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# Nepal

Country strategy

2010 — 2015

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Pramila Devi Mahato, resident of Mahato Tole, Biratnagar, Morang District, at an improved community water point: “It’s convenient that we have a new platform, which also helps keep the water safer.”

Picture: WaterAid/ Anita Pradhan

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## Executive summary

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Nepal is a developing country with a demographically youthful population of 29 million. WaterAid’s work covers service delivery as well as research, learning, capacity building, and advocacy related to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH).

For WASH service delivery in rural areas, WaterAid in Nepal has been working with Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH), including to highlight the gender and poverty dimensions of water deprivation in villages. Through four urban NGO partners, we have reached neglected communities such as slum dwellers, squatters and the urban poor while introducing new WASH technologies including water sources. By engaging in research and advocacy with groups involved in WASH work, we have positioned ourselves as a ‘knowledge catalyst’ that brings the voices of rural and marginalised people to the fore for an appropriate policy response.

There are specific challenges to doing effective WASH work in Nepal. WASH per

capita cost remains high because the poorest and most vulnerable people in Nepal live in scattered settlements across remote, hilly terrain. The absence of locally elected government bodies makes it difficult to build relations with local decision-makers for WASH delivery. The plethora of agencies in the WASH sector, each with their own modalities, has led to replication and confusion when it comes to delivering services at the local level. The lack of land titles complicates service delivery in slums and squatter communities in cities. The sector needs reliable data to push for more financing and greater coverage. Sanitation and hygiene remain a grossly neglected and underfinanced component within WASH.

Against this backdrop, our Country Strategy (CS) 2010-2015 is built on the belief that access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation is a human right, and providing WASH services underpins human development to transform lives in Nepal.

One defining feature of the CS is that we have anchored it to two big targets: the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) targets of 2015 to ensure 53% of the population has access to improved sanitation and 73% has access to improved water sources, and the national target of universal access to water and sanitation by 2017. We aim to lay down the goalposts and inject a sense of urgency into the WASH sector so that sanitation in particular is accorded the priority it deserves. In the next CS period, we plan to use our specific strengths to fill in identified gaps in Nepal's WASH services. We will remain focused on WASH, serve as a knowledge catalyst, pilot innovations, amplify users' voices, and collaborate with diversified partners to extend the reach and influence of our work.

The CS calls for a tighter re-alignment of our work in helping communities declare themselves Open Defecation Free (ODF) with focus on sustained improved

hygiene practices, addressing equity and inclusion (E&I) issues, managing water security, and promoting low-cost sanitation technologies. It represents a shift from our previous CS in taking a broader view of WASH in which cross-sector entities from education, health, local development and the private sector are all seen as partners. It also opens up space for our work in small towns, and seeks to address the water-related conflicts that will arise as a result of climate change and community empowerment in Nepal.

The CS also aims to engage with development partners such as NGOs, donors, relevant ministries, the National Planning Commission, civil society, the private sector, researchers, and the media so WASH is integrated as a bedrock development intervention across sectors. In line with its expanded activities, WaterAid in Nepal sees the need for increased financial and human resources over the next five years.

# Abbreviations

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CBME	Community Based Monitoring and Evaluation
CIUD	Centre for Integrated Urban Development
CLBSA	Community Led Basic Sanitation for All
CLWASH	Community Led Water, Sanitation & Hygiene
CLTS	Community Led Total Sanitation
CS	Country Strategy
DDC	District Development Committee
DWSS	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage
EcoSan	Ecological Sanitation
ENPHO	Environment and Public Health Organisation
E&I	Equity and Inclusion
EWP	End Water Poverty
FAN	Freshwater Action Network
FEDWASUN	Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal
H&H	Health and hygiene
KUKL	Kathmandu Upatyaka Khanepani Limited
Lumanti	Lumanti Support Group for Shelter
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoHP	Ministry of Health and Population
MIS	Management Information System
MPPW	Ministry of Physical Planning and Works
NEWAH	Nepal Water for Health



◀ Krishna Maya and Shova Laxmi Shrestha collect water from a rehabilitated well in Lalitpur District.

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti

NHSP	Nepal Health Sector Programme
ODF	Open Defecation Free
PME	Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation
PPSF	Programme and Policy Strategic Framework
RCS	Rapid Convenient Survey
SACOSAN	South Asia Conference on Sanitation
SEIU	Sector Efficiency Improvement Unit
SoDIS	Solar Water Disinfection
SLTS	School Led Total Sanitation
SWA	Sanitation and Water for All
SWAp	Sector Wide Approach programme
SWC	Social Welfare Council
UEIP	Urban Environment Improvement Programme
UEMS	Urban Environment Management Society
VDC	Village Development Committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WESI	Water and Environmental Sanitation Improvement
WHO	World Health Organization
WQ	Water Quality
WRM	Water Resource Management
WSP	Water Safety Plan
WUMP	Water Use Master Plan

# Introduction

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## Purpose of the Country Strategy

This country strategy (CS) will guide the work of WaterAid in Nepal from 2010 to 2015, aligning it with WaterAid's Global Strategy 2009-2015, its four global aims, and the sectoral demands of the country. It is built on the belief that access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation is a human right, and providing these services underpins human development and health, transforming lives.

In line with Aim 1 of WaterAid's Global Strategy, the CS provides for a greater emphasis on service delivery as well as equity and inclusion (E&I), so that hitherto neglected people are able to push for access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation services that are accessible to all. In planning to work more closely with government, service providers and other stakeholders to build their capacity to deliver and advocate for Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) services, the CS meets Aim 2. In engaging with development partners such as NGOs, donors, relevant ministries, the National Planning Commission, civil society, the private sector, researchers, and the media to ensure WASH is integrated as a bedrock development intervention, Aim 3 is met. And finally, as Aim 4 of the Global Strategy defines WaterAid as a value-driven, global organisation, this CS seeks to replicate

such a diversified, positive and effective working culture within WaterAid in Nepal.

There is ample scope for WASH work in Nepal, where the risks of food and water-borne diseases are high. Though official statistics claim that access to improved water and sanitation services stands at 80% and 43% respectively (2009), it is likely that this is a significant overstatement. It is all the more imperative that WaterAid in Nepal works with its partners and government to meet the national and global targets set for WASH in Nepal.

## Background

WaterAid in Nepal was established in 1987 during the UN Water and Sanitation Decade, 1981-1990. In line with our initial aim to provide support for the provision of WASH services in rural Nepal, we helped set up Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) in 1992. To address the supply of WASH services to Nepal's proliferating small towns and cities, we then partnered with Lumanti Support Group for Shelter (Lumanti). This programme was later expanded to include, among others, the Environment and Public Health Organisation (ENPHO), the Centre for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD), and the Urban Environment Management Society (UEMS).



