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Edito

WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Who has never heard of Sustainable Development? Long term commitment? Sustainability? Everyone uses these words on a daily basis. What do they actually mean? Are we all talking about the same thing? What ideas lie behind these words?

There are many different ways of understanding the idea of sustainability, even if time is an important factor to the concept. First of all this can be interpreted as the opposite of obsolescence, programmed or not. In these conditions it is more about the operating period of equipment.

This can even be seen through a personal point of view, if we just think about ourselves!

Sustainability in the sense of development goes over any borders. How can we make sure that what we do today, still works tomorrow, and the day after, without harming future generations?

Sustainability should be understood as a notion of eternity. Sustainability lasts forever! This does not mean that we should invent machines which never breakdown. No, it simply means that we should transfer the notion of product life to its service, to counteract technology weaknesses and wearing out due to time by setting up efficient services, and getting the beneficiaries to follow us. For many years, we have been supplying local people

with drinking water. In such a context, sustainability is the perpetual movement of the supply of water. And here we come across the notion of quality, as sustainability rhymes with quality.

We are proud of the fact that we know how to develop technology to extract underground water and bring it to the surface making sure it is still drinkable. In fact charging after each cost could bring down the quality of the whole thing. Sustainability rarely rhymes with low investment.

Sustainability should not only take into account these technologies but also the final use which justifies such a service. This leads us onto the maintenance of drinking water up to the end user. In fact, the transport and storage in the villages are often causes of pollution.

If we want to give a long lasting, efficient service to the rural populations, the quality of water must be taken into account right through the chain of consumption. This is our duty as well as that of all the actors in the supply of water.

This is the only condition which would allow us to be satisfied with what we have accomplished. In the same way, the immediate sanitary impact on the locals would support this global approach and would lay witness to sustainability in the future.

■ **Thierry BARBOTTE**
Managing Director



CONTROLLED MANAGEMENT OF MANUAL PUMPS?... OR THE END OF SQUARING THE CIRCLE.

Listing all the articles which mention long term maintenance of pumps would be quite a challenge, considering the number of them. However, projects have had sufficient funds as well as experts to set up a good deal of pumps. The issue remains and the passionate debates continue: the management of manual pumps is not enough to ensure a continual water supply service.

Experience demonstrates that we cannot count on the good will of the pump managers to guarantee a good maintenance of the pumps. Preventive cash tills to pay for repairs and spare parts have never been filled and collecting the money to repair the breakdowns is often too much for the pump managers. This grim picture must nevertheless be put into context by the beneficiaries of the equipment. If, in many minds, water should be free, the idea of a water service should not. Water point users have realized that without money, the pump is not maintained so there is no water. So, water has a price! But how can

we find money to repair the pump?

The easiest way seems to be: let's sell the water. Everyone seems to agree on this. Should we sell by flat rate or by quantity taken? The experiences of selling at a flat rate have not been positive. Buying water depending on the quantity pumped is easier to understand by the buyer. But how can we manage the sales of water from a manual pump? Some have tried asking the pump manager to count buckets, tanks and containers. This is of course important, but not enough, as the pump manager has to be completely trusted to count the production of water as well as the amount of money coming in. Utopia! The pump manager would not be able to see any problems, never mind give sanctions.

Let's make sure all the pump users, managers and local authorities agree on one thing, the water point management is transparent.

There is one simple way : use a machine to count the quantities of water drawn. Putting a meter onto a human powered pump is a technical challenge. VERGNET HYDRO has done it!

VERGNET HYDRO now proposes a range of pumps which can be fitted with a meter. Readings are taken easily which ensures a reliable counting of the volumes of pumped water taken with the money received. The user is therefore sure that he pays for what he has, no more no less. He knows that the money is now checked and the pump manager is now watched. The pump manager is now no longer under suspicion. To conclude, there is more transparency, and more trust for a better service and a sustainable management of manual pumps.

This condition ensures the management of constant operation of manual pumps. ■



THE NEW GENERATION OF THE HYDRO INDIA PUMP:

The MANEO

We have listened to you. We have heard you. Your observations, wishes and demands have led us to develop our HYDRO INDIA pump into a HYDRO INDIA pump version 2: the MANEO.

We have kept the best of its characteristics which are the qualities and the strengths of the first generation HYDRO INDIA pump: VLOM (village maintenance), hydraulic transmission, corrosion resistant, repulsing into the tank and its ease of installation and maintenance. Making the most of almost ten years' experience, and the exchanges we have had with the users and the authorities, the new generation HYDRO INDIA will also have enough options to better meet the needs of the population: the MANEO can be fitted with a meter to record the consumption and its fountain will be adaptable. ■

MALI, WAR AND... WATER

Rural water supply, as we think of it, needs, among other things, a network to distribute spare parts throughout the whole area concerned.

