

Theory of Change



The Need

Problem

For most of the 2.2B people who drink unsafe water, piped-on-premises is still a pipe dream. Four out of five live in rural areas, disconnected from consistent and reliable services. And while the world is making progress toward universal access, that progress masks a persistent blind spot: the last mile.

Safely managed public utilities don't reach these small, remote communities. Which means 5M Ghanaians are deemed too hard or too costly to serve. If basic solutions exist, they are rarely professionally managed and maintained. Promising technologies are installed by third parties without accountability. And health gains evaporate the moment safe water becomes inconvenient or intermittent.

Government and private actors want to reach the last mile with consistent, reliable access. But they falter in the face of high costs, operational complexity, and lack of tested models. Without benchmark data, financing stalls. Without professional operators, policy remains on paper. So the last mile stays locked out of safe, consistent, and equitable service.

The challenge isn't invention—the technology exists. What's missing is a tested, scalable, government-aligned rural utility model designed for communities no one else can reach.

People

Primary: Ghanaian communities under 1K people

Secondary: Water authorities & service providers

Reason

Safe water isn't solved until it's solved for everyone.

The Work

Inputs

1. Deep experience scaling high-impact, affordable, Kaizen culture & R&D budget
2. Local equipment supply chain
3. Professional, embedded operators & maintenance staff
4. District & national MOUs with allocated resources (\$ or staff)
5. Catalytic financing pool
6. Strong brand with deep local trust

Interventions

Design: Engineer & refine technical & service-delivery standards

Deliver: Operate & maintain reliable, professional water service

Demonstrate: Codify & share open-source standards, tools & data

Partners

1. Policy & public-finance champions
2. Complementary WASH NGOs
3. Technical supply & logistics vendors
4. Evidence & research bodies
5. Community leaders
6. Sector learning & advocacy networks

Mission

Saha is a nonprofit service provider that designs, delivers & demonstrates a utility-grade model to ensure exclusive safe water consumption in last-mile communities.

Behaviors

Households

- Drink treated water
- Trust & pay for reliable water services

Authorities & service providers

- Include the last-mile in planning, budgeting & performance frameworks
- Allocate subsidies or contracts to service last-mile communities
- Apply Saha learnings, SOPs & performance standards

Big Idea

Utility-grade water service for the last mile

The Results

Outputs

Design

- # continuous improvement cycles completed
- # service models piloted & evaluated
- # of surface water & borehole sites designed to utility standards
- # of technical specs & cost models developed per system type

Deliver

- # of liters treated & sold
- % service area penetration
- # of days of breakdown
- \$ decrease in cost per liter
- % exclusive Saha use rate
- \$ household contributions for safe water

Demonstrate

- # of SOPs/toolkits published
- # datasets & reliability reports released
- # external provider training sessions held
- # sector knowledge products produced

Short-term Outcome

Last-mile households meet 100% of daily drinking-water needs with GS 187 compliant water

Long-term Outcomes

1. Improved service efficiency & reliability in last-mile communities
2. Government funding allocated for last-mile water subsidies
3. Adoption of performance standards for rural utility operators
4. Increased replication by service providers

Pathways

Size +3, Scale +2

Growth in your own products, programs, delivery, income, team

10-Year Target (2035)

100% of Ghana's last-mile households drinking Saha water, 75 peer-run systems sustaining full uptime & 50% of rural O&M paid by the national budget

Vision

Every sip safe, every day, for everyone.