



**Self Help
Africa**

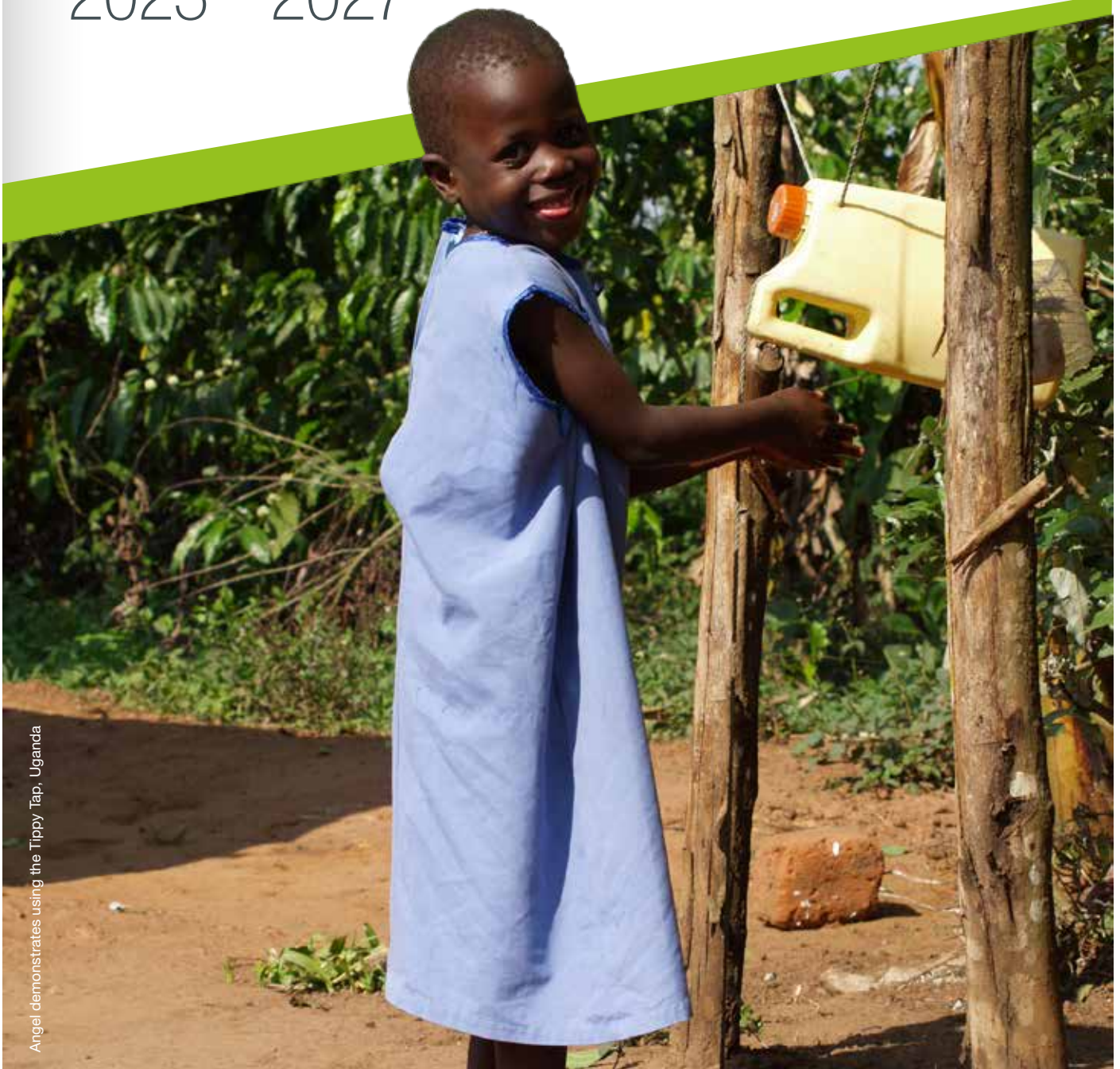
**United
Purpose**

Final draft,
April 2023

GLOBAL WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE (WASH)

STRATEGY

2023 - 2027



Angel demonstrates using the Tippy Tap, Uganda

selfhelpafrica.org/ie/wash

INTRODUCTION

This sector-specific strategy outlines our WASH activities, and how they contribute to the objectives and vision outlined in our organisational strategy, **'Sustainability & Resilience in a Changing Climate'**

Who we are

In 2021, United Purpose's Board of Directors voted to merge with Self Help Africa, an NGO with a similar mission and vision. The milestone moment expanded our organisation's reach to new countries in Africa and brought new expertise to our joint organisation, making us stronger and more effective as we face the many challenges confronting disadvantaged communities worldwide.

