

THE CHRONICLE

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**WATER:
A VITAL RESOURCE,
A GLOBAL CHALLENGE**

#146

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EDITORIAL



Warning: The end of US subsidies puts millions of lives at risk! Today, more than ever, we need YOU!

Dear friends and loyal donors, you who have always been there in times of crisis, we are calling on you now more than ever. The sudden and shocking decision by the United States to cut 92% of its international aid funding has had immediate and catastrophic consequences for our organization and the humanitarian sector as a whole. Our resources are dwindling drastically, even as crises have never been so numerous and intense: wars, famines, natural disasters. This comes as a shock to aid agencies such as ours, dealing a serious blow to the vital operations we carry out in the field with the most vulnerable populations.

Every day, our teams witness unbearable scenes: children suffering from extreme malnutrition, hospitals running out of medicine, families forced to drink contaminated water, millions of people fleeing armed conflict... We are on the brink of an unprecedented collapse of the humanitarian aid system. Without urgent support, millions of people will be left without any help.

We know we can count on your unwavering commitment. Every minute counts. Your donation is now one of the last barriers between these populations and disaster. Thanks to you, we have already been able to accomplish so much—today, more than ever, we need you to continue. With your help, we can continue to provide medical care, food, and shelter to those who desperately need it.

You've already made a difference. Make it again. Donate now.

Axelle Marcot
Fundraising officer

LEARN MORE ON www.premiere-urgence.org

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HUMANITARIAN VIEWPOINT



Timothée Le Guellec, WaSh expert

I am a hydrogeologist and worked in industry and design offices before joining the humanitarian sector. I chose this sector to give meaning to my work and therefore to my time. Water is a fundamental need and I wanted to devote myself to this precious resource, which is essential to everyone.

Today, 90% of natural disasters are related to water, and forecasts confirm that their frequency and intensity will only increase. It is a daily challenge, but also a source of motivation: working with local populations in the field to find appropriate and sustainable solutions.

My work is very varied. I support teams in our **water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions**, which are always integrated with health and nutrition initiatives to address both the symptoms and root causes of the problems encountered. I distribute technical tools to optimize our impact, propose innovations, and share feedback between teams.

I am involved in developing our programs and emergency response efforts, particularly by conducting field assessment missions. My role involves providing support on issues such as water treatment, resource management, and epidemic preparedness and response. I also train and recruit specialists in the sector and coordinate our actions with those of other actors in the context of major international events such as the World Water Forum.

This job, at the crossroads between the field, headquarters, and the many partners in the water sector—whether they come from emergency relief, the private sector, or research—is exciting. Every day, it allows me to contribute to a better management of this vital resource, for the benefit of the people we help.



THANKS TO YOU



1 RENOVATED SCHOOL



147 BENEFICIARY STUDENTS



3 RENOVATED RESTROOM FACILITIES



A SAFER FUTURE FOR SYRIAN STUDENTS IN BAB JANNA

On February 6, 2023, an earthquake struck Syria, exacerbating an already critical situation for the population after more than a decade of conflict. Thanks to your generosity and a total of €10,000 in donations, our teams were able to mobilize on the ground to carry out support actions for the population, including the rehabilitation of the Somar Baddour high school in Bab Janna, a village in the Latakia governorate.

Between June and August 2024, we restored 11 classrooms, a laboratory, a computer room, six administrative offices, and three bathroom facilities, enabling 147 students (66 boys and 81 girls) and 41 teachers to study and work in a safe environment. Among the essential actions implemented were:



Infrastructure improvements: repairing cracks, securing staircases, modernizing classrooms.



Access to water and sanitation: renovation of sanitary facilities, installation of 1,000L water tanks, hygiene awareness campaigns.



Inclusion and accessibility: installation of ramps and adapted restrooms for students with disabilities.



Safety and well-being: improved lighting, replacement of damaged windows and doors.

Thanks to you, these students have regained a dignified and safe learning environment. Thank you!







FOCUS ON Afghanistan

WATER, A MAJOR CHALLENGE

For several decades, Afghanistan has been facing a series of complex crises, including a succession of armed conflicts, natural disasters, and persistent political instability. Among the most pressing challenges, access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities is crucial.

The southeastern provinces of Afghanistan, where Première Urgence Internationale has been working for more than 40 years, are particularly affected by these issues. According to UNICEF, only 32% of the population in 24 of Afghanistan's 34 provinces practice basic hygiene, such as washing their hands with soap. Such a low rate encourages the spread of water-related diseases, such as diarrhea, one of the main causes of chronic malnutrition in children.

