



UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT 2020-2022





About WaterAid

WaterAid Australia is a member of WaterAid, an international non-governmental organisation 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.

WaterAid is made up of member countries in India, Australia, Canada, India, Japan, Sweden, the UK and the USA. The member countries help coordinate and fund operations across country programs with the mission to transform the lives of the poorest and most marginalised people by improving access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.

WaterAid Australia coordinates and fund programs in Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste.

Since we started, we've remained resolutely focused on tackling the three essentials; water, sanitation and hygiene, that transform people's lives. Without all three, people can't live dignified, healthy lives. With all three, they can unlock their potential, break free from poverty, and change their lives for good. Children grow up healthy and strong, women and men get to earn a living, whole communities start to thrive. It sounds normal and it should be. Since 1981 we have reached over 27 million people with clean water.

By working closely with partners internationally and on the ground in some of the toughest places in the world, we help achieve widespread change. Millions of people have already taken control of their lives and built better futures.

Now we are working with our supporters and partners to get clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene to everyone, everywhere by 2030, in accordance with the UN SDGs. It's about more than installing taps, toilets, boreholes and wells. To make lasting change happen on a massive scale, we:

- convince governments to change laws;
- link policy makers with people on the ground;
- change attitudes and behaviours;
- pool knowledge and resources; and
- rally support from people and organisations around the world

People are at the heart of everything we do. We aim to inspire people, bringing them together to ignite action. We spark chain reactions that lead to lasting change in what's normal. Lasting change in people's habits and expectations. Lasting change in how countries work, not just in how villages and communities work. Lasting change is people's lives.

Globally, WaterAid has recently launched our new strategy which will address the following;

- focus on strengthening national and local WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) systems to support the acceleration towards universal, sustainable and safe WASH
- increase the focus on sanitation and hygiene progress to bring them in line with water access
- over the next decade, we will steadily increase our efforts in urbanized areas to account for up to half our work
- all that we do will be founded in peoples' right to water and sanitation and ensure that our work contributes to progress for all, regardless of gender, age, wealth, caste, location, ethnicity, sexuality, religious or occupational status

Together, we will change millions of lives for the better – and change normal for everyone, everywhere within a generation.



20 April 2022

Ms Sanda Ojiambo
Executive Director
UN Global Compact

Dear Ms Ojiambo

I am writing to reiterate WaterAid Australia's continued support for the United Nations Global Compact and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as our ongoing commitment to this global initiative and its principles in the areas of human and labour rights, environment, governance and sustainable development.

Our commitment to the Global Compact is an important example of WaterAid's dedication to achieving the SDGs. Access to water and sanitation has far-reaching impact and extends far beyond Goal 6: "Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all." Water, sanitation and hygiene is an essential component of an integrated approach to tackling poverty, hunger, health, education and inequality and creates fairer, more productive and healthier communities.

Successful realisation of Goal 6 will underpin progress across many other goals, including:

- Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
- Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages
- Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
- Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Goal 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries
- Goal 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

There remain some major areas of concern:

- **Rapid urbanisation, population growth and economic development** present increasing and competing demands for water
- **Climate change** is likely to lead to more frequent, unpredictable and extreme weather episodes, with poor people disproportionately affected by floods, droughts and contaminated water.

- **Public health** depends on safe water, sanitation and good hygiene. COVID-19 is the perfect example we are all trying to tackle by promoting good hygiene in communities
- **Financing** universal access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene will require a significant increase in public and private funding
- **Sustaining water and sanitation services and hygiene** is a significant challenge in many developing countries

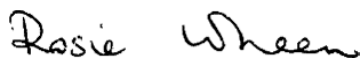
We know that water, decent toilets and good hygiene are essential for every person to live a healthy, safe and prosperous life. Without it we cannot survive. We are working tirelessly to reach our vision of a world where everyone, everywhere has these basic human rights and services. The challenges we've faced with the COVID-19 pandemic has not only made our work more important than ever, it has made our work an emergency.

Against this backdrop, WaterAid's strategy is to bring strong partnerships and coalitions together as we work towards our goal of water, sanitation and hygiene for everyone, everywhere by 2030. We will influence change through four interconnected aims: addressing inequality to access; strengthening sustainable services; integrating water, sanitation and hygiene with other essential areas of development and improving hygiene behaviour.

We pledge to offer our knowledge and leadership, leveraging on the experience of WaterAid in 34 countries around the world, to help shape special initiatives, develop tools and research, further partnerships and projects and help to hold business accountable with respect to their commitments to the Global Compact and its principles.

The attached document details WaterAid's practical actions in influencing change in a broader movement to create a sustainable and inclusive global economy.

Kind regards,



Rosie Wheen
Chief Executive, WaterAid Australia



In December 2013, WaterAid Australia signed onto the UN Global Compact (UNGC) and joined the Global Compact Network Australia. Launched in 2000, the UNGC is an international initiative that seeks to improve organisational practices grounded in its Ten Principles in the areas of human and labour rights, environment, governance and sustainable development.

