Water4
Strategic & Business Plan
The Challenge

2.2 billion people globally lack access to safely managed water. Of the 783 million people worldwide who lack any access to basic, improved water sources, 40% live in sub-Saharan Africa. When people drink unsafe water, they have a high risk of contracting water-borne diseases like cholera, dysentery, and typhoid, which can lead to death. The need to collect water from rivers and streams means they also have less time to rest, work, play, and learn.

Despite global commitments to ensure safe and affordable drinking water for all (SDG 6.1) as part of poverty alleviation, current global funding levels for water and sanitation cover just 30% of the cost needed to reach everyone. Moreover, the funds already invested in the rural water sector have not yielded sustainable water services. Up to 35% of hand pumps in rural Africa are not functioning at any given time, leading to short-term impact and long-term disappointment, at best.

Each water crisis is local in nature, resulting from local contexts and challenges. Barriers to sustainable access to safe water include poverty, low levels of public funding, and lack of private sector participation in the sector. Each district, county, and village faces a unique set of barriers that can only be addressed through local asset-based solutions designed to eradicate the water crisis for good.

About Water4

OUR MISSION
Eradicating the world’s water crisis through local, missional businesses.

OUR VISION
A world where all people have access to safe and Living Water.

THE “WHY”
God’s vision for the world is Shalom, or universal flourishing. We believe that God made all people in His image (Imago Dei) and that He intended all people to flourish physically, psychologically, socially, and spiritually. We see water as the catalyst to enabling communities to experience that abundance for generations. We also see physical water as the entry point to Jesus as the Living Water. Bringing the hope and change of safe water allows safe water businesses to speak beyond practical needs to those holistic in nature, to which we believe Jesus is key. We are focused on the long-term, which includes water services that are sustainable over generations and disciple making that has generational impact.

“The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.” - Isaiah 41:17

WHO WE ARE
We are a group of passionate individuals who are on a clear and proven path toward a world where all people have access to safe and Living Water. Dissatisfied with the status quo and unwilling to accept a broken solution, we are constantly innovating and learning to provide a better way.
OUR STORY
Water4 was started in 2008 with the creation of a manual borehole drilling kit and Access 1.2 hand pump—both focused on reducing cost and increasing sustainability for safe water in rural communities through an empowerment model with local businesses. Though Water4’s initial focus was drilling as many wells, installing as many Water4 hand pumps, and creating as many businesses as possible, it soon became clear that this strategy was a short-term solution with long-term liabilities. Many communities struggle to maintain hand pumps through community-based volunteers, and local water businesses also fail to professionalize due to the rigorous needs for ongoing training, support, accountability, and investment needs to scale. Water4 knew a long-term solution would require a much more innovative and sustainable approach that moved beyond infrastructure to developing market-based, governmentally-aligned businesses to provide ongoing safe water.

Water4 is now focused on professionalizing the provision of safe water by equipping a network of missional entrepreneurs throughout sub-Saharan Africa to create lasting economic, physical, and spiritual change through market-based and operationally-contextual safe water solutions. This approach puts the solutions to local problems in the hands of local people and ensures that safe water access is sustained by local resources for lasting impact. An empowered, connected, and professionalized human network that is equipped with innovative and sustainability-focused technologies, aligned with policy makers, and on fire with faith is what we hope to leave behind in our mission of making ‘impossible’ become ‘history.’

WHAT WE’VE ACCOMPLISHED
Since 2008, Water4 has impacted the lives of over two million people in more than 30 countries through the power of safe and Living Water. We have installed more than 6,600 water projects impacting over 1.6 million people, with 1,765 of these projects under professional management with NUMA Water and Pump iNsurance. We have educated 368,319 people in missional-based water, sanitation & hygiene (WaSH) and the Gospel and have 350 active Discovery Bible Study groups within our network.

We have accomplished all of this while pioneering an approach in which missional enterprises influence the entire safe water supply ecosystem and act as agents of change at the national and district level of countries where we work.
THE WATER4 RECIPE

Water4 has invested more than a decade and nearly $53 million reimagining sustainable and scalable safe water solutions. We are active, involved, and ongoing players that start and scale local, missional businesses to provide sustainable safe water coverage for generations to come. The Water4 recipe has 10 key ingredients:

1. **Start and Scale Missional Businesses** to meet ongoing and growing needs for safe water coverage.
2. **Drive Partnership** with local stakeholders, including communities, governments, and religious institutions meeting local needs.
3. **Mobilize Capital** for expanding the business and customer market.
4. **Equip for Job Creation** that provides local economic opportunities.
5. **Design Innovative Technology** that lowers capital costs and keeps water affordable for customers.
6. **Build Capacity** across nine core competencies through systematic support from Water4.
7. **Develop Leaders** that empower other leaders to grow with the increasing demands of their evolving businesses.
8. **Rigorously Train** in business, finance, marketing, and sales.
9. **Provide 24/7 Contextualized Technical Support** for operations and maintenance through Water4’s Africa-wide partner network.
10. **Utilize an Area-Based Approach** that improves sustainability, economic viability, and social impact.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Water4 uses four guiding principles—Faith, Innovation and Empowerment—to Re-imagine a world where all people have access to safe and affordable water. Only people living and working in a specific district know how to resolve their own local water crisis. We seek to empower individual entrepreneurs and private businesses to develop local solutions that address their unique local challenges.

