

International Solidarity

For Water and Sanitation

European citizens take action



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Editors note: the figures given in the document are presented in Euros.
The exchange rates used to convert are as February 2012.

Prologue

We are living in an increasingly globalised world and as such, we cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of our fellow citizens. Three years before the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and with the United Nations having recognized the human right to water and sanitation in July 2010, an unacceptable proportion of the Earth's population still lacks access to water and sanitation.

Resolving this problem is key to improving access to health, education and thus the ability to face the many other challenges of development. People with easy access to water and sanitation can provide important support to those without access. Solidarity for water involves a heightened awareness of others, an awareness that, as shown in this document, has already led to a wide range of initiatives and actions. People in Europe are keen to work to help their fellow global citizens.

Exchanges and debates organised among the different stakeholders on their actions, projects and their effectiveness, have given rise to two potential avenues for increasing and improving these actions.

Firstly, the existence of a national legal framework in countries of the North that facilitates international solidarity actions for water is essential. Only an enabling context will encourage actions to be taken on a significant scale and according to sound and effective practices.

It would also be very important that the different European bodies take a stand to encourage national governments to take the necessary measures to encourage solidarity at home, in Europe and internationally.

Secondly, in this increasingly inter-connected world, we can no longer work alone. Close collaboration is needed to seek synergies, bringing together the stakeholders of solidarity initiatives, bilateral programmes and multilateral partners.

Our objective is to increase the impact of international solidarity actions for water and sanitation, now and in the long-term.

Jacques Oudin

Vice-President of the Vendée General Council
President of the Groupe d'échanges Commission Nationale
De la Coopération décentralisée/ Comité National de l'Eau



André Flajolet

French parliamentarian in charge
of the World Water Forum



The Challenges of Water and Sanitation

The global water crisis represents one of the main challenges to human development of the 21st Century. More than one third of humanity is affected, with 1.1 billion people still lacking access to safe water and 2.6 billion without basic sanitation.

The water and sanitation crisis has severe consequences on many aspects of human development. It has a greater impact on poor communities who pay the highest prices in the world for water, thus impoverishing them further. It has devastating effects on health, as contaminated water and a lack of sanitation cause many chronic illnesses which can lead to life-long health problems and which kill 1.8 million children under five each year. The crisis also extends to education, affecting children's cognitive development and causing them to miss school due to illness, thus inhibiting their personal development. The lack of water and sanitation also exacerbates gender inequalities. Education and future livelihood opportunities for women are greatly reduced as girls are frequently kept from school to fulfil the chore of collecting water, or drop out once they reach puberty due to a lack of toilets at school.

This situation reinforces the extreme inequality of opportunities that exists both among poor and rich nations and among the inhabitants of a country.



The right to water and sanitation: a human right recognized by the United Nations

In 2000, during the United Nations general assembly in New York, the member nations' heads of state undertook to reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), fixing within Goal 7 the target of halving the number of people without access to a sustainable safe water supply and basic sanitation by 2015.

In this context, in recent years many initiatives have emerged to raise awareness and mobilise the general public regarding water and sanitation. In 2010 the Member States voted a resolution at the General Assembly of the United Nations which "recognizes the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights". This right was recognised by the United Nations Human Rights Council on 30 September 2010. The United Nations resolution is of great political significance as it recognises unconditionally that the right to water and sanitation is a human right like all the other human rights.

The adoption of this resolution is an important step that will, in particular, have a positive impact on the investment decisions taken by governments as regards the water sector. On the national level, it should encourage Parliaments to apply the international recognition of the right to water by taking concrete measures and provisions in their own legislation. The recognition of the right to water should also have a positive effect on the development of new actions and mechanisms for international solidarity.



The principle of solidarity, based on the conviction that we have the duty and the responsibility to help our fellow citizens, motivates us to take action and work together to share access to water and sanitation among peoples, regions and nations. International solidarity initiatives aim to reduce the gap between rich and poor in terms of access to water and sanitation. They offer support where national government policies are unable to meet the basic needs of their populations, whether it be due to a lack of technical or financial resources. These actions provide access to the poorest and most isolated populations, paying particular attention to rural and peri-urban areas, often overlooked by larger aid programmes.

These actions contribute towards four fundamental needs:

- Provide access to water and sanitation for all,
- Reduce the consequences of lack of water and sanitation on hygiene and health,
- Reduce the burden on women and children of collecting water,
- Strengthen the capacities of local structures (local authorities, community associations, NGOs) whose role is increasingly being recognised and which are able to respond more effectively to local needs.

To tackle these issues, international solidarity actions raise awareness in both the North and South regarding the importance of water and sanitation, build infrastructure such as water networks, pumps, wells and latrines, build service management structures and provide training and capacity building.

The role of networks; the need to work together

History has shown that no organisation is able to provide sustainable solutions to development challenges on its own. Solidarity actions involve all stakeholders, including governments, local authorities, civil society and the private sector in both North and South, as well as multilateral institutions. Combining our efforts is crucial if we are to succeed in combating the water and sanitation crisis. Indeed, international solidarity actions have proven to respond effectively to meeting water and sanitation needs. By building lasting ties with partners in the South, experiences

can be shared and capacities built, guaranteeing the sustainability of the actions. There are many different stakeholders involved in solidarity actions, adopting various fundraising approaches and operating methods, offering a wide range of solutions to help meet these great challenges facing humanity. Yet these initiatives are not well known, and deserve to be more widely promoted among all water sector stakeholders. In September 2008, within the framework of the Expo in Zaragoza, the Spanish network «Alianza por el Agua» and programme Solidarité Eau (pS-Eau) organised a meeting of European stakeholders in international solidarity actions for water and sanitation.

