



# **DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDEX FOR PROJECT EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS IN SRI LANKA**

BY

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## Abstract

Community Water Systems (CWS) perform a vital role in providing safe drinking water to the rural populations in the whole world. In Sri Lanka, National Water Supply & Drainage Board (NWSDB) holds the monopoly for supplying safe drinking water to the whole nation. Presently it has covered more than 75% of the urban population but a mere 14% from the country's rural population where as 78.5% of the total population is rural. The NWSDB targets to cover 75% rural population by the year 2025.

Along with this tremendous scope for growth, CWS face significant resisting forces due to increasing difficulty in finding reliable water sources that require less improvement costs, stricter water quality regulations, decreasing financing and investment capabilities, increasing public scrutiny and increasing infrastructure replacement costs.

Despite for both these tremendous scope and significant resistance, there is no real measure or some kind of standard to assess the performance of these CWS. This has greatly hindered the development and improvement of CWSs. To cater the tremendous need that this absence has created for a standard performance evaluation tool, this research was intended towards the development of a 'Composite Performance Index Value' (CPIV). The concept is based on an index, as the Performance Indicators are widely known for its importance and effectiveness in the process of evaluating achievement or progress. They have become important management tool by giving directions to managerial policy and decision making. This report presents the results of the research project to develop CPIV, which has been developed as a holistic evaluation tool to measure the performance of CWS.

The study was carried out using the Delphi method which is a structured process of collecting and refining knowledge from a group of experts through survey instruments. The survey instruments used in this study were questionnaires and interviews. Cross impact analysis was adopted to measure the correlation between



variables in analyzing the recommended Performance Indicators across several factors. Factor analysis was also used through weighting assignment in data analysis

The CPIV has produced an assessment for eleven key performance areas of a CWS which includes variables in access, use, environment, finance, and management and user capabilities. Thus this index integrates the physical, social, economic and environmental aspects that link water and management issues. Hence the index will be an inter-disciplinary tool that combines and presents a cluster of data that are directly and indirectly related to water system and management into a single number, thus simplifying the complexity of various issues that Community Water Managers presently encounter in evaluating the performance of CWS.

The index value will also serve as a tool for identifying prioritization of needs for Intervention and provides ground for decision-makers to act impartially by allowing them to justify their choices, based on a rational and transparent framework. Also the development of the index provides an opportunity to express the needs, expectations and achievements of CWS in a more standardized manner that can be put into the comparable evaluation model.