From 2003, we have taken on a more public role through our research and advocacy work. For rural areas, we supported the creation of the Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal (FEDWASUN) to give rural people a forum to demand their WASH rights, and the NGO Forum for Urban Water and

Sanitation so civil society perspectives are taken into account in water utility reforms and big infrastructure related to WASH projects. We have also coordinated WASH networks such as End Water Poverty (EWP), Freshwater Action Network (FAN) and WASH Group, and formed the 'Sanitation and Water for All' (SWA) alliance.



School girls at Bijanbari, Udayapur district.

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti

## Progress and key shifts

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WaterAid in Nepal's Country Strategy Paper 2005-2010 called for the strengthening of rural and urban service delivery, advocacy and sector influencing, and capacity building of partners. We moved from project-oriented to programme-oriented approaches for a longer and more holistic view of our interventions. In rural areas, one key shift was partnering with Village Development Committees (VDCs) for a 'universal coverage VDC approach', and working directly with user communities. In urban areas, we developed community-based Water Resource Management (WRM) guidelines, Water Quality (WQ) protocols, Water Safety Plans (WSP), and Water and Environmental Sanitation Improvement (WESI) plans that have been mainstreamed and piloted by our partners. We also started partnering with municipalities to deliver WASH facilities to the urban poor.

For CS period 2010-2015, we plan to strengthen our focus on E&I, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), and the total coverage of WASH services for communities, including through low-cost technologies. We have also moved into relatively new areas of involvement such as advocacy through our partners, linking WASH across sectors, and reducing the impacts of water-related conflicts, disasters and climate change.

### Evolution of WaterAid in Nepal, 1987-2010

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#### 1987 to 2004

1. Focus changed from rural to urban service delivery
  2. Diversification from a single partner to 7 partners
  3. Focus on technological interventions (eg EcoSan, fog-water harvesting, arsenic bio-sand filter and SoDIS)
  4. Piloting of new approaches (eg CLTS, GAP, CBME tools) and formulation of urban development strategy
  5. Since 2003, policy and advocacy work in thematic areas: sector financing; Citizens' Action; urban utility reforms; and a sanitation and hygiene campaign, to position WaterAid in Nepal as a key sector advocacy agency and contribute understanding of its global Programme and Policy Strategic Framework (PPSF)
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### 2005 to 2010

1. Introduction of log frame and systematic PME
2. Service delivery and advocacy programme addressed sector blockage issues and PPSF objectives, with focus on inclusion
3. Service delivery focused on scaling up community WRM; programme-based approach rather than project-based approach; increased investment in urban and sanitation sector; mainstreaming of GAP approach and community-based monitoring/LTSM and RCS
4. Strengthening of 5 thematic areas of policy and advocacy work
5. WASH deemed a constitutional right
6. Human resources expanded and strengthened, internal controls and management systems improved, increased contracted funding
7. Partners' capacity in service delivery, advocacy and finance built up
8. More cross-sector linkages, especially with health

### CS 2010-15 (Key re-alignments and shifts)

#### Doing better what we already do

1. Stronger emphasis on sanitation and hygiene to achieve ODF status in communities
2. Explicit focus on E&I and on affordable WASH services for the poor
3. Practice of totality concept to achieve universal access/coverage in our working areas
4. M&E for advisory/decision support: a more robust and user-friendly M&E data system
5. Focus on water security management (ie WRM, WQ, WSP)
6. Amplification of grassroots and community voices for practice and policy changes
7. Renewed focus on low-cost technological innovations

#### New areas of focus

1. Developing cross-sectoral linkages of WASH with health, local development, education
2. Focus on WASH as it relates to child rights
3. Interventions in small town WASH issues: rights, access, governance, etc
4. Partnership with youth groups for a dvocacy work
5. Engagement with the media and the private sector to spread awareness
6. Disaster risk management and climate adaptation work
7. Mitigation/mediation of water-related conflicts

## Key challenges, observations and lessons learnt (2005-2010)

- High WASH per capita cost: The poorest and most vulnerable people in Nepal live in scattered settlements across remote and relatively inaccessible hilly terrain, and as serving such populations with WASH initiatives is costly, it involved trade-offs. Though providing coverage could be justified from an E&I perspective, the results were not commensurate to investment elsewhere.
- Absence of locally elected government bodies: This made it hard to nurture long-term relations with local government officials, so WaterAid in Nepal has focused on strengthening citizens' forums to keep government responsive and accountable.
- Overcrowding of services: Multiple actors working according to their own modalities led to replication and confusion at the local level. We will contribute to stronger coordination and better sharing of information about WASH efforts.
- Partners with diversified expertise: The expertise of our urban partners could not be mobilised effectively while mainstreaming our approaches in delivering WASH services. We need to re-engage with our partners to help build capacity and deepen their expertise in areas that intersect with our priorities.
- Lack of land titles: Delivering WASH services in slums and squatter communities where land titling systems are complex or absent is a big challenge. We need to convince local government to provide services through local civil society and citizens' networks.
- Lack of voice: Large-scale institutional reforms are necessary but may not always be in the interests of poor consumers. WaterAid in Nepal needs to strengthen its role as an 'honest broker' that can credibly balance institutional reform work with speaking up on behalf of the poor.
- Fragmented knowledge: Reliable data is needed to push for additional financing and greater coverage. We have been collecting data, commissioning research, and sharing our knowledge and information in the sector.
- Prioritising sanitation: Sanitation remains a neglected development issue, and we plan to widen our sphere of influence to engage a broader range of partners across sectors.



Men and women from a rural community work on a gravity-fed water supply system for drinking water.

Picture: WaterAid/ Jim Holmes

# Situation analysis

## Socio-demographics

Nepal is a country in flux, with state restructuring to incorporate federalism likely to take place within the next CS period. It remains one of the least developed countries in the world, with a per capita GDP of just Rs 41,851 (365 GBP). Its economy, which is based on subsistence agriculture, grew at 3.5% in 2008, and is largely sustained by remittances from India and the Middle East.

Nepal has a demographically young population of about 29 million (2010), with a median age of about 21. The population growth rate is 1.4%, but the urban population is growing at a rate of 17%. The average life expectancy in Nepal is about 63 years, and the average literacy rate stands at 49% (66% for males and 34.9% for females). Both child and maternal mortality rates are declining significantly, but the risks of food and water-borne diseases remain high, particularly diarrhoea and typhoid.



Prem Kumari Budhathoki washes her hands at a tap stand. As Prem Kumari has a physical disability, the tapstand was built with two taps at different heights.

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti

Nepal has been making progress towards meeting the MDG targets. The percentage of the population below the national poverty line, for example, has decreased from 42% in 1990 to 25% in 2009, in pursuit of the MDG target of 21% by 2015. The percentage of the population

with access to improved water sources and improved sanitation, particularly the latter, has seen a dramatic increase in the last two decades. But these figures are marred by issues of quality and functionality, meaning there is little real chance of meeting the MDG targets on water and sanitation.

