The WOMEN & WATER

RIPPLE EFFECT STUDY

The many impacts of improved water access ripple across society with the ability to empower women and shift gender norms throughout communities.





SAFETY & SECURITY

Over 32% of women reported a decrease in community harassment of women.



INCOME

Over 90% of women who used time saved to expand income-generating and entrepreneurial activities reported increased income.



LEADERSHIP & SKILLS

Over 33% of women became more active in the community.



TIME SAVINGS

Over 47% of women were able to devote time saved to income-generating activities and entrepreneurship, or participating in community groups.



EDUCATION

Qualitative and empirical evidence show that with access to better sanitation facilities in schools, women and girls are better able to continue their education.



NUTRITION

Qualitative and empirical evidence show that access to clean water can improve agricultural and pastoral yields, ensuring that women and girls are not forced to forgo meals so others in the household can eat.



HEALTH

Over 88% of women said that their household was healthier since using the improved water source.



SHIFTING ROLES & NORMS

There was a **62% increase** in perceived male respect for women in communities.

Learn more by following
@WADApartnership or visiting
us at globalwaters.org/wada.

"When women do better, countries do better, communities do better, and families do better."

-USAID Administrator Mark Green













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Theory of Change (Direct Impacts)

INPUTS

- WASH and water
- Access to water programs

ACTIVITIES

- · Water and sanitation access projects
- WASH trainings, community capacity building, sustainable agriculture projects

OUTPUTS

 Committees formed, community members trained, awareness raising conducted

OUTCOMES OR DIRECT IMPACTS OF WATER PROGRAMS

 People using access points, committees managing water points, people implementing learned skills

There is a global connection between women and water.

Yet little research exists that fully explores the impact of women's access to safe water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH)—especially through the lens of economic development.

In 2018, the Water and Development Alliance (WADA) partnered with Ipsos to develop a framework for understanding the many ways improved access to WASH can impact women, their families, and communities.

Pathways to Empowerment—deemed "Ripple Effects"—were identified, which capture the various ways access to water impacts women across the developing world.

Women are essential to global development.

Empowered, educated women—free from the constraints of societal and cultural barriers that traditionally hinder them—are an essential cornerstone to global development and community well-being.

The Ripple Effect Study, undertaken by WADA and Ipsos, illuminates the critical and holistic ways in which improving access to water can empower women and provide rippling, cascading, positive effects.

Pathways: From Direct Impacts to Empowerment

PATHWAY (-**WOMEN & WATER EMPOWERMENT** Access to WASH and water is linked to improved Improved household health and water access increases personal confidence and enables women to spend more reproductive health and personal hygiene, decreased time on income generation, education, housework, rest gender-based violence, household cleanliness, and reduced disease risk. and leisure, and participating in the community. HEALTH Lower water costs, water-related trainings, and time Income generation and greater control of assets savings create opportunities for women to save money improve decision-making power within the household and seek income-generating activities and and lead to confidence, respect, and and the potential for a shift in gender roles. Women and girls can be most affected by negative Food security and nutrition is closely linked to health. coping mechanisms during food shortages. A stable Improved nutrition enables women to spend more time food supply from improved irrigation technologies has pursuing education and other economically a disproportionately positive effect on their nutrition. empowering activities. NUTRITION Women and girls collecting water often face safety and Lower risk of harassment and violence improves freedom harassment issues when water or sanitation sources of movement, which supports participation in education, are not placed thoughtfully within the community. employment, and leadership roles. Lower stress and fear increase women's ability or willingness to participate in **SAFETY &** the community and improve self-confidence. SECURITY Adequate WASH access in school improves student Educated girls have better job prospects and a greater health and supports menstrual hygiene management. capacity to generate income, which can improve their This increases attendance, attainment, and decision-making power in the household and achievement of girls in school. community. **EDUCATION** Including women and girls in WASH interventions, such Leadership in the intervention strengthens women's as water users associations, leads to skills development, power within their households and community, and leadership opportunities, and enhances their role and weakens taboos against women's control over voice in important elements of the intervention. resources. **LEADERSHIP & SKILLS** Close proximity to water resources reduces time spent Saved time can be spent on various activities, on water collection by women and girls, who are often including education, income generation and responsible for collecting water. entrepreneurship, rest and leisure, and community participation. This can lead to increased income, **TIME SAVINGS** self-efficacy, confidence, and leadership. • The pathways and impacts combined





The pathways and impacts combined challenge traditional gender norms and support a cultural shift towards an enabling environment for women's economic empowerment.



male respect for women in communities



report they have taken on new household decisionmaking responsibilities, either solely or jointly with their spouse