Safe Water

CONRAD N.
FOUNDATION

The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation's Safe Water Initiative, using the district as a unit of scale, focuses on system-strengthening and service delivery to ensure reliable, affordable, and safely managed water to 1 million people in low-income households, health facilities, and schools in sub-Saharan Africa. The Safe Water Initiative contributes to building local capacity, narrowing gaps between those living in disadvantage and others, and generating evidence to inform regional, national, and global actors—with the end goal of improved health and socioeconomic outcomes for all.

Ideal state

Every person, health facility, and school in the world uses reliable, affordable, and safe water services. Safe water drives improved health and economic outcomes for all, with narrowing gaps between those living in disadvantage and others, and the Hilton Foundation's locally driven, systems-strengthening model is being replicated globally.

History and background

The Foundation began our work in water in 1990 to help eradicate Guinea worm in Ghana. In 2002, we created the West Africa Water Initiative, a coalition across Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso. In 2006, the Foundation began work in Ethiopia and India to increase access to basic water services for the high need areas. We also supported a watershed management program in Mexico.

In 2011, the Foundation launched Phase I of the Safe Water Initiative. It contributed to increased access to basic water services for nearly 2 million people. We also learned that improving water quality at the point-of-use and making service delivery sustainable would require more attention to governance, incentives, and other 'software'— providing 'hardware,' like pipes, is insufficient.

Phase II, launched in 2017, responded to those lessons. We emphasized systems change and tested service delivery models with the potential for replication and scale in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, Mali, Niger, and Uganda.The Foundation's 2017-2020 Safe Water Strategy sought to

demonstrate systematic ways of providing sustainable and safe water supply to multiple countries, including fragile contexts. During the 4-year timeframe, the Foundation contributed to 595,000 people, 40 schools, and 149 health care facilities gaining access to at least basic water services. Phase II achievements also include:1) the establishment of 10 district-based partnerships with accompanying government-owned plans for water services and 2) the identification of promising models such as safe water enterprises to deliver on quality water services.

Strategy 25 (2021-2025) continues to invest in safe water services for those most in need and is described in this brief. The Foundation remains committed to continue working along with national government leadership, partners, collaborators, and communities to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG), 6.1, which calls for universal access to safe water, beginning with securing safely managed water services[1] in its target districts in Ghana, Ethiopia, and Uganda over the next five years.

Five-year goals

60% of health care facilities have safely managed water in our seven focal districts (~65-70 facilities)

250k new people in our seven focal districts have safely managed water

250k new people in our seven focal districts have safe water at the point of use
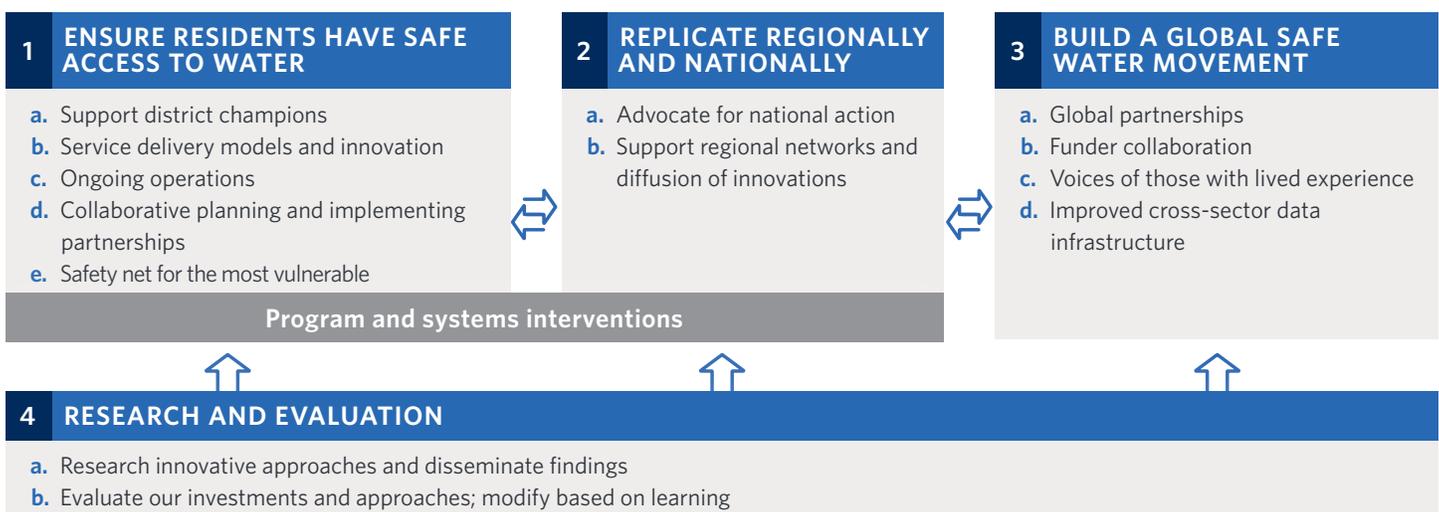
500k new people in districts where partners are working are being reached through replication by government and international partners

