

WaterAid Uganda Country Programme Strategy 2023–2028



**Catalysing collective efforts
to transform lives through
sustainable and safe WASH**





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● HCFs – A nurse stands in front of an incinerator.



● A girl gets ready to walk 30 minutes to a nearby water hole on a dry seabed.



Acronyms

ADF	Allied Democratic Front
COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease-19
CP	Country Program
DPs	Development Partners
DRC	Democratic republic of Congo
DWO	District Water Officer
DWRM	Directorate of Water Resource Management.
ERN	Environment & Natural Resources
HCD	Human Capital development
HWF	Handwashing Facility
INGOs	International Non-Government Organizations
JMP	Joint Monitoring Programme
KCCA	Kampala Capital City Authority
KI	Key Informant
KII	Key Informant Interview
M23	March 23 Movement (Congolesse Revolutionary Army)
MHM	Menstrual hygiene management
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoGLSD	Ministry of Gender Labor Social Development
MWE	Ministry of Water and Environment
NEMA	National Environment Management Authority
NDP III	National Development Plan III
NGOs	Non-Government Organizations
NWSC	National Water and Sewerage Corporation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
WMZ	Water Management Zones
UBOS	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UWASNET	Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WAU	WaterAid Uganda

● A nurse fetches water for the maternity wing from a newly installed water harvesting tank



Executive summary

Millions of Ugandans are still suffering from the health impacts of poor sanitation and hygiene. Millions more still live without sustainable access to safe water or are threatened by floods, droughts, landslides and other climate-related hazards.

Without water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) of sufficient quantity and quality, many Ugandans will continue to suffer from poverty and disease, food and energy insecurity, and reduced economic growth.

Sustainable Development Goal 6 sets out a fundamental ambition that not only underpins the achievement of other Sustainable Development Goals but also echoes WaterAid's own vision – a world where everyone, everywhere has sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Whilst continuing towards this vision, WaterAid Uganda also recognises the significant changes and challenges in global, national and local contexts since our last strategy. These include the heightened impact of climate change, shifts in the donor landscape, rapid urbanisation, refugee influx, high population growth, the COVID-19 pandemic and the global economic crisis, to name just a few.

Drawing from these changes, our new Country Programme Strategy 2023-2028 has been developed around two aims:

- **Aim 1:** Position WASH across the health sector to improve public health.
- **Aim 2:** Strengthen the resilience of WASH to climate change.

This strategic approach is anchored by WaterAid Uganda's four decades of experience in the country. We will use a system strengthening approach to tackle identified barriers to sustained universal access to WASH. This will include:

- Building partnerships and alliances.
- Generating evidence for learning and innovation.
- Advocacy and influencing to scale up good practices.

The participation of women and girls, young people and people with disabilities will be central to ensuring the inclusion of those living with marginalisation.

Advancing universal access to WASH by 2028 in Uganda is possible and we will use all of our resources, energy and passion to act as an influencer towards this outcome. It will require WaterAid Uganda to play multiple roles in which we shall continuously learn and generate evidence to catalyse action and innovation. WaterAid Uganda will at times lead and at other times convene. We will invest in others through financial support and develop capacity through collaboration and partnerships.

WaterAid Uganda's new strategy will invest in mobilising the resources necessary to achieving our aims, guided by the principles of results-based management. We will build on the strengths and potential of our people and engage those passionate about driving and delivering our vision.



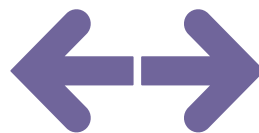
WaterAid Uganda's Country Strategy at a glance



A Uganda where everyone, everywhere has sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene

Aim 1

Prioritise WASH across the health sector to improve public health



Aim 2

Strengthen the resilience of WASH climate change



Role

- Convene and facilitate
- Catalyse change
- Innovate and adapt
- Learn and generate evidence
- Demonstrate models



Approach

Overarching approaches

- Systems strengthening

Cross cutting approaches

- Partnerships and alliances
- Advocacy and influencing
- Gender equality and youth empowerment
- Evidence, learning and innovation
- Modelling service delivery
- Behaviour centered design

By 2028

our ambition through our work is to see:

5 million

more people with sustainable and safe WASH.

Two times

more funding mobilised by the CP.

