

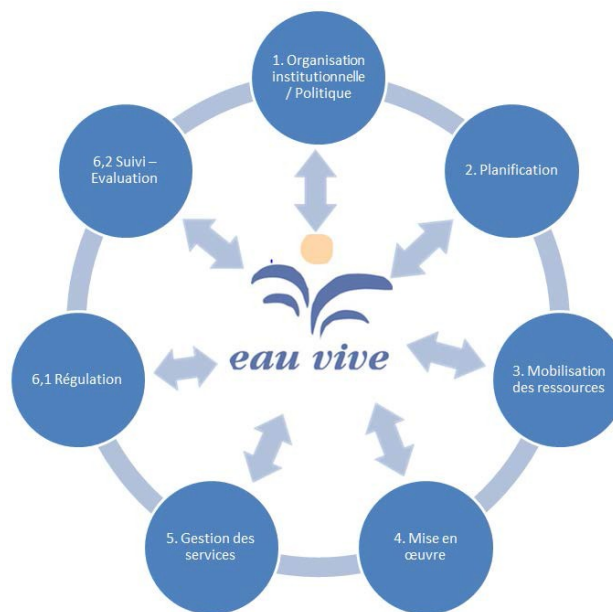
SUEZ Initiatives – French Institute Awards

Special Jury Prize

2015-2016 edition

"InterK'Eau"

Eau Vive



**Structure**

Eau Vive Internationale is an international solidarity organisation. Professional and citizen-oriented, non-partisan and non-denominational, Eau Vive Internationale is the result of the shared vision of Africa and Europe, guided by strong values on which the implementation of all projects, programmes and mobilisations is based. Founded in 1978, on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2014 in Ouagadougou, Eau Vive became the Eau Vive Internationale federation – an international association under Burkina Faso law and an umbrella structure for five national Eau Vive structures (Eau Vive Burkina Faso – Eau Vive France, Eau Vive Mali, Eau Vive Niger, Eau Vive Senegal).

**Context**

"InterK'Eau" is a project conducted in the 5 communes (Kornaka, Adjekoria, Dan-Goulbi, Mayara and Sabon-Machi) of the canton of Kornaka, situated in the Maradi region in Southern Niger.

Niger is ranked among the poorest countries in the world. In rural settings, 50% of the population has no access to drinking water and only 7% of Nigeriens have access to latrines, with a diarrheal illness prevalence rate of 35%. In the canton of Kornaka however, 63% of the population has access to water. This relatively favourable situation is explained by the creation of numerous hydraulic infrastructures over the past 10 years. However, structures are not always operational (breakdowns, obsolescence, disrepair). In addition, in keeping with the 2004 decentralisation law, whilst it is the communes' prerogative to be responsible for their water and sanitation, in other words the complete management of services, very few technical and financial means have been transferred

to them by the State. This “communalisation” is very recent and the communes, namely rural communes, are faced with significant constraints: the expanse of their territories (often spanning a radius of more than 50km), sometimes isolated populations with a low purchasing power and a lack of training among elected representatives and their constituents, namely as regards the responsibilities of local authorities, along with a veritable lack of human, technical and financial means. Very often, the personnel employed by the commune numbers just three people. And the transfer of funding from the State does not permit necessary investments to be made. It is within this context that in 2006, during a first project, Eau Vive accompanied the introduction of the association of communes in the canton of Kornaka (ACCK), which constituted the very first inter-communal service structure. As from 2010 (until 2012), the second project involved institutionalising this inter-communal service, in order to structure and organise it in such a way as to permit it to take responsibility for all of its prerogatives. “InterK’Eau” was put in place within the continuity of this action.

## Objectives

The global objective of InterK’Eau is to sustainably improve access to drinking water and sanitation for the 400 000 inhabitants of the canton of Kornaka whilst innovating with the introduction of a **sustainable inter-communal water service**.

Its specific objectives are therefore complementary: to aim to reinforce the capacities of elected representatives, administrations, technicians and water users in the 5 communes and at the same time, to plan concrete realisations which permit these same managers and users to fulfil their responsibilities.

