



Freshwater Action Network South Asia

A Report on Celebration of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Day by FANSA

28th July 2021 at 3-5 PM NST via online zoom meeting

A photograph of a woman in a red shirt drinking water from a public tap. The image is semi-transparent and serves as the background for the event announcement. The text is overlaid on this image.

FRESHWATER ACTION NETWORK SOUTH ASIA (FANSA)

CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO WATER AND SANITATION DAY

Virtual Program
Date : 28 July 2021, Wednesday
Time : 3:00 – 5:00 PM NST

Zoom link and Passcode
<https://nren.zoom.us/j/61643427285>

Meeting ID: 616 4342 7285
Passcode: 581958



Freshwater Action Network
South Asia

Introduction:

On 28 July 2010, through Resolution 64/292, the United Nations General Assembly explicitly recognized the Human Right to Water and Sanitation (HRWS) and acknowledged that clean drinking water and sanitation are essential to the realisation of all human rights. The Resolution called upon States and international organisations to provide financial resources, help capacity-building and technology transfer to help countries to provide safe, clean, accessible and affordable drinking water and sanitation for all. Further it described that **People are rights-holders and States are duty-bearers** of providing water and sanitation services. Rights-holders can claim their rights and duty-bearers must guarantee the rights to water and sanitation equally and without discrimination.

The ‘human rights-based approach’ stresses the correspondence between rights and obligations, providing a framework for Member States and other organizations that aim to ensure that respect for human rights is integrated into development plans at all levels. Human rights criteria (**availability, quality, acceptability, accessibility and affordability**) and human rights principles (**non-discrimination, access to information, participation, accountability and sustainability**) shape the content and scope of the right and guides its implementation process. All of these elements give meaning to the human right to water and sanitation and must be taken into account for its implementation. Countries have to dedicate additional resources and continuously monitor and follow up on the WASH services specially to reach the most marginalised who are otherwise compromised physically, geographically and spatially.

Integrating HRWS in WASH policies and programs has been a Herculean task and many developing countries are facing hurdles and challenges in its implementation and some of them have not even recognised the HRWS as a right. Similarly, even in South Asia though considerable progress is made on providing safe water and sanitation, however, the progress of integrating HRWS in national policies and programs has been very slow-paced and the equitable and inclusive WASH services to the most marginalised still remains a distant dream with many people left behind.

Keeping this background in view FANSA (Freshwater Action Network South Asia) conducted 100 plus Focussed Group Discussions (FGD) with the most vulnerable communities to assess the status of WASH services specially during the Covid 19 Pandemic in seven South Asian countries (i.e Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka). Based on the findings from the FGDs and in consultations with various WASH sector stakeholders through National and Regional Webinars a policy brief has been developed with key recommendations to the policy makers on how to improve the WASH services to the most vulnerable groups. Given the significance of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Day on 28th July, FANSA along with its partners decided to launch the policy brief on the 28th July 2021 at 3:00 to 5 Pm through an online webinar for wider distribution among the sector stakeholders reiterating the significance of the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Day. This event was planned as part of FANSA’s interim action plan and the event was aimed at achieving the following objectives.

Key objectives:

1. Celebration of the Human Rights to Water and sanitation day to reiterate its significance as a milestone in achieving SDG6.
2. To share and inspire the FANSA members to continue their engagement in integration of HRWS in WASH policies and programs

3. To influence and lobby for better WASH facilities to the most vulnerable at various levels of policy making and implementation.
4. To follow up and renew the commitments made by the Governments using this multi stakeholder platform.

Participants: FANSA members and sector stakeholders from South Asia and other regions. The total number of participants in the zoom platform was 136 persons at the maximum.

FANSA
Freshwater Action Network
South Asia

Human Rights to Water and Sanitation

The South Asian countries and Global Sector representatives have given their valuable remarks on this grand occasion

Hon. Chief Guest, Ms. Bimala Tamang- a community leader from Nepal has launched the policy brief at this event

Jul 28, 2021

Participants shown in the collage:

- Ms. Bimala Tamang
- Dr. Rajendra Singh
- Ms. Lajana Manandhar
- Dr. Seetharam M R
- Mr. Ramiseti Murli
- Dr. Snehalatha Mekala
- Mr. Uday Shankar
- Dr. Ainun Nishat
- Mr. Ugyen Lhendup
- Dr. Sanjay Rana
- Mr. Sana Baloch (Senator)
- Ms. Vanita Suneja
- Mr. Tom Palakudigil
- Ms. Bimala Tamang
- Mr. Sitali Mugatwa
- Mr. Ananda Jayaweera

The Program Agenda

Master of Ceremony: Mr Uday Shankar, FANSA National Convenor, India

Time	Agenda	Speakers/ presenters / Moderator
3:00 to 3:05 Pm	Welcome and background	Lajana Manandhar, Regional Convenor, FANSA
3:05 to 3:10 Pm	Launch of the Policy Brief	Chief guest – Ms. Bimala Tamang, Chairperson, Nepal Mahila Ekata Samaj (Women’s Human Rights Defender Activist)
3:10 to 3:20 Pm	Presentation on Summary recommendations from Policy Brief	Dr. Snehalatha Mekala, FANSA
3:20 to 4:20Pm	Perspectives/ experiences of the stakeholders from six SA countries Bangladesh: Dr. Ainun Nishat, Professor Emeritus of BRAC University Bhutan: Mr. Ugyen Lhendup, National Convenor, FANSA Bhutan India: Mr. Rajendra Singh, Chairman, Tarun Bharat Sangha (winner of Magasaysay Award in 2001) Nepal: Dr. Sanjeev Rana: Executive Director, Kathmandu Valley Water Supply Management Board Pakistan: Mr. Sana Baloch: Member of Parliament, Provincial government, Balochistan Sri Lanka: Ananda Jayaveera, Technical Advisor, Ministry of Water supply	Dr. Seetharam Mysore, RSC member, FANSA
4:20 to 4:30 Pm	Testimony from the community champion: Pakistan	Karim Baloch, FANSA National Convenor, Pakistan (10 mins includes time for English translation)
4:30 to 4:45 Pm	Remarks: Vanita Suneja, Regional Advocacy Manager, WaterAid Sitali Muyatwa, Head of Country Engagement, SWA Tom Palakudiyil, Board member, Anti-Slavery International; Vice Chair, Dalit Solidarity Network, UK	Karim Baloch, FANSA National Convenor, Pakistan
4:45 to 4: 55 Pm	Remarks from the Chief Guest Mrs. Bimala Tamang, Chairperson, NMES	10 mins Including time for English translation
4:55 to 5:00 Pm	Concluding remarks and way forward	R.Murali, RSC member

Mr Udaya Shankar, FANSA National Convenor, India, facilitated the overall session and opened up the program.

1. Welcome Note - Ms. Lajana Manandhar, Regional Convenor, FANSA

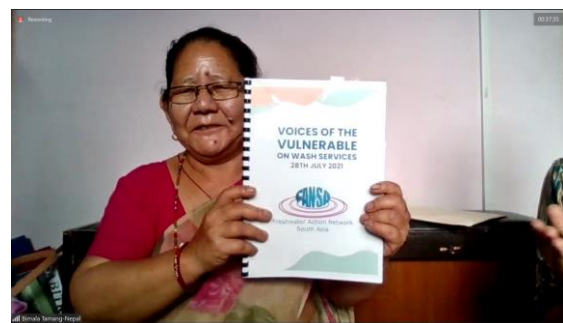
Lajana Manandhar, Regional Convenor of FANSA gave a welcome remark. She welcomed all the eminent speakers, participants, CSOs, community leaders and the FANSA members. She spoke about the importance of 28th July as on this day UN formally recognised water and sanitation as human rights and this is a key milestone in the sector. This is the day of significance therefore FANSA had organised this webinar to celebrate human rights wo water and sanitation. She also spoke about the preparation of policy brief by FANSA which is to be launched in this webinar.



She also shared her own personal experience and engagement in the WASH sector started in 1987 in Papua New Guinea where she had worked with the women slum dwellers organising a hygiene education class for them and later working in Lalitpur in Nepal working with the poor women to build private toilets at their houses. She shared her concerns that even after 11 years of declaration of human rights to water and sanitation no significant achievement is made to close the gap of inequity and injustice in accessing WASH facilities. She emphasized on a need for the sector partners to work together, to share experience and inspire each other to achieve SDGs and human rights to water and sanitation of the marginalised communities.

The Launch of the Policy Brief: The policy brief "**Voices of the Vulnerable on WASH Services**" was launched by the chief guest by Ms. Bimala Tamang.

Ms Bimala Tamang – Launching the Policy Brief: Voices of the Vulnerable on WASH Services, 28 July 2021



The presentation of Policy Brief:

Dr. Snehalatha Mekale, Regional Coordinator, FANSA made a presentation on the Policy Brief **Voices of the Vulnerable on WASH Services**. Dr Mekala briefly introduced FANSA explaining its functions, vision, mission and with a mention that FANSA is a platform to link between local and global actors. The highlights of her presentation are as follows.

- In order to achieve Water for All as per SDG6 – an effective policy is required – to achieve LNOB, in each country by 2030, FANSA as a CSO Network is striving for last 10 years to achieve Water for All. The Policy Brief is a base for policy to bring in action with evidence from the ground.



