

blue book

water, life
people



Burkina
faso



Situation analysis

The policy framework in the water and sanitation sector

The water and sanitation sector of Burkina Faso falls under the responsibility of two entities, both of which are under the tutelage of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Fishery Resources since June 2002.

In the urban area (which covers the 36 largest towns in the country), it is a public company, the National Office for Water and Sanitation (Office National de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement, ONEA) that is responsible for water and sanitation. The ONEA has the reputation of being one of the best performing companies in the sub-region, and was therefore not part of the wave of privatizations of the 1990s. The only public-private partnership is a commercial management contract which is implemented through an association between Veolia-Mazars, and which enables the ONEA to strengthen that which had been one of its weaker points.

In the rural areas, it is the General Directorate for Water Supply (Direction Générale de l'Approvisionnement en Eau Potable, DGAEP) which implements the government's policy and coordinates the sector. This directorate is responsible for the small towns and rural areas. In each one of the 45 provinces, there is a representation of the DGAEP. However, with the exception of those that can draw on the resources of an international aid project, most representations have difficulties adequately carrying out their responsibilities because of their limited human and financial resources. Both in the small towns and in the rural areas, it is usually the users' associations and groups that play a dominant role in the management of the water services: mainly manual pumps, and to a lesser extent small water supply networks. Finally, the national and international NGOs play an important role in the rural areas, where they have established thousands of water points and provided support to the management committees.

Theoretically decentralization plays a key role within the new organizational structure of the water and sanitation sector, since the guidelines published in 1998 (the so called "Guiding Texts for Decentralization", Textes d'Orientation de la Décentralisation or TOD) stipulate that the municipalities are the new entities responsible for water and sanitation at local level. However, the technical and juridical mechanism that transfers this responsibility to the Government has still to be put in place. Today, almost 7 years after the TOD, the situation is still not completely satisfactory, since only 45 (urban)

Burkina Faso and its inhabitants

According to the assessment of water resources carried out in 2001 as part of the preparation of the Action Plan for the Integrated Water Resource Management (PAGIRE), Burkina Faso is today facing a water shortage, with available water resources that amount to only 850 m³ per inhabitant per year¹. The main reason for this deficit is the limited rainfall. The hydrogeological profile of Burkina Faso hinders an easy mobilization of groundwater resources, since over half of the country is located in a primary rock formation.

Most of Burkina Faso is still rural, and the country had 12,3 million inhabitants in 2004 (extrapolated from the last census which took place in 1996). The national growth rate is still high - round 2.4% - even though it is in the process of slowing down. The majority of urban dwellers live in Ouagadougou (950,000 inhabitants) and Bobo Dioulasso. Urbanization is expected to increase rapidly in the coming years - the number of towns with over 10,000 inhabitants will increase from less than 100 by 2005 to over than 250 by 2015.

¹ The shortage threshold was identified by the United Nations as 1,000 m³ of available water resources per year per inhabitant.



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municipalities have been established in the chief towns of the provinces, while around 300 rural municipalities still have to be created. For reasons that are largely beyond the scope of the water and sanitation sector, the decentralization process in Burkina Faso appears to have broken down.

On the other hand, the adoption of the Action Plan for the Integrated Water Resources Management (PAGIRE) in February of 2001 equipped Burkina Faso with a very ambitious institutional framework for the management of water resources. This action plan, which was officially approved by the Government in 2003, is based on the principle of integrated management of resources and foresees the establishment of Basin agencies and Water management committees at local level. This is a relatively complex mechanism which

is not yet in place at local level and does not have many links with the water supply strategy as such.

In line with the sectorial strategy of 1998, Burkina Faso defined in 1999 a reform of the management of boreholes and small water supply systems in rural and peri-urban areas (that is outside of the area served by the ONEA). This reform aims at compensating for the difficulties faced by water users' associations (and in the near future by rural municipalities), which do not yet have the necessary technical skills and the commercial dynamism to manage the water service, particularly with respect to the small water supply systems. The purpose of the reform is to promote delegation of both maintenance and the management of water services to local private operators. An investment project (which is being financed by AFD) is currently testing the principles of the reform on a truly large scale in 13 provinces.

With respect to regulation, there is no national regulatory agency (even within the perimeter of the ONEA), and this situation is explained by the fact that there are practically no private operators involved. There is also no formal regulation for the rural areas and for small towns, not even in the form of an entity that is in charge of auditing the managers - which is an important handicap. The Federation of water users' associations of the Bobo Dioulasso region (FAUEREB) provides an interesting case and an embryo of a type of regulation that is adapted to small towns.

Most civil society activity takes place through the Water Users' Associations and by a few consumer associations in the urban areas. Only poorly represented at the institutional level, this civil society is nonetheless developing some very interesting initiatives, such as for example the FAUEREB, which provides numerous services in benefit of the Users' Associations of the Bobo Dioulasso region.

