

# Beyond political commitment to sanitation: navigating incentives for prioritisation and course correction in Indonesia

## Case study



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*Making sanitation happen: turning 'political will' into action. Policy brief.*

*Beyond political commitment to sanitation: navigating incentives for prioritisation and course correction in Ethiopia, India and Indonesia. Synthesis report.*

*Beyond political commitment to sanitation: navigating incentives for prioritisation and course correction in Ethiopia. Case study report.*

*Beyond political commitment to sanitation: navigating incentives for prioritisation and course correction in India. Case study report.*

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## Executive summary

Since Indonesia's transition to democracy in 1998, successive administrations have shown gradual increases in political commitment to urban sanitation. It has been the subject of major funded programmes, a presidential decree, ambitious national targets, and substantial increases in budget allocation. However, despite performing better than most countries, access to improved sanitation in urban areas has been progressing slowly – from 69.5% in 2009 to 76.3% in 2015,<sup>1</sup> and sewerage coverage and septage treatment are almost negligible.<sup>2,3</sup>

This study examines how high-level political commitment for urban sanitation in Indonesia is translated into progressive outcomes through two mediating processes: prioritisation through different layers of government; and course correction to tackle existing and emerging obstacles. The study focuses on the role of incentives in shaping these processes.

**Prioritisation** seems to have been driven by a combination of positive and punitive incentives. Narratives that align sanitation with positive values such as modernity are motivating public officials to progressively engage with related programmes. Inter-city competitions on sanitation are raising it in Mayors' agendas, and financial schemes are increasing local government's control over budgets, and decision-making authority over investments. A culture of sanction and reprisal, however, seems to be encouraging officials to discharge their service delivery responsibilities. Indonesia's incentive structures around urban sanitation were particularly influenced by a high level of decentralisation, power dynamics across ministries, and a rigid bureaucratic system, which all negatively affected the willingness of individuals at local level to prioritise the sanitation agenda.

Regarding **course correction**, the urban sanitation sector in Indonesia has developed several mechanisms. Review and verification processes at national level were found to be taking place through coordination hubs and working groups, supported by a web-based monitoring system and routine meetings across different levels of public officials. A wide range of forums, networking platforms, national conferences, summits, and advocacy groups were also found to be supporting overall sectoral learning, with WhatsApp guaranteeing flow of information. Advocacy, external technical assistance by development partners, and evidence were key incentives in supporting programmatic course correction.

Nonetheless, such a wide range of mechanisms coupled with lack of institutional leadership has made this a complex exercise for effective sectoral planning and coordinated interventions. The existence of numerous platforms for engagement and the high volume of meetings seemed also to disincentivise participation of key public officials.

Indonesia's experience suggests several lessons, which may also be relevant for other countries:

- Invest in putting together a strong inter-agency sanitation working group able to coordinate highly fragmented and decentralised institutional arrangements.
- Identify 'sanitation local champions' able to sustain support for the cause and activate the right levers around budget allocation and prioritisation.
- Devise an overall vision and sectoral strategy that provides the sector with a clear joint framework to operate in.
- Develop programmes, partnerships, and initiatives that respect context and hierarchies but establish routes of dialogue across different levels of the administrative and bureaucratic system.

## Introduction

This study is part of a wider research project that examines what is needed for high-level political commitment on sanitation to translate into effective action by governments. Given the public health costs and the limited demand that exists without government intervention, those working on sanitation have emphasised the importance of securing political commitment at the highest levels.<sup>1</sup> Less attention has been given to what else might be needed to drive progress on sanitation when that high-level commitment is in place.

We investigate two critical functions that will be needed to turn the spark of high-level political commitment into substantial progress on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Target 6.2, namely ‘adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all’.<sup>4</sup> The first is the ability to translate commitment into prioritisation through the machinery of government – the engine driving progress in the sector. The second is the ability to course correct in response to existing and emerging obstacles – the rudder that allows effective steering and adaptation in the complexities of sanitation.

This dual focus – on engine and rudder – builds on WaterAid’s previous research on how total sanitation coverage was achieved within a generation in several East Asian countries such as South Korea and Malaysia.<sup>5</sup>

In investigating these functions, we look at the underlying issues of incentives, interest and power which operate at individual and organisational level. We consider which incentives work for and against effective prioritisation and course correction. We also consider how prioritisation and course correction interrelate.

The Indonesia case study concerns urban sanitation (including wastewater and faecal-sludge management, but not solid waste), and has a national-level focus. It is part of a global study, which includes case studies in India (rural sanitation) and Ethiopia (rural sanitation).

The overarching research questions, which we address, are:

1. How do incentives shape the translation of high-level political commitment into prioritisation of sanitation through government machinery?
2. How do incentives enable or hinder course correction to tackle existing and emerging obstacles in the sector?
3. How do prioritisation through government machinery and course correction interrelate?

The research was commissioned by WaterAid and carried out by the Overseas Development Institute. Researchers collected primary data through key informant interviews in Jakarta in May 2016, interviewing 22 expert stakeholders representing 16 organisations. They gathered secondary information from academic and grey literature before and after primary data collection and sought to validate the emerging findings via a summary provided to a number of interviewees, as well as

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<sup>i</sup> For example, from prime ministers, presidents, ministers, or heads of government departments.



validating emerging findings via peer review from a number of sector experts. Limitations of the research methodology include reliance on a relatively small pool of interviewees and the fact that all were working at the national level, affecting the depth of the analysis on how prioritisation and course correction occurred at the subnational level.

The next section introduces the history and context shaping the Indonesian urban sanitation sector. We then synthesise the findings related to the research questions, before concluding with lessons that could be relevant to other countries.