**Table 1: Nepal's progress on key MDG indicators**

<b>Progress against indicators:</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2015 (MDG target)</b>
% of population below national poverty line	42	38	31	25a	21
% of children who are underweight (<5)	57	53	45.2	38.6	29
Ratio of girls to boys at primary level	0.56	0.79	0.86	1.0	1.0
Literacy rate of 15-24-year-olds	49.6	70.1	79.4	86.5	100
Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	108	64	48	41	34
Under-five mortality per 1,000 live births	162	91	61	50	54
Maternal mortality ratio	515	415	281	229	134
Total fertility rate	4.6	4.1	3.1	2.9	2.4
% of deliveries attended by health providers	7	11	19	28	60
HIV prevalence (15-49 years)	NA	0.29	NA	0.49	Halt and reverse
% of population with access to improved water source	46	73	81	80	73
% of population with sustainable access to improved sanitation	6	30	39	43	53

A monitoring visit with policymakers, lawmakers, and other WASH sector stakeholders in a WASH child rights project implemented in Rauta village, Udayapur District.

Picture: Nepal Water for Health



## Sector targets and commitments

The Government of Nepal has signed up to the MDGs, under which it needs to achieve 73% drinking water coverage and 53% sanitation coverage by 2015. It has also declared it will achieve universal access to water and sanitation by 2017. Nepal, as a signatory to the South Asia Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) has committed to water and sanitation as a basic human right. SACOSAN further demands that sanitation be prioritised by addressing menstrual hygiene and E&I, along with an increased, separate sanitation budget line. Nepal has also committed to the Sanitation and Water for All – Global Framework for Action.

From 1990 to 2009, the government’s water and sanitation annual sector budget increased progressively. If this trend continues and problems of functionality are resolved, sector financing will be enough to meet MDG targets

and universal access. However, funds will have to be effectively utilised, overlapping should be minimised, and rehabilitation and repair of utilities are essential. The lack of clarity on the sanitation budget line is a challenge. Until 2007, no separate sanitation budget line was available. A GLASS report (2010) indicates that the annual sanitation budget in Nepal is around Rs 360 million, though Rs 1 billion will be required annually for universal access to basic latrine facilities by 2017. The national budget for 2009-2010 committed to providing a toilet to each house, but the budget of 2010-2011 is silent on the matter.

There is also the issue of external resource dependency. Prior to 2006, external resources contributed 71% of sector financing. For the last two years this has dropped to 60%. The Asian Development Bank and World Bank provide around 58% of this. Off-budget funding from I/NGOs is around 11%. Donor harmonisation is thus crucial.

**Table 2: Water and sanitation budget, Government of Nepal**

Decade	1970S	1980S	1990S	2000-2009
Water and sanitation expenditure in US\$ (millions)	28	130.8	256	488

Source: Sector Financing Report, WaterAid in Nepal, 2010



## Policy environment

Following the end of the conflict in 2006, Nepal adopted a Three Year Interim Plan (2007-2010) in lieu of the usual five-year government plans for development and economic growth. The plan proposes the integration of sewerage, on-site sanitation, and solid waste management in urban schemes with cost recovery from users. There are a number of other policies and programmes, not all of which have been endorsed, that deal specifically with WASH issues in urban and rural areas. These include the National Hygiene and Sanitation Master Plan (2010), the National Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Sector Policy (2009), and the National Policy on Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation (2004). There are also cross-sector policies that impinge on water and sanitation, such as the National Urban Policy (2007), the Local Self Government Act (1999), and the Nepal Health Sector Programme-II (NHSP-II). Many of these policies highlight the importance of demand-side management by communities, as well as the involvement of the private sector.

On paper, Nepal has the policies it needs to deliver universal access for all. What is lacking is the political will, both at the government and the sector level, to drive the work on water, sanitation and hygiene forward to meet the MDG and national goals.

## Sector review

### Water supply

Official figures state that 80% of Nepalis have access to improved water sources, up from 46% in 1990. But coverage is only 53% if we consider the functionality of water supply, without even accounting for water quality. With real growth of 7% in 20 years, it is unlikely that Nepal will meet the MDG target of 73% by the 2015 deadline if we consider aspects of quality and functionality. Water pollution and contamination remain among the most serious public health problems in Nepal. Standards of hygiene remain low due to a lack of awareness, crammed living spaces, and inadequate mechanisms to dispose of human and other waste.

### Sanitation

Nepal has come a long way in improving sanitation, with toilet coverage rising from 6% in 1990 to 43% in 2009. But improved and hygienic latrine coverage is only 27%, meaning there is only a remote possibility of meeting the sanitation MDG of 53% by 2015, let alone the goal of universal access by 2017. Districts like Bajura, Bajhang and Kalikot have coverage below 10%; total coverage here could take as long as 2031. Problems of drainage and solid waste management in urban centres are on the rise, despite increased attention from WASH agencies.

One reason for the slow progress in providing sanitation is the policy bias towards water supply. While drinking water programmes have been promoted and implemented since 1970, an integrated water supply and sanitation programme was begun only in 1990.

**Health and hygiene (H&H)**

Nepal has made significant progress in reducing child mortality, but WASH-associated diseases remain among the top 10 causes of morbidity in Nepal. Diarrhoea is the second biggest killer of under-fives, and in 2009 an outbreak in 20 districts in mid and far western Nepal killed at least 346 people.

Though hygiene promotion is widely acknowledged as one of the most cost-effective public health measures, compliance is still low due to lack of prioritisation within and across sectors.

In the rural Terai and western hill districts in particular, the overall picture on hygiene practices is bleak. Just 37% of people in villages wash their hands with water, and only 12% use water and soap. Socio-cultural taboos mean that women undergoing menstruation, people living with HIV/AIDS, and disabled people find it difficult to access WASH facilities, and are thus exposed to health hazards.

**Equity and inclusion (E&I)**

While government and WASH agencies talk about providing water and sanitation to ‘all’, there is a tendency to think ‘gender and social inclusion’ covers all marginalised and excluded communities. Though community-led approaches do give a sense that school children, male and female community members, dalits and other caste members are involved in WASH issues, those mainstream approaches still leave out large groups of marginalised people.

**Table 3: Excluded and marginalised groups in the WASH sector in Nepal**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Women (in relation to, but not limited to, menstrual hygiene management)</li> <li>■ Dalits/indigenous people</li> <li>■ Urban poor (slum dwellers/squatters)</li> <li>■ People, especially dalits, living in inaccessible terrain</li> <li>■ Children</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ People living with disabilities</li> <li>■ People living with HIV/AIDS</li> <li>■ People with chronic, long-term illnesses</li> <li>■ Migrating/nomadic people</li> <li>■ People displaced by political conflict</li> <li>■ People living in extreme poverty</li> </ul>
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Dhana Kumari Magar ►  
collects water from a  
rehabilitated well in  
Lalitpur District.

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti



Such people often lack sufficient knowledge of WASH services to assert their rights effectively, or are unable to overcome caste and class constraints within their communities. They are unable to access civil society organisations or use the media to demand WASH services. This remains the case despite increasing levels of literacy, education, community empowerment, and political participation.

