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VAISHNAVI SURESH

# **WOMEN + WATER ALLIANCE**

## **YEAR 6 & FINAL REPORT**

March 2023

**Submitted BY:**

Patrick Drown (Specialist, Water Stewardship, W+W Alliance)

**REVIEWED BY:**

Alison Gilbert (Chief of Party, W+W Alliance and Manager, Water Stewardship)

Pavneet Kaur (Deputy Chief of Party, W+W Alliance and Sr. Specialist, Water Stewardship)

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## ACRONYMS

AFT	Accessible Family Toilet
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CLA	Collaborating, Learning, and Adapting
CMRC	Community Managed Resource Committee
ESG	Environment, Society, and Governance
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FTK	Field Testing Kit
FY	Fiscal Year
GoP	Good Operating Practice
I4DI	Institute for Development Impact
ICRW	International Center for Research on Women
IRB	Institutional Review Board
ISC	Institute for Sustainable Communities
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KRC	Knowledge Resource Center
LG	Learning Group (P.A.C.E.)
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MAVIM	Mahila Arthik Vikash Mahamandal
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research & Learning
MFI	Microfinance Institutions
MIS	Management Information System
MSRLM	Maharashtra State Rural Livelihood Mission

MPSRLM	Madhya Pradesh State Rural Livelihood Mission
NbS	Nature-based Solutions
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NRLM	National Rural Livelihood Mission
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
P.A.C.E.	Personal Advancement & Career Enhancement
PHED	Public Health Engineering Department
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PWSS	Piped Water Supply System
SBM	Swachh Bharat Mission
SHG	Self Help Group
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
SRLM	State Rural Livelihood Mission
SWSM	State Water and Sanitation Mission
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAP	Village Action Plan
VWSC	Village Water and Sanitation Committees
W+W Alliance	Women + Water Alliance
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WRC	Water Resilience Coalition
WSP	Water Security Plan
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gap Inc. is proud to close an enriching and impactful six years of implementation of the USAID Gap Inc. Women + Water Alliance. Looking back at six years of programming, Gap Inc. has learned immensely about the challenges and range of locally driven solutions related to women's empowerment and improving access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) in communities touched by the apparel industry in India. Thanks to this partnership, Gap Inc. is now able to articulate the power of WASH and women's empowerment work in both strengthening relationships with cotton growing communities and building pride for Gap Inc. among employees.

The Women + Water Alliance launched in 2017 with five partners and ambitious goals. Over six years, the partnership's theory of change evolved to prioritize activities that proved most effective in reaching women's empowerment and WASH goals. Learning and adaptation included adding a sixth partner, WaterAid, to strengthen the partnership's community water management approach. Through COVID-19 partners adapted their approach to implementation to allow for virtual coaching and distanced learning to progress on empowerment and WASH goals. To realize the full potential of the W+W Alliance and make up for delays associated with COVID-19 related implementation, the W+W Alliance was extended for one additional year, moving its end date from 2022 to 2023.

**Upon the close of the Women + Water Alliance, Gap Inc. is proud to share that it has empowered over 2.4 million people to improve their access to water and sanitation, exceeding the Alliance goal.**

Recognizing the value that the W+W Alliance has delivered, Gap Inc. is supporting the next evolution of Women + Water by collaborating with the Water Resilience Coalition and WaterAid to launch a new collective action partnership. The new evolution will build upon the existing Women + Water program structure, government relationships, and reporting mechanisms—and with new corporate partners from across industries, the Women + Water Collaborative will accelerate the impact to reach additional communities in water-stressed regions.

Throughout the course of six years, the W+W Alliance is proud to share the following key achievements:

- CARE formed a total of 6,478 Learning Groups (LGs) in which 214,892 women were enrolled in P.A.C.E. life skills and self-efficacy trainings, exceeding the life of the program target of 200,000 women. 178,410 P.A.C.E. participants graduated from the program, exceeding the W+W Alliance target of 160,000. Additional noteworthy achievements include holding more than 100 Interface Meetings in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and the documentation of 112 stories of change.
- WaterAid teams worked to institutionalize community-led water quality monitoring and surveillance system in all intervention villages, resulting in a total of 13,799 women trained on the use of field-testing kits (FTKs) and the distribution of FTKs in 1,987 villages.
- WaterAid staff have ensured participatory development of Village Action Plans in 2,494 villages since 2019. Of the approved plans, water supply has been started in 1,028 villages. The total amount leveraged by the government departments towards these approved water supply schemes as a result

of the Village Action Plans completed by the W+W Alliance is approximately Rs. 126,731.21 Lakhs (or USD \$153,575).

- Water.org disbursed 52,946 loans to households, reaching 254,140 people with improved access to water and sanitation, and mobilizing 8.91 million USD in capital from February 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022. Cumulatively, over the life of the W+W Alliance, Water.org partners disbursed 129,805 loans and mobilized 23.26 million USD in capital.
- ISC collaborated with 4,140 cotton farmers to promote good operating practices that lower input use (water, fertilizer, and pesticide use), reducing the water footprint of farmers and greenhouse gas emissions while also improving yield and lowering the cost of cultivation for the farmers.
- The Institute for Development Impact (I4DI) conducted the final/endline evaluation of the Women + Water Alliance across all activities. To provide W+W with relevant information about program progress over the years, I4DI compared data collected at endline with baseline data collected in 2018. Following data analysis, in 2022 I4DI facilitated a post-evaluation action plan for the Alliance partners to ensure that the learnings from evaluation findings are used to inform decision making and improve development outcomes for the Alliance.
- ICRW successfully completed an end line survey on the P.A.C.E. program in Madhya Pradesh despite delays and uncertainties that arose from the COVID-19 pandemic. The evaluation demonstrates that key P.A.C.E. outcomes—self-efficacy and self-assertive efficacy—have a positive influence on adoption and maintenance of WASH behaviors among P.A.C.E. graduates.

## YEAR 6 PROGRESS

### GAP INC.

As the Women + Water Alliance completed its period of performance, Gap Inc. and partners maintained focus on verifying, communicating, and acting on the success and learnings from the W+W Alliance in Year 6. Gap Inc. leveraged opportunities to share achievements and lessons learned from collective action for community water resilience amongst business peers and development actors, as Gap Inc. elevated women champions through videos on World Water Day (March 2022) and SIWI World Water Week (August 2022). Gap Inc. also leveraged its channels to announce key milestones and the ultimate achievements of empowering 2 million people to improve their access to clean water and sanitation (August 2022) and the enrollment of 200,000 women in P.A.C.E. (February 2023). This year Gap Inc. convened key institutional stakeholders in India to share the program's successes and learnings through a week of program close-out and knowledge-sharing events (December 2022).

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Adaptive Program Management:** In Year 6 (FY 2022) of the Women + Water Alliance, Gap Inc. focused on several priorities, including program management, amplification and communication, and leadership in corporate water stewardship. The Women + Water Alliance surpassed its goal of empowering 2 million people to improve their access to water and sanitation through WaterAid and Water.org interventions.



In Year 6, the W+W Alliance continued addressing needs for WASH awareness and good WASH practices through its partners' reach as well as through strong ground-level activities. Gap Inc. worked with implementing partners to strategize and realign program activities and program targets for Year 6, based on COVID-19 related government protocols.

Twelve indicators were removed from the renewed work plan in the Year 6 of Women + Water Alliance due to non-usage of indicators for the programmatic activities. Target changes for existing indicators were made in discussion with partners and alignment with USAID. These modifications were made in the MERL strategy and Performance Indicator Reference Sheet (PIRS). For partners to realize real-time data monitoring, new dashboards were created.

- **I4DI Endline Evaluation:** Institute for Development Impact, an evaluation and learning partner for the W+W Alliance, conducted the final endline evaluation in Year 6 of the program. Gap Inc. supported I4DI with the feedback on preliminary endline study findings and analysis methodology before I4DI wrote the final endline report. Gap Inc. facilitated interviews with the implementing partners on their work in changes in practice by the government, private sector, and civil society stakeholders on WASH investments and water stewardship practices influenced by the W+W Alliance.
- **Amplification of Women + Water through Gap Inc's channels:** Year 6 was a big year for communications and amplification about the Women + Water Alliance and its successes. For World Water Day in March '22, Gap Inc. shared the "Inspiring Overview" video on its social media channels and announced that the W+W Alliance had empowered 1.5 million people to improve their access to water and sanitation, a key milestone. During World Water Week in April '22, Gap Brand CEO Mark Breitbard opened a virtual SIWI session by announcing the achievement of the 2 million people goal before launching a panel with W+W implementing partners about learnings from the program. Gap brand leveraged its social media platforms to reach large mainstream audiences by sharing a video of Pramila, a cotton farmer and water champion. USAID, W+W partners, and Gap Inc. leadership amplified the announcements on their social media and LinkedIn platforms. Around the time of program close, Gap Inc. coordinated with CARE to share a video of Pooja, a P.A.C.E. participant, and amplified the video on Gap Inc's LinkedIn alongside the announcement of enrolling more than 200k women in the P.A.C.E. program. Gap Inc.'s continued amplification elevated recognition of the Women + Water Alliance as a leading program for impact, collective action, and innovation in WASH partnerships.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **Showcased Women + Water Alliance in the field:** In the final year of W+W Alliance, Gap Inc. and the implementing partners conducted multiple field visits to showcase partners' work to delegates from the USAID India Mission and to Gap Inc. senior ESG leadership, along with senior leaders from implementing partner organizations. Delegates interacted with the beneficiaries and Alliance partners to better understand the processes and results of implementation. In addition to making W+W's impact real for the visiting delegates, the visits also helped serve to identify opportunities for future collaboration.
- **Hosted W+W Alliance Reflections & Close-out Events:** USAID, Gap Inc., and its implementing and evaluation partners closed out W+W Alliance with a special gathering in India,

which included participation from national and state level representatives from the Government of India (GoI). During the national level dissemination event of the W+W Alliance in Delhi in December 2022, the Ministry of Jal Shakti delivered a keynote address; the Secretary for the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation gave in-person remarks; leadership from Gap Inc., USAID, and the implementing partners reflected on key learnings; and representatives from W+W communities showed great poise, confidence, and leadership as they shared their personal stories throughout the day.

- **Earned recognition of programmatic success through awards and nominations:** The Women + Water case, Expanding the Reach of Women + Water in India Through Collaboration and Adaptation, was a winner of USAID's 2022 Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) case competition. The case was authored by I4DI and was selected as among the top 10 among 120 cases from 70 countries this year. The W+W Alliance was also shortlisted for the 2022 UN Women Asia-Pacific WEPs Awards and received Honorable Mention in USAID Global Waters 2022 Water for the World Photo Contest.
- **Conducted annual diligence:** Gap Inc. conducted annual due diligence of implementing partners, including in-person field visits, and determined all partners to be low risk. Deloitte conducted the annual independent audit for FY2021 with no findings.

## CHALLENGES & REMEDIATION

- **Personnel changes across W+W:** In the final year of W+W Alliance, 2022 saw significant personnel changes among key point people across Gap Inc. and implementing partner organizations. Gap Inc. hired a Sr. Manager to support activities as prime implementer and partners ensured smooth transitions and USAID compliance training for new personnel.

## SUPPORTING MATERIALS

- World Water Day (March 2022): Newsroom article and social media amplifying milestone of 1.5M people empowered
  - Gap Inc. Newsroom post: [This World Water Day, We Celebrate a Milestone for Enriching Communities Along Our Supply Chains](#)
  - Instagram ([video](#) earned 905 Likes compared to 119 Likes in 2021; 4k impressions)
  - LinkedIn ([post](#) earned 197 Likes; 13k impressions)
  - Leadership LinkedIn posts from Gap Inc. [Sonia Syngal](#), Gap Brand CEO [Mark Breitbard](#), and Gap Inc. Head of ESG [Judy Adler](#) (earned a combined 279 likes)
  - Twitter ([tweet](#) earned 5k impressions)
- World Water Week (August, 2022): SIWI panel featuring W+W learnings and announcement of 2M goal achievement

- SIWI virtual panel, “[Unpacking lessons learned from collective action for community water resilience](#),” with opening remarks from Gap CEO Mark Breitbard, then panel with USAID, Gap Inc., and representatives from CARE, WaterAid, Water.org, and ISC to share key learnings.
- Gap Inc. Newsroom post: [USAID Gap Inc. Women + Water Alliance Exceeds Goal To Empower Two Million People To Improve Their Access To Water & Sanitation](#)
- LinkedIn posts from Gap CEO [Mark Breitbard](#) and Gap Inc. Head of ESG [Judy Adler](#) about the goal achievement.
- The news was picked up externally by [Apparel Resources & Ecotextile.com](#).
- Gap brand shared an [Instagram video featuring Pramila](#), a cotton farmer and water champion who participated in Women + Water activities.
- P.A.C.E. Achievement: Pooja’s Story video (January, 2023)
  - Coordinated with CARE to share P.A.C.E. participant Pooja’s story through CARE LinkedIn post and highlighted “200k women enrolled” achievement on [Gap Inc. LinkedIn](#)
- Winner of USAID’s 2022 collaborating, learning and adapting (CLA) case competition: [Expanding the Reach of Women + Water in India Through Collaboration and Adaptation](#) (authored by I4DI)
- Honorable Mention in USAID Global Waters [2022 Water for the World Photo Contest](#).

