

# End Water Poverty progress report: 2019–2020



Credit: WaterAid / Nana Kofi Acquah



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# 1. Introduction

**People living without safe water and toilets are not victims of tragic circumstance.** The source of the water and sanitation crisis is not scarcity nor lack of technology. This crisis results from decisions made by those in power. From colonial legacies. From climate crises. From systemic discrimination against marginalised groups. From prioritising profit over people. In other words, this crisis is profoundly political.

It's vital, therefore, that End Water Poverty's work centres people's agency and dignity. This year the coalition moved away from the type of campaigning that is created and led by the so-called 'Global North'. We moved away from measuring success based on the number of people wearing our t-shirts on World Water Day or World Toilet Day. We moved away from the narrative of how we can best provide services to 'poor' communities in low-income countries. Our campaigns are now designed and delivered by members in both the 'Global South' and 'Global North'.

Whatever your nationality, wherever you live – whether on the streets, in prison or a refugee camp – water is your human right. We have a choice to either stand with people as they claim their rightful share of development or continue business as usual, fuelling a virtuous cycle of poverty and handouts.



Protester in Bulawayo. Credit: Bulawayo Water Action

## 2. Claim Your Water Rights

### #CLAIMYOURWATERRIGHTS

#### 2.1 Our aims

We designed Claim Your Water Rights as a global public pressure campaign with the broad aim of mobilising people to demand their human rights to safe water and sanitation. More specifically, we wanted to test an overlooked accountability mechanism: lodging complaints to National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs), as well as regulators and local authorities.

The campaign complements and develops End Water Poverty's previous work on accountability. Following the publication of our joint *Global Review of National Accountability Mechanisms for SDG6* in 2018, many coalition members expressed interest in working more meaningfully on human rights. Claim Your Water Rights therefore aims to instil members with the confidence to hold governments accountable using the international human rights framework.

The all-encompassing nature of a human rights campaign like Claim Your Water Rights means our members can advocate on a range of different issues - whether it's water affordability, pollution, period taboos, sanitation workers' rights, debt cancellation or privatisation. This allows members to adapt their campaign approach to their local or national context, while working in global solidarity under one banner. Ultimately, we hope Claim Your Water Rights will become an umbrella campaign for a global water rights movement.

#### 2.2 Our achievements

**10 December 2019:** #ClaimYourWaterRights launches on International Human Rights Day, reaching 60,000 people on social media. Civil society hold press conferences in Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**1 January 2020:** The campaign's first major success: Vision Africa Regional Network supports a community of over 1,000 people in Mansa, Zambia, who had been without safe water for almost a year, to demand their human rights. The community vents their frustration on regional TV and radio, imploring their member of parliament (Zambia's health minister) to fulfil his election promises and realise their rights to safe water. They also threaten to submit complaints to Zambia's Human Rights Commission. After hearing the broadcasts, Mansa's member of parliament instructs authorities to restore the community's water supply. Five days later, over 1,000 people celebrate the restoration of their water supply.





**14 January 2020:** #ClaimYourWaterRights becomes one of the top five trending terms on Zimbabwean Twitter after the National Association of Youth Organisations (NAYO) hold a series of Facebook and Twitter sessions to engage young people. NAYO begin a three-pronged approach: some of their organisations lodge complaints through local authorities and utilities. Others present a petition to parliament while the main contingency lodge complaints to Zimbabwe’s National Human Rights Commission relating to the denial of young people’s access to safe water and sanitation within schools and households.

**24 January 2020:** Enugu State declares water emergency after lobbying from a civil society coalition led by Hope Spring Nigeria. The state announces a series of commitments, including: expediting funds to complete a project to service one million people in Enugu’s capital by April; passing a new law recognising water and sanitation as human rights; establishing a regulatory body to uphold these rights. Since the declaration, Enugu has started to refresh its water distribution networks.



**Enugu State declares water emergency.**  
*Credit: Hope Spring Nigeria*

**February 2020:** Hope Spring Water compels the Enugu State government to reconnect a slaughterhouse next to a prominent market that had been without a reliable supply for four years, removing a significant public health risk.