Natural disasters add further complexity to this situation. Floods destroy or damage existing infrastructure, while prolonged droughts reduce access to drinking water. These extreme weather events exacerbate the vulnerability of communities, particularly children, who are most affected by waterborne diseases.

Première Urgence Internationale teams play a central role in responding to this crisis. Our activities related to water, hygiene, and sanitation include hygiene promotion sessions with local populations, as well as direct water supply in communities where rates of waterborne diseases are high. However, the challenges remain immense, particularly due to ongoing insecurity and limited resources, and your generosity is more important than ever in providing the Afghan people with better access to water.



UNDERSTANDING

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

What is it?

The water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector is **one of the three main areas of humanitarian aid.**

Première Urgence Internationale acts in emergency situations in which affected populations face deteriorating environmental, water, hygiene, and sanitation conditions that endanger their health.

In a few figures



2 BILLION

people without access to safe drinking water



2.3 BILLION

of people cannot wash their hands with soap and water



1 IN 3 CHILDREN

face a severe water shortage worldwide

In the field, **Première Urgence Internationale mobilizes its teams to:**



Provide sufficient water for consumption, cooking, and personal and domestic hygiene



Protect all water sources from pollution



Ensure that people in crisis situations can store drinking water safely



Provide facilities for people affected by a crisis to defecate safely and hygienically



Raise awareness among populations about possible diseases and how to prevent them



Provide items that enable good hygiene practices

MEETING OUR PARTNERS

Siemens Caring Hands e.V.

Who is Siemens Caring Hands?

The Siemens Caring Hands charity is an independent non-profit organization founded in 2001 on the initiative of Siemens AG. The association mainly intervenes in major emergencies and pursues charitable and public interest objectives. Its activities include providing aid to disaster victims, supporting fire, rescue, and civil protection services, and strengthening the public health system.



25% funded
by Siemens
Caring Hands



56,151 people
supported



Context of the project in Libya

In September 2023, destructive floods in Libya caused 4,255 deaths, 8,540 people missing, and more than 42,000 displaced. Infrastructure was severely damaged and the living conditions of the local population deteriorated significantly. Our partner Siemens Caring Hands funded nearly 25% of our emergency project on the ground to support initiatives led by our teams in the areas of health and access to drinking water. These interventions were carried out in the districts most affected by the cyclone: Derna, Jebel Akhdar, and Almarj.

Activities implemented

Health: A mobile clinic provided primary healthcare to 6,928 people in 11 health centers in the municipalities of Al-Sahel, Al-Marj, and Toukra, with gynecological services proving particularly popular. Local volunteers raised awareness among the population about the services available, and we supplied two health centers in Derna with medicines and medical equipment.

Access to water: The rehabilitation of 12 buried water points has given 56,151 people better access to drinking water. We supported public water authorities by putting waste collection trucks back into service and providing equipment for the renovation of water networks.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS



Event

The **ChangeNOW Forum** is an international event dedicated to concrete solutions for the planet. Every year, it brings together entrepreneurs, investors, and change makers to accelerate ecological and social transition. The 2025 edition will be held from April 24 to 26 at the Grand Palais in Paris. Saturday will be open to the general public, offering everyone the opportunity to discover inspiring innovations and exchange ideas with committed project leaders. Tickets are available online for those who wish to attend.



Podcast

"*La Guerre de l'eau*" is a series of podcasts produced by France Culture, exploring the geopolitical, environmental, and social issues related to water. It highlights the growing tensions surrounding this vital resource and the solutions being considered to address them. Essential content for a better understanding of the current and future challenges related to water access and management. Available on the France Culture website and listening platforms.

Story

Iraq: The War of Thirst | ARTE Report

In Iraq, due to a lack of water, the Mesopotamian marshes are dying. Faced with this impending disaster, one man is fighting to preserve an ecosystem that was once one of the richest in the world and the indigenous population that depends on it.

This report is brought to you by Arte and is available for replay until October 5, 2027, on arte.tv or YouTube.



A young girl with dark hair, wearing a bright yellow long-sleeved shirt, is washing her hands at a public water tap. The tap is chrome with a green handle and spout. Water is flowing from the spout into her cupped hands. She is wearing a black beaded bracelet on her left wrist. The background is slightly blurred, showing some greenery and a building.

**TO GET PEOPLE OUT OF
THE RED ZONE**

MAKE A DONATION