WHOLE PLANET FOUNDATION

WHOLE FOODS MARKET
TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
2018 SUMMARY & IMPACT REPORT: INDIA
Whole Planet Foundation (WPF) funds microlending programs through CASHPOR in India where Traditional Medicinals sources senna sources for their Smooth Move Tea, which is sold in Whole Foods Market (WFM) stores. WPF is a WFM non-profit whose mission is to alleviate poverty by funding microlending programs where WFM sources products as a way to alleviate poverty and give back to our global communities.

Through the Whole Foods Market Team Member Volunteer Program, WFM gives Team Members the unique opportunity to travel abroad to learn about WPF, see where and how WFM products are grown, provide community service, experience and learn from other cultures and challenge themselves by exploring exciting countries around the globe.
2018 WFM TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM
TRAVEL IN INDIA

- Arrive to and Depart from Delhi
- Optional trip to Taj Mahal in Agra
- WFM supplier partner
- Traditional Medicinals in the Thar Desert
- Visit WPF microlending partner CASHPOR in Varanasi
2018 INDIA SUMMARY

13 WFM Team Member Volunteers traveled to India to volunteer with Traditional Medicinals, The Revive Project, and WomenServe. They visited with microcredit clients of WPF’s microlending partner CASHPOR in Varanasi, learning about their vast impact on poverty alleviation in India by providing access to microloans. Traditional Medicinals sources senna for their best selling tea Smooth Move which is for sale in Whole Foods Market stores. Team Members learned about Indian culture, food, traditions and dance.

TEAM
Amber Fowles, Florida Regional Office
Carrissa Cone, Global Office
Christopher Pulver, Northeast Region, Albany Store
Fatoumata Camara, Northeast Region, Harlem Store
Jamie Collins, Southern Pacific Region, Chandler Store
Lilia Vidals, Northern California Region, Lafayette Store
Lisa Grimm, Global Office
Michelle Champagne, North Atlantic Region, Bellingham Store
Taryn Wolf, Northern California Regional Office
Tess Goodnowott, North Atlantic Region, Fresh Pond Store
Tracy Clow, Southwest Regional Office
Patrick Thomas, South Region, Charleston Store
Cesar Prado, Southern Pacific Region, Venice Store

GROUP COORDINATOR
Barbara Joubert

INDIA TOUR DIRECTOR
Barbara Joubert

INDIA CULTURAL & CUISINE GUIDE
Ashvin Kumar

PROJECT COORDINATOR
Barbara Joubert

WFM TEAM MEMBER VOLUNTEER PROGRAM MANAGER
Genie Bolduc
Pre-trip - October 8 - 11 - Some of the team participated in optional travel to Agra and the Taj Mahal.

Day 1 - Wednesday, October 10 - The rest of the team departed the U.S.

Day 2 - Thursday, October 11 - They arrived in Delhi.

Day 3 - Friday, October 12 - The team traveled from Delhi to Jodhpur to visit the “Blue City,” participate in various cultural activities, and other aspects of tourism in the city.

Day 4 - Saturday, October 13 - Volunteers toured Jodhpur, participating in various cultural activities, and other aspects of tourism in the city.

Day 5 - Sunday, October 14 - The team left Jodhpur for Baap, where Traditional Medicinals sources senna for their Smooth Move Tea that is sold in Whole Foods Market stores.

Day 6 - Monday, October 15 - In Baap, the volunteers learned about Traditional Medicinals, saw where the senna grows, learned about its medicinal properties, and how the senna is harvested. They also learned about the high standards Traditional Medicinals has for their teas. Then, the volunteers went to a school to set up art supplies for painting, and unpacked and laid out the playground for assembly and installation.

Day 7 - 9 - Tuesday through Thursday, October 16 - 18 - The team dug taankas every day for 4 hours in the early morning, had a big breakfast, learned about WomenServe initiatives such as the Thar Artisan Collective, and Self Help Groups, and made traditional chapati in a mud hut over an open fire with women in the community. They took lunch in tiffans (traditional lunchboxes) near a local naadhi (a small pond of water), and listened to the journey of Nioma Sadler, founder of WomenServe, to learn about her vision. After lunch, the team went to the local school until dark to work on the playground, murals, science experiments, hygiene camp, tree planting, games with the children, and to create 2 new classrooms. The team alternated in their opportunities to participate in a “Tea and Taanka”, meeting with a woman whose family has received a taanka through WomenServe. It is a rare one-on-one experience to sit on the floor of a WomenServe taanka recipient, and learn to make tea on her open fire. Nioma leads the sometimes very frank, open discussions about the life for women in the Thar Desert. They also spent time in the local town of Baap, where few western visitors have traveled, contributing to the local economy. On Thursday, they finished installing the playground, planting trees, and painting murals. In the evening, they participated in a cultural event with the community, including local music, dance, food, and fun.

Day 10 - Friday, October 19 - Team members helped to host a fair for 1,000 community members, with speeches and the official opening of the playground.

