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THE ETHIC CHARTER OF WATER

FOR A COOPERATION WHICH GUARANTEE THE RIGHT TO WATER FOR EVERYONE



INTRODUCTION

WHY AN INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY CHART FOR WATER

Rosario Lembo *

There's a new goal to achieve by the next 20-50 years beside the environmental challenge connected to the relation between Man and Mother Earth: ***to assure the right of access to water to the future generations that will live on Earth. Without water there's no life, nor peaceful cohabitation between people.***

Strong of the fact that Earth is composed for its 2/3 of water, the International Community used water as an unlimited and inexhaustible resource, to exploit and consume like all natural and fossil resources on Earth.

On the legal side, few actions have been taken: it was defined the national Sovereignty over water resources and *the Nations* were proposed to avoid possible conflicts with water use by subscribing international agreement for the use and access of available water resources regarding international basin.

The demand to guarantee to all inhabitants of earth the access to safe drinking water, for human use, was already proposed in 1998 by the World Agreement of Water. Later, it was includ-

^(*) President of the Italian Committee of World Contract for Water – Onlus
www.contrattoacqua.it Campaign “WATER - Water Access Through Empowerment of Rights”.

ed into the Declarations for the recognition of the right to water, which concluded the World Social Forums. No other solutions were proposed after the “Millennium Development Goals”, that... committed the Nations to halve, by 2015, the number of people who don't have access to water, that is 1 billion and 500 million people.

According to the Unicef Report presented during the Verifying Assembly of the Millennium Development Goals – New York September 2010 – 2,6 billion people still don't have access to sanitation and 884 million people still don't have access to safe drinking water.

The reduction in the number of the people with no access to water – compared to 1,5 billion people in 2008 – is not the result of a huge financial commitment, nor of an efficient international development programme. It is mainly a statistic result.

The answers could be found at first by the different measurement parameters of the access to water introduced in the JMP report 2010 (Joint Monitoring Programme of OMS and UNICEF), calculated on the distance of population to the first draw well or access source. And as well by the 423 million of Chinese that before were classified between those who didn't have access to water.

An important percentage of Chinese population is now classified in the category of those who have access to water, due to the opening of the markets to the globalisation processes, and to the migration of the rural population towards big cities.

Looking at the future beside the number of those who still don't have access to water it is necessary to take note of two worrying projections.

Even if only 6,7% of renewable water resources would be exploited, the world population will face a growing water alarm by the beginning of the XXI century due to the scarcity of fresh water available. In the last fifty four years the water resources available per capita have decreased of 50 % (from 16.800 to 8.470 m³) due to population growth and to climate changes. The forecasts shown that by 2025 there would be only 4800 m³ of water available. That means a consumption of 57% of the resources available by the next 15 years.

The International Food Policy Research considers that according to the actual demographic growth and water consumption growth rates, the water demand will increase of 50 % by 2025.

The first answer to these questions is in the will of the International Community and single States to question the actual development model based on the growth and to reorganize the agricultural models and exploitation policies of water sources for productive and energetic uses. This challenge risks to fail for a lack of will and of a world authority.

The second answer comes from the will of single States to subscribe and to implement the Resolution approved by the United Nations Assembly on the 28th of July. The Resolution ratified “the right to safe drinking water and to sanitation as an essential human right to the complete enjoying of life and all human rights”.⁽¹⁾ The recognition of the United Nations of safe water as human right may represent the starting point to create a different future.

The Resolution implementation was the subject of a specific Resolution of the UN Human Rights Council. On September 24th, the Council codified the assumption and the procedures to make the water access a human right.⁽²⁾

The first principle (art. 8, comma a), declares that Nations have the responsibility to guarantee the full exercise of all human rights. Even though the management and distribution of safe drinking water and sanitation to private structures, Public Administration is not relieved from its duties.

The second principle (art. 10), put in charge the cooperation and technical assistance of States and UN Specialized Agencies, of the implementation of financial instruments for the achievement of Millennium Development Goals.

⁽¹⁾ General Assembly Resolution 64/92 of 28th July of 2010.

⁽²⁾ Human Rights Council Resolution of U.N. A/HRC/15/L.14, 24th September of 2010.

The United Nations Resolution ratify the right to safe water and gives to single States and to the International Community the responsibility to find the economic resources to effectively guarantee the right to water. This recognition opens new important possibilities. At the same time the Movements of civil society defending common goods and in particular NGOs are called to assume specific commitments.

The first commitment is meant to oblige single State to ratify the UN Resolution, by action and national advocacy campaign. *Without States ratification, the UN resolution won't lead to any result.*

The second commitment is meant *to look out on the commitments that single States will assume on the side of national and international cooperation programmes to guarantee the right to water.*

The States and the International Community should avoid delegating to private and multinational enterprises the management of water programmes and financial resources, that instead should be destined to international cooperation projects to guarantee the right to water for everyone. The attempt to delegate to privates, strongly came out during the discussion held before the ratification of the UN Human and Social Rights Council resolution that took place last September in Geneva, as application of the UN resolution.

Some Associations defending the right to water in different continents conducted a strong monitoring and critical action on government delegations, to stop these attempts.

It is important to remind that the leading philosophy applied by the UN Agencies for international cooperation and the States adopted a market oriented management models.

Public-private partnerships were promoted and they subordinated the access to water to a credit card and to water fee.

The NGO member of the cooperative project WATER^③ approved the proposal of the World Contract on Water to implement the adoption of a “Charter of Solidarity for the Access to Water” in the years 2009-2010. This commitment comes from all the motivations mentioned above and from the awareness that in order to valorise the commitment for the right to water, a new world Politic for water have to grow up.

WHY AN INTERNATIONAL CHARTER OF SOLIDARITY FOR WATER.

The first motivation was shared by all NGOs adopting the Charter. This motivation is the need to stop the promotion of water commercialization and of private management. To build up, in stead, new managements and new international cooperation projects based on a Charter of Ethical Principles affirming water as a human right.

The second motivation behind the adoption of a Charter of Solidarity for the Access to Water is the will to sustain and promote the implementation of the Resolution approved by the UN Assembly on the 28th July of 2010.

The resolution affirms that “the right to safe drinking water and to sanitation is a human right, and it is essential for a full enjoyment of life and of other human rights”.

The “*Charter of Solidarity for the Access to Water*” aims to realize the right to water for everyone using new modality and international cooperation forms.

The big challenge of the XXI century is the construction and the realization of the right to water to everyone through new method of international solidarity. And this calls for citizen mobilization.

^③ WATER - Water Access Through Empowerment of Rights”, countries: Italy, Belgium, France, Greece, Slovenia and Spain.

