

Regional workshop on achieving equitable access to water
and sanitation: from assessment to action

The possible facilitating role of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)

Amanda Loeffen

WaterLex – International Secretariat

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INTRODUCING NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS (NHRIs)

- ✓ **Independent** public bodies (est. parliaments)
- ✓ Legitimate body with constitutional powers at nat. level for **monitoring** of governments compliance
- ✓ Neutral fact finders: collect national level data, perform independent research, initiate field investigations ex officio etc.
- ✓ Bridging role - **facilitation of dialogue**:
 - Among Government Depts. and Ministries
 - Among national stakeholders: civil society, government etc.
 - Link between international accountability mechanisms (ref. UN TB) and nat. authorities
- ✓ Advisory functions to governments/legislative powers

ALL FUNCTIONS

can be helpful to UN agencies in
implementing and monitoring
future SDG6



EXAMPLES



PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS TO SUPPORT SDG 6 IMPLEMENTATION

Translating national level implementation efforts of SDGs can be supported by the promotional mandate and experience:

- public awareness raising
- independent research,
- education programmes to a wide range of stakeholders: civil society, governmental entities and other public bodies etc.,
- media relations,
- independent reports, statements,
- press release etc.

e.g. South African Human Rights Commission

- 2012-13 chose right to water and sanitation as strategic focus area
- Independent primary research – Report
- 9 public hearings in provinces plus national Conference

Findings and Recommendations:

- Engaged with various government departments



NATIONAL LEVEL MONITORING

- ✓ Uniquely placed to ensure a human rights-based monitoring of SDG6 implementation
- ✓ Monitor progress towards achieving internationally agreed development goal based on indicators and benchmarks, collecting data from various stakeholders (national statistical offices, Government, public bodies, civil society etc.).
- ✓ Act as a catalyst for monitoring that is participatory, evidence based, transparent and accountable
- ✓ Several developed a specialized monitoring methodology: e.g. Colombia

e.g. Columbia – Ombudsman’s Office

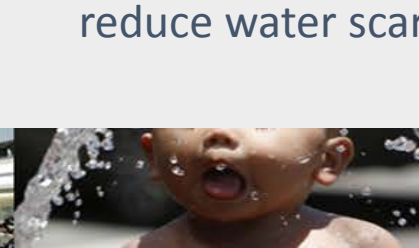
- Constitutional and statutory mission to promote, disseminate and protect human rights
- Asked to evaluate performance of State obligations in respect of human right to water
- Classified municipalities “best” to “worst” re water supply and environmental sustainability

Indicators based on:

1. Human right to water,
2. Environmental sustainability,

RESULTS:

- 46 of 1098 “high risk” and health emergency
- 117 had data inadequate so further research
- Only 17% population acceptable levels of vulnerability
- Urgent need to build regenerative capacity and reduce water scarcity



COOPERATION AND COORDINATION WITH ALL STAKEHOLDERS

- ✓ Bridging role: link civil society to the Government
- ✓ Unbiased meeting point: encourage dialogue, facilitate cooperation among stakeholders in the national implementation of SDGs
- ✓ Bring all concerned stakeholders around one table
- ✓ Collect and channel data: collaboration with civil society, statistical offices, research institutions and academics.
- ✓ Experience in the UN human rights protection mechanisms: well suited to channel information on national level SDG implementation efforts into the future international review mechanism of the post-2015 Agenda.

e.g. Argentinian Ombudsman's Office

- Last 10 years partnership with other institutions
- **Matanza- Riachuelo River Basin** - one of world's most polluted watersheds
- Ombudsman received complaints from residents, organizations, individuals
- Group of NGOs, Universities, local ombudsmen

SUCCESS:

- Drafted first special report on the situation
- Major Cleanup Works began July 2014



INDEPENDENT ADVISORY FUNCTION

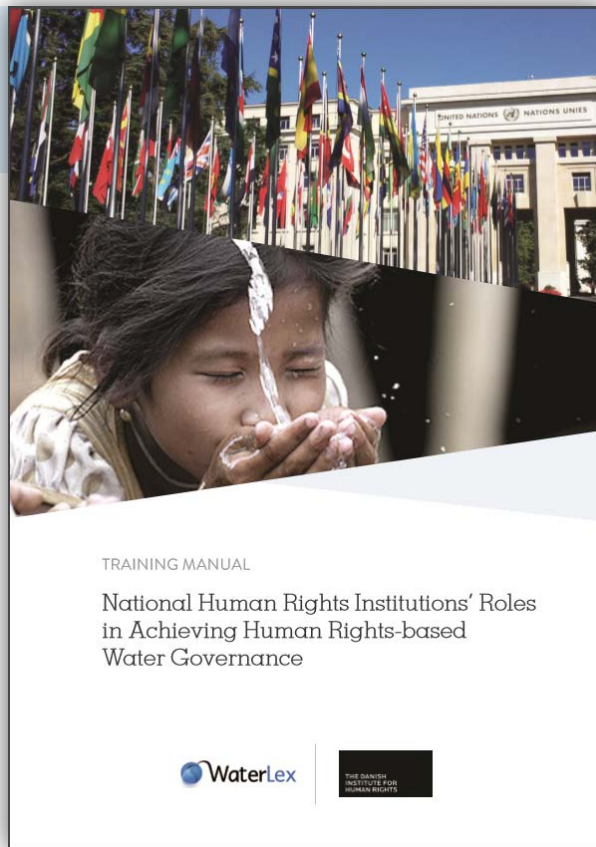
- ✓ Uniquely placed to influence SDG6 national implementation process
- ✓ Positive impact on the national enabling environment
- ✓ Involved in translating and tailoring the globally agreed goal into national frameworks: development of national indicators, benchmarks etc.
- ✓ Involved in the national level review process: e.g. to verify if financial assistance supporting the implementation of SDG6 is in line with human rights commitments

e.g. Peruvian Defensoria del Pueblo

- *Citizens without water: analysis of a rights violation report*
- Included 19 recommendations for government
- Addressed to range of ministries and providers
- Calls on State and Water Service suppliers to improve Access to water and sanitation
- Concentrations of arsenic and aluminium in water supply
- Recommendations to approve rules for operators that fail to provide suitable potable water



NHRI WATER INITIATIVE



- NHRI training manual
- NHRI Online Platform – launch TODAY in Geneva on World Water Day
- NHRI XXL program - incl. CSOs
- Partnership: Danish Institute for Human Rights
- Regional Training Nov'15 in Malaysia with 18 NHRIs from different countries

NHRI
Water Initiative

Proud to say:
i) Very high evaluation and learning scores



RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Consider NHRIs as key national partners to support the promotion, implementation and monitoring of SDG6 at national level
- ✓ NHRIs, as independent public bodies, partner and cooperate with UN country teams to feed into national level implementation and monitoring of SDG 6
- ✓ Consider piloting the involvement of NHRIs in the pilot projects of the GEMI



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS AND WATER GOVERNANCE

COMPILATION OF GOOD PRACTICES

Amanda Loeffen
a.loeffen@waterlex.org

WaterLex – International Secretariat

WMO Building – 2nd floor
Avenue de la Paix – 7bis
1202 Geneva (Switzerland)

WaterLex
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