Day 11 - Saturday, October 20 - The volunteers left Baap for the Manwar Desert Camp, and a sunset camel ride in the desert, and camped out for the night in tents.

Day 12 - Sunday, October 21 - The team traveled from Manwar Desert Camp to Varanasi.

Day 13 - Monday, October 22 - Team members visited with Whole Planet Foundation’s microlending partner in India, CASHPOR. They met staff members and attended center meetings where they saw the process of microlending in action. They witnessed disbursement and repayment of loans. Then, they walked to individual microcredit clients’ businesses. They learned about the process, challenges and success stories of clients whose loans were funded by Whole Planet Foundation through CASHPOR.

Day 14 - Tuesday, October 23 - The team flew from Varanasi to Delhi and home.
The volunteers traveled to Varanasi where they attended center meetings and learned about the process of receiving and repaying a microloan with the staff of Whole Planet Foundation partner CASHPOR, and WPF’s Regional Director of Asia and the Pacific, Claire Kelly. The smallest loan funded by CASHPOR is 2100 rupees, or $28.82 USD. The centers, like the one pictured above, meet once a week with up to 20 people per center. The team attended a weekly center meeting, where women clients pay back the set installment amount of their loan for the week, have the option to deposit into their savings or retirement, and once a month are provided with an educational opportunity. This one was about nutrition. The branch, which oversees centers in 138 villages, including this one, has a repayment rate of 99% for the loans they provide. Microcredit client Vimla, whose loan was funded through CASHPOR by Whole Planet Foundation, is pictured with the turmeric she farms. She also has a small shop in the village.
Pictured above and below is Nirmala, with her looms for silk sari production, and a sari. She purchased two loom machines with her loans, one automatic and another manual, to make saris. She receives orders and employs people to work the machines she owns.

Whole Planet Foundation has supported CASHPOR since 2012, funding $5,311,876 to support their microlending programs in India. CASHPOR has a 99% repayment rate. WPF gave CASHPOR capital to help them reach 1 million new borrowers. As of December of 2018 they had 843,661 active borrowers.
LEARNING ABOUT TRADITIONAL MEDICINALS

Team members learned about Traditional Medicinals’ products, how they are produced, and about their many their empowerment initiatives through the Revive Project and WomenServe. "We are not just in the business of tea. We are in the business of change - changing lives, changing communities, and changing the quality of herbal remedies.

Since our inception in 1974, we have infused sustainability into every aspect of our operations, from sourcing and packaging to distribution and voluntary certifications. This may cost more of our time and resources, but we believe it’s the right way to do business. While we are proud of our progress, there is still much more to accomplish. Your conscious choice allows us to continue this important work."

* from Traditional Medicinals' website: https://www.traditionalmedicinals.com

TRADITIONAL MEDICINALS HAS DONATED $355,949 TO ALLEVIATE POVERTY

Traditional Medicinals pledged $50,000 in 2019 as a supplier partner of Whole Planet Foundation in empowering entrepreneurs through microcredit. Traditional Medicinals sources senna in the Thar Desert in India. As of December 31, 2019, Traditional Medicinals has donated $355,949 to fund 7,856 microloans to create 42,646 opportunities. To learn more about Traditional Medicinals, their products, their empowerment projects and their positive impact, visit their website at https://www.traditionalmedicinals.com.
COMMUNITY SERVICE: DIGGING TAANKAS

A taanka is a water catchment tank. Traditional Medicinals works with WomenServe, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to remove barriers for women and girls through water security and education. As part of their community service, the team members dug 3 large holes to be used as framework for 3 taankas. Each taanka will provide a different household a source of clean water and will eliminate the daily walk to the community naadi (village pond that collects rainwater in a basin for village use) that can take up to 5-10 hours a day round-trip. In the Thar Desert, where rain occurs possibly only 2 days a year, access to water is crucial to survival. Limited access to water contributes to low agricultural production, health issues, challenges for education, and an increased burden on women and girls. Access to a taanka provides a household with 4-6 months of water security that is easily accessible at their home. It improves health and hygiene. Increased access to water allows for higher rate of daily consumption, increased bathing, teeth brushing, and washing clothes.
COMMUNITY SERVICE: DIGGING TAANKAS

Providing access to water empowers women in many ways:

- Physical relief of body pain from no longer carrying water on their heads
- Increased free time to produce income
- More time to care for children
- Personal happiness and pride of owning a taanka
- Girls no longer have to help collect water, providing them time to go to school
In addition to the taanka digs, building of the playground and painting of murals, the volunteers participated in a hygiene camp at one of the local schools. They split into 4 stations where they taught the children how to clip their nails, wash their hair, brush their teeth, and wash their face. Each student was provided with a bag containing soap, toothbrush, and toothpaste.
The team members were immersed into the community through tea and taankas, an opportunity for a few team members at a time to meet a woman who had received a taanka, and enter her house where she prepared tea for them and shared her story. Nioma Sadler, the founder and Executive Director of WomenServe, arranged the visits and accompanied the volunteers on this intimate glimpse into a woman’s life in rural India. They learned how the taanka changed her life for the better and gained an appreciation of day-to-day life in the desert.

