

Following the Flows: WASH Realities in Emerging Urban Centres of South Asia

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Setting the Flow

In India, the number of towns with fewer than 100,000 residents rose from



3,984

in 2001

to



5,704

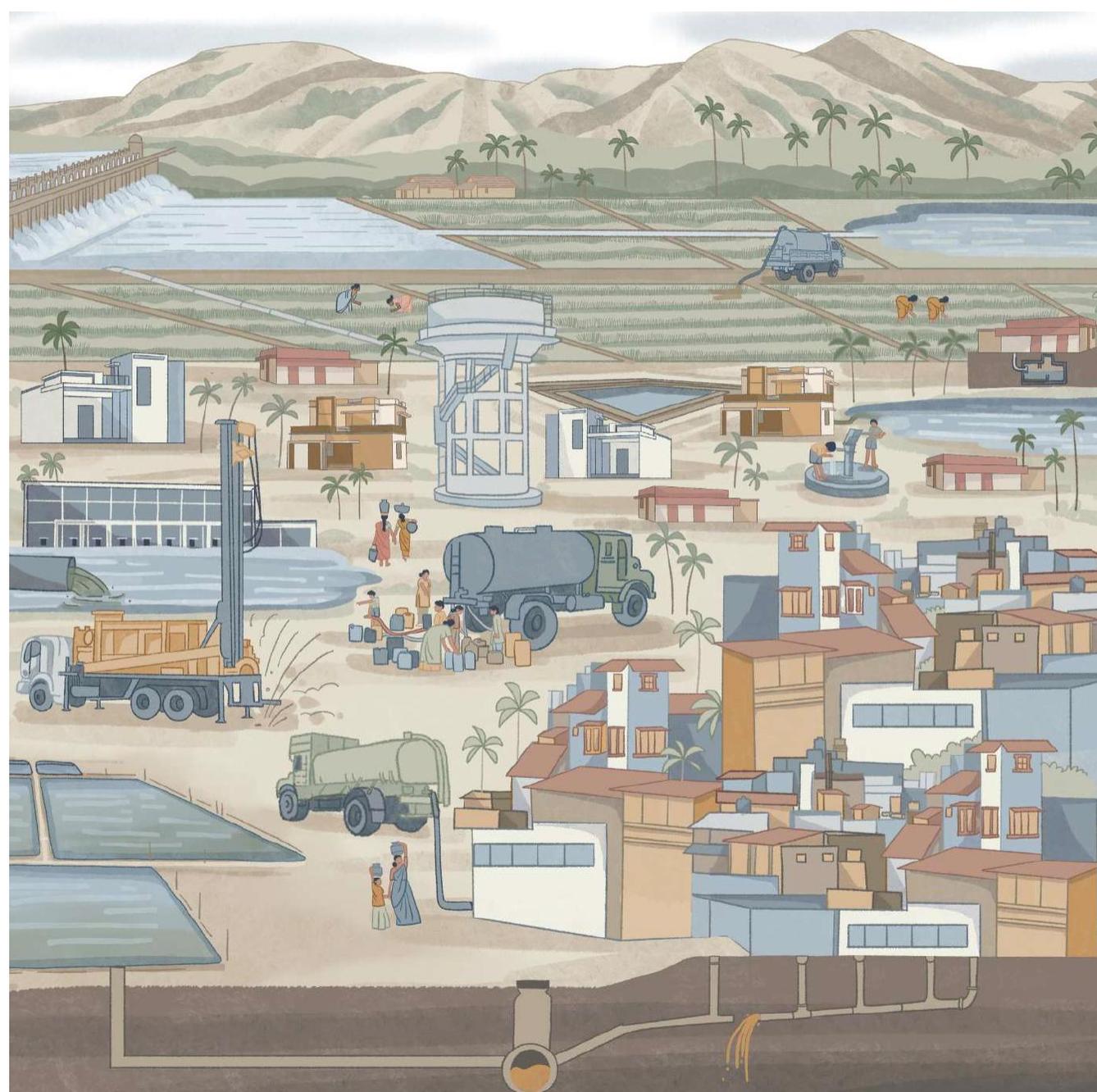
in 2011

a surge of over **40%** in just a decade.