Introduction

Access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is crucial to human health and wellbeing. It also contributes to livelihoods, school attendance and dignity, and helps to create resilient communities living in healthy environments.¹

Informed by the critical gap in access to these vital WASH services in Uganda, and in line with WaterAid's ten-year Global Strategy (2022-2032), WaterAid Uganda has embarked on its new Country Programme Strategy (2023-2028). It builds on the achievements of our previous strategy, leveraging the experience we have gained over four decades of catalysing collective efforts towards sustainable and safe WASH, and supporting and influencing service providers and government authorities to transform lives.

Our new strategy has taken shape in a period of global changes, with new and emerging challenges that require adaptation and changes in the way we work. We are witnessing significant shifts in patterns of poverty, inequalities and climate change. Despite the country's progress in increasing access to sustainable WASH, wide gaps persist both between and within districts.

The purpose of our new strategy is to clarify, both internally and externally, how we will contribute to increasing sustainable access to WASH and eliminating inequalities. This includes focusing our resources, capacity and experience to maximise our impact, and will contribute to our ambition of mobilising US \$100 million and seeing five million more people reached with sustainable and safe WASH in Uganda.

During our strategic period 2023-2028, WaterAid Uganda will focus on two aims:

- **Aim 1:** Position WASH across the health sector to improve public health.
- **Aim 2:** Strengthen the resilience of WASH to climate change.

Through this targeted focus we want to see increased financing and universal access to WASH. These aims will be our entry points for contributing towards the Government of Uganda's vision of transforming the country into a modern and prosperous society by 2040.

Our vision

A world where everyone everywhere has sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Our mission

Transform lives through sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

Our values

Our values define our culture and unite us across the many countries in which we work. They are at the very heart of WaterAid – who we are, what we do and how we do it.

- **Respect:** We treat everyone with dignity and respect, and champion the rights and contribution of all to achieve a fairer world.
- **Accountability:** We are accountable to those we work with and to those who support us.
- **Courage:** We are bold and inspiring in our actions and words, and uncompromising in our determination to pursue our mission.
- **Collaboration:** We work with others to maximise our impact, embracing diversity and difference in the pursuit of common goals.
- **Innovation:** We are creative and agile, always learning, and prepared to take risks to accelerate change.
- **Integrity:** We act with honesty and conviction, and our actions are consistent with openness, equality and human rights.

The situation

Geography and politics

Uganda occupies an area of 241,038 km², with water bodies and wetlands covering approximately a third of its total area. The average temperature ranges from 18-28°C. The country has an annual population growth rate of 3.2% and is projected to grow from 43.4 million to 93.4 million people by 2040.²

Of the current population, an estimated 75% are under 30 years old, giving Uganda one of the youngest populations in the world. There are an estimated 97 males per 100 females. Seventy three percent of the population is still predominantly rural.

Economy

Uganda's economy is largely based on agriculture which employs 66% of the working population and contributes to nearly one fifth of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).³ The economy is liberalised, with several ongoing reforms involving active participation of the private sector and civil society organisations.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ugandan economy grew faster than anticipated – 4.6% during the fiscal year 2022. However, public debt has increased to above 50% of GDP, with external debt repayments comprising 36.12% of the total budget of UGX 48.3 trillion.

WASH in Uganda

The WASH sector in Uganda is highly dependent on donor support. Over the last decade there has been a staggering budget reduction by development partners – from over US \$800 million to less than US \$100 million – and a shift to project financing.

Access to WASH has stagnated and, according to the 2020 Joint Monitoring Programme report, households' access to basic service levels for drinking water, sanitation and hygiene remained at 56%, 20% and 23% respectively.⁴ Gains in water supply coverage are unevenly spread and water quality is not assured. Water scarcity is a growing problem and access to basic sanitation is even worse.

Poor sanitation coverage is exacerbated by 5% of the population still practising open defecation. This contributes to the country's disease burden, with diarrhoea killing an estimated 33 children every day.⁵



● **Climate Change –**
A woman fetches water from
an unsafe water source.





WASH and health

Health is an important determinant of economic development in Uganda. It is underpinned by levels of income, education, housing conditions, access to safe water and sanitation, cultural beliefs, social behaviour and access to quality health services. A healthy population means higher productivity, and the importance of human capital to economic growth cannot be over emphasised because it serves as a catalyst for economic development.

