Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 178 out of 182 countries listed on the Human Development Index (HDI). Located in West Africa, Mali is land-locked with 57 percent of its area in the Sahara Desert. Access to clean water is difficult due to the country’s uneven geographic distribution of water resources. The climate is unpredictable, with variations between heavy rainfall and extreme drought. Because 80 percent of the population works in agriculture, this variability of precipitation makes subsistence increasingly difficult. Annual per capita income, which ranks as one of the lowest in the world, is $380. This extreme poverty has a direct impact on the population’s sanitation and hygiene practices. Of all deaths in Mali, over 20 percent can be attributed to inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene.

WSS SECTOR OVERVIEW

Mali faces difficult challenges to improving the coverage and performance of its water supply and sanitation (WSS) sector. Although the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target has been met for urban drinking water; Mali has for the most part fallen behind on meeting its MDGs. In particular, Mali’s record of accomplishment in expanding sustainable sanitation coverage is poor. WSS sector data must be considered with caution due to consistently conflicting estimates on coverage.

WSS SECTOR FRAMEWORK

Since the early 1990’s, Mali has managed its water resources through a Water Resources Development Framework, which has decentralized government control of WSS services among approximately 700 administrative districts, or communal councils. Around 19 of these communes are in urban areas including six in Bamako. A private sector company, Energie de Malian SA (EDM), provides WSS service in 16 urban areas, with the remaining areas receiving service from local commune authorities and private sector operators. The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Water (MMEE) has overall responsibility for the WSS sector at the national level. Within MMEE, the Direction Nationale de l’Hydraulique (DNH, National Water (MMEE) has overall responsibility for the WSS sector at the national level. Within MMEE, the Direction Nationale de l’Hydraulique (DNH, National}

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**WATER AVAILABILITY IN MALI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Renewable internal freshwater resources per capita, m³/person/year (2008)</th>
<th>4,722 c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water withdrawals, m³/person/year (2002)</td>
<td>595 c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projected water resources per capita, m³/person/year in 2015</td>
<td>3,894 d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Most recently available data provided.

1 UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). FAO Aquastat Database. “Freshwater resources” refers to estimates of runoff into rivers and recharge of ground water and does not include flows from other countries.
2 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 World Bank WDI Database (population) and FAO Aquastat Database (water resources).
3 World Bank. 2009 World Development Indicators (WDI) Database.

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**POPULATION AND HEALTH STATISTICS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population (2008)</th>
<th>12.7 million a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of population living in urban areas (2008)</td>
<td>32% a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average annual urban/rural population growth rates (1990-2007)</td>
<td>4.6 / 2.1% a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under age 5 mortality rate (2007)</td>
<td>196/1000 live births b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under age 5 mortality rate due to diarrheal disease (2004)</td>
<td>18.0% b</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Most recently available data provided.

a World Bank. 2009 World Development Indicators (WDI) Database.

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3 AfDB. AfDB and Mali, 37 years of Partnership (2007).

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The Water Directorate is tasked with providing executive, regulation, financial, and technical support to communal WSS service providers. The DNH functions primarily through its regional and sub-regional offices.6

In 2005, Mali’s government formed the Agency for Water Supply and Sanitation (AMEPA) to oversee WSS sector project execution. This new agency is tasked with taking over many functions previously held by DNH. AMEPA was designed to simplify and accelerate project implementation procedures while allowing individual municipalities to retain their role as service promoter.7

The Regulatory Commission of Water and Energy (CREE) regulates the urban WSS sector. The CREE is vested with robust regulatory powers that it rarely uses. The CREE consults on projects and is able to participate in WSS sector planning. As a regulator, it is responsible for protecting consumer interests, but it also is responsible for promoting and coordinating private sector participation.