- The making of the Policy Brief exercise assessed status of WASH among vulnerable in covid context and covered more than 100 FGDs and individual case studies of vulnerable groups that include – urban shanty dwellers, homeless, persons with disabilities, sanitation workers and people living in remote and hard to reach/tribal/disaster prone.
- The outcome of the study was shared earlier at National Level and Regional Webinars and Summary recommendations are drafted as Policy Brief that are aimed for dissemination and advocacy on HRWS and increasing financial allocation for achieving WASH services.
- The FGD with **people with disability** pointed inadequate access to services, inappropriate design of infrastructure, high prices and lack of sensitivity and discrimination. The recommendations given are systematic mapping, designing appropriate infrastructure, ensure inclusivity in budgeting and development plan incorporating the needs of visually and hearing-impaired people.
- The issues of **sanitation workers** are bad living conditions and discrimination, lack of access to safety gears at work place, no job security and the most affected were informal sector sanitation workers. The recommendations are coverage for personal protection equipment, and provision of comprehensive health and insurance package to all the sanitation workers.
- The issues of **urban shanty dwellers, homeless and migrants** are poverty and unemployment, slums are denied of WASH services, long hours to collect water and poor WASH facilities in the shelter homes. The recommendations are inclusive dedicated budget for integrated development in all the urban pockets / slums, recognition of the slums and making housing provision and appropriate designs of facilities.
- **People living in hard-to-reach areas / tribal communities** have issues like losing lives, livelihoods and assets for various reasons, damaged WAS structure and no fund to repair, vicious cycle of poverty and challenge in accessing information and medical facilities. The recommendations given are incorporation of climate resilience into WASH strategies, need to leverage financial resources and building capacity of the communities.
- The key recommendations for improving the overall systems are ensuring basic amenities, strengthening participation of the vulnerable communities in decision making, capacity enhancement of the training organizations, building human and social capital and ensuring a robust system to measure, analyse learning and sharing experience.

Presentations and Key notes by Panellists:

This session was facilitated by Dr. Seetharam Mysore, Regional Steering Committee Member, FANSA.

Presentation by Prof. Ainun Nishat, Bangladesh

The highlight of the presentation delivered by **Prof. Ainun Nishat** are as follows.

- Despite of the number of WASH policy development "it is not a pleasant situation" in Bangladesh with regards to water and sanitation. The excellent documents are there - policies, strategies and actions plans, yet the implementation is rather poor. One of the main reason for poor implementation is the – policy



development initiatives are funded and led mainly by donors and local ownership on those documents are very weak.

- WASH should encompass four words: Water supply, Sanitation, Health and Hygiene. These four words are important to bring a holistic notion in WASH.
- In most of the South Asian countries Human Rights to Water and Sanitation is established. In Bangladesh, though it was initiated in 2013 itself, the HR perspective in policy is replaced as "Universal Principles to Water" only.
- The five most important point that need attention in Bangladesh are; quantity and quality is an issue, appropriate measures to be taken according to varying geographic context, making the voice of the poorest heard, increasing role of women in WASH and the planning need to consider water supply, sanitation, health and hygiene.

Presentation from Mr Ugen Lhendup, National Convenor, FANSA Bhutan

The highlights of the presentation are as follows.

- The Bhutan Constitution spells out the obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for its citizens. The Royal Government of Bhutan recognizes sanitation as a right. In the recent days, Bhutan has made significant progress in improving rural sanitation and hygiene supported by high level of ownership from people and government. One of the examples for this situation is reflected through the condition that - all schools in the country have at least a basic toilet facility and two third are equipped with flush toilets.
- Bhutan has worked out several policy strategies on Sanitation. They are: RWSS Sector Policy 2002, Strategy Document on Rural Sanitation & Hygiene, Water & Sanitation Rule, 1995, The Waste Management & Prevention Act, 2009, The Environment Code of Practice for Sanitation and Sewerage Management, 2000 and Waste Prevention & Management Regulation, 2012 and School Health & Safety Guidelines, 2014.
- There are a number of government and international agencies in Bhutan directly or indirectly involved in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector at national and local government levels, with many communication lines and coordination mechanisms between the agencies.
- The number of CSO and Private sectors are taking keen interest in Solid Waste Management, Water and Supply and Maintenance, public toilets usages, and public advocacy program.
- There are number of challenges including 5% of the population practicing OD, informal settlements are left out, lack of sustainable waste water treatment system in the urban areas, increased incidence of diarrhea, supply of water, allocation of resources from the government and from the funders and ensuring gender sensitivity and social inclusion in the WASH delivery.
- The future plan includes achieving national targets on sanitation and hygiene, emphasizing hand hygiene and behavior change, disable friendly sanitation facilities and aligning national targets on sanitation and hygiene with SDGs and specific actions for rural and urban areas.



Presentation from Dr. Rajendra Singh, India

The highlights of the presentation are as follows.

- India is rich in wisdom and local policies regarding use and management of water. India has an established decentralised/local water management system that regards the "sense of water science" – with a primary focus on respecting and rejuvenation of water. This community wisdom of water science regarded the six key elements (6 Rs) in "science of water utilisation and management" – Respect for water, Reduce the use of water, and as well, Retreat, Recycle, Reuse and Rejuvenate water.
- Apparently Indian Constitution did not give due importance to these indigenous water science and knowledge system. Rather, the focus of the modern system has been putting importance on promotion of technology and engineering in favour of "centralised system" but not to promote and respect for indigenous water science and knowledge system as mentioned above.
- Rajasthan represents the lowest rainfall zone in the world. From this area people have been being displaced from their ancestral place due to lack of water. Working with the communities, it has been possible to rejuvenate and create water bodies in these areas. As a result, 11,800 water bodies have been conserved in this area with the sole purpose of recharging the underground aquifers. This has not only been done using modern engineering and science & technology but "using science with a sense" and the "science with a geo-hydro sense" and these notions already exists with the communities to control the natural evaporation laws.
- The community is the sole owner of water system, the community has all the rights of water, and the site selections for creating structures. They have been using local materials in making the structures and local knowledge is applied in design of structure to suit the geography (either convex, plain or concave) to be least affected from water flow and other natural disasters as well as to take an advantage to take support from nature. The community never used the technology for massive extraction and exploitation of natural resources or even for the undue benefit of farming.
- The farming is done closely linking the crop pattern with the rain pattern. After the work on conservation with local wisdom, the total area of 10600 sq km was declared/known as the dark-zone is turned into white zone. The area affected with climate change and global warming experienced the regular rain pattern after the massive and sincere water conservation and climate change adaptation and mitigation activities. Farmers now need not to harvest the water discharge from the built structure but could benefit the customised crop-pattern with the very good natural rain, reduced temperature in the area. So, it is evident that with sincere work of community and use of common sense and application of indigenous knowledge / wisdom it is possible to bring bigger change in climate and people's lives to bring hope for prosperity in their own areas for the existing as well as for new generations.



- Use of science and technology and resources will only be useful and must be implemented with the application of a "sense" that respects the indigenous knowledge, traditional wisdom and people's aspirations.

Presentation from Dr. Sanjeeb Bickram Rana, Nepal

Highlights of the presentation made by Dr. Sanjeeb Bickram Rana on “Human rights to water and sanitation: Status, challenges and opportunities in Kathmandu, Nepal”.

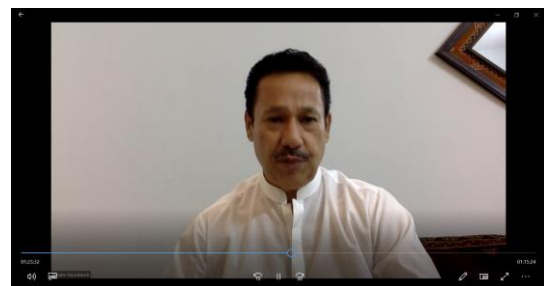
- After the promulgation of new constitution in 2015, it included water and sanitation as a fundamental right. This is reflected in the article 35 under the Right relating to health- *Every citizen shall have the right of access to clean drinking water and sanitation.*
- In Nepal, the basic water supply coverage is 93% and basic sanitation coverage is 100%. The country is declared ODF in 2019. By the end of SDG 2030, the country aims to achieve 90% coverage for high / medium level water supply and 50% coverage for sewerage facility with treatment.
- They are three key institutions in Kathmandu valley for management and supply of drinking water; Kathmandu valley water supply management board, Water supply tariff fixation commission and Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited (KUKL) – the utility operator.
- There is a provision for establishment of Low-Income Consumer Support Unit (LICSU) in KUKL to look after the drinking water supply situation in the low-income communities in the valley including the slum communities. LICSU is dedicated to serve the poor consumers, was established under the Technical Department of KUKL. LICSU supported in the connection of 101 taps in the informal settlements. The communities receiving tanker water supply also gets 60 % discount.
- The challenge faced in providing private connection is the need of land ownership certificate.
- Recently the government has announced to provide 20000-liter drinking water for free to every connection. Different approaches will be adapted to provide access of WASH facilities to informal settlements. Thus, achieving 100% water supply and sanitation services in Kathmandu Valley.



Presentation from Mr. Sana Baloch, Member of Parliament, Provincial Government, Balochistan, Pakistan

Highlights of the presentation by Mr. Sana Baloch, Member of Parliament

- Pakistan is among the top-ten countries in the world that have poor access to clean water. A total of 79 million people in Pakistan still do not have access to a proper toilet. Water-borne diseases are rampantly prevailing. Stunted growth among children is also a major problem and around 38 percent children suffer from this. Among four areas in Pakistan, Baluchistan is one of the most poverty-stricken area despites of the fact that Baluchistan is very rich in natural resources. Rampant use of



agrochemical is another problem and around 10 thousand persons have been dying annually due to agro-chemical poisoning. In Pakistan, only two cities – Islamabad and Karachi have proper waste management and faecal sludge management facilities.

