

REPORT — 22 – 24 MAY, 2024

Majipreneurs Summit

MAJI
PRENEURS



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Introduction

The Majipreneurs Summit bridges the gap between entrepreneurs, investors, development partners and policy makers, creating a supportive space and common mission to build an ecosystem for sustainable water and sanitation initiatives.

The second Majipreneurs Summit was organized from 22 to 24 May 2024 at the Design Hub in Kampala. Themed 'Shaping the Ecosystem. Navigating Opportunities. Building impactful WASH enterprises.', the summit set out to:

- To explore WASH entrepreneurship potential & support needs
- To foster collaboration between entrepreneurs, financiers, experts, and policy makers to support the growth and scaling of more sustainable water and sanitation services
- To discover opportunities for impactful WASH enterprises and support initiatives
- Develop Initiatives to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem for WASH

Through a Hackathon, inspiring inputs, engaging workshops and co-creation exercises and meaningful networking more than 180 entrepreneurs, funders, policy makers and sector experts engaged in collaborative learning, discovered opportunities for water-related entrepreneurship, established support needs and developed initiatives to strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem for WASH enterprises.

The summit built on a preparation process that engaged approx. 50 movers and shakers from the Ugandan WASH entrepreneurship ecosystem in focus groups that identified key barriers and identified initiatives that could enable entrepreneurs to thrive. These were further refined throughout the summit, resulting in concepts for four initiatives that will be further pursued in follow-up to the summit:

- A MajiFund to synchronize and leverage funding in order to create more MajiCorns
- A support programme to upgrade rural water supply systems
- An Area Service Providers Coalition
- An advocacy platform for the needs of WASH entrepreneurs

The Majipreneurs Hackathon is a two-day intensive event that formed an integral part of the summit tailored to 36 aspiring entrepreneurs within the water sector. Participants collaborated in 11 teams to shape or refine business solutions to solve specific challenges in the water sector, benefiting vulnerable populations. The results were presented to a jury of national and international entrepreneurs, sector experts and investors, who selected the following three winners:

- Haga Water Limited: Biosand filters for 50 rural households in Agoro Central Village, Agago District.
- Water Guardian: A solution that combines GIS and IoT sensors to create a digital map of the pipeline network, enabling real-time detection of water leakages.
- Mat Water Solutions: A spiral water wheel pump designed to facilitate irrigation for smallholder farmers with a simple system that does not require electricity, fuel, or solar power.

Aside from these and all other promising solutions that were developed, the Hackathon proved successful to attract young talent and a next generation of Majipreneurs to the water sector.

Highlights from the summit included insightful keynote speeches, including powerful words from Eng. Steven Ogwete on behalf of the honorable Minister for Water and Environment, a panel discussion with Eng. Wilfred Okello (MoWE), Jaqueline Onega Binen (Uganda WASH Parliamentary Forum), Gilbert Guma (water.org) and Henry Othieno (Tusafishe), the MajiSpeed Dating and a dance for WASH performance by the Smash Kids, as well as the MajiCocktail.

Majipreneurs Hackathon

The Majipreneurs Hackathon started on Wednesday 22 May, and 36 participants in 11 teams were working day and night to develop convincing new water supply ideas for Uganda. The young Majipreneurs participated in a two-day long program focused on developing innovative solutions and social business models to improve water supply services.

The hackathon featured several interactive working sessions, beginning with the identification of the problem before progressing to the creation of the solution. This second phase included a game based on the Universal Languages Approach by Viva con Agua, allowing participants to determine how to involve the community in their solution.

The second day focused on validating the solution by presenting the concept of technical feasibility and creating their prototypes. Additionally, participants prepared their presentation pitches, working on them in parallel with their activities on the first day of the summit. The young participants were supported by seven coaches, who were both trainers and professionals in the water sector.

The event culminated in a pitch session on 23 May and an award ceremony on 24 May during which the three winning teams were announced:

1. **Haga Water Limited:** Biosand filters for 50 rural households in Agoro Central Village, Agago District.
2. **Water Guardian:** A solution that combines GIS and IoT sensors to create a digital map of the pipeline network, enabling real-time detection of water leakages.
3. **Mat Water Solutions:** A spiral water wheel pump designed to facilitate irrigation for smallholder farmers with a simple system that does not require electricity, fuel, or solar power.

