



## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

# RISING TO THE CHALLENGES OF 2020 THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

View the digital version at:

[safewaternetwork.org/2020annualreport](https://safewaternetwork.org/2020annualreport)



A dark blue background featuring a network of white lines representing roads or rivers. The map covers parts of West Africa, with labels for various cities and regions. The Gulf of Guinea is labeled at the bottom left. The text 'Table of Contents' is overlaid on the map.

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Dear Friends and Supporters,

For many, the COVID pandemic still poses very real and complex challenges. Access healthcare and vaccines, like with safe water, varies greatly depending on geography and socio-economic status. 2020 highlighted how inequitable the world is in terms of such access, and how much work is still to be done.

And yet, I remain optimistic. The pandemic provided us with the opportunity to strengthen relationships with our partners, roll out innovations, and introduce new programming and practices to address systemic inequities. Despite the challenges of 2020, we have continued working across three programmatic areas to increase access to safe water for millions of people in underserved communities.



Thanks to your generosity and ongoing support, we not only kept safe water flowing in over 500 communities in Ghana and India, we also launched 20 new safe water stations. Drawing on insights from our field operations, we have continued working with partner organizations and leading international institutions to advance the tools, policies, and training necessary to systemically address the global water crisis.

In this, our 2020 Annual Report, you will meet some of those responsible for these accomplishments: members of our team, valuable partners, and people from the communities we work with, all of whom have contributed to the success of these locally owned and operated safe water stations.



Sincerely,  
Kurt Soderlund

# RESILIENCY THROUGH COVID

Responsive. Effective. Ongoing.



Our field teams in India and Ghana continue to adapt to changing conditions on the ground. Working closely with governments at the national, regional, and local levels, we are coordinating efforts, sharing data, and adapting to meet the needs of the communities we serve as this crisis evolves.

“

“Despite the seemingly insurmountable challenges we are facing in India, we continue to keep safe water flowing. Our approach is resilient, and our people are proving even more so.”

— RAVI SEWAK, COUNTRY DIRECTOR,  
SAFE WATER NETWORK INDIA

## ONGOING COVID CHALLENGES

### Prioritizing staff health, safety, and PPE

Our operational innovations significantly reduce consumer contact and improve the safety of operators, technicians, and consumers. This includes protocols, training, and PPE to keep operators and consumers safe.

“

“Our team was ready to face the COVID challenge. Our field staff followed all public health best practices and obtained government curfew passes when needed for in-person maintenance and repair. Utilizing online training modules, cashless transactions, and remote monitoring systems ensured uninterrupted safe water delivery.”

— SHANKER LAL BATRA, HEAD OF OPERATIONS,  
SAFE WATER NETWORK INDIA

### Ghana's free water mandate

In response to the COVID crisis, the Government of Ghana instituted a free water mandate, facilitating essential access to millions. While this meant a significant loss of water station revenue, we were able to keep safe water flowing by ensuring operators were compensated and systems were properly maintained. We tapped into the station maintenance fund and received financial support from partners to keep these community-run water stations open.

“

“COVID has re-emphasized the critical role of access to safe water in public health. We were challenged, but energized to be at the forefront in this collective effort to save lives in vulnerable communities.”

— CHARLES NIMAKO, DIRECTOR OF  
AFRICA INITIATIVES, SAFE WATER  
NETWORK GHANA

## COVID RESILIENCY BY THE NUMBERS



### 400+

Handwashing stations added in 2020



### 80%

Cashless digital payments at water stations in India



### 15

Water Knowledge Resource Centers for COVID relief

Leveraging the high traffic at water access points, stations now provide the resources needed to schedule vaccine appointments, deliver free water to essential workers, and communicate other public health guidelines and updates via WhatsApp group messages.



### 99% INDIA 91% GHANA

2020 water station uptime despite COVID

We kept water reliably flowing throughout the COVID crisis, with stations functioning properly over 90% of the time.



### \$400,000

COVID funding raised

We raised funds with philanthropic partners to fill the water station revenue gap in Ghana in order to maintain sustainable operations.

# 2020 BY THE NUMBERS

Impact with accountability and transparency



# 20

14 INDIA (TOTAL: 330)

6 GHANA (TOTAL: 97)

## Stations added (Total to date: 427)

Our safe water stations are branded locally to support community engagement and activation, and to communicate the values of affordable, reliable, safe water. Stations in Ghana are branded as “H<sub>2</sub>OME!” and are community-owned in partnership with local governments. Stations in India are branded as “iJal” and are owned by social entrepreneurs, women-led community groups, or the community.