- In Pakistan, the provision of water and sanitation facilities to people is not yet regarded as a human right. There are a few provisions that provide legal right to water, nevertheless, achieving those rights is not easy. In order to ensure right to water and sanitation as a human right, there is a need of constitutional reform in Pakistan. What could be suitable in Pakistan is to discuss and debate on possibility to adapt the South African model of human right approach towards water and sanitation. Introduction of a bill on water and sanitation with human rights perspectives is important.
- Providing water and sanitation is not a top-most priority for government rather on security and other areas of government. A dedicated budget is also important. In this regard, one of the very remarkable work that FANSA could do in the region is to organise a discussion among the parliamentarians in South-Asia to look deeper into the provision for water and sanitation in the respective country constitutions for the needful change in the constitutional and judiciary provisions. Such a discussion will capacitate the parliamentarians understanding with a human right perspective on water and sanitation.

Presentation from Mr Ananda Jayaveera, Technical/WASH Advisor, Ministry of Water Supply, Sri Lanka

Highlights of the presentation by Ananda Jayaveera on Sri Lanka: National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2017 – 2021

- The National Action Plan for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights (NHRAP) Chapter 7, “Economic Social and Cultural Rights” has recognized ‘Access to sufficient and safe water and improved sanitation for all, and the sustainable management of water’ as human rights.
- Access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation are two separate human rights with commensurate responsibilities on the recipients.
- Water has to be treated to the standard and supplied to all regardless of their social status
- Tariff policies continue to ensure the lifeline water requirement at an affordable price



Highlights of the remarks from Ms. Vanita Suneja, Regional Advocacy Manager, WaterAid

- Vanita Suneja congratulated FANSA for organising this important session on Water and Sanitation. She is happy to see that the Policy Brief could be launched which is based on FGDs with many people participating from South Asian countries and the important recommendations derived from them.
- She gave emphasize on women’s right to access water and sanitation facilities as we all understand the amount of time women are spending in collecting water and the problems, they face not having access to toilet in South Asia. Therefore, access to WASH ensured for women/girls make them able to redistribute their time in study and lots of other important paid works. Therefore, gender issues need to be kept in the central to our work. These are to be considered as vital human rights.



- UN Council on Human Right has passed a draft resolution on MHM that requires all the governments and institutions to ensure adequate access to facility, information and product for effective MHM.
- The WASH issues like arsenic contamination and agro-chemical poisoning are critical that infringe our right to water. These are directly related to the issues of people's Right to water and sanitation and especially on access to safe quality of water. In this connection, the governments need to make the related corporate bodies to be accountable for human right to water with respect to safety and sustenance of water resources. There is need to negotiate among these corporate bodies and the government to have a regulatory provision to keep these adverse effects to a minimum level. This is also an area that needs to be covered while working with a broader perspective on WASH. It is also important for a biodiversity conservation and promotion of water as natural resources. Also, financial institutions need to consider these issues and not to fund these like damaging projects.
- Lastly, she made two points, to consider gender issues as central to working on Human Rights to water and sanitation, and to consider biodiversity conservation to promote water as a natural resource.

Remarks from Mr Sitali Muyatwa, Head of Country Engagement, SWA

- The Policy Brief launched today is timely and extremely important, useful and insightful. The endorsement of HRTWS is an important achievement as there was issues/challenges related to 'equality' despite of the successful achievement of the MDG goals related to water and sanitation that was duly achieved in the MDG period.
- In this context, Covid19 has also brought a set of challenges especially in the way we work. The impact of climate change also threatens the progress we have made till now. Hence, we are now at a critical juncture and also at a right time to look back on the progress made so far and recognise the challenges faced so that we can take necessary decisions for course corrections.
- This is important to note that the progress made are mainly clustered to the areas where there is easy access to resources and the beneficiaries are primarily consisting of those who have connections to the decision makers. It is important to note that the decision-makers at all levels – global, national, central, federal, provincial and local levels have a critical role in ensuring that the services are reaching the right people – women, rural communities, people with disabilities and in general the people who are in the bottom of the ladder in society.
- It is to take note that the people at bottom are encouraged to take leadership position that makes crucial difference in the resource access and creating an environment for actions to thrive, and accountability becomes a norm but not as an exception. With HRTWS as foundation and vision what we want to see - it is possible to achieve "WASH everywhere, to everyone and always" whether in a disaster period or a stable development period.



- SWA works to promote political will and commitment amongst the political leaders for provision of WASH and this year SWA is producing a Handbook on WASH for Parliamentarian on HRTWS and other objectives of SDGs.
- He mentioned two action points that in order to achieve HRTWS the critical actors have to come forward with their commitments, and to initiate review the processes and accountability measures so that gaps and challenges are identified and addressed.

6.3 Remarks from Mr Tom Palakudiyil, Board Member, Anti-Slavery International; Vice Chair, Dalit Solidarity Network, UK

- Tom Palakudiyil talked about this happiness to join this celebration to mark the milestone achievement of HRTWS as the rights for every human-being – whether rich and poor, or residing in developed countries or in developing countries or in the least developed countries- but for everyone.
- FANSA, since its launch since 2008, has made a remarkable difference in championing the cause of poor and marginalised for HRTWS. FANSA has done this through advocating for poor and marginalised, collaborating amongst like-minded organisations, playing vital role in organising platform like SACOSANs, playing active role in SWA and in shaping and finalising SDG 6. So, this is also an occasion to mark, celebrate and acknowledge that achievement, and we clearly see that we have made a difference and have progressed. But the task is still paramount as to climb the mountain and to make HRTWS to everyone and to every part of the world, not only South Asia but also beyond.
- The launch of the Policy Brief held today is a notable contribution towards that as it shows the path how to climb that mountain and follow the right path to reach destination rather than getting stranded in between. The policy Brief is thus a clear path to respecting and honouring the HRTWS whether it is for the government or any NGO or any other organisation with such an objective.
- Prof. Nishat has cautioned us that the policy however is glamorous as such it is a document only, what is important is action and how it has been applied to bring about changes in the life of the people. And FANSA has contributed for this change/difference through collaborating amongst the partners.
- We need to understand that it is not only as working for as an organisation, or working as a project or as a saviour, on the ground of donor fund, for people to provide them WASH services as committed to donors but the work related to HRTWS/WASH requires a passion, a way of life to work in social sector, a sense of regard that – a descent WASH services to people is everybody's right. In this line, it is a soul-searching occasion that we have worked with a passion for HRTWS and commit ourselves to have fully devoted to LNOB and understand that if anyone left behind is partly "myself" left behind. The policy brief launched today has enough, once again, to encourage us for soul searching in this line.



Remarks from the Chief Guest Mrs Bimala Tamang, Chairperson, Nepal Mahila Ekta Samaj

- Bimala Tamang expressed her happiness to be invited to launch an important document – A Policy Brief for the Voices of the Vulnerable. This has touched her immensely since she belonged to the vulnerable group and represents the vulnerable communities. She has been fighting for the rights to access better water and sanitation facilities.
- A Policy Brief study is the outcome from South Asian countries with situations reflecting access to water and sanitation as human rights and the situation with respect to gender issues related to WASH. She is happy that the vulnerable communities were consulted and opportunities provided for their participation in the dialogue.
- Access to water is important for women with many perspectives: because fetching water is a non-paid work mainly for women so easy access to water means less amount of non-paid-work-time and opportunity for allocation of time for productive engagements for women as well as it reduces chances of discrimination and violence against women. Therefore, access to WASH and especially access to water is human rights associated to women rights. In Nepal, the slum communities are recognised and are provided with water through tanker etc. but an access to water with a permanent tap in the premises is still lacking.
- She hoped that vulnerable people in other countries also do have an opportunity to put their voices in the important occasions. She is pleased and delighted to have been given the opportunity to launch the important Policy Brief and expressed her sentimental feelings and having touched by it.



Concluding remarks and way forward from Mr R. Murali, Regional Steering Committee, FANSA

1. There is a need to work for continuity to raise political commitment for WASH. This is because the UN Human Rights Resolution on WASH was already passed in 2010, yet, except Nepal, no other countries in South Asia have shown their commitment to HRTWS through legislatures. So, the work is to be continued in this line.
2. Existing policies on WASH needed to be interpreted with a spirit of LNOB and in favour marginalised individuals – child, disability with rights perspective.
3. There is need to generate further evidences from the ground that reflect voices and choices of the people so that government take action on them.
4. Violation of WASH as human rights must be challenged to be addressed. We also need to know how we hold the decision makers accountable to their commitments they have made. It is important to determine what are the proper processes for doing this task as well as to focus on the outcomes and progress achieved.



Program Closure from Ms. Lajana Manandhar

Lajana Manandhar expressed her vote of thanks to all the speakers and participants for their contribution time for the session. She expressed that she is very happy to get all the support from the speakers, specialists and FANSA colleagues for the success of the program and expressed sincere thanks to all of them. With this remark for vote of thanks, she formally announced the closure of the program.

Annexes

Details of the welcome remarks from Lajana Manandhar

Namaste and a very warm welcome to you all!

Today, the Day of 28 July, it is important for all of us for the reason that on this day the UN formally recognised Water and Sanitation as Human Rights – this is a key milestone achievement in the sector in right to access to WASH for all of us involved – whether we work as right-holders or policy-makers or the funding collaborators. So, this day is to gather all of us to appreciate, to acknowledge and to share experiences and to inspire each other. With this key objective FANSA has organised this webinar to celebrate human rights to water and sanitation. To mark this celebration, we are very happy to launch the **Policy Brief**, in the session today, which is a collection of water and sanitation issues of the vulnerable groups and communities from South Asia. Also, the Policy Brief comprises of recommendations for the governments to address the issues to end the inequalities, injustice in fulfilling Human Rights to Water and Sanitation.