An overview of all Hackathon participants and of the solutions they developed is available on <https://majipreneurs.creation.camp/hackathon/>.



Majipreneurs Initiatives

The MajiFund

Access to suitable finance for the next stage of growth is a common challenge for WASH Enterprises worldwide, including Majipreneurs in Uganda.

Dozens of Finance Partners and Majipreneurs contributed to workshop sessions before and during the summit, sharing their valuable experience and expertise.

- Most Majipreneurs pointed out that beyond general lack of funding access there is a need to improve transparency of and access to existing funding as well as improve clarity on eligibility criteria and decision making procedures. Mapping needs of and offers for Majipreneurs is key.
- The idea to create a Maji Fund, which synchronizes funding efforts of Majipreneurs Partners through a variety of transparent tools for different stages and with lean funding procedures, was welcomed by all contributors.
- It was additionally recommended to not just focus on direct financial support but also strengthen technical assistance for key aspects of organizational development like financial, legal and marketing capacity.

Several Majipreneurs Partners indicated interest in contributing to a MajiFund, which would help to strengthen the pipeline of impactful Majipreneurs in Uganda and beyond. The Majipreneurs Alliance members Cewas and Viva con Agua Foundation committed to developing the MajiFund concept, gathering feedback and support from Majipreneurs and their partners, refining the concept, and setting up the fund. The ambitious timeline for this process is to launch the MajiFund during the 3rd Majipreneurs Summit in 2025.



The model to upgrade water systems

To enhance the quality of and willingness to pay for water supply services, rural water supply systems across Uganda will need gradual upgrades over the coming years and decades. To support pioneers in upgrading these water systems and becoming operators of rural mini-grids, replicable models and standard procedures are essential. These will enable service providers to upgrade water systems and operate them as social business models.

To move in this direction, this focus group analyzed challenges, opportunities and specific needs service providers face in upgrading water supply systems. These were further developed into the outline for a peer-support and learning programme. This support programme would aim to initially support 5 local water enterprises to:

- Develop comprehensive financial models and KPI tools for operational units and overall operations, that consider key variables and viability factors.
- Create strategies and processes to achieve performance targets through structured peer learning and co-creation among enterprises.
- Provide seed capital to test and enhance models and procedures for upgrading and expanding water supply systems.

This support programme is supposed to start in August and will be geared to establish a clear pathway for upgrading water systems and thereby also supports participating enterprises to raise funds in the future by developing solid investment cases.



The Area Service Providers Coalition

The Operation and Maintenance Framework (OMF) for rural water supply is currently in a transitional phase and not yet fully operational. Prospective Area Service Providers (ASPs) are actively exploring their roles and strategies for engaging in the rollout of this policy. This exploration process is mostly individual, with ad-hoc coordination, exchange, and learning among service providers occurring to a limited extent.

ASP Coalition and Shared Objectives

During the exchanges in the ASP Coalition focus group, shared goals and objectives were established, which include the following:

1. Accelerate the OMF Rollout and performance-based contracting of (pilot) ASPs
2. Facilitate Systematic Exchanges for Mutual Learning, aligning positions, and supporting engagement with key stakeholders.
3. Communicate with a Unified ASP Voice to support the OMF rollout, incorporating perspectives of service providers operating on the ground.



Preliminary Action Areas

To achieve these objectives, ASP Coalition members have identified preliminary action areas to be refined through regular meetings. These action areas include but are not limited to:

- Clarifying the process for becoming an ASP.
- Clarifying the steps of operationalizing the OMF and disseminating it at the regional and district level.
- Engaging in planning, budget requirements, and fundraising for area service provision.
- Sharing existing approaches for mapping assets, their functionality and responsibilities for rehabilitation.
- Assisting in the development of guidelines and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Supporting the enforcement of provisions on mandates and quality of operation and maintenance services.

The coalition aims to align the engagement of prospective ASPs with national, regional, and district governments, NWSC, Umbrella Authorities, and NGOs.

