Stakeholders' interactions in Water Management System: Insights from a MACTOR analysis in the R'Dom Sub-basin, Morocco

Mohamed BEN-DAOUD (bendaoud.mohamed304@gmail.com)
Universite Moulay Ismail Faculte des Sciences https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9487-1215
Badr El Mahrad
Universidade do Algarve - Campus de Gambelas
Gabriela Adina Moroşanu
University of Bucharest: Universitatea din Bucuresti
Ismail Elhassnaoui
Mohammed V University of Rabat Mohammadia School of Engineering: Universite Mohammed V de Rabat Ecole Mohammadia d'Ingenieurs
Aniss Moumen
Ibn Tofail University: Universite Ibn Tofail
Lhoussaine El Mezouary
Ibn Tofail University: Universite Ibn Tofail
Mohamed ELbouhaddioui
Ecole Nationale Superieure des Mines de Rabat
Ali Essahlaoui
Universite Moulay Ismail Faculte des Sciences
Samir Eljaafari
Universite Moulay Ismail Faculte des Sciences

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Stakeholders' interactions in Water Management System: Insights from a MACTOR analysis in the R'Dom Sub-basin, Morocco.

Mohamed Ben-Daoud[1], Badr El Mahrad[2], Gabriela Adina Moroşanu[3] , Ismail Elhassnaoui[4], Aniss Moumen[5], Lhoussaine El Mezouary[5], Mohamed ELbouhaddioui[6], Ali Essahlaoui[1], and Samir Eljaafari[1].

[1] *Moulay Ismail University, Faculty of Sciences, Meknes, Morocco*

[2] *CIMA, FCT-Gambelas Campus, University of Algarve, 8005-139 Faro, Portugal.*

[3] *Institute of Geography of the Romanian Academy and University of Bucharest, Faculty of Geography*

[4] *Hydraulic System Analysis Team Mohammadia School of Engineers, Rabat, Morocco*

[5] *Ibn Tofail University, National School of Applied Sciences, Kenitra, Morocco*

[6] *Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Mines de Rabat, Morocco*

* Correspondence: bendaoud.mohamed304@gmail.com; Postal address: Moulay Ismail University,Marjane 2, BP: 298 ‹Meknès 50050.

Abstract.

This article aims to understand the typologies of stakeholders, their role in the water resources management system in the R'Dom Sub-basin(Morocco), and to identify the current and desired interactions among stakeholders. For this purpose, The MACTOR participatory approach was adopted to involve all key water stakeholders and to analyze their interactions. The action system was characterized by the analysis of related issues and relevant actors on the ground. Thus, ten actors and twelve objectives were identified and assessed in this study. The analysis of stakeholder games allowed to identify the typologies of stakeholders according to their strategic objectives and to evaluate their power, influence and dependence, as well as their convergence in a global water management system. The results show a significant level of convergence among stakeholders despite the existence of certain stakeholders who may be considered autonomous given their low involvement in integrated water management. Furthermore, there was a limited involvement of

stakeholders in certain strategic objectives such as capacity building, technical means, and awareness-raising actions. The paper shows the need to generate greater collaborative efforts among water stakeholders involved in the implementation of integrated water resources management in the R'Dom sub-basin.

Keywords: Water Management, R’Dom Sub-basin, Stakeholders’ interactions, MACTOR analysis.

1. Introduction

Economic development, population growth and urbanization led to an increasing water demand with higher levels of pollution, especially in arid and semi-arid areas where water resources are generally limited (Okello et al., 2015). Therefore, Management models have played a crucial role in the rational exploitation of available resources even if they are limited. These model can be impacted by several factors of which the human’ factor has an important contribution (Ahmadov, 2020). Taking into account the specificities of each region and territory, water managers and water users adopt specific methods that are sometimes adapted to the local contexts (Akhmadiyeva and Abdullaev, 2019; El Mezouary et al., 2020b). In this way, the integrated water resources management (IWRM) framework has been widely used as management approach that takes into consideration economic, environmental, and social aspects all combined (Collins et al., 2020; Giordano and Shah, 2014; Lenton, 2011; Schröder, 2019). In line with the IWRM approach, the sharing of water data and information among actors, as well as stakeholder participation, is the supporting elements for water resources management policy planning and implementation (El Mezouary et al., 2020a; Godinez-Madrigal et al., 2019; Jarar Oulidi, 2019)

Several water managers and experts have developed and used various models and analysis tools to support the implementation of water management policies (Cosgrove and Loucks, 2015; El Mansouri and El Mezouary, 2015; Elhassnaoui et al., 2021; Hermans, 2005; Hermans and Thissen, 2009; Saleem et al., 2021). However, experience has shown a gap between the work of stakeholders and the real use of proposed solutions by water experts, despite their use of new advanced technologies (Hermans, 2005; Pellegrini et al., 2019) . As for the role of policy makers, they often do not implement the solutions proposed by the different actors, especially the water experts, which is mostly linked to a misunderstanding of the water management issue (Hargrove and Heyman, 2020; Morrison, 2003; Pahl-Wostl et al., 2020). In the literature review, several methods of stakeholder analysis were used to solve water resources issues. These used methods take actors as a starting point and produce knowledge about the involved actors in the water sector, their interests and influences, and their strategic objectives (Ahmad and Al-Ghouti, 2020; Hermans, 2005; Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). However, there is currently little research in Morocco that focuses on the study of the interaction between stakeholders in water management.(Ait Kadi and Ziyad, 2018; Hargrove and Heyman, 2020; Hermans and Thissen, 2009; Ingold and Tosun, 2020). This context led us to reflect on the analysis of the interaction among different stakeholders and the exploration of their future roles within the overall water management system in Morocco, with a case study at the level of the R'Dom sub-basin in the Meknes region.

The analysis of stakeholders' interaction in the field of water management is justified by several changes in the water management system in Morocco. These changes are manifested by the development of a new water law (Law 36-15) in 2016. This law has redefined the responsibilities of water stakeholders and introduced new bodies in the water sector, such as the hydraulic basin council and new fields such as the mobilization of non-conventional water (Ait Kadi and Ziyad, 2018; Legrouri et al., 2019). On the other hand, the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 is also a reason to highlight the interaction among different stakeholders.

Furthermore, Morocco has developed a National Water Plan, which is based on three pillars, (1) water demand management and water development, (2) water supply development, and (3) preservation of water resources, and adaptation to climate change. This plan constitutes a roadmap to deal with the challenges of water over the next 30 years (2020-2050).

