

Republic of Rwanda



**MINISTRY OF LANDS, ENVIRONMENT
FORESTS, WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

**SECTORIAL POLICY ON WATER AND
SANITATION**

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ABREVIATIONS UTILIZED

AMCOW	African Ministerial Conference on Water
ADB	African Development Bank
CDC	Comité de Développement Communautaire
EAC	East African Community
ELECTROGAZ	Société de Production et de Distribution d'Electricité, d'Eau et de Gaz
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
Frw	Franc Rwandais
MDG	Millenium Development Goals
MINAGRI	Ministère de l'Agriculture et de l'Elevage
MINALOC	Ministère de l'Administration Locale, des Affaires Sociales et du Développement Rural
MINECOFIN	Ministère des Finances et de la Planification Economique
MINEDUC	Ministère de l'Education, de la Science, de la Technologie et de la Recherche Scientifique
MININFRA	Ministère des Infrastructures
MINISANTE	Ministère de la Santé
MINITERE	Ministère des Terres, de l'environnement, des Forêts, de l'Eau et des Ressources Naturelles
NBI	Nile Basin Initiative
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USD	United States Dollar
WB	World Bank
WSS	Water Supply System
WSSS	Water Supply and Sanitation System

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FOREWORD

Rwanda, after the war and the 1994 genocide which destroyed major parts of its human and economic capital, is now in a situation where it is necessary to achieve considerable efforts of its rehabilitation and development. Hence, this requires the adoption of an approach which targets key sectors and proposes appropriate strategic actions for a sustainable development.

The country recognizes the importance of water and sanitation for the improvement of the living conditions of its population. Thus, better water resources management inevitably contributes to the reduction of poverty and to socio-economic development of the country.

Since 1996, tremendous efforts have been made to launch a national policy for the management of water and sanitation sector that consists of strategies and programmes for the construction and rehabilitation of human resources, social and economic infrastructures, and, to finally develop a long term vision in order to provide better guidance for the development and the coordination in this sector.

Based on the sector-based policy project on water and sanitation developed in 1992, revised in 1997 and as well in 2001, Rwanda consequently formulated a new policy which defines guidelines for efficient use of resources and which also integrates new aspects such as decentralisation, participatory approach, privatisation and funding through programme approach. This policy is in harmony with MDG objectives and 2020Vision which cater that all of its population will have access to drinkable water and to sanitation services.

Also, this policy takes into account commitments taken through regional and international arrangements related to water resources management and environment.

The drawing up of this document is the result of consultations and participations of national and international participants concerned with the water and sanitation sector in Rwanda. The last forum of consultations was held in MURAMBI/Gitarama from February 19 to 23, 2004.

Hence, we thank all individuals who contributed to the preparation of this policy: partners from Ministries, representatives of the Provinces, of the decentralisation entities, of international financial institutions such as the WB, the ADB, UNICEF, UNDP and the FAO, of the civil society and finally of the private sector.

The ideas that emerged herewith will contribute to the development of the water and sanitation sector, and will ultimately lead to the improvement of the living conditions of the rwandese population.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Definition of the sector

Water, used by all sectors of socio-economic life, plays a major role in the socio-economic development of any given country. It is therefore indispensable to human and animal health and in the consumption level per capita and this often goes hand in hand with the development of the country. The agriculture depends on the availability of water which constitutes one of the limiting factors of agricultural output and productivity. Also, the industry and energy sectors as well as institutions are among the greatest consumers of water.

Finally, a certain quantity of national water, flowing outside of the country, cannot be considerably limited without negatively affecting the water needs of other countries.

Indeed, the use of water is varied and in order for its utilization to be sustainable, it is quite necessary that a certain amount of water be devoted to the environmental conservation.

With the population increase, water needs become more and more crucial and its sustainable use requires a rational management both at its resources level as well as its demand level.

The water and sanitation sector is a major part of the economic infrastructures, the third pillar of 2020Vision and PRSP. Hence, the objective of the rwandese government, in this sector, is to improve the water resources management and the health of rural and urban localities as well as increase the drinking water services for the population.

