

2020 WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE BAROMETER



WATER IN CHALLENGES & SOLUTIONS CRISIS/ES?

**INVENTORY OF
ACCESS TO A VITAL
RESOURCE**

WATER IN CRISIS/ES?

Water is life, but today water is in danger everywhere, as a result of pollution, diminishing resources and climate change. And 2.6 million people – primarily children – die every year from water-related diseases.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, which will celebrate 40 years of humanitarian action this year, is once again sounding the alarm. Water is in crisis and this 2020 *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Barometer* aims to take stock of the current situation, as well as the risks and solutions, with field workers, experts, benchmark organizations and leading figures, on the occasion of World Water Day (March 22nd).

This water crisis severely affects health, agriculture, livestock rearing, food and energy, and causes ever-increasing tensions between various water-users, farmers and herders, urban and rural populations.

In 2015, 195 UN member countries unanimously adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including universal access to water by 2030. In 2018, the UN announced that we were not on the right track to achieve this goal. And since then, nothing or next to nothing has happened.

The 9th World Water Forum, which will take place in March 2021 in Dakar, Senegal, must be a different kind of Forum, a Forum of responses, especially for sub-Saharan Africa, the most disadvantaged continent in terms of drinking water access, where the population is set to double by 2050.

The Dakar Forum must represent the most vulnerable populations, as well as the organizations that are actively working to respond to the urgent water and sanitation situation. The Forum must provide practical responses and produce an emergency political declaration that commits nations to action, in a world where 2.1 billion people still do not have safe access to drinking water and 4.2 billion lack access to sanitation.

The world is thirsty, we cannot wait any longer, and no one must be left behind. This is our mission and the Forum's mission too.



BY ALAIN BOINET,
FOUNDER OF SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL



AND ALEXANDRE GIRAUD,
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL



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THE SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL WATER AGENDA

Every year on March 22nd, World Water Day, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL campaigns against the devastating consequences of unsafe drinking water, a leading cause of mortality worldwide. That is why, this year, we are publishing internationally the 6th issue of the *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Barometer*.

With this 6th issue, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL also aims to alert public opinion and spur decision-makers into action, both in the run-up to the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar in 2021, and in the longer term, to achieve Goal 6 of the 2030 SDGs for universal access to drinking water and sanitation.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL is a member of the French Water Partnership and Coalition Eau. In 2016, we took part in Marrakesh COP22 on the issue of water in the Sahel and in March 2018, we attended the 8th World Water Forum in Brasília. In France, we work within the "Groupe de Concertation Humanitaire" to strengthen the French Government's commitment to promote universal, effective rights of access to drinking water worldwide.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Gaining access and providing emergency assistance to those affected by armed conflicts, natural disasters and epidemics, followed by early recovery assistance, has been the defining commitment of the humanitarian NGO SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL for 40 years. Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene is the focus of our teams' expertise and actions in the field. Currently present in some twenty countries, they provide vital humanitarian aid to around 4 million people, solely on the basis of their needs, respecting their dignity, and without judging or taking sides.

SOLIDARITES.ORG

BY ALAIN BOINET,
FOUNDER OF SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

WATER IS IN CRISIS/ES!

Water is life, but water is threatened by pollution of all kinds, by scarcity due to its over-consumption and by climate change, which all cause water stress and dangerous tensions between various users. What is the current situation and what can be done?

"We now know that the number of people without access to safe drinking water has only decreased from 2.3 to 2.2 billion in 17 years. (...) Worse, in sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people using water that is probably contaminated increased by 45% between 2000 and 2017", warns the expert Gérard Payen in his article on the SDGs for this Barometer.

and must mobilize actors in the field, humanitarian and development workers, public and private operators.

This Forum must also act as a stimulus and a driver, urging countries and the UN to achieve the SDGs, including Goal 6, which they unanimously adopted. We still have 10 years to achieve universal access to drinking water, which has been considered a Human Right by the UN since July 2010.

This Forum's theme is "Water Security for Peace and Development". The real challenge, as we now know, is to take action to ensure that water does not become a factor of conflict and danger for populations and their development! This is the challenge we must take up together.

This Forum must be a Forum of practical responses to urgent needs and a Forum of Hope to achieve the SDGs in 2030, including in crisis situations.

Today, 2.2 billion people in the world do not have access to safe drinking water and 4.2 billion are without safe access to sanitation. Meanwhile, 80% of wastewater in the world is discharged without any treatment, as is the case in the Mediterranean! Pollution threatens our health.

Of course, there has been progress, but it is far from sufficient and we know that we are not currently on the right track to achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2030, particularly regarding water access, and especially in Africa, where the population is set to double in the next 30 years.

In the first part of this Barometer, you will find figures and articles on access to water and sanitation, on water-related diseases, on the impact of climate change in the Sahel, on large rivers and on institutional and development policies, as well as an "exclusive interview" with the co-presidents of the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar in March 2021: more than an inventory, it is a state of emergency!

This 6th *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Barometer* aims to contribute to ensuring that the Dakar Forum is up to the challenges of a world that is increasingly thirsty! This first Forum in sub-Saharan Africa must represent populations at risk in fragile or crisis-stricken countries

WATER & CRISES

Increasing numbers of displaced people, cholera epidemics, impacts of climate change, soaring water stress: SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL assesses the current situation of access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene throughout the world. While inequalities are increasing, Goal 6 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is still far from being achieved.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- N°1** Mobilize all the relevant stakeholders to make the 9th World Water Forum a major event that will contribute to putting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Goal 6 back on the right track.
- N°2** Organize a summit between the Heads of State of Sahel countries, which are among the worst affected by lack of drinking water and sanitation, to draw up an action plan that will have a rapid and sustainable impact.
- N°3** Invite local actors and representatives of the most vulnerable communities in Africa to the World Water Forum, so that they can express their difficulties.
- N°4** Organize a conference for field operators, with the objective of boosting complementarity between humanitarian action and development.
- N°5** Advocate for a strong final political declaration at the World Water Forum, prepared at the intergovernmental level by Senegal and France with as many nations as possible, in order to provide practical responses to urgent needs.

2.6 MILLION PEOPLE DIE EVERY YEAR DUE TO WATER-RELATED DISEASES AND INSALUBRIOUS LIVING CONDITIONS

ACCESS TO WATER & SANITATION

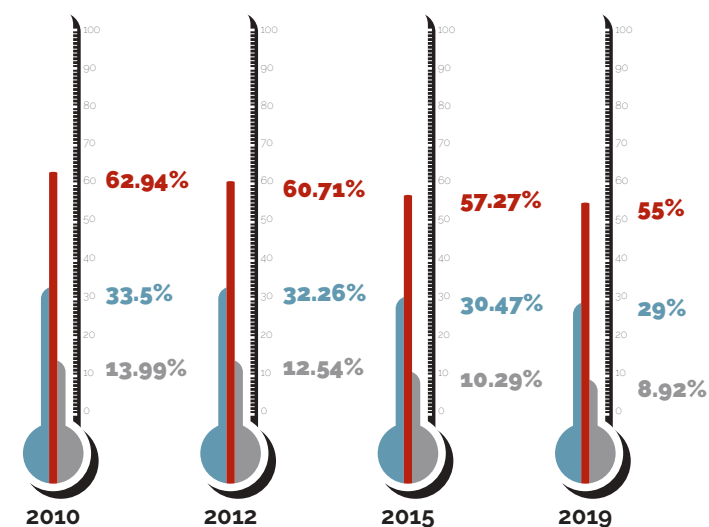


2.2 billion people,
or **29% of the world population,**
do not have access to safely managed domestic
drinking water supply services.

4.2 billion people,
or **55% of the world population,**
do not have access to safely managed sanitation services.

673 million people,
or **8.92% of the world population,**
defecate out in the open.

Source : OMS/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP)
for Water Supply and Sanitation



● Proportion of world population without safe access to water
● Proportion of world population without safe access to sanitation
● Proportion of world population practising open defecation

INEQUALITY



In sub-Saharan Africa,
135 million people,
a figure that has more than doubled
since the year 2000, have limited access
to water and sanitation, and 71% of water
collection tasks are left to women
and girls.

Source : JMP

1 woman out of 3
in the world
is exposed to diseases, shame,
harassment or abuse because
she does not have a safe place
to go to the toilet.

Source : WaterAid

Only 45% of schools
in less-developed countries
and other low-revenue countries
are equipped with sanitary facilities.

In 2011 - based on a sample of 49 countries

Many girls throughout the world
leave school when they reach puberty
due to a lack of access to appropriate
facilities during their periods.

Source : UN WATER

KEY DATES



CLIMATE CHANGE

99% of all natural hazards
are water-related.

Their frequency and intensity are increasing.

Source : UN WATER

4 billion people,
or two-thirds of the world population,
are affected by severe water shortages
for at least 1 month of the year,
mainly due to drought.

Source : Science Advances

500 million people
are affected by severe water shortages
all year round.

Source : Science Advances

Around one-quarter
of the world population,
in 17 countries, is currently experiencing
acute water stress.

Source : World Resources Institute

HEALTH



842,000 people die
every year from diarrhoea
due to inadequate sanitation.

297,000 children
under the age of 5 die
every year from diarrhoea,
because they have consumed unsafe water
or due to a lack of sanitation services
or inadequate hand hygiene.

50% of cases of child
undernutrition are due to recurrent
diarrhoea and intestinal infections caused
by unsafe drinking water, inadequate sanitation
and lack of hygiene.

Source : OMS

ONLY 10 MORE YEARS TO TURN THE SDG HOPES INTO REALITY!

BY GERARD PAYEN, VICE-PRESIDENT OF ASTEE*
AND THE FRENCH WATER PARTNERSHIP (FWP)

A GREAT AMBITION AND A GREAT HOPE

In 2015, the United Nations adopted a very ambitious collective program to tackle the major challenges facing humanity. This action program, called the 2030 Agenda, includes 169 goals to be achieved by 2030. They are grouped into 17 families called Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). About 20 of the SDG goals are water-related. They cover all the major water issues with the ambition of tackling them – something totally new at the international political level. That governments acknowledged these issues and agreed to take them on without half measures raised a lot of hope around the planet.

France, of course, voted for this program and then considered the implications for the whole country. The result was a national strategy for SDGs, which was adopted in September 2019, called France's Roadmap for the 2030 Agenda. This Roadmap clearly states that France acknowledges the 169 global targets and wants to do everything in its power to achieve them. Moreover, water is of great importance since 2 of these 19 "ambitions" – precise, quantified targets – relate to water.

The aim is to achieve universal access to "safely managed" drinking water and sanitation services throughout France by 2030, particularly in the overseas territories. In addition, the SDG National Road Map reaffirms France's intent to achieve good quantitative and qualitative status of its water resources in accordance with the European Water Framework Directive.

One of the great merits of the 2030 Agenda is that it is a real action program with, on the one hand, precise, quantified objectives, often expressed in figures, and, on the other hand, statistical indicators to measure progress towards these expected results.

All of this is good, very good even. But what kind of a ripple effect does this have? Are governments adapting their policies to turn these statements into reality? Are we making sufficient progress to keep pace with these collective ambitions?

BETTER KNOWLEDGE ON WATER MANAGEMENT

In 2015, many of the SDG goals were new. It was necessary to build appropriate statistical indicators and then collect the required data, which took time. Today, not all the planned indicators are yet operational, but progress in knowledge worldwide is evident. Although not all the national values of the new indicators are yet available, for many of them global estimates could already be made for the reference year 2015 and even, for some of them, for more recent years. Nevertheless, there is still a lot of statistical work to be done, since, for example, it is still not possible to estimate the global proportion of urban wastewater that is being treated because too few countries possess the necessary data. For access to drinking water, major progress has been made in knowledge, because 2015 statistics have finally started to take into account whether water is safe to consume or contaminated. The former water access indicator used for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) was totally

inadequate: while it led the UN to declare that the MDG on access to drinking water was met in 2012, we now know that by that date less than a third of the expected progress had been achieved!

UNPREDICTABLE POLITICAL INTENTIONS

This new knowledge convinced countries to call for an acceleration of their efforts at a UN summit in October 2019. Alas, at the same time, they welcomed the progress made on access to drinking water, which is a way of refusing to understand the situation. We now know that the number of people without access to safe drinking water has only decreased from 2.3 to 2.2 billion in 17 years. Daring to welcome this when the official objective is to reach zero in 10 years is astounding. Worse, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of people using water that is probably contaminated has increased by 45% between 2000 and 2017! Where is the progress that governments boast of? If public services are not developing faster than the population, the result might rather be a worsening of the situation.

Governments have yet to adapt many of their public policies to turn the great SDG hopes into reality.

* Association scientifique et technique
pour l'eau et l'environnement

DISPLACED PERSONS : LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND

BY RYAN SCHWEITZER,
WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE OFFICER, UNHCR

In 2015 the UN General Assembly adopted the resolution that paved the way for 17 Sustainable Development Goals including Goal 6 to *Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*. Since then, the world has witnessed the highest levels of human displacement on record.

As of 2018, an unprecedented 70.8 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes as a result of conflict, persecution, or human rights violation. In addition, the number of refugees living in protracted situations (25,000 or more refugees from the same nationality, living in exile for 5+ consecutive years) has increased to 15.9 million with the average duration of a protracted situation increasing to almost 20 years. Away from home, refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) are among the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, often faced with barriers to access basic water supply and sanitation services.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and its partners work to support Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services in over 175 camps and settlements globally. Data is collected on a monthly basis for 151 specific sites¹, and according to the most recent data, SPHERE standards are being achieved in 70% and 95% of sites for water and sanitation respectively.

However, the reality is that the majority of persons of concern do not live in camps or settlements managed by UNHCR. It is estimated that 60% of refugees and 80% of IDPs are hosted in villages, towns and cities where WASH services are often operated by public or private service providers. Those living "out of camp" may face unique challenges to accessing WASH services due to social discrimination, economic marginalization, or restrictive legal policies. They may face challenges related to housing, land, and property rights which can prevent them from accessing existing services. They may lack the right to work or be unable to access banking or financial services. In addition, it may simply be that the existing WASH infrastructure is inadequate for the increased population.

In 2018, the world's Least Developed Countries hosted 33% of all refugees. In these countries, it is often the case that vulnerable populations do not have access to safe and affordable water and sanitation services according to SDG standards. Considering all refugees (i.e. those in and outside of camps and settlements) UNHCR estimates that only 35% and 17% have access to safely managed water and sanitation respectively². When considering the overall global progress on SDG 6.1 (71% safely managed) and 6.2 (45% safely managed) it is clear that refugees are at risk of being left behind.

In our quest to leave no one behind, we should recall that the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation are rights of everyone, rights entitled without

discrimination, rights to be realized and protected regardless of one's status as a refugee. In fact, it is exactly this status as a refugee which calls for special consideration under international human rights law. Leaving no one behind requires increased efforts, not only in emergency response, but more importantly in building and strengthening WASH "systems", which goes beyond the hardware and includes financing plans, governance structures, monitoring and regulatory frameworks, technical and administrative capacities, environmental resource management, etc.

The Global Compact on Refugees envisages that refugee responses are designed in a manner that paves the way for more sustainable support and responses, where possible, integrating responses for refugees into national systems while ensuring these systems are adequately supported. UNHCR is calling on its partners to ensure refugees and IDPs are: 1) included in national development and financing plans; 2) participate and are consulted through these processes; 3) included in data collection activities, monitoring, and reporting (e.g. SDGs).

¹ <http://wash.unhcr.org/wash-dashboard-for-refugee-settings/>
² Based on settings where water and sanitation services are provided with UNHCR assistance and data is available

FOR MORE INFORMATION
ON REFUGEE WASH RESPONSES
AND UNCHR'S NEW WAY OF WORKING
UNDER THE GLOBAL COMPACT
FOR REFUGEES, VISIT: WASH.UNHCR.ORG

EIGHT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SANITATION CRISIS

BY UN WATER

A toilet is not just a toilet. It's a life-saver, dignity-protector and opportunity-maker. Whoever you are, wherever you are, sanitation is your human right. And yet, billions of people are being left behind. Ask yourself: how could anyone lift themselves out of poverty without sanitation? How can the world achieve the Sustainable Development Goals while so many of our fellow citizens live without something so essential to their health? In anticipation of the World Water Forum in 2021, here are eight things you need to know about the sanitation crisis

1 The sanitation crisis is still massive: 4.2 billion people, more than half the global population, still live without safely managed sanitation – that is, without hygienic, private toilets that safely dispose of faecal sludge. And 673 million people still practice open defecation¹.

4 Children are some of the worst affected: 297,000 children under five are estimated to die each year from diarrhoea as a result of unsafe drinking water, sanitation, and hand hygiene.

6 The sanitation crisis threatens us all: Ensuring sanitation for those left behind is not only an imperative for their health but also for the community's as a whole. The health benefits of sanitation are only fully realized when everyone has safely managed sanitation.

2 Lack of sanitation is a major killer: Inadequate sanitation is estimated to cause 432,000 deaths due to diarrhoea every year and is a major factor in diseases such as intestinal worms, trachoma and schistosomiasis.

5 Sanitation is a human right: The human right to sanitation entitles everyone to have "physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure, and socially and culturally acceptable and that provides privacy and ensures dignity". International human rights law obliges states to work towards achieving universal access to water and sanitation for all, without discrimination, while prioritizing those most in need.

7 The world is off-track: We are at serious risk of missing Sustainable Development Goal 6: to ensure water and sanitation for all by 2030. Funding is falling short, demand is rising, water pollution is worsening and existing governance structures are often weak and fragmented.