Moreover, many organisations that disseminate knowledge about WASH restrict themselves to providing technical or service-specific information. The importance of WASH may be explained to community members without impressing upon them that these are rights they can claim. The community may subsequently accept WASH services as an act of charity. An inability to take advantage of WASH services further incapacitates poor people and limits their participation in other development programmes.

The expansion of the media into the remotest parts of Nepal over the last two decades means it is an excellent platform for excluded groups to express their concerns, assert their rights, and hold those tasked with providing services to account. Politically, WASH-related rights are not explicitly enshrined in the Interim Constitution. WASH-related rights have been proposed for incorporation in the draft of the forthcoming constitution.

## Government sectoral programmes

The government has shifted from a project-based to a programme-based approach in the WASH sector. Programmes have focused largely on rural areas, with urban programmes revolving around services in the Kathmandu Valley, major towns like Pokhara, Biratnagar and Birgunj, and a few other small towns. Key government programmes and projects make up 88% of the sector's budget, with 12% contributed by bilateral agencies.

## Stakeholder analysis

WASH stakeholders can be broadly divided into WaterAid in Nepal's partners and the rest of the institutions that make up the larger WASH 'ecosystem'.

### Partners

WaterAid in Nepal works with five partners specialised in service delivery (NEWAH, Lumanti, ENPHO, UEMS, and CIUD) and two advocacy partners (NGO Forum and FEDWASUN). The partners' strengths are that (a) they are loyal, hardworking and interested in continuing as our partners in the new CS period, (b) they are respected in the sector, (c) they have varying degrees of growth management capacity, and (d) they have been able to build on the credibility of their work with WaterAid in Nepal to attract other funding sources.

Shiva Datta Sharma, Caretaker of Tangmang village in Baglung District, maintains the community tapstand. ▶

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti



In general, our service delivery partners are not so well versed in the tools of advocacy, though they are keen to learn. They are also unsure about how to fully mainstream E&I issues into their work. Further, almost all our partner NGOs are dependent on charismatic leaders and have not been able to groom second-tier leaders within their organisations. Despite significant achievements, the lack of leadership growth has serious implications for their institutional growth. WaterAid in Nepal plans to help them build up their capacity, freeing itself up to work with new partners in other areas.

## Sector and cross-sector stakeholders

WaterAid in Nepal will focus on key nodes within the larger WASH ecosystem to focus the country's WASH agenda on national and MDG goals. This includes the National Planning Commission, ministries and their departments, and other concerned stakeholders that supply water, provide sanitation and work to improve hygiene in rural and urban areas. It also incorporates community groups, NGOs, donors, and international agencies that are engaged in either service delivery work or big urban infrastructure projects, not to mention the media, private sector, youth groups, academia, and research institutes.

### Government bodies

The key ministry is the Ministry for Physical Planning and Works (MPPW), which has the mandate to provide safe water to all

in Nepal. WaterAid in Nepal is fully involved in an MPPW-led Sector Wide Approach programme (SWAp) preparation exercise, which has five thematic discussion groups: sanitation and hygiene; sector finance; water quality; functionality and sustainability; and institutional development and capacity building. Our aim is to continue to work with MPPW to put the twin goals (MDG and national) at the centre of the national discourse on WASH. Building on the increased understanding that WASH cuts across all development interventions in the light of the 2009 diarrhoea epidemic, we will continue to play a catalytic role between MPPW and other ministries, including those concerned with health, education, local development, etc.

**Donors, INGOs, NGOs and agencies** WaterAid in Nepal will continue to play a coordinating role in the sector. Specifically, it will share its work on advocacy, E&I, and private sector collaboration, and will build on its role as a knowledge catalyst. We will also share our strengths with our peer institutions in the sector, bringing them together for collaboration to raise the visibility of WASH in the larger discourse of human development in Nepal.

### NGOs, communities, citizens' action groups and user groups

We will lobby and influence decision-makers to make changes at the grassroots level, where we will work with local citizens, NGOs and user groups to build up their capacity to demand rights and access to WASH services.

**Table 4: Key challenges in the sector and opportunities**

<b>Key challenges in the sector</b>	<b>WaterAid in Nepal's engagement</b>
Though MPPW is the lead agency, there is weak coordination among WASH agencies.	MPPW's Sector Efficiency Improvement Unit (SEIU) will be the driving force for harmonisation. We have taken part in SEIU's 5 thematic groups, and will take the lead by writing position papers, creating consensus, and helping put together sectoral elements to assist MPPW's SWAp.
There is weak monitoring and scattered learning, while data focuses on coverage but not outcomes and impact.	While supporting SEIU on monitoring and functionality at a central level, we will also work with civil society networks at the grassroots level for joint monitoring and learning.
The rights of the marginalised and vulnerable remain a peripheral concern for most WASH agencies.	We will produce evidence-based case studies, use media and public hearings, and build up the capacity of citizen groups to push for equitable allocation of resources for specific marginalised and excluded groups.
While more attention is being paid to WASH, more financing, policy reforms, leadership and skill development, and support mechanisms at local levels are needed, particularly for sanitation.	We will help publish and distribute datasets that identify ODF status, as well as funding and capacity gaps. We will push the concept of total sanitation.
The existing social, technical and financial infrastructure is not adequate to meet the MDGs and national targets.	We will calculate how much funding is needed for Nepal to meet MDG and national goals, and look into current flows and spending patterns. We will advocate with the government and sectoral players for appropriate and equitable use of required funds.
Unplanned, rapid urbanisation and the merger of VDCs into small towns leads to competing demands and pollution, but the urban poor are neglected.	We can collaborate with other sector players to promote our work in both rural and urban areas on water delivery, sanitation, sewerage, and in establishing citizen groups to meet the WASH demands of emerging small towns.
Poor water resource management leads to shortages, but there has been little debate on water rights for industry, agriculture and household use.	We will work with government to provide better water resource planning tools, and will also focus on water security management.
Many institutions working in the health, education, local development, and livelihood sectors still do not link WASH to their own sectors.	We will deepen our functional linkages across sectors, and engage partners to develop a 'WASH in other sectors' approach.
Limited involvement of the private sector in the WASH sector.	Private sector participation needs to be encouraged. We can influence the private sector to consider community WASH needs.
There is a lack of institutional priority for sanitation and hygiene across sectors.	We will use media platforms and campaign strategies (eg walkathons) to make the point that WASH should be viewed as a bedrock development intervention that needs resources and political will for success.

# Strategic objectives and indicators

In a nutshell, WaterAid in Nepal's objectives for the next five years are to remove or mitigate the effects of sectoral barriers, and push buttons that lead to measurable changes both at the policy level and at the grassroots level. These are based on our experience and research, and give us a niche in the broader WASH ecosystem while aligning with both the country situation and WaterAid's Global Strategy.

