

Commitment #13

Strengthening the Committee System in Pradeshiya Sabhas with citizen participation to improve local service delivery

1st March 2019– 31st August 2021

Lead implementing agency/actor	Ministry in charge of Provincial Councils & Local Government
Commitment description	
What is the public problem that the commitment will address?	Pradeshiya Sabhas form an important body in the country's local government system and are responsible for providing a range of local public services. Pradeshiya Sabha Act No: 15 of 1987 provides for the establishment of Council Committees that enable the participation of citizens in the decision making processes. Presently, this provision is not properly utilized by both the councils and the citizens. Many citizens feel excluded from the decision making process and are dissatisfied with the services they receive. There is also an inadequacy of by-laws which are vital instruments to address issues arising in their locality and to facilitate the basic operations of the Pradeshiya Sabhas.
What is the commitment?	This commitment aims to enhance the capacity of citizens to engage with Pradeshiya Sabhas to advocate for better policies and improved local service delivery. Majority of the people in Sri Lanka live in Pradeshiya Sabha territories, hence there is a strong case for strengthening Committee systems in these Councils with citizen participation. Participation in Committees will also help to create a structured and ongoing dialogue between the councils and the citizens. Such an environment will be useful for citizens to bring their community needs into greater focus as well as to engage in budget preparations and project development. Committee meetings also provide opportunities to discuss administrative matters of the Council, thereby increasing the effectiveness and performance of the Council.
How will the commitment contribute to solve the public problem?	Six Pradeshiya Sabhas representing all 3 districts of the Western Province will be selected as pilot councils to establish Committees with citizen participation. Awareness creation, technical support and skills will be provided for the effective functioning of the Committees. A maximum of 5 by-laws that are needed will be identified through a participatory manner and will be drafted. A statute to strengthen the 'Brajamandala' at Provincial Council level in Western Province will be developed. A mechanism will be provided to provide scaling up support to replicate the experience in other Pradeshiya Sabha, Urban Councils and Municipal Councils. Hence there is a strong need to strengthen committee system with citizen participation in Pradeshiya Sabhas and scaling up of same to Urban councils and municipalities on successful completion of projects.
Why is this commitment relevant to OGP values?	This commitment promotes public participation as citizens get involved on a continuous basis in the decision making processes of the Council. It promotes transparency as citizens are made knowledgeable about the operations of the Council, expenditure matters, collection of income etc.

Additional information		This commitment strengthens the implementation of the Pradeshiya Sabha Act No: 15 of 1987. It will also be supported by the Right to Information law of the country.	
Milestone Activity with a verifiable deliverable		Start Date:	End Date:
1. Pilot local councils representing 3 districts in the Western Province will be selected and council members and citizens will be provided basic awareness on the Council Committee system. The awareness programmes will reflect the capacity of citizen participation in Council Committees.		May 2019	August 2019
2. Committees with citizen representation will be established in pilot councils. Technical support and skills for the effective functioning of the Committees will be provided with the assistance of external facilitators.		August 2019	August 2020
3. A maximum of 5 by-laws will be prepared in consultation with the Council Committees. The by-laws will be identified on the basis of required needs through a consultation process facilitated by an external consultant. They will be drafted with the assistance of legal officers and with support from the Western Provincial Council.		October 2019	June 2020
4. A statute to strengthen the Rajamandala at Provincial Council level . Western Province will be developed.		July 2019	December 2019
5. A mechanism will be provided to provide scaling up support to replicate the experience in other Pradeshiya Sabha, Urban Councils and Municipal Councils.		July 2020	September 2020
Contact information			
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Other Actors Involved	State actors involved	Western Provincial Council; Commissioner of Local Government; Selected Pradeshiya Sabhas in Western Province	
	CSOs, private sector, multilaterals, working groups	Federation of Sri Lanka Local Government Authorities, Civil society organizations, CBOs and other stakeholders in the selected Local Authority areas	