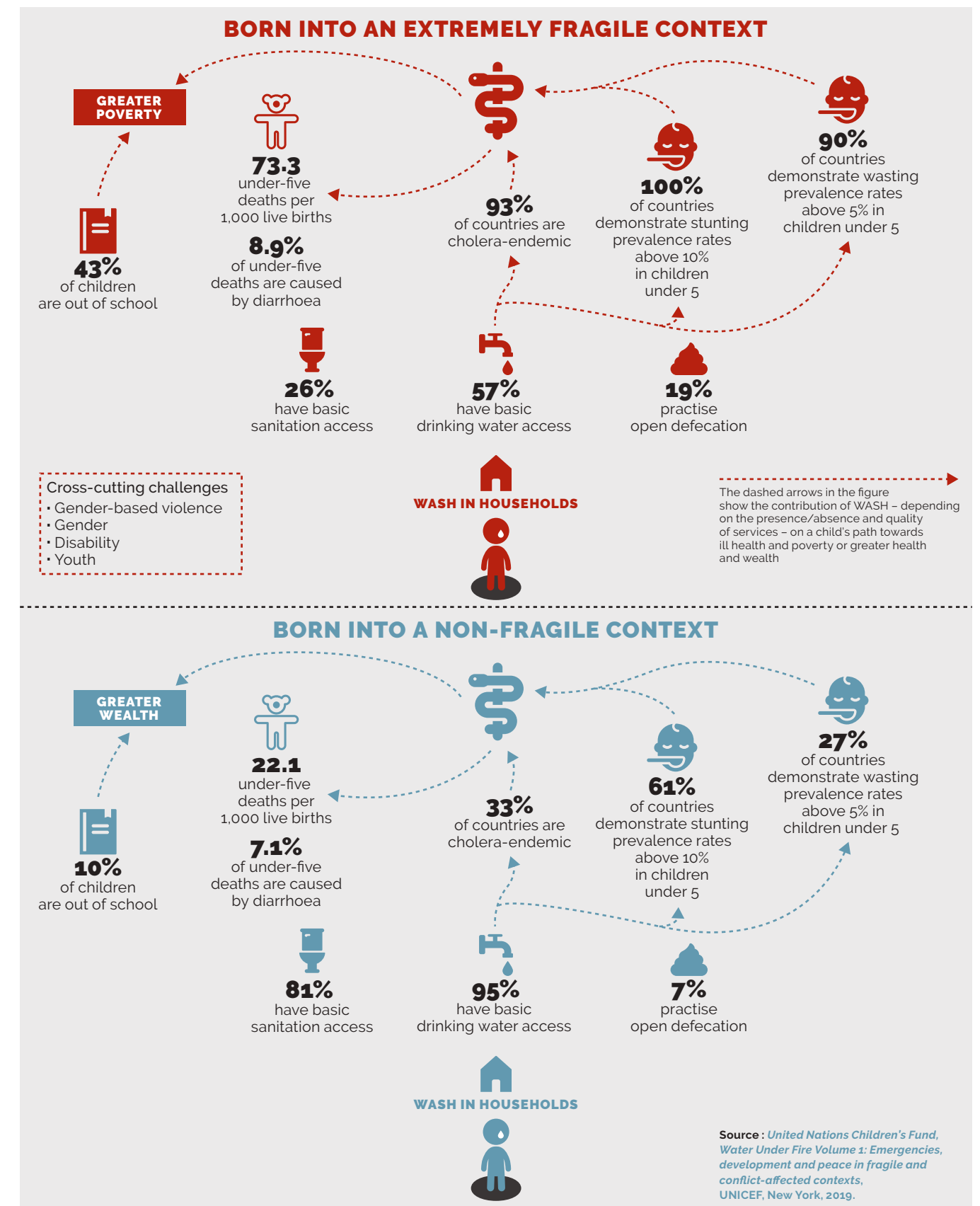
3 Vulnerable people bear the brunt: The people who live without safely managed sanitation tend to face multiple forms of discrimination based on factors such as gender, race, religion, caste and economic status. These groups can be left behind as they try to access and manage sanitation services or improve their current facilities. For example, women's sanitation needs are often not considered, particularly with regard to menstrual hygiene management where taboos deter women from voicing their needs and prohibit their active involvement in decision-making and planning processes. Women and girls are also at risk of physical, mental and sexual violence when they travel long distances to fetch water, visit public toilet blocks or go out at night for open defecation².

8 We must leave no one behind: Sanitation services must meet the needs of marginalized groups and their voices must be heard in decision-making processes. Regulatory and legal frameworks must recognise the right to sanitation for all people, and funding must be dramatically increased and effectively targeted at those who need it most.

¹ WHO/UNICEF (2019) : *Progress on household drinking water, sanitation and hygiene 2000-2017. Special focus on inequalities*
² UN WATER (2015) : *Eliminating discrimination and inequalities in access to water and sanitation*

ALL UN WATER REPORTS
ARE AVAILABLE ON [UNWATER.ORG](https://unwater.org)

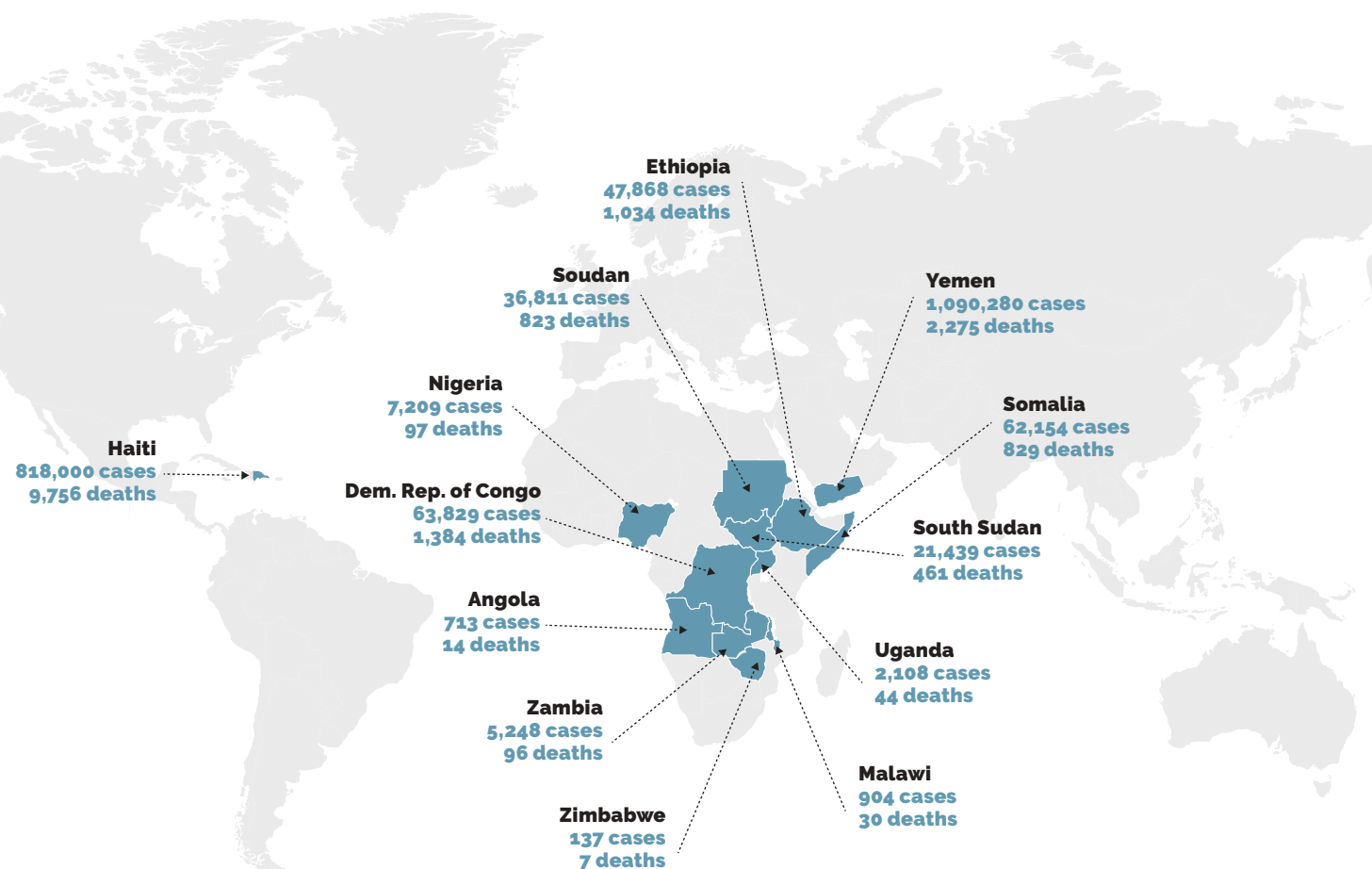
A TALE BY UNICEF OF TWO CHILDREN



CHOLERA, MAJOR OUTBREAKS AROUND THE WORLD

BY
GTFCC

MAJOR CHOLERA OUTBREAKS 2017-2018



Source : Global Task Force on Cholera Control (GTFCC)

Since the 19th century, cholera repeatedly spread throughout the world from its original reservoir in the Ganges delta in India. The current (seventh) pandemic started in South Asia in 1961, and reached Africa, especially the Great Lakes region, in 1971 and the Americas in 1991. Cholera is now endemic in many countries.

There are an estimated 1.3 to 4 million cholera cases worldwide every year and between 21,000 and 143,000 deaths from the disease.

Cholera is an acute diarrhoeal infection caused by ingestion of food or water contaminated with the bacterium *Vibrio cholerae*. It remains a global threat to public health and an indicator of inequity and lack of social development. Cholera spreads through oral transmission, due to lack of hygiene and insufficient knowledge about the disease.

THE FULL VERSION OF THE GLOBAL ROADMAP SUMMARY, BY THE GLOBAL TASK FORCE ON CHOLERA CONTROL (GTFCC), IS AVAILABLE ON THE WHO WEBSITE: [WHO.INT/CHOLERA/PUBLICATIONS/GLOBAL-ROADMAP-SUMMARY.PDF](https://www.who.int/cholera/publications/global-roadmap-summary.pdf) FOR MORE INFORMATION: [GTFCC.ORG](https://www.gtfcc.org)

DRC FACES THE BIGGEST CHOLERA EPIDEMIC IN ITS HISTORY

BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALES
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT IN DRC

Since the introduction of *Vibrio cholerae* in 1974, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has suffered recurrent epidemics every year. The country is currently experiencing the largest cholera outbreak in its history since 1994, when more than 50,000 people were affected in Rwandan refugee camps in Goma.

From 2013 to 2017, DRC alone recorded approximately 151,000 cholera cases and 3,034 fatalities (38% of all cases and deaths reported by the entire African continent), with a mortality rate of 1.9%.

In 2016, a sharp increase in the number of cases was observed, a trend corresponding to the outbreak in some western provinces of the country including Tshopo, Equateur, Mongala, North-Ubangi, Mai-Ndombe, Kinshasa and Kongo Central. That year, these provinces witnessed the largest epidemics recorded in the last five years.

The subsequent outbreak recorded in 2017 seems to have been a continuation of the 2016 epidemic that had not been completely contained, which then continued into 2018. During 2018, 22 of DRC's 26 provinces reported cholera cases. According to the World Health Organization's (WHO) weekly situation reports, 30,678 suspected cases and 972 deaths (a mortality rate of 3.16%) were recorded over the 12-month period.

For the year 2019, a total of 30,304 suspected cases and 514 deaths (a mortality rate of 1.7%) were recorded in 23 of the country's 26 provinces. Compared to the same period in 2018, a decrease of 1.5% in the number of cases and 47% in the number of deaths can be observed in 2019. This encouraging decrease in the mortality rate must now be sustained, or the trend will be reversed if efforts to control the disease are not maintained.

However, the average number of reported cases has remained around 500 cases per week over the past three years, which is still well above the epidemic threshold.

ENDEMIC AND EPIDEMIC AREAS OF CHOLERA IN DRC

Because of their proximity to lake areas, the eastern regions of the country (North Kivu, South Kivu, Tanganyika, Haut Katanga, Haut Lomani) appear to be particularly endemic for *Vibrio cholerae*, mainly due to population pressure in lakeside settlements.

In fact, in 2019, these five provinces account for:

- **South Kivu: 26.3% of all reported cases and 8.2% of all fatalities**
- **North Kivu: 21.5% of all reported cases and 9.7% of all fatalities**
- **Tanganyika: 14.6% of all reported cases and 13% of all fatalities**
- **Haut Katanga: 14.3% of all reported cases and 20.4% of all fatalities**
- **Haut Lomani: 11.3% of all reported cases and 18% of all fatalities**







While the provinces of North and South Kivu alone account for 47.8% of all cholera cases recorded in the DRC in 2019, the average mortality rate in these areas was lower (0.64%). This confirms, among other things, the combined impact of the response interventions in these provinces and of building the capacity of health structures to detect and manage suspected cases.

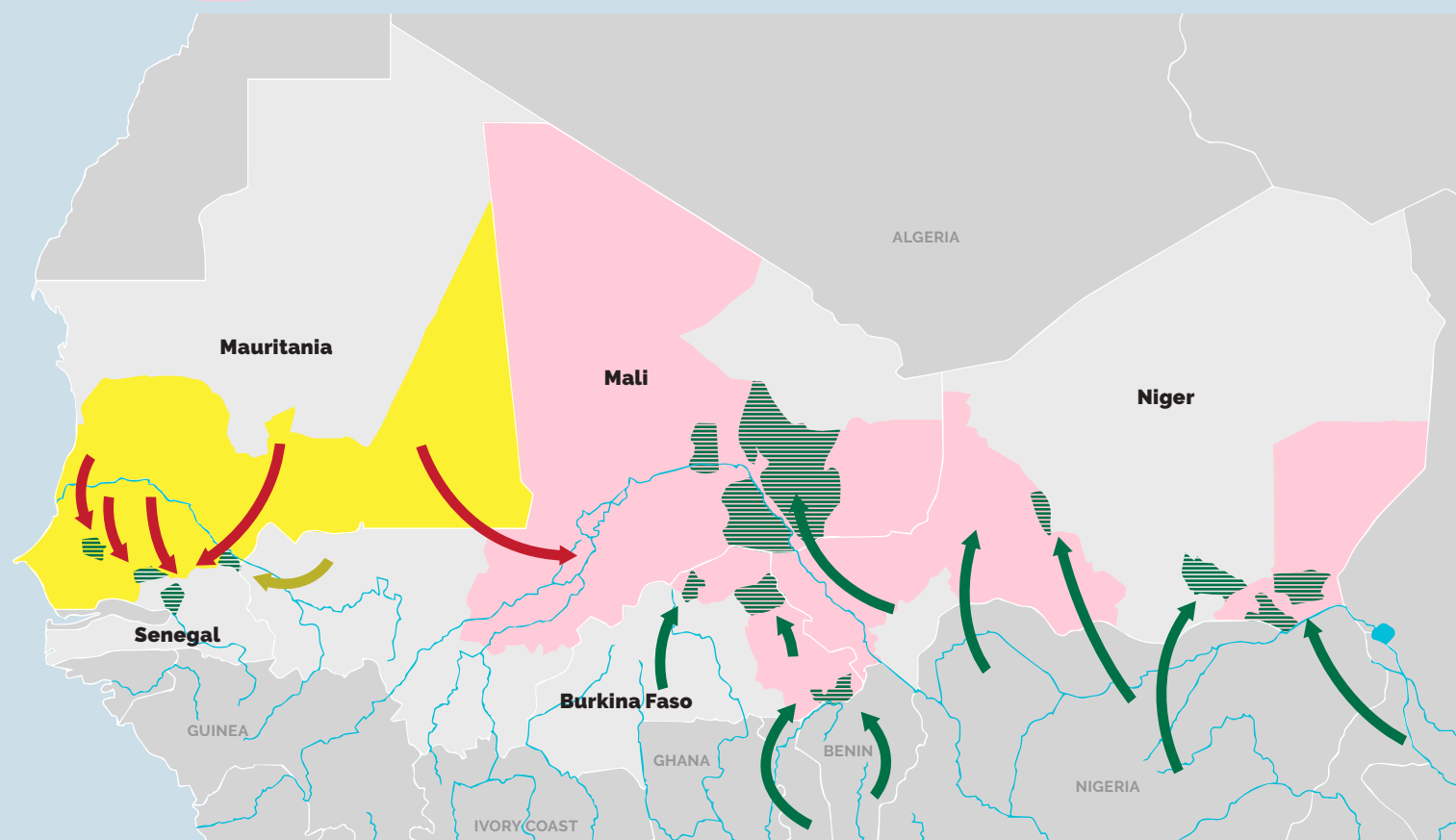
More sustainable interventions, of the "shield" type, would now be necessary to curb contamination and reduce the number of declared cases. This could be achieved through long-term improvements to water and sanitation infrastructure, together with more effective awareness-raising among the populations concerned.

This is especially true in certain rural provinces where the mortality rate is much higher, including Kasai Oriental (5.6%), Haut Lomani (2.7%) and Tanganyika (1.5%), which do not receive the same attention in terms of funding for cholera control interventions, both at the institutional level and regarding the presence of international actors.

Furthermore, while nearly 88% of all cases and 55% of all deaths have been reported in endemic areas (mainly in the East), certain health districts in the western and central provinces of the country are also affected (notably the Kasai region, Kongo-Central and Equateur).

PASTORAL CONDITIONS IN THE SAHEL AUGUST 2019

-  High concentration of livestock
-  Severe shortage of pasture
-  State of insecurity
-  Massive influx due to lack of pasture
-  Early departure due to lack of pasture
-  Return migration with the start of the agricultural season



Source : Action against Hunger, Billital Maroobé Network

THE SAHEL IN THE MIDST OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Rainfall deficits and severe droughts, but also heavy rains and devastating floods: the Sahelian region is experiencing the full impact of climate change and its dramatic consequences on people's livelihoods. The scarcity of natural resources is leading to conflict and migration.

THE SAHEL, TORN BETWEEN DROUGHTS AND FLOODS

BY JULIE MAYANS,
FOOD SECURITY AND LIVELIHOODS ADVISOR

From Mauritania to Chad, the vicious circle of droughts and floods has serious consequences on the populations who mainly make their living from agriculture and livestock. The scarcity of water resources threatens livelihoods.

In the Sahel, droughts are becoming more and more intense. Temperatures are rising 1.5 times faster than in the rest of the world. But climate change is also causing heavy rains (violent thunderstorms, above-normal rainfall). However, the land is too dry to absorb the rising waters. Destruction caused by overflowing rivers and numerous floods were thus observed in Mali and Niger in 2019.

In the Sahel more than elsewhere, these natural disasters are damaging natural resources, which are essential to the agro-pastoral livelihoods that underpin the economy in much of the area. Two out of three people in Sahelian countries make their living from agriculture and livestock. Under the combined effect of drought and floods, land is deteriorating and losing its fertility. Insufficient rain-fed irrigation means that crops fail or are destroyed, while livestock struggle to find water for drinking and sufficient pasture. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts that agricultural yields will fall by 20% per decade in some areas of the Sahel by the end of the 21st century.

The depletion of natural resources in the region has become a source of conflict between farmers and herders, especially since climate change has altered the routes and periods of livestock transhumance, which now often cross cultivated land during the agricultural season. The economic impact is obvious for agro-pastoral populations whose crops or livestock are affected. But the rest of the population, which relies on local products to eat, is also impacted by price inflation and the scarcity of these products on the markets.

The Sahelian population is trapped in a vicious circle: this negative economic impact is further compounded by natural disasters such as floods, which damage the infrastructures that enable both production and trade: roads, bridges, dams, buildings, irrigation networks, etc.

The current context, in addition to prevailing uncertainty in rural areas where climate change is slowly degrading the land, has been pushing many people to migrate to urban centres. The latter are considered to be safe, less dependent on the natural resources-based economy and therefore less affected by natural phenomena. As urban areas become more densely populated, this is likely to lead to overexploitation of natural resources and water supply networks. According to UN projections, the population of the six French-speaking Sahel countries will increase six-fold by 2100, to 540 million.

Moreover, since the surface water table is drying up, traditional open-well water supply systems are no longer viable in the region. However, the technical capacities and financial means of the Sahelian countries to carry out deep drilling are severely limited. As a result, NGOs such as SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE have to dig deeper and deeper to find water. For example, a hydrogeological survey in the city of Ouahigouya in Burkina Faso, carried out by Coopération Chambéry Ouahigouya and Ouagadougou University in 2017, showed that overexploitation of deep water resources in this area by over 200 boreholes had led to severe depletion of the water table, its level having fallen by up to 22 metres in less than 20 years.

