

# **Social Policy and Strategy**

## for the

August 2018

### Water & Wastewater Sector

Summary

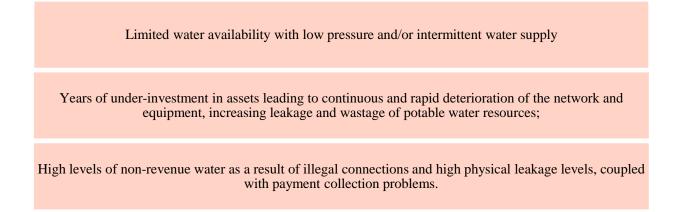
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#### What is Social Policy?

Access to clean drinking water is one of the most basic of needs. Similarly, proper treatment of wastewater is immensely important to maintaining the reliability of source water and ultimately promotes a safer environment. Social policy is concerned with improving the welfare of people and it provides an overarching framework that guides the manner with which societies meet basic human needs. In the context of utility regulation for the water sector, social policy seeks to ensure that there is access to safe drinking water and sanitation services by addressing various factors which include but are not limited to affordability, standards of service and the investigation of consumer complaints.

#### Overview of the State of the Water and Wastewater Sector in T&T



#### **RIC's Social Policy Objectives**

RIC's Social Policy objectives can be grouped into four main categories; accessibility, quality of service, consumer protection and affordability.

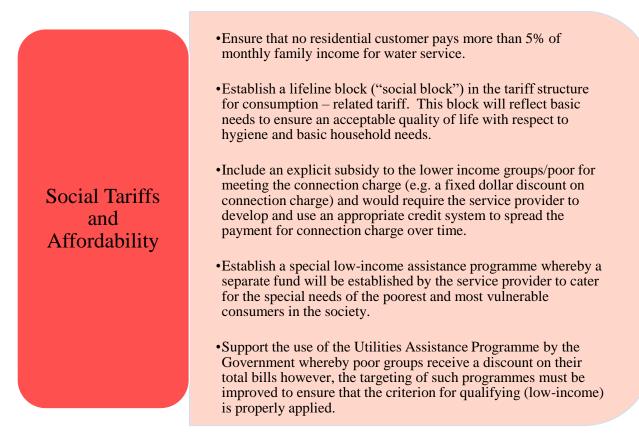
Physical Accessibility and Reliability of Supply

- •Improving access to and reliability of water supply.
- •Focus on making provisions for expansion in the number of connections to the network. The RIC will support specific projects that will improve the reliability of supply to worst-served areas
- •Promote and support strategies designed to assist the poor to gain access to the piped water supply system through funding mechanisms
- •Promote improvement of WASA's coverage of wastewater services to low-income groups who have no means of wastewater disposal.

### **RIC's Social Policy Objectives Cont'd**

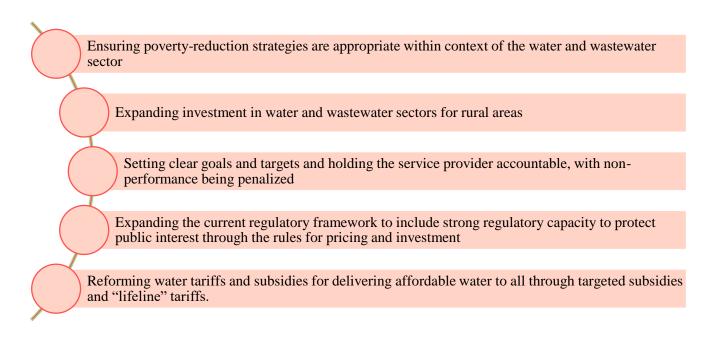
Quality of Service	<ul> <li>Promote best practice in achieving water quality which is safe for drinking.</li> <li>Support consistent and mandatory maintenance of privately owned wastewater systems.</li> <li>Develop relevant water and wastewater standards.</li> <li>Insist that regular disinfection is carried out by WASA when truck borne supply is provided.</li> <li>Promote consumer awareness of water quality and hygiene issues in collaboration with the service provider and other relevant institutions.</li> <li>Support other water quality and health education initiatives undertaken by any other organization.</li> <li>Support WASA's adoption of sewerage systems managed by private developers, homeowners and other government owned facilities.</li> </ul>
Consumer Protection	<ul> <li>Encourage public access to the RIC's customer redress function through the utilization of toll-free telephone number to receive calls from the public, via its website and through social media platforms.</li> <li>Promulgate its rules and procedures for resolution of consumer complaints by disseminating on the RIC website and where necessary, provide explanations to ensure they are understood by the public.</li> <li>The educational effort of the RIC will involve community/stakeholder participation through stakeholder workshops/forums, national consultations, stakeholder information days etc.</li> <li>Continue to work towards achieving timely resolution of complaints.</li> </ul>

#### **RIC's Social Policy Objectives Cont'd**



#### The Way Forward

Overall, the way forward for the water and wastewater sector with respect to social policy will include the following:



#### **Responding to this Document**

All persons wishing to comment on this document are invited to submit their comments by **September 7, 2018**. Responses should be sent by post, fax or e-mail to:

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Regulated Industries Commission			
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Port-of-Spain, Trinidad			
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**Email** : <u>ricconsultations@ric.org.tt</u>

Website : www.ric.org.tt

All responses will normally be published on the RIC's website unless there are good reasons why they must remain confidential. Any requests for confidentiality must be indicated.

A copy of this document is available from the RIC's website at **www.ric.org.tt.**