

Rural Benin

Population: 2,100,000 inhabitants

In the village of Koundokpoe, the collection rate has risen from 85% to 96,87% at the household connections.

Organising authority: Municipalities in rural areas of Benin.

Private operators: 150 water operators known as “farmers”, 80 of which are members or supporters of the Association fédérative des gestionnaires privés des réseaux d’eau du Bénin (AFEB – Federation of private of Benin’s water networks managers).

Location: Rural areas in Benin.

PPP general model description

In the framework of the public service delegation, private water operators and municipalities of rural areas can enter into affermage (lease) contracts. Farmers operate and maintain the water network, collect revenue from water sales and pay charges to the municipality.

Context and PPP objectives

Under the community management which operated until 2003 water services suffered from many deficiencies: lack of suitable management tools, insufficient management staff training and water waste at the standpipes. Revenues were very low due low revenue collection rates from water sales and theft. This was also because of financial mismanagement. This led to a poor water service and serious difficulties to repair breakdowns that inconvenience the population.

In 2003, the administrative decentralization in the country led to the creation of Municipalities, the new key players in the drinking water supply’s governance. According to the legislation, the Municipality is in charge of the project management of the drinking water supply within its territory. A new national village drinking water supply strategy (2005-2015) was conceived to take account of this sectoral approach. In accordance with this strategy, drinking water services must be addressed in consideration of the promotion of the private sector in water supply in rural areas. Emphasis is also given to the support of the professionalization of staff and the Millennium Development goals. Municipalities must delegate water supply management to water users’ associa-

tion or POP. The affermage process started in 2007 in pilot areas and was generalized to every department and all municipalities in 2008.



Water “Farmers” at a training session

In order to improve the benefits of the public service delegation of village water supply to private operators, the Government of Benin asked for the support of the World Bank’s Water and Sanitation program and the International Financial Society to implementing a corporation pilot project. This project, implemented in 2014 in 10 pilot areas, aimed at introducing a more formal structure (concession) for the village water supply networks between municipalities and private operators with a longer contractual term than in the affermage contracts.

Special examples of the PPP model

The public service delegation aims at improving water services for the consumers in the form of village water supply by private operators in the village of Koundokpoe (around 9,500 inhabitants, in the Municipality of Zè) and in the village of Gonougou (around 11,400 inhabitants, in the Municipality of Gogounou) show.

The village water supply in Koundokpoe is managed by Canal-Eau SARL. A 3 year affermage contract was signed in 2010 between the private operator and the Municipality of Zè. It has been renewed in 2013.

In Gonougou, COGEFI signed a 5 year tripartite affermage contract in 2007 with the Water users association and the municipality of Gogounou to supply water services. This has been renewed in 2014. Gogounou is one of the pilot villages of the government project: the contract is now an 8 year concession contract.

- Improving accessibility of water
- Improving availability of water
- Securing revenue streams

Main objectives are:

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Improving accessibility of water

In Koundokpoe, 23 household connections and 21 standpipes are now connected to the village water supply, this means 12 household connections and 2 standpipes more than before the beginning of the contract in 2010. The drinking water supply to the population has risen from 42.12% in 2010 to 59.78% in 2014. Canal-Eau SARL brought drinking water to 3,000 additional people and supplies 9,500 in 2014.



Villagers collect water at a safe standpipe

In Gogounou, only 1 household was connected to the network, the population had to go to standpipes where the waiting time was long. COGEFI connected 62 households of which 9 community connections, which group several households around a single connection. This shows the great interest for household connections from the population.

Moreover household connections have been installed by the two private operators in unreserved or under-equipped areas. For example, Canal-Eau SARL installed connections in Wédjamè, Dokota, Médébaho, Aklouzountikon, Waga, Aklouzountikon, Waga, Togbonou, Avossa, Tangnigbadji and household connections have been installed by COGEFI in unreserved

localities: 2 household connections in an area far from the village centre and 9 in Kirikou, a less-favored area.

Improving availability of water

In Gogounou and Konoukpoe, drinking water is always available at the household connections and at the standpipes during the hours determined by mutual agreement with the municipality: 24/7 for the household connections and 11 hours a day at the standpipes. Network outages have decreased and arbitrary shutdowns at the standpipes disappeared. Moreover, the shut downs of the drinking water supply at the household connection by the private operators due to the non-payment of bills on the due-date have declined significantly. The availability of water as scheduled in the contracts has reduced water-related drudgery especially for women who do not need to walk long distance anymore.

Securing revenue streams

The low collection rate under the community management was one of the main factors of water supply's deficiencies. Since the affermage, the collection rate has improved significantly. For the village water system of Koundokpoe, Canal-Eau SARL increased the collection rate from 85% to 96.87% at the household connections and from 70% to 87.90% at the standpipes. Through a better management and money available to face expenses, a reduction in the number of interruptions and their duration have been made possible.

Other significant improvement: securing water safety

In order to improve water quality and safety, water is treated once a month by chlorination and the private operators conduct regularly the cleaning of the water towers. Moreover the farmers carry out a follow-up on water quality. For instance, in Gogounou water samples are collected and sent to the laboratory IRGIB AFRICA to be analyzed.