## Context

Since Indonesia's transition to democracy in 1998, successive administrations have shown gradual increases in political commitment to urban sanitation. It has been the subject of major funded programmes, a presidential decree, ambitious national targets, and substantial increases in budget allocation. However, despite performing better than most countries, access to improved sanitation, sewerage coverage, and septage treatment have been progressing slowly.

In this section we consider the key elements of the political and governance context that have implications not only for the nature of high-level commitment, but also for how sanitation is prioritised through the government machinery, and how processes of course correction and adaptation play out. We then focus on the urban sanitation sector, to offer further analysis on the nature of political commitment, and the policies, programmes, past progress, and future ambitions that follow from this.

### Political and governance context

Two key political features lead shaping of the incentive structures in Indonesia: a progressive transformation of politics towards a more democratic regime; and decentralisation.

There has been an impressive progressive transition towards a more democratic regime since the end of the authoritarian regime of former President Suharto in 1998. The current coalition government, led by President Widodo, has set a clearer set of priorities aimed at encouraging investment, boosting support for infrastructure development and implementing poverty-alleviation programmes.<sup>6</sup> These are to be achieved through bureaucratic reform and changes to economic policy, among other actions.<sup>7</sup> Overall, budget deficit has been kept manageable and government debt kept low, while billions of dollars in fuel subsidies cuts are to be diverted towards infrastructure projects.<sup>8</sup> However, Indonesia's political culture is still subject to oligarchic domination and elite capture,<sup>9</sup> with corruption, collusion, and nepotism remaining key traits.<sup>10</sup> Negotiation and brokering, rather than violence, have often been key to incorporating and neutralising these elements, but the pace of socially progressive reforms has been slow.<sup>11</sup> Democratically accountable interests, such as oligarchs', have been able to buy policy influence by supporting parties and the military.<sup>12</sup>

Regarding decentralisation, Indonesia is a unitary country but, since 2001 has begun to decentralise political and fiscal authority over public service delivery to subnational

governments<sup>ii</sup> (*Undang-Undang* No 23/2014). Although decentralisation transferred the responsibility for investment in municipal infrastructure and provision of services, including sanitation, to local governments, it only gives them autonomy to determine the size and structure of their sectoral allocations budget expenditure.<sup>13</sup> Central Government retains most taxing powers, meaning that decentralised services are mainly funded by intergovernmental transfers.<sup>14</sup> Although some argue that this model of deconcentrated spending, co-administered with local governments, has had a positive effect on local service access;<sup>15</sup> others highlight that it has not clarified central, regional, and local government roles and functional assignments in service delivery.<sup>16</sup>

Provision of sanitation services since decentralisation has been divided between central Government for policy development, standard setting, and capacity building, and local governments for planning and management of sanitation services (Ministry of Public Works Regulation 16/2008; *Law/Undang-Undang* No 23/2014). For wastewater management specifically, the central Government's role is to develop national wastewater management systems (and directly provide such systems for inter-provincial and national strategic locations) with provinces developing and managing at the regional level, and municipal governments managing and developing in their respective territories.<sup>17</sup> Wastewater's legal status<sup>iii,17</sup> establishes that regional governments, especially municipal governments (*Kabupaten/Kota*), are obliged to develop infrastructure and take charge of post-construction issues, while central Government retains competences for standard setting and sectoral regulation.<sup>18</sup>

For each presidential administration, a five-yearly National Government Development Plan (RPJMN) frames overarching policy, backed by equivalent plans developed by line ministries. There is also a presidential decree on 'accelerating water and sanitation development' (PERPRES No 185/2014). However, Indonesia still lacks a formal and comprehensive legal framework that regulates urban wastewater management and faecal sludge management down to decentralised levels.<sup>19</sup> Central Government remains responsible for preparing policies (*Law/Undang-Undang* No 23/2014 – Decentralisation Law), while local governments must issue local regulations on wastewater management consistent with national regulations (PerMenPU 16/2008 issued by the Ministry of Public Works). The only national law pertaining to wastewater policy was that on Water Resources (*Law* 7/2004); however, the Constitutional Court has invalidated its legal status since 2015.

There is also a National Strategy for Community Based Total Sanitation (*Sanitasi Total Berdasar Masyarakat*), issued by the Ministry of Health under Decree No. 852/2008. Although some cities have drafted their own regulations (for example Solo and Makassar), there is no overall national policy guiding cities to develop these regulations, and, since there is no standard approach or streamlining, they have

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<sup>ii</sup> The Government of Indonesia is three-tiered, comprising 34 provinces or regions with special statutes and 505 districts (412 rural local authorities – *kabupaten* and 93 urban local authorities – *kota*).

<sup>iii</sup> Wastewater is a 'basic service-mandatory-concurrent-affair' whereby responsibilities are distributed across both central and local government (see Al'Afghani et al, 2015).

evolved and are used in different ways in different cities.<sup>20</sup> A new Wastewater Law has been drafted; however, it does not seem to be a priority as it has been on *Prolegnas*<sup>iv</sup> “waiting list” for more than two years, waiting to be discussed and approved by parliament (key informant).

As in other sectors, most of the funds and budgets for sanitation are still controlled by sectoral ministries at the central level (around 80% lies with Ministry of Public Works, and 20% with other ministries).<sup>21</sup> Local equivalents of national line and finance ministries developed a local government budget (APBD), with local parliament approval.<sup>22</sup> Mayors wield considerable influence over local budget priorities, and general, non-earmarked grants from national government (DAU) could provide an important source of finance for sanitation. To date, in general the sector has not been prioritised in local budgets.

Sanitation is perceived as a cross-sectoral issue and, as such, responsibilities are split across a wide range of ministries and agencies,<sup>v</sup> making for a complex institutional system. For example, the Ministry of Public Works oversees development of technical standards and is ultimately responsible for large infrastructure developments while the Ministry of Environment focuses on solid waste management, the Ministry of Education on supporting school sanitation initiatives, and the Ministry of Health on quality control of environmental issues. Sector coordination is ensured by the National Development Planning Agency (Bappenas), which hosts and convenes the National Working Group on Water and Sanitation (*Pokja AMPL Nasional*). This is a legally recognised unit composed of eight ministries responsible for policy formulation and for driving advocacy and development synergies in the sector across the country.

