



# MAPPING THE BLUE THREAD: Charting Our Journey to 2030

## World Vision's 2026 to 2030 Global WASH Business Plan

### Executive Summary

Water is the blue thread of integration connecting people, places, and progress. It is essential to the well-being of children and communities and creates pathways out of poverty by driving economic growth, food security, environmental resilience, safer healthcare, and educational success.

By 2030, World Vision's WASH programs will reach 30 million people<sup>1</sup> with safer, more accessible water services, requiring a 50% increase in scale during this five-year business plan. In addition, we aim to reach 13.1 million people with improved sanitation, and 15.4 million people with handwashing facilities, while supporting more than 8,000 schools and 3,000 healthcare facilities. Achieving this will require \$1.5 billion in total investment, delivered through a blended funding strategy that draws from private, institutional, and domestic sources.

*Mapping the Blue Thread* is World Vision's fourth global WASH business plan, designed to guide our strategy, operations, and investments from 2026 to 2030. It builds on over a decade of experience and outlines how we will expand access to sustainable WASH services, strengthen systems, and deliver measurable transformation in 42 countries. The plan offers a unified global framework while empowering country-level teams to implement strategies tailored to local realities.

At its core, the plan is contextualized and data-driven. Each country will pursue a localized strategy shaped by community need, opportunity, and risk—supported by global technical leadership and digital tools for decision-making and accountability.

Anchored in our global WASH goals—Accelerate, Deepen, Demonstrate, and Leverage— this plan is organized around four operational pillars:

- Technical Focus Areas – Defining what we do
- Program Fundamentals – Grounding our work in quality, inclusion, and accountability
- Targets and Budgets – Aligning ambition with the resources to achieve them
- Place-based Initiatives (PBIs) – Amplifying measurable transformation

These pillars ensure alignment with global standards while allowing for local adaptation—driving coherence, measurable impact, and sustained momentum.

*Mapping the Blue Thread* translates ambition into outcomes. Through integrated programming, place-based innovation, and catalytic financing, World Vision is poised to deliver lasting change for the world's most vulnerable communities.

---

<sup>1</sup> 30 million people represents World Vision's goal for the period 2023 to 2030.

## Background and Mission

### Our Calling and Motivation

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization called to serve the most vulnerable, with a vision for life in all its fullness for every child. The statement, “*Every child deserves clean water,*” has helped define our identity in WASH, rooted in the call of Matthew 25:35: “*For I was thirsty, and you gave me something to drink.*” We measure success not only by technical achievement but by our faithful response to this call—stewarding resources in relentless pursuit of every child’s God-given right to safe water and dignified sanitation.

Beneath this mission lie three mutually reinforcing values that guide our work:

- We value people – Honoring the dignity and image of God in every person we serve and partner with.
- We value accountability – Demonstrated through transparency to the communities we serve, to the countries we work in, and to the donors who entrust us with resources.
- We value leadership – Committed to learning, innovation, and bold action to challenge the status quo and deliver sustainable solutions.

### From Past to Present

*Mapping the Blue Thread* builds on three previous WASH business plans, each of which marked a major evolution in World Vision’s approach to WASH:

2011 to 2015 (first plan): Established a foundational WASH model with technical rigor, standard indicators, and a multiyear strategy—focused on rural water access and regional learning across 10 African countries.

2016 to 2020 (second plan): Expanded into new regions (Latin America, Asia, Middle East), formalized Sustainable Development Goal alignment and institutional (school and healthcare) WASH, and delivered on our pledge to reach 20 million people with clean water by 2020.

2021 to 2025 (third plan – Our Roadmap to Impact): Expanded our focus on quality, inclusion, and global accountability. Hallmarks included the launch of our Culture of Quality initiative, scaled mWater monitoring, a new sanitation strategy, the adoption of women-centered design, and the introduction of our global WASH goals—Accelerate, Deepen, Demonstrate, and Leverage.

**What sets this plan apart:** *Mapping the Blue Thread* marks a shift toward maturity and precision. It introduces an entrepreneurial, country-led model of growth—deeply grounded in local realities and global alignment. Evolving on previous plans, this one embeds geographically targeted programming as a core strategy, builds in program fundamentals as a shared foundation, and integrates funding, monitoring, and technical leadership into a single adaptive system. It balances global scale with local ownership, ensuring that innovation, accountability, and lasting transformation are at the heart of every WASH investment.

## Global Context and World Vision’s Response

### Crossroads and Challenges

We are entering a period defined by volatility, complexity, and unmet need. Despite decades of progress, hundreds of millions of people still lack access to safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene. At the same

time, rising costs, shrinking aid, fragility, and implementation challenges compound the urgency of our work. This business plan acknowledges those realities—and positions World Vision to respond with boldness, clarity, and opportunity.

