Annual Report
2024 - 25



LIVING WATER INDIA

Living Water India is committed to building resilient, self-reliant communities across the country by ensuring sustainable access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. With a focus on long-term impact, we work alongside communities to eliminate preventable, hygiene-related health issues and support their journey toward social and economic well-being. In addition to WASH, we also implement programs that promote education, livelihood opportunities, environmental stewardship, and spiritual growth—helping people lead healthier, more dignified lives.

Letter from the Director

Director –Finance & Admin, Living Water India

Dear Partners and Friends,

Looking back on this past year, I am deeply moved by the progress we've made—and even more so by the partnerships that made it possible. In some of the most remote corners of the country, communities now have access to safe, clean water for the very first time. Schools that once lacked basic sanitation now offer children safe, dignified spaces to learn and grow.

These accomplishments are not just milestones—they're reminders of what happens when committed people come together with purpose. At Living Water India, we believe that long-term transformation doesn't come from quick fixes. It comes from listening, building trust, and working side-by-side with communities to find solutions that last.

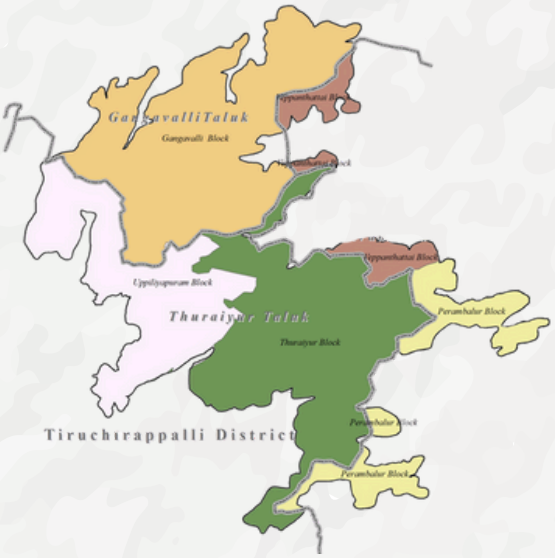
Thanks to your continued support, we've not only implemented vital infrastructure but also empowered people with knowledge—about hygiene, health, and the power of their own leadership. We've witnessed resilience and courage rise in the face of challenges, and it's been a privilege to walk this journey together.

Thank you for believing in this vision, for standing with us, and for being part of something that truly matters.
With deepest gratitude,

David Ongole
Director – Strategy & Operations
Living Water India

This year, Living Water delivered transformative impact through the completion of vital water projects, bringing safe, reliable water to communities long deprived of this basic need. Sanitation facilities and handwashing stations were built in schools and public areas, restoring dignity, protecting health, and enabling cleaner, safer environments.

Through widespread hygiene promotion efforts—including sessions on safe water use, handwashing, and menstrual health—we empowered individuals, especially women and girls, with knowledge to lead healthier lives. Global observances like World Water Day and World Toilet Day were used as catalytic moments to inspire behavior change and deepen community commitment to lasting hygiene and sanitation practices.





21453 Water Users

45 Water projects completed

17170 Trained in sanitation & hygiene

17 Sanitation Facilities

Water

Every time clean water begins to flow in a community, something powerful takes root. The long walks for water grow shorter. The burden of illness begins to lift. And what once felt impossible, safe drinking water at a school or in a village, becomes a daily reality.

Year after year, water has done more than quench thirst. It has returned time to mothers, brought children back to classrooms, and planted the seeds of trust and resilience in places once marked by scarcity. It has helped rewrite the story—not just for individuals, but for entire communities.

These are not just water systems. They are turning points—delivered with care, built in partnership, and carried forward with the strength of local leadership. Through every drop, lives are being restored, dignity renewed, and the future reshaped—one village, one family, one child at a time.

When Water Changes More Than Thirst – The Story of Our Lady of Lourdes Girls Higher Secondary School



Every school day at Our Lady of Lourdes Girls Higher Secondary School in Kottapalayam began the same way. Before the first bell, girls in blue uniforms gathered near a handful of old water taps, jostling for space. Break times were even worse—long queues, short tempers, and, for many, the decision to skip a drink entirely rather than spend precious minutes waiting.

For years, this was normal. With no proper water distribution system or storage tank, even the borewell drilled by the local Panchayat couldn't meet the need. In the summer heat, dehydration left students tired and distracted in class. Handwashing was irregular. For adolescent girls, the lack of water made managing menstruation at school difficult and often undignified. Teachers faced the same struggles—trying to nurture young minds while their own comfort and health were compromised.

That's when Living Water India stepped in. Working closely with the school, we upgraded the water point, installed a piped water network, and built a storage system to ensure a steady, equitable supply across the campus.

