Our Response to the Global Pandemic

Our global community is healthier when everyone everywhere has access to clean water. Water in every home, school and public gathering place has always been our goal. While our country’s attention is drawn to our own households and communities, WaterFirst remains steadfast in our mission to ensure that every family has access to a kitchen tap, a shower, and a toilet, right at their home.

Our colleagues around the world have not stopped working; they continue to build new water systems so that when our project community members are told the very best defense against the coronavirus is to wash their hands, they can. The work you are supporting is saving lives.

Our collective actions and sacrifices matter, in our neighborhoods and around the world. Investing in high-quality infrastructure for clean water and toilets will greatly impact the health and security of our global community moving forward. The return on this investment will impact us all for generations to come.

Guiding Beliefs

1. Access to clean water and a toilet is a basic human right.
2. Clean water transforms lives.
3. Invest in people & offer solutions that last.
4. There is no one-size-fits-all response.
5. Don’t cut corners.
6. Follow up with rigorous monitoring.
7. We are stronger together.
WATER1ST INTERNATIONAL

2019
At a Glance

≈ $2.55 Million Raised ≈

ALLOCATED OF EXPENSES

87%
PROGRAMS

11%
FUNDRAISING

2%
MANAGEMENT

IMPACT TO DATE

232,445 PEOPLE WITH CLEAN WATER

3,104 PROJECTS COMPLETED
63,000,000 CUMULATIVE HOURS SAVED AS RESULT OF WATER1ST PROJECTS
512% RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT FOR TIME SAVINGS ALONE
7,133 LABOR YEARS SAVED

2019 BOARD MEMBERS

CECILIA WHATLEY, CHAIR
HEATHER LEACH, VICE CHAIR
TERRY GIBBONS, TREASURER
KRISTINE BATY
LYNN CARR

JULIA CLARKE
JOSH EPPERSON
LARA KAMMERECK
TIM KIRLEY
DIANE LANGSTRAAT
DICK MOXON

DONOR DATA

74% INDIVIDUAL
23% FOUNDATION
2% CORPORATE
1% CHURCH/CIVIC/CLUB

AVERAGE COST DISTRIBUTION

PIPING WATER TO HOUSEHOLDS
PROJECT DESIGN
SPRING CAPPING OR WELL DRILLING
TOILETS
HYGIENE EDUCATION
WATER1ST OVERHEAD
CAPACITY BUILDING + COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Our audited financial statements and IRS Form 990s are available on our website.
Water is piped directly to every home, school, health clinic, and community center, assuring each household receives the maximum health benefits of clean water, a toilet, and a shower. Piped water to the home ends the walk for water for women and girls. With the constant burden of water fetching and illness lifted, women can earn an income, families begin to save money, and girls can go to school.

All Water1st projects integrate piped water, toilets, and hygiene education. Studies have consistently shown that together — water, toilets, and hygiene — stop the spread of disease and save lives. When water is piped directly to the home and school, it allows for high-quality toilets and showers. Water faucets are placed in bathroom stalls for flushing, cleaning, and washing hands.

We routinely visit our projects to evaluate and improve our work. Rigorous oversight ensures each project is generating the best possible outcomes. You can be confident your donation is wisely spent and making a real difference in the lives of the people we serve. Considering the industry-wide project failure rate is 35-50% after five years, we know monitoring is a worthwhile investment.

Our cost-effective, comprehensive approach impacts the health, economy, education, food security, and overall well-being of our project communities.

CONSISTENT SUPPORT COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

Each local office employs water, sanitation, and public health professionals who know best how to identify, design, and build appropriate technologies. They are experts in community organizing and empowerment. Consistent funding enables our partners to engage in long-term strategic planning, retain qualified staff, and maintain strong relationships with local community leaders. This approach also allows us to saturate a region with water and toilet projects.

COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

We prepare communities to independently own and operate their projects. They receive extensive training to build, operate, and maintain their water projects in perpetuity. Community members are involved in every step of the process; they provide the volunteer labor to build the project and elect a local water committee to govern their system. The end result is a community-managed project that lasts.