According to the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), climate change threatens the integrity of ecosystems that are already weakened by a rapidly growing population, which will further exacerbate competition over natural resources and lead to population movements and conflicts in the region. Today in the Sahel, the challenges for SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE's water access programs are:

- **to respond to the urgent need for drinking water access and thus assist the greatest number of vulnerable populations faced with scarce resources;**
- **to promote a multi-use water response (water for people, water for agriculture and water for livestock);**
- **to support local authorities and communities to improve water management and governance in the Sahel.**



of wells, which requires drilling to an increasing depth, whereas according to the local populations, in the past these wells were inexhaustible. The fact that surface water dries up earlier, in combination with socio-political and ecological factors, reduces the mobility of nomadic pastoralists. This puts great pressure on perennial water sources and fodder resources, which may trigger conflicts between groups struggling to maintain their livelihoods (drinking water, livestock rearing, agriculture). As a result, some communities have been forced to settle in urbanized areas and live in a sedentary manner, drastically changing their way of life. Consequently, when a permanent water point is easily usable and accessible, only the men migrate with their animals and the rest of the family settles around the water point, seeking to diversify their economic activities. These upheavals in the traditional organization of herders and farmers and in the exploitation of resources require us to rethink our approaches to humanitarian intervention in the country.



and international security forces, which are rooted in a context of extreme poverty, intra-community tensions and competition for scarce natural resources caused by climate hazards and desertification. Access to water resources, pasture for herders and fertile land for farmers makes the issue of climate change central – and a source of social tension within the country.

The challenge for humanitarian actors is therefore to deliver rapid assistance in response to the consequences of these conflicts by providing people with food, water and shelter. But it is also essential to understand the environment in which humanitarian action takes place and to provide solutions that enable people to safeguard their natural resources, to meet their future needs and to better protect themselves against the harmful effects of climate shocks, which themselves generate human conflict.

MALI

**BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
IN MALI**

In Mali, in 2019, more than 78,000 people were affected by heavy rains. The village of N'Golobougou in the Markala circle (Segou region), for example, was completely washed away and its inhabitants had to be relocated. Another episode took place in Kidal, precisely in Aguelhok, in August 2019: runoff water washed away the water tower of the Improved Village Hydraulic System set up by SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL. At the same time, Mali suffers from recurrent droughts leading to low groundwater recharge and water points drying up. The phenomenon can be observed during the rehabilitation



in transhumance routes as a result of climate change, the disruption of agricultural and pastoral calendars and the early onset of critical lean periods for both humans and animals, combined with exacerbated pressure on natural resources, may together trigger more frequent agro-pastoral tensions. In addition, inadequate water and sanitation systems and the increased risk of flooding are a breeding ground for water-borne diseases. In 2019, a cholera epidemic broke out in the south-western part of the country³. All of these factors have an impact on the country's already fragile nutritional situation.

¹ *Climate Change Vulnerability Index 2016*

² *Report JMP, OMS/UNICEF, 2017*

³ *National Technical Committee for the Fight Against Epidemics (French Acronym: CNTLE). Week 41 (60 reported cases including 4 fatalities)*

CHAD

**BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT
IN CHAD**

Chad is facing an overlap of interconnected crises. Against a backdrop of chronic poverty and low development (187th out of 189 countries according to the Human Development Index), the country is considered one of the most vulnerable to climate change in the world¹. High variations in rainfall cause increasingly violent cycles of drought and floods. For example, 30 million people depend on Lake Chad for their survival, even though the lake is now ten times smaller than in 1963. 78% of the urban population has access to drinking water, in comparison to just 32% in rural areas². Changes

BURKINA FASO

**BY XAVIER LAUTH,
EMERGENCY TEAM MANAGER
AT SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL**

Burkina Faso has gradually become the scene of a major security and humanitarian crisis. In July 2018, at the time of SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's first exploratory mission, there were 22,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in the country. As of the beginning of 2020, almost 500,000 IDPs have already been registered.

This massive population movement can be explained by conflicts between radical armed groups and national

CLIMATE IMPACT ON WATER AND SANITATION SERVICES

BY PS-EAU

Deteriorations in service quality or service interruptions caused by climate-related hazards and reductions in the quantity and quality of water resources can have serious health and social impacts. The risks are often greatest for the most vulnerable. Women, children, the elderly and disabled, the poor, people living in crisis situations, refugees... are the most exposed.

- **Increase in diarrhoeal diseases** when there is a deterioration in service quality and people use alternative, poorer quality water resources during service interruptions;
- **Increase in conflicts of use** during periods of water scarcity;
- **Greater migration** or people leaving because they have no access to water, creating political, social and environmental issues;
- **More difficulty involved in the chore of drawing water** because people have to travel greater distances and pumping takes longer as the water table is lower and less productive.

The various direct impacts on the water service and their effects on people's health and well-being have economic repercussions. Additional costs incurred due to the impacts of climate change (replacing damaged equipment, maintenance, etc.) can jeopardize the viability of the water service. Furthermore, the lack or reduction of water services also has an impact on people's livelihoods.

TO FIND OUT MORE, READ THE GUIDE PUBLISHED IN 2018 BY PS-EAU: WASH SERVICES AND CLIMATE CHANGE, IMPACTS AND RESPONSES

[PSEAU.ORG/OUTILS/OUVRAGES/PS_EAU_WASH_SERVICES_CLIMATE_CHANGE_IMPACTS_AND_RESPONSES_2018.PDF](https://pseau.org/outils/ouvrages/ps_eau_wash_services_climate_change_impacts_and_responses_2018.pdf)

CLIMATE CHANGE: WATER AND HUMAN SECURITY AT RISK

BY ALICIA PIVETEAU,
SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Climate change is threatening the planet's water reserves, a resource that is vital to the proper functioning of our societies. In this century, which is characterized by demographic explosion and urbanization – two phenomena that are themselves conducive to an increase in the world's water needs – water has never been such a critical issue.

Our water security is at risk and the figures speak for themselves: 80% of the population is affected by some sort of water insecurity, while a rise in temperatures of between 2.2 and 5.1 degrees is predicted¹. This global warming induces, on the one hand, the disruption of the water cycle: water evaporation is accelerating and consequently the quantity available in its liquid state is decreasing. On the other hand, meteorological models are being pushed to their limits: rainfall is increasing in high latitudes while mid-latitudes are experiencing a decrease in precipitation.

Inevitably, these climate alterations impact our food security. According to figures from the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 600 million people will face food insecurity due to climate change by 2080. This is in addition to the 821 million people already affected by climate change. Already, a large proportion of freshwater resources (70% to 90% depending on the country) are devoted to agricultural activities. These needs will increase to provide for the growing production of biofuels. However, whether crops are rain-fed or irrigated, they are struggling to adapt to the variability of rainfall caused by climate change.

The lack of water in liquid form is compensated by an excess of water vapour. This phenomenon is not insignificant since it explains, among other things, the intensification of extreme weather events. While droughts and floods are not new, their increasingly unpredictable and devastating nature is one of the manifestations of climate change.

These disruptions increase the vulnerability of populations and leave them powerless in the face of health and food risks. When sanitation systems are destroyed or inadequate, this increases the risk of waterborne diseases spreading. In this respect, ensuring completely safe, universal access to sanitation is a major challenge for the future: 80% of the world's wastewater is currently discharged into the environment without treatment.

Human activities are also a vector of water pollution: nitrates, phytotoxic algae, pathogens, various chemical products and micro-plastics are found in 80% of freshwater sources². In addition, the current increase in water temperature may stimulate the proliferation of this pollution. While the consequences of climate change accentuate global inequalities and imbalances, the decline in water quality is a phenomenon that knows no boundaries.

Ultimately, and according to the conclusions of the 2014 IPCC report, climate change is a threat to our own security. Climate displacement, in search of arable land and water or due to natural disasters, affected 18 million people in 2018.

By 2050, this figure will reach the level of 140 million people, according to the World Bank. These population movements combined with the increasing scarcity of water are likely to rekindle tensions and conflicts. There is no doubt that all facets of human security (water, food, health, energy) are affected by the alterations that water is undergoing. In the face of these threats, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL works to help populations that are at risk due to crises, and at the same time calls on all responsible stakeholders to join forces and deliver a response that is proportional to these risks and that leaves no one behind.

¹ 5th assessment report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 2014.
² Quality Unknown: The Invisible Water Crisis, World Bank, 2019.

WATER MUST REMAIN A SOURCE OF LIFE IN WEST AFRICA

BY ERIK ORSENNA, PRESIDENT
OF INITIATIVES FOR THE FUTURE OF GREAT RIVERS (IFGR)

AND HAMED SÈMÉGA, HIGH COMMISSIONER OF THE SENEGAL
RIVER BASIN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (OMVS), MEMBER OF IFGR

Threatened by climate change and demographic pressure, major rivers have become a strategic issue. Although they are factors of tension and migration, they should nevertheless bring cooperation and peace.

As early as the 1970s, West Africa was hit hard by the effects of climate change. Water is an important marker of these changes: contrasting rainfall patterns, between drought and flooding; rising sea levels; coastal erosion (the coastline is retreating by an average of six metres per year along the entire coast!); salinization of water and soil, etc. In Saint-Louis, a city at the mouth of the Senegal River and a city of transition between the Saharan and Sahelian climates, there is already an emergency, which was compounded in 2003 by a breach in the Barbary peninsula. This breach was necessary at the time to reduce water pressure and protect people from major river floods, but it has since been widening because no additional measures were taken. This now poses a permanent threat to agricultural and fishing activities, housing, water supplies, etc. Lake Chad is another emblematic regional example. In less than forty years, it has shrunk to a tenth of its previous surface area. This has resulted in population displacement, loss of biodiversity and tensions, given that half of Africa's population is entirely dependent on biodiversity and natural resources. In Nigeria, 1,500 deaths per year are attributable to water-related conflicts.

Climate change and demographic pressure: freshwater resources are becoming a strategic issue, and potentially a factor of tension and migration. But we want to believe that they can also bring cooperation and peace.

What are the main conditions? Here are four which seem to us to be of prime importance:

1. Knowledge, in order to be able to alert and take action: this knowledge comes from data, participatory science, forecasting services, to know the availability of water resources and their variability in time and space. This knowledge also results from the exchange of expertise and practices, in particular between rivers worldwide, as proposed by Initiatives for the Future of Great Rivers (IFGR).

2. Inclusive governance at basin level, in a coordinated manner, to maintain the various uses of water and distribute it equitably between countries. The Senegal River Development Organization (OMVS) has provided, in this respect, an irreplaceable framework for cross-border cooperation. By considering the river and its tributaries as international property and by collectively managing its installations, OMVS has made water a source of rapprochement, integration and cooperation. In the future, it must continue to protect this resource, in particular against pollution, and to ensure its sustainability.

3. Protecting and restoring source headwaters: everything begins in those places where water gushes forth, whether they are on the glaciers of the Himalayas, the source of ten major

rivers in Asia on which more than 1.5 billion people depend, or the Fouta Djallon massif, the water tower of West Africa, which feeds a network of fifteen rivers in eight countries. It is becoming more and more fragile due to extreme weather events and human activities. Protecting it is one of the priorities enshrined in the Bamako Declaration signed by OMVS member countries last December.

4. Involving local populations with managers and experts to make the river a link between populations: if the issues at stake are not accepted and taken on board by all users, the river is at risk, and the services it provides for the economic development and ecological balance of the surrounding area will undoubtedly be jeopardized. How can wetlands be developed while securing access to resources for livestock herders? How can we promote more water-efficient agricultural practices and limit activities that are destructive to soil and water without offering alternatives for populations struggling for survival?

Dakar is getting ready to host the first World Water Forum in sub-Saharan Africa – a Forum focused on water security for peace and development and results. For five years now, IFGR, drawing on the wide-ranging skills of its multidisciplinary international experts, has been raising awareness about the threats to rivers, suggesting solutions and supporting local players in their projects. IFGR will be present in March 2021 to share its experiences so that, from the Senegal River Basin to other rivers all over the world, the future of great rivers remains in our hands.



9th WORLD WATER FORUM

INTERVIEW BY ALAIN BOINET,
FOUNDER OF SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

“DAKAR 2021”

LIVING UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF THOSE WHO THIRST FOR DRINKING WATER, AN OPPORTUNITY AND A CHALLENGE

In the run-up to the 9th World Water Forum, Alain Boinet, Founder of SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, obtained an exclusive interview with the co-chairs of the preparatory committee for this major event: Abdoulaye Sene, representing Senegal, and Patrick Lavarde, Honorary Governor of the World Water Council. They explain why the Dakar Forum must take a radically different approach and provide responses to drinking water and sanitation needs.

WE WANT THE NEXT
FORUM TO BE HISTORIC
FOR THE RESULTS
IT ACHIEVES.

Senegal wants the 9th World Water Forum to be different, even radically different from previous forums. Why is this the case and what are your expectations?

ABDOULAYE SENE Yes indeed, Senegal wants the 9th World Water Forum to be different from previous forums both in terms of its content and organization.

We want the next Forum to be historic for the results it achieves, and to provide practical responses to the issues affecting populations.

We have also launched the Dakar 2021 Initiative to add a Senegalese and African touch to the 9th Forum. The Forum must transcend political and diplomatic matters and lead to tangible results and commitments to meet the urgent challenge posed by water and sanitation issues both in Africa and worldwide.

You declared that the 9th World Water Forum must “build a forum of responses”. What do you mean by this?

PATRICK LAVARDE The initial World Water Forums contributed to defining, publicizing and sharing the major issues at stake in the water sector. Subsequent Forums rallied support for tangible progress like the Human Right to Water and the need for a specific Sustainable Development Goal relating to water. The Forums emphasized the political implications of water-related issues and enabled solutions to be identified to meet these challenges. Now, the time has come to focus on

providing and implementing practical responses to the challenges of water management, in order to achieve the water-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and thus meet the expectations of the most vulnerable populations.

NOW, THE TIME
HAS COME TO FOCUS
ON PROVIDING
AND IMPLEMENTING
PRACTICAL RESPONSES
TO THE CHALLENGES
OF WATER
MANAGEMENT.

Dakar will be the global water capital in March 2021. In your opinion, what does this mean for Senegal and for Africa in general?

ABDOULAYE SENE Dakar will host the 9th World Water Forum on behalf of both Senegal and Africa. It will be the first time that this major global water event is hosted by a sub-Saharan African country. This Forum is therefore an important landmark both for Senegal and for Africa, where water issues are obviously much more urgent than elsewhere. For Senegal in particular, this means that the country's water diplomacy has come to fruition. It is important to emphasize that our country made its mark early on by taking a regional – or even continental – leadership role on water issues. Moreover, this Forum is both an opportunity and a challenge both in terms of organizing such a large event and the many expectations that surround it.

The Dakar Forum has defined four main priorities that are effectively summed up by its title: “Water Security for Peace and Development”. Why link water and peace together?

PATRICK LAVARDE Water security is a key issue for the future of the African continent, and also a major challenge for the whole world. Water-related tensions are on the increase, fuelled by growing demographic pressure, ever-increasing urbanization and the threat of climate change in areas where water is already scarce. If we do not ensure water security, this will endanger development, food, health and education. As a result, water is a major instrument for peace in all areas where the security of local communities depends on it. To avoid conflict between water users, and between countries that share the same water resources, appropriate solutions must be found.



How do water, sanitation and water-use issues currently affect Western and Central Africa?

ABDOULAYE SENE Water and sanitation are very acute issues in Western and Central Africa. They are major concerns in these two regions of the continent, where the population mainly depends on agriculture and livestock rearing for survival. Populations in Western and

Central Africa are finding it more and more difficult to meet their water and sanitation needs. This leads to public health problems and to certain water crises in these regions, not to mention recurring disputes between

farmers and herders. This means that water-related issues have now become a cause of instability for communities. The combined effects of an ever-growing population and climate change are a partial explanation for the difficulties and challenges faced by Western and Central Africa in terms of water and sanitation.

WATER-RELATED ISSUES HAVE NOW BECOME A CAUSE OF INSTABILITY FOR COMMUNITIES.

TO INVOLVE AS MANY STAKEHOLDERS AS POSSIBLE, EACH ACTION GROUP WILL BE SUPPORTED BY AN EXTENDED CONSULTATION GROUP COMPRISING ACTORS THAT HAVE VOLUNTEERED.

The Forum is an international event that is organized a long time in advance. How are these preparations structured and carried out?

PATRICK LAVARDE The Forum is jointly organized by Senegal and the World Water Council, who have formed an international steering committee (ISC). Each of the four priorities is coordinated by a supervisory group of institutions with appropriate expertise and co-chaired by one Senegalese and one international member of the ISC. The topics to be discussed within each of these priorities – which are connected to the water-related targets of the SDGs – are prepared by action groups comprising specialist organizations. To involve as many stakeholders as possible, each action group will be supported by an extended consultation group comprising actors that have volunteered in response to an international call for participants.

How do you see the connection between the 9th World Water Forum and Goal 6 of the 2030 SDGs, when UN Water emphasized last year that we were not on track to achieve the planned goals?

ABDOULAYE SENE The Forum does indeed want to act as a catalyst for SDG 6. It is an opportunity to mobilize funds and renew commitments to achieve SDG 6.

If we do not resolve these issues so that we can meet SDG 6, we will not achieve any of the SDGs. This is because all the SDGs are connected to SDG 6 in one way or another. It is quite true that we are not yet on the right track, but the commitments and results that are expected from the Forum can enable us to reverse this trend and speed up achieving the SDG

targets by 2030, especially SDG 6. Looking beyond SDG 6, the Dakar Forum will also address water issues in Africa and in particular the continent's 2063 Agenda.

