
12 WATER MESSENGER PROJECTS

France Libertés Danielle - Mitterrand's Foundation

For a community based management of water





Table of content

A word from our President	5
About France Libertés... ..	6
Africa.....	8
Latin America.....	12
Asia (India)	18
Europe.....	22
Partners' contact	23

Presentation of water messenger protects

A word from our President

"The Water Messenger campaign enables us to give a voice to initiatives launched by citizens in a number of countries around the world. We have a lot to learn over two years from each of these projects, and also from our partners in the field.

In order to make the most of sharing our experiences, we invite our partners to contact each other and to form a network. This network, which covers a host of best practices, will reach its high point in March 2012 at the AWWF (Alternative World Water Forum) in Marseille, France and the network will hopefully not finish with the end of the projects."

Danielle Mitterrand,
President of France Libertés

About France Libertés...

France Libertés has been active in the field of the right to water for 25 years, in particular supporting populations' actions to improve access to water.

Along with other organizations, we launched the "Water Messenger" movement in 2006 to make the right to water effective throughout the world so that water, as one of humanity's Common Goods, stops being considered as simple merchandise.

Each of these projects is a "Water Messenger" project. Their aim is not simply to sink a well or to build a sanitation system, but to call out to policy makers at all levels (local, regional, national and international), in order to implement the right to water for all, as recognized by the UN and the International Council of Human Rights respectively in July and October 2010.

12 projects were chosen out of one hundred proposals in order to demonstrate the foundation's values and our will to develop citizens' responsibility and democratic management of water through concrete actions with strong advocacy and awareness raising components.

In our view, these projects in four continents promote the populations' efforts and community-based management of water. All of this will help promote the effective right to water. It will serve as illustrative matter for advocacy and our awareness raising actions by showing best practices.



Africa

“Sanitation in Kindia’s neighborhoods, located at the confluence of the rivers Tohu, Wawa and Fissa.”

This Guinean city, located 135 kilometers from the capital, needs a new sewage management system.

The NGO “Coopération Atlantique, Guinée 44” linked with decentralized cooperation between Kindia city council and the French region “Loire Atlantique” will train municipal agents and local departments in order to raise public awareness on basic rules of hygiene. This project aims at reinforcing capacities of both local government and their populations.

For France Libertés, this project, with its focus on training and political action, will enable a real exchange of experience between elected representatives, professionals, education officers and citizens. In the end, all of this will help towards better water management.

“Supporting communal water governance in the Kayes region”

The project, implemented by the “Research and Action Group for Rural Development” (GRDR), fits into a context of the decentralization of Mali’s water management, now run on a municipal level. Its goal is to define, with the help of local authorities and users’ associations, a mode of sustainable management for water points in eight municipalities. In order to do so various committees will be trained on the technical and financial management of water points and will structure themselves as user associations. Local resources will be mobilized in order to improve the maintenance of water points. These actions will be completed with awareness-raising to inform the population of the necessity of financing water services in order to keep the infrastructures perennial.

This project, whose goal is to reinforce capacities of local actors, not only on raising awareness but also to define rules of management and use of this “Common Good” is in line with France Libertés’ desire to promote democratically transparent services encouraging access to water for all.

← 1- The first one: picture taken in Kindia’s neighbourhoods (Guinea) in 2004: Healthiness unit

2- The second one taken in South Africa in 2010: Wells sunk by the community living in Makause (a slum in Johannesburg) with the technical and financial help of the Mvula Trust.



“Active citizens for Water quality: citizen’s assembly”

The Mvula Trust collaborates with the South African Ministry of Water Affairs and Forestry. The NGO wants to create an assembly to put citizens at the centre of defending water quality in mining and industrial zones, where pollution is strongly present, especially in water basins.

This initiative is in line with the “Water Messenger” movement in its aim to mobilize citizens for a democratically transparent management of water as a “Common Good”.

By reinforcing mutual capacities of citizens and civil society and the means by which discussions may develop (forums, assemblies...) in this region, the Mvula Trust wants to do advocacy work towards various executive and legislative actors. It also wants to spread this initiative at a national level.

“Enhance community capacity to sustainably manage water resources to increase access to safe water”

This project is implemented by a network of 13 women’s organizations: The Katosi Women’s Development Trust (KWDT). They not only want to improve access to drinking water but also enable the women to manage and preserve their water in a democratically transparent way.

