

When Water Works: Highlights from a Successful Partnership



2012 marks the second consecutive year TPRF has partnered with The Adventure Project (TAP) to raise funds for their excellent water well mechanic training program. The program creates new jobs and re-establishes access to clean water in areas where water wells are broken. Becky Straw is a "clean water activist" and co-founder of The Adventure Project. This is her World Water Day contribution to our blog, reporting on the success of TAP's partnership with TPRF in 2011.

Last year, something remarkable happened. Four days before World Water Day, my new nonprofit, [The Adventure Project](#), asked The Prem Rawat Foundation a last-minute, crazy question: "Would TPRF match what we raise in 24 hours?" Without hesitation, TPRF jumped on board, and turned March 22 into one of the best days of the year.



Over 150 people joined us in spreading our message on World Water Day, and over 400 people generously donated to match TPRF's grant. Collectively, we raised over \$23,000 for a revolutionary water program in India, implemented by [WaterAid](#), in partnership with a local NGO, Gram Swaraj Samiti Ghosi (GSSG). This program trains and empowers local leaders to become well mechanics, fixing broken wells in their communities.

One year later, I am proud to report that WaterAid has successfully established two well mechanic shops in the Kako and Ghosi blocks in the Jehanabad district of Bihar. As of February 29, 12 new mechanics ***have repaired 85 hand pumps, restoring access to clean water for 12,386 people in need!***

The two shops in Kako and Ghosi are thriving, serving a total of 10 communities. The shops are equipped with water quality test kits, tools and spare parts necessary for repair work, as well as a cell phone to receive repair requests and a motorcycle for transport to the repair sites. This is an innovative and enterprising way to ensure rural communities have access to sustainable water services.



Twelve mechanics have been trained in hand pump repair, pipeline fitting, and use of GPS

technology. The mechanics provide an additional benefit in educating communities about maintaining their hand pumps to prevent breakdown, by establishing volunteer village water and sanitation committees.

The twelve mechanics are committed to rapid response times, with a goal to fully repair hand pumps within 24 hours of receiving the request, when possible. Of the repairs conducted to date, 54% have been completed in less than 12 hours, 91% in less than 24 hours, and only 9% between 24 and 48 hours after receiving the request (these are often major repairs requiring extensive labor or spare parts.) Furthermore, in the past three months alone, the shops have averaged 27 repairs per month. Of the total fee the community pays, 60% of the repair charge goes to the mechanics for their labor and 40% goes to the center to cover operating costs.



Water issues have always been close to my heart. I have spent the last five years of my career focused on evaluating water programs in developing countries. It always pains me to see so many broken wells throughout Africa and India, watching in dismay as mothers and children walk past broken wells to collect water from dirty rivers. The Gates Foundation estimates one third of all wells are currently broken, often because there are no spare parts or trained mechanics.

This partnership with The Prem Rawat Foundation gave us hope that there are organizations and citizens who believe in enterprising solutions to ending the water crisis. I cannot thank TPRF enough for all their support, inspiration and shared belief in investing with dignity.

Thank you,

Becky Straw

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