



Connecting people and nature
through water in West Java, Indonesia

WASH IN WATERSHEDS: WEST JAVA

In Indonesia, 28 million people lack safe water and 71 million people lack access to improved sanitation facilities. Reliable access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services is a cornerstone of community well-being. So, too, are the benefits provided by healthy watersheds. Conservation International (CI) is leading a cross-sectoral movement to integrate watershed conservation with the provision of WASH services. Through our WASH in Watersheds (WiW) approach, we foster enduring environmental stewardship, build community resilience, and create a shared vision between conservation and development.

Challenge

Indonesia's two largest tracts of remaining rainforest on Java are in Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park and Gunung Halimun Salak National Park (collectively known as Gedepahala). The Gedepahala region is situated in the backyard of five major cities, including Jakarta, Indonesia's bustling capital. These two mountainous national parks protect the freshwater supply for 30 million people. Gedepahala also shelters high biodiversity and several endemic species, including the Javan silvery gibbon, Javan hawk-eagle, and a small population of Javan leopards.

Despite the forest's importance, degradation, forest conversion to agriculture plots and settlements pose serious threats to this critical region, impacts are exacerbated by villagers' need to trek into the forest to access water. Unfortunately, the role that forests play in maintaining local water supply and livelihoods is often poorly understood among local communities.

Community Impact

CI Indonesia has engaged with local communities in West Java for ten years, building community resilience and bolstering the livelihoods and capacity of local people to be stronger, healthier and more productive environmental stewards. These efforts have come together under a WiW approach to integrate forest conservation, improved water access, and environmental education to produce measurable results.

FOREST CONSERVATION

Through a partnership with the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park and support of village governments, CI Indonesia has catalyzed reforestation actions and generated alternative incomes for local communities through activities such as agroforestry and ecotourism. Ecotourism helps to generate extra income by ensuring communities receive direct benefits from conservation activities in the park.


WATER INFRASTRUCTURE AND ACCESS

As a complement to forest restoration, we have implemented a participatory approach to building infrastructure for clean water. Working side-by-side with people from Lembur Pasir kampong and the wider community, the CI team and Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park staff installed a 6km-long gravity-fed PVC pipe from a water source in the forest adjacent to the village. Once the pipes were in place, five water tanks were installed at the water station that serves as the water point for the villagers. Guidance was provided to villagers on boiling the water to ensure its safety for consumption.

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

An essential part of the WASH in Watershed approach is helping communities understand the relationship between healthy watersheds and their water, and then giving them the tools to be good stewards. In conjunction with building the pipe and tanks, CI Indonesia with the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park conducted community awareness-raising on the long-term benefit of protecting forests instead of cutting them down for more immediate gain.

Recognizing the importance of educating the next generation to care for nature, CI Indonesia also launched an educational campaign in eight elementary schools around the parks. About 500 elementary and junior high school children from Ginanjar village were visited by CI's mobile conservation education unit.



Ajudin, Head of the Neighborhood Unit Head, reported that, “The community has been dreaming for a long time to get access to the clean water. With support from Conservation International and the Gunung Gede Pangrango National Park, clean water can be accessed from their homes.”

Results:

Approximately 125 families—or about 500 people—are now able to access water from the forest. The communities formed a Local Water Committee and agree to contribute Rp 10,000 (about 0.67 USD) per family, per month. The Committee nominated members, tasked with maintaining and repairing the pipe, as well as managing funds. This means that the water will keep flowing even after CI is no longer working in the area.

Scaling Up Efforts:

In the coming years, CI-Indonesia hopes to expand the WiW program to reach approximately 750 households in at least three villages with water, environmental education and sustainable behavior change opportunities. An expansion of the WiW model would restore and improve the management of approximately 100 hectares in and around Gedepahala. Beyond the direct local benefits, the expansion of this management approach would help protect critical source watersheds for 30 million people and for native biodiversity.





Why CI?

Since 2010, CI has been a thought leader on integrated WASH and conservation, beginning with the launch of a thematic task of the [Africa Biodiversity Collaborative Group](#). With sector experts, we created tools for integration such as [project staff guidelines](#), a [monitoring and evaluation framework](#), and, in-collaboration with IRC, a [methodology for developing an advocacy strategy](#) to translate on-the-ground experiences into local government policy, planning and funding actions. CI also built practical field-level experiences in our programs, driven by a theory of change in which WASH and watershed conservation efforts not only reinforce each other but depend on each other for sustained success. This innovative approach supports CI's mission of biodiversity conservation and human well-being by addressing community-voiced needs for improved water access and quality through a holistic, ecosystem-based approach.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

VISIT [HTTPS://WWW.CONSERVATION.ORG/PROJECTS/WASH-IN-WATERSHEDS](https://www.conservation.org/projects/wash-in-watersheds)

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