

# Using SDG 6 Policy Support System (SDG-PSS) in Sierra Leone



Patrick Amara Ngaojia  
Assistant Director, WASH Information Management  
Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation

Project “Water in the World We Want” Phase 4: Accelerating the achievement of water-related SDGs  
Africa Workshop, 28-30 April 2025, Dakar, Republic of Senegal

# Overall status of SDG 6 at the national level

Sierra Leone's progress toward achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 (SDG 6)-ensuring availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all-remains limited, with significant challenges across various indicators.

Indicator	Indicator Definition	Achievement	Impact (If achieve by 2030)	
6.1.1	<b>Access to Drinking Water</b>		9 million people	<p><b>Low Coverage:</b> The majority of the population lacks access to safely managed water and sanitation services.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure Deficits:</b> Many water supply systems are outdated or non-functional, particularly in rural areas.</p> <p><b>Behavioural Practices:</b> Open defecation and inadequate hygiene practices remain prevalent.</p>
	• <b>Safely Managed</b>	10.6%		
	• Basic Water Service	63%-65%		
6.2. 1a	<b>Sanitation Services</b>		6.9 million people	
	Urban	53%-54%		
	Rural	21%-23%		
6.2.1b	Practice of Open Defecation	25.1%	8.8 million people	
	<b>Hygiene Practices</b>			
	Hand Hygiene Facilities	18%		
	Demonstration	9.6%		
6.3.1	<b>Wastewater</b>	15%	These gains would lead to massive improvements in public health, education (especially for girls), productivity, and economic development across Sierra Leone.	
6.3.2	<b>Water Quality</b>	70%		
6.4.1	<b>Water Use Efficiency</b>	\$10m <sup>3</sup>		
6.4.2	<b>Water Stress</b>	0%		
6.5.1	IWRM	37%		
6.5.2	Transboundary	100%		
				<p><b>Institutional Weaknesses:</b> Limited coordination among agencies and insufficient funding hinder progress.</p>

# National agencies involved in SDG 6 achievement

1. Ministry of Water Resources and Sanitation (Leads Ministry)
2. Ministry of Health
3. Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development
4. Ministry of Basic and Secondary School Education
5. Ministry of Planning and Economic Development
6. Ministry of Technical and Higher Education
7. Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security
8. Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
9. Ministry of Lands, Housing and Country Planning
10. Ministry of Gender and Children's Affairs
11. Water Utilities and Service Providers:
  - Guma Valley Water Company
  - Sierra Leone Water Company
13. Water regulatory bodies:
  - National Water Resources Management Agency
  - Electricity, Water and Sanitation Regulatory Commission
14. Statistics Sierra Leone
15. National Disaster Management Agency
16. National Protected Area Authority
17. Academic and Research Institution
18. Sierra Leone Standard Bureau
19. Sierra Leone Meteorological Agency

# SDG 6 target(s) and indicator(s)

## Most important target(s) and indicator(s) and why

**6.1: By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all.**

Essential for improving child health, education (especially for girls), and reducing time spent fetching water.

**6.2: By 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation.**

Poor sanitation contributes to the spread of preventable diseases

**6.b: Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.**

Decentralized governance in Sierra Leone means district-level participation is key to long-term system strengthening

## Least important target(s) and indicator(s) and why

**6.5: Implement Integrated Water resources Management (IWRM) at all levels, including through transboundary cooperation.**

**6.6: Protect and restore water-related ecosystems, including mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers, and lakes.**

Environmental sustainability is important, but immediate WASH needs (e.g., clean water access, sanitation, hygiene) are more urgent for health and development

**6.a: Expand international cooperation and capacity-building support in water and sanitation-related activities.**

Tracking volume of aid provided is somehow relevant but what is immediate is whether WASH programs are functional and reaching communities.

# Reflections on SDG-PSS and its online course

Contribution of SDG-PSS online course in using SDG-PSS and navigating its main features? Was the course helpful in using SDG-PSS or not? What is needed to improve the course further?

The SDG-PSS online course was moderately helpful in familiarizing me with the tool's main features. The structured modules provided a foundational understanding of how to navigate the interface, input data, and interpret the outputs across the different SDG targets. The course offered practical examples and walkthroughs that clarified the tool's decision-support functions, especially in identifying gaps in policy, institutional capacity, and financing for SDG implementation.

## **Was the course helpful in using SDG-PSS?**

Yes, the course was helpful overall, particularly for beginners or professionals new to the SDG-PSS framework. It broke down complex components such as institutional mapping, stakeholder engagement, and performance scoring into digestible parts. However, for those already familiar with results-based management or policy planning tools, the content sometimes felt too introductory.

## **What is needed to improve the course further?**

Yet to identify area for improvement as I working to move to intermediate level in the utilization of the SDG-PSS platform

# Relevance of SDG-PSS Components

## Most relevant components of SDG-PSS in the national context and why?

### 1. Finance Assessment

It helps policymakers understand current resource flows, funding gaps, and potential sources for scaling up SDG-related investments-critical for informed budgeting and attracting donor support

### 2. Policy and Institutional Assessment

It supports better alignment between national development plans and SDG implementation.

### 3. Gender Mainstreaming and Capacity Assessment

Ensures inclusive decision-making and helps identify which stakeholders are actively involved, who's being left out, and where capacity-building is needed.

## Least relevant components of SDG-PSS in the national context and why?

### Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience Planning

The ministry has developed water risk reduction regulations and it related to activities. It is the least relevant at this stage as there is a lead ministry and the water sector is a collaborating institution .

# Summary

- Sierra Leone faces significant challenges in providing universal access to safe water and adequate sanitation, especially in rural areas.
- The most urgent needs revolve around basic service delivery: safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, hygiene promotion, and behaviour change.
- Targets that deal with complex environmental or governance frameworks (like IWRM or ecosystem restoration) are still relevant but not immediate priorities.
- The SDG-PSS can empower the Ministry to make smarter decisions, close service delivery gaps, and accelerate progress toward universal access to water and sanitation in Sierra Leone



**Thank  
you!**