The challenge invests mainly the International Cooperation actors: these are NGOs but also donor Institutions.

The founding principles of the behaviours proposed by the International Charter of Water have been discussed and shared with local communities and Latin American partners. At first, they

have been shared with those populations like the Bolivian communities, the first to meet the consequences of privatization, but also with African communities, European and Italian Development NGOs.

The support and the subscriptions of the Charter will mark out the success or the failure of this proposal in next years and will demonstrate the commitment of the International Community. Some of the Charter's constraints and agreements could seem hard to realize for some Institutions or actors. At the same time they represent the basis and the purposes to accept and practise to achieve the right to water for everyone and to avoid that water is available only for those who can afford for it.

The first proposal for a Charter of Solidarity for Access to Water was launched at the end of the first Citizen and Water Elected Assembly, held in Brussels in 2009 at the European Parliament. This Declaration was subscribed by Institutions, Local Government delegations, NGOs and Governments Representatives of the European Commission:

- *We don't have any right* to keep the conditions that deprive more of two billion people, in majority women and children, of a human and decent life.
- *We don't have any right* to fuel the factors which lead to wars for water, with the only objective of perpetuate our power in terms of wealth and consume.
- *We rather have the duty* to act for the development of a society founded on the right to life for everyone and on the responsible participation of all citizens to the government of water and its rational and sustainable use
- *We are strongly convinced* that Hearth is not a space of resources to conquer, nor the object of a predatory exploitation and a devas-

tating consumption. We strongly believe that Hearth is a "common home" for all inhabitants and this should represent more than a simply declaration.

It should contrast the "competition struggle" for its wealth and for its existence. Water requires Hearth to become a symbol of life for everyone, the source of a peaceful life. With the recognition of the right to water by the United Nations there are now the instrument to realize this principle.

The Charter of International Solidarity for Water is meant to be the contribution that the NGOs of the WATER Campaign bring to the attention of the Commission and the European Parliament.

It is important to build up Politics based on water sharing and defending water from market oriented dynamics and to financial speculation.

It is of a main importance to promote international cooperation models to protect human rights rather than commercial markets. This kind of cooperation could promote management models run by local communities and by citizens, based on solidarity principles and associated to a responsible use for the protection of water resources.

THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS OF THE CHARTER OF SOLIDARITY FOR ACCESS TO WATER

Marco Iob *

The process that brought to the final draft of the *Charter of Solidarity for Access to Water* started on 2006 from the need to recognize the right to water through International Cooperation.

The Italian Committee for the Water Contract presented the first international presentation of the motivations and intentions for such a Charter, during the event “Rencontres Internationales pour le Droit de l’Eau”, organized by the France Libertés Danielle Mitterrand Foundation in Marseille on 23rd and 25th November 2006.

Many Representatives of international Organisation together with European, American and African Institutions took part to the even ⁽¹⁾.

Following the meeting’s success in terms of interest, the Italian Committee for the World Water Contract started to work on a first draft of the Charter, using the experiences of the Committees NGOs (CeVI, COSPE, Mani Tese, Fratelli dell’Uomo and CIPSI).

^(*) Centro di Volontariato Internazionale.

⁽¹⁾ ACTES do “Rencontres Internationales pour le Droit de l’Eau” - France Libertés - Fondation Danielle Mitterrand avec la Région Provence-Alpes-Côte d’Azur. 23-25 Novembre 2006 - Marseille.

The first draft of the Charter was discussed for the first time at an international level during the first World Assembly of Elected Citizens of Water (AMECE) in Brussels, at the European Parliament. The Assembly was followed by the preparation of a World Action Plan including new commitments.

The commitment at point 4 referred to an International Cooperation based on the Charter Principles ⁽²⁾.

The Action Plan launched by the AMECE was held as a basis for the draft of the project WATER - Water Access Through Empowerment of Rights”, led by the CeVI – International Volunteering Centre - and composed by Italian Organizations (Cicma, CIPIS, Cospe, Legambiente), and Belgian (Green), French (France Libertés), Dutch (TNI), Slovenian (Humanitas), Greek (Humanitas), and Spanish organizations (Ceraí).

The main purpose of the Project was “The promotion of the cooperation, participation and solidarity principles in International and National Water Management interdependent with Southern Countries Management”.

The project included different actions aimed to the revision, confrontation, final draft and diffusion of the Charter of Solidarity for Access to Water through the promotion of an “Ethic Cooperation for water”.

This process was enriched by the confrontation on operating principles and criteria with NGOs, local communities like the Bolivian ones that first knew the consequences of privatization and with the African Water Network, an African Organization Network founded in the meanwhile (World Social Forum of Nairobi 2007).

The first version of the Charter was presented in Italy and discussed during different seminars and congresses focused on water issues, such as the following:

- “Traditional knowledge and social water management in the south of the World – a comparison of different Experiences of Regional Cooperation” organized by the organization “Water Civilization” of Bologna on 25th and 27th October 2007. The Charter was published inside the congress acts which were published by the magazine Silis ⁽³⁾;
- “Water: the milk of mother Hearth”, the collective good practices for a correct use of this resource organized by the GMA and CIPSI at the University of Padua on the 2nd February 2009;
- The seminar “Water and sustainable agriculture”, in Rome, connected to WaterMed 2009.

The Charter was finally presented during the Seminar “Reclaiming Public Water Network Global Strategy”, held in Brussels from the 1st to the 3rd February 2010. The event was organized by the Reclaiming Public Water Network and realized by CEO, TNI, EPSU, PSI, CeVI Blue Planet project, Focus on Global South and Engineers sans Frontières (ESF) in collaboration with African Water Network, the network VIDA (Vigilancia Interamericana para la Defensa y Derecho al Agua) and Our Water Commons.

More than 70 people representing Associations, NGOs, Public Enterprises of Water Management, Trade Unions, and Research Centres coming from Europe, America, Africa and Asia took part to the seminar.

The elaboration process of the Charter was long and complex and it became an important moment of confrontation between different point of views and experiences of organizations and local communities committed for the right to water. The different cultural approaches of the European Movements compared to the Indigenous People of Latin America or to the

⁽²⁾ World Assembly of the Elected and Citizens for Water – Brussels, European Parliament, 18th – 20th March 2007, Catalogue 2007, CeVI Editions.

⁽³⁾ Silis. “Annali di Civiltà dell’Acqua”. Number 4-5 year 2008, Erierto Eulisse.

African or Asian urban experiences, revealed different visions regarding essential issues like the right to water, sanitation, water management, and the concept of common good.

The Charter is the first effort to give voice and value to these diversities. As a result, it's not a dogmatic paper but it's a working tool to improve through experimentation, evaluation, and discussion.

