

WaterAid in Madagascar

Mid-term country programme evaluation

This briefing note summarises an external evaluation of WaterAid's Madagascar programme between August and September 2012. The purpose was to assess progress toward reaching the goals laid out in WaterAid's 2010-2015 country strategy for Madagascar.

The country programme comprises rural, urban, national, and organisational effectiveness programmes. Direct service delivery activities are concentrated in four regions, while in the remaining regions, there are activities for advocacy, governance and transparency, hygiene and sanitation promotion, or all three. The evaluation concluded that the programme is based on a relevant and effective strategy, which incorporates numerous approaches that are globally recognised as good practices. The issues raised in the evaluation primarily concern how best to tweak a few of these approaches to ensure reaching the 2015 goals.

Madagascar context

Madagascar has a population of over 21 million people, the majority of whom live in poverty. The population line is defined as 2,133 calories per day. In Madagascar, 82% of the rural population and 54% of the urban population live below this. Anecdotal information suggests wide gaps among regions, with regards to the number of people living in deep poverty.

Madagascar has a great need for improved water and sanitation, particularly in rural areas. About 1.6 million urban people lack access to safe water and sanitation. However in rural



areas this is six times as many people - 9.5 million. As of 2010, access rates for improved water supplies were 34% in rural areas and 74% in urban areas. Furthermore, anecdotal information suggests that some areas face severe water shortages, with people having to walk hours in the dry season to collect unsafe water. Access rates for improved sanitation were 12% in rural areas and 21% in urban areas.

The Government has taken significant action to improve the water and sanitation sector but an ongoing political crisis has impeded progress. The Good Water Code legislation was passed in 1999 and the Government, with assistance from external partners, had been making steady improvements to the sector. However, in 2009, the president of Madagascar was forced into exile and the Mayor of Antananarivo came to power with military backing. The international community rejected this unconstitutional succession, and many donors suspended assistance.

As a result, sector reform has stalled, external resources for water and sanitation have been

cut significantly, and even the Government's domestic budget has contracted due to a decline in GDP and tax revenue. Until the ongoing political crisis is resolved, this situation will not improve significantly.

Madagascar country programme

The 2010-2015 Madagascar country strategy resulted from a major effort to ensure alignment with WaterAid's global aims and strategic objectives. The four global aims are: to secure poor people's rights and access to WASH services; to support governments and service providers in developing their capacity to deliver WASH services; to advocate for WASH in human development; and to further develop as a recognised leader in WASH and as an organisation that lives its values.

The 2010-2015 country strategy aims to provide 170,000 people with safe water supplies, and see that 136,000 people gain access to sanitation facilities. These are just two examples of the many targets that WaterAid Madagascar has set for itself. The strategy has a budget of about £10 million divided among four constituent programmes: rural (£3.4 m), national (£2.9 m), urban (£1.8 m), and organisational effectiveness (£1.8 m).

Rural programme: The rural projects focus on integrated WASH activities in selected areas in Analamanga, Atsinanana, Menabe, and Vakinankaratra regions. WaterAid currently constructs gravity pipe schemes, mostly. Multiple use services (MUS) are supported through complementary facilities such as fish ponds to make use of overflow from storage tanks. Other activities include Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS), water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) in schools and health centres, and WASH facilities that are accessible to people with disabilities.

Urban programme: This programme operates in four urban communes in Antananarivo, and four small towns in Menabe and Atsinanana Regions. Activities include adding kiosks to existing piped schemes, solid waste collection by private operators, sanitation marketing, CLTS, WASH in schools and health centres, and accessible WASH facilities. In one small town WaterAid assisted delegation of the piped scheme to a private operator.

National programme: This is an exceptionally large and well-regarded programme of 16 research, knowledge management, communications, institutional support, capacity-building, advocacy, and coordination projects. The Regional Budgeting by Objective project supports selected regional governments to develop action plans for achieving the WASH Millennium Development Goals. The Governance and Transparency Fund supports integrated development in two communes. The Diorano-WASH Committees, for which WaterAid serves as the executive secretariat, coordinate the activities of WASH partners.