Our organisational strategy for 2023 to 2027 shares a common mission and vision, and includes a unifying rebrand of the organisation to Self Help Africa, with separate trading entities for Bangladesh and Brazil. As of December 2022, Self Help Africa and United Purpose had more than 100 ongoing projects spanning 17 countries, with 675 staff.



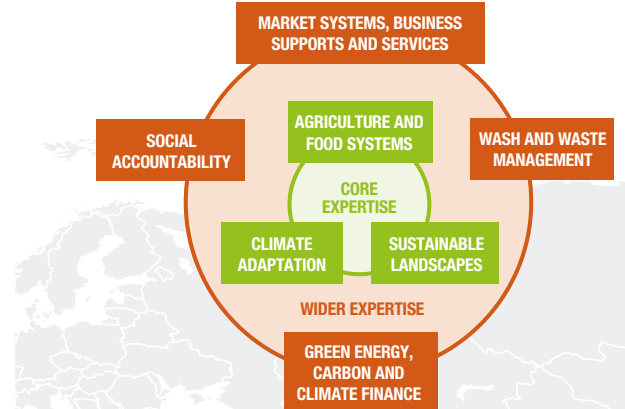
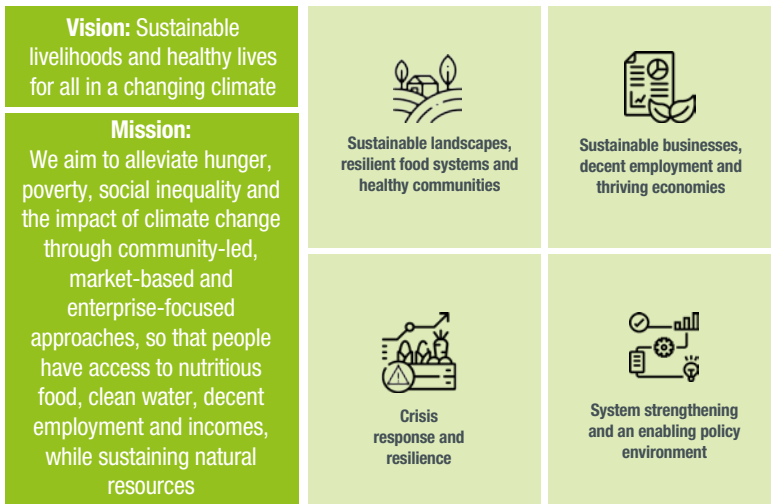
Water point developed by UP in Rohingya camp, Bangladesh. Photo © Will Tillet



Students in Baringo primary school, Kenya. Photo © Will Tillet



A pile of waste, or opportunity? Dubreka, Guinea. Photo © Will Tillet



Where we work



OUR WASH VISION AND OBJECTIVES

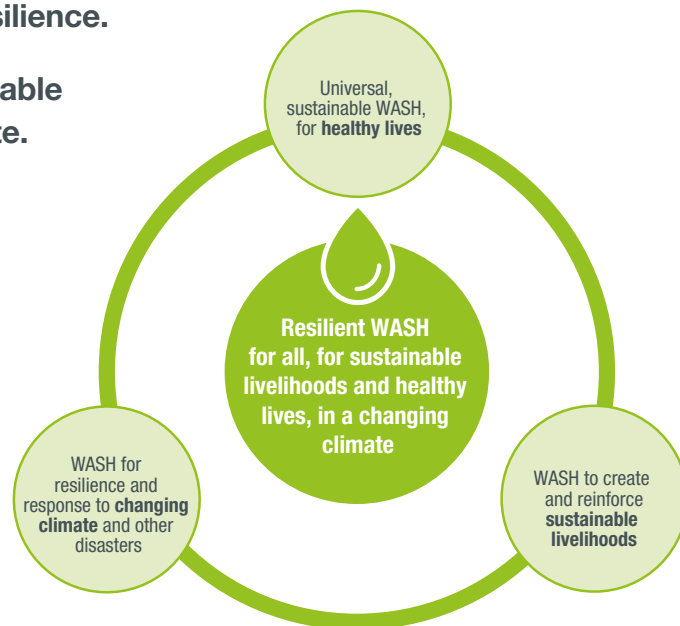
We do WASH for healthy lives, livelihoods and resilience.