<b>Challenge</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>
<b>Increasing Fragile Contexts</b>	Many unserved populations now live in fragile settings—marked by conflict, instability, or deep poverty.	Design flexible, long-term approaches that are responsive to local realities and empower the most vulnerable.
<b>Rising Costs and Decreasing Global Aid</b>	The cost of delivering WASH services is rising while aid is declining or being redirected to lower-risk contexts.	Invest in cost-effective models, expand co-financing, and leverage real-time data to improve targeting.
<b>Slow Rate of Progress</b>	Despite progress, we are not moving fast enough, especially in rural and fragile areas where implementation is most complex.	Scale what works, use adaptive planning, and accelerate delivery through stronger local systems.
<b>Balancing Quality and Impact with Scale</b>	Rapid expansion can jeopardize quality and sustainability, leading to breakdowns in service and user dissatisfaction.	Center user experience, reinforce technical standards, and monitor service functionality rigorously.

This plan does not view these challenges as roadblocks, but as defining moments—opportunities to recalibrate, rethink, and lead with integrity.

### **Strategic Approaches**

To respond to today’s complex challenges, World Vision is anchoring this business plan in four enduring strategic approaches. These principles define how we lead, adapt, and implement across all country WASH programs. They reflect the character of our business plan and the structure behind our ambition: rooted in faith, led by vision, built for complexity, and shaped by place.

#### **Christ-Centered and Rooted in Faith**

Our Christian identity shapes not only what we do, but how we serve. WASH programming is an expression of God’s love—responding to physical and spiritual needs in culturally appropriate ways. We engage churches and faith leaders, foster spiritual formation among staff, and mark program milestones with moments of reflection and worship.

#### **Country-Specific, Entrepreneurial Strategies**

Each country business plan reflects a bold, contextualized vision for growth. Teams are encouraged to pilot new ideas, pursue cross-sector partnerships, and scale what works. This entrepreneurial mindset promotes local leadership, long-term resilience, and systemic change.

## Adaptive Implementation and Decision-Making

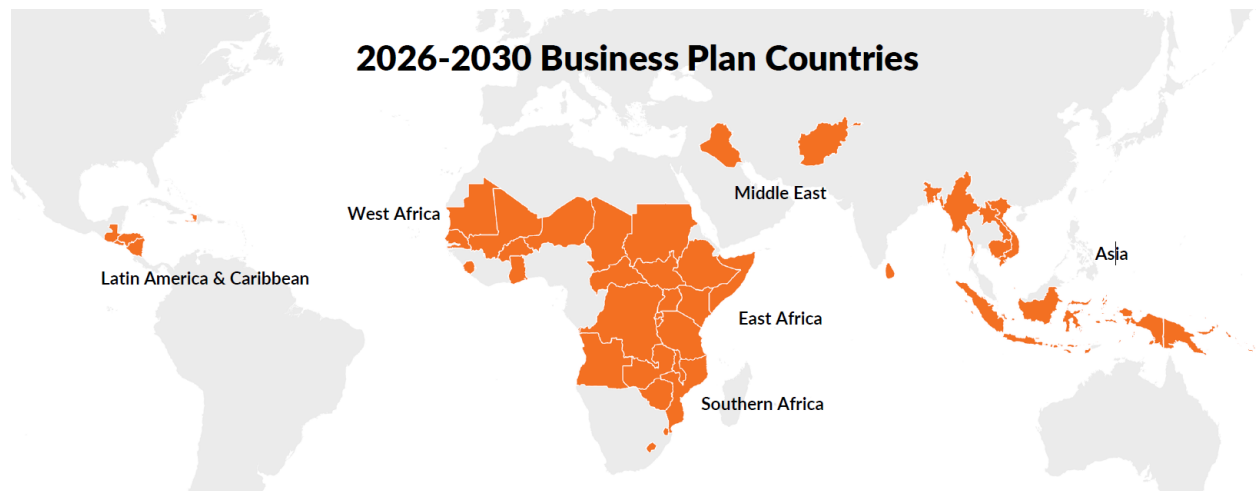
Implementation is treated as a dynamic process. Decisions are made close to the field, guided by real-time data and flexible funding. Country strategies are living documents, evolving through continuous feedback, learning, and course correction.

## Geographic Thinking and Conceptualization

Geography informs strategy. Using tools like mWater, we map infrastructure, water points, and environmental risks to guide planning. We consider population density, natural systems, and cultural dynamics, ensuring that our interventions are rooted in place and contextually relevant.

## Geographic Scope

The plan covers 42 countries across six global regions: Asia, East Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Southern Africa, and West Africa. Selection of the 42 countries reflects World Vision’s operational presence, strategic alignment, and demonstrated need for strengthened WASH services among vulnerable populations.



