2026 IMPACT REPORT

Water, close to home

What 96,000 people, 214 water points, and one stubborn idea — that clean wa
should be ordinary — added up to this year.

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

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The first thing you learn in this work is that water is never just water. In Tembe, where **Clearwater** drilled its first borehole eleven years ago, the well is also a schedule: girls who once walked two hours to the river now walk eight minutes, and the difference shows up in school ledgers, in clinic charts, in the plain arithmetic of a day. This year I watched that arithmetic repeat itself two hundred and fourteen times, in four districts, in two countries.

A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

It was not an easy year. Fuel costs rose, a drilling rig sat in customs for nine weeks, and in March we shut down a filter line that was not meeting our own bacteriological standard. We tell you these things first because trust is the only durable currency a nonprofit has, and because the numbers that follow mean more once you know they survived an honest accounting.

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What follows is the year as we saw it: the numbers first, then the programs behind them, then the money, then the promises we are prepared to make for 2027. Thank you for standing with us — none of this is ours alone.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

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Every figure on this page traces back to a sensor reading, a signed maintenance log, or a household survey with a name and a date on it. We count conservatively: a water point is "serving" only if it flowed on the day we checked without notice, and a family is "reached" only after a second visit confirms the habit stuck.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

214

NEW WATER POINTS BROUGHT ONLINE

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PEOPLE WITH WATER CLOSE TO HOME

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PEOPLE WITH WATER CLOSE TO HOME

$8.4M

INVESTED DIRECTLY IN THE FIELD

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

Three numbers we watch more nervously than any others — durability, adoption, and understanding — because they decide whether this year's work still matters in ten years:[a]

[a] Functionality verified by unannounced site checks in April and October; adoption and knowledge figures from the annual household and school surveys (n = 2,140 households, 88 schools).

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93%

of students passed the safe-water practices check at year end

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

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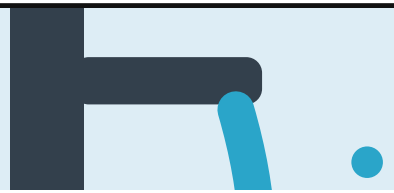
A water point that fails in year three is worse than one that was never drilled, because a village reorganizes its life around it and then loses it twice. So our three programs are really one program — get water close to people, make it safe at the shelf, and teach the habits that keep it safe — run by local crews who stay long after the ribbon is cut.

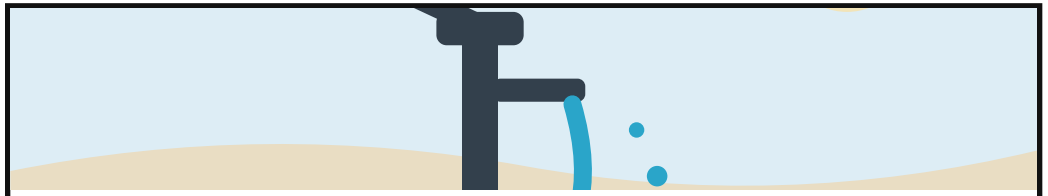
PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD



Wells

128 new boreholes and 86 rehabilitations, each with a trained water committee and a signed spare-parts contract.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD



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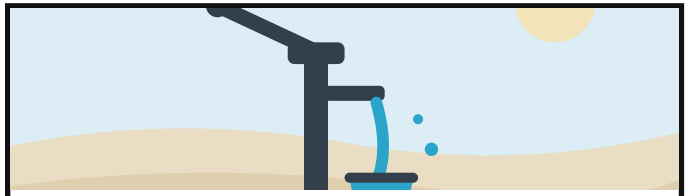
Filtration

8,214 biosand filters built in-district by local masons; families pay a tenth of cost, and own them outright.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD



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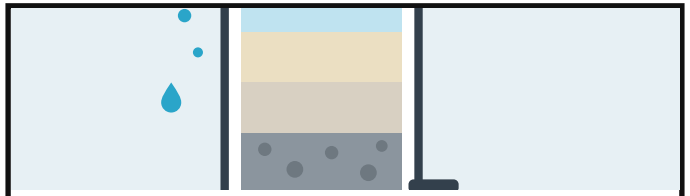

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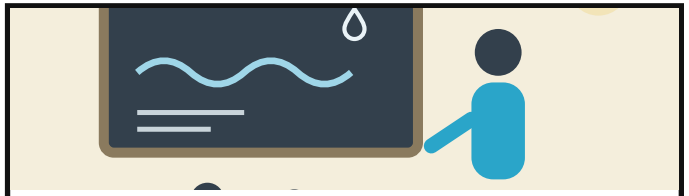