Many of these Tier-IV towns now contribute **39%** of India's disposable income, on par with Tier-I cities¹.

By 2035, they are projected to host **40%** of South Asia's urban population².

Despite the growing economic and demographic weight of small towns, they remain under-represented in policy priorities

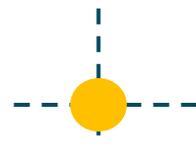


Methodology

20
towns

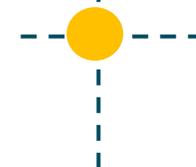
06
regions

In-depth
Interviews

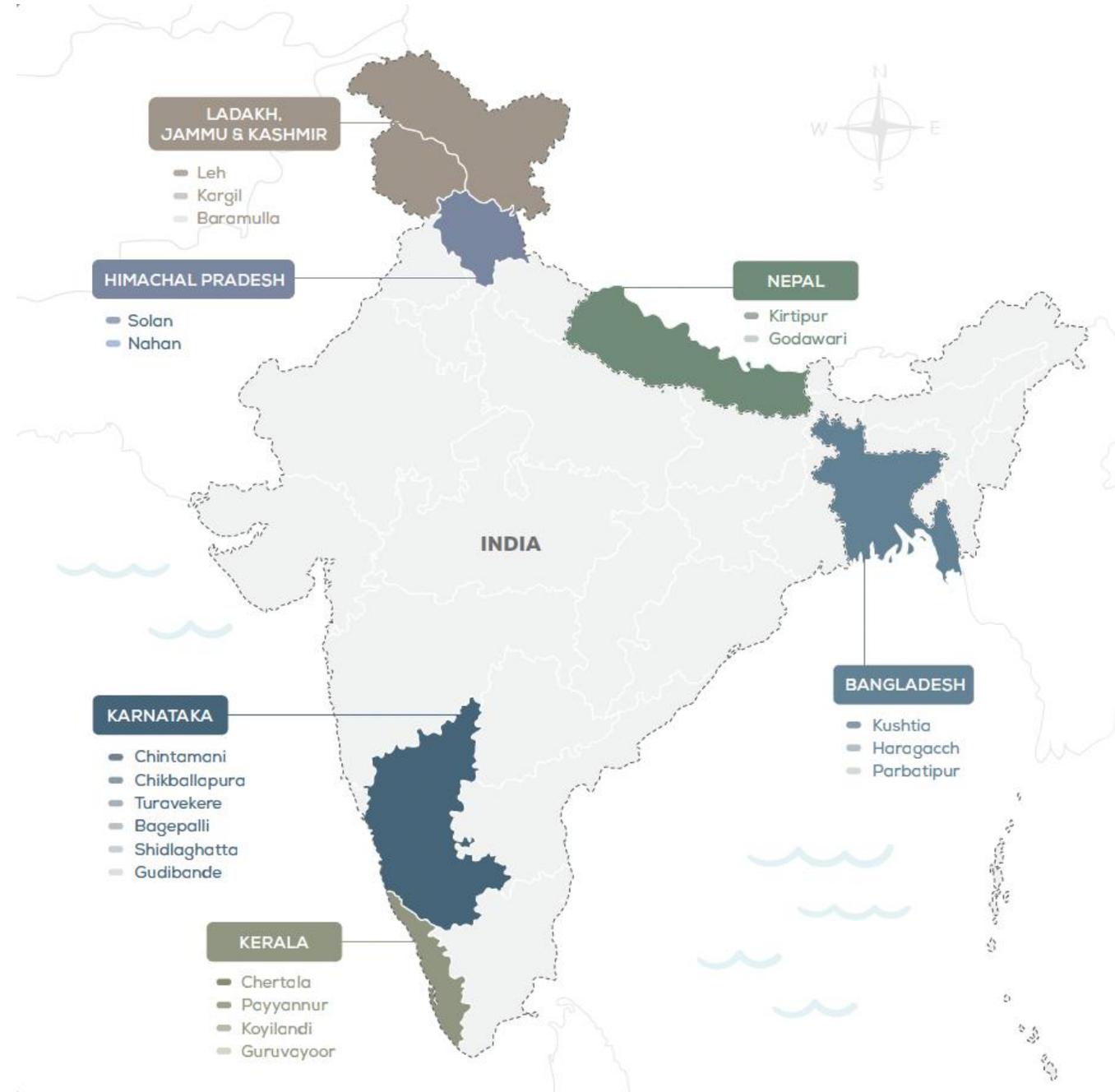


GIS Mapping

Spatial
Observations



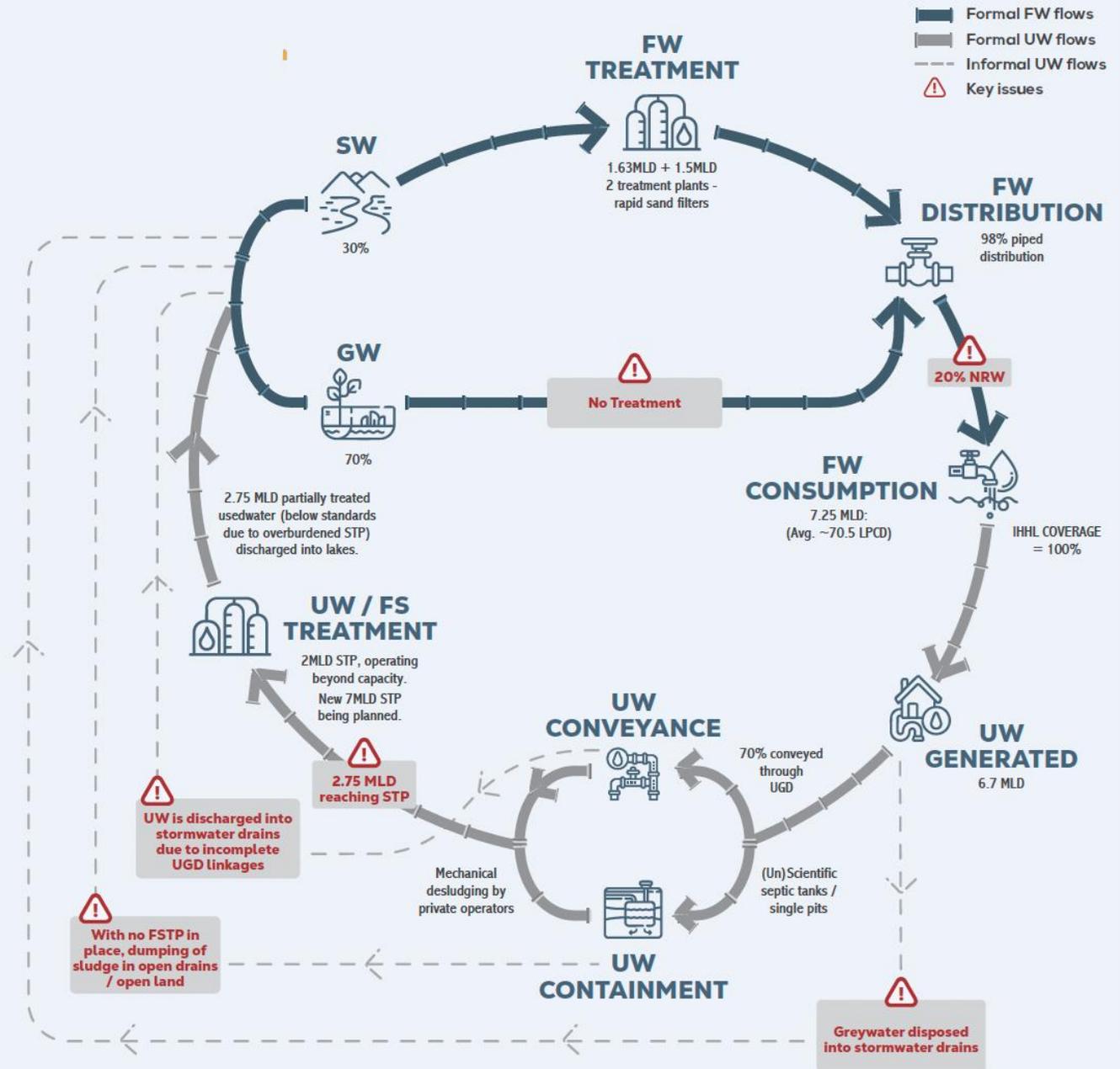
Primary &
Secondary Data
Collection



Why Following the Flows?

Expect Reality

‘Following the Flows’ study was undertaken to make system gaps in small towns visible across diverse contexts and to provide a foundation for context-specific, climate-resilient, and loop-closing water solutions.