The first edition of this publication presented the different initiatives that were discussed during this meeting. Since then, new initiatives have been adopted by certain European countries, others continue to grow and develop, there is a mobilization of local elected officials and from the European parliament on the issue of the need for solidarity in this sector. Therefore we have decided to update the document.

It aims at inspiring other European stakeholders to participate in finding sustainable solutions and creating synergies through networks, thus helping to guarantee access to water and sanitation throughout the world.

Europeans take action

Europeans are increasingly aware of climate change issues and environmental problems. Water has become a key concern for everyone. In Europe we are affected by floods, droughts and increasing restrictions on our consumption of this crucial resource. We are increasingly aware of how lucky we are not to have severe shortages, while in many countries around the world millions of people must live without access to the basic services of drinking water and sanitation. This issue is mobilizing citizens in many industrialized countries of the world, particularly in Europe. They are taking action to help people in countries of the South without access to these services. The way in which they show their solidarity differs from country to country, depending on cultural, social and political factors.

The practice of twinning between cities in different countries began at the end of the Second World War to bring people of the axis and allied nations together. This has developed in France to become a strong tradition of decentralized cooperation for development between French local authorities and their sister-cities in the South. This practice has given rise to the creation of a legal and political framework to facilitate such actions specifically in the water and sanitation sector. In Italy and Spain,

local authorities are also involved in decentralized cooperation. In England, the charity sector is strongly supported by the population who regularly make donations to organisations that support a cause they feel is important. One NGO, WaterAid, stands out as the reference in the water and sanitation sector and benefits from wide support from sector stakeholders and water users. Water and sanitation sector employees in European countries such as the UK, France and Holland are also involved in international solidarity actions, often contri-

buting their expertise to projects in the South. Furthermore, a growing culture of corporate social responsibility is leading more and more private and public water utilities to take action and to mobilise their customers to support water and sanitation projects. Attempts underway in Belgium and Italy to modify the legal framework to facilitate local authorities' and water sector organisations' ability to undertake solidarity actions also reveal a movement that is crossing borders. Switzerland is also testing a mechanism that it would like to see extended to all the cantons.

In this chapter, we describe a few examples, the list is far from exhaustive, of actions taken by stakeholders in international solidarity for water and sanitation in seven European countries: Spain, France, Italy, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Switzerland. We have tried to highlight what motivates their actions, how they mobilize the people around them and we give some practical information and contacts to find out more.



In Spain

From the North of Spain, that enjoys abundant water resources, to the East coast which had to resort to bringing in drinking water by ship during 2008, the people of the Iberian Peninsula are well versed in the importance of water. Initiatives to encourage good local management of the resource are juxtaposed with actions of international solidarity.

A multi-stakeholder alliance uniting Spain and Central America

www.alianzaporelagua.org

Alianzapor el Agua was created in Spain at the end of 2006 to bring together the different stakeholders in the water sector. The central government, local authorities, water utilities, social organisations, and research and analysis institutes in Central America and Spain come together within this alliance to work together for the right to water and sanitation.

Its objective is to promote access to water and sanitation in Central America and to improve service management and quality in the context of Target 7 of the MDGs. The alliance also works to promote solidarity between water users in Spain and Central America and raise their awareness about responsible water use in their daily lives. To achieve these objectives, Alianzapor el Agua promotes integrated development cooperation actions and organises active and committed collaboration between the various sectors involved to maximise the quality and impact of actions.

On the basis of internal standards such as participation, consensus and integration, this coalition has become a permanent arena for sharing experiences and information between its varied members.

Members of Alianzapor el Agua

The Ecology and Development Foundation, ECODES, spurred the initiative to create the Alliance, with the support of the Spanish Ministry of the Environment, the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation and Development (AECID), the United Nations Office for the Millennium Development Goals and the company Expo Zaragoza 2008. More than 330 organisations belong to the Alliance, and several more take part in specific activities and in disseminating this initiative.

Alianzapor el Agua is structured around two standing committees, one in Spain and the other in Central America. The former is made up of representatives of the different types of organisation that belong to the Alliance in Spain. The latter is made up of delegates from the most well-known national and regional organisations and networks in the water and sanitation sector in Central America.

Furthermore, the Alliance has signed collaboration agreements with major sector stakeholders in both Spain (Spanish association of water distribution companies, the national association of public water utilities etc.) and internationally (for instance with the Water Assessment and Advisory Global Network (WASA-GN) and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation).

Building and coordinating a multi-stakeholder network

The standing committees and the technical secretariat of the Alliance (managed by the ECODES foundation) work to ensure that all members participate actively in the network and take ownership of the initiative. This is the idea behind the principle of co-responsibility that has been instigated between the Spanish and Central American institutions involved.

The principle activities of the Alliance, as specified by consensus among all its members are: awareness-raising, sharing of



knowledge and training and the implementation of small innovative pilot infrastructure projects.

Actions focus on the following themes: governance, integrated water resource management, the efficient use of water and appropriate technologies.

One of the main challenges facing the Alliance is to design and launch new direct cooperation mechanisms that enable the expertise and know-how of many highly specialised Spanish and Central American professionals to be shared as simply and easily as possible, to benefit those without access to water and sanitation. To this end, the Alliance is working to build stable relationships between companies, local authorities and civil society.



