



INNOVATE FOR WASH (I4WASH), 2026

WASH marketplace for Africa



Theme;
Innovate, Invest, Impact:
Building resilient WASH ecosystems for the future.

October 28th to 31st 2026
Nairobi County, Kenya





28th to 31st October 2026,
Bomas of Kenya, Nairobi, Kenya

ORGANIZED BY



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INTRODUCTION

Innovate4WASH (I4WASH) is East Africa's leading Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) marketplace, uniquely positioned at the intersection of innovation, private sector engagement, and sustainable financing. I4WASH emphasizes practical scaling of solutions, commercialization, and investment readiness addressing persistent gaps in technology adoption, financing mobilization, and climate integration in the WASH sector. The I4WASH Marketplace Forum 2026 aims to convene key stakeholders across government, private sector, development partners, civil society, academia, and communities to showcase and scale innovative WASH solutions that enhance climate resilience, promote equity, and strengthen interconnections with energy, food security, and environmental sustainability. Building on the success of previous forums which have showcased over 1,000 WASH innovations since 2018 the Forum will accelerate progress toward Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 in Kenya and the wider region while contributing to related SDGs on energy, food, and ecosystems. The Forum is aligned with Kenya's Vision 2030, the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA), and international climate and development frameworks. It will prioritize action-oriented collaboration, investment matchmaking, and policy dialogue to address Kenya's pressing WASH gaps amid increasing climate vulnerabilities.



Figure 1; Group photo at I4WASH Kampala



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BACKGROUND

Globally, inadequate WASH services remain a major public health concern. According to WHO, suboptimal WASH contributed to approximately 1.4 million deaths in 2019. In Africa, only 35% of the population has access to safely managed water, compared to 79% globally. Sub-Saharan Africa has historically relied on foreign aid to finance development, particularly in critical sectors such as WASH. However, declining and reprioritized external funding has created a significant financing gap for achieving the SDGs.

Kenya, despite notable progress in water and sanitation coverage, faces an annual WASH financing gap of approximately 40%, constraining the expansion and sustainability of services amid rapid urbanization and population growth. As donor funding declines, the country must urgently rethink financing models, strengthen domestic resource mobilization, and crowd in private-sector investment across the water-energy-food-environment nexus.

Additionally, Kenya is classified as water-scarce, with national improved water access estimated at 59–70%, sanitation coverage at only 29–30%, and significant inequities in ASAL counties, informal settlements, and rural areas. Climate change exacerbates these challenges through erratic rainfall, floods, prolonged droughts, and ecosystem degradation, disproportionately affecting women, girls, and vulnerable populations while impacting energy access, agricultural productivity, and environmental health. Poor WASH in healthcare facilities alone has contributed to over 320,000 excess deaths across nine countries, including Kenya.

I4WASH 2026 RATIONALE

Achieving universal, climate-resilient WASH access in Kenya and the region requires:

1. Innovative technologies that respond to climate risks
2. New financing approaches beyond traditional aid
3. Stronger public–private partnerships (PPPs)
4. Policy coherence and institutional innovation
5. Cross sectoral partnerships, beyond water resources and WASH



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I4WASH provides a home-grown, market-based platform that connects solution providers with policymakers, financiers, and implementers thereby bridging the gap between innovation and impact. The Forum emphasizes efficiency, accountability, and sustainability, positioning domestic solutions and private capital as central drivers of WASH transformation in the region.

OVERALL GOAL

1. Showcase and catalyze scaling of innovative, climate-resilient WASH technologies and business models.
2. Facilitate investment matchmaking and commitments to bridge Kenya's WASH financing gap.
3. Strengthen policy dialogue on implementation of the National Sanitation Management Policy (2024) and integration of climate resilience into county WASH plans.
4. Enhance collaboration among government, development partners, private sector, innovators, and communities.
5. Build capacity and knowledge on resilient WASH solutions in the face of climate change, urbanization, and population pressures.