WOMEN PLAY AN INTEGRAL PART

Women serve in key leadership roles in the governance and maintenance of their water and sanitation systems. Since women are traditionally responsible for water collection, they receive the greatest direct benefit from a water project. An important role as a water committee member or hygiene promoter enhances women’s ability, making them stronger, more respected community members.

$24 million RAISED

3,104 WATER SYSTEMS COMPLETED

236,593 BENEFICIARIES

5 COUNTRIES

HONDURAS

56 Projects Completed

in 92 Communities

31,394 People Served

BANGLADESH

3,188 Projects Completed

168,115 People Served

ETHIOPIA

6 Projects Completed

21,084 People Served

INDIA

35 Projects Completed

14,400 People Served

MOZAMBIQUE

1 Project Completed

1,600 People Served

*refer to country report
**OUR WORK IN**

**Honduras**

**LOCAL PARTNER:**

**COCEPRADIL**

Our ‘gold standard’ for providing water and sanitation projects in poor communities.

**PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS**

- **100% ACCESS**
  - In several municipios in southern Lempira, we are approaching the goal of 100% access to water supply and toilets. With 10 years, the entire region could achieve 100% access, serving as an example to the world of effective development work.

- **LOCAL GOVERNMENT**
  - COCEPRADIL has leveraged its popularity in the region to capture the attention of local government. Mayors are required to contribute 30% of the overall project cost.

- **CLIMATE CHANGE**
  - All projects incorporate household water meters, ensuring accurate billing and protecting against leaks and over-use, which is preparing communities for climate change.

- **NEW DATABASE**
  - Development of a new centralized database allows for analysis of water meter data and payment information. COCEPRADIL can accurately set few structures that lead to the best outcomes for health and resource conservation, while informing future project development.

**SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMMATIC STRATEGY**

- **LABOR & CASH CONTRIBUTIONS**
  - Before a project starts, at least 80% of community households must sign a contract detailing their contributions. Project participants provide all labor required to construct the water system as well as a monetary contribution in the form of cash or a loan. The labor investment is significant and includes digging miles of pipeline trench by hand and carrying heavy pipe up steep hills. Because communities recognize the benefits of clean water, they work long days to guarantee project success.

- **TRAINING, WATER COMMITTEES & WATER BILLS**
  - COCEPRADIL is particularly skilled at preparing communities to independently own and operate their systems. A local water committee, comprised of 50% women, is trained in all aspects of system management. Once a project is completed, each household pays a monthly water bill of about $2, enough to cover system operation, maintenance, and repair.

- **WATERSHED PROTECTION**
  - Communities are educated about the symbiotic relationship between their water source and the surrounding watershed. They learn ways to restore and protect the watershed, including new agricultural practices that support the preservation of forest cover.

**CHALLENGES**

**Climate Change**

The biggest challenge to our work in Lempira is climate change. Locating and purchasing mountain springs is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive. In response to this challenge, beginning in 2014, COCEPRADIL adopted the policy of metering water use at every household and community tap, including schools and health clinics. Meters encourage users to fix leaks and use water efficiently.

**COUNTRY HIGHLIGHT**

**Built, maintained, and operated by the community**

As with all of the projects we support in Honduras, the Azacualpa Centro system was literally built by the people of Azacualpa Centro, under the guidance of our experienced Honduran colleagues. There were no trucks to carry 300-pound steel pipes or 100-pound bags of cement, no backhoes to dig trenches. Working together over the past year, the community dug 10 miles of pipeline trench and constructed a 50,000-gallon water storage tank. Every single family now has a toilet, a shower, and a kitchen faucet for washing dishes, hands, and laundry.

**WATER SYSTEMS**

The mountainous geography of the Lempira region allows communities to build gravity-flow water systems. High elevation springs serve as the water source. Water is piped to a storage tank, where it can be chlorinated, allowing for 24/7 water service. A network of pipes delivers water to each household, school, clinic, and community center.

**HIGH QUALITY TOILETS**

Toilets are critical to the health equation. Each home, school, and community center is equipped with a flush toilet that is odorless and easy to keep clean.

