



FW: From the Wilde Ganzen Team - July 2026 - 'From Participation to Ownership: Communities Leading Change '

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**Wilde
Ganzen**
concreet project,
blijvend verschil.



Dear partners,

At Wilde Ganzen, we continue learning together about participatory approaches and what it means to shift power to communities. Participation is more than consultation—it means recognising communities as knowledge holders, decision-makers, and leaders of change. Over the past years, we have deepened our understanding of two important participatory approaches: **Participatory Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PPMEL)** and **Participatory Grant Making (PGM)**. Together, these approaches show how participation can evolve into genuine **community ownership**.



Learning through participation: PPMEL

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Participatory Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (PPMEL) ensures that communities actively shape priorities, define what success looks like, monitor progress, and reflect on challenges. This strengthens **downward accountability** and creates opportunities for **shared learning**. Wilde Ganzen has provided an online training course for our partners on PPMEL in the first half of 2026. In addition, all our partners can access our online PPMEL toolkit via this link → [Participatory Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation | Change the Game Academy](#).

PPMEL in practice — SAFE Foundation, Sri Lanka

SAFE Foundation applied PPMEL in a new EU-funded project by involving more than **200 stakeholders**—including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities—from the very beginning.

Through inclusive stakeholder mapping and accessible dialogue spaces, SAFE strengthened transparency and community ownership. A major milestone followed: **provincial officials committed to adopting a disability inclusion checklist across ministries**





Learn more on PPMEEL

→ Look for the [Whitepaper on Community Participation](#)

→ [The Power of Community Participation](#)

→ PPMEEL Whitepapers:

[PPMEEL part 1](#)

[PPMEEL part 2](#)

[PPMEEL part 3](#)

From participation to decision-making: PGM

If communities can define priorities and evaluate change, should they not also help decide where resources go?

This is where **Participatory Grant Making (PGM)** builds on PPMEEL. Wilde Ganzen has adopted the Participatory Grant Making approach, providing small, unrestricted grants to communities through LPOs. This enables communities to determine for themselves how the funds can best be used to meet their priorities and benefit the wider community. Thus, while **PPMEEL gives communities power to shape priorities and define success**, **PGM goes one step further by involving communities directly in funding and resource allocation decisions**.

As both **Liselot's reflection on participation** and **Reham Basher's article on Wilde Ganzen's journey with participatory grant making** highlight, shifting power requires organisations to rethink traditional power dynamics and create space for communities to lead. This is not always easy. It requires trust, flexibility, and a willingness to share decision-making.



Further reading on community-led decision-making

→ Liselot Blog: [The Complexity of Participation](#)

→ Reham Basher:

[Wilde Ganzen's Journey with Participatory Grant Making](#)



Participatory Grant Making in practice Grapevine Hope Centre — Nairobi

What happens when communities are trusted not only to participate, but to help decide where resources go? Grapevine's story shows how participatory grant making can shift power from consultation to genuine community ownership. What began with skepticism gradually transformed into trust, accountability, and shared decision-making.

As one community member reflected: *"Hii ni pata-potea" It may or may not happen*. The skepticism was not only about whether funding would come—it was about whether power would truly be shared. As the process unfolded, communities moved from being consulted to actively shaping decisions. To get a clearer idea of what community ownership in practice looks like, [read the Grapevine story](#).





Participatory Grant Making in practice Kind Heart Organisation — Kisumu

In Kisumu, communities elected their own advisory committee through a transparent process involving youth, women, and persons with disabilities. This demonstrates how participatory grant making can strengthen **local leadership, transparency, inclusion, and collective ownership**.

→ [Watch the Kisumu Video Story](#)

→ [Read the Kisumu Reflections](#)

Looking ahead

PPMEL helps communities define priorities, monitor progress, and evaluate change PGM builds on this by enabling communities to influence how resources are distributed. Together, these approaches move us closer to **community ownership**. When communities are trusted to identify priorities, monitor progress, learn from challenges, and allocate resources, participation becomes transformative. As we continue exploring participatory approaches, we invite all partners to keep sharing experiences, challenges, and lessons learned.

We learn best when we learn together.

Thank you for your attention. If you would like to learn more about PPMEL or PGM, feel free to contact your Project Advisor. They can explain the approaches in more detail and discuss whether they may be applicable to your project.

Kind regards,
Projectteam Wilde Ganzen

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Met vriendelijke groet,

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