Asia	East Africa	Latin America	Middle East	Southern Africa	West Africa
Bangladesh	Burundi	El Salvador	Afghanistan	Angola	Burkina Faso
Cambodia	Ethiopia	Guatemala	Iraq	Democratic Republic of Congo	Central African Republic
Indonesia	Kenya	Haiti		Eswatini	Chad
Laos	Rwanda	Honduras		Lesotho	Ghana
Myanmar	Somalia	Nicaragua		Malawi	Mali
Papua New Guinea	South Sudan			Mozambique	Mauritania
Solomon Islands	Sudan			Zambia	Niger
Sri Lanka	Tanzania			Zimbabwe	Senegal
Viet Nam	Uganda				Sierra Leone

## 2026 to 2030 Business Plan Operational Areas

To guide decision-making and track progress with precision, World Vision has mapped all **875 Operational Areas** where WASH programs will be implemented. These mapped areas provide a level of detail far beyond national-level data. They allow us to see not only *where* we work, but *how deeply* we are engaged—enabling more targeted investments, localized monitoring, and stronger alignment with both government systems and community needs.



## Vision, Goals, and Ambitions

### Vision

This business plan is anchored in a bold and unifying vision: *to deliver adaptive WASH solutions that transform communities and create pathways out of poverty.*

Grounded in World Vision’s mission and shaped by the realities outlined above, this vision sets the course for the next five years of global WASH programming. Through the strategic pursuit of four global goals, we give structure to ambition and guide how progress will be measured.

### Goals

**Accelerate** universal and equitable access to WASH services to improve health, well-being, and livelihoods.

- Reach 30 million more people with safer, more accessible services to clean water (2023 to 2030).
- 80% of household latrines constructed are improved.
- Attain universal service coverage in 50 districts across at least 20 countries.

**Deepen** focus on the most vulnerable people, especially in fragile contexts.

- Launch targeted WASH programming in 25 extremely fragile districts where conflict, instability, or environmental stress limit clean water accessibility.
- Implement women-centered WASH programs in 30 districts with integrated approaches that elevate leadership, safety and empowerment.

**Demonstrate** sustainable impact to strengthen transparency and accountability.

- Digitally map and monitor 100% of new water points via mWater.

- Achieve and maintain 90%+ service functionality rates across World Vision–funded water points.
- Document and report results from Place-Base Initiatives.

**Leverage** our \$1.5 billion global business plan to mobilize financing for WASH services.

- Develop opportunities to catalyze \$250 million in co-financing, primarily through government cost-sharing and repayable finance.
- Maintain a 4:1 leverage ratio across our global portfolio.

## Operations

Success depends not only on our goals, but how we implement and sustain them. This section introduces the four operational pillars that bring the plan to life—turning strategic goals into real-world outcomes. Each plays a distinct role in structuring, supporting, and scaling WASH programming:

- Technical Focus Areas define what we do. They establish the core competencies of our global WASH programs, offering guidance on priorities such as water supply, sanitation, governance, resilience, and emergency response. While every country engages with all five areas, the emphasis is shaped by contextual need.
- Program Fundamentals ensure how we work is grounded in quality, inclusion, and accountability. These ten foundational elements—ranging from monitoring and faith integration to local partnerships and gender equality—provide a consistent framework for programming maturity and growth.
- Targets and Budgets align ambition with resources. They outline what we plan to achieve annually across community systems, institutions, and investment levels—making visible both the cost of impact and our accountability to deliver.
- Place-Based Initiatives demonstrate where transformation is most concentrated. These high-impact, geo-defined efforts integrate funding, staffing, monitoring, and innovation in targeted locations—serving as centers of excellence and storytelling for the broader WASH program.

These pillars align countries to global standards while allowing local adaptation—ensuring impact, coherence, and sustained progress.

### Technical Focus Areas – Priority Activities 2026 to 2030

#### Water Supply and Water Quality

- Improve infrastructure design and implementation with SAFER-aligned (Safe, Accessible, Functional, Equitable, Resilient) practices.
- Increase use of chlorination to improve household water quality.
- Expand use of remote water system monitoring and post-construction accountability tools.

#### Sanitation and Hygiene

- Drive demand creation and hygiene behavior change through Nurture Care Groups, community health workers, and targeted campaigns.

- Scale up sanitation marketing through diverse, affordable product offerings.
- Leverage microfinance and household subsidies to increase improved latrine coverage.

**Governance and Finance**

- Unlock new sources of public and private financing.
- Promote lifecycle costing and operations budgeting.
- Support professionalized and community-based management of WASH services.

**Water Security and Resilience**

- Identify and prioritize key watersheds with significant WASH infrastructure.
- Coordinate with watershed management authorities to implement water resource management practices.
- Train staff in hydrology, geospatial information systems, and management for source protection.

**Disaster Management**

- Train and equip WASH teams to be rapid responders.
- Coordinate with WASH clusters and local disaster authorities.
- Integrate disaster risk reduction and resilience into long-term development programming.

**WASH Program Fundamentals**

World Vision’s WASH approach is anchored in ten program fundamentals, each associated with minimum standards. These are the building blocks of quality and consistency across every country—supporting excellence in design, implementation, monitoring, and adaptation.

Each fundamental is essential on its own, but together, they form a cohesive platform for delivering impact with consistency, accountability, and vision.