1.2 Background

National Context

Physical context

Rwanda, situated in the Great Lakes Region is characterized by topography which gradually rises from the East at an average altitude of 1,250 m to the North and West where it culminates in a mountain range called " Congo-Nile Ridge" varying from 2,200 m to 3,000 m and a volcano formations, the highest being 4,507 m high. This topography is characterized by a vast number of hills and mountains, a fact which results in high soil erosion and loss of water.

Rwanda possesses a dense hydrographical network. Lakes occupy of 128,190 ha, rivers cover an area of 7,260 ha and waters in wetlands and valleys a total of 77,000 ha. The country is divided by water divide line called Congo-Nile Ridge. To the West of this line lies the Congo River Basin which covers 33% of the national territory and which receives 10% of the total national waters. To the East lies the Nile River Basin, whose area covering 67% of the territory, delivers 90% of the national waters.

Rwanda is marked by a continental equatorial climate zones: (i) the high altitude region; (ii) the central plateau region and (iii) the eastern plateau and the western lowlands.

The annual rainfall varies from 700 mm to 1400 mm in the East and in lowlands of the West, from 1200 mm to 1400 mm in central plateau and from 1300 mm to 2000 mm in the high altitude region with an average of 1200 mm per year.

Socio-economic context:

With an estimated population of about 8,162,175 inhabitants in 2002 and an annual population growth of about 3.1%, Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries in Africa (density estimated at 310 inhabitants per square m³).

With an urban population of only about 10%, the rwandese economy remains highly dependent on the rural sector, especially agriculture which contributes a little over 40% to the GDP and accounts for more than 80% of its export earnings. Factually, the agriculture depends largely on the effect of rain.

According to a 1998 UNICEF study, 50% of the households spend at least 1/2 hour per day collecting a 20-liter jerrican of water, while a quarter more spends over an hour per day. These estimates do not even take into account the considerable energy and effort that women and children put into transporting these jerricans. Water sources are usually found in valleys, at the foot of mountains and hills, whereas the people live on hill and mountain tops. The situation is quite worse in the east of the country, especially in the new province of UMUTARA where there are virtually no natural water sources and where it is therefore necessary for women and children to walk several kilometers before reaching the nearest water point.

Rwanda possesses abundant water resources. However, the distribution of drinkable water is still inadequate and the rate of access in the country is estimated at 54% but does not exceed 44% in the rural areas. Regarding the

sanitation, even though over 80% of the country's population has access to latrines, only 8% of these meet hygienic standards.

The non-availability of drinking water has two main negative impacts on the community such as : (i) the time spent in fetching water which is lost in income-generating activities and particularly the schooling of girls and (ii) the diseases caused by use of improper water with various consequences on health and social conditions of the population.

Socio- political context:

The Government of Rwanda implemented a reform programs which will lead to a strong and sustainable economic growth, to the creation of new jobs and to the improvement of the social conditions of its population.

In addition, social and political reform programs, which aimed at that improving the governance and at giving more responsibility to the population through a decentralization and democratization process, were implemented.

The implementation and the application of the decentralization favour this policy through operational community structures such as the CDCs. The creation of the Commun Development Fund is an example of a favoured framework that lead to the financing of beneficiaries.

Applied to the WSSS sector, this participatory approach will allow i) to improve the level of community participation in rural infrastructures planification and management ii) to entrust the management of WSSS projects to CDCs and to build master for the private sector or for the users themselves, iii) to entrust the management of the installations to the users themselves, iv) to avoid the subsidy of investments which are requested by communities; and v) to institute a transparent, fair and decentralized financing mechanisms.

(iii) Regional and International Context

Rwanda shares two water catchments (Nile and Congo) with neighboring countries: Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda for River Nile and the Democratic Republic of Congo for the Congo Basin.

Rwanda, via the Akagera River, is the major source of the Nile. Indeed, the Akagera River is the most important tributary of Lake Victoria from which flows the River Nile. Regarding the Congo Basin, Rwanda contributes largely to feed Kivu Lake and Rusizi River. Rwanda must therefore collaborate with the neighboring countries of the Nile Basin for a common development of the basin's management.

