

# Clean Water, Health, and Quilombola Empowerment

## A Two-Phase Initiative for Sustainable Community Development

This report details a transformative project empowering Quilombola communities in Northern Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro. Through **two comprehensive phases**, we deliver sustainable solutions for clean drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene, while fostering economic development and strengthening cultural identity.

Impacting **150 families** with a total investment of **US\$ 94,800**, this initiative addresses historical infrastructure challenges and builds resilient, self-sufficient communities.

# Executive Summary

The "Clean Water, Health, and Quilombola Empowerment" project stems from the urgent need to address water and sanitation insecurity affecting Quilombola communities in Northern Espírito Santo and the State of Rio de Janeiro. Phase 1, budgeted at US\$ 69,800, will implement complete water systems in two pilot communities, build 12 adequate sanitary facilities, conduct capacity-building workshops, establish a community kitchen/restaurant, and create cultural tourism routes, directly benefiting approximately 150 families.

For Phase 2, we aim to scale the impact with an additional investment of US\$ 25,000 via a Global Grant, expanding the number of sanitary facilities, extending water distribution networks, strengthening economic development initiatives, and broadening the monitoring program. This two-phase structure allows for methodology validation, establishment of solid local partnerships, and creation of success stories before expansion.



**"Clean water saves lives. Sanitation protects. Hygiene prevents. In Quilombo communities, this means childhood without pain, women with time, and elders with peace."**

This document details the complete intervention plan, including historical context, technical solutions, timeline, budget, sustainability strategies, partners, and monitoring mechanisms. We also present sponsorship options for different investment levels, ensuring transparency and measurable impact at each stage of the process.

# Who Are the Quilombos

Quilombos represent much more than historical settlements; they are living communities born of resistance and the pursuit of freedom and dignity. Originally formed by enslaved people who fled or rebelled against the Brazilian slave system, these territories transformed into spaces for the preservation of ancestral African knowledge, communal ways of life, and unique cultural practices that enrich Brazil's intangible heritage.

These communities are guardians of traditional knowledge concerning environmental management, natural medicine, religious expressions, construction techniques, subsistence agriculture, and artistic manifestations that have endured through generations. Collective work and community relations based on solidarity and resource sharing represent fundamental values in the Quilombola social organization, contrasting with the prevailing individualism in contemporary society.

Faith and spirituality, often expressed in unique religious syncretism, also constitute pillars of strength and cohesion in these communities, serving as unifying elements and sources of cultural resistance.

Even after constitutional recognition and the creation of specific public policies, many Quilombola communities remain invisible and face severe structural challenges. The absence of potable water and basic sanitation is one of the most critical manifestations of this historical institutional invisibility, directly affecting health, dignity, and development possibilities.

Our project directly connects with this historical context, recognizing that guaranteeing access to safe water and adequate sanitation is not merely a matter of infrastructure, but an act of historical reparation and valorization of human dignity. By working side-by-side with these communities, we honor their protagonism and strengthen their capacity for self-determination, contributing to the preservation of their cultural legacy while supporting their fundamental right to a healthy life.

# Where We Will Operate

Our area of operation focuses on two strategic regions in Southeast Brazil with a significant presence of quilombola communities facing similar challenges regarding access to potable water and basic sanitation.

## Northern Espírito Santo

- Rural communities in São Mateus
- Conceição da Barra
- Linhares
- Jaguaré

## State of Rio de Janeiro

- Northern Fluminense
- Lakes Region
- Coastal Lowlands

### Northern Fluminense

- Quissamã  
(Machadinha, Barra, Palmeiras)
- Carapebus
- Tapera
- Rural areas of Campos dos Goytacazes

### Lakes Region and Surroundings

- Rio das Ostras
- Casimiro de Abreu
- Silva Jardim
- Cabo Frio
- São Pedro da Aldeia

### Metropolitan Region

- Araruama
- Iguaba
- Búzios
- Saquarema
- Maricá
- Niterói
- Itaboraí
- Tanguá

The pilot communities for Phase 1 will be selected through a participatory process, considering criteria such as urgency of needs, community engagement, technical feasibility, and replication potential. The geographical proximity among some of these communities will also be considered to optimize logistical resources and facilitate the sharing of knowledge among the beneficiary locations.

# Problem and Justification

The Quilombola communities in the region face a critical situation of water insecurity that profoundly impacts their health, economic development, and quality of life. This reality is characterized by multiple interconnected factors that form a persistent cycle of vulnerability.