## **CARE**

CARE implements the P.A.C.E. program to help women gain the confidence, knowledge, and skills needed to make life decisions. Empowered with these skills, women can subsequently improve their access to WASH products and services through making changes in their homes and communities.

The P.A.C.E. life skills and self-efficacy program, with its WASH curriculum, is designed to support women with leadership skills as they take the initiative to improve water infrastructure and use of WASH facilities and services in their communities. CARE has exceeded the goal to reach 200,000 women since the beginning of the project in 2017. CARE and its partners have made a difference in the lives of 75,017 women in Maharashtra and 139,843 women in Madhya Pradesh.

The biggest challenge post the W+W Alliance, as with any development project, is to sustain the learning and impact of training as the program ends. Women P.A.C.E. participants have achieved a basic level of knowledge and skills that can result in changes in their participation in local



## IMPACT



### • Direct

P.A.C.E.'s findings have several significant practical implications for women's lives. Many fruitful and life-changing changes have occurred in the lives of these P.A.C.E. participants.

### • Indirect

P.A.C.E. training has ensured that the outcomes are amplified and speak for themselves through the lens of women's stories of change. Non-P.A.C.E. participants who look up to the changes in the lives of P.A.C.E. participants have noticed the positive influence. The willingness to do the same in the future ensures widespread impact.

politics and their ability to demand improved WASH services in their community. This group of women, if provided representation at the village Panchayati level can raise and suggest solutions for issues related to the betterment of women. P.A.C.E. participants can play a dominant role in the decision-making process at the community level and make suitable recommendations for improving the status of women, along with improvements in overall health of children and families. A good number of women, many more than previously, are competing in local politics, demonstrating vast strides towards gender equity. Women are also making substantial contributions by giving suggestions for raising educational standards and addressing water sanitation and fuel problems - areas that are generally not discussed or prioritized by men. Systematic awareness is needed for enhancing rural women's capacity to take up their new responsibilities as local legislators.

Due to the P.A.C.E. program, more than 200,000 women have increased their self-efficacy. Although the focus of the program was on enrollment and graduation from P.A.C.E., there are ways to continue and further advance the skills of women through government training programs and government-led initiatives through community-level Self Help Groups.

## YEAR 6 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **High graduation rates:** By the end of Quarter 3 Year 6, a cumulative of 6,478 Learning Groups were formed, in which 214,892 women enrolled and 178,410 have graduated from the program, which means an overall 83% graduation rate. The program selected 6,478 P.A.C.E. Champions and 4,300 Male Champions to be official community-level resources. In Year 6, 1,471 Learning Groups were formed wherein 52,718 women enrolled and 44,292 women graduated (84% graduation rate). Also, in Year 6, 1,471 P.A.C.E. Champions and 982 Male Champions were selected.
- **100 Interface Meetings in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra:** Interface Meetings are an opportunity for P.A.C.E. participants to meet with local government representatives and share their concerns and ideas for change and improvements in their community. It is a meeting set up by CARE for P.A.C.E. participants to practice their public-speaking skills and to demonstrate confidence and agency. During the meetings, P.A.C.E. participants discussed issues and challenges in their communities, mostly related to water, health, hygiene, and sanitation. Each meeting had about 8-10 government representatives and 80-100 participants from the community including P.A.C.E.

Champions, Community Mobilizers, and Male Champions. Women make up more than half of the participants in Interface Meetings. In addition to creating space for women to voice concerns, the platform provided an opportunity for government officials to share the latest information about various government entitlement schemes.

- **Government investment due to citizen action:** After undergoing training, many women have taken action individually and collectively to improve their access to water. Even though monitoring post-P.A.C.E. is not formally part of the program, CARE has documented 112 cases in which P.A.C.E. participants have requested and received improved drinking water access, road access, or other services from the government as a result of their activism.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- **P.A.C.E. Champions and Learning Group members make strides in joining local government leadership:** During P.A.C.E. implementation, trainers strongly encouraged women to join village and Panchayat committees such as Water Committees, Village Health and Sanitation Committees, Self Help Groups (for accessing finance), and School Management Committees. Through joining local governance committees, P.A.C.E. women demonstrated leadership and communication skills gained through their training. According to estimates gathered from P.A.C.E. trainers, thousands of P.A.C.E. participants have joined institutions like local committees, Self Help Groups, Non-Government Organizations, and Panchayats.
- **Community-level resources:** 10,000 Champions, 590 trainers, and 5,800 mobilizers have been trained by CARE as community-level resources to push for continued improvements in the community. Since these participants are from the local community, they can integrate into local institutions and can apply the P.A.C.E. learnings for further advancement of their community.

#### KEY LEARNINGS

- **Engaging men to support women:** Involvement of men in P.A.C.E. significantly contributed to the support of their spouses in consistent participation of the program. For example, men were supportive of their wives to attend and participate in the (sometimes long and late-night) P.A.C.E. training sessions. CARE credits this to orientation sessions where community members were informed of the purpose and content of P.A.C.E. where they could ask questions, express doubts, etc. Additionally, when women raised their issues in front of concerned officials, men supported women to confidently share their views and collectively meet the government authority figures to resolve the issues.
- **Further male engagement:** Although the program has included men in some programming, room for further awareness and engagement exists. Involving men is essential for expanding the impact and sustainability of the program because in most cases in rural India, women will request approval of men to attend P.A.C.E. meetings, attend government meetings, and spend money or time on improving household WASH practices. Therefore, including men in conversations helps create the enabling environment for empowered women to thrive.

- **P.A.C.E. could benefit adolescents:** The P.A.C.E. curriculum is designed for rural women covering a broad range of ages from 18-55. P.A.C.E., therefore, does not include adolescent girls who may benefit from a version of P.A.C.E. that is specifically tailored for adolescent girls (and boys).
- **Pointed government engagement can further success:** In order to build sustainability, government officials should be involved in the program from the beginning and develop a budget for follow-up structures to continue to support rural women and promote transparency, openness and communication. Women and the wider community benefit more from P.A.C.E. programs when active follow-up and continued skill-building occurs to promote improvement in livelihood opportunities and community development.

## CHALLENGES & REMEDIATION

- **Sustaining learning for 200,000 P.A.C.E. women:** As a result of the P.A.C.E. training, women's increased self-efficacy and agency has contributed to women's confidence to positively influence their community. After the project, however, some women may look to the W+W Alliance for additional support. To address this, these 200,000 women have been encouraged to link with various livelihood programs of the government, as well as microfinance institutions, and Self-Help Groups, so that P.A.C.E. knowledge can be applied and lead to impact.
- Additional implementation challenges and recommended remediation:
  - Festive and harvesting seasons and local elections delay P.A.C.E. sessions – these need to be taken into consideration during annual and quarterly planning and the setting of targets.
  - Limited time between the closing of a cohort and starting a new cohort. As a remediation, a one month gap between closing and starting the new cohort is recommended. However, often with delays due to the above seasons, leaving a gap between cohorts was rarely feasible.
  - Interface Meetings require attendance of sufficient government officials to ensure representation – some meetings did not have sufficient government stakeholders. Advanced notice and engagement of government with the W+W Alliance is recommended.
  - Retaining trainers until completion of cohort – due to trainers being hired as consultants (and not CARE staff), and due to demanding travel and schedules, some trainers leave before a cohort is finished. This delayed implementation in some areas. In future programs, trainers need specific incentive to successfully complete a cohort – and with quality.

## ISC

The Institute for Sustainable Communities (ISC) engagement in Year 6 of the W+W Alliance was for a period of 5 months (February to June 2022). During this period, the focus of activities was largely on dissemination of work completed in the previous years, especially relating to the initiative on promoting water stewardship in cotton growing areas and research on Articulating the Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus. ISC undertook research in the context of building community resilience to climate change in cotton cultivation through nature-based solutions and engaged with WaterAid to mainstream crop

water budgeting in the development of Village Action Plans (VAPs) by WaterAid. Major Year 6 activities included:

## YEAR 6 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



Research on Nature Based Solutions in Cotton Cultivation



Cotton-Climate-Water Nexus Report Dissemination Products: Factsheet and Journal Paper



Dissemination Events

- **Research Report on Nature-based solution in Cotton Cultivation** – Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are defined by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as “actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems, which address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.” Cotton cultivation has a high environmental footprint, involving high use of water, fertilizers, and pesticides. ISC’s field interventions showed that it is possible to utilize nature based solutions to reduce water use, GHG emissions, and the concentration of chemicals in soil. The potential impact of this work is the improvement of groundwater resources and a decrease in the cost of cultivation in cotton farming alongside improving yield.

Taking NbS initiatives further, ISC undertook secondary research by engaging academics and practitioners and developed a report titled “Nature-based solution in cotton cultivation.” The report outlined the need, benefits, and means to scale nature-based solutions in cotton cultivation in India. The report outlines the following two measures to promote nature-based solutions in agriculture, specifically in cotton cultivation: 1) focus on capacity building and knowledge sharing among farmers and agriculture extension officers and 2) streamline government subsidies to resource conservation-based outcomes instead of input-based subsidies. Under the National Mission on Sustainable Agriculture, the central government and various state governments provide subsidies on natural inputs, financial incentives to encourage the promotion, and adoption of sustainable approaches to farming. Convergence with these initiatives will be useful in promotion of NbS. NbS allows farmers to focus on an integrated approach in farming and create various successful nature-based models to motivate farmers and other stakeholders to adopt more sustainable ways of farming.

- **Dissemination Events:** In order to share the results of ISC’s interventions and to build a discourse on the approaches implemented under the W+W Alliance with stakeholders across government (officials from central and state departments), academia, and civil society organizations working in this space, ISC organized a state level workshop in Pune, Maharashtra on April 08, 2022. The workshop enabled discussion among scientists, researchers, and practitioners to explore approaches and solutions to build the resilience of cotton farmers, improve production practices, and promote the conservation of natural resources (mainly soil and water). The main recommendations emerging from the discussions included reducing the vulnerability of cotton farmers, securing livelihoods, enhancing farm incomes, and conserving natural resources. Specific approaches outlined during the discussions include the following:

- As a part of vulnerability reduction, it was suggested to get available climate data calibrated and validated by concerned departments for better accuracy. And for climate risk management, risk forecasting with related field operations to minimize the penalties were discussed.
- The role of macronutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium, sulphur) and micronutrients (boron, molybdenum, and zinc) in quality crop production and managing biotic and abiotic stress management was explained. There was discussion on deteriorating soil health and the need for C: N ratio management to improve crop productivity. A holistic and sustainable approach to improving soil health and crop productivity was discussed. Emphasis was laid on convergence with government schemes such as on soil fertility maps.
- As a part of sustainable cotton production, organic farming techniques were explained to improve cotton quality and quantity. Scientists, researchers and practitioners who attended the workshop advised to using specific varieties for rainfed and irrigated farmers as the soil and water requirements vary with the soil type. Also, the benefit of cultivating climate resilient varieties was discussed.
- To improve awareness about improved farm practices, participants discussed the dissemination of timely and accurate crop advisory with demonstration plots to reduce the cost of cultivation without affecting soil fertility and productivity. Workshop participants suggested following integrated pest management practices from land preparation to save the crop from pest disease infestation.



Picture 1 Ceremonial release of report



Picture 2 Participants of the workshop

- In addition, ISC identified opportunities and made presentations in external programs to share the findings of the Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus research. This ensured widest possible coverage of the report and its findings across a variety of stakeholders both in India and internationally. These include:
  - Presentation at Alliance for Water Stewardship Textile Working Group Meeting (April 06,2022): attended by representatives from around 15 organizations across textile value chain including Gap Inc, H&M, Bestseller, ZDHC, Alliance for Water Stewardship, World Wildlife Fund, ISC amongst others.
  - Presentation at Better Cotton Initiative’s India Partners Meeting 3 sessions during April 1-30: attended by 70+ partners of Better Cotton Initiative in India.