A Unique Initiative

Thanks to Alianzapor el Agua, Spain and Central American nations are able to share information as well as technological and financial resources. It owes its success particularly to the support of the Spanish Ministry of the Environment, AECID, the participation of the main Spanish water supply companies as well as the wholehearted participation and appropriation of the initiative by the Central American partners. Key to its on-going success are its flexibility and adaptability and the constant quest for innovation.

A water supply company and a municipality team up

www.amvisa.org

AMVISA (Vitoria Municipal Water Company) is a public municipal company whose objective is to provide water sourcing, treatment and distribution services as well as waste water treatment services. It collaborates with the development cooperation department of the Vitoria-Gasteiz municipality.

The objective of this partnership is to build synergies between



the two entities, so that each may bring their expertise to enhance the development projects supported by the municipality. Thanks to their technical know-how, particularly as regards setting up sustainable water supply services, the two partners add value to the work carried out in the field either by NGOs or by EuskalFondoa (an association of Basque local authorities for cooperation) and their partners in Central America.

The Importance of Political Will

In 1988, Vitoria-Gasteiz was one of the first Spanish municipalities to dedicate a percentage of its budget to cooperation actions. In 1991, thanks in particular to strong support from within the municipality, it was also decided that AMVISA would dedicate 0.7% of its budget to such actions.

At first, the cooperation by AMVISA was limited to financial contributions. Then, the employees got increasingly involved in the different phases of the projects presented to their company and their municipality.

An increasing number of AMVISA employees participate in cooperation projects, particularly in Central America, where they participate in evaluating project proposals, ex-post project monitoring, "remote" technical assistance, short technical assistance missions in the field and in sharing experiences and training activities. The employees derive both professional and personal benefits from being involved.

In getting involved in cooperation projects, AMVISA has had to tackle many different issues: what are the most appropriate technologies for each project, how to make the move from infrastructure construction to effective service management,



what pricing policies to set up, what is the most appropriate scale for the project, how to support our partners' institutional development etc.

Despite sometimes difficult contexts, thanks to increased collaboration between AMVISA and the municipality's development cooperation department, the political commitment to promote these mechanisms and the motivation and technical skills of AMVISA employees, these cooperation initiatives are led with considerable professionalism and obtain tangible results. In 2011, AMVISA dedicated €50 000 to cooperation actions.

The cooperation between Vitoria-Gasteiz and AMVISA has also, without a doubt, inspired other public water utilities in the Spanish Basque Country to create their own cooperation initiatives.

In France

Thanks to a national network, an enabling legal framework and the considerable mobilisation of local authorities, water companies and users, water and sanitation sector stakeholders in France are very much involved in international solidarity.

An enabling legal framework

Since 1992, a law on decentralisation allows French local authorities to finance development cooperation projects from their general budget targeting local authorities in the South with which they have signed official cooperation agreements.



The funds raised by local authorities

French local authorities support infrastructure development and capacity building in developing countries. In 2010, €4 million were mobilised for almost 400 water and sanitation projects:

Oudin-Santini Law (water and sanitation budget):	19 M€
1992 Law (General Budget):	5 M€
Towns:	5 M€
Départements:	2 M€
Regions:	1.5 M€
Water and sanitation syndicates:	3.5 M€
Water Agencies:	12.2 M€

1% of local authorities' water and sanitation budget mobilised for cooperation

In 2005, France went even further, providing a specific tool for actions carried out in the water and sanitation sector. The Oudin-Santini Law enables local authorities and water agencies to voluntarily dedicate up to 1% of their water and sanitation budget to cooperation actions in this sector.

Unlike other cooperation sectors, this law does not require any pre-existing contractual relationship between the partnering authorities.

There is no doubt that this specific legal framework has encouraged many local authorities and water agencies to take action. The six water agencies and many local authorities have decided to apply this law and the financial commitments are increasing steadily.

Application of the Oudin-Santini Law directly mobilised 19 million Euros in 2010 and were it to be applied universally, this figure could rise to 120 million Euros each year.



Programme Solidarité Eau: a network supporting local initiatives for international solidarity

www.pseau.org

Created in 1984, pS-Eau is a network of 25 000 stakeholders from all fields relating to water and sanitation: technicians, researchers, elected officials, public and private sector employees, NGOs etc. Its main objective is to improve the effectiveness and the quality of solidarity actions carried out in developing countries.

To do this, pS-Eau works with decentralised cooperation stakeholders, giving them access to information, organising opportunities to share experiences and producing reference tools for the water and sanitation sector. It also monitors and promotes decentralised cooperation actions in the water and sanitation sector and encourages local authorities to get involved, particularly by applying the Oudin-Santini Law.

Supported by the French public authorities, local authorities and NGOs, pS-Eau is made up of a team of 12 people.

Active local authorities

French local authorities and water agencies are involved to varying degrees in promoting access to water and sanitation in developing countries. Their actions can be divided into two main types:

- Financial support for international development actions generally carried out by NGOs,
- Partnerships between local authorities (a “decentralised cooperation” agreement).

The Oudin-Santini Law has enabled specialised support funds for water and sanitation to be created by local authorities and water agencies, sometimes involving the companies responsible for delivering water and/or sanitation services. For example, the Paris region water syndicate (SEDIF)² has supported French NGOs since 1986 to carry out water supply projects on behalf of local authorities in developing countries. In 2010, contributions totalled €9 million, in other words, less than 0.4% of SEDIF’s revenues.