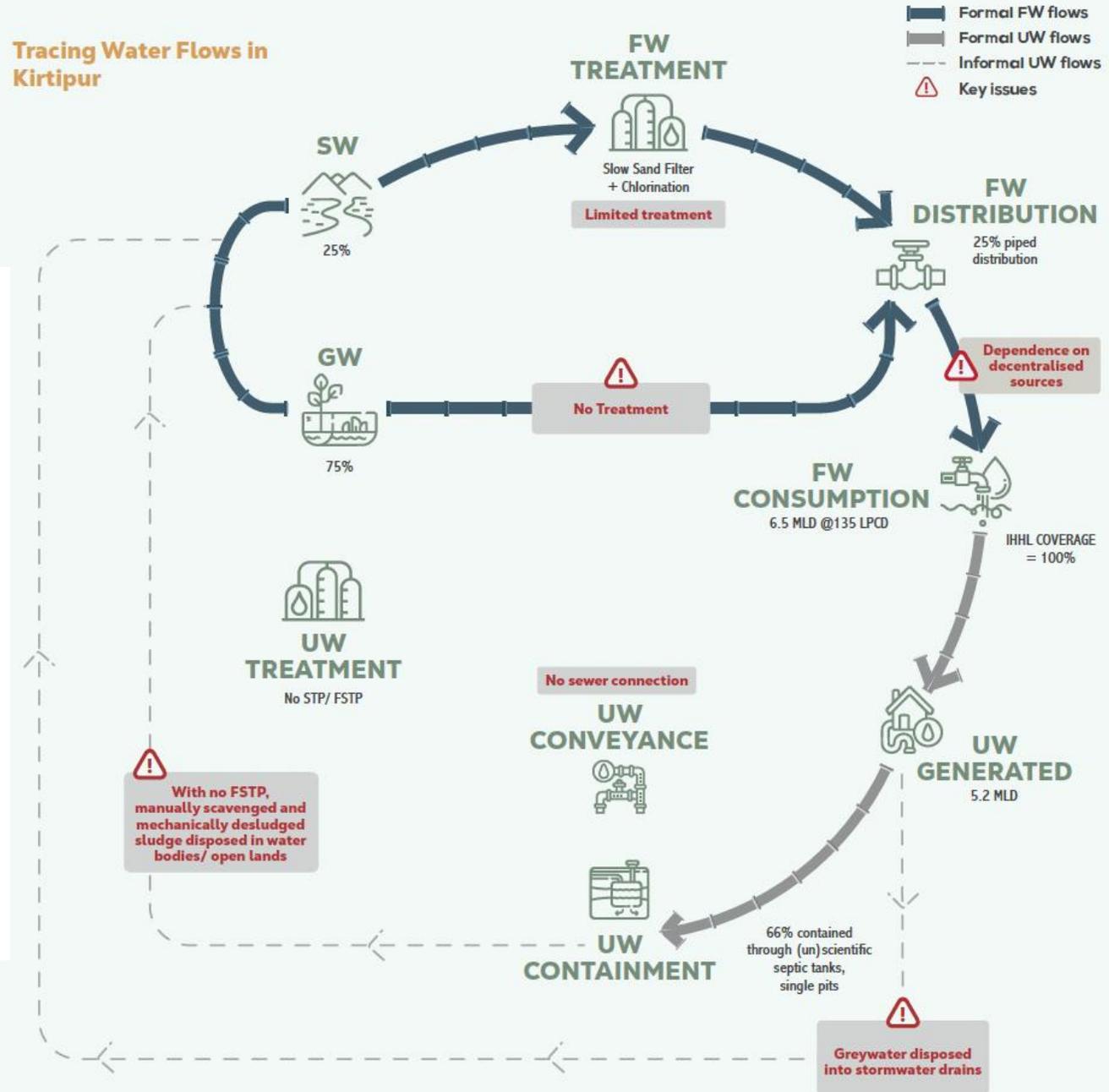
Nepal

The Fragile Promise of Piped Water



The true cost of water lies not in pipes, but in the burden on users.