CHARTER OF INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY FOR ACCESS TO WATER

PREFACE

The Italian Committee for World Contract on Water has been working for ten years to increase the awareness campaigns for the proposals contained into the Manifesto for a public government on Water (2001-2005), in the recommendations of different final Declarations of Water Social Forum, of the Alternative Forum of Water (Florence 2003, Geneva 2005), and in the World Assembly of Citizens and Elected for Water (Brussels 2007). Many National and International Institutions accepted to face the theme of access to water as a human right. Since 2000, many events and commitments took place. They aimed to attract resources to solidarity and international cooperation activities to allow an equal access to water and sanitation.

At the same time the United Nations Agencies adopted some important specific initiatives⁽¹⁾ about water theme:

- the UN Assembly Resolution of 20th December 2000 proclaimed 2003 as the International Year of Water,
- the launch of the International Decade for action “Water for Life” (2005-2015), on 23rd December 2003,

(1) - *Action Plan of Mar del Plata adopted by the United Nations Conference on Water (Mar del Plata 1977) - Resolution n. 32/158 - 19 December 1977.*
- *Rio Declaration on environment and sustainable development (1992).*

- the UN Assembly Resolution of 28th 2010, affirms “the right to safe drinking water and sanitation as a human essential right to full enjoyment of life and all human rights”⁽²⁾.

The financial instruments finalized to guarantee the access to water to everyone are limited today to specific financial programmes activated by different sources: European Commission (Water Facility Found); bilateral cooperation with the main donors countries; resources bids promoted by Foundations or cooperation channels held by local governments; donated resources by enterprises for water management; and finally citizens initiatives, like the recent proposal “one cent for water”, adopted by different AATO in Italy, as well as campaigns promoted by NGOs on water to find the financial resources.

Following the birth of a large number of instruments and proposals, a Charter of intention called “International Solidarity Charter for the Access to Water” was drafted.

The charter contained suggestions and orientations aimed to guarantee both the cooperation projects and the financing programmes. To be coherent with the principles introduced by the Manifesto for a World Contract of Water and with the UN Resolution n. A/64/L.63/ Rev.1.

The Resolution affirms “the right to safe drinking water and sanitation as an essential human right to the full enjoyment of life and all human rights”. It reinforced the State’s responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights that are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interconnected and that should be treated globally and equally with the same commitment.

According to these principle the Charter of Solidarity:

- Is proposed to NGOs, Associations, Local Bodies to realize, sustain, and collect funds for cooperation and solidarity connected to access to water and to sanitation, as a referring framework

to use for the interventions and implementation management. With a specific reference to the access criteria to institutions and Public Bodies grants and to the management of collected funds destined to cooperation projects, which have as main objective the access to water and sanitation, or the use of local water resources.

- It proposed as a guide line to be introduced in bids and to be adopted in the admission and concession of grants for projects aimed at the access to water and sanitation, to Institutions (Government and Agencies) and cooperation projects financing Bodies (Foundations, regional cooperation, ABC Funds, cents/m³).

OBJECTIVES OF THE CHARTER

- 1) To spread the principles of the Manifesto for the World Contract on Water (access to water as a human right, defence of water as a common good, democratic participation and responsibility of citizens to the management):
 - To realize cooperation and international solidarity activities concerning water, leaded by civil society actors (NGO, Associations, etc.), local governments, trade unions, etc.;
 - The criteria of granting, selection and evaluation of programmes and projects of cooperation and international solidarity financed by cooperation agencies and institutional bodies (UE, Ministries, Regions, Local governments, Foundations, ATO, etc.), should aim to guarantee the access to water and sanitation.
- 2) To Sustain and follow the enforcement of these principles and the experimentation of responsible and fair management models of access to water, from the perspective of implementing Organisation and local communities. A common line of intervention will be promoted on two different levels (macro and micro), accepted and shared universally by all actors.

(2) UN Assembly Resolution A/64/L.63/Rev.1 - 28 July 2010.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE CHARTER

The principles of the Charter are those contained in the “Manifesto for a World Contract on Water”, and can be considered as the main Declarations subscribed during the Alternative Forum on Water and the World Social Forums by many organizations and movements engaged in defending water.

These principles were ratified by the Resolution of the UN Assembly, in the field of right to water and sanitation (Resolution A/64/L.63/rev 1 of 28th July 2010)⁽³⁾.

1. Water is a “source of life”, it’s a common good which belongs to every human being and to every living species on Earth;
2. The right to water and sanitation is an universal, inalienable and unlimited human right.
3. The right to safe drinking water and to sanitation is an essential human right for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights (UN Resolution).
4. The “Ecosystems” are common goods. The preservation of the water cycle is an essential condition for ecosystems, animals and people life. Citizens should be responsible and direct actors of their management.
5. Water is a limited resource both at a local and global level, and it has to be used without wastages and preserving present and future quality (sustainable use). Wasting water seriously compromise life and future generations.
6. The Water property must belong to the States. The water Governance and political control must be participatory and democratic, and must include local communities.
7. Water management models promoted and supported by cooperation activities should be include local population and their

full control. The management should be: equal, inclusive, tolerant, transparent, responsible and it must exclude for profit private enterprises, including the partnership models public/private (PPP).

8. Local and National Institutions, from towns to States, should ensure the investments to guarantee the essential right to water and sanitation for everyone and its sustainable use. To this purpose the States could introduce new taxes, aimed to find financial public resources. In any case negotiations processes for a “social contract” within the local Communities and public powers should be promoted, clarifying and identifying roles division, responsibility and costs recovering⁽⁴⁾.
9. The Citizens and local communities must participate directly or through their representatives to the definition and implementation of politics on water, from a local to a global level.
10. The achievement of the right to water and sanitation must contribute to enforce solidarity among people, communities, countries, respecting other human beings, genders, generations, and it must strengthen the creation of “partnerships” and a sustainable and fair government of extensive world water basin.
11. The indications expressed by the Declaration of Indigenous People on Water of Kyoto 2003, and the Declaration of Indigenous People approved by United Nations, are assumed as referring principles of this Charter, to respect local indigenous communities and traditional knowledge.

(3) Assemblea Generale delle Nazioni Unite Risoluzione A/64/L.63/Rev.1

(4) The Human Right Council with the resolutions of .24.09.2010 clarified with 13 recommendations how States can guarantee access to water, which is recognised by the UN resolution of the 26th of July 2010 (A/HRC/15/L.14).

ESSENTIAL CRITERIA

The principles mentioned above should concretely inspire the approach of cooperation programmes and actions for the access to water. Even more should inspired the composition and the aims of the partnerships, as well as the financial resources.