In its innovative approach known as AMOCI, Eau Vive accompanies all of the players, ensuring that they are all aware of the importance of each other.

**Objective 1:** To reinforce the institutional capacities of the 5 communes from the canton of Kornaka with respect to the supervision and management of hydraulic and sanitation infrastructures via:

- A functional inter-communal consultation framework for Water and Sanitation,
- A well-structured and firmly established inter-communal technical service for Water and Sanitation,
- 78 trained local elected representatives who assume the management of the public water and sanitation services,
- An exchange trip to France, with elected representatives, technical services and water syndicates.

**Objective 2 :** To improve accessibility to water and sanitation for households in the 5 communes from the canton of Kornaka, via:

- 1 constructed and operational mini-AEP (drinking water supply), covering the water needs of 3000 persons,
- 200 operational and well-maintained family latrines,
- 6 x two cubicle toilet blocks built in schools,
- 3 operational public latrine blocks built.

**Objective 3 :** the technical capacities of local operators and village structures are reinforced :

- 20 builders trained and equipped to build family latrines,
- 1 Public Water Service User Association (AUSPE) put in place and trained,
- 3 public latrine management committees put in place and operational,
- 10 village hygiene committees put in place and operational,
- 3 school hygiene clubs put in place and operational,
- 10 hygiene trainers trained in best basic hygiene practices,
- Awareness-raising actions on best hygiene practices organised in the 5 communes.

### To understand the AUSPE

In Africa, inhabitants form associations in order to manage their water points. These associations are composed of the inhabitants themselves, who are volunteers, and maintain regular contact with the town hall. Putting these inhabitant associations in place constitutes a key stage in ensuring the success of a sustainable water service.

## Description of the project

**To take simultaneous action at the level of all stakeholders**

**It is by taking action at the level of all stakeholders that access to water for all becomes sustainable.**

Eau Vive works with elected representatives and technical services from the communes in order to ensure that they have the adequate expertise and management tools to enable them to manage the complexities of their water service.

Eau Vive works with all of the companies involved in the infrastructures (wells, water towers, pumps, latrines etc) and their maintenance: the companies which build the infrastructures (drillers, builders, pump installers etc.), the players who repair or organise their repairs, the banks which open the bank accounts for every water point and which propose mutual insurance policies (ensuring the permanent availability of the financial means to organise repairs). Lastly, and more particularly, Eau Vive works with inhabitants who are on the brink of obtaining access to water for the very first time in the majority of cases. In other cases, certain inhabitants have had access to water for several months following the introduction of a water point, but without communal governance and the necessary organisational structure, the water point rapidly broke down without being repaired, remaining unused for several years. Eau Vive accompanies inhabitants in order to give them the means to decide for themselves as regards their involvement and the organisation of their water points. This “empowerment” is necessary to ensure the continuity of the water service.

#### **AMOCI : an approach which makes access to water sustainable in Africa**

AMOCI literally means “appui à maîtrise d’ouvrage communale et intercommunale” (support with communal and inter-communal management). Since 2006, Eau Vive has been able to test AMOCI in the entire canton of Kornaka in Niger and also in Burkina Faso. This approach is now supported by numerous mayors. Eau Vive has recently begun to accompany 4 new communes in the region of Illéla, in Niger.

**The project consists of two phases, the first highlights support given to institutional organisation** with the introduction of the inter-communal service and the inter-communal consultation framework. This phase also triggers pilot actions as regards training people who in turn, will be responsible for training others (hygiene specialists, builders...), the realisation of test structures to accompany the entire capacity reinforcement process. This phase therefore consisted in testing the project’s methodological approach and making a first assessment before generalising the project’s activities whilst making any necessary corrections.

**The second phase**, which serves to further the actions undertaken during the first phase, **stresses the monitoring and management of the structures put in place, the scaling of pilot actions and the construction of the majority of the structures planned.** This phase is very important as it influences the birth of local dynamics in terms of the management and good governance of the water and sanitation services as well putting in place the right conditions to ensure service sustainability.

