balsam and butterfly bush are also controlled. Along the green screen on the Rupel, a wooded bank was also constructed last year with the pruning and coppices coming from the management. In this way we are creating a sheltered living and reproduction area for small mammals such as hedgehogs, weasels, and mice. Birds, including the wren and the hedgerow sparrow will also find a nesting and hiding place. Due to the presence of insects on and in the dead wood, they also find food there. Certain amphibians such as the common toad also like to hibernate there. In this zone, fox tracks were found as well, from which we can conclude that the buffer around the site is certainly being used. Finally, larger mammals such as the beaver and otter were also considered. On the west side of the Terhagen site, opposite the factory, there are plans for an actual otter corridor. This corridor will be created within the larger project of redesigning the Schransstraat, in collaboration with the town of Rumst and various other partners.

In summary, we can say that in the short term, a lot of adaptations have been made around the industrial estate, some more striking than others. An initial biodiversity measurement, carried out by the nature management organization Natuurwerk, already shows good results. The creation of green zones combined with appropriate ecological management quickly produces species that are almost exclusively found along verges and in wildflower meadows (e.g., jack pine-weed, St John's wort, wild chicory, liverwort, wild carrot). These in turn attract a nice diversity of insects, including the tree blue, peacock, ground and stone bumblebees, grass bees, several varieties of ladybugs, bugs and so much more! In a secluded little pond, despite last summer's drought, there was still plenty of water and at least 4 specimens of the lake frog were counted, as well as several brown frogs.

In time, the green zones may resemble a green-blue forest edge with both shrubs with larger bushes and wildflowers and grasses on the sunny side, in addition to the small water features. Eventually, management will mainly consist primarily of rejuvenating the planting in the form of a targeted mowing and coppicing management.





Wienerberger invests the maximum effort in the recuperation of rainwater

Wienerberger has made circularity a key pillar within its sustainability strategy. The sustainable use of water by maximizing the collection, infiltration and reuse of rainwater fits in perfectly with this commitment to circularity.

Within the context of sustainable water management, it is important to point out that Wienerberger Belgium has had a 'zero discharge' status for all production sites since the beginning of this century. This means that all industrial wastewater is collected on site, treated if necessary and reused within production, so that there is no discharge.

In addition, Wienerberger seeks to maximize the supply of its remaining water needs from the recovery of rainwater, as the most sustainable water source.

For example, at the Lanaken production site, a buffer basin was constructed in 2019 to store rainwater from the roofs of our own production buildings, with the aim of reusing this water. In this way, the consumption of canal water from the nearby Albert Canal will be substantially reduced. In 2020, more than 3,000,000 liters of rainwater were thus collected and used within production. This corresponds to approximately 40% of the annual water consumption.

At the Beerse Absheide production site, a large basin was installed in anticipation of providing the required buffer and rainwater supply for production purposes, again replacing canal water. This system has been operational since the beginning of 2021, and has the additional purpose of reducing dependence on other (external) water supplies.

Within the quick construction factory of Beerse Steenbakkersdam, rainwater has been used for production purposes since 2017. In 2020, approximately 2/3 of the total water consumption consisted of rainwater recovery.

The production site in Maaseik has been using maximum rainwater by storing it in a number of underground buffer basins for several years now. In 2020, more than 70% of the water needs on the site will be covered by rainwater. The brick factory in Malle is also continuing to focus on rainwater recovery.

Additional projects will be implemented at various sites in the coming years to maximize the use of rainwater recovery to the benefit of canal and/or tap water.





Wienerberger contributes to nature development on its own industrial sites, but also beyond

Wienerberger has compensated 4 hectares of forest within Flanders last year. The forest compensation was necessary because Wienerberger had grubbed up spontaneously grown bushes on its industrial sites at Beerse. The remarkable thing is that this was done not only to expand our storage area, but for the most part to create top nature in its place.

Indeed, the freed up space will be used to create a large land dune around the storage areas, on which heathland habitats will develop, which is part of the European protected nature. With the land dunes, we are creating habitats for species that are important to the area, such as the viviparous lizard, lestes virens damselfly and heather sabre grasshopper. Because they are situated right next to or near Natura 2000 areas where restoration of heathland is a top priority, they will help to achieve the European nature objectives. With the construction of the land dunes, we are also combatting the invasive exotic species Japanese knotweed in one fell swoop.