However, a 2021 Joint Monitoring Programme report into healthcare facilities found that:

- Over half (53%) had limited or no water service and 76% had no hygiene services.
- About one third of facilities lacked a continuous water supply.
- Nearly three quarters (74%) had hand hygiene facilities at points of care, but only a quarter (24%) had handwashing facilities at the toilet.⁶

Another study, carried out in 2019 in the Greater Kampala Metropolitan area, revealed that:

- 48.1% of healthcare facilities had a limited water service.
- 85.2% had limited sanitation services.
- 57.4% had limited hand hygiene services.⁷

Lack of WASH infrastructure, coupled with unsafe hygiene practices, puts mothers who give birth in healthcare facilities, and their newborns, at higher risk of healthcare-associated infections and this risk increases if a Caesarean section is required.⁸

Malnutrition and poor WASH access are among the top risk factors for mortality and morbidity in Uganda.⁹ With 75% of the disease burden in the country being preventable through health promotion and disease prevention, the integration of hygiene behaviour change into core public health programmes and policies is critical.¹⁰ Infants, under-fives and maternal mortality rates reduced from 2010 to 2020, dropping from 59 to 39 and 82 to 53 deaths per 1,000 and 336 deaths per 100,000 live birth respectively.¹¹ However, they still fall short of meeting Sustainable Development Goal targets. Progress in reducing neglected tropical diseases is also challenged by the need for more community-enhanced behaviour change.

WASH and climate change

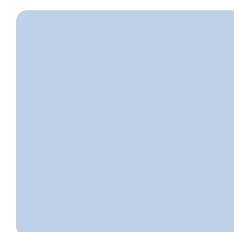
Uganda has committed to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change. To comply with Article 4 of the Paris Agreement, in 2022 Uganda updated its Nationally Determined Contribution that sets mitigation and adaptation targets related to climate change. The Nationally Determined Contributions pay special attention to the impacts of climate change on the water sector and water-related services, sanitation and faecal sludge management and hygiene practices.

Drought, flooding, landslides, land degradation, water pollution and water over-exploitation are climate change hazards that affect WASH services and are therefore prioritised by the Ministry of Water and Environment. Specific population groups particularly women and children are exposed to multiple hazards, thus more vulnerable as time is used to fetch water hence not only miss school or work but are exposed to risks including attacks and gender-based violence.

More than 80% of Ugandans rely on pit latrines that are prone to collapse. Therefore, increasing the resilience of infrastructure is crucial for adaptation to increased flooding and other climate-related hazards. According to the Ministry of Water and Environment, such hazards caused losses to WASH services estimated at UGX 23.8 billion between 2019 and 2020.¹²

The impacts of climate change have resulted in:

- Reduced rural water supplies
- Polluted wells
- Inaccessible water sources
- Flooded and collapsed latrines
- Damage to infrastructure
- Landslides around water sources
- Sedimentation
- Turbidity
- Challenges to hygiene



Increased flooding is likely to lead to an upsurge in diarrhoeal diseases, including Cholera epidemics. This occurred in Mbale, Bulambuli and Butaleja in 2017, where such outbreaks were responsible for 17% of the deaths of children under five years of age.¹³ According to the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, Uganda is ranked as the tenth most vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change and 35th least prepared for climate change effects.¹⁴

Government WASH approach

The Government's 'Uganda Vision 2040' provides a long term development framework under which a series of medium-term National Development Plans will be delivered. National Development Plan III hinges on a programme-based approach, rather than on sectors and Ministries, Departments and Agencies.

Under the National Development Plan III WASH sits under the Human Capital Development programme which also covers education and health and is coordinated by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development is spearheading other WASH-related aspects such as community mobilisation, mindset change, social protection, gender mainstreaming, vulnerability and inclusion.

The programme approach requires a high level of coordination between institutions, ministries, local government and stakeholders at all levels. There are a number of barriers to realising WASH ambitions, including:

- Ineffective planning and budgeting
- Institutional weaknesses
- Poor coordination
- Weak governance
- Reducing trends in funding
- Capacity development issues

Sustainability also poses increasing threats to WASH systems due to limited resource prioritisation for operations and maintenance.