Moreover, KWDT aims to reinforce the women’s influence on local democracy by training representatives of each of the 13 groups so that they can play a role of experts in front of local decision makers, by forming advocacy clubs.

This project enhances female community-based management in an (African) context where women are in charge of water. Their will to organize themselves and to advocate towards their local government, as well as contribute their water management know-how, make this project a good illustration of the work the Foundation wants to promote.

← Pictures taken in Uganda:
- The first one during a water user committee training
- The second one shows a protected source shallow well



Latin America

“Making the right to water (recognized as a “Common Good” in the Bolivian constitution), effective in the field”

After the riots in 2000, Bolivia decided to recognize the right to water for all in its constitution but this still has to become effective.

This is why the Comisión para la Gestión Integral del Agua en Bolivia (CGIAB – Commission for integrated water management in Bolivia) wants to create a working group on the right to water for all.

This commission wants to capitalize on best practices in local community-based management in order to inform a national debate aiming at establishing a community-based democratically transparent and fair management of water to be applied on a national scale.

This working group wants to promote meetings with organizations that have made community-based water management effective. The question of conflicts linked to water access, use and availability will be treated. After that, an awareness-raising campaign will be launched in order to inform the population on the application of the principles of the right to access to water.

The Foundation has chosen to be part of this initiative for its strong political impact which should help mobilize a large portion of both the population and policy makers in order for the right to water to become effective.

“Creation of a citizen’s platform for the right to water”

This platform will propose democratic, transparent and sustainable solutions on water management. The initiative “Chile Sustainable” wants to impulse modifications to the 1981 Chilean Water Code which has established a veritable “water market”.

As a response to this situation, a national workshop will gather more than 50 organizations in order to reinforce the “Chilean coordination for the defense of life and water”.

← Pictures taken in Latin America:
- The first one during a press conference in the city of Arica, in Chile
- The second one during a local meeting regarding the aqueducts of the community in Antioquia, Colombia.



Moreover, it is planned to train leaders of social organizations in order to launch a national advocacy campaign, proposing legislative reforms to put a democratic, transparent and sustainable management of water into place.

France Libertés has chosen to be part of this project which enhances the necessity of considering water as a "Common Good".

"Defense of both community-based aqueducts and the right to water"

Confronted with the Columbian policy of privatising and commercialising water, the Corporación Ecologica y Cultural Penca de Sábila has implemented a project whose aim is to effectively defend community-based management of aqueducts (water supply systems) in 22 municipalities.

The corporation will notably help to structuring community based aqueducts and mobilisation focusing on political actions in order to promote citizen's participation in the national campaign for the defence of water as a fundamental right.

Thus, the corporation hopes to promote juridical recognition of those aqueducts as social entities without any lucrative aims.

The Foundation has chosen this initiative because of its strong political nature at both local and national levels but also because it will implement a community-based and democratic access to water in order to fight against its commercialisation.

"Improving social and integrated water management in three micro river basins"

The Bartolomé de las Casas Centre wants to facilitate a partnership between the municipalities concerned by the river basins and organizations from the Southern Andes region, which is strongly damaged by mining activity.

By reinforcing the capacities of both citizens and local decision makers, the Centre will try to establish an appropriate legal framework for a democratic, transparent and sustainable management of water.