In addition, the forest compensation itself will take place in kind, i.e., through the effective planting of trees on the site, in an area twice the size of the area that was cleared. The planting of trees contributes to biodiversity and at the same time stores tons of CO2.

At Wienerberger, nature development and biodiversity is very important. For example, in 2020, forest compensations were carried out on a number of sites in Turnhout, Houthalen-Helchteren and Putte, always in consultation and with the help of a local forest and/or nature association. In Turnhout, an existing nature reserve was further expanded in this way. On the grounds of Limburgs Landschap in Houthalen-Helchteren, a new forest was planted within the "Zwarte Berg" nature reserve, including beech and oak trees, where about half of the total forest compensation happened. Limburgs Landschap also developed a nature management plan for this, with the aim of creating a biodiverse landscape in which open grass fields, small woods and mosaic zones alternate. Thanks to additional tree planting, a large contiguous forest and nature area will be created.

The above projects are fully in line with Wienerberger's sustainability policy, which has made biodiversity a priority for the coming years. For example, we want to have a biodiversity action plan in place at all our sites worldwide by 2023. We also want to bring products to the market that contribute to biodiversity.





Building site in Kortrijk illustrates Wienerberger's circular applications

To limit the use of raw materials, to reduce the CO2 emissions, and to reduce the landfill, the construction sector is increasingly focusing circular construction. The sector wants to create a closed circle loop, in which materials can be continually reused or recycled. This is beautifully illustrated on a building site of the social housing company Wonen Regio Kortrijk, on which construction began in 2020.

The project

On a property belonging to the social housing company Wonen Regio Kortrijk, Wienerberger shows several circular applications. On the site Tuighuisstraat, 18 existing homes are being selectively demolished and replaced by 31 new units that are tailored to various forms of living and working, good for a total construction of 3,685 m². "The concept of circularity is first and foremost for all procedures," engineer/architect Lieven De Groote, partner of MAKER and of TETRA architects, says. "And the project is circular on several different scales."

At the scale of the neighbourhood, the architects are strengthening the existing social structures through a participatory process, thus facilitating social integration even as the neighbourhood continues to evolve in the future. At the scale of the

property, the architects are restoring the relationship with the 3,100 m² green environment and introducing a mix of housing types that meet a wide range of user needs and profiles. At the scale of the buildings, adaptability to other users and new ways of using them are paramount.

Finally, on the scale of the building components and structural details, 100-year-old facing bricks and clay tiles are being recovered to the maximum extent during demolition and used as materials for the new residential units.

Circular applications

Clay tiles lend themselves perfectly to reuse. They last a very long time and retain their functional and aesthetic qualities all that time. Because they can be installed in a detachable way, they can be easily removed and put to a new use. Modular dimensions ensure that old and new ceramic materials can be easily combined.

Bricks also have a robust character and a long life. The contractor will apply a lime mortar to the recovered bricks when they are used in the new residential units, so that they remain perfectly recoverable afterwards. This lime mortar can easily be separated from the bricks afterwards. In this way, the ceramic bricks can be recovered without loss in new masonry.

The benefits speak for themselves. Contractors can continue to use the familiar ceramic products in the familiar way. Building owners and designers retain their freedom of choice. In short, the example site in Kortrijk shows that circular building has no impact on cost price, quality or aesthetic possibilities.





Another step in the right direction by our energy teams

Our energy teams once again found solutions to lower energy consumption at Wienerberger this year. This made our processes another step more sustainable. We would like to show you the great results they already achieved at the various Wienerberger branches!

Péruwelz kiln: lower specific thermal consumption of our firing process

To fire bricks, you need fire to get the desired result. In the kiln in Péruwelz, gas burners are used for this purpose. A burner works best when there is a good gas / air ratio. We used cold air for this that was heated in the kiln by the hot atmosphere. By heating the air to 150°C with residual heat, we prevented the loss of energy. The results are very positive: the specific energy consumption decreased by 5%.



Pottelberg drying kiln for fittings: lower thermal consumption

The thermal consumption of a drying plant is partly due to its gas consumption. Thanks to a new control, the energy team in Pottelberg was able to reduce consumption in the drying plant by 9.5%.