# 97,000

72,000 INDIA 25,000 GHANA

**Additional people gained access to safe water**

Our stations now support over 500+ communities, providing safe water access to over 1.7 million people.



**+9%**  
IN 2019 INDIA

**+16%**  
IN 2019 GHANA

**Safe water volume increases**



# 621

**New piped connections to households, schools, clinics, and businesses in Ghana**

**Total to date: 1528**





28%

## of stations are female-led in India

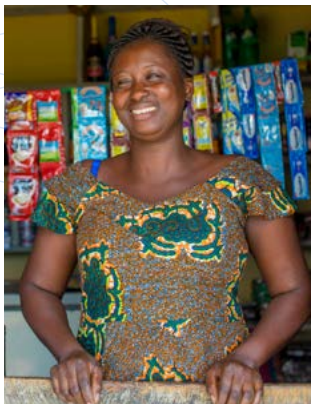
In India, many of our stations are locally managed by female entrepreneurs and female-led community groups.



91%

## of vendors in Ghana are female

In Ghana, the stations are all owned by the community but operated by vendors, most of whom are women—their work includes dispensing water, maintaining access points, and handling payments.



## 18 Alliance partners across 23 states in India

Through the Safe Water Enterprise (SWE) Alliance, first launched at our 2018 Beyond the Pipe Forum in New Delhi, we collaborate with implementers from across India to strengthen the ecosystem for decentralized solutions. Today, the SWE Alliance plays a key role in advancing the Sustainable Enterprise for Water and Health (SEWAH) program, a partnership between our team in India and the United States Agency for International Development that brings together the public, private, and civil sectors to develop policy recommendations, exchange knowledge, build tools and capacity, and scale services to address the safe water needs of millions of underserved people across urban India.

### SEWAH Partners

Bala Vikasa

Community Pure Water

Drinkwell Systems

JanaJal

Josab Water Solutions

Maithri Aquatech

Naandi Foundation

OCEO Water

PHED Haryana

PiLo

Piramal Sarvajal

Rit Water Solutions

Safe Water Network India

Sahasra Water Technologies

Smaat India Private Limited

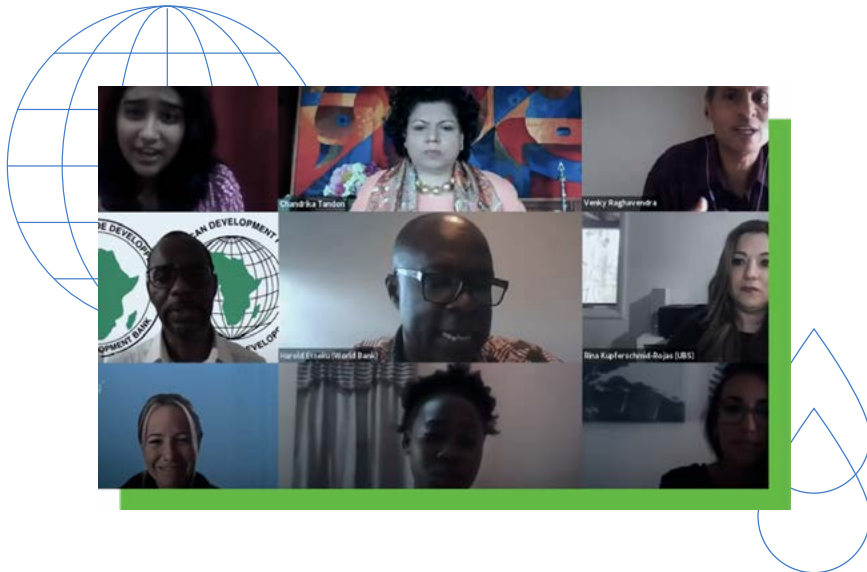
SWEM Water Tech India

WaterHealth India

WaterLife

8 Global water sector webinars presented

20 Countries represented



Watch the video here: [bit.ly/37xSSEt](https://bit.ly/37xSSEt)

“

Safe Water Network’s virtual youth convening brought a group of young changemakers together to share ideas that could be ramped up at an unprecedented scale. This reminds me that there is amazing good in this world and that a team of passionate committed leaders are creating a better planet for all.”