The broader WASH context, from climate change and environmental protection to health outcomes, has inspired WaterAid Uganda's strategic ambition. We know success will require strong lateral and vertical coordination. Our new Country Programme Strategy 2023-2028 aims to significantly contribute to reducing the disease burden in the country by improving access to climate-resilient WASH services. This will require us to tackle systemic barriers to realising sustainable services for all.



● The Kampala Metropolitan Mayor's Forum

Our role

Over the past 40 years, WaterAid Uganda and its partners have transformed the lives of millions of people by bringing clean water, decent toilets and hygiene closer to them. We have cultivated a niche as a development organisation that advocates for the rights to WASH of people living in poverty and marginalisation, with a special focus on women and girls.

Now, we seek to catalyse change that will deliver these essentials to tens of millions more people. Together with our partners and supporters, we will work with determination towards the day when our work is no longer needed. The following sets out how we intend to achieve our aims.

Convene and facilitate

WaterAid Uganda will continue to be a driving force, bringing together state and non-state actors to influence and effect change through collective leadership. Our convening role will be reflected through our partnerships and networks, leveraging their mandate to influence policy processes. We will continue to strengthen our work with state actors who have significant power and influence.

We will continue with existing forums and identify new power centres to strengthen the political will and technical capacity for inter-agency cooperation. We will promote the development of actionable policies for sustainable WASH intervention at all levels.

Similarly, we will continue to amplify our role with non-state actors such as WASH development partners and the Agenda for Change partnership (a collaboration of like-minded organisations that advocate for strengthening WASH systems for sustainable, universal access to WASH). To strengthen our focus, we will collaborate with other organisations and the private sector, especially those working with women and girls, young people and people with disabilities.



● Training local communities: Members of staff facilitating data entry training

We will act as a convener, brokering relationships and forging partnerships to strengthen sector networks. We will build bridges between sectors and draw in new actors from outside the traditional WASH sector such as corporate organisations, young people and academia.

Catalyse change

WaterAid Uganda has, in the past, advocated for improved access to WASH in communities, schools, healthcare and public facilities. In this strategy, we shall, with courage, step into the arena of climate-resilient WASH. We will catalyse and foster strong national and sub-national cross-sectoral working groups to ensure that all WASH efforts align with and strengthen government health efforts. The Water Resource Institute, established with the direct support of WaterAid Uganda, has already catalysed the sector to convene and learn.

To be able to deliver this strategy, we will need to sustain our efforts and investments effectively, especially those affecting women and girls. We will need to bring on board new players, such as the private sector and young people, in order to scale up. With the understanding that women and girls are at the forefront of WASH poverty exacerbated by climate change, WaterAid Uganda will influence change in societal norms and stereotypes that limit their rights to WASH.

Innovate and adapt

Uganda is a rapidly changing country in a dynamic region. WaterAid Uganda will continue to seek to understand where the momentum for change lies and maximise new opportunities. We will be courageous and take informed risks to leverage new possibilities, with a focus on the private sector and young people.

WaterAid Uganda has been a pioneer in advancing replicable WASH facility innovations, including female friendly toilets, adaptive management models and approaches that drive sustainable WASH service delivery. For example, the Women in WASH Mentorship Programme, conceived by WaterAid Uganda and the Water Resources Institute, has been adopted by Agenda for Change for their global platform. We intend to continue this trajectory, creatively seeking new solutions to making WASH services climate-resilient and fully integrated into public health delivery, to accelerate progress towards universal access. With the rapidly shifting context, we will work in ways that allow us to be flexible. Through adaptive planning and management we can respond to the uncertainties of today's complex world, including emergencies as they arise.

- Working together to install the Poldaw PVC riser system in a hand pump



Learn and generate evidence

WaterAid Uganda will continue to focus on packaging and using evidence generated through research. We will communicate this evidence-based knowledge and learning in compelling ways to influence changes in policy and practice. We will demonstrate replicable models and approaches to policy holders for uptake and scale-up.

We will learn from our own experiences and the work of others, pursuing an impactful research agenda and facilitating wider sector knowledge management. We have conducted various research projects in the past, including UPGro – a longitudinal study that focused on unlocking the potential of ground water for people living in poverty. It aimed to build a robust, credible body of research on groundwater supply failure and recommended changing from galvanised iron to PVC (polyvinyl chloride) and stainless steel pipes. We also researched and reported on the assessment of the Status of WASH in Health Care Facilities.¹⁵ WaterAid Uganda used these studies to influence development of the Handpump materials guidelines, National WASH in healthcare facilities guidelines, and micro-planning guidelines that have been rolled out and used by healthcare facilities to plan for WASH.

