

E-MEDIA KIT

From Direct Provision to Sustainable Service Delivery

Private Sector for WASH (PS4WASH) Forum 2026

24 September 2026 | The Cradle Tented Camp, Lodwar, Turkana County

Lessons from Turkana Are Shaping a New Conversation on WASH, Refugee Inclusion, Climate Resilience, and the Future of Service Delivery

1. Key Story

As Kenya advances the implementation of the Refugees Act, 2021 and the Shirika Plan, the future of WASH service delivery is becoming a critical development question. While humanitarian and development investments have expanded access to essential services for refugee and host communities, the long-term sustainability of these services will increasingly depend on functioning local markets, viable enterprises, and stronger partnerships between government, development actors, financiers, and the private sector.

The Private Sector for WASH (PS4WASH) Forum 2026, convened by Swisscontact, Plan International Kenya and UNHCR, brings together key stakeholders to explore how WASH systems can transition from reliance on direct provision towards more sustainable, market-led approaches that strengthen local enterprise, create jobs, attract investment, and improve service delivery.

2. Why this Matters for Turkana and Kenya

Turkana sits at the convergence of several national development priorities. The county faces climate vulnerability, growing demand for essential services, and hosts one of the world's largest refugee-hosting ecosystems in Kakuma and Kalobeyei. At the same time, Kenya's refugee inclusion agenda under the Shirika Plan is driving a broader shift towards self-reliance, socioeconomic inclusion, and more integrated approaches to service delivery.

The challenge is not only ensuring continued access to WASH services but creating systems capable of sustaining those services long into the future while generating economic opportunities for both refugee and host communities.

The lessons emerging from Turkana have relevance far beyond one county. They speak to broader questions around climate resilience, localization, market development, and sustainable service delivery in fragile and underserved contexts across Kenya and beyond.

3. The Big Insight

Over the past two years, the Climate Proofing WASH (CP WASH) Services, implemented in partnership with Swisscontact, Plan International Kenya, Watermission and Apad, is an initiative that has tested a range of private-sector-led approaches to water, sanitation, and hygiene service delivery in Turkana's refugee-hosting and underserved communities. One lesson has emerged consistently: expanding access to WASH services is only part of the solution. Long-term sustainability depends on whether local enterprises, supply chains, and service delivery systems are strong enough to continue operating beyond project support.

From sanitation enterprises installing climate-resilient toilets to circular economy businesses transforming waste into clean energy, the experience in Turkana has demonstrated that WASH challenges can also be opportunities for entrepreneurship, job creation, and local economic participation.

The key insight is that sustainable WASH services are not created by infrastructure alone. They are sustained by the businesses, partnerships, financing mechanisms, and local market systems that support them.

4. What This Means

The conversation **is not about replacing humanitarian support.**

It is about identifying practical pathways that allow:

- Government to strengthen regulation, planning, and coordination.
- Development and humanitarian actors to increasingly act as facilitators and catalysts of sustainable markets.
- Private enterprises to play a greater role in delivering essential services.
- Financiers and investors to support commercially viable business models.
- Vulnerable populations to continue receiving the protection and support they require

Ultimately, the forum seeks to explore how WASH investments can generate both improved service delivery and stronger local economies.

5. Alignment to National Priorities

The PS4WASH Forum directly contributes to:

- The implementation of the Refugees Act, 2021 and the Shirika Plan, promoting refugee inclusion, self-reliance, and integrated settlement approaches.
- National priorities around localization and locally led development.
- Climate resilience and adaptive service delivery in ASAL counties.
- Public-private partnerships and sustainable financing for essential services.
- Enterprise development, job creation, and private sector participation in development

6. Why It Matters to Key Stakeholders

a) Government

The forum provides an opportunity to explore how stronger private sector participation can improve service sustainability, reduce operational burdens on public institutions, and support long-term resilience

b) Development and Humanitarian Partners

The forum offers a platform to examine approaches that can protect development gains, strengthen local markets, and deliver greater sustainability and value for investment.

c) Private Sector

The forum highlights opportunities to expand enterprise participation in WASH service delivery, build new partnerships, and unlock sustainable business opportunities within the sector.

d) Financial Institutions and Investors

The discussion provides insights into emerging market opportunities and partnership models that can help de-risk investment and support enterprise growth.

e) Refugee and Host Communities

Strong local markets and sustainable service systems contribute to improved access, greater economic participation, and more resilient communities.

About the Private Sector for WASH (PS4WASH) Forum

The Private Sector for WASH (PS4WASH) Forum 2026, convened by Swisscontact in partnership with Plan International Kenya and UNHCR is a high-level platform convened to explore practical pathways for transitioning from direct service provision towards sustainable, private sector-led WASH service delivery in Turkana County. Bringing together government, development and humanitarian partners, financiers, private sector actors, and community representatives, the forum seeks to strengthen dialogue and collaboration around market-based approaches that improve service delivery, support enterprise growth, and build more resilient WASH systems in refugee-hosting and underserved communities. The forum is designed as an action-oriented platform that advances conversations on localization, self-reliance, innovative financing, and public-private collaboration.

About Swisscontact

[Swisscontact](#) is a Swiss non-profit founded in 1959 by Switzerland's private sector and academia. Our mission: to unleash the potential of private initiative for sustainable development and shared prosperity. In Kenya, we've been at it for 28 years; working across youth skills, digital transformation, climate action, public health, and SME development. Through the Skills for Life programme, Swisscontact has maintained 14 years of continuous engagement in Turkana County, building deep relationships with local communities, government institutions, and private sector actors. This long-term presence has provided a nuanced understanding of Turkana's economic, social, and market dynamics, enabling the design and implementation of context-specific solutions that strengthen resilience, enterprise development, and sustainable service delivery.

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