Commitments of Donor Bodies and Institutions

- a) to guarantee the nature and origin of grants according to the principles of the Charter, promoting direct participation and actions of citizens, especially by those communities invested by the interventions;
- b) to prevent the interventions from commercial objectives of private enterprises and PPP programmes;
- c) to select projects according to the principle of the Charter, finding out for each bid, sector and geographic area the most urgent area. To use selection criteria from a rigid scores framework with transparent and clear procedures;
- d) to avoid activities and programmes promoted by Agencies and National or International Institutes implementing PPP models and water management oriented to privatization (profit oriented management, totally privates or PPP models, with a private management model);
- e) to set up the establishment of Comities and Experts that should monitor and support the Donor Institutions in the correct application of the principles and criteria introduced by the Charter;
- f) to provide a project evaluation through participatory methodologies (which include local communities) and a system of objective parameters for the measurement of the principles application, to submit in the presentation phase of projects; to provide for grants cancellation or sanctions, in case of violations of the principles subscribed by the beneficiary Body.

Commitments for the implementing actors

- a) to share the principles and suggestions of the Manifesto for a World Water Contract and to respect the Charter principles and criteria, in the field of the proposed projects;
- b) to promote the exchange and construction of real territorial partnerships, public – public, public – community, community – community, respecting the introduced principles;
- c) to enforce the community management and the participatory management experiences, and co – management with public administrator and Bodies;
- d) to solicit Public Institutions to take in charge the costs of the right to water (minimal basic needs);
- e) to testify they don't receive any other grant and they don't participate directly and indirectly (partnerships member or cooperative) to any other programmes/projects/actions which promote water management models oriented to private interests or profit, or public- private partnership (PPP);
- f) to prove they don't receive grants or sponsorship from enterprises, societies or organizations applying private models or PPP models in the water management;
- g) to apply the Charter principles through specific methods indicated by donors;
- h) to sustain the mobilizations of the local community defending water against the privatization processes and all forms of water expropriation and reserves in the territories;
- i) to value the information activity and participation of territorial actors working for the Manifesto's principles;
- j) to prevent or denounce every form of corruption in every water management aspect and phase for all the actors (Public Institutions, administrator, users); to establish and implement policies and regulation, interventions planning, goods and services supply, infrastructures constructions, funds management, human resources administration and management.

Management and Methodological referring aspects

The projects that aimed to guarantee the access to water and sanitation and their recognition as human rights, should describe the interventions methods able to promote the Charter principles, as well as their objects and methodologies.

The management and methodological criteria should find their application among all the different activities, even if the technical aspects are the most important elements of the interventions (ex.: construction of draw well, waterworks, small dam, etc.)

The most important criteria in selection and evaluation projects that should be subscribed and shared by the joining actors of the Charter, are the following:

MANAGEMENT

1. to sustain public and community management, implemented by non – profit actors which respond to the criteria of fairness, involvement, participation, non discrimination, transparency and responsibility, avoiding situations, contests and mechanisms which could support the management of private and for profit organizations, or based on a PPP approach;
2. to sustain those kind of managements respecting the employees and promoting their participation in decisions concerning the right to water and sanitation;
3. to start up mechanisms and procedures able yo guarantee the participation of local communities in the estimation of fees and differentiated fee systems for consumption levels and use, and for social conditions, to guarantee the service equity;
4. participation of local community to “costs” recovering (in case the States don’t contribute) to guarantee the right to “minimal basic needs” for the poorest and most vulnerable categories, and the adoption of solidarity shared criteria to guarantee the access to water to everyone;
5. to value the intervention methodologies maintaining or reporting to the public sphere and local communities the management of the services of access to water;
6. the promote information activity, awareness and lobbying campaign to bring local authorities to assume their responsibilities in the promotion and construction of drinking water and sanitation infrastructures and their management, according to the principles introduced at point 1;

PARTICIPATION

7. to elaborate participatory methodologies for needs identification, in the field of access to water by the local communities through confrontation activities and process between local actors;
8. to promote dialogue among new local actors and experienced ones, to reduce efforts and to find better synergies and collaborations;
9. to promote an active participation, through the involvement of population and local actors in the definition of water and infrastructures management methods during the implementation, management, and water quality monitoring phase;
10. to reduce water conflicts management through initiatives promoting confrontation among all local actors and the research of shared solutions;
11. to promote water democracy for water basins and rivers, through the creation of representative assemblies of citizens and the application of service and water defence charters by local communities;
12. to elaborate a system of objective evaluation indexes according to participatory methods, for the Charter principles within the activities to realize;

ENVIRONMENT

13. to promote interventions aimed to water defence, improving water quality in drinking and domestic use, and in sewage drawing;
14. to guarantee the environmental sustainability of the interventions, in particular in case of actions with a relevant environmental impact;
15. to monitor the hydro geological impact of water drawing and use, especially in case of the construction of draw bells, drilling operations and water resources displacement between basins;
16. to evaluate all decisions regarding the use of water (drawing from ground water, or superficial basin) on the draft of a Water Budget;
17. to adopt a “water basin vision”, that means to apply the principle of sustainable and fair integrated management of basins water resources, from a technique point of view;

FOOD SOVERIGNTY

18. the adoption of agriculture models inspired to the principles of Food Sovereignty, as a use and preservation instrument for water, which privilege products cultivations destined to local consumptions;
19. application of sustainable irrigation systems and techniques for agriculture, regarding resources from different water basin;
20. agricultural use of local products appropriate to the local climate, in particular in regions with a dry climate which need less water and cultures able to adjust to climate change;
21. to avoid to give the support to intensive agriculture methods that use of big quantity of water, in contrast with local climate and environmental and social conditions;
22. to avoid water use for monoculture systems, socially and environmentally unsustainable cultivation (agricultural combusti-

ble on industrial scale), and energy production infrastructures (dams, centrals, canalizations, etc.), with a negative social and environmental impact and that are not allowed by the local population;

23. a more suitable water use with local territories and cultures, observing human rights and environmental sustainability, to create lasting benefits for the community and the environment;
24. to include the water impact or the products virtual water content in the decision processes regarding cultivations and productive technologies;

TECHNIQUES, TECHNOLOGIES AND KNOWLEDGE

25. to value local traditional knowledge on water use and management, among the communities;
26. to promote and recuperate local knowledge and technologies with a low environmental impact in water management for agricultural purposes;
27. to save water resources and to use methods and practises available for the local communities;
28. to adopt techniques and technologies for water protections, saving and reuse and for the improvement of water quality and its constant monitoring and control;
29. to adopt monitoring systems and reductions of water leak in processing and distribution processes;

OTHER SOCIAL ASPECTS

30. Recognition processes regarding the right to water by National Governments, communities and local bodies in the field of Constitutional Charters, statutes and local legislation;
31. Equal access to water for everyone without discriminations, with a special attention to gender equality;

32. local awareness campaigns – North and South – on the Charter principles and on water use, to sustain the UN resolution for the right to water and sanitation and the States and International Community commitments concerning the allocation of financial resources.