WaterAid Uganda will maximise new technology and social media trends to develop real-time learning systems. We will also systematically evaluate programme themes to inform sector practices, set our future direction and demonstrate impact.





● A sanitation worker poses for a photo in a toilet within a healthcentre facility.

WaterAid/James Kiyimba

Our aims

WaterAid Uganda recognises the significant changes that have taken place in global, national and local contexts since our last strategy. These include the heightened impact of climate change, shifts in the donor landscape, rapid urbanisation, refugee influx, high population growth, and the COVID-19 pandemic with its far-reaching socio-economic impacts, including gender-based violence and teenage pregnancy.

Drawing from these changes, our new strategy has been developed around two main aims:

- **Aim 1:** Position WASH across the health sector to improve public health.
- **Aim 2:** Strengthen the resilience of WASH services to climate change.

These aims will contribute towards our global ambition of seeing 400 million more people with sustainable and safe WASH by 2032. For our new strategy, the geographical focus will include current areas of operation in Eastern and Central Uganda. We will focus on a few districts to demonstrate models, strengthen capacity and use these examples to influence government policy and scale-up best practices. We will focus on other areas where needs are greatest, with the aim of making significant improvements in the health, education and economic opportunities available to women and girls and people with disabilities. The choice of our geographical focus is informed by different levels of exclusion to WASH access, and vulnerabilities to climate change.



Aim 1: Position WASH across the health sector to improve public health

● A nurse offering a mother a cup of water from a newly installed water purifier in the maternity wing.

Why this aim?

Access to sustainable and safe WASH in healthcare facilities, schools and communities is fundamental to improving health outcomes, providing quality care and preventing avoidable deaths. If frontline healthcare workers are unable to access WASH facilities and prevent infections, their capacity to deliver safe, effective and dignified care is undermined.

Recognising that over 90% of health workers are women and 70% of nurses are women, our strategy will amplify WASH in healthcare facilities as a women's rights and safety issue. Workers in healthcare facilities need sufficient quantities of safe water to provide quality maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health services for the women, girls and people with disabilities in our target districts. Communities without sustained universal WASH services will continue to suffer from preventable water-related diseases. Integrating hygiene behaviour change into core public health programmes and policies to tackle public health disease burden will be central to our contribution to the Human Capital Development programme in National Development Plan III.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we witnessed healthcare systems in Uganda struggle to cope with secondary impacts, including an upsurge in teenage pregnancies. The plight of healthcare facilities that had major gaps in availability of WASH services was alarming. Yet these are the most basic requirements for providing the safe, quality and dignified healthcare that everyone deserves.

Healthcare facilities without proper sanitation, including toilets and waste disposal, spread diseases instead of preventing them. Without the health sector prioritising universal, safe and sustainable WASH, both in the health system and as a national development priority, progress on public health will not be possible.

Communities, markets and schools need access to WASH to keep people safe, prevent and control infections, protect mothers and babies during childbirth, curb the rise of antimicrobial resistance, and protect us all from future health crises.

How will we achieve it?

WaterAid Uganda will prioritise strengthening health systems and influencing the Government to prioritise WASH across the health sector in order to improve public health. This is in response to the Government's shift in directive from curative to preventative healthcare that is yet to be operationalised at policy level, despite the political will. As such, our ongoing interventions within healthcare facilities, including the development and rollout of the WASH in healthcare facilities guidelines, provides us with a vantage point from which to enforce the Government's directive.

We will work in partnership with the Ministry of Health as they strengthen their mandate of preventative health promotion.