Fundamental	Description
<b>Community and government engagement</b>	Collaborate with communities and local authorities to plan, implement, and sustain WASH systems.
<b>Local partnerships</b>	Forge partnerships with local NGOs and private-sector actors to enhance delivery, innovation, and expand reach.
<b>Staff engagement and growth</b>	Invest in technical capacity, leadership development, and professional growth of WASH teams.
<b>Faith integration</b>	Reflect Christ-centered values through spiritual formation, faith leader engagement through use of tested approaches, and messaging.

Fundamental	Description
Quality control and assurance	Ensure all interventions meet rigorous standards to deliver consistent, sustainable, and equitable outcomes.
Monitoring	Use digital tools and field-level feedback to track progress and inform adaptive decision-making.
Applied Learning	Capture lessons, promote innovation, and refine strategies based on evidence.
Multi-Sector Integration	Enhance impact by connecting WASH with health, education, economic opportunity, and food security.
Reporting and Communication	Ensure reporting is timely, transparent, and accessible—telling the story of impact to all stakeholders.
Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion	Center inclusion in design, staffing, monitoring, and policy engagement.

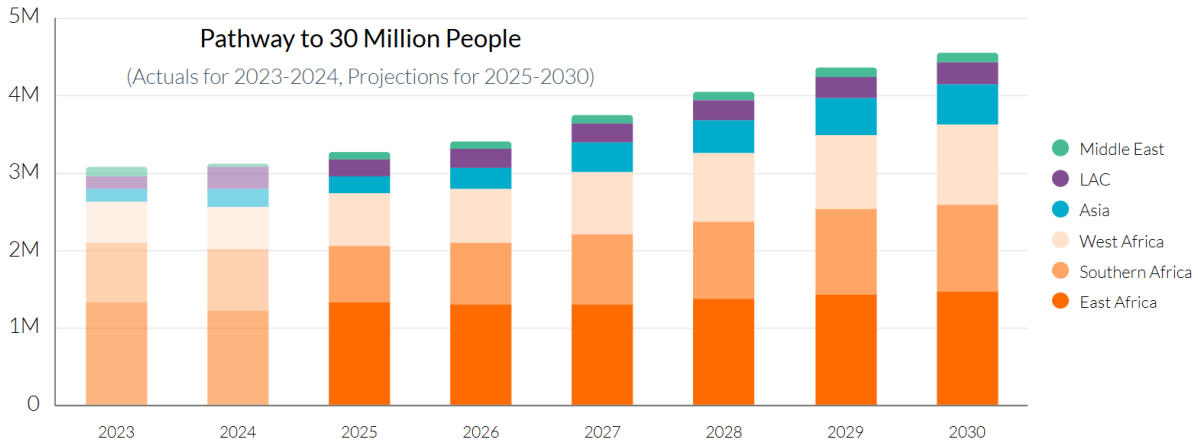
### WASH Capacity Building

To meet the technical demands and growth targets of this business plan, World Vision will expand the **WASH Capacity Building Initiative** through strategic partnerships with Drexel University and the Desert Research Institute. Over the next five years, we aim to graduate an additional 250 staff through the certificate-level program—building core competencies across our global WASH teams. In parallel, three professional development courses per year—delivered virtually and in-person—will target priority topics such as water quality, WASH financing, sanitation marketing, and utility operations. These efforts are tightly aligned with the business plan’s focus areas and will ensure staff are equipped with the specialized skills needed to lead with confidence, quality, and innovation.

### Targets and Costs

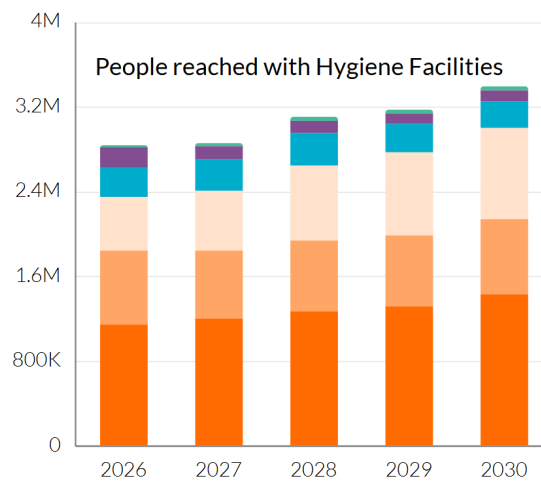
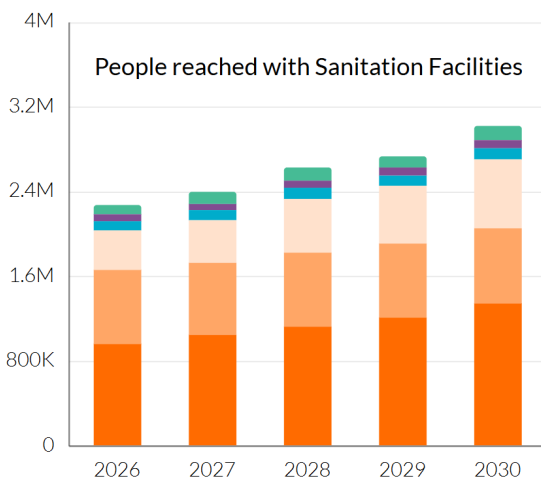
#### Water Participants