- Presentation at Forum for Future multi-stakeholder roundtable meeting on Sustainable Cotton on February 24,2022: Attending by representative from Central and State Government, NGOs working in the cotton cultivation sector.
- **Integration of agriculture water management components in WaterAid Village Action Plans (VAPs):** WaterAid is developing VAPs for the sustainability of drinking water sources as part of its initiative under the W+W Alliance. As part of the convergence efforts, ISC and WaterAid have worked together to integrate crop water budgeting as part of the village action plan development. ISC and WaterAid reviewed the VAPs template and ISC shared information relating to crop water budgeting, data, and evidence to integrate agriculture water management (both water efficiency and water pollution) in VAPs developed by WaterAid. ISC partner staff in the Dhar district participated in community meetings of WaterAid to share the need for reducing water use in cotton cultivation for long term sustainability of water sources.

## KEY LEARNINGS

- Collaboration for sustainability of cotton cultivation: Promotion of Nature-based Solutions and building adaptation of cotton growing communities will be key to secure the cotton crop and cotton farmers from the climate risks. A lot of organizations are either working in the space for enhancing sustainability for the cotton crop in India or are planning to do this work. Such organizations span the public, private, civil society, and academia realms. There is a need for greater dialogue and engagement across these stakeholder groups. State level engagement will be an ideal lever for fostering greater collaboration amongst the stakeholders since it will be ideal for convergence of efforts of the agriculture, climate and water department under the governance system of the state.

## CHALLENGES & REMEDIATION

- **Recognition of Unique Approach developed by ISC for the research on Articulating the Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus:** Across every dissemination event, there was an appreciation for the unique approach adopted by ISC for undertaking the study. This study is a first of its kind for cotton and the approach of integrating climate data analysis with participatory vulnerability assessments was recognized as a good approach to link climate risks with the on-ground impacts on the cotton crop and cotton farmers.
- **Limitations with NbS research:** While the Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus report is a first of its kind compilation for the cotton crop, given the short time duration of ISC's engagement in Year 6 of the W+W Alliance, ISC could base this research primarily only on literature review. To mitigate this limitation, ISC validated findings with organizations implementing NbS approaches. An overall improved approach would have included field visits to see and document the success of NbS initiatives.

## SUPPORTING MATERIALS

- Blog: Assessing the reasons for adoption of good operating practices (GoPs) [in cotton farming](#)

- Factsheet on Articulating Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus Study outlining the approaches, methodology and outcomes of the study for a wider audience. This factsheet is a visual snapshot of the full Articulating Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus study, published in Year 5. ([Link to the full report](#))

## **WATER.ORG**

In Year 6, there was a strong uptake in loan disbursements with a 4.87% increase from Year 5. Partners disbursed 52,946 loans and mobilized 8.91 million USD in capital from February 1, 2022, to September 30, 2022. Additionally, Water.org conducted nine trainings for partners to support program sustainability. The topics of the trainings included WSS loan products like retrofitting toilets and bathrooms, accessible family toilets, rainwater harvesting, demand generation, technical training on toilet construction, creating awareness among borrowers on the importance of improved WSS access and the resulting need to avail WSS loans, and how to use communication materials, such as videos, brochures, flyers, posters, and banners, to raise awareness within communities about water, sanitation, health, and hygiene.

## **YEAR 6 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

- **Expansion of Water.org programs with the State Rural Livelihood Missions (SRLMs):** In Maharashtra, Water.org was approved to operate in 54 blocks (from 17 blocks in Year 5) in six districts, which include districts served by the W+W Alliance program as well as the overall ecosystem. Similar discussions were held with the Madhya Pradesh Government for expansion across 52 districts within the state in Year 6, but these did not progress due to bureaucratic changes. The work with SRLMs is significant because by working with a government program, we are directly influencing and strengthening the state ecosystem. Water.org worked with the SRLMs, the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), Grameen, UNICEF, and others to sustain the programs that Water.org started with the SRLMs.
  - Three field training coordinators were recruited to help coordinate and support the Madhya Pradesh program. In May 2022, a training and appreciation event for partners and staff was held.
  - In June 2022, 54 batches of trainings were conducted in Maharashtra and 21 batches in Madhya Pradesh.
  - The MPSRLM issued circulars on WSS loans to block and district teams in three districts of Madhya Pradesh on September 7, 2022.
  - The Maharashtra State Rural Livelihoods Mission (MSRLM) conducted a banker’s workshop and review meeting on September 13, 2022. A total of 58 bank officials from public and private banks attended.
  - The MSRLM presented the WSS financing model to the NRLM in Maharashtra on October 5, 2022.

- A meeting with the SBM, Grameen, the MPSRLM, the district collectors’ office, and UNICEF in Madhya Pradesh took place in October 2022, where a presentation was given on contributions made by Water.org to expand the project in other districts.
- Water.org hosted 75 workshops and training materials for the state government to promote WSS financing solutions within government mechanisms from July to November 2022, and more will be conducted until January 2023. A total of 10,500 people attended the 75 workshops.
- **Activating the State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM) as a new partner:** In March 2022, an agreement between the State Water and Sanitation Mission (SWSM), the Water Supply and Support Organization (WSSO), the MSRLM, and Water.org was executed to support the WSS lending program in Maharashtra. The SWSM is the nodal department which implements the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and the SBM mandates of the Government of India in any state. This was an important milestone, as it brought the WSS financing solution to the SWSM, a new channel whose mandate is to oversee Maharashtra’s water and sanitation systems. This will be useful in further discussions on accessing capital for the SWSM to scale infrastructure with the Government of Maharashtra. Further scaling of the program will get easier as the SWSM endorses our model of WSS financing to solve water and sanitation issues in the state.
- **Catalytic grants for Knowledge Resource Centers:** MAVIM is setting up six knowledge resource centers (KRCs) across its operational areas to serve as technical hubs for community management resource centers (CMRCs) and NGOs operating in their regions to support WSS lending. Water.org is providing 15 million INR as a catalytic grant to MAVIM to establish a revolving loan fund and support six pilot KRCs, which will each receive grants of 2.5 million INR to lend for WSS products. After three years of revolving this catalytic grant among their SHGs, the KRCs will transfer the amount to six other CMRCs. The selected CMRCs will lend this revolving fund for water and/or sanitation products among the SHGs managed by them, and collections will be redeployed among other SHG members on a monthly basis. Thus, at the end of six years starting in January 2023, the 15 million INR is estimated to generate approximately 48 million INR (through four 18-month cycles of lending), serving over 2,360 families or 11,300 individuals with access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

This catalytic grant is an effort to sustain WSS lending by all CMRCs after the programmatic/grant partnership with MAVIM ends. Additionally, all KRCs will continue to influence, educate, and provide information about WSS lending to MAVIM’s SHGs and other interested community-based organizations from the region.

#### ADDITIONAL NOTEWORTHY ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Expansion of MAVIM’s program from 82 CMRCs in Maharashtra to include 100 new CMRCs - In January 2022, MAVIM expanded its coverage under the W+W Alliance program to 182 CMRCs to scale to more geographies within Maharashtra.
- Three state-level capacity workshops for state-level stakeholders and W+W Alliance partners - Water.org intends to create networks and linkages between state-based organizations like MAVIM, the SRLMs, the SBM, Grameen, and others so that the WSS financing ecosystem continues to thrive.

Over 30 participants attended these workshops. Topics included WSS lending, rooftop rainwater harvesting, AFTs, and other key topics.

- New stories of change - Water.org has collected a total of 65 stories of change during the lifetime of the grant – 50 of which were collected in Year 5 and 15 in Year 6 – through various partners like the SRLMs, Annapurna, and Sa-Dhan, covering stories for the following themes:
  - Retrofitting and repair of toilets
  - Water connection and storage
  - Installation of water filters
  - Construction of new toilets

## KEY LEARNINGS

- **Sustainability of programs:** As we wrap up programs with our partners, we want to ensure that the capacity and capabilities built through our programs on WSS financing solutions are sustained within an organization. Very often, once external funding ends, partners, especially government partners, move on to new priorities and opportunities. Therefore, this year's key learning has been working towards a graduation process with our partners. This ensures that partners continue WSS lending without grant support through Water.org.
- **Cementing the ecosystem created for WSS financing in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh:** We have spent the last five years building an ecosystem of partners – national and state ministries, FIs, and microfinance institutions (MFIs) – to build support for WSS lending. Water.org is devising strategies to continue engagement and advocacy with the WSS ecosystem to support our network of partners, including those supported by the W+W Alliance. Both Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are important states for Water.org in terms of impact potential, presence of FIs whom we can partner with to further the WaterCredit program, and the WSS demand and requirements in both states. Therefore, it is imperative that we continue to engage the larger WSS ecosystem in these states to strengthen the enabling environment for WSS financing to support our core programmatic work.

## CHALLENGES & REMEDIATION

- **Designing programs to become more climate resilient:** As the world's climate is rapidly changing, its effects will primarily be felt through water. People living in poverty will feel the effects of drought, flooding, and extreme weather events first and worst. In the last year, Water.org has started to address climate change – both mitigation and adaptation strategies – in programs with FIs for household lending. Water.org is starting to incorporate strategies to build climate resilience through: locally appropriate solutions like household taps and toilets; off-grid solutions like rainwater harvesting that serve rural households and reduce reliance on the grid for urban households; and improving antiquated and failing WSS infrastructure to conserve billions of liters of water and electricity while reducing emissions.

Therefore, in our training workshops this year with W+W partners, we introduced new loan products such as rainwater harvesting. Rainwater harvesting is increasingly becoming an alternative water source to cater to water needs of households under the influence of long-term climate change.

Additionally, we have delivered training on topics such as behavior change needed to address WSS climate resilient household solutions, conservation of water resources, and borewell recharging.

- **New regulatory framework and policy changes for MFIs:** With new accounting regulations introduced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2022, our MFI partners had to update their management information systems (MISs), which delayed the actual disbursement of loans against the planned disbursement. All system level changes have now been completed to a large extent, and we expect the MFIs to start reporting higher impact numbers in January 2023.
- **Frequent personnel changes with government partners:** Changes at the senior management level within the SBM and SRLMs created frequent challenges in getting buy-in for the project from new officers in charge. Being seniors, these officers have multiple priorities from the government, thus helping them prioritize our project has always been challenging. Often, new incumbents didn't want to continue what their predecessors were doing with the WSS financing project. A lot of time used to be invested in recreating consensus about the project. Even staff changes at lower offices used to create challenges, as these posts would go vacant for long durations, which would delay the project's execution.

## **WATERAID**

To support the sustainability of WaterAid's efforts, in Year 6 WaterAid focused on building the capacities of village level institutions and panchayat representatives to enable them to operate, manage, and maintain village piped water supply schemes. Keeping this in mind, WaterAid provided continued support to the Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) in Madhya Pradesh, Jal Jeevan Mission in Maharashtra, and the communities with whom WaterAid has engaged with in the past three years. Support took the form of coaching for maintaining the momentum Women + Water Alliance activities initiated.

In year 6 WaterAid strengthened interventions most in intensive villages which were intended to demonstrate to government departments the effective implementation of the JJM. In year 6 WaterAid also strengthened support to extensive villages for water management practices.

## **YEAR 6 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS**

- **Community Led Planning Successes:** To complement the efforts of the Public Health Engineering Department in ensuring sustainability of PWSS, WaterAid ensured comprehensive participation for 296 VAPs in Maharashtra and developed 30 Water Security Plans (WSPs) in 30 model villages in Madhya Pradesh. While VAPs focused on ensuring PWSS in the village and covering access to all households in the village, WSPs have been developed to supplement the VAPs and ensure sustainability of the water sources selected under JJM in these 30 villages. Through the WSPs, communities have undertaken surveys to identify recharge and discharge zones in their villages and planned interventions in the recharge zones to supplement the JJM source. All plans were prepared through complete community participation, which included generating community awareness of the JJM and its components; emphasizing the importance of community participation in VAP development; conducting Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) in the villages to ensure complete community involvement in the planning and implementation; and conducting household surveys to ensure no person in the village is deprived of the benefits of the scheme. Women and youth were

instrumental in the entire process of VAP development, and the women and youth trained in participatory planning and development of VAP are now supporting their respective villages in efficient management and monitoring of the implemented schemes. 30 WSPs were developed in Madhya Pradesh by understanding the local hydrogeology and designating the ideal recharge and discharge zones. In these villages, WaterAid planned interventions in the high recharge zones, to further ensure sustainability of JJM sources. Both the VAPs and WSPs were presented in the Gram Sabha for general consent of the community prior to onward submission. Additionally, WaterAid converged these interventions with ongoing government schemes and Gram Panchayat Development Plans to successfully leverage additional funds.

