



water for people
EVERYONE • FOREVER

INDIA OVERVIEW

Water For People | 2019



India

Home to over 1.3 billion people, India is the world's largest democracy and is composed of 29 states and seven union territories. Separated from mainland Asia by the Himalayas, the country is surrounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, the Arabian Sea in the west, and the Indian Ocean to the south. India is a country of great cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity.

According to the 2017 Joint Monitoring Programme Report, 91% of the population in rural areas and 96% in urban areas have access to at least basic¹ water services. Access to improved sanitation is much lower, with 39% of rural India using safely managed sanitation facilities and 14% of rural and 72% of urban populations using basic services.²

PROGRAM HISTORY

Water For People began working in India in 1996, with a small project in West Bengal to help eliminate naturally occurring arsenic in water supplies. In 2007, Water For People established a country program with an office in Kolkata. In 2008 we started a locally registered arm, called Water For People India Trust, to work in tandem on projects funded by Indian corporations, foundations, and individuals. To date, Water For People has worked in 27 districts within six states and reached over one million people through water and sanitation initiatives.

WATER FOR PEOPLE STRATEGY

In 2017, Water For People launched our new 2017-2021 Strategic Plan: Increase our Impact X 20. The plan outlines our three strategic goals of Proof, Global Leadership, and Scale. In the next five years, we plan to enter new districts and continue to prove our Everyone Forever model (Proof). In India we have already moved into three new blocks in Amravati, Birbhum and South 24 Parganas Districts, with plans to implement a full Everyone Forever program. We continue to prove Everyone Forever in Sheohar, Sagar Island, and Patharpratima.

As an organization, we plan to accelerate social change through collaboration and sharing our learnings (Global Leadership). We will work with national governments to reach full water coverage in four countries globally and use business approaches to increase sanitation coverage (Scale).

PROVING EVERYONE FOREVER

The Everyone Forever model promotes water and sanitation services in targeted districts, and the first goal of our 2017-2021 strategy is to prove this model works. Everyone means every single person – even the hardest to reach, the vulnerable, and the marginalized – has access to water and sanitation services. Forever means empowering communities and governments to provide sustainable services and become aid-independent. Everyone Forever provides a model for greater replication, leading to a push for national full water and sanitation coverage – the ultimate goal of our Strategy.

Lasting water and sanitation solutions can only be achieved when local actors – the private sector, civil society, and local government – are supported. As such, Water For People partners with and builds the skills of the District, Block Governments, Gram Panchayat and Panchayati Raj Institutions (community governments in rural areas), local Self Help Groups, community-based organizations, and local non-governmental organizations.

¹Safely managed water service means water that is located on premises, available when needed, and free from contamination.

Basic water service means an improved water source within 30 minutes round trip collection time.

Safely managed sanitation service means a private, improved facility exists where waste is safely disposed of, in addition to handwashing station with soap.

Basic sanitation service means a private, improved facility that separates waste from human contact.

²See where we get our facts: washdata.org

Everyone Forever Regions

- **Sagar Block, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal:** Sagar Island is one of three blocks where Water For People works in the district of South 24 Parganas. Most of the people in Sagar Island are subsistence farmers, fishers, or manual laborers. As an island, Sagar is prone to experiencing tidal surges and flooding.
- **Patharpratima Block, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal:** Patharpratima is one of three blocks where Water For People works in the district of South 24 Parganas. Located in a river delta, Patharpratima is prone to tidal surges and flooding. Most of the population works in agriculture, fishing, or manual labor.
- **Sheohar District, Bihar:** Sheohar is a rural district in India. Water For People works in all five blocks of Sheohar – Dumri Katsari, Tariani Chowk, Piprahi, Purnahiya, and Sheohar. Sheohar has high levels of poverty, at 70%, and most people in this densely populated district are day laborers and farmers.
- **Namkhana Block, South 24 Parganas District, West Bengal:** Namkhana is in low-lying wetlands where water supplies are commonly contaminated with saline. Most of the population in this block are farmers. One third belong to Scheduled Castes, which are the most disadvantaged of India's caste system.
- **Rajnagar Block, Birbhum District, West Bengal:** Of West Bengal's 23 districts, Birbhum is one of four that are prone to droughts. Rather than agriculture, most people in the Rajnagar block focus on handcraft production and bamboo products. The block has a high concentration of traditionally vulnerable and excluded groups, at 51% of the population.
- **Chikhaldara Block, Amravati District, Maharashtra:** Chikhaldara has a high level of poverty, at 81%. The majority of its population belongs to tribal communities, and most families practice agriculture, cultivating rice and soybeans. The block experiences high level of water insecurity.

In part due to the work of Water For People and its partners in West Bengal, in 2016 Sagar Island and Patharpratima reached every community and every school and clinic with reliable water service. The challenge now is to sustain those services and replicate the approach more broadly within district and state governments. To promote this replication, Water For People is strengthening the capacity of Gram Panchayats and developing plans for scaling the approach across South 24 Parganas and West Bengal.

Proof

Total population impacted by Water For People's water-related work in India to date: 1,071,503

District	Year projected to reach reliable water services at these three levels		
	Community	School & Clinic	Family
Patharpratima	2016	2018	2020
Sagar Island	2016	2017	2020
Sheohar	2018	2024	2018
Namkhana	Baseline to be conducted in 2019		
Rajnagar	Baseline to be conducted in 2020		
Chikhaldara	Baseline to be conducted in 2020		

All dates are projections based on the most current information and dependent upon future revenue acquisition, government co-financing commitments, and other factors. The year indicated is based on Water For People's fiscal/program year, which begins on October 1st and concludes on September 30th.