## Precarious Water Access

Shallow wells without adequate protection are prevalent, susceptible to contamination by pesticides, animal, and human waste. The absence of proper chlorination and filtration systems compromises the microbiological quality of the water. Many families have to walk long distances to fetch water, a task that falls primarily on women and children.



## Inadequate Sanitation

Sanitary facilities are often improvised, with rudimentary septic tanks that contaminate groundwater. The improper disposal of waste contributes to the proliferation of vectors. There are no adequate systems for wastewater management.



## Health Impacts

High incidence of waterborne diseases, especially infant diarrhea, intestinal parasitosis, and skin diseases. Children miss school days due to preventable illnesses. The elderly are particularly vulnerable to complications arising from these conditions.

This situation is aggravated by the historical institutional invisibility of Quilombola communities, which are often excluded from municipal sanitation and water supply plans. Despite the constitutional recognition of their territorial rights, access to basic services remains precarious. Public policies aimed at urban areas rarely reach these rural communities, and when they do, they often fail to consider their cultural and geographical specificities.

Water is not only a vital resource but also an element of strong cultural and spiritual significance for Quilombola communities. Its scarcity or contamination represents a threat not only to physical health but also to the continuity of traditional cultural practices.

The opportunity for transformation lies precisely in the implementation of simple, culturally appropriate, and sustainable solutions. Interventions such as protecting water sources, implementing adequate filtration and chlorination systems, building latrines adapted to local

# Overall Objective

By June 2026, the project aims to ensure sustainable access to potable water, adequate sanitation, and hygiene practices, combined with health education initiatives, income generation, and cultural strengthening in selected pilot quilombola communities in Northern Espírito Santo and the State of Rio de Janeiro.

## Potable Water

Implement complete systems for capturing, treating, storing, and distributing potable water that meet the quality standards established by the Ministry of Health.

## Adequate Sanitation

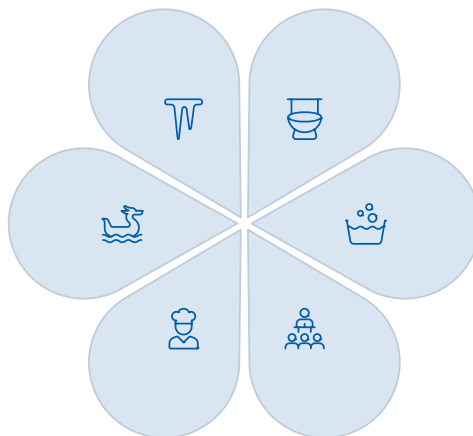
Construct culturally appropriate and environmentally sustainable sanitary facilities, respecting local soil characteristics and practices.

## Cultural Appreciation

Develop cultural tourism itineraries that celebrate quilombola identity, with a focus on special programming for Black Consciousness Day (November 20).

## Income Generation

Establish sustainable economic initiatives based on traditional gastronomy, handicrafts, family farming, and beekeeping, strengthening the financial autonomy of the communities.



## Hygiene

Establish strategic handwashing points and promote educational campaigns for behavioral change related to hygiene practices.

## Health Education

Train community leaders as knowledge multipliers on environmental health, disease prevention, and management of implemented systems.

This multidimensional objective will be achieved through a participatory approach, involving the communities in all stages of the process, from planning to implementation and monitoring. The sustainability of the interventions will be ensured by forming community management committees, training local operators, and establishing preventive maintenance mechanisms.

Progress will be evaluated semi-annually through clearly defined metrics, including water quality indicators, incidence of waterborne diseases, adoption of hygiene practices, functioning of implemented systems, and economic results of income generation initiatives.

# Solution (WASH + Local Development)

Our proposal integrates water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions with local development and cultural appreciation strategies, creating a virtuous cycle of transformation in the selected quilombola communities.

