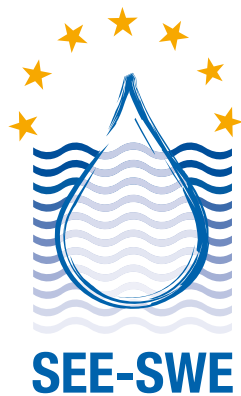


# Annual Report 2008



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## A Word from the President

1 Raymond Jost

**"2008... a year of achievements and new prospects"**



"New prospects" because we have taken time once again as a team to discuss and re-appropriate the fundamental principles contained in the "Strasbourg Declaration", which provides the founding basis for our organisation.

"Achievements" because 2008 is the year in which two of our projects were successfully completed: the construction of public toilets in Stara Zagora, Bulgaria and the RhineNet project, in which we and our partners had invested so much, both in terms of financial and human resources.


New prospects because we asked for an external evaluation of one of our keystone projects, the "Youth Parliaments for Water" in order to strengthen and perfect this action which is one of the particularities of SWE's expertise.

Achievements because the programme which began following a Youth Parliament for Water in Moldova in 2006, gave rise to a recognised local branch (SEAM), which coordinated, among other things, the construction of the largest dry toilet in Central and Eastern Europe in the village of Vorniceni.

New prospects because the successful start-up of our actions in Moldova consolidates our presence and our reputation there, and guarantees the development of similar initiatives in neighbouring villages.

Furthermore, our team in Strasbourg has gained a new project manager and the team shall continue to grow in 2009 as three new people are hired in France and Moldova.

Full of such positive energy, 2009 is going to be a "Vintage" year!



Raymond Jost  
President

## Solidarity Water Europe ... a recap

**Solidarity Water Europe** (SWE) is an international non-governmental organisation created in 1998 thanks to the partnership between the Council of Europe and the International Secretariat for Water with the support of the French Committee of Water Agencies.



### Our missions...

SWE has set itself the mission of fostering access to water and sanitation for the poorest populations, particularly those in Central and Eastern Europe, and of mobilising all stakeholders to apply the principles of integrated water resource management at local level.

SWE initiates and supports action at local, national and European levels. It favours participatory approaches, partnership, skills transfer, solidarity and the mobilisation of all Europe's forces.

### Our Priorities ...

**Fostering access to water and sanitation** by developing infrastructure for vulnerable families or local authorities in rural areas of Central and Eastern Europe, in close collaboration with local populations and stakeholders.

**Developing awareness-raising and education programmes:** organisation of Youth Parliaments for Water / creation of educational tools on hygiene and sanitation / organisation of information sessions and awareness-raising campaigns.

**Stimulating exchanges and collaboration among European stakeholders:** promotion of citizens' participation in the management of Europe's rivers / organisation every two years of the European Solidarity Week for Water / cross-border cooperation programme

**Building local stakeholders' capacities** through training, participatory approaches, accompanying local structures, supporting their initiatives etc.

### A Team...

In France, the permanent project management team, **Nicole Crochet**, and **Cathy Martinez-Mermin** was reinforced for six months in 2008 by **Sophie Schmitt**, and a new employee joined the ranks in July, **Emilie Brocard**.

In Moldova, the local branch is managed by Galina Budu-Casimir.

### The Board.

... made up of well-known people representing both the different European regions and our different fields of action.

#### President

**Raymond Jost**

Secretary General of the International Secretariat for Water in Montreal

#### Vice-Presidents

**Roland Anstett**

Advertising Agent, France

**Diana Iskrev**

Executive Director of Earth Forever, Bulgaria

**Andreas Kraemer**

Director of ECO-Logic, Germany

**Victor Ruffy**

Former National Advisor and former President of Political Affairs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**Annick Waller**

Rotary Club, France

#### Treasurer

**Alfred Fintz**

Retired, France

#### Secretary

**Jean Jacques Fix**

Retired, France

#### Members

**Bernard Barraqué**

Director of Research  
CNRS, LATTs, France

**Jean Briane**

Former Deputy of the French National Assembly, former President of the Environment Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

**Antonella Cagnolati**

Director at the Congress of local and regional authorities of the Council of Europe, France