We will:

- **Generate evidence to advocate for adequate budgets for WASH in public health and promote ownership and responsibility for WASH.** We will influence leadership and others to measure the value of safe and inclusive WASH, and promote its uptake and use to prioritise equitable budgetary allocations. Such financing will include regular operations and maintenance of WASH infrastructure and capacity building for healthcare providers. This shift will support communities to hold health and WASH duty bearers to account for progress on WASH in healthcare facilities service delivery.
- **Integrate hygiene behaviour change into core public health programmes and policies.** We will work with the Government to design, integrate and implement inclusive and effective hygiene behaviour change interventions into existing health programmes, including the Uganda National Expanded Programme on Immunisation, and to respond to major outbreaks such as COVID-19, Ebola and Cholera. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, we will map entry points for WASH, within existing and prospective public health programmes by the Government. The shift and focus will be away from designing general behaviour change messages and campaigns, to those that are context specific. This will be through a creative process based on evidence generated through formative research for the purpose of local ownership.
- **Enhance service levels to deliver inclusive WASH in public healthcare facilities in a bid to improve the quality of care.** Learning from our previous strategies has shown that modelling WASH in healthcare facilities, schools and public places goes beyond infrastructure setup. It also include facilities improvement and hygiene behaviour change that meets the needs of women and girls and people with disabilities. In this strategy, we will look across the entire system to demonstrate and model inclusive and sustainable services, monitoring, operations and maintenance, strengthened planning and budgeting, training, and formative research that leads to strong, sustained behaviour change.
- **Champion effective coordination among donor partners and state and non-state actors in WASH within public health.** We will leverage our decades of WASH experience in advocacy and service delivery to broker relationships that will promote coordination, strengthen capacities, target increased funding and address inequalities.

WaterAid Uganda aspires to see all of these efforts scaled up and adopted by more partners working on WASH and health.

Outcomes

- Healthcare facilities have adequate access to sustainable, inclusive and basic WASH services that are gender-responsive and meet national targets.
- Inclusive and effective hygiene behaviour change interventions are integrated into core public health programmes to achieve sustained changes across critical hygiene behaviours.
- WASH is prioritised in national health development plans, strategies and budgets.



Aim 2: Strengthen the resilience of WASH to climate change

● A member of staff examines the effects of human activity on the environment

Why this aim?

Uganda continues to be exposed to the impacts of climate change and increased climate variability. The country is experiencing increasing environmental degradation. Increased demand for water due to low rainfall and drought is causing water sources (including boreholes and springs) to dry up and is affecting the quantity, quality and availability of water. Conversely, heavy rainfall and flooding, especially around the mountainous regions of Elgon and Rwenzori have, over the years, damaged water sources and sanitation facilities. Runoff and waste ends up in streams and lakes, contaminating water supply sources, especially in the lowlands. Water scarcity due to climate change, and the resulting increase in water costs, are leading to inequitable access. This deprives households of opportunities to collect the safe water needed for proper hand-washing and hygiene, it limits children's ability to grow up healthy and strong, and it hinders the achievement of universal, sustainable and safe WASH.

How will we achieve it?

WaterAid Uganda piloted the Strengthening Resilience Initiatives for Vulnerable Entities (STRIVE) project in partnership with the Ministry of Water and Environment to better understand the integration of WASH into projects focused on climate change. In this strategy we will build on what we have learnt to strengthen the resilience of WASH services so that communities can cope with existing and future climate threats and maintain water security, access sanitation services and follow good hygiene practices.

We will:

- **Influence and advocate for climate-resilient WASH to be integrated into climate change policies and plans.** We will support the Government to use its 'whole society' approach to create awareness, and design active policies that inform and guide climate-resilient WASH strategies, guidelines and standards for strengthening the operational environment. We will also support the Government to strengthen its systems of data collection and generate evidence to advocate for the integration of WASH into environmental and climate change-related policies and strategies, such as the National Adaptation Plans and Nationally Determined Contributions.
- **Support communities to ensure WASH services and behaviours are resilient to climate change.** Our work on climate resilience will be guided by the principles of locally-led adaptation actions. These emphasise empowerment of local stakeholders to have a strong voice in the design of appropriate adaptation strategies and technology that will be demonstrated and scaled up. We will ensure that these adaptation actions are inclusive, to meet the WASH needs of those most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, particularly women and girls whose gender norm-associated household chores, such as collecting water, have been greatly affected.

Our climate resilient WASH work will be informed by context-specific participatory assessments of the hazards, vulnerabilities and barriers within WASH systems that impact water security, sanitation and hygiene.