In the new CS period, we will deepen our niche expertise. WaterAid in Nepal remains the only agency focused on WASH, and is thus in a position to advocate for a more urgent push towards the MDG and national goals for the sector. We aim to use our influence to pilot innovations, catalyse knowledge into action, and use the media to amplify users' voices. Going forward, we want to diversify our partner base to reach out to a broader base of users. The integral components of our programmes in the new CS period will be:

## i) WASH service delivery

### Water

WaterAid in Nepal will continue its work on providing safe and adequate water access to users, employing where possible a community-based water resource management (CWRM) and water security approach. Though we will be introducing new projects in rural and urban settings,

we will continue to work with our partners to ensure the sustainability and functionality of previously delivered WASH facilities. We will also conduct awareness and training activities for stakeholders at all levels on WASH technologies, water quality issues, and the rights to water and good water governance. Effective engagement and support will be ensured with sector stakeholders and Citizens' Action groups in order to hold those responsible for providing WASH services accountable.

### Sanitation

We will continue to work towards providing inclusive, equitable, accessible, affordable, and sustainable access to adequate sanitation, focusing on poor and vulnerable communities in selected rural and urban areas. We will also enhance the knowledge, skills and capacity of partners and selected sector stakeholders at different levels. Delivering sanitation services involves both the hardware of sustainable toilets and the software of changing deep-rooted behavioural patterns – a total sanitation concept that results in communities being able to declare themselves ODF. We will mobilise communities to play a significant role in the construction of their own latrines and achieving a sanitary environment, which will address issues of wastewater, solid waste management, points of use treatment at household level, defecation habits, and menstrual hygiene management.



- ◀ Buddhi Sipai and his granddaughter Gyani Maya, with vegetables grown using compost from latrines.

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti

## Hygiene

In line with WaterAid's Global Strategy, we recognise that hygiene promotion should be an integral part of WASH interventions to maximise the health benefits from investment in water and sanitation. Both service delivery and advocacy work are needed. In addition to regular interventions, innovations and focused interventions will be launched, for example in the areas of menstrual hygiene, hygiene promotion targeting people living with HIV, nutrition, diarrhoea, and Zinc supplementation with oral rehydration solutions.

With our technical support, we anticipate that our partners will have updated hygiene promotion strategies, and will implement hygiene promotion interventions that use appropriate means of communication for behavioural change. Hygiene promotion programme work will focus on achieving sustainable changes in key hygiene practices to reduce the occurrence of WASH-associated diseases.

### ii) Advocacy and influencing

We will prioritise the following to meet WaterAid's global aims for advocacy and influencing:

- Lobby and campaign to have the new constitution recognise WASH as a fundamental right and preparatory actions to reform acts, rules and responsibilities to match constitutional rights

- Lobby, advocate and campaign for increased political will, priority and commitments on sanitation
- Engage civil society organisations for improved governance on water and sanitation utility reforms
- Engage with sector government to materialise Joint Sector Review outcomes thereby to translate national, regional and global commitments into actions
- Use the media to promote best WASH practices and success stories, and continue to challenge the sector to prioritise the rights of the poor
- Publish case studies to minimise the policy and practice gap through evidence-based learning and capacity building of stakeholders
- Budget advocacy, lobbying and campaigning for improved sector financing both at national and local level, while considering equity and harmonisation across sectors
- Raise awareness through annual campaigns with the private sector and other groups

WaterAid in Nepal will work hard to establish itself and its partners as advocates for WASH sector development.

### iii) Rights, equity and inclusion

The purpose of our E&I work is to ensure that marginalised groups are able to

Boys at the latrine of  
Arunodaya Primary School in  
Biratnagar, Morang District. ▶

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti



demand and exercise their rights to secure safe water, improved hygiene, and sanitation services from service providers – be they government bodies, NGOs, community groups or private sector vendors. To that end, WaterAid’s E&I Framework starts with the premise that different people face different kinds of inequities. In Nepal, different groups of poor and marginalised people have not been accorded group-specific interventions when it comes to securing and protecting their rights to WASH.

There is an opportunity for WaterAid in Nepal to engage with such groups to help secure their rights, and to eventually influence other agencies to consider their specific needs. We will mainstream the E&I approach in all our work, and will (a) develop pilot projects that demonstrate the effectiveness of inclusive and equitable WASH services for marginalised people such as those with disabilities; and (b) work with partners to deliver inclusive WASH services where they work as part of their mainstreaming approach.

#### **iv) WaterAid in Nepal’s engagement across sectors**

Having made the shift to playing an influencing role, we want to engage with ministries other than MPPW so as to incorporate WASH into the education, local development and health sectors. We also plan to work with private businesses to promote WASH awareness.

#### **Health**

We will coordinate closely with the Ministry of Health & Population (MoHP) and other stakeholders in the health sector, including researchers. MoHP has a key role in promoting preventive health care, to which WASH is critical. The ‘Environmental health and hygiene’ theme under NHSP-II provides an opportunity to scale up ongoing efforts to reduce WASH-associated diseases.

#### **Education and local development**

We will look at ways to integrate WASH-related materials in the non-formal education curriculum. We will work with the Ministry of Education to develop inclusive standards for students’ toilets. With the Ministry of Local Development, we will push the total sanitation concept so villages and districts adopt practices to sustainably declare themselves ODF (at present, only 75 out of 3915 villages in Nepal have been declared ODF).

#### **Private sector**

We will work with the private sector in areas of overlapping interests. For example, we will help train plumbers who can install rainwater harvesting systems for public and domestic use; work with companies interested in Corporate Social Responsibility in aspects of WASH like hand washing with soap and food hygiene; and work with tourism bodies to promote a plastic-free concept of environmental sanitation. Our role will be to provide technical and supervisory support, while establishing credible, long-term partnerships.



## Country programme strategic objectives

### Global Aims

### CS Objectives

<p><b>Aim 1:</b> Promote and secure poor people's rights and access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Support communities, defined as per the criteria for choosing such communities, to demand and exercise WASH rights</li> <li>■ Enhance access of poor and vulnerable communities to safe, affordable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable WASH facilities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim 2:</b> Support governments and service providers in developing their capacity to deliver safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Strengthen the capacity of partners to effectively deliver WASH services</li> <li>■ Support government and relevant sector stakeholders to help address key WASH sector blockages to meet national targets</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim 3:</b> Advocate for the essential role of safe water, improved hygiene, and sanitation for human development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Drive WASH as a bedrock intervention in health, education, livelihoods, and influence other relevant sectors to prioritise WASH as an integral part of their development discourse</li> </ul>
<p><b>Aim 4:</b> Develop as an effective global organisation recognised as a leader in our field and for living our values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Promote a positive and inclusive organisational environment to develop motivated staff who practice high standards of professionalism and leadership qualities</li> <li>■ WAN is recognised as a credible sector catalyst that adds value to promote learning and innovations in WASH</li> </ul>

## Geographical focus

WaterAid in Nepal will identify geographical locations to work in based on low coverage of WASH facilities; under-financing from government; prevalence of economically backward and socially marginalised groups; minimal presence of other development actors; areas with hardship, vulnerabilities and functionality problems; and potential risks of natural and public health disasters, etc.

