

ABG WASH OFFICE NEWSLETTER 2025.

The **ABG WaSH Committee** was set up in April 2024 to consist of the main key decision makers of the ABG. The chair is the secretary of health and executive members are the secretaries of community government, education, community development, technical services and the policy division director from the Office of the Chief Secretary. Non-executive but permanent members include representatives from the Bougainville Federations of Women, Youth and People Living With Disabilities. Guest members include a representative from the lead WaSH Service Delivery providers and international agencies. The Regional WaSHComs have been set up to include a similar structure, but chaired by the Regional Director from DoCG, with executive member decision makers being District Coordinators of Administration Education, Health, Community Development and Technical Services. Non executive but permanent members include representatives from the network of federations of women, youth and PLWD. BHCP is a guest member as are representatives from WaSH service delivery providers.

The **ABG WaSH Strategy 2024-2029** has been officially launched in July 2025 after a long road of planning that Plan International can take some considerable credit for after several years WaSH sector foundational growth. The strategy is a methodology for implementing WaSH with specific ABG WaSH Governance mechanisms to lead and coordinate the ARoB WaSH Sector. The strategy aligns with Bougainville Vision 2050, Bougainville Sector Development Plans, PNG WaSH Policy 2015-2030, and PNG policies for WaSH in schools and Health Care Facilities (grade II & III).

Figure 1. Training of CG Ward Recorders and Mangers on how to collect WaSH data in their village administrations.



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Standards & Guidelines taken directly from the JMP / SDGs & PNG Policy and targets have been contextualised for Bougainville. They are presented in a format for ward recorders and community government managers to be able to understand and assess their WaSH standards for each household's water supply, sanitation and hygiene facilities.

Awareness of the standards are presented in the same way to school principles and environmental health officers / health care managers for them to understand how to audit the varying standards of their respective school and healthcare facility WaSH infrastructure. In this way all Ward recorders, community government managers, school principles and healthcare facility managers are capacity built to audit WaSH standards.

Figure 2. Training of School teachers to conduct WaSH infrastructure audit in their schools.



Their audit data is recorded in three databases held by respective regional coordinators of community government, and ABG secretaries of the departments of health, education and community government. The **WaSH infrastructure audit** data has been analysed for gaps in WaSH services and presented to every district coordinator and community government manager. The data has allowed for a) a **hygiene strategy** to be developed for communities and schools, and b) a **funding strategy** to be developed to fill the **WaSH infrastructure gaps** which are estimated to be around PGK100m for communities, schools and HCFs to be able to achieve WaSH targets by 2030. International JMP, PNG, and Bougainville targets require 70% minimum standards in communities and 100% in schools and health facilities by 2030.



Figure 3. Minimum WaSH Standards in ARoB, 2025 Baseline, 2030 Target & 2035 Target

Minimum Indicators	2025 Baseline	2030 Target	2035 Target
Community water access	33%	70%	100%
Community sanitation access (toilets)	33%	70%	100%
Community hygiene access (hand wash)	31%	70%	100%
Community open defecation (don't use toilets)	54%	0%	-
School water access	48%	100%	-
School sanitation access (toilets)	41%	100%	-
School hygiene access (sinks)	24%	100%	-
HCF water access	83%	100%	-
HCF sanitation access (toilets)	56%	100%	-
HCF hygiene access (sinks)	35%	100%	-
HCF medical waste facilities (incinerators)	74%	100%	-
HCF environmental waste facilities (bins, cleaning)	86%	100%	-