Activities and Collaborative Efforts

- The ASP Coalition, composed initially of Whave, the Uganda Water Project, and Everflow, has agreed on several activities to support the OMF rollout:
- Organize regular meetings (at least monthly) to share updates, align positions, and coordinate activities related to the OMF rollout.
- Gradually establish principles of collaboration among members for internal alignment and communication with sector stakeholders (including MoWE).
- Define and regularly update required actions, create a roadmap to leverage the ASP coalition with clear responsibilities, and, where necessary, raise the funds and resources for implementation.

Through these collaborative efforts, the ASP Coalition aims to effectively support the transition to the new OMF and ensure sustainable water service provision in rural areas.



The advocacy platform for Majipreneurs' needs

The focus group on advocacy exchanged on how to enhance the visibility and influence of the private sector in the WASH space through coordinated interventions that bring the needs of Majipreneurs into sector platforms and policy processes. This includes establishing collaborative platforms, promoting regulatory awareness, simplifying licensing procedures for Majipreneurs, and strengthening the voice of Majipreneurs in policy formulation. During the focus group discussion the following objectives and initiatives were formulated:

Objective 1: Establish and strengthen collaborative platforms

- Facilitate collaboration between Majipreneurs, financiers and CSOs with government agencies.
- Enhance public-private partnerships for regulatory support and capital access.
- Advocate for financial incentives and protections for Majipreneurs.

Objective 2: Promote awareness and participation in shaping regulatory frameworks

- Launch campaigns to highlight and lobby for conducive regulatory frameworks and incentives.
- Use digital and community engagement to attract private investment.
- Simplify and expedite licensing for WASH entrepreneurs.

Objective 3: Foster engagement in governance to

- Develop collaborative governance models for water system management.
- Provide advocacy and lobbying training for Majipreneurs.
- Connect Majipreneurs with stakeholders for mentorship and resources.



Throughout the Summit, the following stakeholders have committed to leading the advocacy drive for Majipreneurs: WASEU, NETWAS, UWASNET, the WASH Forum of Parliament, Technology for Tomorrow, and WaterAid, along with other Majipreneurs. It was subsequently agreed to conduct a series of follow-up engagements to clarify the advocacy issues, develop a strong case, and draft a policy paper for advocacy purposes for Majipreneurs



Recommendations

Recommendations to build a more enabling ecosystem for Majipreneurs

Throughout the focus group working sessions, several topics and recommendations to build a more enabling ecosystem for Majipreneurs emerged. During the afternoon of the Summit's final day, participants voted the importance of these emerging topics, as follows:

1. Map funding opportunities and make them visible for Majipreneurs and funders
2. Establish a Platform for Majipreneurs and Financiers
3. Establish performance criteria and a process to ensure (performing) ASPs can retain licenses
4. Simplify and expedite licensing procedures for WASH entrepreneurs through clear & transparent process
5. Create a framework that establishes responsibilities and compensations for investments into and maintenance of water systems
6. Develop collaborative governance models for the coexistence of Umbrella Authorities and Private Operators
7. Determine clear tariffs for different water systems
8. Monitor and report if NGOs make provisions for O&M of the systems they build in line with OMF
9. Establish realistic benchmarks for different business models
10. Establish provisions for districts where new water supply models can be tested

Expert Exchanges

Keynote speech

As guest of honor, Eng. Steven Ogwete gave a keynote speech on behalf of the honorable Minister of Water and Sanitation. Eng Ogwete commended the Majipreneurs Summit for the efforts to leverage the potential of WASH entrepreneurship, foster collaboration, uncover new opportunities, and strengthen the ecosystem.

Addressing the shortfall in water-related investments, particularly in rural areas, presents an opportunity for the private sector to drive sustainable business development and societal well-being. From the government's perspective, increasing climate resilience and solving the shortcomings in sanitation provide further opportunities for entrepreneurial solutions.

A symbiotic partnership between entrepreneurs, financiers, experts, policymakers, and community stakeholders is necessary for transformation. Policy reforms and enhanced institutional capacity are also needed. The summit serves as a catalyst for change, aiming to create a future where every Ugandan has access to clean water and sanitation.