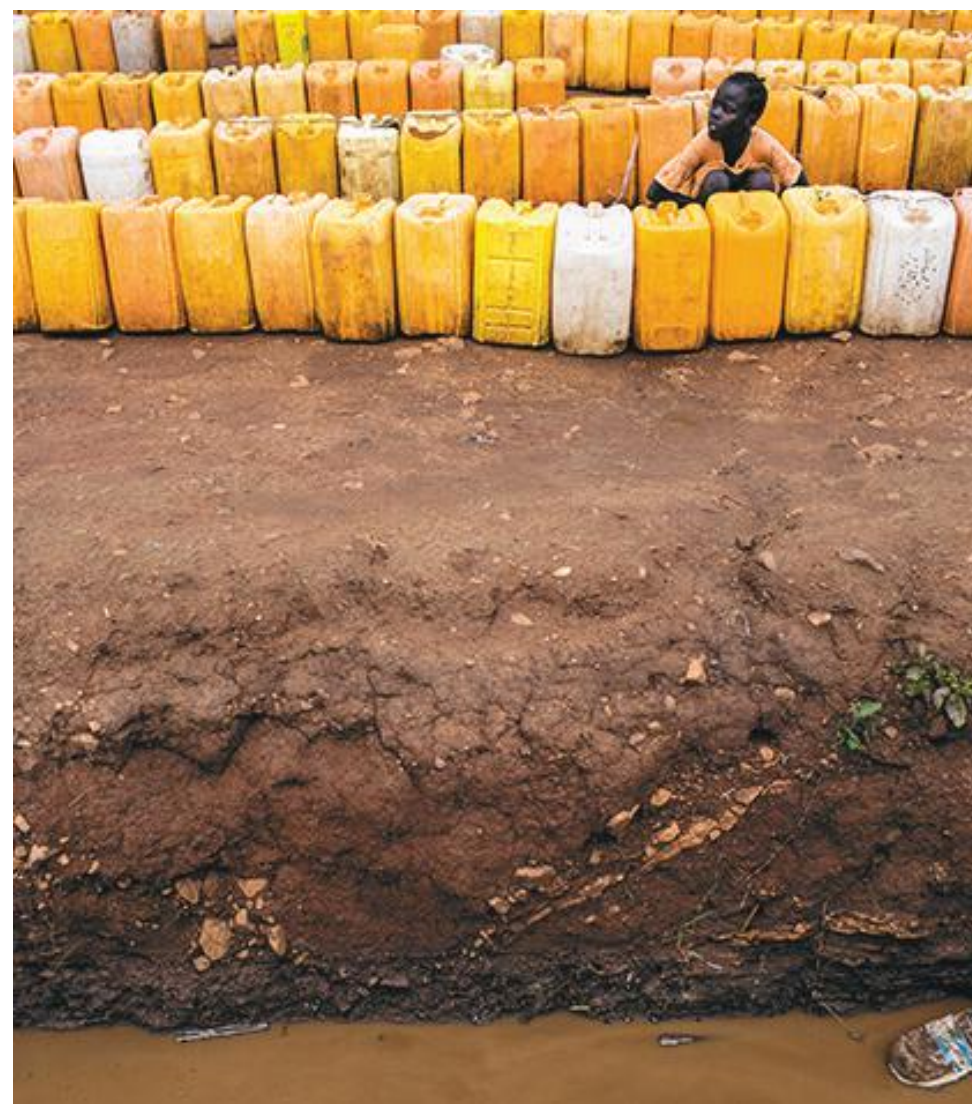
THE FORUM DOES WANT TO ACT AS A CATALYST FOR SDG 6. IT IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO MOBILIZE FUNDS AND RENEW COMMITMENTS.

As co-chair of the international steering committee, you are seeking strategic partners for the Forum. How are you proceeding and what do you expect from them?

PATRICK LAVARDE Strategic partners provide specific support in the organization of the Forum by means of an agreement with the organizers. This support can relate to the whole of the Forum, to one of the priorities or to one of the actions, according to the interests and capabilities of the partner. According to the situation, strategic partners take part in the supervisory groups or action groups. The support they provide can take various forms: financial, intellectual or logistical support. Some of these partnerships have already been established and many others are being finalized, at the initiative of the Forum's executive secretary.

What is the Dakar 2021 initiative and which tangible results do you expect from it?

ABDOULAYE SENE The Dakar 2021 Initiative is the major innovation of the 9th World Water Forum. Through this program, Senegal wants to add a special touch to the event. The Dakar 2021 Initiative was officially launched on 16 January 2020 in Dakar. This operation will generate commitments and actions to accelerate progress, especially towards achieving the SDGs. Among other things, the initiative aims to accredit community projects that seek to provide access to drinking water and decent sanitation. These accredited projects aim to achieve tangible results that will be presented during the Forum in 2021.



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CHALLENGES AHEAD

Increasingly complex and long-lasting crises, proliferation of risks, methodological problems, lack of funding... Water, Sanitation and Hygiene actors still have many obstacles to overcome in order to improve their response capacities in emergency situations and their ability to provide appropriate aid to meet needs.

BY ALEXANDRE GIRAUD,

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

WATER SHOULD BE CENTRAL!

In the context of new, multifaceted crises, access to water and sanitation is fraught with obstacles. One of these is the intrinsic nature of water: it is liquid, fluid, and therefore present at many stages, but it is never central.

Crisises that we now call chronic or complex are characterized by a conjunction of multiple factors, both new and old, which combine in an increasingly unusual way. One recurring factor is the impact of climate change. It is causing population displacements, initiating economic crises and intensifying tensions due to resource monopolization. In addition, there are also issues linked to global population growth, the instrumentalization of community tensions, increasing economic and social inequalities, the diminishing influence of multipolar regulatory mechanisms, and greater access to information (and the consequent questioning of its reliability). These multiple issues almost

systematically lead to the emergence and continuation of current crises.

Responding to these crises, which are invariably protracted and fuelled by numerous, interdependent factors, means that we must look beyond traditional analytical frameworks, break down the barriers between the specialist fields of various actors, and review the characteristics of funding to make it more sustainable and flexible, with greater emphasis on integrated approaches. When we assess needs and design responses, we must erase the divisions between humanitarian/development, public/private, research/advocacy/action, North/South, and take a holistic view that will enable us to transcend worn-out analytical formats.

Similarly, water and sanitation cannot be considered as isolated disciplines at a time when their access is affected by multiple causes (environmental, political, economic, etc.) and their effects are observed in various fields (public health, economic development, political stability, etc.). In a way, water suffers from its

liquid, fluid nature. It can be neither the starting point to analyse a problem, nor its conclusion. It is nevertheless everywhere, binding everything together. Water flows, circulates and is found at countless points, right at the heart of the systemic fragilities observed during crises.

Water is never considered central because it is continuously present at many stages. It is therefore fundamental not to compartmentalize it but to ensure that it is systematically included in the analysis of every context and the definition of every response.

Now, after we have fought so hard for water to have its own Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), it is vital that water is taken into account within all SDGs if we are to achieve each and every one of them.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- N°6** Look beyond traditional analytical frameworks, break down the barriers between the specialist fields of various actors, and review the characteristics of funding to make it more sustainable and flexible, with greater emphasis on integrated approaches.
- N°7** Ensure that water and sanitation are systematically included in all assessments and in the preparation of every response.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE: THE CHALLENGES FACED BY THE WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE SECTOR

BY GROUPE URD*
/ GLOBAL WASH CLUSTER

Human resources, modus operandi, strategic vision... At the initiative of the Global WASH Cluster, Groupe URD reviewed the challenges facing the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector in emergency situations.

STRATEGIC CHALLENGE

People can survive a few weeks without food, a few weeks without shelter, several years without education; but without water they will only survive a few days. Of all the needs that people affected by a crisis may have, access to water is therefore a top priority. Today, the essential contribution of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector is acknowledged. However, this sector does not yet have sufficient strategic support. Its contribution to public health is fundamental, as underlined by epidemiological data. It is vital for the functioning of human settlements in crisis areas, such as refugee camps, sites for displaced persons, destroyed cities or remote areas where people are stranded and cannot escape. WASH also plays a major role for health institutions and the education sector, and enhances dignity and quality of life, especially for women. Yet too often it remains a secondary priority.

Without safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, the situation of people affected by conflicts or disasters can only get worse. However, according to a Groupe URD report published in June 2019 at the initiative of the Global WASH Cluster,

the emergency response capacity of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector is limited by several factors. These include security and access, aid logistics and bureaucracy, insufficient and inflexible funding, but also significant human resource problems.

Although consistent efforts have been made to improve coordination and, ultimately, the quality and coverage of services, sometimes needs are not fully met or aid arrives too late – especially as the WASH sector has had to respond in recent years to several parallel crises, in different parts of the world, which have lasted for a relatively long time. And all this has been done without sufficient human resources, which has sometimes lowered the quality of interventions and weighed heavily on staff well-being.

In addition to the customary issues of quality and program management in difficult or inaccessible contexts, specific technical problems make the WASH sector's response even more complex: working in urban contexts; integrating gender and protection issues (i.e. ensuring that services are accessible without discrimination or endangering populations); anticipating and preparing for environmental and technological disasters; and adapting to the more prominent role of new aid delivery methods (cash and vouchers, subcontracting to private suppliers, etc.). With the increasingly visible effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and droughts around the

world, competition for water resources is intensifying. In addition, due to population growth and rapid urbanization, it has become more and more difficult for the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene sector to provide services in both rural and urban areas. Despite its impressive commitment at all levels, the sector is not yet ready to meet the challenges of the future.

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGE

Operationally speaking, Groupe URD also highlights the lack of versatility in the choice of aid delivery methods. Each organization develops its method in isolation according to its own policy, without acknowledging whether this method is the most appropriate or asking if it could be optimally combined with other methods to provide sustainable humanitarian solutions. The rapidly changing world means that some methods may be less feasible while others may become the only realistic option depending on the context. In order to be able to use all of these methods, organizations need a much wider range of skills and experience than most WASH staff currently have.

* Urgence Réhabilitation Développement

PLEASE VISIT URD.ORG
FOR ALL GROUPE URD'S CONCLUSIONS
AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE CAPACITY
OF THE WATER, SANITATION
AND HYGIENE SECTOR

EMERGENCY RESPONSE: THREE OBSTACLES TO OVERCOME

BY
MSF (DOCTORS WITHOUT BORDERS)

The emergency response capacity of the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) sector has been under scrutiny for several years, and was also closely examined by Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) in 2017 as part of its Emergency Gap Project. One of the case studies presented in this report highlights three major obstacles that prevent timely and appropriate responses, particularly in the early stages of an emergency.

1 The development approach does not always align with the emergency response approach

The development approach involves the sustainability of programs, community participation, resilience, and working with local partners. In this approach, the 'soft' side is as important as the logistical and infrastructure development side. This approach is not to be criticized, as it has many advantages, and community engagement in the very early stages of an emergency can make a positive contribution to sanitation programming. However, this focus has prompted WASH actors – multi-mandate organizations especially – to gear their activities around a programmatic approach that is not always well suited to emergency interventions.

This situation has lessened the technical and logistical capacity within the sector. Fewer experienced WASH experts are available to implement and oversee field activities in emergency situations. Fewer organizations have the ready capacity to take on WASH activities in the emergency phase of a crisis, due to the different approaches taken and the cost and complexity of emergency operations.

2 There are not fewer Water, Sanitation and Hygiene actors, but they are less able to intervene in emergencies

There are many organizations in the humanitarian sector with the capacity to implement Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) activities. The question is whether this capacity can be utilized in complex humanitarian emergencies, especially in insecure contexts. The answer is no: few organizations are willing or able to respond in the first three months of an emergency.

The perception of increasing insecurity has had a pernicious effect on the number of organizations working in insecure contexts, and has expanded the number of contexts which are perceived as unsafe. Regardless of the truth of the matter as to how much security has actually worsened for humanitarian organizations, many have lost their ability to manage insecurity and have become risk-averse. Once this capacity has been lost, it is difficult for an organization to regain it without structural support or sustained investment.

Funding issues also affect the response capacity of the WASH sector. Humanitarian organizations that are dependent on funding from institutional donors must wait for funds to arrive before commencing operations. Therefore, it is difficult for most organizations to react to the initial phases of emergencies.

A lack of technical capacity is also a hindrance. Even with the will to intervene and the necessary funding, if an organization does not have the technical competency to implement quality programming, then the results will not be to the benefit of the populations.

3 Each organization uses its own lens

All organizations see WASH activities through their own lenses: in support of nutrition programming; as part of a longer-term and sustainable programming objective; as a variable in balancing preventive and curative services; as part of a response to a specific vulnerable group, such as children; or as a form of protection. MSF, of course, implements WASH activities in support of disease control and as one type of emergency life-saving programming. The net result of this situation is that no organization has as its sole focus the provision of emergency WASH programming. There is a diffusion of responsibility and a mish-mash of actors implementing activities that sometimes overlap.

YOU CAN CONSULT MSF'S EMERGENCY GAP PROJECT ONLINE:

ARHP.MSF.ES/EMERGENCY-GAP-FINAL-REPORT-BRIDGING-EMERGENCY-GAP

THE MSF CASE STUDY ON THE EVOLUTION OF EMERGENCY WASH IN HUMANITARIAN ACTION CAN BE FOUND HERE:

ARHP.MSF.ES/SITES/DEFAULT/FILES/THE-EVOLUTION-OF-EMERGENCY-WASH-CASE-STUDY-VF.PDF

“WATER IS BOTH THE SOURCE AND THE VICTIM OF CRISES”

INTERVIEW BY
SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE

As a major actor in development assistance throughout the world, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is a first-hand witness to the increasingly complex contexts of humanitarian operations. **Charles Tellier**, *Director of the Fragilities, Crises and Conflicts Division* and **Céline Robert**, *Head of the Water and Sanitation Division*, explain the difficulties that arise in the field and the approach that AFD has adopted to address them.

TO MAKE A SUSTAINABLE IMPACT IN THESE FRAGILE CONTEXTS, AFD HAS HAD TO ADAPT ITS APPROACHES, PARTNERSHIPS, METHODS AND TOOLS.

Today, humanitarian and development organizations are faced with increasingly complex contexts. How do you differentiate between “fragilities” and “crises”?

CHARLES TELLIER Your question highlights the importance of working in synergy. Fragilities are the determining factors, the breeding ground for crises. A crisis, however, is defined as a situation of sudden, protracted or chronic instability, which is likely to undermine a State, an institution or a population. To address the risks of exposure to such shocks, the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) is committed to building the capacities of societies, regions and institutions to prepare for, manage and recover from them. The agency is particularly involved in disaster risk reduction (cyclones, epidemics, etc.) since climate change will exacerbate the impact of crises.

What kind of challenges do these multifaceted crises pose for an institutional donor like AFD?

CHARLES TELLIER As part of its strategy, AFD has made two major commitments: to combat the fragilities of States and societies and also to safeguard social bonds. Since crises may be multi-dimensional and interlinked, and may become protracted or chronic, this makes them much more difficult to address. To make a sustainable impact in these fragile contexts, AFD has had to adapt its approaches, partnerships, methods and tools.

In fragile contexts, do Water and Sanitation present any specific challenges?

CÉLINE ROBERT Water is a vital, irreplaceable resource: it is therefore

both the “source” and the “victim” of crises. Water and Sanitation services are often captured, used or damaged by warring parties. It is, however, the extremely heterogeneous and volatile nature of current crises that places major constraints on water-related interventions, which require a long-term strategy. Multiple responses are therefore an absolute necessity and this invites us to rethink our operational methods by attempting to improve their adaptability and flexibility. That’s the main challenge. We must not forget, however, that AFD’s mandate focuses on long-term support for local and national authorities. Our operations within fragile contexts must therefore form part of a humanitarian-development nexus. In this respect, we are actively working on mobilizing field organizations with the ability to manage both the crisis and reconstruction periods.

To meet these new challenges, AFD is taking a new approach. What does this entail?

CHARLES TELLIER AFD has measured up to these challenges by adopting a cross-cutting approach. Through its French team, and alongside humanitarian and research actors, AFD funds programs to support local actors or civil society organizations, with one single goal: to consolidate peace for the benefit of populations. By precisely analysing the context and adapting our operational methods, we can achieve greater adaptability in the deployment of our programs and, more importantly, make sure our action is as relevant as possible. We encourage opinion surveys and fund research-action projects. Of course, our projects comply with the “Do no harm” approach. We have also developed dedicated financial tools, such as Crisis and Post-crisis Calls for Projects (APCC), to co-fund field programs that support

capacity-building for local civil society organizations (CSOs).

Can you give us an example of one of these new operating methods in the Water and Sanitation field?

CÉLINE ROBERT When we work in fragile contexts, each of our projects has its own specific characteristics in terms of the actors involved and the implementation methods used. However, we can pinpoint some similarities, regarding the time-frame for example. Projects generally last more than three years, so that they extend beyond the time required to address the symptoms of the crisis. In addition, our field partners are often international or non-governmental organizations that have a long history working in the intervention area, which means they have built up strong relationships with local and national actors and have expertise in implementing the “Do no harm” approach.

It is now crucial to take into account various social groups when working in the field. How does this apply to Water and Sanitation?

CÉLINE ROBERT This inclusive approach has always been important for AFD in every context. This is even more essential in volatile environments and as the number of crises continues to increase. In fragile contexts, we carry out in-depth field analyses to improve our understanding of the dynamics at play. For example, we are currently working on a study in Burkina Faso that includes the issues of forced displacement and nomadic populations, so as to integrate these aspects into the construction of our water supply project right from the start.

To make its action more effective, AFD has created the Minka Peace and Resilience Fund, among others. How is this progressing?

CHARLES TELLIER The Minka Peace and Resilience Fund, with an annual budget of over 200 million euros, forms the foundation of the French strategy to combat the fragility of States and societies. This Fund finances projects to

consolidate peace, which aim to address identified fragilities and build up the resilience of societies and institutions to tackle them. For example, the *I Yéké Oko* project (12 million euros) supports the re-establishment of social bonds and the revival of the rural economy in regions affected by the displacement of Central African populations, on both sides of the Central African Republic/Cameroon border. Minka combines rapid response and structural programs, and is characterized by its multi-sectoral approach to each region in crisis: the Fund targets four of the current major fragility zones: the Sahel, Lake Chad, Central Africa and the Middle East.

How do the Fragilities, Crises and Conflicts division and the Water and Sanitation division at AFD work together concerning programs and funding?

CÉLINE ROBERT When the Water and Sanitation division has to manage a project in a crisis and/or conflict zone, it calls on the Fragilities, Crises and Conflicts division to provide support in understanding both the context and the specific methodology for these zones. Concerning funding, our field offices act as a gateway for our partners.

What is AFD’s budget for Water and Sanitation?

CÉLINE ROBERT In 2019, AFD awarded 1.3 billion euros to the Water and Sanitation sector, representing an increase of over 30% in comparison to the average annual commitments for the 2014-2018 period. Subsidies (donations) reached a historic high in 2019, totalling almost 430 million euros (280 million euros in funds delegated by the European Union and 150 million from the French Government), or 30% of funding commitments. Regarding the Minka fund, 6% of funding is allocated exclusively to Water and Sanitation. It should be noted that, since Minka projects are by nature multi-sectoral, other cross-cutting funding may also include Water and Sanitation programs.

TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT CRISIS AND POST-CRISIS CALLS FOR PROJECTS (APCC):
[AFD.FR/EN/FINANCING-NGO-PROJECTS](https://afd.fr/en/financing-ngo-projects)



BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT IN DRC

IN KALEMIE, LACK OF FUNDING THREATENS THE FIGHT AGAINST CHOLERA

WITH LUCILE CHABOT,
HEAD OF PUBLIC PARTNERSHIPS

Since 2011, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has been working in the town of Kalemie in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) to rehabilitate and sustainably manage drinking water services to combat the spread of cholera. But the final phase of the project could be jeopardized due to a lack of funding and commitment from international decision-makers.

Kalemie is the largest town in the Tanganyika province, located in south-eastern DRC on the border with Tanzania. This city was the entry point for cholera into the country. Due to the neighbouring lakes and lakeside areas, this region is classified as a "source" area, i.e. a source of the epidemic, but also a sanctuary during calmer periods.