— CHANDRIKA TANDON, FOUNDER & CHAIR, TANDON CAPITAL, AND GRAMMY-NOMINATED ARTIST

Speaker for Safe Water Network’s September 2, 2020 virtual convening of young global leaders, “Water, Sustainable Living and Communities”

# PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

Together we do more



Closing the safe water access gap for 2.2 billion people around the world is too large for any one organization to overcome. Safe Water Network partners with the public and private sectors to advance the practices and mobilize the resources needed to solve the global water crisis.

# PROVIDING CONVENIENT PIPED CONNECTIONS IN GHANA



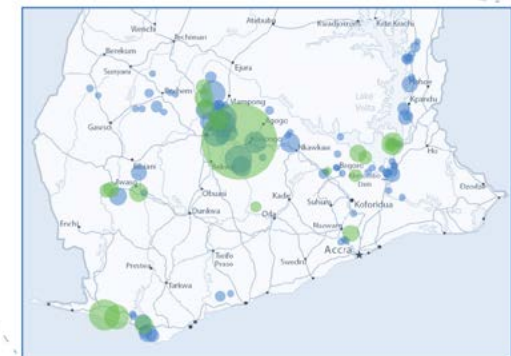
COUNTRY: GHANA

SERVICE:



FIELD  
IMPLEMENTATION

Leveraging our years of experience installing small piped networks across Ghana, we increased the number of households and businesses with a direct water connection from 200 in 2019 to more than 1,500 in 2020. Our partners brought crucial funding and essential expertise to deliver clean and affordable water to thousands of people at home.



**621** New piped connections  
(Total to date: **1528**)

## Why piped connections?

Piped connections bring water directly to such destinations as homes, businesses, schools, and health clinics. In most cases, it's a line and tap brought directly to a building's premises. Piped connections are important because they make safe water more convenient and reduce the chances of recontamination.



Watch the video and visit the EP Clinic:  
[bit.ly/3C64JHE](https://bit.ly/3C64JHE)

## Safe water for public health

The Dzemeni EP Clinic, for example, previously relied on harvested rainwater and untreated river water located a kilometer from the facility.

“

Patients, including pregnant women, had to bring their own water to be treated properly. That made everything more difficult. This piped safe water connection has transformed our ability to treat patients properly.”

— MISS MIGAILLA, MIDWIFE IN-CHARGE  
AT DZEMENI EP CLINIC IN VOLTA

Our piped connections to healthcare facilities ensure 24/7 access to safe water for basic hygiene, medical procedures, and patient care.



## Our Work with Piped Connections in Ghana By the Numbers

**6,000**

people now have safe water at home

**44 MILLION**

liters of water delivered directly to homes, schools, clinics, and small businesses in 2020

**10**

healthcare facilities connected to reliable water supply



## Piped connection partners

**Engineers Without Borders** helped Safe Water Network's design and construction team map out the ideal layout for new pipes so that more community members would be closer to the network.

“

Safe Water Network is providing a basic human right of clean water which has been so needed, especially during the current pandemic. Engineers Without Borders USA is honored to call Safe Water Network a partner in addressing our global water crisis.”

— CATHY LESLIE, FORMER CEO,  
ENGINEERS WITHOUT BORDERS, USA

**Envicom** is working with our team to develop and refine a mobile app that not only leverages GIS capabilities to cost out new connections for consumers, but helps our local sales team manage a growing pipeline of household consumers.

“

We are thoroughly enjoying our partnership and are impressed by the way Safe Water Network seeks to implement efficiencies and adaptations that will make their work more impactful and resilient.”

— AMANDA MINER, GIS SERVICES MANAGER, ENVICOM

**Whitten and Roy Partnership** provides training and field coaching to build up Safe Water Network's sales capabilities so that more consumers can benefit from safe water access right at their doorstep.

“

Safe Water Network's offering is nothing less than a revolution in the way that rural communities in Ghana receive drinking water - customers simply turn on their tap and drink fresh, clean water from the comfort of their home. I've never seen anything like it at this scale.”

— TYLER ROY, WHITTEN & ROY PARTNERSHIP, LLC

**The Stone Family Foundation and Conrad N. Hilton Foundation** lead a team of funders supporting the evolution of our piped connections program in Ghana.

