There has been a commendable upward trend in ADP allocation on WASH though Bangladesh in recent times faces inflation due to many reasons including Russia-Ukraine war and the soar of Covid 19 pandemic. WASH ADP allocation increased 5.44% from preceding fiscal FY2021-22 compared to overall ADP increase of 7.5%.

Projects undertaken in response to Covid 19 pandemic and climate change are a positive way forward, but allocation in FSM, and capacity-building should also be increased.

Though proportionate allocation for rural areas shows some increase – from 22.5% in FY 2021-22 to 27.7% in FY 2022-23, gap between rural and urban has further been increased.

Intra-urban inequities in WASH allocation have been remaining a big challenge.

Allocation in hard-to-reach has slightly increased in haor and hilly region, however, dropped in coastal area. The HIES 2022 (Key Findings) discloses that 3.85 percent of population depends on ponds, rivers, canals, wells, etc. as their main source of drinking water.

This is concerning because as JMP 2021 underscores, the percentage having access to ‘safely managed drinking water’ stands at 59% and percentage having access to ‘safely managed sanitation’ stands at 39% only.

To attain ‘safely managed drinking water’ and ‘safely managed sanitation’ in an uneven progress situation holistic approach in ADP allocation for WASH to be followed with focus on community engagement in FSM, climate change and disaster risk.
Key Findings from WASH ADP Budget-Tracking

1. A commendable upward trend observed in WASH allocation in FY2022-23 though proportionate increase is lower than increase in overall ADP size.

Long term trend in WASH ADP allocation (Figure 1) shows commendable upward trend but this proportionate increase over the preceding fiscal year is lower – 5.44% - than the corresponding rate of increase in the overall ADP size – 7.4%.

2. An increase allocation in water and sanitation is commendable but a decrease in FSM may affect supply of ‘safely managed drinking water’ and achievement of ‘safely managed sanitation’.

Disaggregated data (Figure 2) shows increased allocations for water and sanitation in FY2022-23 compared to the allocation in the preceding fiscal year. But allocations for FSM and capacity-building show a surprising decline that may affect the supply of ‘safely managed drinking water’ and ‘safely managed sanitation’ (SDG 6.2). A few years ago World Bank report (2018) titled “Promising Progress: A Diagnostic of Water Supply, Sanitation, Hygiene, and Poverty in Bangladesh” found E. coli bacteria present in 80% of private piped water taps and 41% of all improved water sources. WASH budget-tracking policy briefs in the past underscored emerging climate hotspots and FSM in secondary towns and urbanized villages represent newer WASH challenges.

The situation since then has improved a lot. Key findings of HIES 2022 show that 92.32 percent of population have access to improved toilet facilities and prevailing open defecation is 0.69 percent only. It is commendable too that DPHE has undertaken projects on WASH, DRR and Fecal Sludge and Waste Management (FSWM) to build resilience through disaster risk communication and community engagement process. On investigation it is found that DPHE has been implementing ‘environmental sanitation’ projects in 39 secondary towns. There are projects on solid waste management too in Narayangonj City Corporation and Khulna City Corporation. Dhaka WASA has also undertaken a project, “Dhaka Environmental Sustainable Water Supply Project” at a cost of Taka 141705 lakh. These projects are being implemented in pourasavas not situated mandatorily in climate vulnerable areas.

It is recommended that successful projects on environmental sanitation should be scaled up, and more projects on environmentally sustainable and disaster resilience funded from ADP should be undertaken to ensure supply of ‘safely managed drinking water’, ‘safely managed sanitation’, FSM, and solid waste management in the climate vulnerable areas of the country.
3. Upward trend in allocation in haor and hilly regions is praiseworthy; coastal strips should receive similar attention.

Repeated calls in the past were made through this budget-tracking exercise to ensure WASH programmes in the hard-to-reach area for realizing SDG 6 and government’s commitment in adopted plans and policies. The WASH ADP allocation in FY2022-23 finds an upward trend (Figure 3) in haor and hilly areas but fails to keep similar spirit in coastal and char lands to ensure government’s commitment to supply drinkable water to all citizens.

4. A more rational and equitable intra-urban distribution of the WASH ADP allocations should be in focus.

The WASH budget-tracking exercise has repeatedly brought into focus the entrenched problem of intra-urban inequities in WASH allocations. Unfortunately, ADP allocation of FY2022-23 (Figure 4) shows a continuation of this problem.

It is observed that allocations are disproportionately tilted towards DNCC and Gazipur City Corporation. A more rational and equitable intra-urban distribution of the WASH ADP allocations is proposed once more.

5. WASH ADP allocation for all four WASAs should be increased.

FY2022-23 found a decrease of ADP allocation in WASAs, to 30% from 36% of preceding fiscal year (Figure 6). Since cities are growing with the growth of their population ADP allocation for present 4 WASAs should proportionately find an upward trend.
6. Some positive changes in intra-WASA allocations but remaining inequities should be redressed.

