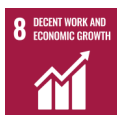




Water Security for All

Annual Progress Report May - Dec 2025 for DEKRA

April 2026



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  GOALS

Clean water for children – shaping a secure future



supports



UNICEF does not endorse any company, brand, product or service.



DEKRA supports UNICEF:

An impactful partnership to ensure water security for children and families in Ethiopia and India

A global water crisis and its impact on children

More than 2 billion people lack access to safe drinking water at home, and over 450 million children worldwide live in regions with high or extreme water insecurity. Climate change is making this crisis worse: droughts, floods and rising temperatures are destroying water infrastructure and depleting groundwater reserves, disproportionately affecting the communities that have contributed least to the crisis.

A pioneering partnership for water security

In 2025, DEKRA and UNICEF announced a pioneering five-year partnership to provide children and their

families in Ethiopia and India, two countries heavily impacted by water scarcity, with access to clean drinking water and stronger community resilience. Over five years, DEKRA will support UNICEF with a total of EUR 5 million, contributing to UNICEF's Water Security for All initiative.

Our shared goal: safe water for more than 860,000 people by 2030

Together, DEKRA and UNICEF aim to ensure sustainable access to safe and affordable drinking water for around 860,000 people across Ethiopia and India by 2030.



A SHARED VOICE FOR WATER AND CLIMATE

At DEKRA's 100th anniversary celebration in Berlin (July 2025), Kitty van der Heijden, Deputy Executive Director, UNICEF, delivered remarks on the shared ambition behind the DEKRA supports UNICEF partnership and the importance of water security in a changing climate.

Beyond programme implementation, the partnership between UNICEF and DEKRA also operates on a strategic level—leveraging their collaboration to advance water and climate action, and to strengthen calls for greater commitment to water security as a cornerstone of climate resilience for children and their communities.

Achieving climate-resilient Water Security for All

THE PROGRAMME AT A GLANCE

- **Programme focus:** Climate-resilient water supply to help children and communities adapt to climate change
- **Countries:** Ethiopia and India
- **Duration:** 2025–2030
- **Total planned reach** (by 2030): ~860,000 people gaining access to climate-resilient and sustainable water supply across both countries
- **DEKRA's contribution** (overall): EUR 5 Million



UNICEF's Water Security for All initiative responds to the growing water crisis as a consequence of climate change and water stress. With DEKRA's support in Ethiopia and India, it helps governments and communities secure safe, sustainable and climate-resilient water services, while strengthening systems, financing and capacity to reach the most vulnerable children and their families.

The programme follows a clear pathway across four outcomes:



Outcome 1 SHIFT

Supporting governments with climate risk analysis, identification of vulnerabilities, and testing/identifying solutions that reduce water insecurity as climate impacts intensify.



Outcome 2 CATALYZE

Unlocking and coordinating larger-scale financing—including climate finance and domestic resources—to address bottlenecks and enable sustainable investment in the water sector.



Outcome 3 SCALE UP

Scaling practical, climate-resilient models that expand services to those without access and upgrade existing systems to withstand climate shocks and long-term stress.



Outcome 4 SOLAR HUBS

Supporting the shift to low-carbon, reliable energy for water supply through technical assistance, capacity building, and enabling systems for solar-powered WASH solutions.

The first programme year (2025) marked the **start-up and foundational phase of programme implementation**. Across both countries, UNICEF focused on **putting in place the technical, institutional and operational building blocks** required to deliver sustainable results over the partnership period.

The following pages provide an overview of key progress and results achieved in 2025 in Ethiopia and India under the Water Security for All programme.



Installing solar panels in the Somali Region to strengthen climate-resilient water services and sustain reliable supplies amid deepening drought and worsening water scarcity.

A deepening water emergency: the programme could not have started at a more critical time

Ethiopia is facing a renewed and intensifying water crisis following the failure of multiple consecutive rainy seasons. The October–December 2025 short rains were among the driest on record, driven by La Niña conditions and a strongly negative Indian Ocean Dipole. These conditions have compounded the impacts of the historic 2020–2023 drought, which had already left livelihoods, water sources, and community coping mechanisms severely weakened.

The Somali and Oromia Regions in southern Ethiopia are particularly affected by this escalating water scarcity, leaving many water supplies dry or highly unreliable and increasing dependence on motorized schemes, particularly deep boreholes.



In southern Ethiopia, climate change has serious consequences for families who are mainly pastoralists, living off their livestock and dependent on weather conditions.