Lack of infrastructure, inadequate hygiene practices and environmental factors make Kalemie a high-risk area. In addition to this, the city's drinking water network, built in 1954, is still dilapidated and too undersized to cope with the influx of vulnerable communities into the area. Over the last ten years, due to population displacements following violent clashes in the DRC, the total population of Kalemie

has risen from 50,000 to around 317,490.

For the time being, only an estimated 29% of the population has access to water from the city's network. The rest of the population has to draw water from wells, or from Lake Tanganyika and the Lukuga River, which are both exposed to faecal contamination.

SOCIAL WATER MANAGEMENT

For this reason, since 2011, with the aim of reducing and eventually eradicating cholera epidemics, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has been working not only to rehabilitate Kalemie's water network, but also to help local structures and communities take ownership of the management and maintenance of this network while raising awareness concerning good hygiene practices.

Our teams support local authorities and members of civil society in developing the social and sustainable management of drinking water supplies. This enables two local associations, l'Association des Mamans pour la Sécurité et la Protection des Bornes Fontaines (The Association of Mothers for the Safety and Protection of Standpipes) and l'Association des fontainiers (The Association of Fountain Managers) to sell water in order to manage the standpipes efficiently and sustainably.

In exchange, they donate part of their revenue to the Congolese public water management company, REGIDESO. Together, these three organizations also contribute to raising users' awareness by advising them about good practices and informing them about the existence of emergency chlorination points.

During the fourth phase of the project, which took place from November 2018 to June 2019, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams participated in the renovation and construction of 3,949 linear metres of network, for the benefit of 350,918 people. Thanks to the Oudin-Santini law, which enables local authorities and water agencies to allocate 1% of their revenue from water and sanitation services to international cooperation programs, several partners provided funding for part of the work.

These included the Syndicat des Eaux Île-de-France (SEDIF), the town of Blois, the Communauté d'agglomération du Pays Virois, the Agence de l'eau Loire Bretagne, and the Agence de l'eau Rhône Méditerranée Corse.

THE FINAL PHASE OF THE PROJÉT IN JEOPARDY

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL is still struggling to find the necessary funds to complete the restoration of a durable water network in Kalemie, and thus continue fighting the root causes of cholera. Lack of sufficient funding could jeopardize the implementation of the fifth and final phase of the project. This phase is all the more crucial as it will consist in implementing a water master plan and training local stakeholders in the management and maintenance of the network before handing it over to them so that the network is sustainable. However, until this funding arrives, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL may have to suspend its activities in Kalemie. This would threaten the project's continuity by breaking the ties and trust built up over the years with the authorities and the local population.

There are several reasons for this difficulty in finding funding. On the one hand, the persistence of cholera cases in Tanganyika province is not widely publicized, and on the other hand, this already fragile country is gripped by severe security crises. As a result, donors are increasingly reluctant to commit to such programs. For several years now, both in this province and also in Haut-Lomami, the Kivus, Ituri and now the Kasais, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has observed that humanitarian NGOs have been withdrawing from the fight against cholera and persistent diseases, due to a lack of sufficient funds.

THE INERTIA OF INTERNATIONAL DECISION-MAKERS

This cruel lack of funding is also a reflection of the inertia of certain international decision-makers who do not realize that access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene is almost systematically at the heart of an effective response to epidemics and that a medical response, on its own, is not enough. These decision-makers reject most of the attempts by humanitarian actors to propose practical, long-term solutions. And yet, these same decision-makers criticize the fact that NGOs use public funds to replicate the same mitigation activities every year.

Since they also act as emergency "firefighters" in epidemic zones in Kalemie, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams are aware that managing cholera cases, chlorinating water points and disinfecting infected homes can save lives. But under no circumstances will the latter eliminate this scourge. In its 2018 Barometer, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL appealed to all humanitarian and development actors, both public and private, involved in the DRC to work together to implement a common plan to combat the deadly – but easily controllable – disease of cholera. Only structural projects, and particularly those involving the development of infrastructure, which are still too rare in the DRC, will put an end to the disease.

**READ SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S
MANIFESTO TO FINALLY ERADICATE
CHOLERA IN THE DRC ON:
[SOLIDARITES.ORG/EN/COUNTRIES/
D-R-CONGO/MANIFEST-ELIMINATE-
CHOLERA-DRC/](https://solidarites.org/en/countries/d-r-congo/manifest-eliminate-cholera-drc/)**



BY MARIE-FRANÇOISE SITNAM,
PROTECTION OFFICER, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE

DIGNITY, HYGIENE AND SECURITY

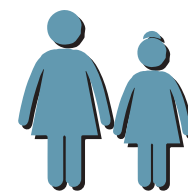
The challenges of protecting access to water and sanitation

Women, children, the disabled, LGBT+: several population groups are more vulnerable than others and therefore have specific needs. Lack of attention to these needs can hinder or block their access to water and sanitation.

Conflicts, natural disasters, voluntary or forced displacement affect people differently depending on their age, gender, sexual orientation, level of mobility, ethnicity, cultural or political perspective, values, attitudes or beliefs. However, certain groups such as women and girls, children, people with a disability or

reduced mobility, the elderly or people belonging to so-called marginal groups (LGBT+ community, castes, etc.) are less visible and therefore have fewer opportunities to express their opinions within the community. But these groups have needs, priorities and capacities that are sometimes very different from other groups under consideration, which has a

direct impact on how they can or cannot access Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services. It is therefore crucial to look more deeply into how crisis situations affect them and the barriers to access they may encounter, while taking into account their specific characteristics and analysing the power dynamics that impede equitable access to resources.



WOMEN AND GIRLS

In many contexts, women are responsible for water collection and domestic chores. Yet they may find it difficult to participate in community decision-making. A factor as insignificant as the location of toilets, showers or a water point can have a severe impact on the daily lives of women and girls.

The distance between water and sanitation services and homes can make even the simplest daily tasks, such as using the toilet or fetching water for household chores, much more difficult. A woman caring for young children is unlikely to leave her home to go to the toilet if she has to go a long way, or to go to the water point if the collection time is too long.

Worrying survival practices have developed: if there are no toilets nearby, one in three women prefer to relieve themselves in the open air, close to where they live, which increases psychological stress due to the fear of being seen and the feeling of loss of dignity. Many women say they prefer to wait until nightfall to take care of their personal hygiene, making them "prisoners" during the day.

Gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual assault are also significant barriers. Women and girls who prefer to relieve themselves after dark, out of sight, face an increased risk to their physical safety. Today, we know that one in three women (and girls) have already been sexually assaulted. This very often leaves women (and girls) with an impossible choice between hygiene, safety and dignity.

For teenage girls, managing their first period, between the ages of 10 and 19, is particularly problematic. Depending on the context, they face more restrictions on their movements and behaviour than other groups. Very rarely included in discussions regarding specific community needs, adolescent girls have little opportunity to express concerns about their feminine hygiene or safety.

The issue of the economic inclusion of women and teenage girls in water and sanitation programs is also a challenge. In some crisis contexts, women and adolescent girls often have less access to financial resources to meet their needs. But it is very complicated for them to obtain paid work within water access programs or to receive training on the maintenance of WASH infrastructure (schedules in conflict with their domestic chores, childcare responsibilities, lack of access to feminine hygiene products, etc.). However, they are expected to clean latrines or common areas on a voluntary basis.



LGBT+ COMMUNITY AND MARGINALIZED GROUPS

LGBT+ communities and marginalized groups are very often unable to share the same spaces and infrastructures as the rest of the population due to cultural taboos but also due to psychological pressure, threats and physical violence.



CHILDREN

Since children are less involved in decision-making, and less well-informed, they have fewer opportunities to say 'no' and are highly dependent on their parents or other adults to provide for their needs and safety. However, many WASH responses do not systematically take into account the presence of children in the target population – and therefore the need to incorporate appropriate facilities such as toilets and washbasins that cater for their height and size, or that are large enough to allow the adults on whom they depend to assist them.

When they are forced to use unsuitable devices or systems, children are thus exposed to health risks, but also to risks of physical abuse through their proximity to other adults within sanitary facilities.



PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY

They often feel "invisible". People with a disability, like older people, may have reduced mobility and therefore special needs. Yet they are very often under-represented in community participation actions. In crisis situations, they are also exposed to increased risks of neglect or moral and physical violence due to the erosion of social safety nets and community support networks.

Without their specific needs taken into consideration, people living with disabilities and the elderly encounter difficulties in the daily use of water points and sanitary facilities: due to their reduced mobility, they may inadvertently touch faeces when using standard toilets, or slip on the wet surfaces of water points or shower areas. These difficulties increase their psychological stress related to the use of facilities and accentuate their sense of loss of dignity.

Without sanitation, thousands of children suffer from diarrhoea, and waterborne diseases due to unsafe water are responsible for one in two cases of malnutrition. In 2019, 673 million people were still practicing open defecation. How can this be explained and what are the realities behind these figures?



ACCESS TO SANITATION: PROGRESS, BUT A MIXED REALITY

BY JULIEN EYRARD, WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE
TECHNICAL ADVISOR FOR THE ASIA REGION, ACTION CONTRE LA FAIM

Ending open defecation is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The world is making progress towards this goal: the latest JMP¹ report shows that 23 countries have reduced open defecation rates through actions like Community Led Total Sanitation (CLTS)² campaigns. These virtuous and effective campaigns put an end to open defecation for adults, but one category of the population is excluded: toddlers who defecate "on the spot" or in cloths. If parents wash these cloths in the river, this amounts to open defecation, which in turn creates a certain level of environmental contamination. This level will not be high enough to cause serious diarrhoea, but constant exposure will be sufficient to cause other types of pathologies that can lead to undernutrition due to malabsorption of nutrients. In response to this situation, Action contre la Faim (ACF) is developing a "Baby Wash" campaign, which aims to raise awareness among parents and caregivers about

good hygiene and excreta management practices. This is an essential approach since some families are unaware of the contamination risks posed by young children's faecal matter.

THE SPECIAL CASE OF INDIA

India is a true "kingmaker" in terms of reducing open defecation, since it is the country where it was most practiced. Until 5 years ago, more than 50% of the population had no access to toilets. This is the only country, with a 47% reduction in open defecation, which has achieved the progress observed in 2019. How? Thanks to the launch in October 2014 of the "Swachh Bharat" (Clean India) campaign. Gandhi himself used to say that "sanitation is more important than independence".

As soon as he was elected, Narendra Modi, claiming nationalist Hinduism and Gandhian heritage, launched this

campaign and made it a priority. Thanks to a substantial budget of 13 billion euros, the program has enabled the construction of 111 million latrines in the country in just 5 years. These are hopeful figures which, unfortunately, do not reflect the abandonment of open defecation: there is always a gap between having access to toilets and actually using them. Open defecation is an ancient practice that remains tenacious in some Indian environments. It is therefore necessary to change mentalities and behaviour so that the program is also successful in terms of use. However, the campaign seeks above all to "bring in the numbers" by counting only the toilets and not their usage rate.

In India, as elsewhere, it is time for civil society to take action to change attitudes and call on leaders to show political will to end the scourge of open defecation. Without sanitation, there can be no sustainable development.

¹ JMP : Joint Monitoring Program, a UNICEF and WHO goal monitoring system
² An integrated approach that consists in encouraging a community to analyse its own practices and their consequences, and to take action on water and sanitation

WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF FRANCE'S NEW INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY?

BY SANDRA MÉTAYER,
COALITION EAU

France recently adopted an international strategy for water and sanitation for the period 2020-2030, after a consultation process led by the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE) involving many stakeholders. A step forward that satisfies a longstanding demand of Coalition Eau and responds to a commission from the Inter-ministerial Committee for International Cooperation and Development.

French action concerning all the major current issues, in particular the effective implementation of the Human Rights to water and sanitation, the management of water resources and the protection and preservation of aquatic ecosystems.

That the first priority relates to governance issues is interesting; this integrates important orientations such as the inclusiveness of services, support to local stakeholders, structuring of the sector, participation and accountability, but also the management of trans-border basins and the strengthening of international water governance.

However, the proposals are very broad and most of them are not broken down into specific objectives. The main commitments and major actions that France wishes to carry out to meet these WASH challenges are not explicit. The document fails to send a clear political message.

NO QUANTIFIED TARGETS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The third strategic priority is dedicated to the means for implementation. In terms of Official Development Assistance (ODA), the strategy acknowledges the strong predominance of the "loans" instrument and notes the need to increase grants. It plans to improve targeting towards the Least Developed Countries, in particular the Priority Poor Countries of the French cooperation, and to increase the share of ODA channelled through NGOs. These orientations are heading in the right direction but face a major shortcoming: no quantified targets are specified.

With regard to sanitation, the document is more specific. It plans to balance financing between water and sanitation, with an

ambitious target which is to be welcomed: in 2030, half of the sector's ODA must be dedicated to sanitation.

Finally, while the strategy proposes an analysis of the WASH action taken by the MEAE Crisis and Support Centre during humanitarian crises, there is no guidance on emergency funding.

THE ISSUE OF ENFORCEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Following its adoption, it is now essential to ensure the proper enforcement of the strategy by communicating it to the State services and all public actors responsible for its implementation and by allocating adequate resources for its implementation.

To ensure monitoring, the strategy incorporates an accountability framework which associates indicators with each strategic priority. This framework will enhance the transparency of France's action. While it includes the monitoring of the main Official Development Assistance data, the framework does not, however, assess certain orientations, particularly those relating to governance. It will be largely based on the indicators that the Agence Française de Développement will use over the period.

At a time when our sector suffers from a lack of political leadership at government level, let us hope that the new MEAE strategy constitutes an "internal" advocacy tool that demonstrates the importance of WASH for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda as a whole and enables greater political and financial prioritization of this sector in French international cooperation.

The political policy orientation document for France's external action in the field of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) presents two objectives: (i) universal and equitable access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, and (ii) Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) at the level of river basins.

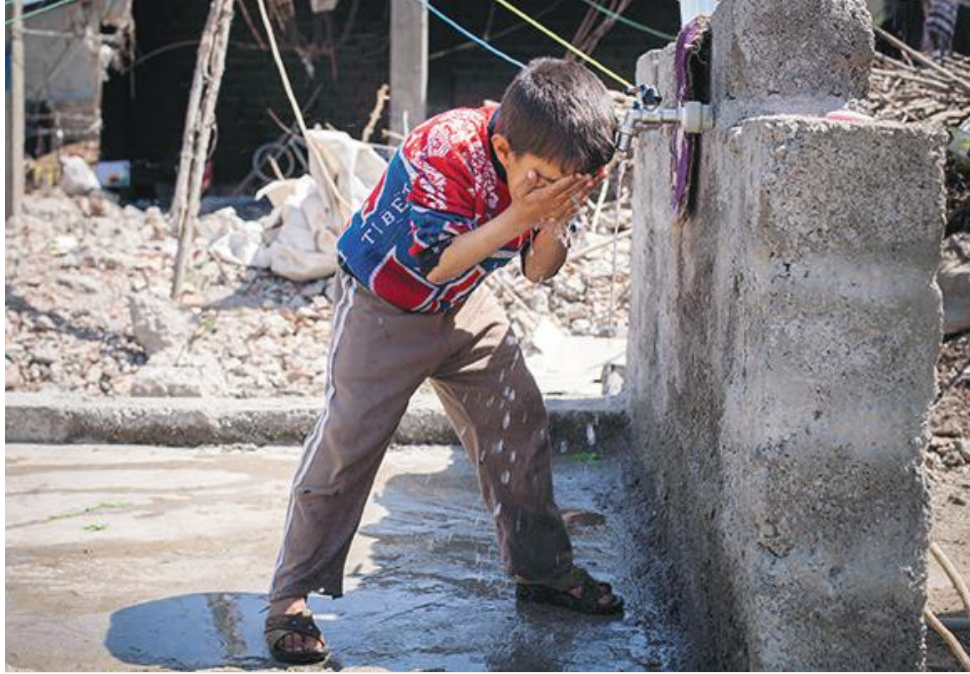
In order to reach these objectives, the government has adopted the following strategic priorities:

- 1. To improve governance of the water and sanitation sector, from local to global level;**
- 2. To reinforce water security for all in a context of increasing pressure on resources and growing water-related crises;**
- 3. To strengthen the effectiveness of means and tools, by giving priority to the development of innovative solutions and solidarity-based financing mechanisms.**

RELEVANT BUT VERY BROAD ORIENTATIONS

The first two strategic priorities provide an overview of the orientations for

In anticipation of the 2020 municipal elections and the ten-year anniversary of the UN's acknowledgement of the Human Rights to water and sanitation, Coalition Eau and 30 partner organizations are launching the "Water is a Right!" campaign. The objective is to mobilize the government and elected officials regarding the persistent challenges of access to water and sanitation, in France and around the world.



BY ÉDITH GUIOCHON,
ADVOCACY OFFICER, COALITION EAU

WATER ISN'T EARNED, IT'S A RIGHT!

AN ALARMING GLOBAL SITUATION

France is committed at the international level to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations, and in particular to "guaranteeing universal access to water and the efficient management of water resources" (SDG n°6). However, ten years after the acknowledgement of the Human Rights to drinking water and sanitation, the challenges are still immense!

- **2.2 billion people around the world still do not have access to safe water**
- **4.2 billion people have no safe sanitation facilities**
- **1,000 children die every day of diarrhoea as a result of inadequate access to water and sanitation**

FRANCE ALSO LAGGING BEHIND

Today, in Metropolitan France, 1.4 million people still do not have access to safe water, and 7.5 million people do not have adequate sanitation facilities (UN 2019 data). The price of water is also an issue: nearly one million French households have difficulty paying their water bills (to remain affordable, the bill should not exceed 3% of actual household income). And in the French Overseas Departments and Territories, the figures are even more alarming, with access rates sometimes similar to those in some developing countries.

THE GOVERNMENT'S ESSENTIAL ROLE

It is urgent that the French State plays its full role to enable a rapid change in political trajectory and to ensure that this

essential service is finally accessible and affordable for all, including the poorest. These political stakes are playing out both nationally (in Metropolitan France and the Overseas territories), through the acknowledgement and effective implementation of the Human Rights to water and sanitation, but also in terms of international solidarity, through stronger political will and ambitious and effective official development assistance for water and sanitation.

A 'MANIFEST'EAU' FOR MUNICIPAL CANDIDATES

The action of local authorities, who are responsible for Water and Sanitation, is essential and their impact is significant, with the development of ambitious and innovative political measures, both within their territory and in the context of decentralized cooperation. This is why the candidates in the 2020 municipal elections are invited to sign a "Manifest'Eau" (Water Manifesto) containing 5 commitments to take practical action, during the six years of their mandate, to support universal rights to water and sanitation, within their territory and internationally.

In the coming weeks and months, through mobilization actions and with the support of the actress and director Aïssa Maïga, the campaign's patron, the "Water is a Right" partners will send their recommendations to local elected officials and candidates in municipal elections, but also to the government and parliamentarians, in order to make 2020 a landmark year for the Human Rights to water and sanitation.