While we are celebrating the occasion today, I feel to recall my personal experiences too, from my first exposure to a slum community as my first step to the world of water and sanitation. It was in Papua New Guinea in the year 1987, a long time back, to the Bumbu Slum Community as my first exposure on WASH- as working for poor people. Access to water and sanitation and education was big challenge there but interacting with the community was also very challenging due to security reasons. Through the local organisation I contacted the senior members of my association to organise sanitation and hygiene awareness classes there. These sessions turned to be very successful and I was very pleased to work with these people from this poor settlement. This was for the first time; I observed the delivery of awareness sessions in the community settlements on hygiene and sanitation topics. At that time, this was something very new for me.

Later in 1995, in Nepal, at Lhola (Dalit) community, Lalitpur Municipality, we ourselves supported women groups to construct a sewerage pipeline. In the absence of sewerage facilities, they were practicing open defecation. The sewerage projects faced severe problems and social issues. Later when the project was completed, we were informed that the community had to hold at least 65 meetings with various stakeholders to solve several issues they were facing. Similarly, in Balaju slum in Kathmandu, we had to stay as guarantor to assure the payment of water tariff and piped-water-connection. In those days there were lots of hurdles while working with poor communities and we had to find ways to tackle with them continuously. But the time has changed now and we all know that recognition of water and sanitation as human rights has paved the way for the government to introduce national water and sanitation policies and also establishing access to water and sanitation as fundamental rights. Even after 11 years of this provision, it is unfortunate to see that yet many poor communities- like Bumbu, Lhola, Balaju slum and many more in South Asia are still deprived of the access to water and sanitation. These communities are making every possible effort to access water and sanitation facilities. The challenges faced have also given birth to the innovations and solutions and this needs to be shared widely and we need to learn from experiences. There are many opportunities for the sector partners to work together to enhance synergy. This is the day we need to commit and to achieve SDG 6 and to end the suffering caused by the lack of water and sanitation by 2030 and FANSA is committed to give the Best of us. Celebrating this Day has been a pleasant

opportunity for us as we have eminent speakers from South Asia, US and UK. We are so happy and encouraged to have you all with us. We also have the Chief Guest with us who is a highly passionate person about women's human right issues. All the speakers are inspiring figures with many years work and experiences in the sector. I am very sure that the FANSA members and all the participants will be happy and thrilled to listen and learn from them. Therefore, my special welcome to the chief guest and to all the speakers. We also have representative from our partner organisations, governments, professionals, FANSA family, CSOs and community leaders. I express again a very warm welcome to you all to this session. Thank you!

FRESH WATER ACTION NETWORK SOUTH ASIA (FANSA)

CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO WATER AND SANITATION

28th July 2021

About FANSA



- FANSA Functions

- A Network of **400 plus CSOs** from **South Asia**
- **A** platform for dialogue and influence.
- A link between local and global and acts
- A forum for sharing and learning
- Collaborates with Government and sector stakeholders

- FANSA Envisions

- *“A world where water is respected and protected as an essential resource for all forms of life and universal access to water and sanitation is achieved responsibly and inclusively”.*

- FANSA's Mission

- Strengthening the role of civil society in decision-making,
- -linking the environmental and developmental agenda,
- advocate for the realization of the right to water and sanitation for present and future generations.

Making of the Policy Brief



VOICES OF THE VULNERABLE ON WASH SERVICES

28TH JULY 2021



Freshwater Action Network
South Asia

- Assessed status of **WASH among vulnerable in COVID context**
- **100 Plus FGDs** in seven countries
- **Vulnerable groups**
Urban shanty dwellers, Homeless, Persons With Disabilities, Sanitation workers, People living in remote /tribal /disaster/ Hard to reach areas
- Outcome shared at **National and Regional Webinars**
- *Summary recommendations drafted as **Policy brief***
- *Useful for dissemination & focused **advocacy on HRWS***

People With Disabilities (PWDs)



- Inadequate WASH services
'We need more, BUT get less'
- Facility Available, yet NOT accessible
- Unable to pay high price of the services
- Lack of sensitivity, response & discrimination

Recommendations

- Undertake systematic mapping (data base) and beneficiary targeting
- Develop guidelines and designs for the disability-specific and context-specific wash needs of the pwds, including times of disaster with robust monitoring and accountability to track inclusiveness
- Design holistic & inclusive development plans with livelihoods as central theme of all covid recovery plans with dedicated budgets and monitoring plans for full utilization by national, state and local governments.
- Ensure inclusivity in all behavior change communications materials, and in other dissemination materials developed – so that visually impaired and hearing impaired are also reached

Sanitation Workers



- Squalid living conditions with social discrimination
- Work without safety gear and safety net
- No Job security and untimely payments
- Informal sanitation workers worst affected

Recommendations

ENSURE MANDATORY PERSONAL PROTECTION

- Provision of Personal Protection Equipment kits by the respective employers to be made compulsory, along with training and monitoring of the usage of the same.

PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH AND INSURANCE COVER FOR ALL SANITATION WORKERS

- Provide for full coverage of hospital expenses starting from diagnosis to the full treatment so that it is not a burden to these economically backward classes.
- All category of sanitation workers, in the formal and informal sector, to be given due protection under a comprehensive insurance policy that covers medical, life and accidental risks.

Urban shanty dwellers, Homeless & Migrants



- Poverty, unemployment & under payment
- Slums not a priority for WASH service delivery
- Abuse and Denied access at public WASH facilities
- long hours for collection of water/ for open defecation
- Shelter homes have poor WASH facilities

Recommendations

- WASH NEEDS TO BE 'BASIC' PREREQUISITE WITH DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR ALL THE URBAN POCKETS WITH INCLUSION OF DEDICATED BUDGETS AND SUB-PLANS FOR INTEGRATED WASH DEVELOPMENT.
- THE SETTLEMENTS TO BE RECOGNISED AS LEGAL AND PROVIDE ACCEPTABLE HOUSING TO PEOPLE LIVING IN UNRECOGNIZED SETTLEMENTS.
- DEVELOP DESIGNS AND TECHNOLOGIES APPROPRIATE FOR SPACE-CONSTRAINTS AND OTHER CONTEXTUAL LIMITATIONS.
- WASH SERVICE DELIVERY STANDARDS SHOULD BE ON PAR WITH THE NORMS FOLLOWED FOR OTHER AREAS, AND THERE SHOULD BE CONTINUOUS MONITORING OF THE SAME
- PROMOTE COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS, BUILD LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATION OF SHANTY DWELLERS IN DELIVERY AND MONITORING OF WASH SERVICES.

People living in Hard to Reach Areas/Tribals



- Loss of Lives, livelihoods and assets
- Damaged WASH infrastructure – lack of funds to repair
- Vicious cycle of deprivation, poverty & enhanced vulnerability
- Poor penetration of information, basic amenities & medical facilities

Recommendations

INCORPORATE CLIMATE RESILIENCE INTO WASH STRATEGIES

- National level action plans on climate change, disaster management and WASH need to be aligned to promote overall integration of climate resilience into the WASH strategies. This also need to ensure that investments made and progress achieved on WASH are equitable and sustainable.

LEVERAGE FINANCIAL RESOURCES FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES

- To develop climate resilient WASH infrastructure National Governments, need to develop strategies to pool required financial resources from national budgets, public finances and support from external agencies.
- The estimate & standard schedule of rates to be revised dynamically to suite to the geographic context.

FOCUS ON BUILDING CAPACITIES OF THE SECTOR FOR CLIMATE RESILIENT WASH

- Building Human Capacities across all tiers is a must – from the Policymakers to the local governments and even grassroots organizations. Hence, there is a need for a substantial increase in allocations meant to build the capacities of WASH sector in risk assessment viz in planning, implementation and monitoring of climate resilient WASH solutions.

INVOLVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION TO ENHANCE CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- Local communities in the climate-risk areas need to be capacitated to constructively engage themselves in sustainable maintenance of the climate resilient WASH solutions created at the local level.

Recommendations to improve the systems

FIRST THINGS FIRST – ENSURE BASIC AMENITIES

- WASH services are among the most essential prerequisites which can enable comprehensive growth – be it agriculture, industry or business.

STRENGTHEN PARTICIPATION in DECISION MAKING BY THE VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

- Institutionalize participation and decision making for the vulnerable communities in planning, implementation and monitoring of WASH interventions at all levels of governance.

STRENGTHEN THE HANDS OF THE IMPLEMENTORS

- Sensitize and train the agencies responsible for delivering WASH services regarding needs and rights of vulnerable communities.