Decentralised cooperation partnerships generally mobilise the internal skills of the French local authority (of elected officials and the technical departments in particular). Changes in approach have shown an increase in their capacities to manage and monitor actions and projects are focussing more on their own specific areas of expertise: public service management, collaboration between authorities, water resource management and development plans etc. Thus, since 2006, the Communauté Urbaine de Lyon (greater Lyon urban council)³ has been mobilising its elected representatives and the expertise of its employees in the water directorate to support communes in the Haute-Matsiatra region in Madagascar to assume their water service management responsibilities, including investment planning, procurement, construction monitoring, choice of management systems etc.



² www.sedif.com

³ www.grandlyon.com

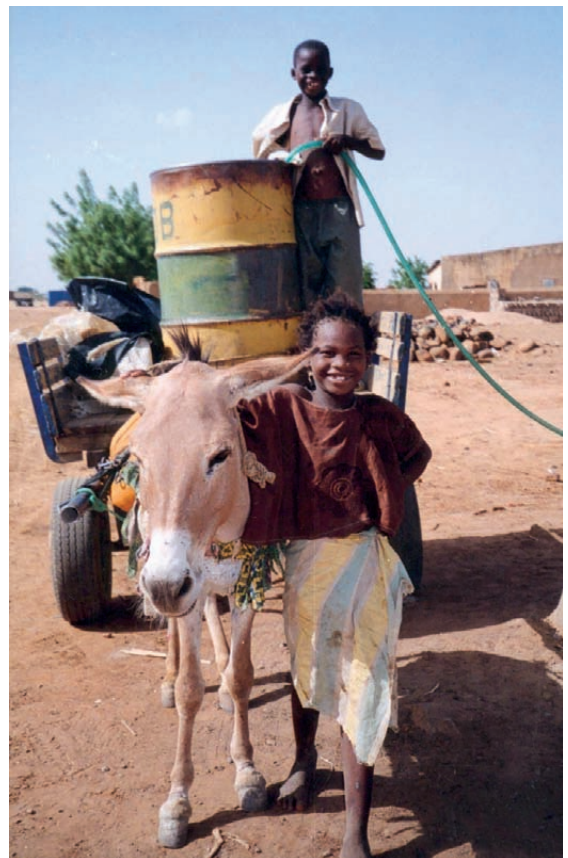
In Mali, the urban commune of Gao asked the French commune of Maxéville⁴ for support in setting up its public sanitation service. This involved developing the organisational structure of the sector, building stakeholder capacities and mobilising financial resources.

Present in more than 90% of the projects, associations are key partners for local authorities. Partnerships with NGOs such as Eau Vive⁵, which has more than 30 years' experience in building stakeholder capacities in West Africa to drive their own development, are essential to support project implementation and monitoring, bring additional expertise and strengthen the ties between the cooperation project and the inhabitants of the area concerned.

Finally, water companies are frequently involved in decentralised cooperation initiatives by providing additional funding, equipment or the specific expertise of their employees. As for example, Aquassistance⁶ the humanitarian association of the GDF SUEZ and SUEZ ENVIRONNEMENT group made up of volunteers staff members or Veoliaforce⁷ from the Veolia company.

In Bordeaux, application of the Oudin-Santini Law led to the creation of a support fund to which the water utility, Lyonnaise des Eaux also contributed. The fund is jointly run by both the Bordeaux urban council and Lyonnaise des Eaux.

International cooperation actions of Grand Narbonne⁸ were developed in close collaboration with its water utility, Veolia Eau. To implement its decentralised cooperation actions in Burkina Faso, Grand Narbonne can now count on the help of its volunteer partners from the Veoliaforce network.



⁴ www.mairie-maxeville.fr

⁵ www.eau.vive.org

⁶ www.aquassistance.org

⁷ www.fondation.veolia.com

⁸ www.legrandnarbonne.com

In Italy

Italy is the greatest consumer of bottled water in the world. The Tuscany region hopes to reduce this practice by raising awareness about wasting water resources and promoting international solidarity actions focusing on good governance and reaching the MDGs. In the provinces of Turin and Venice, similar actions are being implemented.

The Water Right Foundation, initiator of a multi-stakeholder partnership

www.wrf.it

Since 2002 Publicacqua S.p.A., the company that manages the integrated water service in the Middle Valdarno Basin, in Tuscany, has been implementing development projects on water related issues.

Devolving one euro cent per every cubic meter of water consumed by users, a Fund named "L'Acqua è di tutti" has been constituted in order to realize interventions in those countries where water is insufficient or badly managed.

In 2005, the company, with the support of local municipalities, together with the civil society and the scientific and academic world, created a non profit association for the management of the Fund: Water Right Foundation.

Water Right Foundation promotes development cooperation projects, information and awareness activities on access-to-water right and sustainable management of the resource, environmental education activities in schools, research projects with the University of Florence, training workshops for the maintenance of infrastructures built by means of the development projects.

Water Right Foundation operates with two different modalities:

- as a pure "donor", granting contributions to projects presented by third actors (association, ngos, others) by means of the Fund "L'Acqua è di tutti" (call for proposals published on the web);

- as an active actor, leader of complex projects requiring specialized expertises both on PCM and on technical issues developed with the involvement of Publicacqua's personnel.

Up to today, 2.450.000 € of contribution have cofinanced interventions for over 4.500.000 €. Approximately, one million of people have benefited, directly or indirectly, of the projects cofinanced by the Fund "L'acqua è di tutti".