Overlapping roles and responsibilities of key agencies may have slowed improvements in the sanitation sub-sector. Additionally, Mali classifies sanitation primarily as a household responsibility rather than one in which the state plays a constructive role. In 1998, the Dirección Nacional de l’Assainissement et du Contrôle des Nuisances (DNACPN, National Directorate for Sanitation and Environmental Nuisance Control) of the Ministry of Environment (ME) was created to shape national policy for controlling pollution and other environmental problems and to ensure implementation of these policies. The achievement of agency objectives is hampered by a lack of funding.8

THE URBAN SUB-SECTOR

Approximately 30 percent of Mali’s population lives in urban centers. Mali’s urban WSS sector has experienced a significant improvement in access to clean water from 54 percent in 1990 to 81 percent in 2008; a smaller increase was reported for access to improved sanitation, from 36 percent in 1990 to 45 percent in 2008.9

EDM holds a concession contract with the government to provide water services to 16 urban communes. EDM is also required to contribute to new investments in order to catalyze expansion of water service coverage. EDM appears to operate relatively

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9 WHO/UNICEF JMP. Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update.
efficiently compared with other utilities in West Africa.

Sanitation services are slowly improving. Financing for “mini-sewerage systems” is available through the Malian Office of Habitat, which operates under the Ministry of Housing, Lands and Urbanization. Cost recovery remains elusive with mini-sewerage systems only recouping 20 percent of the required revenue to pay for operation and maintenance costs, but to date several urban areas have received or are currently receiving funding for these types of systems. These urban areas include Bankoni, Baco Djicoroni, Djenné, and Timbuktu.

THE RURAL SUB-SECTOR
Access to drinking water has significantly improved in rural areas, increasing by 22 percent since 1990. Sanitation coverage has improved at a slower pace, increasing by only 9 percent since 1990.10 While expanding WSS services to the rural sub-sector is the responsibility of the DNH and its regional and sub-regional offices, many sub-regional offices are not operational. Providing WSS services in rural areas falls to the communal councils. These councils are responsible for the planning, construction, and operation of water infrastructure within their individual jurisdictions. The DNH supports these operations with technical assistance. Rural areas receive funding for planning and infrastructure projects through the National Agency of Collective Territory Investment (ANICT). However, to receive funding, the communes must put forth a 20 percent match from their own revenues.

Although roles and responsibilities are defined, communal water service providers face many challenges. Cost recovery mechanisms are limited, creating chronic maintenance problems. Very few communes have established maintenance funds in order to retain mechanics for pump servicing and repairs, and opportunities to build the capacity of communes to operate and maintain their systems exist. Additionally, greater market development could enhance Mali’s private sector participation in operation and maintenance functions.

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10 WHO/UNICEF JMP. Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2010 Update.
**DONOR INVOLVEMENT**

Approximately 85 percent of Mali’s water sector investments come from bi-lateral or multi-lateral donors. An inter-ministerial water and sanitation committee heads sector coordination and project fund dispersal. The DNH serves in the capacity of technical adviser while the water resources management commission and the environment commission often hold additional joint monthly meetings. The sector hosts more than 20 bilateral and multi-lateral technical and financial partners. Chief among these organizations are the African Development Bank, Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA), France, Germany, and the World Bank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DONOR</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
<th>CONTACT INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFD (French Development Agency)</td>
<td>Semi-urban WSS infrastructure development and financing.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African Development Bank (AIDB)</td>
<td>Rural WSS infrastructure development; Capacity building at commune level to operate and manage small water and sanitation systems.</td>
<td>Moulay Lahcen ENNAHLI <a href="mailto:MLFO@afdb.org">MLFO@afdb.org</a> Tel: 223-222-28-85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DANIDA</td>
<td>National WSS reforms and institutional capacity building and national water sector framework development; Local capacity building for decentralized WSS services; Integrated water resource management.</td>
<td>Norbert Hagen <a href="mailto:norbert.hagen@gtz.de">norbert.hagen@gtz.de</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GTZ/KFW</td>
<td>Integrated water resources management capacity building. Water scarcity awareness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Aid</td>
<td>Helped with access to water and sanitation</td>
<td>Mr. McDonald Benjamin Acting Country Director <a href="mailto:mbenjamin1@worldbank.org">mbenjamin1@worldbank.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raised the profile of the water and sanitation sector through influencing national policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Built capacity of local government capacity building</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Set up centers selling spare parts so that local communities can repair their own water and sanitation facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Contact information may change frequently and therefore be different from what is noted above.

This 2009 Water and Sanitation Profile was updated from the 2008 Water and Sanitation Profile under the Water Tracking, Estimating and Reporting Support (WaTERS) program implemented by Mendez England & Associates, Inc. WaTERS is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and provides technical support to the USAID Water Team and affiliated stakeholders.


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