Panel Discussion

During the afternoon of the final day of the Summit, a distinguished panel took to the stage to contextualize the exchanges and discussions that occurred over the course of the event.

Eng. Okello from the Ministry of Water and Environment (MoWE) and Jacqueline Onega Binen, the coordinator of the Uganda WASH Parliamentary Forum, provided insights from the policymakers' perspective. Gilbert Guma from Water.org highlighted the needs and viewpoints of financiers, while Henry Othieno from Tusafishe shared the entrepreneurial perspective on the Summit's proceedings.

Highlights from the panel discussion include, among others:

- Eng. Okello re-confirmed that the government has a strong desire to continue supporting enterprises but also needs support from entrepreneurs and ecosystem actors in addressing the most important gaps.
- Henry Othieno pointed out that profit margins for Majipreneurs are razor thin but can yield meaningful impact. It requires patience, financial support and trial and error to build a water enterprise. Ecosystem actors need to take the challenges of such an entrepreneurial journey into consideration.
- Gilbert Guma emphasized the importance of thoroughly understanding market dynamics and identifying business opportunities for WASH entrepreneurs to enhance their investment readiness and attract financing.
- Jacqueline Onega Binen highlighted the need to use platforms like the WASH Parliamentary Forum to engage parliamentarians and communicate the tremendous efforts and important work on Majipreneurs.



Networking

MajiSpeed Dating

The second day of the Majipreneurs Summit started with speed networking, which was an interactive experience for attendees and stakeholders. The networking gave the participants a unique opportunity to connect with one another and exchange contact details.

The session provided a platform for entrepreneurs to meet with financiers, policymakers, and experts. Speed networking was an efficient way to build valuable business relationships. Participants discussed their thoughts and experiences on how they could connect and drive solutions for a better future.



Mapping the WASH entrepreneurship landscape

Throughout the preparations for the Majipreneurs Summit, enterprises and sector stakeholders repeatedly pointed out the need to map the WASH entrepreneurship landscape. During the networking break of the Summit's final day, the Hackathon participants engaged with the summit attendees to map the coolest small, medium and large Majipreneurs as well as the financiers and support organizations that were considered most relevant by the audience.

The resulting map (see below) will feed into future work to map key players of the Ugandan WASH entrepreneurship landscape



MajiMarket

Throughout the Summit, several established and emerging enterprises exhibited their solutions at the MajiMarket, where they engaged with potential clients, partners and funders. This years MajiMarket featured WaterQuip, Water forever, WaterKit, Spouts of Water, SafePad and Ensonga Care, Technology For Tomorrow, SWEDO, Wabibi Pads, Whave and UpEnergy (see Annex for more details).

Universal Languages Approach (ULA)

The Universal Languages Approach harnesses the power of music, art, and sports to raise awareness and engage communities in topics related to WASH. This approach aims to create a joyful and inclusive environment, encouraging people to participate in WASH initiatives through positive experiences rather than through traditional methods that may rely on shame or fear. Throughout the Summit, participants explored how Majipreneurs could use ULA for marketing and market expansion.

MajiTales

The intersection of Viva con Agua's Universal Languages Approach (ULA) and the Four Principles of Marketing (Product, Placement, Promotion, Pricing) was explored to formulate nine strategic steps. These steps are designed to help Majipreneurs develop clear marketing strategies and gain a deeper understanding of their users. This comprehensive framework, known as "The Majipreneurs Marketing Model (MMM)," is brought to life through the interactive game "Majitale."

This approach was tested as part of the Hackathon. Participants created and shared stories highlighting WASH challenges and solutions, complemented by interactive games.

The insights how this session enhanced understanding and provided practical examples of using storytelling to raise awareness and drive change in their communities was presented to the audience during the last day of the Majipreneurs Summit.