## Water

- Protection of natural sources and existing wells against contamination
- Installation of filtration and chlorination systems appropriate to local conditions
- Construction of elevated reservoirs to ensure adequate pressure
- Implementation of distribution networks with strategic access points
- Installation of handwashing stations in communal areas

## Sanitation

- Construction of simple sanitation facilities adapted to soil conditions
- Implementation of primary effluent treatment systems
- Training for proper maintenance of facilities
- Educational campaigns for behavior change
- Appropriate solid waste management

## Education

- Workshops on personal and domestic hygiene practices
- Training in system operation and maintenance
- Training in community-based water resource management
- Training of local operators as multipliers
- Development of culturally appropriate educational materials

## Development & Culture

### Quilombola Gastronomy

Implementation of a community kitchen/restaurant equipped for preparing traditional foods, serving both the local community and visitors. This initiative includes:

- Adaptation of existing physical space
- Acquisition of basic kitchen equipment

### Economic Diversification

Strengthening complementary productive activities that value traditional knowledge:

- Handicrafts with local materials
- Organic family farming
- Sustainable beekeeping
- Production of medicinal plants

# Phase 1 Deliverables (US\$ 69,800)

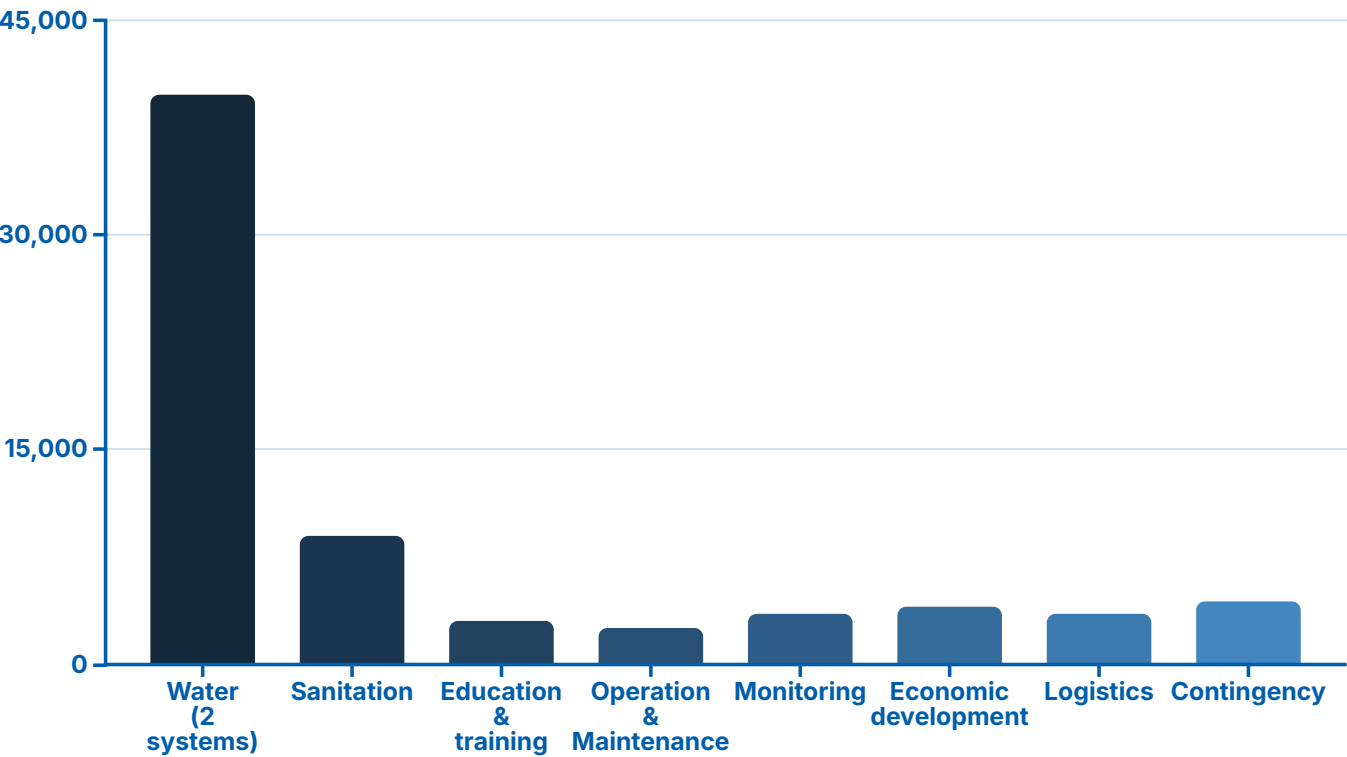
The first phase of the project, with an investment of US\$ 69,800, focuses on two strategically selected pilot communities and includes a comprehensive set of interventions to establish the program's foundations and validate methodologies that will be expanded in Phase 2.

