



HR₂W News

Issue 1 | January 2021

Our Newsletter

2020 has undoubtedly been a challenging year for all, and its unpredictable nature has provided us with a unique opportunity to reflect on the need for change.

Established as a non-governmental organisation on 6th May 2020, HR2W is able to claim several successes in its first year. This first issue of our newsletter looks back at these accomplishments and introduces new programmes for 2021.

This quarterly newsletter will inform you of progress in achieving our mission of integrating the human rights to water and sanitation (HRWS) into law and policy. We strive to keep the information salient and succinct, with links to our news site, but please let us know by return email if you would prefer not to receive it.

May we take this opportunity to wish you a healthy and happy 2021, and we look forward to hearing from you as the year progresses.

The Team at HR2W

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Message from the President

After its first seven months of existence, HR2W has heralded a new momentum in activity relating to the human rights to water and sanitation. The organisation has been able to platform its position as a voice on these crucial rights to create solutions for resilience to pandemics, putting vulnerable people first, linking wider water governance issues to human rights, and always ensuring a human rights-based approach (HRBA).

There is a critical need for a more sustainable approach to water solutions if we are to work ourselves out of the current global crisis, and it no longer works to plaster over the wounds. We need critical thinking, innovative and HRBA solutions that are forged into law for long term sustainability.

Read further to sample a taste of the research, innovation and publications that this organisation has to offer, and please, speak to us in person if you see an opportunity to collaborate.

Dhesigen Naidoo



Figure 1 Dhesigen Naidoo, President HR2W

Human Right Indicators – Kenya

HR2W embarked on a new programme with the Kenya National Human Rights Commission last October, based on the Leaving No One Behind Tool ([LNOB Tool](#)) developed with the support of SDC. The goal is to support vulnerable groups in Kenya that are being overlooked for water and sanitation supply by developing a monitoring system that is built up around human rights-based indicators.

The project seeks to identify the people that are being left behind through the LNOB tool, and engagement with local communities to validate the results. Through partnership with KNCHR, we will aim to integrate the structural framework that already exists in local policy, with practical solutions for monitoring some of the process and outcome-based indicators.

Implementing water programme in Mexico with CONAGUA

CONAGUA carried out the work for the development of the National Water Programme (PNH), a guiding document of policy in the country, for the 2020-2024 Administration. One of its primary goals is to progressively guarantee human rights to water and sanitation, especially in the most vulnerable populations.

At HR2W, we have supported this work through recommendations for the integration of the HRWS, and we are currently embarking on a programme to support the roll out the new plan at river basin level. To ensure that policies are understood at river basin level, the development of human rights-based indicators is under development to track and monitor its implementation. HR2W is working with the Inter-American Development Bank to develop these indicators and share the information in the PNH through a national training programme.

Our Webinars

HR2W is pleased to announce the 7th event in its successful [webinar series](#) on topics related to HRWS, dealing with the Human Rights-Based Approach for Community Adaptation to Climate Change on 3rd February 2021.

The series was launched on 3rd June, with a keynote speech from the President of HR2W, Dhesigen Naidoo (CEO of WRC), and moderated by the CEO of HR2W, Amanda Loeffen. The inaugural webinar featured the critical link between COVID and the HRWS and presented the first of many thought-provoking discussions.

Each webinar has succeeded in attracting between 150 and 250 registrations, thanks to noteworthy speakers and topics. Attracting attendees from Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia these webinars have included collaboration with Léo Heller (Special Rapporteur on human rights to safe drinking water and sanitation) for the 10th Anniversary of these rights; leaders of national water authorities; professors of human rights law; youth leaders of water networks from four continents; water and sanitation governance leaders in Africa, Latin America and Asia, and experts from UN-Water member organisations that are actively working on the HRWS.