“

Our vision is safe, clean water being piped into all homes. Decentralized approaches focused on connecting households have been successfully proven in parts of Asia and we are proud to pioneer this in Ghana with Safe Water Network. We look forward to continuing the partnership.”

— JOHN STONE, FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN,  
STONE FAMILY FOUNDATION

# PROVIDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA



COUNTRY: **INDIA**

SERVICES:



**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

The Government of Karnataka engaged Safe Water Network to support a comprehensive, multi-year program to help upgrade the reliability and performance of water purification plants across thirty districts.

## Why Karnataka?

Many parts of India are water stressed, impacting millions. The state of Karnataka also has source water contamination, as well as the challenge of safe water access for underserved communities. In response, the state built one of the largest systems of water purification plants in the country, serving over 40 million people. Safe Water Network is now deploying its technical and management expertise to help improve the performance, reliability and affordability of these systems.





## Meet Archana

One of the 18,000 water purification plants under the jurisdiction of the Government of Karnataka is in the community of Agalakurki, located in the southeast part of the state. Before Safe Water Network was engaged, the plant there was often not operational, forcing mothers like Archana to fetch water from contaminated water sources.

“

“This new and improved plant has extended our lifespans by fifty years.”

— ARCHANA, AN AGALAKURKI VILLAGE WATER COMMITTEE MEMBER



Watch the video and meet Archana: [bit.ly/3ymKEe4](https://bit.ly/3ymKEe4)

BEFORE



AFTER

2020 was the second year of this engagement and is part of Safe Water Network's Technical Assistance program that provides support and training to governments and other organizations providing safe water in underserved regions around the world.

## Our work in Karnataka by the numbers

18,000

water purification plants in Karnataka supported under our partnership with the state government

40 MILLION

people gaining access to reliable safe water through the state government's decentralized water purification system

“

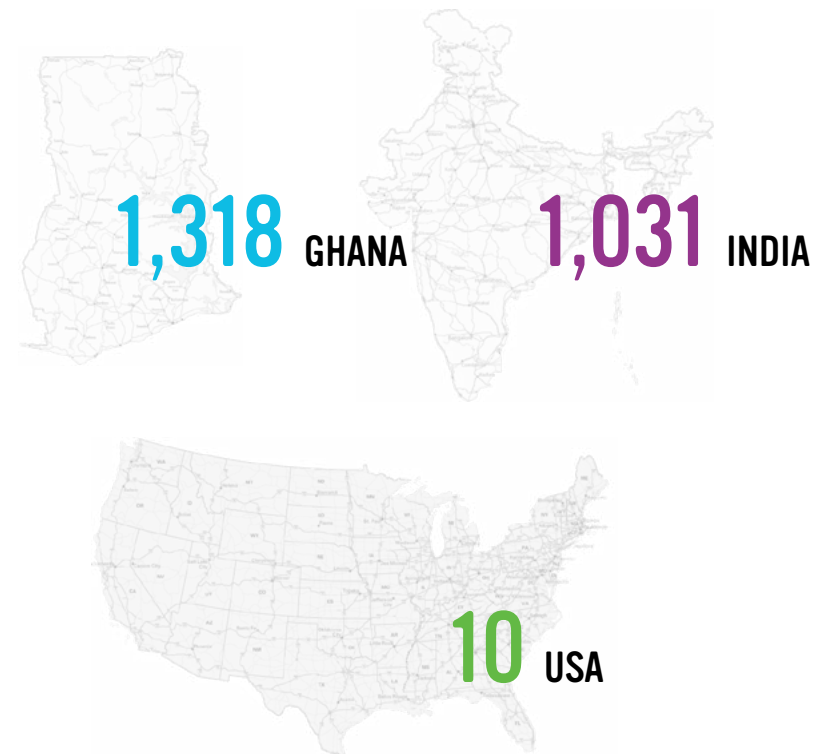
“Safe Water Network has established a deep expertise around decentralized community water supply. Scaling this work through partnering with other organizations and governments, like the Government of Karnataka, now means that many more communities have access to safe, reliable, and affordable water.”

— ANIL SONDHI, VP OF TECHNICAL OPERATIONS, SAFE WATER NETWORK WATER SOLUTIONS

# MEET THE TEAM

A Committed Global Team

Over 2,300 individuals—a combination of community members, local leaders, technicians, and full-time Safe Water Network staff—work together across our three programs. With expertise in health, business, engineering, and development, we are all passionate and committed to solving the global water crisis.



