



Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 13-Feb-2019 | Report No: PIDISDSC25021

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Mauritania	Project ID P167328	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Mauritania Water and Sanitation Sectoral Project (P167328)
Region AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Sep 17, 2019	Estimated Board Date Dec 30, 2019	Practice Area (Lead) Water
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministere de l'Hydraulique et de l'Assainissement	Implementing Agency Ministere de l'Hydraulique et de l'Assainissement	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

Increasing access to water and sanitation services in selected rural areas and small towns, as well as build the institutional capacities of Mauritania's water and sanitation sector

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**SUMMARY**

Total Project Cost	40.00
Total Financing	40.00
of which IBRD/IDA	40.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	40.00
IDA Grant	40.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification
Moderate

Concept Review Decision
Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue



Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **A desert country, with a fast growing, increasingly urban population.** Mauritania is a desert country, with as little as 0.5% of its land considered arable. Its population of 4 million (2017) grows at 2.8 percent per annum. Nomadism, once prevalent, is all but disappearing, with half of the country's population made up of former nomads who have settled in recent decades. The urban share of the population (60% in 2016) is growing fast, as Mauritania features the second most rapid urbanization rate in Africa.
2. **Mauritania has experienced sustained growth in the past two decades.** The economy is heavily reliant on mining (iron, copper, gold...), oil and fishing, its primary exports, while agricultural and pastoral potentials remain under exploited. Despite exogenous shocks related to commodity markets, growth averaged 4.5 percent over the 2001-2015 period, while inflation remained low (1.5 percent). Helped by a prudent fiscal policy, a gradual recovery of mineral prices, and improved performance in the fisheries, livestock, manufacturing, and commerce sectors, Mauritania has emerged from the latest fall in commodity prices, and real GDP growth is recovering to 3.5% percent in 2017 from 2% in 2016. Per capita GDP reached US \$ 1,120 in 2016, placing the country at the bottom of the middle-income country (MIC) category. The informal economy accounts for 40 per cent of GDP and employs about 86 percent of the working-age population.
3. **There was a sharp decline in the poverty headcount between 2008 and 2014**—from 44.5 % to 33% of the country's population. Changes in welfare have been pro-poor, and inequality, as measured by the Gini index, also decreased from 35.3 in 2008 to 31.9 in 2014. The incidence of poverty remains particularly high in rural areas, where it exceeds 44%. Poverty also remains high in the capital, Nouakchott, as a result of internal migration effects. Although a MIC, Mauritania's human development index (HDI) relegates it to 156th rank among of 188 countries. Only 55 percent of children aged 6 to 11 are enrolled in primary school, one third of households live in precarious housing, and 38% of people use electricity as a source of lighting. Around 2150 Mauritians, including 1700 children under the age of 5 die each year from diarrheal disease. WHO estimates that nearly 90% of these deaths are directly attributed to the poor quality of water, sanitation and lack of hygiene.
4. **More sustainable infrastructure, economic diversification and job creation are needed, to make Mauritania's economy more resilient to drought and other forces impacting the country.** Mauritania benefits from abundant, diversified mineral wealth, but the weak management of extractive rents limits the optimal and pro-poor use of revenue. Similarly, the failure to effectively harness Mauritania's water resources and other natural endowments in livestock and fisheries constrains diversification and employment. Excessively rapid urbanization hinders the emergence of productive and inclusive urban centers. In this regard, the heavy flow of drought-affected rural and nomadic populations into cities exacerbates planning and service provision challenges. Urban centers are characterized by informality, poor infrastructure, poor service coverage, self-employment, and weak human capital, and do not create an enabling environment for higher-productivity services nor attract private investment.



Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **Mauritania is defined by very scarce and poorly documented water resources.** Mauritania's water resources are far from insignificant, with an average of 2,800 m³ / inhabitant / year in 2014, but they are very unequally distributed and difficult to mobilize, effectively resulting in extreme scarcity. Such resources comprise:
- Surface water (97 percent of renewable resources) concentrated along the southern border in the Senegal River, the only sustainable river in the country, and in countless ephemeral wadis.
 - Groundwater (3 percent of renewable resources), mostly in fracture aquifers with low yields and high drilling failure rates, and, in some parts of the country, in more productive continuous porous aquifers.
- The lack of good water resources knowledge, planning and management affects the sustainability of current withdrawals and impairs the development of new resources. As Mauritania is located in one of the regions most affected by climate change, temperature increase and rainfall variability are certain to accelerate the depletion and degradation of water resources. In this highly stressed context, the country's fundamental water challenge is the lack of knowledge and policies for the best management, conservation and protection of scarce resources.
6. **The WASH service access deficit.** Mauritania features some of the lowest water supply, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) service access indicators in West Africa. Over the last two decades, the country has supported major investments in drinking water supply and, to a lesser extent, sanitation, but has failed to achieve the goals set out in its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) for the period 2001-2015 and for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The service deficit, as measured by accepted indicators¹, is dire in both urban and rural areas:
- a. **Water supply:** As of 2015, only 58 percent of the urban population and 57 percent of the rural population had access to an improved source of drinking water, and overall, only 33 percent of the population had access to water on the premises through piped connections. In terms of equity, 82.3 percent of the richest households (5th quintile) have access to drinking water, compared to only 39.3 percent of the poorest households (1st quintile). Water supply security and continuity is an issue in many cities and communities which are considered to have service. Since 2014 however, Nouakchott's water supply security has benefited from a radical improvement thanks to the Aftout-Essahili water transfer project from the Senegal River.
 - b. **Sanitation:** The development of sanitation lags further behind water supply service. In 2015, 58 percent of the urban population, and 14 percent of the rural population had access to an improved form of sanitation. Open defecation is prevalent at 35 percent, especially in rural areas, where it is reportedly practiced by 69 percent of the population. Such official indicators do not however seem to capture promising more recent Community-Led Total Sanitation gains in rural areas (see below). Coverage by sewer networks is the exception, limited to 4 percent of Nouakchott's population. In Nouakchott, as elsewhere, there are yet no regulated entities responsible for the collection and treatment of wastewater or fecal sludge, which are disposed in the environment or in the ocean. A new storm water management system is being built in the capital.
7. **GOM's sanitation strategy and CLTS momentum.** Mauritania's National Sanitation Policy (PNA) and National Sanitation Strategy (SNA) were developed in 2011, upholding principles of: (i) demand-based approach, (ii) bridge geographical inequities, realistic technologies, serve public areas, incorporate sanitation and hygiene

1 Unicef/WHO, Joint Monitoring Program, 2015 – Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water.



components in all water supply projects, especially through CLTS. To date, CLTS programmes have already reached 7,235 rural localities, including some 4,000 villages with an overall population of roughly 1.2 million. Out of this number, 3,633 localities have since been declared open defecation free (ODF). Through CLTS, an estimated 150,000 latrines were self-constructed, for a beneficiary investment of about MRU 50 million (\$US 1.4million). It is estimated that if properly sustained and expanded, CLTS policies may help GOM meet SDG 6.2 in rural areas.