Papu Devi (pictured below) saved for months before receiving a taanka 4 months ago. Before the taanka she walked 4 hours one way to the naadi and 2 hours one way to collect wood, every day. Obstacles such as dust storms, feeling ill, the long walk and pain in her joints, back, and neck made life very difficult. She had no formal education and married her sister’s husband after she passed during childbirth, and took on her sister’s children to raise as her own. She also cares for her eldest son’s first born. She is able to send her children to school.
“I knew I wanted to focus my life on issues that women and girls face around the world,” says Nioma Sadler, Founder of WomenServe, pictured below in yellow.

“When women are systematically denied access to the same economic opportunities that men can access, cycles of poverty are created and repeated. WomenServe is always looking for ways to remove these cultural barriers so that women can empower themselves and create their own opportunities. These interventions offer training in indigenous handicraft techniques, social and economic support, and best practice knowledge banks in an effort to improve income generation and bolster entrepreneurial activity.”*

* A quote from WomenServe's website: https://www.womenserve.org/our-work/herlivelihood-economic-development/

The volunteers participated in a cultural activity with women in the community, making chapati, a traditional flatbread.
For girls in Rajasthan, an education can be the difference between a life of freedom or being married before their 18th birthday. But for generations, girls haven’t had the privilege and access to go to school. 40% of girls who attend school drop out before 5th grade. 350,000 girls are out of school. Only 1 in 100 girls reach 12th grade.
COMMUNITY SERVICE: PLAYGROUND BUILD

Traditional Medicinals and Whole Foods Market built a playground for a local school, in partnership with WomenServe. Playgrounds give children a safe environment for developing social, physical, emotional, and cognitive skills. The use of a playground can improve children’s balance, motor, and physical skills, and the exercise improves their health and emotional wellbeing.
COMMUNITY SERVICE: PLANTING TREES AND PAINTING MURALS
CHESAR
“What Traditional Medicinals is doing in India is truly wonderful. They help women and families in poverty with no water security, and little education. As a group we help build these things called taankas (water catchment tanks), which were 10 feet deep by 10 feet wide, and have a filtration system that captures rain water, water that would last a family about 6 months. Before, women would walk 2 hours one way just to get water for drinking, eating, and bathing. The taanka gives them more time freedom.

We visited women in villages and had the chance to see how they invested their loans to better their families and community. The staff members who give these loans out have a very close relationship with the women and their communities. They care about, and would do anything within their power to help families in need.

Thank you for letting me be a part of this program. I will forever cherish the moments I experienced, and the relationships I built with everyone on this trip. It was truly an amazing experience, and I am glad I was chosen to participate. Unforgettable.”

AMBER
“This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to travel to places and be invited into villages and homes that no tourist would ever have the opportunity.”

MICHELLE
“The entire experience in India was incredible, and I feel fortunate and blessed to have been able to participate. I learned how incredible Traditional Medicinals is as a company. They truly care about their partners. Traditional Medicinals, WomenServe, and Revive have emerged to work to empower the women and girls in the region.”

CESAR
“What an incredible experience! Truly life-changing. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in making it a reality.

I learned so much from talking with the Traditional Medicinals team. It is a truly great company. I consider myself fortunate to have had this opportunity to learn more about their mission and products. Building the playground at the school and digging the taanka (water catchment tank) were both incredibly fulfilling experiences that I honestly would not trade for anything. This trip absolutely changed my life in ways that I am still cannot fully understand. I am just so unbelievably grateful I cannot even express it. I love all of the people in our group and will treasure these memories for the rest of my life. I am now even more focused on realigning my life in a way so that I can help others as much as possible.”

FATOU MATA
“This was a great and beautiful experience. I learned a lot but also grew as a person. Helping those families- the students and women- opened my mind and heart to do more things like that in other parts of the country as well as at home. Connecting with the women one on one, whether it was during taanka building, or while making chapati flatbread was and is a memory I will forever hold.

TESS
“Whole Planet Foundation has always been deeply meaningful to me, and the opportunity to go on this trip, and meet microcredit clients, turned out to be an incredible, and very informative experience. This opportunity is a beautiful gift to Whole Foods Market team members. It is eye opening, powerful, and well-orchestrated, and it is an incredible opportunity for self-development. It emphasizes the good that WFM strives to do in the world, and combines our missions of service with our sustainable practices. I wish for everyone to have this opportunity. I am forever in gratitude to this program, and the opportunity it creates for Team Members to see a new culture, serve in new ways, and grow as people, and as ambassadors for our company, Whole Planet Foundation, our suppliers, and all the good they are all doing in this world.”

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2018 WFM TM VOLUNTEER PROGRAM IMPACT

INDIA

13 TEAM MEMBERS TRAVELED TO INDIA

17 MICROCREDIT CLIENTS MET

1 SCHOOL PLAYGROUND BUILT

3 TAANKAS BUILT

2 CLASSROOMS ADDED

60 TREES PLANTED