OUR VALUES

1. **God’s in This**- Shalom doesn’t include a water crisis.
2. **Continuously Improve**- Fail fast, fail cheap, but get better all the time.
3. **Creatively Rebel**- We create new solutions to persistent problems and embrace the role of making waves.
4. **Dusty Footed Disciples**- Following Jesus means walking down long and risky streets.
5. **Slow is Smooth and Smooth is Fast**- Relentless strategic systems and an area-based approach make for an eradicated crisis.
6. **Swords and Trowels (Nehemiah 4:17)** - We are humble yet highly professional servant leaders who aren’t afraid to get our hands dirty.

7. **Good Stewards Ask Unashamedly** - When you multiply what you steward, you don’t shrink back from inviting others to participate financially.

8. **All the Pieces Make the Whole** - God uses the collective impact of different people with diverse ideas, strengths, interests, and cultural backgrounds to allow our organization and enterprises to fulfill and surpass the Water4 vision.

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**VALUE PROPOSITION**

**Technology/Design** - Water4 offers a unique model for partnering with communities to meet their safe water needs in sub-Saharan Africa. We combine market-based innovative technology with a district-wide approach to ensure safe water for all.

**Quality Services** - Water4 offers two levels of safe water through piped and hand-pumped delivery (NUMA piped water systems in small towns and hand pump iNsurance agreements in rural communities).

**Entrepreneurship** - Water4 enterprises are led by local entrepreneurs who want to change the status quo. Enterprises are familiar with the local context and are accountable to customers for delivering high-quality services.

**Job Creation** - Small and medium size enterprises create local jobs and become investable over time by generating local revenue and continuing to grow their customer base.

**Reaching the Last Mile** - Water4’s focus is on rural and small town water supply within focus districts—a demographic that is not being targeted by other scaled safe water solutions.

**Shalom** - Water4 leverages enterprises’ desire to use social, spiritual, and business best practices as a vehicle of expressing and proclaiming God’s love for one’s neighbor.

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**EXIT STRATEGY**

Water4 aims to put an end to the dependence on charity, leaving behind healthy, missional enterprises that have the leadership, capacity, and financing to continue growing their market share and serving more customers with safe water services. Once drinking water is globally accessible, Water4 will move to solve water for farming and other barriers that stand in the way of flourishing. In the meantime, these enterprises are putting a dent in the global water crisis, working with what they have towards a world where all can flourish.
2030 Strategy

GOALS
By 2030, Water4 aims to provide 20 districts in 15 countries in sub-Saharan Africa with universal access to safe water, serving a total of seven million people through a district-wide approach to safe water delivery. We will do this by partnering with local businesses, NGOs, communities, governments, and the private sector; creating jobs and building capacity; providing rigorous training and technical support; and utilizing innovative technology and an area-based approach—all with the goal of providing the greatest number of people with access to safe and Living Water in the most sustainable and financially viable way. We will prove our model in enough contexts, at significant enough scale, with enough documented data to enable large-scale adoption for increased impact and efficiency toward Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6.1, 6A, and 6B.1

16.1 By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all; 6A By 2030, expand international cooperation and capacity-building support to developing countries in water- and sanitation-related activities and programmes, including water harvesting, desalination, water efficiency, wastewater treatment, recycling and reuse technologies; 6B Support and strengthen the participation of local communities in improving water and sanitation management.
By the end of 2020, Water4 achieved total coverage of its first district, Wassa East, Ghana and had two other districts underway in Sierra Leone and Zambia that will be completed in 2022 and 2023, respectively. By 2023, Water4 will complete an average of two districts per year through 2030.

**FUNDRAISING STRATEGY**

In order to achieve this goal, Water4 will raise a total of $142 million—$129 million through philanthropic dollars and $13 million via commercial finance. We will do this by building strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations; engaging individuals, corporations, churches, and schools in the Water4 mission; securing major donors who desire to fund market-based sustainable approaches to safe water; and securing capital from investors who are looking for low interest and high social return on investment.

![Funding Our 2030 Vision](image)

Every $27 = one life impacted

**STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

Water4 has five strategic objectives that guide the work of the organization and define our core focus. On an annual basis, Water4 defines key results by department and key performance indicators for departments and individuals that drive quarterly work programs that ensure delivery on each strategic objective.