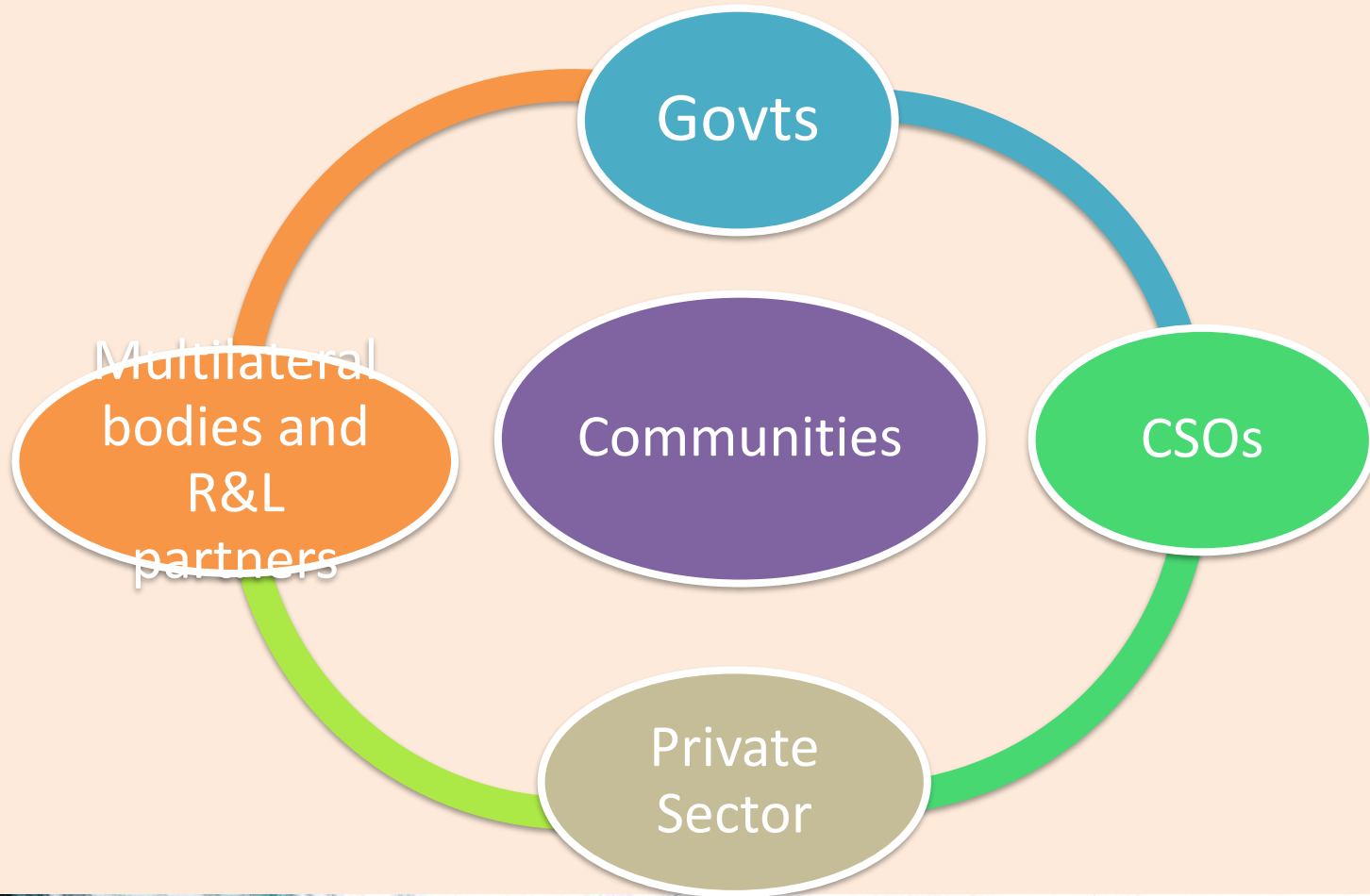
PRIORITIZE BUILDING HUMAN AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

- Build capacities of people and people's organizations to catalyze and lead behavior change, innovate in social enterprise and take lead in monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

ENSURE A ROBUST SYSTEM TO MEASURE, ANALYZE, LEARN AND SHARE EXPERIENCES

- Develop a robust, interlinked data management system which would enable tracking progress in multiple dimensions of development, with focus on short-term outputs as well as long term outcomes.

Recommendations





Thank you

for more details
Dr. Snehalatha Mekala
Regional Coordinator
regionalcoordinator@fansasia.net

National Action Plan for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights 2017 - 2021

*Implication for Water and Sanitation
Sector*

Eng. Ananda Jayaweera
WASH Advisor
Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka's Commitments

- ▶ The National Action Plan for Protection and Promotion of Human Rights(NHRAP) Chapter 7, “**Economic Social and Cultural Rights**” has recognized under the Goal 3 that ‘**Access to sufficient and safe water and improved sanitation for all, and the sustainable management of water**’ as human rights
- ▶ Access to safe drinking water and improved sanitation are two separate human rights with commensurate responsibilities on the recipients
- ▶ Water has to be treated to the standard and supplied to all regardless of their social status - (Live in a Manson temporary shelter)
- ▶ Tariff policies continue to ensure the lifeline water requirement at an affordable price
- ▶ All countries need to adopt their NDWP and establish that Drinking water has the priority over all other water uses (Water Governance)

HR Action Proposed	Proposal	Policy Change
<p>3.1.1 Review and consider the right to water and sanitation as recognized in international conventions</p>	<p>Enabling environment for National Targets to be achieved for universal access to water and sanitation by 2030</p>	<p>Ensure water safety security , affordable and reliable services</p>
<p>3.1.2 Amend the fundamental rights chapter of the constitution to include right to water and sanitation</p>	<p>Create awareness among legislature</p>	<p>NDWP recognized that access to water is a human right</p>
<p>3.1.3 Harmonies all legislative, policy and regulatory provisions to recognize and implement a “minimum standard of access to water” – for both personal (drinking) and domestic use</p>	<p>Nationally agreed minimum standards and benchmark and review all policies and regulatory provisions</p>	<p>DWSP Revised to reflect safely managed drinking water inline with SDG 6.1</p>
<p>3.1.4 Articulate a clear policy statement and a plan of action to implement access to “improved sanitation” as a matter of priority among vulnerable groups and individuals</p>	<p>Already in place to raise the standards to safely managed sanitation</p>	<p>Milestones established with strategies & infrastructure</p>

HR Action	Proposal	Policy Directions
<p>3.2.1 Establish the resources and capacity needed among provincial and local authorities mandated to support rural community water supply infrastructure and (small scale) water services</p>	<p>Review rural water supply policy in line with SDG Target 6.1, 6.2 and 6.6 and define respective responsibilities of key stake holders viz CBO, LAA, PC, NWSDB DCWS</p>	<p>Autonomy and sustainability of CBO managed schemes</p>
<p>3.2.2 Re-Visit the practical and sustainable use of the Rural and Water Supply and sanitation (RWSS) policy, where-by a considerable responsibility is given to the communities to manage and coordinate their own access to water</p>	<p>Review RWS&S Policies and recommend nationally accepted O&M model for community managed RWS</p>	<p>Adopt nationally accepted CBO model for sustainability</p>
<p>3.2.3 Define an "Integrated approach" to the monitoring and implementation of water and sanitation services</p>	<p>Formulate an integrated approach for M&E to define priorities & periodical intervention for water and sanitation services</p>	<p>Comprehensive sector programme and M&E system for resource mobilization for priority intervention</p>

HR Action	Proposal	Policy Statement
<p>3.3.1 Identify concrete measures to progressively meet the water and satiation needs of particular groups such as school children</p>	<p>Priorities and adopt all inclusive approach in the development of projects and programmes</p>	<p>Priority resource mobilization and adopt “No one left behind “</p>
<p>3.3.2 Ensure hygienically maintained public toilets particular for working women in urban areas and urban low-income housing</p>	<p>Develop standards for hardware and standard operational procedure's</p>	<p>Include public convenience in all projects and programmes</p>
<p>3.3.3 Identify a balance between regulations for the use of groundwater ,with minimum requirements of water needs at the household level, with due consideration to the availability and access to year -round drinking water at the household level</p>	<p>Priorities drinking water when using ground water for agriculture purposes through proper assessment</p>	<p>Regulate pumping and overuse</p>
<p>3.3.4 Identify the means to ensure that communities affected by drought and disaster have access to established minimum quantities of drinking water</p>	<p>Institutionalize DRR and Emergency Water and Sanitation with emergency water points among communities</p>	<p>Adopt a zoning policy for water stress and include emergency water points in all projects in dry zones</p>

Colorful Thank You Slide Design

T H A N K Y O U





Freshwater Action Network
South Asia

FANSA Bhutan

CELEBRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS TO WATER AND SANITATION DAY

28 July 2021, Wednesday



The Constitution spells out the obligation to provide a safe and healthy environment for its citizens

The Royal Government of Bhutan recognizes sanitation as a right

Bhutan has made significant progress in improving rural sanitation and hygiene supported by high level of ownership

100% of schools in the country have at least a basic toilet facility and two third are equipped with flush toilets

Policies and Strategies on Sanitation

RURAL

- RWSS Sector Policy 2002
- Strategy Document on Rural Sanitation & Hygiene

URBAN

- Water & Sanitation Rule, 1995
- The Waste Management & Prevention Act, 2009
- The Environment Code of Practice for Sanitation and Sewerage Management, 2000
- Waste Prevention & Management Regulation, 2012

INSTITUTIONS

- School Health & Safety Guidelines, 2014



Safe Water Bhutan 2020

WWW.SKYJUICE.ORG.AU

WASH Governance

There are a number of government and international agencies in Bhutan directly or indirectly involved in the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector at national and local government levels, with many communication lines and coordination mechanisms between the agencies. The key agencies involved in the sector are:

- Gross National Happiness Commission
- Ministry of Health
- Public Health Engineering Division
- District Administration
- Sub-District Administration
- Households
- Civil Society Organization
- Private Sector



Best Practices / Innovations

Rural
Community based approach

Urban
By and large it is government driven approach, but of late number of CSO and Private sectors are taking keen interest in Solid Waste Management, Water and Supply and Maintenance, public toilets usages, and public advocacy program.

Institutions – Hand washing program (Creation of facilities, advocacy, Campaigns ...)

