



United Republic of Tanzania



## WASH Enterprise Incubator in Tanzania

Maji Safi kwa Afya Bora Ifakara (MSABI)   

MSABI is a Social Business Incubator which pioneers progressive and innovative hardware and software systems that create and “spin-off” independent and locally owned WASH service delivery businesses.

Launched in 2009, Not-for-profit , Agricultural Water Management , Groundwater Extraction , Irrigation , Purification , Water Metering , Water Storage , Cross-sector , Cross-sector: Education , East Africa: United Republic of Tanzania

Partners: HDIF, USAID/iWASH, FIU, Stone Family Foundation, GHD, Swiss TPH, Canadian Grand Challenges, WSP/Aquaya, and Nestle.

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### Problem Addressed

Seven hundred eighty million people globally lack access to safe water and 3.4 million people die each year from WASH-related illnesses. In Tanzania, only 47% of the population has access to safe water and 11% to improved sanitation. A survey of over 2,000 water points by MSABI found 75% are shallow open wells, with an average depth of 4.5 meters. Published water quality analysis done by MSABI found these sources are 1,000 times more polluted when compared to borehole water. In addition, there are over 50,000 abandoned water points in Sub-Saharan Africa representing a loss of USD 360 million and additional impacts on livelihoods and health (IIED, 2009). MSABI assessed existing hand pumps in the Kilombero Valley and found that more than 80% have operational problems.

### Innovative Approach

MSABI uses an integrated, multi-layered and multidisciplinary approach to improve the health of disadvantaged rural communities. Their program aims to educate, build capacity, and empower local communities to plan, create and sustainably manage water and sanitation businesses which leads to improved health and economic status of disadvantaged communities. They tailor solutions matched to the local context, and account for engineering, social and environmental issues.

MSABI is improving sustainability of WASH interventions through several approaches. They require local ownership of water and sanitation assets which uses a demand-driven, market-based approach. They also make sure to use only affordable and repairable appropriate technologies that are matched to the local context paired with ‘best-fit’ software management systems. They use integrated approaches which empower communities through education, capacity building, and business training to create local WASH service providers. In addition, they provide training and capacity building of civil society organizations and their staff. Conducting WASH and health research improves knowledge and understanding of WASH intervention outcomes. They also are involved in advocacy and involvement of government at all levels to support private sector approaches.

They begin with understanding the needs of the community and then design approaches that work for them. Most innovation is focused on hardware, but their methodology works because it is focused on software. They look at how to

make the hardware sustainable in the communities.

What makes MSABI different is that they have a strong WASH specialist team that spends their time in the field and are well-placed to design innovative approaches by matching engineering to social and environmental needs. The team goes house-to-house on bicycles to better be able to reach underserved people in Tanzania. They focus on WASH and develop models that fulfill a need. They strive to make solutions tailored to specific contexts that are not only innovative but also sustainable. They constantly learn about successful approaches and see what works in other local contexts and markets.

## Program Solution

MSABI is a Social Business Incubator. They pioneer progressive and innovative hardware and software systems that create and “spin-off” independent and locally owned WASH service delivery businesses. They help stimulate and create local market demand for essential services that improve the livelihoods and wellbeing of disadvantaged rural and peri-urban communities.

Within 6 years of operations, MSABI has emerged as a leader in the water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector in Tanzania. The organization has directly benefited more than 80,000 people through the provision of water and sanitation infrastructure, and more than 400,000 through hygiene sensitization programs. An integrated, multi-disciplinary and cost effective process is used to improve the health of rural communities. MSABI aims to create sustainable local WASH enterprises, capable of delivering high quality products and services through market-based solutions. Interventions are integrated and tailored to meet the specific environmental, engineering and social needs of local communities.

Some examples of businesses they have helped incubate include the manufacture of water filters, drilling of boreholes, production of hand pumps, maintenance services, micro-insurance, sanitation facilities, water kiosks, and solar drip irrigation. They have demonstrated that poor people value and will pay for quality services, and that these businesses can be financially sustainable.

The organization also facilitates WASH research in engineering and health as well as specialist training courses. MSABI is leading the development of innovative Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to improve and streamline program management, monitoring, evaluation, reporting and quality control systems. MSABI employs a local and international team of up to 75 people and has managed over USD 3 million in competitive grants. MSABI received the 2011 International Water Association Innovation Development Honour Award and was runner-up in the 2014 Nestle Creating Shared Value Global Prize.