## OUR WATER STATION OPERATORS

### Meet the female vendors and operators in Ghana



“Since we heard about the pandemic on the radio, we heard lots of stories and I was really scared...After the COVID-19 training at the Safe Water Network station, I got a better understanding of the disease and how it works. I’m grateful that I can keep myself and the community people safe.”

— AUNTIE BOLAKUBA, STATION VENDOR

### Meet the water aunties in India

Through our water enterprises in India, women who once spent hours each day carrying unsafe water home to their families are now equipped with the skills and confidence to own and manage safe water stations.

“Safe Water Network trained me in the technical and practical aspects of running the water station. They also taught me how to run and manage the water ATM.”

— SUREKHA GADPORI, WATER AUNTIE



## OUR FIELD TEAM



COUNTRY: GHANA

Joseph Sam Cherbu oversees the newly formed customer activation team, brought on to help manage the growth of the piped connection program in Ghana. He played an instrumental role in designing Safe Water Network's GIS-enabled app, which maps out the piped network to provide customers with an accurate estimate for a new connection. Joseph was so encouraged by the transformative effect that reliable and convenient access to safe water had on people's lives, he spent hours outside of his customer activation role assisting the field team with trenching as they completed new connections to homes.



“

“I understand what access to safe water at home means to the people of Ashanti. It's transformative. It's saving lives and that means 'all hands on deck' for us at Safe Water Network.”

— JOSEPH SAM CHERBU, CUSTOMER ACTIVATION,  
SAFE WATER NETWORK



COUNTRY: **INDIA**

“

“Innovations like remote monitoring ensure that the Government of Karnataka can continue to provide safe water for its forty million inhabitants across the State.”

— **WILSON DHANARAJ, PROJECT MANAGER, SAFE WATER NETWORK**

Wilson Dhanaraj is a Project Manager at Safe Water Network, supporting our Technical Assistance partnership with the state Government of Karnataka in India. He works closely with the officials of the state’s Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation department.

# YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS



Your steadfast support and compassion have made all the difference in our ability to deliver in this most trying of years. It has also proven to all of us here at Safe Water Network that together, we truly can achieve meaningful impact for underserved communities.

with heartfelt appreciation,

Kunt Soluh

## Our Supporters

### \$500,000+

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Newman's Own Foundation         | The Stone Family Foundation                        |
| The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation | United States Agency for International Development |

### \$100,000-\$499,999

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Anonymous                                     | Osprey Foundation             |
| Clea Newman                                   | Pacific Star Charitable Trust |
| Government of Karnataka                       | Pentair                       |
| Honeywell Hometown Solutions India Foundation | Pentair Foundation            |
| Joanne Woodward                               | The One Foundation            |
| Josh Weston                                   | The Zide Family Foundation    |

### \$25,000- \$99,999

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| ADP   | PepsiCo Foundation            |
| Ahafo North District Assembly               | Sanjeev Chadha                |
| Chris Brody                                 | Stichting Aqua for All        |
| Christina Gold                              | The Aquaya Institute          |
| Elizabeth McGeachin McKee Foundation        | The Waterloo Foundation       |
| Engineers Without Borders USA               | Venkat and Pratima Srinivasan |
| Friends of Safe Water Network, Richmond, VA | Vitol Foundation              |
| GSMA Mobile for Development Foundation      | Vivek Sankaran                |
| Nordstrom/Seifert Family Foundation         | Watering Minds                |
|   | World Vision Ghana            |
|   | Xylem Watermark               |



## Our Supporters (continued)

### \$5,000-\$24,999

|                         |                              |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Betty McManus           | L. Chris Saenger III         |
| Constellation Brands    | Louis W. Bremer              |
| Dalip Pathak            | MTE Fund                     |
| Emandi Law Firm         | Pascucci Family Foundation   |
| Envicom Corporation     | Rich Delaney                 |
| Eric and Alex Soderlund | Surya Mohapatra              |
| Fernando Vigil          | The Sebonack Foundation      |
| Hew and Kate Crooks     | The Trehan Family Foundation |
| IFF Inc.                |                              |

### \$1,000-4,999

|                            |                                   |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3M                         | Manveen Koticha                   |
| Brian Mahony               | Merchant du Vin                   |
| Christopher Hest           | Nils Ringe                        |
| Cushman Family Foundation  | Raj and Nalini Sharma             |
| David Levine               | The Larkins 2019 Charitable Trust |
| Harit and Reena Talwar     | William and Carolyn McKee         |
| Jay Bhaskaran              | World Class-Ghana, Inc            |
| Jonathan Kowalski          |                                   |
| Long Trail Brewing Company |                                   |

## Words from Our Supporters

“

“Safe Water Network has demonstrated a strong standard of excellence, empowering communities with access to safe water. Newman’s Own Foundation is proud to be among its expanding group of committed supporters and partners, collectively working to close the global water access gap.”

