EMPOWERING INNOVATION WHERE IT MATTERS
Dear Reader,

Our focus is on SDG-6. As water and sanitation experts, we believe in integrating these sectors with entrepreneurship to create lasting impact.

I am involved in various Cewas programmes and can proudly say that we not only support entrepreneurs but also embrace entrepreneurial thinking ourselves. In 2023, our motto was ‘Accelerate Acceleration’. To maximise impact, we launched our first Rural Water Accelerator, Sanitation Accelerator in Kenya and Uganda, and an Acceleration Program for rural water and sanitation enterprises in Nicaragua. We also initiated a WASH Accelerator in Ghana and a Green Accelerator in the Middle East, Jordan, and Lebanon. This resulted in over 40 thriving enterprises, who contribute to the overall impact created by Cewas entrepreneurs - improved WASH access for 4.7 million people.

To help water enterprises succeed, we invest in sector-specific entrepreneurship ecosystem development with support institutions, industry experts, and investors. We pioneered green ecosystem networks in Jordan and Lebanon and are now expanding this model. WASH ecosystem networks are emerging in Uganda and Ghana. We have also connected our entrepreneurs with water utilities, creating open innovation platforms in Argentina, Mexico, and Ecuador.

Curious about what’s next for Cewas? Ask our entrepreneurs about their needs, which dictate our actions. Which sectors and countries are eager to establish a WASH innovation ecosystem, and what follows after acceleration?

Sareen Malik
Cewas Board Member
Who We Are?

Cewas is the world's first dedicated water and sanitation business support organization for impact-oriented solutions.

Our Entrepreneurs

+398

at Incubation, Acceleration & Scaling Stage.

Our Impact

+4,7 mio

people benefiting from new or improved water supply and sanitation services.
What We Do

Ecosystem Development

Water and Sanitation entrepreneurs can’t operate in a vacuum. They need markets and a supportive enabling environment of access to finance, smart policies, business partners, and support actors to serve poor and marginalised communities. Cewas helps build those markets and enabling ecosystems by raising awareness, capacitating, and coordinating stakeholders on the ground - whether national, regional, or global.

Entrepreneurship Support

Supporting water and sanitation entrepreneurs with dedicated training, technical assistance, and networking opportunities is our core work. Our specialised staff coaches and trains at all stages: from ideation to incubation to acceleration to scale-up. We work on business models, product and market development, innovation and growth strategies, governance structures, and investment readiness. Additionally, we provide mentoring and guidance in decision-making processes and day-to-day challenges.
What We Do

Impact Investment Facilitation

Cewas works on both sides: we make WASH enterprises investment ready and investors WASH-sectors ready. We invest a lot of time to make sure our WASH enterprises are ready for investments so we can link and matchmake them with our broad network of investors. We also support philanthropic and impact investors to design or refine their impact investment strategies, develop new financing instruments and find the right match from our vast WASH enterprise portfolio. Cewas does not manage funds or invest itself in enterprises, but helps make investment deals possible.

Knowledge & Training

We design, implement, and evaluate hands-on training programs tailored to diverse stakeholder needs. For our dynamic training and coaching initiatives, both short-term and long-term, we leverage our expertise in business development, water & sanitation engineering, project management, and leadership. We curate training packages that catalyse organisational shifts, drive efficiency, and prepare the market for sustainable entrepreneurial solutions.

Governance & Integrity

Our water-sector specific governance and integrity training and tools have helped companies and organisations improve transparency, accountability, and participation globally, leading to enhanced efficiency, reduced costs, and improved reputation. Our integrity trainings are based on the Integrity Management Toolbox, a concept co-developed by Cewas and Water Integrity Network (WIN).

Cewas Annual Report 2023
Our Highlights in 2023

GHANA
The first Cewas Accelerator for WASH enterprises in West Africa kicks off in Ghana.

KENYA & UGANDA
18 Enterprises with solutions for rural water supply and on-site sanitation in Kenya and Uganda receive specialised sub-sector acceleration support.

JORDAN & LEBANON
Cewas regional accelerator, working with 15 green enterprises, ecosystem experts and policy partners.

NICARAGUA
The first acceleration program in Latin America, focused on rural water and sanitation enterprise in Nicaragua.