### **Nature of high-level commitment on urban sanitation**

Major funded programmes, state budget increases, presidential backing and ambitious national targets all seem to indicate a gradual increase in commitment to urban sanitation by successive administrations, and the sector is reportedly rising up the agendas of a number of provincial and district leaders.

High-level commitment towards urban sanitation was low until the 2000s. Previously it was mainly perceived as a private matter, with government initiatives traditionally promoting ‘self-provision’ of sanitation facilities, and NGOs or donors funding the few decentralised wastewater treatment solutions.<sup>23</sup> In an attempt to align sectoral policy reforms with the 2001 decentralisation process, the Government enacted new policies (such as the National Policy on Community Based Water and Sanitation Development, 2003) and launched new national programmes (such as WSLIC – Water and Sanitation for Low-Income Communities, and SANIMAS – Sanitation by Communities). These reinforced a gradual shift towards a community-based approach whereby central and local authorities assumed a facilitation role, while transferring responsibility for urban sanitation sustainability to communities. However, sanitation remained “the ‘poor parent’ in the WASH equation, as central

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<sup>iv</sup> National Legislation Program that determines which laws are to be discussed each year.

<sup>v</sup> These include: Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Public Works, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Environment, and Ministry of Industry.



government investment and demand from local government remained low” (key informant).

The launch of the Indonesia Sanitation Sector Development Program (ISSDP) in 2006 represents the first key milestone in Indonesia’s recent sanitation journey, and a sector breakthrough. Several factors contributed to it: a change in decentralisation law (UU 32/2004 replaced UU No 22/1999), which helped clarifying urban sanitation responsibilities; donor support; and consolidation of a shared view on sanitation sector priorities among cross-ministerial staff. ISSDP was also part of central Government’s response to the financial crisis of the 1990s that made it reluctant to take on infrastructure loans from multilateral agencies. Instead it designed and invested in programmes more focussed on advocacy and technical assistance.<sup>24</sup> Amid limited provincial and local government understanding of what sanitation entailed, this central Government pilot project thus focused on providing technical assistance to strengthen the policy and institutional environment at local level.<sup>25</sup> No substantial infrastructure funding was available (only modest grants were on offer for piloting and small works). Instead, the programme focussed on ‘socialising’<sup>vi</sup> the concept of Citywide Sanitation Strategies (*Strategi Sanitasi Kota/Kabupaten or SSKs*).<sup>vii,26</sup> Designed to increase subnational governments’ awareness of local sanitation issues while encouraging them to channel more investment towards it, the programme was deployed across eight cities as a pilot to refine in future scaling up.

Scale-up of ISSDP led to the launch of the Accelerated Sanitation Development for Human Settlements Program (PPSP) – the current ongoing Government-led urban sanitation programme, described by many as having consolidated the new sanitation paradigm in the sector. Launched in 2010, PPSP used a multi-sectorial and integrated approach to sanitation development systems. SSKs remained the main element through which to address urban sanitation as “a planning tool for local governments to use for advocating budget increase towards sanitation development from central and provincial level whilst increasing political commitment from Mayor/Bupati”<sup>viii</sup> (key informant). Within four years, 446 districts/cities have completed the preparation of SSKs. The current second phase, PPSP II (2015–2019) is focussed on implementation of SSKs and expanding the programme to 506 districts/cities.<sup>27</sup>

The third key milestone in Indonesia’s sanitation journey is the 2014 presidential decree on ‘Accelerating Water and Sanitation Development’ (PERPRES No 185/2014). It provides the legal base for central Government to advocate for a greater involvement from local governments towards fulfilling their responsibilities, and for local legislatures to disburse local budget. Moreover, it also supports mainstreaming efforts at local level for the development and adoption of city-wide sanitation strategies (Article 9). One of the most crucial elements of the decree is that it created a cross-sectorial task force directly under the President’s remit (Article

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<sup>vi</sup> We use the term ‘socialising’ to refer to processes of disseminating and publicising information aimed at increasing people’s awareness and understanding of specific issues.

<sup>vii</sup> As part of SSK local governments have to prepare an integrated, multi-year city or district sanitation strategy that describes the current sanitation situation, projected needs, key strategic approaches, and specific programmes for each city or district.

<sup>viii</sup> A *bupati* is a head of a rural district.

12) responsible for accelerating WASH development. However, at the time of the research, it was not yet operational and most discussions revolved around the need to clarify which ministry, out of 12 suggested to take part, would lead it (key informants). In addition, although signposting political prioritisation, presidential regulations still rank below Government-issued ones (*Undang-Undang*).<sup>28</sup>

President Widodo's demonstrations of high-level commitment seem to reflect a personal interest in issues surrounding sanitation, especially considering his direct involvement in ISSDP as Mayor of Surakarta/Solo in Central Java (one of the six pilot cities). According to a key informant, this experience might have contributed to his understanding around "the positive multiplier effects of sanitation on health improvement, productivity increase, environment and employment".

