

## People's Republic of Bangladesh Country Overview



### Summary

Bangladesh has made remarkable progress in advancing access to water and sanitation services by increasing access to drinking water to 98%<sup>1</sup> and reducing open defecation practices to almost zero in 2019 (1.5%<sup>2</sup>). In 2018 74.8% of the population had a handwashing station with water and soap on their premises<sup>3</sup>. The major WASH challenge Bangladesh is now facing is to improve practices and quality of WASH services i.e., predominantly water quality and safe disposal of human excreta to fully realize health and wellbeing outcomes for the poorest. In achieving this, the sector also has to overcome climate change impacts affecting the sustainability and continuity and quality of WASH services.

According to the SDG Financing Strategy 2017 of General Economic Division, Bangladesh will require additional 11.80 billion dollars to achieve SDG-6 (constant 2015-16 prices) out of which 9.34 billion dollars is required for SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2<sup>4</sup>. The financial requirement for fiscal year 2017-2018 for SDG 6.1 & SDG 6.2 was 1.31 billion US dollars. Allocation was US\$ 0.80 billion dollar and the gap was 0.51 billion US\$<sup>5</sup>. About half of the WASH sector budget allocation for SDG-6 is from the public-sector funds, with private sector contributing 30% and development assistance making up the balance (20%). Government has also expanded the Annual Development Programme (ADP)<sup>6</sup> Budget allocations to the sector from US\$ 563 million in fiscal year 2017-18 to US\$ 1.44 billion in 2018-19. The steady growth and upward trend in WASH budget allocation continues in FY2020-21 ADP like the previous years with 14.4% increase from revised ADP of FY2019-20 (US\$ 1.26 billion)<sup>7</sup>. However, FY 2020-21 water and sanitation got larger share whereas hygiene receives a small amount i.e., less than 5% of the total WASH budget.

In addition, access to water and sanitation services is significantly lower in poorer communities and among vulnerable groups.

### Five major actions to ensure an aggressive approach to progress include:

1. Advocacy to Ministry of Finance to approve separate budget lines for water, sanitation and hygiene by 2021, to support tracking sector financing to reach SDG 6 targets.
2. Increase Government yearly budget by USD 250 million for WASH in each fiscal year to reduce the budget gap by 50%.
3. By 2022, ensure that at least 2 million more people in arsenic contaminated areas get access to safe water.

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<sup>1</sup> MICS, 2019

<sup>2</sup> ibid

<sup>3</sup> ibid

<sup>4</sup> SDG Financing Strategy Bangladesh Perspective; General Economics Division, June 2017

<sup>5</sup> The GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey, Bangladesh data, DPHE and WHO

<sup>6</sup> Policy Brief, WASH Budget Scenario in Proposed National Budget FY 2020-2021, WaterAid, UNICEF and PPRC 2020

<sup>7</sup> ibid

4. By 2022, increase access to safely managed sanitation by 5% and bring 75% of the population under basic sanitation.
5. By 2022, increase at least 5% of the national WASH budget allocated for Hand Hygiene for all promotion, including proper menstrual hygiene management.

## 1. Country Context

Bangladesh lies in the north-eastern part of South Asia with an area of 147,570 sq. km and a population of around 168.10<sup>8</sup> million, having population density of 1,116 people/sq. km. Over two thirds of its population lives in rural areas, although urban population is increasing at a very high rate i.e. double than the national growth rate<sup>9</sup>. Bangladesh is situated in the world's largest delta and is particularly exposed to impacts of climate change like sea-level rise, increasingly frequent and intense hydro-climatic hazards. Development priorities and poverty reduction strategies are guided by the 7<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan (2016 – 2020) defined by the government's Vision 2021 and the Perspective Plan (2010-2021). Over the last decade, the economy has grown at nearly 6 percent per year, poverty dropped by nearly a third while life expectancy, literacy and per capita food intake have improved considerably. Infant mortality rate decreased to 34 from 46 between 2012 and 2019 (MICS 2019). In the FY 2018-19, the GDP growth rate was 8.13%, with per capita of USD 1,751 (BBS, 2017).

The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) has the statutory responsibility for ensuring access to water supply, sanitation and hygiene services. Identified lead agencies with specific responsibilities for urban, peri-urban and rural WASH can be mentioned as Water and Sewerage Authorities (WASA), City Corporations / Municipalities and Department of Public Health Engineering (DPHE). Bangladesh has been ranked as one of the most environmentally vulnerable countries in the world where challenges include climate change impact on WASH services, high rural-urban migration rates, particularly to slums, lack of services for hard-to-reach areas, groundwater arsenic contamination and inadequate faecal sludge and solid waste management.

## 2. SDGs and the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Sector

Bangladesh met the Millennium Development Targets for drinking water by increasing progress from 68% to 87% between 1990 and 2015. Remarkable progress has been made by reducing open defecation practices to around 1% by 2015 from 34% in 2003 and increasing access to improved sanitation to 64%<sup>10</sup>.

In the era of the SDGs 98.5 of population has access water from improved water sources. However, only 42.6 % population has access to safely managed drinking water services<sup>11</sup>. In terms of sanitation, basic service coverage is 64.4% nationally. Safely managed sanitation coverage is 36.4% (estimated) for rural areas; no data is available for urban areas<sup>12</sup>.