**Philippe Dangelser**

Polyglotte, France

**Pierre-Marie Grondin**

Director,  
Programme Solidarité Eau, France

**Irina Lucavetchi**

Water Engineer, Romania

**Pierre-Alain Roche**

Pyrenees Mission Manager  
French Ministry of National Planning

**Pierre-Frédéric Ténière-Buchot**

Member of the French Water Academy, France

**Houria Tazi-Sadeq**

Interdisciplinary UNESCO Chair for sustainable water management, Morocco

## The actions of Solidarity Water Europe... in 2008

2008 was an opportunity to re-confirm our commitments in Central and Eastern Europe for access to water and sanitation, both in the field with local populations and on a national and European institutional level in order to mobilise the partnerships required to improve the sanitary and environmental situation in these areas.

2008 was the year SWE celebrated its **10th anniversary**, as did the Youth Parliament for Water process, which furthermore was evaluated on this occasion by an external organisation. The evaluation confirmed the pertinence of this programme and the need to continue and develop it.



### An innovative approach

- An **informed choice** of techniques made by the school
- The **creation of educational materials**
- **Support of teachers in educating children**
- The **visit of similar projects**
- The **creation of the Library of water and solidarity**
- The **construction of facilities**
- The organisation of a **regional forum**

### Respecting the local choice

In spring 2008 and after information and training sessions run by SWE, the high school organised a debate to vote on the decision of whether or not to build the toilets. SWE only contributed specific technical details to the debate.



The debate was heated and raised many questions and concerns, but also much enthusiasm, and enabled each person to take ownership of the project. In the end, the majority of the participants voted in favour of the project. The Mayor accepted the project and a contract was signed clarifying the responsibilities of all parties.

## Access to water and sanitation projects in the field

### a) In Moldova

The project in Moldova aims at improving hygiene and sanitation in the village of Vorniceni and neighbouring villages. After the process began in 2007 (creation of a local branch of SWE, pilot construction project, meetings with teachers etc.), 2008 saw the project take form.

The actions focused on the high school in Vorniceni, attended by more than 600 students and teachers from 5 neighbouring villages, as well as primary school pupils who use the sports facilities of the high school. The high school had old latrines, lacking in privacy and without hand washing facilities.

In partnership with the SDC<sup>1</sup>, the SIAAP<sup>2</sup>, the MEDDAT<sup>3</sup>, and the Rhine Meuse Water Agency, SWE coordinated the project to build new toilets in the high school, using an **innovative approach** of social support, education and awareness-raising:

<sup>1</sup> Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation

### Construction

After a certain number of administrative procedures, luckily facilitated by the involvement and support of the town hall, construction of the toilets began in summer and was completed in December. The Vorniceni toilet block is the first heated ecological toilet block in Moldova and the largest in Central and Western Europe. Furthermore, it was also connected to the school buildings, making access much more comfortable than the previous latrines. Basins for hand washing were also added.



### Support for education, training and awareness-raising:

When such facilities, which require a considerable change in habits of both users and cleaning staff, are installed, all people involved in the project require on-going support consisting in:

*\*Training and awareness-raising using high-quality educational materials*



SWE worked on developing suitable and modern educational materials and awareness-raising tools, using Moldavian know-how as much as possible.

*\*Supporting teachers to educate children:*

The teachers were trained in sanitation and, to help them prepare their lessons, they were given a "guide" on water, health and the environment (the role of sanitation, the water cycle, the link between water and health etc.)

*\*Visiting similar projects*

In February 2008, SWE organised a visit of ecological toilets in a school in Ukraine with a delegation made up of teachers and young people from the school, and elected officials from the town hall and the district.

Thus, they were able to see such toilets in action and discuss their advantages and disadvantages with the teachers. This visit confirmed their choice.

*\*The creation of a dedicated space for education and information on water: the Water and Solidarity Library.*

SWE and the parents' association financed the refurbishment of the library with an area dedicated to water, comprising all the tools developed for the project, documents on water, general information on water in Moldavian and English, films etc.

This collection of materials on water will be added to bit by bit, and copied, in order to put together a "Water Box" which will be able to be distributed to other schools (whether on loan, to be sold or donated remains to be decided).



