

## Monthly Round-Up – March 2021

### EVENTS

#### ▪ World Water Day 2021 – Valuing Water

World Water Day was observed on March 22 on the theme ‘Valuing Water’. Globally, the day celebrates water and raises awareness of the 2.2 billion people living without access to safe water. This year the theme highlighted the importance of what water means to people, its true value and how we can better protect this vital resource.



To intensify efforts to truly value water and ensure equitable access to the life-critical resource, Water For People India organized a series of events across four states – West Bengal (Rajnagar, Khoyrasol, Kolkata, Howrah), Bihar (Sheohar), Maharashtra (Amravati), and Odisha (Ganjam, Khordha). In Amravati, Water For People India team organized activities promoting water saving and conservation practices in small groups due to COVID-19 restrictions in Khatkali, Amzari, Pipadhari, and Kunbhiwagoli villages. Total 126 people were reached.

In Sheohar, the event was observed on March 22 and 23. Activities including signature campaign, debate, and quiz competitions were held in 8 villages reaching 300 people. Miking was done in 41 GPs reaching 50,000 people. In schools, students participated in drawing, essay writing, and speech competition. Approx. 474 students and 30 teachers participated in the celebration. On March 23, a workshop was organized by Water For People India and Sri Ram Foundation in presence of block and district level officials to discuss issues pertaining to water scarcity. A signature campaign was also held to showcase collective action towards water security. Activities were held with farmers in Nabinagar village of Biharsharif block sharing their experiences and ways to increase water use efficiency through modern irrigation techniques.



In West Bengal, World Water Day was celebrated to educate and make communities water prudent through the preparation of Village Water Safety

Security Plan (VWSSP) covering five villages, reaching 329 community members. VWSSP is a process to ensure provision of safe and adequate water supply to each rural household at a convenient location and in a sustainable manner. During the activity, GP representatives were present for better implementation of VWSSP, and findings were enumerated in an application letter and submitted to the respective GPs. A rally was organized by Baghasola water user committee (WUC) to sensitize people about the need and importance of clean water and preserving it. Communities were encouraged to form WUCs to ensure functionality of water points, and minimize their breakdown.



Under the School WASH program, inauguration of renovated school WASH facilities in Rampur Joyrampur Primary School under Chandipur GP in Howrah, West Bengal was organized. Cultural events along with painting competitions were held in West Bengal and Odisha in presence of students, child cabinet members, and stakeholders.

Water For People India also featured in a special news segment *Mission Paani Ground Zero* to celebrate the spirit of water

conservation. The NEWS 18 team covered a story from Sakraul GP, in Nalanda district, Bihar showcasing the contribution of Water For People India with partner RB in ensuring community participation and making them the ultimate custodians of their water resources.

## VISITS

### ▪ Visit to Program Areas - West Bengal

A field visit to project implementation areas in West Bengal was held from March 1-6 by the Senior Management team. The team including Bishwadeep Ghose, Country Director, Wakeel Ahmed Siddiqui, Director Programs and Mrinalini Dixit, Deputy Director, HR & OD visited Maulana Hasrat Mohani Memorial Girls High School for an overview of School WASH



initiatives and rainwater harvesting intervention supported by Ernst & Young Foundation and Samagra Shiksha Mission Kolkata as part of *Project Unnata Vidyalaya Unnata Kolkata*. The team later visited the urban slums to understand the impact of renovated community toilet block in Sonai slum, Kolkata. On March 4, the team visited Rajnagar Madhyamik Balika Vidyalaya located in Rajnagar GP in Birbhum district, and interacted with the child cabinet members and teachers about various WASH interventions and their impact on student learning, health, and dignity,



particularly for girls. They later visited the community water point site at Dampara community and mini piped water supply scheme at Chatina community followed by an interaction with the water user committee for O&M of water points. On March 5-6, the team visited Khoyrasol block for an overview of the various ongoing activities and interacted with

the team and community members to understand the sustainability mechanism.

## IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES



### Construction and Commissioning of PWSS

Water For People India Trust in partnership with Colgate Palmolive (India) Limited has commenced construction of piped water supply schemes in Chichati, Kesharpur, K.G. Dhana and Hirdamal villages in Chikhaldara Block, Amravati district, Maharashtra. Villagers in the form of *shramdaan* (voluntary labour) contributed to the pipeline excavation for household connection and village distribution pipeline. As part of the intervention, Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) with a stand post has been provided to every household along with 1,50,000 litres storage tank by the district rural water supply department. Water user committees have been formed in the villages for regular follow-up of construction work and collection of tariff for O&M. Around 471 households have benefitted from the water supply scheme.

### Impacting Communities through Storytelling



Water For People India is piloting a unique intervention in Sheohar for behaviour change of communities using extinct Lok Katha i.e. storytelling. The process is participatory and is being co-created with the help of local artists, community members and field staff. During the folk-art recovery process, 16 local stories were documented. Based on the story's popularity and its adaptation for behavioural change, the story of Natua

Dayal Singh was selected. After training local artists for 15 days, performance was rolled out on March 23 in all villages in Sheohar block. A first-of-its-kind show, the performance was

applauded by the audience targetting various age groups for promotion of positive WASH behaviours.

- **Handwashing Tippy Tap Installed in Community**

A Tippy tap (outdoor handwashing device) has been installed in Bhabaniganj community in Birbhum district, West Bengal. Tippy tap is a low-cost handwashing station that can be prepared with locally available materials. Handwashing with soap at critical times prevents families from getting diarrhea and other diseases including COVID-19. “Tippy taps” are simple (and usually free) devices that



serve as a convenient access point for water and a visual reminder to wash one’s hands at crucial times. For adoption of safe hygiene practices, Water For People India is encouraging communities to wash their hands with soap after defecation, before handling food, before and after taking meals, and before feeding a child. To facilitate these key behaviours, the project is recommending that families use tippy taps installed near the latrine and kitchen. A tippy tap works by using the foot to tap a lever to tip water out from a container. It means hands can be washed without touching the stand – therefore stopping the spread of dirt and bacteria.

- **Child Cabinet Formation in Schools**



A Child Cabinet formation meeting was held in Bhabanipur Sambhunath High School, Bhabanipur GP involving 22 students. The aim is to strengthen the child cabinet and implement positive peer modelling for safe WASH practices. The child cabinet would also ensure cleanliness within school premises and monitoring of WASH facilities. To encourage the students on their roles

and responsibilities, child cabinet badges have been provided to the students indicating their roles. Additionally, Water For People India team facilitated the strengthening of school development committee reaching 20 members including Panchayat Pradhan, Upa Pradhan, school committee members, Shiksha Bandhua, parents, Headmaster, Teachers and non-teaching staff. A discussion was held on upcoming project objectives and intervention plans in the school. School development committee was also briefed on their responsibilities to help prepare the O&M plan, procuring WASH materials and facilitating minor repairing works.

- **GP Level Hygiene Promotion Session**

Water For People India Trust organized a hygiene promotion session with 26 participants including adolescent girls, GP representatives, ASHAs, ANMs and community members on the ill-effects of open defecation and importance of maintaining personal hygiene. Through the session, focus was given on behaviour change through the depiction of handwashing steps, promoting awareness on usage of toilets, safe treatment and disposal of human body waste and other issues pertaining to good health and overall well-being.



## CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIVITIES

### ▪ Training of PRI members, Block Officials

Water Resources Management is one of the key components of *Project Sheohar* under the 'Everyone Forever' model. The aim is to promote and build capacities of stakeholders from government and community institutions including Gram Panchayats, District and Block Officials and various committees at village level such as VWSC, WUC, WIMC etc.



Water For People India with its implementation partners Sarvshree Seva Sadan, Sri Ram Foundation, Mahila Vikash Gramin and Shilp Kala Prasikshan Sansthan conducted a two-day training on Village Water Safety Security Plan (VWSSP) from March 10-20 in all five blocks of Sheohar District, Bihar. The training program aimed to orient and develop the planning and implementation roadmap on VWSSP including source sustainability,



demand and supply of water, operation and maintenance of water facilities, water quality monitoring, water budgeting and approval of the plan in Gram Sabha. Around 239 people participated in the program. Participants were appreciative of Water

For People India work as part of *Project Sheohar* and their greater involvement focusing on sustainability with the gram panchayats, community members, and local government.