

emmaus express

December 2014

www.emmaus-international.org

SPECIAL
EDITION

LAKE NOKOUÉ

CITIZENS IN SOLIDARITY FOR WATER ON NOKOUÉ

Editorial

By Azankpossio Viviane, elected representative on the executive committee of the water users' organisation

Since my election a year ago, our main missions are to inform members of the community, inform households on the need to pay subscriptions, and create awareness around hygiene and sanitation. The women, who now account for 4 out of 9 members of the water users' organisation play an essential role in these activities!

In one year, I have realised that the Nokoué project was not about "selling water" but about working together, reflecting on the difficulties involved and finding solutions, changing people's behaviour, and sometimes taking difficult decisions to ensure that the organisation progresses.

The arrival of water at Kinto



Since September 2014, drinking water has finally been flowing in the village of Kinto! Although the water distribution systems at the other sites had been inaugurated in December 2013, the work at Kinto took longer to complete. Studies concluded that there was only salt water on the site, making it impossible to implement the programme. The villagers, however, and particularly the women who had to walk miles to find water, insisted that a new site should be assessed because they were sure that fresh water would be found there. The mutual trust between Emmaus International, the people living around the lake and the authorities meant that this new study went ahead. It ended up with the location of a fresh water table and the start of work. The site will be inaugurated in March 2015.

PROFILE OF... the Kpatinvo family, users of water on the lake (village of Dékanmey)

"In our family, we use water from community taps for our consumption and washing clothes and dishes. Some people don't like the taste, but I have chosen this water for my family. We no longer suffer from frequent diarrhoea, so we spend less money on medical care. The community tap is very close to our home, and that avoids walking long distances to look for water. We are now waiting for latrines to be delivered soon so we can use them".



emmaus
INTERNATIONAL

ACTIVISTS FOR CHANGE



Two tanker vessels for 2015

The tanker boat solution has been adopted to empty the latrine blocks and send faecal sludge to the wastewater treatment plant* on Lake Nokoué. Experts from France, Benin and Senegal and people living around the lake have devised this solution together to respond to the specific constraints imposed by lake Nokoué. Project engineer Jean-Paul Gazeau explains the solution: "Despite the fact that the tank is part of the hull, the boat will not have a deep draught so it can access all the sites. Its design means low fuel consumption and a small wash that does not disturb fishermen. It will be made of steel to resist the conditions of the lake and make on-site repairs easier. " The first of the two tanker boats will be on the lake in Spring 2015.

*See the special issue on Nokoué (July 2014)

SPOTLIGHT ON...

The cost of the water basin

On Lake Nokoué, the local people pay 20 francs CFA (€0.03) for each 35-litre water basin filled from a community tap under the programme. This sum is not what the water costs, but the price for the water and sanitation service.

20 francs CFA represents around 2% of the daily income of a family living on the lake. The local people, constituted in an organisation, have set the price per basin themselves.

These contributions cover the operation and maintenance costs of the infrastructures (employees, taxes, regular analysis of the water). They also ensure free access to latrines for all the people living around the lake.



Finally, they guarantee the sustainability of the infrastructures (renewal, repairs, and the possible future extension of the network).

This price means that the accounts of the programme can be balanced based on current consumption.

If consumption increases between now and the next meeting of the community organisation, a drop in the price per basin may be approved in a vote.

FACT FILE

85
latrine
blocks
being
built

2 tank
boats
will be
operational
in 2015

100 %
of the local inhabitants
(i.e. 70,000 people)
now have access to
drinking water

A publication by Emmaus International – 2014
communication@emmaus-international.org
47 av. de la Résistance – 93104 Montreuil Cedex.
France

Publishing director: Jean Rousseau and the
communication steering committee

Editing – page layout: Marie Flourens, Marie-Anne
Dubosc, Lucie Bardisa

Graphic design: Nicolas Pruvost

Translation: David Griffiths

Photo credits: Emmaus International