8. **The Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity (SCAPP) is GOM’s roadmap to pursue the 2030 sustainable development goals.** It is aligned with the SDGs, aiming at “universal access to water and sanitation”. Such WASH goals are enshrined in the National Strategy for Sustainable Access to Water and Sanitation (SNADEA). The strategy crafted from a comprehensive situational analysis of the sector rests on 5 pillars:
 - Pillar 1: Identify, monitor and protect water sources
 - Pillar 2: Improve access to potable water
 - Pillar 3: Improve access to water for farming and livestock production
 - Pillar 4: Improve access to sanitation and hygiene
 - Pillar 5: Improve sector governance
9. **A review of public expenditures was conducted in the water sector for the period 2006-2016.** Conducted by WB in partnership with the Mauritania Center for Policy Analysis (CMAP), the public expenditure review (PER) shows that water and sanitation expenditures account for roughly 3% in the national budget, which is significant. Investments in the sector stood at MRU 26.35 billion (approximately USD 740 million) during the period, representing a yearly average of 2.4 billion yearly (USD 67 million). Investments were very heavily focused on urban water needs, with 67% of funds coming from external financing (primarily Arab lenders) and 33% from the national budget. Room exists for better efficiency and sustainability of such capital expenditures, especially as the coverage gains are slow, and public operator performance remains poor.
10. **The Ministry of Waterworks and Sanitation (MHA²) is responsible for water policy, spanning the management of water resources, as well as water supply and sanitation services.** MHA is structured into operational directorates and also supervises several operating companies including, the National Water Corporation (SNDE³) and the National Rural Water Agency (ONSER⁴) respectively responsible for urban and rural water supply, the National Water Resources Center (CNRE) in charge of water resource planning and monitoring, the National Drilling Corporation (SNFP) responsible for borehole drilling and the National Sanitation Agency (ONAS) responsible for urban sanitation. MHA has been hampered by leadership discontinuities, with minister longevities averaging 10 months over the past 3 years. Other ministries also have water-related prerogatives, such Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment, with opportunities for better inter-ministerial coordination.
11. **A key WSS sector reform, initiated with WB support in the early 2000’s, was only partially enacted, and calls for reactivation and updating.** The reform, embedded in the 2005 Water Code (Law No. 2005 - 030 of February 2nd, 2005) established the principle of delegation of WSS services by local governments to autonomous professional operators, including private firms. The law also extended the mandate of the Multisector Regulatory Authority (ARE) to the water sector, to regulate service, protect consumer interests and oversee of delegation contracts. Implementation of the law suffered from the political and institutional instability between 2005 and 2009, and has to date only marginally replaced GOM’s engagement in service operations. Limited progress has been made in transferring service responsibilities from GOM’s national operators SNDE or ONSER to private contractors

2 Ministère de l’Hydraulique et de l’Assainissement

3 Société Nationale des Eaux

4 Office National du Service d’Eau Rural



accountable to local governments and ARE. Only 11 public water service delegation contracts are currently under implementation to serve about 70 rural communities (ARE 2015 Report), with satisfactory results and performance gains over prior ONSER operations. Not a single urban community has yet benefited from a service delegation contract, and SNDE's low performing monopoly remains untouched across Nouakchott, provincial capitals, intermediate cities and small towns.