### Organisation of an inter-district forum in Vorniceni

On 25 October 2008, to ensure the project in Vorniceni does not remain a one-off, SEAM organised a forum that brought together Mayors, teachers, NGOs, doctors and youth leaders from neighbouring villages, particularly those whose young people attend the high school in Vorniceni.

The theme of the forum was **"Hygiene and sanitation in our villages: finding the solutions"**. The idea was to present the action carried out in the high school, but also all the other possible actions, from information campaigns to infrastructure construction.

The objective was also to enter into contact with active members of civil society in the different villages, in order to listen to their problems and identify future projects. While participation was lower than expected due to a regional event organised on the same day, the participants greatly appreciated the forum. In a second stage, SEAM will visit the most motivated villages in order to ascertain what the next project could be.



AT the same time, in the context of the International Year of Sanitation and the Year of Youth in Moldova, SWE and SEAM organised a contest for young people, which was original to say the least, entitled "photograph your toilets!". The objective was to take photos of the toilets in the village. Prizes were awarded to the winners during the Forum. The competition was a resounding success.

## Promoting Moldova

SWE produced postcards from the photo exhibition "Moldova, Europe's Market Garden" held by SWE in 2007, in order to promote local know-how and agricultural wealth (sets of 12 postcards can be purchased at: <http://www.see-swe.org/fr/nous-soutenir>)



## b) In Bulgaria

In the villages of Badesthe and Hristhrene (in the municipality of Stara Zagora), 6 public dry toilets were constructed and in one school toilets were rehabilitated. The new installations were inaugurated in April 2008 in the presence of Solidarity Water Europe, Earth Forever, the Municipality of Stara Zagora, the Rotary Club, Hristhrene Town Hall and the village inhabitants.



In 2009, one year after the installations were opened, it will be time to review their use, evaluate their impact on behaviour change and see how the facilities are managed.

## Youth Parliaments for Water

### a) The Rhine Youth Parliament

The **Rhine Youth Parliament** initiated by Solidarity Water Europe, was held in Bonn, Germany, from 7 to 11 March 2008. It was co-organised in partnership with Stichting Reinwater (the Netherlands) and Bonn City Council.

This event brought together 45 participants from the Netherlands, Germany, Luxemburg and France, to discuss the future of the Rhine and its tributaries. It was co-financed by the Interreg IIIb project "RhineNet, for participative management of the Rhine", coordinated by SWE.

The programme took place over four days including a field visit to a stream in Bonn, a tributary of the Rhine, in association with a role play; a presentation by the ICPR (International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine); workshops and; a plenary session at Bonn City Hall.

This week full of meetings and discussions enabled the young people (15 to 20 year olds) to take a stand on an international scale in favour of protecting the Rhine and involving local populations in its management.



The work carried out was submitted to the City of Bonn and will be followed up to enable the delegations to continue awareness raising at local level. In August 2008 a delegation of the Rhine Youth Parliament presented its recommendations to a plenary session of the International Commission for the Protection of the Rhine in Luxemburg, before members of the Commission and the Minister of Home Affairs and Country Planning, Mr. Jean-Marie Halsdorf, who commended the initiative.

## **b) Evaluation of the Youth Parliament for Water Process**

For 10 years now, Solidarity Water Europe has been organising *Youth Parliaments for Water* across Europe (in France, Hungary, Malta, Germany, Romania, Bulgaria, Moldova and in Switzerland), approximately one per year.

The parliaments are one of the keystone activities of SWE and yet the overall approach has never changed since they were first begun.

The external evaluation was led by the association BA-ba with the support of SWE. The evaluation covered the Parliaments both in terms of organisational methodology (programming, activities, results) and in terms of the educational approach. The pertinence, effectiveness and impact of this project were assessed.

To do this, around sixty participants from the different Parliaments received a questionnaire or were interviewed. The latter belonged to five categories: young people; organisations; support structures (financial or political); co-organisers of the parliaments and; the SWE. The response rate was 26%.