Tracing Water Flows in Kirtipur

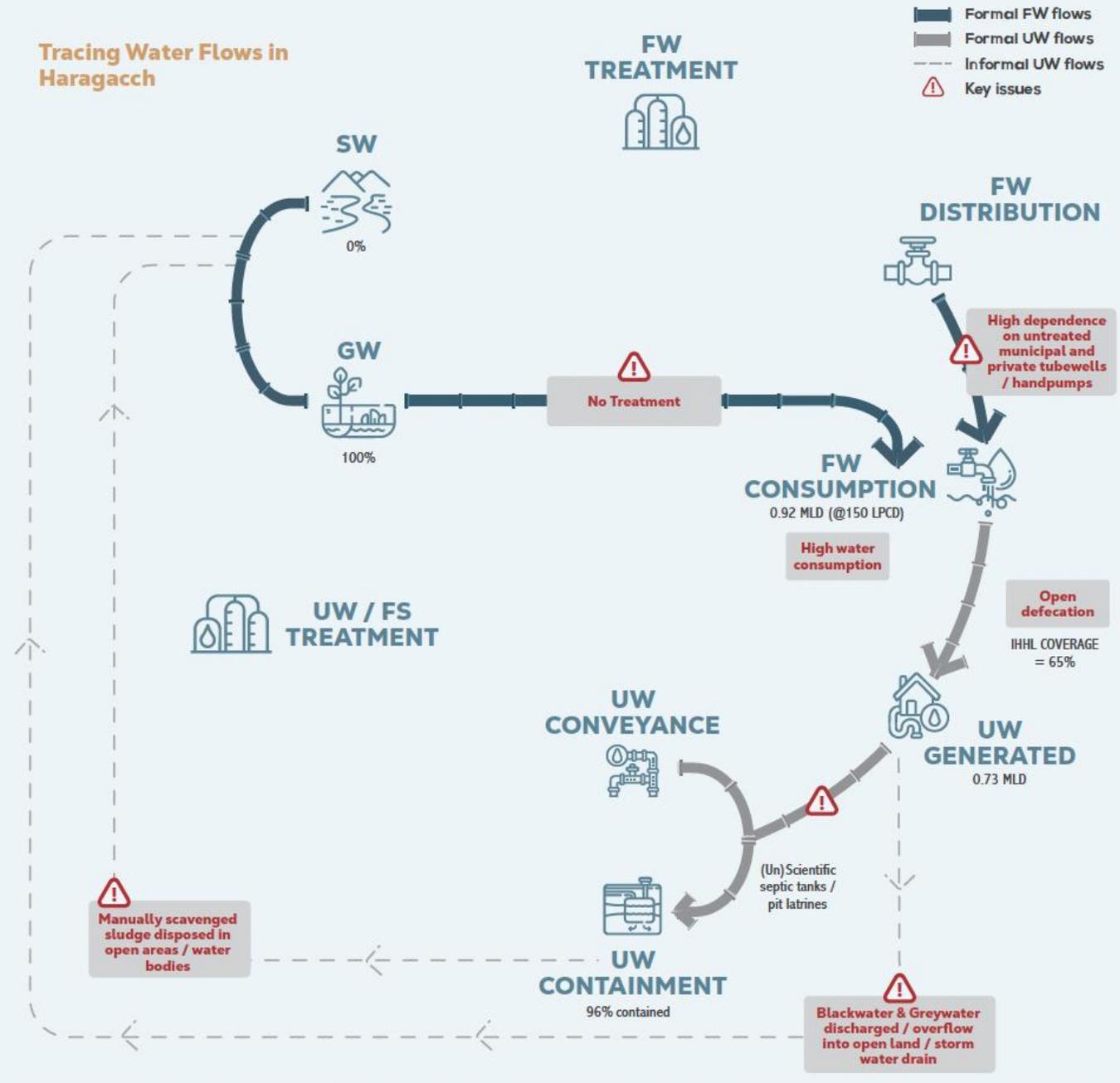


Bangladesh



Sanitation coverage is rising, yet untreated waste silently pollutes the water beneath communities.

Tracing Water Flows in Haragacch



Ladakh

Source: Ladakh Ecological Development Group

Losing Dry Toilets, Losing Climate Wisdom



The shift from dry toilets to septic tanks in Kargil is turning a climate-adapted practice into a sanitation crisis.

