

Questions for guidance of participants in public consultations on water and sanitation services

These are guidance questions only. Please select the ones that you find of interest or you consider important for policy makers. Your comments need not be limited to these questions.

- 1.0 What is your understanding of the government’s commitment to “Ensure 24 hour reliable water service”?
 - 1.1 In the area that you live in/you are knowledgeable about, how many households have 24-hour reliable water service?
 - 1.2 How important is it to shift to piped water from water from wells and other sources?
 - 1.3 Is there 24 hours of reliable supply to all households through the current piped-water supply?
 - 1.4 Can you imagine a realistic scenario where there would be no need to build storage tanks in homes and commercial buildings?
 - 1.5 What are your views on hybrid solutions that include some self-supply (e.g., rain-water harvesting, wells) and piped water for some hours?
 - 1.6 Do you trust the quality of the purified drinking water supplied in your area? Can you drink it straight from the tap, without boiling it, as it is possible in some countries?
- 2.0 The Report on Water Demand Projections has assessed the present coverages (estimated at the end of 2019) of the country in water and sanitation. In water supply, the NWSDB [National Water Supply and Drainage Board] covers 41.3% of the population with piped water supply services. CBOs [Community Based Organizations] and Local Authorities [LGAs] provide water to a further 12%. An estimated 38.7% of the population is covered with basic water supply through self-supply served by protected dug wells and rainwater harvesting systems, and nearby public point sources including hand pumps and dug wells. In the estate sector, some 70% of the population is covered with water supply, with a growing percentage having access to safely managed, treated water supply. The coverage in sanitation is over 92% around the country except in estate areas where coverage is just 67%, and a good number of households share toilets. Most households in Sri Lanka have a proper toilet. Some 5 % use shared or public toilets or have a direct-drop pit latrine. A further 2% do not have a fixed place for defecation. Safely managed sanitation is achieved only for sewerage – which currently stands at 2.1%, mainly in Colombo, or when a household uses a two-pit pour-flush latrine with some 3 years storage capacity for one pit.
 - 2.1 In your Province/District [please specify] is the coverage above the national average as stated above, or below? In what areas? Be specific. If possible, give sources that can be checked.
- 3.0 The government has promised to “introduce an efficient garbage, sewage and liquid waste management system as well as a water purification system” for Colombo.

- 3.1 How important is it to introduce sewage and fecal sludge management systems in other cities and non-urban areas?
- 3.2 What would be a good way of prioritizing these projects?
- 4.0 What are the current problems, if any, experienced regarding septage in your area?
- 5.0 Should the government have a single objective for urban, rural and estate sector water supply? If not, what should the sector-specific objectives be?
- 6.0 Water and sanitation services (WSS) require large upfront capital expenditures, some continuing operational costs, and periodic costs of maintenance and upgrading.
 - 6.1 Do you believe that the central or provincial governments, or local government authorities should bear the full responsibility for these investments? Do they have the capacity?
 - 6.2 Do you accept the value of cost-reflective tariffs that will make it easier to mobilize the required investments?
 - 6.3 Do you see a need for support mechanisms such as low-interest revolving funds that can extend loan facilities for WSS?
 - 6.3.1 Should these facilities be open to LGAs or limited to CBOs?
 - 6.4 How can the efficiency of operations by service providers be improved?
 - 6.5 Is there a role for private participation in WSS?
- 7.0 Who should be responsible for setting water and sewerage/septage tariffs?
 - 7.1 Supplier (e.g., NWSDB, LGAs, CBOs)?
 - 7.2 Provincial government Ministry?
 - 7.3 Central government Ministry?
 - 7.4 Public Utility Commission of Sri Lanka?
 - 7.5 Based on a formula, tied to factors such as cost of living index?
- 8.0 If tariffs are set through regulation, how frequently should they be revised?
- 9.0 Is there a need to regulate the quality of water supplied through piped-water systems?
 - 9.1 Should the supplier conduct periodic tests and publicize the results?
 - 9.2 Should a regulator conduct tests or check the tests conducted by the supplier?
 - 9.3 What is the ideal frequency of testing? Or should it be random?
- 10.0 If regulatory proceedings such as tariff determinations or the setting of standards for water quality are to be conducted, what is the preferred location? Colombo, the Provincial Capital or other?