



Agence Régionale d'Exécution des Projets - AREP de Guelmim Oued Noun



Guelmim, Tan Tan, Lakhssas and Mirleft
Drinking water
& wastewater reuse projects

Non-Technical Summary



Project description

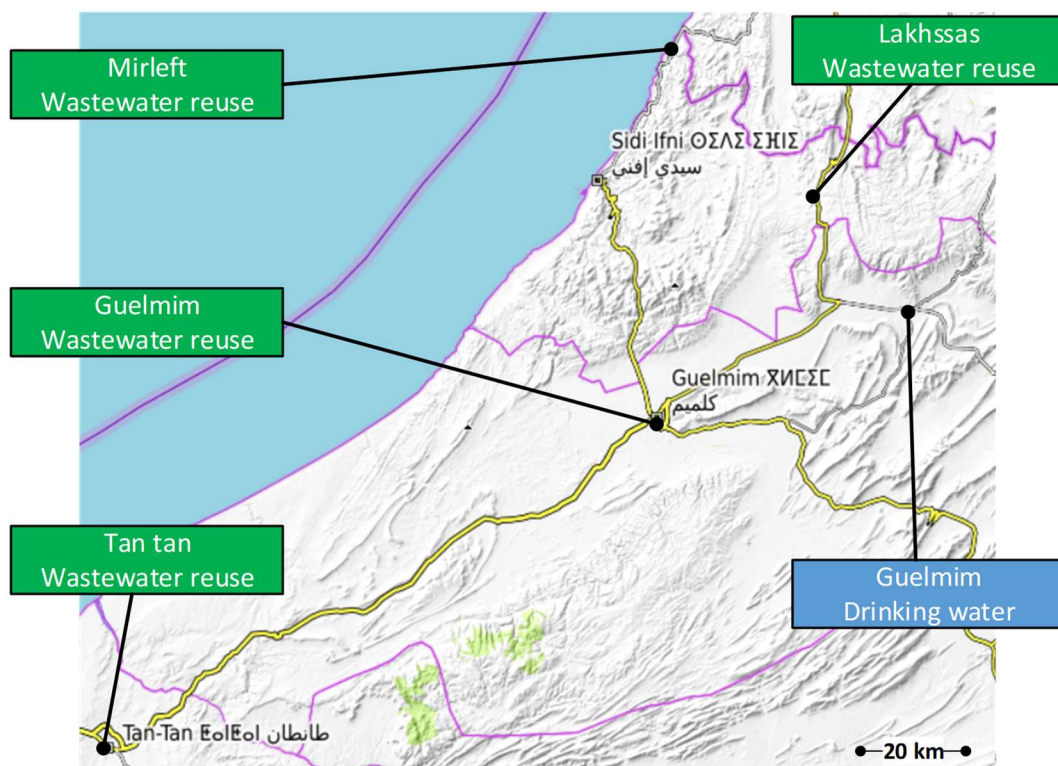
Guelmim-Oued Noun Region, with financial support from the Ministry of Interior and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), is implementing the following strategic drinking water and wastewater reuse projects:

- The drinking water supply project is part of the 2020-2027 National Drinking Water Supply and Irrigation Program (Programme National pour l'Approvisionnement en Eau Potable et l'Irrigation or "PNAEPI"). It aims at increasing and improving access to drinking water for households in rural areas within Bouizakarne district.
- The wastewater reuse projects aim at irrigating green spaces and green belts in Guelmim, Tan Tan, Lakhssas and Mirleft: the projects involve the upgrade of four existing Waste Water Treatment Plants ("WWTPs") to enable the reuse of treated water for watering green spaces in the Region.

The Project is categorised "B" in accordance with the EBRD 2019 Environmental and Social Policy 2019, and was therefore subject to an Environmental and Social Due Diligence.

An Environmental and Social Action Plan, as well as a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, were also prepared for the Project.

Figure 1 - Location of the five sub-projects



Implementation arrangements

The implementing agency for this Project will be the Regional Agency for the Execution of Projects of Guelmim-Oued Noun Region (Agence Régionale d'Exécution des Projets or "AREP").

The technical studies, construction and rehabilitation works that are required for the Project will be implemented by specialized companies selected by AREP according to the national and EBRD procurement rules.