12. **Established in 2001, SNDE is a state-owned enterprise mandated to produce, transmit, distribute and sell water in urban areas.** Its operations span 46 cities and towns above 5000 inhabitants. Nouakchott accounts for 45% of its customers and 66% of its billed water volume. SNDE also operates the Aftout-Essahili water transfer system supplying Nouakchott from the River Senegal since 2014 (150,000 m³/day). While Nouakchott service performance is SNDE's core challenge, questions are allowed as to SNDE's capacity to maintain the capital's new production assets and rehabilitate its leaking distribution networks. On the financial front, SNDE suffers chronic losses since 2009, due to inefficient technical and commercial operations, included inflated structure costs. With a priority focus on implementing investment programs with no performance strings attached, the company also faces limited incentives for a turnaround. SNDE's performance reform is one of the key challenges in the sector, but not yet a resolute focus of GOG policy. GOM is assessing options to regulate SNDE under a multi-year performance-contract, with clarification of responsibilities and accountabilities towards local governments.
13. **Created in 2010 after the reform, ONSER remains the main rural service operator.** ONSER was established to replace a pre-existing agency and respond to day-to-day operation and maintenance needs, on an ad-hoc basis, without structured objectives, planning and budgeting, and mixing asset ownership, operator and construction roles, with very limited resources. ONSER remains overstaffed yet lacks qualified agents, and its tariffs vary by village, yet are disconnected from cost-recovery. About 40% of its operating budget is covered by subsidies. Although the law provides that centers with more than 500 inhabitants must have their water service delegated to a competitive private provider, to date, only 70 centers benefit from such a solution. ONSER is however enacting a new strategy to scale-up and accelerate the delegation process, under ARE's well tested delegation framework. MHA commissioned a 2030 strategy for improving access to WASH services in rural and semi-urban areas, through sustainable resource management. The study assessed that there remain 2860 unserved rural communities of more than 150 inhabitants, the majority of which are concentrated in the Gorgol, Assaba, Guidimaka, Hodh el Chergui and Hodh el Gharbi provinces.
14. **Arab lending agencies are the key WSS investment financing partners, with limited emphasis however on promoting reforms.** Such key lenders include the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD), the Islamic Development Bank (IDB), the Saudi Development Fund (SDF) and the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. The volume of their urban-focused lending tends to dwarf that of other donors such as African Development Bank (AfDB), Agence Française de Développement (AFD), European Union (EU) and JICA, and to dilute their effectiveness in supporting institutional reforms and performance improvements. Meanwhile, AfDB recently financed two major drinking water and sanitation projects (PAEPA and PNISER) in the south of the country. AFD and EU are equally engaged in this area (AEPA 5 Wilayas and contribution to Aftout Echergui projects). Finally, as a financier of the maiden CLTS campaigns, UNICEF continues to provide technical and financial support to MHA in project delivery, including in the eastern provinces (Hodhs).
15. **The World Bank's reengagement in Mauritania's water sector.** Since 2005, WB's support to Mauritania's water sector was limited to irrigation investments through a regional project (PGIRE, PGIRE2). In 2016, GOM and WB agreed to explore opportunities for a partnership renewal in water. A Water Sector Engagement Note was developed, for an update on sector status and needs, as well as identification of potential priority areas for



technical and financial cooperation. A Water PER was also subsequently conducted to better understand opportunities for improving expenditure efficiency in the sector. The tasks supported a welcome renewal in policy dialogue, leading to the prioritization of the following sector-wide cooperation objectives:

- Strengthening of WRM knowledge and capacities, with particular focus on groundwater.
- Developing access to WASH services in rural areas
- Supporting institutional governance and capacity building, towards improving sector performance, with particular focus on urban water supply needs.

Relationship to CPF

16. **The proposed Water and Sanitation Sectoral Project (WSSP) contributes to the 2018-2023 Country Partnership Framework (CPF) goals.** Adopted in July 2018, the CPF identifies how improving access to water and sanitation services in selected rural areas and small towns of Mauritania will help to achieve Goal 1.3 of its Pillar No. 1, i.e. "Promoting economic transition for diversified and resilient growth". As requested by GOM, the project is consistent with GOM's SCAPP and SNADEA.
17. **The Project aims to align with the spatial convergence approach sought to promote the growth of intermediate urban poles as part of decentralization reform in Mauritania.** Options for geographical convergence of WSSP interventions with WB's upcoming decentralization/urban development project and rural power supply project, are being identified. Such convergence will focus on the south of the country, in particular in the three wilayas of the "Poverty Triangle (Assaba, Gorgol, Guidimakha) and in the migration stressed eastern Hodhs (Hodh el Chergui, Hodh el Gharbi).
18. **Aligned with the twin goals of reducing extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity,** the aim of this spatial approach is to focus WB funded investments in or around intermediate towns with proven economic development potential, as retained by the government for introduction of decentralization measures. The approach is currently being assessed with Mauritanian authorities, including the identification of around 6 intermediate towns to be targeted by the decentralization/urban development project.
19. **Principles for targeting WSSP interventions were agreed at a WB-GOM consultative workshop on November 19th, 2018.** The WSSP adopts a sectoral ambition, aimed at focusing the value-added of WB technical and financial support on critical sector challenges. WSSP is thus primarily structured around:
 - The acceleration of access to water and sanitation service in (i) rural areas and small towns in Assaba, Gorgol and Guidimakha, preferably surrounding intermediary cities targeted by the urban development project, as well as (ii) targeted refugee hosting communities and camps in the eastern "Hodhs".
 - As feasible within budget constraints, WSSP will also consider highly specific investment options to improve urban water supply in selected intermediate towns, consistent with promoting the development of economic urban poles, and contingent on GOM's commitment to improving the sustainability of SNDE's operations and investments at central and local levels.
 - Specific technical assistance and capacity building tasks will target the strengthening of CNRE's water resources monitoring, planning and management capacities, as well as support to GOM/MHA's reform initiatives to improve sector governance and SNDE performance.
20. **The project is aligned with the Maximizing Finance for Development (MFD) approach, which would typically lead to increased sustainable private sector solutions and save scarce public resources in the case of this operation.** In fact, in targeted rural areas and small towns, the Project will build, expand or rehabilitate drinking water supply