— **MIRIAM E. NELSON, PRESIDENT & CEO,  
NEWMAN’S OWN FOUNDATION**

“

“We value our long-standing partnership with Safe Water Network to realize water equity, an essential component for building inclusive, healthy communities globally.”

— **MARYBETH THORSGAARD, VICE PRESIDENT,  
COMMUNICATIONS, PENTAIR**

“

“I’m particularly drawn to Safe Water Network’s focus on empowering entrepreneurs – notably women entrepreneurs– as operators of small-sized community water systems. It’s a terrific approach to ensure sustainability and is gaining momentum as a solution that can scale.”

— **SURYA N. MOHAPATRA, BOARD MEMBER, SAFE  
WATER NETWORK; FORMER CHAIRMAN, CEO AND  
PRESIDENT OF QUEST DIAGNOSTICS, INC**

“

“World Vision Ghana recognizes the expertise & leadership of Safe Water Network particularly in enterprise-based solutions to water supply problems and is keen to explore additional opportunities to work together.”

— **DICKENS THUNDE, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, WORLD  
VISION GHANA**

## Words from Our Supporters (continued)

“

“Safe Water Network is at the frontier of leveraging digital tools to improve water services and is generating much needed insights and evidence for private and public sector alike.”

— ILANA COHEN, ACTING HEAD, GSMA MOBILE FOR DEVELOPMENT UTILITIES

“

“We believe that safe and potable water is the right of every human being, but that it takes effort, innovation and collaboration to make that right a reality. You can see that effort in what Safe Water Network does. This is an investment in the future and in a program that is making a real difference.”

— CHETAN MISTRY, STRATEGY AND MARKETING MANAGER, XYLEM AFRICA

# A LOOK AHEAD



The COVID pandemic has strengthened our resolve. It has put a spotlight on how essential safe water is to health and its critical role in slowing the spread of disease. We are now prepared for an even more ambitious agenda in the years ahead.

# BUILDING ON OUR WORK IN 2020



## #TechforGood

We are implementing several projects that expand the use of technology to improve station productivity in ways that can cost effectively scale operations. Our remote sensors and new digital operating platform accurately gather station metrics, analyze data, and deliver performance drivers, such as mobile alerts, so that technicians and operators can effectively manage operations. Water ATMs and RFID cards provide contactless delivery of safe water, collect actionable data, and can be quickly scaled. We are also applying technology to combat climate change and manage water sources sustainably. GIS technology is being used for site selection to mitigate environmental and socio-economic risks. Solar power installations reduce operating expenses, provide a more reliable energy source, and lower our carbon footprint.



## Sector Engagement

Our network across the water sector continues to grow. The pandemic accelerated our ability to globally connect with water sector experts. We are building on the momentum created by our 2020 webinar series, which covered topics like concessional finance for water, water quality, and climate adaptation, with new hybrid and live events.

SERVICES:



## Inclusion

As part of a broader Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) program that involves staff recruitment, vendor sourcing, and leadership review, our DEI initiatives include active recruitment of women in Ghana and India as operators, entrepreneurs, technicians, and safe water committee members. We have also committed to being an anti-racist organization through strategic and honest internal discourse, thoughtful hiring practices, and setting aside time for reflection on systemic racial injustice and the Juneteenth holiday.

# HELP US KEEP SAFE WATER FLOWING IN UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES IN INDIA AND GHANA

Make your impact at:

[safewaternetwork.org/donate](https://safewaternetwork.org/donate)



## FINANCIALS

In 2020, Safe Water Network once again received the highest rating from Charity Navigator for accountability and transparency.



More than **80 cents of every dollar** of our revenue goes directly to programs that are bridging the water access gap in Ghana and India and engaging the global water sector to bring systemic change.

View audited financials: [bit.ly/3lslRl2](https://bit.ly/3lslRl2)