FOLLOW THE "WATER IS A RIGHT" CAMPAIGN
ON [LEAVESTUNDRIT.FR](https://leavestundroit.fr)



WATER IS A RIGHT! A campaign sponsored by Aïssa Maïga

The "Water is a Right!" campaign is sponsored by french actress, author and director Aïssa Maïga, who is strongly committed and sensitive to the issues surrounding access to water and sanitation.

Among her many projects, Aïssa Maïga therefore took up her camera and made a documentary film *Marcher sur l'eau* ("Walking on Water"), which will be released in autumn 2020.

Co-produced by Bonne Pioche and Echo Studio, this documentary film shows, through the eyes of an eleven-year-old girl living in a village in the Azawak region of Niger, the construction of a deep well by the NGO Amman Imman, and the gradual arrival of water in this region (16 communities concerned). The film illustrates the complex issues surrounding the lack of access to drinking water, the role of women and the impacts of climate change in West Africa. This

story eloquently illustrates the ideas put forward by the campaign.

As the year 2020 marks 10 years since the United Nations recognized the Human Rights to water and sanitation, the film "Walking on Water" and the campaign "Water is a Right" both resonate with a strong message about the importance of access to water for all! Events will be organized throughout the year to highlight the fact that water is a right.



SOLUTIONS & INNOVATIONS

To adapt to our changing world and continue to provide quality aid, international solidarity actors must constantly update their approach by reviewing not only their operating methods but also their ways of thinking.

INNOVATION IS THE FUTURE OF THE WASH SECTOR!

BY ANNE-LISE LAVAU, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS
FOR PROGRAMS, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Wherever water is in crisis, several solutions and innovations are already being implemented on a daily basis. Now the challenge is to make them accessible to all.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams work every day to provide quality humanitarian aid, seeking to best meet the needs of populations affected by crises. This quality approach that guides our action raises questions about our capacity for situational analysis, including needs assessment, and our ability to adapt to the many changes in the humanitarian contexts in which we work: how can we adjust our methods of intervention to a deteriorating context? This concern for flexibility is essential for building a relationship of trust with beneficiary populations, partners and donors.

In this last part of the Barometer, we have chosen to talk about the "half-full glass".

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL calls on all international solidarity actors to put on their rose-tinted glasses, which filter out the problems, in order to highlight the solutions and innovations implemented daily in situations where water is in crisis. As we know, crisis contexts that are subject to major constraints (deterioration of the security and food context, tensions over natural resources, logistical constraints and restricted access...) are conducive to innovation. To be more accountable and to maximize the impact of our actions, let's work together to establish a comprehensive learning and improvement process that will result in the development of solid technical expertise, the strengthening of MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning) activities and support for humanitarian innovation on a daily basis.

For SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, humanitarian innovation can refer to something unheard of, something new; a search for improvement and/or a

perpetual adjustment to changes (in a context, in the needs of populations, in the tools available, etc.). The innovation approach is therefore understood as a tool at the service of the quality approach. It relates to our ability to demonstrate the quality of our operational action, our added value as a humanitarian actor and, ultimately, our humanitarian impact.

Low-tech solutions and innovations (accessible to all, local, simple) are the future of the sector. These technologies, services and know-how meet essential needs, and are sustainable and accessible.

Too often in our work, we are asked to observe and analyse problems in order to find solutions. But some of these solutions are already in place and this invites us to take a positive look at the sector and at the qualitative improvement of responses by promoting specific initiatives among all actors.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

- N° 8** Apply systemic and situational analysis frameworks that include the analysis of criteria on deteriorating contexts.
- N° 9** Develop dynamic, integrated, multi-actor, multi-annual responses that anticipate and adapt to deteriorations (or improvements) in contexts.
- N° 10** Identify, integrate and support the scaling-up of "low-tech" innovative solutions, to improve the impact of our interventions.

BY THIERRY BENLAHSEN,

DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

OVERCOMING RISK AVERSION

If our judgment were based solely on humanitarian plans and “4Ws” (mapping of NGO presence and response coverage) available from humanitarian coordination bodies, it would appear that water and sanitation needs are being met, even in hard-to-reach communities. Claiming to be able to reach these areas has become a major “selling point” for many organizations and agencies.

In the field, a completely different reality can be observed: local Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) teams left to their own devices, heavy reliance on private service providers without a monitoring framework, lack of respect for minimum quality standards, implementation of emergency facilities that no longer correspond to the communities' recovery levels.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL is more convinced than ever that effective international aid – regardless of the response timeframe – requires physical, tangible presence in the most isolated communities. But this means revisiting certain intellectual stereotypes in order to understand these areas of intervention.

DECONSTRUCTING THE SECURITY NARRATIVE

Yes, some contexts are very high risk, but the myth of the humanitarian worker operating during a bombing raid is a mental image from the past. The famous “front line” now only exists in very few contexts of intervention and has been gradually replaced by areas of diffuse instability. In many areas of contested sovereignty, such as in northern Mali or north-eastern Syria, the leadership of one party involved in a conflict often depends

on its acceptance by the surrounding communities. Building our own acceptance around relevant and quality activities and infrastructure is therefore a much more effective method of risk management than negotiations with any one group.

DECONSTRUCTING THE FALLACY “HARD-TO-REACH AREAS = EMERGENCY RESPONSE”

No, working in dangerous areas does not necessarily mean setting up emergency activities. These activities are obviously necessary but they are not sufficient, even right at the start of an intervention. In Liptako Gourma, between Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali, tensions between displaced and host populations are high due to a historical lack of accessible infrastructure, and would be intensified by an emergency response targeting displaced people only. The priority must therefore be the establishment of basic services for all populations, complemented by relief and support activities targeting vulnerabilities, not status. This requires strong coordination of expertise, between acceptance management, technical, social and economic engineering and capacity building (district and departmental levels). We are far from what a rapid intervention of a few months can achieve, and collaboration with development actors, private partners and local authorities is the only effective option, under humanitarian leadership in the first instance, because of access issues. Unfortunately, how many times can we still hear – particularly from development donors – that they are not interested in this type of humanitarian action that is considered too short-

sighted? Will this bias continue for a long time to disadvantage areas that should nevertheless be given priority in terms of structural responses? When are we finally going to work together?

PROXIMITY IS A TOOL!

Relevance implies an institutional commitment: the combination of a detailed understanding of the issues faced by populations, communities, stakeholders and local team members; and the analytical distance and projections that can only be provided by technical collaborators with the capacity for hindsight that only experience in several contexts can bring. The delegation of analysis and positioning to purely local teams (i.e. from the intervention zone only) amounts to an internal transfer of responsibility, and therefore in the long term to a transfer of risk and acceptance of failure.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's work has been based for years on a very close relationship between its head office, country coordination and base management teams, whether expatriate or local. The commitment of all our employees to our teams in the field – even the most complicated ones – is an organizational obligation. This enables the structure to ensure that all levels of the organization have an intimate grasp of the issues related to our activities, and to guarantee that the right decisions are taken in times of crisis.

In a way, it is our appetite for risk that protects us from that same risk.

And in the end, we will all bear this risk individually.

MAINTAINING ACCESS IN CHALLENGING CONTEXTS

BY XAVIER LAUTH, EMERGENCY TEAM MANAGER,
SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Access to the most vulnerable populations can rarely be guaranteed all the time and in all circumstances. It requires a sound understanding of the context, as well as daily action to gain and maintain the acceptance of all local actors.

Access to the most vulnerable populations has always been a central issue in the implementation of our operations and is at the heart of SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's values. To take aid further, our mandate is to understand, integrate and respond to the expectations of the communities we assist, by working with people as closely as possible. Upholding this key principle, which may seem natural for a humanitarian actor, can be complex or even impossible due to the numerous barriers that obstruct humanitarian access in the countries where we work. These obstacles may take various forms: violent armed groups that refuse any assistance for local populations, or roads cut off by an earthquake. They may also include compulsory administrative constraints on travel or on carrying out humanitarian action in a neutral and impartial manner.

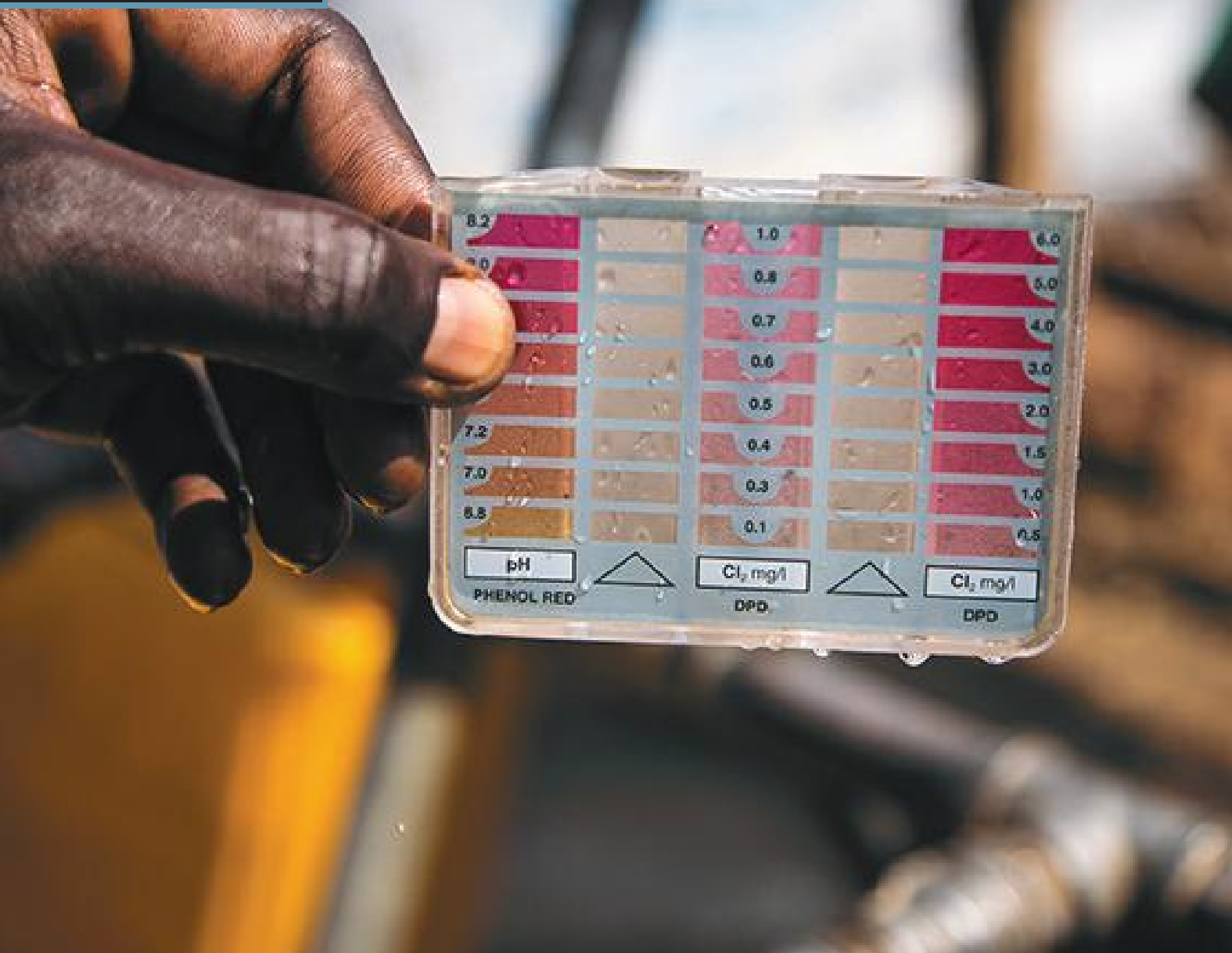
For SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, access is defined as the ability of humanitarian actors to reach the population affected by a crisis, without causing them any harm, as well as the affected population's ability to access humanitarian assistance. This lies at the very heart of our mandate, and these barriers and constraints form an integral part of our work, which is to provide assistance to those who are most in need, regardless of whether they belong to one group or another.

Access therefore hinges on respect for local populations, and on our ability to project action in risk zones, then to manage and follow through on these projections. Certain populations are frequently kept away from humanitarian assistance. There are various reasons for this: political motives, avoiding the presence of witnesses, pressure on an opposing group, or corruption on the part of one individual. In certain cases, access may be closed off due to a misunderstanding or to poor communication between the local community and humanitarian workers, who do not have the same social conventions or the same expectations.

So there are no ready-made solutions to obtain access, let alone to negotiate it. Access must be established then maintained through everyone's day-to-day work. It must be a central element when analysing any humanitarian action and sustained by a critical, analytical perspective on our operational contexts. For example, a badly communicated message during the recruitment of staff could send the wrong signal to a community or to a local authority representative, which could cause offence and close off access to a community. A project could be jeopardized due to lack of preparation for the obstacles on a road, or insufficient evaluation of the financial costs to reach one person.

Access to a population can be restored by setting up an air bridge, which enables a fleet of planes to reach an isolated population, or through clear communication with warring parties about the humanitarian mandate so that they accept this principle. It may be consolidated in volatile areas with the support of a beneficiary community that will guarantee the security of an NGO. It may also be resumed simply due to a change in administration, when a more accommodating authority is placed in charge of travel authorizations within a region. It is rare that humanitarian access in the field can be guaranteed all the time and in all circumstances. Sometimes, it is therefore necessary to anticipate that access will only be secured for a short time. One example, which receives the most media coverage, is the passage of large humanitarian convoys following high level negotiations. At a more modest level, and yet just as transiently, the installation of a water point that has changed lives in one village may encourage the neighbouring community to put pressure on leaders, local authorities or armed groups who had previously refused humanitarian assistance.

Access is rarely a question of major international negotiations. Instead, it relies on daily action that has been designed to fit the context, which enables us to be accepted, recognized and to carry out our work. When this work is well done and takes into consideration the specific social dynamics of each location, then this is the only passport to acceptance that will always remain valid. It is not always enough to guarantee us access, but without it nothing is possible.



BY MELISSA OPRYSZKO,
HEALTH TEAM, OFDA

NEW DATA-BASED, CONTEXTUALLY-RELEVANT APPROACHES

AND TRACY WISE,
WASH ADVISOR, OFDA

To improve the quality and effectiveness of their responses, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) actors must ensure that their programming approaches are based on relevant data and appropriate to the context in which they work.

Solutions and innovations to address humanitarian WASH needs are not fancy new filters or other engineering marvels. To meet the challenges of complex emergencies that are overwhelming humanitarian response capabilities, we must approach innovation differently and identify solutions more broadly. This is particularly important for the United States Agency for International Development's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (soon to be part of the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance) as almost 90% of 2019 funding for WASH programming supported populations affected by complex emergencies. More focused attention on improved delivery, market systems analysis, and behaviour change interventions are key to improving the quality and effectiveness of responses. Ensuring WASH programming approaches are founded on a robust evidence-base and are contextually relevant underpins these initiatives.

MARKET-BASED PROGRAMMING

Complex emergencies are increasingly occurring in urban and high-density areas where limited space, advanced networks and governmental authorities compel working within local systems including markets, administrative and infrastructure networks. WASH implementers need to work effectively with local utilities, water vendors, and large market systems rather than creating parallel systems specific to emergency response. This approach, market-based programming (MBP) in emergency WASH, is expanding and becoming more readily applied by NGOs. OFDA considers cash and vouchers important components of MBP, but partners can do more, such as short-term targeted support to market actors to restore market systems after a crisis. Professionalizing community-led systems through programs, such as Oxfam's in South Sudan¹, as well as mapping private water market actors and piloting the resulting priority recommendations

for improved service delivery, such as CRS in Nigeria, are examples of OFDA's recent support. Importantly, OFDA has decided to mainstream these approaches into existing programming, rather than continuing stand-alone global awards, as a lesson learned in increasing uptake across partners. OFDA has also adopted the Grand Bargain² Multipurpose Cash Outcome indicators that incorporate sector-relevant concerns through the inclusion of WASH-related coping strategy indicators.

INNOVATIVE HYGIENE PROMOTION TOOLS

Another OFDA priority is contextually based behaviour change tools, rather than health-based education, to improve hygiene promotion and maintenance of WASH structures. Long recognized as an under-served area of emergency WASH, hygiene behaviour promotion is now moving well-beyond bland health education messaging and enabling populations to apply good practices to their changed circumstances by exploring motivations and barriers. The OFDA-funded WASH'Em project³ focuses on innovative rapid assessment tools using decision-making software to hone in on people's motivations in crises when time, resources and attention are limited. Other recent approaches include using nudges, play soap, and Sesame Street characters adapted to the context to entice improved hygiene behaviours through positive, fun activities aimed at the whole family, not just caregivers.

CREATIVE SOLUTIONS AND DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS

Capacity building of humanitarian WASH actors continues to be a challenge requiring creative solutions to address limits in time, staff movement, and access to materials. Dissemination of research findings in practical innovative programming is critical. OFDA supports

academically rigorous field data collection around commonly implemented but under-researched activities such as bucket chlorination, and laboratory work⁴ for emerging questions such as safe handwashing practice in Ebola outbreaks. Partnerships between implementing organizations and academic partners promote guidance and tools based on sound evidence that remain applicable to real world programming.

Returning to the idea of "new" technology, advances in solar energy have made this intervention widely applicable to emergency contexts due to lower costs and greater efficiencies. The WASH sector must stay up-to-date to take advantage of these improvements; the OFDA-funded Global Water and Solar Initiative⁵ provides real-time design and best practice support to humanitarian WASH NGOs. OFDA also supports a new generation of WASH staff through formal approaches to education, such as the in-development Humanitarian WASH Master's degree being developed in the Middle East by ACF.

The increasing complexity and scale of humanitarian WASH responses demand continued innovation with broad dissemination. OFDA WASH supports these solutions through sector-wide capacity building initiatives, targeted research to expand the evidence base for effective programming, and we applaud partners' uptake of improved approaches specifically adapted to emergencies, such as market-based programming and behaviour communication.

¹ Supporting sustainable water service delivery in a protracted crisis, OXFAM, 2018

² The Grand Bargain, launched at the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016, is an agreement between some of the largest donors and humanitarian organizations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.

³ <https://washem.info/>

⁴ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5322913/>

⁵ https://energypedia.info/wiki/Solar_Pumping_Toolkit_-_The_Global_Solar_%26_Water_Initiative



HAITI NO NEW CHOLERA CASES FOR ONE YEAR

BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL
OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT IN HAITI

AND WANGCOS LAURORE,
DEPUTY PROGRAMME COORDINATOR IN HAITI

Since February 2019, no new cholera cases have been registered in Haiti, which had been ravaged by the disease for ten years. This victory has been made possible by the combined efforts and coordination of all the actors fighting the epidemic.

Cholera broke out in Haiti in October 2010, in the aftermath of the earthquake that devastated the country. The disease left 9,792 people dead and over 82,000 were admitted to hospital¹. To fight the epidemic, the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP) and the National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation (DINEPA) drew up a 10-year plan to eradicate cholera (2012-2022), with support from technical and financial partners. This plan comprises three main strategic priorities: coordination and support for

decision-making, access to preventative and curative treatment and combating transmission of the disease. From 2010 to 2013, humanitarian actors implemented an emergency "knock-out" response to save lives.