systems whether directly or indirectly operated by ONSER, or in some instance operated by urban operator SNDE. The operation and maintenance of such rural and small-town water supply facilities will be systematically transferred to local private operators, under the existing PPP framework regulated by ARE. Accordingly, by implementing PPPs in small towns under SNDE responsibility, WSSP may help MHA introduce the first service delegation contracts in SNDE's urban water supply domain.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Increasing access to water and sanitation services in selected rural areas and small towns, as well as build the institutional capacities of Mauritania's water and sanitation sector

Key Results (From PCN)

21. **The following indicators will be used to assess project performance:**

- Number of persons with access to safe drinking water
- Number of persons with access to improved sanitation facilities
- Number of children educated on hygiene
- Number of schools with latrines equipped with handwashing facilities
- Number of piezometers/gauging stations monitored by CNRE to provide data on a regular basis.

22. **The number of expected beneficiaries is yet to be assessed through feasibility studies** but is expected to be of about 100,000 for drinking water, and approximately 70,000 for sanitation.

D. Concept Description

23. **The objective of the project would be achieved with the following:**

- (i) construction or rehabilitation of drinking water supply systems in targeted rural areas and small towns, including potential improvements to water supply conditions in neighboring intermediate towns, and including involvement of PPP;
- (ii) Supporting a large-scale Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) campaign in rural areas and small towns to bring about an open defecation free (ODF) community, conduct hygiene education and build public latrines;
- (iii) Targeted WSS services to fragile, refugee communities; and,
- (iv) Provision of technical assistance and capacity building to sector institutions, with focus on water resources management and on improving sector governance and efficiency. Governance technical assistance is expected to focus on the institutional reform of public operators, and support for strengthening the enabling environment to allow for greater private sector participation to allow for greater efficiencies and better management of rural water supply facilities.

24. **By addressing deficits in access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene deficits, in coordination with public health systems and interventions (such as in particular public health monitoring and nutrition programs with child**



focus) the project design will seek to enhance its contribution to human capital outcomes and alleviate malnutrition and stunting prevalence.

- 25. **Appropriate and innovative technologies will be incorporated.** Provisions have been made for the investment components of the project, including solar or hybrid groundwater pumping equipment and simplified distribution systems (with the use of relevant innovative technologies) combined with improved public hygiene and sanitation facilities (in schools, health institutions, markets...). Based on on-going country experiences, the CLTS campaign is expected to effectively stimulate the construction of family latrines (self-financing/self-construction) by households.

Project activities are broken down into four components:

Component 1: Sustainable improvement of access to drinking water and sanitation (US \$ 22 million)

- 26. **The aim of this component will be to consolidate and build** on the results achieved by the Government of Mauritania with support from its development partners in delivering access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the target regions, including Refugee area located in Hodh El Chargui.
- 27. **The Directorate of Water (DH) is currently working on drinking water master plan (SDH)** for the Gorgol, Guidimakha and Assaba wilayas, as well as the 2 eastern Hodhs where service access deficits are the largest. The exercise has already been completed for Gorgol, Guidimakha and Assaba and the DH currently has a comprehensive outlook of investment needs. For the 2 other wilayas (Hodhs), the SDHAs will be ready in the coming months and may therefore help the MHA to effectively program its investments in the years ahead. They will also be used to prepare this Project (feasibility study which must be ready before the Board approval with bidding document for some activities also ready).
- 28. **As an example drawn from DH data,** the number of localities with more than 300 inhabitants and with no access to safe drinking water is as follows:

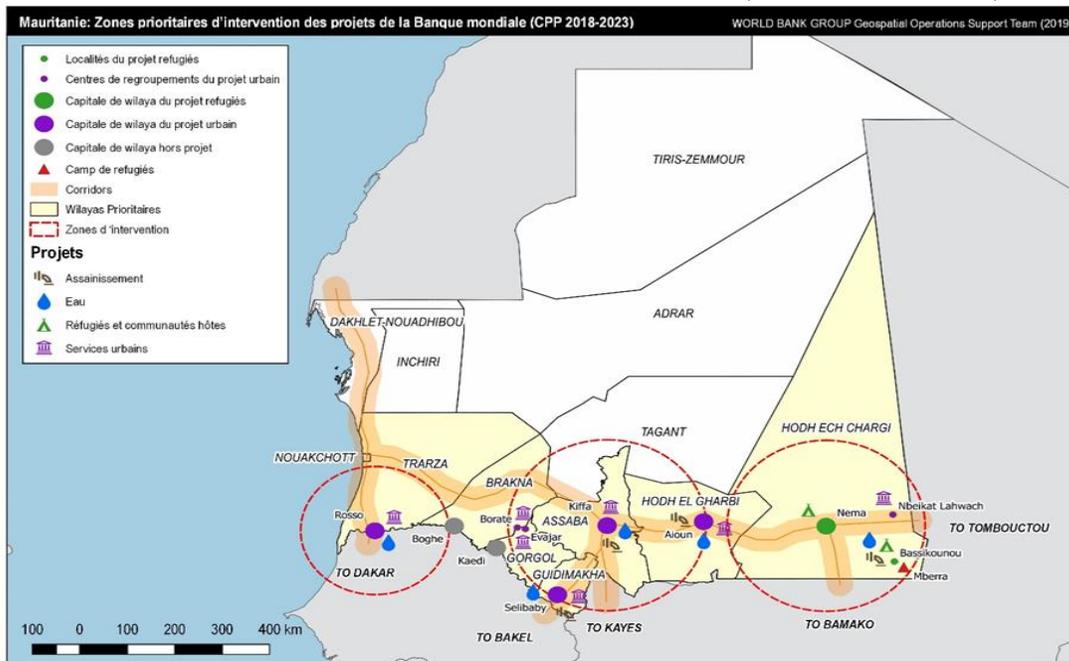
	Gorgol	Guidimakha	Assaba	Hodh El Gharbi	Hodh El Chargui	Total
Number of unserved localities	159	138	125	35	44	501
Population	94,697	97,138	60,754	30 971	46 102	329 662

- 29. **The Project feasibility study will integrate and update such data, with findings to be used for adjusting the SDHAs.** Ultimately, the localities will be chosen in the priority rural areas, and in keeping with the spatial convergence sought with other WB-funded projects, based on criteria to be determined in consultation with the MHA. The feasibility study will integrate climate resilience considerations both in the selection of beneficiary communities and in the design of technical solutions.
- 30. **In targeted rural areas and small towns, the Project will build, expand or rehabilitate drinking water supply systems whether directly or indirectly operated by ONSER, or in some instance operated by urban operator SNDE.** The operation and maintenance of such rural and small-town water supply facilities will be systematically transferred to local private operators, under the existing PPP framework regulated by ARE(or CCPPP). This will advance sector



compliance with the partially enacted 2005 Water Law and its provisions to delegate the operation water supply systems to private operators accountable to local governments. While such outsourcing is already a proven practice for 70 ONSER rural and small-town systems, it would be a strategically meaningful first PPP experience for small town systems owned and operated by SNDE. Also, the selected areas supported by the Project could become a model for a scaled-up intervention at a later stage such as an incubator for a bigger project funded by the Bank in middle/long term.