In addition, the introduction of new technologies in the water sector, such as the use of decision support tools and real-time water management make it necessary to position the various stakeholders in the management system, with the aim of achieving an integrated and sustainable water management system (Jarar Oulidi, 2019; Johansen, 2018; Mapani et al., 2019). In this context, it appeared useful, even necessary, for a key public sector such as the water sector to identify the main issues and major actors related to water management, understand their strategies and identify the main synergies and potential conflicts. This questioning of the interactions among actors, will allow decision makers and political actors to understand the dynamics of the system that integrate all actors and to frame their future intervention in the implementation of water-related public policies (Brown et al., 2020; Fritsch and Benson, 2019; Ingold and Tosun, 2020; Pezij et al., 2019). The objective of this paper is to conduct the analysis of stakeholder's interaction in water management system at the R'Dom sub-basin. To do this, we adopted a participatory approach through the involvement of key stakeholders in the definition of objectives and possible interactions and influences between stakeholders.

.2. Case study

2.1. Study area characteristics

The study area is located in northwestern Morocco, about 140 km east of Rabat city and 60 km west of Fez city. The Lambert coordinates are: X = 470 to 510 km and Y = 320 to 380 km. It is an area that extends 35 km from east to west and about 50 km from north to south (Tahri, 2005) **(Fig. 1).**

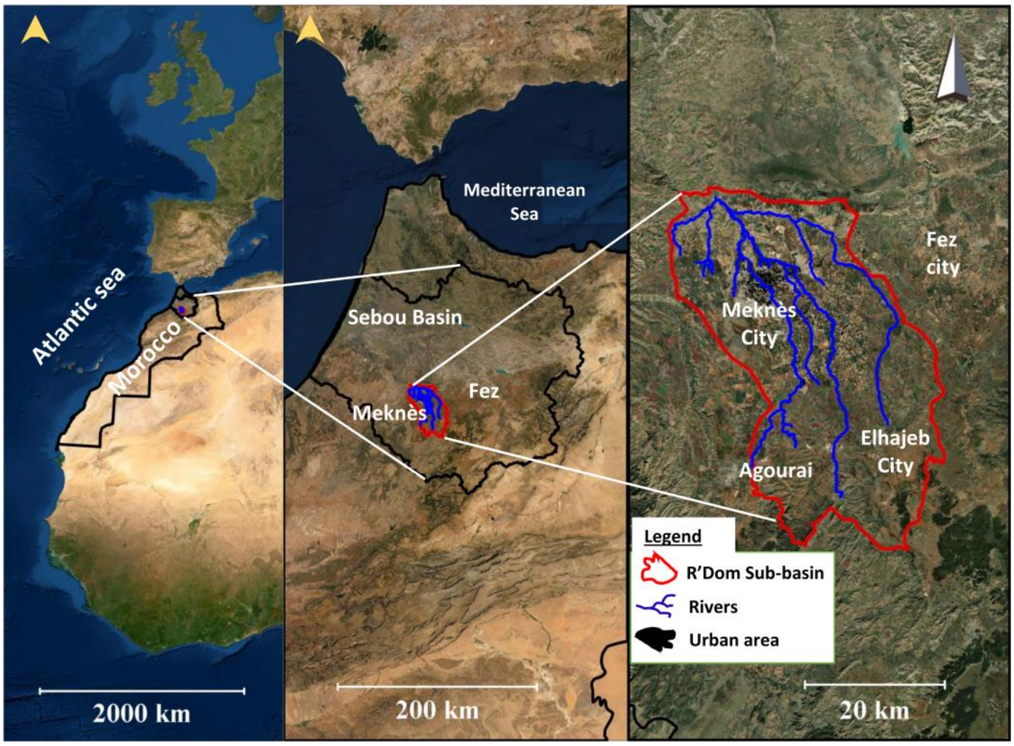

Fig.1. Study area location

The area is characterized by a semi-arid climate, intra-annual variability of temperature, and an average annual rainfall of 500 mm, recorded in the Meknes station (Allaoui, 2019; Essahlaoui et al., 2001). The surface water, in the R'dom sub-basin represented by R'dom River, and the confluence of the Boufekrane, Ouislane and Bouishak Rivers (Essahlaoui, 2000). The rivers are strongly dependent on the springs that feed them. The Atrous, Ribaa, and Bittit springs are the most important and are found in the foothills of the El Hajeb-Ifrane Plateau; they are located about 30 km South-East of the Meknes city (Amraoui et al., 2004; Ben-Daoud et al., 2021).

The surface water is used for irrigation and to supply the Meknes city with drinking water (Essahlaoui, 2000; Ben-Daoud et al 2020). Others springs are locater 20km south of the Meknes city such as Aghbal, Boujaoui and Maarouf springs and they are also used to supply drinking water to the Meknes City. From a hydrogeological point of view, there are two important aquifers in the R'dom sub-basin, the deep aquifer and the Plio-Quaternary aquifer (El Mezouary et al., 2015;

Essahlaoui, 2000). The free water table is located at an average depth of 10 to 30 m (Essahlaoui, 2000);

The region is marked by important economic activities such as agriculture, food industry (Ben-Daoud et al., 2012). This important economic activities had negative impact on water sustainability in terms of quality and quantity(Ben-Daoud et al., 2011). Moreover, the water management system in the region is experiencing other challenges,such as, the overexploitation of the water table, controlling the intensification of agricultural activities that consume groundwater resources and the establishment of policies that mixes awareness raising and regulation.

2.2. Water management stakeholders in the study area

Water management policy in Morocco has progressed through two distinct phases. The first phase was characterized by a water supply management through the development of hydraulic infrastructure and the construction of dams (Ait Kadi and Ziyad, 2018; Ben-Daoud et al., 2021; Legrouri et al., 2019). The second phase was characterized by water demand management, which was supported by the development of the water strategy 10 years later. Beyond this policy there is a legal and institutional arsenal allowing the implementation of the water resources management policy at different scales **(Appendix A.Fig.1)** (Ben-Daoud et al., 2021, p.)

Several actors involved in the water sector in Morocco. Some of them are involved at both, the national and local levels (Ait Kadi and Ziyad, 2018; Legrouri et al., 2019) **(Fig. 2).** To facilitate the identification of the stakeholders involved in the following research, the role of each actor is provided in the **Appendix B.**

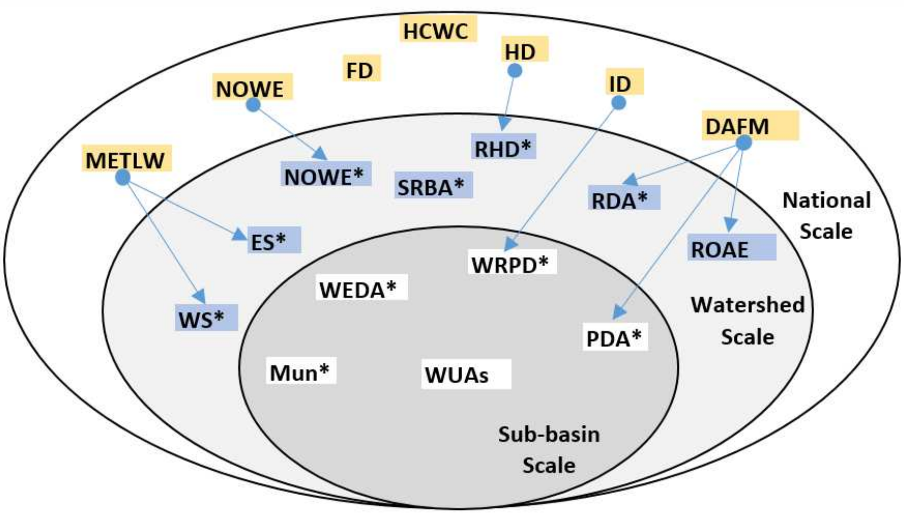

Fig. 2. Relevant water management stakeholders in the study area (*involved stakeholders in the case study)

