

# Developing Indicators for the Human Right(s) to Water and Sanitation

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## Exploring the Politics of Indicator-Based Accountability

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# The Indicator Development Process

1. Development – Creating Indicators through the United Nations
2. Implementation – Employing Indicators in Reports to Human Rights Treaty Bodies
3. Application – Facilitating Accountability for Water & Sanitation



# Indicator Creation as Political Process

**Frame**  **Identify**  **Review**

- Elaborate Norms
- Conceptualize Indicator Categories

- Translate Existing Data into Rights-Based Indicators
- Create Overlap across Rights

- Consult for scientific validity and political relevance

**Policy Analysis**

**Comparative Analysis**

- Education
- Health
- Water & Sanitation

**Interviews (12)**



# Framing Indicators

Role of the OHCHR/  
Special Rapporteurs



Paul Hunt

## Conceptualizing Indicators

Structural	Process	Outcome
Binary	Largely Qualitative	Largely Quantitative
State commitments to undertake measures for the realization of the right	State efforts to implement the right	Population-level results reflecting individual enjoyment of the right

# Identification of Indicators

## Interdisciplinary Collaboration

- Reports of Special Rapporteurs
- Academic Initiatives
- SERF Index
- OHCHR Illustrative Indicators & Meta-Data Sheets

## Indicator Specification

- Data Availability
- Quantitative Preference
- Reflective of Reality



# Implementation of Indicators

Comparisons across time (and across countries)

## Harmonizing Data in State Reporting

- What data DO states report?
- What data SHOULD states report?
- Developing Guidelines for the Content of State Reports





# Implementation of Indicators

Comparisons across time (and across countries)



Research Necessary on  
Reporting Practice

## Human Rights Treaty Bodies

- Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
- Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
- Other Treaty Bodies?

# Process Model

## Developing Indicators for the Right(s) to Water and Sanitation

- (1) Frame Norms
- (2) Identify Indicators
- (3) Political Review



# Justifying Indicators for Water and Sanitation

“right to water indicators should be identified in the national water strategies or plans of action. The indicators should be designed to monitor, at the national and international levels, the State party’s obligations . . .”

General  
Comment 15

1995

2000

2005

the human right to water is indispensable for leading a life in human dignity. It is a prerequisite for the realization of other human rights.

entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic uses

# Facilitating Accountability for Water and Sanitation

## UN Resolution on the Right to Water and Sanitation (2010)

“the right to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation as a human right that is essential for the full enjoyment of life and all human rights.”



## Role of the Special Rapporteur



MDGs



Human Rights

“Measuring whether Governments are making efforts towards the realization of the rights to water and sanitation to the maximum of available resources is an important budding area of work.”

- Catarina de Albuquerque

# Incorporating Human Rights in the Post-2015 Development Goals

- **Berlin WHO and UNICEF consultation on post-2015 monitoring (Berlin**
  - Exploring the relevance of the human right to water and sanitation to future monitoring efforts
- **END Working Group**
  - Incorporating rights-based norms for equity and non-discrimination in the Post-2015 water and sanitation agenda



# Identifying Candidate Indicators

- Delineate attributes of right(s)
- Review existing indicators
- Structure around data
- Consider overlap with other rights

## Political Conflicts

- Government Flexibility vs. Cross-National Comparison
- Setting Policy to Meet Indicators?
- Objectivity as Accuracy?

Review with States to Assure Implementation

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