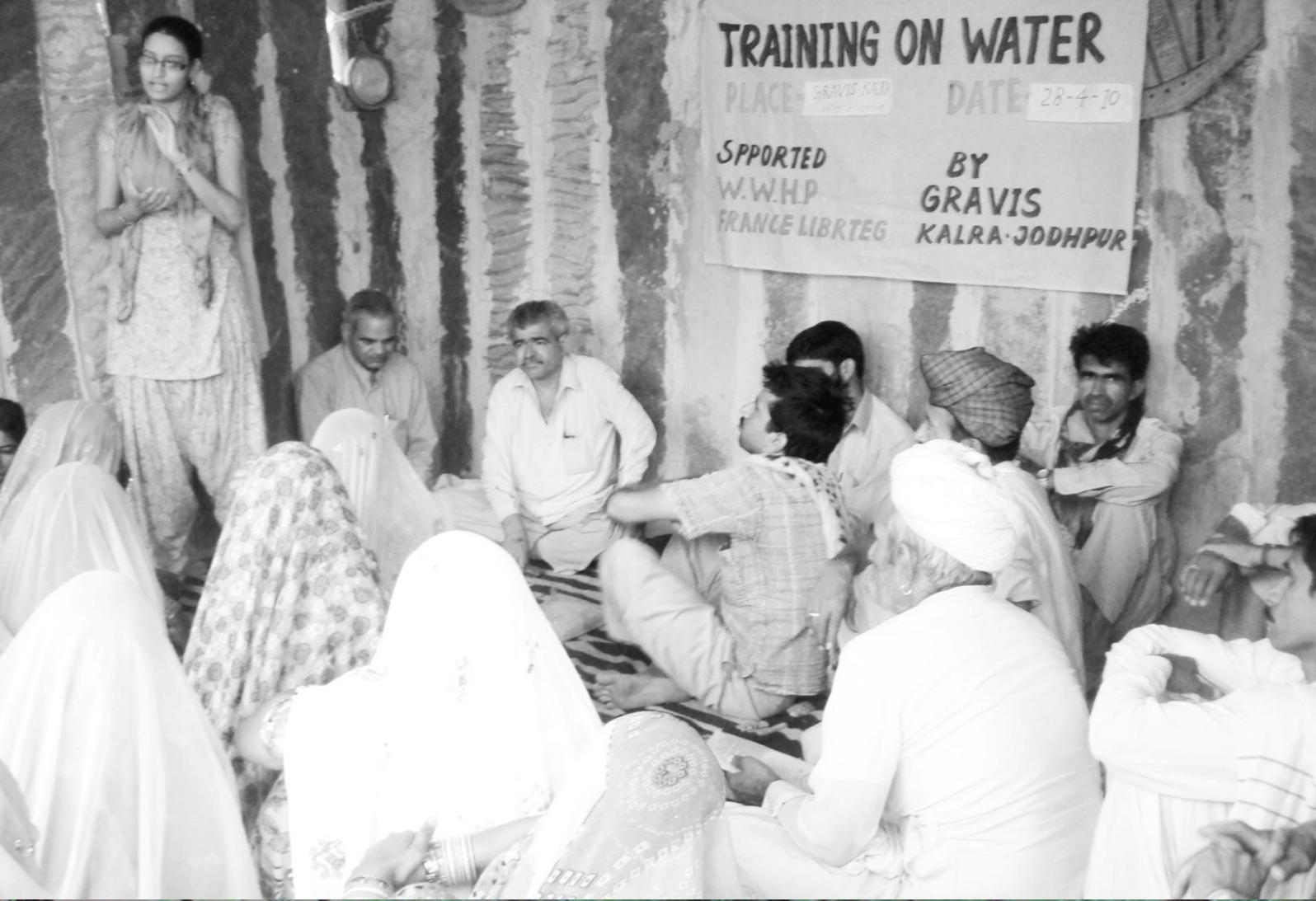
← Pictures taken in Colombia:
- The first one during a local meeting regarding the aqueducts of the community
- The second one in the community of Sabaneta



On the one hand this project will enable to develop awareness-raising actions and working groups' trainings on integrated management and support of this management system. On the other, advocacy activities will try to influence policy makers during the 2011 presidential elections.

Those characteristics of democratic and transparent management of water are in line with France Libertés' values and what it hopes to promote.

← *Pictures taken in Colombia:*
- *The first one during a local meeting regarding the aqueducts of the community*
- *The second one in the community of Sabaneta*



Asia (India)

“Harvesting rain to mitigate droughts”

GRAVIS (Gramin Vikas Vigyan Samiti) is an NGO that has been working with the population of the Thar Desert for 20 years to reinforce village capacities to renovate their traditional harvesting water system and to create Water User Groups and Self Help Groups. Today, it wants to enhance lessons learnt during this experience and influence public authorities on their water management policies.

In this project, GRAVIS undertakes awareness raising activities among the populations of 10 villages in order to familiarize them with the above-mentioned system. This action includes the mapping of water resources, the construction of demonstration units and advocacy work aiming at generalizing traditional rainwater harvesting techniques at a state level in Rajasthan.

The use of traditional knowledge and modern techniques, plus the implication of the communities in decision-making, planning and execution processes for a democratic, transparent and sustainable management of water are the reasons why the Foundation decided to support this project.

“Social mobilization for ensuring community water rights and to improve access to safe water”

The NGO, PARIBARTAN is working to reinforce people-centred advocacy capacities of the most unprivileged populations in a district located in the state of Orissa.

Half of the 40 villages concerned by the project have been displaced, despite their strong opposition, by a dam built 25 years ago. The inhabitants have lost their lands and their forests. Moreover, some financial compensation promised has still to be made.