WE INVITE YOU TO SUBSCRIBE THE CHARTER ON THE WEBSITE
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Italian Committee for Water World Contract - 16th November 2010
(www.contrattoacqua.it)

COIBO AGUA PARA BOLIVIA: UNA LLUVIA DE IDEAS

The paper describes the position of the associated NGOs of COIBO (Italian NGOs Network of Bolivia) ⁽¹⁾ regarding water issues in the Bolivian context. The ideas are the results of the dialogue and consideration among COIBO NGOs, which was developed at first in the COIBO commission on water, and then shared by all NGOs in the assembly. It derives from exchange and evaluation processes of the NGO's activities and motivations for their interventions in the region. The result is a document which describes the associated NGOs position.

The aim of the document is to present the Italian NGOs vision on water issues in a coherent, synthetic, and accessible way. We hope through this document these ideas could spread publicly and could promote dialogue with central and local institutions and organizations involved on these issues.

The document could become a reference for other actors of cooperation operating on these themes or interested in creating synergies on strategic and operational aspects (objective confrontation, and activities and projects implementation), and for donors concerning projects granting criteria.

The context of the themes (backgrounds, history, and legislation) is introduced from the perspective of associated NGOs. We expose then the principles which found our commitment, as well as NGOs methodologies to implement their principles in present and future actions. Finally, we present three different good practices experiences developed by Italian NGOs and some reference texts which contributed to develop our position. We think this could be an interesting point of consideration for other actors.

This document doesn't represent a complete reference concerning the position of all associated NGOs on water issues. It only reports the shared and common positions, still considering the NGOs independence: each NGO keeps its peculiar position concerning other issues and their specific strategies and actions.

At the same time, the document doesn't report the institutional position of Italian Cooperation, which has its own institutional representatives and its defined guide lines.

We want to thank finally all coordinators and Desks working in Italy and all the technical staffs of COIBO NGOs which contributed to the draft of this document.

La Paz, 10 aprile 2010

Carlo Krusich
COIBO Coordinator 2009

⁽¹⁾ Il documento è stato sottoscritto dalle seguenti ONG aderenti a COIBO: ACRA, ASPEm, CELIM Bergamo, CeVI, COOPI, COSV, CVCS, GVC, ProgettoMondo MLAL, Ricerca e Cooperazione, UCODEP.

SECTOR FRAMEWORK: WATER IN BOLIVIA

Bolivia is a water-abundant country, but the distribution and access are not equal, and reflect the geographical and social differences. Moreover, water is often the reason of social and political conflicts between urban and fringe areas, rural areas and cities or among the same communities. There is a strong relation between limited access to water and population poverty conditions. The access to safe and clean water affects directly people's health and their economic activities: the majority of Bolivians work on agriculture and livestock, which are very sensible activity to the availability and quality of water.

According to the UNESCO World Water Report (2003), Bolivia occupies the 16th position on 180 countries in relation with its water supply. Nonetheless it occupies the 67th place on 122 countries regarding water quality. In Bolivia there are three extensive international water basins: the Amazonian basin, which covers 724.000 km², the Paraguay – Paraná Basin (or Plata's basin), which covers 229.500 km² and the Andean Basin of the Plateau which extends for 145.081 km².

According to the data reported by FAO, the average rains consist on 1124 mm / year (FAO/AQUASTAT, 2000). The driest region is the South East of the country, with less than 100 mm rain per year, while rains rise up on the east area of the country, where we find values of 1700 mm/year. In the Pando, the north department of the country, rains reaches values of 2200 mm. In the region of Chapare we find the highest values of the country, with more than 5000 mm of rain per year. In Bolivia the rain season is concentrated on a few months of the year and it often brings to floods which

cause big damages to the cultivations; during the other months, the dry season can bring other serious consequences. The impacts of natural disasters like floods, dry season are known as the phenomenon of the "Niño y la Niña". In the last years these two phenomena have strongly increased, with negative impact on the situation, causing economic losses on GDP of 20%. The negative effects influences the conservation of the Andes glaciers, which lost almost the half of their never – ending snow in the 25 years, with tragic consequences for the future of fresh water reserves. The first tropical glacier of Bolivia disappeared, the Chacaltaya.

Agriculture is the sector which uses the biggest quantity of water, around 94% of total actual water demand (around 2.000 millions m³/year, 2007). Nonetheless, only 11% of the agriculture surface can use irrigation systems, giving food security to one third of the population. At the moment there are around 230.000 hectares which can use irrigation systems and an additional demand of 280.000 hectares. In the last years no significant improvement regarding irrigations system was introduced in the country, which still depends on rain seasons.

The amount of water used for human consumption is 104.5 millions of m³/year, which is the 5% of the total demand of water. Anyway, regarding drinking water distribution, there are many differences among social groups. The 90% of urban population has access to domestic water use (OMS/UNICEF, 2004), but only the 44% of rural population have it. Even in urban areas water distribution is not equal. In middle and high class neighbourhood, there is a constant provision, while in popular and peripheries neighbourhood water distribution is limited and inhabitants

have to supply with alternative methods, like tank cars. At the same time access to sanitation, in a wider meaning, is not uniform: it reaches the 60% of urban population and only the 22% of rural population (OMS/UNICEF, 2004).

Among productive sectors, industry and mines demands a high quantity of water, and consume every year almost 32 million m³, which is 1% of the total country demand. The majority of the used water is released into the environment without any purification treatment.

The water is a serious environmental problem, as it damages citizen's health and quality of life and ecosystems integrity. Many Bolivian lakes and rivers are polluted, as well as cities and mines groundwater. The mineral and industrial activities are the first causes of pollution, followed by wastewater drain and the sewer system leaks, which affect both surfaces reserves and groundwater.

AN HISTORIC PROCESS OF WORLD RELEVANCE

In world summits of the 90s new lines and directions were imposed in the field of the water management: the World Conference of Rio de Janeiro of 1992, the Uruguay Round (1986 – 1994), the Marrakech conference of 1995, the World Water Forums promoted by the World Council. These changes regarded the distribution and treatment of drinking water for human use, considered as an economic resource which has to rely on markets and private participation.

