

INITIAL SESSION PROPOSALS

Drafted by: Ashfaq Khalfan, Coordinator, Right to Water Programme, Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE)

Topic reference number: 4.1: Implementing the right to water and sanitation for improved access

Total Number of sessions proposed for Topic: 4 (3-4 expected)

Have these proposals been viewed and commented on by all the Topic Coordinators?
☐ yes ☐ no

Have these proposals been viewed and commented on by the Topic Consortia?
☐ yes ☐ no (these based on consultations with consortia, however, further time required to refine these proposals)

Have these proposals been viewed and commented on by the Topic Consultative Group?
☐ yes ☐ no

Have these proposals been reviewed by the Theme Coordinators?
☐ yes ☐ no

Important Reminders

- Sessions should aim to provide responses to key questions on contentious or conflictual subjects, raise awareness on new solutions or developments or give the opportunity to discuss issues in order to provide greater consensus.
- Sessions should favour exchange (panels, debates, questions and answers and interactive formats) rather than provide static presentations.
- Sessions must include different perspectives and associate various stakeholders. Focal points for the various stakeholder groups will be available to assist you in identifying appropriate representatives to associate within your sessions.
- Session descriptions should not be elaborate nor detailed, since room should be left for further development as offers of contributions from the wider community are received (through Sept. 30th). Efforts should be made to integrate as many of these proposed contributions as possible.
- A virtual platform for thematic development is at your disposal to facilitate development processes (document creation with versioning, discussion groups, wiki tools, etc.). Topic Coordinators are responsible for managing these virtual spaces. More detailed information will be sent to you on this issue soon.

Important Dates

May 15th: Topic Coordinators submit initial session proposals to the Thematic Coordinators for review.

June 1st: Thematic Coordinators submit session proposals to the Programme Committee (via the Forum Secretariat and WWC HQ) for review.

June 13th: Programme Committee meets to review all submissions

September 30th: Call for Contributions closes.

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November (TBD): Final session plan to be submitted—but development work continues until the Forum!

Proposal for Session 1, Topic 4.1

Broader Issue/Context	It is necessary to concretise the debates on RTWS, looking at specific practical action to accompany claims for the right, based on emerging practice
Key Question	Will the human right to water and sanitation (RTWS) accelerate progress towards and beyond the MDGs or is it an empty promise? What measures need to be put in place by governments to ensure that RTWS is taken into account in sector reform, budgeting and policy formulation
Session Development Description/ Outline	<p>1. In which countries have key elements of RTWS been put into practise at the national level and how has this been done? How was the political will generated and obstacles overcome? All States have recognised RTWS as part of the right to an adequate standard of living (e.g. in Habitat Agenda) and about 20-30 have the right to water in national legislation or policy. However, use of RTWS to drive reforms at the national level is embryonic in most countries. It is important to look at the evidence that does exist on use of RTWS in order to address the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does this emerging practise indicate that the promise of the RTWS can be realised? - What are the lessons? How was resistance to RTWS overcome within government? - Will it be possible for governments and other actors to move beyond the MDGs (as well as meeting any un-met targets)? - How can 'transition countries' who are on the brink of recognising or implementing the RTWS be assisted to move ahead. - What are the main blockages to implementation of RTWS? - Which constituencies can be relied upon to push forward a rights-based approach? What approaches have been taken to convince sceptics? - Where water utilities overcame the objections of local authorities and land ministries to the provision of water services in informal settlements, how was this done? - How can/has the UN human rights system can play a constructive role at the national level? - How can governments ensure the RTWS for those relying on small-scale provision of water and sanitation? - How have water and sanitation sectors ensured that they avoid discrimination and neglect or socially excluded groups (for example indigenous peoples, nomadic and traveller communities, those of low-caste, people with serious or chronic illnesses and those living in arid and semi-arid areas)? What type of targeted measures have been taken to achieve this goal? <p>(Note that questions regarding participation and accountability are also critical in this regard, but will be addressed in the second session).</p>

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	<p>2. What are the key outstanding questions about the duties that correspond to the right to water and sanitation? Many questions about the RTWS are answered in General Comment 15, the Sub-Commission Guidelines on the Right to Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation and the 2007 OHCHR report and in a number of publications on this topic. Some of these answers are not well known in the development field, or are not yet sufficiently clear, or raise new practical questions. Examples of these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the minimum standards for countries that have massive levels of lack of access and insufficient resources? What are the immediate obligations? - Can the affordability element of the RTWS, and the percentage of resources to be provided to water and sanitation for the poor, be expressed in precise numerical terms? - What are government obligations in relation to IWRM - What are the obligations of local authorities in situations of lack of resources? - What are the responsibilities of rights-holders? - What are the obligations of small-scale providers? - What are the implications of RTWS for other non-State actors? (Business, NGOS, Faith based organisations) - What are the relation of the RTWS to traditional rights and values of water and to land rights? <p>This session will involve all actors that have a role in national water and sanitation programmes, with particular reference to those governments and other actors that are setting the trend in this area, or are actively considering how to implement RTWS. Discussions will focus around evidence from country programmes. Human rights focused institutions will also play a role in these discussions by examining the practice and issues from a human rights lens. The discussions of this topic will be useful for the soon-to-be appointed United Nations Human Rights Council Independent Expert on water and sanitation who has a mandate to prepare a compendium of best practices.</p>
(Types of) Organizations to be involved in session development	<p>National governments (including ministries in the water, sanitation and health sector and development departments) and parliaments</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Civil society (including delivery and advocacy NGOs, academic and research institutions, religious organisations, social movements, media, professional associations and unions)</p> <p>Service providers</p> <p>Inter-governmental bodies (UN agencies, IFIs)</p>
What is being bridged here?	<p>The human rights and development sectors</p>