Source: Ladakh Ecological Development Group

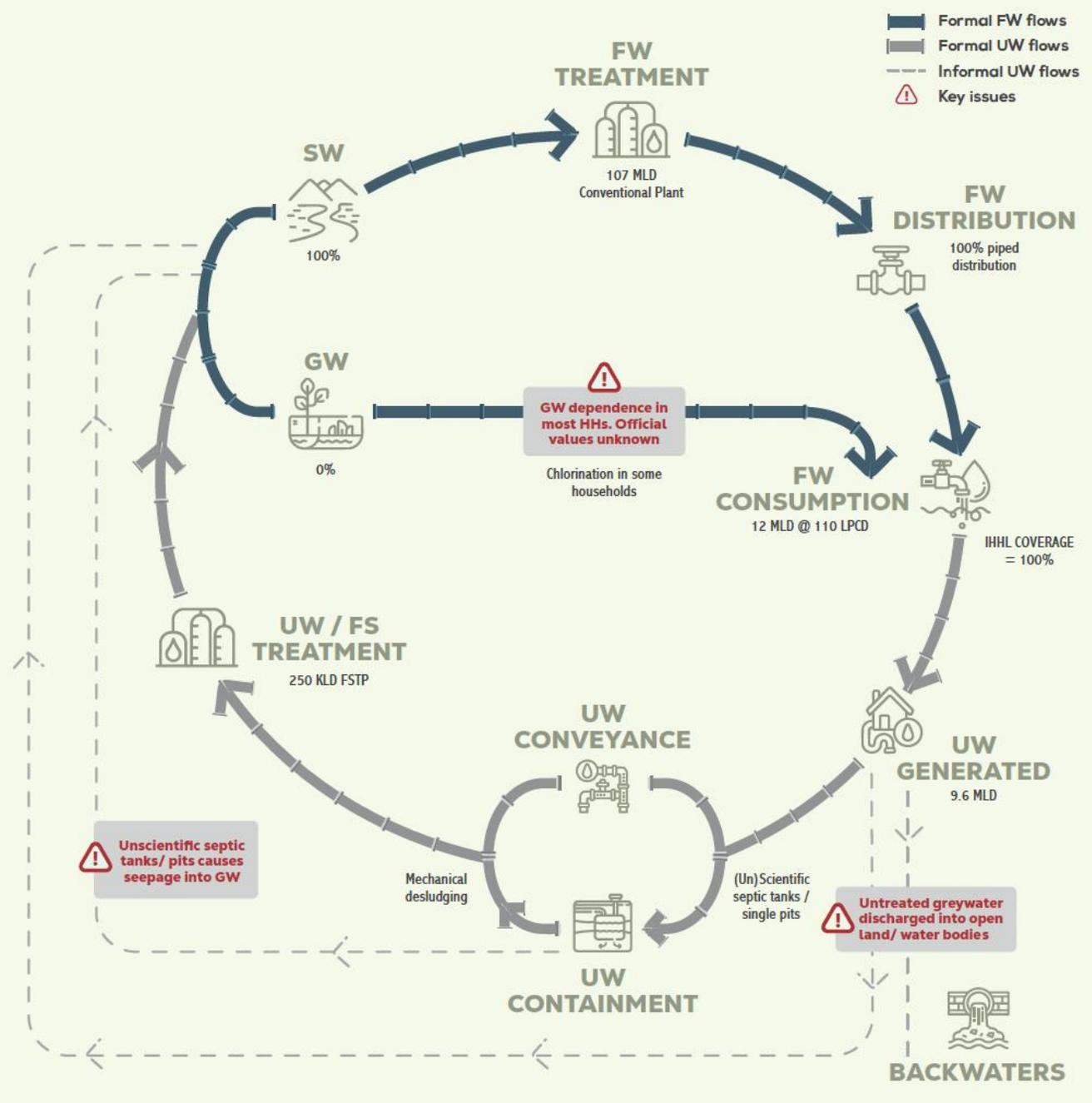


Kerala



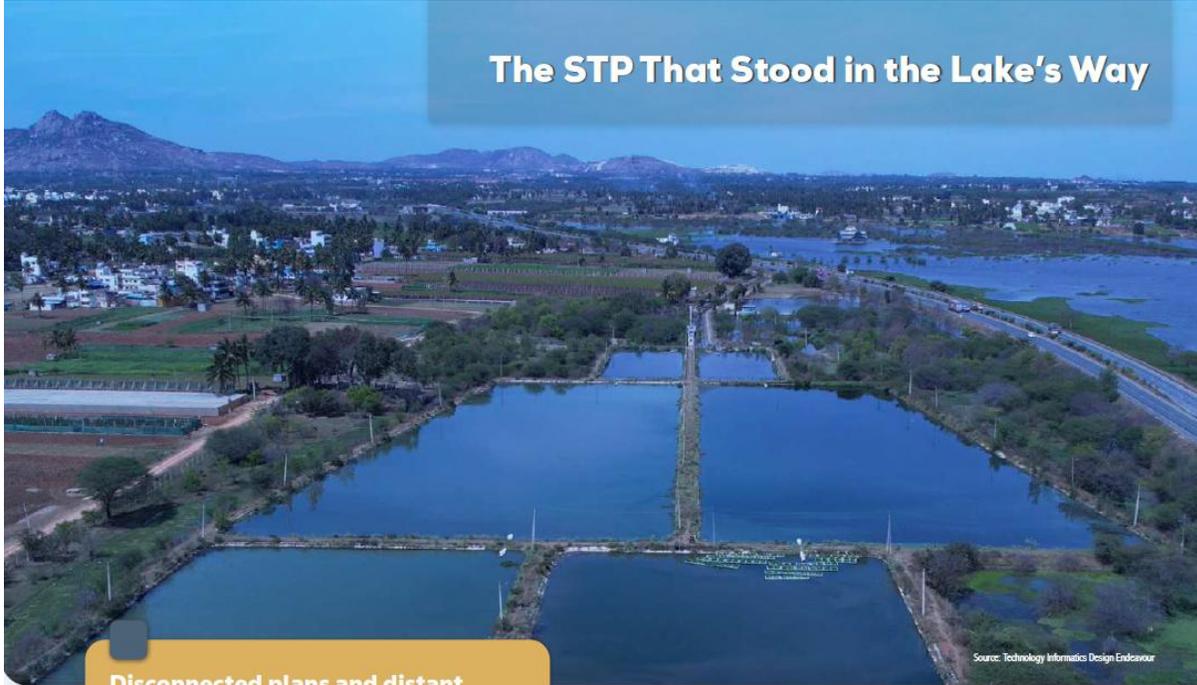
The Invisible Crisis in Kerala's Wells

Kerala's trusted wells are no longer a source of life, but a pipeline for disease.