1	2	3
<b>Complete Water Systems</b> Implementation of 2 integrated systems including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Protection of existing sources/wells</li><li>• Installation of filtration and chlorination systems</li><li>• Construction of elevated reservoirs</li><li>• Distribution network with strategic access points</li><li>• Water quality monitoring systems</li></ul>	<b>Simple Sanitation Facilities</b> Construction of 12 adequate sanitary units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Designed considering local soil conditions</li><li>• Adapted to the cultural needs of the communities</li><li>• Primary effluent treatment systems</li><li>• Water points for personal hygiene</li></ul>	<b>Training Program</b> Conducting 6 workshops covering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Personal and domestic hygiene practices</li><li>• Operation and maintenance of implemented systems</li><li>• Community management of water resources</li><li>• Training of local multipliers</li><li>• Safe food handling</li><li>• Planning of cultural activities</li></ul>
1	2	3
<b>Operational Support</b> Establishment of initial O&M structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stock of water treatment supplies (3 months)</li><li>• Spare parts for preventive maintenance</li></ul>	<b>Monitoring</b> Monitoring system for 12 months: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Periodic water quality analyses</li><li>• Health indicator monitoring</li><li>• Evaluation of hygiene practice adoption</li></ul>	<b>Economic Development</b> Income generation initiatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 "light" quilombola kitchen/restaurant</li><li>• Development of visual identity (branding)</li><li>• Training in basic</li></ul>



# Phase 1 Budget

The total budget for Phase 1 of the project is US\$ 69,800, distributed among different components that complement each other to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable approach. The allocation of resources reflects the priorities identified during the preliminary diagnosis, with emphasis on water systems which represent the most immediate need for the communities.



Component	Value (USD)	Details
Water (2 systems)	39,800	Includes source protection, filtration/chlorination equipment, reservoirs, piping, connections, valves, and access points
Sanitation	9,000	Construction of 12 simple latrines with primary effluent treatment system
Education & training	3,000	Conducting 6 workshops, production of educational materials, and training of multipliers

# Phase 2 (Global Grant) — +US\$ 25,000

Phase 2 of the project, planned for implementation after the successful validation of Phase 1, will seek to expand the impact and scope of interventions through a Global Grant from the Rotary Foundation, with an estimated additional investment of US\$ 25,000. This expansion will be made possible by international partnerships and the strategic use of the District Designated Fund (DDF), amplified by the World Fund match as available.

## Sanitation Expansion

Expansion of the number of adequate sanitary facilities, reaching at least 20 more units strategically distributed in the beneficiary communities. This expansion will allow for greater population coverage and a significant reduction in environmental contamination.

## Cultural Routes

Complete structuring of tourist-cultural itineraries, including signage, interpretive material, advanced training for local guides, and articulation with regional tour operators. Annual calendar of cultural events beyond the November 20th date.

## Network Amplification

Extension of water distribution networks to areas not covered in Phase 1, including the installation of additional access points and household connections where feasible. Increased storage capacity to meet expanded demand.

## Economic Strengthening

Consolidation of the Quilombola restaurant infrastructure, including improvements to the physical space, acquisition of complementary equipment, and expansion of service capacity. Development of more robust marketing and commercialization strategies.



## Additional Components of Phase 2

### Expanded Monitoring

### Institutional Strengthening

# Results and Indicators (M&E)

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential components of this project, allowing us to track progress, identify needs for adjustments, and measure the real impact of interventions in the beneficiary communities. We have developed a comprehensive set of indicators that cover both technical and social aspects of the project.



**≥150 families with safe drinking water**

Continuous access to water that meets Ministry of Health quality standards, with comparative measurements before and after the intervention.



**-40% reduction in child diarrhea in 12 months**

Significant reduction in the incidence of child diarrhea cases and other waterborne diseases in the pilot communities, compared to the initial baseline.



**≥12 toilets + ≥6 washing points**

Adequate sanitary facilities and functional handwashing points implemented and in regular use by the community.



**≥6 workshops / ≥200 participations**

Conducting training workshops with active participation from community members, contributing to the dissemination of knowledge and healthy practices.



**1 "light" kitchen operating**

Community kitchen/restaurant implemented and operating regularly, with at least 20 people trained in food preparation and basic management.