**Before and after a civil society coalition compel Enugu State to reconnect the water supply of a slaughterhouse near a prominent market.** *Credit: Hope Spring Nigeria*

**5 February 2020:** Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation meet the Nigeria Human Rights Commission. The commission pledge to support the Claim Your Water Rights campaign & assure those living without safe water & sanitation that their office is always open.



**Claim Your Water Rights campaigners meet the Nigeria National Human Rights Commission.** Credit: Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation

**March 2020:** Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation support a community in the Niger Delta to approach the National Human Rights Commission to file complaints against a Chinese oil company polluting their drinking water. The community then decides to pursue compensation instead. Another community in Okigwe, Imo State, also file a complaint. The Imo State Water and Sewerage Corporation commit to ensuring water runs in the state before 2020 World Water Day during CFCF’s Claim Your Water Rights radio show. The Imo State government commence the revitalisation of the Otamiri scheme in Owerri as well as deliver water to two public schools in urban Owerri.

**1-31 March 2020:** Most Water Action Month mobilisations cancelled due to Covid.

**8 March 2020:** IRSP Pakistan’s Claim Your Water Rights rally attended by over 500 people on International Women’s Day.



**Demonstrators at a Claim Your Water Rights rally on International Women’s Day in Pakistan.** Credit: Integrated Regional Support Programme Pakistan



**14 March 2020:** The Indian Institute of Youth and Development and its partner SADBHABANA collect more than 200 signatures for a petition titled “Safe drinking water and better sanitation are our Rights” in Keonjhor district.

**18 March 2020:** End Water Poverty publishes new messaging on Covid and tweaks Claim Your Water Rights strategy with stronger focus on digital advocacy and more ambitious demands.

**1 April 2020:** Hope Spring Nigeria refocus their campaign to ‘Lockdown, Not Lock-Tap’, engaging the Enugu State Water Corporation to suspend disconnections.

**7 April 2020:** End Water Poverty publishes global call for governments to realise sanitation workers’ rights. 350+ civil society organisations and networks sign. Sweepers Are Superheroes adapt this statement to call on the Pakistan government to honour sanitation workers.

**April 2020:** Four weeks after Media for Community Empowerment’s radio show on Mteгани Fm, the local Mkuranga government successfully drill a well in response to residents airing their concerns about the village’s decade-long water crisis.



**Interviewing people without safe water in rural Tanzania.**  
*Credit: Media for Community Empowerment*

**1 May 2020:** End Water Poverty publishes Covid manifesto on Labour Day to amplify calls for governments to protect people from Covid by urgently realising their human rights to water and sanitation. Over 600 sign.

**May 2020:** Hope Spring Nigeria facilitate the Enugu State government’s approval of a new water scheme with a capacity of 50,000 m<sup>3</sup>/day. Project to be completed by March 2021.

**June 2020:** The Punjab Assembly, Pakistan’s largest provincial assembly, passes Sweepers are Superheroes’ resolution to recognise sanitation workers as ‘frontline heroes in the fight against Covid-19’ despite opposition from the state’s health minister. The resolution compels employers to provide PPE to workers who enter sewers or shovel faeces without gloves or masks. Pakistan Supreme Court invites Sweepers Are Superheroes to help create new legislation.





**June 2020:** Hope Spring Nigeria invite Enugu’s Hospital Administrator Dr Okechukwu Ossai to their Claim Your Water Rights radio show. After hearing interviews with health workers lamenting inadequate water and sanitation facilities in health centres, Ossai declares live on air that his department will rehabilitate Enugu’s 34 health facilities. He pledges to return to the radio program before the end of the year to update the public on the state’s progress. As of October, HSN are monitoring water and sanitation facilities in Enugu’s general hospitals.



**Enugu’s Hospital Administrator Dr Okechukwu Ossai commits to rehabilitating Enugu’s health facilities live on air. Credit: Hope Spring Nigeria**

**June 2020:** Imo State trucks emergency water to communities not connected to the central water supply system in response to Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation’s calls on local radio. The following month, Imo State Water and Sewerage Corporation start repairing broken or burst pipes and extend water pipes to non-connected areas.

