



Sustainable Water Integrated Management - Support Mechanism (SWIM- SM)

Project funded by the European Union

**REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE STATUS OF THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES AND / OR ACTION PLANS  
FOR WASTEWATER**

**NATIONAL REPORT FOR MOROCCO**

**Lot 1 (WP1) "Water Governance and Mainstreaming»**

**Activity 1.1.2**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**August, 2013**





## SUMMARY

**Out of the three countries of the Maghreb, Morocco, although suffering from water stress, is the least disadvantaged.** This is due to the oceanic influence on its Atlantic flank as well as to the presence of mountain ranges exceeding 4,000 m. in altitude. This does not prevent large spatial disparities in water resources from the Rif from occurring, with more than 800 mm annual average water and less than 100 mm in the southern Sahara. Moreover, temporal variation is also considerable, so much that it may occasionally result in pronounced droughts. This context has important implications for the management of water and explains the current Moroccan policy of seeking new unconventional resources (wastewater reuse and desalination of brackish or marine). **Since the adoption, in 2010, of its National Development Strategy of the Water Sector, Morocco has been clearly committed to a policy of Integrated Water Resources Management implementation in six areas:**

- Management of water demand and water efficiency.
- Management and development of the offer.
- Preservation and protection of water resources.
- Reducing vulnerability to natural hazards.
- Continuation of the institutional and regulatory reforms.
- Modernization of information and capacity building systems.

To develop this strategy, a specific budget requirement by 2030 was established.

A number of these areas have a direct impact on the management of sanitation.

**The entire water sector is governed by Law 10-95 of the 20th of September 1995, commonly referred to as the "Water Act" (currently under revision) which provides the framework for managing and creating the necessary tools for its implementation.** This is particularly the case for **Hydraulic Basin Agencies**, upgraded to real architects of planning, management and protection of water resources of the country. **Institutionally benefiting from financial autonomy based on the principles of «user / pays" and "polluter / payer "**, such agencies, represent a modern, internationally acknowledged water management approach.

In addition to the Water Basin Agencies ( ABH ) , there have been created over the years several organizations, placed under the supervision of the ministries, meant to become the tools of implementation of policies on the ground: the National Agency for Energy and the Water ( **ONEE** ) (formerly National Service for Drinkable Water ( **ONEP** ) / National Power Service ( **ONE** ) for Water Supply ( **DWS** ) and sanitation, ORMVAs (Regional Office for the Agricultural Development, dealing with irrigation), the National Agency for Sanitary Safety of food products ( **ONSSA** ) (which ensures the quality of products of Wastewater Reuse ( **REU**), the Superior Council for Water and Climate ( **CSEC** ) ( advisory volume for the planning of water resources management) , etc. ....

The Ministry of Energy , Mining , Water and the Environment ( **MEMEE** ) , responsible for the management , protection as well as for the quantitative and qualitative monitoring of water resources,



happens to be a major factor in the water sector, what with the ABH and ONEE under its umbrella. As for the Ministry of Agriculture, it has reserved for itself the upper hand on irrigation. The Ministry of the Interior (MI), is the custodian of local communities and on the relevant modules the latter are managing, with respect to DWS and sanitation services, besides the ONEE. In addition, the Ministry of Interior oversees the implementation of the **NAP** (National Water Sanitation and Cleansing Plan). **The Ministry of Economy and Finance has also an important role to play**, as it finances investments through the state budget. Other ministries are involved according to their specificity: the Ministry of Health, through its mission of protecting public health; **the Ministry of Trade and Industry**, as the custodian of the Moroccan Department of Industrial Standardization (**SNIMA**), in charge of standardization. Although the state is highly centralized, **part of the water management is delegated to the Water Users Associations (WUA)** – as far as water used for agricultural applications is concerned - or to the Local Government Units (Communes) – as far as AEP and sanitation applications are concerned; decentralization at the provincial level (Provincial or Prefectural Water Committees) has been provided for, for planning at the level of river basins ( ABH ) as well as for the management and protection of the resource.

**The involvement of different stakeholders** (ministries , government agencies, other structures) **has been developed quite well through an institutional and regulatory framework, although some areas need to be strengthened, as are for instance those of rural sanitation , wastewater reuse , regulations allowing ABH play their full role and greater participation of users in water management (see below).**

**Intervention policies and the implementation of the National Water Strategy** are being materialized through major scale projects and plans, with objectives 3, 5 , 15, 20 or 25 years then broken down into annual action plans. **A National Plan for Water -based strategy with a 2030 perspective is being validated.** Large projects fall within these programs. Some of these programs are available in five-year plans.