Live Mural Painting & SMASH Kids

A mural titled "Flowing Opportunities" by Sayyid Bin Musa and a dance performance by the Smash Kids were also presented. The Smash Kids, a youth performance group, delivered an energetic performance emphasizing WASH themes through dance and music. Their routines conveyed messages about hygiene, water conservation, and sanitation, and were followed by interactive sessions where participants learned and joined in on the dance moves. This performance captivated the audience and made learning about WASH enjoyable. These live demonstrations showcased the power of the Art4WASH and Dance4WASH approaches, respectively, illustrating the impact of using art and dance to promote WASH initiatives.



MajiCocktail

The MajiCocktail was a networking event that provided a relaxed setting for participants to connect, share ideas, and build partnerships. It featured networking opportunities, pitching sessions for WASH solutions, and a variety of refreshments. This event facilitated valuable connections, showcased innovative ideas, and fostered collaborations among attendees.



Key Insights and Outlook

The second Majipreneurs Summit was a resounding success, bringing together over 180 participants from various sectors, including entrepreneurs, financiers, policymakers, and experts. This vibrant gathering provided a dynamic platform for fostering collaboration and forming partnerships essential for the growth and scaling of entrepreneurial water and sanitation services. Through its interactive design, the summit facilitated the development of more than 10 innovative WASH business ideas and four key initiatives aimed at creating a more supportive environment for Majipreneurs.

The summit underscored the importance of such events in bridging the gap between different stakeholders in the WASH sector. By providing a space for direct interaction and networking, the summit enabled participants to exchange ideas, share challenges, and co-create solutions. The initiatives and ideas that emerged are a testament to the collaborative spirit and the shared commitment to improving water and sanitation services.

Several critical insights were gained during the summit that will shape future events and initiatives, including:

- 1. Interactive and Action-Oriented Design:** The focus group process used to develop project ideas transformed the summit from a conventional event into an action-oriented platform. This approach not only engaged participants more deeply but also ensured that the summit had tangible outcomes.
- 2. Emerging Topics:** Participants highlighted several emerging topics that are crucial for the future of WASH entrepreneurship, such as mapping financing options and identifying other support actors. These insights will be pivotal in setting the agenda for the next summit.
- 3. Government Engagement:** The participation and contributions of government representatives significantly enhanced the summit's success. Their insights and support will be instrumental in shaping future initiatives and ensuring alignment with national policies and priorities.
- 4. Community Building:** The positive feedback and fruitful exchanges among participants emphasized the need to invest in building a supportive Majipreneurs community. This community is vital for ongoing collaboration and knowledge sharing.

Looking ahead, the insights and momentum gained from this summit will guide our future efforts in several key areas. To maintain the momentum and continue building the Majipreneurs community, we are committed to organizing two to three additional community events before the next summit. These events will provide ongoing support and networking opportunities for Majipreneurs, ensuring they remain engaged and connected.

Additionally, we will explore opportunities to develop joint initiatives with the Ministry of Water and Environment and key sector stakeholders for the next summit. This collaboration aims to align our efforts with needs of Majipreneurs, national priorities and to leverage government support for broader impact, ensuring that the initiatives we implement are sustainable and well-supported.

We are committed to help bringing the initiatives developed during the summit to life through a structured follow-up process facilitated by the implementing organizations. Core members of each focus group will receive support to ensure the successful implementation of their projects. This structured follow-up will be crucial in transforming the ideas generated during the summit into actionable and impactful projects.

We eagerly anticipate taking stock of the outcomes from this year's collaborations at the next Majipreneurs Summit, planned for Q1 2025. The insights and feedback from this summit will inform the agenda for the next event, ensuring that it continues to address the most pressing needs of the Majipreneurs community. By fostering collaboration, engaging with government partners, and building a supportive community, we are confident in our ability to drive meaningful progress in the WASH sector.

Annex - Overview of MajiMarket exhibitors



Waterquip

Water Quip Uganda Limited is dedicated to transforming lives through access to safe, affordable drinking water. Their mission is to build vital infrastructure with top-quality, chemical-free water purification systems that provide sustainable economic and environmental advantages. As an authorized distributor of Swedish manufacturer SOLOKRAFT and Canadian manufacturers VIQUA and LUMINOR, They offer solutions ideal for homes, schools, businesses, and village communities.

The team was led by Adrine Atumanya, who was also a coach and part of the jury team during the Majiprenuers Hackathon.