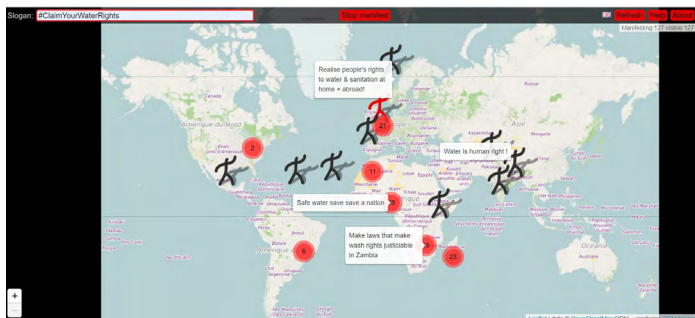
**23 June 2020:** Zambia NGO WASH Forum successfully lobby the Ministry of Finance to waiver import duties for chemicals needed by commercial utilities to treat water.

**30 June-1 July 2020:** Media for Community Empowerment deliver media training for staff at Tanzania League of the Blind (TLB) in Morogoro to produce interactive content that enables people with disabilities to demand their rights.

**July 2020:** The UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation invites End Water Poverty to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the human rights to water and sanitation.

**July 2020:** The Indian Institute of Youth and Development conducts analysis on the socio-economic effects of Covid-19 on sanitation workers and people with disabilities in Odisha.

**28 July 2020:** Organisations from 20 countries and five continents representing every EWP constituency join our inaugural digital demonstration to highlight that, ten years after water and sanitation were recognised as human rights, billions of people still don't have access to these fundamental public services. As well as online protests, some members organised physical community mobilisations with individuals holding #ClaimYourWaterRights placards. We reach 66,000 people on Twitter (our daily average is 6,000).



**Digital demonstrators across the world highlight the denial of billions of people's rights to safe water and sanitation.**  
Credit: End Water Poverty



**Protesters in Pakistan mark the tenth anniversary of the human rights to safe water and sanitation.** Credit: Integrated Regional Support Programme Pakistan

**September 2020:** Following Media for Community Empowerment's radio broadcast from Kikwawila village in Ifakara, Tanzania, the local government drills water for their citizens. Three days after listening to MECE's show, residents started bothering the village chairperson by asking when the local government will realise their human rights to water.

**2 October 2020:** Tatirano Social Enterprise's handwashing campaign, a collaboration with the Madagascar government, records nearly 15,000 handwashes in one day after establishing 61 handwashing stations in marketplaces across three regions.



**A woman washes her hands at Tatirano Social Enterprise's handwashing stations in Madagascar.** Credit: Daniel G Wood



**6 October 2020:** Socio-Economic Rights Institute publishes the first of four case studies from its research paper *Claiming water rights in South Africa*. The publication is accompanied by four webinars with the South Africa Mail & Guardian exploring the different ways people are claiming their water rights in South Africa.



Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa’s research paper documents the various ways people are claiming their water rights in South Africa. Credit: SERI



Members of the Unemployed Peoples’ Movement celebrate outside the Makhanda High Court. Credit: SERI/Anna Majavu, New Frame

**12 October 2020:** End Water Poverty and UNISON publish *Human Rights to Water and Sanitation Advocacy Toolkit* for civil society, trade unionists and activists.

**15 October 2020:** Indian Institute of Youth and Development organise sensitisation, trainings, local media coverage and a small public gathering for Global Handwashing Day.

**24 October 2020:** End Water Poverty members constitute 1/6 signatures on civil society statement denouncing private lobby attempts to suppress the Special Rapporteur’s new report on privatisation.

**31 October 2020:** Bulawayo Water Action present ultimatum to Zimbabwe Water Authority to provide the city with water.



Protesters in Bulawayo. Credit: Bulawayo Water Action

**3 November 2020:** After months of lobbying from the Zambia NGO WASH Forum, the Zambia National Human Rights Commission establish a Thematic Committee on economic, social and cultural rights and invite the forum to nominate a representative to sit on the committee.

**We are immensely proud of our members' achievements.** It's rare for an advocacy campaign with limited resources to produce so many success stories in a such a short period of time. Yet we have engendered legislative change in Pakistan, public commitments to refreshing water facilities in hospitals in Nigeria, and over 1,000 people successfully demanding their rights to water in Zambia (to name just a few examples). The diversity of our achievements reflects the plurality of our membership: civil society in 12 countries representing Africa, Asia, Europe, North Africa and hopefully soon South America have joined Claim Your Water Rights. This is a truly global campaign.

