DECLARATION ON:
RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

WEBINAR 14TH JULY 2021
DECLARATION, HUMAN RIGHT 2 WATER EXPERT COMMITTEE, MARCH 2021

DECLARATION ON RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

The Human Right 2 Water Expert Committee, March 2021

DECLARATION ON RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

1. Governments need to ensure that people do not lose continuity of supply due to the inability to pay under emergency conditions. At the same time, water utilities/managers need to be mindful of unintended consequences, such as how changes to existing policies could affect overall water usage and availability.

2. Social, environmental, and cultural acceptability, especially for access to sanitation facilities for women and girls, should be integrated into service design and provision under normal circumstances, to ensure that it continues during emergencies.

3. Maintenance access during a crisis may be limited due to transport difficulties, and consideration needs to be given to planning for emergency situations, especially for prioritized groups.

4. A minimum volume of water per person should be always assured, with special provision and planning for emergencies to maintain services. Sanitation and waste disposal need to be carefully treated before disposal to avoid spread of disease, and deterioration of water supplies.

5. Testing on an almost continuous basis for the supply of water for drinking, and disposal of wastewater, is needed to avoid unnecessary contamination of water supplies and local water bodies. This will reduce spread of disease and health problems and protect clean water sources. People need to be alerted immediately if there is a contamination incident.

6. Provision of services without discrimination is critical to ensure that vulnerable people can maintain dignity, with standards for methods of inclusion, and a system for checking that it happens.

7. Inclusion of representatives from all marginalized groups, especially women, is required in the planning and design stages of service provision to ensure proper consideration is given to their needs.

8. Provision for special communication channels during an emergency is essential to ensure adequate notice of any changes in supply, quality, and price of water and sanitation services.

9. Planning for continuous services during emergencies should include budgets for ensuring continued maintenance services, disposal of contaminated waste, and prioritisation of supply to essential services for vulnerable people.

10. A complaint system should be in place to deal quickly with concerns during a crisis. It should be easy to access, and adaptable for people with different needs.

We would like to thank UN-Habitat for their generous contribution to the research programme.
RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE AND HEALTH EMERGENCIES

- Resilience means
  - Standards of the human rights to water and sanitation are upheld in the national legislation
- Assessment based on
  - Key attributes of the HRWS that are linked to hygiene, control of disease, and health
- Analysis of law in 23 countries
  - Continuity of supply
  - Availability for vulnerable people
  - Ensuring quality of drinking water
  - Affordability
  - Consideration of handwashing facilities
  - Management of contaminated waste
AFFORDABILITY

1. Governments need to ensure that people do not lose continuity of supply due to the inability to pay under emergency conditions. At the same time, water utilities/managers need to be mindful of unintended consequences, such as how changes to existing policies could affect overall water usage and availability.

- The most limiting factor to continuity of supply
- Planning for pricing plans under emergency conditions needed
- Unintended outcomes, shortages, hardships
- Wastewater has been overlooked

ACCEPTABILITY

2. Social, environmental, and cultural acceptability, especially for access to sanitation facilities for women and girls, should be integrated into service design and provision under normal circumstances, to ensure that it continues during emergencies.

- Need for consumer opinion, and input on a regular basis, incl. during emergency
- Safety for women and girls a concern
**ACCESSIBILITY**

3. Maintaining access during a crisis may be limited due to transport difficulties, and consideration needs to be given to planning for emergency situations, especially for prioritised groups.

- Prioritise vulnerable
- Emergency infrastructure planning
- No discrimination

**AVAILABILITY**

4. A minimum volume of water per person should be always assured, with special provision and planning for emergencies to maintain services. Sanitation and waste disposal need to be carefully treated before disposal to avoid spread of disease, and deterioration of water supplies.

- Specific laws for min. volumes
- Restrictions on release of untreated wastewater and toilet matter – pollution
- Handwashing not given priority
QUALITY

5. Testing on an almost continuous basis for the supply of water for drinking, and disposal of wastewater, is needed to avoid unnecessary contamination of water supplies and local water bodies. This will reduce spread of disease and health problems and protect clean water sources. People need to be alerted immediately if there is a contamination incident.

- Responses to water contamination incidents
- Immediate reactivity

NON DISCRIMINATION

6. Provision of services without discrimination is critical to ensure that vulnerable people can maintain dignity, with standards for methods of inclusion, and a system for checking that it happens.

- Most overlooked in legislation
- Proactive inclusion required
- Explicit standards and monitoring of inclusion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPATION</th>
<th>ACCESS TO INFORMATION, TRANSPARENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7. Inclusion of representatives from all marginalised groups, especially women, is required in the planning and design stages of service provision to ensure proper consideration is given to their needs.</td>
<td>8. Provision for special communication channels during an emergency is essential to ensure adequate notice of any changes in supply, quality, and price of water and sanitation services.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Decision-making
- Services need to be attuned to needs
- Very few laws re participation

- System to communicate emergency instructions
- Communication of changes in supply, Q, P
- Continuity/timely data when offices are closed
9. Planning for continuous services during emergencies should include budgets for ensuring continued maintenance services, disposal of contaminated waste, and prioritisation of supply to essential services for vulnerable people.

- Budgetary planning to maintain functionality
- Continuity is often over-looked

10. A complaint system should be in place to deal quickly with concerns during a crisis. It should be easy to access, and adaptable for people with different needs.

- Systems for dealing with complaints often not reliable in emergency
- Obligation to report problems during crisis
MORE INFORMATION

The declaration and technical research (annexes) can be found on our website

www.humanright2water.org

Health and Climate Resilience – Human Right 2 Water