The private sector has a limited presence in Burkina Faso, and many of the water and sanitation operators work rather informally in the field of water supply or removal of faecal sludge (this is the case of numerous carters and water deliverers who serve a good part of the inhabitants of Ouagadougou). In spite of the number and the density of manual pumps (one of the highest in Western Africa), the maintenance network for the pumps works badly, because the market is too crowded, the operators lack professionalism and institutional recognition. Some operators are cautiously starting to assert themselves in the niche of water services management, and this trend should grow in the context of the on-going reforms that were mentioned above. ►

| | 1990 | | | 2004 | | | 2015 Goals | | | Gap | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------|
| | population million | coverage | | population million | coverage | | population million | coverage | | population million | investments | |
| | | million | % | | million | % | | million | % | | per year | million \$ |
| Rural | 7,8 | 3,9 | 50% | 9,8 | 5,9 | 60% | 12,2 | 9,7 | 80% | 3,9 | 27,4 | 301,6 |
| Urban | 1,2 | 0,9 | 74% | 2,6 | 1,7 | 65% | 4,4 | 3,7 | 83% | 2,0 | 18,8 | 207,2 |
| Total | 9,1 | 4,8 | 53% | 12,3 | 7,5 | 61% | 16,6 | 13,4 | 81% | 5,9 | 46,2 | 508,7 |
| Rural | 7,8 | 1,1 | 14% | 9,8 | 1,5 | 15% | 12,2 | 7,0 | 58% | 5,5 | 5,2 | 57,5 |
| Urban | 1,2 | 1,1 | 88% | 2,6 | 2,2 | 85% | 4,4 | 4,1 | 93% | 1,9 | 3,9 | 86,8 |
| Total | 9,1 | 2,2 | 24% | 12,3 | 3,6 | 30% | 16,6 | 11,1 | 67% | 7,4 | 9,1 | 144,2 |

water

sanitation

Source : Estimates by Hydroconseil (2004)

Who has access to water and sanitation services?

If the rural areas (including the small towns) are defined as the areas where the ONEA does not provide any service, then the coverage rate is estimated at 60% in rural areas, with very strong geographical disparities - when one multiplies the number of water points by the 300 people that each point should serve, then one obtains a coverage rate of theoretical needs of over 100% in certain provinces. The water service in rural areas is to a large extent provided by boreholes equipped with hand pumps, a technology in which Burkina Faso invested heavily in the 1980s and 1990s, because of its cost-effectiveness and because of the difficulty of mobilizing water resources. In the 250 to 300 small scale water supply systems that Burkina Faso has, the economic demand is still very weak (in the order of a few liters per day per inhabitant), which reduces the durability of the systems from a financial perspective.

In the urban environment (36 towns), and in spite of good performance by the public company (ONEA), the coverage rate for water is estimated at 70%, with a relatively weak connection rate (one private house connection to approximately 36 people). In Ouagadougou a large part of the distribution takes place through standpipes and carters. Once the Ziga dam becomes operational it will be possible to progressively double the number of individual connections (the demand is estimated at over 60,000 connections if the price goes down to 100,000 CFA francs). The true challenge in the urban areas is to improve the service to the peri-urban districts, where an estimated 300,000 people have only very limited access to basic public services.

The access rate for sanitation is very weak in the rural areas (less than 15%) and better in the large towns where the ONEA has

developed a voluntary policy for promoting and financing on-site sanitation, at least in Ouagadougou and in Bobo Dioulasso.

How much will the MDGs cost?

Based on an estimated unit cost of around 90 dollars for water and sanitation in the rural area, and 120 dollars for water and sanitation in the urban areas, it can be concluded that it will be necessary to spend around 45 million dollars per year on water and 10 million dollars per year on sanitation in order to reach the MDGs.

Around 15 million dollars are currently being invested in the rural areas and in small towns mostly through public funds (the funds that are obtained through the HIPC mechanism and through decentralized cooperation are proportionally not very important). In the urban areas, the ONEA has invested an average of 30 million US dollars per year, but this level of financing is also takes into account investments in the Ziga project and can therefore be expected to reduce in the years to come. Local financing mechanisms are almost non-existent, with the exception of the example of the FAUEREB in Bobo Dioulasso, where the joint management of the savings of the water users' associations is slowly resulting in the concession of some bank loans.

Challenges



Burkina Faso

In comparison to other Western African countries, Burkina Faso has benefited from a rather strong public policy for water and sanitation. Nevertheless, more than one in three inhabitants of Burkina do not have access to water and over two in every three do not have access to adequate sanitation. In order to achieve the millennium development goals, Burkina Faso will need to address the following four key challenges.