Because of the pertinent activities which take place in those basins, Rwanda has become a member of organizations whose objectives are to contribute to the regional cooperation development with neighboring countries in order to find possible solutions such as economic development, environmental protection, etc...

Regarding the international cooperation, Rwanda is a member of organisms such as NEPAD, AMCAW, NBI, EAC, etc...

2 GENERAL ORIENTATIONS

(i) 2020 Vision

- Access of all to drinking water and sanitation
- Integrated and sustainable water resources management with focus on secured satisfactory water needs
- Water collection, conservation and utilization for an economic development.

(ii) Poverty Reduction Strategy

The sustainable improvement of the water and sanitation sector is essential and offers many advantages:

- (i) positive impact on maternal and children's health;
- (ii) improvement and enrolment of schooling specially for girls;
- (iii) reduction of time passed in fetching water by women ;
- (iv) reduction of health expense services both for the households and for the Government, particularly for the diseases related to water like diarrhea ;
- (v) increase of productivity because of better health.

The main objectives of the sector are to: improve the water supply systems; optimize use of water in agricultural sector, energy production and transport; encourage the management of water supply infrastructure by communities; increase the access to the sanitation services; and reinforce the capacity building at all levels (central and district).

(iii) National Investment Strategy

The national investment strategy encourages studies of the conditions of involvement of the private sector and implementation of water supply systems in rural and urban areas at affordable costs for the consumers. The state will

continue to play its leading role in the development of the water sector through the provision of the necessary infrastructure.

The role of the private sector, which is solicited, was limited to the construction and furniture of the construction material for public tender. The policy will encourage the private participation in the mobilization of investments, the development and management of drinking water and sanitation infrastructures. The promotional mechanisms will be put into place. Local financing initiatives of activities in rural areas will be sustained.

(iv) 7- year Government Program

During the 7- year government program, the following sector-based reforms will be pursued:

Institutional aspects

A coordination framework of the sector that defines the role of the principal partners will be undertaken in order to avoid the dissipation of efforts. Legal and regulation instruments will delimit the responsibility of each partner.

Decentralization

For the water and sanitation sector, the existing implementation mechanisms will be reinforced and enabled to establish the decentralization at the lowest appropriate community level.

Participatory Approach

The sectoral policy of water and sanitation will develop participatory approach where the population and the stakeholders will play an active role in the planning and the execution of all activities related to the utilization and the conservation of water.

Program Approach

The new policy stresses on a program approach which takes into account all sector activities formerly devoted to projects. The advantages of this program approach lie in the coherence of the activities and in the respect of national priorities that all partners agreed on. Also, this program approach enables the focus of the major part of the investments on sustainable actions that greatly improve the sectoral indicators of the poverty reduction.

Reinforcement of the Roles of women and children

The particular situation that emerged after the war and the genocide makes the women's social group quite crucial and very vulnerable. In addition to their traditional responsibilities like fetching water for domestic use, women now acquired a new responsibility as household chiefs. This role of fetching water is shared by the infants who, at school age, waste a lot of time performing these activities instead of attending school. Thus, each project that increases the access to drinking water and sanitation services should therefore take into account the concerns of these two groups.

Participation of the Private sector

The policy will encourage the private participation for the mobilization of investments and the development and management of drinking water and sanitation infrastructures. The promotional mechanisms will be put into place. Local financing initiatives of activities in rural areas will be sustained.

Capacity building

Capacity building programs will be implemented at all levels. These programs will include the development of technical and human capacities such as training, information exchange, technology transfer, active participation in international fora, equipment acquisition and other domains in order to ensure efficient sanitation and water resources management functions.

Integrated Management by watershed

Within the decentralization, this system favors the development and the coordinated management of water and related resources. It will be adopted and undertaken within the watershed. The principles of this policy of decentralization serve as proposed guidelines for necessary institutional aspects for the implementation of this integrated management by watershed.

Monitoring and Assessment

The monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the sectorial water and sanitation policy is an important stage that will allow better resource management and to ensure that objectives, strategies and actions will attain the expected results.

And this being, the monitoring and assessment organs will be put into place at all levels (beneficiaries, decentralized entities and central structures).