Pottelberg drying kiln ST4: lower specific electricity consumption by our own fans

Important when drying the bricks: hot air must be brought into targeted contact with the product. Thus, the friction experienced by the air inside the kiln affects the electricity consumption of the fans. This is where Pottelberg's energy team achieved savings of no less than 58%. As a result of this intervention, the total specific consumption of the drying plant in 2020 was reduced by 17%!





The Elfino roof tile: great ecological score

Koramic's new roof tile Elfino combines the slender look of slate with the excellent performance of a ceramic roof tile. Thanks to its great, up-to-date design, it is perfectly suitable for both new construction and for renovation. It is easy to install, UV-resistant and it has a long service life, supported by a 30-year warranty. In addition, it also scores high ecologically.

Eternal beauty

Characteristic of the fine roof tile Elfino is its thin foot side. In combination with the adjusted width of the ridge cap, this results in a roof that just seems to run on. Ceramic fittings support a sleek finish and detailing, and enhance the architecture. The gable tiles fit nicely and are perfectly woven into the roof plane.

The Elfino ceramic tile is UV-resistant and therefore colourfast, thanks to the engobe process. The engobe, a fine, matte coating, is baked into the clay. This produces an aesthetically much more durable result than a coated finish.

Nice for roofers

The Elfino is easy to install. Thanks to the continuous suspension nose at the top, the roofer does not have to attach all the ceramic roof tiles one by one. This increases

the ease and speed of installation, of course always keeping in mind the applicable anchoring standards. The ridge cap is available in two opening angles, suitable for roof pitches from 25° to 50°.

Nice ecological score

The Elfino ceramic roof tile is produced locally, using local and recyclable natural materials. Transport is kept to a minimum. In addition, the roof tiles are removable and reusable.

For renovations with impact

The ceramic roof tile Elfino is the perfect alternative for a slate roof and can contribute to the completely asbestos-safe Flanders, which is what the Flemish government is aiming for by 2040. Old roofs usually have a solid structure, so that your old slate or roof tiles can be replaced without extra reinforcement. In such cases, a limited number of procedures are generally required to make the structure flat enough.





Sustainability tour visiting Wienerberger Beerse

With a sustainability tour through the five Flemish provinces, the Flemish Entrepreneurs allowed ministers and young people to discover for themselves what positive impact businesses are having on climate challenges. In this context, Flemish Minister for Mobility and Public Works Lydia Peeters visited our site in Beerse on March 9, 2020.

The second stop of the sustainability tour of the Flemish Entrepreneurs is in the Kempen, at Wienerberger and Campine. Flemish Minister for Mobility and Public Works Lydia Peeters and the 5th year STEM of the Heilig Graf from Turnhout will have the unique opportunity to experience how companies put sustainable business and cooperation into practice, both in their products and working methods.

Nature Domain on production site

At Wienerberger, sustainable solutions permeate all products, construction applications and production environments. "We are actively using water transport, which saves us 32 freight trips by boat or 7,500 trips per year. We have already installed solar panels on the flat roofs of our factory buildings but we want to go one step further and build 2 wind turbines, the equivalent 45 soccer fields of solar panels. We partly use plastic packaging made of 50% recycled shrink sleeves and to increase biodiversity, we support the realization of European nature goals on our industrial sites," Caroline Van de Velde, CEO of Wienerberger explains.

Finding solutions together

With the Sustainability Tour, the Flemish Entrepreneurs - 19 employers and sector organizations - want to bring together policy, entrepreneurs, and young people. There are so many examples of companies where sustainability is really part of the DNA, we need to show them off," is what the Flemish Entrepreneurs are saying. "By connecting young people, companies, and politicians, we hope they will better understand, inspire and learn from each other to find solutions together to the big challenges we face today. Hopefully, it can also convince young people to choose fields of study that will enable them to help companies do business even more sustainably down the road or find solutions for the future."





Wienerberger supports SOS Children's Villages

In addition to a gift of €5.000 in the context of the promotion '(Tele)Work 1 Hour For Life', we are also raising money for SOS Children's Villages through our monthly showroom tombola.

2020 was a strange year for everyone. Although in 2019 we still had numerous promotions on our sites for charity, such as the sale of various delicacies, the Warmathon or the St. Nicholas breakfast, such actions were unfortunately not possible in 2020. Nevertheless, we were keen to support a good cause in 2020 as well, and we chose SOS Children's Villages.