3 national governments have designed and are implementing plans to strengthen water systems

1. Safely managed water: water that is: a) located on premises; b) available when needed; and c) free from contamination, consistent with SDG 6 criteria

Strategy architecture

1 ENSURE RESIDENTS HAVE SAFE ACCESS TO WATER	**2** REPLICATE REGIONALLY AND NATIONALLY	**3** BUILD A GLOBAL SAFE WATER MOVEMENT
a. Support district champions b. Service delivery models and innovation c. Ongoing operations d. Collaborative planning and implementing partnerships e. Safety net for the most vulnerable	a. Advocate for national action b. Support regional networks and diffusion of innovations	a. Global partnerships b. Funder collaboration c. Voices of those with lived experience d. Improved cross-sector data infrastructure

Program and systems interventions

4 RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

a. Research innovative approaches and disseminate findings
b. Evaluate our investments and approaches; modify based on learning

WHERE WE WORK

Ethiopia

Ghana

Uganda

EQUITY FOCUS

- "Last-mile" households
- Low-income households
- Women and girls
- Children, at birth and in schools
- Build the capacity of local organizations to serve their communities

OTHER KEY METRICS

- Subsidy mechanisms are implemented, and providers reach the hardest-to-serve 10% of residents with safe water coverage
- Increase the percentage of residents with safely managed water (e.g., from 2% to 18% safely managed in our focal districts in Ethiopia)

PROGRAM COSTS

Phase I (2011-2016):
$56,000,000

Phase II (2017-2020):
$54,226,000

Strategy25 (2021-2025):
Est. $88,000,000

CHALLENGES

- The target countries are resource constrained and face tough choices in funding competing priorities
- Taking a systems approach to achieve sustainable results takes time
- The political context, including reforms, instability and the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on governments and overstretched economies, could make regional and national efforts less viable

OPPORTUNITIES

- The Foundation is uniquely positioned and timed to raise safe water's profile as a public health necessity and promote WASH interventions as key in addressing future outbreaks
- Amplified communications and marketing efforts can broaden and strengthen partnerships with other foundations, donors, and the private sector to leverage resources, replicate innovative service delivery models, and multiply impact

ILLUSTRATIVE PARTNERS*	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT AWARDED (2017-2020)
Millennium Water Alliance and IRC WASH	Hub for partnership building and master plan development. Coordinates partnerships, manages and disseminates knowledge and national advocacy efforts, and strengthens capacity of district government responsible for delivering public services	$16.7 million
World Vision	To support the implementation of WASH services in districts and healthcare facilities in Niger, Ghana, and Mali	$5.8 million
WSUP Advisory CIC	To support the Mid-Western Umbrella of Water and Sewage in Uganda to play its new role as a Water Authority for 800,000 people	$3.3 million
Aquaya Institute	Providing technical support to analyze national water quality policies and regulations, and designs and tests cost-effective monitoring solutions at the district level	$2.5 million

This list is not exhaustive of the Illustrative Partners.