### WaterAid in Nepal’s potential programme districts during CS 2010-2015





Ram Rati Malik belongs to a marginalized community of Beli, Siraha District. “We used to go to the toilet in the bamboo groves by the lake,” she says. “We always feared defecating in the open as you never knew who’d be around and we were also scared of the snakes. This toilet is very convenient.”

Picture: WaterAid/ Marco Betti

# Human resources

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WaterAid in Nepal's human resource planning revolves around maximising the potential and effectiveness of our staff members to support organisational effectiveness, in line with Aim 4 of the Global Strategy. In principle, our thinking and planning on human resources will be guided by this question: what sort of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and diversity will we need to successfully deliver the CS? Since organisational culture is the invisible glue that holds a strategy's deliveries on track, we want to ensure that we first get the internal culture right.

## Culture

We aim to put strong emphasis on a value-driven culture. Such a culture derives its strength from the six WaterAid in Nepal values, which call for the principles of transparency, fairness, trust and mutual respect; inclusiveness in all that we do; collaborative action; workforce diversity; being inspirational and inspired to do a good job; sharing information and credit; exercising responsible discretion; and being enthused about the work planned for the next five years. The minimum standards and indicators highlighted in WaterAid's E&I Framework under Aim 4 will be followed throughout the strategic period. There will also be some spillover gains as our work culture influences our partners and helps them improve their governance.

## Skills for re-alignments and shifts

To sustain such a working culture, appropriately qualified staff should be enabled to manage their work commitments. For this CS period, we hope to first fill in the posts that have been approved, so as to free up staff for key re-alignment work. Second, since the new strategy calls for an emphasis on E&I, H&H, private sector engagement, contract management, more robust M&E, and more travel to the field, we wish to recruit appropriate additional staff for these strategic shifts. It is hoped that a formal skill audit will validate our informal skill-gap findings. We will review and update manuals related to human resources, health and safety, E&I, performance management, fraud and negligence policies, child protection policies and toolkit, and malpractice policies. The organisation will also initiate internship programmes so university students can be brought in for training, exposure, and research.

## Staffing and rationale

Based on our work related to re-alignment, strategic shifts, and skills required, 29 staff are proposed, of whom 26 will be regular (up from 20 now), and 3 will be contracted. For more details, refer to WaterAid in Nepal's organisational structure in Annex 2.

## Financial resources

It is projected that WaterAid in Nepal will require additional financial resources over the course of the CS period for the following reasons:

- Work related to re-alignment and strategic shifts into new areas
- Hiring new personnel to increase staff numbers from 20 to 26 over the next CS period
- New partners and wider sector engagement
- More emphasis on E&I/H&H through partners and policy bodies
- Regular activities and technical innovations including in disaster preparedness
- Advocacy and research through existing and new partners and networks
- Planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME), including through a data bank that uses a management information system (MIS)

WaterAid in Nepal's experience is that service delivery costs more than advocacy; 60% of investments will be for service delivery, with the rest for advocacy, capacity building and organisational effectiveness.

**Table 5: Financial resources projected for WaterAid in Nepal, 2010-2015 (in '000 Rs)**

Financial plan	Fiscal years						Total
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015 -16	
Total*	290,115	289,682	241,930	292,215	336,047	403,256	1,853,247

\* The stated figures only indicate the essential financial plan and do not reflect the 'desirable' and 'ambitious' financial plans.

# Risk management

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WaterAid in Nepal foresees a number of external and internal risks that could impinge upon its effectiveness. These risks may be grouped into four categories:

## Strategic

Nepal's political turbulence translates into a number of risks. At the national level, there is an increasing danger that the new constitution will not be drafted by May 2011. If that happens, Nepal could enter a constitutionally undefined area, which will pose risks to all development agencies working here. The absence of elected local government in districts and VDCs makes it critical to cultivate relationships with ministries and local politicians. Power relations among and within communities are in flux, and the state faces federal restructuring. These risks may be mitigated by conducting regular situation reviews, which feed into WaterAid in Nepal's planning process.

## Financial

Inflation and exchange rate volatility will pose risks. Donors may focus more on education and health at the expense of funding for the WASH sector. Updating financial and other manuals will make it easier to enforce compliance procedures and protocols, thereby minimising risks of fraud through improper utilisation of funds by partners, non-compliance with WaterAid in UK and donor reporting requirements, or loss of assets or property.

## Operational

Operational risks include heavy workloads, staff turnover, and conflicts that affect quality of work and performance. Our proposed organisational culture will be of help. Updating health and safety manuals, and training staff and partners in the basics of disaster management on and off the field will help mitigate the impact of other operational risks. Partners' capacity to deliver will be regularly assessed with opportunities provided for training and skills development. Compliance with our systems will be regularly monitored. Staff members' influencing abilities may need additional training. Besides, partners and stakeholders may not be fully on board with the rights-based approach. All these require us to communicate ways of working effectively so that the sector gets a clear and coherent message from us.

## Hazards

Power shortages remain a problem, compounded by the shortage of diesel to run generators. Earthquakes, floods and landslides remain unpredictable hazards, about which staff members and partners will be made aware.

The Country Representative together with the Senior Management Team, with support from the regional desk, will review the situation regularly and develop mitigation strategies for risks identified.

# Monitoring and evaluation

The M&E strategy's overall objective will be to measure the achievements of the strategic period, particularly in terms of changes adopted, and improve learning. We will make ourselves accountable to our main stakeholders, improve effectiveness in delivering country plans, and enhance learning for better future programming. We will revise our existing PME framework in line with the global PME strategy, national M&E standards, the CS, existing good practices, and implement it. Our experience will be communicated to partners and sector stakeholders. Key areas include:

## a) Process and progress monitoring

- Establish a robust MIS and information flow mechanism
- Update the PME framework, adhering to global and national PME standards
- Track progress of projects and provide timely feedback to all concerned
- Pilot innovative monitoring tools on E&I, campaigns, and advocacy, including for a rights-based approach
- Carry out regular verification of results from the field, relative to plans
- Deepen partners' and WaterAid in Nepal's capacity for regular progress reporting mechanisms
- Consolidate innovations like post project follow-up, community-based M&E, social auditing, sustainability, Rapid Convenient Survey (RCS), etc
- Ensure compliance of approved programme policy, manuals and approaches at all levels

## b) Impact monitoring

- Focused impact studies on social development (health, education and livelihood), sustainability, and governance sectors related to WASH
- Small-scale case studies focusing on good practice or cases of failure

## c) Mid-term and final evaluation

- Categorical periodic assessment of performance indicators
- External evaluation in 2011 by an external team of experts, with results shared with relevant stakeholders
- Social Welfare Council (SWC) evaluation in 2012 for the agreement renewal process with the government