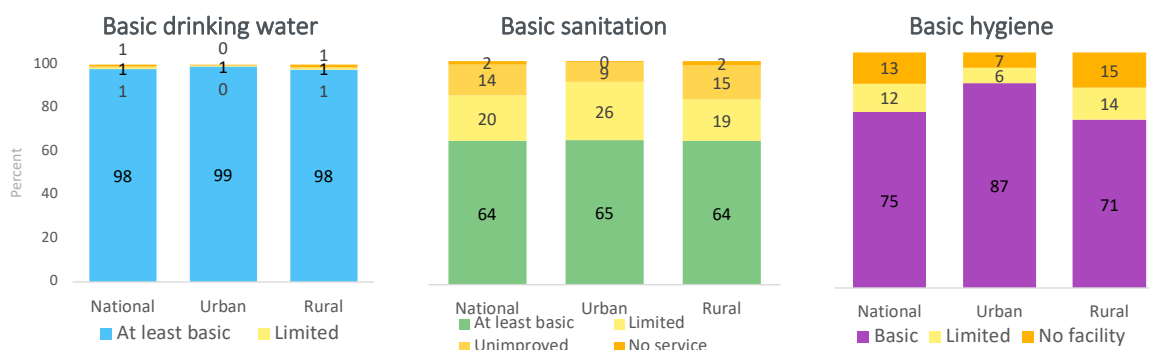
<sup>8</sup> <https://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population/BD>

<sup>9</sup> Population growth (annual %) in Bangladesh was reported at 1.042 % in 2019, World Bank Nov 2020

<sup>10</sup> MICS 2019

<sup>11</sup> Household members with an improved drinking water source located on premises, free of *E. coli*, available when needed and ≤50ppb Arsenic

<sup>12</sup> MICS 2019



Source: MICS 2019

The national Vision is to achieve universal access to safe & affordable drinking water for all and ensure access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene by 2030<sup>13</sup>. Bangladesh aims to achieve this in three five-year phases. Phase-1: 2016 – 2020: Achieve universal coverage in rural and urban populations using various water supply options; Phase-2: 2021-2025: Sustain universal coverage in rural & urban populations by increasing service delivery standards; Phase-3: 2026-2030 continue to work for sustaining universal coverage in rural & urban.

A major challenge that Bangladesh is facing is the gap between access and quality of WASH services. The access to improved water is 98.5% (not including arsenic contamination) while safely managed drinking water service coverage is only 42.6%. The progression from open defecation free (almost 1.5%) to universal access to safely managed sanitation, which is currently 36.4% in rural areas (Estimated MICS 2019). Other challenges are inadequately designed low-cost and low-tech solutions for specific environments such as flood and storm-prone coastal areas or water-scarce hilly environments; faecal sludge management and safely managed sanitation options for densely populated areas such as urban slums. Shared toilet commonly uses in densely populated urban slum, which is not counted as improved toilet by the JMP. Additional solutions are needed to extend and affordable resilient services to people living in hard to reach (HtR) areas, coastal and arsenic prone areas. The weak capacity of local government institutions and mobilization of funding in a timely manner are other sector development issues to tackle in order to achieve the SDGs in the WASH sector.

Actions taken by MoLGRD&C to address these challenges include a Joint Sector WASH Bottleneck Analysis 2018-2019 to assess the sector against the SWA collaborative behaviours and building blocks in the eight divisions of Bangladesh and the formulation, review and updating of policies, strategies and plans aligning SDG towards facilitating emerging issues and to target the most vulnerable in the hard-to-reach areas. Challenging example includes implementing the Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Faecal Sludge Management: IRF-FSM (2017); Implementation Plan for Arsenic Mitigation for Water Supply 2015-25 (2018), revision of the National Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation (2014) expected to published in 2021 and revised National Pro-Poor Strategy for water Supply and Sanitation Sector in Bangladesh (2020), National Action Plan for IRF-FSM (Paurashava & Rural Areas) (2020), development of National Menstrual Hygiene Management strategy-expected to be endorsed in 2021, revising National Water and Sanitation Policy (1998), Sector Development plan in line with SDG. Other actions include re-establishing and operationalizing the defunct thematic groups, the Local Consultative Group (LCG) for Water Supply and Sanitation Sector, Water Supply and Sanitation Forum coordination, monitoring, development, resource

<sup>13</sup> Revision of the National Strategy for Water Supply and Sanitation (2014) expected to publish in 2021

mobilization and technical support for the implementation of sector-wide strategies and approaches, institutional capacity building, such as establishment of a Water Supply & Sanitation Human Resource Development Centre for Government technocrats, a Management Information System using GIS, National Water Supply & Sanitation Information Centre and sustainable services delivery through implementing high value projects of the sector.

### 3. COVID-19 and WASH Sector

The Government of Bangladesh aims to maximize the benefits WASH services can have by serving as barriers to human-to-human transmission of the virus. The sector thus helps to lower the immediate impact of the pandemic. The Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) seeks to achieve continuity and improve equitable access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services in response to COVID-19.

To reinforce the benefits for reducing transmission and impact of the epidemic, the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MoLGRD&C) has drafted a 'National WASH Sector Strategic paper 2020-22 for Response to Covid-19 Outbreak through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions' together with technical assistance from UNICEF and in close collaboration with other relevant Ministries, especially for Health, Education, Information, Religious Affairs and various other important local, national and international stakeholders. In addition, the sector also needs to take a longer-term view and commits to increasing resilience of WASH services and communities against the future crisis.

