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**Commentary on Data Policy – Glory and Tech Ltd.**

As an NGO based in Korea with the mission to address climate change and provide clean water to rural communities in Ghana. Our data practices are fundamental to our mission, underpinning our decision-making processes and our transparency and accountability to all stakeholders. By sharing data effectively, we foster a sense of connection and engagement among everyone involved. From our donors to the communities we serve. The work we do is not just about statistics; it's about real people and their stories. Our data helps capture the lived experiences of the communities we assist, informs our project planning, and illustrates the tangible impacts of the support we receive from our donors and partners.

In this commentary, we explore our current data policies in four key areas: structure, format, sharing protocols, and visibility. We also suggest strategies for enhancing these practices to better serve our mission.

### 1. Structure of Data Dissemination

Our NGO is committed to effectively sharing vital information about our climate change projects and clean water initiatives with all relevant stakeholders. In rural Ghana, local project officers gather data through field surveys, environmental monitoring, and feedback from beneficiaries. This information is carefully verified by us in-country program coordinators and then uploaded to a central data repository managed in Korea. From there, it is transformed into comprehensive reports, impact assessments, and funding updates tailored for donors, government agencies, partner organisations, and the wider public.

We take a decentralised yet coordinated approach to our data dissemination strategy, ensuring that our field teams can quickly gather insights on water quality and project outcomes using mobile survey tools. After verification, this data is processed into user-friendly formats, such as reports and infographics. We prioritise transparency and accuracy by holding monthly coordination meetings for internal sharing and releasing updates quarterly for external stakeholders. This structured approach ensures that we not only keep our partners informed but also effectively communicate the progress and impact of our initiatives to the communities we serve.

**2. Format of Data Dissemination**

Our organisation employs a range of formats to effectively communicate with diverse audiences, ensuring that information is accessible and engaging. For technical partners, we provide detailed reports, Excel datasets, and charts that offer in-depth analyses. In contrast, we simplify our messaging for community stakeholders through visually appealing infographics and translated materials in local languages, utilising formats such as posters and short videos. These efforts aim to bridge the gap between complex data and community understanding.

In addition to digital formats like PDF reports, GIS maps, and interactive dashboards showcasing key metrics, we also produce print materials such as brochures and newsletters tailored for rural Ghanaian villages. We recognise the importance of adapting our communication methods to meet the needs of various audiences, from researchers and government agencies to community members and social media followers. By taking this multi-format approach, we enhance public engagement while ensuring that essential information is accessible to all.

### 3. Data Sharing Protocols and Procedures

Our data sharing protocols are designed to ensure transparency while rigorously protecting sensitive information. We adhere to strict internal guidelines, which require all field data to undergo thorough quality checks before release. Personal details of beneficiaries are anonymised to comply with privacy standards. We share project datasets with research institutions and government agencies through formal Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), while access to raw field data is limited to authorised project managers. Aggregated and anonymised versions of the data are available to partners, and any public release must receive approval from the Communications and Data Governance units.

To promote open access, we publish certain public datasets, such as aggregate water quality measurements, on our website and open-data platforms. Sensitive information, such as household-level data, is anonymised before sharing to protect individual privacy. Requests for data from researchers or partner organisations are managed through a formal request process, which our data governance committee meticulously reviews to ensure compliance with both Korean and Ghanaian privacy regulations.

**4. Data Visibility**

We strive to ensure our work is visible and transparent to the communities we serve and our broader audience. Our website features a regularly updated project page that reflects our progress, highlights success stories, and provides informative data dashboards. Additionally, we actively engage with our audience through social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp, where we share project updates and stories that showcase community impact on our climate and water initiatives. In our commitment to knowledge sharing, we publish select non-sensitive datasets online for public access, aiming to enhance global understanding of rural water provision and build resilience against climate challenges. Through these efforts, we seek to foster transparency and collaboration within our community and beyond.

**Improving Data Curation Practices at Glory and Tech**

At Glory and Tech, our mission to combat climate change and provide clean water to rural communities in Ghana goes beyond passion and fieldwork. Each borehole we install is backed by accurate, organised data that helps us decide where to focus our efforts, measure our impact, and show donors the difference their contributions make. However, the real challenge lies in curating this data to ensure it remains accurate, accessible, and meaningful over time.