In Mali, where every region has our hydropumps, this network is already complicated to achieve considering the size and spread of the country: spare parts management is not the same in Ségou as in Kidal!

During times of crises or war, such as is the case for Mali, this is no mean feat, and undoubtedly, the operating rate of manual pumps is not very good today.

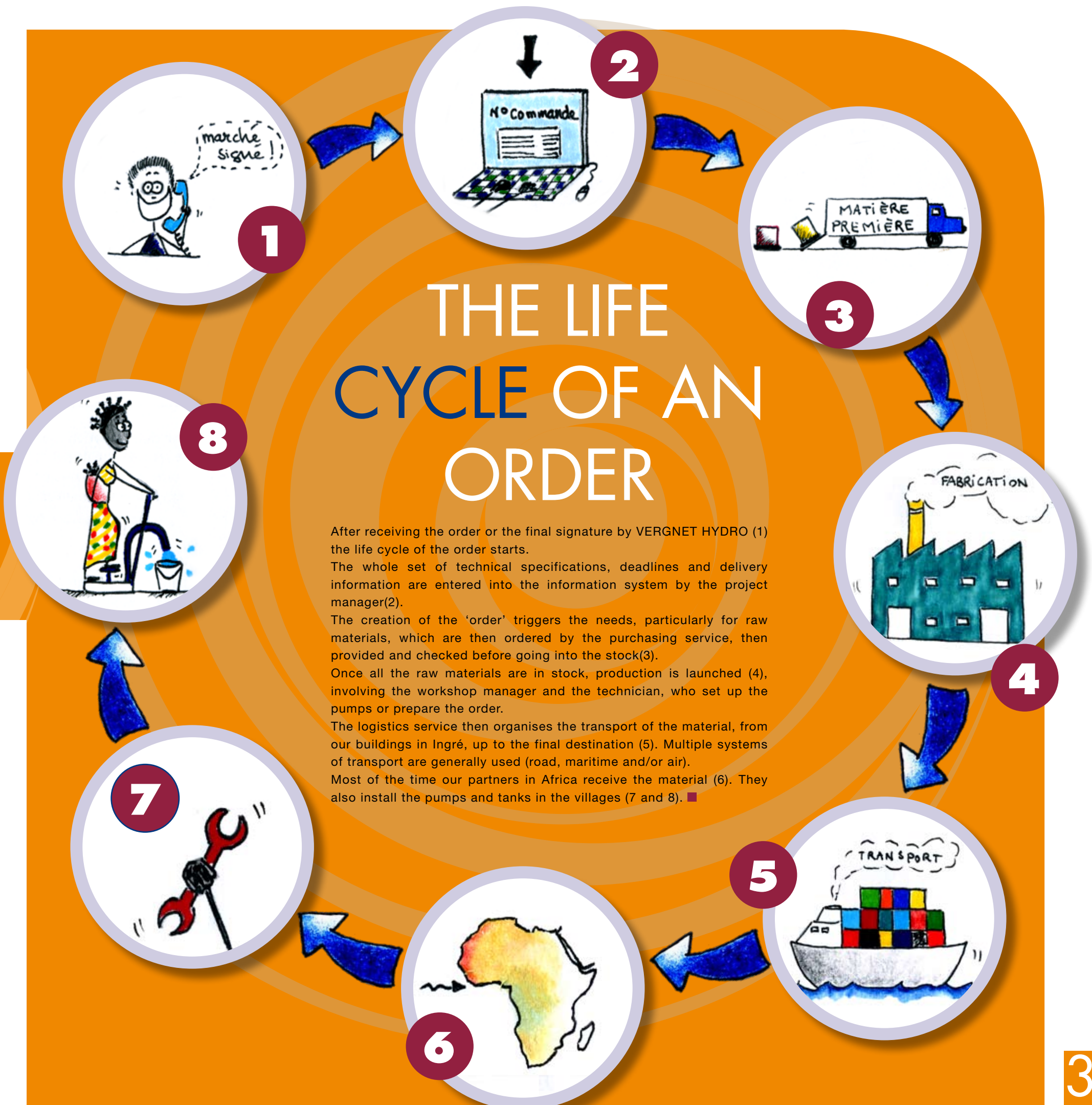
In the 15th May 2013 conference, the donors who support development in Mali, decided to donate 3.2 billion euros, starting with a part in September. Some of these funds is for rural water supply.

Such funds let us hope for an efficient short term rehabilitation of basic

rural infrastructures, including the supply of drinking water. The impact of such projects is quick, visible and useful at a reduced cost.

For many villages, the human powered pump is the only modern access to drinking water. Its rehabilitation must be, more than ever, carried out under strict criteria of sustainability. For example, the operators in charge of these projects, should propose service guarantees at least equal to those proposed for a new water point programme! This will then show the will of the decision makers to guarantee a long term solution to basic needs in order to improve their living conditions.

