

Climate justice and poverty alleviation: innovative collaborations

15.30 – 16.45

Speakers: Koen Wynants (Commons Lab – Belgium), Stefan Goemaere (SAAMO/Papillon – Belgium), Marlies D’herthoge (Fietsersbond/Netwerk Tegen Armoede – Belgium)

Host: Heidi Degerickx
(Netwerk Tegen Armoede – Belgium)

**strong
social
work**

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social
work



Papillon project

SAAMO samen
uitsluiting
aanpakken



BOSCH

Tackling energy poverty in a way that's good for people and planet

Papillon

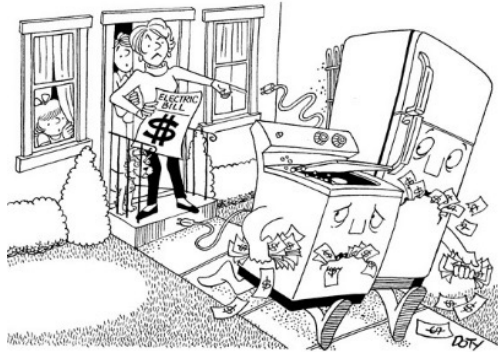


This is Papillon

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The social problem

- families with low incomes
- old appliances = low energy efficiency
- high energy consumption > high energy bills > energy debts
- 1/3 families in energy poverty have energy wasting appliances
- 142.000 families in Flanders (before energy crisis)



The solution

- A product-as-a-service
- co-creation between social organisation & economical partner
- 10-year rental contract – service & guarantee included
- monthly payments



Theory of change

Activities	Outputs	Short Term Outcomes	Medium Term Outcomes	Long Term Outcomes
providing appliances	rental model	lower energy consumption and/or higher comfort	more budget	less energy poverty
			less energy debts	
			less stress	
	product-as-a-service	new market	lessons on circular economy for the company	design for longer lifetime, repair, refurbishment and recycling
		new business model		less waste
providing assistance to the families	energy support	the right energy supplier	awareness how to reduce energy consumption	active conscious consumer
		view on energy situation	higher knowledge of energy market	

Results pilot

2018: Pilot in small region
Start august 2018 (> 2028)
73 families / 119 appliances

2019: support by Flanders Circular

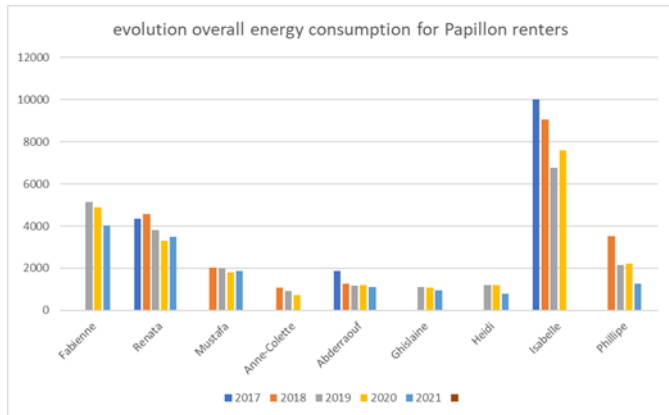
2020: winner Climate trophee -
Radical changemakers

2020: Bronze medal 'Belgian Business
Awards for the Environment'

2021 – 2024: support by VP Capital

2023: finalist European Social
Innovation Competition (EISMEA)





Average savings: -22% or 666 kWh

Social tenant: 56%
private tenant: 35%
homeowner: 9%

single person: 43%
single parent: 22%
family: 20%
couple: 15%



Scaling

2021-2022:

- scaling to enthusiast municipalities spread across Flanders through social franchising
- 24 municipalities
- 370 extra appliances / 240 extra families
- Influence on Flemish government to adopt measures

End 2023:

- scaling made possible for all of the Flemish municipalities

2024

- replication in Czechia



Papillon

Stefan Goemaere

Community worker energy poverty

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SAAMO West-Vlaanderen

<https://www.saamo.be/papillon>



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BOSCH

“A Bike for Everyone” By Netwerk tegen Armoede, Fietzersbond and Cera

Cindy Van Geldorp & Marlies D’hertoge

Tackling transportation poverty by local bicycle projects



61 associations in Flanders

- 6 criteria
- Structural poverty reduction with and from people themselves
- Expertise by experience and participation are central aspects of our mission/vision

Poverty is exclusion and **injustice**,
a structural problem



Vision: "**Just be allowed to be human!**"
a fight for human rights and fundamental rights

Striving for a society in which everyone's human dignity is recognized!



