



NIGER

Water and Sanitation Profile

POPULATION AND HEALTH STATISTICS	
Population (2008)	14.7 million ^a
Proportion of population living in urban areas (2008)	17% ^a
Average annual urban/rural population growth rates (1990-2008)	3.9 / 3.4% ^a
Under age 5 mortality rate (2007)	176/1000 live births ^b
Under age 5 mortality rate due to diarrheal disease (2004)	13.6% ^b
<small>Note: Most recently available data provided. ^a World Bank. 2009 World Development Indicators (WDI) Database. ^b World Health Organization (WHO). World Health Statistics 2009.</small>	

WSS SECTOR OVERVIEW

Over 20 percent of deaths in Niger can be attributed to poor sanitation and hygiene.¹ This fact highlights the many challenges that face Niger's water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector. In addition to weak government support to the WSS sector, the country's hydro-climatic and geographic conditions create additional difficulties.

Niger has one of the highest population growth rates in the world, which has absorbed some the progress being made.² While Niger also has one of the lowest sanitation coverage rates in the world, since 1990, improved sanitation access has still increased by 4 percent. In addition, improved drinking water coverage has increased by 13 percent.³ However, Niger's population has nearly doubled since 1990, growing by 88 percent between 1990 and 2008.⁴

¹ Prüss-Ustün, A., et al. *Safer Water, Better Health*, WHO (2008).

² African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW), et al. *Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation* (2006).

³ WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP). *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update*.

⁴ Calculated from the World Bank's 2009 World Development Indicators.

To achieve its 2015 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the number of people that will need water and sanitation access would have to increase by four times for water, and by ten times for sanitation.⁵ 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.

Other issues to be addressed within the WSS sector to improve and expand service include: (1) improving the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system; (2) building the capacity of key agencies in the sector; (3) strengthening the performance of the sector in terms of cost-recovery; and (4) promoting the sanitation leadership role of the National Water and Sanitation Commission (CNEA).

WATER AVAILABILITY IN NIGER	
Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita, m ³ /person/year (2008)	238 ^c
Water withdrawals, m ³ /person/year (2002)	185 ^c
Projected water resources per capita, m ³ /person/year in 2015	187 ^d
<small>Note: Most recently available data provided. ^c UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). <i>FAO Aquastat Database</i>. "Freshwater resources" refers to estimates of runoff into rivers and recharge of ground water and does not include flows from other countries. ^d Note this value was calculated using a straight-line calculation based on average population growth rates (1990-2008) with no adjustment for consumption or technology changes. Data was obtained from <i>World Bank WDI Database</i> (population) and <i>FAO Aquastat Database</i> (water resources).</small>	

WSS 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 launched the Water Sectoral Project. Most notably, the policy

⁵ AMCOW. *Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation* (2006).

KEY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Agency	Description	Contact Information
Ministry of Hydraulics, Environment and the Fight Against Desertification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water and natural resources management; Policies, strategies, and implementation of projects. 	Adamou Namata
SPEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban WSS system owner; Water service capital improvements. 	Seyni Salou seysalou@yahoo.fr Tel: 227-20734340
SEEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban WSS service operator for 52 urban areas; Operation and 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 Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WSS service policies, coordination, strategies; Sets water rates. 	
National Water and Sanitation Commission (CNEA).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotes expansion of the WSS sector 	

created the Asset Holding Company for Urban Water Supply in Niger (SPEN) and the Water Management Corporation of Niger (SEEN – the water service provider). SEEN operates under a lease contract to SPEN and is in partnership with an international private operator.⁶

The poverty reduction strategy for Niger allocates approximately six percent of the national budget to the WSS sector. Niger’s WSS policy also separates urban and rural services, but the Ministry of Water Resources retains overall responsibility for sector coordination. Rural water service is decentralized and is the responsibility of the communities, which 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 78 percent of the country’s population lives in rural or peri-urban areas. In 2003,

⁶ *Ibid.*

the Government adopted a Rural Development Strategy (RDS) which provides the framework for all rural WSS sector interventions. Following the completion of action plans for implementing the RDS, the government prepared the National Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Plan, which include the ultimate attainment of the MDGs.⁷

The Ministry of Water Resources sets water rates, which have increased 24 percent from 1999 to 2005. The increase is part of a strategy to reduce the financial deficit and to expand access.⁸ Water billing rates meet operation and maintenance costs, but billing and collection effectiveness could improve based on a 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.