Increasingly ambitious national sanitation targets have also been key to sustaining momentum around this agenda. Focus on urban sanitation has gradually increased across Government development plans (such as RPJMN – *Rencana Pembangunan Jangka Menengah Nasional*).<sup>ix,29</sup> In 2004 sanitation was only briefly mentioned as playing a key role in decreasing infant and maternal mortality rates (RPJMN 2004–2009); but by 2010 a specific sanitation target on reaching open defecation free status had been introduced (RPJMN, 2010–2014). In 2014, the Government reinvigorated and extended the ambition for universal access, stating it would provide 100% access to sanitation (waste water, solid waste, and drainage) by developing and upgrading centralised (off-site or city-scale, area, and communal) wastewater treatment infrastructure, and improving the quality of on-site septage management. Another example of high-level political prioritisation is the inclusion of 'sanitation' as part of the '100-0-100' target campaign. In line with the national objectives set by the RJP MN (2015–2019), this reflects the Government's drive to provide 100% access to water, ensure 0% of people are living in slums, and ensure 100% access to good sanitation by 2019.<sup>30</sup>

High-level political commitment has also been reflected through budget increase across the three main sources of national financing for sanitation.<sup>x</sup> National budget allocation towards sanitation<sup>xi</sup> increased from IDR 315 billion in 2005 to IDR 2,525 billion in 2013 in nominal terms.<sup>31</sup> Since 2010, there has been a special grant allocation from the national budget to local governments dedicated only to sanitation to support implementation of the PPSP.

Although most funds come mainly from central Government, district governments have also begun allocating more funds towards this sub-sector, although comprehensive data are difficult to obtain. Extrapolating from a subset of 51 district governments between 2010 and 2014, the percentage of total annual planned expenditures on wastewater through annual municipal budgets, increased from

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<sup>ix</sup> This is a comprehensive and fixed plan that defines the President's five-year term of office priorities and development objectives, and serves as the point of reference for annual government-wide work plans and yearly investment allocations.

<sup>x</sup> National budget funding (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Nasional – APBN*), special grant allocations from the national budget to local governments (*Dana Alokasi Khusus – DAK*), and local government budgets (*Anggaran Pendapatan dan Belanja Daerah – APBD*).

<sup>xi</sup> Sanitation spending figures include all the components of the government definition of environmental sanitation, namely (i) wastewater management, (ii) solid waste, and (iii) drainage.

0.10% to 0.19%, and for drainage and waste collection it increased from 1.06% to 1.09%.<sup>31</sup> Box 1 further examines the evidence for high-level prioritisation within local government structures.

### Box 1: Prioritisation by local leadership

Although not a direct focus of this study, there are signs of prioritisation by leadership within local government structures also. Much of this subnational drive was secured by direct influence of AKKOPSI, a mayors and *bupatis* alliance for sanitation formed in 2009 by the mayors of ISSDP's six pilot cities in an attempt to "make sanitation sexy and inspire local government leaders to go beyond constructing roads and buildings" (key informant). With currently more than 400 member-cities AKKOPSI "represents the voice of the local government by acting as an intermediary with central government agencies" (key informant). AKKOPSI plays a key role in socialising<sup>xii</sup> national Government initiatives such as 'Citywide Sanitation', and facilitating understanding of how to access funding. For example, "uptake of Ministry of Public Works Sanitation loans (Hibas) was initially very low because local governments were not completely sure what the funds were for and how to access them, it was only when AKKOPSI helped disseminating the initiative that commitment increased" (key informant).

Commitment has also been expressed publicly via declarations at both central and local government. These include the Blitar Declaration on Sanitation (2007) signed by the mayors of the six ISSDP-supported cities and the National Sanitation Commitment signed soon after by a range of Ministers recognising the impact of poor sanitation on health and economic development, and committing Government to engage with multi-stakeholder partnerships to advance sanitation progress. In 2016 governors also signed a declaration across Indonesia aimed at prioritising investments in sanitation at provincial level. The Gubernur Peduli Sanitasi Declaration calls for maximisation of the health budget as an alternative source of funding for sanitation-related activities, for example. The reach of these declarations remains limited, however, because they lack legal backing and the number of signatories is low. For example, up until now, Gubernur Peduli Sanitasi Declaration issued in March had only been signed by eight out of 34 governors.<sup>32</sup>

A common denominator across Indonesia's sanitation journey, at least at national level, has been the work of Pokja AMPL and the role played by Bappenas within it. Referred to as the 'sanitation driving motor' (key informant), Pokja AMPL, 'led by sanitation champions' (key informant), has been instrumental in consolidating inter-ministerial collaboration and mobilising support across the various departments with some responsibility for sanitation. This has been achieved lately through Bappenas' sanitation roadmap,<sup>33</sup> whereby urban sanitation is seen as a key component to deliver the national RPJMN Plan and achieve the ultimate goal of Indonesia becoming a high-income country.

<sup>xii</sup> See footnote vi.

Gradual increases in level of commitment to urban sanitation by successive administrations has yet to translate into significant outcome improvement. For example, access to improved sanitation in urban areas has been progressing slowly – from 69.5% in 2009 to 76.3% in 2015<sup>34</sup> –and sewerage coverage and septage treatment are almost negligible.<sup>35</sup> Moreover, the resulting impact on water quality is clear, with a recent survey integrating water quality into the national economic survey (SUSENAS) finding two thirds of drinking water samples at the point of consumption containing *E. Coli*.<sup>36</sup>

### Translating high-level political commitment into prioritisation through the government machinery

In this section we consider how high-level commitment translates into prioritisation of sanitation through the government machinery – the first of our two key functions, the other being ability to course correct.

In the Indonesian context, both positive and punitive sets of incentives seem to be at play. On one hand, incentives that appeal to common values, inter-city competitions, and financial schemes are powerful motivators for local governments and public officials to engage with the urban sanitation agenda. Many of these are instrumental because they hold the promise of some sort of personal gain and reward. On the other hand, however, individuals are also at the receiving end of sanctions, which lead them to engage not necessarily out of personal interest, but in order to avoid reprisals. Furthermore, in Indonesia many incentive structures for prioritising urban sanitation are influenced and shaped by wider political economy factors. These can determine the ability of lower levels of government in Indonesia to prioritise sanitation, and in some cases act as disincentives.