#### Key Strategic Priorities are:

- **Ensure continuity and making water, sanitation and hygiene available focusing on eliminating inequalities.**
- **Improve resilience, safety and water quality of water supply systems**
- **Ensure that water and sanitation systems are resilient and sustainable** in order to protect public health and support national health systems despite the impacts of climate change, environmental degradation and emergencies.
- **Hygiene promotion, awareness and behaviour change:** MoLGRD&C should take the lead in developing to develop and adopt Hand Hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap to bridge the current momentum for hand hygiene in the COVID-19 response with the longer-term goal of making hand hygiene a pillar in public health interventions in Bangladesh.
- **Critical WASH considerations ahead of reopening the schools:** Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, safeguards are in place in schools before they reopen to enable and encourage handwashing with soap at key times among school children as soon as they return.
- **Institutionalise WASH in healthcare facilities (HCF):** In the short term, gap analysis and improvements of WASH and waste management services at HCF level (including quarantine centres) are needed and practices like hand hygiene, environmental cleaning and disinfecting, strengthened. Longer-term aspects would be investments for operation and maintenance of these systems and systematic integration in operational protocols for long-lasting behaviour change and fostering of WASH in institutions as a social norm.
- **Sector Coordination and Monitoring:** The needed virtual platforms and digital tools have to be in place and must to be used effectively to ensure dynamic sector coordination and monitoring. It will be necessary to strengthen Sector Development Plan (SDP) thematic groups specially 'Hygiene, gender and Inclusion thematic group', Local Consultative Group-Water Supply and Sanitation, with the supervision of Policy Support Branch (PSB), LGD and the National Forum for Water Supply and Sanitation (NFWSS) for strengthening sector coordination and monitoring, particularly through virtual platforms is an important element to

increase resilience, equity and build back better.

- **Strengthen institutional capacity building and sustainability of service delivery system**
- **Incentivize the private sector to lead the delivery of sustainable solutions**, especially handwashing products and services for low-income consumers.
- **Leverage national and global partnerships** with stakeholders such as International Training Network (ITN-BUET), icddr.b, UNICEF, WHO, Development Banks, NGOs, Sanitation and Water for All (SWA) and others.

In total, **US\$ 849** million financial support is required to ensure the WASH sector's immediate, intermediate and long-term response to COVID-19 from April 2020 to December 2022. Government has committed USD 298 million, **USD 200 million** from World Bank-AIIB, **USD 33 million** from ISDB and **USD 2 million** grant from UNICEF as technical assistance including the development of the National WASH Strategic Paper to response COVID and development of Hand Hygiene for All (HH4A) road map. There is currently a funding gap of **USD 316 million** is required from International Financial Institutions, Development Partners and private sector to assist the countries fight against the spread of COVID-19 and strengthen national systems to cope with the impact of the pandemic<sup>14</sup>. The relevant interventions by UN agencies are also included in the UN Bangladesh COVID-19 socio-economic recovery framework (SERF).

#### 4. Collaborative Behaviours, Building Blocks and Guiding Principles

In the context of the SDGs, Government leadership of the sector planning processes has been enhanced by the establishment or strengthening of government led multi-stakeholder platforms such as the SDG 6 high-level platform, chairing the Local Consultative Group and the formulation of the National Action Plans for SDG 6.1 and 6.2. Government systems for procurement of water and sanitation services are used by most development partners. A budget and expenditure tracking platform have been piloted to strengthen accountability and provide evidence-based data to support sustainable financing strategies. The SDG Tracker is being developed by the Government to track progress towards elimination of inequalities. And an integrated management information system for the rural WASH sector with the support of development partners such as JICA, SIDA and UNICEF is being established.

##### The Government has taken several critical steps in the past two years:

- Establishment of Policy Support Branch (PSB) for WASH sector development, policies and coordination under MoLGRD&C.
- Operationalizing the defunct thematic groups, the Local Consultative Group (LCG) for Water Supply and Sanitation Sector, Water Supply and Sanitation Forum coordination, monitoring, development, resource mobilization and technical support for the implementation of sector-wide strategies and approaches.
- Establishment of water quality testing laboratories in every district to ensure the water quality and to enhance the water quality and surveillance activity.
- Establishment of a Faecal Sludge Management Support (FSM) cell to address the safely managed sanitation systems throughout the country.
- Development of Implementation Plan of Arsenic Mitigation – Water Supply (IPAM- WS) (2018), Institutional and Regulatory Framework for Faecal Sludge Management (IRF-FSM)-2017, revision of Pro-Poor Strategy for Water and Sanitation 2020 and National Action Plan for IRF-FSM (Paurashava & Rural Areas) (2020) by the PSB of LGD
- Establishment of National Water Supply & Sanitation Information Centre in DPHE and

<sup>14</sup> MoLGRD&C (2020), Draft Bangladesh Strategy Paper 2020-22 for Response to Covid-19 Outbreak through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions



sustainable services delivery such as a high value \$240 million 'Arsenic Risk Reduction Project for Water Supply' for the populations at risk of arsenic affected aquifers being implemented by DPHE.