1. Water4 is positioned and resourced as a key player in the philanthropic WaSH sector, offering a new, innovative, and sustainable approach to market-based safe water services
2. All Water4 enterprises are healthy and missional, providing safe water services to the benefit of the communities they currently serve
3. Water4 delivers sustainable area-based coverage in 20 districts in 15 countries of enterprise operations, demonstrating the scalability of financially viable service models
4. All Water4 enterprises achieve financial and operational sustainability, and Water4 no longer provides ongoing operational subsidies
5. All communities within Water4 enterprises’ operational areas are experiencing holistic transformation due to integrated development that uses sustainable water services as a catalyst
Management and Structure

BOARD GOVERNANCE
Water4 is governed by a Board of Directors that meets three times annually. The Board plays an active role in supporting us in achieving our mission, ensuring we have adequate financial resources, monitoring and strengthening programs and services, supporting and evaluating our President & CEO, ensuring legal and ethical integrity, enhancing our public image, and steering us towards impact and sustainability.

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ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE & STAFFING

Water4 is led by President & CEO, Matt Hangen, and a senior leadership team composed of a Sr. Director of Development, Sr. Director of Operations, Sr. Director of Programs, and Sr. Director of Strategic Partnerships. The senior leadership team, together with the President & CEO, are responsible for setting short- and long-term organizational strategy, overseeing staff, and leading the organization towards achieving its goals. Water4 staff are allocated across the following functional departments: Development, Finance, Human Resources, Marketing, Programs, and Strategic Partnerships. We have 17 staff and six consultants based in the US, along with three staff and 17 consultants based throughout Africa.
ENTERPRISE OWNERSHIP
Water4 partners with 20 enterprises throughout sub-Saharan Africa and South America. Our role in the partnership is to provide critical technical assistance, leadership development, capacity building, and business standardization. Water4’s partnership is extensive and critical to the success of the enterprises. A few key contributions of Water4 include: promoting lean management; auditing to ensure operational and financial viability; building relationships with peripheral stakeholders; backstopping to enable learning through failure; ensuring water quality with technical audits; investing in research and development to keep up with evolving technology; developing and strengthening supply chains; developing business models for expansion and risk mitigation; taking anti-corruption measures; reinforcing values; providing management and human resource support; and lending personnel from network enterprises in times of need.

Water4 maintains three levels of partnership with enterprises:

1. **Primary Partners** receive the full suite of Water4 support, training, and coaching, in line with Water4’s competency development framework;
2. **Certified Service Providers** receive limited support from Water4 based on area(s) of technical expertise and are managed and contracted by Primary Partners of Water4;
3. **Associate Partners** receive limited training and coaching support for select competencies related to area(s) of expertise.

Primary Partners are either wholly owned, meaning Water4 maintains ownership of assets, appoints leadership, sets strategy, and makes key decisions regarding resources, operations and direction; or partially owned, meaning Water4 has a governing stake in the enterprise in exchange for funding, participating in key decision-making and key strategic direction for the enterprise. Water4 does not maintain any ownership in Certified Service Providers or Associate Partners. Water4 has three wholly owned subsidiaries: AD Ghana, 4Ward Development East Africa, and AD Burkina Faso.

Regardless of partnership type, we are committed to providing extensive support and oversight because we have a long-term vision. It is estimated that 50% of small businesses fail in the first five years, and 70% fail in the first 10 years, so risk mitigation measures are necessary to ensure that businesses, communities, and donors can celebrate success. As businesses cross these sustainability thresholds, Water4 plans to transition ownership and depreciated assets to local entities in a way that honors our promise to donors and the communities that these enterprises serve.

EVALUATION & MEASUREMENT OF IMPACT
A key goal for Water4 in 2021 is building out a robust Theory of Change, logframe, and associated monitoring and evaluation plans. These details will then be incorporated into Water4’s Strategic & Business Plan.

The new plan will focus on measuring outcomes, in addition to outputs, including sustainable businesses and sustainable service delivery. Moreover, the team will develop core social impact indicators that demonstrate and help monitor impacts beyond safe water provision, including environmental and economic impacts.
At this time, Water4 engages in the following key monitoring and evaluation activities:

1. Monthly reports from enterprises tracking key outputs and first level outcomes
2. Baseline surveys at regular intervals in districts targeted for full safe water coverage
3. Specific evaluations to review projects, enterprises, and business plans
4. Regular analysis of business profitability and long-term planning

At this time, key tools that are used for these processes include:
1. mWater for field data gathering, mapping, and entry
2. QuickBase as a database and visualization tool
3. SPSS for statistical analysis

At an organizational level, key metrics that are reviewed regularly include:
1. Number of water projects
2. Number of people impacted by safe water
3. Number and type of ongoing service delivery agreements
4. Number of water projects with ongoing service monitoring
5. Number of people with ongoing service delivery
6. Number of people trained in WaSH and Multiply
7. Number of Active Discovery Bible Studies