SOS Children's Villages is a development organization dedicated to helping vulnerable children worldwide. In 2020 they organized '(Tele)Work 1 Hour For Life', which enabled you to work for SOS Children's Villages for 1 hour from your home offices. In doing so, you just did your own job, but donated the value of that hour to their projects. In exchange, you received some nice backgrounds to brighten up a videocall.

Wienerberger chose to donate €5,000 to this action, which allowed us to use the backgrounds of SOS Children's Villages for the entire month of December, and several colleagues were only too happy to do so.

We also donate a nice amount to SOS Children's Villages through our showroom campaign. In our showroom we organize a monthly raffle for our showroom visitors, and 1 winner each time wins a gift voucher of \leq 600. A matching amount is then donated to SOS Children's Villages. This action is raising an additional \leq 10,000. In this way, we are also helping vulnerable children to grow up strong.





Wienerberger maze in Rumst

Together with the Leisure Department of the town of Rumst, Wienerberger created an original concept to allow children to have a sporty and fun afternoon during the summer months of 2020.

On our site in Rumst, large packets of bricks were laid out in a maze of 1.60 metres high and with a surface area of 400m². The maze was part of the 'Rumst Zomert' program, which we were happy to participate in.

The maze was open during the whole summer of 2020. Many children and parents found their way to our maze and experienced an exciting journey of discovery.





Together for a sustainable culture of safety

The health and well-being of our employees is very close to our heart. A motivating and above all safe working environment is thus extremely important. For many years, we have made continuing efforts to systematically improve occupational safety and working conditions in the various departments, in order to eliminate all risks as much as possible.

But whatever progress we make on this, it's hard to become completely risk-free. That is why it is very important to continue to adapt our own behavior to all possible risks to the highest degree possible. Wienerberger therefore wants to build a safe and motivational working environment together with EACH employee.

What steps have we already taken?

Safety culture working group

From this starting point, we have established a 'safety culture working group' with the aim of developing a sustainable safety culture within Wienerberger. Within that safety culture, safe behavior comes from our employees themselves, because that is what they want, both at work and at home. This working group maps out a workable route to achieve this goal.

Ambassadors

There is a long way to go to achieve a truly pervasive safety culture. Ambassadors are very important in this regard. That is why we have also put together a group of security ambassadors in addition to the more limited working group. Security ambassadors promote these critical security behaviors at all times. Ambassadors also participate in training sessions on safety and the role that they play in this several times a year. At present, this group mainly consists of managers and prevention advisors. However, the aim is for everyone to eventually become a convinced ambassador and a role model for safe behavior. Once we get there, safe behavior will have become something that is generative, i.e. it will have become part of our daily routine.

Safety mascot

We have also created a safety mascot. In the future, we will communicate more often about safety and how useful it can be. Our mascot will help us to do just that by to clarifying how we view safety and to even put it first and foremost.

Pilot sites

To develop a sustainable safety culture, we started with 2 pilot sites, namely Péruwelz and Kortemark. At both sites, we first conducted a 'terrain exploration,' after which a baseline measurement was made to determine the level of safety present at each site. The survey that was organized for this purpose showed that safety efforts are already being undertaken at both sites, but that the involvement in safety and compliance with the rules still mainly lies with the managers. This is already a good result, but it shows there is still work to be done.



What are the next steps?

From 2021 onwards, mindset sessions will be organized on both pilot sites, so that everyone will be able to understand how important safety is. Following that, sessions will be organized to promote 'knowledge development.'

The next steps on the pilot sites are simulation exercises. What was learned in the previous sessions will be then put into practice in completely a risk-free environment. In concrete terms, this will consist of recognizable safety-related situations in which the participants have to respond, for example addressing colleagues in an unsafe situation, observing the actions of their colleagues, paying attention to one or more crucial safety behaviors, and so on. This will be a phase in which we learn by doing and by observing others. All of this will then be put into practice in the actual working environment. By the end of 2023, we plan to have arrived at a "progressive" (generative) safety culture at the 2 pilot sites, one in which everyone shares ownership of safety responsibilities in a dignified manner.