The **main conclusions** of this evaluation are that:

- the Parliaments are **very rich** in terms of **the activities proposed** during the parliaments (observation in the field, role plays, artistic workshops, training etc.), the **contacts built** with youth organisations from around Europe (schools, NGOs, youth councils etc.) and the **partnerships established** with donors and politicians as well as in terms of the **impact** (reputation, exchanges among different structures, professional springboard, local projects etc.). The educational approach used during the Parliaments is appropriate and the organisation commended.
- **there is still room for improvement and further development**: The young people are the main beneficiaries of the "parliament approach", but the representatives of the participating structures (schools, NGOs) would like to see the programme build their capacities further to be able to continue the activities at local level (micro-financing, training, networking etc...). The overall organisation should also be improved to ensure sustainability, wider communication and political support etc.

## **c) Preparing the 9th Youth Parliament for Water in Russia**

The 9<sup>th</sup> Parliament was designed in parallel with the parliament evaluation process. The main lessons learned from the evaluation have been integrated into the design of this Parliament.

The Parliament will take place at Nizhni Novgorod (Russia) at the end of 2009, with the theme "Europe's River Treasures".

The location was chosen following a request by our Russian partners who, having participated in the previous youth parliament organised by SWE in Moldova, expressed the desire to host such an event themselves.

The choice was further confirmed during a visit to Nizhni Novgorod, during which the associations and the local authorities gave the project a very favourable welcome.

(managed at national level) and its many tributaries (managed at local level) run through the town and the region of Nizhni Novgorod, encompassing a natural and cultural heritage which is still present and persistent difficulties in the distribution of drinking water.

The local partners also demonstrated a willingness to work on involving the local populations and stakeholders in integrated river management.

## **RhineNet**

The RhineNet project, coordinated by SWE over the past six years came to a close in June 2008.

During this final phase, several activities were carried out:

-The Rhine Youth Parliament held in Bonn in March 2008 (see Page 11)

-The travelling exhibition Transrhine was presented with resounding success in various events along the Rhine

-The river data gathering system "Cartoweb" received official support and collaboration from the ICPR. Data were entered into the programme and training sessions on its use carried out.

To close, this final phase provided the opportunity to compile all the activities carried out in the context of the RhineNet project in a single document, the **Guide of experiences of Citizenship and Participation along the Rhine**. The guide is available in three languages (French, German and English) and can be downloaded from our website [www.see-swe.org](http://www.see-swe.org)



## **A practical guide for developing European cooperation for water and sanitation in Central and Eastern Europe**

In light of the difficult situation and increasing needs of countries in Central and Eastern Europe in terms of water and sanitation, SWE has stimulated debate and discussion regarding the creation of a practical tool for stakeholders involved, or who would like to get involved, in these areas of Europe.

The tool is designed for French stakeholders, however, it will be easily adaptable to other European actors. The objective of the tool is three-fold:

- \***To raise awareness among French stakeholders** regarding the alarming sanitation situation in these countries, particularly in rural areas and small towns where, on average, 20% of the population in Central and Eastern Europe resides.
- \***To convince stakeholders of the need to take action** and to inspire them to develop projects in these countries, since the majority of international cooperation actions target Africa and Asia.
- \***To provide practical tools**, advice and examples in order to help new cooperation projects to be developed.

In 2008, a first draft of specifications for the guide was drawn up, SWE hired a new person to work on this project and an initial meeting was held with certain potential partners in November.

In 2009, project implementation will begin with research and the drafting of detailed information sheets on the first three countries: Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova.

## Solidarity Water Europe Turns Ten!

Born in February 1998, following a European forum on "Water, source of citizenship, peace and regional development", Solidarity Water Europe has aimed from the beginning to put the principles defined in the Strasbourg Declaration (the declaration adopted during the forum) into practice. These principles concern:

- The democracy of water
- The protection of aquatic environments
- Water services for a fair economy
- Water as a factor in land planning
- Water, a source of learning

During the year of its tenth anniversary, SWE concentrated on improving its visibility, to raise public awareness of the type of environmental challenges facing the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, in particular the challenges relating to water management and the forms of support and solidarity that could be developed.