WATER

In addition to supporting the installation or rehabilitation of community hand pumps, Water For People develops and supports Water User Committees that oversee the operation and maintenance of water points. In India, many handpumps are broken and non-operational due to poor maintenance. Water For People addresses this problem through the Water User Committees and the mobile mechanics program known as *Jalabandhus* (Friends of Water). This program provides training to entrepreneurs on maintaining and repairing handpumps and piped water schemes and connects the *Jalabandhus* to communities, institutions, and local government. The *Jalabandhus* are independent businesses, and some have even signed annual maintenance contracts with governments and public institutions. The *Jalabandhus* program began in South 24 Parganas and has expanded to several other blocks and districts.

Water For People is also strengthening the Village Water and Sanitation Committees at the Gram Panchayat level. These are local government sub-committees that oversee water and sanitation facilities, budgeting, and large-scale operations and maintenance.

The Government of India has a renewed commitment under its National Rural Drinking Water Programme to provide every household a piped water connection of 70 liters per capita per day by 2022. Water For People is supporting this program through capacity building of the Village Water and Sanitation Committees to manage, finance, and maintain these new systems.



SANITATION

Water For People promotes sustainable sanitation in India through a market-driven, research-based approach. A Water For People Sanitation Hub in India drives research and pilots new sanitation products, ideas, and tools. In Sheohar, Water For People is providing loans to sanitation entrepreneurs for developing their businesses (known as Points of Purchase, or POPs). Additionally, we support these entrepreneurs through trainings, business planning, and product supply.

Water For People also partners with local microfinance institutions to provide loans to families and community groups to invest in sanitation facilities. Through loan provision and supporting local sanitation businesses, Water For People assisted with almost 16,000 toilets being built in 2018, which translates to approximately 88,000 people with access to a toilet. This contributes to the Government of India's *Swachh Bharat* Mission for the country to be open defecation free by October 2019. For households in urban slum areas that don't have the space to build a household latrine, Water For People co-finances and constructs community toilet blocks, while supporting local committees to maintain the toilet blocks and ensure sustainability.

Water For People is also researching and market-testing sanitation initiatives to promote safer pit latrine emptying. One method is a household-level pit life extender that separates liquid from solid waste within a latrine or septic tank and treats it to be safe for discharge to the environment. This solution could replace illegal and unsafe pit emptying practices.

SCHOOLS

Water For People works in schools not only to increase access to sustainable sanitation and water services, but also to promote good hygiene practices among students. Alongside local partners, Water For People constructs school sanitation and water infrastructure, building separate toilet blocks for girls and boys that include handwashing stations. To accommodate girls' sanitation needs, facilities for girls include changing rooms that provide the privacy required during menstruation and incinerators for the disposal of sanitary products. Additionally, teenage girls are empowered through menstrual hygiene management trainings and communications.

Water and Sanitation Committees in secondary schools and Child Cabinets in primary schools are formed to oversee the operations and maintenance of the water and sanitation facilities and promote student hygiene. This guarantees the sustainability of the new infrastructure. Schools are also connected to *Nirmal Bandhu* (sanitation workers) who are responsible for the cleaning of toilet blocks on a regular basis.

FUTURE WORK

Water For People, together with local partners, will continue its community and public institution water and sanitation work with increased emphasis on building capacity of local governments to manage water systems. Water For People will continue to support community-level water committees as they operate and maintain their water systems. As part of our sustainability strategy, we will aim to transition support of community Water User Committees to local governments. In schools, we will continue constructing and rehabilitating sanitation blocks and train student Water and Sanitation Committees.

While every community in Sagar and Patharpratima has access to reliable water services, the work there is not done. Water For People is now shifting to focus on Forever to improve sustainability of water services by strengthening institutions responsible for overseeing them. We plan to reach every family in both blocks by 2020.

In Sheohar, Water For People will continue installing and rehabilitating hand pumps. To address the issue of poor water quality, we will make sure there is at least one deep borehole that produces high quality water in every neighborhood. In Sheohar, social art activities like street theater and short films provide education that help promote demand for safe water services. Water For People is also facilitating loans for household sanitation in Sheohar.

In Namkhana, we will focus on improving access to clean and reliable water service by installing and rehabilitating handpumps. In select schools, we will install rainwater harvesting structures alongside handpumps as well as sanitation and hygiene facilities to ensure students have access to child-friendly WASH facilities.

In Rajnagar, we will work with communities to strengthen the management of water resources by helping develop water safety and security plans, training local *Jalabandhus*, and instituting operation and management plans. To improve water infrastructure, we will install mini piped water schemes in a number of villages and construct water points in communities and schools.

In Chikhaldara block, where piped water systems exist but are in disrepair, we plan to co-finance and facilitate the rehabilitation of systems. Given the large tribal population in Amravati, we will continue to expand our school water and sanitation programming to state government-funded, residential tribal schools. As Amravati is a water-scarce area, Water For People is piloting water conservation and capture technologies, such as rainwater catchment systems.

Throughout India, Water For People will continue innovating and researching sanitation solutions, while testing successful initiatives in markets.