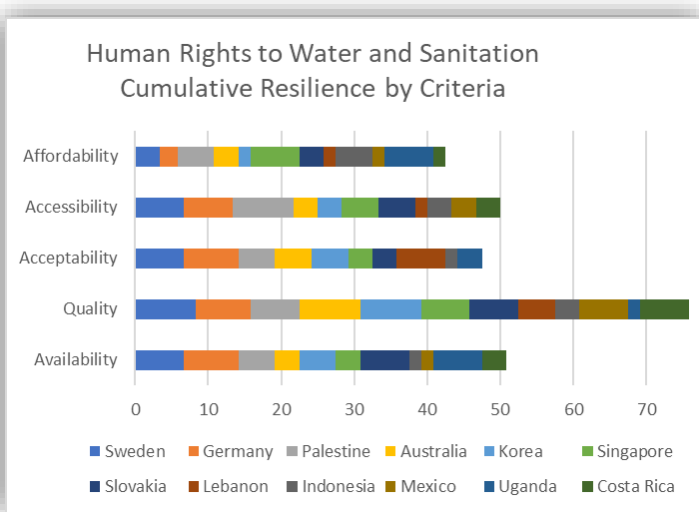


Figure 2 Initial results from Resilience Tool launched on Human Rights Day Webinar

Resilience to Pandemics

The latest webinar on the 10th December 2020 celebrated Human Rights Day 2020, marking the moment when the United Nations Geneva Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights back in 1948. The 2020 theme was 'Recover Better – Stand Up for Human Rights', addressing the largest international crisis in years with the global pandemic.

HR2W brought together experts from Costa Rica and Kenya, along with legal experts from the same regions, to discuss how strengthening the HRWS can create a long-term positive impact. It was an opportunity to launch new methodology developed by HR2W, thanks to research support from White & Case, for testing legal resilience to emergencies such as COVID-19 (see figure 1 below for extract).

World Toilet Day

Toilets are even more important in today's world, with **3/5 people lacking a safe and hygienic place to go to the toilet**, and hygiene becoming an imperative to prevent the spread of disease. No toilet is not just a problem for the dignity of people, but it also creates an environmental and health problem, especially if waste is not treated or collected in a safe manner.

In celebration of World Toilet Day 2020, Human Right 2 Water's CEO Amanda Loeffen moderated IWRA's webinar ['Sustainable Sanitation and Climate Change.'](#)

The panellists shared sanitation stories and experiences from various parts of the developed and developing world, covering topics that connected groundwater and climates, the challenges of wastewater governance and the technical complexities of managing sewage in urban areas with fast growing populations.

NHRI Manual

National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) can help people to realise their human rights to water and sanitation through their role as independent advisors to government, and their capacity for promotion, protection and monitoring of human rights.

HR2W supports their work by sharing examples of good practices in this field through its new publication on

[NHRIs and Water Governance: Compilation of Good Practices](#)

Supported by End Water Poverty, this publication seeks to build on innovative and positive experiences to contribute towards a community of practice of NHRIs wishing to enhance their role in water governance for the realisation of human rights.

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS
INSTITUTIONS AND WATER
GOVERNANCE

COMPILATION OF GOOD PRACTICES

2nd Edition / 2020



Human Right 2 Water Youth

The goal of **Human Right 2 Water Youth** is to bring together a diverse variety of global youth networks, all of whom are seeking to achieve the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation. We provide them with a platform that works as a space to share their ideas, their work and their projects as well as keep up to date with the work of other networks.

Young team members from [HR2W Youth](#) hosted a webinar in October 2020, highlighting the importance of involving young people in the dialogue on water. The result of this engagement was a signed declaration reflecting our commitment to involve youth in water governance and responding to the most pressing challenges we face today. It is beholden to us, the world's future leaders in water and sanitation, to find solution for these challenges.



Human Rights Based Approach

HR2W is currently finalising a manual to provide a practical guide for the realisation of the human rights to water and sanitation through programming. It provides a step-by-step guide on how to include the HRBA, working through the stages of situation analysis, planning and implementation. It will be launched in the next month, so please get in touch if you would like a preview.

On a similar theme, we also partnered with CapNet, SIWI and Redica to produce an online course as an introduction to the main principles and concepts for a human rights-based approach to IWRM, an essential condition to improve access to water and sanitation and achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This course can be found at <https://cap-net.org/humanrights/> and is available with no charge through to the end of April.