ARGENTINA, MEXICO, & ECUADOR
Cewas created an open innovation platform connecting our entrepreneurs with water utilities in Argentina, Mexico, and Ecuador.
Contributions from our entrepreneurs to SDG6

- **2.3 mio** m³ of water saved
- **3.4 mio** people with new or improved drinking water
- **4.7 mio** people benefiting from new or improved water supply and sanitation services (55% customers from vulnerable groups)
- **1.6 mio** m³ of wastewater safely treated
- **1.5 mio** people with new or improved sanitation

(cumulative figures calculated from the start of operation of businesses supported by Cewas)
Contributions from our entrepreneurs to other SDGs

(cumulative figures calculated from the start of operation of businesses supported by Cewas)

- 88,039+ tonnes of food produced or processed
- 56,300+ people acquired knowledge & skills to promote sustainable development
- 502+ women in managerial position
- 468,000+ tonnes of avoided greenhouse gas emissions
- 63,900+ tonnes of avoided resource waste
- 66,200+ tonnes of solid waste collected and adequately treated/discharged
- 187,000+ people using energy or water efficient innovations
- 4,184+ full-time equivalent jobs created
Our Ongoing Accelerators

**East Africa Rural Water Accelerator**

The East Africa Rural Water Accelerator drives sustainable business model development for rural water access in East Africa by empowering 9 high-potential enterprises towards investment readiness. Tailored for innovative rural water enterprises with the potential to impact numerous rural beneficiaries, the program encompasses various business models for water sourcing, storage, treatment, distribution, operational services, maintenance, and ancillary products. Participants benefit from customized business support, catalytic grants to surmount scaling obstacles, and dedicated assistance for connecting with investors. Moreover, they access networking opportunities with investors, industry specialists, and ecosystem partners, coupled with mentorship from seasoned water sector professionals. This collaborative effort involves Cewas, OPERO Services, and WASEU, generously supported by the Stone Family Foundation and Aqua for All.

[Know More ➔](https://san.creation.camp)

**East Africa Sanitation Accelerator**

East Africa’s first dedicated sanitation acceleration program empowers 9 innovative impact enterprises focused on on-site sanitation and resource recovery solutions. Cewas kick-off the 12 month accelerator in mid 2022 in cooperation with its local partners OPERO, WASEU and several funding partners (i.e. Aqua for All, VOxImpuls, Waterloo Foundation, Toilets for All, etc.). Key focus of the acceleration journey is to improve the profitability and scalability of the selected business models (pit emptying, decentralised wastewater treatment and reuse and solid waste management).

[Know More ➔](https://san.creation.camp)
Since 2023, the Cewas team and its local partner Skyfox are working with 10 Ghanaian WASH enterprises. In Ghana’s first-ever WASH-specific accelerator, the enterprises are developing country-specific acceleration strategies and are in the process of becoming investment ready. While the accelerator comprises also two very well-known Safe WASH enterprises (Clean Team Ghana, & Saha Global), the other are locally grown and lead raw diamonds that are gearing up for their first-ever external investment.

WASH Ghana Accelerator

The Accelerator, in partnership Flourish, Spark and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, is designed to help grow business models around different environmental solutions in terms of impact and financial sustainability. 15 enterprises across Jordan and Lebanon joined the accelerator with solutions that include among others smart resource management, PV maintenance services, solid and organic waste recycling, water-efficient agricultural production, regenerative forests, zero waste retail. In 2024 several of the businesses will continue working with cewas on tackling industry-specific policy barriers and fundraising.

Cewas Green Middle East Accelerator

Know More ➤ https://cewasga.creation.camp

Know More ➤ https://ghana.creation.camp
The Water Action in Enterprises (WAIN)

The Water Action in Enterprises (WAIN) initiative empowered medium and large industrial companies in Jordan to enhance water efficiency in their operations by crafting business cases for integrating water technologies and optimising water usage.

Through technical and financial feasibility assessments for six companies, it was established that investments in water efficiency typically yield full payback within 3 years. Initially designed to assist water and sanitation solution providers in accessing new market segments and identifying viable financing channels, the WAIN project was executed under the Green Action in Enterprises umbrella, supported by the German Government through the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

Program on Open Innovation in Water and Sanitation:
Utility Entrepreneurs 2023-2024

EPMAPS-Waters of Quito (Ecuador), the Water State Commission of Queretaro (Mexico), and Cordovan Waters (Argentina) participated in an Open Innovation program aimed at supporting innovative solutions for water and sanitation challenges. This initiative fostered collaboration between service providers and local entrepreneurs. In June 2023, Cewas launched a "Water Utilities Innovation Sprint" to train innovation managers in managing collaborative programs with entrepreneurs. Each utility identified challenges in coverage and efficiency.