National scale actors:
METLW: Ministry of Equipment, Transport, Logistics and Water
HCWC: Higher Council Water and Climate
DAFM: Department of Agriculture and Fisheries Maritime
ID: Interior Department
HD: Health Department
FD: Finance Department
Watershed and sub-basin actors:
SRBA: Sebou River Basin Agency
WEDA: Water and Electricity Distribution Agency
NOWE: National Office of Water and Electricity
RDA: Regional Direction of Agriculture
PDA: Provincial Department of Agriculture
ES: Environmental Service
RHD: Regional Health Department
WS: Water Service
Mun: Municipalities;
WRPD: Water Research and Planning Directorate
WUAs: Water Users Associations
ROAE: Regional offices for agricultural enhancement

It should be noted that not all of these water stakeholders were questioned within the framework of this study, either because of the arbitrations made on the final choice concluded by the participants in the workshop, or because the positions of the actors excluded from the exercise were already represented through their decentralized services (case of the ministerial departments)

2.3. Materials and Methods

In this paper, stakeholder interaction was defined as a mode of regulation of the relationships among a set of actors in the water resources management system. To analyze their interaction in the R'Dom basin, this paper proposes a methodological approach inspired by the strategic analysis of Crozier and Friedberg (1980) as a theoretical framework. Crozier and Friedberg's (1980) approach emphasizes the relational aspect of power between stakeholders. Power is a "relationship/interaction" between people/actors linked by common issues. As for the empirical framework, the MACTOR (Method Actors, Objectives, and Force Reports) model served as a coherent tool for this approach (Crozier and Friedberg, 1980; Godet, 1994).Thus, MACTOR is a method to help actors to decide on the implementation of their alliance and conflict policies. Moreover, several workshops and meetings were organized to classify the 10 organizations involved as key stakeholders in water resources management in the study area and to collect the necessary data for the stakeholder analysis (Hermans and Thissen, 2009; Schmidt et al., 2020).

2.3.1 Identifying actors and objectives

The first step in data analysis is the identification of key stakeholders, which play a major role in the integrated water resources management system in the R'Dom sub-basin (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). Thus, the selected stakeholders were mobilized and interviewed through a participatory approach including the presentation of the study objectives (Godet, 2013) **(Table 1).**

Table 1. Actors involved in the study analysis

Actors involved	Acronym
1. Water and Electricity Distribution Agency	WEDA
2. National Office of Water and Electricity	NOWE
3. Sebou River Basin Agency	SRBA
4. Regional Direction of Agriculture	RDA
5. Provincial Departement of Agriculture	PDA
6. Environemental Service	ES
7. Regional Health Departement	RHD
8. Water Service	WS
9. Water Research and Planning Directorate	WRPD
10. Municipality	Mun

In order to be included in a MACTOR analysis, a stakeholder (actor) is considered as a social or economic group with a capability of action, and organized in a strategy, to achieve its objectives(Crozier and Friedberg, 1980; Godet, 1994). In this research, stakeholders were only represented by public bodies and institutions, as they are the main contributors to the water management process and are closely related to water problems in the region(Ben Nasr and Bachta, 2018). All administrative actors were consulted in depth, which helped legitimize the participatory process and build trust between the research team and involved stakeholders (Ben Nasr, 2015).

The number of interviewees was chosen based on criteria that allowed access to reliable data such as specialty, area of expertise, involvement in the water management process and many others. Indeed, all interviewees have a profile that allows them to provide sufficient and reliable information on water management issues in the study area (Ben-Daoud et al., 2021).

The participatory approach was conducted through discussion workshops and working meetings with stakeholders to address the issue of stakeholder interaction in the IWRM process. Stakeholders engagement led to the identification of expected goals for each stakeholder that are embedded in their future policy agenda (Smyth et al., 2020; Tuokuu et al., 2019). A list containing twelve objectives was established **(Table 2)**. These goals were explained and described in sufficient detail to allow for a methodological assessment of each actor's position (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015).

Table 2. List of strategic objectives

Objectives	Acronym
1. Ensure the continuity of water resource data, which makes it possible to assess the impact of the use on the environment	Water Data
2. Implement tools allowing the production of integrated water management indicators over a long period	Assessing.Tool
3. Leading a reflection and action at the watershed scale	Man.scale
4. Taking a global vision of the several water uses and take them into consideration in water management	Water.U.I
5. Strengthen the partnership between different water stakeholders	Partn.lev
6. Strengthen participation with steering groups and working meetings with a large number of stakeholders	Stak.consu
7. Make a large number of awareness campaigns aimed at the public and all users of water resources.	Awareness
8. Ensure a Long-term stable funding integrating other uses and environment preservation	Funding
9. Ensure the compliance with water laws and standards (Law 10-95; Law 36-15; Standards ...)	Regulation
10. Implement applicable techniques adapted to integrated water management	Tech.means
11. Adopt a medium- or long-term planning taking into account parameters evolution	Planning

2.3.2. Data collection

As for the data collection methodology, participants were asked during a workshop to rate their appreciation of the influence of each stakeholder on the others. The influences and affinities to the objectives were noted according to the MACTOR method from (0) to (4) depending on the importance of the possible challenge for the stakeholder (Godet, 2010; Knaggård et al., 2019).

(See Appendix C. Table 1)

The construction of data analysis took place in two stages, which were conducted in parallel, (1) conducting the indivudual meetings with each stakeholder and (2) conducting workshop sessions bringing together all the stakeholders (Hermans and Thissen, 2009; Manzano-Solís et al., 2019). The confrontation between the key feedbacks from the interviews, and the reflections of the working group made it possible to delimit the system database to be taken into account in the MACTOR analysis (Anggraeni et al., 2019; Newton and Elliott, 2016).

The representation of stakeholder's interaction is carried out through the identification of the actors and their associated objectives, which constitute the two entry points in the analysis exercise in our case study. Thus, the representation of the system (actors, objectives) is largely determined by the perception of the actors (participants) (Godet, 2010). Given the time allocated for reflection, and the perceptions of the system by all the actors involved in this reflection, this approach does not claim to be an exhaustive coverage of the problem of analyzing the interactions among the actors of integrated water resource management.