UpEnergy

UpEnergy specializes in developing high-quality decarbonization projects that enhance lives through climate finance.

Their expertise spans climate finance, monitoring and evaluation, engineering, behavioral science, and local operations, ensuring They deliver projects with integrity, measurable impact, and significant social benefits.They prioritize low-income communities in our quest for a just energy transition.



Water forever

Water Forever International is a social enterprise on a mission to enhance the sustainability of water supply in Africa. Operating through its subsidiaries, Maji Milele in Kenya and Water Forever Uganda in Uganda, the organization offers a wide variety of prepaid water meter systems.

These systems include communal water meters, also known as Water ATMs or Communal Prepaid Water Dispensers, which are installed at public water points like kiosks and standpipes.

They provide prepaid and smart water meters for individual connections, ranging from small household meters to large distribution points. Headquartered in the Netherlands, Water Forever International leverages these innovative solutions to ensure efficient, controlled, and sustainable access to water for communities across Africa.

WaterKit

WaterKit is a social enterprise focused on providing clean, safe water and sanitation to vulnerable and refugee communities in Uganda. Their innovative use of technology and dedicated team ensures they continue their mission of delivering impactful clean water, sanitation, and clean energy solutions. By leveraging technology, They strive to improve the health and quality of life for those in need.

The team was led by Denis Ogwang, the co-founder. He also supported in delivering the hackathon as a coach and was a member of the Hackathon Jury.



Spouts of Water

Spouts of Water is a social enterprise that creates life-changing environmental and social benefits for African households through impact-driven products. They are Africa's largest manufacturer of ceramic water filters, offering affordable, locally sourced solutions.

Their business model combines commercial sales with carbon projects to maximize reach and impact, reducing carbon emissions and supporting communities with limited purchasing power.



SafePad and Ensonga Care

SafePads Uganda offers reusable sanitary pads designed to provide a safe and infection-free experience. Their products focus on delivering reliable menstrual hygiene solutions to enhance the health and wellbeing of women and girls.

Ensonga Menstrual Care is a social enterprise dedicated to transforming menstrual hygiene in East Africa. They provide eco-friendly materials and products for sanitary pad production, along with information and advocacy on menstrual hygiene.



Their goal is to ensure every girl and woman has access to safe and sustainable menstrual care solutions, promoting hygienic and dignified menstrual practices.

Technology For Tomorrow

Technology for Tomorrow - was founded in 2008 by Paul Kimera and Nicholas Kasekende and develops sustainable technologies and products. One of them focuses on the processing of biohazardous waste in the healthcare sector by using customized incinerators.

The other social enterprise setup by the company is the MakaPads project. This resulted out of a research that revealed that academic performance of most girls dropped at puberty level and a high rate of absenteeism from school by poor schoolgirls. The innovation and products from MakaPads have come in to meet this need by providing an effective low cost protection to the girls. The pads are made out of papyrus and paper waste.



SWEDO

SWEDO Innovations Limited is a social enterprise dedicated to improving the socio-economic wellbeing of women and youth in peri-urban and rural areas.

They focus on sustainable waste recycling, WASH, and renewable energy solutions. As a customer-driven company, they prioritize customers' needs, providing clean energy solutions and promoting community empowerment through education, research, and innovative approaches. The team was represented by Maria Kiiza, founder and managing director.



Wabibi Pads

Wabibi Pads Limited tackles menstrual hygiene management and period poverty among women and girls in marginalized Ugandan communities. They produce sustainable, environmentally friendly reusable sanitary pads and empower women through skill development and employment opportunities.

Their mission is to ensure every woman has access to dignified menstrual care, thereby enhancing their socio-economic wellbeing



Whave

Whave Solutions is a non-profit social enterprise in Uganda that collaborates with local governments and rural communities to ensure sustainable water maintenance services.

Their technicians perform regular checks and immediate repairs to prevent breakdowns, ensuring consistent water flow. Communities pay a small annual fee, with government support ensuring the sustainability and scalability of our services.





Thank you!

Thank you for taking the time to read this report. If you have any questions or would like to discuss our findings further, please don't hesitate to reach out to us.

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