**≥300 visitors/year at the Nov 20th event**

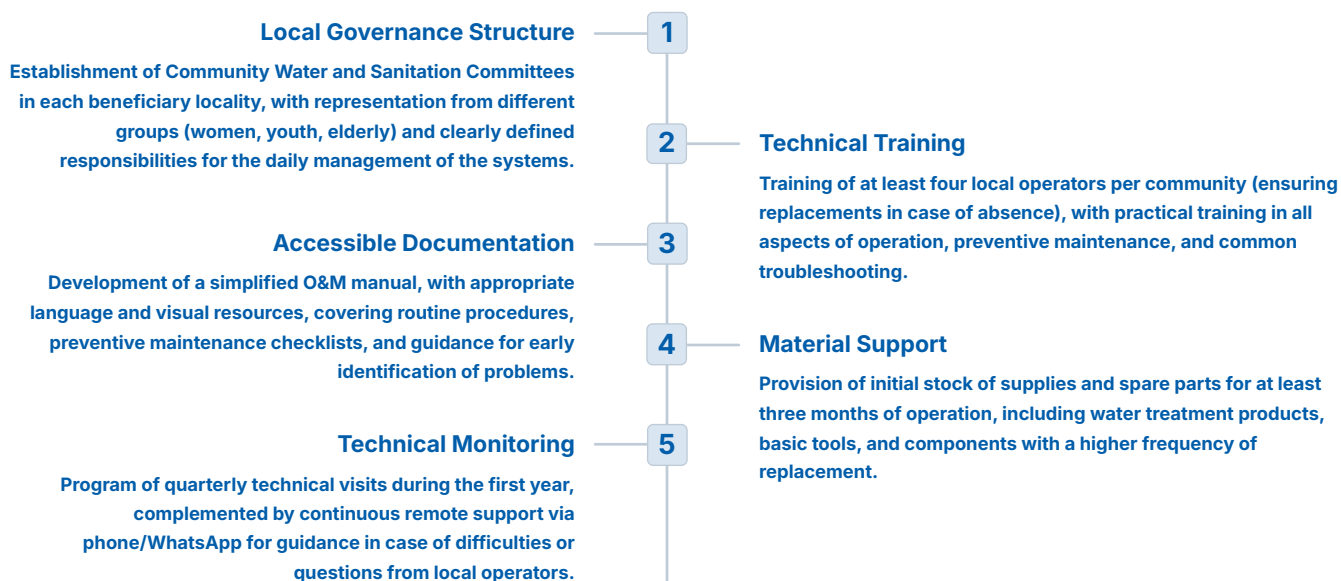
Cultural event on Black Consciousness Day established and attracting visitors, contributing to cultural appreciation and income generation in the community.

## Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix

Indicator	Baseline	Target	Source	Frequency

# Sustainability and O&M

Long-term sustainability is a central aspect of this project, with specific strategies to ensure that the benefits endure far beyond the implementation period. Our Operation and Maintenance (O&M) plan integrates technical, social, and financial elements to ensure the continuity of the implemented systems and practices.



## Institutional Integration and Financial Sustainability

### Articulation with Public Services

Establishment of formal partnerships with:

- Primary Health Care (PHC) and Family Health Strategy (FHS) for continuous monitoring of water-related health indicators
- Local schools for incorporating hygiene and sanitation themes into the curriculum
- Municipal secretariats for eventual complementary technical support
- Rural technical assistance entities for integration with other initiatives

### Financial Sustainability Mechanisms

- Establishment of symbolic community contributions proportional to the economic capacity of families
- Creation of a community fund for maintenance, with clear rules for its use
- Allocation of a percentage of the revenue generated by the restaurant for the maintenance of water and sanitation systems
- Complementary fundraising from local supporters for extraordinary needs

Transparency in resource management is a fundamental element of sustainability, with regular and accessible accountability to all community members. Simple mechanisms for recording and documenting will be implemented, adapted to the local context, ensuring that everyone can monitor both the technical status of the systems and the financial aspects related to maintenance.

- ① Experience shows that community water and sanitation systems have greater longevity when communities develop a sense of collective ownership, combined with local technical capacity and transparent management mechanisms.

The sustainability plan is not static, but foresees periodic evaluations and adjustments as needed, responding to community dynamics and any unforeseen challenges. This flexibility, combined with solid foundations of capacity building and governance structure, is essential for the long-term resilience of the project.