- **Influence allocations and investment of sufficient funding from the Government, donor partners and the private sector for climate-resilient WASH programming.** We will support local government to develop costed WASH investment plans. We will influence service providers to understand and budget for additional costs associated with climate adaptation that will help attract additional WASH investment to districts.

Outcomes

- Climate-resilient WASH is integrated into climate change policies and plans.
- Strengthened climate-resilient WASH services and behaviour.
- Adequate funding for climate-resilient WASH programming is available from the Government and donors.



- **A trained local mason, constructing a rainwater harvesting tank.**



● A girl gets ready to make a trip to a nearby waterhole.

Our approach

To achieve our ambitious goals, WaterAid Uganda's core approach has five key aspects that cut across our aims and detail the ways we will work to drive change and bring our vision to life.

Our theory to making change happen

We believe that advancing towards universal access to WASH in Uganda by 2028 is possible through collaborative efforts and strengthened systems. WaterAid Uganda will influence, lead, catalyse action and innovate. We will invest in others through financial support and capacity development. We will collaborate and add weight to partnerships and initiatives.

Systems strengthening for sustained service delivery

Systems strengthening is our overarching approach. It requires detailed analysis of system barriers, working through collective action that uses coordinated tactics at multiple levels, and long term commitment from the Government. WaterAid Uganda is already implementing a systems strengthening approach through the Sustainable WASH project, tackling different building blocks for sustainability that include:

- Government leadership
- Effective coordination and integration
- Institutional arrangements
- Strategic planning
- Gender and social inclusion
- Active, empowered people and communities
- Monitoring, financing, accountability and regulation
- Effective delivery of services and behaviour change
- Environment and water resources management



● A school girl washing her hands

To ensure that the Government remains in the driving seat, we will be working in partnership with city, municipality and district authorities, mayors and local council leaders, to strengthen government leadership, coordination and accountability. We also work with local civil society organisations to raise the voices of community members living with marginalisation to demand WASH improvements through participatory budget advocacy. We will continue to demonstrate climate-resilient service delivery models in selected communities, schools and healthcare facilities.

To maximise the impact of WASH interventions, we will ensure they are coordinated and integrated into government plans and other ongoing development efforts, such as health (maternal, neonatal and child health, immunisation, neglected tropical diseases), nutrition and education programmes.

Partnerships and alliances

Working with partners and alliances has always been at the heart of everything WaterAid Uganda does. The achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 6 will only be possible through collective action and leveraging the strengths of different actors. We will continue to build these relationships, developed over the years, to work together towards our shared goals.

This strategy will see more of our activity shift to leveraging what we do to drive change with others, with outcomes less attributable solely to us. We will be more ambitious in our long-standing engagement with the Government, communities, civil society, the private sector, academia and organisations for women, young people and people with disabilities, so that we can maximise complementary strengths.

Our approach will shift from working primarily with the Government to forging new engagements with the private sector, in recognition of its increasing role in improving WASH access. Our focus will be on large, medium and small-scale private enterprises to deliver improved services, strengthen capacity and advocate for access to WASH.

For example, private sector contributions to global commemorative days, such as Global Handwashing Day or World Water Day, offer companies a way to be socially responsible while still advertising their products to increase product sales and profits – the bottom line for most private sector partners. Our collaborations with the private sector will range from utilities, sanitation marketing entrepreneurs, spare part suppliers, masons, artisans working on sanitation and pit emptiers, to large multinational companies and investors.

Advocacy and influencing

It is essential to have strong institutions with adequate capacity and resources to deliver and sustain high-quality WASH interventions and reinforce behaviours over time. WaterAid Uganda will support the capacity of these institutions by boosting planning and budgeting processes, supporting innovative management models, improving service delivery, conducting policy research, lobbying and advocating for engagement, and empowering others to position WASH issues more effectively. This will be done by influencing decision makers at local, national, regional and global levels to accelerate change and to make a global case for investment in WASH.



Gender equality and youth empowerment

WaterAid Uganda believes that promoting gender equality and empowering women and girls is one of the most effective approaches to achieving universal access to WASH services. We will continue to work together, focusing on women and girls and those living with marginalisation, to demand and realise their rights to WASH. We will advance gender equality in WASH across all of our work, using a gender-responsive approach that targets changes in norms and systems that reduce women's unpaid WASH labour and care burdens. Pivotal to our work will be supporting the development and implementation of gender-responsive WASH policies, budgets and strategies for all WASH actors, including the Government and public and private sector service providers.

