



CASE STUDY TITLE

Access to Drinking Water and Sanitation Services in Cameroon



SUMMARY

The Cameroon Government being a member of the United Nations Organisation (UNO) joined the rest of its members to adopt the seventeen (17) sustainable development goals in 2015.

Following the adoption of the sustainable development goals (SDG) by the United Nations, the Cameroonian Government developed a strategy document for growth and employment (DSCE) based on these SDGs and another which contained the Cameroon's vision by 2035, now replaced by the National Development Strategy 2020-2030. The DSCE has set as objective to improve the population's access to drinking water by 75% in 2019 and to improve sanitary systems by 60% by 2035. These, to be achieved by rehabilitating existing infrastructures, completing extensions to existing potable water networks and promoting the implementation of large-scale connection programs. The access rate to drinking water as at 2019 has improved by 62% while access to adequate sanitary facilities in urban areas stands at 58%, and 29% rural areas.

With the elaboration of ISO 30500 and ISO 24521 and their adoption by Cameroon, we recommend that various stakeholders be sensitised on these standards for implementation for better access to safer water suppliers and to better sanitary systems. We also recommend a certification system be set up to certify for non-sewered Sanitation Standards.

BACKGROUND

In 2015, 193 member countries of the United Nations including Cameroon adopted a new sustainability agenda. This new agenda defines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to monitor progress towards eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions by 2030. SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) aims to ensure access for all to sustainably managed drinking water and sanitation services.

AT A GLANCE

COUNTRY

- Cameroon

LEVEL

- National

SDG ADDRESSED

- SDG 6 - Clean Water & Sanitation

This, composed of eight targets, covers the following areas: access to drinking water; access to sanitation and hygiene; quality of water and wastewater; use of water resources and water shortages; management of water resources; ecosystems related to water; International cooperation and capacity building; and stakeholder participation. It is within this framework that the Cameroonian Government, assisted by donors, developed Cameroon's development strategy.



BACKGROUND

This is available in two reference documents which are:

- Cameroon's development vision by 2035;
- The strategy document for growth and employment (2010-2020), now replaced by the National Strategy for Development 2020-2030.

In developing countries, including Cameroon, the majority of populations use latrines with septic tanks. The latter have repercussions on the quality of the water table and cause an upsurge in water-borne diseases, the main causes of infant mortality. Also, the flushing system with sewers, treatment and discharge into the natural environment is very expensive (electricity and water costs).

It is from this observation that Cameroon, through the Mirror Committee N°23-Environment and Natural Environment, has been diligently engaged in the process of developing the ISO 30500, Non-sewered sanitation systems - Prefabricated integrated treatment units - General safety and performance requirements for design and testing, provides general safety and performance requirements for the product design and performance testing of non-sewered sanitation systems for prefabricated integrated treatment units. Thus, the portfolio of Cameroonian standards was enriched on November 12, 2019 by the following standards:

- NC 2875: 2019- ISO 30500 On-site sanitation systems- Prefabricated integrated treatment Units-General performance and safety requirements for design and testing;
- NC 2937: 2019-ISO 24510: 2007-2017-Activities relating to drinking water and sanitation services-guidelines for the evaluation and improvement of service to users;
- NC 2938: 2019-ISO 24511: 2007-2017-Activities relating to drinking water and sanitation services-guidelines for the management of public sanitation services and the evaluation of the services provided;
- -NC 2939: 2019-ISO 24521- Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services - Guidelines for the on-site management of domestic wastewater services.

The Cameroonian Standard NC 2875 specifies general performance, safety and durability requirements for the design and testing of prefabricated integrated processing units. NC 2937, 2938 and 2939 standards are positioned as complementary tools to NC 2875, in that they improve the management of sanitation services and drinking water supply.

STRATEGY

For several years now, access to drinking water and sanitation facilities have been the main issue in numerous battles waged by states across the globe. This fight is hugely important for the populations of developing countries like Cameroon. In terms of hydraulic and sanitation infrastructure, the Cameroonian Government in the Strategy Document for Growth and Employment (DSCE) has set as the objective of improving the population's access rate to drinking water by 75% in 2019 and reaching a 60% rate of access to adequate sanitary facilities by 2035.





STRATEGY

To achieve these, plans have been made to: rehabilitate existing infrastructures, most of which have been carried out for more than 20 years; complete extensions to existing networks which have not kept pace with urban and demographic expansion; and promote the implementation of large-scale connection programs.

For manufacturers and stakeholders in the production of drinking water, NC 2875, 2937, 2938 and 2939 offer advantages in terms of improving their products and access to the market. Given the fact that they comply with international reference standards. For Consumers, NC 2875, NC 2937, NC 2938 and NC 2939 give consumers the possibility of having toilets and drinking water services that meet internationally recognized requirements. In addition, they will have the tools allowing them to make the choice of quality products, in accordance with their health, safety, sustainability, etc. needs.

For the public authorities, NC 2875, NC 2937, NC 2938 and NC 2939 provide regulatory bodies with tools to facilitate conformity assessment, certification and/or market surveillance activities. In addition, they position themselves as a valuable basis for the potential regulation of this industry.

Especially the decentralized Territorial Communities and drinking water supply structures, NC 2875, NC 2937, 2938 and 2939 are an opportunity for improving sanitation and water quality in recreational and natural environments. disadvantaged in Cameroon.

RESULTS & IMPACT

Thanks to these actions carried out within the framework of the implementation of the DSCE, the rate of access to drinking water, although below the above-mentioned target, has been improved by 62%. This is due to insufficient installed production capacity and the dilapidated nature of the distribution network.

Regarding sanitary facilities, the situation remains worrying. We are witnessing a decline in the level of access of the populations to improved sanitary facilities. In urban areas, the access rate is 58%, while in rural areas it is 29%.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

The main challenges, in accordance with the national water supply development strategy, will be: to initiate the process of decentralization of public drinking water supply, to create a favourable framework for the installation of private drinking water production companies in localities not covered by the public network, to set up an investment program to improve access to drinking water in rural areas.





CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

Regarding sanitary systems, the actions to be carried out will be oriented towards the rehabilitation of existing infrastructure and the modernization of treatment, pollution control and providing drainage systems for wastewater and rainwater in urban areas.

POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

- Sensitize all stakeholders to the application of standards aimed at improving the sanitation system, in particular ISO 30500 and 24521, non-sewer sanitation standards. Indeed, the ISO 24521 standard optimizes the existing wastewater treatment services, the ISO 30500 standard encourages the development of new technologies and solutions;
- Build and rehabilitate sewer networks in urban and peri-urban areas;
- Regularly checking the wastewater installations of industries installed in urban and rural areas in accordance with the above-mentioned standards.
- Facilitate cooperation between all stakeholders.

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