

Madagascar

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Madagascar, the world's fourth largest island, lies off the south east coast of the African mainland, 400 kilometres from Mozambique. Because of its isolation most of its mammals and plants and half of its bird species exist nowhere else on earth.

The Malagasy population is composed of 18 ethnic groups who all speak Malagasy, albeit with different dialects. Madagascar, which was colonised by France in 1896 and regained its independence in 1960, is one of the poorest countries in the world. Seventy percent of the population live below the poverty line and the majority of people are dependent on subsistence farming.

Despite the efforts made to date, the number of people with access to safe water and sanitation is very low and differs greatly between rural and urban areas. While only 14% of the rural population have access to water compared to 66% of the urban population, 7.5% of the rural and 27% of the urban population have access to adequate sanitation.

WaterAid in Madagascar



WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

WaterAid opened an office in the capital Antananarivo and was officially registered as an international non governmental organisation (NGO) in Madagascar in 1999. WaterAid's work quickly developed and it now supports five main partner organisations to work with communities in setting up, operating and maintaining their own water and sanitation facilities using low cost technologies that are appropriate to local conditions. They also help people to learn about good hygiene practices so that the health benefits of projects are maximised.

These projects are in both urban and rural areas of three of Madagascar's six provinces (which in turn are composed of 22 regions containing 1552 smaller administrative units called communes). WaterAid's partners are local NGOs with many years' experience in providing water supplies, through gravity-fed schemes, well construction and the locally manufactured rope pump. WaterAid has worked with them to introduce sanitation and hygiene education into communities. WaterAid is helping these partners to develop their skills and encouraging them to grow.

WaterAid is also forming links and networks with organisations with similar aims across the country at local and national levels to feed into wider policy debates. In Madagascar there is a positive government policy environment and both water and sanitation have been prioritised in both the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (the current plans that qualify governments for debt relief funds) and the government document *Madagascar Naturally*. The needs, however, are great and require a

considerable increase in government, NGO and private sector capacity as well as greater coordination to provide sustainable, safe water services, adequate sanitation and hygiene education.

WaterAid is therefore raising awareness of the need for integrated projects so that hygiene education and sanitation are seen as equally important as safe water.

In 2005 it undertook two new awareness raising projects. Through the 'Sanitation in my neighbourhood' photographic competition primary school children took pictures of the problems and solutions in their communities as they saw them. A national exhibition followed by local exhibitions were held and started debates with the community and local (commune) government on how best to change the situation.

A study called 'Looking Back' found that projects providing safe and convenient water supplies meant that communities were healthier and, with more time, were more able to carry out other activities including making compost, weaving, farming and study.

Alphonsine, from Ambalalovana.



WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

Alphonsine walks down a slippery path three times a day to collect water. "The water here isn't good," she explains, "especially in the rainy season when it can become contaminated and diarrhoea and malaria are common."

Now her community in Ambalalovana is working with WaterAid's partner Caritas to build a clean water supply. Caritas have supplied materials and training to enable the community to build and maintain the scheme. The community is digging ditches for pipes to relay water from the mountain source to the village below.

"It is a sign of progress to have a standpipe," Alphonsine continues. "The women will spend less time collecting water. Our health will also improve which is a great relief. We have heard of cholera outbreaks nearby. We haven't had any here, but it is always a source of anxiety, especially to parents."

A short film and leaflets showing the findings will be used in discussions with regional and commune level government to lobby for water and sanitation to be included in all future development plans.

WaterAid has developed close links with other NGOs, the Government and donors in Madagascar and has worked together with them on policy issues relating to water and sanitation. It plays a key role in the wider international WASH campaign advocating for water, sanitation and hygiene for all. This campaign promotes messages such as hand washing with soap, effective use of hygienic latrines and safe transport and storage of water from the tap to the point of use.

Plans: 2005-2010

Madagascar has signed up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) agreed by all world governments to halve the proportions of people without access to water and sanitation between 1990 and 2015. WaterAid intends to contribute to these efforts in its new strategy for Madagascar running from 2005 to 2010.

WaterAid's plans and activities to help achieve these targets include:

- To support partner organisations to help 19,000 people gain access to safe water and sanitation every year by 2010
- To support local partner organisations and strengthen their capacity to raise their own funds, to ensure a further 3800 people gain access to water and 4700 to sanitation every year by 2010

WaterAid will do this by increasing the numbers of partner organisations that it works with, developing its work in poor urban areas and also expanding work with local governments which have the responsibility for water and sanitation services in their area.

Together WaterAid and its partners will carry out initial surveys of the water points and sanitation facilities along with the levels of poverty in each focus area to ensure that any new work reaches those most in need. These projects will also look at the sustainability of water resources to ensure that projects are environmentally sustainable.