31. Under this component 1, in line with the SNA's guidelines and based on the needs expressed by the DA, the project will equally contribute to improving collective sanitation by financing the construction of public latrines in schools, health centers, markets, bus stations, etc. The management of these infrastructure will be agreed upstream with Ministries in charge of each sector such a recruitment of employees who would take care during the O&M cycle so ensuring its sustainability.
32. The DA has estimated the public latrine to be met under the project at roughly 300 blocks at three positions. It would be appropriate to look carefully into the availability of water (handwashing facilities and cleaning of toilets) in projects currently under implementation.
33. Under the spatial convergence approach, selected investments for strengthening of water supply conditions in the larger intermediate towns will also be considered on a case specific basis, in keeping with budget constraints and conditioned on clear commitments by GOM and SNDE to engage in relevant reforms and programs towards improved efficiency, maintenance and sustainability in urban water supply operations. Current sector and market conditions are not deemed to favor the pursuit of PPPs for the delegation of SNDE's water supply operations in intermediate towns. As an indication, the probable areas that will be affected by the spatial synergy approach between the water and sanitation sector and the other sectors are presented on the map below.





Component 2: (Refugees Area) Sustainable improvement of access to drinking water and sanitation in the Hodh Echargui (US \$ 10 million)

34. **Serving targeted refugee communities**, the project will contribute to fill a part of gap in terms of water and sanitation access to complete a national program targeting Hodh Echargui Wilaya mainly in localities where Refugees and host communities are located (c.f. map above). A similar approach as described in Component 1 will be used.
35. **As an example, drawn from MHA data, the express needs in terms of safe drinking water and sanitation in Hod Echargui is as follows:** (i) 44 localities with more than 300 inhabitants underserved which represent 46102 inhabitants without access to safe water, (ii) 250 target villages with 280 estimated average population per village and represent 42000 inhabitants without access to sanitation facilities.

Component 3: Project Coordination and Institutional Support and Capacity Building (US \$ 8 million)

36. **Under this component, the project will support strategic institutional strengthening priorities in the water sector.** Priorities screened as part of the Sector Engagement Note process and through the Water Sector PER recommendation are confirmed to include:
- Rebuilding CNRE knowledge and capacities for effective planning, monitoring, management and development of scarce water resources at the national scale. This strategic need particularly focuses on groundwater resources. The tasks may include (i) the design an enabling institutional framework to develop CNRE's activities; (ii) support (human, technical and financial) capacity building for the center; and (iii) improve identification, monitoring and protection of (surface and ground) water resources;
 - Supporting selected studies and initiatives, including institutional diagnostics, aimed at improving governance, efficiency and capacities in the sector, and specifically addressing the performance, sustainability and accountability challenges of national operators ONSER and SNDE. In the case of SNDE, such support may help implement a multi-year "Contrat-Programme" ruling the mutually agreed objectives and obligations of the state and of the operator.
 - Supporting the necessary further expansion of private sector engagement in the sector, with: (i) relevant updates to the Water Code and adoption of missing bylaws; (ii) streamlining and expansion of public water service delegation requirements; and (iii) strengthening of ARE regulatory capacities.
 - Supporting an organizational diagnostic of MHA's central and regional directorates, as well as the strengthening of their capacities (human, technical, financial, data) including a need to explore how to set up a model of an efficient and performant Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
37. **This component will also ensure** (i) strategic and operational planning, fiduciary management (administration and finance, procurement, monitoring, internal audits, etc...) in compliance with the Financing Agreement; (ii) oversight and coordination of project activities.
38. **This will involve** (i) setting up and running a project coordination unit within the Minister's Cabinet; (ii) ensuring the proper functioning of advisory and oversight bodies, consultation platforms, etc.; (iii) ensuring project visibility and knowledge management; (iv) ensuring strict compliance with the Financing Agreement and environmental and social obligations; and (v) ensuring project knowledge management, communications and monitoring-evaluation.