Organisational effectiveness programme: This programme comprises monitoring and evaluation, human resource development, and other internal activities, for example improving the financial management system. A notable new activity for 2010-2015 is the introduction of post-implementation surveys to evaluate the functioning of completed water supply and sanitation facilities as part of WaterAid's commitment to providing sustainable services.

WaterAid Madagascar implements its activities primarily through about 20 local partners, not counting Government and financing partners. The implementing partners include Government departments, NGOs, national associations, civil society and community-based organisations,

universities and training organisations, and commercial enterprises.

Findings: Relevance

The programme in Madagascar is relevant to the current situation. The country strategy is based on sensible approaches and practices for the Madagascar context. Many are based on internationally recognised approaches such as the delegated management of small town water supplies, MUS, CLTS, and sanitation marketing, to name a few examples.

In a country where so many people are poor, WaterAid faces tough choices about who to target. Over 70% of Madagascar's people are poor, but the depth of poverty and need for WASH services varies considerably. Targeting based on poverty rates may miss the poorest and neediest, especially since practical criteria, such as accessibility by road, are inversely correlated with depth of poverty. Also, poverty and the need for WASH are much more widespread in rural areas, raising the issue of how to decide the relative size of the rural programme. As a result, WaterAid faces choices about how to balance objective indicators of poverty against indicators of sustainability, such as beneficiary interest, local government capacity and political will.

Problems experienced by rural piped schemes put management model choices into question. WaterAid now relies primarily on gravity piped schemes to provide rural water services, but a study of completed schemes found their sustainability threatened by management problems. Poor technical support, oversights by commune governments, poor financial management and insufficient revenue, and poor maintenance and source protection due to a reliance on voluntary labour all caused issues. These are not easy problems to address. Other programmes in Madagascar and elsewhere in Africa have tried delegated management models

using private operators, which WaterAid should consider as a possible solution.

Findings: effectiveness

The country strategy appears generally effective in achieving progress toward the 2015 goals. An example is the Diorano-WASH committees, which WaterAid has championed. Stakeholders have expressed their appreciation for the role which these committees have played in promoting sector coordination among WASH partners. Furthermore, Diorano-WASH has been an excellent mechanism to raise the profile and cement the reputation of WaterAid Madagascar in the sector, in line with the global aim of being an organisation which lives its values. Another example is sanitation marketing, where local demand for sanitation facilities has increased due to a combination of research on appropriate technology, hygiene and sanitation promotion, and partnerships with local entrepreneurs.

Open defecation has been reduced through CLTS, but some operational issues concerning this approach remain. WaterAid has found CLTS to be successful in rural areas. However, the experience in urban areas and small towns has been that people do not react well to the campaigns based on public shaming. In rural areas, some partners have required villages to achieve a certain level of latrine coverage before construction of the water infrastructure begins.

WaterAid currently implements a basic MUS approach, with limited scope for increasing the productive use of water. At 20 litres per capita per day, the WaterAid Madagascar rural schemes provide the minimum amount of water necessary for multiple uses; any less and the water would be sufficient for domestic uses only. The MUS approach at an intermediate or high level requires 50-200 litres per capita per day. Therefore, WaterAid Madagascar has limited scope for encouraging economic uses of

water, which is one of the country programme's 2015 targets. There may be potential to increase the productive use of water from traditional sources through improved planning. Another option would be to change the design of rural piped schemes to increase the volume of water supplied, and to make the water for accessible for productive purposes (eg, on-premise connections or livestock connections).

Information management is the weak point in an otherwise impressive knowledge management and research component. The national programme has produced many fine resources. The system used to manage this information needs to be updated, so that users can search by tags, and so that the public can easily access online the final products.

Conclusion

The findings suggest that WaterAid should review its options in regard to a number of issues. For example: to what degree should selection criteria target the poorest and neediest? Do private operators have a role to play in the management of rural piped schemes? Should a certain level of latrine coverage be prerequisite for starting water scheme construction? Should more water be provided for productive uses? How can WaterAid make its knowledge products more accessible?



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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