An expert group will also be set up in 2021 with the aim of developing internal expertise. These experts will be trained and guided to become certified Safety Behavior Experts. In doing so, they will acquire the necessary knowledge and insights to further build on the culture of safety within Wienerberger Belgium, and they will also be able to train and coach new and current employees.

Of course, our other sites will not stand still in the meantime: the insights learned and 'Best Practices' will be shared throughout the group. Following the progress made by the pilot sites, the team of Safety Behavior Experts will steer the development of the culture of safety at the other sites in the right direction. There will be toolboxes and workshops, cross-observations by plant managers and supervisors, various safety communications, a Q&A library and more.

We are convinced that the connection between technical safety, safety systems and our collective and individual human behavior will accelerate us towards our goal.



Faun measures in Lanaken for the management of the embankment

Wienerberger built an ecological embankment around its factory in Lanaken between 2018 and 2019. The 6-8 m high embankment was landscaped and planted so that neighbours and passers-by experience a green landscape instead of the brick factory. At the same time, the embankment attracts a whole range of special plant and animal species, thus forming an important link in the ecological network between the Albert Canal in Belgium and the Meuse Valley in the Netherlands.

Bee hotel

The embankment has been planted in places, creating small woods here and there. However, a large part of the embankment has been laid out as herb-rich grassland. The wildflowers attract a lot of insects; in addition to numerous daytime butterflies, such as the swallowtail, the Icarus blue and the common dustpan, there are also many wild bees. To give them even more opportunities, Wienerberger has installed a large bee hotel on the embankment. As soon as it was installed in the spring of 2020, a lot of buzzing of solitary bees could be heard here. We counted no less than 21 different species of wild bees and bumblebees! These, in turn, provide pollination for the plants, giving them more opportunities to spread. And the more different bee species there are, the greater the chance of pollination, so the more robust the ecosystem.

Falcon box

Above the Zouwdal we regularly see a Kestrel hunting; hanging in the air "praying". To give the species even more opportunities, we placed a Falcon box at the foot of the embankment. Hopefully we will soon see the first Zouwdal Falcons hunting above the area!

Picnic table

Not only nature benefits from the embankment; it is also important to us that our employees can enjoy a moment of rest in a green area. That is why we integrated our picnic benches into the greenery of the embankment, so that our people can also experience biodiversity.

Management

To achieve the highest possible biodiversity, and thus to give opportunities to as many plant and animal species as possible, well-considered ecological management



is essential. Moreover, the embankment cannot be seen in isolation from the nearby Zouwdal corridor, which Wienerberger designed and planted, in collaboration with the Leembank a few years ago, and which connects the natural values on the banks of the Albert Canal with those of the Grensmaas in the Netherlands. Therefore, it was decided with the partners (municipality of Lanaken and Maastricht, and provinces of Belgian and Dutch Limburg) to apply unified, cross-border management. The management of the grasslands is aimed at impoverishing the soils, so that wildflowers and herbs prevail. This can be done by letting sheep graze on it a few times a year, or by managed mowing, 2 to 3 times a year. The forest zones develop spontaneously, while the forest edges get coppice management. The result is a very varied landscape, suitable for insects and butterflies, but also for field birds, bats, viviparous lizards and even badgers.

The project was made possible in part with the funds from the Interreg-project 2BConnect.





Update about the construction and promotion of the Ecosan 'Flower Toilets' in Uganda

Join for Water wants to improve access to proper toilets in Uganda through the 'Flower Toilets', to stimulate public health, without damaging impact on the environment. In addition, young local entrepreneurs can earn an income – thanks to the unique approach.

During these Covid-19 times, the importance of good hygiene has been demonstrated once again. That is why Join for Water put extra effort into the construction of hand-washing facilities in 2020, sensitizing the population and providing more toilets. Because about half of the population in Uganda still has no access to an 'improved sanitation facility' according to the standards of the United Nations.

Existing toilets are polluting the soil and rivers

Not only is the low number of toilets of concern, but the sustainability of existing facilities also leaves much to be desired. Traditionally, toilets consist of a manually dug pit with a provisory shelter on top. Just like a lack of toilets, these bathrooms lead to pollution of surface water. And consequently, also to the pollution of nearby rivers and lakes.

