

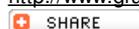
Grundfos Lifelink – Sustainable Water Solutions for the Developing World

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- [Business](#)
- [Community development](#)
- [Infrastructure](#)
- [Rural development](#)
- [Sustainable development](#)
- [Urban development](#)
- [Water Supply](#)

Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Grundfos Lifelink is delivering a new model for sustainable water supply in the developing world that enables long-term financial and technical sustainability through an innovative combination of pump solutions, revenue management, and professional service support.

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

What social or environmental problem are you trying to solve? [100 words] 884 million people do not have access to safe water. This causes 2 million deaths annually due to waterborne diseases, and it causes a great loss of human potential, when people struggle daily to cover their most basic needs. 8 billion USD are invested annually in total aid for the water sector. Unfortunately, the current models for water projects cannot cover the needs and are not sustainable. Most evaluations conclude that 50% of rural water projects fail within two years. The failures are primarily caused by lack of financing, capabilities, and spare parts for operation and maintenance.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

The Grundfos Lifelink (GLL) solution is an innovative water supply system for rural and urban water projects in the developing world. It combines a pump driven by solar energy with an automatic water dispenser including an innovative payment system based on mobile payment, remote monitoring and a professional service contract. The small user fee for water is transferred in a closed system to a service account, which covers for service and maintenance. A Grundfos certified technical team monitors all projects remotely via the internet and carry out service on behalf of the community. With the water revenue financing the on-going service and maintenance, this is a new and scalable model for long-term sustainable and self-financing water projects.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

Musingini is a community of 2000 inhabitants in rural Kenya and was the first community to benefit from a Grundfos Lifelink system in March 2009. Before, they had a hand pump, but it was broken down, so people walked several kilometers to the river to fetch water. The pump was installed in the borehole and the entire Lifelink system implemented by the Kenyan Grundfos Lifelink team. Each household got a smart card 'water key' and the community received training on how the system works and on the relation between safe water and good health. The community reports that water is now near and easy to tap, that there is no waiting time, that water borne diseases have gone down and children are more in school. Several young men have started a 'water distribution business' and others use the water for growing vegetables and tree seedlings. One year later, the community raised funds for extending a distribution line to the school, the health clinic and the central market place. Since inception, nearly 4 years ago, the community has only seen one day with interruption in the water supply, which was solved by the Kenyan technical service team

from Grundfos.

Sustainability

Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?

Who are your peers and competitors? Identify others who are working to address the same needs you are, and explain what differentiates you from them. What challenges could these players pose to your success or growth? Water Health International also works holistically with payment system on a safe water solution. There is no direct competition yet, but possibly in Asia on water treatment in the future. Elster Kent offers water metering and payment systems in Africa, but do not provide a total solution with remote monitoring and service team. The primary challenge for GLL is to change the mindset in the sector from the traditional and often unsustainable approach with short term investment in low tech hand pumps, towards a long-term approach focusing on lifecycle cost and the sustainability of the solution.

Team

Founding Story

The story of Grundfos Lifelinks starts back in 2006 when the chairman of Grundfos, Mr. Niels Due Jensen, was travelling in Thailand and saw how poor people struggled to get clean water. Mr. Jensen declared that Grundfos should do something about this and established a team to develop a sustainable solution. Both the solar driven pump and the remote monitoring system were existing products, but now combined in a totally new solution with the water dispenser and the integration of the MPESA mobile payment system developed by Safaricom in Kenya.

About You

About You

First Name

Louise

Tell us about yourself/your team.

The drive of my work is to develop new models for sustainable development building on business and cross-sector partnerships. My background is a master's degree in anthropology and innovation, which I apply in my work as a Programme Manager of Global Partnerships & Communication in Grundfos Lifelink. I am part of a dedicated team of 10 people in Denmark, 4 in Kenya, and one in Thailand. I am 34 years old, from Denmark, and considering myself a global citizen. I feel most passionate and alive when I am together with engaged people exploring new ideas and solutions.

What makes you an intrapreneur? What are the skills, capabilities, and personality traits that make you an intrapreneur?

With my combined background in anthropology and innovation, together with my experiences in the intersection between business, innovation and international development, I am able to see the bigger picture of a situation, to understand human relations and motivations, to work and mediate across sectors and cultures, and to develop new ideas and solutions in collaboration with other people. I have always been driven to find solutions to social challenges. I keep my vision and passion as my guiding star and let this guide me to where I can make the biggest difference through my work.