The decentralisation of responsibilities to local communes offers an opportunity for decisions to be made on the ground where they are needed. WaterAid aims to assist the communes in building capacity to enable them to better plan, coordinate and carry out their work in safe water, sanitation and hygiene. It will also work with them to lobby for the necessary

financial resources where appropriate.

Additional resources are vital as WaterAid estimates that the \$20 million currently spent annually on water and sanitation is \$97 million short of the \$117 million needed to meet the MDGs. This extra financing is crucial to build skills to implement appropriate and sustainable projects.

Sanitation is a key issue in the country. The impact of sanitation on the whole country was reported in a joint publication from the Government, NGOs and United Nations agencies called *Sanitation – the challenge*. The document noted that five million working days and 3.5 million school days were being lost every year due to ill health caused by bad sanitation. The value of these losses was estimated to be 300 times greater than the amount of public money actually being spent on sanitation.

The launch of WASH in Madagascar in 2000 assisted in bringing together the different actors interested in raising the importance of basic hygiene and sanitation and ensuring their integration with water projects.

Sanitation has now moved up the political agenda and the sanitation policy process, which WaterAid has assisted in, is now moving forward. However this policy still needs to be finalised, financed and implemented on the ground if the huge task of reaching the sanitation MDG is going to be achieved.

Miza, from Andoakaolo village.



WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

Twenty five year old Miza has five children and comes from Andoakaolo. She used to have to collect water from this muddy pool where animals drink and flies buzz around. WaterAid helped her community build a new well (pictured far left) and her life has changed dramatically.

“Everyone here is so happy now: we have good quality water nearby so the women spend less time collecting and carrying water. We are cleaner and there is much less sickness in the village. Before, when we had to drink dirty water, there were a lot of stomach upsets and children were often very ill. Now parents are less worried about their children, they rarely get sick and if they are ill it is less likely to be serious.”

The regions where WaterAid has projects are labelled in capital letters



Madagascar

Area: 587,041 km²

Capital: Antananarivo

Other main cities: Fianarantsoa, Toamasina, Antsiranana, Toliara, Taolagnaro and Mahajanga

Population **17.3 m**

Infant mortality **126/1000**

Life expectancy **55.4 yrs**

Water supply coverage **45%**

Sanitation coverage **33%**

Below poverty line **71%**

Human development index **146**

Adult literacy **71%**

Sources: World Development Report 2005 and the Human Development Report 2005.

NB. Official statistics vary. There is a need to improve monitoring to improve water and sanitation data.

Achievements to date

- Worked with the national government and different organisations towards the establishment and implementation of a sanitation strategy
- Worked with its partner organisation in Toamasina to replicate innovative urban sanitation projects
- Helped three of the four largest water supply NGOs in Madagascar to integrate hygiene and sanitation with safe water initiatives
- Been a driver of the international WASH initiative in Madagascar, which brings together and unites the efforts of organisations to work effectively in partnership

£8 pays the daily wage for a health worker to provide hygiene education for 200 people in a rural community

£15 pays for the construction of one latrine slab for a rural family

£194 pays the wages of the engineer, technician, mason and labour to construct one hand-dug well

£167 pays for one rope pump which can provide water for 200 people

WaterAid

WaterAid – water for life

The UK's only major charity dedicated exclusively to the provision of safe domestic water, sanitation and hygiene education to the world's poorest people.

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WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

Ikognane, Vice President of the Mohairiry village kitchen garden.



WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

Ikognane, the vice president of 15 kitchen gardeners, explains how the community's new well has enabled them to start the Mohairiry village kitchen garden.

"Before the well we had no kitchen garden," she says. "There wasn't anything you could eat on this bit of land, there just wasn't enough rain to make things grow. We still don't have rain, but now we can water the plants ourselves. The great thing is that now we have a garden we can eat a greater variety of vegetables rather than just manioc which we ate before. We are eating a more varied diet which is much healthier – we know our families will be healthier. We can also sell some of our vegetables and so make some money in that way."

Rahaingolalao, from Antananarivo.



WaterAid/Jeremy Horner

Rahaingolalao lives in a slum area in central Antananarivo where the community has recently installed a latrine. "Since having the latrine life has been much more comfortable," she says. "Before there was nowhere to go to the toilet so there was human excrement everywhere, especially during the floods. It was a source of great shame to us but since having the latrine we don't have this problem.

We had to transport sand, cement and water to the site and since its installation we keep the latrine and the area around it clean and hygienic. I don't mind doing this because I know it improves the health of our family. All around us there have been cases of cholera, but we haven't had any."