Solution sheet

Helping to achieve the UN's development objectives



The Water Fund, a solidarity scheme for access to water

Description of the context

Close to one billion people worldwide do not have access to clean water, and 2.6 billion do not have access to sanitation. "To halve, by 2015, the proportion of the population without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation" is one of the goals set by the 193 member states of the United Nations at the Millennium Summit in 2000.

Grand Lyon is helping to achieve this goal by exploiting the possibilities offered by the 2005 law on "1% water solidarity", known as the Oudin Law. This law allows local authorities in charge of water and sanitation services, to carry out cooperation and solidarity actions in this area by providing finance to a maximum of 1% of their water budget.

Grand Lyon has decided to get actively involved in the practical implementation of this solution. It was one of the first local authorities to apply the "1% water solidarity" by creating the Fonds de Solidarité et de Développement Durable pour l'eau (Fund for Solidarity and Sustainable Development for Water - FSDD).

Today, the Urban Community mobilises € 350,000 per year to support projects for access to water and sanitation worldwide.



Objectives of the tool

The Water Fund (Fonds de Solidarité et de Développement Durable pour l'eau) is allowing access to water and sanitation to be developed in 17 countries in Africa and the Mediterranean rim. To this end, it supports projects aiming to :

- build water and sanitation infrastructures,
- put in place a permanent management of the infrastructures,
- raise awareness of populations to hygiene and health.

The projects are run principally by international solidarity associations on behalf of local authorities.

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Description of the solution

The Fonds de Solidarité et de Développement Durable pour l'eau is an innovative scheme based on a public/private partnership intended to improve access to water in developing countries.

The Fund, with an annual sum of € 1,050,000, is provided jointly and in equal parts by Grand Lyon, its potable water operators - Veolia Eau and Lyonnaise des Eaux - and the Agence de l'Eau Rhône Méditerranée et Corse. This scheme has not resulted in any increase in the price of water.

The Water Solidarity Programme (PS-Eau) can support project carriers in constructing their approach, contributing their knowledge to the target countries and helping network the actors.

Implementation of the solution

Since the Fund was created, € 4,270,000 have been invested in over 100 projects in Africa, Asia and the Mediterranean rim. The majority of projects are carried out by associations from the Rhône-Alpes region. The infrastructures built have allowed some one million beneficiaries to be supplied with water or to have access to sanitation.

A few examples of the projects financed :

• In Guinea, the Water Fund has allowed 4 water supply lines to be built as well as a number of public latrines for 5 enclave villages of Fouta Djallon. These pipelines have enabled 2,250 inhabitants to be supplied with water. Water supply committees have been created for each pipeline which deal with the management and maintenance of the works to guarantee their longevity.

• In Burkina-Faso, in the parish of Boura (province of Sissili), the Fund has been involved in financing 4 projects for access to potable water, education in hygiene and the promotion of sanitation. 3,620 inhabitants now have the benefit of good-quality water close to their homes thanks to 6 boreholes fitted with a human-driven pump and a water pipe.

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Cost of the solution

The Fonds Eau receives € 1,050,000 per year, from the following sources :

- Grand Lyon : € 350,000
- Agence de l'eau Rhône Méditerranée & Corse : € 350,000
- Veolia Eau : € 300,000
- Lyonnaise des Eaux : € 50,000

These sums are a global envelope to finance the projects presented. For a single project, the investment by the Water Fund can range from € 10,000 to € 100,000 per year.

Risks and constraints

It is important to carefully analyse the longevity of the projects presented, their technical feasibility, and their institutional and social integration. To do so, their examination is organised on the basis of pre-defined criteria. A technical committee issues a technical opinion which is submitted to the steering committee, bringing together representatives from the various backers.

Once the project has been validated, the progress of its implementation needs to be tracked. To this end, staged payments are scheduled subject to receipt and validation of progress reports.

Finally, at least 3 times each year, field assessment missions are organised to check on the implementation of the projects, and also to advise the project carriers as to their action.



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