Our vision is of **Resilient WASH for all, for sustainable livelihoods and healthy lives, in a changing climate.**

With this in mind, our three interconnecting objectives for WASH are:

- Contributing to universality and sustainability of WASH services and practices in communities and public institutions, leading to **healthy lives**, and contributing to the targets of UN Sustainable Development Goal 6.
- Reinforcing and creating **sustainable livelihoods** from WASH value chains, and using WASH 'outputs' as inputs for sustainable agriculture.
- Strengthening communities' resilience to a **changing climate** and other shocks and disasters, and responding to such disasters, where appropriate and needed.

Over the next five years, we'll help at least 2 million people improve their sustainable access to safe drinking water and at least basic sanitation services



Key strengths

Being a multi-sectoral organisation provides a key potential 'offering' to the complex challenges we face in the countries that we work. Below we list elements of our current, and our potential, WASH sector niches and added value, based on our existing portfolio and emerging focus areas:

- A strong approach to rural water sustainability and water quality, aided by innovative financing mechanisms
- An integrated approach, particularly between WASH and agriculture, WASH and nutrition, and WASH and energy
- Climate- smart WASH solutions that avoid greenhouse gas emissions
- A market-based approach to WASH, integrating across sectors, and including women-led enterprise networks
- Integrating social accountability into our WASH systems strengthening work, deepening decentralisation
- A long-term presence in countries and development focus, offering opportunities to support and strengthen the humanitarian-development 'nexus'

Alieu Jatta from Kunkujang, The Gambia. Photo © Jason Florio

THEMATIC FOCUSES

To achieve our vision and objectives in WASH, we'll focus on six interconnected themes:



We work in diverse contexts and in each country we have specific WASH-sectoral (and wider organizational) niches, comparative advantages and focus areas. Because of this, the themes we focus on will vary by country, and we do not seek to work across all themes in all countries.

Historically, initiatives that fell within these themes were part of a specific project, but the period 2023 to 2027 will see a deliberate shift towards more thematic and programmatic WASH funding and programming.

On the next page we provide detail on our work and intentions, across these six themes



Globally, 884 million people lack basic access to water services, two billion drink water from contaminated sources, and 30-40% of water points in rural Africa are non-functional.

UP/SHA have worked primarily in rural areas, constructing and rehabilitating >18,000 water points, benefitting >5 million people. We'll continue our rural focus, progressively evolving our financing mechanisms (including carbon and other results-based funding) and service delivery models, to ensure water supply services in the districts (or equivalent) we work are sustainable, at scale, and support people consume reliably safe-quality water. Our project designs will consider predicted climate risks and use integrated water resource management to reduce water resource stresses and conflicts, through our [Functional Landscape Approach](#).



2.3 billion people lack basic sanitation access, and 2.3 billion lack handwashing facilities. One child dies every two minutes from poor WASH, which also contributes to undernutrition.

We've made great impacts in eliminating open defecation (OD), with over 5 million people living in communities that became 'OD Free', and SHA's 'CINAP' approach already integrates WASH within nutrition-sensitive agricultural programming. Moving forward, we'll increasingly combine the promotion of WASH behaviours with the social marketing of WASH-related products, and work on sustaining communities' OD free status while supporting households up the sanitation ladder. We'll continue to strengthen our behaviour change approach, content and targeting to maximise the impact of nutrition outcomes.



In 'least developed country' schools: 37% lack basic water access, 22% lack any toilet facilities at all, and 49% lack handwashing facilities. Children are agents of change, schools are great platforms for multi-sectoral programming, but also sites of disease transmission.