(v) International Development Goals

During the last thirteen years, consecutive world summits and conferences on population development have established framework actions based on common goals and objectives:

- (i) United Nations Conference on human environment held in Stockholm;
- (ii) Rio de Janeiro conference (1972) which decided on action plans called « Agenda 21 »;
- (iii) World summit on sustainable development held in Johannesburg;
- (iv) and the NEPAD summits

o Agenda 21

The United Nations Conference on environment and development held in Brazil had an objective to establish a new world balance of partnership in order to create new levels of cooperation between countries in key sectors.

Concerning water, strong interest was focused on the development and on the integrated water resources management, water resources protection, water and sustainable development in towns and rural areas, and impacts of climate changes on water resources.

o Millenium development Goals

For water and sanitation, the United Nations has adopted, for this millenium, the following action plans:

- o Reduce the population margin that has no sustainable access to drinking water by 2015 ;
- o Develop water resources management frameworks ;
- o Increase the production benefits by water in irrigation systems for food security, suppression of the pressure on environment, promotion of the possibility to use water in other productive sectors ;
- o Safeguard human lives by ensuring acceptable drinking water quality ;
- o Mobilize the financing of national resources investment needs in the water sector ;
- o Reinforce the institutions and techniques of the country in order to implement integrated water resources management policies ;
- o Protect the water surface quality and groundwater as well as the aquatic ecosystems and coastal regions.

Rwanda commits itself to reducing by half the percentage of the population that has no sustainable access to drinking water supply and sanitation by 2015.

- **The world Summit on Sustainable Development**

The Johannesburg World Summit consolidated the content of agenda 21 and convened on necessary actions for all countries in the implementation of the MDGs objectives.

Concerning access to base drinking water and sanitation services which are the fundamental indicator for poverty reduction, the summit introduced a new concept to reduce by half the number of people without improved access to sanitation services by 2015.

- **The New Partnership for Africa's Development**

The new Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is a vision and strategic framework for Africa's renewal whose main objectives as the regards the sector are; (i) to eradicate the poverty; (ii) and to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development

3 SECTOR PRESENTATION

3.1 Statement of the sector problem

a) Insufficient infrastructure

Despite all the efforts, the rate of water supply (54%) is still below the desired threshold.

Daily consumption per capita in rural areas is put at 8.15 liters, a figure by far less than the consumption standard of 20 liters per capita. More than a third of drinking water supply infrastructures have to be rehabilitated.

b) Insufficient expertise

The water and sanitation sector is characterized by a number of programs and activities whose implementation calls for expertise which is currently not available in the country. To attain the planned performance, concerned services depend on foreign experts whose services are very expensive. This situation is much more worrisome, particularly at local administrations level which are required to implement the government policy.

c) Insufficient data on the actual situation of the sector

To date, the country's water resources are unknown. The existing database is poor. The little information that exists is scattered and sometimes badly kept. The establishment of an information system on water is therefore essential in order to have a reliable planning and decision making tool.

d) Limited Intervention of the private sector

Up to now, the private sector has not yet shown interest in investing in the establishment of water and sanitation infrastructure. Only two international enterprises are involved in the management of water infrastructure, one in the rural area, and the second has just taken over the management of ELECTROGAZ.

However, there is hope that through the sensitization efforts currently deployed by the central government, private initiative will be stimulated for increased investment in this sector.

e) Decentralization process non achieved

In May 2000, the Government of Rwanda adopted a decentralisation policy and strategy with the objective of giving the population the power to make political, economic, social and technical decisions as well as decisions for the management of public property, mainly with a view to fighting poverty. The implementation of this policy and strategy is under way. In the water and sanitation sector, implementation of decentralisation had started earlier with the introduction of the participatory approach through the Rural Water and Sanitation Project. However, implementation is still dogged by lack of sufficient financial and skilled human resources to have it established firmly at the lowest level, i.e. at the grassroots level.

3.2 Sector Constraints and Opportunities

Today, the major obstacles that face the development of water and sanitation are the following:

- (i) The institutional framework for the coordination of water resources management as well as the mechanisms for the monitoring and assessment is weak.
- (ii) The data regarding the importance of water resources are insufficient and fragmentary. This is the same for the importance of requirements

in drinking water, agriculture, and energy production and in industry. The scattered settlements don't favour the easy access of water to the population. And when the drinking water is available, all of the population have no access to it because of their low purchasing power.

