



NIGER

Water and Sanitation Profile

POPULATION AND HEALTH STATISTICS	
Population (2006)	13.7 million
Proportion of population living in urban areas	17%
Urban/Rural population growth rates (1980-2000)	5.7 / 2.8%
Diarrheal deaths/year (2004)	22,700
Under age 5 mortality rate	259/1000 live births
Under age 5 mortality rate due to diarrheal disease (2000)	19.8%

SECTOR OVERVIEW

The challenges facing Niger’s water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector are serious obstacles to achieving sustainable drinking water access and sanitation. To achieve its 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Niger’s WSS sector will need to double its capacity in the next six years. In order to expand coverage this quickly, the sector will need to embark on a training and institutional capacity building program so that government and donor contributions to the sector are absorbed and utilized effectively.

Multiple issues must be addressed as the sector improves and expands service. These issues include:

- Improving the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system;
- Building the capacity of key agencies in the sector;
- Strengthening the performance of the sector in terms of cost-recovery; and,
- Promoting the sanitation leadership role of the National Water and Sanitation Commission (CNEA).

SECTOR FRAMEWORK

In 2000-01 Niger updated its water and sanitation policy and reorganized its urban water sector. The policy reorganized key agency responsibilities, created new water service providers, and created the Water Sectoral Project (PSE). Most notably, the policy update created the Asset Holding Company for Urban Water Supply in Niger (SPEN) and the Niger water supply utility (SEEN). SEEN operates under a lease contract to SPEN and is in partnership with an international private operator. Regulation of urban water is to be performed by a multi-sector agency established in 2003, but the agency is not yet fully operational.

The policy also separated urban and rural water service. The Ministry of Water retains overall responsibility for sector coordination. Rural water service is decentralized and is the responsibility of the communities. Communities have set-up user associations and village water committees to operate and maintain their water systems. These smaller water service providers serve the majority of Niger’s population since more than 80 percent of the country’s population lives in rural or peri-urban areas.

The poverty reduction strategy for Niger allocates approximately six percent of the national budget to the WSS sector. The decentralization of the sector occurred recently; therefore, local providers have yet

WATER AVAILABILITY IN NIGER	
Renewable water resources per capita, m ³ /person/year (1960-2007)	2,257
Water withdrawals, m ³ /person/year (2000)	159
Projected water resources per capita, m ³ /person/year in 2015	1,641
Note: 2015 projected water resources per capita is a straight-line regression calculation based on population growth rates with no adjustment for consumption or technology changes	

KEY AGENCIES

Agency	Description	Contact Information
Ministry of Hydraulics, Environment and the Fight Against Desertification (MHE/FAD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and natural resources management Policies, strategies, and implementation of projects 	Adamou Namata
Asset Holding Company for Urban Water Supply in Niger (SPEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban WSS system owner Capital improvements 	Seyni Salou seysalou@yahoo.fr Tel: 227-20734340
Niger water supply utility (SEEN)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban WSS service operator for 52 urban areas Maintenance 	
User Associations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural and peri-urban water service providers 	
Village Water Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural water service provider 	
Ministry of Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSS service policies, coordination, strategies Sets water rates 	

to totally develop their financial, managerial, and technical capacity. The sector will have to overcome this lack of capacity while at the same time improving on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) processes so that access estimates and performance measures are more precisely collected.

Levels of sanitation access remain woefully inadequate, particularly in rural areas. In response, the government created the fledgling National Water and Sanitation Commission (CNEA). If properly supported, the CNEA and the National Monitoring and Evaluation Committee for Water and Sanitation Sector (CNSESEA) can expand access to sanitation facilities. Sanitation functions in urban areas are already the responsibility of SPEN and SEEN, where coverage is slowly expanding. However, in rural areas service providers have not assumed sanitation responsibilities, thereby placing the 2015 MDG targets for sanitation likely out of reach.

THE URBAN SUB-SECTOR

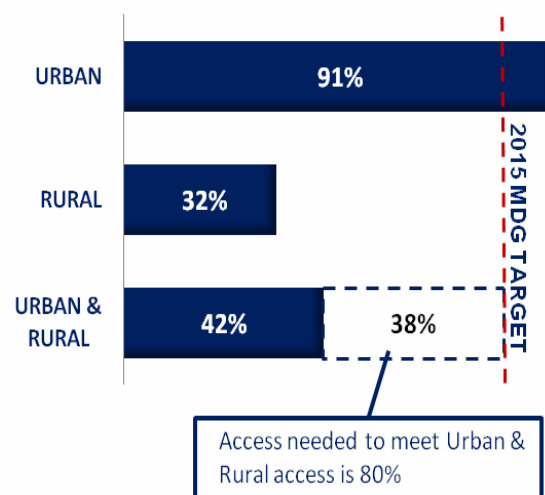
Although SPEN and SEEN are responsible for water service in urban areas, the Ministry of Water still sets water rates. Rates have increased from 196 CFA in 1999 to 244 CFA in 2005. In 2008, water rates can still comfortably meet operation and maintenance costs, but billing and collection effectiveness could improve based on a recent utility benchmarking study for West Africa. SPEN will be able to better meet its revenue requirement and consolidate its financial position if water rates continue to edge up in-step with cost of service and inflation.

