

Nigeria



WaterAid/Suzanne Porter

Nigeria, the largest country in West Africa and the most populous on the continent, has a culturally and ethnically diverse population made up of over 250 groups speaking 400 different languages. Nigeria is made up of one federal capital territory and 36 states; among which there are marked religious differences. Those in the north are predominantly Muslim, with 12 run under Sharia law, while the southern states are mainly Christian. 10% of people have indigenous beliefs.

After being under military rule for many years fragile democracy was reintroduced in 1999. Now, despite tensions and violence between the ethnic and religious groups, the possibilities for development have improved and the Government is also committed to eliminating corruption, which is widespread. However, despite having vast natural resources, including oil, gold and diamonds, the majority of the population live in extreme poverty.

WaterAid in Nigeria



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WaterAid began work in Nigeria in 1995 to assist with the vast water and sanitation needs found there. Currently 60% of people have access to safe water while 38% are reported to have sanitation. With a population of 126 million this means huge numbers are without these essential services. Every year there are 175,000 deaths due to diarrhoea, malaria and typhoid, which together account for 70% of child illnesses and deaths. The cost in lost productivity, through both poor health and the time spent collecting water, which is commonly five hours a day in the dry season, is high.

Following its first project in Etche, WaterAid moved to Benue State in 1996 to manage the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) Water and Sanitation Project in Oju Local Government Area. In 1999 WaterAid expanded its activities to Plateau and Bauchi states, based on the high levels of poverty and low access to water and sanitation there. In these two states WaterAid works in partnership with five established non governmental organisations (NGOs) as well as state and local governments. In 2004 WaterAid expanded its work to three further states and to more local government areas in Benue State. In the same year a new office was established in the federal state capital of Abuja to ensure WaterAid has a strategic presence in the country.

Since 1995, when it began work in Benue State, WaterAid has been assisting the water and sanitation units (WASUs) of local government councils to deliver water and sanitation services to the poor. Local

businesses are contracted to help communities with construction work, such as drilling boreholes, installing handpumps or building latrines and to run 'sani centres' which sell materials for latrine construction.

As well as helping communities establish water supplies and latrines, WaterAid and the WASUs promote good hygiene behaviour such as washing hands and keeping latrines clean. A number of innovative approaches are used, including radio jingles, early morning megaphone announcements and school hygiene clubs.

To encourage work between communities and local governments, which in the past have been widely mistrusted and perceived to be corrupt, WaterAid has developed a transparent system for selecting which communities to support and the level of subsidy each household is given. Through the 'vulnerability ranking system' households within communities determine their levels of poverty according to indicators

which the community as a whole suggests themselves. By eliminating political interference this is renewing people's faith in working with local governments.

By working in different policy environments with different levels of government and a range of partners WaterAid is able to share useful lessons about how to best deliver water and sanitation services to the poor. For example the self-selection process described above has now been imported to other projects funded by DFID and the Nigerian Government. WaterAid is also supporting local governments to produce their local development plans. These not only prioritise work and forthcoming plans, but they also help them to access funding from other donors including UNICEF.

Plans: 2006-2011

While the Nigerian Government has publicly committed to prioritising water and sanitation services it faces massive problems in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of halving the proportions of people without access to safe water and sanitation between 1990 and 2015.

In its new strategy running from 2006 to 2011 WaterAid sets out its plans and activities in Nigeria to help achieve these targets.

The key aims are to:

- Help 84,000 people gain access to water, sanitation and hygiene education every year by 2011
- Support local partner organisations to raise their own funds, while keeping a strong advisory role on how these funds are spent to ensure a further 90,000 people gain access to water and 85,000 to sanitation every year by 2011

As the responsibility for water and sanitation is being shifted from central to local government, WaterAid has committed to work with 30 local governments in future to build their capabilities to carry out their water and sanitation work effectively. Support is vital as currently they have limited authority, funding and capacity, which is constraining their ability to meet their obligations. In 2004 for example 25,000 handpumps were purchased and distributed to local governments without any prior discussions. Virtually all lacked the budgets to sink the wells for the pumps.

In the past political bias has also meant that many projects in Nigeria were inequitable and excluded the poor. WaterAid will therefore increase its influencing and lobbying work to ensure money is spent in the most appropriate ways to reach the very poorest people. This will include mapping

the existing facilities so that donors and the Government can plan new projects in a coordinated way where they are most needed; or where possible, rehabilitate broken facilities. To assist this process the MDGs will be localised and each area will work towards a specific target.

WaterAid will also lobby local and national organisations to strengthen their own water, sanitation and hygiene work. It will focus on building the capacity of 24 partner organisations and two main networks. A media network will also be developed to raise awareness of the issues in the country.