To date, we've improved WASH in >2,500 schools, implemented numerous sector approaches to improve WASH in schools (WinS) and developed innovative SBCC approaches. We'll continue to refine our multi-sectoral 'package' for WinS covering WASH, environment, agriculture, gender and seek funding to consistently deliver this. We'll refine our sports SBCC component, and our social accountability and systems approach, to ensure sustainability.



Unmanaged waste causes health hazards and emits 5% of global greenhouse gasses. In Africa, only 55% of waste is collected, 4% is recycled, and >90% is dumped or burned.

We will improve the collection and management of waste by SMEs, introducing low-cost approaches, to provide inputs for the circular economy. We'll support SMEs to convert waste into fertilisers and animal feed to take advantage of the high demand and cost of agricultural inputs, and we'll increase recycling or conversion of inorganics. To address energy poverty, we'll support SMEs to convert waste into briquettes. We'll integrate waste in agriculture and environment (terrestrial and marine) interventions, evolve waste financing and business models, and create demand for, value of, and jobs from, waste.



Climate change and environmental destruction is increasing the frequency and impact of disasters, and water scarcity is a growing driver of conflict and migration. Disasters and poorly designed humanitarian responses, undermine WASH developmental gains. Humanitarian events are becoming more frequent and protracted, yet there are few good examples of the humanitarian-development 'nexus'.

We'll keep evolving our thinking, approaches and articulation of the 'nexus', with systems strengthening, market-based approaches, WASH-to-Agri inputs, WASH in institutions, and innovative financing as core elements. We'll build our own, and partner's, 'surge' capacity to respond to WASH crises in the countries we work. We'll be CHS certified members of national WASH humanitarian clusters and pre-qualified partners for emergency funding. We'll mainstream climate resilience across our work.



The WASH sector has a sustainability problem: water points are non-functional, and 'slippage' of ODF status and hygiene behaviours is widespread. WASH is a constitutional right and decentralized mandate in most countries we work, most of which are off track to meet WASH SDG targets.

We'll continue to upscale systems strengthening across our WASH interventions, supporting systems analysis, and local government planning and capacity strengthening in their mandates to support and oversee WASH services. We'll increase our evidence-based contributions to national and donor policies, refine approaches for social accountability, and evolve and deepen how we work with local government. We'll collaborate with others at national and global levels to contribute to sector agendas learning.

Metrics of success

Our organisation’s aim is to support 2 million people to access safe drinking water and basic sanitation services between 2023-27. Our results monitoring system will track this, and the number of people applying improved WASH practices along with the tonnage of waste converted. In 2023, we will develop a menu of indicators across the six themes, tracking indicators across relevant projects and developing annual WASH reports.

How we’ll achieve this strategy

We will continue the ‘Stepping UP WASH’ (SUW), organisation-wide ,sector-strengthening process, we began in 2020. SUW focuses on organisational evolution across four key result areas, with an overall objective that SHA/UP maximises its potential for positive and sustained impact in the communities we serve, and its contribution to the wider WASH sector.



WASH clinic, Benue state, Nigeria
Photo © Jason Florio



Latrines in Obanliku Area, Nigeria.
Photo © Jason Florio

Portfolio and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visits to remaining SHA/UP countries for strategy development, and support country teams in the WASH elements of overall country programme strategy development• Integration of WASH into proposals (reactive + proactive), to operationalise WASH strategies (ongoing)• Support to ‘flagship’ WASH projects across the six themes, helping to refine approaches (ongoing)• Finalise WASH indicator menu and data collection tools, and integrate into SHA monitoring databases• External and systematic reviews of WASH approaches, and internal learning, to evolve
Profile and partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• External profile raising around new (uploaded) WASH strategy and new organisational brand• Active participation and networking in global WASH conferences (e.g., IRC, SWWW, WEDC, UNC) (ongoing)• Develop learning briefs on WASH approaches and disseminate in key sector networks• Deepen relationships with, and seek to join, key global initiatives (e.g., Uptime, Agenda for Change); continue and expand country collaborations (such as A4C) for sector learning and influence (ongoing), and continue to evolve and deepen how we work with government counterparts• Expand and deepen technical and academic partnerships across the six thematic areas (ongoing)
Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop technical guidance documents and resource repository for each of the six strategy themes• Continue and strengthen WASH-UP Net organisation-wide monthly learning and exchange forum (ongoing)• Develop induction and structured self-learning pack from WASH-UP Net materials, across six themes• Augment decentralised WASH capacity by expanding regional advisor(s) scope, internships, technical partnerships and thematic consultancies, with general country WASH team growth where needed• Develop costed capacity development plans globally and at country level, start annual workshops• Continue monthly country mentoring calls, develop learning groups by strategy theme (ongoing)
Funding base	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We are driven to remain flexible, be proactive and reattune to emerging situations.• We ensure whatever needs to be decided centrally is done so responsibly and fairly, whilst giving clear autonomy to country programmes and our subsidiaries to respond with agility to changing circumstances.• We maintain composure in difficult situations, finding ways to keep ourselves and others focused and constructively moving forwards.

