

2020-2024 Strategy

OUR MISSION

Empower the poorest rural communities to provide their children safe water and a healthy, clean environment to develop to their potential.

INTRODUCTION

Today more than one in ten children born in western Uganda die before their fifth birthday. Half of these deaths are related to inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene. In the next 15 years, 40 million children will strive to reach their potential in communities struggling with inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Governments and civil society are rallying behind the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which include universal access to water, sanitation, and hygiene by 2030. At the same time, the sector lacks data on what works and funding for critical investments.

Infrastructure, such as wells and latrines, are not enough. Many fall into disrepair and randomized trials have found

that infrastructure often doesn't translate into health improvements. Therefore, it is critical to build the capacity of rural communities to ensure the long-term sustainability of wells and change hygiene behaviors to ensure clean water translates into healthy children.

The Water Trust has developed an effective program to improve rural water point functionality from 55% to 95% across nearly 200 water points. This program approach is scalable and appropriate to many rural contexts. Furthermore, while several randomized trials have found limited health impact of sanitation promotion, we are at the forefront of testing how to improve sanitation promotion to significantly improve child health.

In this strategy, we seek to scale our approach to sustainable rural water to one million people across East Africa, build a robust evidence to demonstrate its impact, discover a sanitation program with higher impact on child health, and build a Uganda-centered organization and leadership team that can realized these goals and drive our growth into the future.

OUR GOALS

1. Scale self-help groups for sustainable water and sanitation.

Self-help groups are community-based savings and credit cooperatives that are trained to also collect water user fees, manage a reserve fund for the water point, and promote hygiene and sanitation in the community. Self-help groups have demonstrated they can unlock financing for critical maintenance and repairs for rural water points. By 2025, we aim to help one million people across 4,000 rural communities in Sub-Saharan Africa to benefit from clean water sustained by self-help groups. To that end, we will not only scale up our operations in western Uganda, but also leverage our technical expertise to influence and equip peer organizations in other districts and countries to implement the self-help group model for sustainable water.

2. Pioneer low-cost interventions that help self-help groups protect their health and improve community well-being.

Self-help groups can play a powerful role in transforming their health and well-being beyond just water sustainability. By 2023, we want to build a robust evidence for 1-2 low-cost sanitation and health training programs that can significantly improve health outcomes and quality of life, and begin to scale them in our operations. Our most promising program is our poultry management training program, which aims to reduce child exposure to chicken feces, and which will be evaluated by a randomized controlled trial in 2020.

3. Establish a Ugandan leadership team, systems, and network of engaged board members, funders, research partners that can drive growth and meet or exceed all INGO standards.

We aim to attract, retain, and develop a leadership team in Uganda that can take ownership of the organization's future, while strengthening the board and establishing the connections with funding partners and researchers to ensure the organization can survive leadership and donor transitions and thrive as a growing organization. In addition to human resources and our development of a diverse, engaged board, we aim to develop systems and communication processes that allow The Water Trust to meet the highest standards of organizational management while pushing decision-making to East Africa to the greatest extent possible.

WHO WE ARE

Since 2008, The Water Trust has partnered with more than 600 communities, schools, and health facilities in the districts of Masindi and Kiryandongo in western Uganda to establish safe water and healthy, clean environments for more than 300,000 people. In the process, our organization has built significant expertise in developing and implementing effective water, sanitation, and hygiene programs, from managing construction to developing participatory learning activities that foster healthy habits. The Water Trust team consists of 25 employees, 96% of whom are Ugandan. The majority of staff are located in field offices in western Uganda, with the Executive Director located in the US.

The Water Trust maintains partnerships with a network of leading researchers that enable this lean organization to undertake rigorous research and evaluation projects to demonstrate impact and influence larger organizations to adopt its proven approaches. The Water Trust's work is made possible by a strong community of foundations, corporations, and individual philanthropists who share our values and commitment to empowering the poorest communities to provide safe water and a healthy clean environment for children and their families to thrive. Notable supporters of The Water Trust's work include United States Agency for International Development (USAID), charity: water, Deerfield Corporation and Vibrant Village Foundation.

OUR ROADMAP

The Water Trust has developed a scalable solution to water point sustainability, forming self-help groups to finance and sustain water point maintenance and repairs. In the years ahead The Water Trust is poised to scale this program across Sub-Saharan Africa. At the same time, The Water Trust continues to research and develop sanitation and health training programs that integrate with this model. In the years ahead, The Water Trust aims to develop an evidence-based sanitation program to improve health and scale this program across its growing network of self-help groups.

KEY MILESTONES

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
People actively supported (thousands)	45	100	170	200	250	250
Sustainable water points & SHGs	120	400	680	800	1,000	1,000
Groups paid for through TWT revenue	120	400	550	600	650	700
Revenue (millions)	\$1	\$1.1	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$1.5	\$1.5
Active countries	1	1	2	3	4	4
Districts in Uganda	2	2	3	4	5	5

OUR VALUES

We promote an organizational culture built on the values outlined below by integrating these values in our recruitment of staff, performance reviews, and the expectations we set for ourselves in how we collaborate with one another, with the communities we serve, and with our partners.

Rigorous

We aim to advance the frontier of best practices in our programs and in our day-to-day work as professionals.

Humble

We go out of our way to listen to our communities, colleagues, peers, and researchers to objectively assess strengths and weaknesses and make decisions.

Radically candid

We demonstrate that we care personally about people while still directly and respectfully addressing issues, even when it's uncomfortable. We work out loud – ensuring our work is visible and intelligible to our colleagues, communities, partners, and the general public.

Accountable

We establish clear standards and objectives and take action to remedy failures and scale successes.

Curious

We push ourselves, communities, programs, and partners to expand our aspirations and reach new heights.