



WaterAid/ Farzana Hossen

Water Entrepreneurship for Women's Empowerment

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Climate and economic resilience
through empowering women

Acute water crisis in Atulia union of Shyamnagar, Satkhira

People of the union had to pay a high price (BDT 1 per litre) for a bucket of water - a price which is difficult for them to afford. Women and girls are disproportionately affected by the water crisis. The nearest source for people residing in the Atulia union is around four to five kilometres away, so women used to walk for hours to collect water - carrying gilt-silver pitchers. Due to an absence of clean water, saline related diseases such as hypertension, liver damage, eclampsia are often observed. Girls used to miss schools to support their mothers as well.



For more information, please visit www.wateraid.org/bd
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Our work

We promoted a social business-approach; led, operated, managed and expanded by women, that helps communities to access clean, safe and affordable water through the installation of a Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant. We call this approach WE-WE, which is short for Water Entrepreneurship for Women's Empowerment. The RO plant has a capacity to disperse 500 litres/per hour - which is adequate for people of surrounding villages in the union.

The women group who manage the plant and sell water consist of five members from the community - earning money to economically sustain themselves and the maintenance of the plant. This community-led approach resulted in a 50% decrease in water prices (BDT 0.5 per litre) than what was before - bringing considerable relieve to communities in the union.

An average monthly profit of BDT 10,000 earned by the women group

Apart from their role in enabling access to water, the WE-WE approach enable the women to contribute to their family income. They also invested their own money in the RO plant to improve operational efficiency. This empowerment model resulted in them participating in family- and community-level decision-making.