



Focus on drinking water

This document is a summary of the guiding principles of “1001 fontaines pour demain”. It explains the rationale for our decision to focus on drinking water and to make sustainable improvements in the health of rural populations by giving them access to safe drinking water.

Access to drinking water...

- Every year, contaminated drinking water kills **1.6 million** children **under the age of five**. This is equivalent to **4,000** such deaths per day.
- Almost **3 billion** people do not have running water in their homes that would give them access to the 20 to 50 litres of water per day, defined by the World Health Organisation as “access to improved water”. About **900 million** of these people live in rural communities and have no choice but to drink ... swamp water.

Given the large investments required to construct the piped infrastructure for running water and sanitation, it is likely that small rural communities in developing countries will have to wait a long time for access to such facilities. Meanwhile, the best solution for these communities is to undertake their own initiatives to improve their situation.

Many villagers continue to satisfy their needs for drinking water, as they have done for centuries, by consuming water from nearby rivers, lakes and swamps. These water sources typically have a high level of bacterial contamination, especially from faecal matter, and are a frequent cause of water-borne diseases, such as diarrhoea.

Water-borne diseases account for 20% of infant mortalities in developing countries.



Water quality

In 2005 a comprehensive review of epidemiological studies revealed that there was a 34% reduction in the incidence of diarrhoea when the quality of the drinking water could be assured up to the **point of consumption**. Previous studies, which claimed that water quality had little impact on health, only took account of the quality of the water at the point of distribution. Since 2005, however, it has been clearly demonstrated that transport and storage conditions can cause significant degradation in the quality of the water before it is consumed.

“1001 fontaines” water...

The *1001 fontaines* initiative is specifically focused on delivering safe drinking water to the consumer’s home. By treating the water and ensuring that the purified water is transported and stored under the proper conditions, the quality of the water is guaranteed at the point of consumption, which is critical to improving the health of the poorest rural populations, especially the health of children.

In order to provide safe drinking water **at the point of consumption**, the water production sites utilise the following:

- self-contained treatment unit, capable of adapting (due to the relatively small quantities of water treated per day) to the best local source of treatable water. The installation of the unit is performed by a team trained in water treatment. This team conducts analyses of the different local sources of raw water and adapts the treatment process to use the best local water source, as necessary
- **quality control** of the treatment of the water and the bottling. This is done via a defined quality control process that includes regular and frequent bacteriological analyses throughout the life of the operation of the unit
- **delivery to the consumer’s home** in disinfected, closed and sealed containers
- storage managed by a trained operator, such that the water is stored in **disinfected containers** rather than simply in any available vessel
- maintenance of the water quality via the addition of a micro quantity of silver ions that prevent re-contamination
- focus on taste, such that the water is appealing to consumers, and containers that are easy to use. These factors ensure **satisfaction** for the consumers.



Water is vital for life and has a fundamental impact on an individual’s health. The recommended quantity of drinking water for adults is 2 litres per day.