

# Press Release: The Kampala WASH Symposium

20<sup>th</sup> June, 2016

## The Kampala WASH Symposium: Looking beyond ordinary approaches

Kampala, Uganda – Today marked the first day of the Kampala Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) symposium which will run until 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2016, at the Speke Resort - Munyonyo. The theme of the event is: *From Projects to Services - WASH Sustainability through Whole Systems Approaches*. It is the sixth sustainability forum of its kind, and the first to be held on the African continent.

WASH Sustainability forums bring together hundreds of experts, government representatives, donors, and other WASH stakeholders to explore how each can better play their role in ensuring that water and sanitation services last for generations. They began in 2010 and have continued annually, with a goal of improving approaches to sustainability. The forums have grown into the world's foremost discussion focused on ensuring that WASH services last.

This year's event is hosted by Uganda's Ministry of Water and Environment, in partnership with UNICEF, GIZ, IRC, Global Water Challenge, Agua consult and Eclipse. For the first time ever the organisers of the WASH Sustainability Forum are joining forces with the Secretariat for the Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA) to combine the 2016 WASH Sustainability Forum and the 21<sup>st</sup> SuSanA Meeting.

The objective of the symposium is to provide a platform for stakeholders in WASH projects to discuss methods for evaluating interventions; explore political economy topics; and examine how systems can be engaged to ensure that services last over time. The Symposium further aims to look beyond the conventional notion of "projects" to discuss how WASH stakeholders can and should work together within the wider complex systems that deliver services.

For decades, WASH strategies have followed a "business as usual" approach of implementing projects that have largely remained focused on the project and under-emphasized the broader context. For example, in the rural sub-sector, external funding often finances WASH projects that are unrealistically expected to be maintained entirely by local beneficiaries. Furthermore, in urban areas, sustainability of services is often threatened when resources are mainly directed towards infrastructure, not providing for developing and strengthening capacity of critical institutions.

The Symposium will therefore specifically aim to enable participants to reach a common understanding on why old approaches to addressing challenges of delivering universal and permanent WASH services do not work. It will also showcase benefits of engaging with whole system approaches as a pre-requisite to successfully scaling up sustainable services. Additionally, the Symposium will focus on changes that are necessary for how WASH interventions are conceived, implemented and sustained over time. This event will present emerging perspectives on how to drive whole-system change and support the building of robust national systems at a scale capable of providing universal access.

The symposium will host over 170 participants from 26 countries, including 15 different African countries. Representatives of different governments, donors, researchers, and practitioners from Uganda, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa, the Netherlands, the US, and the UK among others, will also be present.

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## Information on Host/Organizers

The **Ministry of Water and Environment** is the host of the Kampala WASH Symposium. The Ministry is committed to universal access to sustainable and equitable WASH resources and services and is committed to building national systems to make this possible. The Ministry is also committed to responding to complexity with flexibility, innovation and rigour.

**UNICEF** is a leading humanitarian and development agency working globally and in Uganda for the rights of every child. Child rights begin with safe shelter, nutrition, protection from disaster and conflict, and traverse the life cycle: pre-natal care for healthy births, clean water and sanitation, health care and education. UNICEF has spent nearly 70 years working to improve the lives of children and their families.

**GIZ** – In 2007, the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) declared Uganda a priority country for development cooperation. Water and sanitation are one of their main priority areas. In the WASH sector they cooperate with national and international partners such as the Ministry of Water and Environment and co-funders USAID and the Swiss Development Cooperation. As commissioning partner, GIZ provides expertise and capacity development, supports transparency and accountability, and project management support.

**IRC** is a think-and-do-tank that works with people in the poorest communities in the world, with local and national governments, and with non-governmental organisations (NGOs), to help them develop water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services that last not for years, but forever. IRC helps people to make the change from short-term interventions to long-term services that will transform their lives and their futures. Through its country presence in Uganda, Ghana, Ethiopia, Burkina Faso, India, Honduras, and its work in Africa, Asia and Latin America, IRC co-leads an Agenda for Change to make universal, equitable and sustainable WASH services by 2030 a reality.

**Global Water Challenge (GWC)** is non-profit coalition of leading organizations committed to universal access to clean water and sanitation. GWC has played a leading role in convening leaders from around the world over the past five WASH Sustainability Forums to ensure lasting WASH systems through collaboration between governments, communities, civil society and the private sector. GWC's commitment to sustainability goes beyond these meetings, leading innovative programs such as the Water Point Data Exchange and other efforts that help to improve service delivery around the world.

The **Sustainable Sanitation Alliance (SuSanA)** is an open international alliance of members who are dedicated to advancing sustainable sanitation systems that take into consideration all aspects of sustainability. Founded 9 years ago, the alliance has grown to more than 6,500 individual members and 270 partner organisations. Over the past years SuSanA has been an important platform to discuss sustainability in sanitation and the SuSanA Secretariat has hosted a series of SuSanA meetings in Africa to date (in Durban, Addis Ababa, Kigali and Dakar).

**Aquaconsult** is a UK-based consulting company providing a range of technical assistance and consulting inputs principally in the field of water supply, sanitation and hygiene and related aspects including decentralised service delivery, public administration reform and community organisation. Our extensive track record in the field of sustainable service delivery provides cutting edge knowledge with practical experience of ways to improve impact and the long-term legacy of investments.

**Eclipse** is a local consultancy contracted as event manager, responsible for the logistics of the Symposium.

*For more information, visit: [www.KampalaWASHSymposium.org](http://www.KampalaWASHSymposium.org)*



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