This is also the case in the Western Uganda region around Lake George. The water table is so high there that the wells of the traditional latrines are collapsing. The result: people are even less inclined to invest in a toilet. This led to heavy local pollution and poor health situations for the population. Children in particular often became ill and died from diarrhoea, cholera and typhoid.

Covid-19 hits particularly the population financially

The Corona crisis also had an impact. Many economic sectors fell silent, and incomes were therefore a lot lower than average. This made it more difficult for the local population to contribute to the purchase of a Flower Toilet, despite increasing demand. Join for Water therefore took actions to mobilise more funds for further investment in the sustainable sanitation solution.

Achievements in 2020

- Ugandan employees and entrepreneurs produced 55,000 building blocks for the construction of Flower Toilets in Nyakeera, Kabambiro and Karangura.
- Sixty-six toilets were built for families, after which they were sensitised and trained in the use of the Flower Toilets.
- We built 2 bathroom blocks at schools: 4 toilets for boys with hand-washing facility and 4 toilets for girls with hand-washing facility and an extra wash place.



Bathroom facilities for schools



Mjanwe – Young Ugandans produce the building block for a Flower Toilet. With eight wheelbarrows of sand and murram (red clay)and a bag of cement, they can make 150 to 200 blocks. About 800 blocks are needed for each toilet.



Adaptation works for otters on our Rumst-Terhagen site

It is probably no secret that Wienerberger has an eye for nature on and around its sites. The quarries in Rumst, for example, are a habitat for crested newts and numerous water birds. But probably not many people know that otters also live in Rumst.

After no otters had been encountered in Flanders for 20 years, some otter excrement was spotted in Terhagen-Rumst a few years ago. Camera images confirmed the presence of otters in the Rupel region. WWF, the Institute for Nature and Forest and the University of Antwerp then decided to take a closer look at the habitat requirements for this species to see what possible obstacles could be encountered in reintroducing it into our regions.

An otter needs a habitat of 10 square kilometres, and it must be able to get in and out of the water easily. To provide the otters with sufficient food, 1 kg of fish per day is needed for each animal. If we want the otters to live with us again, it is important that instead of concrete banks along rivers, there are also soft transitions with sufficient bank vegetation.

At our Rumst-Terhagen site, works will start in 2021 to create corridors or connecting routes for the otter between the Rupel and the nature reserves in the area, as part of

the "Otterland" project. For this purpose, the old warehouse in Terhagen will be demolished, a pool will be created next to the dike and a tunnel will be created under the Nieuwstraat. In addition, the bank will be reconstructed so that the otters can easily get in and out of the water.

Apart from these measures, the fish stock should also be stimulated, by improving the water quality in the Rupel.





Continuously growing as an organization goes hand in hand with the further development of our own employees

Wienerberger is a company with passionate and enterprising employees. We want to give them every opportunity to grow. We also want to share this passion with new employees. To be able to respond to future needs in terms of production & technology, we offered a training program for becoming a maintenance technician, in collaboration with TEO.

The objective, from the perspective of HR, is to create and maintain an environment with motivated, engaged employees. Employees who enjoy coming to work and feel good about themselves at work. Employees who can identify with the company. To achieve this, we want to continue focusing on an environment in which you are able and encouraged to take responsibility, where we are open to feedback and where development is the focus.

To attract untapped talent, but also to enable our own employees to grow, we contacted TEO. TEO stands for Teaching Each Other and offers the opportunity for further training/retraining as a technician, according to the required competences within our organization. This will enable us to fill the critical vacancies for technicians.

Customised process

TEO has developed its own method that enables the candidate to carry out the necessary basic interventions in maintenance, after completing the course. The candidates are immersed in a theoretical part that they can do online independently, and a practical part. Both parts were created and approved by our own technical department. The practical portion includes a case study and an onsite training with an experienced teacher.

Onsite training in Kortemark

At our site in Kortemark, this course was offered for the first time. A space was provided where the candidates could practise and optimise both the practice and the theory.

There was quite a lot of interest in this training for maintenance technician, from both internal and external candidates.



Beerse also welcomed TEO candidates

In the Kempen region, where we have several branches, there is also a need for technicians. Because of this, we decided to create a customized TEO course for this region. The onsite program took place at the site in Beerse, but we can also offer candidates opportunities at our other sites in the area.