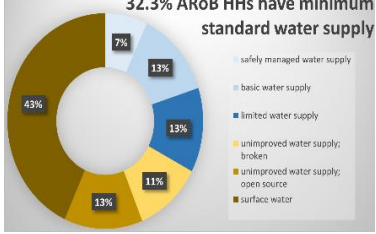
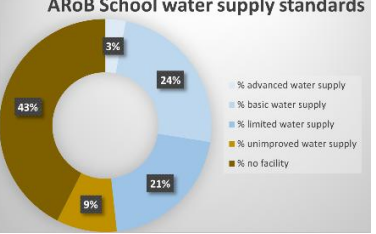
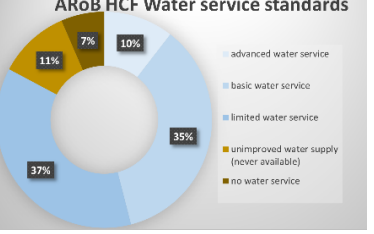
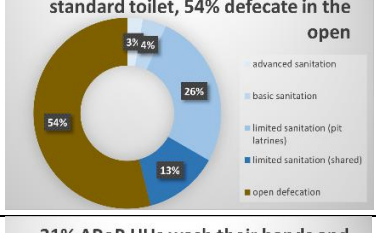
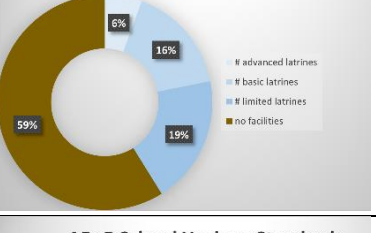
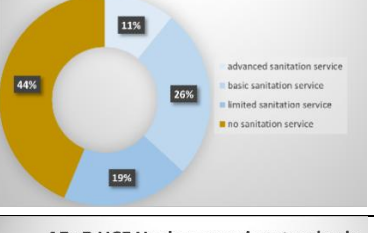
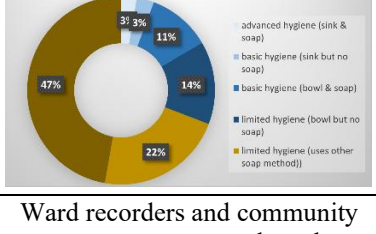
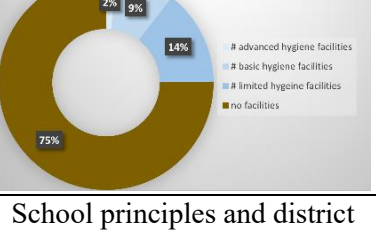
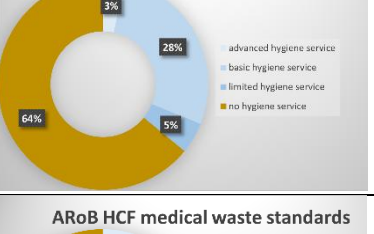
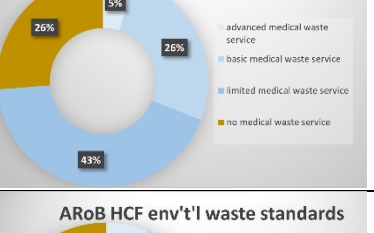
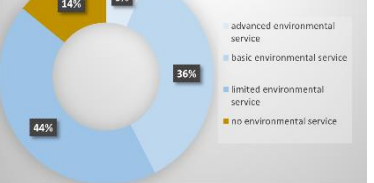
The data allows the ABG to prioritise which locations could receive WaSH project implementation by partners, and also allows government to allocate an annual budget with which to sustain present gaps, by implementing a sufficient amount of WaSH implementation to cover new annual demand created by population growth of 3%. For 2026, Each of the thirteen districts of Bougainville are expected to apply through PFDs for district WaSH projects. The ABG is now in a much stronger position to lead with its own planning and coordinate others to support plans of the overall Bougainville WaSH Sector. ABG is in a unique position of credibly monitoring achievements towards targets.

All district coordinators and community government managers have been trained how to apply for WaSH projects for communities, schools and HCFs using the PFD format. All BHCP Health Coordinators have been trained how to apply Healthy Island and Community Led Total Sanitation in villages. All District Education Officers have been trained to train school teachers in how to apply menstrual hygiene management for adolescent girls, create WaSH clubs in schools, and apply WaSH targets and WaSH maintenance in the SLIP process. Capacity building of all the above was completed by August 2025, and a new phase of **ABG WaSH operations & supervision** is expected as applications are received for the selection and approval process for 2026 budget funding.