Other initiatives in Italy

Acqua bene comune (2004). This fund was also created by taking 1 euro cent per cubic metre consumed by the 630 000 inhabitants of Venice and Treviso provinces. The funds raised are used to finance water projects in Africa and Latin America.

Solidarietà a Torino (2004). The province of Turin dedicates one thousandth of a euro per cubic metre billed to funding international cooperation projects aimed at building sustainable water resource management models.



Water Right Foundation

In the United Kingdom

WaterAid is a British NGO focusing specifically on the provision of water supply and sanitation systems and hygiene education to the most impoverished populations around the world.

For 30 years WaterAid has been improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene in some of the world's poorest communities in the North.

www.wateraid.org

WaterAid was founded in 1981 following the commitment of water industry employees and authorities to respond to the UN 1981-1991 Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

That year, water industry employees raised £25,000 (€28 250). Since then, WaterAid has been working to enable the world's poorest people to gain access to safe water, sanitation and

hygiene education. These basic human rights underpin health, education and livelihoods and form the first, essential step in overcoming poverty.

WaterAid works with local partners, who understand local issues, and provides them with the skills and support to help communities set up and manage practical and sustainable projects that meet their real needs. WaterAid also campaigns locally and internationally to change policy and practice and ensure water and sanitation's vital role in reducing poverty is recognized.

Organising regional and national fundraising events

Throughout the 1980s the formation of regional WaterAid fundraising committees, based in many of the UK water industry's organisations, enabled more and more organised fundraising events to take place.

The privatisation of the water supply and sewerage authorities in England and Wales in 1989 saw the creation of nine companies and regulatory bodies. The new entities and their staff pledged to continue their support for WaterAid's work and to this day remain a valuable and pro-active group of core supporters.

Staff and customers of the water industry have raised £ 1115 million for WaterAid since 1985.

Water industry employees participate in or organise many different sporting or cultural fundraising events to mobilise their friends, families and communities. For instance marathons and triathlons, golf or cricket tournaments, charity balls and thousands of small-scale local fundraising events.

One such event, Sing for Water, held an event at the Thames Festival in 2011. 800 singers and 50 choirs performed, raising an estimated £ 30,000(36.000€)

Approaching the general public

The annual Customer Appeal is the foundation for raising funds from individuals. It is negotiated on an annual basis with each company. Companies often contribute to the cost of the leaflet which is usually distributed with the water bills. Thus WaterAid reaches each household and strengthens people's awareness of their own access to water and sanitation services in comparison with

WaterAid in figures for financial year 2010-2011

- £48.1 million (€8.7 million.) raised
- 224,477 supporters
- 1,5 million people with access to water
- 1,6 million people with access to sanitation

the thousands of people who do not have such access.

Besides fundraising, WaterAid's individual supporters also take part in campaigning activities. Communication and feedback to donors is generally via a twice-yearly magazine (Oasis) and a twice-monthly e-newsletter. Water companies and other organisations have regular features in their own magazines and staff communications on what their own employees, customers, companies and local groups are doing for WaterAid.



Trekking up Everest in 2008 to raise money for Water Aid



WaterAid - Adam Reuben

"Sing for Water", a fundraising event in London

WaterAid and its Donors

Working so closely with the public, WaterAid must answer many, often conflicting, questions. Some examples are:

- «Why does administration cost so much? • I want all of my money to go to projects. Why do you send me so much information – surely a magazine every six months is a waste of money? • I don't want my money to go to corrupt African governments. Yet another conference and policy paper – how does it make a difference to people's lives? • Surely you can't be independent if you are so heavily supported by the privatised water companies – surely they really run WaterAid.»

These issues and others are addressed through the development of high quality marketing and communications materials that help the public to understand what is at stake.

Additional challenges include securing funding for policy, advocacy and campaigning work, managing increasing amounts of restricted funding from bilateral and multi-lateral donors, and the increased competition for funding from sources such as Trusts and Foundations. Measures to overcome such challenges include taking a strategic approach and developing robust contract management systems.

WaterAid's income has grown significantly in the last five years and continues to grow. This is thanks, among other things, to WaterAid's excellent relationship with water companies, a relatively low-cost annual public appeal and attracting donors and supporters who want to know specifically about water and sanitation, and therefore are likely to be more loyal to WaterAid as the UK's main development agency focusing on these issues.

In the Netherlands

Known for its innovation in water treatment and management, the Dutch water sector is contributing actively to the targets of MDG 7. Eager to share this expertise, the water utilities are allowed since 2009 to dedicate up to 1% of their annual turnover to international solidarity actions.

A legal framework allowing the water utilities to dedicate up to 1% to international solidarity (motion Koppejan from 2009).

A motion inserted in January 2009 in the general law about water has allowed the Dutch water utilities to contribute up to 1% of their annual turnover, in cash and/or in technical assistance, to international activities that contribute to improving access to safe water and sanitation for the poor. It was agreed that this contribution should not lead to an increase in water tariffs in the Netherlands.