We took the feedback we received after the course in Kortemark into account for the course in Beerse that was organized a month later.

As in Kortemark, we can look back at a successful course in Beerse. Our employees were able to strengthen their technical knowledge, but the passion for technology also grew among the external candidates.

The candidates were closely monitored by HR and the direct managers during the process. After the program in Beerse, we continued with 2 of the 3 external candidates, including Azzeddine. He has now been working as a technician for several months, under the supervision of our experienced maintenance manager. For the internal candidates who successfully completed the program, an individual program was set up to develop themselves further.

Follow-up

It is very important to us that after this training, people still have access to guidance. Both the production manager and the maintenance manager monitor the evolution of these "TEO technicians" on a monthly basis.

This process has not only enabled the employees to evolve, but as an employer, we have also taken steps in the further evolution of our training policy. To be continued!



Wienerberger supports Maggie Program nonprofit

Maggie Program association is the non-profit department of DMOA architects. Its goal is to roll out small-scale construction projects with innovative and sustainable solutions in hard-to-reach or conflict areas, more specifically in developing countries and for refugees and disadvantaged people. The Maggie Program was created as a result of the Maggie shelter innovation. Wienerberger is pleased to support this great initiative.

What is the Maggie program?

The Maggie program stands for a comprehensive approach to give refugees and disadvantaged people worldwide access to health care and education and offer them perspective through their European knowledge of construction techniques and innovation. The goal is to provide innovative solutions in hard-to-reach areas, or conflict zones through small-scale construction projects.

For their operation, they use the "Maggie shelter," a structure that looks like a tent but has the advantages of a real permanent building. The Maggie's design is based on 30 life-saving criteria. By filling the double-walled structure with local materials (sand, insulation, even including plastic waste) onsite and with the help of local labour, a sustainable, circular, and ecological infrastructure is created that will last at least 15 years. The Maggie is a game changer that can meet the wedge between urgency and long-term development, and therefore make humanitarian aid cheaper with a lower footprint. Maggie's unique qualities enable building a quality space very quickly in a temporary context where permanent buildings are not feasible (politically, practically, speed, etc.).

Maggie goes to Yezidi

A first project of the Maggie Program association that we support is "Maggie goes to Yezidi," a project in Iraq that was delivered in 2019. In post-ISIS Iraq, approximately two million people have been displaced from their own country. The Shariya camp in Duhok alone houses thousands of Yezidis who have fled. In total, this camp houses 20,000 people, including at least 9,000 children. If the children in the camp are given the proper accommodations, they can develop intellectually and emotionally. The design of the project is therefore based on very concrete assignments and an assessment of needs, including traditional classrooms, spaces for art therapy and some multipurpose practical spaces.

The result is the construction of 4 Maggie shelters and 2 containers. These spaces will provide ample opportunity for the children in the Shariya camp to recover from their traumas, and to play and live in a real community. Thanks to the unique partnership with Panaga NGO, a local nonprofit, it will be possible to provide at least 100 children with access to education and trauma treatment each year. The Maggie program gives refugees the opportunity to learn and practice in a safe place so they can stand on their own two feet. This gives them the opportunity to become the community leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow. The trauma healing school is in intensive use for the Yezidi children, as well as for adult education in the evening.



Maggie goes to Kakuma

A second Maggie project that Wienerberger is supporting is "Maggie goes to Kakuma," a project in Kenya that was completed in 2020. Kakuma is a town in north-western Kenya. It has been home to a refugee camp since 1992 and currently hosts more than 186,000 refugees and asylum seekers, 55% of whom are children who have fled war and violence in neighbouring countries.

In September 2018, Dr. Jane Goodall and Koen Timmers decided to establish the "Innovation Lab Schools" project. Each Lab School will have internet connection and laptops and tablets, and 1,000 teachers have already joined to teach children and local teachers via Skype. In Kakuma, the first Innovation Lab School was set up, but there was still a need for a solid infrastructure to be able to teach more children at the same time. Therefore 2 Maggie shelters were installed to be used as classrooms, connected to a container to store the laptops.

This unique partnership allows 200 children a year to attend school, and local teachers to be trained. Maggie Program non-profit offers refugees the opportunity to learn and practice in a safe location so they can stand on their own two feet and become the community leaders and entrepreneurs of tomorrow.



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