1. Putting in place a planning and consultation framework

Putting in place a common pot and working towards a convergence of interests between the different financing partners in Burkina Faso within a flexible programmatic framework (for example over three years) will promote a harmonization of approaches with respect to disbursements, monitoring and evaluation. External support will thus become a complement to the effort at improving organization and developing accountability that is driven by the actors in Burkina themselves. The objective should also be to increase the disbursement rate and to ensure that national and international investments



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can be traced. Finally, the programmatic framework should be based on a clear base line situation and a simple monitoring mechanism which makes it possible to measure progress.

Indicators • Amounts invested in the sector, proportion allocated to investment in the local and national budget • Rate of credit disbursement and level of efficiency in project and program implementation • Coherence of the regulatory tools of the different existing sectorial frameworks.

2. Better targeting the citizens and the local level

It is indispensable that the participation of citizens in policy and strategic choices be promoted, in particular through increased involvement of local leaders in managing water and sanitation services in small and medium towns. Users should be closely involved in big

decisions concerning the type of equipment to choose and the management model to put in place.

Indicators • Availability of practical tools which support local municipalities in carrying out their role as lead entities for water and sanitation at local level • Guiding policy framework in place that makes it possible to transfer the water and sanitation competence to municipalities • Number of contracts that are delegated by local municipalities to associations or private operators.

3. Guaranteeing the sustainability of the water supply service in rural areas

Hand pumps, most of which have been put in place in the eighties and nineties, are reaching the end of their life span while the users' groups which manage these pumps do not have sufficient resources to finance their replacement. There is therefore a significant risk that the quality of service in rural areas will decrease. Given that users increasingly demand small water supply systems, solutions should be found that improve the weakness in the maintenance supply chain for hand pumps.

Indicators • Number of hand pumps that are operational • Network of post-sale service and representations of equipment suppliers • Definition of certain technical standards in regulations.

4. Providing water and sanitation services to the unplanned peri-urban areas of large towns

Over 400 000 people (mostly low income households) live in the peri-urban unplanned districts of Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso, and pay three to four times more for a service of inferior quality than those who are connected to the network of ONEA. In reality, service in the peri-urban areas is provided by small operators who obtain water from the stand pipes that are situated on the outskirts of the served areas. The ONEA should provide service to these un-planned areas and ensure a good connection rate in order to bring water to the users and reduce household expenditure on water.

Indicators • Integration of the unplanned districts in the strategy for extending water services • Number of new private house connections in the peri-urban areas • Number of households in the poorest quintile that have access to water services.

The millennium endeavor



eau vive

Enabling improved planning and coordination of actors

- **Organize a general assembly of the water and sanitation sector.**

A general assembly of the sector should be organized without delay in order to mobilize all the concerned parties, to make an assessment of the situation, to divide roles, and to draw up a code of conduct that will guide further action. This general assembly can be the point of the departure for mobilizing all parties towards the achievement of the MDGs. The National Water Council (Conseil National de l'Eau, CNE), which was created in 2003, could be the promoter of this general assembly.

- **Establish a consultative framework.** Beyond the general assembly it is necessary to have a more permanent structure which provides a space of convergence, dialogue, resource sharing and harmonization of interventions. This consultation framework (which exists on paper but has never convened) is necessary to avoid useless disputes, the duplication of interventions in the field and to optimize the use of financial resources allocated to the sector. It could be supported by a technical unit with experienced staff, which will take on the monitoring of the indicators in the form of a "control panel" recognized by all parties.

- **Undertake key studies to define the base line situation.** It is necessary to undertake a large scale study in order to define the base

line situation which will make it possible to assess the progress towards achieving the MDGs. A comprehensive data base needs to be put in place at national level which should include information about the available infrastructure, the extent to which equipment is operational, but also the quality of the service and the performance of the management of services.

- **Create coherence between the different national sectorial strategies.** In order to improve the efficiency of the sector and limit its incoherencies, it is necessary to critically review the different national frameworks and strategies that have been drawn up in the recent past, to promote greater complementarity between the different sectorial strategies. The link between the water and sanitation sector and the poverty reduction strategy, in particular, should be strengthened.

Improving access to water and sanitation services

- **Secure the water supply to the two largest towns.** In a context where water resources are scarce, the reliability of water supply to the towns of Ouagadougou and Bobo Dioulasso - which cover almost three quarters of the urban population of the country - needs to be secured. This strengthening includes securing the sources of water



supply (mostly surface water) by constructing and maintaining the production and treatment facilities, and finally the transport of water through large diameter canalization.

- **Extend the coverage of services within the ONEA perimeter.**

This improvement of the coverage in the urban areas should be done by extending the existing services and increasing the number of house connections (a campaign of subsidized house connections and tariff adjustments can facilitate this process). The quality of the services provided by the ONEA as well as its substantial expertise should ensure a rapid increase in access to water and sanitation, provided that ONEA has more resources at its disposal to make large scale investments and that an urban policy is in place that enables it to extend its network to the unplanned districts (where the majority of the un-served clients of ONEA live today).