### Values-based incentives creating a shared objective

Prioritisation across different parts of government was aided by technical and economic arguments that conferred to sanitation a central role in achieving wider economic development ambitions. A major study by the World Bank<sup>37</sup> provided solid evidence of the impact low levels of urban sanitation investment was having in the country, and was used to develop a tailor-made cross-ministerial advocacy strategy. By highlighting that inadequate sanitation was making the country lose the equivalent of 2.3% of its GDP,<sup>38</sup> the study reportedly helped key stakeholders realise it was hampering national ambitions to reach high-income status, and threatening Indonesia's global competitiveness. In translating commitment into prioritisation through lower tiers of government, a more generic and less technical approach to sanitation issues was apparent, taking advantage of broader ideas of economic competitiveness. At subnational level this was coupled with values of modernisation whereby the image of the smart/modern city drove mayors to engage with sanitation.

## **Instrumental incentives: inter-city competition**

Peer pressure among mayors and bupati has played an important role in securing political buy in from certain individuals. This has been achieved through different sanitation Award Schemes, like SANIPURA from AKKOPSI (Box 1), which recognises the best-performing city or mayor every two years; or the AMPL Award from POKJA, which acknowledges individuals who have contributed towards sanitation-related development innovations in both central and regional or local governments.

These moments of public recognition are usually part of city summits, which generally attract a lot of media attention.<sup>39</sup> Donors have also begun compiling and publishing information that publicises how much local governments are allocating to funding sanitation services through their annual municipal budgets.<sup>40</sup> These tools have contributed to building awareness around funding levels, and in some cases to getting local governments to increase budget support by triggering a sense of pride and healthy competition.

These platforms also provided mayors and bupati with arenas to showcase their achievements and increase their popularity and electability. Especially because “at the local level more than the economic cost of sanitation, it is about the legacy of the ‘smart city’ they want to leave behind, which can only be achieved by investing in sanitation” (key informant). Key informants also revealed that some mayors/bupati invested highly in sanitation “because it would increase the region’s competitiveness and its Human Development Index”.

## **Instrumental incentives: financial resources to obtain political capital**

Financial incentives have also played a role in subnational prioritisation across Indonesia. These have an effect not so much via personal financial return, but via a political return associated with being able to control budgets and make investments.

For example, by participating in PPSP and working towards putting together a citywide sanitation strategy, local governments are now able to access a much wider range of funding options, both from central Government (for example the Special Allocation Fund, or DAK,<sup>xiii,41</sup> which involves earmarked transfers) and donors (for example DFAT’s Sanitation Hibah)<sup>xiv</sup>. This has resulted in hundreds of districts developing strategies over a short timeframe, as mayors spot an opportunity to bring funds to their constituencies.

To accelerate the improvement of on-site sanitation construction and provision of sludge emptying trucks, central Government is further scaling up Sanitation Hibah,

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<sup>xiii</sup> DAK is allocated in the national budget (APBN) to finance central Government initiatives implemented by the region. At the provincial level, the DAK grants are used for provincial road improvements, development of regional art and culture, and rural extension services. At the district level, the DAK grants are used for basic education and preventative healthcare, district road development, basic infrastructure, district markets, and small-scale industry development.

<sup>xiv</sup> The initiative uses an output-based approach as an incentive for local governments to invest more in sanitation. Districts install and pay for sanitation connections first, and are then reimbursed by the programme (see [www.indii.co.id/](http://www.indii.co.id/)).



through the national Government's Wastewater Management Local Grants programme.<sup>xv,42</sup> In 2016, the Ministry of Public Works allocated 200 billion IDR to the programme; however, currently fewer than 20 cities will take part because of various budget and approval and administration issues.

### **Sanctions: encouraging officials to fulfil public service responsibilities**

As previously highlighted, translation of high-level political commitment through government machinery in Indonesia has also been driven by negative incentives that motivate individuals to act by threatening a punishment.

The Law on Public Services (*Undang Undang* No. 25/2009) is an example of one of these. Although our research was not able to measure how much of this was already happening in the WATSAN sector, we know that this legal instrument enables sanctioning of public officials if they fail to comply with service standard requirements. It also provides for citizens' rights to complain to the ombudsman, which might be a way of 'naming and shaming' regional heads (mayors, regents, and governors).

Sanctions can also derive from other legal instruments such as regional by-laws (*Peraturan Daerah* or *Perdas*). Although recognised as the lowest rung in the hierarchy of laws and regulation in Indonesia, these can be used to set sanctioning rules relating to implementation of basic services. For example, financial penalties can include a fine of up to IDR 50 million or six months' imprisonment, and administrative penalties can take the form of license suspension or revocation.

### **Inhibiting factors: decentralisation, autonomy, hierarchies and power**

The above incentives work through encouraging prioritisation and sanctioning any failure to prioritise urban sanitation. However, there are also features of the wider political economy or governance environment in Indonesia that constrain the ability of officials to prioritise the sector, including legal, fiscal and political dimensions of decentralisation.

Considering legal aspects first, Indonesia's districts are distinct legal corporate entities, which can own assets and in theory can borrow finance. However, the pace of Indonesia's decentralisation has left gaps and tensions in the legal framework that obstruct effective working. For example, infrastructure for sanitation, and water, is often constructed by line ministries (particularly Public Works) using national budgets, and notionally transferred to district government ownership. However, legal status is not always fully clarified and, in a context of strict public expenditure rules, district government officials can be reluctant to take on ownership and operation and maintenance responsibilities. As noted, the Constitutional Court annulled a key national law (7/2004 on water resources) in 2015, further reducing the limited guidance this had provided on sanitation. A wastewater law has been drafted but has been waiting for approval for two years, and, although a presidential decree

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<sup>xv</sup> This is an output-based programme whereby local governments invest in advance to build septic tanks and supply sludge removal trucks with grants from the national Government, disbursed after construction and performance verification.

on ‘accelerating water and sanitation development’ (PERPRES No. 185/2014) has been approved, such instruments are subsidiary to framework legislation.