2.3.3 Data input matrices

Two input matrices were developed in consultation with the involved stakeholders and through the organized workshops (Ben Nasr and Bachta, 2018). The position of stakeholders in the water resources management system depend not only on the position of each stakeholder regarding the objectives, but also on the power of these stakeholder and its ability to influence the others (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). It is therefore important to emphasize these two types of relationships below:

(1) The influence of actors on each other: The relationship among actors has enabled to develop the Matrix of Direct Influences (MDI) or Matrix "Actor X Actor". This matrix reflects the power relationships among actors, with the sums in rows and columns showing the global influence of each actor on the others (in rows) and its global dependence on the others (in columns)(Godet, 2010). The calculation of the matrix of direct and indirect influences will make it possible to draw several conclusions about the interaction between the different actors **(Appendix C. Table 2).**

(2) Actors position regarding the objectives: The relationship among actors allowed to develop the Valued position matrix (2MAO) or Matrix " Actor X Objective "This matrix provides information on the actor's position on each objective (pro, against, neutral or indifferent) and the hierarchy of its objectives (Ben Nasr, 2015; Ben Nasr and Bachta, 2018; Godet, 2013). The Valued position matrix provides a measurement of the conflictual or consensual character of the objectives based on the sum of the agreements and disagreements in the columns. **(Appendix C. Table 3.)**

2.3.4 Model operation

Although the data input only concerns direct influence among actors, which it takes into consideration indirect influence that is exercised through the use of influence with other intermediary actors **(Fig. 3)** (Godet, 2013).

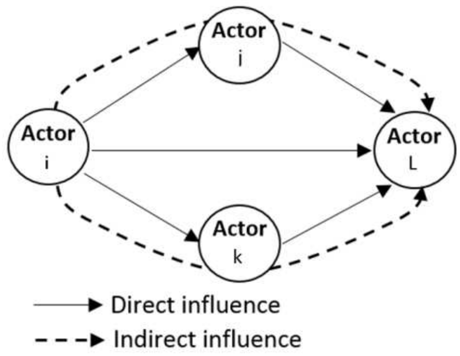

Fig. 3. Direct and Indirect influences between actors*

*The influence of ‘i’ on ‘j’, is the sum of the direct influence it has on ‘k' and of all indirect influences it gains through all the other third actors (here ‘j’ and ‘L’).

Direct and indirect influences*:* The calculation of the matrix of direct and indirect influences (MDII) is done through formula (1). This matrix contains, for each pair of actors, the direct influence added to the sum of the indirect influences of each possible intermediate actor.(Lakner et al., 2018; Munteanu and Apetroae, 2007).

$$\mathrm{MDII_{ij}} = \mathrm{MDI_{ij}} + \sum\nolimits_{\mathrm{k}} \left(\min\left(\mathrm{MDI_{ik}}, \mathrm{MDI_{kj}}\right)\right) \qquad (1)$$

Where: i, j, and k three actors ; $MDII_{ij}$: The direct influence that actor 'i' has on actor 'j’

$\sum_k \left(min\left(MDI_{ik}, MDI_{kj}\right)\right)$ *:* The sum of all indirect influences that actor 'i' exerts on actor 'j' and that transit through a relay actor 'k’

Two indicators are calculated from the MDII matrix according to equations (2) and (3).

$$\mathrm{I_i} = \sum_{\mathrm{j}} \left(\mathrm{MDII_{ij}}\right) - \mathrm{MDII_{ii}} \qquad (2)$$

$$\mathrm{D_i} = \sum_{\mathrm{j}} \left(\mathrm{MDII_{ji}}\right) - \mathrm{MDII_{ii}} \qquad (3)$$

Ii: The degree of direct and indirect influence of each actor

Di: The degree of direct and indirect dependence of each actor

Indirect influences are determined by using at least two direct influences, generating an overall value that is the unweighted sum of all direct and indirect influences. The MDII matrix calculates the influence (Ii) and dependence (Di) which are the respective sums of the matrix rows and columns (Fetoui et al., 2021; Munteanu and Apetroae, 2007).

Balance of Power between actors: balance of power makes it possible to assess an actor's relative weight in the regulation of the water management system. This balance of power is measured by calculating a synthetic indicator called the Balance of Power (Ri) from the matrix (MDII), according to the equation (4) (Fetoui et al., 2021; Godet, 2010).

$$\mathrm{Ri} = \left(\frac{(\mathrm{I_i} - \mathrm{MDII_{ii}})}{\sum_i(\mathrm{I_i})}\right) . \left(\frac{\mathrm{I_i}}{\mathrm{I_i} + \mathrm{D_i}}\right) \qquad (4)$$

The (Ri) coefficient is normalized in 1, therefore, if all the actors had the same relationship, all the (Ri) quotients would be equal to 1. An actor that has a normalized balance of power greater than 1 has a relationship superior to the mean (Godet, 2013; Lakner et al., 2018). Normalization is given by its mean, defined as (eq.5):

$$\mathrm{Q_i} = \overline{\mathrm{R}}_\mathrm{i} = \frac{\sum \mathrm{R_i}}{\mathrm{n}} \qquad (5)$$

Where n= number of actors

Therefore, the normalized (Qi) quotient is the one shown below (eq.6):

$$\mathrm{Q_i} = \mathrm{n} * \frac{\mathrm{R_i}}{\sum \mathrm{R_i}} \qquad (6)$$

Actors Objectives Relationship: The actor/objective plan is derived from a factorial correspondence analysis (FCA) performed on the Weighted valued position matrix (3MAO) using the MACTOR tool. This matrix is obtained automatically by multiplying the Valued position matrix (2MAO) by (Ri) coefficient according to the equation (7)(Godet, 2013).

$$3MAO_{ij} = 2MAO_{ij} * R_i \qquad (7)$$

Indeed, this process makes it possible to identify the stakeholders' position in an influence/dependence map.

Convergence and divergence between actors: The 3MAO matrix was used to obtain the convergence matrix (3CAA (Eq.7) and divergence matrix (3DAA (Eq.8). This matrix identifies for a couple of actors the number of common positions they have on the objectives. This makes it possible to identify the number of possible alliances between actors (Munteanu and Apetroae, 2007)

$$3\mathrm{CAA_{ij}} = \frac{1}{2}\sum\left(\left(|3\mathrm{MAO_{ik}}| + |3\mathrm{MAO_{jk}}|\right).\left(3\mathrm{MAO_{ij}}\,.\,3\mathrm{MDII_{jk}} > 0\right)\right) \qquad (8)$$

$$3\mathrm{CAA_{ij}} = \frac{1}{2}\sum\left(\left(|3\mathrm{MAO_{ik}}| + |3\mathrm{MAO_{jk}}|\right).\left(3\mathrm{MAO_{ij}}\,.\,3\mathrm{MDII_{jk}} < 0\right)\right) \qquad (9)$$

3. Results

The MACTOR method offers several graphic representations and aggregate coefficients to help in the interpretation of model results.