A comprehensive multi-stakeholder WASH Bottleneck analysis based on the SWA building blocks was conducted in 2018-2019 by the MoLGRD&C in collaboration with UNICEF in the eight divisions of Bangladesh to assess and priority gaps in urban and rural WASH services and institutional WASH delivery. Costed action plans have been developed to address the priority gaps.

The following section provides the significant challenges and bottlenecks, which are common to all the sub-sectors in all the divisions:

- **Sustainable Service Delivery:** the absence of functional Operation and Maintenance strategies at the sub-national. Development of National operation and maintenance guidelines/strategies for both urban and rural context including WASH in Institutes as recommended priority actions;
- **Planning, Monitoring and Review:** The absence of integrated needs-based plans resulted in the recommended priority activity to develop area-wise needs-based plans that capture the specific and diverse needs of the vulnerable population in the urban slums, areas that are prone to salinity, arsenic, and floods, and other hard to reach areas and vulnerable populations in terms of gender, disabilities climate vulnerability and socio-economic status;
- **Sector Policy and Strategy:** The weak alignment of key sector documents with emerging issues. Review and updating of the key sector documents such as the National Water and Sanitation Policy (1998) and the Sector Development Plan (FY 2011 and 2025) were key activities identified;
- **Capacity Development:** institutional capacity gaps include the weak functionality of some of the support structures, absence of harmonized and currently used tools, especially for community mobilization and hygiene education and training as well as climate resilient WASH
- **Budget & Expenditure:** The consultations indicated that financial flows and commitment are unpredictable, not separated and ring-fenced for WASH at division level and other governmental tiers. Activities related to developing accountability and tracking mechanisms were proposed;
- **Communication:** absence of mechanisms and functional structures at the divisional level to facilitate communication between policy makers and technical staff; national and sub-national divisions; between sectors such as health, WASH and education and at the community level;
- **Cross cutting issues:** address gender, inclusion of people with disabilities and climate change adaptation were identified as priority actions within the various sector building blocks, rather than as separate issues. Development of National Menstrual Hygiene Management strategy as recommended priority actions.

The Government, with support from WASH stakeholders, has conducted the Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS)-2018 survey to reflect the SDGs agenda and to monitor how the country is considering the SDGs in their national target setting and national plans and policies. Key findings are:

- Implementation of national WASH policies and plans is constrained by inadequate human and financial resources;
- While country have national standards for drinking-water and wastewater, institutions tasked with regulatory oversight for WASH service delivery are stretched and unable to undertake the required surveillance;
- National financial systems to support decision-making should be strengthened;
- National WASH targets are increasingly reflecting SDG ambitions, aiming to provide universal coverage and to reach higher levels of service. However, a dramatic increase in performance will be required to achieve these targets;

- Large funding gaps remain between what is needed to reach WASH targets and what is available;
- Bangladesh is gradually responding to the “leave no one behind agenda” by establishing policy measures to reach populations living in vulnerable situations;
- External support agencies (ESAs) are increasingly aligning their objectives with the SDGs and prioritizing a focus on WASH systems strengthening

## 5. Eliminating Inequalities

**Urban/Rural:** There is almost no disparity between the rural and urban areas of Bangladesh in terms of access to improved drinking water services (rural - 98.2% and urban – 99.6%) but little disparity exists in terms of wealth quantile index (poorest 94.4% and richest 99.9%). However, some disparities exist in terms of access to improved sanitation (Rural – 82.9% and Urban – 90.5%; poorest 67.1% and richest 96.5%), presence of handwashing facilities with soap and water (Rural – 71.4%% and Urban – 87%). It is to be noted that access is not homogenous in urban areas: In the urban slums, urban dwellers with no education were at the highest risk of drinking water source contamination with faecal matter and lack of improved sanitation facilities. In terms of financial resources, disparities are also observed between urban and rural areas. As much as 80% of funds for water supply are spent in urban areas and 20% in rural areas. Similar situation is observed in sanitation sub sector. Only 22% of total sanitation funds have been spent in rural areas and the remaining 80% funds in urban areas (GLAAS 2019). Govt. support is nil or very miser for WASH support to the low-income communities in cities and across the country vulnerable disaster-prone communities and groups (elderly, underprivileged children, women) are not sufficiently covered by monitoring mechanism of functionality of WASH infrastructure. This is crucial as climate change is exacerbating existing vulnerabilities to both slow and fast onset hazards among vulnerable groups, affecting water quality and quantity as well as the continuity and sustainability of access to WASH services.

**Gender:** while 88.7% of the poorest women collect water in families, only 4.4 percent of men do the same (MICS 2019). According to National Hygiene Survey 2018, 58% of schools had water available at the separate change rooms/toilets for girls, 35% schools had soap available at the change, 32% of schools had soap and water available at these change room/toilets, 22% of schools had sanitary pad disposal bins available and 13% of schools had hygiene kits available. Based on a six-month recall period, 30% of girls reported that they missed school due to menstruation. Among those who missed schools due to menstruation, the mean number of days missed was 2.5 at each cycle in last 6 months (Bangladesh National Hygiene Survey, BBS, 2018).