There have been some positive changes in intra-WASA allocations with proportionate allocation for DWASA somewhat reduced in FY 2022-23 budget and corresponding allocations increased for CWASA and RWASA (Figure 5).

However, allocations for KWASA continues to languish at the bottom.

This governance challenge should be resolved at the policy level by equitable distribution of resources and timely completion of big projects.

7. Urban-rural inequities in WASH ADP allocations need to be resolved.

Urban areas continue to receive the lion share of WASH ADP allocations (Figure 7), but the urban-rural disparity has to be resolved at the policy level in future allocations.

Otherwise, Government’s 2 National Priority Targets (NPT) in WASH sector in line with SDGs SDG 6, i.e., 100% Safe Drinking Water (NTP 1/ SDG 6.1.1) and 100% Safely Managed Sanitation (NTP 2/ SDG 6.2.1) will be hard to achieve.

8. Environment, Climate Change and Disaster-related new Initiatives and ADP Projects.

PPRC team collected data on environmental, climate change and disaster-related WASH projects to ensure supply of safe water and environmental sanitation undertaken in FY2022-23 by different GoB agencies, specially DPHE. There are projects on solid waste management too. These projects are being implemented in different secondary towns but not mandatorily in climate vulnerable areas. Dhaka WASA has also undertaken a project, “Dhaka Environmental Sustainable Water Supply Project” at a cost of Taka 141705 lakh. DPHE is implementing such environmental sanitation projects in 39 pourasavas. All those pourasavas are climate vulnerable. Hence, questions arise about the selection process of those pourasavas.

Normally the climate vulnerable and disaster-prone areas are in the 13 districts of the coastal belt, the flood-prone zones, on both sides of rivers Brahmaputra-Jamuna, Padma and Meghna. There is flush flood zone in the haor areas. There are problems of salinity intrusion in coastal belt where tube-well does not work for fresh water. Therefore, to combat with salinity intrusion due to climate change and disasters, and continuing supply of safe water and environmentally sustainable sanitation services during emergency more projects should be implemented in those disaster-prone and climate vulnerable areas of the country.

As one of the most climate vulnerable countries Bangladesh situations with respect to safely manage water and safely manage sanitation is complex. The country has made remarkable progress in eliminating open defecation, the safe management of feacal sludge has become a major and urgent challenge. It is advocated that on-site sanitation service may be a suitable option and recommended that SMOSS (Safely Managed On-Site Sanitation) service/ system will work towards pro-poor gradually, accountable, safe and sustainable safely managed on-site sanitation services, to contribute to the improved living environment, health and well-being of the people. Awareness rising programmes on SMOSS to be undertaken. Some projects are being implemented on solid waste management in some cities and towns.
In Paikgachcha Pourasava of Khulna district Taka only 70 lacs have been allocated for dustbin and toilet installation, rain-water harvesting, tree plantation, water tanks, etc. DPHE is also implementing Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) on WASH in Emergency. In neighbouring countries of Bangladesh RCCE working group created a national collective approach to RCCE on COVID-19 to formalize the coordinated response. The strategy builds on the knowledge gained from other health crises about the best ways to combat stigma and false information.

It is recommended that successful projects on environmental sanitation should be scaled up, and more projects on environmentally sustainable and disaster resilience and risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) funded from ADP should be undertaken to ensure supply of ‘safely managed drinking water’, ‘safely managed sanitation’, FSM, and solid waste management in the climate vulnerable areas of the country. It is recommended that successful projects on climate change, disaster resilience and RCCE should be scaled up funding from ADP to ensure supply of ‘safely managed drinking water’, ‘safely managed sanitation’, FSM, and solid waste management in the climate vulnerable areas of the country.

**Recommendations for FY2023-24 ADP Allocation for WASH sector**

- While some aspects of inequities in WASH ADP allocation are being addressed, **two out-of-focus dimensions require attention**:
  
  i) hard-to-reach areas – chars, coast, haors and hilly regions, and
  
  ii) intra-urban inequities.

- Services for FSM in secondary towns and urbanized villages are crucial. Decline in allocation in this sub-sector runs counter to the rising needs as seen in increasing urbanization trend in Population census 2022. An **increased FSM allocation** to address the emerging WASH challenges in secondary towns and urbanized villages in the next ADP budget is strongly recommended.

- To realize the dual WASH sector National Priority Targets (NPT) i.e. **100% Safe Drinking Water and 100% Safely Managed Sanitation** and thereby attaining SDG 6, increased allocation including advocacy on hygiene sub-sector is a positive step but implementing this through ministry of health alone will not achieve the required results. A **multi-agency policy approach** should be adopted as a priority.

- To ensure higher policy prioritization on environment, climate change, and disaster hotspots in WASH sector, **stronger advocacy** should receive more focus for better allocations in these areas in the ADP allocations.

- Projects/programmes on climate change, disaster resilience including risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) on WASH, SM OSS, FSM in Emergency should receive priority in future ADP allocations to combat the new challenges in these complex areas. Solid waste management in cities and secondary towns requires policy priority too.