Annual spending in the urban areas appears to meet MDG drinking water targets; however, the lag in sanitation will require additional allocations since latrines in cities and large towns are rarely "improved." Taken together, SEEN and SPEN are steadily improving, meeting operation and maintenance (O&M) costs, and making possible water access to the poor by waving connections in peri-urban for those that qualify.

THE RURAL SUB-SECTOR

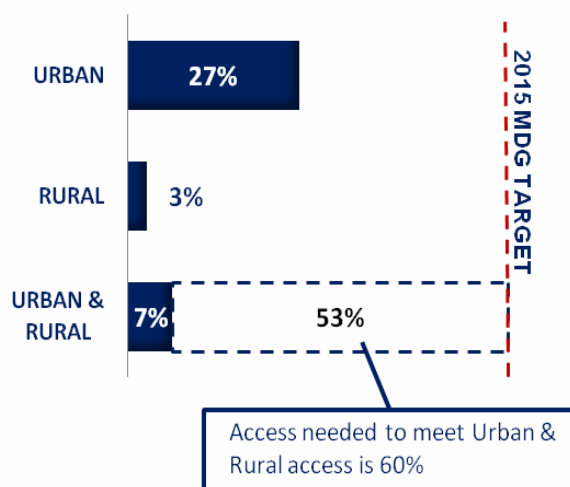
The rural sub-sector did not formerly decentralize its WSS service until early 2005. The capacity to manage water facilities and potential private sector operators is limited at the local level. Most rural areas are not able to recover costs, because rates must be kept affordable. Although this is the case, rural

Meeting MDG 7: Access to Water in 2006



Data Source: UN MDG Indicator Database

Meeting MDG 7: Access to Sanitation in 2006



Data Source: UN MDG Indicator Database

communities are responsible for meeting their own O&M costs without assistance from the central government. In practice however, rural areas are able to subsidize their revenues with donor funding or by offsetting the cost to repair failing equipment, replace or install new facilities through donor funding. Local communities are also responsible for contributing nominal amounts in either cash or in-kind for capital improvements financed by the central government.

Rural user associations and village water committees provide little to no sanitation service. The greatest opportunity for increased government and outside donor assistance is in the rural sanitation sub-sector. Niger needs to improve both the coverage and sustainability of sanitation services in rural areas by implementing newly drafted sanitation action plans and supporting the leadership role of CNEA. Hygiene awareness continues to be an issue in rural areas. Outside assistance, whether by the government, donors, or non-governmental organizations, can build awareness through community-level hygiene promotion campaigns.

DONOR INVOLVEMENT

Niger has several key development partners in the WSS sector. Most donors have focused their support on rural programs. Both the UN Development Program and the World Bank actively coordinate donor roles and responsibilities in Niger. The donor community strongly supported the recent Poverty

Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) revised in 2007. The WSS sector funding gap is not clear considering Niger's available data, but it is expected that outside donor assistance will continue to account for the bulk of funding in the WSS sector.

DONOR	ACTIVITIES	CONTACT INFORMATION
AFD (French Development Agency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural WSS infrastructure development ▪ WSS service management capacity building 	
The World Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Urban WSS infrastructure development ▪ Management capacity building at utility level ▪ M&E process improvements ▪ Natural resources and ecosystems management and community capacity building ▪ Transboundary water management 	Matar Fall mfall@worldbank.org
Saudi Arabia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural water supply development – groundwater well development 	
DANIDA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural water assessment and ministerial support ▪ National water sector policy reforms and development 	
AfDB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural WSS infrastructure development 	Sabrina HADJADJ AOUL s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org

Additional information and sources: Statistics were compiled from the WHOSIS database, WRI-Earthtrends Water Resources and Freshwater Ecosystems database, and the UN MDG Indicators database. Other sources included the AfDB Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation Report (2006), 2007 OECD-Niger Annual Economic Outlook Report, WOP-Africa Utility Performance Assessment (2008).

This Water and Sanitation Profile was prepared under the **Advancing the Blue Revolution Initiative (ABRI)**. ABRI is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and addresses some of the most challenging water issues in the Middle East and Africa including the lack of access by the poor to improved water and sanitation services, inefficient and nonproductive water use, and transboundary river basin management. ABRI works closely with host country governments, actively pursues co-investments from the private sector, reaches out to like-minded foundations, and partners with regional institutions.