ZERO CHOLERA CASES SINCE FEBRUARY 2019

From March to September 2014, thanks to the efforts of the MSPP and all its partners, there was an unprecedented decrease in the incidence of cholera since the epidemic broke out in the country. However, during the third quarter of the same year, a new outbreak occurred in Port-au-Prince, the nation's capital city. An investigation showed that this upsurge was caused by the contamination of one of the water points that supplied the city. Once again, the epidemic spread to all the other towns in the country. This turn of events revealed weaknesses in the country's institutions, but also showed that

the actors fighting cholera had not been vigilant enough; they thought they had already triumphed over the disease.

At the time of writing, no new cases of cholera have been registered in the country since February 2019. Haiti has taken a leap forward, knocking about two years off the timetable in the 2012 eradication plan. This outcome has been made possible by the combined efforts and coordination of the actors fighting the cholera epidemic in Haiti.

INSTITUTIONAL AND COMMUNITY COORDINATION

The organization of regular meetings that brought together all the actors working in the Water, Sanitation, Hygiene and Health fields, in the various departments of the country, enabled more effective epidemiological surveillance at the institutional and community level.

At the institutional level, sentries were posted in health centres to ensure that epidemiological data was collected and centralized. Stool samples were taken and analysed by the national laboratory to detect the *Vibrio cholerae* bacterium quickly. The results were available within an acceptable turnaround time: two weeks to one month.

At the community level, the challenge was to mobilize local actors (organizations, multi-skilled health workers, dignitaries, etc.) and to build their capacity to take action by providing training on the treatment of cholera cases (oral rehydration, disinfection of the sick person's home, water purification treatment) and on reporting information on rumours of suspected cases. This information was analysed during coordination meetings, and appropriate action was taken. When cholera cases were confirmed, this enabled community response teams to carry out more detailed investigations and implement another series of measures: widening the cordon sanitaire, setting up chlorination and handwashing points, disinfecting latrines, etc.

In 2015, NGOs, Public Health teams and National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation teams took joint action in areas where there were recurring outbreaks of cholera. Working together to implement the response enabled the coordination of humanitarian activities and bolstered their overall impact. A case tracking system was set up, and every confirmed case was investigated in detail to identify the index cases and thus cut off any disease transmission routes.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S ACTION

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has been actively fighting cholera in Haiti since 2010, with support from its main funding partners², and has played an important role in coordinating the various actors. It provided technical support to collect epidemiological data, analyse this data and map out at-risk areas.

In keeping with its mandate, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL deployed teams to the most remote, difficult-to-reach areas

in order to save lives. It also played a leading role in setting up departmental investigation commissions in the West, South East and Nippes departments to consolidate operations in response to cholera outbreaks.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams participated in all sectoral meetings, not only to stimulate discussions but also to suggest solutions. The creation of joint teams with the National Directorate for Water Supply and Sanitation bolstered "knock-out" operations.

Actions to support other partners were also carried out in other departments throughout the country. SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL also provided logistical support to transport joint teams and take Cary-Blair samples (containers used to collect and store stool samples) to the national laboratory.

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams also organized training sessions to help state institutions, their partners and community focal points gain greater autonomy.

Finally, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL worked with universities to carry out scientific studies so as to confirm or refute certain assumptions, in particular regarding home disinfection or environmental conditions.

VIGILANCE

The results achieved since February 2019 bear witness to the successful cholera eradication activities in Haiti, but the lessons learnt in 2014 mean that all actors must remain extremely vigilant. The battle is not yet over. Investments must be made to reduce risks, in order to consolidate the progress already achieved and, in time, to enable the poorest Haitian communities to live in a cholera-free environment.

¹ Data published by the Ministry of Public Health and Population (MSPP).
² UNICEF, ECHO (European Commission) and GAC (Canada).

FOR MORE DETAILS, THE SOLIDARITÉS
INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL REPORT,
"HAITI, 10 YEARS AFTER
THE EARTHQUAKE" IS AVAILABLE
ON [SOLIDARITES.ORG](https://solidarites.org)

"ALLOCATING MORE FUNDS TO FIGHT CHOLERA"

BY MARIA-LUISA
FORNARA,
UNICEF REPRESENTATIVE
IN HAITI

"It has now been almost exactly a year since any new cases of cholera were confirmed in Haiti. The last confirmed cholera case dates back to 4 February 2019. This means that the cholera eradication activities have been successful. UNICEF played a key role in fighting cholera. Working with other United Nations agencies and partner NGOs to support the Haitian government, UNICEF deployed rapid response teams, within 24 to 48 hours, to homes where a suspected case had been detected."

"The time has now come to ramp up our efforts to sustain the progress we have made after a 10-year battle against the disease. We must consolidate the monitoring system, maintain a minimum response capacity within the Ministry of Health, improve water and sanitation facilities, and enhance hygiene awareness and promotion within communities, to prevent any new outbreaks of cholera or other diarrhoeal diseases."

"We have two years left to completely, permanently eradicate cholera from Haiti, in accordance with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the government's national strategy. I call on our technical and financial partners to allocate more funds to fighting cholera, so that together, with the Haitian government, we can win this last battle against cholera."

2020, A LANDMARK YEAR FOR WATER

BY JEAN LAUNAY, CHAIRMAN
OF THE FRENCH WATER PARTNERSHIP

2020 will be marked by several important international events. Each of them will be an opportunity for the French Water Partnership (FWP) to call for tangible action on universal access to water and sanitation.

2020

must and will be a landmark year for many water issues. There are many important dates throughout the year: the submission of revised climate plans by countries before the COP26 in Glasgow (review of "Nationally Determined Contributions"), the 2020 target date for certain Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the review of the United Nations SDG monitoring mechanism, the World Conservation Congress organized by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), and the COP15 Biodiversity Convention in China. We hope that governments and all actors in society will seize these opportunities to increase their objectives and make announcements.

These important events will be an opportunity for French Water Partnership (FWP) members to discuss

potential angles for advocacy and define strategic actions to drive progress on water issues. The FWP has 200 members, who form six panels (governments and public institutions, local authorities, civil society organizations, economic players, research and training institutes, private individuals). They all believe in collective action and have joined the FWP to influence international decisions and maintain consistency between their overseas projects.

Although the FWP and its members are active internationally, they also emphasize

ALTHOUGH THE FWP AND ITS MEMBERS ARE ACTIVE INTERNATIONALLY, THEY ALSO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING AN EXAMPLE, SO AS TO BE CREDIBLE ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD.

the importance of setting an example, so as to be credible elsewhere in the world. The criteria used to evaluate access to drinking water and sanitation within the SDG process have been upgraded since the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We now know that the number of people who do not have access to safe drinking water has only fallen from 2.3 to 2.2 billion in 17 years. This is an alarming figure, an alarming situation. Access to drinking water and sanitation is fundamental to escape chronic poverty and greatly reduce infant mortality. The major efforts made by French stakeholders are commendable (increased official

development assistance, decentralized cooperation, results achieved by civil society organizations, various types of cooperation). However, these efforts must be increased, bearing in mind that 2 million people in France do not have permanent access to

drinking water and sanitation, especially in the Overseas Territories where 40% of domestic sanitation facilities do not comply with regulations. Regarding environmental issues, according to the 2018 progress report on the implementation of the SDGs in France, only 44% of surface waters had been restored to good ecological status in 2016. In 2050, the average annual flow of rivers through towns will fall by 10 to 40%, and droughts will become much more frequent and severe. As sea levels rise, flooding will occur more often, as will the salinization of coastal groundwater.

FWP members working on the SDGs have formed a working group and have defined four priorities for the next two years:

- 1. To advocate for faster implementation of the 2030 Agenda water goals.**
- 2. To ensure that the 2030 Agenda is effectively implemented.**
- 3. To contribute to greater visibility and understanding of the SDGs.**
- 4. To emphasize the FWP members' expertise and solutions to implement the SDGs.**

FRANCE MUST SET AN EXAMPLE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARIS CLIMATE AGREEMENT

Since the water cycle is the first sign of climate change, the FWP and its members have also made the connection between water and climate one of their four priority issues. Floods, droughts, wildfires, hurricanes, rising sea levels, deterioration of aquatic biodiversity – these will all continue to increase and will have a major impact on human activities and the natural world. Extreme climate conditions may cause a greater number of epidemics and population movements, in addition to conflicts and food shortages (Lake Chad, Libya, Syria, etc.). Their multi-faceted impact will affect France, the European Union and the Mediterranean region, as well as our relations with the African continent.

In the wake of the COP25 conference in Madrid, we cannot deny that water is still seldom discussed in the climate debate. However, the fact that adaptation was given high political priority in the Paris agreement – although many actors see

it as being relegated to a later stage (in relation to mitigation) – is an opportunity to give water and aquatic biodiversity issues their place in these negotiations. For the record, 93% of the commitments made by governments at COP21 included an adaptation component that mentioned water.

Many French stakeholders (local authorities, industrial firms, farmers) are taking action to implement the adaptation aspect of this agreement. The French Government has also adopted its second National Climate Change Adaptation Plan (PNACC 2). For its part, the FWP working group on this issue has set itself the overall objective of encouraging the operational implementation of the Paris agreement with regard to water. Its work focuses on the following areas:

- 1. Supporting the operational implementation of international commitments and the emergence of solutions relating to water and climate issues.**

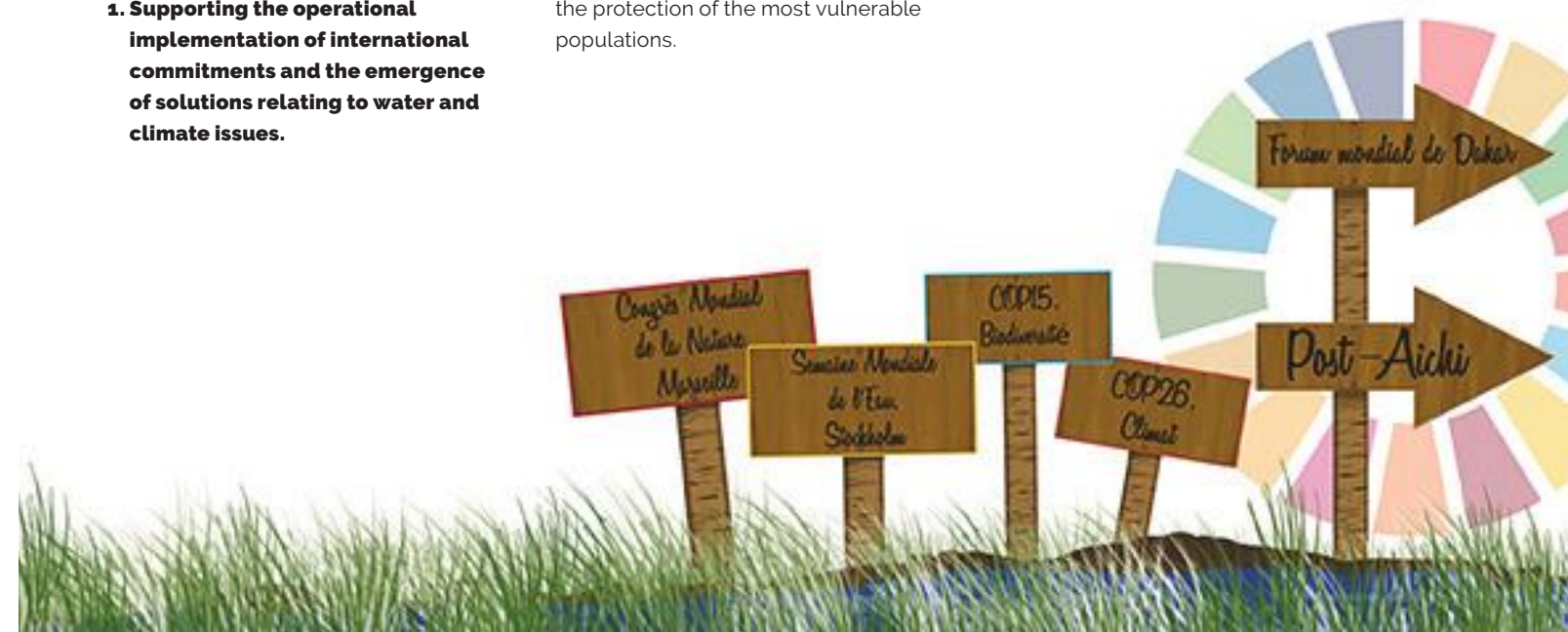
- 2. Contributing to greater inclusion of adaptation and water/climate issues in international negotiations and policies, and advocating for upward adjustments in national commitments made by governments.**
- 3. Emphasizing the FWP members' expertise and solutions to combat climate change.**
- 4. Improving "water and climate" awareness, knowledge and capabilities among all stakeholders and at all levels.**

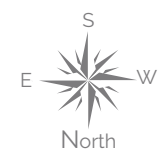
In fragile environments, climate

disturbances exacerbate other crisis factors. Through its working group "Access to drinking water, sanitation and hygiene during crises

and in fragile contexts", the FWP is taking action to increase the sector's ability to respond to growing needs and to prioritize the protection of the most vulnerable populations.

The FWP's fourth priority issue, as defined by its governance and members, is aquatic biodiversity. As mentioned earlier, two major events should enable the identification of appropriate strategies and commitments to respond to the major decline in biodiversity worldwide and especially in aquatic biodiversity. The IPBES Global Assessment of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (2019) sadly reminded us that the current species extinction rate was "unprecedented" and still accelerating. It is a little-known fact that aquatic diversity is particularly badly affected. The FWP will participate in the World Conservation Congress in Marseille and will also attend the COP15 Biodiversity Convention in Kunming. Our contribution: to showcase knowledge and Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and to call for freshwater to occupy a much more important position in post-2020 goals to protect biodiversity.





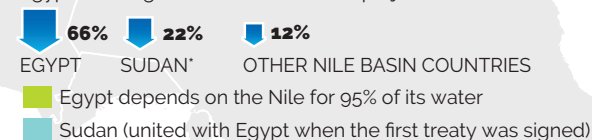
INDIAN OCEAN

Hydropolitical conflict over the Nile

Inequitable water sharing and Egypt's water security...

- The Nile and its tributaries
- Catchment area
- Canal project to divert part of the river to develop agricultural land

Share in annual flow according to the 1929 and 1959 treaties
Egypt has a right of veto over all Nile projects

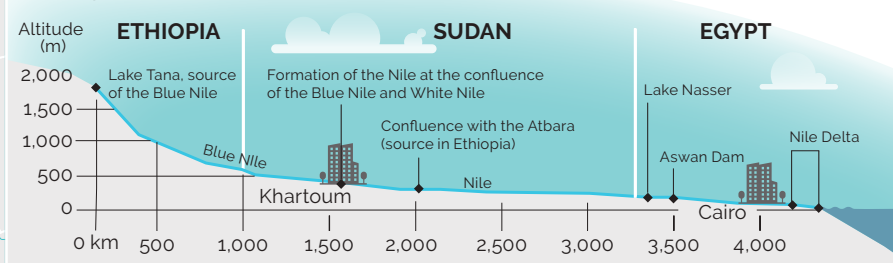


... are being challenged by upstream countries and Ethiopia's projects

- Upstream countries
- Water inflows into the Nile from Ethiopian plateaus
- Water inflows from other tributaries
- Grand Renaissance Dam under construction
- Signatory country of the Entebbe agreement (2010**), disputing Egypt's dominance over water sharing
- Signatory country of the Khartoum agreement (2015)
The three countries agree that the necessary work to fill the Grand Renaissance Dam will commence after impact studies have been carried out

*At the time, this included South Sudan
**South Sudan joined this agreement in 2012

Topographic profile of the Nile from the source of the Blue Nile



Sources: M. Labi Bouguerra, Confluences Méditerranée, Automne 2010; Le Monde, 20 June 2013; F. Lasserre, Les Guerres de l'eau, Éditions Delavilla, 2009; Carlo n° 12, 2012; Arelon/ Capri; Africa Water Atlas; Phue, 2010; World Bank; FAO; Aquastat; AFP

WATER SHARING AT THE HEART OF WAR AND PEACE

BY ANNE GUION,
JOURNALIST, LA VIE

Due to dwindling resources around the world, water-related conflicts are likely to multiply - unless the vital need for collaborative management can form the foundation for sustainable peace.

Water was a little-known cause of the popular uprising that plunged Syria into war. Between 2006 and 2010, Syrian farmers suffered four successive years of drought: 2 million people slid into poverty and more than 1 million farmers left the countryside to move to the cities. The country, affected by global warming, is also the scene of a regional battle for water. In the 1990s, Turkey launched a vast development program including the construction of 22 dams on the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The consequences for its border countries, Iraq and Syria, were significant: today, the flow of the Euphrates is estimated to have fallen by about 50% and that of the Tigris by 66%.

WATER IS ADDING FUEL TO THE FIRE

No less than 260 river basins in the world are thus shared between two or more States. They are potential hotbeds of tension in a global context of resource scarcity. "Water in itself is not a source of conflict," says Frédéric Lasserre, professor of geography at Laval University in Quebec City (Canada), "but the rivalries caused by water sharing may combine with other sources of tension until they reach breaking point." To put it plainly: the issue of water exacerbates existing conflicts.

This is the case in the Middle-East. At the heart of the tensions: the issue of

control over the Golan Heights, located to the north-east of Lake Tiberias and annexed by in 1981 by Israel, which considers it as a region in its own right. Another source of tension is the Nile, which flows through nine countries before reaching the Mediterranean in Egypt. However, the methods employed by the latter are annoying its neighbours, including Ethiopia where the Blue Nile has its source. In 1997, Cairo did not see fit to present its project in advance to irrigate the Toshka Valley with water from the artificial Lake Nasser, located on the border with Sudan. As a result, Ethiopia responded by launching the Grand Renaissance Dam project in 2011, the largest hydroelectric facility in Africa.

For Frédéric Lasserre, future conflicts over water could be civil wars. "Water scarcity can lead to a violent outburst of frustration... Especially if some actors instrumentalize these tensions," explains the researcher. These kinds of conflicts, which receive very little media coverage, have already resulted in deaths, for example in September 2010 in the Kurram region of Pakistan.

ARDUOUS NEGOTIATIONS...

For the international community, the challenge is to help the countries concerned reach balanced agreements. But this is no small task. Discussions often drag on and on. The New York Convention on the Law of Non-Navigational Uses of International Watercourses, signed in 1997, took 47 years to come into force because the 35 ratifications required were not achieved before then. In 1999, a consultation body, the Nile Basin Initiative (NBI) was created. But its members have still not been able to reach an agreement. The same is true for the Tigris

and Euphrates rivers. Since 1962, several rounds of negotiations have been held, without much success. In the face of global warming in the region - projections indicate that a 2°C rise in temperature would reduce rainfall by 20 to 40 per cent - these States will probably have to reconsider their position. And - who knows? - make water sharing in the Middle-East the basis for lasting peace.