**Every phase includes two aspects.**

**Aspect 1: Accompanying the 5 communes** in the organisation and management of the drinking water and sanitation service and the introduction of inter-communality (via Eau Vive’s innovative AMOCI approach)

**Aspect 2 : Reinforcement of the capacities of local drinking water and sanitation operators** (tradesmen, repairmen, builders, spare part retail points etc.)

**Aspect 3 : Construction of drinking water and sanitation infrastructures**

**Aspect 4 : Reinforcement of the capacity of inhabitants** to manage their water points and latrines and circulation of best hygiene practices in households, schools, via the radio, etc.

## **Description of the innovation**

#### **AMOCI : an organisational innovation in response to a complex world**

Even when combined, known innovative technical solutions do not suffice to resolve the serious problem of access to water in Africa. In Niger, one inhabitant out of two has no access to water, 93% have no toilet facilities and 34% of the population suffer from diarrheal illnesses. It is necessary to put in place a global organisation for the water service whilst taking account of all of the stakeholders and in keeping with local cultures and customs. This requires a step by step approach which can take between 6 and 12 years, depending on the context, but which ensures a sure fire result: access to water for all on a long-term basis.

In Niger, decentralisation in its current form dates from 2002. With the new territorial breakdown, Niger counts:

- 7 regions plus the urban community of Niamey, 63 departments,
- 265 communes of which 52 are urban and 213 rural (which in total, count more than 12 000 villages),
- 4 urban communities regrouping the urban communes of the biggest agglomerations.

For many years now, elected representatives from Kornaka have been working with **Eau Vive with respect to this means-pooling rationale.** They have firstly undertaken actions, namely in the cultural domain (community radio) and via the animation of communities by organising **annual inter-communal days which take place in every town hall on a yearly rotational basis. This event, which is festive, sporting and technical, serves to bring together all of the stakeholders, commune partners and local and regional authorities.**

This approach recently permitted an **inter-communal Water and Sanitation service** to be implemented.

## Results

As regards access to drinking water: water supply benefits 3 000 persons (according to a rate of 1 tap for 250 persons – the water supply includes 4 water fountains and 3 taps each).

As regards access to sanitation: 2000 persons benefit from the 200 family latrines on the basis of 10 people per latrine; 1000 pupils benefit from school latrines; public latrines can welcome up to 2 000 people on busy days.

Accompanying measures concerned:

- The elected representatives from the 5 communes of the canton of Kornaka, equating to 78 persons ;
- The inter-communal water and sanitation technical service ;
- The members of the 3 management committees for public latrines and the members of the users association for the public water service, equating to 35 persons ;
- The 10 local builders who will benefit from training and equipment ;
- The 10 hygiene specialists who will benefit from training on best hygiene practices;
- The 10 village hygiene committees put in place, equating to 120 persons ;
- The pupils and teachers from the 3 schools, equating to approximately 1000 persons.

Furthermore, at least 50 000 persons (10 000 per commune) are impacted by hygiene awareness-raising activities. In an indirect manner, the entire population from the 5 communes composing the canton of Kornaka, equating to almost 400 000 persons, benefit from the project.

## Reproducibility of the project

Promotion permits the project to be circulated at a national level. Its reproducibility has already been confirmed. Consequently, after having met with Eau Vive and the elected representatives from Kornaka, representatives from the canton of Illéla, also in Niger (4 communes), have also developed an inter-communality project with the support of Eau Vive.

## Conditions of reproducibility

Within the context of decentralisation, the majority of States have transferred water and sanitation activities to the communes in order for these public services to be managed at the level of populations. Unfortunately, the communes have had little training, are not very structured and the issue of a public service tends to remain conceptual or in an embryonic state.

This context largely reinforces the distribution and reproducibility potential of the innovation: providing and overseeing water and sanitation services is a challenge to be risen to in all of these States and the project will therefore reach way beyond the Nigerien national context.

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## Site Internet

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Eau Vive International : [eau-vive.org](http://eau-vive.org)