In 2011, the Dutch water utilities spent approximately 0.5% in total, as they gradually expand their contribution towards the agreed maximum of 1%. Most of this contribution is channelled through what are called Water Operator Partnerships. In 2011, 27 WOPs were established in more than 12 countries by 9 of the 10 Dutch utilities. VEI (the international Joint venture branch of Vitens and Evides) established WOPs in Mongolia, Yemen, Mozambique, Ghana, Vietnam, Malawi and more recently in Ethiopia, Kenya and South Africa. PWN is active in Indonesia and Rwanda, World water net is working in WOPs with South Africa, Morocco, Suriname, Egypt and Indonesia. WML is active in Kenya, supporting AMREF Flying Doctors. The water company Drenthe has been a partner in joint ventures with 10 regional companies for decades in East Indonesia while the water company Groningen supports the development of low cost ceramic Household filters (Tulip Filter) in India.

Vitens-Evides International, An example for Partnerships

www.waterforlife.nl • info@waterforlife.nl

The Netherlands' two largest water providers, Vitens and Evides, serve 7.8 million people. Both are privately structured but publicly owned, and in 2006 they decided to join forces to establish Vitens-Evides International (VEI) to contribute to reaching MDG 7. Over more than 100 years, Vitens and Evides have amassed extensive knowledge and expertise in the sector and are among the top in the world in service quality and reliability.

They wish to share their knowledge and expertise with water utilities in developing countries. An element of motivation for their employees, Vitens and Evides' involvement in international activities is also highly valued by their customers. The Dutch Government's commitment to the MDGs provides a national supporting context for this endeavour. VEI's main activity is to build partnerships with local water providers in developing countries to help them improve their operational performance and become more independent and financially viable. This in turn will help ensure sustainable water services to the population. VEI is considered a key stakeholder in developing these Water Operator Partnerships (WOPs). VEI is currently working in WOPs in Mozambique, Yemen, Vietnam and Mongolia.

Communication is key to fundraising

Vitens and Evides contribute €1,5 million each to VEI per year representing 0,4% of their annual turnover.. To supplement this money, the Water for Life foundation (created by Vitens and Evides, and now also supported by WML) carries out fundrai-



Vitens Evides



sing actions targeting both its domestic and commercial customers. Via the water bill, flyers are sent to customers with a request to contribute to projects in developing countries. Clear communication to customers is crucial to ensure they understand the issues at stake and the objectives of VEI.

Customers may make a one-off donation or sign up to give a fixed amount per day of 5 cents, 10 cents or 15 cents, adding up to a yearly contribution of €18, €36 or 54. For the year 2011 the funds raised were approximately €750 000. Since 2007, the funds raised have been doubled each year by the NGO Aqua for All.

Currently 25 000 households, representing nearly 100 000 people, as well as corporate clients participate in Vitens and Evides actions and the number is still rising each year.

Aqua for All, water sector employees rise to the challenge

www.aquaforall.nl

Created in 2002 at the initiative of water sector employees, Aqua for All is a foundation linking water and sanitation projects in developing countries with the Dutch water sector. By acting as a 'hinge' between NGOs, the water sector and the private sector, Aqua for All facilitates the actions of different stakeholders thus increasing the effectiveness and impact of the programmes supported.

One million people with access to drinking water, 600 000 people with basic sanitation.

From 2006 to 2010 a total of 16 million Euros from DGIS (Dutch Governmental Overseas Development Assistance) was matched with a total of nearly 14 million from private funds and the water sector, enabling access to safe water and sanitation to be provided for nearly 3 million people. Aqua for All also manages a



pool of 140 water sector experts available for short and long term contributions both from behind their desks as well as abroad, who support projects with training, workshops, studies and institutional support.

These in-kind contributions represent the equivalent of some €100 000 to €300 000 per year.

Approximately 65% is direct support to Africa. In 2011 Aqua for all was awarded another 10 million to be matched with 10 million Euros from the Dutch private sector to serve 800 000 people from July 2011 to June 2014.

Walking for Water: an international event

Aqua for All coordinates an annual (still growing) national event called Walking for Water. Pupils walk 6km with 6 litres of water on their backs, sponsored by their friends and families. Hundreds of primary schools participate, also hosting talks on water and sanitation issues. With wide media coverage of the Walking for Water campaign, many stakeholders pledge to double or triple what the children raise. Aqua for All doubles the end result. NGOs and community groups can work with schools for their own water and sanitation program objective, participating under the franchise model of walking for water. Since 2010 the event went international, with parallel events in United Kingdom, South Africa, USA and Indonesia.

In Belgium

Belgium is a federal state with three regions: Flanders, Wallonia and Brussels-Capital. While Overseas Development Assistance is a federal Belgian responsibility, each region is responsible for its own water policy. Therefore, solidarity initiatives for the water sector differ between these regions.

The need for a national framework

In Belgium, systems to introduce mandatory taxes or levies do not comply with the present national system to control drinking water prices and with the mandate of inter-municipal water supply structures. It is recommended that the country is seeking to establish a framework that would facilitate mobilization of water users.

In May 2008 the Walloon Government voted to create an International Fund for Solidarity for Water. A first attempt based on a levy on the drinking water price was blocked by a negative advice from the State council. A second attempt resulted in the creation of a fund intended to receive contributions from the Walloon region, drinking water distributors, the inter-municipal sanitation authorities, donations and legacies.

The fund encourages decentralized cooperation actions with a focus on water through twinning relationships. It became operational end 2010 with funds only coming from the Walloon government. A first call for projects awarded 6 projects which were started up in the course of 2011.

In March 2008, in the Brussels region, the local government proposed to introduce an international solidarity fund based on a levy on water of varying levels, increasing with increased consumption.

The proposal got a negative advice from the State Council prohibiting linking international solidarity with a potential increase in the water price for the consumer. A new attempt to create a fund was started during 2011, but again, the State Council advised negatively.