The speed with which our members adjusted to the Covid crisis was perhaps most impressive. After building momentum following the campaign soft-launch on 10 December 2019 (International Human Rights Day), we planned to mobilise our wider membership during March, which is

traditionally Water Action Month. However many members were forced to cancel or postpone plans to lodge complaints or hold World Water Day rallies due to local or national outbreaks of Covid-19.

Though this severely restricted the potential for civic action, it also presented a huge opportunity to passionately advocate for people's human rights. The pandemic exposed many of the injustices water and sanitation advocates had been trying to highlight: chiefly, how can people protect themselves from infectious diseases like Covid-19 without safe, affordable water?

While the WASH sector predominantly prioritised hygiene behaviour change campaigns, Claim Your Water Rights presented an alternative approach and narrative. Before the United Kingdom had even locked down on 23 March, we'd developed stronger messaging and more urgent demands. Yet the core of our narrative - which centres people, human rights and the duty of the state - remained. After all, "it shouldn't take a pandemic for governments to do what they are supposed to do", to quote Clinton Ezeigwe of the Claim Your Water Rights task team.

Our members combined awareness-raising activities on the importance of handwashing with bold advocacy, focusing on both emergency measures to save lives, such as ending disconnections and urgently repairing or installing services, as well as systemic change in urging governments to invest in water and sanitation as public services or enshrine the human rights in national laws. We also put increased impetus on online advocacy, testing new tactics and technologies. To mark the tenth anniversary of the human rights to water and sanitation on 28 July, organisations and individuals from 20 countries across five continents joined our inaugural digital demonstrations in an uplifting display of international solidarity.



When we first began this campaign, we faced opposition and scepticism from others working in the WASH sector. We were told that human rights were too difficult to communicate. That they didn't produce results. That our members wouldn't understand (or had little interest in understanding). Our technical grasp of the international legal framework was questioned. We were warned about trying to hold private companies accountable to the same standards as governments. Some described our approach as 'polemical', 'confrontational' or 'uncooperative'. Others said the word 'claim' was too provocative.

Our members' achievements belie these concerns. Claim Your Water Rights' success stems from their creativity, persistence, versatility and determination.

### 2.3 What did we learn?

- Our members' agility has been crucial. The pandemic confirmed the potential volatility of precisely plotted plans. Advocacy campaigns must have inbuilt flexibility to take advantage of unforeseen political opportunities. We must also have conviction in our core aims and control over our narrative. While the Covid crisis forced us to rethink our tactics and messages, it only strengthened the urgency of our calls to realise people's rights to water and sanitation. We must avoid diluting our demands to conform to the sector consensus.
- Members must feel they have autonomy to adapt resources and create localised campaign strategies and materials. They know their country context better than we do; they know their communities better than we do.
- Members appreciated the vibrancy, diversity and global scope of Claim Your Water Rights. Through social media, members observed the various ways colleagues from other countries approached the campaign, sharing their experience and expertise.
- Our members are capable and willing to campaign on human rights. We have not found the human rights framework difficult to communicate. In fact, we received positive feedback concerning the clarity of our blogs and campaign materials. Likewise, our members have said our key messages are clear and easy to understand. The communities they have spoken to are generally receptive and willing to learn how to claim their water rights.
- However, in many countries our members encountered a distinct lack of knowledge among rights-holders and duty-bearers alike. In other countries like South Africa and Zimbabwe, it is widely known that water and sanitation are human and constitutional rights. Indeed, the Socio-Economic Rights Institute of South Africa reflected that the campaign enabled them to document the various ways communities are claiming their rights, thus challenging a popular misconception concerning the apparent lack of water rights litigation in the country.
- Rights activation is key but we cannot encourage people to claim their rights against their will. For example, Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation identified a community whose water has been contaminated by a Chinese oil company. The national human rights commission visited the community and said they had a legitimate case to lodge complaints but community leaders decided instead to pursue compensation, which they did not receive. Our member maintained contact with the community, who will lodge complaints soon. Patience is pivotal.

