



Operator Performance Reviews: Strengthening professional and accountable sanitation services

Strengthening wastewater operators' capacity is critical to accelerating the achievement of safely managed sanitation in Bandar Lampung. To ensure alignment with national standards, SNV assisted the city's public wastewater operator by carrying out its first performance review. Results of the review demonstrated that evaluating financial, services, operational, and human resources operations is a key step towards improving the provision of citywide wastewater services.

Key lessons

- Aligning wastewater operators' competencies and services with the national standard is essential to ensure proper operational procedure for sanitation services.
- Performance reviews of wastewater operators is crucial to identify capacity levels and develop action plans to strengthen sanitation services.
- Multi-stakeholder involvement is key to creating accountable and transparent sanitation services.
- Engaging higher level actors within the local government, such as the city's Secretary and Mayor, is necessary to secure and prioritise funding for improvements in sanitation services.

Background

There are three institutional forms of domestic wastewater management in Indonesia. First, a technical implementing unit that sits under, and is resourced by, a city office. Second, a municipal service agency that sits under a city office but has flexible financial management. Third, a municipality-owned company that is a separate entity from a city office and has a flexible resource arrangement. Of over 500 cities in Indonesia, only three have a municipality-owned company to manage their domestic wastewater. One of these is Bandar Lampung, a city where the WASH SDG programme – an urban sanitation programme supported by the Government of the Netherlands – has been operationalised.

The challenges

Bandar Lampung's domestic wastewater and solid waste has been managed by one municipality-owned company since 2017: PD Kebersihan Tapis Berseri. Since its establishment, the public operator has never conducted a performance evaluation, although it does have a business plan for sanitation services.

In 2021, the faecal sludge treatment plant's (FSTP) conventional system was upgraded to a mechanical one, but the transition was not easy. The operator experienced difficulties in applying the new Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and faced challenges in arranging the desludging services due to limited human resources. Furthermore, it faced funding difficulties over maintaining its desludging truck. Combined, these factors threatened the security of the city's sanitation services because the average 45 cubic metres of faecal sludge produced each day require proper desludging, conveyancing, and treatment, regardless of the standard of the operator's performance.

Box 1: The operator's main limitations

- The operator's sanitation services only cover 3% of the city's total population.
- Only 20% of the total human resources budget has been allocated to building capacity.
- In 2022, only six of the operator's 14 staff had received training.
- Those operating the system have limited technical expertise.
- There is poor financial management and opportunities for funding are not being tapped.
- There is a lack of professional private sector engagement and improving sanitation is not considered a priority.

The public operator in Bandar Lampung was one of the first operators to engage in the operator performance review regulated by the Ministry of Public Works and Housing. As part of this process, the multi-stakeholder assessment team developed a set of recommendations for operator improvement in Bandar Lampung. Photo credit: Local facilitator.

Despite its limited resources, the wastewater operator has to provide citywide sanitation services for residents. As a municipality-owned company, it is expected to be independent in terms of resource management and funding. Since 2021, it has become a crucial requirement for the company to conduct a review of operations and improve the city's wastewater management to align its performance with regional and national regulations.

Our approach

Acknowledging PD Kebersihan Tapis Berseri's critical role in achieving safely managed sanitation in Bandar Lampung, SNV and key stakeholders agreed to perform its first performance review and to develop an improvement strategy for the company to strengthen its sanitation services and its business.

Evidence-based advocacy

SNV initiated a participative discussion with PD Kebersihan and the City Planning Office, as a coordinating body, to identify needs and establish a review team. Next, it engaged the City Secretary by presenting the challenges faced by PD Kebersihan and emphasising the importance of a performance review to strengthen its current and future operations. SNV also consulted with the national Ministry of Public Works to ensure its guidance on conducting a performance review optimally was utilised, and to gather feedback on the review plan. Additionally, it secured the support of the Ministry of Home Affairs for the performance review process.



