Dear Friends,

The year 2020-21 has been life-changing for all of us. We were caught unawares and unprepared by the novel Coronavirus upending many lives and livelihoods. Coping mechanisms called for changed strategies and methods within the organization and in the community. The concern that the pandemic could further exacerbate the fault lines of water insecurity, especially for the vulnerable population, was not lost on our part. In keeping with our ‘Everyone Forever’ approach, Water For People India Trust decided to re-dedicate its efforts in prioritising the needs of the most vulnerable to ensure that safe water, sanitation, and hygiene services are available and accessible with the active collaboration of communities, local governments, and communities to tackle the various social and economic dimensions of the crisis.

As head of Water For People India Trust for the first year, I am thankful for the loyal and enduring support of our existing and new partners and donors, who allowed us the flexibility to adapt. This is an abridged version of our Annual Report 2020-2021 presenting the key highlights of the past year. Readers can also access our detailed Annual Report for more information.

VISION: A world where every person has access to reliable and safe water and sanitation services.

MISSION: Promote the development of high-quality drinking water and sanitation services, sustained by strong communities, businesses and Governments.

ALIGNMENT TO SDG 6 AND NATIONAL POLICIES

Water For People India Trust is committed to working towards achieving the main targets set within the overall SDG 6 by 2030 and national policies including Niti Aayog WASH indicators; National Urban Sanitation Policy; Swach Bharat Mission (Clean India Campaign); Swajal - The Aspirational District Program, and other goals set by the new Ministry of Jal Shakti.

RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC

Coping with the widespread novel Coronavirus has meant adapting to new norms of operating, interacting, and sharing knowledge digitally as a ‘smart’ organization. We rigorously practiced all standard protocols related to COVID-19 prevention and safety of our staff and the communities we serve. Flexibility and innovation guided our activities in communicating public health information, installing handwashing stations and toilet blocks, and distributing hygiene kits while ensuring the needs and rights of the most vulnerable.

Combinations of social media, phone calls, text messages, videos on varied topics for awareness, posters, pamphlets, folk media such as street theatre, wall paintings, street art were used to spread messages on COVID-19 prevention and WASH. For example wall art, IEC materials, and films were used for awareness in schools. The challenges of reduced mobility of staff were overcome by sharing responsibility with volunteers, user groups formed within the projects, and existing local committees.

Organization staff trained and strengthened these groups to monitor and manage the construction/repairs of water and sanitation infrastructure and hygienic practices. Both staff and volunteers supported government efforts in reaching out to affected people with hygiene and dry ration kits as well and promotion of COVID-19 prevention norms. For example, we created a model of Tippy Tap to promote handwashing in Birbhum district, West Bengal.
OUR PROJECTS

**SWACHH NIRAPAD PARIVESH**
NSF Foundation supports Water For People India Trust in implementing the provision of water services and systems in several districts, including Rajnagar and sanitation services to every person, family and public institution in these blocks. The initiatives are supported by Skoll Foundation and Water For People India Trust.

**EVERYONE FOREVER PROGRAM**
The program operates in Sagar, Patharpurama, and Namkhana blocks in South 24 Parganas district, West Bengal. It ensures safe and reliable water and sanitation services to every person, family, and public institution in these blocks. The initiatives are supported by Skoll Foundation and Water For People India Trust.

**PROJECT SHEOHAR**
The program reaches out to every household, community, and public institution (health centers and schools) in Sheohar district, Bihar. To improve their quality of life through sustained access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The long-term partnership includes Water For People, One Drop Foundation and charity: water collaborating with the government, social art groups, civil society organizations, and private agencies.

**THE WATER INITIATIVE**
Water For People India Trust partnered with Colgate Palmolive (India) Ltd. to design and implement the program, "The Water Initiative," along the lines of the Swajal scheme based in Chikhaldara block, Amravati district, Maharashtra. It aims to ensure last-mile coverage with safe drinking water through strengthening water sources; piped water supply systems and functional household tap connections that are operated and managed by the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). The focus is on increased access for women and adolescent girls.

**MISSION PAANI**
The initiative is a collaborative effort by Reckitt Benckiser and Water For People India Trust in alignment with the two initiatives of Jal Jeewan Mission and Jal Shakti Abhiyan launched by the Government of India in 2019. We aim to build water conscious households. In the initial phase of the project, from April 2020 - March 2023, we will build a proof of concept for the proposed model for Mission Paani, viz. the “Conserve-Sustain-Transform” model in two blocks of Amravati (Maharashtra) and Nalanda (Bihar).

**WHAT WE DO: THEMATIC AREAS**

**WATER:** Supporting individuals and the community to access water; building water points and systems; facilitating testing and treatment of water for safety and forming initiatives such as Water User Committees (WUCs) and Child Cabinets (CC) to manage and operate the systems so that they last.

**SANITATION:** Providing affordable and functional sanitation for families by facilitating access to skilled contractors, waste management including menstrual waste and strengthening the rural supply chain through sanitation shops to build self-reliant communities.

