

Leaving No One Behind: showcasing practical ideas using a human rights-based approach

Speakers: Rio Hada (OHCHR), Cynthia Bleu-Laine (WaterLex), Gabriella Casanova (WaterLex)

Side Event at 11th meeting of the Working Group on Water and Health under the Protocol on Water and Health, 4th April 2019

Palais des Nations, Room VIII, 13:15-14:15

Implementing practical solutions for achieving SDG 6 is incredibly challenging for many countries especially where the population is largely rural, or dispersed, and resources are limited – inevitably, people have been left behind. A new approach to finding solutions needs to be taken, considering efficient use and redistribution of existing resources such that people in all walks of life have full access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation. The solutions require widespread changes in law and policy such that vulnerable people, including women, children, the disabled and the elderly, rural communities and the very poor, can all access their rights to these basic needs. Essentially, it needs to incorporate a human rights-based approach to improve the management of these resources at community level.

This side event is planned to share some of the winning projects from the **1st World Summit on Leaving No One Behind**, held in Geneva this February, and to highlight relevant chapters on human rights from the World Water Development Report on Leaving No One Behind, launched on World Water Day. The Summit was developed to support practical solutions for realising human rights to water and sanitation, highlighting projects that are affordable for local communities, incorporate a human rights-based approach, and can easily be scalable through replication in other areas. The projects include innovation through technical solutions and approaches to inclusion and can demonstrate practical ideas for SDG 6 implementation.

The goal of the one-hour event is to present the ideas briefly, and then to have an interactive discussion with representatives from countries of the pan-European region on how similar initiatives could be applied and/or inspire progress, using the Human Rights-Based Approach as a guiding principle.

Side Event on Leaving No One Behind – Programme (1h)

<i>Time</i>	<i>Subject</i>	<i>Speaker</i>
2'	Introduction	Cynthia Bleu-Laine, <i>WaterLex</i>
5'	Human Rights-Based Approach to the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation	Gabriella Casanova, <i>WaterLex</i>
12'	Presentation of Case Studies from the 1 st World Summit on Leaving No One Behind	Gabriella Casanova & Cynthia Bleu-Laine
10'	World Water Development Report on Leaving No One Behind	Rio Hada, <i>OHCHR</i>
29'	Interactive Discussion with Participants	
2'	Closing Remarks	Gabriella Casanova, <i>WaterLex</i>

Summary of the projects

Flagship Project

Winner of the Innovation Award at the 1st World Summit on Leaving No One Behind is Shervin Hashemi from Seoul National University, presenting a project entitled “Resource Circulation Sanitation Showcase to Provide Sustainable Sanitation in Remote Areas”. Developed with Professor Moo Young Han, this project appealed to the judges based on the innovative nature-based solution and supporting access to safe and sustainable water and sanitation for people in remote and water scarce rural areas.

This project met these criteria best out of the finalists, especially since it encourages the use of safe sanitation through ensuring that the waste is recycled as a safe fertiliser, potentially covering costs. It does not require complicated infrastructure and meets WHO guidelines for remote areas.



The project features a system named “Resource Circulation Sanitation (RCS)” developed as an efficient and sustainable solution for remote areas. The process separates liquid and solid toilet waste and combines it with rainwater harvesting and bio seed fed tank-reactors to reduce reaction time for composting to two weeks. The use of nitrifying microorganisms improves fertilising potential, and removes unwanted indicators making it safe to use in agriculture.

The Exploratory Projects

The 1st World Summit on Leaving No One Behind selected three winners of exploratory projects that seek to demonstrate innovative approaches to water and sanitation solutions. They all capture aspects of a human-rights based approach and using local and community-based solutions that can be tested and scaled up through integration into policy.

The three equal winning projects represented themes from the Summit through people that are marginalised through gender, disability or remote, rural communities.

Community-lead village rainwater harvesting

Deepthi Wickramasinghe, University of Colombo and Sri Lanka Water Partnership, presented a project on “Rainwater Harvesting as an Alternative Water Source in CKDU Affected Areas in Sri Lanka”. Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Aetiology (CKDU), is prevalent in agricultural areas where ground and surface water become polluted with agrochemicals and toxins.



It seeks to demonstrate how village level rain water harvesting societies can be formed as an alternative to using other contaminated water sources, to reduce the impact of CKDU. The project will provide community rainwater solutions backed by training and awareness campaigns. It helps to realise the human right to water through provision of clean water in accessible locations.

Improving technical capabilities of local government and implementors



A second project on “Building an Enabling Environment for Universal Access to Safe Water in Colombia” was presented by Eva Manzano from the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST). CAWST has found that one of the main barriers for access to safe drinking water in rural communities is local knowledge of technical solutions. This project supports government agencies and local implementors with training and support to establish workable solutions.

Sanitation facilities for disabled and elderly people

And, it was interesting to see the focus on disabilities and elderly sanitation as demonstrated through a third project from Ramisetty Murali from the Freshwater Action Network South Asia (FANSA) and Snehathatha Mekala from the South Asia Consortium for Interdisciplinary Water Resources Studies (SaciWATERS). Their project, titled “Local Government Lead Action to Translate Policy Commitment - Inclusive Sanitation Progress for Disabled Children”, deals with the issues of inequity and exclusion in the development of sanitation facilities, particularly affecting groups who are already marginalized.



This project sets out to establish partnership with district level governments to develop model communities where sanitation needs are fully met. It aims to provide accessible, affordable and non-discriminatory toilets to best serve marginalized groups, elder populations and disabled peoples.

All of these exploratory projects will be featured throughout the year during the UN-Water campaign on Leaving No One Behind.