## d) Learning and sector engagement

- Feed analysed information for decision support on a regular basis
- Generate high value learning, identify challenges and share as appropriate for decision support
- Maximise learning from other WaterAid country programmes, regional forums, international agencies, and national stakeholders across sectors
- Extract evidence-based learning from the recommendations and conclusions of different learning products
- Engage with MPPW's PME unit and relevant thematic groups
- Provide WaterAid in Nepal information to SWC and MPPW on a regular basis

# Projected users

**Table 6: User projection**

Year	No. of projects	Direct users		Influencing (indirect) users	
		Water	Sanitation	Water	Sanitation
2010/11		46,265	43,003	6,600	4,800
2011/12		26,331	24,609	19,700	17,800
2012/13		34,877	31,237	24,400	22,100
2013/14		41,852	37,484	29,280	26,520
2014/15		48,130	43,107	33,672	30,498
Total		197,455	179,440	113,652	101,718
Total users	Water	311,107			
	Sanitation	281,158			



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# Appendices

## Annex 1:

### Country programme strategic objectives and indicators

<b>Global aims</b>	<b>CS Objectives</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<p>Aim 1: Promote and secure poor people's rights and access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support communities, defined as per the criteria for choosing such communities, to demand and exercise WASH rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ At least 4,000 communities understand and demand WASH rights</li> <li>▪ At least 300 communities have a platform to ensure WASH rights, due to WAN's influencing work</li> <li>▪ Evidence of collective action by user networks, civil society networks and non-sector actors for WASH-related issues</li> <li>▪ At least 50% poor and marginalised community members represented on user committees, including women</li> <li>▪ Evidence shows that media aggregates citizen voices for policy reform</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance access of poor and vulnerable communities to safe, affordable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable WASH facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 197,455 users have access to improved water facilities and 179,440 accessed improved sanitation facilities through WAN's direct support</li> <li>▪ At least 70% of users adopt sustained improved hygiene practices at the time of project completion</li> <li>▪ At least 80% of users are from poor and marginalised groups</li> <li>▪ Impact studies demonstrate improved social and health outcomes</li> <li>▪ WAN piloted/promoted at least three new inclusive and affordable technologies and or approaches related to WASH</li> <li>▪ At least 1,000 poor communities (out of 4,000) enabled to effectively implement and maintain WASH services</li> <li>▪ At least 15 WASH coordinated plans (WUMP/MESP) at local level adopted and followed by local village-level or municipal-level or small-town government/ stakeholders</li> </ul>

<p><b>Global aims</b></p> <p>Aim 2: Support governments and service providers in developing their capacity to deliver safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation.</p>	<p><b>CS Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen the capacity of partners to effectively deliver WASH services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Numbers of indirect users who exercise WASH access as a result of WAN's influencing work amount to 113,652 for water and 101,718 for sanitation, at least to basic standards</li> <li>Partners' capacity improved in mainstreaming WAN's key strategic shifts</li> <li>WAN's partners utilised 100% of allocated resources in an effective, efficient and transparent way. All WAN service delivery partners comply with local government planning &amp; review processes while executing projects</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support government and relevant sector stakeholders to help address key WASH sector blockages to meet the national targets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence shows that government recognises WAN's contributions towards national goals</li> <li>Evidence shows that WAN's engagement helped government meet its international commitments on WASH</li> <li>Increasing trend of fund disbursement and use in WAN's working districts through influencing provides evidence of enhanced access of poor to WASH services</li> <li>Conducted at least one joint research per year with relevant sector and cross-sector organisations</li> <li>WAN's effective engagement in different thematic groups of SEIU for WASH sector development</li> </ul>

### Global aims

Aim 3:  
Advocate for the essential role of safe water, improved hygiene, and sanitation for human development

### CS Objectives

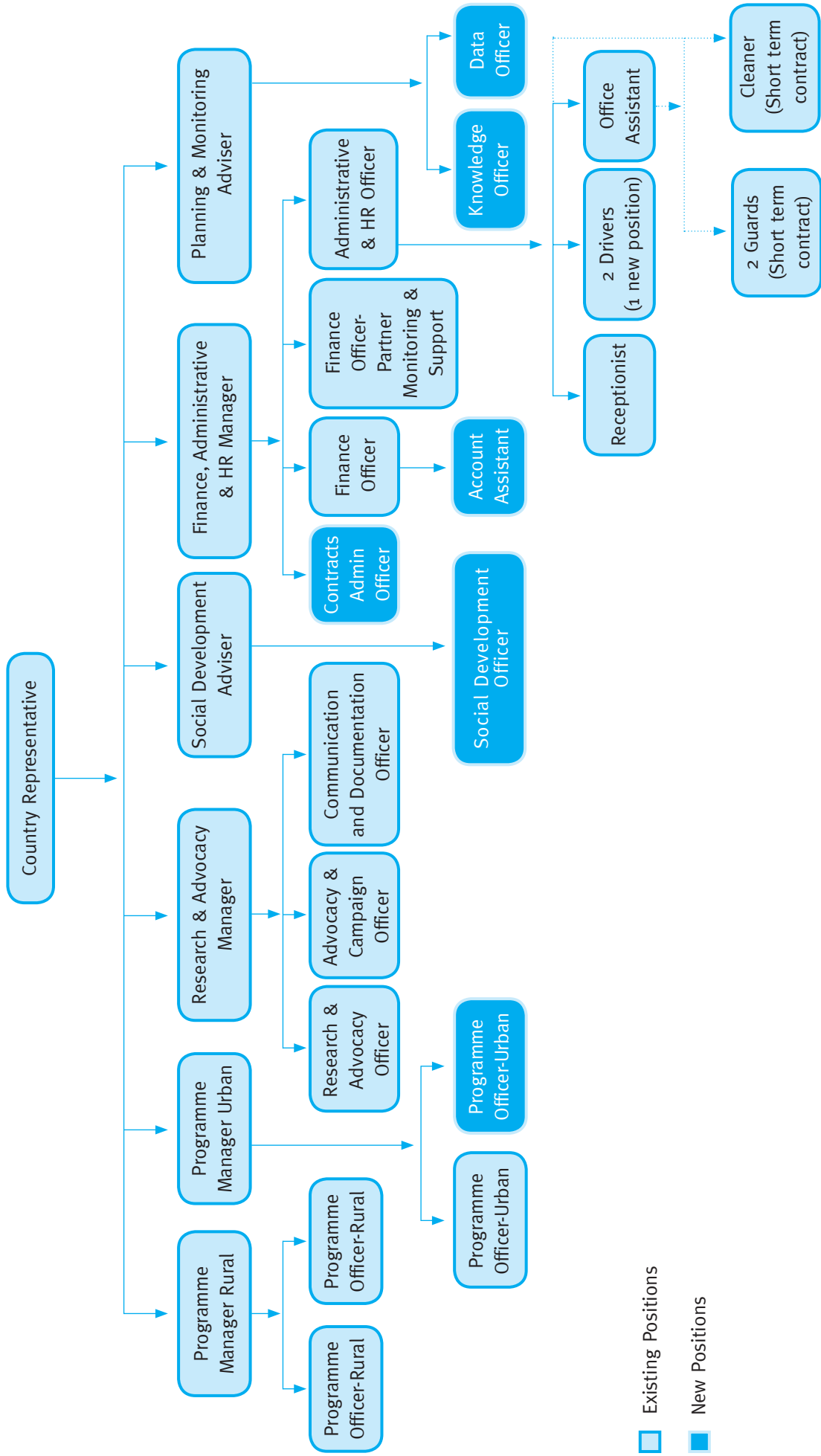
- Drive WASH as a bedrock intervention in health, education, livelihoods, and influence other relevant sectors to prioritise WASH as an integral part of their development discourse