Solidarity Water Europe re-worked all its communication documents and tools to produce **a new brochure** presenting Water Solidarity Europe (available in four languages: French, English, Russian and Moldavian) and develop a new **internet site**: [www.see-swe.org](http://www.see-swe.org)



In November 2008, to celebrate its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, SWE organised a get-together in Paris, bringing together around forty people (NGOs, members of the SWE Board, financial partners etc.) and providing an opportunity to look back over ten years of actions and look towards the coming years.

This warm and relaxed event enabled partners who knew little about or only parts of the work of SWE, to learn about the vast range of activities and to meet the team. This event made it possible to strengthen existing partnerships and identify new opportunities. Those present were invited to give their impressions and present their vision of SWE in the future, which helps us to have a better idea of what is understood about and expected of SWE.



## Networking and Lobbying

Since 2007, SWE has been a supporting member of the **Water Coalition**, a network of French NGOs working in France and abroad to bring water and sanitation to all. SWE participates in the meetings to define the network's strategic orientations, disseminates information and in 2008 was particularly involved in organising an international exhibition to be held in spring 2009 in Strasbourg entitled "Toilets, a matter of dignity", which is being coordinated for France by the coalition. This exhibition is one of the communication events organised by UN Water in the context of the International Year of Sanitation, 2008.

SWE is a member of the Advisory Board of the **EWP (European Water Partnership)**. EWP is a European forum made up of water sector stakeholders from all fields (governments, NGOs, public and private sectors, civil society, research institutes etc.) who come together to share viewpoints and seek solutions to water management challenges in Europe and to foster partnerships. The role of SWE within the EWP is to give its view as an NGO working in the field and one particularly involved with young people, citizenship and solidarity.

SWE participated in the **4th International Water Dialogues**, organised by Green Cross Spain in Seville. This conference on "Water management in Central and Eastern Europe, new challenges and opportunities for development", provided the opportunity to present the work carried out by the SWE on the "application of the right to water and sanitation in Central and Eastern Europe".

Finally, SWE also participates in the work of the French Water Partnership and is planning to become a member.



## Preparation for the 5th World Water Forum – Istanbul Mars 2009

Throughout 2008, SWE prepared to participate in the **5th World Water Forum** that is to be held in Istanbul in March 2009. In addition to its participation in many sessions and workshops organised during the forum, SWE will contribute in particular by:

- \* Organising an intensive three-day working session among young Turks and young people from other countries on the theme of citizenship and solidarity.
- \* Participating in the European Regional session "European Actions to Achieve Sustainable Sanitation for all. Reflecting on the International Year of Sanitation". Among other things, SWE will present its original and successful approach applied in Moldova.
- \* Co-chairing the session "MPs Dive In: A prerequisite for sustainable and fair access to water and sanitation" at the Citizens' House for Water (an initiative of the International Secretariat for Water)
- \* Being present, in the name of the Water Coalition, at the French Pavilion.

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## Financial Overview

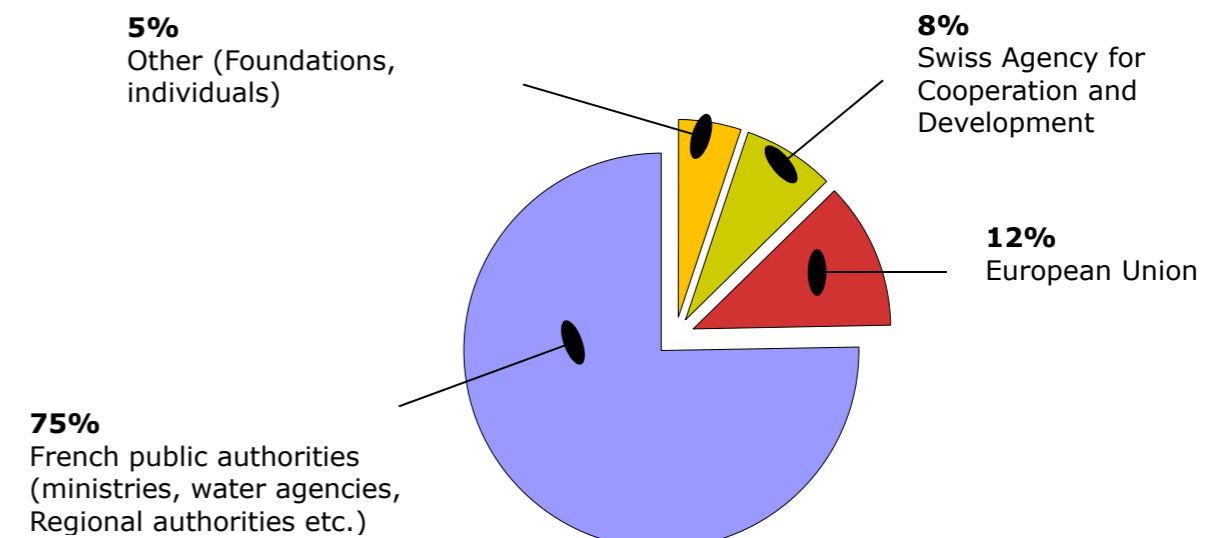
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SWE's budget for 2008 was around **180 000 Euros**.

