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ESTABLISHMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNIT (WRMU) G-CREWS Component 1 – Climate-Resilient Water Governance

BACKGROUND

Water is a scarce resource in Grenada and climate change has already begun to aggravate the problem with an increasing average temperature and more erratic rainfall. More frequent heavy rainfall events make water supply outages more common due to high turbidity in the raw water supply. Saltwater intrusion in coastal groundwater aquifers due to sea level rise will further reduce the availability of freshwater in the future. To rescue the water resources of Grenada in the long run, it requires a sustainable and Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM).

IWRM seeks to harness the benefits of water by ensuring there is sufficient water of adequate quality for drinking water, food production, energy generation and water-based recreation, as well as sustaining healthy water-dependent ecosystems and protecting the aesthetic and spiritual values of lakes, rivers, and estuaries.

IWRM also entails managing water-related risks, including floods, drought, and contamination. The complexity of relationships between water and households, economies and ecosystems require integrated management that accounts for the synergies and trade-offs of water's great number of uses and values.

Draft National Water Policy – management of the country's water resources:

The Goal of Grenada's National Water Policy is to provide sustainable management of the country's water resources, through stakeholder participation and contribution to economic, social and environmental development in an efficient and equitable manner.

The Policy is based on the need for a holistic and coordinated approach to water management; the adoption of the concept of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) which recognizes the essential, finite and vulnerable nature of water



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the conservation and protection of ecosystems, participatory approaches in decision making, the role of women, and the economic value of water. It is considering the need to urgently address the adverse impacts of climate change on water resources and enable social and economic well-being through improved water resources management, the monitoring, assessment, development and protection of the resources, and conditions governing wastewater re-use. **This function would be carried out by the Water Resources Management Unit (WRMU).**

Institutional Arrangements

Grenada's policy position is that the responsibility for management of water resources is to be separated from responsibility for the provision of water and wastewater services. In order to give effect to this restructuring, such changes of institutional arrangements will be implemented through supporting legislative measures. In view of the limited resources available, and the need to minimize the expected financial impact, any restructuring will as far as possible build on existing structures and current best practice. The new institutional framework will consist of three sets of inter-related functions:

- (A) Policy Direction and Coordination;
- (B) Regulation; and
- (C) Services Provision

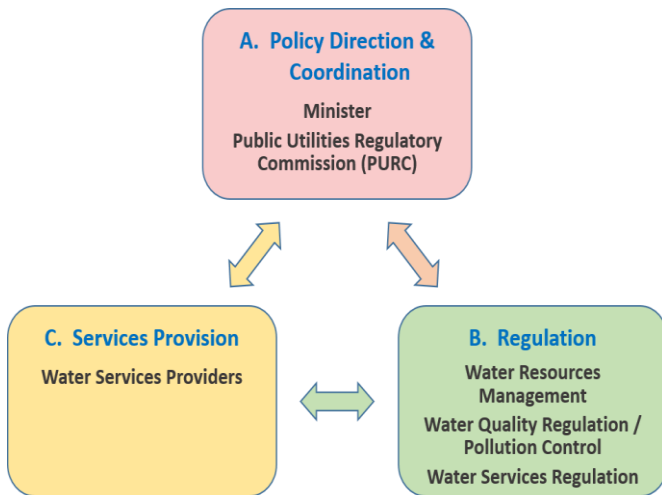


Figure 1 Water Sector Institutional Relationships

Water Resources Management Unit (WRMU) – will be responsible for the day-to-day management of Grenada’s water resources in their entirety. These include both surface water and water stored as part of municipal/community supplies

Surface waters are: streams, rivers, lakes, other natural reservoirs), ground waters (natural aquifers, and wells)

Water stored as part of municipal/community supplies from rainwater harvesting or other sources, estuarine waters and waters along the coast that are subject to use (recreation, supply for desalination and receiving environment for effluent discharge).

With the set-up of a Water Resource Management Unit, Grenada strengthens the overall water governance of the tri-island state. In order to fulfil these functions, the WRMU will, *inter alia*:

- Establish, analyze, assess and monitor the status of national water resources (quantity, quality, utilization, vulnerability) on a routine basis, and identify the available resources and their potential sustainable yields;

To support the main functions of the WRMU, G-CREWS will build on the existing infrastructure regarding the collection, management and analysis of water resources and climate data. This will be done in cooperation with agencies that collect water resource data on the island including the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, NAWASA and other relevant stakeholders. The WRMU will gather this data and feed it into a periodically updated ‘climate change and hydrology model’ and reporting system for Grenada. The model will provide the WRMU with a critically important climate service product for future adaptation planning and addressing water-related information needs across public services, businesses and households. The use of re-mote sensing data could improve the model forecasting skill.

- Work with water service providers and other water users, including communities, to ensure the protection, efficient and sustainable use of water resources. The Grenada Water Stakeholder Platform (G-WASP) will act as the major ‘sounding board’ for these actors in the discourse with the WRMU (and the Public Utilities Regulatory Commission (PURC) on WRM issues;
- Develop a permit system for the allocation of access rights to the use of water resources, which set out the terms, conditions and limitations on use;
- Develop standards, regulations and guidelines governing the management of water resources; and
- Design and deliver public education and awareness programmes on water resources management.

Establishment of WRMU

Prior to commencing the establishment of the WRMU the G-CREWS project will engage in a review with the recommendations of the relevant policy documents and briefs and make recommendations to Cabinet on final institutional structures, functions and responsibilities and oversee implementation. This introduction of a new dedicated government unit will ensure sound and climate-responsive regulation of water resource management and will eventually lead to a strengthened institutional and regulatory system for climate-responsive planning and development.

The establishment and empowerment of the WRMU will go through three (3) different steps or main activities:

1. Supporting the Implementation of Water Legislation to Establish the Water Resources Management Unit
2. Technical Capacity building of WRMU
3. Strengthening the Collection and Management of Water Resources and Climate Change Data

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