



TRUCK VENDORS OF CITY WATER

Nouakchott - MAURITANIA

Nouakchott: population 700,000 - 1,000 Ouguiya (UM) = US\$ 0.53

NOUAKCHOTT'S TRUCK VENDORS

- There are 60 truck vendors, of which 10 are city operated and draw water without charge from the city water raised storage tanks, and 50 are privately operated and draw water from two other raised tanks.
- Of the 50 private water trucks, 15 are operated by companies for their own use, 10 are operated by construction companies, who sell water left over after supplying their construction sites, and 25 trucks are operated by residential water vendors.



Nouakchott, a desert city, has unplanned settlements at its periphery and nearby desert villages that lie beyond the reach of the city water network.

HOUSEHOLDS FAR FROM ALTERNATIVE WATER SOURCES

Thirty-five private water truckers with vehicles fitted for driving on sand sell water to about 20,000 residents (3 percent of households):

- living in houses equipped with concrete cisterns not connected to city mains,
- living in nearby villages that are inaccessible to carters,
- and to residential areas under construction.

They also serve settlements along the highways leading into the city from the east and the south, where there are no wells.



City water trucks are assigned to provide free water to municipal offices and low-income areas.

A MICROENTERPRISE THAT DISTRIBUTES WATER

Most water vendors own a single truck, some own three or four.

- A second-hand truck (8 m³ capacity) costs about UM 2.5 million.
- Water from the storage tanks costs UM 200/m³.
- Water sells for 850/m³ on average, depending on vehicle maintenance costs, the carrying capacity of the truck (4-13 m³), and the distance of the delivery location.
- Average annual sales volume for an 8 m³ truck is UM 3,150,000 for about 525 delivery trips/year (one or two round trips a day).



Thirty-five to 50 water trucks a day fill up from a storage tank managed by a staff member of the Human Rights Commission for Fighting Poverty and Promoting Social Integration (CDHLCPI).

AT THE WATER TANK, THE TRUCKERS GET ORGANIZED

In the Ksar area of Nouakchott, nearly 25 private water truckers have pooled their resources in order to:

- improve the area around the water tank where they fill up, building restaurants and shops, keeping the access road maintained, and planning for a telephone connection;
- make available an agent who acts as an intermediary for the truckers with their customers and with vehicle repair mechanics when they need them;
- form a committee of four elders who mediate conflicts between truckers.



A storage tank operator has persuaded a mechanic, an electrician, and a tire repair specialist to set up shop near his tank in response.

Paying for water drawn from the storage tank.