Pictures of school hand washing

- Separate toilets for boys and girls
- Capacity building for School Health Coordinators
- Competition among schools on WASH programs
- Government resource allocation in WASH program
- Programs from CSOs



Challenges

Coverage

- Approximately 5% of the total population still practice OD
- It will be huge challenge to declare the country ODF anytime soon with the current subsidy free approach
- Informal settlements in the urban areas that does not get urban amenities will require special attention
- Sustainable waste water treatment system that uses less mechanical parts and energy is required for urban

Health

- Despite commendable progress made in sanitation coverage, diarrheal incidence still remains high
- Provision of adequate water supply at all times remains a big challenge

Funding

- Government support is crucial for long term sustainability of the program
- Development partners should continue to support the WASH program

Equity and Rights

- Ensuring gender sensitivity and social inclusion in the delivery of sanitation & hygiene services is still at an early stage
- Instituting monitoring tools that are used to track the participation and influence of women and the poor population

Future Plans

- Achieving National target on sanitation & Hygiene still remains the top priority
- Behavior change of users on hygiene use of toilet and handwashing with soap will need to be emphasized
- Attention needs to be paid to disable friendly toilets
- Aligning national targets on Sanitation & Hygiene with that of SDG

Rural

- Community based approach to continue
- Support from government to achieve 100% coverage
- Strategy to sustain the progress made so far
- Work on Solid waste and grey water management

Urban

- Capacity development of the engineers
- Strengthen institutional capacity to hygiene promotion and behavior change
- Increase resource allocation for sludge management and waste water management





Before

Now





THANK you

Celebration of Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Day



Status, Challenges and Opportunities in Kathmandu- Nepal

Dr. Sanjeev Bickram Rana

Executive Director

Kathmandu Valley Water Supply Management Board

WASH facilities in Nepal – Facts and Figures

EQUITY IN FINANCE

Figure 1. Urban vs. rural WASH funding

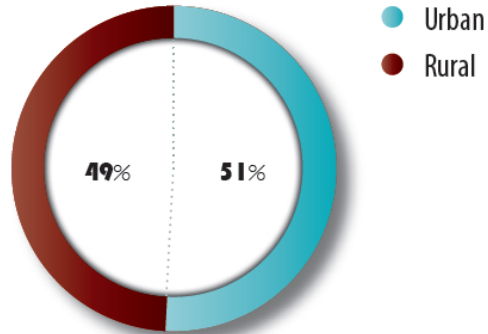
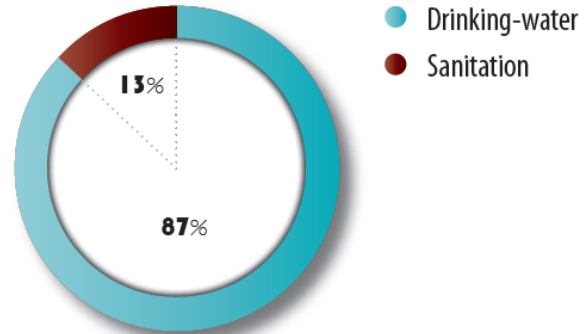


Figure 2. Disaggregated WASH expenditure



EQUITY IN ACCESS¹

Figure 3. Population with access to improved sanitation facilities

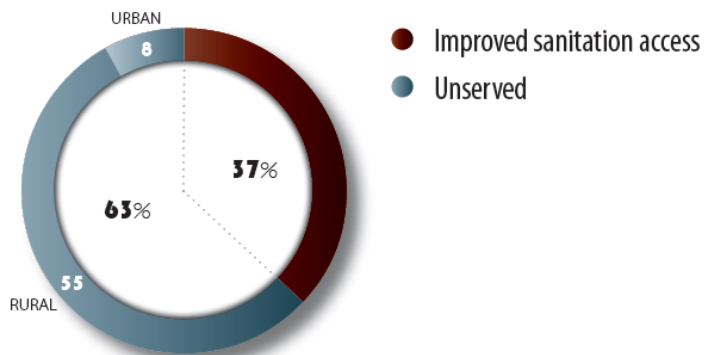
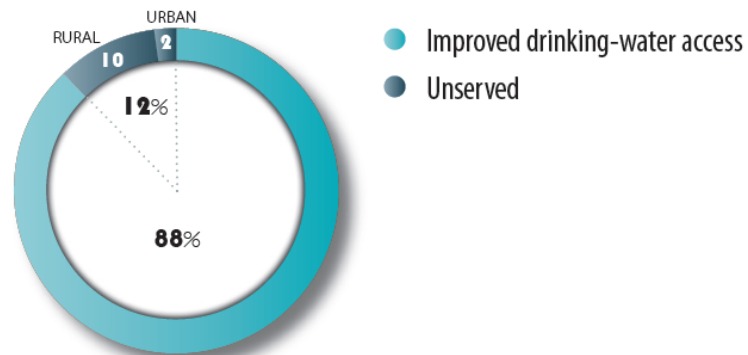


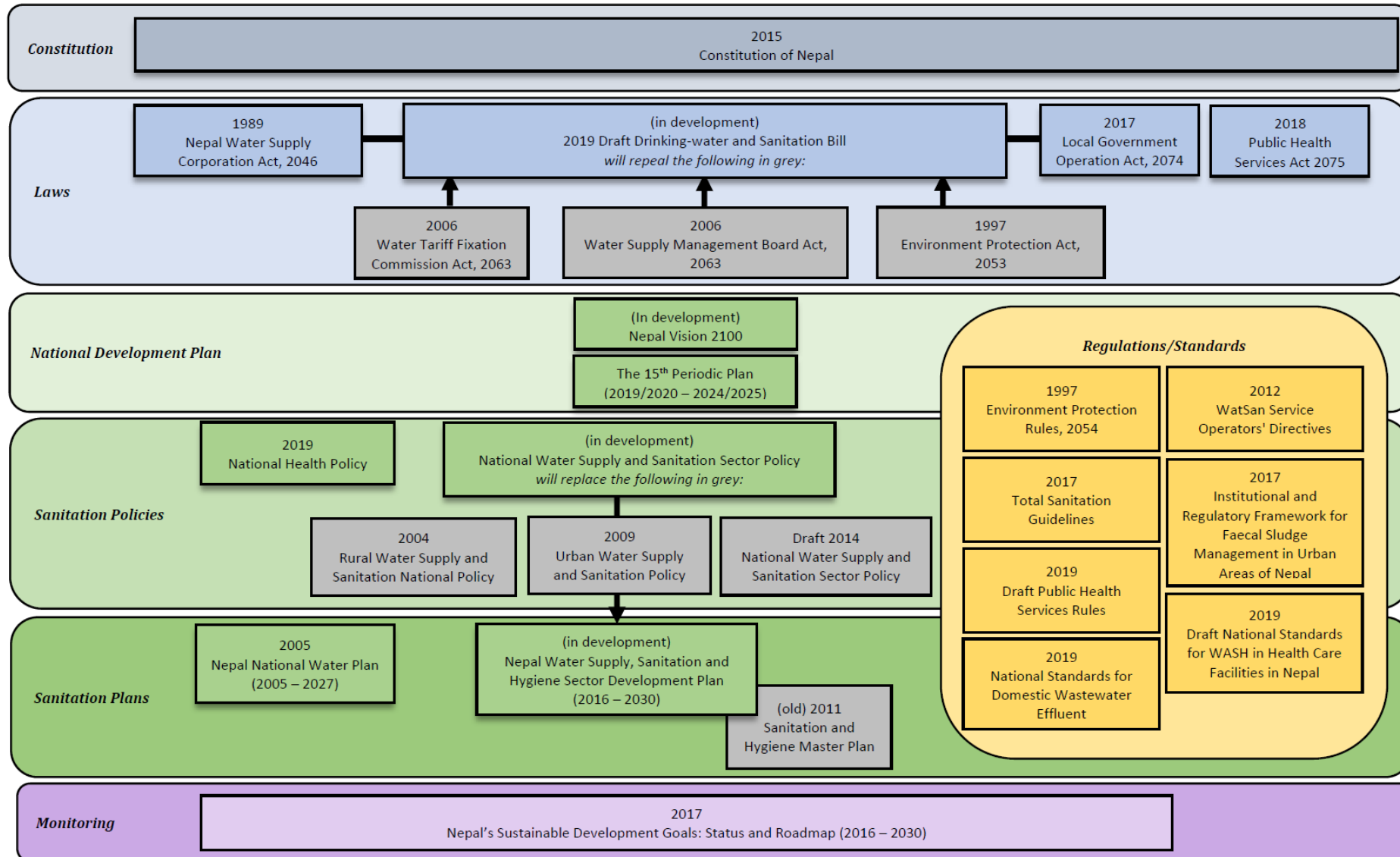
Figure 4. Population with access to improved drinking-water sources



¹ Progress on Drinking-Water and Sanitation – 2014 Update, WHO/UNICEF 2014.

