



## **WaterAid Nepal: Country Programme Evaluation**

### **Draft Final Report**

Submitted by

**WEDC**

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**For WATERAID UK**



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## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction and background**

This evaluation of WaterAid's country programme in Nepal was carried out in January 2012 by a team of three external consultants and one staff member from WaterAid Nepal (WAN). The evaluation focused on the relevance and effectiveness of the country programme in relation to the national context and strategic priorities as identified in the Country Strategy 2010-2015.

Nepal has a predominantly rural population amounting to 86% of the total, although urban growth is high at 4.7% per year according to current estimates. The national coverage figures for water supply are: urban 93% and rural 87%. For sanitation the values are much lower at 51% for urban and 27% for rural. Whilst there has been a notable reduction in open defecation since 1990, it is still practiced by 53% of the total population. WaterAid's service delivery programme is poverty-focused in its selection of villages in 9 districts in the rural Tarai and rural hills. The urban programme has 14 projects spanning 12 municipalities during 2011-14.

One of the most significant recent advances in the WASH sector in Nepal is the establishment of the Joint Sector Review (JSR) in 2010-11 as a forum for performance assessment, policy guidance and developing a coherent approach to planning and budgeting.

### **Approach and Methodology**

The aims of this evaluation are

- to focus on the high-level aspects of relevance and effectiveness in accordance with WaterAid's policy for Country Programme Evaluation and the OECD DAC evaluation framework; and
- to be forward-looking, drawing out lessons to advise future directions and approaches for the WAN programme

Sustainability is incorporated as a component of effectiveness.

The main sources of primary data were: internal and external documents; key informants in WAN, Government, bilateral and multilateral agencies, partner NGOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs); observation and interviews with key informants and service users of systems and facilities supported by WAN in Kathmandu (Narayan tole), Lalitpur (Siddhipur), Chitwan (Sukranagar), Ghorka (Ghyakchowk), Siraha (Fulbariya and Brahmha Gauchari) and Sunsari (Ithari) districts. The degree of participation and involvement by WAN staff was good. A half-day briefing workshop at the start of the evaluation enabled stakeholders to give their views on current "big issues" in the sector; WAN Programme Managers to outline their strategy; and the evaluation team leader to explain the approach adopted for the evaluation.

### **Evaluation Findings**

#### ***Relevance of WAN Country Programme***

Overall, the relevance of WAN's country programme is rated as good. Particular strengths are the overall positioning of WAN and its contribution to developing the Joint Sector Review. Targeting of rural programmes is very good, both geographically in

terms of identifying poor Village Development Committees (VDCs) and ensuring inclusion of vulnerable groups. Service delivery is consistent with national sector policy and strategy. Whilst evidence-based analytical advocacy is strong, there is greater potential for future 'advocacy in alliance' than is currently being realised.

The most serious constraint to be addressed is the lack of working in partnership with other key sector actors; WAN is currently 'going it alone' in important areas of policy advocacy, research and publication. Whilst this assists delivery against targets, WAN's work in these areas could have far more impact by working more closely with other interested parties on issues of mutual concern to themselves and to the sector as a whole.

### ***Effectiveness of WAN Country Programme***

Overall, the effectiveness of the WAN's country programme is also rated as good. The quality of rural service delivery through NEWAH is excellent, both in terms of process and construction. NEWAH has fostered good relationships with government. Urban service delivery, whilst of good quality, needs more technical support for implementation. The urban programme would benefit from a strategic review of its various strands, focusing on the synergy between them, as these currently appear to be somewhat disparate. The rights-based approach is a new area where WAN has been influential and is working with relevant partners in rural areas; further capacity building is needed. WAN has been effective in influencing changes to policy and practice, through work with the JSR nationally and locally, where NEWAH's integrated approach to water, sanitation and hygiene is widely recognised and local budget advocacy has had some success.

WAN/NEWAH's approach to sustainability is very good and judged to be an appropriate balance between maintaining a presence post-implementation whilst not being perceived to be taking over the role of government, even though lack of government capacity is a serious constraint. Organisational learning and research would be more effective if WAN worked more closely with other actors in the sector. Partners wish to see greater acknowledgement of joint work. A particular problem, possibly not of WAN's making, is that partners feel their effectiveness is constrained by ever-changing and more onerous reporting requirements from WaterAid.

### **Recommendations**

**Recommendation 1: collaborate more closely with government and international partners.** This is the most important recommendation to ensure that WAN has a greater overall impact and better serves the national WASH sector. WAN needs to establish substantive medium to long-term working relationships with other external actors and be proactive in taking its own initiatives to these partners to work together.

**Recommendation 2: situate WAN's advocacy work more clearly within the national WASH sector.** WAN has a good reputation for evidence-based analytical advocacy and there is greater potential for future 'advocacy in alliance' than is currently being realised. WAN can identify strategic allies to work with on key issues whilst retaining individual work on new issues. Maintain the clear distinction between awareness raising and analytically-based advocacy.

**Recommendation 3: review the urban strategy.** Review an appropriate level of activity in the urban sector and how to select localities and partners. Review the current NGO partners to ensure added value to the main programme, particularly in relation to small research-related initiatives. Consider whether to bring the urban and rural programmes together under a single programme for Service Delivery to ensure better alignment with advocacy and partnerships.

**Recommendation 4: further develop WAN's analytical work to improve programming.** WAN can add further value to the sector by investigating the efficiency of WAN service delivery partners with the view to establishing benchmarks for future working and modalities of service delivery; with partners, consider developing a concept of 'total quality' to guide future programme work.

**Recommendation 5: increase the focus on the relevance and visibility of partner capacity building.** Establish a clear focal point for capacity building within WAN, with an outline strategy that ensures additional skills required by new WAN approaches in rights-based approaches, advocacy equity and inclusion are covered as these may not be delivered by 'traditional' WASH training providers.

**Recommendation 6: increase WAN's influence on sector practice whilst remaining aware of partners' constraints.** Build on WAN's excellent publications through reviewing the dissemination of learning to partners concerning implementation and new issues to ensure that learning reaches down. Go for more joint branding of publications with both NGO partners and external agencies, drawing more on other organisations' data in addition to WAN's. Ensure that partners concerns about onerous reporting requirements are addressed.