Component 4: Contingency Emergency Response Component (US \$ 0 million)

39. **Should a natural event precipitate a major disaster affecting the livelihoods of people living in the project area, the government may request the World Bank to reallocate project funds to cover some costs of emergency response and recovery.** Detailed operational guidelines for implementing the project Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC) will be prepared and approved by the World Bank as a disbursement condition for this sub-component. All expenditures under the CERC will be in accordance with paragraphs 11, 12, and 13 of Bank Policy: Investment Project Financing. They will be appraised and reviewed to determine if they are acceptable to the World Bank before any disbursement is made. Disbursements will be made against an approved list of goods, works, and services required to support crisis mitigation, response, recovery, and reconstruction.

Other issues of concern to consider:

40. **Gender:** The project will look into the possibility of remedying the gender and/or social inclusion gaps identified in the CPF in line with the World Bank Group's gender strategy. Further discussions on gender gaps, specific actions proposed and performance indicators will be held during the project preparation phase. For actions retained, a logical results chain will be designed starting from baseline analysis, actions, monitoring up to evaluation.
41. **Citizen engagement:** All stakeholders, especially communities and municipalities grouped under the umbrella of Citizen Consultation Committees (CCCs)⁵, will be engaged in identifying priority investments in their respective areas through public consultations and meetings. At each phase of project implementation, a beneficiary satisfaction survey will be conducted to assess improvements in water supply and sanitation services delivered in the target areas. Additionally, relevant indicators will be incorporated into the performance assessment framework and monitored throughout the project. A mechanism will also be set up to handle complaints from residents regarding project activities.
42. **Climate Change/Resilience:** Extreme phenomena arising from global warming of the atmosphere (droughts, heatwaves, intense evaporation, violent rainstorms, etc...) affect the quality and quantity of raw water that serves as a direct source for drinking water and sanitation providers to deliver their services. Moreover, these events may damage the current infrastructure.
43. **According to the latest report of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Mauritania is located in one of the six regions of the world that will be most affected by the impacts of global warming.** There is a high risk in Mauritania of general weakening of ecosystems and agricultural potential, reduced water resources, soils and pasture. The anticipation of climate change on the basis of the IPCC scenarios adapted to Mauritania shows a sharp rise in temperatures ranging from about 2 ° C in Nouadhibou to over 3.5 ° C in the east of the country, and up to 4.5 ° C in the south of the wilayas of Assaba and Guidimakha.
44. **With regard to rainfall, the climate scenarios for the 2050 horizon predict a decrease in rainfall of between 17 and 20% compared to the 1961-1990 reference normal, which should be put into perspective by taking into account the rise in certainly limited and non-homogeneous rainfall observed between 1990 and 2008.** The reduction in rainfall associated with rising temperatures is contributing to reduced pasture area and increased demand for

⁵ The CCC shall be established by Mayor's decree for a maximum period of 5 years and reported to the supervisory authority pursuant to the requirement on consultations prior to launching the municipal development process.



drinking water and pastoral water, resulting in increased pressure on water resources and rural infrastructure where a negative economic impact could be result.

- 45. The project will endeavour to alleviate these risks and build climate change adaptation capacities by supporting the Government of Mauritania’s efforts to enhance its knowledge, integrated management and conservation of resources on the one hand, while promoting the construction of appropriate infrastructure on the other hand.

Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	TBD
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Environmental and social risks and impacts include the following: sustainability of groundwater resources to support the development and continued functioning of small town water supply systems; use of local labor for construction in compliance with national Mauritanian and ILO standards; provisions for community health and safety commensurate with community training on construction of household latrines as well as potential increased wastewater associated with increased water supply; construction material resourcing, use, and disposal; potential negative impacts on biodiversity, living natural resources, and/or physical cultural resources; management of land acquisition, involuntary resettlement, and voluntary land donation in accordance with national laws and World Bank standards; inclusion of vulnerable populations in stakeholder engagements, as well as in access to project outcomes, including access to improved potable water supply, access to latrines, and access to open-defecation and hand-washing awareness campaigns and learning resources.

Note To view the Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, please refer to the Concept Stage ESRS Document.

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APPROVAL

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