# Invest in people, progress, and possibility

## Water is essential to life. Yet millions of people still lack access.

Today, 2.1 billion people — one in four — live without access to safe water. An even greater number, 3.4 billion, lack access to safe sanitation. This lack of access perpetuates the cycle of poverty.

People living in poverty often pay high prices to buy water from vendors or spend hours collecting it from unsafe sources — costing them time, money, opportunity, and health.

Safe water and sanitation are foundational to solving many of the world's most urgent challenges. Many daily challenges for people living in poverty tie back to water.

**The global water and sanitation crisis is:**

**A women's crisis** — Women and girls spend 200 million hours every day collecting water, and even more than that if you add the additional time searching for a safe place to relieve themselves.

**An environmental crisis** — Antiquated and failing water infrastructure produces unnecessary carbon emissions, wastes resources, and often neglects to reach people living in poverty. Access to safe water enhances the resiliency of people living in poverty to the effects of climate change.

**An education crisis** — When children are tasked with collecting water, they miss school and have less time to devote to studies overall.

**A health crisis** — 1 in 4 children under the age of 5 around the world suffer from stunting and malnutrition linked to water and sanitation.

**An economic crisis** — $260 billion is lost globally each year due to lack of basic water and sanitation. This represents 1.5% of the GDP of 136 mostly low- and middle-i income countries.

**Current investments for water and sanitation amount to $28.4 billion per year. This represents a gap of $85.6 billion. It will take three times more than what is currently being invested each year to bridge the financial gap. Solutions — like ours — help close the financial gap for universal access to water and sanitation.**

## Using philanthropy to scale access to safe water and sanitation

Founded by Gary White and Matt Damon, Water.org has worked for more than 30 years to pioneer smart, scalable water and sanitation solutions. Our powerful solutions are market-driven and adapt to the 15 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America where we work

Our approach combines philanthropy, investment, and infrastructure development to scale lasting access to safe water and sanitation. Philanthropy lays the foundation. Investment accelerates scale. Infrastructure ensures the solutions reach the people who need them.

## Our solutions

Collaboration is central to the strength of our approach. Water.org's solutions — WaterCredit, WaterEquity, and WaterConnect — offer distinct and complementary approaches to solving the global water crisis.

### WaterCredit

WaterCredit is a powerful solution and the first to put microfinance tools to work in the water and sanitation sector. WaterCredit helps bring small loans to those who need access to affordable financing and expert resources to make household water and toilet solutions a reality.  It is a pay-it-forward system that makes it possible to help more people in ways that will last.

### WaterEquity

WaterEquity is an asset manager dedicated to ending the global water crisis, with an exclusive focus on raising and deploying capital for water and sanitation solutions throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Its private funds invest in a portfolio of financial institutions, enterprises, and infrastructure in emerging and frontier markets — enabling them to scale, meet increasing market demand, and deliver universal access to safe water and sanitation to low-income communities.

### WaterConnect

WaterConnect is a project development company dedicated to creating opportunities for construction-stage investment in climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure in low- and middle-income countries. It brings early-stage financing and technical expertise to complement local partners, develop new infrastructure, and deploy technology that will impact water access, quality, and scarcity, and in turn build help more people in ways that will last.

## Proven, powerful solutions that are scaling impact

**Our impact is scaling**

- 95 million people now have access to safe water or sanitation

**We are catalyzing capital**

- Every dollar donated helps unlock $21 in capital for water and sanitation solutions
- To date, together with our 163 partners around the world, we've catalyzed $8.6 billion in capital to support small loans for water and sanitation solutions

**Our solutions empower people directly**

- 90% of borrowers are women, empowered with the time and health to pursue income earning and educational opportunities
- 21.1 million loans disbursed through local financial partners
- 1 million people reached approximately every six weeks — compared to one million a year in the past

**Local economies benefit**

- The World Health Organization estimates every $1 invested in water and sanitation provides a $4 economic return

By working in partnership with local institutions and governments, we ensure that solutions are owned and sustained by the communities they serve. This is what makes our approach so powerful, inclusive, and built to last.

## Impact in action: Selamah's story

In rural Indonesia, Selamah is a respected vegetable vendor and community leader. Other women in her village bring her bamboo and fern leaves from the forest to help them prepare produce for sale at the market. But while Selamah supported her neighbors' livelihoods, she quietly struggled to access the safe water she needed to run her business and care for her family.

For years, Selamah made exhausting daily trips to the Meninting River to collect water—carrying heavy buckets back to her home to cook, clean, bathe her children, and wash produce for sale. The water was often contaminated and the process was not sustainable.

That changed when Selamah took out a small loan from a local financial institution to fund a household water connection. Today, she has a tap on her property that gives her access to safe water.

Helping empower women with access to safe water unlocks opportunity. For Selamah, it meant growing her income, strengthening her community, and reclaiming time for what matters most.

*"After we got safe water at home, my income increased. I am thankful there are many vegetables to sell and that I have plenty of water to clean them... They are happy. I am happy. And everyone in my family is happy."*

**— Selamah,** from Indonesia

## Join us and unlock safe water for 50,000 people

A $250,000 philanthropic contribution can:

- Empower ~50,000 people with safe water or sanitation.
- Mobilize ~$4 million in capital for solutions through our 200 partners around the world
- Enable ~11,000 loans for water and sanitation access.

Together we can accelerate progress toward safe water and sanitation for all.

**To learn more about partnership opportunities, contact us at partnerships@water.org.**