Mismatch between locally led planning processes and centralised funding arrangements is further constraining prioritisation. Funding remains top-down, with local governments having to “latch on to whatever plans the central government might have” (key informant). This control by central Government is further reinforced through the kind of criteria that local governments must fulfil if they seek to apply for public finance.<sup>43</sup> For example, the criteria of the Special Allocation Fund (DAK) heavily influence the kind of sanitation infrastructure they can choose from, restricting implementation of SSKs and identification of technologies that could better respond to locally specific needs (key informants). Budget execution rates for sanitation projects are often low, due to complicated systems of implementation (such as detailed engineering design revisions, and lengthy processes to obtain land and procure goods and services).<sup>44</sup> Beyond the sector, complex multi-stakeholder budget approval processes at local government level rarely lead to sanitation being prioritised.<sup>45</sup>

In terms of political decentralisation, it is not clear to what extent devolution (local elections) has led to improvements in service delivery. As mentioned by a key informant: “central Government remains reluctant to devolve autonomy to province and local governments, based on concerns it will lose its power, control and influence over regional matters”. Moreover, decentralisation should in theory also allow for increasing citizen voice around local government spending priorities, however, “low demand from the public itself” (key informant) seems to be reinforcing a lack of readiness from local governments to prioritise and invest in sanitation.

In most ministries, the sanitation portfolio remains a responsibility of officials working at Echelon 3 and 4 level – those most junior and with less capacity to set ministerial agendas. Unless an issue is under the direct remit of those working at higher levels of the bureaucratic hierarchies – Echelon 1 and 2 – holding responsibility for budget allocation within their directorates, incentives for prioritisation will remain limited (key informant).

Power differences between ministries also create challenges for prioritisation across Government. Designated responsibilities for coordinating and enforcing prioritisation by different ministries within Government are not backed up by the implicit power associated with control of budgets. Responsibility for coordinating the urban sanitation sector rests with Bappenas, which in theory should lead in encouraging different Ministries – including Public Works, Home Affairs, Health, Environment, Finance, Education and Culture – to prioritise their respective contributions to the urban sanitation agenda. Bappenas plays this kind of role in other sectors and is ordinarily seen as a powerful entity, but research suggested that it faces challenges. In the words of one interviewee: “because its power has decreased over the years [Bappenas] now needs to work much harder to convince different ministries to respond to sanitation needs and work together”. The Ministry of Public Works, meanwhile, controls much of the investment in centralised and decentralised urban sanitation infrastructure from the national budget (giving it de facto control over spending priorities), the Ministry of Home Affairs exerts much influence over subnational government affairs, and the Ministry of Finance approves budget

disbursements. These different forms of more implicit power are at work alongside Bappenas' on-paper authority to coordinate and direct the urban sanitation sector. Despite this, Bappenas, through the work of *Pokja AMPL Nasional*, has played a leading and critical role in finding other ways within the existing landscape to push action on sanitation. This has included significant work on identifying the key drivers and ingredients leading different sector stakeholders (for example politicians, influencers, leaders, communities, private sectors, and international organisations) to act and advocate for acceleration of sanitation within their constituencies.<sup>46</sup>

### Course correction to tackle existing and emerging obstacles

Despite the existence of national coordinating platforms, an online monitoring system, working groups, and networking forums in the Indonesian urban sanitation sector, the highly hierarchical bureaucratic system is making effective sectoral planning and coordinated interventions a complex exercise.

### Major learning and reform efforts

Course corrections can be identified at both national and subnational level. At national level, different urban sanitation programs (for example SANIMAS, ISSDP, and PPSP) have led to a shift in the paradigm whereby sanitation has gradually gone from being a private matter to becoming recognised as a shared responsibility, with local governments assuming a bigger role. Whereas in SANIMAS central Government focussed on promoting shared communal septic tanks, from PPSP onwards the development of sludge management systems became the spending priority for public investment. More recently, there has been further realisation that a "centralised sewerage system is not going to work unless the whole of the sanitation value chain is taken into consideration" (key informant interview), signalling potential further changes ahead. In another example, in a recent cabinet reshuffle, the Ministry of Environment 'upgraded' sanitation from Echelon 3 to 2, which is perceived to be linked with the importance given to solid waste management, as part of a wider sanitation function, under Widodo's presidency.

Course correction processes at this level seem to have been led by 'Sanitation Champions', holding key decision-making positions in both Bappenas and the Ministry of Public Works, and actively engaging with review and coordination processes through *Pokja AMPL* (the sector's coordination hub). For example, whereas Nugroho Tri Utomo (Bappenas) was seen as the 'thinker and planner... and the political driver mainstreaming the sanitation agenda' (key informant), Rina Agustin (Ministry of Public Works) 'sought to make programmes a reality by pushing for budget allocation increase within the Ministry' (key informant). Pak Nugroho was especially active in his role as Chairman of *Pokja AMPL* and was renowned for his passion, enthusiasm, and motivation for WASH issues, and for promoting inter-ministerial collaboration.

Advocacy, external technical assistance by development partners, and evidence also played a substantial role in supporting programmatic course correction at national level. For example, work by development partners has helped change the Government's approach to faecal sludge management from building sludge treatment plants to management of the wider faecal sludge service chain.<sup>47</sup> Donors

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and development partners like the World Bank, the Australian Government (DFAT), UNICEF, the Dutch Government, and the American Government (USAID) have helped consolidate Indonesia's receptiveness to such change through programmes of technical assistance and ongoing support to Ministry of Public Works and other national agencies over the years (for example USDP, IUWASH, INdII). Overall, this support has contributed to shaping nationwide faecal sludge management improvements, towards the goal of achieving 100% sanitation coverage by 2019.

