Navigating Funding Challenges for the WASH Sector in DR Congo

WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH) SECTOR
Public Expenditure Review (PER): 2016-2021

Key findings

- This review reveals a deep funding gap for the WASH sector.
- DR Congo is significantly off-track for achieving SDG 6.
- Sanitation is the worst-performing sector.
- Key problems include:
  - Insufficient funding
  - Incomplete decentralization
  - Inefficient management of public finances

Insufficient domestic and external funding

How much funding goes to the WASH sector?
At the current pace, universal access in DRC will not be reached by the year 2100.

Actual annual expenditure
US$101.8M

Envisioned annual expenditure* US$800M

Distribution of the annual expenditure in the WASH sector (annual average on 2017-2021, in US$)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Domestic Sources</th>
<th>External Sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>US$8.8M/yr</td>
<td>US$69.6M/yr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>US$23.4M/yr</td>
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Expenditure in WASH (US$M)

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Sources: Ministry of Budget, WB Data 2022, JMP 2022, GLAAS 2022

Is the WASH sector a priority for the government?
The government does not yet consider the WASH sector a strategic priority. Sectors such as Education and Health receive a far greater share of domestic expenditure.

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<th>Sector</th>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>22.14%</td>
<td>7.31%</td>
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<td>Health</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>22.14%</td>
<td>7.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
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Source: Ministry of Budget

*As set out in the 2020 National WASH Plan (PNEHA) for the period from 2020-2030.

Note: Year 2016 was disregarded here due to outliers (pending REGIDESO utility bills were cleared by the Government this year).
Where is funding directed?

Off-budget expenditure:
Mostly targeted at the provinces. Expenditure within the Grand Kasai region were driven by grants for REGIDESO secondary centers. The Eastern provinces of Nord and Sud Kivu, affected by a protracted conflict, also received substantial funding.

Domestic On-budget expenditure:
Mostly limited to the city province of Kinshasa.

Budget preparations are affected by the poor coordination between the Government and WASH Partners. This is aggravated by the large share of Off-budget funding streams for the WASH sector.

Off-budget funding streams for the WASH sector.

Key issues leading to low efficiency

Weak WASH On-budget execution

WASH On-budget execution in DR Congo (2017-2021)
20.5%

Average WASH budget execution in other countries
72%

Note: The high expenditure in year 2016 represents government outstanding bills to REGIDESO that were partially cleared upon an agreement with the Government settled in 2016.

Sources: Ministry of Budget, WB (2024). Funding a water-secure future: an assessment of global public spending, based on available budget data from 81 countries (2009-20).

Low capital investments for expending WASH access

Domestic capital investments are only US$1.7M/year for 58M people without basic access to water supply. This is less than US$ 3 cents per unserved person.

Low budget credibility

Overestimated budgets in some categories were reallocated to others during fiscal years.

Incomplete decentralization and lack of coordination

WASH sector fragmentation, involving several ministries and deconcentrated entities with overlapping mandates, hampers coherent budget programming and evidence-based decision-making.

- As demonstrated by other countries such as Ethiopia, a National WASH Platform should be set up for M&E, coordination and resource mobilization purposes.
- Decentralization should be accelerated.
- Reforms were introduced and in fiscal year 2023 a program budget for water supply was introduced, that should be scaled up.

Neglect of the sanitation sector

The sanitation sector is neglected, with the majority of WASH funding going to the water sector.

13x Investment in water supply is 13 times higher than investment in sanitation.