



 WaterAid

Papua New Guinea

Country Strategy 2017-2020
Summary

Introduction to the Strategy

While one billion people have escaped poverty in the last 20 years, at least 10% of the world's population still live without safe water to drink and one in three people live without access to an improved toilet.

As a result, it is estimated that 315,000 children die every year. This wholly unacceptable situation causes untold suffering, holding back human development. It particularly affects the lives of women who carry the burden of collecting water and caring for sick children, and the lives of girls who often fail to finish their education because of a lack of toilets in schools, as water, sanitation and hygiene underpins health, education and nutrition. Poor sanitation continues to deprive women of privacy and expose them to the risk of attack.

Papua New Guinea (PNG) is the most populous country in the Pacific, home to 7.2 million people. Eighty-seven percent of its people live in rural areas. Often these areas are hard to reach, with poor access to roads and basic services. This is true of water, sanitation and hygiene (WaSH) with 60% percent of the population lacking access to safe water and 81% without access to improved sanitation.

This situation makes WaterAid PNG's mandate as relevant now as when we started 12 years ago.

WaSH in PNG

Since independence, approaches to WaSH have been implemented haphazardly, with little connection between the WaSH sector and national development policies and strategies.

The launch of the country's first National WaSH Policy in January 2015 has changed this situation significantly. For the first time the PNG Government has set clear WaSH targets and priority areas for action. It has also established a framework to improve coordination and harmonisation with donors, and enhance communication and collaboration and monitoring at the national and sub-national levels

The PNG government's commitment to improving services to its people and the quality of their lives is clear. The greatest challenge now is to deliver these policies and plans to ensure they "come to life for our people", as one community leader put it.

Our strategy

Our new Country Strategy has been developed with a clear appreciation of the challenges and opportunities for improving WaSH outcomes in PNG. It has been informed by our country program evaluation.

This strategy sets out WaterAid PNG's intents from 2017 to 2020. It is not a roadmap, but a compass, helping us find our way as we work to support government and communities to achieve the changes they aspire to.

The strategy has also been developed to align our focus areas with those of the PNG WaSH Policy, WaterAid Global Strategy, and the United Nation's Global Goals, which aspire to ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all people by 2030.

The successful implementation of the strategy will ensure that WaterAid PNG continues to be at the forefront of work to ensure every Papua New Guinean has access to sustainable WaSH services by 2030.



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WaterAid PNG

WaterAid PNG is a non-government organisation with a mission to transform the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people by improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene. We are the only organisation that focuses exclusively on the WaSH sector in PNG.

WaterAid PNG began funding work in in 2004 and opened a country program office in Port Moresby in 2012. Since 2014, we have assisted over 50,000 people with access to WaSH services.

Our 2015 country program evaluation noted that over the last country strategy period Wateraid PNG made significant progress towards our objectives. Notable were our increased local partnerships, both with NGOs and government, and our increase in geographic coverage, to include the National Capital District, and Central and Chimbu Provinces. We also contributed significantly to the development of the country's first National WaSH Policy.

However, the program evaluation also noted the need: to deepen our relationships with government and integrate local NGO partner work with government processes; to strengthen WaterAid's sector influencing role; and to strengthen sharing of our evidence-based learning, both internally and externally.

With the passing of the National WaSH Policy, the political and policy environment for WaSH has improved significantly since our last country strategy. The PNG Government's increasing leadership and its desire to see donors, development partners and NGOs work with it to deliver on the policy has created a critical turning point in WaSH service delivery. Also significant is the importance the Government has placed on water as a 'strategic asset', not just

for health but also for economic and broader development, so as to lead to improved living standards for citizens and resilient, sustainable self-reliant communities.

What WaterAid PNG does, and how we work can contribute significantly towards helping government to tip the balance. Through this strategy we are committing to work more closely with government within its processes and structures.

In working with government, we will aim to focus our program interventions in a select number of districts, with the aim of building an integrated and district-wide approach that can be used to capture evidence on how to bring about sustainable WaSH outcomes. This will involve integrating our sports-based hygiene behaviour change approaches with our collaboration with government agencies and partners in select districts.

Drawing on evidence from our program interventions we will work to pursue systemic change over individual support or single issue interventions. We will maintain our focus on advocacy to engage with the Government on the need to increase financial support for WaSH.

Central to how we work will be a commitment to deepening our understanding and practice of a rights-based approach to our programming.



