

**Achievements to date:**

- WaterAid has reached over 800,000 people in Nepal with its water, sanitation and hygiene programme
- Through a partnership with Radio Sagarmatha, WaterAid contributed to over 100 episodes of a discussion programme on water, sanitation and hygiene, raising awareness with the public and policy makers
- WaterAid held a rally in Kathmandu in support of the End Water Poverty campaign, and to date has collected 115,000 petition signatures

**£5** could pay for a bag of cement to produce a latrine slab

**£13** could pay for a health volunteer to train a community for one month

**£92** could pay to construct a tubewell

**£152** could pay to construct a composting latrine

**£1,154** could pay to build a school sanitation block for 200 children

**£11,538** could pay for a gravity flow scheme, bringing water to 100 households

**Buddhi Sipai** talks about his composting latrine in Thimee, Kathmandu



WaterAid/Marco Betti

“As I am a farmer, I have always worked with earth and we can now use everything. We mix up our household waste with compost from the toilet and use it for our plants. I use it to grow onion, coriander, carrots and radish – everything grows now! It all grows well and the taste is even better. Fertiliser helps them grow a lot but it has no taste. Using this compost takes more time but is healthier and tastier.

“I don’t want to urinate or go to the toilet anywhere else! I don’t even like to use other latrines – I only like to use my own. Now I can’t do without it at all! When I go to the river I worry as some people still go to the loo there. I hate that place now.”

Buddhi and his composting latrine also feature in our film *We are WaterAid*. Watch it online at [www.wateraid.org/video](http://www.wateraid.org/video)

**Kabita Neupane** collecting water in Neupane Gaun



WaterAid/Marco Betti

“I used to wake up early in the morning around 4am just to collect water. It was very dark then and I was always scared about slipping and falling down the hill. It used to take two hours for a round trip to collect the water – it was still dark when I came back and I used to get so tired and depressed then.

“When I heard that a waterpoint would be installed near to my house and that we’d be able to drink safe water, we were very happy. Now we are healthy, there are less illnesses and we get sick less often. Before I couldn’t feed my children on time, now I can cook and feed my children properly.”

# Nepal



Charlie Bibby/Financial Times

Nepal lies landlocked between India and China, with a dramatic landscape that reaches from the lowland plains of the Terai up to the peak of Everest in the Himalayas. Nepal is in a phase of political and social transition following a decade-long period of internal fighting. According to UN figures, the conflict left more than 12,000 people dead and 100,000 people displaced.

Although it is estimated that 89% of people have access to water, in hill areas distances to water sources are great. In the Terai, wells are often highly polluted and in many areas the quality of water is affected by the presence of arsenic. Just 27% of the population has access to sanitation, meaning diseases can be easily spread through unhygienic living environments. Every year diarrhoeal diseases kill 9,000 children in Nepal.



WaterAid transforms lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world’s poorest communities.



WaterAid, 47-49 Durham Street  
London, SE11 5JD

T: + 44 (0)20 7793 4594

E: [wateraid@wateraid.org](mailto:wateraid@wateraid.org)

[www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org)

Registered charity numbers 288701 (England and Wales) and SC039479 (Scotland)

November 2009

## WaterAid in Nepal



WaterAid began its water, sanitation and hygiene work in Nepal in 1987 and now works with seven partner organisations in the country. Our activities with them are vital as approximately a third of all deaths in Nepal are of children under five, and half of these are due to diarrhoea.

In rural areas our work with partner Nepal Water for Health has enabled almost 4% of the population to access water, sanitation and improved hygiene. Our urban work reaches those living in slum and squatter settlements in the Kathmandu valley and towns in the narrow strip of flat, fertile land along the Indian border of the Terai.

From the Terai, the landscape rises up into the steep foothills and mountains of the Himalayas. This demanding terrain determines methods used to ensure safe drinking water and improved sanitation. Latrine installation and access to a safe water source can be difficult and so we work closely with dispersed communities to find the best solutions for them.