**Socio-economic:** About 73.9% of the poorest spent less than 30 minutes to collect water while this figure is 84.7% for the richest quintile. About 7.6% poorest spent over 1 hour to collect water, while only 4.3% richest spent more than 1 hour for same. 81.8% poorest were found exposed to arsenic contaminated drinking water below WHO standard, while 86.9% richest exposed same time. The prevalence of open defecation (4.4%) amongst the poorest households is significantly higher than among the richest and three times national prevalence (1.5%). The practice of open defecation among Bengali is only 1.3% while this fourteen time among other ethnic communities (17.8%). Over 44% poorest household were found with basic handwashing facilities while 96.8% richest household had this (MICS, 2019).

**Geographic disparity – between divisions:** The prevalence of open defecation is the highest in Ranpur division (6.7%), this is the lowest (0.1%) in Khulna division; only 71.1% population in Sylhet division use drinking water which is below 50 ppb of arsenic (Bangladesh standard) compared to 99.4% for Barishal division; only 44.3% of the residents of Dhaka Division compared with 88.1% in Barishal Division use a drinking water source that is free from *E. coli* contamination (MICS 2019).

**Challenging terrain:** The Water and Sanitation Sector Development Plan (FY 2011 -2025) cautions that there are Hard to Reach (HtR) areas (i.e. urban slums, islands, wetlands) where the sufficiency and reliability of access to improved water and sanitation services is lower than the national averages.

SDG Indicator on Water, sanitation and Hygiene	Progress Made (MICS, 2019)	
	General population (National achievement)	Most marginalized/ poorest quintiles
Safely managed water <sup>15</sup> (national arsenic standard)	42.6 %	35.4%
Safely managed water <sup>16</sup> (WHO guideline for arsenic)	39.1%	31.0%
Safely managed sanitation	36.4%	14.34%
Handwashing facilities with water and soap: SDG 1.4.1 & 6.2.1	74.8%	44.3%

Steps taken by government to eliminate inequalities include evidence generation for more precise targeting of the areas of need using nationally commissioned surveys such as the Demographic Health Survey and the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS). Review of policies and strategies such as the National Pro-Poor Strategy; National Strategy for Hard-to-Reach areas and the Implementation Plan on Arsenic Mitigation. Services delivery approach by commissioning high value context- specific projects in hard to reach like the Bangladesh Arsenic Mitigation Project, costal belt area, Tea Gardens and Chittagong Hill Tracts.

## 6. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Financing

According to the SDG Financing Strategy 2017 of General Economic Division, Bangladesh will require additional 11.80 billion dollars to achieve SDG-6 (constant 2015-16 prices) out of which 9.34 billion dollars is required for SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2<sup>17</sup>. The financial requirement for fiscal year 2017-2018 for SDG 6.1 & SDG 6.2 was 1.31 billion US dollars. Allocation was US\$ 0.80 billion dollars and the gap was 0.51 billion US\$<sup>18</sup>. About half of the WASH sector budget allocation for SDG-6 is from the public-sector funds, with private sector contributing 30% and development assistance making up the balance (20%). Government has also expanded the Annual Development Programme (ADP)<sup>19</sup> budget allocations to the sector from US\$ 563 million in fiscal year 2017-18 to US\$ 1.44 billion in 2018-19. The steady growth and upward trend in WASH budget allocation continues in FY2020-21 ADP like the previous years with 14.4% increase from revised ADP of FY2019-20 (US\$ 1.26 billion)<sup>20</sup>. However, in FY 2020-21 water and sanitation got larger share whereas hygiene receives a small amount i.e. less than 5% of the total WASH budget.

The strategy to reduce the financial deficit is to increase government allocations, coupled with resource mobilization towards increased domestic private markets and commercial resources and increased efficiencies with more efficient use of allocations.

<sup>15</sup> Use of safely managed drinking water services meeting national arsenic standard (50 ppb)

<sup>16</sup> Use of safely managed drinking water services meeting WHO guideline for arsenic (10 ppb)

<sup>17</sup> SDG Financing Strategy Bangladesh Perspective; General Economics Division, June 2017

<sup>18</sup> The GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey, Bangladesh data, DPHE and WHO

<sup>19</sup> Policy Brief, WASH Budget Scenario in Proposed National Budget FY 2020-2021, WaterAid, UNICEF and PPRC 2020

<sup>20</sup> ibid



Disparities in access to sanitation facilities vary between the rich and poor. Such gaps are also geographical and based on gender. Such inequities are being addressed by prioritizing funding to arsenic prone, coastal, hilly and other hard to reach areas and increasing WASH budget in the Annual Development Programmes with a dedicated WASH budget allocation for the urban and rural poor and the consideration of subsidies for the ultra-poor. Despite all efforts, 21 million from the poor to the poorest still lack hygienic toilet facilities. And people living in poor households are ten times more likely to use unimproved sanitation than those living in the richest households<sup>21</sup>. Moreover, sanitation facilities sensitive to the needs of disabled people are still lacking. The sanitation practices in densely populated urban slums are also far away from safely managed qualifiers.

Government recognises the need to reach the most vulnerable and marginalized as being critical in ensuring equitable services to all. Promotion of hand hygiene for all by 2030 and positive sustained behaviour change is an essential element of sustainability. The investments in water and sanitation will not pay dividend to the economy and the people if the relevant WASH and health indicators are not improved in a sustainable manner. Proper hygiene behaviour coupled with sustained use of services is therefore critical.