3.1 Direct and indirect influences

Through the MACTOR method, we devoted the first analysis exercise to the influence among actors by developing the Direct and Indirect Influences Matrix (MDII) **(Appendix C. Table 4).** This aim to provide a more complete vision of the interactions and power relations among involved stakeholders in the water management process. Indeed, one actor can limit the choices of another one through an intermediate actor. Furthermore, two indicators have been calculated from the matrix (MDII) to explore the influence and dependence among actors, as follows:

(1) The indicator (Ii) calculated by summing matrix' rows, which represents the degree of direct and indirect influence of each actor,

(2) The indicator (Di) calculated by summing matrix columns, which represents the degree of direct and indirect dependence of each actor.

Following the calculation of both indicators (Ii) and (Di), it was noted that actors with high values of (Ii) indicator (i.e., with a high degree of influence, such as NOWE, SRBA, WS, and WRPD), have lower values of (Di) indicator, i.e., more influenced by other actors (**Appendix A. Fig.2**). These two indicators will be used later to categorize the actors in the influence/dependence map.

3.2 Map of influences and dependencies among actors

The map of influences and dependencies among actors shows their power relationships (dominant and dominated actors) **(Fig. 4).** On the axis of control, the dominant actors are SRBA, WS and ES, given their strong influence and low dependence on other actors; in fact, they are regulatory actors.

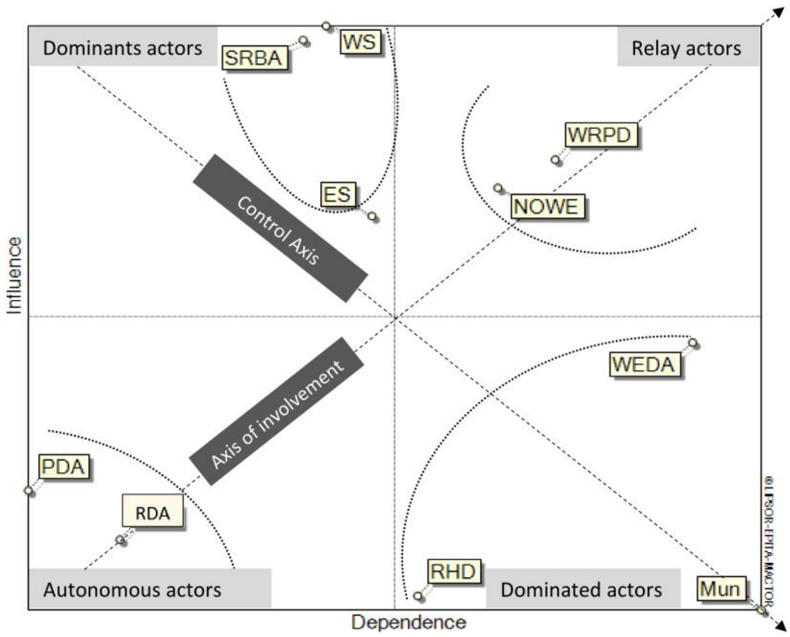

Fig. 4. Map of influences and dependences between actors

The dominated actors are represented by, WEDA, RHD and Mun. These actors are more sensitive regarding the actions of other actors, which requires their evolution in terms of capacities and means. Note that the power relations among actors is not limited to the simple appreciation of direct capacity of action. Thus, one actor can influence another through a third one (relay actor). In this study case, the intermediary actors are represented by WRPD and NOWE, which have a strong influence and dependence, as they are influenced by some actors (i.e., SRBA and WS) and have an influence on others, acting as an intermediary between two categories of actors (dominants and dominated actors). WRPD, plays an important role in the planning and monitoring of surface and groundwater resources. NOWE, is in charge of the generalization of access to electricity and drinking water, wastewater treatment and the extension of production, and distribution networks of water resources. If the projects and objectives of these actors are not realized, or if these actors do not evolve, the water management process will remain blocked. Moreover, **Figure 4,** highlighted a fourth category of actors who are neither influencers nor dependents, which (autonomous) are PDA and RDA.

This first analysis shows the unstable character of the actor role given the presence of some actors who are autonomous and less involved in the water resources management system. This unstable nature of the actor role in the water resources management system requires further analysis in terms of the power relations among the actors (Bettencourt, 2010).

3.3 Balance of Power between actors

The calculation of actor's Balance of Power (Ri) allowed to measure its relative weight in the integrated water management system. The indicator Ri is proportional to the weight of the actor role in the water management system (Fetoui et al., 2021). Conversely, if (Ri) is low, the actor is in a lower position to defend its interests in the water management system.

The analysis of the direct and indirect influences of the actors, has allowed to identify, in decreasing order, four groups of actors (Godet, 2010) **(Fig. 5):**

- A first group with a very high-power ratio, composed of two dominant actors, such as SRBA and WS, these actors constitute the entry points of the water resources management system. They contribute as drivers or barriers to the evolution of the processes in the water management system
- A second group with a high degree of power. This power enabling the actors to defend their position in the water management process. This group is represented by, ES and WRPD.
- A third group composed of most sensitive actors, such as WEDA, PDA. These actors have a significantly weaker balance of power than average, which does not allow them to impose their positions on their own.
- A fourth group of actors, represented by RDA, RHD and Mun, have the weakest power relations in the water management process.

In addition to this balance of power (Ri), the potential balance of power represented by the indicator (Qi) was calculated **(Fig. 5).**

In the **Fig. 7,** Qi corresponds to the maximum power ratio that the (Ri) can take in consideration, the maximum influences and direct and indirect dependencies of actor and its feedback (Fetoui et al., 2021; Godet, 2010). Thus, (Qi), is a measurement of the potential balance of power, taking into consideration the intensity of the action means of one actor on the others. Furthermore, the comparison between (Ri) and (Qi) has allowed to highlight the lessons learned in relation to the role of actors in the water resource management system.

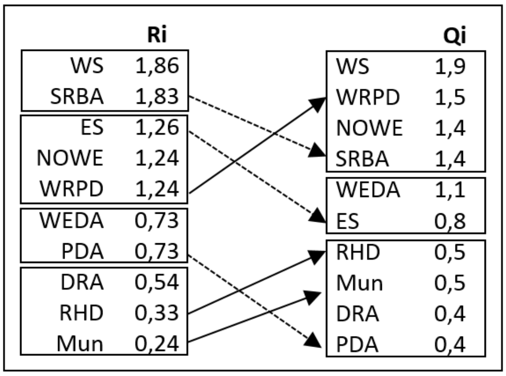

Fig. 5. Comparison between the Ri and Qi indicators

The comparison between the Ri and Qi indicators shows that the weight of certain actors, such as WRPD (from 1.24 to 1.5), RHD (from 0.33 to 0.5) and Mun (from 0.24 to 0.5), has increased in the potential power ratio. This may reflect the strong involvement of these actors in the water management system. Nevertheless, some of the others are experiencing a decrease in their means of action such as SRBA, ES and PDA. Thus, the potential power ratio shows a decrease in the weight of SRBA (from 1.83 to 1.4), ES (from 1.26 to 0.8) and PDA (from 0.73 to 0.4). Globally, it can be observed an increasing concentration of actors around an average weight between the apparent situation (Ri) and the potential situation (Qi), which shows a very high degree of connexity among the water management actors (Godet, 2013)