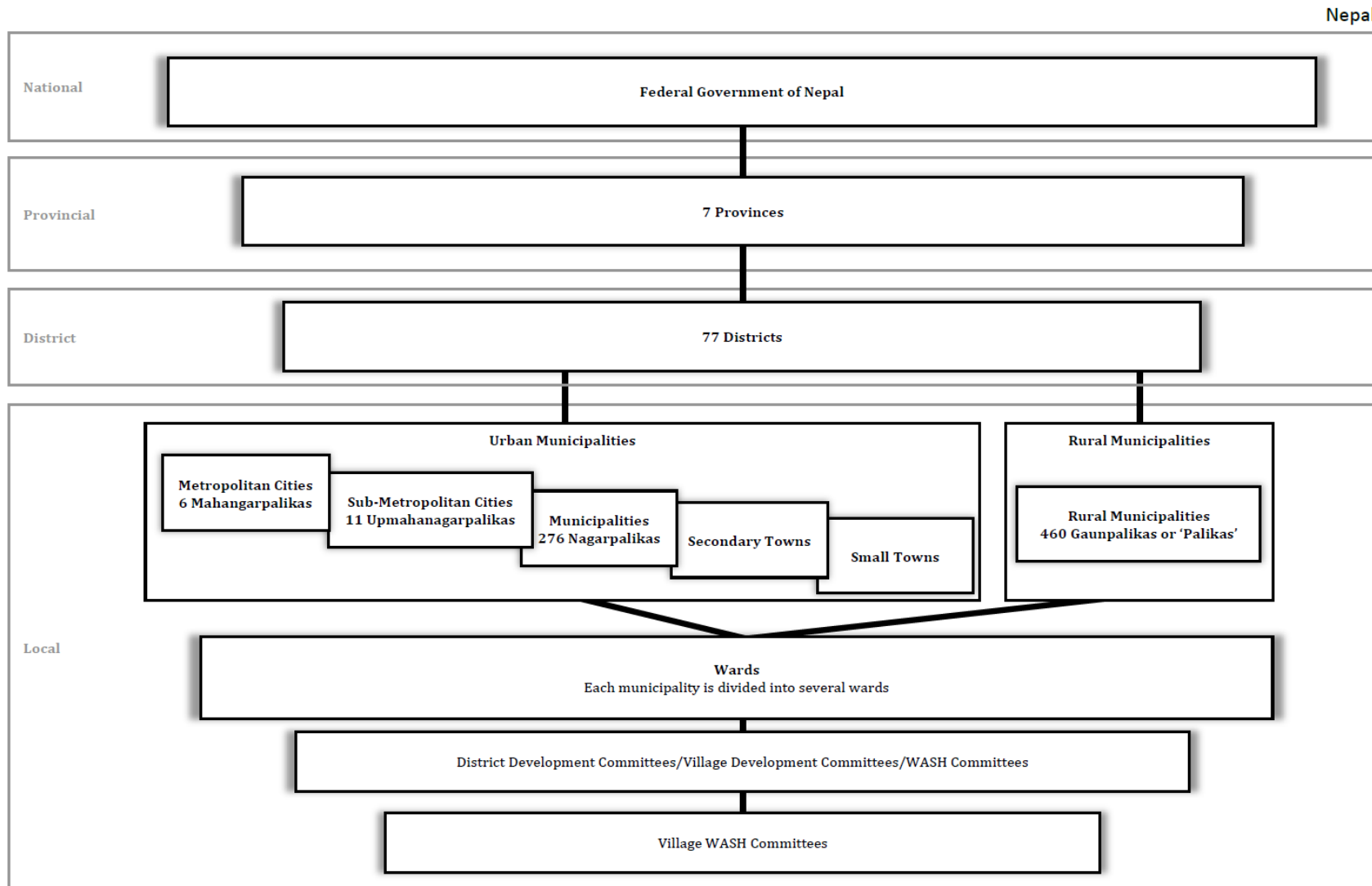
Policy and planning WASH framework of Nepal

Nepal



- Focus on water than sanitation
- After the promulgation of new constitution in 2015, sanitation sector is incorporated in main policy framework.

3 Tier Government after Constitution of Nepal 2015- Federal Context



□ 1/7/753

□ All three level Governments are involved in Kathmandu Valley

Figure 3. Local government arrangements and sanitation in Nepal

Human Right to Water and Sanitation

- Nepal is signatory of the UN Resolution 2010 -64/292 (Human right to water and sanitation)

Constitutional Provisions in Nepal

- Constitution of Nepal – 1990 had no provisions for water and sanitations.
- New Constitution of Nepal 2015 included Water and Sanitation as fundamental right, thus

Article 35 – Right relating to Health

- (4) Every citizen shall **have the right** of access to clean drinking water and sanitation.

WASH facilities in Nepal – Facts and Figures

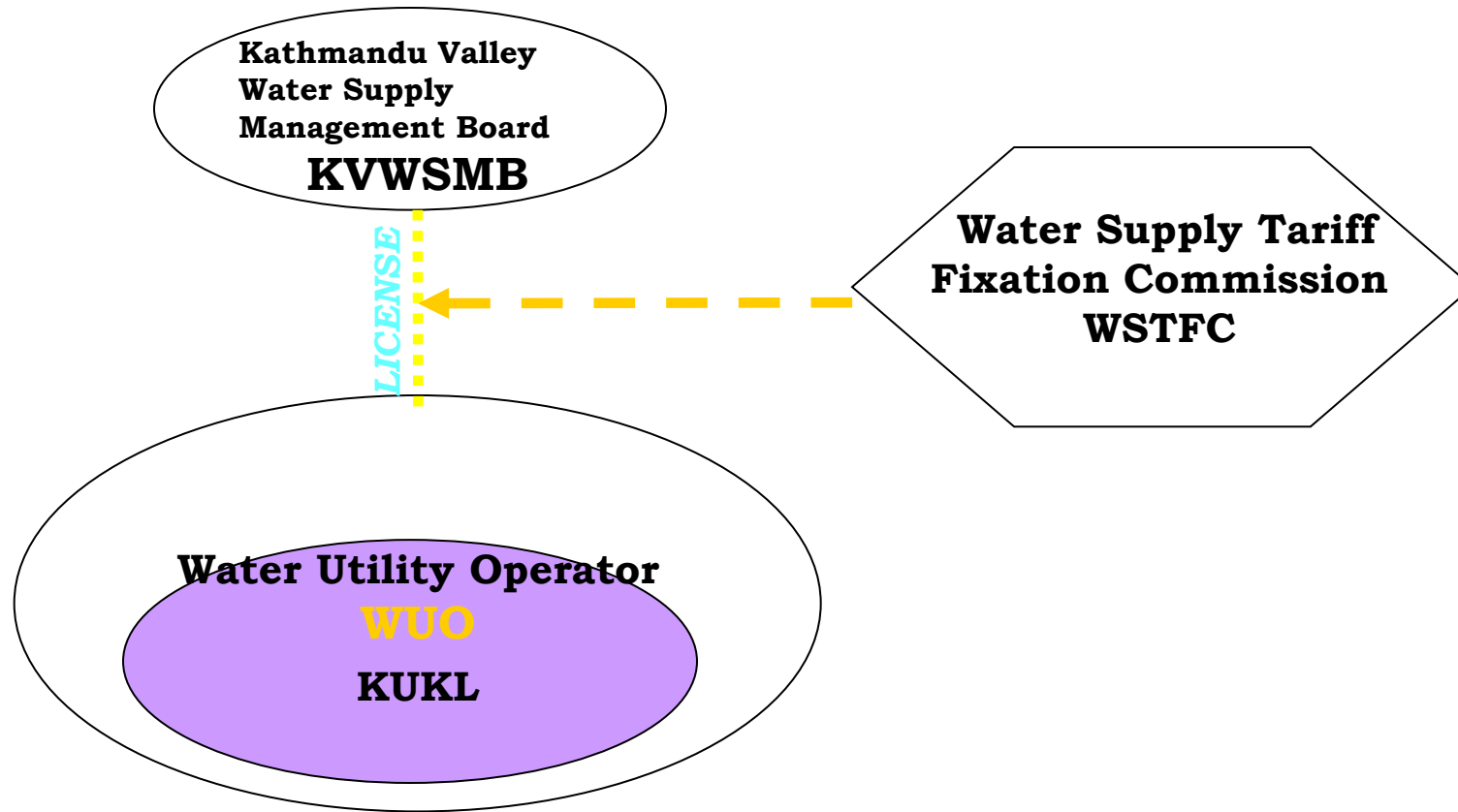
Status

Sn	Topic	Status	Remarks
1	Basic Water Supply	92%	This year target is 93%
2	Basic Sanitation	100%	ODF declared in 2019

Way forward – Based on National Policy

SN	Topic	15 th National Plan-2025	SDG 2030
1	Basic Water Supply	99%	100%
2	High/Medium Water Supply	40%	90%
3	Sewerage facilities with Treatment	20%	50%