- (iii) The participation of women in water infrastructures is insufficient and the analysis of gender problematic is not systematic
- (iv) The country is not yet equipped with drinking water quality, distribution and sanitation national standards.
- (v) Rain water harvesting techniques uses are not yet mastered and disseminated.
- (vi) Water used in agriculture sector is insignificant, because irrigation is not developed. Likewise in the industrial sector whereby the data uses are unknown and the waste water management inexistant.
- (vii) The water use for electricity production is still very low because it represents only 68% of total needs. But the production capacity exists in order to satisfy the demand which increases with the population growth.
- (viii) Despite the existence of watercourses and transboundary lakes open to navigation, transport and tourism are not implemented as a way to develop the efficient use of water and to fight poverty.
- (ix) The very high population growth rate (3,1%) resulted in a remarkable reduction forest massifs and reforestation for the energy production domestic use.
- (x) The very important erosion of watershed doesn't favour the normal replenishment of groundwater.
- (xi) The industry development and the demographical pressure are the cause of chemical and biological pollution that affects the population life.
- (xii) The funds allocated for the development of the sector are still insufficient and don't meet the requirements.

- (xiii) The human capacities to develop and manage the sanitation and water sector in a satisfactory matter are not yet sufficient in term of quality and quantity.
- (xiv) The mechanisms for the implementation of the decentralisation policy option as a way to achieve easily the development of all the population are not yet defined with regards to water resources development and management.
- (xv) At present, the water and sanitation sector is a prime concern for the government. The private sector and the consumers participate poorly in the investment and the management of water and sanitation infrastructures.
- (xvi) The hygiene and sanitation culture is not yet generalized.
- (xvii) Even if 80% of the population have pit latrines, we observe, nevertheless, that those who respect the hygienic conditions are less
- (xviii) By lack of appropriate infrastructures (collection systems for solid wastes and sewage waters, channeling for rain water, ...), the sanitation conditions remain precarious and bring out a very low coverage rate (< 8%).
- (xix) The sanitation infrastructures costs are very expensive. But public funds allocated for their development are scares.

Potentialities

- Rwanda has a good rainfall and a dense hydrographical network
- Simple Water Supply Systems are managed by associatives. The management of complex systems by local communities is currently under study
- Liberalization of water sector management
- Existence of various laws, regulations and institutions governing water quality and sanitation services
- Existence of various policies (reforestation, forest protection, erosion control and protection of catchments basins, development of marshland)
- Existence of an inventory of appropriate sanitation technologies
- Receptiveness of the population to hygiene and sanitation education

3.3 Principles of the sector policy

The water and sanitation sector-based policy is based on the following principles:

- Each person has right to access to water services
- Water has value and is a social and economic good
- Priority should be awarded to safeguard the satisfaction of the county's water needs
- Men as well as women should equally participate in the water resource protection and management
- Water resource management should be integrated and made watershed
- Water use should be rational and should take into account the environmental concern
- The quality and quantity standards of water should be respected
- The polluters will have to pay for the damage thus created
- The gender perspective should be taken into account at all levels of water management
- The beneficiaries should be responsible of their water and sanitation services
- Each rural water supply must systematically contain a sanitation component
- The utilization of transboundary water resource should be equitable
- All water sector partners should be involved in water resource management

3.4 Sector Vision

- The entire population will have access to clean drinking water and sanitation services;
- The water rainfall collection and retention techniques will be mastered and utilized for agricultural use
- The natural water reservoirs especially forests at high altitudes will be renewed and managed more appropriately
- The water resources will be rationally managed and harmoniously integrated with regards to the national master plan on the space use
- The population will be able to ensure the equitable and sustainable resource management
- The production, protection, distribution and sanitation water infrastructures will be maintained by all users
- Urban and rural areas will be in a healthy acceptable conditions
- All households will have to acquire appropriate practices in hygiene and sanitation
- Each town or development pole needs to acquire waste water and solid waste treatment units

