



emmaüs EXPRESS

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CITIZENS IN SOLIDARITY FOR WATER ON NOKOUÉ

Editorial by André Todjé,

1st Deputy Mayor of Sô-Ava,
responsible for water and sanitation

“We have been supporting the Emmaüs project for the past 10 years. Although the provision of drinking water is one of the responsibilities of the town hall, we had neither the expertise nor the resources to implement this kind of project. The strength of the project lies in the fact that it has brought all the stakeholders together and placed the population at the heart of the decision-making process. Now the project really belongs to us. The town hall should demonstrate the political will to support the residents’ association and thus ensure the sustainability this service for the population. I think that this participatory method could serve as a model for future projects in Sô-Ava.”

Latest news from the lake



The tanker boat that will be collecting faecal sludge from the latrines and taking it to the treatment plant was unveiled in late January and has been in operation since February. All the facilities are therefore complete and operational. Following 10 years’ work on the lake, the Nokoué programme will come to an end in May 2016.

But that does not mean that activities will cease – far from it! Having received support and assistance for several years and grouped together as a users’ association, the lake’s residents are now capable of managing the facilities and awareness-raising activities independently. Emmaüs will continue to support the project as a member of that association. In February, a film was made to illustrate how the population of the lake had taken ownership of and become increasingly involved in the project. There will be an exclusive screening of the film at the World Assembly in April and it will then be sent to all the groups.

> Christine Hounsa, food vendor, completed a training course on food hygiene and preservation

“I sell dishes that I prepare at home. I used to cook with non-drinking water. I noticed that some of my customers were falling ill, which really bothered me, but I had no other option. Recently, I completed a training course along with some other food vendors and learned about the importance of using drinking water, making sure I’m clean before cooking, using consumable condiments, protecting the food, etc. Since then I have changed my habits. I earn less money but have a clearer conscience as my customers are no longer falling ill because of my cooking.”



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Treatment plant to be operational soon

Everything is in place in order to get the treatment plant up and running. The landing stage has been completed and crew has just been recruited and trained to operate the tanker boat that was unveiled in late January. Once the latrine blocks are full, the tanker boat will be able to begin regular pumping and dump the sludge in the treatment plant. The sludge will be filtered through sand and reeds then used as fertilizer in agriculture.

SPOTLIGHT ON...

José, responsible for monitoring operations

Can you introduce yourself?

My name is José Bénédicte Hounsa. For six months, I have been responsible for monitoring the operations of the water and sanitation facilities under the Nokoué programme. I assist the users' association with the technical and financial management of the facilities.

What facilities have been completed?

Nine water towers, 103 standpipes, 95 latrine blocks, one tanker boat and one treatment plant were completed under the pilot programme and then the PCSEN* project. That has created 108 jobs and 103 different activities for standpipe attendants.

What are the future challenges?

The first challenge is to maintain the equipment, which is heavy-duty and expensive. The second is to ensure good governance within the residents'



association that manages the facilities. We are working to instil values such as management, transparency and community life. But above all, the sustainability of the facilities requires sufficient revenue – i.e. sufficient water consumption on the part of the users. The “water basin” sale will enable us to maintain the infrastructure and ensure free access to the latrines. We must therefore continue raising awareness about the importance of using the water supplied to the standpipes, and the fact that it is safe to drink and reduces health risks.

*Citizens in Solidarity for Water on Nokoué

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION !

> Shooting of the next film on the programme, in February 2016.



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