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- The effectiveness of NHRIs varies from country to country. As most of our members are still in the process of lodging complaints, we hope to have a clearer idea on their efficacy in a few months.
  - Our initial communication materials focused too heavily on lodging complaints to National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs). We quickly adapted our suggested campaign tactics to accommodate members working in countries without functioning human rights institutions. We also softened our language in response to some members' concerns that governments would deem 'lodging complaints' too confrontational.
  - Traditional and social media are always essential accountability tools. At a time when mass public gatherings were banned in many countries, their importance only increased as people spent more time at home anxiously checking news sources for updates. In July we capitalised on this by reaching over 350,000 people on Twitter alone, doubling our monthly average. In Tanzania, where government censorship restricts people's ability to speak out, Media for Community Empowerment interview rural communities who live without water, airing their stories on local radio. Their broadcasts reached over two million people and led to several local authorities installing boreholes and committing funds to improving services - often without complaints being lodged. As other success stories from Nigeria and Zambia demonstrate, the mere threat of lodging complaints combined with increased public awareness of human rights can be enough to spur duty-bearers into action.
  - Forming alliances is key. One of our most significant alliances was with the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights to Water and Sanitation, Léo Heller, whose office contacted us to align Claim Your Water Rights with the UN's tenth anniversary celebrations of the human rights to safe water and sanitation. This gave additional visibility and legitimacy to our campaign. Investing time to build relationships with journalists is especially essential. Over the past year, we've developed a close working relationship with Devex's water correspondent Rebecca Root as well as BBC investigative journalist and documentary maker Leana Hosea. We also facilitated contact between our members and local journalists, such as Nyasha Chingono in Zimbabwe. As well as securing campaign coverage and amplifying our messages, this led to exciting opportunities. In January, Leana Hosea organised a film screening and panel discussion on water security with the Guardian's former environment editor, an academic from King's College and WaterAid's head of campaigns Claire Seaward to raise money for the Claim Your Water Rights campaign. Leana also shared the contacts of activists in America and South Africa who have become strong voices within our coalition.
  - It is possible to sustain a public pressure campaign even when the usual tactics are prohibited. Though Covid-19 severely hindered our members' ability to engage communities and activists in face-to-face meetings, we trialled new technologies and embraced online advocacy to pressure duty-bearers. The pandemic vindicated our decision to stop limiting the coalition's mobilisations to a single month every year. Living without water affects people's everyday lives. The struggle for water is a daily fight. Our members are proactive in extending their campaign activities beyond preliminary plans and funding limitations.



- The more varied the tactics, the better. For example, Hope Spring Nigeria attribute their success in lobbying Enugu State to declare a water emergency and reconnecting a slaughterhouse’s supply to involving a broad coalition of civil society groups. Yet the WASH sector leans towards a homogenous approach that can exclude “outsider” influencing tactics. This campaign is not about forcing members to be confrontational or agitational. It’s about giving unconditional backing to members who see confrontation as an effective way of achieving their advocacy aims.
- We can also work with WaterAid to influence national climate adaption plans by mobilising members to lodge complaints relating to both the human rights to water and a safe environment, combining WaterAid’s insider approach with our outsider approach.
- Facilitate more peer-to-peer learning between members in the same country or region. To foster solidarity among the coalition, we should encourage members to share each others’ success on social media and establish a WhatsApp group for all Claim Your Water Rights campaigners as well as separate chats for different regions.

## 2.4 What next?

- We must sustain this campaign over the next year. As well as encouraging new members to join Claim Your Water Rights, we should continue to fund existing members so they can continue the work they started. Though we achieved rapid results, advocacy work needs time to manifest and materialise. We have generated awareness and garnered momentum in multiple countries. For example the #ClaimYourWaterRights hashtag has become a “household name” in Nigeria’s Enugu and Imo states. There is no point devising a different campaign purely for the sake of having something new.
- Our priority is to develop the campaign’s focus on climate justice. This involves strengthening our burgeoning relationship with environmentalists like Green Climate Campaign Africa and Greenpeace, who assisted in organising and supporting our digital demonstrations.
- In 2020 we commissioned HumanRight2Water to update their ‘Compilation of Good Practices for National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) and Water Governance’. To strengthen capacity and collaboration between civil society and NHRIs, we will share these findings during webinars and training sessions.
- Prioritise national political opportunities over international UN days. Days of action like World Water Day and International Human Rights Day are useful hooks to amplify our work and display global solidarity. But these days should only ever enhance the actions our members are taking at national level - not vice versa.
- Digital demonstrations have the potential to encourage collaboration between members working in the same country and form proxy protests in places where large gatherings are not an option - either due to the risk of contracting Covid-19 or due to governments repressing resistance. In 2021 we will explore the possibility of pioneering targeted national