← Pictures taken in India:
- The first one during a User Committee's training session on water in a village, Thar Desert
- The second one is a women drawing water from a well at the end of the project by PARIBARTAN



The commitment of forty women (one for each village) elected as “Water Messenger” is at the centre of this project. Paribartan trains these “Water Messengers” to raise awareness in their villages, to organise marches, to map water resources and identify needs. The high point of the project is the organisation of a public hearing so that the women can present the results of their work to local and state authorities. The Foundation has been impressed with the quality and the force of Paribartan’s educational work which helps unprivileged communities mobilise and gives them the opportunity to be heard by policy makers.

“Information and local governance of water: the Mustikovila chain of water tanks”

The Mustikovila tank is one of 3300 water harvesting structures constructed by a visionary king in the 14th century. This project shows an innovative way of saving heritage and historical know-how, associating them with modern methods of administration which could inspire the region and, why not, other countries.

The two NGOs Timbaktu Collective and VISTA have chosen, along with the local population, to use a computerized Geographic Information System (GIS) focused on water management and the use of agricultural zones downstream from the tanks.

Awareness-raising and training activities will enable the population and local authorities to exploit this system as a participative and sustainable water management system.

At the end of the project, a seminar will take place, gathering local, institutional and academic actors. During this meeting, a complete proposition for renovating and managing the tank will be presented to the competent governmental authorities.

Here, the idea of combining traditional know-how with modern techniques to reach an optimal and democratic management of water, as well as the participative and political aspects of the project, appealed to the Foundation.

← Pictures
taken in India:
- The first one:
Fishing in one
of the
Mustikovila’s
tanks
- The second
one: Paddy
fields
downstream
from the
Mustikovila’s
tanks



Europe

“Safe water and sanitation for all in Moldavia”

This project tries to raise awareness and reinforce the capacities of both Moldavian citizens and their local authorities in order to advance towards access to safe sanitation for all.

The main goal is to implement Water Safety Plans (WSP) and management plans to promote best practices.

In order to present a solid solution to national and international authorities in order to spread safe access to water zones, WECF and its partners will work in 8 villages by mobilizing young people. They will be **organized** in committees capable of awareness-raising among the population and undertaking advocacy actions towards local authorities.

France Libertés has chosen to support this project for its awareness-raising work towards the population and its national, as well as international, political scope.

← Pictures taken in Moldavia:
- The first one during a Moldavian dance at the River's festival (launch of the project)
- The second one shows a local products stand at the River's festival

Partners' contact

AFRICA

Guinea

Coopération Atlantique – Guinée 44 :

Elsa Cardinal : elsa.cardinal@cooperation-atlantique.org

Selly Keita : selly.keita@cooperation-atlantique.org

Mali

GRDR (Research and Action Group for Rural Development):

Sandrine Vincent : sandrine.vincent@grdr.org

South Africa

Mvula Trust:

Victor Munnik: victor@mvula.co.za

Uganda

KWDT:

Margaret Nakato: katosiwomen@katosi.org

LATIN AMERICA

Bolivia

CGIAB

Elizabeth López Canelas: layka72@hotmail.com

Chile

Chile Sustentable

Cristian Villarroel N: cwillarroel@chilesustentable.net

Colombia

Corporación Ecológica y Cultural Penca de Sábila

Javier Marquez Valderrama: corpenca@une.net.co

Peru

Bartolomé de las Casas Centre

Mourik Bueno de Mesquita: mourik.bdm@apu.cbc.org.pe

ASIA (India)

GRAVIS

Shilpa Sharma: shilpa@gravis.org.in

PARIBARTAN

Subhransu Bhusan Swain: subhransu1963@yahoo.com

Timbaktu Collective

Manikandan: timbaktu.info@gmail.com

EUROPE

Moldavia

WECF :

Natalia Dejean (WECF France): natalia.dejean@wecf.eu

Nadejda Andreev (WISDOM): wisdom2004@gmail.com

Oleg Rotari (ORMAX) ormax@mail.ru



For further information:

France Libertés – Fondation Danielle Mitterrand

at 01 53 25 10 40 / contact@france-libertes.fr



FRANCE LIBERTÉS

22, rue de Milan 75009 Paris •

Phone : +33 (0)1 53 25 10 40

CONTACT@FRANCE-LIBERTES.FR

WWW.FRANCE-LIBERTES.ORG

