The importance of a Human Rights-Based Approach to IWRM

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IWRM

• Addresses interests and actors that occur in the same river basin.

• Acknowledges competing but related problems & interests in water resources alongside land & other connected resources.

• Aims at breaking silos at all levels; emphasizes the coordinated & cross-sectoral.

• Based on the UN Agenda 21 + Dublin Principles; promoted under SDG 6.5.

• Builds on predefined targets, promoting stakeholder participation & recognizing roles of women in basin planning.
Human rights-Based Approach (HRBA)

The UN ‘Common Understanding’

1. **Goal:** All programmes of development cooperation, policies and technical assistance should *further the realization* of HRs

2. **Process:**
   - **HR standards and principles** guide all development cooperation & programming

3. **Outcome:** taking a HRBA contributes to development of relevant actors’ capacities + empowerment.

**Principles & procedural dimension**

- Non-discrimination and equality
- Participation & inclusion
- Transparency & the rule of law
- Rights-holders & Duty-bearers (primarily the state)
Why apply an HRBA to IWRM?

- The HRBA lays as much focus on process as on the *substantive* rights & corresponding obligations.
- It contains steps to further the realization of the human rights and obligations at stake by identifying them + rights-holders & duty-bearers and comparing with water law & water rights.
- HRBA involves clear allocation priorities → better mainstreaming of human rights
Water has a crucial importance to realize key human rights – and *vice versa*

**From the IWRM perspective**

The human rights framework *adds value* to the ‘3Es’ of sustainable development:

- Economic efficiency in water use,
- Social Equity,
- Environmental /Ecological aspects

by 1st ensuring water for personal and domestic uses & prioritize the vulnerable (+ LNOB).

**From the HR perspective**

The crucial importance of water resources to realize key human rights:

- To life,
- To health,
- To food,
- To a healthy environment.

Critical: basin situation assessment (Qn, Ql) & active, collaborative management.