World Vision commits to reaching 30 million people with safer, more accessible clean water services across 42 countries during the 2023 to 2030 period, which aligns with the Everyone Needs a Believer campaign. Current projections from country plans show 27.75 million people, which leaves a gap of 2.25 million. Approximately \$50 million in base funding remains to be allocated between 2028 to 2030. This funding, coupled with an expected 4:1 leverage of additional resources, is designed to close the gap in water participants. For the five-year business plan period, World Vision plans to reach 20.5 million people.



### Sanitation and Hygiene Participants

Country plans are also aiming to reach 13.1 million people with sanitation facilities and 15.4 million people with hygiene facilities, during the five-year business plan. But our aspirations are higher for sanitation, and by investing in market-driven sanitation models and targeted subsidies, we believe we can surpass the current goal of 2.2 million household latrines and reach 3 million latrines with more than 80% being higher quality 'improved' latrines.



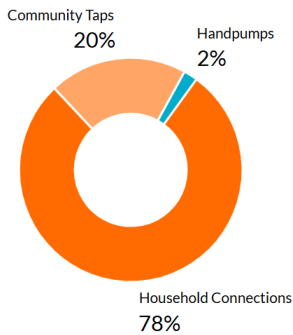
### Types of Service

World Vision's business plan prioritizes delivery of improved WASH services. Among new water points, 78% will be household connections or on-premise water points. Each of these water points represents a more sustainable service model, often supported by fee-collection, utility service providers, and stronger governance. The majority of these connections are funded through cost-share agreements or repayable financing mechanisms.

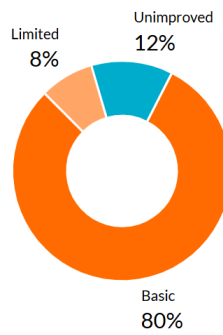
Plans for 88% of sanitation facilities to be improved<sup>2</sup> latrines demonstrate a significant 23% growth from the current business plan where only 71% of latrines reported are improved.

<sup>2</sup> Basic and limited sanitation services are both defined to have improved latrines.

