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CONFERENCE

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## UN 2023 Water Conference Side Event

*Data for Decision-Making: Committing to improve data use and insights*

8:00am- 9:30am, Thursday, Mar 23, 2023  
Deloitte Offices

Organized by: *The Aquaya Institute, Deloitte, Uganda Ministry of Water and the Environment, mWater, UNICEF/WHO Joint Monitoring Programme, Global Communities, World Vision, and the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.*

### **Background on the event (one paragraph)**

“Data and Information” is one of five Sustainable Development Goal 6 accelerators to increase progress towards universal water and sanitation. In this session panelists and participants, including representatives from Member States, civil society and the private sector, discussed a set of commitments as a call to action to encourage better use of data for decision-making in the water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) sector.

### **Water Action Agenda (one paragraph, if possible, please include the link to your commitment in the [Water Action Agenda database](#))**

This session did not submit a commitment to the database, but presented a set of draft commitments for consideration by our attendees during the discussion. Our hope is that this session began a conversation among our sector partners. The draft commitments included: 1) Establish sector alignment around key definitions of standard indicators to promote data comparability and coordination.; 2) Demonstrate open data sharing between governments, implementers, private sector, and other stakeholders to maximize existing resources; 3) Promote data quality standards to facilitate data reuse and provide decision-makers with accurate, reliable information; 4) Allocate funding for improving the technical capacity and infrastructure of local and national governments to collect and maintain data; and 5) Develop open-source or low-cost interfaces that use data analytics to track trends and address actionable questions.

### **Key Issues discussed (5- 8 bullet points)**

- The Aquaya Institute and mWater both presented on ways data is currently being used for decision-making, including the use of AI for identifying WASH-vulnerable populations, and the use of data analytics and dashboards by governments for better planning.
- In the panel discussion, speakers and panelists discussed the challenges to data collection and use for decision-makers, including: manual data collection systems, data collection systems not generating data that is easy for decision makers to analyze, and the lack of standardized and harmonized high-quality data. T
- Speakers and panelists then presented opportunities in the sector to increase the use of data by decision makers, including: making data collected more transparent and accessible, turning investments in data technology into investments in data analytics and capacity building, and collecting datasets demanded by the stakeholders who will use them.
- The session concluded with panellists sharing actions their respective organizations will take towards implementing a better culture around the use of data.

### **Key recommendations for action (5 - 6 bullet points)**

Many panelists suggested next steps their organizations would consider towards making these commitments a reality during our discussion (subject to change).

- Aquaya's Draft Commitment: The Aquaya Institute commits to making all non-confidential data collected through its projects open-source and publicly available.
- World Vision's Draft Commitment: World Vision recognizes the importance of open data and local capacity-building in support of country-led monitoring. We therefore commit to "reimagining" the asset transfer process by emphasizing both the transition of the built infrastructure itself as well as the underlying data that informed the design, development, and eventual operation of that infrastructure.
- Deloitte's Draft Commitment: Deloitte commits to seeking other opportunities to use the data it collects in its programs in ways that go beyond the original intended use so that Deloitte maximizes the analyses possible with data collected and adds value to as many stakeholders in the sector as possible.
- Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Draft Commitment: For grants that include major data collection efforts or research of value to the field, we commit to provide resources to grantees to disseminate non-sensitive de-identified data. We also commit that we will encourage all grantees to engage government in the dissemination process.
- JMP commitment: To make publicly available summaries of all national WASH data used for SDG reporting, along with the scripts used to process the data and produce SDG estimates. We also commit to highlighting inequalities by disaggregating data by wealth and urban/rural settings, and increasingly by sub-national regions.
- Uganda Ministry of Water and the Environment Draft commitment: Upgrade of MWE's Databases to electronic databases to improve data collection, storage, data manipulation, and information sharing to improve decision making. Develop baseline data to facilitate progress tracking.