The programme in Ethiopia aims to deliver **climate-resilient and sustainable safe water supply for drought-affected communities in Somali and Oromia Regions**.

In Ethiopia, UNICEF is working through a **direct and downstream approach**, meaning working closely with communities, woreda authorities and service providers to identify priority sites, complete technical designs and safeguards, procure and install solar pumping systems, and construct storage and distribution infrastructure.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

Key progress in 2025

- Completed participatory scoping and **selected six priority water-insecure communities** through consultations with elders, women's groups, local leadership and woreda authorities.
- Confirmed an **expected service reach of 71,600 people** across the six sites once systems will be completed.
- Developed **three structured data-collection tools** to support forthcoming system and community assessments for climate risk and water security planning.
- Achieved **substantial construction progress on first priority systems** in Somali and Oromia Regions.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

Community consultations and site selection (foundational phase)

UNICEF began implementing the programme through **community consultations and a structured scoping exercise, which informed the identification of six priority water-insecure communities**, three in Oromia Region and three in Somali Region. Through participatory engagements with elders, local leadership, women's groups and woreda authorities, **communities helped identify the most vulnerable locations requiring urgent, climate-resilient water interventions.**

The identified sites face **critical water storage constraints**, heavy **reliance on unprotected sources**, and **underutilized boreholes** lacking the infrastructure to supply safe water to surrounding communities. Collectively, **these six sites are expected to serve 71,600 people.**

The **consultative site-selection process** strengthened **community ownership**, ensured **alignment with locally defined priorities**, and established a **strong foundation for implementing climate-resilient water systems in line with the programme's strategic outcomes.**



Current water source in use in Akash Kebele, Ginir woreda, Oromia Region, one of the selected sites.

Three data-collection tools (water system assessment questionnaire; community-level focus group guide; woreda-level focus group guide) were developed to capture information on climate hazards, vulnerability and exposure, and community capacity to respond—informing the design of safe, climate-resilient interventions.



Significant progress towards restoring reliable access to safe water in Akash Kebele, Oromia Region

In Oromia Region, **implementation has progressed significantly in Akash Kebele**, Ginir Woreda, East Bale Zone, where the **community had long relied on unprotected ponds** after a 35-year-old borehole failed.

The **drilling of a new 300-metre-deep borehole with a discharge of six litres per second** represents a major step towards restoring reliable year-round access to safe water.

Completion of the detailed design and Environmental Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), combined with ongoing procurement of solar pumping systems, ensures that the **water supply infrastructure will be climate-resilient, powered by renewable energy and operationally sustainable.**

Once completed, the system will serve around **13,000 people.**

Construction of a water distribution system in Guna Gado Woreda, Somali Region

In Somali Region, substantial progress has been made on the **construction of a fully solarized, climate-resilient water distribution system** at Balisareedo Kebele in Guna Gado Woreda. Installation works are under way, including a **60-kilowatt solar array, a 100-cubic-metre reinforced-concrete reservoir, distribution pipelines, water points, livestock troughs, and supporting structures.**

Once completed, the system will serve approximately **8,500 people** and integrate features that mitigate the impacts of increasingly frequent droughts, particularly through solarisation, which ensures uninterrupted service regardless of fuel availability or price fluctuations.

Unlocking existing water resources

The intervention operationalizes a high-yield, government-drilled borehole that previously lacked functional distribution systems, thereby **unlocking existing water resources and transforming the borehole into a dependable, climate-resilient public asset.**

Collectively, these advancements demonstrate strong progress in expanding access to sustainable water services while reinforcing community capacity to adapt to climate-related shocks.

By **shifting reliance away from diesel generators and unsafe surface water sources** towards **solar-powered systems**, the intervention directly contributes to long-term climate adaptability and reduces household expenditure on water access.



Current state of the borehole at Balisareedo Kebele (left) and on-site water collection point (right), Somali Region.



60kWp solar panels installed to power the fully solarized, climate-resilient water distribution system.



Water point under construction near a health post (left) and 100 cubic metre water reservoir under construction (right) at Balisareedo Kebele water system.

Pictures: ©UNICEF Ethiopia/2025/ Patson Kaendesa

Update on key result indicators

Results in 2025 were primarily enabling and preparatory. As none of the six planned water systems were completed within the reporting year, measurable beneficiary access and climate co-benefits will be reported once commissioning is finalized and services are delivered.