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Next steps and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of consortia to enhance multi-stakeholder participation and establish a session consortia by July 08 - Session consortia to further develop this proposal and to begin discussion by end of September 1. List of best practices and 2. Elements of RTWS requiring clarification. - Further discussion Stockholm Water Week (August 08), Zaragoza Expo (September 08, in particular RTWS events there, Oslo RTWS conference (UNDP/University of Oslo and Oxford) (November 08) - Consortia members to place their resource documents on session web-site from the end of September 08 - World Social Forum
Contact information for coordination of this session	<p>Name: Session Convenors to be determined by end June after outreach process completed. In the interim, please contact Ashfaq Khalfan</p> <p>Organisation: Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (Right to Water Programme)</p> <p>Country: United Kingdom</p> <p>E-mail: ashfaq@cohre.org</p> <p>Tel: (44) 1865285253</p>

Proposal for Session 2, Topic 4.1

Broader Issue/Context	<p>A key value-added of the RTWS is to strengthen accountability of governments and other actors to users of water and sanitation. Beyond recognition of RTWS, it is important to consider the processes needed to make such accountability real in practice</p>
Key Question	<p>Is the RTWS really making a difference for the poor and marginalised? What steps are needed to improve their ability to use the RTWS as a tool to gain access and to hold governments and other actors to account?</p>



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<p>Session Development Description/Outline</p>	<p>While session 1 focuses on the 'supply-side' of the RTWS, session 2 examines the 'demand-side'. The discussion will focus on good practise in mobilisation by users to understand and claim their rights, including circumstances where users are assisted or facilitated by civil society, government and other actors. It should also consider the role of government in ensuring that its own programmes are based on genuine, non-cosmetic participation by users and that public officials (as well as private service providers where they are delegate responsibilities) are accountable to users.</p> <p>Key questions involve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where has advocacy for RTWS been successful? What were the successful ingredients? Did using human rights language make a difference (positive or negative) as compared to referring to the human need for water? - Where advocacy for RTWS was unsuccessful, or was rejected, what were the reasons for this? What could have been done better? - Where have governments put in place measures that have worked to ensure access to justice in the water and sanitation sector? What are the lessons? How can power imbalances between governments, donors and IGOs on the one hand, and marginalised communities, on the other, be overcome to ensure pro-poor water and sanitation governance? - Where there are critical challenges of advocacy by communities with poor governance other challenges (e.g. suffering from lack of a financial base to organise, insecurity, factionalisation, patron-client relationships, illiteracy), how have these been dealt with? How can/have other actors helped strengthen community governance in the water and sanitation field? - Is there a danger that RTWS will be appropriated by powerful actors? How can this be prevented? - Where has the water and sanitation sector partnered with other government sectors to ensure greater accountability? - One obstacle to accountability is institutional separation between ministries/departments. How has this been dealt with? - What forms of enforcement mechanisms have worked in practise for the central government to make ensure that its obligations are fulfilled by local authorities and other service providers? - How have/can the 'voice' of excluded communities be strengthened in public participation processes). - What forms of expertise do water sector professionals require in order to properly ensure participation? <p>This session will focus on advocacy groups and government bodies (and other actors involved in participatory and accountability mechanisms, and will consider case studies. Discussions will occur in the virtual forum and at relevant conferences (listed below). An attempt will be made to put duty-</p>
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	bearers and advocates in direct discussion.
(Types of) Organizations to be involved in session development	<p>National governments (including ministries in the water, sanitation and health sector and development departments), parliaments and independent public monitoring bodies (e.g. human rights commissions, ombudsman)</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Civil society (with a particular focus on advocacy NGOs, academic, religious organisations, social movements, media)</p> <p>Service providers</p> <p>Inter-governmental bodies (UN agencies, IFIs)</p>
What is being bridged here?	The technocratic implementation perspective and an advocacy perspective
Next steps and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of consortia to enhance multi-stakeholder participation and establish a session consortia by July 08 - Session consortia to further develop this proposal and to begin discussion by end of September of 1. List of best practices (government implementation of accountability mechanisms 2. Case studies of advocacy. - Further discussion Stockholm Water Week (August 08), Zaragoza Expo (September 08, in particular RTWS events there, Oslo RTWS conference (UNDP/University of Oslo and Oxford) (November 08), World Social Forum - Consortia members to share case studies on the session web-site from the end of September 08
Contact information for	Name: (Session Convenors to be determined by end July 08 based on outreach process)