Climate justice: a fight against transport poverty

“

Transport poverty is a major form of exclusion. Without transportation, people cannot fully participate in society.

- Cindy Van Geldorp





**“Climate policy
will be social or
won’t be”**

1. Leave no one behind
2. Human rights

Climate March 2022



A Bike for Everyone



- The cyclists' union is a member association
- Advocate for all cyclists throughout Flanders and Brussels.
- See earlier
- Cera is a financial cooperative
- 400.000 associates
- Mission: "Investing together in prosperity and well-being."

A Bike for Everyone:

- A **fund** for volunteers
- **Local bicycle projects** in the fight against transportation poverty
- **Trainings** for volunteers





1. Project from 2023 until 2026

2. Since 2023: 13 Local bicycle projects

- Bike sharing system
- Cycling lessons for children and adults
- Bicycle repair system
-

3. Training and coaching professionals and volunteers
Fietsersbond

1. **Vision on poverty alleviation by volunteers of the Fietzersbond**
2. **Barriers experienced by people in poverty:**
 - Access to a bike,
 - Using a bike effectively,
 - Having the option or choice to cycle,
 - Having knowledge of cycling as a mode of transportation



<https://www.netwerktegenarmoede.be/nl>



Netwerk tegen Armoede



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Thank you!

De Woongenoten



**Tackling housing problems for vulnerable people
through new coalitions
led by
new institutions of collective action or commons**

The problem

- **More and more refugees which are**
- **People/families with low incomes, with**
- **no or bad access to (private, public, social) housing**
- **Vacancy of old houses, in bad conditions, not climate proof**
- **lack of social housing in cities and in smal(ler) villages**
- **Political choices? Human rights?**



The solution

- **A new ‘institution for collective action’, ‘De Woongenoten’**
- **A new collaboration/coalition with a coöperative, ‘Wooncoop’**
- **= a collective cooperative partnership (‘CCP’)**
- **Division of roles:**
 - The collective: finding houses, investors
 - The coöperative: administration, formal owner



Other partners in the new coalition



- A local social rental organization: to assign people to the houses in a professional and just way
- A local citizens collective specialized in the support of refugees
- A local collective specialised in renovation of older houses
- A local energy coöperative
- Local citizens as new members/investors of the coöperative Wooncoop



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Results since the start in 2018

- 120 members, 750000 euro (and counting)
- 5 houses
- 6 apartments
- A new commons based model ready for upscaling in Flanders and Europe

Key success factors

- **A collective of (very) engaged citizens, at least two people**
- **a strong local network/community**
- **a strong sounding board, sparring partners**
- **finding the missing link in the wicked problem; do not do other people do better. Don't waste time and energy**
- **find complementary partners, willing to collaborate: win-win**
- **Good agreements between users, members, partners, ... Building mutual trust**

The rise of the commons, institutions for collective action

Definition of commons:

1. shared resource ('common') 2. used by a group of people ('commoners') 3. making agreements ('commoning')

In many forms: sharing/using/stewarding meadows, lakes, forrests, data, streets, houses, food, culture, energy, cities, the planet, universe,...

Widespread all over the world, growing again as a glocal movement

- citizens want to reclaim control/power (climate crises, energy crisis, ...)
- citizens who disagree with commodification of all kind of goods/services
- for basic human rights: create acces to food, housing, energy, ...

Role of Commons Lab: experiment, learn, share, inspire, accelerate commons based transitions in Flanders/Europe,...

The future of Europe is common

Thanks for your attention...

De Woongenoten

De Woongenoten

Bob Docx

Volunteer De Woongenoten

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Koen Wynants

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commonslab.be