Water is only one example. Let us hope for an efficient and harmonious use of these funds in favour of a real sustainable development, a major condition to help Mali emerge from this crisis and start to feel better... ■



THE DRC

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

VERGNET Hydro has been developing and consolidating its presence in a large part of the DRC, the West and South of the country, since 2007. This is a huge challenge for us.

How can we guarantee the maintenance of our material in this Congolese context which is characterised by the size of the country, the difficulty of getting around rural areas and the lack of understanding of rural water supply for a lot of our contacts?

From the beginning of this adventure, because it was one, we had to defend to all our partners notions such as guarantee, sustainability, and After Sales Service. These terms seem to be evident to most of you but they have surprised a lot of our contacts in DRC; 'VERGNET, you want to guarantee your material here in this rural area in DRC? Are you serious?'

How many times have we been asked this, how many times have we had to tell them that, as a material manufacturer we have to guarantee our material? Manufacturer? That is one of the most important words as it has meant that we have been able to develop our presence in the Congo. In fact, our contacts were more used to work with suppliers or sellers who order material without knowing where these things come from. For many of them, they could, for the

very first time, speak, exchange and debate with the representatives of a manual pump manufacturer in order to provide solutions to ensure the long life of the supplied material.

The way of thinking is changing in the DRC, a lot of development partners have understood the need to work with structures such as Vergnet Hydro. As a Congolese technician said 'we need to put a stop to the white elephants' talking about those projects without guarantees nor after sales service nor implication from the private sector to ensure the right maintenance. Oh, of course things are not as simple as that. Some people will not understand the need to pay such a price in order to guarantee the service of water. But do we have a choice?

However, this is not opportunistic. VERGNET does not see the DRC as a vast market where anyone can come, do his business and then leave without building anything for the future. We have been present locally for nearly 6 years thank to our Congolese representative GETRACO. Our common objective is to be able to go on improving rural water supply, continuing sustainability and quality objectives through our knowhow and by constantly improving our range of products.

Finally, we have taken up this challenge for the locals, throughout the future years, through our presence in the field and a demand for bigger and better results. ■

A WELL-DESERVED RETIREMENT

Brigitte left BRGM in February 1992 to join VERGNET SA.

Jean-Michel CHABRIAIS trained her when she arrived, and she continued working with him for over twenty years in the same constructive and efficient way. Oh, as we all know, life, whether personal or professional, is never hassle free, and Brigitte has had her fair share, but the motto 'Fluctuat Nec Mergitur' is a good one to represent the 21 years of good and loyal service Brigitte has left behind for us.

She has certainly left her mark, one that could be illustrated by the words precision, rigour and tenacity. Brigitte has managed to succeed a tour de force by imposing rigour and quality in her service. Ever ready to spot an imprecision – even errors in a tender – her career change in logistics and transport reinforced her working methods, as no doubt several subcontractors of VERGNET HYDRO could tell you! 21 years of good and loyal services is a big deal, and her commitment from beginning to end in the creation and setting up of African partners, the mainstay of the VERGNET HYDRO success story, have been essential. Madame Brigitte is well known everywhere in Africa!

We are going to miss all of these qualities, alongside her outspokenness and her involvement in the life of her service and her company, but we have to let her leave us for a well-deserved rest. Her replacement is in place and if Brigitte takes part of VERGNET HYDRO with her, she also leaves enough of herself behind so that we can keep on going:

And even if teamwork is key, in every working VERGNET pump, there is a bit of Brigitte! ■

Etienne DECHERF

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NEW COLLEAGUES



> **Emilie JUBIN**, with her BTS diploma of Management Assistant of small and medium sized businesses joined a management controlling team in the food and agricultural industry before going into their purchasing department.

After various experiences in purchasing, she arrived in Ingré in February 2013 to deal with the management of orders of VERGNET HYDRO and PHOTALIA as a replacement of Aurélie DABOUT.



> **Emmanuel BOLE**, An ISTOM graduate, has been working for over 20 years in the industrial food industry and agricultural and environmental engineering international markets, with long overseas stays.

After being a project manager for VERGNET from 2007 to 2010, he joined VERGNET HYDRO in 2013 to strengthen our sales force team.



> **Sébastien MOURGUES** is an Environmental Industrial Engineer (from the EME of Brittany) who worked for Farmex Technologies in the Hérault region of France on various hydraulic projects in Africa and the Caribbean, particularly in Haiti where he lived for over a year. Afterwards, he developed projects in Laos for the SWELIA group of companies.

In October 2013 he left his native South to work for Vergnet Hydro as a project manager.

2013

WE WERE THERE!

→ WORLD WATER WEEK
STOCKHOLM

→ AIDEX
BRUSSELS



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All the design, manufacture, distribution, installation and maintenance services of the hydraulic systems of VERGNET HYDRO are certified ISO 9001 version 2008