

In May 2007 the White Horse challenge raised £3065 for WaterAid's work in Nepal. This fantastic contribution will make a real difference to communities in Nepal, saving lives and allowing people to take their first steps out of poverty. This report explains the situation in Nepal, and gives an idea of the impact that the White Horse Challenge donation will have. On behalf of WaterAid and the communities who will benefit from this very generous donation, thank you very much everybody who took part in the White Horse Challenge.

Nepal

Nepal lies landlocked between India and China, its dramatic landscape rising from the lowland plains of the Terai up to the peak of Everest in the Himalayas.

Although it is estimated that 84% of people have access to water, in hill areas distances to water sources are great. The Terai wells are often highly polluted and the quality of water is affected by the presence of arsenic in many areas. More than 73% of the population do not have access to sanitation, spreading disease through unhygienic living environments. Every year approximately a third of all deaths in Nepal are children under five, half of which are due to diarrhoea.



After a decade-long violent conflict between Maoist, Monarchist forces and political parties that has claimed more than 13,000 lives and damaged the social and physical infrastructure of the country, Parliament has now been restored.

However, the troubles continue and have added new challenges to development, especially in rural areas where most WaterAid-supported projects and partners operate. People are increasingly migrating to urban centres to escape the poverty or violence of life in the country.

WaterAid in Nepal

WaterAid began its water, sanitation and hygiene work in Nepal in 1986 and has continued despite the political instability and conflict of recent years.

White Horse Challenge 2007 Nepal report



Nepal rises out of the Terai up into the incredibly steep foothills and mountains of the Himalayas. This extreme topography determines the areas which can be accessed and the methods used to ensure safe drinking water and improved sanitation. The picture to the right shows Kamrang village- the topography of this village illustrates the geographical challenges in Nepal! Technologies are chosen that are appropriate to local conditions, affordable and easy to set up and maintain by the communities themselves.



Ensuring the quality of water sources is a major challenge. In the Terai arsenic has been found in 17% of wells. WaterAid and its partners use arsenic detection and mitigation methods to keep wells safe.

Falling water tables and ground water pollution pose additional challenges to providing water and sanitation services to poor people in Nepal.

In the hills projects use gravity flow piped supplies where water can be transported by pipework from natural springs to tapstands placed near to homes, thus reducing the drudgery involved in carrying water a long way. In Kathmandu traditional wells are rehabilitated and shallow tubewells installed.

Education on hygiene practices is also carried out in communities, maximising the health benefits of improved water and sanitation services. Water-related diseases are common in Nepal but for the majority of the population the causes of ill-health are shrouded in superstition. The picture to the right shows a tile that is used to communicate hygiene education messages- in this case the importance of washing hands. Other tiles remind communities to wash vegetables before cooking, wash water pots carefully and use latrines instead of practising open defecation. Other hygiene promotion methods include role play, puppet shows, songs, home visits and practical lessons.



As well as helping communities to manage water and sanitation improvements and change their hygiene practices, the sustainability of projects is always key to our work in Nepal.

Some examples of how this donation may be spent in Nepal

The money raised by the White Horse challenge could pay for any of the following, enabling communities to gain access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene education.

- £2 pays for a latrine cover slab serving a family of up to seven people
- £6 pays for two bags of cement for two latrine cover slabs.
- £15 pays to train two community water technicians to maintain a gravity flow water supply scheme and hand dug well.
- £90 pays for a handpump and boring to serve 10 households
- £480 pays for a health motivator to promote good hygiene practices to 850 people for 12 months

What can be achieved – voices from the field



Nirmala Chaudhary, from Malahanma Village, Nepal, used to get water from a bamboo flow pump, but the water was dirty and the bamboo would often rot away. In 2000, WaterAid and NEWAH implemented a project that included the new tubewell and handpump seen here.

Nirmala says: "*The water used to smell bad. We used to use it to drink, bathe, wash and for our garden. Now water quality is good from this pump. It has improved health and more children are clean. Before the pump there used to be a lot of diarrhoea, but now it is reduced.*"

On behalf of WaterAid and the communities in Nepal who will benefit from the money raised by the White Horse Challenge, thank you very much indeed.