OVERVIEW OF WASH STRATEGY BY PROGRAMMING COUNTRY

We will not seek to work across all themes in all of our country programs. The relative focus depends on our existing capacities and portfolio, comparative advantage and added value within the WASH sector and as a wider country program.

BRAZIL

State of Paraíba

SENEGAL AND THE GAMBIA
GUINEA
BURKINA FASO
NIGERIA

North Kivu and South Kivu provinces, DRC

BANGLADESH
ERITREA
ETHIOPIA
UGANDA
KENYA
RWANDA, BURUNDI
MALAWI
ZAMBIA
MOZAMBIQUE

Below we outline what the envisaged primary focus is likely to be in the short-term (the larger icons) and those which are smaller or more 'pipeline' medium-term areas are presented with the smaller icons.

The strengths/ niches listed include both current, and likely near-term WASH sector niches

H-D = 'humanitarian-development',
WQ = water quality;
Sust. = sustainability;
Cyst Str = systems strengthening;
orgs = organisations;
WinS = WASH in Schools

Bangladesh

Strengths / niche: Women's Business Center network / enterprise approach, geographic (CHT), H-D nexus, integrated WinS (blue school+), rural water sust. + WQ, Syst Str.

Focus Themes:



Brazil

Strengths / niche: Social accountability, CSO network, women's livelihoods, MHH, geographic (N.E Brazil rural+ urban).

Focus Themes:



Burkina Faso

Strengths / niche: Development-focused approach and multi-year funding (nexus), rural livelihoods.

Focus Themes:



Gambia

Strengths / niche: Rural water sustainability and WQ, waste-agriculture (agri network) and blue economy, WASH-nutrition.

Focus Themes:



Guinea

Strengths / niche: One of few strategic WASH orgs, rural+peri urban water sust.+ WQ, WinS, waste for agri-inputs and blue economy, market-based, carbon.

Focus Themes:



Kenya

Strengths / niche: Geographic (e.g. Baringo), WASH-nutrition, integrated WinS, agri-enterprise and market-based, integrated approaches.

Focus Themes:



Malawi

Strengths / niche: Major WASH player, ODF successes, go-to humanitarian partner, H-D nexus, rural water sust + WQ, syst str., carbon + other key WASH funders, WinS+sports, market-based S&H, multi-sectoral programming.

Focus Themes:



Mozambique

Strengths / niche: Social accountability and decentralization, systems str., WinS, geographic (Niassa), waste-to-agri inputs.

Focus Themes:



Nigeria

Strengths / niche: Reputation in sanitation sub-sector, rural water sust.+ WQ, carbon, geographic (S.East), systems str., H-D nexus, waste.

Focus Themes:



Senegal

Strengths / niche: Geographic (Casamance), NRM (forestry, blue economy), women's enterprise, WinS.

Focus Themes:



Uganda

Strengths / niche: WASH for Agri-inputs and enviro., WASH-nutrition, H-D nexus, market-based approach, geographic (e.g. Lake Bunyonyi,...).

Focus Themes:



Zambia

Strengths / niche: Integrated WASH in Schools (WinS), WASH for agri-inputs, rural market-based approach, WASH-Nutrition.

Focus Themes:



Other Countries

We will be developing our thinking around what our WASH work could look like in other countries, such as Ethiopia, in due course.



**Self Help
Africa**

**United
Purpose** 
Beyond aid



**Partner
Africa**



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