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Opportunities and Challenges

A challenging context, globally

Papua New Guinea is one of only three countries globally that has safe water coverage of less than 50%. It also has the twelfth highest proportion of people using unimproved sanitation. These two statistics indicate the scale of the challenge facing the WaSH sector in PNG.

Millennium Development Goal targets for water and sanitation were missed by a substantial margin. The latest estimates indicate safe water coverage at 40% and sanitation at 19% - little to no improvement between 1990 and 2015.

Against this backdrop, the challenge of delivering a step change in progress to achieve universal access to basic water and sanitation services by 2030 is immense.

Improving sector coordination and leadership

Although the Government is committed to a process of decentralised development and decentralisation of funding through the Service Improvement Programme, there are currently no guidelines for using this to improve access to WaSH. Departments that could be more active in the sector, such as the Department of Health, have lacked incentives to engage.

The absence of a single national-level body charged with overall responsibility for developing and implementing policy for the

WaSH sector has been a major impediment to the development of the sector.

To address this, the National WaSH Policy has prioritised establishing a National Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Authority that will hold responsibility for sector leadership and coordination, working with existing sector institutions and organisations. The Government has taken the first step towards this end by establishing the WaSH Program Management Unit (PMU).

Finance for WaSH

Existing funding for the sector has been insufficient to make significant progress against government targets. Government investment to date, through the Development Budget has been modest. In recent years, loans and grants from development partners have increased total budget allocations, although the majority of funding has been allocated to a few urban WaSH initiatives. New World Bank and European Union investments present an opportunity for the WaSH sector to demonstrate how PNG can achieve its WaSH policy targets at a district level.

Sector capacity building and training

There have been insufficient numbers of staff employed in the WaSH sector, across all relevant disciplines. A limited supply of

new graduates from existing institutions has only exacerbated this challenge. The lack of established implementation guidelines for WaSH programming has resulted in a broad spectrum of approaches being applied and skills developed. Limited coordination of activities has meant valuable knowledge sharing and skill transfer opportunities between agencies have been missed. These issues have affected WaSH sector effectiveness and its ability to absorb additional funds.

Significant strengthening of the human resource capacity of the WaSH sector needs to be done if the ambitious targets of the National WaSH Policy are going to be met. This will require ensuring all existing and new staff have the necessary skills, and encouraging new staff into the sector.

Hygiene behaviour change

WaterAid's Sports for Development (S4D) program has been focused on improving hygiene behaviour through sports, initially through netball and volleyball.

This unique program has offered a new pathway to supporting changes in hygiene behaviours, which are central to achieving many health outcomes. Leveraging the uniqueness of this program, lessons from the S4D program will be used to inform national approaches to changing hygiene norms and behaviours.

Making Change Happen

Supporting national policy processes

WaterAid PNG will support the Government's WaSH PMU to implement the WaSH policy, with a focus on supporting policy implementation, sector coordination, as well as the development of an effective management information system (MIS).

We will do this through our active engagement on the National WaSH Task Force, which works with the PMU to deliver on National WaSH Policy targets and aspirations.

Using a district-wide approach and building capacity

WaterAid PNG will work with provincial and local-level governments, and in partnership with two District Development Authorities, to implement a district-wide approach that improves WaSH service delivery for communities, educational institutions and health care facilities, and which also progressively eliminates inequalities.

As part of the district-wide approach and work with the National WaSH Task Force, we will look for opportunities to deliver training programs for WaSH sector actors to enhance sector capacity to understand and deliver against key principles, relevant policies, service delivery models, and planning and monitoring mechanisms.

Integrating and focusing our programming

We will promote an integrated programming approach that ensures that our current S4D hygiene behaviour change program is integrated with our planned district-wide approach. We will also ensure that other important programming, such as working on menstrual hygiene management, is integrated into our district-wide approach.

To maximise the benefits of a district-wide approach, WaterAid will concentrate its programming activities in East Sepik and Central Province. We will also aim to continue to work in the Provinces of West Sepik, Chimbu, and Western Highlands, ideally through supporting WaSH in rural communities, schools and health centres.

Taking a rights-based approach

We will integrate a rights-based approach to development with our sector strengthening agenda, to advocate and influence government leadership in the sector. We believe the integration of a rights-based approach will contribute to governments fulfilling their roles and responsibilities to their citizens. We will also encourage citizens to actively participate in holding their government accountable through collaborative partnership.