Education

96 schools running the safe-water curriculum; 41,000 children taught by teachers we trained, not by us.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Wells that keep working

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Wells that keep working

Drilling is the cheap part. The real product is the maintenance economy around a well: a committee that collects fees, a mechanic within a day's ride, a parts shelf in the district town, and a sensor that tattles the moment flow stops. Every 2026 well shipped with all four.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Wells that keep working

> **"The pump is not the gift. The gift is that my daughters are at school this morning instead of at the river." — Amina K., water committee chair, Tembe**

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Safe at the shelf

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Safe at the shelf

Water that leaves a well clean can arrive at a cup dirty, so the second program follows the water home. Biosand filters are slow, heavy, unglamorous technology — and they are what families keep using in year five, which is the only benchmark we trust.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Safe at the shelf

> What did not work: the ceramic-pot filter we piloted in 2025 cleared our lab tests and failed in kitchens — cracked lids, slow flow, quiet abandonment. We stopped the line in March, refunded our partners, and moved the budget to biosand units, which families already know how to live with.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Teaching the habit

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Teaching the habit

Hardware without habit is a museum piece. The school curriculum runs eight lessons a term, taught by local teachers with materials in three languages, and it works: knowledge scores rose from 61 to 93 percent over the school year.[b] The children audit their own schools' water points, and their checklists go to the district office — the youngest inspectors we have ever employed.

[b] Assessed with the eight-item safe-water practices check, administered before and after the school year in all 96 program schools.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Teaching the habit

Where each program stands against its 2026 goal:

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Teaching the habit

PROGRAM	2026 GOAL	PROGRESS

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Teaching the habit

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Teaching the habit

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Household filtration	10,000 filters	**82%**
School education	120 schools	**80%**

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Four districts, one habit

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The year looked different in each place we work, and the same in the one way that matters — the water kept running. Four districts, in the order we first reached them.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Four districts, one habit

1

Tembe

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2	Nkota	Forty water committees and a solar filter line — the district that taught us to price the spare parts before the drill bites.

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2	Nkota	Forty water committees and a solar filter line — the district that taught us to price the spare parts before the drill bites.
3	Rusale	Where the ceramic pilot failed and biosand held; households here now treat every drinking litre by plain habit.

PROGRAMS IN THE FIELD

Four districts, one habit

1

Highlands

Newest and hardest — nine boreholes across scattered hamlets, each with a mechanic who lives within a day's ride.

FINANCIALS

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We publish the same statements our auditors see, at the same level of detail, because donors are partners and partners read footnotes. Ninety cents of every dollar went to the field this year; the rest kept the lights on and the sensors reporting. Our reserve now covers four months of operations — deliberate, not idle.[c]

[c] Audited by Rothwell & Frame LLP. The full FY2026 statements and Form 990 are available on our website.

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Reserve at year end	**$2.1M**

FINANCIALS

Where the program dollars went, by allocation:

FINANCIALS

ALLOCATION	AMOUNT	SHARE

FINANCIALS

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Wells & rehabilitation	$4.3M	51%

FINANCIALS

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Household filtration	$2.2M	26%

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Wells & rehabilitation	$4.3M	51%
Household filtration	$2.2M	26%
School education	$1.1M	13%
Monitoring & evaluation	$0.8M	10%

THE ROAD AHEAD

THE SECOND DECADE

is where water lasts

THE ROAD AHEAD

Next year we will drill fewer wells than we could and maintain more than we must, because the field keeps teaching the same lesson: durability is bought in the second decade, not the first. Three commitments shape the 2027 plan, and we intend to be held to them in next year's report.

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Every water point from 2026 gets a funded ten-year maintenance plan and a named mechanic before we drill anything new.

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Monthly sensor uptime for every well goes on the website — the failures too, within thirty days of finding them.

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3 **Hand over the keys**

By the end of 2028, every district program will be led and budgeted by staff who live in that district.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Clean water is not a miracle; it is a habit a community keeps, an invoice somebody pays, a valve somebody greases. Thank you for paying for the unglamorous parts. They are the ones that last.

THE ROAD AHEAD

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Leah Mwangi

THE ROAD AHEAD

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR · THE CLEARWATER INITIATIVE · NAIROBI & SEATTLE