In Bolivia two experiments of privatizations of water management took place and determined the commercialization of this resource. Between 1997 and 1999 the water services of La Paz and Cochabamba were privatized and their management was assigned to two consortiums controlled by two of the biggest water multinationals enterprises in the world.

In 1997 the drinking water services and the sewer system of La Paz, the were managed by the public enterprise SAMAPA (*Servicio Autónomo Municipal de Agua y Alcantarillado*), were privatized and assigned to the *Aguas del Illimani* consortium (AISA), which was controlled by the French enterprise Lyonnaise des Eaux, a branch of the Suez. The concession was announced as a social plan meant to bring water to the disadvantaged neighbourhood of *El Alto* (the pro-poor concession): the contract provided for the installation of 70.000 new domestic concessions and more than 38.000 new sewage concessions. During the first years of the new management, the planned volumes of investments for the water and sewage systems expansion were not achieved, and the water consumption fees increased by 20%. The communities started to demonstrate against the AISA

management through *Cabildos* (popular assemblies) and mobilizations led by the El Alto association FEJUVE (*Federación de Juntas de Vecinos*). They demanded the government breach the contract with AIFA. In 2005 the government started negotiations with the multinational. In 2007 the government of Evo Morales terminated the contract with *Aguas del Illimani* and assigned the water services management of La Paz and El Alto to the new public enterprise EPSAS (*Empresa-Pública-Social de Agua y Saneamiento*).

In 1999 the Cochabamba water services that were managed by the Servicio Municipal de Agua Potable y Alcantarillado (SEMAPA) were assigned to the consortium of *Agua del Tunari*, controlled by the US Multinational Bechtel as the majority shareholder.

The government approved the law 2029, which legally recognized the concession to privates of the basic provision and permitted the monopoly of management in some specific areas. With the first bills, the inhabitants of Cochabamba found out that fees raised by almost 300% with the *Aguas del Tunari* administration. The water multinational didn't respect traditional and communitarian customs and uses in water management, as well as the organization of the periphery areas of the city, and they asked for payments for draw bells water use through inhabitant's resources and community labour. In February 2000 mobilizations started, where population asked for the breach of the contract with *Agua del Tinari*. During the April of the same year, after many days of social conflicts, the government cancelled the contract of concession and repealed the contested law 2029.

With the mobilization in defence of Water a social and political process started which influenced Bolivia political progress

of the last 10 years. Bolivians expressed in the streets and squares that water is a common good of all communities and it can't be privatized. Its management must be public and communitarian. This awareness launched the research for new models of water management, consistent with traditional habits and customs defended against privatization, which must be fair and transparent, with a social control and a high level of participation in decision making processes. The importance of water in political issues of the country brought the government of Evo Morales to the establishment of the Ministry of Water, to satisfy citizen's demand in terms of access to water. This initiative promoted the realization of a fair, sustainable and participatory water management, which can contribute to the social and economic development of the country. The Ministry of Water "develops and implements public policies, plans, programmes and projects for the conservation, the adaptation and the sustainable supply of environmental resources. It develops the irrigation and sanitation systems with an integral and sustainable approach to basins, and it promotes the priority use of water for life through approaches consistent with local traditional customs".

WATER IN LEGISLATION

The article 373 of the New Constitution of the State, approved on the 25th January 2009, declares water as a "fundamental right for life" and completes a process began on 2000 when the city of Cochabamba refused the privatization of water during the days which are remembered as the "Water War". The water constitutional system is now considered as an important achievement of social organizations which fought to get back public sovereignty on water.

The new constitution confers the supremacy of the water management to the state: "It's a duty of the State to manage, to rule, to protect and to plan the adequate and sustainable use of water, including social participation and the guarantee of the access to water for all inhabitants" (art. 374). It states as well that "according to the law water resources [...] cannot be object of private acquisition as well as its provision" (art. 373 inc. II).

Though the constitutional text forbids the privatization of water resource, it doesn't offer the same guarantees for the service supply. The article 309 which rule the public economic organizations, establishes that public enterprises, between different objectives, will have to "administrate basic services of drinking water and sewage directly, or through public, communitarian, cooperative or mixed enterprises" (art. 309). The constitution opened the course to the establishment of "public – private societies" or mixed enterprises, which are the new instruments for water multinational or big cooperation agencies to promote the privatization of water.

In Bolivia doesn't exist at the moment an outline law on water resources:

the law on water of 1906 was annulled because of the temporal context in which it was enacted. Beside the lack of a general law, different sector rules were developed. Regarding human consumption the "law in drinking water and sewer system", is still in force. This law is the number 2066, and it was re – published on 2000 to modify the contested law 2029, which allowed the privatization of water through the instrument of the concession.

According to the law, the regulation of services supply is assigned to the *Superintendencia de Saneamiento Básico* (SISAB), which can confer concessions and licences for the service and fix prices, fees, and taxes. In 2007 the SISAB approved with the administrative resolution N. 124/2007, the *Guía de Solicitud de Licencias y Registros*, after a confrontation process with social organization. This is a binding regulation which recognizes legal identity to small entities which supply water and their rights on sources and the service area. Afterwards in Santa Cruz and Cochabamba were organized the CTRL (*Comités Técnicos de Licencias y Registro*), which are in charge of supervising the admission demands of communitarian drinking water and irrigation systems.

With the aim of ruling water use in the agricultural sector, the law 2878 was approved in 2004, after a long confrontation with the irrigator organizations. The law 2878 has the objective of administrating water resources for irrigation, and it establishes a new institutional framework, which localize and ensure the rights to use water through a Register. The register contains the concessions of water sources to families and indigenous and local communities, and it has the aim of guarantying the access to water for domestic and traditional agriculture use.

The Supreme Act 0071 of April 2009, established the *Autoridad de Fiscalización y Control Social Agua Potable y Saneamiento* (AAPS), which substituted the SISAB in its functions, and it has as objective “to rule activities realized by” natural persons and corporate, privates, communitarian, mixed and cooperative bodies, in the field of drinking water and sanitation (art. 3, DS0071). It wants to guarantee beneficiary’s rights and the access for all inhabitants of the multinational State to the services, ensuring the sustainable provision of natural resources. The AAPS monitors and rules the drinking water and sanitation systems activities, according to the Law 2066 (2000), which rules the drinking water services and sewer systems, and to Law 2878 (2004), which rule the irrigation sector. The AAPS also monitors the regulations coherence with the constitution”.