Coupled with this, research uncovered that decision-makers within national Government have also been receptive to and in some circumstances have acted on evidence. As previously highlighted, a study by the World Bank<sup>48</sup> on the economic impacts of low levels of urban sanitation investment provided the first solid evidence of the kind of impact this was having in the country. More recently, two other studies<sup>49,50</sup> were used as the basis to shift the national Government's paradigm and policy on faecal sludge management. A recent study by UNICEF<sup>51</sup> on the determinants of stunting in Indonesia also showed that addressing sanitation is key to reducing current high levels of stunting in children.

At subnational level, an interesting example of course correction has been the use of provincial budget (*Bantuan Keuangan*) to fund local government sanitation-related projects. According to a number of key informants, provincial governments would traditionally only be able to spend funds on national infrastructure or facilities that benefited their region as a whole. However, a different approach has been trialled in West Java Province, where since 2015 provincial funds have been used towards construction of small infrastructure. In the same province, a percentage of the fixed 10% health budget is also being redirected to sanitation by justifying these activities as part of promotional and preventive health strategies. At the time of research, AKKOPSI was reportedly playing a key leading role in these discussions, by mediating and linking mayors to political bodies at higher levels such as line ministries. These efforts were further being consolidated through public declarations like the *Gubernur Peduli Sanitasi Declaration* that called upon signatory mayors to endorse this initiative.

A focus group discussion also revealed another element of course correction – local governments were reportedly including sanitation initiatives in the local midterm development planning, which had not happened before.

### Day-to-day adaptation

In the context of a highly hierarchical bureaucratic system and sub-sector responsibilities dispersed across several ministries, much day-to-day adaptation at national level takes place through coordination hubs and working groups.

*Pokja AMPL* is the sector's main coordination hub, responsible for liaising with and linking government agencies and development actors working across the sector, while monitoring and evaluating national plans. This effort is supported by NAWASIS (National Water and Sanitation Monitoring System) – a web-based system developed in 2011 that monitors the process of preparation, implementation, and



performance of SSKs, among other indicators.<sup>xvi,52</sup> A focus group discussion uncovered that routine meetings in *Pokja AMPL* were regularly taking place at different Echelon levels, with issues being escalated further up the ladder according to their level of urgency. It also confirmed that each ministry conducts its own monitoring and evaluation, especially linked to their own established performance-based criteria.<sup>53</sup> Working groups are also widely used as coordination mechanisms because they represent “semi-formal structures and flexible channels of communication” (key informant). A focus group discussion revealed that even within *Pokja AMPL*, there are several working groups assigned to different national programmes, or working in different ministries.

Sector learning at national level is further complemented by a multiplicity of fora that bring together a variety of stakeholders, such as the Sanitation Partner Group (which links development partners and government institutions), and a range of *Jejarings* – ‘networking’ groups formed to address different sector-related issues and formed by government agencies, donors, implementing partners, academic institutions, and private sector organisations.<sup>xvii</sup> This web of working groups and networking platforms is based on formal and informal channels of communication, with WhatsApp, for example, reportedly playing a key role in keeping information flowing. Sector learning also takes place through regular national conferences, summits and roadshows organised by both central Government (for example the bi-annual National Sanitation Conference) and advocacy groups such as AKKOPSI (for example Horizontal Roadshow Advocacy and Learning; and City Sanitation Summit). These have mainly been used as vehicles to support and advocate for improved access to sanitation, while socialising key approaches and building political buy-in (for example Citywide Sanitation Strategy).

Effectiveness of these groups in supporting course correction was, however, brought into question. One key informant characterised them as “ad-hoc, platforms for networking and sharing experiences, with little attempts made to use them for sectoral planning and coordinated interventions”. Unstructured discussions taking place in these meetings, and the high volume of meeting requests, reportedly generates confusion among participants about time and effort prioritisation. Most of these fora are also chaired by junior level ministerial staff (Echelon 3), who have limited ability to influence because of the hierarchical bureaucratic system in place, which further limits the possibility of acting on learning (key informant). Existence of so many parallel fora also contributes to “dispersing attention and focus, with most stakeholders – especially those public officials in Echelons 1 and 2, limiting their level of participation due to time constraints and a sense of duplicating efforts” (key informant). Course correction is also being affected by high staff rotation across government departments, especially when there is promotion from Echelon 2 to 1.

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<sup>xvi</sup> It receives inputs from programme managers at the central (PMU-PIU PPSP), provincial (provincial Sanitation Working Group), and district/city (district/city Sanitation Working Group) levels. In theory data are collected every four months in line with the current budget year; however, it is unclear to what extent it is fully operational as limited data are publicly available on either of its main websites (<http://nawasis.info/> and [www.ppsp.nawasis.info/](http://www.ppsp.nawasis.info/)).

<sup>xvii</sup> For example, *Jejaring AMPL*, which discusses wider sector issues; or *Jejaring NAWASIS*, a platform dedicated to learning and sharing experiences around managing data.



Since this entails moving to a different directorate altogether, “most knowledge gets lost” (key informant).

These limitations of the various groups, platforms and fora imply that high-level leadership might struggle to undertake routine progress chasing and address implementation challenges.

### Interrelation between prioritisation through government machinery and course correction

Indonesia provides a couple of examples of course correction in support of prioritisation efforts. One of the clearest is the shift of the sanitation portfolio within the civil service hierarchy. The Ministry of Environment ‘upgrading’ sanitation from Echelon 3 to 2 signals that it now ranks higher in the list of priorities for this specific Ministry. The move was reported to be directly linked to the importance given to solid waste management under Widodo’s presidency, but this research could not probe the real inner workings. The more recent redirection of provincial health budgets towards sanitation-related activities as part of promotional and preventive health measures also demonstrates course correction supporting efforts to increase prioritisation. These examples of a more symbiotic relationship follow the Presidential decree of 2014, implying that indications of high-level political commitment can also contribute.