Flemish Partnership Water for Development

A platform for public and private stakeholders

www.watervoorontwikkeling.be

The Flemish Partnership Water for Development (VPWvO) is a platform founded on World Water Day 2004. It brings together the Flemish Ministry of the Environment, public and private water players, the academic sphere, non profit making organisations and NGOs who wish to contribute to achieving MDG7.

The population of Flanders is six million: the objective of the partnership is to provide the same number of people in developing countries with access to drinking water by 2015. To achieve this objective, the platform works to stimulate partnerships for co-financing and/or exchanges of knowledge and expertise.

Public and Private Funding

The Minister of the Environment allocates a yearly budget to the platform, fixed at his/her discretion. Calls for proposals are held which in particular must be proposed by at least two partners, and must support the notion of water is a publicly managed good. An independent jury is evaluating the proposals. Funds are allocated to the approved projects. Local water sector stakeholders, public inter-municipal structures and private water companies add to these projects voluntary contributions which can be of financial kind and/or free of charge supply of knowledge and expertise. Water users are not mobilized directly; however the public inter-municipal partners always inform their customers and stakeholders about their commitment.

Significant results despite modest funds

Between 2005-2011 the Flemish Partnership Water for Development carried out 45 good quality projects. By the end of 2010, thanks to these projects, access

to drinking water had been provided for about 66.200 people, and 458.000 gained access to sanitation. The support included concrete cases of transfer of knowledge and expertise.

However, the amount of money generated needs to increase to achieve the objectives of reaching 6 million people by 2015.

See www.watervoorontwikkeling.be



PROTOS founded in 1977, the NGO PROTOS facilitates and strengthens development processes that are integrated into the local cultural and social context and that aim to improve the well-being of vulnerable populations of the South. In Belgium, PROTOS works with local authorities, schools, companies and citizens who wish to show their solidarity with people who lack access to water and sanitation, giving them the opportunity to support or get involved in projects in the field.



Example of a project: Toamasina Madagascar

The project, executed by PROTOS in the context of the Flemish Partnership

Water for Development, enables 14 000 people to gain access to a drinking water and 600 families and 2000 school pupil to benefit from basic sanitation services. Sensitization and formation about hygiene is given to the population of the 2 slum districts of the city reaching 50.000 inhabitants.

Further on, the municipality authorities of Toamasina and the state owned drinking water provider JIRAMA are reinforced in their capacities. The project is running over the period 2009-2012, and the main funder is the Belgian cooperation for development.

The Flemish Government and VNW, the largest water distributor in Flanders, are also financing partners of the project. Rotary club Cantersteen Brussels and Rotary International were also a financial partner during the pilot phase in 2009-2010.

Aquafin/Aquaplus and Geo-ID joined the project beginning of 2011.

PROTOS is executing the project in the field in cooperation with 2 local partners and the municipality of Toamasina. The local partners are JIRAMA, the public owned drinking water company of Madagascar for the drinking water part, and the NGO FSG Frères Saint-Gabriel for the sanitation part of the project.

As a part of the project, VWM is setting up a Public Public Partnership with JIRAMA, in order to reinforce the capacities of JIRAMA. VWM is putting additional own financial means in the set-up of this PuPuPa, on top of what they invest in the project.

In Switzerland

Switzerland benefits from abundant water resources, considerable financial resources and excellent technical know-how—three reasons that motivate the authorities to support those who lack access to drinking water and basic sanitation. International solidarity is the “raison d’être” of Solidarit’Eau Suisse.

Solidarit’eau suisse — a platform to facilitate cooperation between Swiss municipalities with communities in developing countries

Solidarit’eau suisse is an initiative and platform to establish sustainable cooperation in the field of drinking water supply and basic sanitation of Swiss municipalities (and their water utilities) with communities in developing countries. Financing of adequate infrastructure and capacity development in organisational and technical matters are its main objectives. Solidarit’eau suisse’s mission is to contribute to the achievement of MDG 7 by mobilizing additional finance for the water sector through a voluntary solidarity levy of Swiss communities. It provides a platform that links Swiss communities to NGO’s which are implementing water projects in communities in developing countries.

Solidarit’eau suisse has been initiated in 2007 by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) in partnership with NGOs, the Aguasan Group (community of practice for WATSAN in developing countries) and water utilities and communities.

How solidarit’eau Suisse works

Solidarit’eau Suisse is an online platform designed to bring Swiss NGOs and their partners into contact with municipalities or water utilities who wish to participate in solidarity actions. Water and sanitation projects that are to be implemented in developing countries are handed in to the solidarit’eau suisse secretariat by different Swiss NGOs. All the project proposals are independently assessed by an expert of the Aguasan Group— an interdisciplinary Swiss community of practice bringing together

a wide range of water specialists focussing on developing countries. Positively evaluated projects are then presented on the solidarit’eau suisse internet platform. Municipalities and water utilities are invited to look through the proposals and independently choose a project that best suits the interests of the municipality. The NGOs and the municipalities will then negotiate and agree on the financial contributions of the municipality to the project. The responsible NGO is reporting directly to the community that provides the financial means on project progress and impact. In addition to selecting from the list of proposed projects, Solidarit’eau suisse also offers the possibility to establish more direct partnerships with communities in developing countries to establish public-public partnerships for both financing and capacity development in the water sector in the target community. The projects target the most vulnerable populations thanks to the local cooperation approach. Municipalities in the South are able to share know-how with their peers from the North — particularly important in the context of decentralisation.