### Indicators

- WAN's proactive effort resulted in the health sector progressively practising Water Quality Surveillance and prioritising sanitation and hygiene services in its plans and interventions
- WAN's influencing work resulted in the education sector prioritising gender-differentiated, inclusive WASH services
- Increased attention to WASH-associated services by organisations that promote livelihood development
- WAN partners established and deepened relationships with local institutions on health, education, local government
- WAN's proactive roles resulted in WASH-specific budgets being analysed and informed by cross-sector organisations
- Ensured at least the following development initiatives are clearly articulated in cross-sector interventions:
  - WASH in disaster (natural/public health)
  - WASH effects due to climate change/source sustainability through hydro-geological monitoring
  - WASH in public health disaster associated with WASH
  - WASH in HIV/AIDS
  - WASH in disability
- WAN's advocacy work used to influence the legislature, cross-sector ministries, government-led commissions, donors

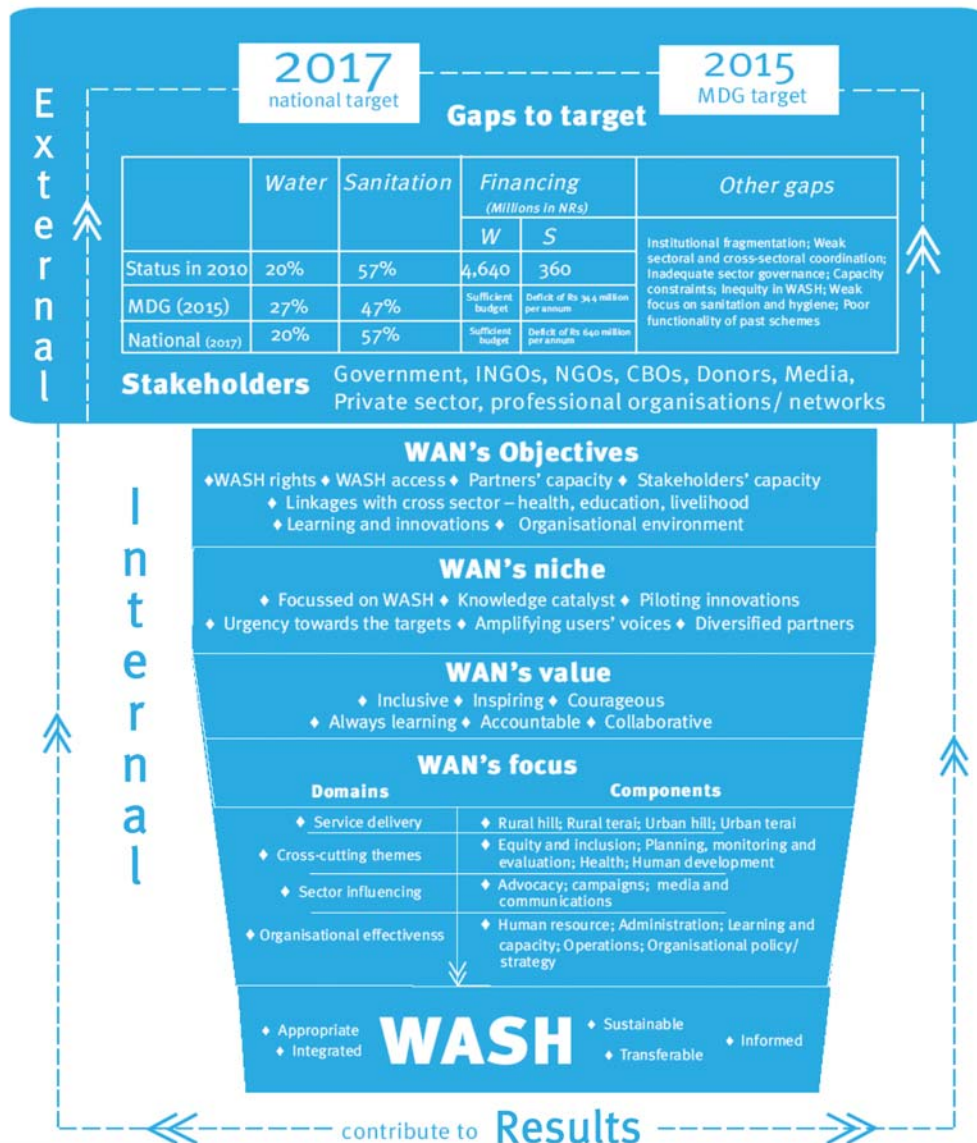
<p><b>Global aims</b></p> <p>Aim 4: Develop as an effective global organisation recognised as a leader in our field and for living our values</p>	<p><b>CS Objectives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote a positive and inclusive organisational environment to develop motivated staff who practice high standards of professionalism and leadership qualities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Indicators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WAN's internal policy and practices ensure a safe and inclusive working environment that recognises and values differences, transparency and diversity</li> <li>WAN provides space for value-driven career growth and personal development to its staff</li> <li>WA's compliance, rules, regulations, processes and procedures effectively followed</li> <li>WAN's guidelines and manuals are updated on time, operational and complied with</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WAN is recognised as a credible sector catalyst that adds value to promote learning and innovations in WASH</li> <li>innovations in WASH</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>WAN's credibility is increasingly recognised by relevant sector and cross-sector stakeholders</li> <li>WAN's staff provide peer leadership in different thematic areas in the sector and cross-sector development in different thematic areas in the sector and cross-sector development</li> </ul>

**Annex 2**  
**WaterAid in Nepal’s proposed organisational structure 2010-2015**



# CS map

The CS map is a one-page visual depiction of WaterAid in Nepal's strategy that places our work in the broader contexts of the Global Strategy and Nepal's national targets.





Bhim Bahadur Layo Magar collects water for his family. “I was unaware of other personal hygiene issues and food hygiene, such as the need to cover cooked food and drinking water. Since the implementation of the project in my village, I’ve been able to apply the knowledge I’ve received in the hygiene classes in my daily life.”

Picture: WaterAid/ Anita Pradhan



WaterAid transforms lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world’s poorest communities. We work with partners and influence decision-makers to maximise our impact.

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Front cover picture: Chandra Kumari Khadka, drinking water at the tapstand at Bijanbari in Udayapur District. WaterAid/ Marco Betti