Also key to our work will be promoting and amplifying leadership and decision making by women and girls (in all their diversity), and building on our leadership in menstrual health and hygiene at all levels. We will work with local and national government to ensure that violence against women in WASH is an issue recognised in policies and guidance, and that actions are planned for the WASH sector as a whole. We will specifically engage young people in a manner that is productive and constructive through positive youth development approaches within communities, schools, organisations, peer groups and families. We recognise young people as assets, allies and agents of change who have much to contribute to solving the challenges within the WASH sector.

Evidence, learning and innovation

The foundations of WaterAid Uganda's work will be built on a detailed analysis of WASH systems at national and sub-national levels. We will invest in resources that generate evidence

through formative and action research. This will shape inclusive, affordable and replicable solutions for groups living with marginalisation, with a focus on women and girls, and inform hygiene intervention design and strategic government-led plans for all WASH interventions.

We will use what we have learnt from the successes and failures of our own water, sanitation and behaviour change programmes. With our partners, we will innovate new and adapted service models and technical solutions, drawing on the evidence of others and sharing this learning widely. Central to our work will be expanding our partnerships with knowledge based organisations, investing in innovation and filling data gaps, including those for WASH and new areas such as climate-resilient WASH. Most importantly, we will amplify our work with communities and collect evidence on best practices, and gender and WASH solutions, and share this knowledge so that others can model and replicate locally-led learning.

**A school girl
excited about new
WASH facilities at
her school**



● From left; Abigaba Rehema, 18 and Kyomuhangi Mariam, 16, members of school WASH club, after inspecting a burning chamber for disposing of used sanitary pads, Natete Muslim High School, Kampala, Uganda, November 2019.



KCA WaterAid
SINGLE-FLUSH 10-SPACE WATERBORNE TOILET
CONSTRUCTED BY: NATALIO USAMBA
PARTNERSHIP: KAMPALA CAPITAL CITY AUTHORITY
PROJECT: SUSAID
YEAR: 2019
Funded by: USAID Foundation

Resources

To effectively deliver our strategy, over the next five years WaterAid Uganda aims to increase its annual budget by 50%, to US \$15 million, and grow its multiskilled workforce. We will mobilise the necessary resources to achieve our aims through investment in partnerships.

In collaboration with WASH stakeholders, we will invest in our influencing work to see a 50% increase in WASH sector funding for the strategy period. We will use cross-cutting organisational programming capacity, with the right balance of skills and competencies, to ensure that results are delivered in the most effective and efficient manner. Our programming will be guided by results-based management principles. We will use our management systems to ensure that financial and human resources are fully focused on results, while monitoring and evaluation of results is used to develop and modify the design, resourcing and delivery of programmes.

We will build on the strengths and potential of our people, seeking to retain, attract, develop and engage with those who are passionate about driving and delivering our work. Our values will be at the forefront of all that we seek to do, and we will focus on the wellbeing of our people, transformational leadership and employee engagement at all levels. We will deploy the right people, in the right places, at the right time, and continuously support their development and learning.

We will develop costed, results-oriented, evidence-based programme plans that describe how we will finance our strategy. We will continue to secure funding for long term projects that will help strengthen the WASH financial sector in the nation's economy. We will be both ambitious and reasonable in our growth trajectory, to try to reach as many people with safe, accessible WASH as possible. We will encourage the private sector and corporate organisations to play a role in enhancing safe and accessible WASH. Our robust systems will be catalytic to enhancing our ways of working.



Collecting a water sample from a community tap for water quality testing.

In a climate changing world, effective collaboration and pooling resources among stakeholders has never been more important. We will seek out new partners across our work, especially in non-traditional areas that require our complementary skills, networks and capacity. We will develop collaborative methods that help to grow our skills and capacity alongside those known to be experts in their field. This will boost our people's competencies to deliver on our vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has sustainable and safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

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● Climate change – a few children take their rest near a water source.



WaterAid/Alex Busingye

● A nurse washes her hands before interacting with patients



**WaterAid is an international not-for-profit,
determined to make clean water, decent
toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone,
everywhere within a generation. Only by
tackling these three essentials in ways that
last can people change their lives for good.**

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