Prioritisation and course correction also seem to have been incentivised in similar ways, with financial schemes and an inter-city awards’ system fostering this feedback loop, especially across local governments and mayors/bupatis.

Conversely, it is precisely at this level that risks of negative interplay between prioritisation and course correction are high. With PPSP and the push towards the 2019 national target, local governments are now under considerable pressure to deliver on SSKs, for example. Combined with lack of human resources at local government level, this top-down pressure is inhibiting locally appropriate course correction efforts and leading to the production of “poor quality SSKs” (key informant).

Overall, it seems that the current incentive structure in place is only marginally contributing to reinforcement of this relationship, because it is not resonating enough with local government public officials. This is ultimately linked to issues of central–local power dynamics and distribution of responsibilities. Although in theory subnational governments hold significant power to develop infrastructure and take charge of post-construction issues, central Government has in practice retained a fair share of control over funding.

## Conclusions and lessons

Framed within a national context of a developing democratisation and a complex decentralisation process, our review of Indonesia's sanitation journey suggests there has been a gradual prioritisation of sanitation and consolidation of course correction mechanisms. But this has yet to translate into significant acceleration in sanitation outcomes.

National programmatic changes, a presidential decree, and increasing budget allocation have all signalled increasing high-level commitment and prioritisation of sanitation. A shared vision of modernity and new central Government financial schemes have supported translation of such high-level commitment through the government machinery. Challenges persist, however. Decentralisation has been a complex process and a misalignment between 'bottom-up' project planning and 'top-down' budget preparation has hampered translation of high-level commitment to local governments. Issues around asset ownership, lack of finance and effective devolution have curtailed the ability of lower levels of government to respond to any incentives to prioritise.

Course correction has been incentivised through advocacy, external technical assistance by development partners, and evidence. Many sector-learning mechanisms are in place, which enable discussion and coordination; however, their high number is disincentivising engagement of key stakeholders', who struggle to manage competing agendas. Course correction has in some cases supported further prioritisation, as indicated by instances of using provincial budgets for sanitation, and allocating the sanitation portfolio to higher Echelon officials. These seem to have been reinforced by the Presidential Decree on Accelerating Water and Sanitation, which sets the legal umbrella for national and subnational action. Challenges remain with top-down pressure coupled with lack of human resources, leading to development of poor-quality citywide sanitation strategies.

Overall, and despite political commitment translating to some degree of prioritisation and course correction initiatives, significant acceleration has not yet occurred in terms of outcomes. Between 2010 and 2015, access to improved sanitation in urban areas increased on average by 2%, and since 2013 there has been virtually no evolution.<sup>54</sup> To meet the target of universal access by the end of 2019, the pace of development needs to be significantly increased.

Elements of Indonesia's experience captured in this study can offer some pointers for other countries with high-level political will coupled with a decentralising political system, hierarchical bureaucratic culture, and a complex and fragmented sectoral institutional framework:

- Establish a strong inter-agency sanitation working group that can gather consensus across multiple stakeholders.
- Identify 'sanitation local champions' (for example powerful leaders or influential individuals) who are committed and motivated to promote an agenda; and develop a range of incentive mechanisms that resonate with

their interests, and ensure their continuous engagement with the cause (for example public recognition outlets, potential for career advancement and improvement of public image).

- Formulate a common vision and sectoral strategy that ensures horizontal and vertical synchronisation and synergies across ministries and other key sector stakeholders.
- Develop programmes, partnerships, and initiatives that work through hierarchies, identify key entry points within them and establish routes of dialogue across different levels of the administrative and bureaucracy to ensure government support from early on and throughout.

## Annex 1: Interviewees list

<b>Director</b>	Directorate Housing and Human Settlements – BAPPENAS (Planning Development Agency)
<b>Planning Staff Member</b>	Directorate Housing and Human Settlements – BAPPENAS (Planning Development Agency)
<b>Water and Sanitation Specialist</b>	Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP/World Bank)
<b>Technical Director - Water and Sanitation Unit</b>	Indonesia Infrastructure Initiative (IndII/AUSAID)
<b>Manager - Infrastructure Unit</b>	Indonesia Infrastructure Initiative (IndII/AUSAID)
<b>Chief of Party</b>	Indonesia Urban Water and Hygiene (IUWASH)
<b>Deputy Chief of Party/Watsan Technical Advisor</b>	Indonesia Urban Water and Hygiene (IUWASH)
<b>Deputy Governor</b>	Spatial Planning & Environment, Jakarta Capital City Government
<b>Head Section Regional I</b>	Sub-Directorate of Housing & Settlement Regions, Directorate General of Regional Development, Ministry of Home Affairs
<b>Director</b>	Directorate General of Housing Settlements , Ministry of Public Works
<b>Secretary of Director</b>	Directorate General of Human Settlements, Ministry of Public Work
<b>President</b>	AKKOPSI
<b>Liaison Cell USDP - PIU-T</b>	Urban Sanitation Development Program (USDP)
<b>Liaison Cell USDP - PMU, and PIU AE</b>	Urban Sanitation Development Program (USDP)
<b>2x Secretariat Staff</b>	National WSS Working Group (Pokja AMPL)
<b>3x Secretariat Staff</b>	Secretariat PMU PPSP
<b>IT Communications Officer</b>	Indonesia Toilet Association
<b>Programme Coordinator</b>	WatSan Action/Yayasan Tirta Lestari
<b>Community and Networking Coordinator</b>	WatSan Action/Yayasan Tirta Lestari
<b>WASH and Market Officer</b>	OXFAM Indonesia
<b>Health Team Coordinator</b>	World Vision Indonesia
<b>Executive Director</b>	SPEAK

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