3.4 Actors Objectives Relationship

The Actors Objectives relationship provides an initial analysis of the consensual character of all actors around the objectives established during the workshops (Bettencourt, 2010; Fetoui et al., 2021; Godet, 2010). The results show the absence of negative values, which means that all the stakeholders are characterized by the convergence for all the objectives defined to achieve an IWRM in the study area (**Appendix C. Table 5).**

The Actors Objectives relationship also allowed to measure the degree of involvement of each stakeholder on all the objectives by summing up the absolute values in rows, and to identify the objectives that most strongly engage the stakeholders, through the summation of absolute values in columns (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). Regarding the global involvement of the actors, the sum of the absolute positions of the actors gives an indicator of this involvement in the water resources management system (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). This indicator varies from 14 for the RDA to 37 for the ES (**Appendix C. Table 5).**

Therefore, the most involved actors in the game are ES, PDA, SRBA, NOWE, and WEDA. These are concerned with a large number of objectives, which reinforces their projects and their missions within the water resources management system. In contrast, RDA, Mun, RHD, have the lowest level of implication with (14, 19 and 21 respectively in the valued position matrix). They are only concerned with certain objectives. As for the mobilization of stakeholders on the objectives, the results show that the most important objectives for the actors are, "Stakeholders consultation"; "water Data"; "Regulation"; and "Planning", all with higher scores (Fetoui et al., 2021).

3.5 Actors/objectives correspondence map

The Actors-objectives map is determined by the application of the correspondence analysis offers a possibility to position the actors to each other as well as their goals in the case of water management. The correspondence analysis is carried out on the Weighted valued position matrix (3MAO) **(Appendix C. Table 6).** The interpretation of the correspondence map between actors and objectives is facilitated by the analysis of the percentages of inertia developed using the MACTOR method **(Appendix C. Table 7)** (Bendahan et al., 2004). The percentage of information were summarized by factorial axes F1 and F2 is 57.42%.

Analyzing **Fig.6**, the factorial axis F1, is the most explanatory with 33.98% of the information, which reflects the dominant tendency of SRBA, as a regulatory actor in the water sector. There are as well two other regulatory actors represented by ES, WS, and which are located in the gravity point of the map, which means that they have medium values. WRPD is the actor that makes the highest relative contribution to the explanation of the F2 axis. Axis F2 with 23.44% of the information, even if it is less explanatory, it brings important information. Consequently, F1 axis reflects the aspects related to "planning", "partnership level" and "stakeholders participation" as important objectives to establish a more balanced water resources management system (Bendahan et al., 2004; Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). The correspondence map can also be interpreted by the degree of proximity among the points that are represented by "stakeholder/actor", "stakeholder/objective" and "objective/objective".

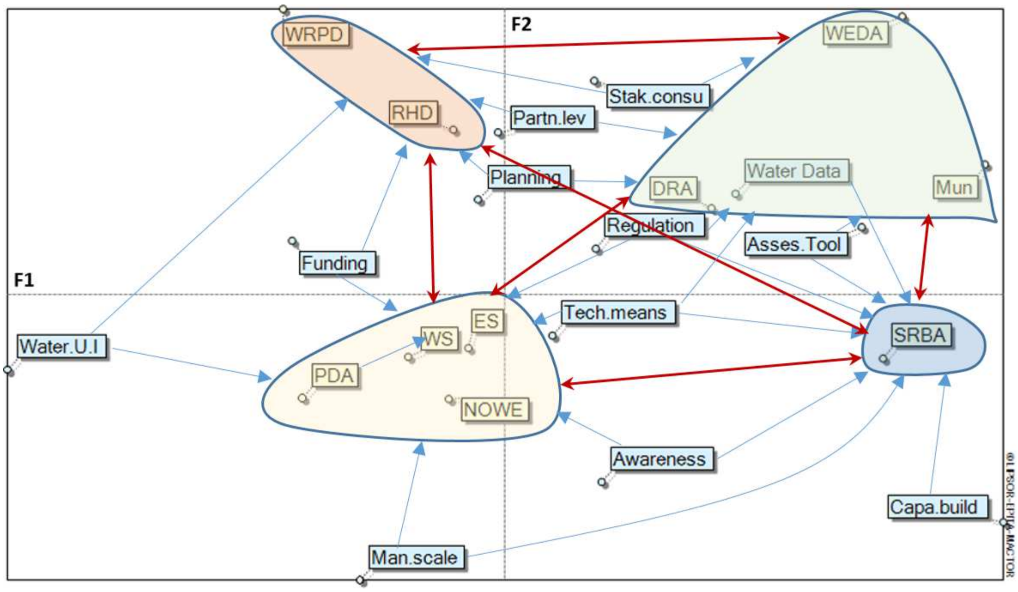

Fig. 6. Actors/objectives correspondence map

The proximity among the stakeholders on the map means that they have similar profiles in terms of commitment to the objectives. Proximity among objectives means that there are similar degrees of overall mobilization among water actors (Godet, 2013). Consequently, the existence of an influence relationship between the achievement of one objective on the other in the reality of the game is also possible. As for the proximity between an actor and an objective, it represents the indication of an attractiveness between actors and actors/ objectives.

Conversely, two opposite points (actors/objectives) on the map indicate repulsion. In this way, some actors, such as ES, WS, PDA, NOWE, have a tendency to join a group because of their proximity to each other. These actors are considered in the same group despite some difference in terms of their commitment to some objectives. Other actors like WEDA and RDA seem to be different from the others in terms of their commitment to the objectives.

As for the link among objectives, there is a high degree of proximity between some objectives, such as "Water Data" and "Assessment tools". This alignment means that there is an influential relationship between water data and assessment tools(Ben-Daoud et al., 2021; Hargrove and Heyman, 2020).In another way, the assessment of the state of water resources management is certainly influenced by the availability of data in a timely manner and with reliable quality (Charnay, 2011). A high degree of alignment between the objectives related to partnership level and stakeholder participation is observed. This shows that stakeholder participation provides opportunities for partnership among actors for collaborating on water management issue (Basco-Carrera et al., 2017; Reed, 2008; Smyth et al., 2020).Therefore conclusions can be drawn from the analysis of the map, on the three dimensions "actor/actor", "actor/objective" and "objective/objective".

This analysis shows the existence of an impact relationship between different actors and between different objectives. Therefore, the delay of one actor in achieving one objective can impact the achievement of the other objectives and ultimately impact the implementation of IWRM (Giordano and Shah, 2014; Godinez-Madrigal et al., 2019; Schröder, 2019). Consequently, stakeholders in their management process must take this relationship between objectives seriously. This brings us to the term of "integration" in the IWRM concept, considered as a solution to the problem of interdependence between various components involved in the management process (Akhmouch and Clavreul, 2016; Al-Jawad and Kalin, 2019; Tuokuu et al., 2019) **(Fig.6).**

The interaction analysis between actors was extended through the use of a hierarchical decomposition method obtained according to an aggregation model by the average allowing us to identify similarities between the groups of actors and to highlight the correspondence mapping results. The investigation of similarities between stakeholders, shown in Figure 10, allowed us to identify two main groups of stakeholders.