## 7. Country Priorities and Commitments

**Priorities for the next 3-5 years for the WASH sector include:**

- a. Surface water use will get priority over the ground water and by 2023 number of users per water point will be brought to 50 people/water point.
- b. Harness local resources to maintain efforts to sustain open defecation free status while expanding safely managed sanitation service to achieve the SDG 6.2 targets with significant and higher investments from the Government of Bangladesh.
- c. Approve and adopt 'National WASH Sector Strategic Paper 2020-22 in Response to Covid-19 Outbreak through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions' and continue Bangladesh Government efforts to invest in water, sanitation and hygiene to tackle COVID-19 pandemic and mobilize additional financing.
- d. Develop and adopt Hand Hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap to bridge the current momentum for hand hygiene in the COVID-19 response with the longer-term goal of making hand hygiene a pillar of public health interventions in Bangladesh.
- e. Rollout a multi-stakeholder national hygiene behaviour change campaign based on the HH4A road map and ensure that additional financing is mobilized.
- f. Encourage private sector, local entrepreneurs, Micro Finance Institutions and external support agencies and NGOs to participate WASH business in line with the revised pro-poor strategy 2020.
- g. Implement targeted, equitable, inclusive and innovative interventions taking into account the climate change adaption.
- h. Set up sustainable handwashing facilities with soap and sufficient water including proper waste management at the schools, healthcare facilities and public settings.
- i. Provide dedicated fund/projects on surface water/faecal sludge/sewerage treatment plants to address the WASH challenges in urban areas.
- j. Undertake development projects on water and sanitation in rural areas in line with the Pro-Poor Strategy-2020.

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid

### Important Government plan to achieve challenging targets of SDG 6 include:

1. Advocacy to Ministry of Finance to approve separate budget lines for water, sanitation and hygiene by 2021 to support tracking sector financing to reach SDG 6 targets.
2. Increase Government yearly budget by USD 250 million for WASH in each fiscal year to reduce the budget gap by 50%.
3. By 2022, ensure that at least 2 million more people in arsenic contaminated areas gain access to arsenic safe water.
4. By 2022, increase access to safely managed sanitation by 5% and bring 75% of the population under basic sanitation.
5. By 2022, increase at least 5% of the national WASH budget allocated for Hand Hygiene for all promotion, including proper menstrual hygiene management.

**Development partners' commitments include a funding commitment of 150 million USD annually.**

### Road Map

Essential elements of the Government roadmap to achieve the commitments and priorities stated above include the following:

- December 2020: Approve 8<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan integrating actions and financing process to overcome identified bottlenecks of WASH.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2021: Approval of National Hand Hygiene for All (HH4A) road map and launch Multi-Sectoral National HH4A Campaign.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2021: Approval of GoB Rural Sanitation Project.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2021: Final Report of Safely Managed On-Site Sanitation (SMOSS) Study (definition and measurement criteria) to achieve SDG 6.2.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2021: Disseminate WASH Bottleneck Analysis report (Bangla and English version) at divisional level.
- December 2021: Disseminate WASH Accounts in Bangladesh including primary level out of pocket household expenditure.
- December 2021: Publish revised National Water Supply and Sanitation Strategy, revision and approval of National Water Supply and Sanitation Policy, development and approval of National Operation and Maintenance Guidelines/Strategy and Menstrual Hygiene Management Strategy.

## 8. Mechanisms for Review and Follow-up on the Priorities and Commitments

The SDG implementation Review (SIR) is a high-level national committee under the Honourable Prime Minister's office. SIR is headed by Principal Coordinator, SDGs Affairs established for the monitoring of SDGs. SIR has facilitated to develop National Action Plans for each goal including SDG6 and completed data gap analysis against indicators. It has established a monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) framework for SDGs that will facilitate the follow-ups of the priorities and commitments. In addition, different instruments of the LGD, MoLGRD&C such as the National Forum for Water Supply and Sanitation, National Sanitation Taskforce, National Coordination Committee for CWIS & FSM and National FSM-CWIS Cell (proposed in NAP for IRF-FSM), Thematic Groups of LCG, WATSAN

Committees at different tiers will play their assigned role that will support implementation and follow-ups. Further the Local Consultative Groups as well as Civil Society and I/NGO Networks (e.g. WSSCC, FANSA, etc.,) will contribute to the cause.

However, in addition to financial resources, lack of adequate and skilled manpower may affect the performance and functionality of these bodies. External and Domestic Resource mobilization, institutional capacity building, collaboration and partnerships are some of the approaches considered to overcome these barriers.

## 9. Processes and Materials used in the Preparation of the Brief

Decisions and outcomes of meetings, consultations and sessions of Ministerial Committee and working groups were instrumental in preparation of the Brief

### Processes and materials used in the preparation of the Brief

- The GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey, Bangladesh data, DPHE and WHO
- Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) Report 2019
- Draft WASH Bottleneck Analysis Divisional Reports 2020
- Joint Monitoring Programme Reports (JMP), 2019 update
- SWA Collaborative Behaviours Country Profile
- CSO commitments report to realize SSDG-6
- SDG Financing Strategy Bangladesh Perspective; General Economics Division, June 2017
- Policy Brief, WASH Budget Scenario in Proposed National Budget FY 2020-2021, WaterAid, UNICEF and PPRC 2020
- Country brief 2016, DPHE reports
- Inter-Ministry working groups/meetings, involved in the preparation of the Brief. Consultation meeting with Development Partners (DPs) and Civil Society Organization.