...THAT SOMETIMES BEAR FRUIT

Utopian? Not necessarily. Other countries have already managed to agree on these issues: Pakistan and India have fought each other in several bloody wars, and yet they have long agreed on sharing the six rivers that flow from the high peaks of the Himalayas. An agreement, signed in 1960 under the aegis of the World Bank, thus ratified the distribution of these waters. Meetings to work out the technical details between the two administrations have never been called into question. And this, despite the persistent tensions between these feuding neighbours. This example proves that through collaborative management, water, often a source of conflict, could also become a factor of peace and cooperation.

Le Monde

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WATER CONSCIOUSNESS TO SHAPE FUTURE DIPLOMACY

BY FRANÇOIS MÜNGER, GENEVA WATER HUB DIRECTOR,
SECRETARIAT OF THE GLOBAL HIGH-LEVEL PANEL ON WATER AND PEACE
AND NIOKHOR NDOUR,
DAKAR WATER UNIT COORDINATOR

A source of insecurity and tension, the issue of shared and sustainable access to water will be at the heart of the 9th World Water Forum in Dakar in March 2021. It is a major challenge for humanity.

Avital, limited and irreplaceable resource, a fluid resource that cuts across sectoral and political boundaries, freshwater is both the condition for human development and the foundation for the stability of our civilizations. Between scarcity, conflict and cooperation, the sustainable management of water resources is a major challenge for humanity. The work of the Global High-Level Panel on Water and Peace has helped to position water as a common issue on the peace, security and development agendas. Senegal has made a significant contribution to this positioning, both as a co-sponsor country of the panel, and by organizing the first UN Security Council dialogue on the connection between water, peace and security in November 2016; on this occasion, more than 60 countries committed themselves to this politically sensitive dynamic. In keeping with these commitments, Senegal will host the 9th World Water Forum in 2021 on the theme "Water Security for Peace and Sustainable Development". This Forum will also draw on the valuable, long-term experience of jointly managing the region's large trans-border basins.

Discussing water security means acknowledging the growing complexity of managing a resource that is under stress and vulnerable to climate change.

The growing demand for water, the huge increase in the pollution load, the gaps

in infrastructure and the climate-related disruption of the water cycle are known factors in the escalation of water-use rivalries. To respond to these factors, we need to pursue developments and initiatives for trans-border, inter-sectoral and inter-community management. Agreements around basins and the management bodies that operate them must view basins as backbones for inter-sectoral, sustainable and equitable development; this requires innovative public and private funding mechanisms that support common master plans. Ways must be found to steer appearance-focused societies towards the invisible challenges of aquifers, which tend to be overlooked in water management despite our crucial dependence on these major water reserves. States have a major role to play in regulating the often-divergent interests related to water. Such regulations require the inclusion or strengthening of local arbitration and negotiation mechanisms. This is all the more necessary because in many current contexts it is important not to give way to violent political movements that exploit tensions related to water and land. Access to water is a constant source of tension between communities in the Sahelo-Saharan region, as the Mauritanian Head of State pointed out during the 6th Dakar Forum on Peace and Security in Africa. The Bamako Declaration on 29 November 2019 by the African Union on access to natural resources and conflicts between communities calls for joint reflection and

the promotion of an African solution that takes into account local values.

Making water the common denominator of the peace and security, development and humanitarian agendas requires the establishment of operational dialogues between communities of expertise to define practical solutions. Just as the Geneva Water Hub has been working on this issue since 2015 within International Geneva, the Dakar Water Unit was created in 2019 and embodies the political will to mobilize experts on these issues and to support new professional vocations around water.

Our two organizations are participating in the development of the World Observatory for Water and Peace. This international mechanism, which stems from the Panel's recommendations, is being deployed as a network of entities that have, on the one hand, the analytical capacities in water politics and, on the other hand, the diplomatic skills and neutrality to bring together stakeholders and address sensitive water-related political issues.

Constantly raising awareness concerning water issues and their intrinsic nature in defining our possible future seems to us the necessary path to develop 21st century water diplomacy.

MALI: REDUCING THE CONFLICTS SURROUNDING WATER POINTS

BY AUDE LAZZARINI,
WASH TECHNICAL ADVISOR, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE
AND EMMANUELLE MAISONNAVE,
LEARNING OFFICER, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE has been present in the Kidal region since 2013, where it carries out water point rehabilitation projects both to improve water access for the population and also to reduce inter-community tensions.

In the Kidal region of northern Mali, rainfall is very low, rivers are temporary and groundwater recharge is irregular. The quantity of water available is generally insufficient, especially during dry periods. Nomadic herders, local herders and local populations must therefore share the few water points available. This creates tensions; all the more so as the needs of the populations are constantly increasing due to high population growth. Moreover, persistent insecurity since the political and military crisis in 2012 has restricted mobility, disrupted transhumance routes, and therefore made water access even more difficult.

In response to these agro-pastoral issues, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE has been working in the region since 2013 and rehabilitating water points, with the underlying objectives of contributing to the fight against malnutrition but also of reducing inter-community tensions (between local herders and nomadic herders) and intra-community tensions (between the various Arab communities, Fulani, Tuareg, etc.) in connection with these water points.

SEPARATING USES AND SECURING ACCESS TO WATER IN ALL SEASONS

Since 2015, about fifty Improved Pastoral Hydraulic Systems (SHPA) have been set up in the Kidal region. Water is distributed at two levels: on the one hand to standpipes for the local population's domestic use (cooking, washing, drinking, etc.), and on the other hand to water troughs to feed livestock. This separation ensures safer, better quality water, since neither people nor animals are in a position to pollute it, but also enables considerable time and energy savings (no more animal traction). Water is accessible to several users simultaneously, which reduces tensions. In addition, each system has a solar-powered water tower with a capacity of 5 to 10 m³, which guarantees a regular water supply in all seasons.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SHARED RULES

To ensure the durability of these systems, and especially their regular maintenance and appropriate protection, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE worked in partnership with local associations. 24 of the water points are managed by management committees (COGEPE), made up of 6 to 8 members. The contribution mechanisms (monthly flat rate, per-litre rate, etc.) were discussed and chosen by the communities. At 14 water points, water is distributed free of charge, since no agreement is yet in place; SOLIDARITÉS



INTERNATIONAL's teams are continuing discussions with these communities to find the most suitable approach.

To help the population take ownership of these water facilities, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONALE has also trained community representatives to deliver messages to users about the region's water resources, drinking water availability, water treatment and conservation. Raising awareness concerning the shared rules on water use and visits to water points has contributed to a calmer atmosphere between local populations and herders, some of whom say themselves that the SHPA is a model that could be promoted throughout northern Mali.

BY JAMES BROWN, OXFAM

MONITORING THE QUALITY OF WASH RESPONSES

A new coordinated approach

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, in partnership with UNICEF, OXFAM and Tufts University, is working to develop new approaches to help WASH specialists to collectively monitor and manage the quality of their responses, within the framework of the international WASH cluster Quality Assurance and Accountability Project (QAAP).

Humanitarian responses are increasingly complex and demanding contexts in which to work. Not only are crises becoming more protracted and dynamic, but global expectations of quality and accountability are growing at a time when resources are as limited as ever. SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, in partnership with UNICEF, OXFAM and Tufts University, is working to develop new approaches that help Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) practitioners to collectively monitor and manage quality across WASH responses, under the Global WASH Cluster's Quality Assurance and Accountability Project (QAAP).

WHY?

WASH practitioners are under increasing pressure to demonstrate effectiveness, efficiency and accountability to people affected by crisis. We know from after-action evaluations that WASH responses do not always maximize people's use of WASH services and sometimes generate relatively low levels of satisfaction. Often, similar quality issues recur from one response to another.

Despite the volume of new guidance being produced, changing how we work at the response level has been slow – it's often unclear how different initiatives can help us understand, monitor, and act on issues related to quality in a holistic way. How can we change this?

There is growing recognition that we need to be better at evidence-based programming, which requires tracking the impact of our work in a way that informs how we can design more responsive services. Up to now, the focus of response monitoring has been to track outputs

(toilets built, water supplied, hygiene sessions held), but this produces a distorted picture of the reality experienced by the people we aim to support: building toilets doesn't always mean that people feel safe enough to use them, or that there is a sustainable way to manage the faecal sludge that they collect.

INFORMATION INNOVATION

Advances in the way data can be collected and analysed at scale provide opportunities for the way information is used to manage quality. This data can support teams to track indicators over time, and to make evidence-based decisions. However, if we're not collecting the right data, analysing it effectively or sharing the results, the volume of data can quickly become overwhelming without adding value.

A COORDINATED APPROACH

Response monitoring is an important function of national WASH Clusters and their reporting is responsible for identifying gaps in coverage and quality, informing strategy, and how resources are prioritized. The QAAP aims to streamline how clusters routinely monitor outcome-level progress, and ensure that the voices of people affected by crisis are central to understanding the situation on the ground.

This matters – when time and resources are limited, we are biased towards prioritizing the most visible problems. What gets measured, gets managed – without putting people first and monitoring effectiveness, equity, safety from their

perspective, it's unlikely that we are living up to our humanitarian principles.

WHAT IS THE QAAP?

The aim of the project is to strengthen quality across WASH responses globally. We are developing approaches to response monitoring that can be used at the collective level to measure not only what is being done, but how it is being done, what it is achieving, for whom and when. A guidance note that is inspired by quality assurance systems used in industry will be complemented by a monitoring framework that describes in practical terms what should be measured and how. We will continue to work closely with national WASH Clusters/Sectors to understand how best to adapt to specific contexts and to ensure approaches are put into practice.

We are currently working with four WASH responses (Cox's Bazaar, Myanmar, South Sudan and Colombia) and plan to roll out further in 2020.

By strengthening the way WASH practitioners jointly collect, analyse and use data to understand and manage quality, we hope to give donors, national governments and colleagues in other sectors confidence that resources are being managed effectively to deliver the right impact. More importantly, we must work to give the people we aim to serve confidence that WASH programming carried out on their behalf will be higher quality, better aligned with their needs and more responsive to their perspectives.

**TO FIND OUT MORE
OR TAKE PART IN THE PROJECT:**
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A SOLAR PUMP KIT TO REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

PAR JULIEN BARBIER, WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE ADVISOR AT SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

Today, with the increasing number of humanitarian crises and longer-term assistance operations, there is a tendency to question the strategies and methodologies used by humanitarian actors. When the COP25 in 2019 ended without any consensus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL recognized that its programs have a significant impact on the local natural resources that it seeks to protect for the most vulnerable populations.

During a humanitarian emergency, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has set itself a 72-hour deadline to mobilize the necessary teams and equipment to provide access to water, wherever the disaster may occur. Initially, such interventions aim to meet the immediate needs of the affected population, namely water, sanitation, food and shelter. However, in many cases, this deadline cannot be met due to a lack of adequate infrastructure and an inexistent procurement market. The gradual loss of access to intervention areas due to deteriorating security conditions means that our teams are very often obliged to rethink their operational approaches and constantly find new solutions to reach local populations.

Moreover, the water treatment kits that are generally used rely on fuel-powered generators for their electrical power. In addition to the high running costs that this entails, there are also other difficulties surrounding fuel supply, as well as their undeniably negative impact on the environment.

Despite the development of photovoltaic technology in recent years, in practice, when field teams set up projects, they lack sufficient knowledge to correctly scale and select solar power equipment. Yet this energy source could provide an easy, competitive solution, especially in terms of maintenance costs and low environmental impact.

For this reason, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL launched a photovoltaics research program in 2018, in partnership with the Ecole Centrale Paris, Latitudes and Electriciens sans frontières (ESF), to develop a solar pump kit that was suitable for the demanding intervention areas where our organization works, and that could be immediately deployed in response to major environmental or humanitarian crises.

The design of the first two prototypes of this kit is due to be finalized during 2020, with the aim of providing 15 litres of drinking water per person per day for 200,000 people with no access to water, living in a remote area and cut off from energy supplies. To ensure that these kits are suitable for the responses we provide, the first two of them will be deployed by our teams on our current missions.

This project has also been supported by SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's logistics department, so as to take into account the increasingly complex constraints surrounding the international deployment and transportation of equipment to field locations. In fact, the "last kilometre" before delivery has been one of the challenges faced by the whole design team. The growing number of attacks on humanitarian convoys, the near-total destruction of water infrastructure and the recurrent lack of air transport have been some of the main constraints faced by this project, which aims to adapt to all the situations that our NGO has encountered over 40 years of humanitarian action.

This project, which is supported by SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL as a whole, forms part of an international approach to continuously reduce the use of fossil fuels. The impact of our action must be considered over the long term, so using free energy to deliver an essential resource for life reflects the humanitarian principles that we defend.

This project also shows SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's commitment to meet future challenges by reducing the costs and the environmental impact of humanitarian responses, while maintaining the quality of the services provided to populations in need.



Sumita Bormon (in the center) relies on SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL teams to strengthen her community's governance regarding water access.

A REPORT BY SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL **DHAKA: HELPING SLUM DWELLERS EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO WATER** WITH CLOTILDE BERTET, FIELD COMMUNICATION OFFICER, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

In several slums of the Bangladeshi capital, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL teams help local populations to strengthen their governance regarding their claims and access to drinking water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste treatment.

Since the beginning of the century, Dhaka has seen its population explode. Today, the Bangladeshi capital city has a population of over 18 million, and this figure is not likely to decrease any time soon. Every year, more people migrate to Dhaka to flee poverty and repeated flooding in the country's rural areas. Most of them settle in slums, where access to water and electricity is difficult or non-existent. Due to insalubrious pipes, pollution or abandoned infrastructures, the families living in these slums use and consume poor-quality water.

In 2010, the United Nations recognized access to safe drinking water and sanitation as a universal Human Right. Several inhabitants of the Dhaka slums have therefore decided to group together

in community associations to claim this right. However, they lack the technical knowledge and support they need to assert their claims and make them succeed. Especially since the local authorities do not have the capacity and resources to improve and extend coverage of basic services to these unhealthy and overcrowded areas.

This is why SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL has been working in 10 slums spread across 8 Dhaka neighbourhoods since January 2018, to build up the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate and take action for their access to safe drinking water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste treatment. This governance project is funded by the European Union and the AGIR Foundation, and is expected to benefit a total of 60,000 people by 2021.

Sumita Bormon is one of the first women to become a CSO representative in the Vagolpur Jelepura slum in Dhaka. She is regularly trained and advised by SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL's teams concerning access to water, sanitation and hygiene, and also on water safety and waste management. "I convey information to the slum dwellers. I help answer their questions," she says. Like

other CSO representatives supported by SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL, Sumita Bormon has become a trusted focal point in her slum. This process not only encourages local communities to take care of themselves, but also ensures that they will continue to benefit from expertise once the project is completed.

Dilip Kumar, another CSO representative, is a local figure from the Vagolpur Jelepura slum. His family has been living there for three generations. He testifies to the many positive changes brought about by the project. "Our neighbourhood is visibly cleaner. We have achieved daily garbage collection and paved the main square of the slum, which had always been muddy and a source of disease. New toilets and filters have also been installed. Families are much more aware, in terms of using water: they boil it before drinking it or cooking it".

Ultimately, SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL aims to leave it to CSOs to organize themselves. But in the meantime, the NGO's teams continue to ensure regular monitoring to increase the self-sufficiency of CSOs and respond to persistent problems.

AN APPEAL TO FRENCH COMMUNITIES FROM SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL

CITIZENS, ELECTED OFFICIALS: RALLY YOUR COMMUNITY AROUND THE CAUSE OF UNIVERSAL DRINKING WATER ACCESS!

Of France's 35,500 communities, only 200 are taking advantage of the Oudin-Santini Law which allows local authorities to allocate 1% of water-related revenues to the funding of international projects aimed at providing clean drinking water: and this despite the initiative's demonstrable human impact – at a negligible cost to community residents – since its inception nearly 15 years ago.

The UN recognized access to drinking water and sanitation as a Human Right in 2010.

Yet the sad fact is that 10 years later, 2.2 billion people throughout the world still do not have access to clean drinking water and 4.2 billion lack safe sanitation facilities. Nearly half of those who fall victim to these insanitary living conditions are children under the age of 5, those most vulnerable to waterborne diseases like cholera and diarrhoea. Women are also particularly badly affected: one in three women worldwide is at risk of being attacked or feeling ashamed because they do not have safe access to toilets.

According to the most recent count (2018), these catastrophic statistics have prompted over 200 French local authorities, water groups

and water agencies to take action, using the Oudin-Santini Law to fund international development projects aimed at providing sustainable aid to the most vulnerable populations. In total, 28.2 million euros have been raised, although this figure has fallen in comparison to 2017.

Established in 2005, though still underused and lacking in visibility, the Oudin-Santini Law allows French local authorities as well as regional water authorities and agencies to devote up to 1% of their water and sanitation budgets to funding for international humanitarian projects in these sectors. Despite its negligible cost to residents of participating communities, this aid has a considerable, virtuous human impact not only on the beneficiaries of

funded projects (rehabilitation of water networks, support for local governance, creation of water point management committees), but also on the funding communities themselves (community-wide mobilization, enhanced awareness of local water resources, etc.).

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL wishes to express its deepest gratitude to the local authorities and regional water agencies that have stood by its side since 1998.

The humanitarian NGO now calls on the rest of France's 35,500 local authorities to join in this spirit of solidarity and help achieve Sustainable Development Goal 6: a world in which all can enjoy the Human Right to clean drinking water by 2030!

"THE FIRST RESPONSE TO HUMAN SUFFERING MUST BE SOLIDARITY."

SOLIDARITÉS INTERNATIONAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION (SDG 6)

- N°1** Mobilize all the relevant stakeholders to make the 9th World Water Forum a major event that will contribute to putting the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Goal 6 back on the right track.
- N°2** Organize a summit between the Heads of State of Sahel countries, which are among the worst affected by lack of drinking water and sanitation, to draw up an action plan that will have a rapid and sustainable impact.
- N°3** Invite local actors and representatives of the most vulnerable communities in Africa to the World Water Forum, so that they can express their difficulties.
- N°4** Organize a conference for field operators with the objective of boosting complementarity between humanitarian action and development.
- N°5** Advocate for a strong final political declaration at the World Water Forum, prepared at the intergovernmental level by Senegal and France with as many nations as possible, in order to provide practical responses to urgent needs.
- N°6** Look beyond traditional analytical frameworks, break down the barriers between the specialist fields of various actors, and review the characteristics of funding to make it more sustainable and flexible, with greater emphasis on integrated approaches.
- N°7** Ensure that water and sanitation are systematically included in all assessments and in the preparation of every response.
- N°8** Apply systemic and situational analysis frameworks that include the analysis of criteria on deteriorating contexts.
- N°9** Develop dynamic, integrated, multi-actor, multi-annual responses that anticipate and adapt to deteriorations (or improvements) in contexts.
- N°10** Identify, integrate and support the scaling-up of "low-tech" innovative solutions, to improve the impact of our interventions.

