Project Background and Context

When Water For People was founded in 1991, there was an enormous gap between water and sanitation services levels in the U.S. compared many countries in the world. We have made progress globally since then, but the gap remains, and our mission continues to be focused on strengthening the service environment in low and middle-income countries. At the same time, we are aware that some vulnerable populations in the U.S. and Canada do not have sustainable water and sanitation services. According to the 2017 Joint Monitoring Program report, the US is 99% served with safely managed water and 90% served with safely managed sanitation. Canada is 99% served with safely managed water and 82% served with safely managed sanitation. This means more than 3 million people do not have access to safe drinking water service in the U.S. and Canada with even more without safely managed sanitation services.

More recently, the systemic issues that result in persistent inequities in the U.S. and Canada, including access to water and sanitation services, has garnered much more attention. Our experience at Water For People has also changed since 1991. We have grown from a volunteer organization focused only on engineering/infrastructure support to a diverse global organization with competent professionals in eleven countries. Today we help develop water and sanitation infrastructure as well as contribute to systems-strengthening work to address issues of equity and sustainability, especially as we reach people living remotely - the last mile.

Background on the Current Situation in the USA

Today, according to the US Water Alliance and Dig Deep, more than two million Americans live without running water and basic indoor plumbing, and many more without sanitation in six hot spots:

1. California’s Central Valley
2. The Navajo Nation
3. The Texas Colonias
4. The rural South
5. Appalachia
6. Puerto Rico
These areas were chosen to include a diversity of geographies, populations, and water access challenges, and to be broadly representative of other regions that were not included in the report, such as Alaska, Louisiana, or the Dakotas.

On the Navajo Nation in the Southwest, families drive for hours to haul barrels of water to meet their basic needs. In the Central Valley of California, residents fill bottles at public taps, because their water at home is not safe to drink. In West Virginia, people drink from polluted streams. In Alabama, parents warn their children not to play outside because their yards are flooded with sewage. In Puerto Rico, wastewater regularly floods the streets of low-income neighborhoods. Families living in Texas border towns worry because there is no running water to fight fires.

Background on the Current Situation in Canada
One of our Canadian partners, the One Drop Foundation, works with an Inuit community in Quebec. We are also aware the Canadian Government is planning to establish the Atlantic First Nations Water Authority in spring of 2022. We would like to learn more about the status, and plan for resolution, of long-term drinking water advisories throughout Canada, especially in the First Nations communities.

Purpose of this Study
The origin of these Terms of Reference for a Landscape Assessment of the Water and Sanitation Sector that Supports Vulnerable Populations in the US and Canada is that we would like to learn if we have something to offer the water/wastewater sector in North America. Would it be possible, and impactful, to leverage our experience and build on - not distract from - the important work that remains in addressing the service-level gaps in the countries where we currently work (and where we have expertise)? Our strongest contributions are likely in helping develop sustainable services in rural, non-sewered services areas. We do not have interest or expertise in increasing our scope to new areas such as agriculture, flood control, urban utilities, etc. We are also interested in learning more about existing organizations already working in this space and if our expertise can be additive to theirs in helping solve the problems. We are about to embark on the development of a new strategic plan, so the time is right to do this Landscape Assessment.

Objective(s) of the Desk Study
Prepare a Landscape Assessment of Service Levels in Water and Sanitation in the US and Canada. The assessment should include the following information:

- Current service level trends of different vulnerable groups in the U.S. and Canada
- Existing actors working towards improving services for these vulnerable groups – NGOs, government agencies, consultants, etc.
- High-level assessment of the key service functions (e.g., institutional arrangements and coordination, planning, regulation and accountability, learning and adaptation, financing, monitoring, water resources management, infrastructure, etc.) and their ranking from strongest to weakest in each geography
- Water For People’s capacity in terms of human resource and technical skills – how well can it transfer to the U.S. and Canadian environment?
• Water For People’s capacity in terms of broadening fundraising opportunities/new potential prospects with a new North American focus – can we access new funders?
• Considering the results from the Landscape Assessment, a list of potential ways we might consider engaging in this work with a recommendation on which options could be explored in a full Feasibility Study. The options should include things like:
  o Do nothing
  o Be a fundraising and learning partner (with an organization already doing this work)
  o Be an implementing partner with such organizations
  o Provide consulting services
  o Open an equivalent of a country program in a specific region of the U.S. and/or Canada

Potential organizations and resources to research in this Landscape Assessment include but are not limited to:
• Community Engineering Corps – part of Engineers Without Borders
• DigDeep
• Water Mission
• OneDrop Foundation
• Community Water Center – Central Valley, CA
• The Center for Water Security and Cooperation
• Water For People – Canada (they are interested in potentially fundraising for Canada as well as Water For People’s current country programs)

Water For People can help connect the volunteers working on this assignment with contacts at the organizations above once the Landscape Assessment commences.

### Dates for the Assignment

- **July 20, 2020** - Posting date for applications
- **August 5th, 2020** - Application due date
- **August 14, 2020** - Selection of volunteers
- **August 17, 2020** - Start date
  - **August 31, 2020** - Scope/workplan due
  - **October 16, 2020** - Draft Landscape Assessment due
  - **October 30, 2020** - Comments back from Water For People
- **November 13, 2020** – End date - Final Landscape Assessment due

### Methodology

Internet search; interviews with people or organizations working in this space

### Tools for the Assignment

Internet
**Deliverable(s) and Audience**

- **Deliverable:** Landscape Assessment of Service Levels in Water and Sanitation in the US and Canada
- **Audience:** Senior Leadership Team, Global Programs Team, and the Board of Directors at Water For People

**Timeline for Deliverable(s)**

November 2020 – see details above.

**Main Point of Contact**

Ben Greiner – Global Programs Coordinator (bgreiner@waterforpeople.org)

**Profile of the Volunteer(s)**

The number of volunteers required for this desk study is 2 (two)

Ideally, the volunteer(s) will have:

- Knowledge of the needs, successes/failures, and actors in the US and Canada working in water/wastewater/sanitation
- Familiarity with Water For People’s work (Everyone Forever impact model and Systems Strengthening Agenda)
- Strong writing skills
- Project management experience

**If interested, please submit:**

- A CV detailing relevant experience, interest in this study, and why this study is a fit for your skills.

To: volunteers@waterforpeople.org by July 31, 2020