

**Budget 2012 dry on water and sanitation masterplan**  
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Accessibility to clean and safe water and sanitation are the basic rights to human beings as declared by United Nations last year. In this respect, Budget 2012 is a disappointment as it does not holistically address all the prolonged water issues in our country.

Budget 2012 allocated almost 500 million for the water infrastructure upgrading and also to improve accessibility to water. However, the allocation only focuses on Sabah, FELDA settlements and also estates.

State such as Kelantan that suffers water quality degradation since years ago has been demanding for more allocations from the federal government to improve basic infrastructure such as water services. Yet, due to some circumstances, the federal government has not done anything.

Recently Indah Water Konsortium came into the limelight after 11 years of being nationalised into a fully government owned company. With the proposal from 1Malaysia Development Board and Puncak Niaga Sdn Bhd, a possible second mode of privatisation seems to be ongoing. Nevertheless, we are concerned about the lack of allocation in the budget for sewerage systems upgrading or development, which is in dire need of a revamp.

We are opting to be a developed country in nine years and large scale developments have been sprouting despite of the world financial crisis that we are experiencing now.

Large scale developments are being planned as indicated in the budget; however no allocations or considerations are being given to address the adequacy of current water supply to cater for all these developments or whether the existing infrastructure has the capacity in order to sustain these future developments.

And the development of big hydroelectric dams that cause irreversible destruction to the ecosystem just to cater for large industries, while ignoring the provision of basic necessities for the locals just does not make sense.

As one of the highest water users in the region (as indicated by the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water), consumer education on water conservation is important to address this issue.

In the 2012 Budget, there is no or lack of initiatives on water saving and conservation or related measures. On the other hand, there is no pollution reduction or rehabilitation measures for the water sources such as rivers, lakes and groundwater.

Non revenue water in our country is still remain as high as 36.37 percent in 2010 as compared to 2009 figure, which was 36.63 percent. With the minor reduction of 0.26 percent, it seems more allocation should be given for infrastructure improvements to address non-revenue water that has been a burgeoning issue for most of the water operators in our country.

Rainfall and water resources are copious in our country. However, if we do not manage it properly and take it for granted, eventually all these gifts will be drained away from us.