**HYGIENE:** Promoting key practices for good health such as using toilets, handwashing, and safe storage and disposal of excreta. Promotion of COVID-19 was added to the usual WASH sessions. Apart from the local CBOs and government, farmers and school teachers were included and trained on the Village Water Safety and Security Plan for each site in West Bengal.

**WASH in Schools (SWASH):** Facilitating access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities in schools, enabling WASH in schools by provision of facilities for menstrual hygiene management (MHM), promoting positive WASH practices, and strengthening Child Cabinets and School Development Committee to monitor management of facilities and behaviour change.

**CROSS-CUTTING THEMATIC AREAS**
- Social Art for Behaviour Change
- Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Research
- Gender Equity and Social Inclusion
- Institutional building
- Pilots and Innovation

Despite pandemic-related restrictions, we adapted our strategies to the new norms and continued to establish sustainable solutions.

**WE ENHANCED KNOWLEDGE AND BUILT CAPACITIES**
Along with in-house training, the team enhanced the knowledge and skills of community based groups such as WUCs, MCs, Child Cabinets, and sub-committees under the PRI; frontline workers such as AWWs and Government officials (PRI/ULB) to increase their efficiency in the provision of WASH services. This year, information related to hygiene practices and prevention of COVID-19 was added to the usual WASH sessions. Apart from the local CBOs and government, farmers and school teachers were included and trained on developing the Village Water Safety and Security Plan for each site in West Bengal.

**WE FACILITATED CONVERGENCE**
Our organizational models are designed to include all stakeholders – communities, local governing bodies at Gram Panchayat, district and state levels, agencies, and departments implementing programs and schemes related to water and sanitation. Apart from consultations with government officials from departments involved in education, drinking water and sanitation, agriculture and livelihood, we also worked with the health department and police force for COVID-19 prevention and management.

**WE LEVERAGED RESOURCES**
In facility creation, co-financing is a mandatory term of engagement and contributions are raised for operation & maintenance (O&M). Convergence facilitated such leveraging of funds from existing schemes and PRI/ block budgets, wherever possible. Positive examples include, approximately 18.79% co-financing from GP and Block level departments in Birbhum district and co-financing for each site (Schools & Community Toilets) in West Bengal. In Sheohar, the PRI has already approved 18 Village Water Safety and Security plans and incorporated commitments in the Gram Panchayat Development Plan. A tariff system was introduced to build an O&M fund with financial contribution from each family that uses the water point. Developing linkages with government schemes (MNREGA) has helped to create livelihood opportunities.
WE INNOVATED

Innovative approaches include building low-cost handwashing stations, constructing soak pits, promotion of handwashing through the tippy tap model, facilitating running water with metering system, building water points on high raised platforms so that they are functional during floods, and installation of low-cost incinerators and child-friendly handwashing stations in schools. Water management initiatives such as rooftop rainwater harvesting through construction of School WASH complex was also introduced. The cross-cutting strategy of Social Art for Behaviour Change (SABC) was used to generate enhance understanding and retention of key WASH messages creatively in schools and the community. Examples include wall writing in schools, street plays, community videos, puppet/magic shows, films, and creating 'inspire' tools. The team is working on a mobile-based application to strengthen monitoring and data management.

WE FOCUSED ON SUSTAINABILITY

Strengthened and trained community and school-based groups effectively conducted operation and maintenance activities during the pandemic. The Jalabandhus, Anganwadi workers, School teachers, and water user committees monitored and supervised the operations and also promoted hygiene messages. Revenue generation systems such as monthly user fee cards and pay-and-use model were introduced to facilitate community contributions for service provision and thus enhance ownership. We used a combination of approaches – community based management, system strengthening and a business model approach- to sustain WASH services.

CHANGED LIVES: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

“My students are now happy using the renovated WASH infrastructure. They are washing hands with soap and have shared their learning with their families and community.”

Babuswar Soren, Headmaster Bansbona Primary School, Birbhum

“The first street play I attended was an eye-opener and a turning point in my life. I learned about waterborne diseases and the importance of drinking safe water and proper handling practices. It reminded me of my responsibility towards my family and village. Hence, I use every opportunity to spread awareness and help others.”

Urmila Devi, Sheohar

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Judicious financial management of any organization is critical to achieving its mission and objectives since it gives confidence to the various stakeholders and members. It also helps to mobilize the financial resources required to sustain the management and operations of the programs and generates confidence in the patrons who look for transparency and accountability. This has become increasingly important in the existing challenging environment for NGOs. Therefore, Water For People India Trust follows a transparent financial system with sufficient checks and balances.

JOIN US TO END THE WATER AND SANITATION CRISIS!

Despite COVID-19 emphasizing the importance of hand hygiene for prevention, 3 billion people worldwide (UNICEF Report) including children, do not have access to soap and handwashing facilities. Access to safe water, basic hygiene and integrated WASH services for all is our first line of defence against COVID-19 and a range of infections.

YOU can help change the way we all use and save water. Your support can ensure a focused action to meet the WASH challenge, ensure access for all and help create a ‘water secure’ future.

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