NEXT STEPS IN ETHIOPIA

Infrastructure completion and commissioning

Next steps will include **completing the construction and commissioning of climate-resilient water systems** in both regions, finalizing the **installation of solar pumping systems**, and **conducting participatory climate risk assessments and water-supply planning at community level** in line with scale-up objectives. These processes will help **ensure that new infrastructure is not only functional but also adaptive to future climate conditions**.

Government engagement and scale-up

Continued engagement with government, local leaders, and community structures will support **institutional anchoring of climate-resilient water supply planning**, while systematic documentation of lessons and progress will **facilitate scaling of the model to the remaining four drought-affected project communities** (two in Oromia and two in Somali).

Through these next steps, the programme aims to deliver lasting improvements in water security and safety, enhance community resilience to climate-related shocks, and contribute meaningfully to Ethiopia's broader climate adaptation agenda.

Drinking Water Safety and Security Planning to strengthen sustainability and safety

To ensure long-term sustainability, safety, and climate resilience of the newly established systems, these actions will be advanced through a tailored Drinking Water Safety and Security Planning (DWSSP) process in each target community. DWSSP is a risk-based framework that **helps communities and service providers identify, assess, and manage risks that could compromise drinking water safety, reliability, or sustainability**—from source to point of use—while integrating climate risks such as drought, flooding, and groundwater variability. Implementing DWSSP will equip local water committees and government counterparts with practical tools for monitoring, operations and maintenance, contingency planning, and environmental protection.

This step will consolidate the gains achieved through infrastructure investments and ensure that communities are empowered to safeguard their water security and adapt effectively to evolving climate pressures.





INDIA

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Supporting access to clean drinking water at household level in rural communities reduces the daily burden on families—especially women and girls—by limiting the time spent fetching water and strengthening safety, health and well-being.

Responding to the deepening water stress for rural communities in India

India is experiencing increasing water stress, with over **600 million people living in regions categorized as high to extremely water stressed**.

Climate variability, erratic rainfall, groundwater depletion and rising temperatures are intensifying risks to rural drinking water security. In many tribal, hilly, forested and remote habitations, service reliability remains constrained by unreliable grid electricity, declining groundwater tables, and gaps in sustainable operation and maintenance (O&M) systems.

Solar-based Single Village Schemes (SVS) offer a climate-aligned solution to reduce energy dependence and strengthen reliability, but require stronger planning, standardisation and institutional capacity to perform sustainably at scale.



Munna Kuwar collects safe drinking water from the household tap connection at her home in Satola village, Pratapgarh district, Rajasthan.

The programme in India aims to **strengthen climate-resilient and sustainable rural drinking water services under the Government of India's Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)**, particularly in water-stressed and hard-to-reach areas.

UNICEF supports government-led implementation through **targeted technical assistance and capacity building** to strengthen climate-risk-informed planning, sustainable operation and maintenance, and the integration of solar-based solutions within rural water supply schemes.

WHAT HAVE WE ACHIEVED SO FAR?

Key progress in 2025

- Completed **climate-risk and hydrogeological assessments** in selected locations to inform **technical guidance and competency-based training modules** for engineers and sector practitioners.
- **Generated and disseminated operational learning** through knowledge products and platforms to **support replication and scale-up across states**.
- Supported the strengthening and operationalisation of **108 solar-based rural water supply schemes**.
- **Improved reliability and availability of drinking water services** benefited more than **14,300 people**.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVITIES

Implementation during the reporting period progressed with activities that contributed to the approved programme design, with a strong focus on strengthening climate-resilient, solar-based rural water supply systems. The programme contributed to institutional strengthening, technical assistance, renewable energy integration, and structured capacity building to enable sustainable water service delivery in climate-vulnerable regions.

Strengthening climate-risk-informed planning and technical capacity

The programme strengthened climate-risk identification and climate-resilient planning within rural drinking water governance under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), with a focus on integrating **climate considerations into planning, system design and institutional capacity**.



Through collaboration with the Indian Institute of Technology Roorkee (IIT Roorkee), **climate-risk and hydrogeological assessments** were undertaken in selected locations in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, **identifying key vulnerabilities such as groundwater stress, seasonal variability, energy inefficiencies, and exposure to drought and extreme rainfall**.

Findings from these assessments are **informing competency-based training modules and technical guidance** being developed with the National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS), to **support engineers and sector practitioners to integrate climate-risk considerations into rural water supply planning and scheme design**.

In parallel, UNICEF's **policy advocacy and technical backstopping** helped states better align public finance flows with climate-risk-informed planning, groundwater sustainability measures and renewable energy integration under JJM. This helps strengthening institutional readiness and planning quality and helps amplify climate-aligned financing beyond project-level resources.

