



**TANZANIA**

**WATER SECTOR  
POLICY OVERVIEW PAPER**

**SEPTEMBER 2006**

Authors: Anders Arvidson & Mattias Nordström, Stockholm Environment  
Institute

The sole responsibility for the content of this paper lies with the authors. It does not represent the opinion of the Community. The European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.

**Intelligent Energy**  **Europe**

## **Table of Contents**

---

Introduction.....	3
Water resources management .....	3
Rural water supply .....	4
Urban water supply and sewerage .....	5
Conclusions.....	5

## Introduction

Water sector development in Tanzania was governed by the 1991 National Water Policy, until the new 2002 National Water Policy entered into force. One of the main developments that took place in national water policy during the decade between these two policies was that the framework for planning, investment and operations and management changed. In 1991 the central government was given the mandate to be the sole investor, implementer and manager of projects, in rural as well as in urban areas. The 2002 policy, on the other hand, has as an objective to develop a framework for beneficiary participation in planning, construction, operation, maintenance and management. Also, a framework for sustainable development and management of water resources has been integrated into the policy.

The 1991 National Water Policy set a goal of providing clean and safe water to the population within 400 meters of their households by 2002. By 2002, however, only about 50% of the rural population and 70% of the urban population had access to reliable water supply services. Furthermore, due to poor operations and management, over 30% of rural water schemes are not functioning properly.

The Tanzania Vision 2025 aims to achieving “high quality livelihood”, to attain “good governance through the rule of law” and to develop a “strong and competitive economy”.<sup>1</sup> The 2002 water policy acknowledges that water is one of the most important resources underpinning the achievement of these goals, and is structured around three thematic focal areas: water resources management, rural water supply and urban water supply and sewerage.<sup>2</sup>

The 2002 policy identifies six types of instruments to be applied in achieving the objectives summarised above:<sup>3</sup>

1. Technical instruments
2. Economic instruments
3. Administrative instruments
4. Legal instruments
5. Regulatory instruments
6. Participatory instruments

## Water resources management

The annual renewable water resources of Tanzania were 2,700 cubic meters per person in 2000, as compared to an average of 7,300 cubic meters per person on world average. Current demographic projections of an increase in population from 33 million in 2001 to 60 million in 2025, this figure could drop to about 1,500 cubic meters per person per year. This indicates that Tanzania may face a serious water stress in the coming two decades, as anything below 1,700 cubic meters per person per year on average signifies

---

<sup>1</sup> 2002 National Water Policy, the United Republic of Tanzania July 2002, p. 5

<sup>2</sup> 2002 National Water Policy, the United Republic of Tanzania July 2002, p. 6

<sup>3</sup> 2002 National Water Policy, the United Republic of Tanzania July 2002, p. 7

water scarcity. In addition to this, the location of water reservoirs and groundwater aquifers – as well as rainfall patterns – is highly uneven across the country.

In the 2002 policy water resources and their use have been divided into twelve categories; domestic water supply, livestock, agriculture, industry, mining, energy, fisheries, environment, wildlife and tourism, forestry and bee keeping, navigation and trans-boundary water resources. The challenges identified in providing for all of these activities, while at the same time safeguarding the environment and water resources for future generations, are defined as:

- water requirement for all humans to maintain human health, and to restore and maintain ecosystems functionality is guaranteed;
- water available to ensure food security, electricity generation and other economic activities;
- maintain water quality to meet agreed standards, maintain the long term availability of freshwater stocks, and ensure that water resources management is financed and raw water priced to promote efficiency, sustainability and equity;
- integrated water resources management approaches are instituted;
- effective and sustainable strategies to address natural and man-made water resources problems are put in place;
- participatory water resources planning and decision-making that involve users and stakeholders are put in place;
- water resources data are available and accessible to all, and an effective information system is put in place and operationalised;
- mechanisms to resolve conflicts over water resources are institutionalised;
- motivated and highly skilled professionals are available in adequate numbers.

The water resources management policy has taken on a new approach which can be said to encompass three elements: (i) comprehensiveness to capture multi-sector and multi-objective planning as well as indirect and cumulative aspects, (ii) subsidiarity to shift planning, decision and management processes closer to the beneficiaries, and (iii) economic effectiveness to ensure that public as well as private investments reflect water scarcity, equity and incentives for rational use of water.

## **Rural water supply**

As said in the introduction, the access to reliable and safe water supply is poor in rural areas. The specific policy objectives in this area are to:

- provide of adequate and affordable water supply services;
- define the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders;
- emphasise on communities paying for part of the capital cost, and the full cost of operation and maintenance of services;
- shift from a supply driven to a demand driven approach;
- decentralise management of water supplies;
- promote participation of the private sector in the delivery of goods and services around water access;

- improve health through integration of water supply, sanitation and hygiene education.

The main shift from the 1991 policy are of course in the emphasis on full cost recovery at the community level, the introduction of demand driven approach and the opening up for new actors to participate in the planning, investment, ownership and management of water supply infrastructure. In the 2002 policy, a number of guiding principles around social rights, economic approach, environmental protection and sustainability have also been introduced.

The rural water supply policy also includes a larger set of goals, with associated activities and interventions, in areas such as for example public sector regulation, facilitation and coordination, water for livestock, financing rural water supply programs and monitoring and evaluation.

## **Urban water supply and sewerage**

Due to the rapid rate of urbanisation, and overall population growth, urban water supply and sewerage infrastructure is hard pressed to meet all requirements. Between one third and half of the urban population in Tanzania lives in unplanned or squatter areas, and only about 70% of the urban population has access to reliable water supply. Existing infrastructure is old and in dire need of upgrading.

The specific objectives of the national water policy for urban areas are to:

- guide the development and management of efficient, effective and sustainable water supply and waste water disposal systems;
- create an enabling environment and appropriate incentives for the delivery of water and sewerage services;
- develop an effective institutional framework and ensure that water supply and waste water disposal entities are financially autonomous;
- create an efficient and effective system of revenue generation from sale of water and waste water removal;
- enhance water demand management and waste water disposal.

From the 1991 policy, the most striking changes are the notions that water utilities are to be financially autonomous, and that these utilities can be for-profit private enterprises.

Similarly to the rural water supply policy, the urban water supply and sewerage policy includes a larger set of goals, with associated activities and interventions, in this case in areas such as for example: deteriorated infrastructure, low revenue collection, water demand management and private sector participation.

## **Conclusions**

In the water sector, Tanzania faces a complex of challenges due to current water shortages (which will probably worsen), inefficient infrastructure in need of upgrading, fiscal requirement for higher recovery rate of costs for service provisioning and

competing uses for water resources. To address these challenges the 2002 policy sets out an ambitious strategy to introduce integrated planning processes, devolution of decision-making to lower echelons of government, to reduce the share of public financing of water supply and sewerage services and to open up traditional public monopolies to private competition. This will introduce a new set of challenges and potential conflicts. For example, while sound integrated, long term planning is in the interest of society, it is costly and capacity intensive. And at the local level, where more of the planning is envisioned to take place, there may be pressing social and economic needs that will override long term and indirect (e.g. downstream) impacts. Also, the objective to serve all of the population – including the poorest segments – with water and sanitation on an equitable basis is difficult to accommodate within a framework of higher cost recovery and for-profit utilities without carefully designed and publicly funded incentives and support programmes.