Karnataka

The STP That Stood in the Lake's Way

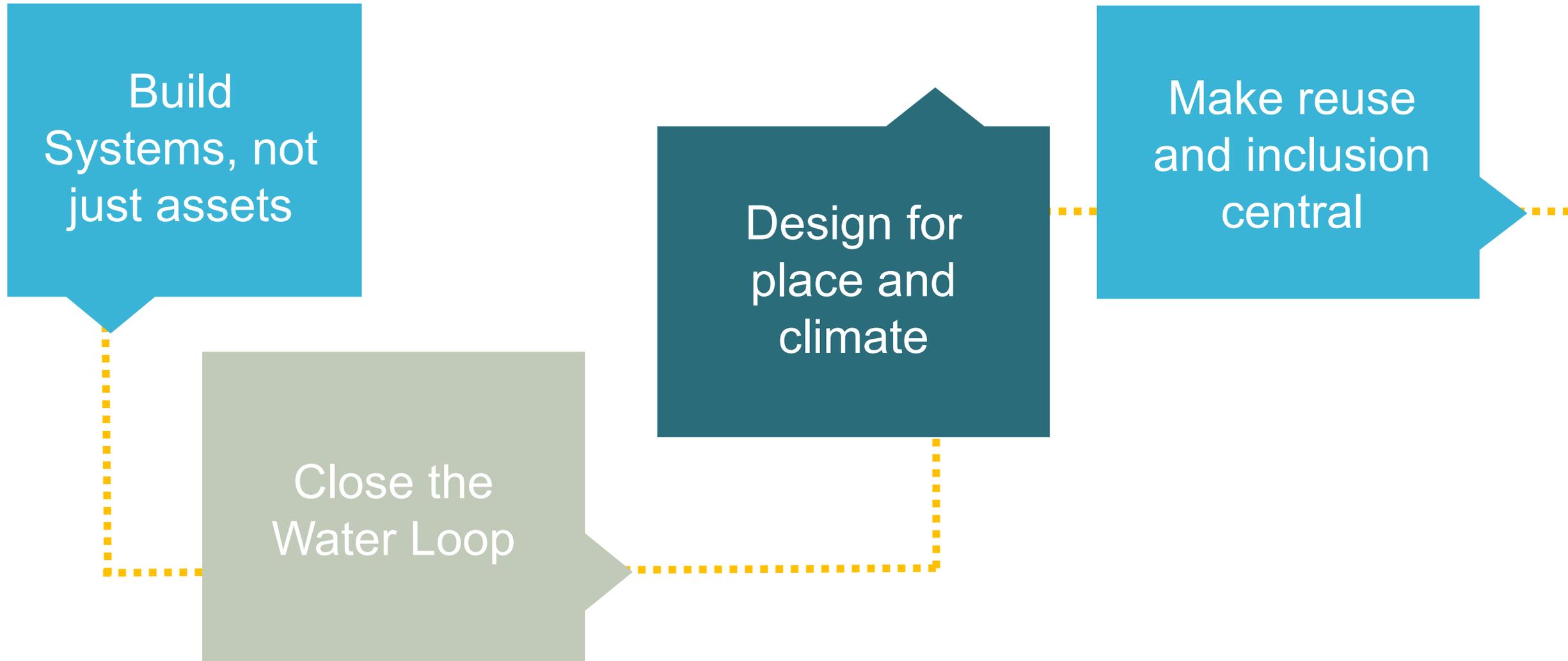


Source: Technology Informatics Design Endeavour

Disconnected plans and distant decisions cannot build resilience, it grows from local wisdom and systems grounded in the land.



So what's the way forward for small towns WASH ?



Thank You

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