From assessments, planning, advocacy, and technical support to tangible results for children and families

During the reporting period, **more than 14,300 people**—including about 4,300 children and 6,200 women and girls—benefited from **improved reliability and availability of drinking water services associated with solar-based rural water supply systems**.

These results were achieved through government implementation, with the programme providing targeted support focused on technical assistance, renewable energy integration, and institutional strengthening. By improving system uptime and reducing dependence on unreliable grid electricity or costly fuel-based pumping, the supported interventions helped strengthen day-to-day service continuity for households in climate-vulnerable rural settings.



Scaling up practical solutions for climate-resilient rural water services

Testing and improving approaches that can be replicated

The programme supported practical models that help make rural water supply more reliable under the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM). In Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh, convergence-based approaches were demonstrated that **link drinking water schemes with groundwater management, watershed work, and community-led operation and maintenance**. The aim is to **strengthen local governance and protect water sources so services can last**.

Strengthening government capacity to take solutions to scale

State and district administrations across 14 states were supported through **trainings, policy reviews and performance workshops**, including technical inputs facilitated with the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIM Bangalore). **Lessons from implementation were captured in 19 knowledge products** and shared through the National Institute of Water and Sanitation (SPM-NIWAS) platforms to support wider uptake.

Expanding solar-based systems to improve reliability

During the reporting period, the programme contributed to **strengthening and operationalising 108 solar-based rural water supply schemes**, enabling an **estimated 216 kilowatt-peak (kWp) of installed solar photovoltaic capacity** and **180**

horsepower (HP) of pumping capacity. These improvements helped reduce energy-related disruptions and supported more reliable water services.



Solar-powered elevated water storage tower with two tanks in Odsanpalli, Chhattisgarh, supporting reliable rural drinking water supply.

Building the skills to operate and maintain solar-based water services

Capacity building is central to ensuring the **sustainability and performance of solar-based rural water supply services**. During the reporting period, **the programme trained and supported technical staff, engineers, pump operators and frontline functionaries on preventive maintenance, inverter and controller management, system monitoring, and basic troubleshooting**—strengthening the skills needed to improve uptime, extend asset life and maintain operational efficiency.

This focus was reinforced by a broader enabling environment as states continue to expand renewable

energy solutions relevant for water infrastructure (for example through solar integration in rural water initiatives in Gujarat and wider solarisation efforts in Rajasthan). Select academic and technical inputs further strengthened training content, governance considerations for solar asset management and performance monitoring.

Overall, these efforts **strengthen the human and institutional capacity required to keep solar-based water services reliable and climate-resilient over time**.

UPDATE ON KEY RESULT INDICATORS

During the reporting period (May-Dec 2025), the following results are associated with systems supported through the programme:



108 solar-based rural water supply schemes were supported, strengthening climate-resilient service delivery across participating states (SDG 13).



Improved water access for approx. 14,332 people, including about **4,387 children and 6,267 women and girls**, through improved reliability and availability of drinking water services (SDG 5, SDG 6).



Approx. **64.49 million litres of additional water availability was enabled through solar-powered rural water supply systems** during the reporting period (SDG 6).



216 kWp of solar photovoltaic capacity installed across supported schemes (SDG 13).



Estimated **annual reduction of approx. 147.73 tonnes of CO₂ emissions**, based on standard emission factors associated with displacement of non-renewable grid electricity or diesel-based pumping* (SDG 13).

*These reductions correspond to the replacement of conventional non-renewable grid or diesel-powered pumping systems with solar-powered infrastructure, contributing to lower operational emissions and improved energy sustainability in rural water supply systems. These estimates represent indicative climate mitigation benefits associated with renewable energy integration and improved system efficiency.

NEXT STEPS IN INDIA

Lessons learned to guide the next steps

Key lessons from the reporting period highlight that targeted **engagement with national technical and academic institutions can significantly improve the quality and sustainability of state-led implementation**—provided it **complements, and is embedded within, existing government systems**.

The programme also demonstrated that **solarisation delivers the strongest results when integrated into overall Piped Water Supply Scheme (PWSS) design** and anchored in **clear institutional arrangements for operation and maintenance (O&M), financing, standards and monitoring**.

Next steps in 2026

Building on the foundational work completed between May and December 2025, next steps from January 2026 will focus on:

- Moving from demonstration to institutionalised scale by **finalising solar-based Single Village Scheme (SVS) O&M policies in select states**.
- **Expanding structured capacity building across additional districts**.
- **Strengthening monitoring and grievance redressal**.
- **Institutionalising technical standards and design templates** to ensure uniform quality and reduce variability in implementation across states.