The change was immediate and visible. Girls filled their bottles without hurry. Laughter replaced the jostling around the taps. Handwashing became part of the school rhythm. Restrooms stayed clean and usable. Girls no longer missed days each month because of inadequate facilities. Teachers taught with renewed energy.

Now, clean water is no longer a privilege at Our Lady of Lourdes—it's a daily certainty. And in that simple change, the school found something powerful: when the struggle for water disappears, the space for learning, dignity, and opportunity grows.

Bandavalasa: A Journey from Neglect to Renewal





Bandavalasa, a small Kondadora tribal settlement in Pedabida Gram Panchayat of Ananthgiri Mandal, lies deep within the Kamberu range of the Eastern Ghats. For centuries, the Kondadora people—often described as reserved and deeply connected to their ancestral ways—have lived in bamboo and mud homes, facing hardships shaped by poverty, natural disasters, and isolation from mainstream development.

The community struggled with unsafe water, poor sanitation, and widespread health issues. Early marriages, malnutrition, and alcoholism further weakened their social fabric, while basic amenities such as roads and clean water were absent. With polluted sources, open defecation, and little awareness of environmental care, Bandavalasa lived under constant threats of illness, particularly fever and diarrhea.

By 2021, conditions had reached a breaking point, and urgent support was needed. A participatory survey revealed the depth of the crisis—contaminated water, unprotected springs, unclean surroundings, and free-roaming livestock creating unhygienic conditions throughout the village.
Living Water India responded by first addressing the most urgent issue: water. An abandoned borehole was revived, a new elevated tank was installed, and the community was mobilized to manage their water system through a dedicated WASH committee. This provided a reliable supply of clean water and laid the foundation for sustainable use.

Next came sanitation and hygiene improvements. Behavior-change sessions encouraged families to adopt healthier practices, and community toilets inspired households to build their own. For the first time, families began to see open defecation as a direct threat to their health and dignity.

Attention then turned to the environment. The community was surrounded by cattle sheds built close to homes, where dung mixed with stagnant water created breeding grounds for mosquitoes. At first, residents were reluctant to move the sheds due to cultural traditions. But persistent health awareness efforts gradually shifted mindsets. With collective determination, families relocated cattle sheds to the village outskirts, cleaned up their surroundings, and took pride in maintaining a healthier environment.
To further reduce risks and promote sustainability, soaking pits were built near water collection points, and spring water was redirected for agriculture. A livelihood program was introduced, equipping families with sustainable farming techniques that strengthened their food security and income.

Today, Bandavalasa looks and feels transformed. Spaces once cluttered with waste are now clean and organized. Roads are clear, children play safely, and families enjoy the dignity of healthy living. Most importantly, illnesses caused by poor hygiene and unsafe water have drastically reduced, giving the community hope for the future.

Soneri Maliamma, a 45-year-old resident, shared:
“Living Water India has brought big changes for my family and everyone in our village. Before, our surroundings were dirty, and the water made us sick. Now, with clean water and sanitation, our village feels healthier. We no longer use the open fields as toilets, and we have moved cattle away from our homes. Our children are happy and can play safely. Farming training has also helped us care for our land better and earn more income.”

Clean Spaces, Healthy Lives



Access to safe sanitation is more than just a facility—it's the foundation of dignity, health, and opportunity. Through improved toilets, handwashing stations, and hygiene education, we are helping communities protect their health, prevent disease, and create cleaner, safer environments for everyone.

Sombari Leads Change in Diguvasoba





In the tribal hamlet of Diguvasoba, in ASR District, life once revolved around unsafe drinking water and the long-standing practice of open defecation. With most villagers leaving for work early in the morning and returning only at dusk, it was difficult to create space for dialogue on health and hygiene. Change felt distant, and resistance to new practices was strong.

Everything began to shift when Sombari, a resident of the community, joined a WaSH awareness program. What she learned didn't just change her own habits—it lit a fire within her to inspire others. She began by transforming her own lifestyle, ensuring her family used safe water and adopted proper sanitation. Slowly, her conviction spread. With persistence and courage, she spoke with neighbors, explained the health risks of open defecation, and painted a vision of dignity and pride in using toilets.

Her leadership soon sparked action. Five households stepped forward to construct their own toilets and proudly declared themselves free from open defecation. This breakthrough created a ripple effect across the village. Today, families in Diguvasoba drink safely managed water, and nearly sixty percent of households are using toilets regularly. The rest are already planning or constructing theirs, setting the community firmly on the path toward becoming open defecation free.

What began with one woman's determination has grown into a movement of transformation. Sombari's story is a reminder that when local leadership rises, entire communities can reimagine their future—and turn challenges into opportunities for lasting change.