**HEALTH EDUCATION**

Community members attend hygiene workshops to learn how their new water system can contribute to healthier homes. Children are a critical focus of the hygiene-promotion activities because they are the principal victims of the water crisis. COCEPRADIL makes hygiene education fun with songs, games, and skits, all while demonstrating the importance of using a toilet and washing hands.

**SHOWERS**

Each household receives a shower room. For the first time in their lives, community members can bathe every day. Feelings of shame have been replaced with a sense of dignity.

**IN SERVICE**

- **8,200** people served
- **12** communities
- **56** projects completed
- **92** communities
- **31,394** people served

**PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

- **10** projects serving **8,200** people in **12** communities
OUR WORK IN

Bangladesh

OUR WORK IN

KENDRA

SHASTHYA

DUSHTHA

SHT HA

LOCAL PARTNER:

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

COMPLETED PROJECTS

3,188

PROJECTS

168,115

PEOPLE

SERVED

PROJECTS

100

GRANT &

LOAN BASED

SERVING

4,000

PEOPLE

COUNTRY HIGHLIGHT

Slum residents have no legal access to public water supply or sewer systems.

Water1st works in urban slums in Bangladesh's three largest cities—the capital, Dhaka (population 18 million), Chattogram, (4 million), and Khulna (1 million). They have no legal access to public water supply or sewer systems. Adding to the crisis is the rapid increase in urban slum populations in Bangladesh: 150,000–400,000 new residents arrive each year from rural areas seeking a better life for their families.

In these squatter settlements, renters are forced to buy water of unknown quality at very expensive rates. There are no sewer pipes in these neighborhoods, so waste from ‘open’ toilets flows right through the community, making living conditions extremely unhygienic, and sanitary toilets a high priority.

The urban slum communities we support in Bangladesh consist of hard-working rickshaw drivers, domestic & textile workers, and other low-wage earners. They need a day to a day, without personal savings or a safety net. When their work is disrupted by a pandemic, their families are instantly impacted and at risk. Our partner organization, DSK, is second-to-none when it comes to the technical aspects of our systems, and is also deeply committed to the health, economic security, and dignity of the people they serve.

In an increasingly urbanizing world, Water1st's most significant discovery has been our partner in Bangladesh, Dushtha Shasthya Kendra (DSK). DSK has pioneered a highly-effective means of providing water, toilets, and hygiene education to an urban slum environment.

We began funding DSK in two slum areas in Dhaka in 2006. Since then, they have demonstrated the ability to scale up and spread out. With increased Water1st funding, DSK now implements hundreds of projects a year in Bangladesh's three largest cities of Dhaka, Chattogram, and Khulna.

The incorporation of micro-lending into the DSK operation model has proven highly effective. Water systems and toilets are not given away. Users must repay the full construction cost to DSK within 1-2 years. Repayments have exceeded 96%. These repay loans are then used to fund more projects. Currently, 49% of our annual budget for Bangladesh comes from repaid loans, leveraging even greater impact.

Piped Water

Water1st encourages the adoption of piped water networks, which provide the best long-term cost. In our piped network systems, water is pumped to an elevated storage tank. From the storage tank, water flows to one or more locations in the slum settlement, providing ample water to residents for drinking, cooking, bathing, and laundry.

DSK incorporates high-quality toilets that are easily distinguishable from most other toilets built by NGOs around the world. They use a porcelain pan for easy cleaning and a water seal that makes them odorless. Water faucets are placed in the stalls for flushing, cleaning, and hand washing.

Hygiene Education

A comprehensive hygiene-education program addresses the community’s most challenging health issues. Various trainings are targeted to those who care for young children, to adolescent girls entering puberty, and to special groups like food and tea vendors. These trainings result in dramatic changes in hygiene behavior and significant gains in health indicators.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Our local partner, DSK, takes a participatory approach to project implementation. The process starts with a community mapping exercise to identify local housing, shops, roads, mosques, and of course, water sources and toilets. Communities vote on their highest-priority issues and then create an action plan to solve them. Water supply is commonly identified as the most critical need; not surprising when slum communities report spending up to 40% of their annual income treating water-related illnesses.