Collaborating within the WaterAid federation

WaterAid PNG will link with WaterAid expertise in the region and globally to ensure we are continuously learning, adapting and striving to implement best practices in-line with WaterAid's global strategic aims. This will help us to build capacity, influence, support integration and strengthen approaches to equity, ultimately improving the quality of WaSH services delivered.



Our Strategic Intents

WaterAid PNG's overall aim for 2017-2020 is to influence the WaSH policy and programming approach in PNG, in order to strengthen the foundation on which PNG will deliver on the National WaSH Policy targets. We see our role as supporting the building of an enabling environment towards achieving universal access to WaSH in PNG.

1. Championing WaSH at a national policy level

WaterAid PNG will advocate to the National Government to increase investment in WaSH, and will collaborate with the PMU and other stakeholders to implement the National WaSH Policy.

WaterAid PNG will seek to leverage off its programming interventions to inform and shape government policy. Political will is essential to ensuring that PNG meets the targets the Government has set through its National WaSH Policy.

We will work with our traditional sector partners, and new partners in other sectors, to drive a narrative for the WaSH sector that complements the Government's aspirations. As well as engaging with political leaders, we will actively support the implementation of the National WaSH Policy, which sets out seven strategic pathways for improving service delivery and strengthening the sector.

Pathways:

- We will actively participate in regular National WaSH Task Force meetings to support planning and accountability processes, drive improvements to sector performance, strengthen relationships with key stakeholders, and share knowledge and learning from our work;
- We will advocate for an annual Joint Sector Review process to be coordinated, where progress towards policy targets are shared and future plans and priorities agreed;
- We will advocate for increased government financing towards WaSH;
- We will work to strengthen the extent to which WaSH is incorporated in key National Health and Education policies;
- We will aim to establish a Community of Practice as an effective learning exchange for sector stakeholders;
- We will contribute to the design of a management information system for the National WaSH Policy, reflective of the skills, resources and capacities available to sustain it.

2. Taking a district-wide approach

WaterAid PNG will work with sub-national government to strengthen two District Development Authorities through a district-wide approach.

Responsibility for ensuring everyone has access to lasting WaSH services is the responsibility of provincial and local-level government, with District Development Authorities (DDAs) being the mechanism to support improved service delivery. We will work with them to build capacity and support them in their responsibilities for planning and regulating service provision, and ensuring communities, schools and health care facilities have affordable, safe and sustainable WaSH services.

Pathways:

- We will support DDAs to develop multi-year strategic plans to improve WaSH service delivery, framed by policy targets and informed by funding allocations that consider appropriate technologies and include a sustainability plan;
- We will promote a rights-based approach, including the key principle of equality and non-discrimination to ensure people who have the worst services, especially those who are poor or marginalised, are considered;
- We will facilitate opportunities for learning, knowledge creation and capacity development, and ensure experiences at the sub-national level inform national priorities and plans;
- We will strengthen appropriate systems for effective data collection, analysis, and decision-making.

Join us to reach everyone, everywhere with safe water, sanitation and hygiene by 2030!

3. Changing hygiene behaviour

WaterAid PNG will prioritise the creation of innovative and impactful behaviour change messaging to influence social norms around hygiene practice

Hygiene promotion is widely recognised as a highly cost-effective intervention for improving public health. However, successful strategies for promoting long-term behaviour change have proven notoriously challenging. The focus of many hygiene promotion initiatives remain concentrated at household and community levels and delivered through infrequent training or outreach activities. We will build on our S4D initiative, learn lessons from successful global programs, and approach hygiene promotion as integral to our district-wide approach.

Pathways:

- We will continue innovating through our S4D initiative, using sport and sports personalities as mechanisms to effectively deliver creative behaviour change messaging nationally and sub-nationally, as well as through schools;
- We will build on our infant faeces management research findings to hone and finesse messages related to maternal, newborn and child health, potentially linking with health care facilities;
- We will advocate for a national hand-washing campaign through the National WaSH Task Force.

4. Building team and culture

WaterAid PNG will invest in fostering a strong sense of collective spirit, team working, mutual respect and fun as essential foundations for delivering this ambitious strategy

The WaterAid PNG team is small, committed and dynamic, but has experienced notable change in recent years. As we ready ourselves to embark on the next phase of our journey, we will explicitly focus on supporting a high-performing team.

