

GAC in Infrastructure



Governance & Anti-Corruption in Infrastructure Advisory Program

Emerging Good Practice in Urban Water Projects

Morocco: Oum Er Rbia Sanitation

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Project Objectives & Challenges

The National Office for Potable Water (Office National de l'Eau Potable – ONEP) is the national water supply operator in Morocco, responsible for supplying treated bulk water to urban distributors (“municipal régies” and private operators) and providing service to over 500 medium to small towns. ONEP is overall a high-capacity agency, ranking among the best performing public operators in the region and competes on the sub-Saharan public-private partnership markets. ONEP receives virtually no government subsidies for operations, achieving adequate cost recovery and infrastructure financing through tariffs and connection fees, urban/rural, production/distribution and water/sewerage cross-subsidy flows, and operational efficiency gains. ONEP has in the recent past also been given the responsibility to provide wastewater services in the towns where it supplies water. The financing of wastewater services is shared between the municipalities and ONEP under an agreement guaranteed by the Government.

The project seeks to increase access to sewerage services and reduce wastewater-related pollution in 11 towns in six provinces in the Oum Er Rbia basin. The project will rehabilitate the existing wastewater networks and construct 10 new wastewater treatment plants. In addition, the project aims to pilot non-conventional technologies for wastewater systems in selected locations. The project will provide 13,000 sewerage connections over five years.

Client Initiatives for Improved Governance in the Water Sector

The objective of the National Sanitation Plan (Plan National d'Assainissement) is to increase the overall rate of access to sanitation to 80%, and wastewater treatment to 60% by 2020. The National Sanitation Program targets 260 towns covering about 10 million people. For ONEP to implement these investments without damaging its financial equilibrium, while continuing to use cross subsidies to maintain financial viability, the Government of Morocco has allowed for:

- An increase of the potable water tariff of 5% per year, beginning in 2009;
- A subsidy for the development of the rural water supply of MDH 150 million per year (US\$18 million);
- An increased surcharge for wastewater collection of 0.2 DH/m³ in 2009 and 0.1 DH/m³ in 2010 (2.4 and 1.3 US cents respectfully).

Governance Measures Supported by the Project

Accountability

ONEP expects to improve its operations and maintenance practices from a South-South twinning cooperation under the project. The project will finance the twinning cooperation in order to support and bring practical experiences to ONEP in wastewater management. The prospective partner is expected to be a utility that has developed substantial experience in non-conventional and appropriate technologies that will help ONEP reduce the costs of delivering wastewater services in small towns. This long-term South-South partnership and cooperation will provide ONEP with the needed expertise to expand services to small towns in an affordable and sustainable manner.

Participation

The project ensures beneficiary involvement at two stages. First, through feasibility studies potential beneficiary concerns on sanitation services were identified and beneficiary needs were reflected into the project design with the goal of facilitating household connections to future sanitation services. Second, the project is employing a proactive communications strategy to help promote project benefits and thus increase the connection rate and financial contributions from the communities. Through this awareness raising and mobilization campaign, ONEP is expected to better meet end-users needs; particularly women's needs.

Reference Documents and Contacts

For more information on this project, please visit:

<http://www.worldbank.org/?pagePK=64283627&piPK=73230&theSitePK=40941&menuPK=228424&Projectid=P098459>

Project press statement June 15, 2010:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22617429~menuPK:34463~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

Morocco Water & Sanitation:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22491408~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

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This note is part of a review of infrastructure sector projects to identify emerging good practice within the governance and anti-corruption (GAC) agenda under the *GAC in Infrastructure* initiative by the Transport, Water and ICT Anchor. The focus is on GAC measures designed to improve accountability, participation and transparency by client sector institutions. The purpose of this series is to provide information that may be of interest to those involved in designing and implementing projects in the water sector.

The series is based on a review of project documents in recently approved projects. Therefore, no attempt has been made to evaluate the effectiveness of the measures introduced. Task Team Leaders for the featured projects have reviewed the notes and, in some cases, provided additional information.

The *GAC in Infrastructure* website provides links to publications and additional reference materials.