

POWER PROJECT – THEORY OF CHANGE

Building Climate-Resilient, Inclusive and Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services Through Community Power and Women's Leadership

THE PROBLEM

- Many rural water points break down and stay unrepaired.
- Spare parts are hard to find and maintenance systems are weak.
- Sanitation coverage is low and hygiene practices are poor.
- Women and girls spend hours collecting water and face the greatest burden.
- Climate shocks like floods, droughts and erosion disrupt services.
- Communities lack resources, skills and ownership to sustain WASH services.

OUR VISION (IMPACT)

All rural and coastal communities in Sierra Leone enjoy reliable, climate-resilient and affordable water, sanitation and hygiene services.

Women and girls lead and benefit equally from these services, improving health, dignity, education and livelihoods for all.

OUR APPROACH

We strengthen local systems, build women's technical and leadership capacity, develop local markets and financing, and ensure communities own and sustain their water and sanitation services. Our work is inclusive, climate-resilient and focused on long-term results.

OUR ASSUMPTIONS



Communities are willing to participate, contribute and own their services.



Local skills can be built and retained when women are trained and supported.



Local markets and service providers can supply reliable spare parts and materials.



Households are willing and able to contribute small amounts regularly.



Climate-resilient planning reduces disruptions and protects services.



When women lead and decide, services are more inclusive and sustainable.

OUR PATHWAYS OF CHANGE



1 SUSTAINABLE & CLIMATE-RESILIENT WASH SERVICE DELIVERY

- Rehabilitate and construct climate-resilient water systems and toilets.
- Promote hygiene and safe water use in homes, schools and health centres.
- Design services that withstand floods, droughts and other climate risks.



2 WOMEN TECHNICIANS AND LOCAL SERVICE SYSTEMS

- Train women as Village Maintenance Workers and Local Area Mechanics (women technicians).
- Provide tools, starter kits and ongoing coaching.
- Organize women technicians into groups for support and professional growth.



3 STRONG COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE AND OWNERSHIP

- Strengthen water committees and community groups.
- Support transparent rules, record keeping and decision making.
- Promote inclusion of women, youth and people with disabilities in leadership.



4 LOCAL MARKETS AND SPARE PARTS SUPPLY

- Support local suppliers and retailers to stock quality spare parts and materials.
- Develop strong links between technicians, suppliers and communities.
- Improve storage, transport and fair pricing.



5 SANITATION MARKETS AND LIVELIHOODS

- Support women-led businesses in toilet construction, slab making and hygiene products.
- Provide business training, coaching and start-up support.
- Link entrepreneurs to local markets and customers.



6 INCLUSION, GENDER EQUALITY AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

- Promote equal participation of women, girls, youth and people with disabilities.
- Address gender norms and promote shared decision making.
- Build community resilience through climate-smart planning and action.

SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES (1–2 YEARS)



Reliable water access improved for 5,000+ people across 8 rural communities.



20 non-functional water points rehabilitated and under preventive maintenance.



4 women-led WASH enterprises established and operational.



60–80 women trained and earning income through pump maintenance, sanitation, hygiene products and services.



80% of households regularly contributing to transparent maintenance systems using mobile money and cash options.



8 community governance structures strengthened, with women holding at least 50% of leadership roles.



Water point downtime reduced through faster local repairs and scheduled maintenance.



Community maintenance and financing model tested, documented and ready for scale-up.

LONG-TERM IMPACT (SCALE-UP, 5+ YEARS)



100,000–200,000 people accessing more reliable and climate-resilient rural WASH services.



400–500 water systems maintained through decentralized women-led maintenance networks.



1,500–2,000 women economically empowered through WASH enterprises, technical work, sanitation businesses and hygiene product production.



At least 50% reduction in water point downtime through preventive maintenance and local repair systems.



Improved public health for 50,000+ people, 30% less time spent collecting water for women and girls, and stronger resilience to climate-related shocks.

HOW WE MAKE IT HAPPEN (ENABLERS)



LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS
Work with district authorities, health centres, schools and community leaders.



DATA AND LEARNING
Use simple data and regular reviews to improve our work and share lessons.



SAFEGUARDING AND INCLUSION
Protect children and adults and ensure no one is left behind.



SUSTAINABLE FINANCING
Use user contributions, savings groups and local business revenues to sustain services.



CLIMATE RESILIENCE
Plan for climate risks and protect water sources and infrastructure.



SCALABILITY
Build strong models that can be expanded to more communities and districts.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



Community Ownership



Women's Leadership



Accountability



Equity and Inclusion



Sustainability



Resilience