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Note: This country brief was prepared by Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives with the participation of partners including DPHE, WASAs, UNICEF, WHO, World Bank, ADB, ITN-BUET WaterAid, icddr.b, Dorp, Brac, Simavi, PAB, WSUP, iDE, DSK, NGOF, VERC etc. and Private Sector Organizations.

Table for the Country Priorities and Commitments for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, WASH and Table for the Important Government plans to achieve challenging targets of SDG-6 were attached below.

## Country Priorities and Commitments for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene, WASH

Priorities for next 3-5 years for WASH Sector	Present situation	Future plan
1. Surface water use will get priority over the ground water and by 2023 number of users per water point will be brought to 50 people/water point.	<p>At present around 98% of Drinking water sources are based on Ground Water in rural areas (Source: DPHE); Based on the directives of Honorable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, DPHE has been given priority to implement the surface water treatment plant, Reverse Osmosis Plant, Nano filtration and Solar Pond Sand Filter, Rainwater Harvesting Systems etc. through different projects.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPHE is Providing Surface Water in 37 District/Upazila Paurashavas.</li> <li>• The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2019, jointly arranged by GOB-UNICEF, has revealed the basic water supply coverage in Bangladesh as 98%.</li> <li>• DPHE is providing surface water through excavation/re-excavation of pond in rural areas through two projects.</li> <li>• Number of Ponds Re- excavated: 1008</li> <li>• Number of Ponds excavated: 100</li> <li>• At present Number of Waterpoint is person/Water point is 85 (As of June/2019)</li> <li>• DPHE is providing Rain water to the Rural people through different Running Projects. As of June 2020 almost 20 thousands rain water harvesting systems has been installed.</li> </ul> <p>The surface water treatment is in practice in several municipality of the country. Beside this, a huge community mobilization and awareness raising campaign has been fielded towards rain</p>	<p>DPHE is giving priority for Surface water use as much as possible. Currently, surface water treatment plant based project is being planned in Paurashavas by DPHE. At present, one technical project is running for feasibility study of surface water. Based on the study, more surface water related projects will be undertaken.</p>

	water utilization in the coastal areas including the utilization of spring water through Gravity Feed System (GFS) in the rural areas of Chittagong Hill districts.	
	<b>In Megacity Dhaka</b> at present use of ground water is 66% and surface water is 34% (Source: Dhaka WASA). In other cities surface water treatment plants are being built to increase use of surface water gradually.	In Dhaka City use of ground water and surface water will be 30% and 70% respectively by 2023.
<b>Priorities for next 3-5 years for WASH Sector</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Future plan</b>
<b>2.</b> Harness local resources to maintain efforts to sustain open defecation free status while expanding safely managed sanitation service to achieve the SDG 6.2 targets with significant and higher investments from the Government of Bangladesh.	Bangladesh is almost open defecation free (about 99% achieved). Basic sanitation coverage is 64%, safely managed sanitation is currently 36.4% in rural areas. (Source: Multi Cluster Indicator Survey, MICS, 2019 report by BBS and UNICEF). No data for Urban areas.  The following three projects has been initiated to maintain the sanitation coverage: 1.Village Sanitation Project 2.Rural water Sanitation and Hygiene for Human Capital Development Project. 3.Improvement of sustainable water supply, sanitation and hygiene system in hoar areas.	By 2022, increase access to safely managed sanitation by 5% and bring 75% of the population under basic sanitation.
<b>3.</b> Approve and adopt 'National WASH Sector Strategic Paper 2020-22 in Response to Covid-19 Outbreak through Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Interventions' and continue Bangladesh Government efforts to invest in water, sanitation and hygiene to tackle COVID-19	Final draft is prepared by Policy Support Branch of LGD, UNICEF and 17-member sector working committee). It will be submitted to LGD for approval by December 2020.	Expected to get approval by February 2021
	Three covid-19 related projects of DPHE are waiting for approval.	DPHE is planning to invest more in water, sanitation and hygiene to tackle COVID-19 pandemic.



pandemic and mobilize additional financing.		
4. Develop and adopt Hand Hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap to bridge the current momentum for hand hygiene in the COVID-19 response with the longer-term goal of making hand hygiene a pillar of public health interventions in Bangladesh.	Hand Hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap is now in draft stage (being prepared by DPHE, PSB, UNICEF and Hygiene Thematic Group). Hopefully, it will be submitted in January 2021 to LGD for approval.	Expected to get approval by March 2021
5. Rollout a multi-stakeholder national hygiene behaviour change campaign based on the HH4A road map and ensure that additional financing is mobilized.	This will be done after Hand Hygiene for all (HH4A) roadmap is approved by LGD.	Expected to rollout from May 2021
<b>Priorities for next 3-5 years for WASH Sector</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Future plan</b>
6. Encourage private sector, local entrepreneurs, Micro Finance Institutions and external support agencies and NGOs to participate WASH business in line with the revised pro-poor strategy 2020.	DPHE is encouraging local entrepreneurs, Micro-Finance Institutions, external support agencies and NGOs to participate WASH business in line with the revised pro-poor strategy 2020.	New projects will align with the revised pro-poor strategy 2020. Subsidy will be provided to hardcore poor for hygienic latrine, Faecal Sludge Management and community water supply schemes etc. Other people/households who can afford will be served by improving supply chain and creating enabling environment for private sector with incentives, tax holidays etc.