The experience of rural communities and of the big cities peripheries, with their organizational way of life around water is the base of a legal framework which responds to the demand of all sectors. At a local level many communities still manage their water resources according to their ancient traditional use and customs, with their mechanisms of distribution, work and costs sharing. But the communitarian management of water cannot always face different problems, such as water scarcity

or sources pollution, as they don’t provide for sufficient instruments and resources to bring technical improvements, in basic water infrastructures and water treatment.

The National Development Plan for 2006-2010 drafted by the actual government establishes new guide lines in the field of water resources regulation and management. The document declares that “water is a right of people and all living beings on a territory, and its distribution and use must be based on values of justice, solidarity, equity, diversity and sustainability” (PND, 2006:125). The State is committed to promote the public and participated management of water resource, giving particular attention to the needs and rights of people with scarce economic resources and native indigenous people.

The actual government is elaborating a new Law proposal (the law draft is called *Ley de Agua para la Vida*, Water for life Law) to establish a binding frame for water management, and to promote the legal recognition of traditional and customary use of water resources. The Law must be introduced coherently inside the legal framework of the State Constitution, conferring rights and duties to all actors involved in the process: national and local authorities, services suppliers, communities and also cooperation and financing bodies.

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES OF COIBO REGARDING WATER ISSUES

COIBO NGOs have been working for many years on water issues in Bolivia. During our experience in this sector we identified and defined the principles and the values which lead our work, through a constant dialogue and ideas exchange with international and Italian movements which fight in defence of water.

Italian NGOs share and recognize the next principles and values:

- Water, as a fundamental source of life for the ecosystem, is a common good and belongs to all human beings.
- The access to water, with adequate quantity and quality, is a universal human right and it is inalienable, individual and collective
- Water must contribute to enforce solidarity among people, community, countries, genders and generations

- The property, government and management of water must be public. Water is not merchandise, and it cannot be privatized. Public – private partnerships and for profit bodies are refused and have to be considered a water privatization form; on the other side, experiences of partnerships public – public, public – community, community – community, must be promoted. Communitarian organization experiences and forms are considered public experiences.
- Water must involve citizens and communities in equal, participating, democratic and transparent ways. Citizens must guarantee the economic sustainability of water service according to their uses, customs and possibilities, as well as national and local bodies.
- Water is a limited resource at a local and global level, and its management must be sustainable, for preventing damages to future generations.

METHODOLOGIES FOR PROJECTS AND POLICIES DRAFT AND EXECUTION

The NGOs of COIBO identify the following methodological aspects for the definition, draft and execution of policies and projects concerning water.

1. Rafforzare i processi democratici e partecipativi nella gestione dell'acqua.

Water issues involve everyone and water is a “common good” and it belongs to all communities. That is the reason why NGOs are committed in the creation and empowerment of decisional spaces and processes which involve all actors which have a role in the Water Cycle, both for human use than for productive aims. These processes must include services suppliers, public and communitarian ones, and citizens users or *comunarios*, with a particular attention to the women participation. The democratic and participatory processes imply a transparent management and transparent mechanisms of water management control and corruption prevention.

Communities will focus their attention on the empowerment of participatory and “governance” models of the entire water resource cycle regarding the priorities of use and drawing, and the prevention to privatization and merchandizing risks. These risks come from the public – private partnerships which were already experienced on the Bolivian territory.

2. To recognise cultural differences and to sustain dialogue, confrontation and participation of all actors in the water conflicts management.

Conflicts often emerge in relation to the access to water sources and their use, and involve communities which share the same water basin like irrigators and drinking water consumer organizations etc. A sustainable water management, which can be effective for common and collective interests, must be based on the respect of cultural differences and pluralisms. For these reason we consider essential the empowerment of dialogue and confrontation among all involved actors, in the management of water conflicts. The conflicts solution must include solidarity and equality principles to ensure a fair and sustainable access to water.

3. To guarantee environmental sustainability, to promote water saving and water rational use in all interventions.

The actions of Italian NGOs are directed to inform populations and organizations they work with, about the necessity of defending environment to guarantee the future availability of water and all natural resources. They will work mostly with the aim of reducing negative impact of human activities. They will work on awareness campaigns on an efficient and careful use, both for domestic and productive purposes, reminding that water is a limited resource.

The diffusion of water saving methods will be promoted for human and productive uses. In particular the actions will propose more efficient irrigation methods. Education (formal and informal) for every generation in urban and rural areas

will be an essential component to change behaviours and to consolidate the values of solidarity and sustainability (with a particular attention to children and women). The activities aimed at increasing individual and collective responsibility must become a fundamental aspect of every intervention related to water issues.

4. To assist confrontation and dialogue between communities, central and local bodies, related to the assumption of mutual responsibilities and definition of public policies.

The communities play the most important role in water resource management, which is now recognised as a fundamental human right, after the new Bolivian juridical situation and the social conflict of 2000. This extremely important change should guarantee a better social control and a more democratic access to water. At the same time, a progressive breaking up process of the state structure could derive from this situation, especially at a local level for what concerns water resources management. The COIBO NGOs will promote the assumption of responsibilities between managing organizations (water committees, social cooperative, etc.) and the municipality, so that they could take charge of water management. That means they will take care of the network planning, the maintenance of water infrastructures, and the organization of resources, technique staff and labour force, with a perspective of governance of water resources and water basin.

5. Investments to promote a participatory and social water distribution service management, respecting environment, efficient and sustainable.

All interventions promoted by NGOs will respect the traditional uses and customs of the interested communities, to guarantee to everyone the access to a minimal basic need as a right, and they will have to consider beside the technical aspect, the financial and the social sustainability aspect of water resources. From the technique point of view the use of technologies which respect the habits, traditions and use appropriated knowledge is privileged; technologies which use local materials and an easy maintenance. It is also considered the environmental impact of every intervention and the impact reduction of materials and water infrastructure, using environmental engineering methods.

Water is a right and can't be merchandise and it can be accessible on an income base, and the access must be guaranteed to everyone. The recovering of costs for water services (distribution services, water treatments) must be guaranteed from the collective commitment of citizens, communities and local and central authorities. The recovering of the costs for a minimal basic need of drinking water for every citizen must be guaranteed by public authorities.

6. To identify, to recognise and to sustain traditional use and customs and traditional knowledge in technology and water management.

Rural population developed an efficient and sustainable use of the resource. This traditional and ancestral techniques must be respected, defended and valued, and in many cases could present good solutions for a better use of water and could meet some modern technologies. At the same time it must be considered the cosmological vision of population, which saw water as a human being, a fundamental part of a belief which represents a universe view. The NGOs are committed to respect beliefs and cultural practises, in the field of natural resources, in particular water. It's necessary to consider the beneficiaries habits to avoid technologies which are not acceptable or contrary to the local traditional belief and organizational forms.

