

Getting access to water and sanitation

On July 28, 2010, the UN General Assembly recognized that safe and clean water is a human right essential to the full enjoyment of life and all other human rights.

However the depth and content of this right are problematic.

The definition of the right to water and sanitation made by international organizations and used in global statistics is very limited. To have access to water, it is said to be enough to live at less than a kilometer from a water source or at 15 minutes. Water sources are said to be “improved” but one out of two times, they do not provide clean water as defined by Codex Alimentarius.

The objective of the following workshops is first to assess the situation of those whom neoliberals deny the exercise of this right, in Africa, as in France.

By looking at examples, such as Lake Chad, we will show how dominant parties are leading pseudo climate-change adaptation projects without any consideration for the fundamental living conditions of the people, in particular their access to drinking water and sanitation.

Finally we will look hard at sanitation in developing countries, which has fallen into oblivion, and the solutions that lead to managing water as a common good in France and elsewhere and methods for financing these solutions.

Thursday March 15, 10am to 12.30pm at Dock des Suds D

Water and sanitation in big cities in Niger and Burkina Faso

These three megacities have a history that is similar in many ways. Their story sheds light on the catastrophic situation of the large majority of their inhabitants who cannot get enough drinking water and proper sanitation. The consequences on their health and development are unacceptable. Women and children suffer the most.

So far, policies have been ineffective in resolving problems that have been worsened by demographic growth and social conflicts.

The workshop will first identify and assess the main causes of today's situation and then examine the most effective and durable solutions that enforce the right to water as recognized by the UN General Assembly in July 2010.

Workshop run by: Catherine Baron

Abdou Bontianti - Mariama Saidou - John Kabeya

Thursday, March 15, 1pm to 3.30pm at Dock des Suds E

Water and Decentralized Cooperative Projects

Twin-city cooperative projects often involve water and could be about drilling wells, irrigating agricultural zones, preventing soil erosion... These actions have often been successful due to the shared efforts of the inhabitants and their European friends. These projects have sometimes failed, and all parties have learned lessons, lessons that are related to agronomics, education... and are tied to the history of each place, the economy, and people's health.

The heart of this workshop is about sharing experiences. We will above all talk about the best conditions that are necessary to make these non-commercial actions successful.

Workshop run by: Jean Loup Englander

Cooperative Project between St Michel s/Orge (91) and Ber (Mali) - Syndicat de la Vallée de l'Orge and foreign guest Cités- Unies-France and foreign guest - NGO PsEAU and foreign guest - France-Volontaires and foreign guest - City of Paris: Pierre Shapira and foreign guest

Thursday March 15, 1pm to 3.30pm at Dock des Suds D

The Roma and their access to water and sanitation

By looking at drinking water and sanitation, we can assess the situation of Roma in France and in Europe.

This workshop will highlight very real testimonials from those who suffer from and denounce discrimination. We will also talk about how associations that fight alongside the Roma can intervene.

Alternative propositions will be grouped together with other proposals concerning other unstable and insecure populations. This theme is strongly tied to the workshops about women.

Introduction

Fatih Bouraoura (Abbé Pierre Regional Delegate)

Initial round table: The History of the Roma and the Symbolism of Water in the Roma Culture
Sarah Carmona (Dr in History, Roma) Alain Fourest (Rencontres Tsiganes) Claire Auzias (Sociologist)

Testimonials from the Roma: regarding access to water and sanitation. Movements led by
Santino Spinelli (Dott. Prof.), Eugène Daumas (President of UFAT), Marian Mandache (Coordinator of Human Rights, Romani CRISS)

Film about the Roma in Slovenia and their access to water

The impact of the privatization of water and sanitation on the health of the Roma
Philippe Rodier (Roma Mission of Médecins du Monde)

Debate on alternative propositions. Real responses today.

Thursday March 15, 3.30pm to 6pm at Dock des Suds B

Water, hygiene and sanitation: from the Comoros to the Comorian community in Marseille

Marseille citizens of Comorian descent and their associations act as a link between a poor country, the Comoros, where access to water and sanitation is deplorable, and a rich country, France, where many people cannot properly benefit from the right to water, sanitation and hygiene.

They are always available to help their families, villages, and neighborhoods in Comoros, and they begin resolving these problems by engaging in communal and democratic projects about water, sanitation and hygiene, which are seen as common goods. In Marseille, as a way of enforcing the right to water as recognized by the UN in July 2010, many associations are asked daily to relieve difficulties, the consequences of extreme poverty and unsanitary housing.

The objective of this workshop, after describing the situation in Comoros and in Marseille in detail, is about defining realistic solutions for here and over there, that can be led by citizens, but heard by politicians and governments.

As for Marseille, while debating the renewal of public services contract with SEM and SERAM, how can we analyze our situation, emblematic of the poor's situation? As for France, what laws would enforce obligations about Human Rights, and would not let those be excluded from rights because of financial reasons?

Workshop run by: Nouriati Djambae

Zilé Soihili - Nassurdine Haidari - Mr Moeau - Kassim Papa - Marie Aziani - Eric Narsisyan - Radu Milehanu - Hans Syvester - Passage de Soprano

Friday March 16, 10am to 12.30pm at Dock des Suds E

The Lake Chad issue, major multibordered lake in the heart of Africa

Lake Chad is currently under analysis and under opposing views: the media, the CBLT, certain international institutions like the FAO, local governments, and some French “big brothers” see the lake as being endangered because of samples directly impacted by mankind and climate change. For scientists, the hydrology of the lake has been stable for about twenty years. Its fluctuations, of which we know the history, is better for production such as agriculture linked to falling water levels and also animal farming, to the detriment of fishing.

The countries that border the lake have examined transferring a part of the Congo's water basin in order to fill the lake and make it more spread out. This decision, a “white elephant” dream, risks posing more problems than it resolves. Above all, it leads to an undetermined future for the lake's ecosystem and lives of the people around it. These people have found on the riverside a way of fleeing the uncertain Sahelian climate, and they are settling there and starting families. The governments that share the lake are not playing their role of producing common goods and protecting rights. On the contrary, the inhabitants are prey to government personnel, and they do not have access to essential services (education, healthcare, drinking water).

The “international community” has been asked by the governments that border the lake to “save Lake Chad” by financing this gigantic and dangerous inter-basin water transfer project. After giving an in-depth analysis, this workshop aims to formulate democratic, independent, participatory and financially feasible conditions under which the people can develop sustainable and ecological activities while fully exercising their rights.

Workshop run by: Géraud Magrin

Audrey Mbagogo - Bernard Mounier - Jacques Lemoale

Friday March 16, 10am to 12.30pm at Dock des Suds C

Access to sanitation, managed as a common good, using alternative techniques

Lucien Stanzione - Bernard François - Pierre Gabert - Tahar Idder - Mohamed Tahar Idder - Fanny Staub