Formation of a multi-stakeholder performance review team

SNV formed a multi-stakeholder performance review team to facilitate a transparent process in which both parties were held accountable for performing their roles and responsibilities. The team consisted of various city offices, including the City Assistant, the Planning Office, the City Inspectorate, the Public Works Office, and the Environmental Office. The City Secretary formalised the review team by issuing a Decree to indicate the authority of each member.

Alignment with national guidance

The performance review was conducted in alignment with the Ministry of Public Works and Housing's national guidance, the 'Performance Review for Wastewater Operators,' established in 2018. The results were used

as a basis to formulate an improvement strategy during participatory discussions with the review team and additional actors (e.g., universities).

SNV has recommended a yearly performance review in the future, and for the results to be applied to inform the development of an ongoing improvement strategy. The strategy is considered critical to the city's efforts towards achieving safely managed sanitation, as mandated by the Ministry of Home Affairs' Minimum Service Standard Regulation. SNV has recommended that the strategy is formalised by Mayor's Decree and funded by the local government.

Performance review method

The national guidance outlines four aspects for assessment under a performance review.



During the project period, the team engaged in four methods per aspect to complete the performance review of each. These comprised the following:

- **Data collection.** The review team collected 2020-2022 data from the operator and government offices. The two-year data period provided information on operations before and after FSTP system upgrade.
- **Data verification and validation.** The review team verified and validated the data during a consolidation meeting and used a performance review template.
- **Data analysis and scoring.** The team identified challenges and bottlenecks during the data analysis. It also agreed on how PD Kebersihan scored in each of the four review aspects.
- **Action plan development.** The team developed a performance improvement strategy that was authorised by the City Secretary.

Figure 1. Aspects of a performance review

Key results

The review results serve as evidence of the gaps in performance that need to be strengthened.

The improvement strategy has been mutually agreed between the assessment team, the strategy development team, and the PD Kebersihan. It was then signed by the City Secretary Assistant and Head of the Planning Office.

The strategy serves as a binding document to mobilise all relevant stakeholders and as a basis for planning, including budget allocation, business plan reviews and the development of customer database, among others.

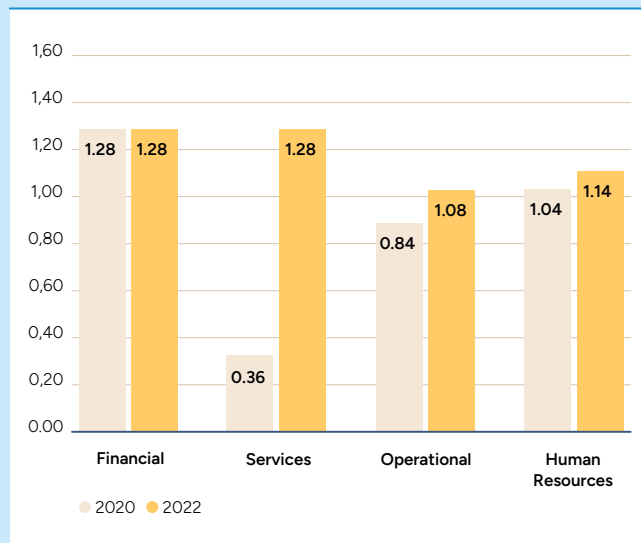


Figure 2. Performance review scores

About SNV: SNV is a global development partner, rooted in the African and Asian countries where we operate. With 60 years of experience and a team of approximately 1,600 people, it is our mission to strengthen capacities and catalyse partnerships that transform the agri-food, energy, and water systems to enable sustainable and more equitable lives for all.

About WASH SDG: WASH SDG was a consortium programme whose members – SNV, WAI, and Plan – aimed to sustainably improve access to, and use of safe drinking water for at least 450,000 people, sanitation for at least 2 million people, and improve the hygiene behaviours of 1.6 million people. Supported by the Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS) of the Government of the Netherlands, the programme was coordinated by Simavi.

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Cover photo: Both public and private operators need to stay safe while carrying out desludging services. To do so, they must use personal protective equipment and follow safety guidelines outlined in SOPs. Photo credit: SNV/OTMI Indonesia.

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