Sanitation and Hygiene Program in Communities



Living Water's Sanitation and Hygiene program continues to drive meaningful transformation across communities in WPA areas. Through engaging and practical sessions, children and adults alike have been empowered with essential knowledge on safe water practices, including proper storage, transportation, and treatment.

The program's strength lies in its comprehensive and inclusive approach. Training reaches households, community health groups, adolescent health groups, and the broader community, ensuring that safe hygiene practices are understood, adopted, and promoted across generations.

The impact is evident. Families are now handling and storing water safely, adolescents are advocating hygiene within their peer groups, and households are embracing improved sanitation habits with confidence. These changes reflect a lasting shift in behavior, enhancing health, well-being, and resilience across communities.

This program exemplifies Living Water's commitment to fostering sustainable behavioral change, creating healthier environments where every household can thrive and every community can flourish.

Sanitation and Hygiene Awareness in Schools



Living Water has been actively conducting Sanitation and Hygiene awareness sessions in schools and three early childhood education centres (Anganwadi) across the communities in WPA areas. These sessions covered essential health topics, including the transmission of diseases, personal hygiene, and proper handwashing techniques. Children learned how illnesses spread and why maintaining cleanliness is critical for preventing health risks.

The program emphasized interactive, hands-on learning, with demonstrations on effective handwashing practices to reinforce this vital habit. By instilling these practices early, the initiative aims to promote lifelong hygiene habits, contributing to improved health and well-being across the community.

In addition to regular sessions, Living Water leveraged global health observances—such as World Water Day, World Toilet Day, and Global Handwashing Day—to further raise awareness. Through engaging activities during these important days, children and community members alike deepened their understanding of sanitation and hygiene, creating a culture of health-conscious behavior that extends beyond the classroom.

Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) Program – Driving Lasting Change



Living Water's CLTS program has successfully empowered communities to take charge of their own sanitation practices. Through interactive sessions, community members were actively engaged in understanding the harmful effects of open defecation (OD) and envisioning a healthier environment.
During the sessions, participants were divided into groups for hands-on activities: one group undertook a transect walk, known as the "Walk of Shame," to see firsthand the impact of OD; another group engaged in a ladder exercise; and a third group conducted community mapping to identify areas needing improvement.

These activities sparked deep reflection and honest discussion. Participants openly expressed their feelings of shame regarding existing sanitation habits and collectively recognized the need for change. Inspired by this awareness, the community made a decisive commitment: to construct household-level toilets with the support of the local Panchayat.

The program's success lies not only in raising awareness but in fostering community ownership and action. With plans for toilet construction underway, families are actively participating, ensuring that the initiative is sustainable and that the community moves steadily toward becoming open defecation free.

Menstrual Hygiene Management

Living Water, in partnership with community champions, has been implementing a comprehensive Menstrual Hygiene Management program across both WPA areas. These sessions, attended by women and adolescent girls, aimed to promote safe and hygienic menstrual practices while addressing cultural barriers that often compromise health and dignity.

In Ananthagiri Mandal, the program focused on encouraging the use of reusable cloth pads. Traditionally, women relied on cloth during menstruation, but social stigma prevented them from drying it openly, creating hygiene risks. To overcome this, the initiative introduced redesigned cloth pads, stitched for improved comfort, discretion, and practicality. This innovation allowed women to maintain proper hygiene by drying pads privately, while feeling confident and dignified.



By combining awareness, practical solutions, and cultural sensitivity, the program empowered women and adolescent girls to adopt healthier menstrual practices, significantly improving their well-being and enabling them to participate fully in daily life without compromising their health or dignity.

Skill Training for the Tribal Youth

A skill training program was organized in Thuraiyur to support youth in accessing career development opportunities. The Tribal Welfare Department of Tamil Nadu sought our assistance in mobilizing young individuals from tribal communities for specialized skill training courses. In response to this request, we successfully facilitated the enrollment of four youths in three-month training programs, including a Diploma in Medical Laboratory Technology, Front Office Management, and Web Development.



As part of the program, the government is providing free accommodation and meals with a monthly stipend, ensuring that financial constraints do not hinder their learning. Upon completion, participants will have the opportunity to secure employment with reputed companies, offering them a pathway to stable careers and financial independence.

Beyond benefiting the trainees, this initiative has also strengthened our collaboration with the Tribal Welfare Department, paving the way for future opportunities to uplift and empower tribal youth.

Nutritional Intervention Program – Ananthagiri Mandal

The Living Water team, together with community champions, implemented a nutrition intervention program across three villages in Ananthagiri Mandal. The initiative focused on tackling malnutrition among women, while also strengthening the overall nutritional well-being of families.