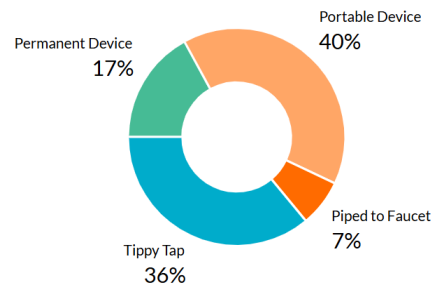
### Waterpoint Types



### Sanitation Facility Type

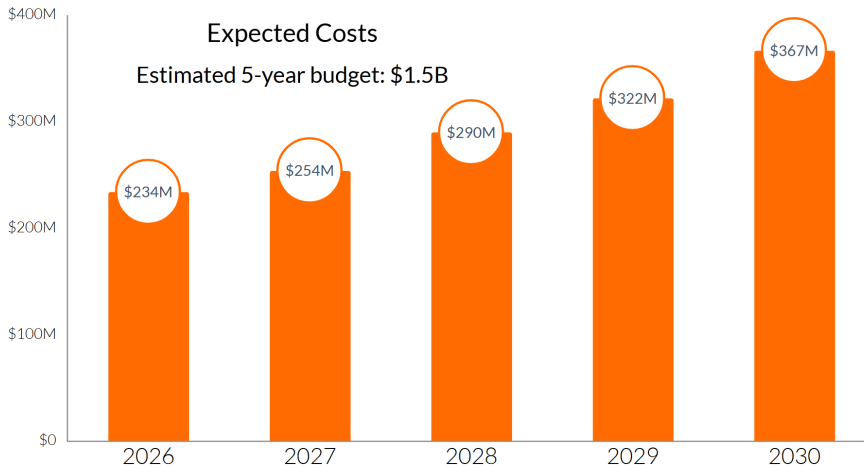


### Handwashing Facility Type



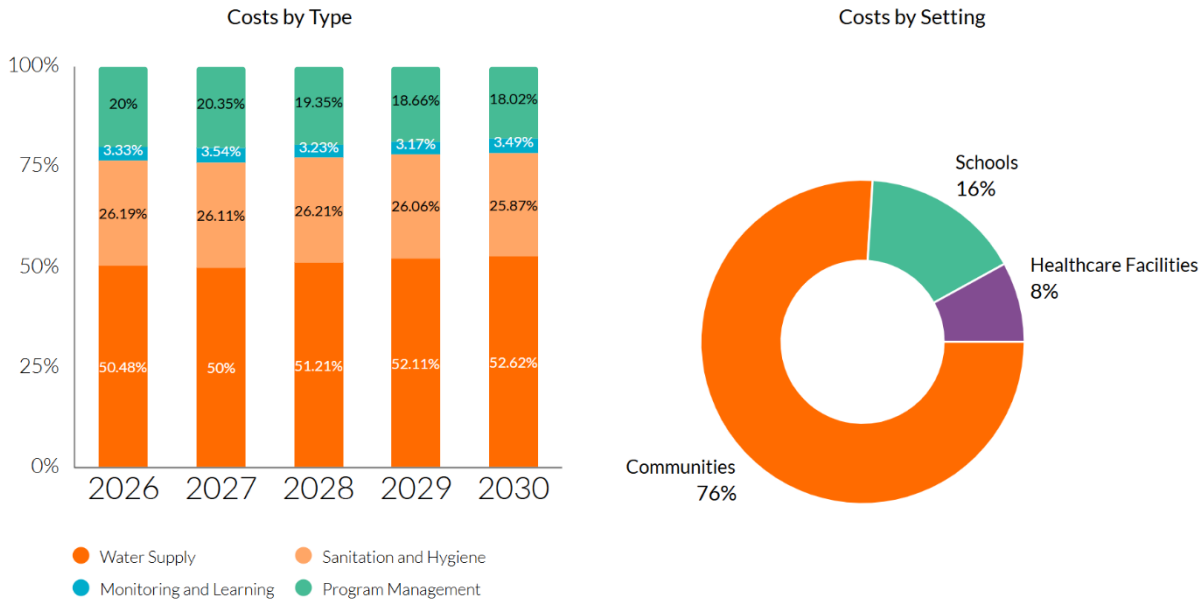
### Annual Costs

*Mapping the Blue Thread* is projected to require \$1.5 billion in total funding, increasing annually as programs scale. Expected costs begin at \$234 million in 2026 and rise to \$367 million by 2030. This growth reflects the anticipated scale-up of activities across countries, investments into program fundamentals to improve quality and maturity of WASH implementation, and management systems required to deliver measurable impact at scale.



### Spending Allocations

Project costs across the five-year business plan are expected to remain consistent in proportion, with approximately 50% to 53% allocated to water supply annually. This proportion is in line with previous business plans and reflects the high costs associated with water infrastructure and proper governance structures. In terms of delivery setting, the allocations are in line with the operational footprint of World Vision.



### Investment per Person

World Vision’s projected investment per community participant is \$50.81, an 8% increase of approximately \$4 from the past business plan. This figure includes only funding directly channeled through World Vision and excludes external cost-share or financing contributions. Growing our external cost-share and financing opportunities is significantly helping to keep investments by World Vision at a sustained level. Required investment amounts have increased due to inflationary trends, increased focus on quality, and providing WASH services in more fragile places.

#### Investment per Community Member by World Vision

	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030
Water	\$20.22	\$38.24	\$37.91
Sanitation	\$4.76	\$6.46	\$9.29
Hygiene	\$1.03	\$2.18	\$3.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$26.01</b>	<b>\$46.88</b>	<b>\$50.81</b>

#### Investment per Student by World Vision

	2016-2020	2021-2025	2026-2030
Water	\$10.22	\$39.02	\$19.04
Sanitation	\$30.15	\$32.29	\$31.48
Hygiene	\$2.51	\$2.46	\$9.67
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$42.88</b>	<b>\$73.77</b>	<b>\$60.55</b>

## Regional Distribution of Total Program Participants, Institutions, and Business Plan Costs

	East Africa	Southern Africa	West Africa	Asia	Latin America	Middle East	Total
<b>Community Participants (M)</b>							
Water	10.22	6.54	5.71	2.62	1.91	0.75	<b>27.75</b>
Sanitation	5.71	3.48	2.48	0.50	0.34	0.55	<b>13.1</b>
Hygiene	6.38	3.40	3.42	1.38	0.63	0.15	<b>15.4</b>
<b>Institutions</b>							
Schools	1,725	2,109	1,517	1,161	1,789	144	<b>8,445</b>
Healthcare Facilities	1,083	374	647	454	338	99	<b>2,995</b>
<b>Business Plan Costs (M)</b>							
	\$395	\$300	\$230	\$143	\$116	\$30.2	<b>\$1,214</b>

### Place-Based Initiatives

Place-based initiatives (PBIs) are a new way of focusing resources, effort, and attention in specific locations to achieve deeper and more measurable impact. Rather than large country evaluations, which are costly and scrupulous, PBIs focus on selecting high-potential places where World Vision and its partners can demonstrate tangible results—by aligning funding, staffing, monitoring, and innovation in one location.

They serve as “centers of excellence,” generating insights and storytelling to attract funding or replication in other countries. Underscoring our business plan’s value of leadership, PBIs can also influence national policies or global sector strategies.