A promotion campaign attracted 170 young entrepreneurs from Quito, Queretaro, and Cordoba. A hackathon was held from September 28 to October 1, 2023, resulting in three winning teams: Aquared in Cordoba, Comsagua in Quito, and SCM Planeta Verde in Queretaro. These teams are now part of the Young Water Fellowship 2023-2024, receiving virtual trainings, coaching, seed funding, and a bootcamp in Lima in May 2024.
Innovation in Water and Sanitation in LATAM & Caribbean - Publication LATINOSAN 2022

At the VI Latin American Conference on Sanitation (LATINOSAN Bolivia, 2022) in Cochabamba on October 12-13, 2022, Cewas orchestrated the Workshop on Innovations in Water and Sanitation in Latin America and the Caribbean. With over 120 participants, the workshop emphasised innovation as a crucial transformation tool for the water and sanitation sector in the region. Cewas subsequently produced a technical note capturing the workshop’s outcomes, a map of innovations and innovators categorised by sector and type. The publication aims to provoke reflection among stakeholders and advocate for heightened innovation in the sector. It furnishes practical recommendations for authorities and decision-makers, presenting diverse options to enhance and manage water and sanitation innovation ecosystems across Latin America and the Caribbean.


Under a technical cooperation agreement with the Inter-American Development Bank, Cewas assisted the Innovation, Transformation, and Data Science Management Department (GITCD) of Agua y Saneamientos Argentinos S.A. (AySA) in enhancing its internal innovation management through a five-year strategic plan. The creation of the strategic plan was a collaborative and meticulous process. In July and August 2023, Cewas led a diagnostic exercise following the ISO 56002 Innovation Management Standard, pinpointing five areas for enhancement. In the subsequent months, Cewas guided the team in defining its 2033 vision, purpose, and strategic objectives. In October 2023, Cewas conducted a workshop to delineate actions and allocate resources. Through this plan, GITCD aims to become the focal point of AySA’s transformation by December 2033, catalysing a series of opportunities and impactful projects. The innovation strategy for the 2024-2028 period concentrates on problem-solving, promoting experimentation, and aligning innovation with value generation.
Strengthening Integrity Management for Better Water & Sanitation Services in Mexico

AySA serves as the municipal water and sanitation service provider for Buenos Aires City and 26 surrounding districts. The Integrity and Good Practices Department at AySA is committed to nurturing an integrity-driven culture within the organization by imparting knowledge, advocating prevention, and encouraging the active involvement of all AySA staff in matters concerning integrity and transparency.

Within the framework of the "Consultancy for Initiating Change Processes for Integrity in Key Actors of the Water and Sanitation Sector in Latin America," financed by the IDB, Cewas collaborated with AySA's Integrity and Good Practices Department to design a custom virtual course tailored to the service provider's specific requirements. The objective was to cultivate integrity principles among AySA employees. In October 2023, Cewas facilitated a collaborative workshop to identify learning needs and structure the course. Following this, experts from Cewas and AySA worked together to develop the course content and materials, now accessible to more than 7,000 employees.
Ainda Agricultural Centre is a well-established SME based in the North of Iraq that provides a large range of agricultural input solutions to farming communities in Penjwen, Halabja, and Garmk.

In 2021, the Water and Energy for Food Grand Challenge for Development (WE4F), with Cewas as a consortium partner, began supporting Ainda in its growth transformation towards increased impact and innovation. This collaboration facilitated access for Ainda to vital technical and financial support as well as critical networks in the agri-value chain.

Being part of WE4F helped Ainda progress both financially and technically. The amount of knowledge gained in these two years of involvement with Cewas is remarkable. Ainda’s growth is most obvious in its Environment, Social and Governance components. During the Annual Convening gatherings, we felt as an important part of a larger chain of innovators working across the MENA region, South and East Africa, all with a shared purpose of producing more food with less energy and less water.

Ainda helped save a total of 657 million litters of water.

SDG Impact

Provided its products & services to 7,500 smallholder farmers and other end-users using energy or water-efficient WE4F innovation in their activities. Benefiting over 825 farmers to experience an increase in income.

Inspiring Enterprises: Ainda, Iraq

Abubakr Omer Rahim
CEO of Ainda

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The Cewas team’s hard work and dedication have made them a key expert in Lebanon’s solid waste management sector. They provided valuable advice, helped us build strong partnerships and supported our journey from B2C to B2B while keeping sustainability in mind at all times.

ReFuse addressed pollution and intricate waste management issues in the refugee camps and densely populated Lebanese urban areas. The solution was transparent and advantageous for communities most affected by pollution and waste challenges.

ReFuse enhanced waste management in Lebanon with a novel stakeholder engagement approach. Their rapid implementation of multiple collection and recycling points, combined with effective community outreach and incentives, showcased their dedication. Cewas provided early-stage guidance and later supported them through the InvestMED programme, offering coaching and financial backing, which they absorbed and applied astonishingly.