- **Undertake a vast rehabilitation program of existing infrastructure.**

In the rural areas and the small villages, many of the works that were done 10 to 20 years ago (small dams, boreholes fitted with hand pumps, cement wells) are reaching the end of their lifespan and must be replaced. Furthermore, achieving the MDGs is based on the assumption that new facilities are constructed (small dams, boreholes fitted with hand pumps, small water supply systems, cement wells, sanitation facilities) and that responsibilities for implementing and managing water and sanitation infrastructure are transferred to the local level (municipality or village).

- **Embark on a large-scale awareness and education program.**

The challenges in the water and sanitation sector are still not well understood by certain target groups such as young people (schooled and unschooled), inhabitants of rural areas, or low income households. Therefore, the efforts in hygiene awareness and education should continue, so that more families will decide to invest in the improvement of sanitation facilities. This large scale education and awareness campaign should support efforts aimed at attaining the MDGs and should draw on all possible resources (direct animation, media, school material...).

- **Ensure sustainable operation of the facilities and provision of services.**

The durability of the facilities and services to be provided depends on the maintenance supply chain as well as on a good cost recovery and on quality management. This requires, therefore, that the level of professionalism of the local managers be strengthened.

This is a particularly important challenge for small water supply systems, which will progressively become the reference equipment outside of the ONEA perimeter. It is necessary that emerging new positions in the water sector, such as “manager of the water service”, be supported with suitably adapted technical, methodological and financial tools.

Developing the potential for civil society participation

- **Recognize the potential of civil society.** Civil society has an important potential, notably in the areas of social mobilization, and expertise in implementing actions in the field and in mobilizing local and international resources. Projects jointly implemented between decentralized cooperation partners should be taken into account and integrated in national planning exercises. Joint programs involving the Government, NGOs and users' associations should be implemented in order to demonstrate that there is complementarity rather than antagonism between the different actors.

- **Delegate more responsibility to the local level.** Delegating more responsibility to the local level makes it possible to speed up actions, to reduce the risk of failure, and to support the local institutions in decision making, financing and monitoring. In this manner it becomes possible to decentralize financial resources by establishing local water and sanitation funds which can be accessed by associations and local authorities under certain conditions. The conditions of access to local funds will probably become a strong motivating factor for enhanced professionalism.

- **Support and promote local private operators.** Local private operators can play a considerable role in professionalizing the management of the water and sanitation services in the towns where ONEA is not equipped to intervene, provided that the rules of the game are clearly defined at the outset. These operators can also contribute, to a somewhat lesser extent, to financing access to the service. It is therefore necessary to involve them in the on-going processes and to improve the framework within which they are operating (for example, by drafting a model contract for delegated management of a small water supply system).



blue book burkina faso



water, life, people

The publication of the **Blue Book : water - life - people** is the result of a commitment made in Kyoto (March 2003) by the World Assembly of Water Wisdom (Assemblée Mondiale des Sages de l'Eau - AMSE). The Blue Book aims at reporting on the progress made in the water and sanitation sector towards reaching the millennium development goals (MDGs).

It is directed to all the stakeholders of the water and sanitation sector in the country, as well as to the technical and financial international partners. It reports, among other issues, on the place of civil society, on policies for decentralization and on locally available financing tools.

Each Blue Book offers a different, and more critical, vision of the water and sanitation sector in a given country, by independently and at regular intervals (every three or five years) measuring the progress made and by striving to put forward the opinion of the users and citizens whenever possible. Three Blue Books - covering three countries: Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger - were published simultaneously in March 2005.

In the long run, the World Assembly of Water Wisdom hopes that the process of preparing and publishing the Blue Books will provide an independent vision of the water and sanitation sector, which is capable of developing its own analysis methods, of regularly measuring agreed upon indicators, and which offers a non-conventional vision of policy and public strategy, without taking ideological sides or trying to disguise reality.

What is the added value of the Blue Book?

- It is a participatory process that started on the basis of the reality in the field, and is based on a critical analysis of observed situations in the area of water and sanitation.
- It is a tool that promotes exchange, dialogue and mobilization of all actors in the area of water management, in order to promote large scale project portfolios from the civil society.
- At country level, and in the framework of making a choice between priorities for sustainable development, the Blue Book strengthens local initiatives, the right to water and poverty reduction.
- At regional level, the Blue Book contributes to building a vision, and engages the international community in promoting more innovative and effective means of cooperation.

Collaborators. The Blue Book is an initiative of the International Secretariat for Water (ISW). It is supported by partners which have all been involved at one moment or the other in the process based on their competence and their knowledge of the field.

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