# Governance and Partners

The project's governance structure has been carefully designed to ensure efficient implementation, transparency in resource management, and respect for community leadership. A clear definition of roles and responsibilities among the various actors involved is fundamental to the initiative's success.

## Executive Leadership

Rotary E-Club D4751 will act as the project leader, responsible for overall coordination, financial management, accountability to sponsors, and liaison with national and international partners.

## Beneficiary Entity

Acquirerj (Association of Quilombola Communities of the State of Rio de Janeiro) or a similar organization will be the formally recognized beneficiary entity, ensuring legal representation and continuity of actions.

## Local Mobilization

Churches and local organizations will work on community awareness, logistical support, and facilitating spaces for educational and training activities in the beneficiary locations.

## Community Articulation

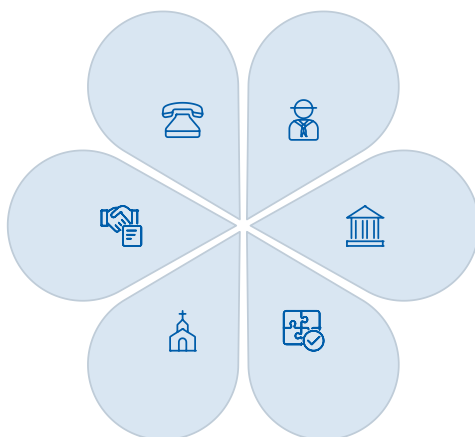
CONAQ ES/RJ (National Coordination of Articulation of Rural Quilombola Communities) will be responsible for mediation with the communities, validation of local priorities, and mobilization for effective participation at all stages.

## Institutional Support

Municipal Health and Education Secretariats will contribute epidemiological data, logistical support, integration with existing programs, and support for educational activities in the communities.

## Technical Advisory

UFF (Fluminense Federal University) and UENF (Northern Fluminense State University) will provide specialized technical advice, laboratory analyses, and support in documenting and disseminating results.



# Risks and Mitigation

Risk analysis is a fundamental step for the successful planning and implementation of the project. We have identified the main potential challenges and developed specific strategies to mitigate them, increasing the chances of success and sustainability of the initiative.

## Logistics and Access

### Risk:

Difficulties in accessing Quilombola communities, especially during rainy seasons, can cause implementation delays and increase costs.

### Mitigation Strategies:

- Detailed planning considering favorable climatic windows
- Prior articulation with local leaders for logistical support
- Identification of alternative routes and contingency plans
- Strategic storage of critical materials in safe locations close to the communities

## Community Engagement

### Risk:

Low participation or internal conflicts within the communities can compromise local ownership and the sustainability of the interventions.

### Mitigation Strategies:

- Co-creation approach from the initial phases of the project
- Careful selection of community representatives respecting local structures
- Transparent and regular communication about all stages
- Flexibility to adapt project aspects to local preferences
- Professional conflict mediation when necessary

## Maintenance and Supplies

### Risk:

Difficulties in continuously obtaining water treatment supplies and spare parts after the project ends may compromise the functionality of the systems.

### Mitigation Strategies:

- Establishment of an O&M fund with initial project resources
- Provision of strategic stock for the first

## Financial Governance

### Risk:

Challenges in transparent and efficient resource management can generate mistrust and compromise both the relationship with sponsors and the sustainability of the actions.

### Mitigation Strategies:

- Establishment of a dedicated bank account exclusively for the project

# Sponsorship Packages

We have developed a set of sponsorship options that allow for different levels of engagement and contribution, making the project accessible to various types of supporters. Each package represents a concrete and measurable component of the project, allowing sponsors to clearly visualize the impact of their contribution.

Value (USD)	Included Components	Estimated Impact	Recognition
US\$ 2,500	1 complete sanitary unit + 1 handwashing station + educational material	Directly benefits one family (4-6 people) and contributes to community health	Identification plaque on the sanitary unit and mention in reports
US\$ 5,000	Spring/well protection + family hygiene kits + 1 training workshop	Impacts approximately 15-20 families with safer water and improved practices	Plaque at the protected spring and recognition in educational materials
US\$ 10,000	Integrated water+sanitation module for a community cluster	Complete solution for approximately 20 families (~80-100 people)	Main plaque on the system and prominent participation in events
US\$ 25,000	1 complete water system (without extensive distribution network)	Provision of safe water for up to 75 families (~300-375 people)	Naming rights for the system and recognition in all communications
US\$ 50,000	2 partial water systems + 10 sanitary units + educational component	Comprehensive solution for two smaller communities (total ~500 people)	Lead sponsor status with prominence in all documentation

# Timeline

The project is structured for implementation over 17 months, from August 2025 to December 2026, following a logical sequence of activities that ensure adequate preparation, careful execution, and consistent monitoring.