7. Recognize the water basin as a reference unit and promote integral management policies of water resources.

The water cycle and drainage take place in the "water basin" and every policies and projects related to water management must consider the basin as a fundamental reference unit. Water exploitation or valorisation interventions and projects, must consider their environmental impacts on the compatibility with the volume of available resources and the basin refill. The interventions must respect Natural Laws which rule water cycle. For this reason we believe it's important to promote a water resources global management to respect the water balance, the integrity of ecosystems and the ecological processes of basins. At the same time, it's necessary

to consider and favour the participation and the involvement of all actors and communities which live close to the same basin, to take decisions regarding water and local basin use and valorisation.

8. To support ratification processes of the right to water by local, central and international authorities.

Italian NGOs believe that water is a right, though the international institutional community keeps on considering it as an essential requirement or an economic good which is subject to market laws.

NGOs are committed to sustain initiatives for the recognition of the right to water as a universal, inalienable right for every human being. The right to water and its defence must become a priority of the political agenda and it must be introduced into the constitutions, as it already happened in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Uruguay. We believe it is important that the right to water will be included in treaties and international conventions (also in relation to climate changes and water crises which these changes are worsening), and that it will be introduced and supported in the statutes of local provincial and regional authorities, or formally approved through *ad hoc* resolutions.

9. To support exchanges and partnerships between public and communitarian management bodies (public-public cooperation agreement, public-community and community-community).

Another important methodological aspect is the exchange of experiences (at a national and international level), and good practices as a vehicle to promote the public, communitarian and participatory water resource management. The exchanges between public water provision, both public and communitarian, offer the opportunity to verify if succeeding models applied in urban and rural areas, could be proposed in different contexts.

During the exchanges activities specific issues can be faced, concerning the technical and administrative management of water system, as well as more general issues, like the legal aspects in the field of water services and the relations between authorities and citizens / users.

10. To promote the correct water management for productive purposes and food security.

NGOs will avoid activities which could cause environmental dangers or damages to water basins. Italian NGOs are committed to promote the use of water for agricultural systems constant with local requirements and the geographical peculiarities, with the production and consumption cycle, and with the conservation and defence of environmental processes.

They will promote "non water intensive" cultivations and productions, as well as the functional use of water to rural, productive and food requirements, to satisfy the alimentary self – sufficiency of rural communities. The introduced productive

activities and cultivations must not damage the water cycle stability, in relation to the local water basin, and must include a low level of water and pollution.

11. To use participatory methodologies to identify the needs of water.

The use and the demand of access to water depend on geographical and social contests. For this reason is essential to promote and support active processes, to identify the interventions sectors which respond to an effective demand and involve local communities and actors. To avoid the realization of projects which don't meet real needs, we commit to work with beneficiaries from the needs identification phase until the implementation and the conclusion of interventions in the water sector.

GOOD PRACTICES.

WATER MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES EMPOWERMENT IN THE SOUTH AREA OF COCHABAMBA

Description: The Bolivia Water project had the objective of guaranteeing the access to water for domestic use to the inhabitants of the south area of Cochabamba, promoting citizen participation in water services and resources management. The project developed educational and counselling courses for the water management Committees of the area through the promotion of a participatory, sustainable and responsible management of water resources and services, improving social organizations skills (ASICA Sur). During the training different targets group were involved, not only managers and Committees members, but also users and inhabitants of the neighbourhood, for a training on technical, administrative and bureaucratic problems, promoting a correct management of water infrastructure. During the project implementation, the Water Committees of the south area were supported in the recognition process as water services supplier by the State. The Bolivia Water project could create synergies with other water related projects of the peri-urban area of Cochabamba, such as the project PASAAS (water infrastructures construction) and the project Misicuni (water provision through a dam construction).

Finally different congresses were promoted for experiences and technologies exchanges through the event organization (I and II International Water Fair) and the promotion of international convention on water issues (Water World Forum, World Social Forums and other).

PROJECT NAME: Bolivia Water 2004-2009

NGO: CeVI

LOCATION: Cochabamba

DONOR: Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia

MODEL OF COMUNITARIAN MANAGEMENT OF A DRINKING WATER SYSTEM

Description: The Saya community drinking water system was built by the community members. This system improved health conditions of the population, which suffered of illnesses related to water pollution (rivers and draw wells were not protected from toxic materials coming from surface water). Furthermore, women have more time today for their activities, as they don't have to walk to the far draw wells: with the new system they have taps from which they can have fresh water.

The project for drinking water in Saya, has been based on the following principles:

- The direct system management of the community members, who are not only service users but active administrators of the community.
- The valorisation of *ancestral costumes and traditions* in the regulation of drinking water communitarian system
- The integrated management of the local water basin

The system management committee has an executive council composed of a president, a vice-president, a treasurer and a secretary. The beneficiaries know that this body has to coordinate with the trade union authorities and with local administration to guarantee

the good management of the communitarian system. To guarantee maintenance costs recovery (tools, administrative materials, and technical staff) every user pays a fixed low fee, and another amount according to each consumption levels.

PROJECT NAME: From the source, the community of Valle Araca has access to water.

NGO: ACRA

LOCATION: Community of Saya, Municipality of Cairoma, Fifth municipal section of Loayza province – Department of La Paz

DONOR: AATO Venezia

IMPROVEMENT OF COMMUNITARIAN MECHANISMS OF WATER CATCHING, STORING, DISTRIBUTION AND USE IN THE CHACO OF TARIJA

Description: Two consecutive projects (emergency and environmental disaster preparation) kept the same objective to guarantee the access to safe water for human use in the community of Chaco in the Entre Rios municipality, where the *guarani* culture lives with the customs of *chaqueños* farmers and breeders. During the project execution many educational processes destined to different communities and their leaders were realized, regarding water treatment and safe storing mechanisms, using local knowledge and native system for water settling processes.

Catching and drinking water system were improved, together with the constitution and empowerment of water committees and communitarian irrigation committees (construction and maintenance, health education, statutes and regulation, administration and fees structure, environmental impact reduction).

A study on surface water mapping was realized (mountainsides, gorges, rivers, etc.), and it provided information on water quality and the quantity to prevent dry season and to avoid deep well drilling which cause water exhaustion and an high salt levels. The project approach is humanitarian, and activities and strategies were developed according to the sustainability and adaptability of local population (low cost intervention).

PROJECT NAME: Vulnerable indigenous communities of breeders of Bolivian and Paraguayan Chaco prepared to environmental disasters.

NGO: COOPI

LOCATION: Chaco in the region of Tarija, Entre Rios municipality (Bolivia)

DONOR: European Commission, Department of Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection (ECHO)

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