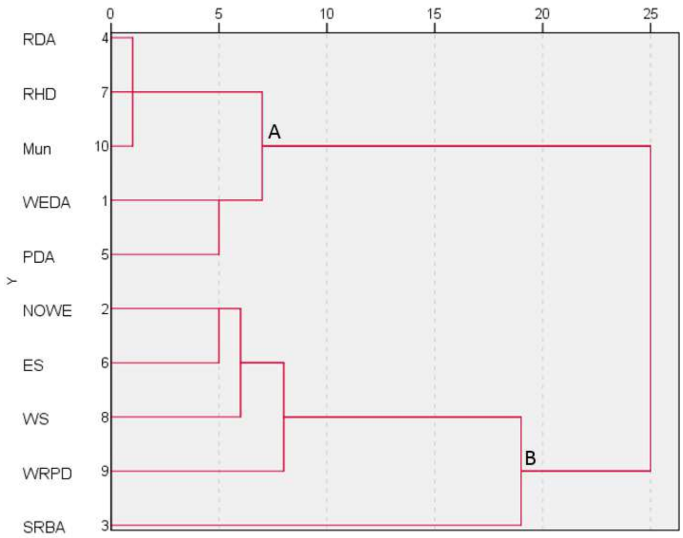

Fig. 7. Diagram of similarities between actors

The similarity analysis has allowed to divide the actors into two groups that are similar in terms of objectives and that present alliances in terms of future management actions (Bendahan et al., 2004; Helsel et al., 2020; Pati et al., 2014). This classification confirms the representation of the correspondence map regarding the concentration of regulatory actors in the same category of actors such as Sebou River Basin Agency, Environmental Service. The Water Research and Planning Department (WRPD) and National Office of Water and Eletricity (NOWE) are also included in this group. The second group is composed of the rest of the actors. Furthermore, this similarity analysis has allowed to group the small groups of actors identified in the correspondence map into two main Sub-groups according to their affinities (Johansen, 2018).

3.6 Convergence and divergence between actors

The 3MAO matrix(is used to measure the degree of convergence between stakeholders. Convergence among actors was determined by identifying the number of common positions that the pair of actors have on the objectives (for or against). Consequently, we proceeded to the identification of the number of possible alliances between actors. Thus, the majority of actors have common interests, given the high intensity of their convergence indices **(Fig. 8).**

In order to map the water management actors in relation to their convergences, a convergence network among actors was developped. Thus, the more actors are in proximity to each other, the more intense is their convergence (Godet, 2013; Lakner et al., 2018).

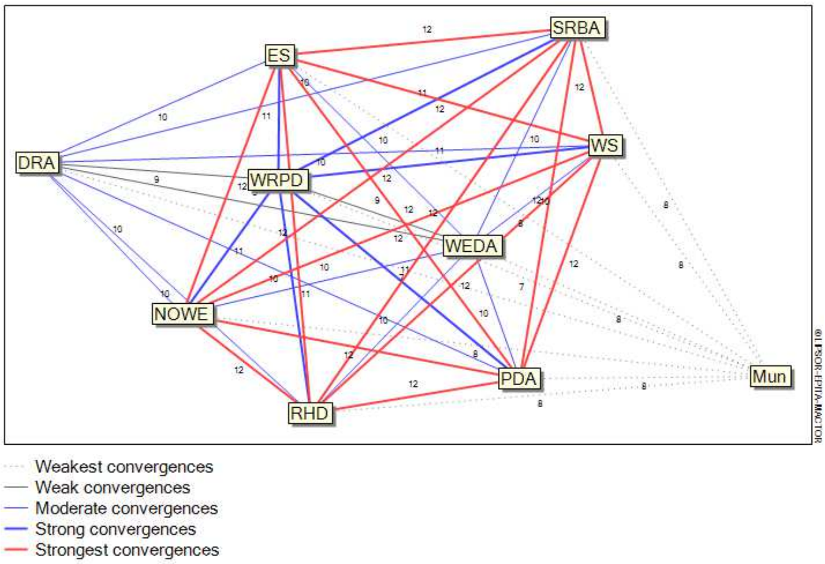

Fig. 8. Convergence network between actors

Fig. 8 shows a clear link among the majority of the actors that are interconnected with the red line which indicate a strong convergence. Two actors that appeared less connected with the others are the RDA and Mun. Furthermore, the proper divergence is absent among the actors. This indicates the absence of potential conflicts among actors that could hinder the achievement of objectives. This result will be interesting during the negotiations process of future projects concerning water management in the R'Dom Sub-basin.

4. Discussion

If stakeholder theory shows how questions of stakeholder identification might be answered, current methods of stakeholder interaction analysis go beyond the question of stakeholder identification, and move to complex considerations that are not easily explained by simple analysis (Mitchell, 2005). This paper's approach involves dimensions related to complex interactions between stakeholders, such as influence, dependence and convergence between actors in the water management process.

In the study area, over the years, planning and implementation programs for IWRM policies have still occupied a large part of the political discourse of all the actors involved in water management. Nevertheless, the reality on the ground shows a larger gap between the political discourse and the implementation of water management actions. Indeed, the following analysis was conducted to answer this question related to the interaction between water management actors. The results show that stakeholders can be classified into four categories in terms of influence and dependence, such as dominant actors, dominated actors, relay actors, and autonomous actors. This classification is very important for the implementation of policies related to water management while focusing on the category suitable for influencing the role of other stakeholders. In this sense, the relay actors who have a strong influence and dependence can facilitate the search of balance of power stability between actors are presented by WRPD and NOWE. These two actors act as intermediaries between two categories of actors (dominant and dominated). Thus, all stakeholders need to understand that the relay actors are a strategic actors in maintaining the balance in the management process (Bettencourt, 2010; Godet, 2013; Lakner et al., 2018). In addition, the level of convergence and alliance between stakeholders was also addressed in this study and shows a significant degree of convergence between actors. **(Appendix A. Fig.3).** Thus, the more the actors are distant from each other, the more their divergence is intense (Fetoui et al., 2021). However, it is important to take into consideration that the statements of the participants in the workshops and interviews may not completely reflect the reality. This is why it is necessary to expect conflicts in terms of water management, whether between the actors themselves or between the actors and the users. Moreover, the meetings we conducted confirmed the existence of certain levels of conflict. This conflict concern the agricultural irrigation, the digging of wells and boreholes, the water use from dams and the granting of operating authorizations, all of which are sensitive and represent potential points of conflict (Ait Kadi and Ziyad, 2018; Ben-Daoud et al., 2021; Del Vecchio and Mayaux, 2017).