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coordination of this session	Organisation: Country: E-mail: Tel:
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Proposal for Session 3, Topic 4.1

Broader Issue/Context	<i>While the right to water has received significant attention, the linked right to sanitation lacks comparable clarity and attention. This session will help address this deficit.</i>
Key Question	What does the right to sanitation mean?
Session Development Description/ Outline	<p>Following the International Year of Sanitation and the emerging focus on water and sanitation by the UN human rights bodies, it is imperative to consider what the right to sanitation implies. Key questions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where is/will an internationally recognised definition of the right to sanitation be provided? What is the ideal definition of the right to sanitation? Should it include waste-water and solid waste management? - What are the duties of government? What are the responsibilities of users? - What is the value-added of a right to sanitation? - What should the minimum standards of RTS for countries at various levels of development? - What are the primary barriers to access to sanitation? How can human rights be used to help? Where has this occurred in practise? - What are the next steps in developing and promoting the right to sanitation in the human rights and development field? <p>This session will involve all actors that have a role and interest in sanitation. An attempt will be made to ensure that bodies and civil society groups outside the traditional 'water sector' and who are responsible for public health are included in the discussion, as well as human rights focused institutions.</p>
(Types of) Organizations to be involved in session development	<p>National governments (including ministries in the water, sanitation and health sector and development departments) and parliaments</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Civil society (including delivery and advocacy NGOs, academic and research institutions, religious organisations, social movements, media, professional associations and unions)</p> <p>Service providers</p> <p>Inter-governmental bodies (UN agencies, IFIs)</p>
What is being bridged here?	The human rights and development sectors

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Next steps and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of consortia to enhance multi-stakeholder participation and establish a session consortia by July 08 - Session consortia to further develop this proposal and to begin discussion by end of September of implications of sanitation as a right and case studies of implementation. <p>Further discussion: Commission on Sustainable Development (May 08), Stockholm Water Week (August 08), Zaragoza Expo (September 08, in particular RTWS events there, Oslo RTWS conference (UNDP/University of Oslo and Oxford) (November 08), South Asia Sanitation Conference (November 2008)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consortia members to share case studies on the session web-site from the end of September 08
Contact information for coordination of this session	<p>Name: (Session Convenors to be determined by end July as part of outreach process)</p> <p>Organisation:</p> <p>Country:</p> <p>E-mail:</p> <p>Tel:</p>

Proposal for Session 4, Topic 4.1

Broader Issue/Context	<p>Discussions of the RTWS have thus far taken a water supply focus for the unserved. There has been little focus on emergency situations (conflict, disasters) and whether human rights have anything to add to current best practise.</p>
Key Question	<p>The continuum from Emergency to Development: the role of a rights-based approach?</p>



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Session Development Description/ Outline	<p>This session will consider the value human rights approach can provide to emergency response, and in transitioning from response to long-term rehabilitation and development. It will consider what steps are needed to better entrench human rights for the humanitarian sector. It will consider questions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Given that emergencies generate significant resources and attention, does a human rights approach help in this regard? - What human rights principles are relevant to emergency provision of water and sanitation? Are these already included in current best practices, such as the SPHERE standards? Can more explicit attention to human rights help entrench current best practice in the emergency response field, and if so how? Are there examples where this has been done? - Have other human rights besides RTWS been utilised in emergency responses, and if so, how does this help? <p>This session development process will be made of bodies that focus on emergency response as well as development and human rights focused groups that have an interest in considering their role in addressing emergencies.</p>
(Types of) Organizations to be involved in session development	<p>National governments (including ministries in the water, sanitation and health sector, development, emergency departments, security agencies)</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Civil society (in particular humanitarian NGOs, advocacy NGOs, academic and research institutions, faith-based groups, social movements, media, professional associations)</p> <p>Inter-governmental bodies (UN agencies in particular humanitarian focused groups, IFIs)</p>
What is being bridged here?	<p>The three distinct development, humanitarian (emergency response) and human rights sectors</p>
Next steps and timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expansion of consortia to enhance multi-stakeholder participation and establish a session consortia by July 08 - Session consortia to further develop this proposal and to begin discussion by end of September of 1. List of key areas in which RTWS can provide value-added to emergency response mechanisms 2. Case studies of areas in which emergency responses have taken on an approach based on RTWS. - Further discussion: Zaragoza Expo (September 08, in particular RTWS events there) - Consortia members to share materials on this subject on the session web-site from the end of September 08
Contact information for	<p>Name: (Session Convenors to be determined by end July as part of</p>



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coordination of this session	outreach process) Organisation: Country: E-mail: Tel:
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