- **Strengthening of local village level institutions:** Despite massive infrastructural support rolled out for the success of JJM, the key to successful development and sustainable implementation of the 'Nal Se Jal' scheme depends on the Gram Panchayat and rural communities' ability to plan, implement, manage, own, operate, and maintain their own in-village water supply systems. Therefore, it is imperative to have sufficient awareness of JJM activities within the district by training members of village level institutions on key components of JJM to enable them to sustain their village piped water supply schemes for years to come. With sustainability in mind, WaterAid trained 1,146 PRI members and 932 VWSC members in Year 6 on their roles and responsibilities in the context of operation, maintenance, and effective management of piped water supply schemes. WaterAid focused on implementing systems across all model villages and some intensive villages to ensure sustainability of interventions. Additionally, WaterAid facilitated the development and adoption of local water supply bylaws in model villages through sessions with VWSC members to frame the water supply bylaws for their villages and with community members to ensure buy-in and adherence to the bylaws. The bylaws included clauses on relaxations for water tariffs depending on the socioeconomic status of households, penalties for over usage or wastage of water, and non-payment of water tariff. The bylaws, once framed, are discussed and approved in the Gram Sabha for general consent and approval by the community - thus gaining buy-in and a sense of ownership from all community members.

### Key Learnings

- **Building women leadership requires a continuous community intensive approach:** At the village level, due to societal structures in place, WaterAid observed that women were often hesitant to take up traditionally male-dominated roles, such as that of a pump operator. The role of a pump operator at the village level is often critical in ensuring regular, uninterrupted water supply to all households of the village. In villages with P.A.C.E. Champions, WaterAid benefitted through their support to encourage women to take up less traditional roles and opportunities for leadership. With WaterAid's consistent engagement with the communities and intensive support that decreased over time, a few women took the lead and now WaterAid is proud to report that some of the W+W Alliance villages include women pump operators, in both villages with and without prior P.A.C.E. programming.
- **The convergence of key stakeholders is necessary for success of the JJM scheme:** Government partnership and support is paramount for the success of the national JJM scheme. A comprehensive VAP not only has provisions for infrastructure of piped water supply schemes, but also includes source sustainability, greywater management, and operation and maintenance of

constructed schemes. It is essential that once the infrastructure is completed, coordination on the planning and implementation for the other components of the VAP must be carried out in convergence with allied departments at the district level in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. In the W+W Alliance villages, WaterAid promoted this model of convergence and partnered with multiple allied departments, extending WaterAid government engagement far beyond our initial plans. In some W+W Alliance villages, WaterAid was able to undertake efforts on all components of JJM in coordination with key government departments at the district level.

## CHALLENGES & REMEDIATION

- **Elections:** Due to Panchayat elections conducted in Madhya Pradesh in June and July 2022 and the institution of the model code of conduct, which prohibits community gatherings at times of elections at the end of May 2022, some programmatic activities were halted and activities continued in the field until December 2022. In addition to delaying programmatic activity timelines, the elections resulted in personnel changes to the Panchayat body that initially interrupted our progress. To mediate this challenge, WaterAid took concerted efforts to engage these stakeholders in program objectives to gain their alignment and ensure minimal delays.

### Supporting Materials

- Model Village Film: WaterAid's work to develop and increase the capacity of model villages on water quality and water security. This has been shared via YouTube and will soon be shared on other WaterAid social media sites to increase visibility on project successes.
- W+W Journey: video to showcase the story of this Alliance – how over the years, the Alliance has been able to groom women leaders under all key components of interventions.
- Durga Malviya's Story: A woman in Sehore advises her village on water conservation and water quality activities.
- Jyoti's Story: The village Sarpanch, Jyoti, ensures that her village's water supply system is taken care of by members of her village.
- Kavita Vaishnav's Story: Kavita empowers her village to develop comprehensive Village Action Plans and encourages women's participation in traditionally male-dominated forums.
- Niranjana's Story: Niranjana, the village Sarpanch, empowers women in her village to take charge of their village water supply systems to keep it operational for years to come.
- Radha Bhagirath Patel's Story: Radha, one of the first trained water technocrats in her village under the W+W Alliance, operates and maintains her village's water supply system and regularly tests for contaminants.
- Savita Parihar's Story: Savita, a village volunteer who aspires to be her village's Sarpanch, trains other women in her village to test for contamination, and encourages community participation in the development of the Village Action Plan.
- Sita Bai's Story: Sita Bai is one of the first women pump operators in the W+W Alliance.

- Uma Kanade's Story: Uma, a member of her village water and sanitation committee and agricultural laborer, leads interventions in her village and encourages water conservation.
- Vinita Baghban's Story: Vinita, a village volunteer, mobilizes her village to advocate for their water needs.

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

I4DI conducted the final evaluation of the Women + Water Alliance in Year 6 with data collection commencing in June 2022. The quantitative data was collected in cross-sectional household surveys carried out at baseline and endline in Dewas, Dhar, Khandwa, Indore, and Sehore districts in Madhya Pradesh and Wardha and Yavatmal districts in Maharashtra, which were W+W Alliance program districts. In each state, a sample size of 1,000 households was calculated. To supplement and provide context to the quantitative survey data, focus group discussions (FGDs) were held at endline with a variety of community members in a small subset of villages that also participated in the quantitative survey. To measure changes in WASH investment and water stewardship practice among external stakeholders, the evaluation team conducted key informant interviews with representatives from three of the W+W implementing partners engaged in system strengthening activities.

## YEAR 6 KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Program satisfaction was extremely high among direct P.A.C.E. participants:** Among those surveyed, the majority of female P.A.C.E. participants in both states (over 95% of n=210) were satisfied with the topics that P.A.C.E. covered. A similar proportion indicated that they learned a great deal about WASH practices while attending P.A.C.E. classes. In both states, 96% of participating respondents expressed an overall satisfaction with P.A.C.E. classes. The vast majority reported that they had learned a great deal about WASH practice from the P.A.C.E. classes. One potential area of feedback related to the number of P.A.C.E. sessions offered, whereby participants wanted more sessions. In fact, 69% of participating respondents in Maharashtra and 34% in Madhya Pradesh stated that P.A.C.E. offered too few sessions. Secondary analysis of P.A.C.E. stories of change revealed that participants believed the program had contributed to their increased knowledge related to WASH behaviors, such as how to effectively wash hands, treat water to make it safer for drinking, and handle and store water to prevent contamination. Additionally, participation in P.A.C.E. allowed women to improve their soft skills related to effective communication, decision making, and problem solving.
- **Water access improved across time in many households, particularly in Madhya Pradesh:** Compared to the baseline, the proportion of surveyed homes with an improved drinking water source declined slightly in Maharashtra at endline in the comparison and intervention communities. On the other hand, there was a substantial gain in access to an improved water source in Madhya Pradesh, growing from 79% at baseline to 91% in the intervention villages and 83% in the comparison villages at endline. Moreover, at endline, water sources in Madhya Pradesh were substantially more likely to be in the respondent's dwelling or yard than at baseline. This change also affected water fetching practices. There was a substantial decline in households that fetched water off the premises in Madhya Pradesh, decreasing from 79% at baseline to 38% and 37% among the intervention and comparison villages at endline, respectively. Nevertheless, as at baseline, a small proportion of respondents in both states reported that their household only had partial year access



to their main drinking water source, with access most typically reduced in the summer (due to a number of reasons including drought, seasonality of ground-water levels based on rain, sunshine, etc.). To compensate, these households had to temporarily change sources. Summer sources were further away and were more likely to have queues, meaning more time devoted to fetching water. The alternative sources sometimes were more expensive. To mitigate these time and financial costs, it was common for households to drastically reduce their water consumption during the summer.

- **The overall burden of water fetching decreased, and responsibilities shifted to men in many households:** The endline study revealed a substantial decline in total time spent by households fetching water compared to baseline, with intervention group respondents showing the largest decrease in both states. At baseline, households that had to travel away from their premises to collect water were spending 69 minutes on average every day in Maharashtra. At endline, intervention households were spending 55 minutes and comparison households were spending 81 minutes on average every day. In Madhya Pradesh, those fetching water at baseline were spending 100 minutes on average every day. At endline, this time had reduced to 64 minutes and 74 minutes on average every day for households in the intervention and comparison villages respectively. In both states, responsibility for water fetching shifted away from older adults. In Maharashtra, children below age 18 years assumed this role from older adults, while in Madhya Pradesh the responsibility transferred to young adults aged 18 to 38 years. At endline, men in the intervention communities in both states tended to be taking on more sole responsibility for water fetching compared to baseline. In Madhya Pradesh, this change was especially pronounced in the intervention villages. There, men had sole fetching responsibility in 32% of intervention households and 19% of comparison households at endline, versus 23% at baseline. The qualitative data revealed the positive impact that reduced time for water collection had on the affected households. The changes were consequential – ranging from increased time for chores, food preparation, income generation, and even leisure time. Respondents attributed these time savings directly to increased water accessibility.
- **Satisfaction with the household’s main drinking water source was high at endline, with improvements especially observed in Madhya Pradesh:** Satisfaction with household drinking water source generally remained static in Maharashtra over time, at about 92%. However, in Madhya Pradesh there was a noticeable increase in satisfaction, particularly among the intervention group. In Madhya Pradesh, the baseline value of 80% rose to 95% among intervention group respondents and 91% among comparison group respondents at endline. The qualitative data revealed nuanced differences in the dissatisfaction expressed by intervention and comparison group members. Those from the intervention communities tended to identify minor grievances with their water, such as high salinity, high chlorine that left white sediment, or water that did not taste good after heavy rains. In contrast, dissatisfied respondents in comparison villages were unequivocal in their strong dissatisfaction due to an irregular water supply and perceived “impure water” that was muddy, had sediment, and algae overgrowth from stagnation.
- **Water storage and treatment practices did not change consistently across time and place and remains an area for continued improvement:** Water storage practice improved in both states. In Maharashtra, 7% of the baseline sample was using correct water storage practice, compared to 19.6% of the intervention respondents and 31.3% of the comparison respondents at endline. Similarly, just 7% in Madhya Pradesh had adopted correct water storage practice at baseline, versus 17.6% of the intervention group and 18.9% of the comparison group at endline. However,

there was considerable room for continued improvement with regard to both water storage and water treatment. For the latter, small gains were observed in the intervention group in Maharashtra only. Human waste management practice substantially improved in intervention and comparison villages in both states, and particularly in the intervention group in Maharashtra where 91% of respondents were practicing correct human waste management at endline compared to 83% of comparison village respondents (baseline = 50%). Handwashing practice improved substantially in Maharashtra, where 21% of baseline respondents met the threshold for proper hand washing practice at baseline and 69% of intervention group respondents and 66% of comparison group respondents did so at endline. In contrast, 66% of baseline respondents in Madhya Pradesh had proper handwashing practice, while only 18% of intervention group respondents and 10% of comparison group respondents did at endline.

- **Women’s empowerment appeared to improve among direct P.A.C.E. participants but not among the broader community:** At endline, WASH self-efficacy scores were not significantly different between the intervention and comparison groups in Maharashtra, although they tended to be higher among intervention villages than in comparison villages in Madhya Pradesh. A deeper examination revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the WASH self-efficacy scores depending on P.A.C.E. participation. P.A.C.E participants had higher WASH self-efficacy than non-participants in the intervention communities in Madhya Pradesh at endline (23.39 versus 21.96, respectively, out of 30 maximum;  $p=.0254$ ). In Maharashtra, the data trend was similar, although not statistically significant. These differences in self-efficacy may have been due to a direct program effect that failed to diffuse to the broader community because about one-third of P.A.C.E indicated that they had not shared information learned with other non-participating households. There were no major differences between the intervention and comparison villages with regard to women’s WASH agency at endline in either state. In focus group discussions, P.A.C.E. participants described situations in which women united to demand WASH-related change. In the two intensive WaterAid villages sampled into the focus group discussions, where WaterAid had significant activities and presence, community leaders offered robust examples of women’s roles in WASH management in the Village Action Plan development process, in a way that exceeded examples from the other focus group villages.
- **The enabling environment supported change at the household and community level:** W+W Alliance partners sought to create a systems-level support structure for long term behavior change, making it possible for sustained individual and household results after the P.A.C.E. program. To this end, the partners devoted efforts toward influencing supportive WASH financing and water stewardship practices in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Program staff indicated that at baseline there were national and state level policies for the provision of village piped water systems that would bring water directly to homes. However, most villages at the time were not implementing local plans due to low community capacity. The W+W Alliance responded with capacity building activities for community members, assistance developing functional community management plans, and advocacy at higher levels of government to support community-centric water management approaches. Separately, by raising awareness of (1) financing models, (2) supportive government circulars, (3) increasing demand from households, and (4) small-scale successes, staff reported that the W+W Alliance increased the receptivity of financial institutions to offer an array of WASH financial products.