REVOLVING LOANS

Users of the water systems and toilets are required to pay 100% of the construction costs via a long-term, low-interest loan. The loan approach ensures water systems and toilets are built for those who really want and need them. With repayment rates exceeding 96%, we have nearly doubled our reach and rate of project completion.

WATER IS THE CATALYST

Once neighborhoods have organized themselves to solve their water and sanitation problems, they are prepared to tackle other high-priority issues, such as trash collection, roads, and improved drainage. Water committees have organized household garbage collection for a small monthly fee. Each day, a paid garbage crew collects waste and transports it to a government-approved dump site.

The Character of DSK Shines Bright

The urban slum communities we support in Bangladesh are made up of hard-working rickshaw drivers, domestic & textile workers, and other low-wage earners. They survive one day at a time, without personal savings or a safety net. When their work is disrupted by a pandemic, their families are instantly impacted and at risk. Our partner organization, DSK, is second-to-none when it comes to the technical aspects of our systems, and is also deeply committed to the health, economic security, and dignity of the people they serve.

DSK is working tirelessly to mobilize urban slum communities to protect themselves from the spread of COVID-19. They are going door-to-door to educate residents on transmission pathways of disease and hygiene practices people can use to protect themselves, including frequent handwashing, wearing masks, and sanitizing home environments.
Ethiopia

OUR WORK IN

LOCAL PARTNER:
Water Action

LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEW STANDARDS
WATER SYSTEMS
PEOPLE SERVED

POPULATION 105,000,000
POPULATION LIVING BELOW $1.90 A DAY 27%

Completed Projects

6 WATER SYSTEMS SERVING 21,084 PEOPLE
60% of people lack access to clean water.

Under Construction

1 WATER SYSTEM SERVING 3,800 PEOPLE

COMPLETED PROJECTS

6 WATER SYSTEMS
SERVING 21,084 PEOPLE
PEOPLE SERVED

COUNTRY HIGHLIGHT

Three hours each day

In Ethiopia, approximately 60% of the people lack access to clean water, and over 70% do not have sanitary toilets. These numbers grow even higher in the rural areas where we work. Without access to a safe water supply, women and girls spend more than three hours each day collecting water. They walk multiple times a day to distant contaminated sources, carrying containers weighing 40 pounds.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

In the Nick of Time
WATER FLOWS IN
DIMA JELIWAN

In early March, about the same time the first case of coronavirus was detected in Ethiopia, the community of Dima Jeliwan turned on their household taps and clean water flowed for the first time. Now every family is armed with the number one defense against pathogens of all kinds, clean water. All Water1st projects are designed to make handwashing possible in places like rural Dima Jeliwan. If we want people to wash hands frequently, we must go the extra mile to build systems that pipe water directly to every household. The return on this investment is enormous as women and girls no longer spend their days walking and waiting in long lines at public taps; women have time to earn an income; girls can attend school; and their families have enough water to maintain a hygienic living environment that benefits our global community.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Water Action

Since 2005, Water1st has been providing support to our Ethiopian partner organization, Water Action, to work with rural communities to implement integrated water and sanitation projects that also protect the watershed.

In order to maximize their impact, Water Action has developed a master plan for the Dawo Woreda, a county within the Oromia region. Projects are clustered geographically, resulting in compounded benefits. Communities can learn from one another and a market emerges for supplies and spare parts.

The local government water office has agreed to co-finance our projects. This is a positive development on many fronts. Not only does it allow us to stretch our donations further, it leaves communities feeling hopeful their government cares about them, and ensures that local government has a stake in the project’s long-term success.

Based on years of field data, Water1st believes household water supply (piped water) and quality toilets have the greatest health and economic impacts on a community. Our partner, Water Action, is implementing household water connections and pour-flush toilets in the current Ethiopia project, similar to the models used successfully in Honduras and Mozambique. Currently, only 4% of rural water systems in all of Ethiopia are ‘on premises’ (at households). We anticipate this innovative experiment will lead to a new standard for projects in Ethiopia.