To improve our effectiveness, we need to rethink our data management. Here are five practical strategies based on real-world experience and data analysis principles.

The first step in getting our data under control is to create a thorough data map for our organisation. Think of it like a blueprint for a house—it shows us where everything is located, how it's organised, and how different parts connect. Without this map, our information can easily become scattered across various places like personal laptops, hard drives, and even handwritten notes, which can lead to gaps in our knowledge or the same work being duplicated. For example, if we keep our water quality test results in one system and community location data in another, we're missing out on a chance to combine these important pieces of information to uncover significant patterns. By clearly identifying each dataset—like borehole test results, GPS locations of our project sites, photos from community events, and attendance records for trainings—and designating someone responsible for each, we can make sure our data is organised in one central place where it's easy for everyone to access.

The second improvement we can make involves adopting a single standard format for all our organisational data. Inconsistent file types can create major roadblocks when it comes to integrating and analysing information. Imagine one project team storing water readings in Word documents while another uses PDFs, and yet another relies on mixed formats in Excel. This scenario makes any attempt to compare datasets not only time-consuming but also fraught with the potential for errors due to the need for reformatting. By standardising our approach—using Excel for numerical data, JPEG or PNG for images, and PDFs for final reports—we can streamline this process and make our data more compatible for analysis.

Furthermore, we can enhance our data management by implementing clear and consistent file naming conventions, such as “CommunityName\_Date\_ProjectType”, e.g., Ejisu\_2025-03-10\_WaterInstallation. This practice helps ensure that files are easily identifiable without needing to open each one. Alongside this, maintaining a focus on data quality through regular audits and validation checks will ensure that our datasets remain reliable and accurate. By taking these simple yet effective steps, we can save significant hours during reporting cycles and empower ourselves to make better-informed decisions across the organisation.

Moreover, one important recommendation is to create a clear data sharing policy. In any NGO—especially those working across borders and handling sensitive community information—it’s essential to find a balance between transparency and privacy. Without a well-defined policy, staff and volunteers might either accidentally share too much confidential information or hold back important data that could benefit others. From a data analysis perspective, having this policy in place helps ensure that sensitive personal information remains protected while still allowing for the sharing of aggregated and anonymised data. For example, instead of publishing individual household water usage records, we could share the average usage for an entire community. This approach safeguards individual privacy while providing valuable insights for external experts to help us identify trends. By documenting these guidelines and making them accessible to all team members, we can improve both our security and our collaboration.

One of the key areas we can also enhance is public access to our data through thoughtfully designed online platforms. Data that remains tucked away in storage serves little purpose; it becomes truly valuable when we share it effectively. By creating a user-friendly, public-facing dashboard, we transform our raw numbers into a compelling story of progress and impact. Imagine a donor being able to see, at a glance, how many boreholes have been installed this year. Policymakers can easily identify which districts are experiencing improved access to clean water. Community members can engage with real-time updates on the growth of local reforestation efforts. The more accessible and visually engaging our data is, the more it resonates with stakeholders and encourages active participation. Moreover, by focusing on data curation and quality, we ensure that the information presented is not only accurate but also meaningful. This approach provides analysts with opportunities for independent verification and constructive feedback, fortifying the credibility of our results. In essence, when we make our data clearer and more relatable, we foster a stronger connection with our audience, ultimately driving greater engagement and support for our initiatives.

Finally, regularly reviewing and improving our data is essential. It's important for us to regularly review and improve our data. Our datasets require periodic checks to make sure they're accurate, complete, and relevant. If there are errors in measuring climate impacts or missing information in water quality tests, we run the risk of drawing the wrong conclusions and misallocating our resources. By conducting quarterly data audits, we can catch any anomalies early on, fix them, and ensure that our analysis is accurate. Whether we're looking at how effective a water filtration system is or assessing the carbon offset from a tree-planting project are reliable and trustworthy. This ongoing process of refinement truly lays the basis for making informed decisions.

In conclusion, at Glory and Tech, we believe that data is more than just numbers; it's a reflection of the meaningful work we do and the lives we touch. By organising our data, standardising its formats, and establishing clear guidelines for sharing, we can make information easier to access and understand. This isn’t just about being efficient; it’s about building trust with the communities we support and the donors who believe in our mission. In our ongoing fight against climate change and our pursuit of clean water for all, having solid data practices is just as crucial as the projects we undertake.

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