

Political will: the secret sauce to reaching Everyone Forever

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Water For People's Everyone Forever model has been building momentum since its inception in 2011, attracting attention from donors, other WASH organizations, and, most importantly, governments from around the world. 2018 was a historic year for Water For People, with milestones across country programs, including our first-ever Forever milestone (in Bolivia) and our first-ever Everyone milestones in Africa (in Malawi), Guatemala, and Nicaragua. Globally, our water impact population increased from 2.8 million to 3.3 million people! So "what's in the water" at Water For People?

We believe the success of the Everyone Forever model includes a rather simple mix of ingredients:

- Vision – From the beginning, all stakeholders share a common understanding of and true commitment toward reaching universal and sustainable access to WASH services.
- Planning – Collaborative development of the roadmap for reaching universal and sustainable access to WASH services, including estimates of the human, technical, and financial resources required.
- Monitoring and Reflection – Conducted annually to measure progress, make adjustments based on stakeholder learning, and set incremental priorities.

Without vision, planning, monitoring, and reflection, it is difficult to achieve anything at all in life, isn't it? (This is something my daughter, a senior in high school, is working on). But Everyone Forever requires something else, a "secret sauce." Something that we sometimes struggle to describe, quantify, and even mention when we talk about the model. Let's call it political will.

What is political will?

Unfortunately, we know what it looks like when political will is *missing*. Several years ago, we had to press the stop button on a potential new district in Nicaragua due to, let's just say, a lack of goal alignment. Additionally, we've struggled to progress as quickly as we would like in a district in Honduras due to lack of political will at the top. Should we stay or should we go?

Fortunately, we also know what it looks like *with* political will. And thankfully, it exists in almost all the 35 districts in nine countries around the world where we work!

Co-finance

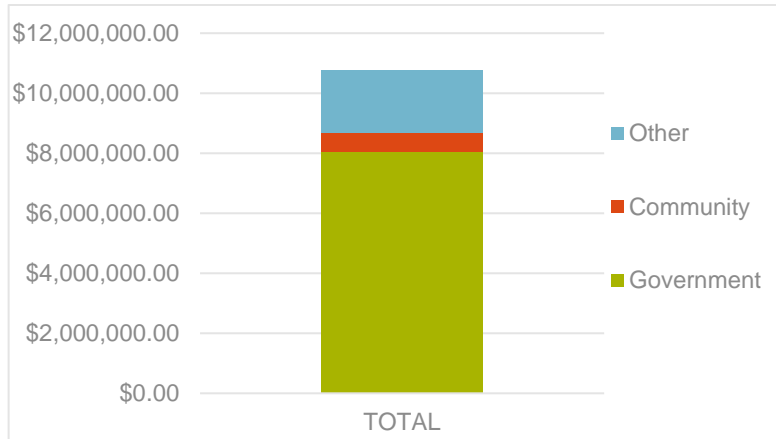
Perhaps the best manifestation of political will is co-finance, or leveraging public funds for WASH. As the Everyone Forever model expands to new places, two key questions for us are:

1. "Mr. or Ms. Mayor, are you willing and able to invest public funds to co-fund water infrastructure in your district to accelerate achievement of reaching Everyone with access to WASH services Forever?" The answer here is usually (but not always) "yes" since this provides opportunity for high-profile project completion celebrations in the communities (and votes for re-election!).

2. “Mr. or Ms. Mayor, are you willing and able to invest public funds to create and/or strengthen your District WASH Office, to achieve Everyone and Forever, give Water For People a reasonable chance to exit someday, and keep water flowing for generations?” The answer here is also usually “yes,” even though he or she may not exactly understand or care as much about the importance of this. Of course the timeframe for longer-term results and sustainability go well beyond typical election cycles.

In 2018, Water For People invested just under \$20 million toward combating the global water and sanitation crisis. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of co-finance in fiscal year 2018 by government, community, and other contributions. District and national governments provide co-finance in the form of staff and consultants (like those who work in District WASH Offices), as well as funds invested in WASH infrastructure, education, operations and maintenance, and monitoring.