“Solidarit’eau suisse” is managed by a secretariat that supports the internet platform, facilitates the contacts between communities and NGOs, and communicates about the initiative to motivate and convince an increasing number of communities to participate.

 **solidarit’eau suisse**
 Gemeindefsolidarität für Trinkwasser in Entwicklungsländern
 Commune solidaire : l’eau, c’est la vie. Pour les pays en développement aussi
 Solidarietà comunale per l’acqua potabile nei Paesi in via di sviluppo



By end of 2011, more than 80 municipalities contribute through *solidarit'eau suisse* to water projects in developing countries and more than 50 municipalities and water utilities own the “*solidarit'eau-suisse*” label. Every year approximately 650'000 CHF are collected for the different projects of the more than 20 Swiss NGOs. A great deal of this amount comes from municipalities and water utilities that made a commitment for several years.

An attractive national label

Municipalities and water utilities are thus provided a simple way to participate in international solidarity actions. Those

that invest 1 cent CHF (approx 0.85 cent EURO) per 1000 litres of water consumed per year are awarded the label “*Solidarit'eau suisse community*”. Many municipalities combine the publication of the label with further communication on water quality or solidarity in the community. The “*solidarit'eau-suisse*” proves to be a valuable incentive and motivation for municipalities to participate and donate and a useful means for communication. Good media coverage and committed municipalities are motivating others to join. Furthermore, when the municipality undertakes international solidarity actions, they also raise awareness regarding the value of water supply and sanitation and promote responsible consumption of water in Switzerland.

Lausanne – Nouakchott, a public-public partnership under the umbrella of *solidarit'eau suisse*

In October 2009, Lausanne's water utility “*eauservice*”, signed a partnership agreement with its counterpart in Nouakchott, the capital of Mauritania (Communauté Urbaine de Nouakchott, CUN), to improve the access to drinking water for disadvantaged people, to promote better methods of sanitation and to support the building of a municipal water management system. Fifteen other Swiss Municipalities decided to support the project managed by *eauservice*. The main activities of this partnership were the extension of the water distribution network, the construction of water points, the purchase of 3 water trucks for the distribution of water in remote areas and the implementation of an awareness campaign on water issues.

Given the good results in the first phase of the project, the partners agreed to continue the collaboration and launched a new project at the end of 2011. The objectives remain mainly unchanged: bringing water to the poorest people by extending the water distribution network but also training the water professionals in Nouakchott, and strengthening the management system and capacity of the CUN by developing, among other things, performance indicators and updating its database on water.



Conclusion

Different ways to reach a shared goal: access to water and sanitation for all

The wide array of experiences in terms of solidarity actions for water and sanitation initiated in Europe is closely linked to the cultural, historical, legal and economic diversity of this continent.

However, regardless of the form these actions take, European citizens are clearly concerned to help their fellow citizens of the world to have access to something that, since the United Nations Resolution of July 2010, constitutes a basic human right.

The setting up of an official incentive by France in 2005, then by the Netherlands in 2009 and similar projects in Belgium and Italy show that a national legal framework to encourage and enable such actions strengthens this wave of solidarity.

It is clearly out of the question to impose a single mechanism in Europe or to imagine any basis for action other than voluntary commitment.

Nonetheless, we feel that action by our European institutions to facilitate the setting up of national mechanisms would be a firm step in the right direction.

Recent declarations supporting such an idea are very encouraging.

In 2011, a declaration by the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe was unambiguous: the elected representatives requested that the Council and the Commission "encourage European countries to adopt the principle of 1% solidarity for water".

In January 2012, the Commission on social issues of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly made an identical declaration in which:

"We suggest that the European Union and the Council of Europe encourage their Member States to set up policies enabling the authorities responsible for water supply and sanitation services to voluntarily dedicate up to 1% of the revenues generated from water distribution to solidarity actions (such as capacity building, sharing of resources and emergency aid) in this sector at national, European and international levels".

Finally, the Resolution of the European Parliament for the 6th World Water Forum should also contain a similar provision.

It is to give substance to these declarations and contribute to the adoption of a concrete decision by the European Union that we wish to continue sharing experiences and working together.

This is why we hope that many of you will join us in the "1% solidarity for water" campaign that will be officially launched at the 6th World Water Forum in Marseille.

You will find more information at: www.water-1percent.org



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International Solidarity for Water and Sanitation

European citizens take action

More than a billion people in the world lack access to drinking water and 2.6 billion lack even basic sanitation. Just to halve these figures, we would need, according to UNICEF, to give access to water to 300 000 people, and basic sanitation to around 500 000 each day.

Provision of access to water and sanitation is above all a public responsibility, which lies first and foremost with local and national governments. However, neither national governments, nor international donors, nor businesses, nor civil society actions are alone able to provide the local authorities around the world with the capacity to ensure viable water and sanitation services that are accessible to all. Actions based on a feeling of solidarity, initiated by citizens, local authorities or companies have a key role to play in developing sustainable solutions.

Whether it be through decentralised cooperation between local authorities in the North and South, the contribution of expertise and funding by companies, actions led by NGOs or the mobilisation of users and sector employees, a multitude of actions based on solidarity are being implemented by European citizens to increase sustainable access to water and sanitation in developing countries.

This document aims to highlight a few examples of such initiatives which deserve to be more widely known, so that others may participate or adapt them to their own context.



1% Solidarity for Water

www.water-1percent.org



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