Awareness is particularly vital in raising funds for water and sanitation. The Government's Director of Water stated in 2004 "I have 50,000 communities needing water but this year we could fund projects in just 2809 of them." This statement is not surprising. Currently the annual water budget is \$54m, but this needs to increase by \$266 million a year to reach the MDGs. Yet even now poor coordination and confusion over roles and responsibilities means that only 56% of the budget is actually spent. Years of changing governments have also left the country in huge amounts of debt, with annual repayments amounting to \$1.7billion a year. This is three times the education budget, nine times the health budget and over 31

times the water budget. In 2005 WaterAid campaigned through the Global Campaign Against Poverty (known in the UK as Make Poverty History) for debt cancellation alongside calls for more and better financing for water and sanitation services.

WaterAid's focus on the poorest and most vulnerable in society will continue by ensuring that women, the elderly, disabled and those living with HIV/AIDS are included in projects. This is vital as despite women being the main providers of water, in many parts of the country their increasing poverty and powerlessness is also hindering the success of projects.

As the rural poor move to urban areas looking for work more and more end up living in unplanned settlements without any services. WaterAid has further plans to help these communities, especially in small towns, to build and manage their own affordable water and sanitation systems using the most appropriate technology.

The country also faces significant challenges over issues of poor water quality and conflicts over water use and management. WaterAid will therefore include water resource management within all its projects to address the issues of depletion and contamination. To date some projects involving rainwater harvesting have been successfully carried out and this will also continue.

Patience Dominic, teacher at the primary school in Warok.



WaterAid/Suzanne Porter

"I moved to Warok two years ago to take up a teaching position," says Patience who is also responsible for the hygiene education classes. "It was very important to me that the school had a well and latrines, because I know how much safe water and hygiene matter.

I have five children, two boys and three girls, and they all go to the school here. I would not want them going to a school without these facilities and I would not be willing to teach in such a school. I know how important education is, especially in rural communities, but I must put the health of my children first.

When there is a community well and everyone has their own latrine, this will be a very healthy place to live."



Nigeria

Area: 923,768 km²

Capital: Abuja

Other main cities: Lagos, Ibadan, Port Harcourt, Kaduna and Kano

Population	139.8 m
Infant mortality	198/1000
Life expectancy	43 years
Water supply coverage	60%
Sanitation coverage	38%
Below poverty line	34%
Human development index	158
Adult literacy	67%

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

NB. 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.

Achievements to date

- Developed a vulnerability ranking system to ensure resources are fairly allocated to communities
- Successfully established partnerships between communities and government
- Shared good practices such as the Local Millennium Development Goals and its monitoring and evaluation system with others involved in water and sanitation

£6 pays for a 50kg bag of cement, enough to make two dome shaped latrine slabs

£40 pays to train 11 committee members on the operation and maintenance of water and sanitation facilities in a poor rural community

£100 pays a mason to construct one hand-dug well to serve at least 150 people in a community

£240 helps provide hygiene promotion training to 120 people in a poor rural community

£1600 helps set up three sanitation centres to enable six communities of around 1000 people to each have access to latrine slab construction materials

£3800 provides one borehole fitted with a handpump and three ventilated improved pit latrines for 2000 school children



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/Suzanne Porter

Thirteen year old **Sa'a Ali** from Fikayi in Bauchi State describes life without a safe water source.



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"I have to collect water three or four times a day for my family," says Sa'a whose choice of water source is currently limited to a river nearly an hour away or a pond 20 minutes away. Both are polluted. "It is my duty to make sure the container for water at home isn't empty. When I am not collecting water I do the grinding to make morning and afternoon food. When my mother collects the water, I go and collect firewood or do my guinea flour grinding. We take it in turns in the day.

I always try to collect water from with my friends or my sisters, Toure or Hajara. It is a long way to come and I am afraid on my own. I get afraid from the distance, being alone, animals and snakes. Water, wood, grinding. My work, it is my life. What else is there?"

Suzanna Tuwan is now a latrine builder in Takkas village in Plateau state.



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"Before we had the well it used to take at least two hours just to collect water from the river. I had to take the children with me and they were always late for school. Now the children are never late for school and I have much more time.

With the extra time I have and the money we save now that we are not always having to buy medicine for the children, I felt able to take advantage of a small business loan from (WaterAid's partner) COWAN. I used the money to buy cement to start building latrine slabs for people in the village. Some people think building slabs is a man's job, but I think whatever a man can do, a woman can do.

I would like to see everyone in the village get a latrine because it is so much better to use a latrine than to go to the bush. That is the main reason I decided to learn to build slabs and get our own latrine – to stop my children using the bush. It is not healthy.

The future will be better for my children, especially my daughters. Knowing that makes me very happy."