## KEY LEARNINGS

- **Extraneous circumstances affect evaluation design and implementation:** In pre-post designs, seasonal consistency in data collection is a best practice, particularly when outcomes may be influenced by different seasons. For this reason, the original plan for the W+W Alliance baseline and endline measurements sought to collect data during the same seasons. Indeed, there was only a slight delay in the endline data collection following an extreme heat wave in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh, such that the endline and baseline data collection calendars were quite similar. Despite the similar calendar times, the weather conditions of the endline data collection were more extreme: an extreme heat wave immediately preceding the endline data collection and heavy rains in Maharashtra during a portion of the endline data collection. Another potential disruptor was the COVID-19 pandemic, which was not present at baseline. The COVID-19 pandemic and the resultant public quarantines and closures did force the cancellation of the midterm evaluation, which prevented a potential round of evidence-based program adaptation. The exact ways in which COVID-19 and the extreme weather conditions may have affected the endline measurements are unknown, but they are hypothesized to have affected the intervention and comparison villages similarly at endline. This is useful because the main comparison in the evaluation was between the intervention and comparison villages at endline. These unforeseen circumstances did pose some implementation challenges to the data collection team, which in hindsight, our evaluation design should ideally have been factored in, and contingency plans incorporated into the design.
- **Data Management for village identification:** In hindsight, the project might have benefitted from using a shared platform for tracking implementation at the village level that used the 2011 India census village list as its basis and routine updates and cleaning to that village list. It appears that the approach to creating the implementation lists was that each partner built a list of villages in which it worked, and then the lists were merged electronically or perhaps also manually before being shared with I4DI. The problem with this approach was that small deviations in the spelling of village names would prevent seamless merging and there would be duplicate villages located in the files, sometimes with inconsistent information about the mix of program exposure received. Moreover, because I4DI was using the 2011 India census file as the basis on which to draw the list of unexposed comparison villages, deviations in the spelling between the census file and the W+W village implementation lists resulted in a similar problem – fraught attempts to merge the files and identify the totally unexposed villages.
- **Village Comparability over Time:** The factor that most substantially affected the comparability of the baseline and endline data was the change in how the intervention villages were defined from baseline to endline. The change was driven by evolved thinking about how and which W+W Alliance activities would work to achieve the specific program outcomes measured by the endline evaluation. This change over time did pose some comparison challenges, but the endline evaluation (submitted in November 2022 and approved by Gap Inc in January 2023) has articulated how this change did not pose any challenges in producing sound evaluation analysis for the Alliance.

## LIFE OF PROJECT

### GAP INC.

#### KEY LEARNINGS

- **Collaborate with organizations that specialize in technical areas and design the program in a way that requires their convergence:** Instead of working with one implementing partner to implement all program workstreams, the Women + Water Alliance chose a consortium of implementing partners that specialized in technical areas. For example, CARE implemented Gap Inc.'s P.A.C.E. women's empowerment and self-efficacy trainings, which then enabled women to fully participate in water governance improvement activities implemented by WaterAid and to leverage WASH micro-credit loans facilitated by Water.org. Meanwhile, ISC partnered with Water.org to improve financial literacy for women enterprises and with WaterAid to help community members build a cohesive understanding of water budgeting. Transforming otherwise disparate workstreams implemented by different organizations into a cohesive effort required demonstrating to partners the value of collaboration and talking through activity convergence examples. Such cohesion was made easier through building a shared vision that articulates a holistic approach to WASH and women's empowerment, a vision that was strengthened as the partnership began implementing and as adjustments to the theory of change were made over time.
- **Flexibility to modify program design midway through implementation to account for new learnings:** Program funders encouraged implementing partners to learn and adapt in line with USAID's Collaborating, Learning and Adapting (CLA) best practices. Such flexibility allowed for modified approaches in program delivery during COVID-19 so that activities still took place—safely and with adaptations—during COVID-19 related restrictions. At the program structure level, recognizing that empowering women to take out a micro-loan for a water tap could not be effective if there is no reliable water supply to draw upon, the Women + Water Alliance expanded to include a new partner, WaterAid, to strengthen effective WASH governance by partnering with communities to develop village water security plans.
- **Build in government integration from the project outset:** In water resource management planning, the priority given to government engagement and government programs was a key driver in being able to pilot and scale financing programs with government partners. A key stakeholder in the implementation of the W+W Alliance is the India government's Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) which aims to create water infrastructure needed so that every rural household has access to piped water by 2024. Aligning water governance workstreams with JJM allowed the Women + Water Alliance to accelerate program impact and to help ensure government investments were guided by community-level needs—and therefore increase the likelihood of long-term sustainability for those solutions.
- **Flexibility to evolve Management Information System:** With so many stakeholders involved and more than 50 KPIs, data quality assurance and reporting was a significant challenge. However, Gap Inc. and implementing partners worked in alignment and identified steps to ensure high quality data and set a cadence to report numbers in MIS. Several data quality checks and multi-level approvals were introduced before reporting data in Goodera system. To avoid double counting of

beneficiaries, modifications were made, and a conservative approach was adopted to report beneficiary numbers.

- **Develop robust management and financial systems at the program start:** One of the unique aspects of the Women + Water Alliance is that the private sector funder of the Global Development Alliance, Gap Inc., is also the prime implementer. Due to the novelty for Gap Inc. in implementing a USAID project, Gap Inc. did not have strong systems or policies and procedures for implementing a USAID program at the program start. Developing systems similar to those that exist at traditional USAID implementers was key in allowing for smooth program management.
- **Strive for consistent programming for all communities involved in the project:** The Women + Water Alliance made an intentional and systematic effort to layer interventions appropriately with communities involved in the W+W Alliance. Gap Inc. coordinated with Water.org, WaterAid, CARE, and ISC to carry out activities in many of the same communities, but 100% of overlap of interventions did not exist due to the scale and types of program activities. For example, activities on WASH financing from Water.org and WaterAid's work on water management did not always overlap with CARE's P.A.C.E. training with women due to resource constraints. This impeded the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of the project's comprehensive multi layered model for all women and communities involved, including when trying to assess program outcomes and impacts in the ICRW and I4DI endline evaluations. As a result, it became critical to understand overlap and acknowledge differences in participant exposure to program activities in order to understand community outcomes as a result of the W+W Alliance.
- **Find opportunities to sustain as many workstreams as possible.** While community water management developed through the Women + Water Alliance has a clear pathway to be sustained over time due to government engagement, some program activities are more challenging to sustain after the program ends. For example, learning groups related to women's empowerment are encouraged to keep meeting after the end of the Women + Water Alliance, but strong systems are not in place to ensure this occurrence after field trainers leave a given village. On the sustainability of some program workstreams, additional innovation and design is needed.

## CARE

### ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 2018, P.A.C.E. training has been implemented at the community level in selected districts of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Enrolment in the P.A.C.E. training included 214,892 women across 4,000 villages. Women enthusiastically participate in the P.A.C.E. training in rural area resulting in remarkable changes in women's lives at the household and community level, as demonstrated by stories of change documented by CARE. During the program's implementation, many examples were noted in which women with increased levels of confidence post-P.A.C.E. came forward either independently or collectively, to solve an issue of concern in their community. There are many examples of evidence that depict the aspiration of graduated women. For instance:

- In multiple communities, women came together to petition the government to fix the community borewell (due to poor or no functionality) and they received assistance within weeks from the government, benefitting the whole village.
- Several women reported that their communication and problem-solving skills enhanced after P.A.C.E., resulting in better rapport with their husbands, mothers-in-law, and other family members. Now, many women have started working outside the home, gaining more income and independence.
- In some villages, women used their collective efforts to solve issues. They advocated for (and in most cases received) government action for the construction of roads, cleaning of wells, installation of motor pumps in borewells, construction of a bridge connecting one village to another, and repairing non-functional hand pumps.
- After benefitting from the P.A.C.E. training, many graduated women contested in the Panchayat election and took up leadership roles to become the Sarpanch, Deputy Sarpanch, etc. Today, P.A.C.E. graduates have become a source of inspiration for other women through their confidence and leadership. With the guidance and skills gained from P.A.C.E. training, women are coming forward to find new livelihood opportunities and increase the family's income. They learned about WASH credit Financing through P.A.C.E. training and many took out loans from various means like Self Help Groups (SHGs), microfinance institutions (MFIs), and Water.org partners. With the money from loans, many graduated women started grocery shops, beauty parlors, sewing, shoe shops, food stalls, etc.

**Resilience during COVID-19, a widespread external challenge:** During the extreme difficulties brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, P.A.C.E. Trainers, Mobilizers, Male Champions, and P.A.C.E. participants contributed to the health services and other programs run by the Government by providing a range of voluntary support such as making and distributing over 15,000 masks, maintaining social distance in the village, encouraging local migrants to isolate and encouraging people to get vaccinated. Additionally, P.A.C.E. participants created traditional art (rangoli) in the community to raise awareness and share messages of COVID-19. In a time of need, they took what they learned from sessions such as the problem solving and decision making modules, and turned those learnings into practice. Throughout COVID-19, CARE observed that the leadership outcomes associated with P.A.C.E. can not only improve a woman's situation in the household, but can lead women to tackle community-wide challenges.

## KEY LEARNINGS

- **High retention and graduation rates:** To ensure a high retention rate, CARE only begins program sessions once trainers can confirm participant interest in completing the P.A.C.E. curriculum. Trainers host a “Zero Session” prior to initiating cohort to discuss in detail what the participants will learn over the 6-month program, which helped women set expectations and determine whether they were truly interested in participating in the P.A.C.E. training. Additionally, trainers choose training locations and schedules that accommodate the availability and convenience of women participants so that they can attend sessions. As a result, P.A.C.E. through the W+W Alliance achieved high retention levels and an average of 80% attendance in each session. If participant attendance dips below 80%, trainers postpone sessions and reschedule. Finally, P.A.C.E. Trainers were from local areas, so not only were they very skilled at delivering the sessions, they were able to create a strong personal rapport with the participants—which also helped with retention.

- **P.A.C.E.'s impact could be amplified by tailoring it to the context of rural women's livelihoods and life stages:**
  - In domain of women's livelihood:
    - Agriculture domain— Combining P.A.C.E. with agriculture training could enhance outcomes because agriculture is the primary source of income for most of the women in the P.A.C.E. programme. Combining climate and water smart agriculture methods with P.A.C.E. modules could help women succeed in taking on new roles in agriculture.
    - Artisan domain— Connecting P.A.C.E. artisans with large markets in cities like Indore, Ujjain, Bhopal, Jabalpur, and Gwalior can offer a plethora of opportunities for women to continue to improve negotiation, decision-making, problem-solving and other soft skills learned through P.A.C.E.
  - In domain of life stages:
    - Adolescent stage— The P.A.C.E. curriculum is designed for rural women ranging in age from 18 to 55. As a result, P.A.C.E. excludes adolescent girls who may benefit from the outcomes of P.A.C.E. A P.A.C.E. version tailored for adolescent girls may help in the project's empowerment goals even further.
- **Additional opportunities for engaging men:** Room still exists for men to contribute more to P.A.C.E. discussions. By engaging men, we can increase the impact and sustainability of programming aimed at improving women's lives. This is because women will often seek out male permission before engaging in P.A.C.E. sessions, attending government meetings, or incorporating financial spending or time into improving household WASH practices. When this happens, it creates a conducive environment that enables empowered female participants to thrive.
- **Understanding long-term impacts of P.A.C.E.:** After completion of P.A.C.E., there are limited follow-up mechanisms to track the performance of Champions and P.A.C.E. participants in the short or longer-term after the close of the project. In the future, follow-up and “touch-points” for continued communication, motivation and monitoring with Community Mobilizers and P.A.C.E. Champions could enhance P.A.C.E. outcomes.
- **Improve P.A.C.E. partnership with government initiatives:** After participating in P.A.C.E., some participants are linked with the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), which can introduce women to Self Help (savings) Groups, and skill development programs. However, many participants are not linked with any government schemes despite their desire to be associated with livelihoods-related activities. A more active follow-up from P.A.C.E. with government programs could ensure continued skill building for P.A.C.E. participants and access to livelihood opportunities.
- **Increasing focus on menstrual hygiene:** Introducing menstrual hygiene knowledge and practices to adolescent girls can increase their attendance in schools as dropouts often happen when menstruation starts. In collaboration with schools, additional menstrual hygiene modules in P.A.C.E. training can help girls understand the biology, and the practices and the resources they can utilize to be healthy and comfortable when menstruating.