Strategic global engagement to mobilise the private sector for climate adaptation and resilience for children

Alongside programme implementation in Ethiopia and India, the partnership between UNICEF and DEKRA also includes a strategic focus to position climate adaptation for children with the private sector.

In 2025, UNICEF initiated its engagement with the private sector in climate adaptation and community resilience, particularly for children, and to position this agenda within business and global climate discussions. DEKRA's funding and active participation contributed to the development, validation, and initial uptake of this work.

Key results:

Establishment and activation of an Advisory Group

A multi-stakeholder Advisory Group was convened, bringing together leading companies and platforms (including DEKRA). The group provided structured input to shape the work and confirmed continued engagement, with members willing to extend into 2026.

Development of business-relevant tools

With inputs from the Advisory Group, UNICEF developed business-relevant tools designed to be grounded in corporate realities and aligned with existing business frameworks—supporting companies to engage more concretely on climate adaptation and resilience for children.

A [dedicated website](#) was also launched to host the tools and enable broad access for companies and stakeholders.

Broad-based stakeholder consultation

To strengthen relevance and usability, UNICEF engaged 26+ public and private sector entities through workshops and interviews. These consultations informed both the content and the practical applicability of the tools under development.

Strengthened positioning at global level

UNICEF strengthened global positioning by showcasing the tools at high level at COP30, helping raise visibility and support early uptake.

The Imperative for Business Action on Climate Adaptation, Ensuring Co-Benefits for Communities

Evidence and rationale for the private sector to include communities in building resilience

November 2025



“

For us, adaptation is part of corporate climate responsibility. As the global partner for safety, security and sustainability, we see it as our duty to anticipate climate risks before they disrupt people or operations and actively contribute to the resilience of businesses and communities.

”

Wolfgang Linsenmaier,
Member of the Management Board
DEKRA e.V. and DEKRA SE, CFO

Funds received in EUR: 500,000.00

Total expenditure in EUR: 233,103.64

Expenditures from programme inception till December 2025 remain comparatively low because the programme was in its **inception phase (May–December 2025)**, during which UNICEF deliberately prioritized **establishing the operational foundations required for effective, scaled delivery in 2026 and beyond**. This included institutionalizing partnerships with government and civil society, aligning implementation approaches, completing initial planning and technical scoping, and initiating capacity development.

The **remaining balance between funds received and expenditures by 31 Dec 2025 is planned to be utilized in 2026**, when implementation shifts into more intensive roll-out, trainings, and delivery on a stronger and more coordinated footing.

A STORY OF IMPACT

Safe drinking water at home in Jilingsereng

For decades, water shaped daily life in Jilingsereng village in Ranchi district, Jharkhand—through scarcity, long walks, and uncertainty. In a community of around 260 households, women and adolescent girls relied on dug wells and hand pumps, often waiting for hours in queues, especially during the summer when sources ran low. Time lost affected livelihoods and care responsibilities, girls sometimes missed school, and monsoon-related contamination made water-borne illnesses a recurring risk.

Change came with UNICEF's support to the Jal Jeevan Mission to bring safe drinking water to every rural household. In Jilingsereng, **solar-based single village water supply schemes** were installed under a cluster model. Today, **six solar-based schemes collectively provide functional household tap connections—so clean water reaches families at home**.

The **impact is immediate**. Women and girls no longer spend their mornings fetching water, and children—especially girls—have more time for school and play. With water available for drinking, cooking, and handwashing, households are better able to maintain hygiene and protect their health.

Sustaining these gains also depends on **community leadership**. Jal Sahiya Rubi Devi, a trained water quality monitor and member of the Village Water Sanitation Committee, **regularly tests water using Field Testing Kits**. She explains safe water storage, clean containers, and proper use through village

meetings and household visits—and responds promptly whenever families raise concerns about water quality.



Jal Sahiya Rubi Devi (right) is testing water quality using a field testing kit.

Today, Jilingsereng stands as an example of how access to safe water can transform not just infrastructure, but lives, behaviour, and community confidence. The village has moved from uncertainty and daily struggle to reliability and dignity.

Jilingsereng's story is a reminder that **when government initiatives and community participation come together, transformation becomes not just possible, but sustainable**.

From standing in long queues at wells to turning on taps at home, the village has truly travelled a long distance—a journey from water struggle to water security, from hardship to hope.

We thank you very much for your support and the trust in our work.