5 KEY PRIORITY INTERVENTION AREAS

1. Climate-Resilient & Circular WASH Systems

- Water-Environment-Energy-Food Nexus
- Climate-resilient and nature-based WASH solutions
- Water harvesting, reusing, and recycling
- Integrated solid and liquid waste management (*fecal sludge, wastewater, and solid waste systems*)

2. Sustainable WASH Infrastructure & Green Technologies - showcasing low-carbon, resource-efficient systems that enable safe service delivery and recovery

- Citywide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS)
- Solarization and green energy solutions for WASH systems
- De-fluoridation and water quality treatment technologies



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3. Resource Recovery & Circular Economy Solutions

Focus: Turning waste streams into economic and environmental value

- Fecal sludge treatment and reuse (e.g., co-composting, soil conditioners)
- Organic waste-to-resource solutions (e.g., compost, biogas, Black Soldier Fly)
- Waste-to-energy and nutrient recovery systems

4. Innovative WASH Financing & Market Systems

Focus: Scaling access through financial inclusion and private sector engagement

- Innovative WASH financing mechanisms (RBF, blended finance, microfinance, PAYGO)
- Financing for circular economy enterprises and waste value chains
- MSME development across sanitation and waste services

5. Inclusive, Gender-Responsive & Public Health Outcomes

Focus: Ensuring equitable access, dignity, and behavior change

- Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM)
- Hygiene behavior changes and community engagement
- Targeting underserved populations (informal settlements, ASALs, schools, health facilities)





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INTENDED AUDIENCE

Estimated Participation: 200–250 delegates.

1. WASH innovators and startups, youth- and women-led enterprises
2. County governments and Government policymakers, Water utilities
3. County Governments and Government policy makers and
4. Development partners and donors
5. Financiers and impact investors
6. NGOs, CSOs
7. Academia.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

1. Innovations showcased
2. Partnerships formed
3. Investment pledges
4. Scaled climate-resilient WASH solutions in priority areas
5. Improved service coverage and system resilience
6. Strengthened WASH ecosystems contributing to SDG 6
7. Reduced vulnerability to climate shocks
8. Progress toward universal, equitable access by 2030



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PROPOSED FORUM STRUCTURE (4 DAYS) - Tentative

The four-day forum will feature keynote sessions, though provoking panel topics, pitches, innovation exhibitions, networking sessions, and field visits.

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4
Morning	<p>Setting the scene- Systems, Policy and Opportunity</p> <p>Opening Plenary: The Future of WASH in Kenya <i>(Panel + keynote from sector enablers)</i></p> <p>Scene Setting: The PPP Landscape in WASH <i>(Status of private sector participation)</i></p> <p>Driving Impact: How the Private Sector Can Deliver on WASREB KPIs</p> <p>Group Photo</p>	<p><i>Money, Markets & Emerging Opportunities</i></p> <p>Unlocking Capital</p> <p>Financing the Future of WASH: Development Partner Perspectives</p> <p>New Frontiers: Understanding Carbon Credits in WASH</p> <p>ESG in Action: Turning Compliance into Opportunity</p>	<p>Nature & Innovation</p> <p>Working with Nature: Scaling Nature-Based Solutions in WASH</p>	<p><i>Innovation, Nature & Real-World Application</i></p> <p>Learning by Seeing</p> <p>Technical Site Visits (8am – 1pm) <i>(Real-world exposure to applied solutions)</i></p>
Mid day	<p>Policy, Regulation & System Realities</p> <p>Navigating the System: The WASH–Energy–Food–Environment Nexus <i>(Regulatory landscape)</i></p> <p>Decoding the Sector: Tariffs, Taxes & Sanitation Policy Simplified <i>(Sanitation levy, EMCA regulations, tariffs)</i></p>	<p>Building Viable Models</p> <p>What Works: Designing Bankable WASH Business Models</p> <p>Public-Private Partnerships that Deliver: Enabling Frameworks & Lessons</p>	<p>Innovation Spotlight: Practical Approaches to Climate-Resilient Systems</p>	
Afternoon	<p>Inclusion & Resilience</p> <p>From Scarcity to Resilience: Designing Climate-Ready Water Infrastructure</p> <p>Inclusive WASH: From Advocacy to Evidence-Based Action <i>(Gender & inclusion)</i></p>	<p>From Ideas to Investment</p> <p>Bridging the Gap: Connecting Projects to Funding Opportunities</p> <p>Interactive Session: What Makes a WASH Project Investable?</p>	<p>Partnerships, Commitments & Way Forward</p> <p>Powering Change: Building Effective Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships that strengthens Collaboration Across the Sector</p> <p>Closing the Loop; Commitments & Way Forward</p> <p>Event Wrap-Up & Closing Remarks</p>	
		B2B Networking cocktail		



