

How can the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation create Resilience to Pandemics such as COVID-19?

WEBINAR | 10th December 2020 | 15:00h – 16:30h CET

Panellist's Bios

Amanda Loeffen

Chief Executive, Human Right 2 Water



Amanda is CEO of Human Right 2 Water, and an experienced general manager and business development executive in water, energy and sustainable development, with international experience in Australasia, Europe and North America. Her goal is to provide sustainable solutions based on human rights to improve water governance worldwide. Previously as Director General of WaterLex, she led a team of water governance experts to encourage law and policy reform. Current projects include her leadership of the UNECE People-First PPP

Stakeholder Engagement subgroup to realise benchmarks for developing human rights-based approaches. Previously, as CEO of a project management company in New Zealand, Amanda delivered environmental resource consent for a community water infrastructure scheme for irrigation and hydro-generation.

Professor Sharmila Murthy

Associate Professor, Suffolk University Law School



Sharmila L. Murthy is an Associate Professor at Suffolk University Law School, where she teaches and writes on issues of property law, environmental law, international environmental law, poverty, and human rights. Previously, Sharmila co-founded the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Program as a Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School's Carr Centre for Human Rights Policy. In 2014, Sharmila was selected as a finalist for the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation. Sharmila began her legal career as a public interest

poverty lawyer after clerking on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Sharmila received her JD from Harvard Law School, her MPA from Harvard Kennedy School of Government, and her BS in Natural Resources from Cornell University. She was also a U.S. Fulbright Scholar in India.

Rio Hada

*Team Leader Human Rights and Economic and Social Issues
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*



Mr. Hada is currently coordinating the work of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in the area of economic and social rights. He is the focal point on human rights to water and sanitation, and represents the OHCHR in the work of the UN-WATER. Last year, he co-led the UN-Water campaign for the 2019 World Water Day with the theme of leaving no one behind: “Water for all: whoever you are, wherever you are, water is your human right”. He also leads the work of OHCHR on the human rights of older persons.

Together with UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, OHCHR serves as the joint secretariat for the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing established by the General Assembly with the mandate to strengthen the protection of human rights of older persons.

Imanol Aguilera

Legal Officer, Human Right 2 Water



Mr. Imanol Aguilera is a young Spanish and Uruguayan professional born and raised in the Geneva Region. Imanol is a legal researcher specialised in International Water Law and Human Rights. Having Worked at Waterlex, he is now part of the Human Right 2 Water team. He holds a Bachelor in International Relations and Development (University of Sussex, UK) and a masters in International Environmental Law and Sustainable Development (SOAS University, UK). He also pursued his legal studies by completing a Graduate Diploma in Law

at BPP University in London, Waterloo. Through his academic and professional experiences, Imanol has become familiar, and has developed extensive skills in the areas of human rights advocacy, legal research and mapping, and capacity building.

Yamileth Astorga

President, AyA Costa Rica



Degree in Marine Biology (1989) and Master of Science in Environmental Sanitation, with specialization in Ecotoxicology from the State University of Ghent, in Belgium (1991). With experience in the field of water resources for about 30 years. She has worked as an academic and researcher at public universities for near 20 years. National and international consultant for more than 20 years, for various national institutions and organizations such as the State of the Nation of Costa Rica, Ministry of Environment, Forestry Financing Fund, Foundation Costa Rica - United States, Reventazon Basin Commission; as well as international organizations such as Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD), Global Water Partnership of Central America, IDB, World Bank, European Union and Fair Trade Labelling Organization. Driving the participatory process of building the new Law on Water Resources in Costa Rica, from 2001 to 2014 and was part of the project presented by People's Initiative. Since 2014, is currently the Executive President of the Costa Rican Institute of Aqueducts and Sewers (AyA).

Géraldine Gené

Legal Director

Human Right 2 Water



Géraldine is the Legal Director at Human Right 2 Water and a former judge in Costa Rica. She has more than 20 years of experience as a private lawyer, litigator, trainer and consultant. She is a specialist in international business, and a certified conciliator and Mediator, providing her with facilitation and negotiation skills at central and local levels. At WaterLex, her programmes covered the Latin American Region, providing legal advice, municipal and community workshops in many countries. In addition, she is an experienced coordinator of projects and cross-sector multi-level social programmes.

Eng. Robert Gakubia

CEO, Kenya Water Services Regulatory Board, Kenya Water Authority



Robert Gakubia is the CEO of the Kenya Water Services Regulatory Board [Wasreb] a position he has held since July 2008. Before that Robert was the Director of Water Services at the Ministry of Water, Sanitation and Irrigation a position he rose to after having held other senior positions in the Ministry. As Director and CEO, he has been instrumental in implementing a reform agenda needed to ensure a more accountable, responsive, well capacitated, resourced, resilient and progressive water sector in

Kenya in line with the International Human Rights Framework. He is a Civil Engineering graduate from the University of Nairobi and an MSc graduate from UNESCO-IHE in the Netherlands. He is also a Professional Engineer under the Engineers Board of Kenya and a Corporate Member of the Institution of Engineers of Kenya.

Professor Patricia Mbote

University of Nairobi



Professor Patricia Kameri-Mbote is currently a Professor of Law at the School of Law, University of Nairobi where she has taught for over 30 years and served as Dean. She is also an Advocate of the High Court of Kenya and was conferred the rank of Senior Counsel in 2012 and a Founding Research Director of (IELRC), and the Programme Director for Africa. She studied law at the University of Nairobi, the University of Warwick, the University of Zimbabwe and earned her doctorate from Stanford

Law School (Stanford University). She taught in many universities around the world and published widely. Among her published work is a co-edited book titled: *Water is Life: Women's Human Rights in National and Local Water Governance in Southern and Eastern Africa*, Weaver Press, Harare, (2015).