

# Water

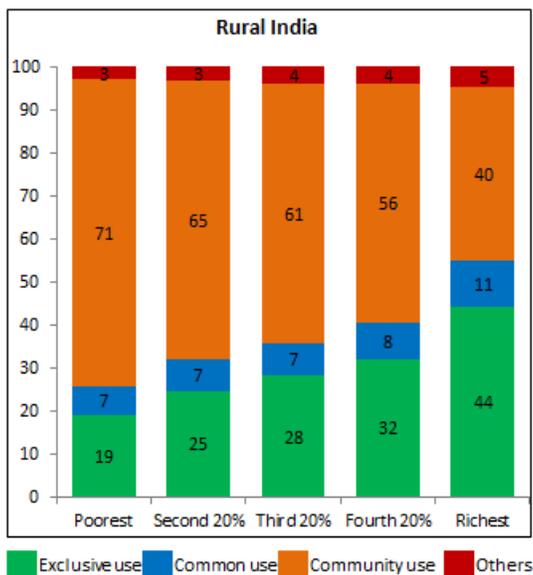


## UNICEF India Water interventions

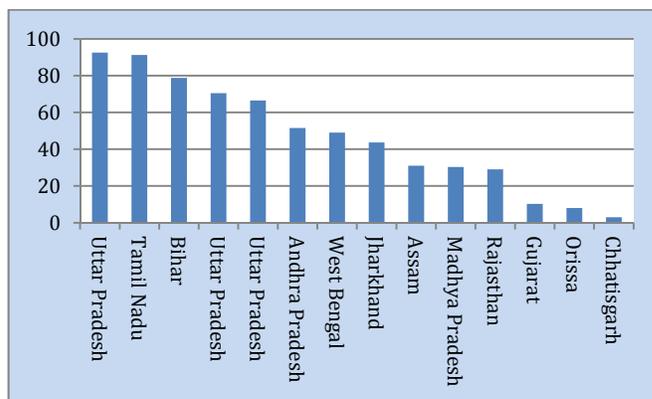
### Background

India has made good progress on providing access to improved drinking water sources for its population with 522 million gaining access to improved drinking water sources from 1990 to 2010 and so India has met the water MDG. However, in terms of access, there are still almost 100 million people in India accessing drinking water from unimproved sources.

Another key issue behind the statistics is that of who is gaining access: ST indicators for piped water access are lower than the Indian average (24% as opposed to 44%); the value for Scheduled Castes (SCs) is 41% (Census, 2011). The Distribution across wealth quintiles from NSS is given below:



The other key drawback with improved access is that it does not reflect safe water. UNICEF supported research work with State Governments shows that water quality issues in India remain a very serious challenges; survey across 12 States showed over half the samples did not meet quality standards.

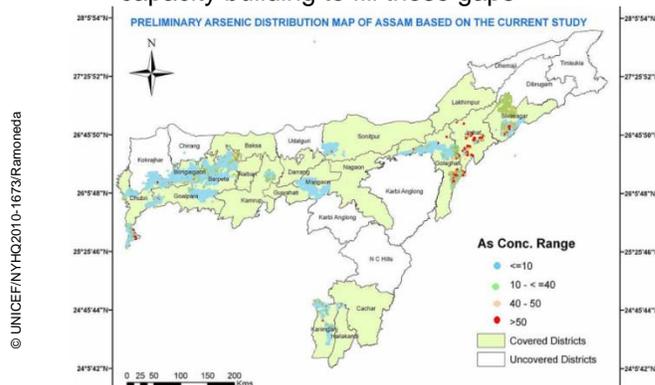


**Distribution of Fecal Coliform Contamination (% positive detects) from selected Districts across States from 2008**

### Action

UNICEF has offices at National level and in 13 State capitals covering 15 States. UNICEF's work on water has primarily been in the following areas

1. Better understanding of the water quality issues via analyzing and mapping of chemical and microbiological contaminants
2. Support to State governments and communities on corrective action on water safety via risk reduction
3. Support on source sustainability via water security planning and implementation
4. Highlighting of O&M issues and subsequent capacity building to fill these gaps



## Examples of UNICEF work on Water

- In Maharashtra, UNICEF and Government developed a uniform water quality resolution for GPs leading to the engagement of 29,000 water quality monitors as well as developing actions plans for quality affected areas.
- With UNICEF support, PHED in MP and Rajasthan started Water Safety and Security Planning in the most water-stressed areas with support to capacity building and O&M guidance development.
- GoWB is up-scaling a UNICEF model for fluoride response to benefit over 12,000 excluded rural population and 66 schools.
- Assam and Jharkhand saw UNICEF support water quality mapping across affected areas to help Govt to develop response plans.
- UP has created a capacity building platform on strengthening supportive supervision to water sector institutions.
- Support to National discussions on monitoring in water, water and gender issues, National Communication & Advocacy strategy on drinking water.
- Water safety has now been incorporated into the Uniform Water quality protocol.

## Key Challenges

- Capacity challenges are still significant; there is a need for a comprehensive capacity building framework; though some initiatives are underway (e.g. Block Resource Centre at National level and in Maharashtra)
- Need for much stronger monitoring systems, as recognized by partners during the National consultation meeting on strengthening M&E and data analysis.
- Investment in water safety demand generation and community participation with a need for longer term commitments and programs go beyond a one year planning cycle and more IPC to ensure sustainability and adequate O&M is in place. Eventually the goal should be to move away from heavy capital outlays to strong focus on sustainability.
- It is key to close the loop on water safety problems meaning there must be a clear follow-up mechanism for identified water quality problems.



## Strategic Approach

- Addressing equity in drinking water & sanitation requires increasing access to services, inclusive approaches & participation, equal treatment and providing opportunities for all excluded groups and persons.
- Women and children constitute 70% of the population and deserve special attention. Ending gender-based inequities faced by girls and women must be accorded the highest priority.
- Women should be included in all aspects of decision making with respect to drinking water security planning, implementation, operation, maintenance and management (NRDWP guidance)
- Children are more likely to die from diarrhoea than adults, due to their undeveloped immune systems, Furthermore, the odds of stunting at age 24 months increase exponentially with each diarrhoeal episode and with each day of diarrhoea. The children most at risk are those living in poverty.
- It is essential to systematically address the water safety issues in a systematic fashion to tackle diarrhea rates in India.

