



Press Release

Veolia Environnement and UNICEF join forces to tackle emergencies

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Emergency situations have become ever more complex, their impact ever more destructive, be they caused by a tsunami such as the one in south Asia in 2004, or by an earthquake as experienced by Pakistan in 2005. It is essential that one be able to intervene within hours and have access to the most appropriate technical and human resources.

Water and sanitation are vital factors in any humanitarian catastrophe. The survival of thousands of people will depend on the ability to respond quickly and effectively; a majority of them, often, will be children, always the most vulnerable in the event of a humanitarian emergency.

For 5 years, now, UNICEF and Veolia Environnement have been working together on the frontline, with the shared objective of bringing the necessary assistance to those in need of it, however difficult the task may be.

In Bunia, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the collaboration between UNICEF and Veolia, supporting local NGO and government partners, has meant improved access to water for 150,000 people living in urban areas, thus reducing the risk of a cholera epidemic. In the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Veolia's team of experts carried out an assessment, on behalf of UNICEF, on the state of the pumping stations in areas affected by the floods in the summer of 2007, and prepared a program to repair them, now being implemented.

Today, with the signing of a cooperation agreement, Veolia Environnement, through its Foundation, becomes a 'standby partner' of UNICEF. Veolia Environnement will be able to boost UNICEF's ability to respond in the event of humanitarian crises, and to contribute its expertise and know-how. For both partners, it is also a case of giving concrete expression to their desire to work more closely together in the field.

Under this agreement, Veolia Environnement commits itself to quickly mobilize, at any time, employees who have volunteered to join the Veolia Force (formerly Veolia Water Force). Under the direction of Thierry Vandeveld, Executive Officer of the Veolia Environnement Foundation, and in collaboration with the UNICEF teams on the spot and its local partners, they can identify and assess what is needed, deploy the appropriate technical equipment and manage the water and power supplies for stricken communities.

"This network, the only one of its kind, is made up of 500 of our employees across the world, all extremely committed, experts in their field and all volunteers", explains Antoine Frérot, Executive Vice President of Veolia Environnement and CEO of Veolia Water. "This type of partnership, bringing together environment-sector professionals with the lead players in the

sphere of international solidarity, is a guarantee of more effective action for the benefit of populations at risk".

For UNICEF, it is essential to be able to count on experienced emergency practitioners capable of being rapidly deployed. Such a partnership is therefore a valuable resource when it comes to responding to humanitarian crises and emergencies.

" Responding to humanitarian crises remains one of the major challenges we have to face. No matter the scale of an emergency, it always requires an immediate response and qualified people. The cooperative partnerships we have developed over the past few years have enabled us to very quickly deploy qualified experts who are competent and immediately operational" says Pierrette Vu Thi, Deputy Director of UNICEF's Office of Emergency Programmes. "A water supply, sanitation and hygiene are vital for the populations affected. The needs, and the need to respond to them are growing all the time and an organization such as UNICEF must be able to mobilize all available resources and know-how, including those of the private sector. That is why this partnership we are finalizing today with Veolia is so important for us".

About Veolia Environnement

At the time of the natural catastrophe caused by Hurricane Mitch in Nicaragua, in 1998, Veolia Environnement created Veolia Water Force, an emergency response unit with the job of installing or restoring drinking water supply systems in cases of natural disasters, health crises or armed conflict. Encouraged by its experience in the area of water, the Veolia Environnement Foundation decided to bring together the Company's four areas of expertise (Water, Waste management, Energy and Transportation) into a single entity dedicated to providing emergency assistance: Veolia Force. It always acts in partnership with the local public authorities and the solidarity operators: the humanitarian institutions and associations.

Present in five continents and with more than 300,000 employees, the company supplies made-to-measure solutions for municipal and industrial clients in four complementary business areas: water management, waste management, energy management and the management of freight and passenger transportation.

About UNICEF

UNICEF operates in more than 150 countries and territories across the world, helping children there to survive and develop, from earliest infancy to the end of adolescence. The world's biggest supplier of vaccines to developing countries, UNICEF focuses on child health and nutrition, the provision of access to drinking water and sanitation, good-quality basic schooling for all children, boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, all forms of exploitation and AIDS. UNICEF is exclusively funded by voluntary contributions from private individuals, business, foundations and governments.

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