



Note No.: 19 / 2020

The Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations Office, World Trade Organization and other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva and has the honor to refer to the latter's letter dated 17 February 2020 regarding the questionnaire on the human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation.

The Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam has further the honor to submit herewith the feedback to the questionnaire prepared by the Ministry of Development, Brunei Darussalam.

The Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam to the United Nations Office, the World Trade Organization and other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva.
13 May 2020



Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Palais des Nations
1211 GENEVA 10

**MANDATE OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON
THE HUMAN RIGHTS TO SAFE DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION**

Question	Reply
<p>1</p> <p>How is the concept of the minimum core obligations of the human rights to water and sanitation translated and applied in the water and sanitation sector in the country?</p>	<p>The Department of Water Services, Public Works Department has achieved 100% continuous water supply to the population (referring to Sustainable Development Goals SDG 6.1) as part of fulfilling the nation's requirement.</p> <p>Improved sanitation in Brunei Darussalam are accessible to all citizens and are provided by the Government through sewer connections of public and private buildings into centralised sewerage systems in urban areas and in the national housing schemes. Private houses/buildings will use individual or communal septic tanks at their own expense in sub-urban and rural areas.</p>
<p>2</p> <p>What policies and programmes are in place to ensure that those obligations are always met? In case the minimum core obligations are not met, please provide information on the extenuating circumstances.</p>	<p>Achieving 100% continuous water supply is one of the National Key Performance Indicator (KPI) and the Government has provided sufficient amount of Operations and Maintenance budget (OCAR) annually.</p> <p>The Government has also invested in the development of water infrastructure projects for water sustainability and safety such as building new dams, water treatment plants, water reservoirs and pipe replacements through the National Development Plan budget.</p> <p>The Government provides free connections to centralised sewerage systems whenever these systems are available in urban and national housing areas. The connection works are programmed under the 5-Year National Development Plan (5-Year NDP) Projects and the Public Works Department annual budget (Departmental) projects.</p> <p>Private developers (private sector, private residential and private developer) are encouraged to carry out sewer connections when centralised sewerage system is available. A septic tank will be used if connection to public sewerage is not available and impractical.</p> <p>In line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 7 and a strategic goal of the Department of Drainage and Sewerage, Public Works Department (DDS-PWD) is to increase centralized sewerage accessibility by 5% every NDP. By 2035, the centralized sewerage coverage is anticipated to be 70% of the overall population.</p>

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<p>3</p> <p>Please describe efforts made by the Government in the last few years that allowed the progressive realization of the human rights to water and sanitation.</p>	<p>The efforts undertaken includes the development of water infrastructure such as building new water dams, water treatment plants, upgrading & replacement of pipes and creating water reservoirs.</p> <p>The Government is continuously expanding existing centralised sewerage infrastructure in sub-urban areas to increase improved sanitation coverage to the population as well as reduction of septic tanks.</p> <p>There have been progressive transformations in sanitation provisions since the 1950s by adopting septic tanks over direct discharge and night soils practices as well as the introduction of the first centralised sewerage system for the capital city Bandar Seri Begawan in the late 1960s.</p> <p>Private sector participation in the provision of sanitation services is high in the operational and maintenance works of public centralised systems and desludging services of septic tanks.</p>
<p>4</p> <p>Please describe how planning in the water and sanitation sector is guided by the principle of progressive realization of the human right to water and sanitation, and how it reconciles the two priorities – increasing levels of access to services on one hand, and reducing inequalities between different groups on the other.</p>	<p>Brunei Darussalam does not practice inequality in water supply or water access in accordance to wealth, race or religion.</p> <p>Centralised sewerage systems are commonly available in all major townships and national housing schemes in the country. Population residing within the areas are accessible to make sewer connections to the centralised systems with no charges.</p> <p>Septic tanks are commonly used in residential, public institutions, commercial and industrial developments in sub-urban and rural areas where centralised system does not exist. Provisions of septic tanks are usually borne by the private sectors.</p> <p>As of 2019, improved sanitation coverage for Brunei Darussalam are: 93% on total improved sanitation, i.e:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 59% on centralised sewerage system • 34% on septic usage

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<p>5</p> <p>Please describe methods of budgeting and budgetary planning which aims to ensure that the maximum available resources are utilised for the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation for all. Please include the process of allocating budget as well as the output achieved by the utilisation of the budget.</p>	<p>The Brunei Government has provided Public Works Department budget plan for Operations and Maintenance (OCAR) and approximately 27% of the budget is allocated to Department of Water Services.</p> <p>Approximately of 6% is allocated for the development of water infrastructure projects for water sustainability and safety such as building new dams, water treatment plants, water reservoirs and pipe replacements.</p> <p>Under the 5-Year NDP and Annual Departmental projects, DDS-PWD is financing on provisions of new sewerage infrastructure developments as well as to carry out planned and corrective maintenance works.</p> <p>In 2013-2017, an estimated B\$105 million (US\$74 million) was spent in expanding coverage of the centralised sewerage system for the population including maintenance of existing sewerage infrastructure.</p>
<p>6</p> <p>Please describe how non-financial resources have been utilized to progressively realize the human rights to water and sanitation including the process of utilization and the output.</p>	<p>Adoption of innovative technologies in construction method and material/equipment is one of the key strategies for sustainable development and maintenance of sanitation/sewerage infrastructure in Brunei Darussalam.</p> <p>Pipe jacking/micro tunnelling is commonly used in pipe laying works to increase productivity rate and reduce public disruption in urban and densely populated areas. Energy-efficient pumps are slowly replacing conventional pumps to reduce power bills and pump failure. The use of telemetry/SCADA systems and also Internet-of-Things to remotely monitor pump and treatment operations will enable early warning systems and fast responses to sewerage system failure.</p>

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<p>7</p> <p>In case where trade-offs with resourced usage on other national agenda and implementation of other rights were required, please provide the circumstances and the decision taken as well as reasoning behind the decision.</p>	<p>The industrial sectors has been an underlying concern due to the highest demand of water consumption.</p> <p>There is a proposal for the use of desalination plants and other water sources (through Foreign Direct Investment) to help protect country's domestic water resources.</p> <p>On the agricultural industry, there is potential competition for the abstraction of raw river water for usage in dams. Moving ahead, the Government anticipated further improvements in the water infrastructure such as creating more dams for sources of raw water in the agriculture industry.</p>