7. Implement targeted, equitable, inclusive and innovative interventions taking into account the climate change adaption.	DPHE is implementing 17 climate change adaption projects at coastal area.	Focus on adoption climate resilience technologies. 20 climate change adaption projects are being planned for coastal area.
8. Set-up sustainable Handwashing facilities with soap and sufficient water including proper waste management at the schools, healthcare facilities and public settings.	<p>Currently 47.6% schools (44.8% primary and 49.4% secondary schools)<sup>22</sup> have basic handwashing<sup>23</sup> facilities.</p> <p>According to the Global Baseline Report, 2019 for WASH in Health Care Facilities, 54% % of health care facilities in Bangladesh have hand hygiene materials at the point of care.</p>	<p>Set up sustainable handwashing facilities (group washing facilities with soap and running water taps that allow physical distance) and the use of environmental nudges and effective waste management at 130,000 schools by 2022 (Covid-19 strategy 2020).</p> <p>Provide around 50,000 handwashing facilities with water sources in hospitals, urban slums, public places and community clinics, isolation centers at city corporations, municipalities, district, upazila and union levels and ensure continued supply of running water and soap at these facilities by 2022 (Covid-19 strategy 2020).</p>
<b>Priorities for next 3-5 years for WASH Sector</b>	<b>Present situation</b>	<b>Future plan</b>
9. Provide dedicated fund/projects on surface water/faecal sludge/ sewerage treatment plants to address the WASH challenges in urban areas.	As per the directive of Hon'ble Prime Minister at ECNEC meeting, projects are being formulated with city management, waste management and water treatment plant as part of development activities of new cities at various levels. Sewage and solid waste management activities have been started in 69 municipalities of the	

<sup>22</sup> National Hygiene Survey, BBS-UNICEF-Water Aid, 2018

<sup>23</sup> Soap or powder in or within 30 ft of at least one student toilet (Q3.3) AND tap or bucket water in or within 30 ft of at least one student toilet

	country with the funding and cooperation of the Government of Bangladesh, Islamic Development Bank and the World Bank.	
<b>10.</b> Undertake development projects on water and sanitation in rural areas in line with the Pro-Poor Strategy-2020.	Revised pro-poor strategy 2020 proposes to provide targeted subsidy for water supply and sanitation services to the hardcore poor (bottom 12.9%). Source: Household Income Expenditure Survey, BBS 2016	New projects will align with the revised pro-poor strategy 2020. Subsidy will be provided to hardcore poor for hygienic latrine, FSM and community water supply schemes etc.

## Important Government plans to achieve challenging targets of SDG-6

Government plan	Present Situation
1. Approve separate budget lines for water, sanitation and hygiene by 2021 to support tracking sector financing to reach SDG 6 targets.	At present there is no consolidated allocation for WASH sector and separate budget code in our budget. WASH budget is imbedded in other sectoral budget. Separate WASH budget will help to track implementation progress and monitor SDG-6 achievement.
2. Increase Government yearly budget by USD 250 million for WASH in each fiscal year to reduce the budget gap by 50%.	According to the SDG Financing Strategy 2017 of General Economic Division, Bangladesh will require additional 11.80 billion dollar to achieve SDG-6, out of which 9.34 billion dollars is required for SDG 6.1 and SDG 6.2 <sup>24</sup> . The financial requirement for fiscal year 2017-2018 for SDG 6.1 & SDG 6.2 was 1.31 billion US dollar. Allocation was US\$ 0.80 billion dollar and the gap was 0.51 billion US\$ <sup>25</sup> . The steady growth and upward trend in WASH budget allocation in ADP continues in FY2020-21 like the previous years with 14.4% increase from revised ADP of FY2019-20 (US\$ 1.26 billion).
3. By 2022, ensure that at least 2 million more people in arsenic contaminated areas gain access to arsenic safe water.	According to Multi Cluster Indicator Survey (MICS), 2019 report by BBS and UNICEF around 17.5 million people currently drinking arsenic contaminated water with more than 50 parts per billion (Bangladesh water quality Standard).
4. By 2022, increase access to safely managed sanitation by 5% and bring 75% of the population under basic sanitation.	Bangladesh is almost open defecation free. Basic sanitation coverage is 64%, safely managed sanitation is currently 36.4% in rural areas (estimated), source: MICS 2019). No data for Urban (Safely Managed On-Site Sanitation Survey, SMOSS, piloting will help to decide method of next MICS).
5. By 2022, increase at least 5% of the national WASH budget allocated for Hand Hygiene for all promotion, including proper menstrual hygiene management.	FY 2020-21 water and sanitation got larger share, whereas hygiene receives a small amount i.e., less than 5% of the total WASH budget. Source: Policy Brief, WASH Budget Scenario in Proposed National Budget FY 2020-2021, WaterAid, UNICEF and Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), 2020.

<sup>24</sup> SDG Financing Strategy Bangladesh Perspective; General Economics Division, June 2017

<sup>25</sup> The GLAAS 2018/2019 country survey, Bangladesh data, DPHE and WHO