



## WATER FOR PEOPLE IN CHIKHALDARA

*A spotlight on the Chikhaldara block in Amravati, Maharashtra state, India*

In Chikhaldara, home to the Melghat Tiger Reserve and many of India's tribal communities, the terrain is hilly. For many of these tribes, the forest has been a resource and a home. Yet years of discrimination, poverty, and land-use issues have left these communities struggling with various crises, from health to nutrition to water. Monsoon season brings decent rainfall, but the rocky soil makes restoring and retaining groundwater difficult.

Women and young girls often walk a mile or more several times a day, with water vessels on their heads, to get water for their family's needs. Sometimes, they do this walk alone or in groups or flanked by children, but they are always trekking on mountainous terrain, balancing as much as their vessel will hold to make it home.

Water For People India focuses on water access in the Amravati district in the Maharashtra state, where per capita income is 50% that of the rest of the state and more than 29% of families live below the poverty level. This work includes ensuring historically vulnerable and excluded populations, including low caste and tribal communities, have access to safe water and sanitation services. Water For People India has been working with 50 villages in the Amravati district.

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### 39% OF WOMEN

**in rural India had to leave their homes daily to collect water from sources 1-3 miles away. That can be over 1,000 miles walked a year.<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> Gaon Connection Survey, July 1, 2019.

*Photo: A behind-the-scenes shot from the Runway for Water Film with women from the Korku tribe in Chikhaldara. You can watch the film at [waterforpeople.org/runwayforwater](http://waterforpeople.org/runwayforwater)*



“When we started our operations in the Amravati district, our local government partner suggested together we improve the availability and accessibility of water for remote areas. He was the one who advised us to begin our work in the Chikhaldara block, as it’s a remote tribal area.

At the same time, the government launched the Jal Jeevan Mission, which aims to provide safe and adequate drinking water through individual household tap connections by 2024 to all households in rural India. The opportunity for collaboration turned out to be a win-win situation for both Water For People India and the administration.”

– **Hemant Pinjan**, *State Program Lead, Water For People India*



## HIRDAMAL VILLAGE

Chikhaldara, Amravati, Maharashtra

Village Population: 498

### Before

- Though the village had a functional pipe water supply established 15 years ago by the government, it was situated on a farm within the village boundary and water was only available for 1-1.5 hours a day.
- There was little water on school premises so students had to go home for water – interrupting education and attendance.
- Less use of toilets because of insufficient water – hygiene suffered for children and adults.



### During

Working with the community, Water For People added tank capacity, more distribution pipeline, an online chlorinator for disinfection, and drinking water facilities at the school and local anganwadi center, plus a roof top rainwater harvesting project with underground storage tank.



### After

- Chlorinated water for drinking
- Women are no longer traveling for additional water needs
- Improved school attendance and sufficient, safe drinking water while at school.
- Overall improvement in community hygiene and within school children
- Kitchen gardens in the school and in the home backyards



*Photos, top to bottom: Discussing upcoming plans, planning for sanitation programs, the village primary school and the new water tank.*



## SOLAMOH VILLAGE

Chikhaldara, Amravati, Maharashtra

Village Population: 272

### Before

- The condition of the existing water tank was poor and not being used by the community.
- Direct supply existed through a lift line on 3-4 common standposts where water only available for 1-1.5 hours a day. This resulted in unequal distribution of water.
- Insufficient or no water available within the school and anganwadi center. There was little water on school or anganwadi center premises so students had to go home for water – interrupting education and attendance.
- Less use of toilets because of insufficient water – hygiene suffered for children and adults.



### During

Working with the community, Water For People added a new lift line, tank capacity, distribution pipeline, an online chlorinator for disinfection, and a drinking water station at the school and local anganwadi center.

### After

- Easy access and sufficient water availability.
- Chlorinated water for drinking.
- Women are no longer traveling for additional water needs
- Improved school attendance and sufficient, safe drinking water while at school.
- Overall improvement in community hygiene and within school children



*Photos: Discussing upcoming plans, a blessing ceremony for the work about to begin, the community laying pipes, the new water tank.*