Pathways:

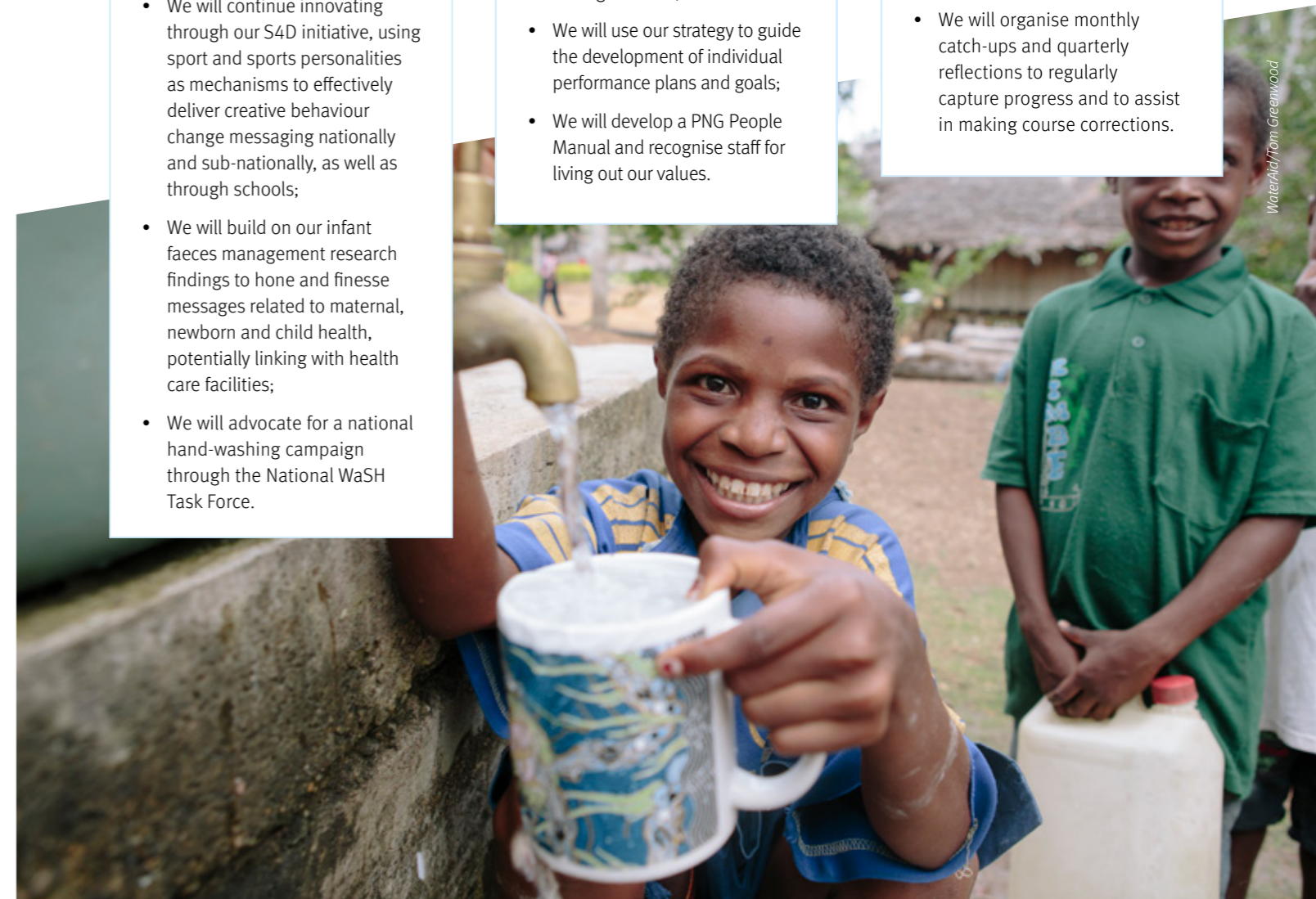
- We will organise regular team-building moments as part of our quarterly reflections and staff day events;
- We will reorganise our staff structure and job descriptions in line with this strategy and our strategic intents;
- We will use our strategy to guide the development of individual performance plans and goals;
- We will develop a PNG People Manual and recognise staff for living out our values.

5. Strengthening systems, processes and performance

WaterAid PNG will focus on strengthening our systems and processes to ensure we have a solid foundation from which to build over the next strategic period

Pathways:

- We will prioritise improving our grant management processes and financial management systems to enhance our capacity in these core areas;
- We will coordinate participatory annual planning and review processes for the country team to agree key priorities, hold ourselves accountable for progress and identify significant achievements and lessons learned;
- We will organise monthly catch-ups and quarterly reflections to regularly capture progress and to assist in making course corrections.



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 **WaterAid**

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