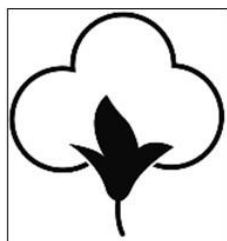
- **Shared responsibilities at home:** While there are many benefits to P.A.C.E. sessions, many men and women were impacted by the conversations they had about workloads and gender disparities. Further dialogues and action-planning for duty-sharing and equitable decision-making and improved communication between men and women would benefit women’s ability to act on soft skills that the P.A.C.E. modules provide.
- **Collaboration with donors and Prime implementers:** It was not easy to launch P.A.C.E. in the community setup first time from factory setup. With support from the dedicated project team and Donor, it was possible to unite women to increase their efficacy and agency on water, sanitation and health outcomes. Such a huge group of 200,000 P.A.C.E. women is ready to shine. The key factor of collaboration with donors was the team spirit to achieve the goal of the alliance. There was no limitation to connect with donors at all levels.

## ISC

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Reducing the environmental footprint of cotton cultivation:** Engaging with 4,140 cotton farmers across 43 villages in Kukshi and Umarban Blocks (District Dhar, Madhya Pradesh); Ralegaon and Kalamb Blocks (District Yavatmal, Maharashtra) to promote good operating practices that lower input use (water, fertilizer, and pesticide use), ISC reduced the water footprint of farmers and greenhouse gas emissions while also improving yield and lowering the cost of cultivation for the farmers (figure below). The impacts demonstrate a more sustainable approach to growing cotton to raise the income for farmers without negatively impacting the health of natural resources (mainly soil and water). Such sustainable approaches also establish means to shift towards the use of more organic inputs and lead to a positive behavior change amongst cotton farming communities.

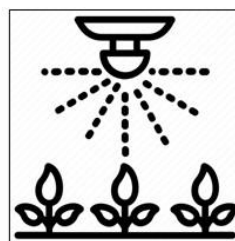
Key impacts as a result of adoption of good operating practices:



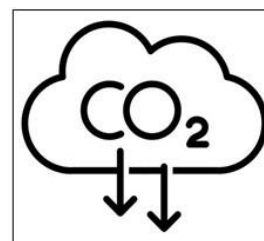
15% increase in yield



USD 372/ acre  
reduction in cost of  
cultivation



18% water footprint  
reduction



46% greenhouse gas  
emission reduction

- **Ensuring the sustainability of water sources:** Source strengthening measures undertaken have resulted in replenishing 126 million liters of water during Year 5 (2021). This, coupled with the 115 million liters of water harvested during the previous year (2020), makes a total net volume of 241 million liters of water harvested. This total volume of water of 241 million liters, harvested in 2020 and 2021 can support the domestic and drinking water needs for 9,500 people for an entire year (considering 70 liters per capita per day consumption norms) or can help meet the water needs for



producing 10,700 kgs of cotton (considering it takes 22,500 liters of water to produce a kg of cotton in India).



Picture 3 Water Harvesting Structure in Donoda Village, Yavatmal (August 2021)



Picture 4 Water Harvesting Structure in Mendhla Village, Yavatmal (May 2021)

The availability of water has also led to the recharge of groundwater in the region. ISC calculated the water balance for one hydrological cycle in the catchment. Data indicates that recharge in the year 2021 increased by 24.1% as compared to 2020. In addition, farmers in the catchment of these structures have been able to irrigate their land for the entire cropping season where they previously had to rely on the wells of other farmers. The area under assured irrigation (having water for irrigation all through the cultivation season) has increased by 114 acres resulting in providing life-saving irrigation for the crops during dry spells.

- **Strengthening the role of women:** Of the 4,140 farmers participating in the promoting water stewardship in cotton growing areas of Dhar and Yavatmal project, 53% were women. ISC achieved gender parity in participation through strategic collaboration with local NGOs and government partners who helped identify and reach out to women farmers across Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Further, ISC strengthened the network of women-led village level extension workers, also known as Krishi Sakhis, across the 43 project villages in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Out of the total 34 field functionaries engaged 22 (65%) were women. The purpose of Krishi Sakhis is to spread knowledge sharing amongst cotton farmers on good operating practices to promote better soil and water management practices. These women are the stewards and ambassadors of change, who are addressing information and knowledge gaps in cotton farming. During 2021, the Krishi Sakhis worked hand in hand with ASHA (health) workers to raise awareness on prevention of COVID-19 and vaccination.

ISC supported the creation of 26 women self-help groups<sup>1</sup> (SHGs) engaged in producing bio-fertilizer and bio-pesticide, generating additional income for the women SHGs and reducing the use and resulting impact of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. For the 2021 cotton season, ISC and its implementing partners worked closely with these women entrepreneur groups to help them scale their production. Cumulatively, the groups produced 16,000 kilograms of vermi-compost and 1027 liters of bio-pesticides, generating an income of Rs. 283,915 (USD 4,056). ISC undertook capacity building efforts for developing business plans for ensuring higher incomes for SHGs. ISC formed partnerships with private orchard nurseries so that SHGs can expand their client base to earn additional income.



Picture 5 A women SHG member selling her vermi-compost to a customer



Picture 6 A field functionary holding a bottle on bio-pesticide

- **Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus Research:** The research study, Articulating the Climate-Cotton-Water Nexus, demonstrated the climate risks facing cotton cultivation, the impact of climate change on water resources and farmers, and current adaptation practices. The study adopted a unique approach and methodology combining remote sensing, climate analysis, and community-based vulnerability assessments covering the major cotton growing areas of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

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<sup>1</sup> A self-help group is a committee usually composed of 12 to 25 local women promoted as an economic empowerment initiative. As part of ISC's engagement 26 self-help groups (SHGs) that have been formed in the project areas who are engaged in production and selling of bio-fertilizers and bio-pesticides.

Extensive multi-stakeholder engagement was undertaken during the research. Researchers engaged the following stakeholders: scientists at Central Institute of Cotton Research; Dr. Panjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth; practitioners working at International Organizations, IDH, Better Cotton, and national NGOs; officials from government line departments; and farmers. Findings of the study indicate that the future of cotton cultivation is at risk due to changes in climate, which in turn poses a challenge to the textile industry and associated industries. The pathways outlined in the report will inform relevant stakeholders on how to plan and execute interventions, programs, and policies for the sustainability of the textile and apparel sector, conservation of natural resources, and improvement of the lives and livelihoods of communities.



Picture 7 Cover Page of Research Report

## KEY LEARNINGS

- Climate risks create differential vulnerability:** While the impacts of climate change are felt by all, certain groups experience the severity of the impacts of climate change due to lack of knowledge and resources. In the case of cotton farming, small landholders and rainfed farmers are more vulnerable to climate change compared to large, irrigated farmers. It was important for ISC to map the vulnerability of these different groups of farmers and devise learning and engagement strategies catering to the needs of the different groups in order to build the resilience of farming communities.
- Collective action for local operation and maintenance:** Water harvesting and recharge structures were renovated in 2020 in ISC partner villages and villagers saw the benefit of these improvements. However, in order to sustain the operation and maintenance of these structures, communities needed to come together and collectively manage them. Continuous engagement with villagers and the formation of water user groups assisted in properly maintaining structures in 2021 resulted in effective water harvesting.
- Identifying alternative extension and outreach mechanisms:** COVID-19 related restrictions on in-person convenings prevented conventional methods of training, farmer field schools, and awareness generation for cotton farmers to take place. However, with the cotton season progressing, training and extension activities still needed to occur. ISC and its partners quickly pivoted to virtually engage farmers through digital means like Zoom, Google Hangout, and WhatsApp for organizing online training and outreach sessions. The ISC team also conducted farmer trainings on a one-to-one basis and in smaller groups of 15 farmers, taking necessary permission from relevant government authorities.

## WATER.ORG

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Impact generated:** More than 100,000 families have been able to take out microcredit loans to finance new WSS connections or retrofit existing ones thanks to W+W Alliance efforts. That this has occurred during the pandemic demonstrates the value and priority that communities place on improving their access to WSS.
- **Including the concept of WSS financing through microcredit loans within Government planning and strategy:** Repeated programmatic and advocacy efforts resulted in Water.org successfully advocating for credit financing as a solution to achieving the Government of India's SBM and, more recently, the JJM goals. Water.org has participated, facilitated, and convened multiple stakeholder forums, roundtables, and meetings which bring together national and state governments and the private sector to foster dialogue on policy outlook and practice frameworks in the area of financial inclusion to help institutionalize WSS lending in India as a sustainable loan product category. These efforts, which are still ongoing, are critical to Water.org's mission of driving more private sector capital toward the WSS sector.
- **Demonstrable success with State Rural Livelihood Mission program model:** A systemic shift Water.org is very proud of is the inclusion of WSS financing in the State Rural Livelihood Mission Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh Annual Action Plans. This is noteworthy because microcredit programs have now been introduced specifically for water and sanitation, whereas before our intervention, WSS was limited to behavior change programs with no credit component. Additionally, we are now scaling the model in other states like Odisha and Jharkhand based on the successes we demonstrated in the W+W Alliance geographies.
- **WSS loans are income enabling:** WSS loans through the W+W Alliance have demonstrated that a WSS loan product is an income-enabling product. 40% of WaterCredit borrowers in India have reported an increase in their household income as indirect cost savings due to improved health outcomes. Availing WSS loans helped lower health expenses and enabled women and household members to take on more income generating activities due to time saved from accessing WSS. In addition, most of the population who live at the base of the economic pyramid earn daily wages; falling ill results in less hours and days worked and lost income.

### KEY LEARNINGS

- **Leverage program models and networks of partner institutions:** The W+W Alliance was the first time Water.org converged its program with programs implemented by other organizations. For example, using CARE's P.A.C.E. program to train women on WSS financing helped generate additional demand for WSS loans. Water.org designed the WSS financing modules and trained the CARE team on delivery of the module. The module helped create awareness about the availability and ways to access capital for WSS facilities. We will continue to use this methodology while designing and implementing other multi-stakeholder programs – a learning that we are already applying to two programs in India, the first with WaterAid (a separate program being implemented outside of the W+W Alliance districts) and the second with Habitat for Humanity.

- Build in government integration from the project outset to create project sustainability:** It is imperative to develop an ecosystem that supports WSS financing, especially by prioritizing government engagement. Government programs were vital in piloting and scaling financing programs with government partners. The acknowledgement of WSS financing by the SWSM in Maharashtra is the perfect example of how the government's priorities are aligning with Water.org's efforts. We are already seeing increased interest from the SWSM in Maharashtra to scale the project of WSS financing across the state, as they have started to realize the complementary role of Water.org's role in sustaining the wins from the SBM and JJM.
- Aligning geographies:** Water.org programs use a market-based model where we work with banks, MFIs, and non-banking financial corporations at a state and national level, which is not limited to select districts or villages. Therefore, an initial challenge was to reconcile the implementation of our market-based model with working in specific W+W Alliance geographies. While Water.org has continued to work at a state level with our FI partners under the W+W Alliance, this challenge also became an opportunity because it necessitated Water.org to find a new partner who had a program presence specifically in W+W Alliance districts. This created a great opportunity for Water.org to partner with an SRLM, as they have SHGs linked with financing with large banks. The success of the program with the SRLM was recognized by other states, and they shared their interest in starting such programs in collaboration with Water.org with Odisha and Jharkhand governments at the forefront. It is definitely worthwhile to expand on the outcome of this partnership, as SRLMs have the largest number of women SHGs in India.
- Convergence in a multi-partner program:** Working within a multi-partner program was a challenge for the first few years, especially as CARE, ISC, and WaterAid focused their activities in a few geographies while Water.org took a statewide approach to implementation. Water.org covered almost all districts across the states while other partners worked specifically in seven districts. Gap, Inc. supported us solving this problem by reporting KPIs for the seven W+W Alliance districts and then the remaining districts in the overall ecosystem.

A benefit of the multi-partner model is that Water.org successfully leveraged WaterAid, CARE, and ISC's program outreach to create awareness about WSS loan solutions among communities in W+W Alliance districts, accelerating demand for loans. The inclusion of the WSS financing chapter in the P.A.C.E. module was a great display of convergence and longevity of WSS financing concepts among community members trained with P.A.C.E. curriculum. The awareness and utility of WSS financing was quite high among those trained in the curriculum. Similarly, Water.org was able to align itself with the work being done by WaterAid, as there were frequent workshops and meetings organized by the state government where we both presented a united front in utilizing WSS financing to support the work being done by the government to increase the accessibility of water and sanitation in rural areas.

