Between the Indian and Pacific Oceans is the archipelago island nation of Indonesia – acclaimed for pristine resort beaches and lush green tropical forested volcanic mountains that produce robust coffee beans. Indonesia is not only an island between two oceans, it is separated by extremes of natural beauty and other areas where refuse is cast aside by islanders who unintentionally pollute water supplies when doing so.

Families are in a constant state of pursuit – for work, water and assistance to change their conditions. Work that was once nearby has been replaced with makeshift jobs in distant locations for adults, and the children are becoming ill from waterborne diseases that are invading well water that drink without boiling in school. Their outlook is surprisingly positive given the radical changes produced by unforgiving shaking ground and rubble that lines the streets as far as the eye can see.

Water is collected by adults and children alike who walk 5-6 kilometers daily, and what they collect is from rivers since most wells were damaged from the earthquake. Rainwater is trapped during rainy season by those without well access. Whatever their source of water, it is untreated and contaminated by either the environment or storage containers that are unclean or used for multiple purposes without proper washing and sanitization between uses.

The Lombok education system is challenged with teachers in rural community schools who lack the knowledge and resources to provide health and hygiene education to students. The result is an endless cycle of generations who throw garbage into rivers, live in dirty environments and use unsanitary bathrooms. Education is the cornerstone if the tide is to turn in Indonesia and the Lombok area.
“The only access is river water flowing in a ditch near the school that can be used for the needs of children from morning to afternoon. For the needs in the office itself, me and the teacher brought drinking water from home. Since the earthquake struck our village and there was not a single school left, the school buildings and water sources in our place were closed. Hopefully our school can get help with water sanitation equipment that is clean, healthy and safe.”

Ruslan Hadi, Spd, Headmaster
The village of Sambik Bangkol is home to farm field laborers, ranchers and local construction worker. The source of water at the school comes from a nearby river because it was covered with rocks and damaged from the earthquakes of 2018. Even today, the school is in the process of repairing the well, but the task is difficult with a lack of filtered water to keep the healthy and some population who left and never returned. Not only has the school been affected, but the entire village of Sambik Bangkol has been utilizing the existing river water for all their daily needs such as; drinking, bathing, washing vegetables and for toilet uses. Without any resources after the earthquakes, the local community and school have been using improvised ways to move water from rivers near the school, but what water makes it to the school is contaminated and very dirty, making it a serious health hazard for the students to drink.
Planet Water Foundation is a U.S.-based non-profit that develops strategic partnerships that support Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts that align with four of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Quality Education; Gender Equality; Reduced Inequalities; and Clean Water and Sanitation. Project 24 programs and initiatives support these four SDGs with longitudinal support in each community for five years.

Since 2015, Project 24 is Planet Water Foundation’s World Water Day advocacy and engagement platform the focuses on the world’s critical need to bring an end to water poverty.

“My name is Anggun, every day my friends and I drink potluck water because at school we don’t have access to clean water that is suitable for consumption. My friends and I often drink river water that runs near our school. My friends and I want to have access to adequate water for consumption.”

Anggun Despika Karunia, fifth grade student
“As a classroom teacher, it is very difficult for me to supervise all students and tell them not to drink river water. Because access to wells in the school was damaged, it is very difficult to facilitate drinking water for students. Even for toilet needs, we had to take water from the river near the school. The impact is that many students in my class often get sick.”

- Windi Ayu Wandiri S.Pd, teacher