

WHY SHOULD WE OPPOSE THE SETTING UP OF PREPAID WATER METERS

- **Prepaid water meters pave the way for privatization**

The World Bank's constant use of the term cost recovery and private sector participation lays down the conditions in their lending policies. This reduces the already difficult access and affordability of clean water thus promoting the interference of water companies. Prepaid water meters are simply a tool used under private contract in order to secure profits for the shareholders, not the access to water for the users.

- **Prepaid water meters changes the demand responsive nature of water management**

With the possibility that one's access to water will get cut off as soon as one cannot pay, the demand for water goes down as people will buy only how much they can really afford. This results in use of untreated water, which has further consequences on the health and hygiene of persons. It also reduces the interface that exists between the government and the consumers of water. The consumers have no mechanism to be able to address their concerns about loss of access to water once they run out of money to be able to pay for it.

- **Prepaid water meters undermine public health**

One is forced into making difficult trade offs between water, food, medicine, school fees, transport and other essential goods and services. Hence, all the gains that are supposed to be achieved through access to regular clean water is totally undermined as slum dwellers will have to look for alternative sources of water, which most likely will be polluted

- **Are Prepaid water meters really cost effective**

Despite potential management savings prepaid water meters are provided at a higher rate for users as compared to traditional billing system as these meters are high technology solutions, hence the private players will also have to recover their costs in installing and operating them

- **Prepaid water meters will only widen the inequalities that exist**

Water becomes an individualized marketed commodity thus eroding the social relations between families in the communities where these prepaid water meters will be set up. The shared burden of access to water is lost. These meters are provided only in areas that are poor thus securing payment from people who already have a difficulty to pay for the most basic things. The women and children are forced to go back to their traditional role of water carriers. Hence, progress hoped to achieve in gender gains and education for children is all lost.

- **It violates our fundamental right to water**

The human right to water has been guaranteed in our constitution and also through international covenants set up by the United Nations now. It is the responsibility of the government to provide its citizens with free access to potable water. Water is equivalent to our right to life

Water is essential to life, is best protected by local communities and citizens, and not by private companies. And therefore we must protest the potential monopolization of our source of life and behold our constitutional right.

**WATER IS OUR RIGHT- NOT A PRIVILEGE
SAY NO TO PREPAID WATER METERS**

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