The balance of power between the actors shows the power exercised by certain actors such as SRBA, WS and ES, who are also the regulating actors. Moreover, despite the importance of certain actors in the water management, such as PDA and DRA, we note their positioning in the category of autonomous actors. This result underlines the need for the policy-makers intervention to bring about the necessary changes through their power in order to involve these actors in the IWRM process (Bettencourt, 2010; Hermans and Thissen, 2009; Metz and Glaus, 2019). Following this analysis of the different categories of actors in terms of their influence and dependence, it appears that the actors strongly involved are represented by the relay actors, must resort to dominated actors in terms of support and alliance (Yeo and Benchekara, 2015). This support will help build a more balanced water management system.

The analysis also included the degree of participation and involvement of each stakeholder in all the objectives initially established. The objectives exhibiting the highest degree of involvement are:

- Ensuring the continuity of water resource data, which makes it possible to assess the impact of the use on the environment.
- Strengthening participation with steering groups and working meetings with a large number of stakeholders
- Ensuring the compliance with water laws and standards (Law 10-95; Law 36-15; Standards ...).
- Adopting a medium- or long-term planning taking into account the evolution of parameters.

The highlighted objectives can be considered as priority challenges to be raised by all actors in a common project. The rest of the objectives are ranked as secondary according to the choice of the actors.

Based on these objectives drawing the strongest involvement, importance was given to the availability of water data by stakeholders as this is crucial in evaluating the indicators' performance in IWRM implementation (Ben-Daoud et al 2021 Abdullaev2014). Stakeholders made this choice based on the reality that water data are not continuous and not accessible to everyone (Ben-Daoud et al, 2021). This requires the actors to spend more effort to improve the accessibility of water data for both managers, and academics by implementing Law 31-13 on access to information.

With the same importance as water data, stakeholder participation is also crucial. Moreover, the involved stakeholders in the study area have not yet evolved to levels that allow for real involvement and consultation in the decisive stages of the management process(Ben-Daoud et al., 2021; Hargrove and Heyman, 2020; Newton and Elliott, 2016). The insufficiency in the implementation of laws and standards related to water such as Law 10-95; law 36-15, constitutes one of the factors limiting the real implementation of policies related to water resources management. This challenge related to the law's application must be supported by the stakeholders' awareness to participate on a more knowledge-intensive base.

In addition, the net distance between the objectives was also measured. This allowed us to identify the objectives on which the stakeholders are positioned in agreement or disagreement. The results show the significant net distance between the objective relating to 'stakeholder consultation' and the other three objectives, such as 'regulation', 'water data' and 'planning' **(Appendix A. Fig.4).** This result confirms the important effort required from the actors, in order to achieve the most mobilizing objectives described above.

Stakeholders believe that awareness has not had a significant impact on the improvement of the water management process. Nevertheless, similar studies (Al-Jawad and Kalin, 2019; Godinez-Madrigal et al., 2019; Moriarty et al., 2010; Schröder, 2019) show that awareness raising has a great importance in the IWRM process. The same studies show that awareness raising allows stakeholders not only to lead local processes related to water management but also to take ownership of water management issue in their territory. In this sense, all stakeholders must be adequately included, regardless of their individual economic and political influence. In this sense, the involvement of relay actors should be seriously considered in order to establish a common management framework involving all stakeholders. Furthermore, the implementation of a water management policy is largely determined by the manner in which local actors translate and appropriate this policy (Del Vecchio, 2018).

The design of such a policy, which takes into consideration the interactions between actors, starts with the framing of the issue related to the interaction between actors and its programming in the political agenda. Consequently, the conflicting interests of the different actors must be considered in the implementation of the policy related to water management (Del Vecchio, 2018; Fritsch and Benson, 2019; Metz and Glaus, 2019). In addition, the prospective analysis of possible future scenarios and stakeholder choices should absolutely integrate the power relationships, alliances and conflicts between the different stakeholders as well as the most mobilizing objectives that emerged from this study. Indeed, this prospective analysis will enable water management stakeholders to make decisions while moving from the anticipation of alliances and conflicts between stakeholders to a strategic management process **(Appendix A. Fig. 5)**

We now turn back to the IWRM concept which requires in its implementation, a step by step process, with some changes occurring immediately and others taking several years of planning and capacity building of actors(Barbosa et al., 2017). Thus, medium and long term planning that takes into consideration the evolution of the parameters is a necessity, in order to support the efforts made by the actors in their strategic management process (Giordano and Shah, 2014; Loucks and van Beek, 2017)

Moreover, the establishment of governance in the water management sector also has a significant role in determining the outcomes of collective actions between actors facing common management issues. In this regard, governance is already becoming more useful for analyzing common resources and collective actions at the local level and this has been confirmed by studies in the field (Ahmadi et al., 2019). Moreover, Katusiime and Schütt, (2020) has shown that the performance of water resources governance is significantly better with integrated water resources management practices (Katusiime and Schütt, 2020).

At the end of this discussion, a number of key stakeholders should have been identified, as well as the possible interactions that stakeholders face in the management system. The achievement of any objective depends on the stakeholders' strategies and their involvement in the global management process.

5. Conclusion

This paper was designed to highlight the issues and opportunities related to stakeholder's contribution to achieve an IWRM. The analysis of stakeholders' interaction, carried out in this study showed the existence of many decentralized structures. The structures are mostly dependent on the decisions of the ministries in charge at the central level. The existing governance system requires the implementation of IWRM practices as the adopted management model reflects the political and social power existing among the actors in the water sector. Furthermore, four categories of actors were identified in the analysis based on their degree of influence-dependence. The more influential and less dependent stakeholders are the most appropriate for successful implementation of IWRM in the study area. As for the relay actors, they constitute strategic stakeholders that can act to maintain the stability of the management process. For the third category of stakeholders, and despite their important role in the IWRM process, the analysis identified their autonomous character in the water management process. This requires their involvement in the management system by the relay actors.

Following the analysis of the degree of commitment of the stakeholders to their objectives, the study shows a low commitment of stakeholders to some objectives, such as capacity building, implementation of technical means, water uses integration and awareness implementation. Therefore, the areas of interest that the stakeholders need to address, such as:

- Strengthening the participatory approach and the involvement of all stakeholders, especially those identified in the category of autonomous actors.
- Strengthening the capacities of water management actors, particularly in terms of new technologies and new regulations related to the water sector.
- Involving the new structures established by Law 36-15 on water, such as the basin councils, governance and monitoring bodies for the IWRM process.

It is important to highlight the limitations of the analysis conducted in this work. (1) the approach dealing with the relationships between actors could be influenced in the long term by policy changes at the central level. (2) The MACTOR analysis is also dependent on the reliability of the statements of the participants in the data collection, despite the criteria adopted in the identification of actors. (3) A local context characterized by rapid institutional dynamics that make it difficult to predict the long-term behavior and prerogatives of the various participants.

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Declarations

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