



Invitation

Advancing Women's Legal Rights to Water

Venue: Salvation Army, Auditorium

Conveners: Women for Water Partnership (WfWP), Environmental Law Institute (ELI), Rights Resources Institute (RRI), UNESCO- World Water Assessment Programme, Soroptimist International (SI), Business and Professional Women International (BPWI)

Date: 19 March 2019 at 2.30 pm

Introduction

Poor access to infrastructure perpetuates women's burden in managing water for household and productive uses and, in turn, limits their ability to effectively engage in water governance. Moreover, as evidenced by a comparative global analysis of national laws in 16 African, Asian, Latin American, and Oceanic countries conducted by RRI and ELI, women's legal rights to access, use and actively manage water and land resources remain limited.

The assessment provides new insights on the linkages between communities' land and water tenure rights, and the lack of harmonization between water and land legislation. These legislative failures limit rural and indigenous women's opportunities to improve livelihoods and participate meaningfully in decision-making processes impacting water resources.

On the other hand, there are examples that demonstrate innovative mechanisms, like social networks and the use of gender disaggregated indicators, to effectively engage women in water decision-making and governance, Important lessons can be learned from these experiences to help fill the existing gaps in legal protections of women's water rights.

The session will provide an overview of the initial findings of the RRI/ELI study, insights into some of the examples of innovative practices to improve women's role in water governance and conclude with recommendations to support policy change that fills identified legal gaps, as well as how to leverage political will to do so.

Programme

2.30 Opening and Welcome

Mariet Verhoef-Cohen: President of Women for Water Partnership and Soroptimist International

2.35 Securing Women's Water Tenure Rights: Findings from a global analysis of community-based water tenure systems

Carl Bruch: Senior Attorney; Director International Programs Environmental Law Institute

2. 50 Q&A and discussion

3. 05 Empowering women to become water leaders

Seline Meijer: Programme Officer Global Programme for Governance and Rights, International Union for Conservation of Nature

3. 15 The value of informal processes: women influencing water management decisions

Lesha Witmer: Steering Committee Women for Water Partnership

3. 25 Moderated discussion on key messages to the CSW

3.50 Closing conclusions