As a signatory to the Global Compact, WaterAid Australia shows leadership in the not for-profit sector and ensures our policies align with the UNGC's universally accepted values and principles.

Water is one of the greatest sustainability challenges facing business and is a key issue for Australia as the world's driest inhabited continent. Water underpins the global economy - it is essential for agriculture, manufacturing, metal, thermal energy, food, beverages, textiles, pulp, paper and many other industries.

Water issues, including access, scarcity and pollution are fundamental risks to business that affect the bottom line and carry environmental and social implications. This is reflected in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which recognise water and sanitation as critical components of sustainable development (Goal 6).

WaterAid sees its corporate relationships as important opportunities to emphasise water's importance in sustainable development. Under the WaterAid Federation, WaterAid Australia is committed to the CEO Water Mandate and advises companies on how they can both protect their water supply needs and ensure that poor, rural communities have access to clean water.

Corporate partnerships are critical to our success, not only in terms of raising valuable funds, but also in ensuring WaterAid leverages on its valuable partners to co-design sustainable technical solutions to water-related issues in developing countries as well as holds a strong voice in campaigning governments locally to help us solve the water and sanitation crisis in developing countries.

As a member and participant in UNGC forums, WaterAid Australia is able to promote the necessity of universal access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene as a fundamental human right in overcoming poverty. Throughout the process of developing the SDGs, WaterAid campaigned tirelessly and successfully to ensure a dedicated Global Goal for water and sanitation was included.

Through a partnership with WaterAid, companies can strengthen their corporate social responsibility and sustainability programs, commit action toward the SDGs and bring life-saving clean water and sanitation to the world's poorest communities.

In a world with so many competing priorities, WaterAid remains resolutely focused on tackling the three essentials of water, sanitation and hygiene because they transform people's lives for good. Thus, our commitment to the UN Global Compact has many intents and purposes: we aim to increase the awareness among corporate Australia of water supply and sanitation as a basic human right, both domestically and regionally; to align with and learn from industry leaders in sustainability, and to promote the great work achieved through the Compact to recognise industry and market forces as the great hope to catalyse change.

In this Communication on Engagement, we describe our actions to support the Global Compact and its principles over the period April 2020 – March 2022. We also commit to share this information with our stakeholders using our primary channels of communication.

Engage with Global Compact Local Networks

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
|---|--|
| WaterAid is active within the Australian network, engaging in areas where we can contribute, learn or share | Work on the inclusion and prosecution of SDG 6 shows WaterAid added value to its partners and the water industry at large in a framework for deeper engagement through a common agenda beyond our own business model. |
| WaterAid promotes its UNGC membership in all WaterAid corporate materials and on its website | Since joining the UNGC, we've seen awareness and interest in the Compact growing within the water and health industry in Australia; a sector lacking in membership for some time. WaterAid, as the charity partner of choice of water companies and utilities, has been instrumental to bring some new partners to the UNGC. We have also been active in the UNGC Australian network by attending different workshops and participating in initiatives to design a joint social agenda between NGOs and the private sector |
| We share all publications and work-stream papers with WaterAid US & UK and encourage them to participate | Our UK and US offices are also UNGC members, which aligns the UK and US water industry with the network, increasing exponentially the focus on SDGs. |

Join and/or Propose Partnership Projects on Corporate Sustainability

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
|--|--|
| Broadening our partnerships with the Australian Water Association (AWA) and partnering with Water New Zealand to strengthen collaboration and mitigate overlap | WaterAid has partnered with AWA (the umbrella organisation for the water industry in Australia) to improve the effectiveness of both organisations through joint development and activities and reciprocal membership, so that collaboration around development of water systems in neighbouring countries is undertaken jointly by WaterAid, AWA and the Australian water utilities to eliminate overlap and better allocate scarce resources. The MoU has also triggered different collaborations with other smaller water networks in Australia and has also prompted WaterAid to develop a relationship with the water umbrella organisation in New Zealand (Water New Zealand). |

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| Working with the Water Services Association of Australia (WSAA) | We have also partnered with WSAA and AWA to agree on a common agenda for the promotion of SDGs across the water industry, with a particular focus on gender equality. WSAA has reached out to all their members to promote WaterAid's value proposition to the market and has always shared our work and communication on SDGs with their network |
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Engage Companies in Global Compact-related Issues