In each environment technologies are chosen that are appropriate to local conditions, affordable and easy for communities to set up and maintain themselves.

### Water

In Nepal's capital Kathmandu, water tables are dropping. Traditional water sources that have served the city for years are drying up and the demand for water has increased as more and more people have moved to the city to escape the conflict or find work.

We work with our partners to install shallow tubewells and rehabilitate traditional wells and stone water spouts. These spouts, built hundreds of years ago, provide free water to the city and so are vital to the poorer residents. However, as they had fallen into

disrepair with questionable water quality, WaterAid has worked to restore them, and ensure they are maintained.

In hill areas projects use gravity flow systems where possible, enabling water to be transported by pipes from natural springs to tapstands placed near to homes.

### Sanitation

Sanitation coverage in Nepal is just 27%. This results in widespread disease as the majority of people do not have a latrine and have to defecate in the open. WaterAid works through partners to support communities in building a wide range of latrine options. Composting latrines are effective with farming communities, and in overcrowded areas community latrines, where ownership and maintenance is overseen by the local population, are a good solution.

### Hygiene

The third part of WaterAid's work with communities is improving hygiene. This ensures the health benefits of improved water and sanitation services are maximised. Water-related diseases are common in Nepal but for the majority of the population the causes of ill health are shrouded in superstition. Hand-washing is not common practice, with only 37% washing their hands with water, and 12% with soap at critical times.

One tool used to successfully promote improved hygiene practices are hygiene education tiles. These tiles are displayed in villages and depict images of people following good hygiene practices. A schools programme also passes messages about good hygiene and menstrual hygiene management to children

and teachers. Other promotion methods include role play, puppet shows, songs and home visits.

### Reaching the excluded

In Nepal, many poor people live on land without legal tenure, and so are unable to access basic services such as water and sanitation, as they are often overlooked by governments and decision-makers. In addition, some marginalised and ethnic groups are excluded and forbidden from drinking from water sources, with women and children often being the most vulnerable due to their low social status and literacy rate.

WaterAid works hard to ensure these groups are included in water and sanitation supply plans, as well as working with communities to help them gain acceptance and access to water and sanitation facilities.

### Advocacy

WaterAid has been involved with campaigning for water and sanitation issues in Nepal, using media like local radio to raise awareness and spread knowledge around these issues. The End Water Poverty coalition uses the influence of local celebrities, such as actress Jharana Thapa, as well as holding events, such as public rallies in Kathmandu, to call for water and sanitation for all.

Following this kind of advocacy work, the government has increased funding and allocated a separate budget line for sanitation. Demands such as the recognition of access to sanitation and drinking water as human rights have also met with government approval. With greater recognition of the vital importance of water and sanitation it is hoped that more will be done to reach those living without these basic services.

### Ram Rati Malik pictured at the old water source in Beli



"No one would let us touch the waterpoint in the village. If someone was kind they gave us some water but otherwise we couldn't get any from the tap. We would collect water from this pond and we used to get stomach aches, coughs, typhoid and fever."

<b>Nepal</b>	
Area:	147,181km <sup>2</sup>
Capital:	Kathmandu
Other main cities:	Biratnagar, Birganj, Bharatpur, Pokhara, Nepalgunj
Population	<b>28.3m</b>
Infant mortality	<b>46/1,000</b>
Life expectancy	<b>66.3 yrs</b>
Water supply coverage	<b>89%</b>
Sanitation coverage	<b>27%</b>
Below poverty line	<b>30.9%</b>
Human development index	<b>144</b>
Adult literacy	<b>56.5%</b>
Number of children dying from diarrhoeal diseases every year	<b>10,700</b>

Official statistics tend to understate the extent of water and sanitation problems, sometimes by a large factor. There are not sufficient resources available for accurate monitoring of either population or coverage. Varying definitions of water and sanitation coverage are used and national figures mask large regional differences in coverage.