- COVID-19 pandemic response:** The pandemic severely hit rural areas, significantly impacting India's overall economy, disrupting the microfinance sector, and causing unemployment. Many people lost income, resulting in reduced loan repayment. Uncertainty and reduced income affected spending patterns, which reduced the demand for WSS loans as people opted for income-generating loans instead. As a result, several states and districts implemented strict lockdowns and travel restrictions to mitigate the spread of the virus. In addition, the slow-to-start vaccination distribution and the risk

of multiple waves added to the financial sector's fragility, primarily because lockdowns significantly impacted agricultural and manufacturing activities, thus affecting the earnings of most borrowers.

Despite local lockdowns and restrictions, Water.org was able to achieve results by adopting resilient strategies, such as shifting to virtual platforms for training and ensuring the safety of field staff by reimbursing costs for weekly self-administered antigen tests. Water.org also contributed to creating awareness of hygiene best practices on various platforms, such as WhatsApp, by producing multiple short videos and posters called knowledge nuggets. Awareness resources were shared with government stakeholders, implementing partners, and the community. In addition, Water.org field coordinators found alternative ways to continue operations and connect with clients, such as virtual trainings, phone calls, and attending village organization meetings. This allowed the team to continue training the SRLMs' community resource persons on WSS financing, coordinate with SRLM district-level staff and MAVIM CMRCs, and support the SHG members of MAVIM and the SRLMs with loan applications in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Small MFIs, including Water.org partners, have yet to fully recover from business losses incurred. Due to the capital crunch and reduced liquidity, many of these MFIs are exiting the market. Water.org is supporting these organizations by connecting them with refinancing institutions such as India's National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and other organizations who could lend them capital for business so that these organizations can continue to sustainably lend for WSS even after Water.org's grant support ends.

- **Accounting for frequent personnel changes when supporting government programs:** A feature of working with government-led programs is the frequent changes in personnel, especially at the bureaucratic level. Water.org witnessed frequent personnel changes at the SBM and SRLMs, which impacted program operations. Administrative changes deferred decision-making and implementation of key initiatives, including the geographic expansion in MSRLM blocks and other COVID-19 response strategies. Water.org navigated these delays and lags as best as possible by maintaining relationships across different levels of government departments and establishing relationships with the new officials.

## **WATERAID**

### **ACHIEVEMENTS**

- **Community led planning:** To instill a sense of ownership amongst the communities towards the scheme, W+W teams have ensured participatory development of village action plans in 2,297 villages since 2019. W+W teams have facilitated formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSC) in these villages to ensure representation from all villagers. Members of the VWSC, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI), and women from all villages were involved in the planning process for all developed VAPs, and WaterAid paid close attention to ensure all households in the village were captured to prevent left-out households. Since 2019, 2,167 out of 2,524 submitted plans have already been approved by the respective departments across Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. Of the approved plans, water supply has been started in 1,028 villages. The total amount leveraged by the government departments towards these approved water supply schemes as a result of the Village

Action Plans completed by the W+W Alliance is approximately Rs. 126,731.21 Lakhs (or USD \$153,575).

- **Institutionalizing community led water quality monitoring and surveillance system:** One of the key components of the JJM is equipping communities connected to piped water supply schemes with the ability to ensure regular water quality testing and access to safe drinking water. Through the W+W project, five women from each intervention village were trained on water quality testing using field testing kits (FTKs). Teams worked to institutionalize community-led water quality monitoring and surveillance system in all intervention villages, resulting in a total of 13,799 women trained on the use of field-testing kits and the distribution of FTKs in 1,987 villages. Beyond the training and distribution of FTKs, project teams have ensured all women trained are also enrolled in the Government of India Water Quality Monitoring System (GoI WQMS) platform. On this platform, women can maintain records at the village level of the pre- and post-monsoon water quality tests and report results to the VWSC and Panchayat representatives. Additionally, with PWSS currently being implemented in many villages, monthly water quality tests are carried out by these teams to ensure safe water is being distributed to every household. Additionally, the teams have supported in the preparation of water calendars for routine annual activities for the PWSS.
- **Strengthening of Local Institutions and Community Ownership:** Sustainability of PWSS in villages can only be ensured if local governance institutions are strengthened on managing, maintaining, and sustaining their PWSSs. Since 2019, W+W teams trained 3,711 VWSC members and 4,240 PRI members for this purpose. WaterAid also observed that local village institutional members are taking the lead in ensuring effective O&M of PWSS in their villages. This model of community ownership is visible in the 30 model villages where detailed O&M plans, detailed O&M budgets, and anticipated expenditures have been developed. Using these budgets, the community calculates a water tariff for each household in the village that is meant to cover regular O&M costs of the installed PWSS. Additionally, WaterAid staff worked with community members and local village level institutional members (including VWSC and PRI representatives) to develop local water supply bylaws which govern water supply, water distribution, and water governance within the village. Water tariffs depend on the socio-economic condition of individual households, penalties for over usage and wastage of water, and previous non-payment of water tariffs. These bylaws, once framed, are discussed and approved in the gram Sabha for general consent and approval of the community.

Since 2019, a total of 448 villages (30 MP and 418 Maharashtra) have been provided O&M kits by the panchayat/VWSC. Additionally, 796 villages (520 MP and 276 Maharashtra) have started with water tariff collection and to date, WaterAid has facilitated the collection of approximately Rs. 1369.91 lakhs (or 1,669,046 USD) through water tariffs.

- **Women's Leadership and Participation:** During planning processes, women played a key role in community mobilization and development of participatory VAPs in all 2,524 villages. Women from different households of a village have been included in the VWSC and these women have led initiatives on monitoring the quality of construction of PWSS in their respective households. Additionally, women trained on water quality are playing a pivotal role in generating awareness on water quality monitoring and surveillance at the household level. In model villages, WaterAid encouraged the selection of two pump operators, one male and one female. Women pump operators

play an active role in mobilizing the community to plan for effective O&M of PWSS, to develop an O&M budget for the village, and to finalize water supply bylaws in the village.

A total of 184 women pump operators have been trained by W+W teams. These women facilitated a formal contract with the panchayat and the provision of an honorarium for pump operators in the O&M budget of these villages ranging between Rs. 4000 – 10,000 (\$ 49 – 122), depending on the size of the village and number of households. Additionally, women trained under this project have been celebrated by independent agencies (UNDP/SIWI and National Water Mission) for their exemplary work at the grassroots level under key components of JJM.

- **Equity and Inclusion:** Throughout implementation WaterAid has promoted principles of equity and inclusion. WaterAid facilitated household surveys to assess access to piped water in all hamlets of the village, identifying left out households and ensuring their inclusion in the list of eligible households for PWSS. WaterAid not only ensured 50% women representation in VWSCs formed, but also encouraged representation of women from marginalized communities including from scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. When framing water supply bylaws in model villages, the W+W team facilitated clauses for the relaxation or differential water tariff rates for poor and marginalized households. Through prioritizing equity and inclusion, WaterAid broke gender stereotypes, promoted women in taking on key village level tasks, ensured representation from all sections of society in decision-making forums at the village level, and facilitated rules and local laws in accordance with the socio-economic condition of the relevant village families.

## KEY LEARNINGS

- **Empowering women is essential for effective systems:** Empowering women to take leadership roles at the community level is a major success of this project. These leadership roles are not necessarily positional in nature (i.e., Sarpanch), but include active roles in water quality surveillance and monitoring, VAP development, streamlining of water tariff collections, and strengthening of O&M mechanisms at the village level. Throughout project implementation, WaterAid aimed to encourage increased women's participation through opportunities for leadership. This resulted in women serving as village volunteers on water quality testing, pump operation, and representation for the needs of families and communities in Village Water and Sanitation Committees. The level of participation and leadership by women seen in the W+W Alliance villages is groundbreaking in the rural context and can serve as a successful model to replicate across the country, as women from these villages have already been commended for their exceptional work in actively contributing towards the JJM.
- **Capacity building is an ongoing process:** One of WaterAid's strategies to ensure water security, water quality monitoring, and surveillance has been capacity building at the grassroots level. In this pursuit, WaterAid engaged and ensured training of key women and youth from the communities, VWSCs, and PRIs. It is important that for effective capacity building, materials for trainings were customized for the needs of the target group. People from the same village may require different sets of training materials for the same topic, depending on their capacity to comprehend, learn, and convert their learnings into actions. Furthermore, some groups may require multiple refresher trainings to ensure comprehension of the material. Therefore, WaterAid has learned that to impact change, trainings must not be a one-time effort, but instead be a series of regular follow-up trainings and support to community stakeholders to support their learning. WaterAid has ensured tailored



support with regular meetings at the community level through ratri chaupals (community gatherings in small groups to deliver awareness messages on the key components of the JJM) and meetings with PRI and VWSC members at frequent intervals to reemphasize the topics that they had been trained on.

- **Participatory processes are non-negotiable:** The importance of participatory processes cannot be undermined. To instill a sense of community ownership, involvement of the community at each stage – planning, management, implementation, and monitoring - is imperative. Only when the community is involved in the entire process can a strong sense of ownership be developed. Additionally, full participation of women requires specific outreach and coaching so that ultimately women take up key roles at the village level. As a strong example of women participation, some model villages include female pump operators who play an active role mobilizing community in planning for effective O&M of PWSS, developing O&M budget for the village, and finalizing water supply bylaws in the village. Women leadership at the community level is also important for ensuring community participation and ownership.
- **Effectiveness of in-person engagement:** Due to the pandemic, the mobility of WaterAid’s team was severely impacted in Year 4 (2020) of the W+W Alliance. To overcome this, WaterAid developed online training modules on key topics within the JJM to train the community and key stakeholders. However, because access and exposure to W+W Alliance’s target groups via virtual training modules is very limited, with some areas not having access to network connectivity and/or resources necessary for online training coordination, disseminating virtual modules across the W+W Alliance villages proved to be a challenge and not a suitable alternative to in-person trainings. Moreover, face-to-face interactions for these specific trainings seemed more effective, as there is increased comfort and ability for all members of the village to raise questions and contribute to discussions. The team has learned that although online resources can be used, online trainings were not the most appropriate method for WaterAid’s approach in the W+W Alliance.
- **Leveraging Technology for Data Collection and Compilation:** Considering the scale at which JJM had been rolled out and the number of villages relevant to the W+W Alliance, WaterAid felt it necessary to leverage technology for developing VAPs and online reporting of activities from field. The datasets were large, considering nearly 200 villages were covered in each district every year, and therefore compiling, collating, and analyzing the data collectively was susceptible to error. To overcome this, WaterAid used m-Water, an open-source tool for collecting data which is free of cost, user friendly, and was ultimately able to reduce data entry errors. The system had a three-tier system of approvals which ensured data quality and control for large datasets. Data from the field is fed into mWater and, post verification, is fed into WaterAid’s internal Management Information Systems (MIS) system. Finally, data is reverified at the country level and is reported through Goodera, W+W Alliance’s partner-wide data system. WaterAid would promote this model for data collection and compilation in future iterations of this program.
- **Flexibility and collaboration is key to implementing large-scale programs:** WaterAid had a widespread operation at the district level, with an average of 200 villages covered in each district. With such a large scale, achieving uniformity in terms of allocation of time and resources to each village is difficult, considering the speed with which schemes are implemented by the government under the JJM. Considering this, WaterAid’s approach was to focus implementation in intensive

villages and leverage the work done by other W+W Alliance partners in extensive villages where WaterAid had lower levels of engagement. WaterAid especially collaborated with CARE and utilized social capital developed under the P.A.C.E. program to provide additional support to extensive villages. WaterAid trained P.A.C.E. champions on the participatory development of VAPs and water quality testing, who then worked closely with their villages to complete VAPs and testing. Additionally, WaterAid worked closely with Water.org and the Institute for Sustainable Communities to supplement their work on sanitation loans and water conservation measures. Leveraging the collective strength of W+W Alliance partners to achieve WaterAid's own objectives amplified impact and facilitated the W+W Alliance's ultimate success.