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
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| Our collaboration with OzWater (the annual water industry conference) & International Water Centre | WaterAid International and Australian Chair Karlene Maywald and WaterAid Chief Executive Rosie Wheen have all given key notes at recent water conferences in Australia (no travel opportunities elsewhere) highlighting the importance of the SDGs in poverty alleviation. Further, we contribute to the CEO Water Mandate as an essential platform for supply chain water security and promotion of the human right to water and sanitation in the framework of a rights-based approach. |
| International Women's Day | IWD is important for WaterAid, as the lack of clean water and decent toilets affect women from an early age, providing recommendation on ways the community can make a positive difference. In Cambodia, the WaterAid team has led the 'HerRoles' campaign over the past year, supported by our major Corporate Partner, Who Gives A Crap. The campaign promoted women's WASH leadership in a sector dominated by men through a series of podcasts, live public dialogues and storytelling. |
| Investment in WASH | A global vision to end extreme poverty by 2030 begins with water and sanitation. There is an increasing global awareness of the importance of water, sanitation and hygiene to alleviate poverty. Investing in WASH requires an integrated approach with first steps required in a household, community, district and country level. Businesses that are already engaging on WASH make a clear link between business value, and the societal benefit or development impact generated by investing in WASH. |

Join and/or Support Special Initiatives and Work Streams

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
|---|--|
| WaterAid Australia sitting on the Global Compact Network Australia's Environment Leadership Group Steering Committee | WaterAid presence on this Steering Committee has helped promote a deeper awareness within the Australian business community and elevate water supply as a critical aspect of business risk analysis and planning. The GCNA's Environment Leadership Group (ELG) was established to provide a forum for sharing, learning and collaboration in relation to corporate environmental responsibility, and to explore challenges and solutions to local and global environmental issues facing us. The ELG draws on the skills and knowledge of expert advisors, Government and business stakeholders to deliver forums and workshops that provide practical learning opportunities, and keep participants up-to-date on key domestic and international developments in the environmental sustainability space. |
| Influencing the Australian Government on the relevance of WASH for sustainable development and efficient delivery of basic human rights | WaterAid has played a major role to ensure the Australian Government's response to COVID-19 in the Asia-Pacific region focused on water, sanitation and hygiene. As the Government is increasing framing Australia Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) around climate resilience, WaterAid is working to ensure that water, sanitation and hygiene are seen as critical to Australia's approach to adaptation and building resilience. |

Participate in Global Compact Events (Global & Local)

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Attendance at international events | The WaterAid Chair Karlene Maywald attended the World Water Week in March 2022 as part of the Dubai Expo 2020 conducting various sessions on water, sanitation and hygiene as well as gender equality. |
| Attendance at Australian events | We have engaged with a number of member organisations, including Sydney Water, Melbourne Water, Yarra Valley Water, Greater Western Water, South East Water, GHD, Mott MacDonald, Calix, Aurecon & Outland Denim |

Other Actions to Support the Global Compact

| Actions | Measurement of Outcomes |
|---|---|
| Human Rights | |
| Elevating human rights | Our gender equity and disability inclusion strategic focus is at the centre of all that we do. |
| Labour Rights | |
| Advocacy for fair labour guidelines and engagement with workers in factory settings | WaterAid work with the VF Foundation to develop national guidelines for garment factory workers in Cambodia. In addition, we work on OHS in the industry for minimum access to water, toilets and hand washing in factories for workers, along with facilitating sector coordination for WASH and factory industry sector to improve policies for workers. |
| Environment | |
| Increasing our climate resilience work | Climate Resilient WASH is a key focus area for WaterAid. We work with governments and partners across our country programs to advocate for rights to WASH in broader water resource management initiatives. This includes capacity building efforts around climate resilience and water security, increasing sector coordination among governments, as well as ensuring that marginalised communities are included in key decision making. |
| Campaign Work | We have campaigned for responsible environmental management, including regulating the use of water in agriculture and industry, to protect and preserve enough clean and safe water for communities' basic needs. |
| Health | |
| Progressing universal WASH in healthcare facilities | The current pandemic illustrates the vital importance of continued investment in WASH in HCFs. We work with governments and WASH stakeholders to prioritise long-term, sustainable WASH services in HCFs. |
| Sustainability | |
| A recognised approach to building systems for sustainable WASH | WaterAid works to strengthen the systems which enable WASH services and behaviours to be sustained long after our implementation. By supporting government-led WASH mechanisms for WASH coordination, planning, policy-making, financing and monitoring and encouraging regular reflection and sharing of learning we help to lay the foundations for lasting services. Our systems strengthening way of working has been recognised by UN-DESA as an example of good practice to reach the SDGs. |

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| Strengthening national WASH policies and systems. | We have supported the development and roll-out of national WASH monitoring systems in Papua New Guinea and Cambodia, which make data available for better decision-making. We have contributed to the development of government policies and strategies for universal water and sanitation in Cambodia, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste which set the direction and vision for government and non-government stakeholder collaboration. |
| Anti-Corruption | |
| Strengthening our anticorruption policy and payments procedures | We have strengthened our internal policies that include an anonymous fraud portal to report suspected cases of internal or partner fraud in order to show best-practice in-house. |