



CASE STUDY TITLE

The Water Service Performance Contract and the TG ISO 20510 Standard



SUMMARY

The drinking water service is governed by the following series of international standards:

- ISO 24510, Activities relating to drinking water and sanitation services - Guidelines for the evaluation and improvement of service to users
- ISO 24511, Activities relating to drinking water and sanitation services - Guidelines for the management of public sanitation services and for the evaluation of the services provided
- ISO 24512, Activities relating to drinking water and wastewater services - Guidelines for the management of public drinking water services and for the evaluation of the services provided

The TG ISO 24510 standard presents recommendations for evaluating and improving service to the user.

BACKGROUND

In Togo, the drinking water service in urban and semi-urban areas is the prerogative of the Société Patrimoine De l'eau et de l'assainissement Collectif en Milieu Urbain et Semi Urbain (SP-EAU) and Société Togolaise des Eaux (TdE). SP-EAU, as a concessionary company, is responsible for assets, investments and debt management. With respect to TdE, it is the operating company and controls the infrastructure made available to it.

STRATEGY

During the reform which saw the birth of SPEAU in 2015, in the concession and affermage contracts, a performance contract was provided, which includes the indicators that can show the level of the drinking water service.

AT A GLANCE

COUNTRY

- Togo

LEVEL

- National

SDG ADDRESSED

- SDG 6 - Clean Water & Sanitation

These indicators mainly relate to the technical aspects (the resource, the technical management of the infrastructures), the commercial aspects (connections, collection, invoicing, user satisfaction) and the financial aspects (profitability, staff and staff productivity). This piece focuses on these indicators with regard to the guidelines presented in standard TG ISO 24510.



RESULTS & IMPACT

By analyzing this contract against the TG ISO 24510 standard, we can see that the majority of the recommendations are taken into account. Indeed, the standard identifies three essential components: (i) the provision of the service; (ii) subscription management and invoicing; and (iii) relations with the user. These components are taken into account by the commercial indicators of the Togo performance contract.

On behalf of the provision of service, we find, among others, the following indicators:

- CB-1 connection rate within the timeframe projected at 95% within 7 days (point B3.1 of the standard)
- CB-2 rate of paid connections not realized projected at less than 5% in 30 calendar days
- TRP-3 rate of conform analysis results projected at 90%

On behalf of subscription and billing management, the performance contract essentially provides for the rate of compliance with the maximum billing deadline which is projected at 100%. As for relations with the user, the performance contract essentially provides for the complaint rate and the response rate to complaints within 15 days, which is projected at 85%.

CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

It is noted that indications involving the participation of the user are almost absent from the contract. As such, the contract does not assess the availability of information relating to the service, nor the participation of the user and even less the participation in local life. The absence of indicators concerning these three points and others - which relate mainly to exchanges between services and users - does not allow good communication and understanding of the service, by the user.

Accordingly, during awareness sessions on drinking water issues, the following type of questions were posed: Is TdE water safe to drink? What is the price of the connection? Why are the bills for setting up connections in our neighborhood are so expensive? How long do you have to wait to have a connection after paying the connection fees?

In addition, it is very rare to meet users who are aware of the existence of a concession and affermage contract and, even less, of a performance contract. The non-existence of committees or associations of users of drinking water services in urban and semi-urban areas also limits the evaluation of the service from the user's point of view. Most of these issues are due to insufficient communication between the user, the operator and the responsible body. Within each TdE agency, there is a client manager to respond to this. However, the toll-free number is commonly used to notify TdE of breakages and the account manager is more oriented towards customer follow-up. As a result, issues that are not the direct responsibility of the individual user are often not discussed.

It should also be noted that the performance contract does not take into account indicators on the cost of the service, the service rate and others relating to the equity of the water service. In summary, the guidelines of the TG ISO20510 standard have been taken into account for the most part in the development of the performance contract but there is still some way to go.





POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

This standard is user-oriented and therefore in its implementation requires the introduction of more PI to assess the communication between the operator or the responsible body and the user.

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