**The major programs are:**

The National Water Sanitation and Cleansing Plan, currently under revision, providing, among other, for actions aiming at reaching 300 Wastewater Treatment Plants (STEP) by 2025.

The National Household Waste Plan (PNDM), embarking on a 15-year horizon (but as yet not accounting for the STEP-generated sludge).

The “Green Morocco” Project (Maroc Vert), embarking on objectives spanning through to the year 2020 and comprising a significant component for irrigation and water conservation.

The Water Resources Integrated Development Master Plans (PDAIRE), prepared by each ABH for its respective basin, harboring a long-term vision, subject to reviews on a five-year basis. The PDAIRE integrate the national basin and other various plans and program objectives.

Communal Development Plans, resulting from the obligation of each municipality to develop such plans every three years, in particular as regards investments for the ASP and Sanitation.

These programs – especially when it comes to investment - benefit from the support of international donors (European Union (EU), KfW (KfW), French Development Agency (AFD), World Bank ...)



Despite a context so very favorable to water management, **examining the current situation reveals a number of weaknesses in certain sectors of sanitation, namely:**

- **The rural sector has been suffering significant delays** regarding sanitation, compared to urban areas. This is because (1) the ONEE intervention is generally not provided for towns of less than 5000 inhabitants; (2) municipalities are in penury of human as well as of technical and financial resources; (3) there is a lack of information, training and user involvement. A RAN ( a National Rural Sanitation Plan) is currently being developed.
- **The reuse of wastewater – most particularly in agriculture -, clearly proclaimed by the Government as a necessity for the country, is now presenting significant shortcomings:** a virtually non-existent institutional framework and insufficient technical expertise on the part of most players. In order to be developed, this sector should also address the problem of overheads incurred by further processing, transport, storage and monitoring of projects.
- **The fate of sewage sludge, including its application in agriculture has been suffering from an insufficient institutional framework.** Agricultural use or disposal do not require an official license whereas these issues are not addressed by either the PNA or in PNDM. The development of a National Plan for the management and recovery of sewage sludge is therefore a matter of the utmost urgency.
- **The problem of industrial waste appears all the more urgent, in the light of the –at least for the time-being – incompleteness of the relevant institutional framework (for certain discharge standards in particular).** A strategy for managing industrial waste should be established, based on large industrial information and more effective incentive policies (the incentive system through the Industrial Depollution voluntary mechanism seems largely insufficient). At present, the non- implementation of standards is the major impediment to the proper functioning of ABH and therefore of the IWRM.
- **The ABH, which are key tools for the management and protection of the resources, may not currently operate normally, as per definition in the relevant texts.** As a result of the de-facto impossibility to collect "polluter / payer" royalties (see above), ABHs have not acquired financial autonomy, hence their being in no position to develop an effective policy. This must be remedied promptly, all the more since such situation is contrary to the very principles of the Water Act. Similarly, the participation of water stakeholders in the functioning of agencies should be ensured through the creation of a Basin Committee, comprising representatives of all types of players.
- **Other sectors have also been suffering certain weaknesses. Such is, for instance, the case of the amount of rates for AEP and Sanitation which are clearly too low to allow management agencies to cover the cost of services and gain economic independence.** This is also the case of data management and databases that manage them. **The absence of a national database for water** as well as the existence of more than one data bases in the various institutions and agencies in different formats are a handicap for policy makers and planners in the sector of water and sanitation. It also appears that **the concept of Public Health has not been sufficiently assimilated** by water stakeholders (at all levels); it would therefore be preferable



for such notion to be addressed with a stronger involvement of the Ministry and the establishment of appropriate tools.

In conclusion, **the analysis of the current situation in the sector of water and sanitation in Morocco shows a very well-developed institutional framework the effectiveness of which depends on the application in the field of tools and appropriate means as well as on a strong government commitment to develop the sector.** [This analysis also revealed a number of areas where progress can be made, namely:](#)

- Facilitating the decision-making process.
- Developing a comprehensive institutional framework for the REU and strengthening specialized technical expertise in the field.
- The deregulation of industrial waste standards to allow ABH gain financial independence and to put their policies into practice.
- The establishment and development of a sanitation policy in rural areas and the development of appropriate technology.
- Reform and coordination of databases and the creation of a national water database.
- Increased participation of stakeholders and water users in the management of water and sanitation, and a better-developed of information and communication policy.
- Institutional and technical regulation of the treatment and recovery of sewage sludge.
- Taking better account of the concept of Public Health and the establishment of an appropriate framework.