The program successfully addressed nutritional deficiencies, particularly anemia, through a targeted six-month intervention. Baseline hemoglobin (Hb) tests of 51 participants revealed that 60% were anemic, underscoring the urgent need for nutritional support. The program combined practical training on preparing and cooking balanced meals, dietary improvements, nutritional supplements, and ongoing awareness sessions emphasizing the importance of consuming the right balance of nutrients, including milk, eggs, and iron-rich foods. By the end of the program, follow-up Hb tests showed a remarkable drop in anemia levels to just 16%, demonstrating a significant improvement in women's health. Beyond these measurable outcomes, women reported increased energy, confidence, and participation in daily life—showing that the initiative not only enhanced nutritional health but also fostered lasting behavioral change and resilience across the community.

Workshop on cross-cutting Themes



A workshop on Cross-Cutting Themes was conducted at the WPA2 office, focusing on Environmental Stewardship.

Mrs. Beena, Deputy Director of Vision India, led an insightful session on the environmental impact of human activities. She highlighted how urbanization contributes to pollution and biodiversity loss, while deforestation accelerates climate change and disrupts ecosystems. Addressing water contamination, she explained the dangers posed by industrial waste, improper disposal, and agricultural runoff. Her session provided practical strategies to mitigate these issues through sustainable practices, responsible resource management, and community-driven conservation efforts.

Following this, a session was held on Personal Hygiene and Menstrual Hygiene Management. She emphasized the importance of daily hygiene habits such as handwashing, oral care, and proper sanitation to prevent infections and maintain overall health. She also provided practical guidance on menstrual hygiene, covering the safe use and disposal of sanitary products and the importance of cleanliness to prevent health complications. Her session empowered staff with essential knowledge to promote hygiene and well-being within the communities they serve.

This workshop reinforced the team's commitment to integrating environmental responsibility and inclusive health practices into their WASH initiatives, ensuring a more sustainable and equitable impact.

National Tribal Day



In November, the LWI team was privileged to observe National Tribal Day in collaboration with the Government Tribal Primary School. It was an honor to be part of this significant celebration. The school organized sports events, and prizes were awarded to the winners during the festivities.

National Tribal Day raises awareness among future generations about the sacrifices made by tribal freedom fighters during India's independence movement. The day will be celebrated annually to recognize the contributions of tribal communities in preserving their cultural heritage and promoting key Indian values such as national pride and hospitality.

World Environment Day – Promoting Environmental Stewardship Across WPA Areas



Living Water observed World Environment Day under the theme "Beat Plastic Pollution", engaging both schools and communities across the WPA areas to raise awareness about the importance of environmental protection.

In schools, students participated in interactive sessions covering critical topics such as water, air, soil, and noise pollution, with a special focus on the harmful impacts of plastic waste. Through discussions, poster-making, and hands-on activities, students were encouraged to take responsibility for their environment and adopt sustainable, eco-friendly habits.

In communities, members actively participated in clean-up drives, tree planting efforts, and awareness campaigns designed to highlight the importance of maintaining a clean and green environment. Guided by Living Water staff, these activities strengthened local engagement and inspired collective action to preserve natural resources and reduce environmental degradation.

By extending activities over several days, Living Water ensured broad participation and maximum impact. These initiatives reinforced the significance of World Environment Day, empowering both children and community members to take meaningful, lasting actions toward a healthier planet.

Hygiene Kit Distribution – Promoting Healthy Practices

Living Water distributed hygiene kits containing essentials such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, and menstrual pads across communities, aiming to promote awareness of healthy living and personal hygiene. Alongside the distribution, community members received guidance on key practices, including oral care, body hygiene, and proper handwashing techniques.
The initiative served a dual purpose: providing practical support to families while reinforcing critical hygiene habits. By combining education with tangible resources, the program helped communities adopt healthier routines, contributing to improved well-being and long-term prevention of hygiene-related illnesses.

Training for Community Champions

Living Water conducts regular refresher training sessions to strengthen the capacity of community champions across WPA areas. These sessions focus on essential WASH topics, including safe water transportation, storage, and household-level treatment, as well as effective handwashing techniques.

The training also covers critical health practices such as preventing disease transmission, proper faeces disposal, and diarrhoea management, ensuring champions are equipped to address key community health challenges. By enhancing their knowledge and practical skills, these sessions empower community champions to promote safe hygiene and sanitation practices, fostering lasting behavioral change and improved health outcomes across their communities.



Looking Ahead



As we move forward, Living Water remains committed to empowering communities, promoting sustainable practices, and fostering lasting change. Building on the successes of the past year, we aim to expand our initiatives in water, sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, and environmental stewardship, ensuring that more families have the knowledge, resources, and support to thrive. Our vision is to create communities that are not only healthier but also resilient, self-reliant, and empowered to shape their own future. With continued collaboration, innovation, and dedication, we look forward to deepening our impact and reaching even greater milestones in the years ahead.