100 Million Initiative

Annual Update | April 2026

Improving water security for 100 million people by 2030

The 100 Million Initiative is working with governments, development banks, foundations, social enterprises, a global network of academic partners and the private sector to improve water security for vulnerable people.

The work builds out of the REACH programme which reached its target of improving water security for over 10 million people in 2025. We have established programmes of work in Bangladesh, Kenya, India and Zambia applying results-based contracts to improve drinking water services in healthcare facilities, schools and communities.

Highlights from the 100 Million Initiative

In its first year, the 100 Million Initiative has made progress in three key areas.

1. Results-based contracts to improve drinking water services: research and successful implementation of results-based contracts with professional service providers are supporting on-going and new government partnerships that are scaling the impacts. Partnership with Uptime is expanding the integration of water safety metrics in results-based contracts to new geographies. Additionally, the team continue to support the sector, providing support to World Bank programmes on Payment for Results, convening a Community of Practice for results-based funding for safe water, working with WHO on sanitary inspections, Global Water Centre on design of water safety training, and with UNICEF on their WASH Service Delivery Models Tool.
2. Integration of climate resilience for water security: the research on climate resilience continues to influence policy through engagement on metrics for climate resilience WASH, partnership with ADB on rural water security, and continuing research with CLARE's PALM-TREEs project.
3. Advancing equity and inclusion in water security: the *Fair Water?* exhibition was held in Dhaka and Manila, expanding access internationally to research on water security. This was further leveraged through social media campaign supported by ADB that reached 6 million people. The 100 Million Initiative is contributing to University of Oxford-wide training around inclusive event design and delivery and continues to publish and support dissemination of outputs from the REACH-WISER (Water InSecurity Equity and Resilience) project.

Below we highlight the activities from 2025/26 in two main areas that we are supporting – i) government partnerships with Bangladesh, Zambia and India and ii) global partnerships.

Government partnerships

Bangladesh

SafePani

SafePani mechanics fixing school pump.
Photo credit: HYSAWA

REACH co-designed the SafePani model for reliable drinking water in schools and healthcare facilities. In 2025, the government co-funded a six-year results-based contract in Khulna district serving 1,174 facilities for 215,000 people. Based on excellent results in Khulna district, the government has now approved a second district to be added to this contract doubling the impact numbers. In addition, the Department of Primary Education has been interested to apply the model to all 65,567 primary schools serving 10 million children. Currently, the plan is to phase in SafePani in another 14 districts as part of the national Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP5, 2026-2030). Overall, this will result in c.3 million people under SafePani contracts with the possibility to scale further and potentially achieve a national model before 2030. This work was recognised by the University of Oxford's School of Geography and the Environment ***Engagement and Impact Award***, won by **Dr Sonia Hoque** in June 2025 for exemplifying successful research to impact translation.

Professor Katrina Charles at the Philippines launch of the Fair Water? Exhibition with Gerry Ablaza, Trustee of the Ayala Foundation; Fatima Yasmin, Vice-President for Sectors and Themes at the Asian Development Bank (ADB); and Edgar O. Chua, Chair of the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation

Zambia

SafeManzi

Working with Uptime, Oxford has created and piloted the SafeManzi model in 100 schools and healthcare facilities in one of the districts in Zambia's Central Province. Excellent results, supported by a four Ministry MOU (Education, Health, Local Government and Water), have increased demand to scale the work to remaining ten districts in the province in 2026, serving 980 facilities. The team are working with government laboratories to ensure sustainability of high-quality services to support drinking water safety. The work has gained interest from Cooperating Partners including the World Bank, EU, UNICEF, and FCDO.

India

Decision Support System for JJM in Karnataka

Working with Uptime, Oxford has collaborated with the Government of Karnataka to develop a Decision Support System to monitor and manage delivery of drinking water to multi-village schemes in the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). JJM is a signature national programme costing over USD63 billion to provide every citizen with a functional household tap connection. The Decision Support System will ensure the policy goals are met and support improved water resource management and public allocation of funding. If successful, the DSS will benefit 12 million people supplied from piped water networks.

Cover graphic from Government of Karnataka/JJM report on Leveraging Decision Support Systems for Operational, Financial and Water Resource Resilience, produced in association with Uptime Global and the University of Oxford

Global partnerships

Asian Development Bank: Asian Water Development Outlook

Prof Katrina Charles and Dr Sonia Hoque partnered with the Asian Development Bank to strengthen the measurement of rural water security for the Asian Water Development Outlook in 2025. This included integrating safely managed water and sanitation and hygiene data, and analysing National Adaptation Plans to evaluate the climate resilience of rural water security. The analysis demonstrated that progress in WASH access only translates to reduction in diarrhoeal disease where high and equitable levels of service are achieved alongside progress on governance.

AWDO presentation by ADB

Uptime Global: safe drinking water in results-based contracts

The 100 Million Initiative team work closely with Uptime Global to strengthen the water safety metrics in their global results-based contracts. In 2025, these contracts were operational in 16 countries for over 5 million people. The Uptime affiliate charity (Uptime Catalyst Facility) co-funds the government contract in Bangladesh and will support the Zambia scale up. The analysis of the data demonstrates improvements in water safety, reducing sanitary hazards and addressing *E. coli* with ongoing research capturing the capacity building needs of teams to incorporate water safety approaches.