ReFuse helped save a total of 260 tonnes of materials diverted from landfills. Benefiting over 13,648 households to reduce waste, and improve their well-being. And involving 15,000 individuals in its services to understand the root of the problem, By focusing on the consumption cycle, it aims to inspire everyday actions that can lead to change.

Guglielmo Mazza
Co-Founder and CEO, ReFuse

SDG Impact

Inspiring Enterprises: ReFuse, Lebanon

(Photo: ReFuse Headquarters)
WaterQuip, a rural water supply enterprise in Uganda, offers safe and cost-effective drinking water solutions to schools and rural institutions. With the Catalytic Grant from the acceleration programme, we embarked on scaling up our operations. Leveraging the expertise of Cewas, OPERO Services, and WASEU, we developed and implemented an impact monitoring management system using smart metering technologies. This innovative approach enables us to assess and communicate our impact systematically, facilitating engagement with potential impact investors that would have been challenging to reach otherwise.

WaterQuip Uganda Limited is a socially-driven and female-led water purification solutions provider that provides state-of-the-art, chemical-free solutions to rural schools who want to make their tap water safe to drink. Their customer segments are schools and health facilities in rural and urban areas. Their unique aspects & innovative potential is a state-of-the-art water purification for safe drinking water consumption, specifically designed to meet the requirements of rural and urban settings in sub-Saharan Africa. WaterQuip’s solutions are offered both for purchase and as a subscription service which includes maintenance and spare parts.

WaterQuip has been part of the East Africa Rural Water Accelerator.

SDG Impact

WaterQuip Uganda provided access to safely managed drinking water services to 350,000 children and onboarded 600+ schools. (June 2024).

Adrine Atumanya
CEO of WaterQuip

Inspiring Enterprises: WaterQuip, Uganda

(Photo: WaterQuip, Uganda)
Inspiring Enterprises: Brilliant Sanitation Uganda

From the beginning, we learned how to make a positive difference & expand our business, how to offer our services & explore every important detail we hadn’t thought about before. We also grasped the concept of income and expenses.

Founded in 2018 by Semukoteka Abubaker, is a dynamic social enterprise that specialises in high-quality latrine emptying services across Uganda, addressing sanitation challenges through innovative gulper technology and offering a wide range of sanitation-related services in both urban and rural areas. BSUL services include toilet emptying using both cesspool trucks and gulping technology, soak pit setting, soak pit upgrading, soak pit construction, plumbing works, construction of toilets, construction of septic tanks, consultancy works, supply of sanitation equipment, and compound design.

Brilliant has been part of the East Africa Sanitation Accelerator.

SDG Impact

7,100 m3 of wastewater emptied annually

139,000 people benefiting from safely managed sanitation services due to Brilliant Sanitation Uganda support.

Semukoteka Abubaker,
CEO & Founder of Brilliant Sanitation Uganda

(Cover: Brilliant Sanitation Uganda)
Our Team

Michael Kropac  
Co-Director

Aline Bussmann  
Co-Director

Janek Hermann-Friede  
Project Manager

Johanna von Toggenburg  
Country Manager  
Lebanon

Leonella Barreto-Dillon  
Regional Director  
Latin America & the Caribbean

Johannes Heeb  
Co-founder & Project Manager

Hannah Wuzel  
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Nashwan Dhahir  
Country Manager  
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Maisam Otoum  
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Simon Joncourt  
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Reto Wey  
Board Member

Amanda Ammann  
Board Member

Roland Schertenleib  
Honorary President

Thomas Zeller  
President

Amanda Ammann  
Board Member

Reto Wey  
Board Member

Amanda Ammann  
Board Member

Roland Schertenleib  
Honorary President

Thomas Zeller  
President
Our mission is to identify, build the capacities, coach and finance WASH entrepreneurs that can really make a change. However, this journey requires collective effort – we need you!

Help us by:

Spreading the word – Follow & Subscribe to our social media channels and newsletter, and share our regular application calls to high-potential impact entrepreneurs.

Partner with us – as we don’t know it all. Our initiatives are collaborative ventures, and we love to work together with local and international partners to empower innovators in expanding access to novel or enhanced WASH services.

Invest in our enterprises – Capital is indispensable to speed up the scaling process. Whether your contribution is a modest sum or a substantial investment, we are eager to connect you with the suitable entrepreneur from our portfolio.

Finance – our ecosystem development or pipeline-building programmes. We do not have an endowment nor core-funding from anyone. We need patient investors & financiers that understand that it needs training, coaching and the respective resources to make raw diamonds shine!

Help us Create More Amazing WASH Enterprises!
How to Reach Us

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