## MONITORING & EVALUATION

### ACHIEVEMENTS

- **The P.A.C.E. evaluation was designed and implemented with historical context in mind.** During the inception stage, ICRW designed an evaluation study which builds on the existing understanding of the impact of Gap Inc.'s P.A.C.E. program and also measures change in key indicators for the W+W Alliance. Usually evaluation design measures impact by conducting a baseline before the program is initiated and an endline after completion of the program. As a Gap Inc. knowledge partner since 2007, ICRW conducted rigorous evaluation of the P.A.C.E. program in multiple settings that demonstrated the effectiveness of the program in building women's knowledge, skills, and ability to navigate and negotiate at home and at the workplace. Therefore, the evaluation of W+W was designed to further understand the influence of P.A.C.E. training outcomes such as self-efficacy, communication, and involvement in decision-making on adoption and maintenance of WASH behaviors. It was decided, therefore, to conduct the first round of surveys soon after completion of P.A.C.E. training. This innovation provided an optimum evaluation design that took into consideration existing knowledge and given resources.
- **I4DI's endline showed that the W+W Alliance contributed positively to a variety of WASH and women's empowerment outcomes:** Among these were differences in water access, including particular gains in improved water source access in Madhya Pradesh. In general, intervention villages had higher satisfaction with their household's main water source than comparison villages at endline, as evidenced by both the quantitative and qualitative data. As at baseline, seasonality of water availability remained a challenge for many households, regardless of location, especially during the summer season. Additionally, although there were increases to improved water sources, improvements in WASH-related behavior did not follow consistently. For example, water storage practice improved in both states, but there was considerable room for continued improvement on water storage and water treatment practices.

### FINDINGS FROM EVALUATIONS

- **Complex findings related to WASH empowerment:** There were no major differences between the intervention and comparison villages on women's WASH agency at the I4DI endline. In many homes, men alone were making major decisions about household WASH. WASH self-efficacy scores were not significantly different between the intervention and comparison groups in Maharashtra, although then tended to be higher among intervention villages than in comparison

villages in Madhya Pradesh. On the other hand, there was a statistically significant difference between the WASH self-efficacy scores of P.A.C.E participants in the Madhya Pradesh intervention villages, comparison to non-P.A.C.E participants in the same villages. P.A.C.E participants had higher WASH self-efficacy. In Maharashtra, the data trend was similar, although not statistically significant. Taken together, these findings suggest that P.A.C.E contributed to an empowerment effect on direct participants, but the program did not have a ripple effect on other households in the larger community. This likely was due to limited sharing of information with other non-participating households, as indicated by the quantitative data.

- **Human waste management practice substantially improved in intervention and comparison villages in both states:** The most striking changes observed were with regard to time savings for water access and the burden of responsibility for water fetching. In Maharashtra, the average everyday time spent for water fetching was 25 minutes shorter in the intervention villages than in the comparison villages, whereas in Madhya Pradesh the intervention villages spent 10 minutes fewer collecting water on average. In the I4DI endline, noticeably more men were responsible for water fetching, either on their own or sharing the responsibility with women in their household.
- **Stories of change from the P.A.C.E. program illustrated the WASH contributions that women are making to their households and communities:** Moreover, the endline qualitative data revealed the strong engagement and ownership of community WASH management among women in communities with intensive WASH governance activities. Nevertheless, the gatekeeping role of village leadership and men in the household cannot be understated. According to focus group respondents, invitations to attend village council meetings appeared to be an important precursor for some women to participate. ICRW's quantitative survey found low male P.A.C.E. participation even in households with female P.A.C.E. participants. However, the FGD data and P.A.C.E. stories of change included examples of the influential role of men, especially in convincing other men to improve WASH facilities and practice.
- **Need for intentional and intensive male engagement:** During the W+W Alliance, men were engaged in a limited capacity thus restricting the impact of the program on gender norms that contribute to gendered WASH inequities. To achieve this, it would be important to involve not only male champions but also other men and boys in the community. Additionally, ICRW's P.A.C.E. curriculum needs to integrate a gender lens across the content to ensure that the program is able to influence and shift gender norms to make communities gender equitable along with achieving the goal of improving health and well-being of the community.
- **Continued engagement and learning needed for P.A.C.E. participants:** The evaluation of P.A.C.E. program demonstrates that self-efficacy and self-assertive efficacy—have a positive influence on adoption and maintenance of WASH behaviors among P.A.C.E. graduates. Self-efficacy and self-assertive efficacy are also associated with sustained handwashing practices. The evaluation thus implies that there is a need to continue investing in building women's self-efficacy and self-assertive efficacy both for improving WASH behaviors as well for building resilience.

## KEY LEARNINGS FROM M&E IMPLEMENTATION

- **MERL-backed Programming:** Many of USAID’s complex programs are implemented by a combination of implementation partners, so in that sense this program was not unique. However, the unique feature of the W+W Alliance was that the learning approach was underpinned by a MERL Strategy, including a Program Strategy Map (Theory of Change). The MERL Strategy was developed early in the implementation and revisited regularly throughout implementation. The MERL Strategy clarified the relationship between partner contributions to the interventions as well as to the monitoring and evaluations itself, to form a comprehensive plan for activities and learning. It was invaluable to I4DI’s evaluation decision making and the analytical approach.
- **Intentionality in Collaboration, Learning, and Adapting:** Having served as the evaluator of the program and led several evaluations of program performance (baseline study in 2018, midterm process evaluation in 2020, and the final evaluation in 2022), I4DI has been able to see the various programmatic and operational adaptations the Alliance has been able to enact for overall program effectiveness. Some notable examples are provided below.
- **The CLA process enabled Women + Water:** Positive attitude towards CLA allowed the program to bring more evidence-based learning into collaborative discussions with USAID, Gap Inc., partners, and local counterparts, facilitating key adaptive management decisions that are having profound impacts on what the Alliance can achieve. This opened communication channels wider than they otherwise could have been, while simultaneously creating alignment and intentional convergence among all parties. CLA quickly became more fully embedded in the team culture, rather than something frequently discussed but never fully internalized. The team started operating in a much more collaborative and dynamic manner than they were at the outset of the activity.
- **Pause and reflect workshops:** I4DI facilitated workshops with W+W to revisit the underlying logic of the model and its critical assumptions and identify how gaps in the theory of change can be addressed, to maximize the Alliance’s impact on the women and communities. The workshops in the early years of the program invited a broader set of stakeholders in the WASH space, including representatives of communities and also WaterAid, an organization that maintained deep connections to communities and community leaders and had a strong understanding of existing water infrastructure. Through these discussions, WASH governance was identified as a key but missing piece in the W+W theory of change, which had initially launched with partners CARE, Water.org, and ISC. This engagement with WaterAid led to an expansion of the theory of change, incorporating a key new branch of the logic model that centered around providing WASH governance and infrastructure to communities, and tactical approaches for operationalizing those theories. The insights from those workshops led WaterAid to formally joined the Women + Water Alliance in 2019.
- **Need for shared vision:** The high number of partners involved in the program meant that developing consensus for a shared vision of the project demanded a high level of effort. Each partner brought to the partnership their own expertise and perspective and as a result it took time for all partners to align on a shared vision. Something to note for future projects implemented by multiple partners is that time and effort should be set aside for alignment at the start of implementation.
- **Need for alignment among partners:** Initially, partners implemented their components of the program without collaborating with other partners. As each partner’s main objective was to achieve their own KPIs, it took a long time for partners to agree on the need to collaborate to deliver the

greatest possible impact and ensure that all P.A.C.E. participants could receive various components of the intervention. Due to the missed opportunity for collaboration at the beginning of implementation, higher levels of impact were achieved only later on in the program. While the program achieved its intended impact, greater collaboration among partners from the initiation of the project could have ensured holistic program input to all the P.A.C.E. participants. If all those women had access to WASH financing (Water.org activities) and participation in water management activities in the community (WaterAid activities), this would have contributed to a more sustained impact.

- **Need for a Robust Evaluation Design.** The program presented a great opportunity to set up a robust impact evaluation that could have helped to understand the impact of the holistic program design on program participants and the communities. For instance, we could have set up either Quasi-Experimental study (the design used to evaluate P.A.C.E. component by ICRW) or a Randomized Controlled Trial to determine the impact of the holistic program or various program components respectively. However, because of changes in the sampling approach between baseline and endline, some villages sampled as intervention villages at baseline had partial exposure over the course of the Alliance, and therefore would not have been eligible for intervention or comparison villages sampling at endline. Thus, since the program design was work in progress at the time of baseline, the evaluation design also could not be devised accordingly.
- **Leveraging existing knowledge:** The program built on the foundation and the learning from Gap Inc's P.A.C.E. program. This foundation allowed the W+W Alliance to scale women's empowerment intervention across 2 states in India through CARE quickly. Additionally, other implementation partners such as WaterAid, Water.org and ISC contributed their expertise to develop a holistic program that was aimed at improving health and well-being of communities. This strong foundation allowed the program to move quickly once implementation started.
- **Adaptation to COVID-19:** The ICRW baseline study was conducted in September-December 2019 and ICRW's endline was scheduled a year later in order to assess whether the learnings still hold and to draw a comparison between the two time periods (immediately after a cohort ends and one year after a cohort ends). However, with the outbreak of COVID-19 in 2020, the timeline of this study was impacted. The endline was delayed by almost five months (February–March 2021). During this period following challenges were anticipated and mitigated:
  - **Loss to follow-up:** To mitigate the challenge of loss to follow-up an additional step was added to recruitment of respondents. A separate team was formed to map the respondents in their given location prior to the main survey. This helped in containing loss to follow-up to 10% rather than the anticipated 15-20%
  - **COVID-19 safety for both respondents and research teams:** Between the first wave (March to October 2020) and the second wave (April 2021 onwards) the team seized a short window to conduct the fieldwork for the endline survey. However, the risk of COVID-19 during this window was also very high. The team followed a stringent protocol to minimise the risk during the training and field work. This included ensuring that masks, sanitizers, and soaps were made available not only for the research team but also for the respondents.

- **Impact of COVID on respondents:** During the endline it became critical to understand the impact of the pandemic on the lives of the P.A.C.E. participants. Therefore, additional questions were added to the study tool at the time of the endline survey.

#### CLA-SUPPORTED IMPACT ON W+W RESULTS

- Just one year after executing CLA-based adaptations, including the incorporation of WASH governance as a key branch in the W+W logic model, the number of people empowered to improve their access to drinking water and sanitation through the Alliance increased from just under 70,000 to more than 900,000. By August 2022, the Women + Water Alliance achieved its goal to empower two million people to improve their access to water and sanitation in India.
- In early 2022, I4DI authored the CLA case study that articulated many adaptive management efforts undertaken by the W+W Alliance, with a focus on the findings from the mid-program pause-and-reflect session that ultimately led to an expansion of the theory of change and WaterAid to join the partnership. This study won the USAID CLA Case Competition, which stands as a testament to the Alliance's emphasis on learning and the intentionality of adaptive management throughout the life of the project. I4DI has served as the collaboration, learning, and adaptive management (CLA) partner to the W+W Alliance since the program's inception.
- Having conducted the post-evaluation action planning workshop with Alliance, it was clear that partners were looking at ways to incorporate the learning and recommendations from the final evaluation I4DI conducted into their existing and ongoing sustainability planning. This bodes well for any future WASH work that partners plan on undertaking as those plans will be grounded in evidence backed by the findings of the W+W Alliance endline evaluation.

## KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	YEAR 6 TARGET	YEAR 6 IMPACT	TOTAL PROGRAM TARGET	TOTAL PROGRAM IMPACT	% PROGRAM TARGET ACHIEVEMENT
Estimated number of people empowered to improve their access to drinking water and sanitation	497,052	517,363	2,153,686	2,425,440	113%
P.A.C.E. Enrollment	28,000	52,718	200,000	214,892	107%
Total Learning Group	800	911	6,377	6,478	102%
Total Graduation	55,720	61,888	160,000	178,410	112%
P.A.C.E. Champions	2,000	1,471	6,377	6,456	101%
Male Champions	1,334	1,404	4,092	4,320	106%
# Loans disbursed	20,484	79,143	78,853	156,150	198%
Total amount of financing disbursed (USD)	3,994,380	13,000,178	15,376,335	27,364,532	178%
Number of people participating in trainings implemented to create awareness of WSS financing in target communities	13,110	78,750	118,007	209,993	178%

# Village Action Plans prepared	300	296	2,500	2,494	100%
# Women and youths trained on water quality testing as a cadre	511	2,888	7,300	13,132	180%
# Social audits conducted & community scorecards developed	50	49	150	107	71%
# PRI members trained on water quality	800	1,091	2,000	4,185	209%
# Gram Panchayats with availability of functional FTKs	50	128	360	2,035	565%
# District and block Govt. functionaries trained on water security & quality issues	100	0	880	1,329	151%