These are not additional, secondary projects; they are commitments to transformation, embedded into each country WASH business plan. Every country is expected to propose at least one place-based initiative, with the option to pursue more based on readiness, opportunity, and co-financing potential.

### Universal Service Coverage (USC)

Focused on achieving full, equitable WASH coverage in a defined geographic area—typically a district—through coordination with local government, integrated planning, and intensive monitoring. USC PBIs aim to demonstrate what’s possible when all components of WASH converge to achieve transformation at scale.

### Women-Centered Design

Centers women’s leadership, voice, safety, and economic empowerment in WASH programs. These PBIs focus on co-design with women and girls, gender-sensitive infrastructure, and capacity-building for female entrepreneurs and leaders.

### Market-Based Sanitation

Aims to catalyze affordable, accessible, and scalable sanitation solutions through private-sector engagement, supply chain development, behavior change strategies, and smart subsidies that close affordability gaps.

## WASH in Fragile Contexts

Prioritizes flexible, adaptive service delivery in conflict-affected, climate-disrupted, or politically unstable settings. These PBIs blend humanitarian and development approaches while building resilience within systems and communities.

## WASH Financing Solutions

Explores innovative financing mechanisms—such as blended finance, cost-recovery models, or microfinance tools—to mobilize capital, enhance sustainability, and scale access beyond traditional grants.

## Water Resource Management (WRM)

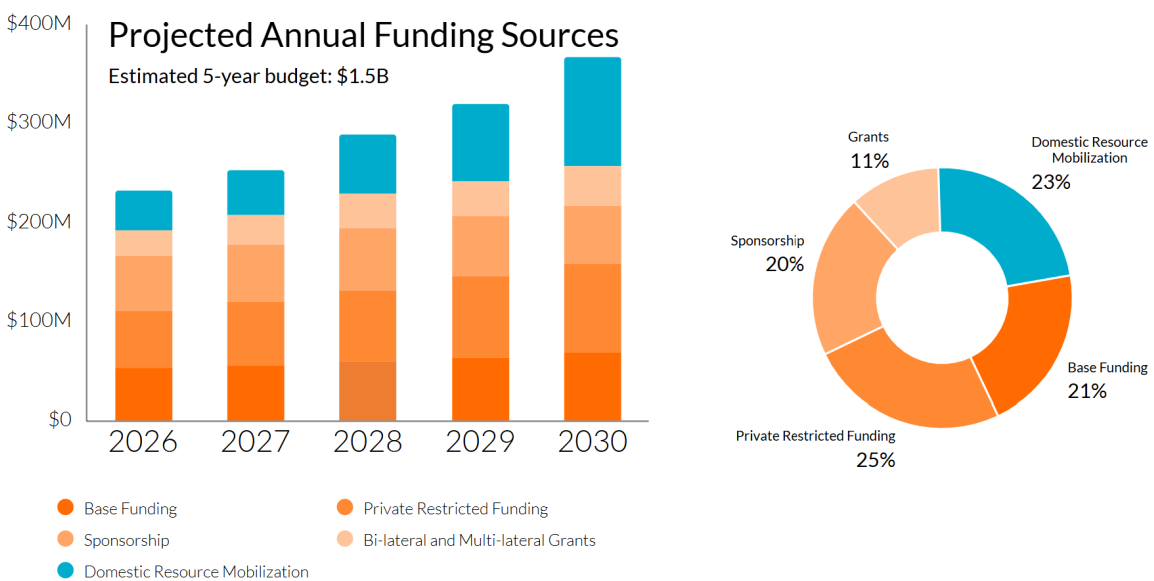
Targets source water protection and watershed-scale planning to ensure long-term availability of water. These PBIs use integrated water resource management tools and partnerships with local authorities to protect and restore natural water systems.