The WSS sector will have to overcome the lack of funding and capacity while at the same time improving on M&E processes so that access estimates and performance measures are more precisely collected. The lack of the M&E process has resulted in limited stakeholder participation, a lack of data uniformity, and no integration of sanitation data.⁹

Levels of sanitation access remain inadequate, particularly in rural areas. 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

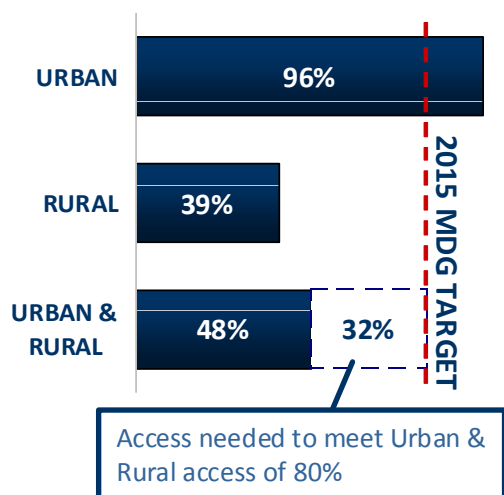
Annual spending in the urban areas appears to meet MDG drinking water targets; however, the lag in sanitation will require additional allocations since latrines in cities and large towns are rarely “improved.” Taken together, SEEN and SPEN are steadily improving, meeting operation and

⁷ African Development Group. *Niger Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Project* (2006).

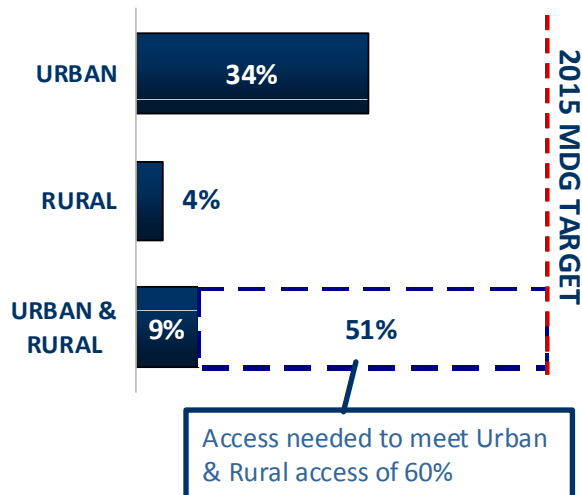
⁸ AfDB/OECD. *African Economic Outlook: Niger* (2007).

⁹ AMCOW. *Getting Africa on Track to Meet the MDGs on Water and Sanitation* (2006).

Meeting MDG 7: Access to Water in 2008



Meeting MDG 7: Access to Sanitation in 2008



Data Source: WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation (JMP), *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update*. Note on comparing baseline data from earlier reports: The JMP methodology uses all available data in each successive report. This means that estimates may be recalculated for earlier years if more data becomes available. The JMP notes that these new estimates may affect the baseline reported in earlier data sets.

maintenance (O&M) costs, and improving water access by the poor by waiving connection fees in peri-urban areas for those that qualify.

THE RURAL SUB-SECTOR

The rural sub-sector did not formally decentralize its WSS service until early 2005 when towns became responsible for drinking water and sanitation.

Decentralization has advanced slowly, and the capacity to manage water facilities and potential private sector operators is limited at the local level.

Rural 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.

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. Donors provide nearly 90 percent of WSS funding. Most donors have focused their support on rural programs. Local authorities of rural jurisdictions rely on donor support monetarily and technically, as they do not have expertise or experience in WSS projects.

Both the United Nations (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 revised in 2007. The WSS sector funding gap is not clear considering Niger's lack of 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 ^e
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 (Danish International Development Assistance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural water assessment and ministerial support; ▪ National water sector policy reforms and development. 	
African Development Bank (AfDB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rural WSS infrastructure development. 	Sabrina HADJADJ AOUL s.hadjadjaoul@afdb.org
^e Contact information may change frequently and therefore be different from what is noted above.		

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Additional references that aided in the development of this report include: Water Operator Partnership (WOP)-Africa Utility Performance Assessment (2008).

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