Comprehensive & Integrated Systems

Our Ethiopia partner, Water Action, works with rural communities to implement water, sanitation, hygiene, and watershed protection programs. In order to maximize their impact, Water Action develops a master plan for an entire region. Water1st is focused on implementing the plan for the Dawo Woreda, a county within the Oromia region. Projects are clustered geographically, resulting in compounded benefits. Communities can learn from one another and a market emerges for supplies and spare parts.

ADVANTAGES OF PIPED WATER

There are currently six Water1st-funded piped water networks in Ethiopia. One advantage of a piped water network is the ability to create household connections. Three of our projects (Ilamu Muja, Kelecho Garbi, and Gonbisa Kussaye) families have paid to connect to the water supply system. Each household connection includes a water meter and users are charged a monthly bill based on the volume of water used. We know from meter readings that households with a direct connection use roughly 50 liters per person per day, the volume necessary to ensure sufficient water for drinking, cooking, and hygiene. Households collecting water from public taps are using less than half the volume needed to be healthy. These meter readings convinced Water1st to invest the additional amount needed to provide household connections at all users from the start of the project.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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NEW STANDARDS

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Mozambique

**Our Work In**

**LOCAL PARTNER:**

Grupo de Saneamento de Bilibiza

Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 180th out of 189 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index.

Prior to GSB’s relationship with Water1st, they had completed a number of small-scale water projects and coordinated farmer co-ops. Their community-based co-op model had all the characteristics we like to see in a local water committee. GSB showed considerable interest in providing household water connections and pour-flush toilets, not simply latrines. For these reasons we chose to support GSB as our newest partner.

On January 29th, the extremists reached the Water1st project communities and burned the villages to the ground. The residents were warned that the insurgents were approaching, so they abandoned the town and no casualties were reported. Many residents have not returned to their homes and the government has not taken effective actions to secure the territory or drive out the insurgents. For the time being, the area is a war zone and all development activities have come to a standstill.

Until the government of Mozambique takes seriously its responsibility to provide a safe environment for the people of Cabo Delgado, residents cannot return to rebuild their homes and resume their lives; and Water1st is unable to continue operating in the region. We are still reeling over this devastating news as photos and information slowly trickle in. Our hearts are with our partner, GSB, and the communities of Bilibiza and Dezanove.

**Cabo Delgado: A Region in Turmoil**

Our hearts are with our partner GSB

On the heels of our report of Cyclone Kenneth, the most powerful tropical storm ever recorded off the coast of Africa in 2019, we are devastated to report even greater destruction inflicted upon the people of Cabo Delgado at the hands of a well-organized cell of extremists. When Water1st embarked on a partnership with GSB during the summer of 2017, the region was peaceful and the need for clean water was great.

On October 22, 2017, an armed group attacked a police station in a small town several hours north of our project area. This was the first act of aggression by an emerging radical group seeking a complete overthrow of the present political structure. Over two years, the attacks gradually increased in frequency, geographical scale, and deadliness. Mozambique’s government demonstrated very little interest in curtailing the violence. In early 2020, the attacks evolved into something resembling a civil war, with the violent extremists moving at will through the region, occupying entire Districts.

On January 29th, the extremists reached the Water1st project communities and burned the villages to the ground. The residents were warned that the insurgents were approaching, so they abandoned the town and no casualties were reported. Only a few residents have returned to their homes.

**POPULATION**

**Population Living Below $1.90 A Day**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>29,670,000</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<td>of the population</td>
<td></td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td>lacks access to water</td>
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<td>and toilets.</td>
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Water1st is proud to support Grupo de Saneamento de Bilibiza (GSB) in Mozambique, where 80% of the population lacks access to water and toilets. Mozambique is one of the poorest countries in the world, ranking 180th out of 189 countries on the United Nations Human Development Index.

We began working with GSB in 2017. Our efforts are focused in the Cabo Delgado province, an isolated region located in the far north. Prior to GSB’s relationship with Water1st, they had completed a number of small-scale water projects and coordinated farmer co-ops. Their community-based co-op model had all the characteristics we like to see in a local water committee. GSB showed considerable interest in providing household water connections and pour-flush toilets, not simply latrines. For these reasons we chose to support GSB as our newest partner.
GIVE WATER. GIVE LIFE.

water1st.org