## Funding Strategy

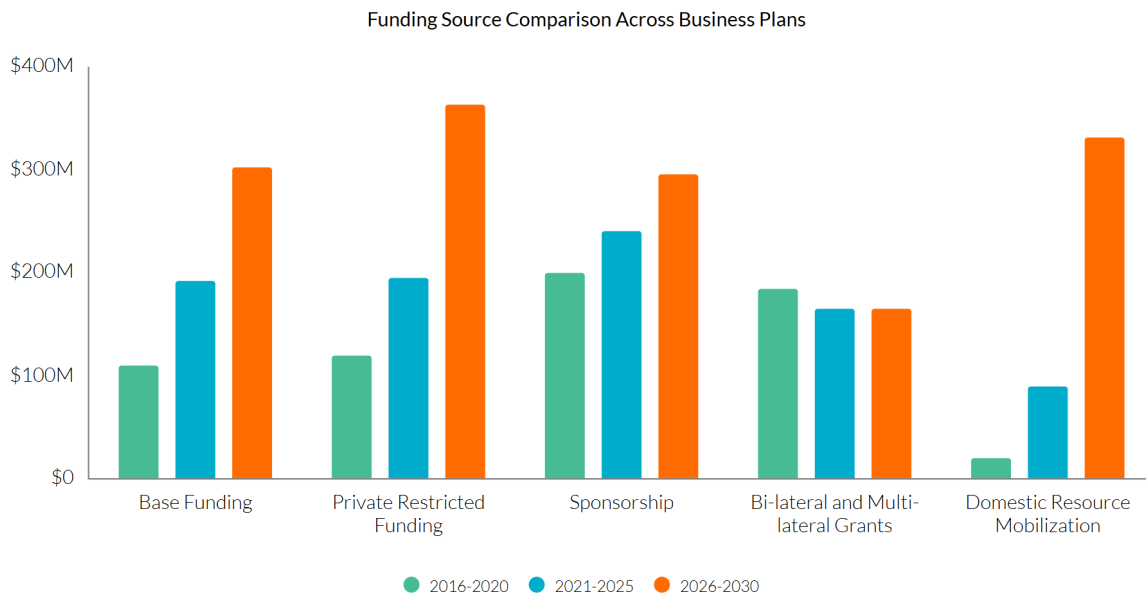
World Vision’s WASH funding strategy is built to catalyze large-scale, sustainable impact through a layered investment model. Rather than relying on siloed or one-to-one project funding, this strategy blends flexible private base funding, domestic cost-share, sponsorship, institutional grants, and restricted private grants from corporations and foundations to scale country programs. This integrated approach enhances resilience, unlocks additional resources, and ensures that WASH programs can mature over time rather than cycle through fragmented projects.

## Sources of Funding

*Mapping the Blue Thread* will be funded through a diverse mix of private, public, and domestic sources. Private restricted funding is projected to represent the largest proportion, followed by domestic resource mobilization, and then base funding.



## Comparison with Past Business Plans



One of the most significant shifts over the next five years will be a reduced reliance on institutional grants and sponsorship funding and a rise in domestic resource mobilization. Given the current funding environment, we are expecting our grant funding to remain flat, and sponsorship growth will remain limited, achieved primarily through cross-sector integration. This anticipated plateau further reinforces the importance of diversified and domestically anchored funding strategies to sustain momentum.

The focus on domestic resource mobilization will require mindset shifts as greater emphasis is placed on cost-share, repayable finance, and in-country resource development. Much of this projected growth is tied to the success of the Blue Thread Global Water Fund, which is designed to help unlock capital and financial partnerships at the national level.

### Base Funding

Base funding consists of flexible, privately raised funds – including contributions from major donors, churches, Gift Catalog, and mass fundraising channels. Unlike project-specific grants, base funding is devised to be strategically deployed to strengthen program quality, unlock co-investment, support innovation, and increase reach. It plays a catalytic role across the portfolio and allows for adaptation, capacity-building, and long-term program positioning—not just direct implementation.

### Leveraged Funding

Leveraged funding includes all resources that are mobilized as a result of base funding, whether or not they are channeled through World Vision. This includes government cost-share, private sector partnerships, public grants, and sponsorship. Countries are expected to meet a 4:1 leverage ratio and could qualify for more base funding if better ratios are obtained.

### Co-Financing and Blue Thread Global Water Fund

The Blue Thread Global Water Fund (GWF) is a blended finance initiative led by World Vision U.S. and VisionFund International to expand investment in WASH services. By combining philanthropic capital with concessional loans, risk guarantees, and private sector investment, the GWF helps derisk WASH

investments and attract new financing into underserved communities as well as resources to support long-term sustainability of services beyond initial capital costs.

Initially being piloted in Rwanda, Zambia, Ghana, and Uganda, the GWF is expected to scale significantly by 2028, mobilizing up to \$100 million by 2030 in support of WASH initiatives. The GWF will contribute directly to the goals of *Mapping the Blue Thread* by expanding access to water and sanitation services and reducing dependency on other revenue sources.

## Conclusion

*Mapping the Blue Thread* marks the next stage in World Vision’s evolution as a global WASH leader—one that emphasizes integration, precision, and accountability to reach the most vulnerable with sustainable services.

This plan brings together decades of learning into a strategy that aligns global goals with locally driven action. It introduces place-based programming to concentrate resources where they can drive measurable transformation. It strengthens our technical focus areas while holding every program accountable to shared standards through defined fundamentals. It also brings new structure to how we set targets and align budgets, allowing us to track progress with clarity and consistency across 42 countries.

This strategy is built on the belief that clean water, dignified sanitation, and safe hygiene services are not isolated solutions, but part of a broader system of change. When thoughtfully designed and locally implemented, WASH programs strengthen health, education, livelihoods, and community resilience.

Water is the blue thread that weaves people, places, and progress together—creating something more durable and more transformative than any single project can offer.

As the world’s leading non-governmental provider of clean water, World Vision and our partners are committed to expanding our impact, to forever change the lives of 30 million people by 2030.

*World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.*

© 2025 World Vision, Inc.