protests with more specific demands. Having already transitioned from mobilising on one day a year (World Water Day) to one month a year (Water Action Month) to a year-long campaign (Claim Your Water Rights), regular monthly protests seem the logical next step. As we refine our digital advocacy strategy, we will consider making these protests weekly (i.e. #Wednesdays4Water) to show that water is a daily fight and that pressure is unrelenting. To mobilise more people, members will need more forewarning and a manif.app demonstration video.

- Work with new Special Rapporteur Pedro Arrojo to push our global petition calling for national governments to ban water disconnections.
- Update End Water Poverty’s Election Toolkit with section on Claim Your Water Rights
- Update our messaging and strategy in response to feedback from members and Steering Committee. We could also publish a list of suggested tactics as well as case studies documenting our members’ successes in detail.



Living without water affects people’s everyday lives. The struggle for water is a daily fight”





Credit: WaterAid/ Ernest Randriarimalala



## 3. Government, Pay Your Water Bills!



### 3.1 Our aims

The collection of arrears and noncompliance of public institutions in paying their water bills has remained largely overlooked. Non-payment often extends beyond office premises to residential homes of senior government officials; their access to water is often prioritised over the needs of society. Yet there is plenty of anecdotal – and some structural – evidence that many public institutions do not consistently pay their water bills and that these arrears threaten utilities’ financial instability as well as the realisation of people’s human rights. In Africa, governmental and institutional customers often account for 20-30% of billings. In Ghana, the collection rate among private users is 89% against only 12% among public users. This causes significant financial losses for water companies. That’s why EWP members ([Water Citizens Network Ghana](#), [FANMex](#), [Zambia NGO WASH Forum](#) and [KEWASNET](#)) in collaboration with [Water Integrity Network](#) (WIN) and [Solutions for Water integrity and Management](#) (SWIM) and with support from GIZ, launched the Government Pay Your Water Bill campaign at Stockholm World Water Week in August 2020.

The campaign intends to compel governments and their agencies to pay their bills as well as highlighting this issue in the public domain in order to influence policy dialogues on water sector financing. We aim to achieve the following:

- Have vibrant and visible national campaigns in at least three of the five targeted countries as well as two other countries by the end of 2020.
- Influence several public institutions in target countries to settle their arrears and initiate new practices or policies at local or national level to ensure timely payment of future bills.

### 3.2 Our achievements

We successfully launched the campaign at Stockholm World Water Week. Our members and secretariat staff played a significant role in leading breakout sessions and responding to contributions participants.

We have produced a [policy brief](#) that outlines our vision and summarises SWIM’s research findings.

Since the launch, our members commenced various grassroots activities in four focus countries (Ghana, Nepal, Zambia and Mexico).

- In Ghana, the campaign has taken off seamlessly. [Water Citizens Network](#) have made public interventions on the failure of Ghana’s Finance Ministry and Community Water Sanitation Agency to consider paying small town water service providers as part of the government’s directive to deliver free water during the Covid-19 pandemic. The two government agencies cited lack of data from the service providers. Water Citizens Network’s actions contributed to the Ministry of Finance and Community Water Sanitation Agency performing a U-turn and paying small town water

providers. Water Citizens Network innovatively involved the Fiscal Justice Network in the country, thus integrating the issues of domestic resource mobilisation and transparency into the campaign. The network's national profile has been boosted as a result. They have been approached by the University of British Columbia to co-host an exchange programme.

