

ANTENNA MANIFESTO

*“All of us would like to help change the world ...
and believe that we will not succeed.
But to act is within everyone’s reach.
To not act is to be complicit.”*

Antenna was born nearly 30 years ago from its founder’s radical insight: **“Half of the world’s population cannot meet their basic needs and scientific research is not interested in them.”**

An economist and lawyer committed to defending human rights and a man of science, **Denis von der Weid** is the epitome of thinking and acting differently in favour of the poorest populations. He created the Geneva-based Antenna Foundation, a trendsetter and pioneer of an original model that more and more major institutional players and NGOs are now joining.

Antenna’s modus operandi runs contrary to the dominant pattern of technological innovation – **where 80% of technologies developed benefit only 10% of the world’s population** – and the frantic race to develop complex technologies. At Antenna, creativity comes first in the development of simple, inexpensive, sustainable, useful – rather than futile – technological or medical solutions to meet the fundamental right to survival of any population. **These solutions reflect Antenna’s priorities of providing essential access to drinking water, basic education, nutrition and health.***

A trailblazer in the field of sustainable development, Denis von der Weid understood and declared well before the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 that research must go beyond a publish or perish syndrome and take on an environmental, social and economic role.

At Antenna, we fully support the **17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals** and our work on them takes place at various levels. Our environmentally friendly medical and technology solutions address the needs of half of the world’s population. Of course, we hope that there will be some spectacular change in the not too distant future that solves the challenges emanating from the global climate crisis. But the lack of political consensus on how to address ongoing environmental destruction means that we must aim to achieve progress today for and with those populations that have already been deprived of everything they possessed – Their lives, not just their survival – are the very purpose of our work.

Antenna’s actions start with observations in the field: environment, resources, essential needs. Our dynamic is that of **economic and social development based on the autonomy of the targeted populations** and against the scourge that corruption still represents, a vision based on utility that is very far indeed from that of a “charity business”.

We do not offer occasional help; rather, we stimulate the local economy wherever we operate by encouraging the active role of women. Because the opposite of misery is not wealth but sharing.



We measure our effectiveness in terms of success over time. To ensure the anchoring and sustainability of our solutions, Antenna has developed and implemented a high-impact model based on three major cycles:

■ **The Research and Development cycle**, where Antenna undertakes and participates in research projects in collaboration with an international network of scientists and engineers in fields related to drinking water, agroecology, nutrition, traditional medicine and energy;

■ **The Field Testing approach** where we test and validate solutions locally and develop application methods and training;

■ **The Dissemination cycle** where we deliver technological, medical and economic solutions in Africa, Asia and Latin America through the development of social enterprises or school programmes; this is only possible thanks to a partnership with major international and governmental organizations and NGOs, as well as other local foundations and associations. Antenna provides strategic, technical and financial support to implement projects and develop local sustainable and economically viable solutions.

We use microcredit programmes as much as possible to disseminate these solutions, so that the beneficiaries can start income-generating activities.

Some Antenna Foundation programmes are real **social enterprise incubators**. For example:

■ Antenna has incubated **WATALUX**, a company that distributes WATA®, a potable water solution the size of a radio that uses a pinch of salt and some electrolysis to turn salt water into chlorine, thereby allowing communities to clean their own water.

■ Antenna created **ÉLÉPHANT VERT**, the first bio-input hub in Africa, coming soon to Europe.

■ **Antenna France** is accelerating the local farming of spirulina, a microalga with remarkable nutritional virtues: a few grams swallowed daily for several weeks is enough to put a malnourished child on the road to recovery. And spirulina farms generate income for local communities, especially women.

On the strength of its convictions, its progress and the momentum of its young and passionate teams, **the Antenna Foundation is increasingly engaged in the research and large-scale dissemination of technological and medical solutions that meet the basic needs of people living in extreme poverty.**

A place of dialogue and debate open to all ideas, intrinsically modern, Antenna is in step with the societal aspirations that its visionary and disruptive founder anticipated from the beginning.

The experience gained over the years highlights the importance of the support needed to accelerate the replication of successful local projects and the diffusion of Antenna solutions on very large scales.

This is Antenna's challenge, today and for the future: to extend the impact already achieved locally for a more equitable world.

For this, we need you – researchers, social entrepreneurs, public and private partners, institutions and NGOs.

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- 1.2 billion people live in extreme poverty and their daily basic needs are threatened; 70% are women.
- 2.1 billion people do not have access to drinking water, 4.5 billion do not have water purification networks.
- 200 million hours a day is the amount of time girls and women spend simply collecting drinking water; in developing countries, contaminated water causes 4 out of 5 diseases and 1 in 3 deaths.
- More than 1 billion people, 75% of whom are farmers, suffer from hunger; yet 30% of the food produced on our planet is thrown away.
- 2 billion people do not have access to electricity.