3.5 Sector Mission

To create favourable conditions for fair and sustainable access for the population, men, women and children, to water and sanitation infrastructure and to the development of natural resources

3.6 Sector objectives

(i) General Objective

The overall objective of the sector is to improve the living conditions of the population through optimal use of water resources and access of all to water and sanitation services

(ii) Specific Objectives

- Rational and sustainable management of water resource
- Increased rate of access to drinking water
- Increased rate of access to water of agro-livestock
- Development of sanitation and promotion of hygiene
- Mastery of water for environmental protection
- Increased the use of water for energy production
- Capacity building

IV SECTOR STRATEGY IN BRIEF

The strategies of water and sanitation services are:

- Set up of politic, regulatory and institutional framework favourable to rational water resources management
- Integration of gender to water resources management
- Development of water supply systems and sanitation services
- Development of storage and conservation of water infrastructures for multiple uses (agriculture, energy, environment, tourism...)
- Promotion of river and lacustrian transport

The sector-based strategy, in coherence with the national strategy for poverty reduction and international and regional goals, was developed taking into account the SWAP approach, the good quality policy and the participation of all actors, in particular, all concerned communities in the good development of sector-based strategy and its implementation. The Medium Term Expenditure Framework was used to ensure the coherence between the strategy and available resources within the sector.

Also, the water and sanitation strategy is in complementary with national options such as: (i) labor intensive national policy; (ii) gender aspect; (iii) Information and Communication Technology; (iv) the HIV/AIDS; and (v) environmental concern.

V PROGRAMS OF THE SECTOR

o Water Resources Management Program

The Government of Rwanda has engaged a preparation of strategic investment in the development and protection of the country's water resources which are critical elements in the economic and social developments.

The first phase of this program launched since 2003 comprised of the following elements:

- An Institutional component which will establish the policy basis, the legislative framework and the required institutional arrangements through which the function of water resources management will be undertaken by the government;
- A Technical component which intends in establishing: (i) an information system that enables the institutions in charge of water resources management to have better knowledge, at any time, of the current situation (water quality, quantity available,...) and to assess the critical issues on various sectors of the water use and to prepare the implementation of the pertinent solutions
- A Human resource development component which enabling the assessment of the human resource development and capacity building needs ensures that the water resources management functions are efficiently and well performed at all levels.

The current activities of Nile Basin Initiative strategic action plans and the African Ministerial Conference on Water, which Rwanda is a member, complement the activities proposed in this program.

o Water supply and sanitation program in rural area

In order to achieve the millennium goals and the 2020Vision, the Government of Rwanda launched 15 years water and sanitation program in rural area. This program aims to improve the population rate with access to water, presently at 44%, and increase the sanitation rate, presently at 8%, to 66% in 2010, to 80% in 2015 and 100% in 2020.

The approach used in the program is based on the demand of communities and conforms to the decentralisation policy adopted by the government. This approach leads the participation of the beneficiaries in the definition of WSSS sub-projects, the implementation and the management of the infrastructures through decentralized structures created by the government.

The total estimated cost of the program is USD 925 millions

- **Water Supply System and Sanitation in urban area**

Presently, the investment program is elaborated for the City of Kigali. The other centers are considered as rural centers because of their specificities (housing, economic activities, organization, population,...). The total estimated cost of the program is USD 750 Million for Kigali.

VI INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

The water and sanitation sector is a cross-sectorial domain. Many intervening parties such as state institutions, international organisms, NGOs, civil society and private sector are concerned. Their implication is indispensable particularly in the identification of requirements and programme definition, resources mobilization, execution, monitoring and programme assessments.

Among ministerial institutions, the major partners are: MINECOFIN, MINAGRI, MININFRA, MINISANTE, MINEDUC and MINALOC.

- The different ministries concerned by the water sector participate in an integrated manner in the identification, implementation and monitoring of water and sanitation projects
- The donors should support the government in the implementation of projects, infrastructures management and contribute in the financing
- The private sector should participate in the execution of projects, infrastructures management and the financing of water and sanitation sector
- The civil society and NGOs should support the decentralized entities in the implementation, management, training, ...