JMP/GLAAS review of indicators for global monitoring of climate-resilient WASH

In 2024, the UNICEF and World Health Organization Joint Monitoring Program (JMP) and Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) initiated the process to identify indicators for global monitoring of climate-resilient WASH. Professor Katrina Charles is part of the academic team delivering the indicators, drawing on REACH research on WASH and climate, as well as experience engagement with policy makers and practitioners to design metrics that support progress. In 2025, based on systematic reviews of the literature and engagement with stakeholders, they delivered a longlist of indicators which has been refined to a short list in March 2026.

Fair Water? exhibition tour and social media campaign

The **Fair Water?** exhibition, a collaboration between the REACH Water Security programme and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, has expanded from its original Oxford display to locally adapted editions in Bangladesh and the Philippines, with proposals underway to tour Nairobi and Stockholm in 2026. In Dhaka, the exhibition ran at the Bangladesh National Museum from 18 May to 4 June 2025, attracting 5,500 visitors and featuring Bangla translations, locally relevant research from BUET and SafePani partners, and water-related artefacts supplied by the museum. In Manila, the exhibition was hosted at the Ayala Museum from 28 May to 28 August 2025, drawing 17,000 visitors and reaching a further 6 million people online through a major social media campaign; adapted by ADB and the Ayala Foundation, it combined global and Philippine water security issues, engaged young audiences, and was supported by expert talks and a teachers' guide for school groups.

> *"the water security issues highlighted in the Exhibition affect me personally—both directly and indirectly"*
>
> Visitor to Fair Water? Exhibition in Dhaka

Fair Water? at the National Museum of Bangladesh

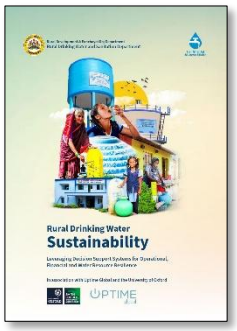
Inclusive Events Workshop, University of Oxford

The 100 Million Initiative collaborated with the School of Geography and the Environment on a training event aimed at academic, research and professional services staff at the University of Oxford, building on the Inclusive Conferences Guide published by the REACH programme and SOGE in 2019. The workshop included a collaborative planning activity through which 30 participants from around the university shared their insights and recommendations on creating inclusive events. Best practice insights from this collaborative workshop is feeding into a new Inclusive Events Toolkit for wider dissemination.

Publications

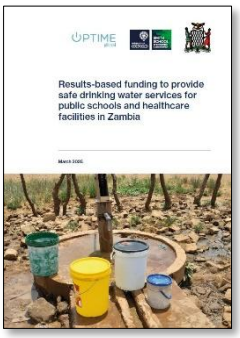
Publications and outputs from the 100 Million Initiative are available through the website https://100m.ox.ac.uk/publications.

Key outputs

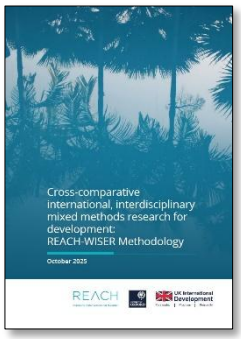


Government of Karnataka in association with Uptime Global and the University of Oxford (2025). **Rural Drinking Water Sustainability: Leveraging Decision Support Systems for Operational, Financial and Water Resource Resilience**. (2025) Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department, Bengaluru, India.

Hoque, S.F., Hope, R. Katrina J. Charles, K.J., & Mohammad Monirul Alam, M.A., Md Nurul Osman, Md N., Mohammad Saiful Islam Mazomder, M.S.I. (2026). **Driving impacts through science-practitioner partnership: Professionalising water service delivery in rural Bangladesh**, Environmental Science & Policy, Volume 176, 104316.



Hoque, S.F., Lishimpi, K., Phiri, F., Tambatamba, B., Mulundika, M.M., Kalapa, C., Simwanza, T., Siajunza, M., Mugode, M., Hope, R., Charles, K., Nowicki, S., Nshenda, E., McNicholl, D., Nyirenda, U., Muchelenje, J. and Haankuku, C. 2025. **Results-based funding to provide safe drinking water services for public schools and healthcare facilities in Zambia**. Working Paper. Oxford, UK: University of Oxford and Uptime Global.



Charles, K., Hoque, S., Korzenevica, M. et al (2025). **Cross-comparative international, interdisciplinary mixed methods research for development: REACH-WISER Methodology**. REACH Working Paper 15, University of Oxford, UK.

In August 2025, the University of Oxford included the 100 Million Initiative in their annual public engagement campaign. The overview article focuses on our work in Bangladesh and Zambia, looking at how the results-based funding models SafePani and SafeManzi came to be developed and the benefits for people attendings school and healthcare facilities.

- Read more: **Improving water security for 100 million people**

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Partnership | Progress | Prosperity

UPTIME global

unicef for every child

World Health Organization

SafePani সেফপানি

UPTIME catalyst facility

ADB Asian Development Bank