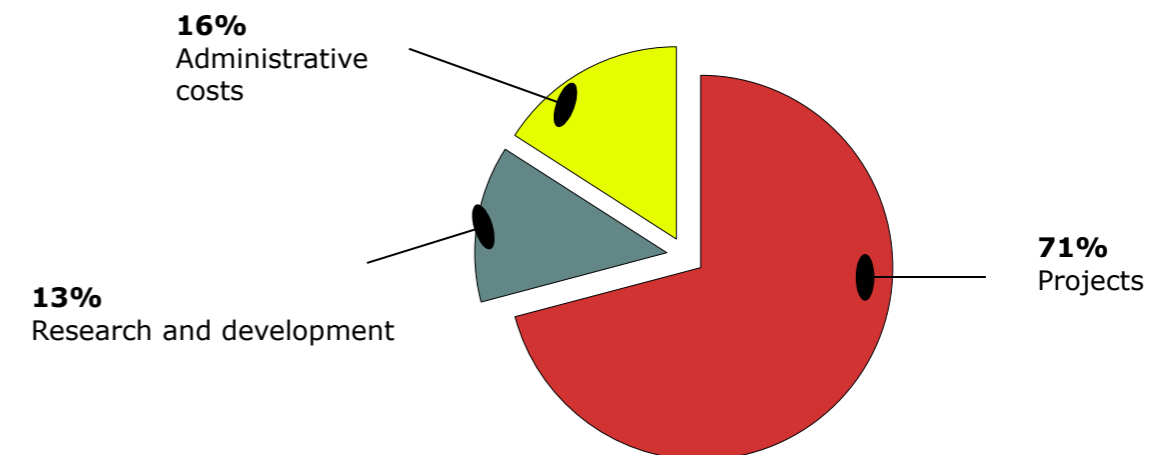
Every year, our accounts are checked and certified by an official auditor.



### Income breakdown (2008)



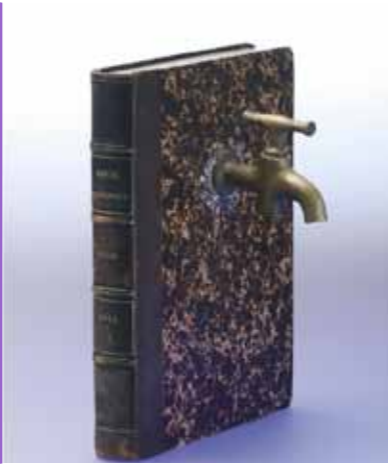
### Expenditure breakdown (2008)



# 5

## List of available documents

Some of our documents are available on our Internet site: [www.see-swe.org](http://www.see-swe.org)  
For all other documents, please contact the Solidarity Water Europe office



- New brochure presenting SWE
- Report on the Rhine Youth Parliament
- Report of the Parliament Process Evaluation
- Intermediary report on the project in Moldova
- Guide on Citizenship and Participation – Report of experiences from the RhineNet Project
- Initial communication – Call for participation in the 9th Youth Parliament for Water in Russia, October 2009
- Set of 12 postcards produced from the Exhibition "Moldova – Europe's Market Garden"



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