Figure 1: 2018 Global Co-finance



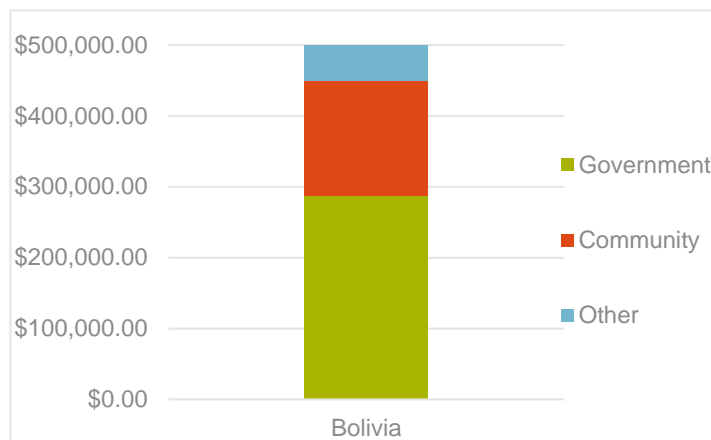
Community contributions include funds that communities invest in WASH projects and the provision of in-kind materials (such as gravel, construction materials, privately owned land) and labor. Other contributions include support from partner implementing organizations.

It is no coincidence that Rwanda, Peru, and Bolivia are three countries with Water For People’s most significant co-finance contributions from local and national governments, as well as the countries where leadership at the highest national level is fully committed to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6: Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all reaching universal and sustainable WASH for all by 2030.

Bolivia

In districts where Water For People works in Bolivia, municipal governments have strong District WASH Offices (DMSBs) and have co-financed at least 50% of the costs of all new water infrastructure for the past seven years, sometimes accessing funds from the national government’s *Mi Agua* program.

Figure 2: 2018 Co-finance in Bolivia



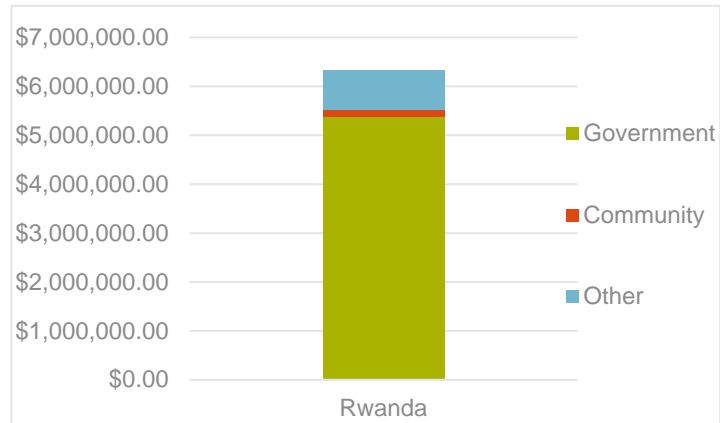
Since 2013, Water For People has contributed US\$606,000 of the \$1.7 million invested in new and rehabilitated water infrastructure, with the remainder invested by municipal governments and communities. And we are very excited about the significantly positive trends in co-finance for household sanitation. Municipal governments such as Villa Rivero are offering smart incentives, which have resulted in more than 400

families in 2018 building nice bathrooms with their own resources valued at an estimated 15x the incentive provided.

Rwanda

In districts where Water For People works in Rwanda, local governments contract local private operators to manage water systems and have co-financed 45% of the costs all new water infrastructure through a blend of district and national government (Water and Sanitation Corporation – WASAC) funding. In 2018 Water For People invested just over \$5 million, while in-country resources co-financed approximately \$6.3 million of program work.

Figure 3: 2018 Co-finance in Rwanda



Peru

In districts where Water For People works in Peru, nearly 100% of the funding for new water infrastructure has come from local governments pulling from national government funds. In fact, one of the two Everyone Forever districts has already reached Everyone, and the other is very close. Since 2011, Water For People’s water infrastructure investment in those two districts has been just under \$350,000.

So, keep an eye on the progress of these three countries as we approach 2030. We are already working closely with those national governments to scale the Everyone Forever model to reach their entire countries with sustainable water services. And now I need to figure out how to get my daughter to increase the priority level on her scholarship essays (as a way for her to express political will through co-finance contributions towards her college fund?) so we can help her achieve her life goals.