How we can accelerate WASH through public sector development?

WASH Monitoring in Bangladesh

25 unions under six sub districts of the districts of Barguna, Laxmipur, Kishoreganj, Tangail, Sirajganj and Bagerhat in Bangladesh are the home of almost 842,000 people. 61% of this population has access to safe sanitation and 87% to safe drinking water. To realise full WASH coverage in these districts, we need to drastically change our approach. Traditional solutions focused on building (subsidized) WASH infrastructure are not sustainable and cannot meet the needs of the growing population.

Empowering, informing and organising citizens

The WASH Monitoring programme led by WASH Alliance partner DORP, uses Budget Tracking as a mechanism to empower the people to voice their WASH needs to the government and to ensure that the relevant policy makers take a positive approach to ensure the right to water and sanitation of the people. This will finally lead to increased accountability and transparency of local governments. While doing so, changing the mindsets of all stakeholders involved to create a system for sustainable and affordable WASH services is main priority. This is the only way to adapt to fast population growth and to achieve full coverage.

WHAT IS BUDGET TRACKING?

Budget Tracking helps create accountability and transparency in WASH budget allocated and utilization from district to community level. Budget Tracking is based on two pillars. Firstly, it creates demand for WASH services in communities through a participatory approach, for example in WASH Health Village meetings. This way, it ensures the people’s participation in budget preparation processes, enabling them to better voice their needs. Special attention goes to the empowerment of women and children.

Secondly, it helps governments, as service providers, to understand the WASH reality in the communities, and to enter into an open dialogue with them to cater the WASH needs of the people. We do this via Health Budget Clubs, pre-budget meetings and open budget sessions. In the districts where we are active, the budget tracking approach has led to an increase in annual WASH budget allocation around 20%.  

[Graph showing number of people with access to water or sanitation in Bangladesh]
In Bangladesh, our local partners facilitate the development of a system in which all stakeholders work effectively together on realising sustainable WASH. They bring them together, build capacity and train them.

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<th>Stakeholder</th>
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| **Households**<br>Organized in Health Village Groups, WASH Budget Clubs | The representatives of the local community are responsible for identifying local WASH needs, to raise awareness and to create demand for WASH. They play an important role in lobbying with the government on district level and businesses that provide the WASH services. Finally, they support the local government at union level in organizing Pre-Budget and Open Budget meetings and public hearings on WASH Budget. | • Increased awareness of the people on their rights leads to behavioral change in relation to WASH, stimulating demand and empowering them to ensure their right to water and sanitation facilities. This results in increased WASH budget allocation by local governments.  
• As neighboring communities see the benefits of budget tracking, they take over this approach from Local Government, to increase accountability. While initially 6 districts achieved extra WASH budget allocation, with the same lobby today 24 communities realised this. |
| **National government**<br>DPHE | The government is responsible for ensuring that everyone has access to WASH in Bangladesh, by allocating budget for this and work with accountable WASH service providers. They are responsible for facilitating a functioning public sector for WASH via rules and regulations, WASH information provision and public private partnerships. | • Community lobbying led to increased WASH budget allocation to the local governments throughout the country, not only to the lobbying ones.  
• The DPHE trains mechanics to help households with simple trouble shooting, significantly increasing access to WASH.  
• Lobbying by communities make Government service provides more accountable. For example, in one of the sub-districts, they installed a pond sand filter, |
| **Local government**<br>Union Parishad Chairman & secretary | On a district level, the role of the government is to raise awareness and create demand for WASH in the communities. They are responsible for supervising budget preparations, facilitating dialogue with the communities by organizing Open Budget meetings, and monitoring budget utilization. It is their job to take care of equal distribution of budget among all areas. Local governments should take care of adequate information provision. | • Increased lobbying by the communities increased WASH budget allocation by an average of 20%.  
• Increased access to WASH leads to healthier and more productive people. At the same time, people’s satisfaction with local government is enhanced, making them more willing to pay tax. This is the perfect incentive for governments to invest in WASH service provision. |

**ACCELERATION INDICATORS**

**THE PROGRAMME IS DESIGNED SO THAT IN 2020:**

- Sanitation density has grown from 61% to 95%.
- The number of people with access to sustainable WASH has grown more than 4 times.
- 48 unions in which Budget Tracking takes place has increased from 6 to 48 unions.
- The number of safe toilets built has increased from little more than 20,961 to 80,000 in 5 years time.
- Local finance invested in WASH by the government is 2x higher, from €56,000 to more than €112,000.

The WASH Alliance International is a multi-national consortium of over 100 partners worldwide. We work together with local NGOs, governments and businesses to make sure everyone on this planet has sustainable access to and makes use of water and sanitation. The Alliance is operative in 8 countries in Africa and Asia.

[www.wash-alliance.org](http://www.wash-alliance.org)