## Detailed Timeline - Phase 1





# Transparency and Communication

Transparency and effective communication are fundamental pillars of this project, ensuring accountability to sponsors, continuous community engagement, and the dissemination of learnings. We have established a comprehensive system for documentation and information sharing that meets the needs of all involved stakeholders.



## Periodic Reports

Preparation of detailed semi-annual reports containing:

- Physical and financial progress of activities
- Photographic records of interventions
- Results of water quality analyses
- Health indicators and practice adoption
- Testimonials from community members
- Challenges faced and solutions implemented



## Visual Identification

Installation of communication elements in communities:

- Signs identifying systems and sanitation facilities with Rotary and sponsor logos
- Informative panels about the project in strategic locations
- Visual educational material on use and maintenance
- Appropriate signage to guide visitors



## Digital Platform

Development of an accessible information system:

- QR code on signs directing to the project page
- Online portal with updated information and results
- Photo gallery documenting the evolution of interventions
- Transparent financial accountability
- Channel for questions and suggestions from interested parties

## Communication Strategies by Audience

### For Beneficiary Communities

- Monthly community meetings for progress updates
- Information boards in central locations, regularly updated
- Simplified visual material with water quality data
- WhatsApp group for daily communications
- Quarterly printed newsletters for local distribution
- Participatory photographic documentation carried out by community youth

### For Sponsors and Partners

- Detailed semi-annual reports sent via email
- Monthly newsletters with quick progress updates
- Quarterly video conferences for results presentation
- Invitations for field visits at strategic moments
- Formal recognition at events and publications
- Access to image bank and testimonials for institutional use

## Public Communication and Dissemination

The project also includes strategies to share learnings and results with the wider public, contributing to the positive visibility of quilombola communities and to the replication of the initiative:

- Articles in Rotary publications and other specialized journals
- Participation in events and conferences on water, sanitation, and community development
- Production of a video documentary about the process and impacts (with explicit authorization from the communities)
- Detailed case study for educational and institutional use
- Creation of guiding material for replicating the experience in other contexts

Transparency is not merely an administrative obligation, but a fundamental value that permeates all project activities, contributing to the building of trust, collective learning, and the sustainability of interventions.

All communication materials will be developed respecting the dignity and protagonism of quilombola communities, avoiding assistance-based approaches or those that reinforce stereotypes. Visual and textual representation will be validated by the communities themselves before any public dissemination.

# Contact

## Project Coordination

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For more information about the project, to request additional documentation, or to schedule meetings, please contact us via the channels above. We are available to clarify doubts and discuss partnership opportunities.

## Complementary Documentation

The following documents are available upon request:

- Preliminary inventory of Quilombola communities (D4751 RJ/ES region)
- Detailed Monitoring and Evaluation Matrix
- Comprehensive Sustainability and O&M Plan
- Detailed Budget (BOM - Bill of Materials)
- Support and intention letters from partners
- Preliminary technical studies

All material can be provided in digital or printed format, as per the applicant's preference.

## About Rotary E-Club D4751

Rotary E-Club D4751 is an innovative club that brings together Rotarians committed to humanitarian service through a virtual platform. Belonging to District 4751, which covers part of the states of Rio de Janeiro and Espírito Santo, the club has distinguished itself by implementing sustainable social impact projects in various areas, with emphasis on water, sanitation, health, and community development.

The club's Humanitarian Projects Committee is formed by professionals with experience in social project management, sanitary engineering, public health, and community mobilization, ensuring a multidisciplinary and technically sound approach to the initiatives implemented.

"The 'Clean Water, Health, and Quilombola Empowerment' project represents our vision of transformative Rotarianism, combining technical interventions with deep respect for human dignity and cultural appreciation. We invite you to be part of this journey of positive impact alongside the Quilombola communities."

Rotary E-Club D4751  
District 4751 - Rio de Janeiro/Espírito Santo  
Rotary International

 To learn more about Rotary International and its global work in water and sanitation, visit [www.rotary.org](http://www.rotary.org)