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SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS

Premier Sponsor: (Kes. 10,000,000)

- Speaking opportunity at main plenary session along other high-level dignitaries
- Corporate branding with large logo on Forum materials and main branding of Forum as well as website and media ads
- Permission to install corporate branding at the main venue
- Extra-large Corporate profile of 1 page in Forum booklet
- Guaranteed slot / interview in event-video
- Distinguished word of thanks in opening session
- Complementary exhibition booth
- Complementary participation of up to five company representatives
- Preferential seating in all sessions and events

Silver Sponsor: (Kes. 4,000,000/=)

- Corporate branding with small logo on Forum materials and main branding of Forum as well as website and media ads
- Permission to install corporate branding at main venue
- Appoint a speaker for the panel?
- Specific corporate profile of 1/4 page in Forum booklet
- Word of thanks in opening session
- Complementary exhibition booth
- Complementary participation of up to three company representatives

Gold Sponsor: (Kes. 6,000,000/=)

- Speaking opportunity as main speaker (first speaker with more time allocated) at a thematic session/ panel discussion/roundtable
- Corporate branding with small logo on Forum materials and main branding of Forum as well as website and media ads
- Permission to install corporate branding at main venue
- Large corporate profile of 1/2 page in Forum booklet
- Word of thanks in opening session
- Complementary exhibition booth
- Complementary participation of up to three company representatives

Bronze Sponsor:(Kes.2,000,000/=)

- Complementary standard booth* for exhibition
- Complementary participation of up to three company representatives
- Appoint a speaker for the panel
- Permission to install corporate branding in the session room
- Word of thanks at the beginning of the session.

Note: Alternative agreements can be negotiated, and each sponsorship package can be customized.



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Exhibition Booths (for 3 days) - This fee covers.

1. **One** 3m*3m Exhibition booth .
2. Full draping for your stand in your company corporate colors (**not more than 3 colors**).
3. 1 fully draped table and 2 chairs for use at the booth for **3 days**.
4. **All access** conferences pass for one person that will be manning the stand for the 3 days.
5. The booth will be set up a day before the event.

N/B (You are responsible for your own branding materials)

ABOUT THE ORGANIZER – QUERCUS GROUP

“What if the most powerful force in sustainable development isn't technology or policy but the right people in the right room?”

That question has driven **Quercus Group** since our founding in Copenhagen in 2012. We are a strategic consultancy built on a simple but radical conviction: that lasting change happens at the intersection of sectors, not within them.

Our story begins with a provocation. When founder Nicolai Rottboll helped build Europe's largest cleantech cluster - CLEAN, it became clear that the missing ingredient in most development challenges wasn't funding or expertise, it was architecture. Someone had to design the connections. That insight became our practice.

Today, we work at the frontlines of sustainable development and regional economic growth, operating across borders and sectors to build the partnerships that move ideas into action. We call it the **Quadruple Helix**: governments, businesses, academia, and citizens engaged not in sequence, but simultaneously. The approach is rooted and refined through over a decade of hands-on delivery across some of the world's most complex operating environments and sectors, namely; Water and Sanitation, Agriculture and Waste management sectors.

What makes Quercus different is what we do after the strategy deck. We stay in the room. We engage the decision-makers who can unlock change, connect the businesses that can deliver it, and work with the communities who will live with the results. We translate complexity into clarity and clarity into action. Every engagement is built from scratch. No templates, no off-the-shelf frameworks. Just rigorous thinking, genuine relationships, and an obsession with outcomes that outlast our involvement.