For the operation phase:

- The drinking water sub-project will be operated in the future by a Multipurpose Regional Company, "MRC" or through another entity, as identified through an institutional, financial and technical audit and detailed governance study that will be undertaken..
- For the wastewater reuse sub-projects, detailed studies aligned on the planned green spaces / green belt developments, will describe the proposed technical scheme (pipes + trucks) for wastewater reuse, as well as the institutional/financial arrangements defining the respective responsibilities of:
 - the entity in charge of wastewater collection and treatment meeting the Moroccan normative requirements for domestic wastewater (this entity is presently ONEE);
 - the entity responsible for the interface between wastewater initial treatment and wastewater reuse, including additional treatment so that wastewater meets the normative requirements for irrigation water and wastewater reuse.
 - the entity(ies) entitled to use the treated wastewater – for plants irrigation or other authorized technical needs.

Given its nature and level of readiness, the Project is expected to extend on several years:

- Year 1: Preparatory studies.
- Year 2: Preparation of bidding documents and selection of contractors.
- Years 3-4: Construction.

Physical impacts and mitigation measures

The main physical risks and potential impacts are related to the construction phase of the sub-projects. They include:

- The permanent or temporary use of land for the construction of new infrastructures, such as water pipelines or water/wastewater treatment facilities.
- Increase of vehicles traffic with associated accident risks around the project's footprints. This risk will be significative in the villages where the drinking water sub-project will be implemented, as well as along the supply routes for all sub-projects. This risk will be mitigated through traffic management and signalling of construction sites.
- Dust and erosion risks resulting from earthworks. An Erosion and Dust Management Plan will be prepared and implemented.

Environmental impacts and mitigation measures

Pollution prevention: Oil spills and wastes are the main pollution risk during construction. For each sub-project, the Contractors will have to prepare and implement oil spill prevention and response plans as well as a waste management plans.

During operation, the main pollution risk will be the release of poorly treated wastewater in irrigation sites. This risk will be controlled through appropriate quality control of the wastewater treatment.

Biodiversity conservation: The drinking water sub-project does not present risks for biodiversity conservation.

Regarding the wastewater reuse sub-projects, species of conservation interest and protected/internationally recognized areas were identified in the areas where works are planned:

- Draa Wadi Estuary, a legally protected area ("SIBE") and Ramsar site is located close to Tan Tan wastewater treatment plant. The exact boundaries of the site will be marked on site to avoid impact on Draa Wadi Estuary.
- No net loss measures for Argan trees have been included in the Project, because Argan trees Priority Biodiversity Features as defined by the EBRD, and also because two of the sub-projects are located in the Arganeraie Biosphere reserve (Mirleft and Lakhssas).
- The Project also includes no net loss measures for *Mauremys leprosa* and *Hannonia hesperidum* whose presence are respectively confirmed and suspected for two of the sub-projects.
- The Project finally includes impact avoidance measures for Small mammals and reptiles, including notably workers awareness raising.

Social impacts and mitigation measures

Land acquisition is required for the Project construction. The Project is however not expected to result in physical resettlement. Economic resettlement is likely. A Land Acquisition and Livelihood Restoration Framework, and subsequently a plan, will be prepared for the Project.

Community-level consultation and disclosure of information will be conducted in accordance with the Project's Stakeholder Engagement Plan and Livelihood Restoration Framework.

Employment: Hundreds of construction personnel is expected to be employed during the peak period of the construction works in total. Only a small number of staff will be hired permanently for the operation period.

Disturbances: Noise, dust and traffic are the main disturbances expected during the construction period. The potential negative impacts will be managed by controlling dust emissions from the construction site, and by managing traffic interactions at the connection between the construction site and the public road, with the objective to avoid accidents.

Leisure and tourism: the project sites and their vicinity do not offer any particular interest for leisure or tourism activities. No impact.

Public health and Safety: the Project construction and operation will not generate any significant health risks. Public health risks are expected to be reduced, through a better control of drinking water and treated wastewater quality. Safety risks will be increased during construction mostly as a result of traffic increase and will be managed through the implementation of the traffic control and signalling procedures.

Workers health and safety: Before starting any construction activities, contractors will prepare specific Health, Safety and Environment Management Plans (HSEMP).

Cultural heritage: The projects sites are not located next or close to a cultural or historic site that might be visually impacted.

Contact

If you are interested in the Project and wish to receive further information, please liaise with AREP's contact person:

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