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Figure 3. WaSH Standards for all of Bougainville

Community WaSH standards	School WaSH standards	HCF WaSH standards
<p>32.3% ARoB HHs have minimum standard water supply</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> safer managed water supply basic water supply limited water supply unimproved water supply, broken unimproved water supply, open source surface water 	<p>ARoB School water supply standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> % advanced water supply % basic water supply % limited water supply % unimproved water supply % no facility 	<p>ARoB HCF Water service standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced water service basic water service limited water service unimproved water supply (never available) no water service
<p>33% ARoB HHs have a minimum standard toilet, 54% defecate in the open</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced sanitation basic sanitation limited sanitation (pit latrines) limited sanitation (shared) open defecation 	<p>ARoB School sanitation standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # advanced latrines # basic latrines # limited latrines no facilities 	<p>ARoB HCF Sanitation standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced sanitation service basic sanitation service limited sanitation service no sanitation service
<p>31% ARoB HHs wash their hands and 94% do not have toilet sink facilities</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced hygiene (sink & soap) basic hygiene (sink but no soap) basic hygiene (bowl & soap) limited hygiene (bowl but no soap) limited hygiene (uses other soap method) no facilities 	<p>ARoB School Hygiene Standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> # advanced hygiene facilities # basic hygiene facilities # limited hygiene facilities no facilities 	<p>ARoB HCF Hygiene service standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced hygiene service basic hygiene service limited hygiene service no hygiene service
<p>Ward recorders and community government managers have been trained to record WaSH standards specific to households</p>	<p>School principles and district education officers have been trained to record WaSH standards specific to schools</p>	<p>ARoB HCF medical waste standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced medical waste service basic medical waste service limited medical waste service no medical waste service
<p>All existing data from project sites will be monitored to ensure additional infrastructure data is uploaded to the ABG WaSH infrastructure database</p>	<p>Environmental health officers and health care facility managers have been trained to record WaSH standards specific to health care facilities</p>	<p>ARoB HCF env't'l waste standards</p>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> advanced environmental service basic environmental service limited environmental service no environmental service



An additional component of WaSH governance in ARoB is the transfer of powers of the PNG WaSH Policy to Bougainville under the peace agreement between PNG and Bougainville. This is already under development and a consultation schedule has begun already and will be rolled out to stakeholders in early 2026 with the aim of being submitted to the BEC for Parliamentary approval in 2026, or early 2027 at the latest.

In 2026, Bougainville can look forward to another year of ABG focus on strengthening its role in ensuring improved WaSH standards in communities, schools and grade II&II health care facilities in all corners of Bougainville. In the pursuit of being one of the first governments to reach WaSH targets by 2030.

Positive project impact has been observed in 2024 and 2025, now that ABG has taken an active role in improving its leadership and monitoring of the Bougainville WaSH sector. Existing and potential further WaSH project funding has been identified as we move into 2026. ABG WaSH governance has been strongly supported by EU Technical Assistance that includes institutional strengthening, capacity building and data management development. World Vision in partnership with Plan International have been funded by the EU for a three year period and hope to complete WaSH projects for 23,000 people or 50 communities in South Bougainville districts, improve WaSH in 50 schools and 10 health care facilities, by 2026. The Bougainville Partnership arm of the AUS/PNG partnership, funded by DFAT are targeting upto 80 community infrastructure projects per year which mostly include water supplies, and of course we are seeing lots of water tank distribution by constituency and national members at specific intervals of the year.

The challenge for ABG starting in 2026 is to strengthen the coordination of these collaborating partners, to align with district planning mechanisms, register projects, comply with minimum standards and update our evidence of progress towards achieving targets by 2030. The submission of a Bougainville WaSH Policy to the BEC in mid 2026 will strengthen government and political will to govern the WaSH sector so that these early challenges of governing the sector are responded to mutual effectiveness.



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