Institutional Arrangement in Kathmandu

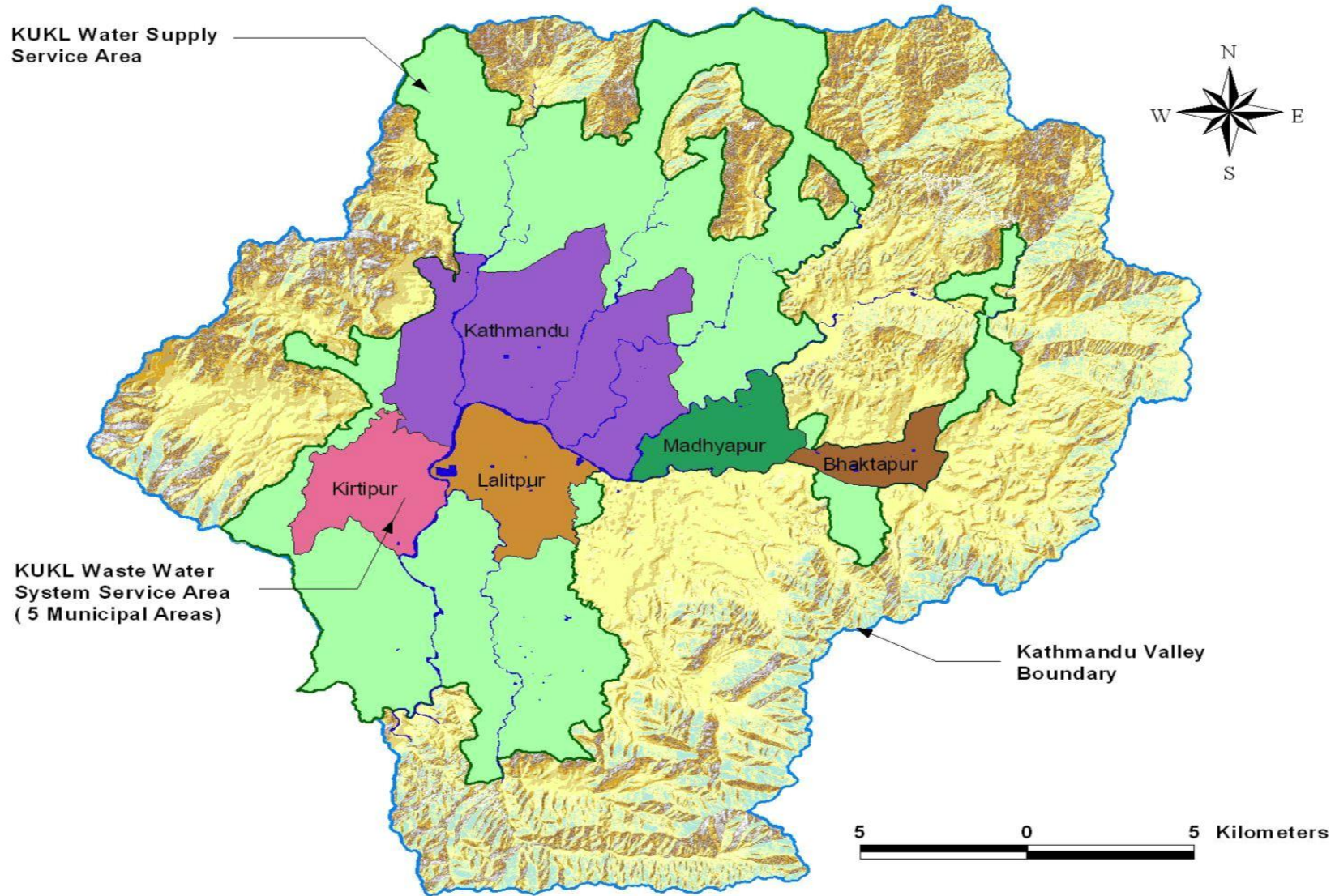


KVWSMB : Asset owner and responsible for developing and overseeing service policies & planning

KUKL : Responsible for operating water supply and wastewater system in Kathmandu Valley

WSTFC : Tariff regulation and safeguarding consumer interests

Service Area of KUKL



Informal Settlements in Kathmandu Valley

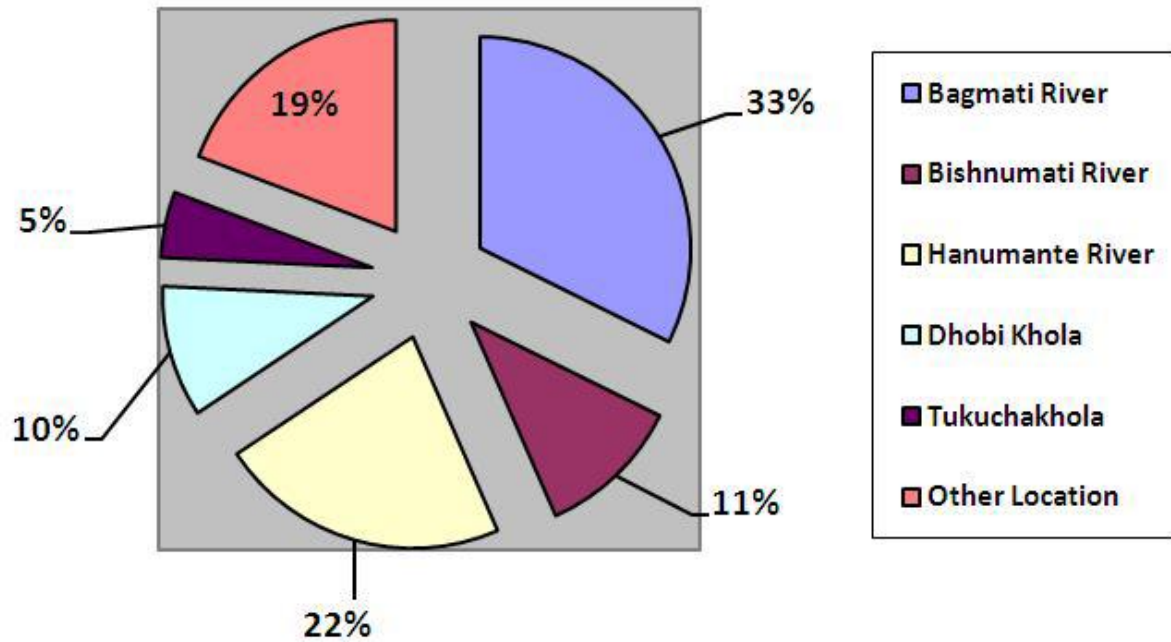


Figure 1: Distribution of Squatter Population by Location

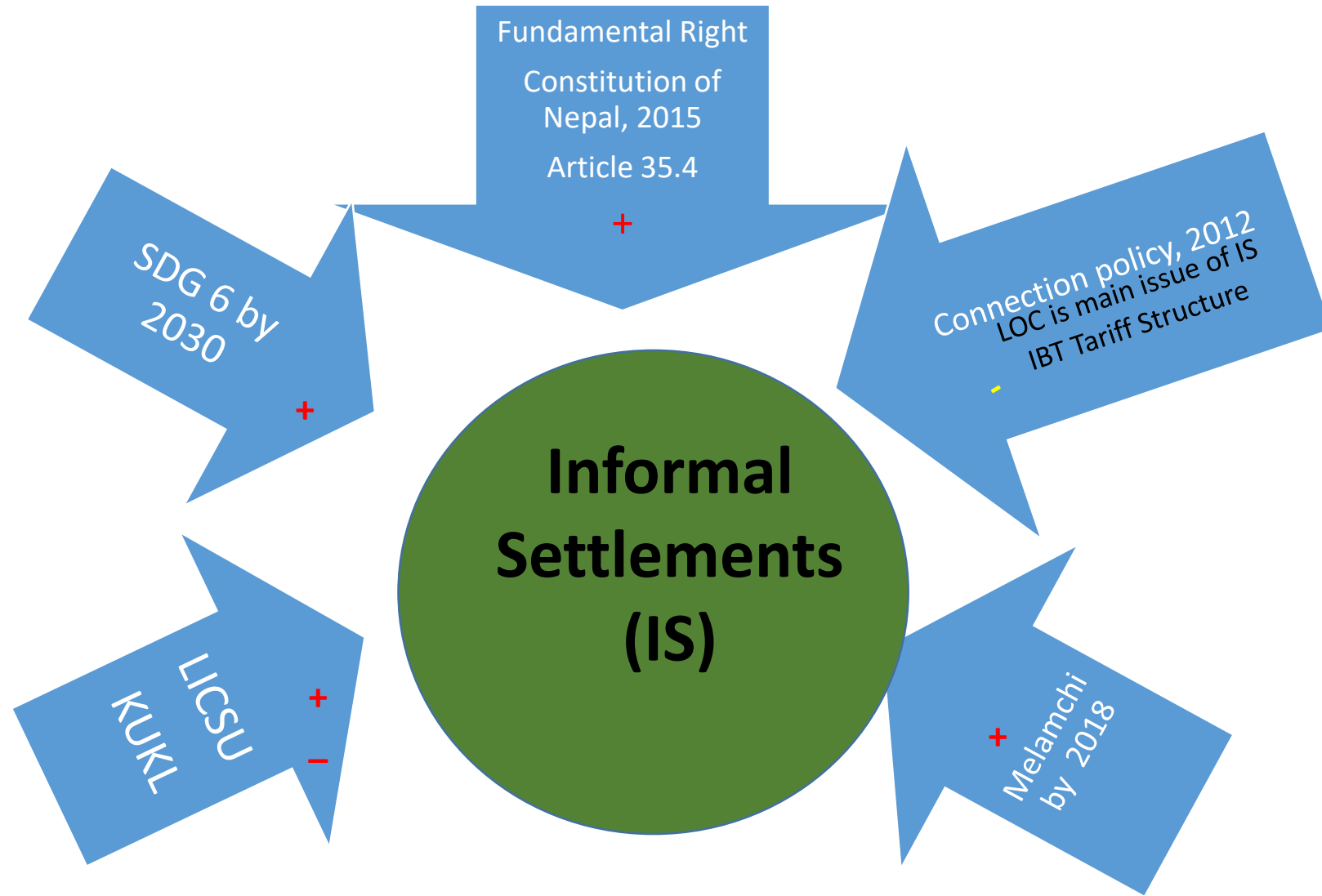
Source: Lumanti Bulletin, 2069 B.S.

Squatters settlements in Kathmandu Valley and their demographic status.

Location of Squatter Settlements	Number of Settlements	Total Population	Total Households	Average Household Size
Bagmati	11	3903	863	4.5
Bishnumati	5	1564	306	5.1
Hanumante	1	2422	589	4.1
Dhobikhola	5	1247	271	4.6
Tukucha	2	843	176	4.8
Other Locations	16	2747	530	5.2
Total	40	12726	2735	4.7

Source: Lumanti Bulletin, 2069 B.S.

Informal Settlements in Kathmandu Valley : Present Status



Access to Water and Sanitation

Low Income Consumer Support Unit (LICSU)

- **LICSU is dedicated to serve the poor consumers, was established under the Technical Department of KUKL.**
- **Total 101 Taps were connected in Informal Settlements.**
- **Areas receiving Tanker Water Supply gets 60 % discount in Tanker Service.**

Human Rights, Water Supply and Sanitation in Kathmandu Valley

Opportunities

- Access to water – One house one connection policy
- Affordability – Current policy ensures tax for basic water supply remains below 3 percent of average income
- Low income user groups and informal settlements are subsidized in Kathmandu Valley.
- 20000 LFW in this FY 2021/022

Challenges

- Existing connection policy demands Land Ownership Certificate for each individual connection.
- Commitment to development partners
- 15 National Plan and SDG

Contd...

Way Forward

- 20000 liter drinking water free to every citizen.
- Different approaches to provide access of WASH facilities to informal settlements. Thus, achieving 100% water supply and sanitation services in Kathmandu Valley

THANK YOU