About Your Organization

Company Country

, VB, Bjerringbro

Primary country where this project is creating social impact Additional countries or regions

Uganda

Industry

Other

The information you provide here will be used to fill in any parts of your profile that have been left blank, such as interests, organization information, and website. No contact information will be made public. Please uncheck here if you do not want this to happen..

Innovation

Select the stage that best applies to your solution

Scaling (the next step will be growing impact on a regional or even global scale)

The Solution: Why is this solution innovative for your company and industry?

Why is this solution innovative for your company and industry? [70 words]

For Grundfos, this is the first initiative directly focused on the Base of the Pyramid segment. This requires an innovative approach in terms of technology, business models, value chains, partnerships, and service set-up compared to Grundfos' main markets. For the water and development sector, GLL changes the game from low tech and unsustainable solutions to an intelligent and holistic approach that overcomes the main challenges of financial and technical sustainability.

Impact

What has been the impact of your solution to date?

38 projects in Kenya and 2 projects in Uganda provide reliable access to safe water for nearly 100,000 people. On average, each community consumes around 1000 m3 of safe water each year. The social impacts in the community are multiple. Health clinics report that incidences of water borne diseases has reduced significantly; school teachers report that children are performing better in school due to better health and more time spent studying; micro-business activities with water distribution, brick making, and growing of vegetables and tree seedlings have started. Conflicts around management of water and money have reduced in the communities. And even the men have become more involved in fetching water, alleviating women to spend more time and energy on family and productive activities.

What is your projected impact over the next 1 to 3 years?

On all our demonstration projects in Kenya we have committed ourselves to service and maintain the water systems for a minimum of 10 years. This will provide a reliable platform for a continued socio-economic development. In the next 3 years we will scale up operations to a range of countries in East and West Africa through networks of local sales & service partners and partnerships with government, NGOs and water companies as our customers. Our goal is to reach 3 million people in 2015 with safe water from a Grundfos Lifelink dispenser, and continuously scaling up from there.

What barriers might hinder the success of your project? How do you plan to overcome them?

A: It takes time to establish a new organisation in a new country.

Solution: Alliances with local Grundfos companies or distributors as sales and service partners.

B: The cost of the water dispenser was too high to demonstrate a clear value for money.

Solution: Redesigning the dispenser from scratch and launching a new version in early 2014 at 10% of the price.

C: The 'total project solution' does not always match the need of the customer.

Solution: Apply a modular approach where the customer can buy only the dispenser or a larger set-up with pumps solutions according to needs.

Sustainability

What is the benefit or value you're creating for your business?

A: Building a new market for Grundfos in the BOP segment

B: Creating positive awareness through e.g. BBC Horizons documentary on Grundfos Lifelink and receiving the 'World Business and Development Awards' by UNDP a.o. at Rio+20.

C: Pioneering new models for business, service and partnerships in Grundfos.

D: Creating pride internally amongst Grundfos employees about the initiative

How are you leveraging internal resources (funds, time, knowledge, etc.) to support this initiative?

Grundfos is investing long-term in the development of GLL as a new business company. From being a very independent start-up company and platform for radical innovation, GLL is now becoming more integrated in the larger Grundfos Group in order to scale up. This means leveraging R&D knowledge, production facilities, market analysis, marketing and communication efforts, and not least distribution, sales and service through the local Grundfos companies in Africa and later Asia. With this set-up, we can rapidly scale up production and delivery by building on the global capacity and reach of Grundfos across 50 countries.

Expand on your answer, explaining the long-term funding and support plan.

Sustainability and social responsibility is in the DNA of Grundfos, a family owned global company with 18,000 employees, strong values and strong economy. With GLL, Grundfos is pioneering a new model of 'business with a social purpose' with top-level commitment. Grundfos is investing in the development of new products for GLL, including the new water dispenser and a new water treatment system. During 2013, GLL will get three dedicated business development managers in East Africa, West Africa, and in Southern Africa to drive the scale up. A business development manager in Thailand is preparing the introduction to the Asian market.

Tell us about your partnerships across your company and externally that are key to your project's success.

Internally, the support from top management and product development is key, together with buy in from regional managers in Africa and Asia. Externally, we have benefitted from partnerships with Safaricom, from the support of the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Kenya, and from partnerships with development actors like the UN and the Red Cross, who are our customers.

What internal support have you gotten for your project? What kind of push-back have you received?

The vision and commitment from the chairman Niels Due Jensen and the management to invest in this initiative has been crucial to keep momentum.

Being a radical new business, there has been many disbelievers, but the people who believe in our mission and support us directly or indirectly is growing both internally and externally.

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