- In Zambia, the campaign had a slow start due to Covid-19 restrictions. Despite this setback, Zambia NGO WASH Forum produced radio discussions to raise public awareness. They also made a courtesy call to the Minister of Water, Dr Jonas Chanda, to discuss sector financing and debt in unpaid water bills owed by public institutions. They are now working on a response to the Zambian Auditor's report on commercial water utilities, which will be presented to the Zambian parliament by the close of November 2020.
- In Nepal, the campaign did not take off as planned because our members' priority was to support the Nepal government's efforts to address Covid-19. However, WaterAid Nepal has now contracted a consultant to conduct a study on non-payment within the Kathmandu Valley. We expect the results of this study within the first week of December 2020.
- In Mexico, work has started on data collection and analysis. The results will be used to design advocacy materials for the campaign's national launch, which will hopefully be in December or January.

**Social Media:** We created a Twitter account to push out our narrative to the public and engage experts in discussions. From August to October, our tweets earned around 13,300 impressions (214 impressions per day), while the account has amassed over 28 followers. The highest

engagement was during the launch: we earned 791 impressions with a 4% engagement rate and 43 link clicks to blogs. These statistics are encouraging given that we did not pay to promote posts and had little time to build a following.

**Video Production:** The campaign project officer produced a video to convey the campaign messages. The video also amassed 180 views.

**Blogs:** We published a couple of blogs to showcase the campaign:

- [Finance and Governance: Government, Pay Your Water Bills!](#)
- [Surviving Covid: Government, Pay Your Water Bills!](#)

These blogs sparked interests on social media, with people engaging with the essence of the campaign. It touched the nerve of a difficult issue that many sector stakeholders do not want to discuss.

**Webinars:** We had opportunities to present the campaign during two global webinars hosted by Sanitation and Water For All/University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the African Development Bank's Rural Water and Sanitation Supply Initiative on "[Increased Resource Mobilisation for Rural WASH In Africa](#)". Attendees showed great interest in the topic during the webinars and we received many follow-up questions following the webinars.



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### 3.3 What did we learn?

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The campaign had some setbacks in its early stages. The contract between EWP and WIN could not be signed on time meaning the project resources were not promptly released. This delayed our members from starting grassroots work and the recruitment of our Project Officer. The campaign was launched in the middle of the pandemic, which meant some of our members redesigned their tactics and tools.

Despite these initial challenges, the campaign has proven its relevance. Either by coincidence or luck, some governments like Ghana and Zambia took the issue seriously. Although water utilities and regulators experience non-payment by government agencies, they have been hesitant in coming forward to support the campaign publicly. The campaign was designed to run for six-months; we have come to realise that this was too ambitious.

### 3.4 What next?

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We look forward to launching national campaigns in Nepal and Mexico. We will discuss the future of this work with WIN in December 2020. From initial discussions, both WIN and EWP think there is value in continuing this campaign.

## 4. Governance

### 4.1 Structure

The coalition is governed by a Steering Committee that meets quarterly over Zoom. Among other things, the committee is responsible for providing strategic direction as well as feedback from the regional/professional constituents of the coalition that they represent.

The committee is made of:

- Malesi Shivaji ([KEWASNET](#)) and Roukiattou Ouedraogo ([SPONG](#)) representing Africa
- Masroor Ahmad ([SABAWON](#)) and Zahida Fizza Kabir ([SAJIDA Foundation](#)) representing South Asia
- Nathalie Seguin ([Fresh Water Action Network, Mexico](#)) and Vanessa Dubois C ([Central American Regional Assoc for Water and Environment \(ARCA\)](#))
- Mark Beacon ([UNISON public service union](#))
- Catarina Fonseca ([IRC WASH](#)) and Phillip Beetlestone ([WIN](#))
- Jamillah Mwanjisi, Chairperson

Meetings are usually chaired by Jamillah Mwanjisi in her capacity as coalition Chairperson.

Aside from the Steering Committee, there is a Task Team that supports the Secretariat in the design and delivery of the Claim Your Water Rights campaign. The Task Team consists of:

- Syed Shah Nasir Khisro, [IRSP](#) (Pakistan)
- P.C. Misra, Indian Institute of Youth & Development (India)

- Mary Gill, [Center for Law and Justice](#) (Pakistan)
- Temple Oraeki, [Hope Spring](#) (Nigeria)
- Clinton Ezeigwe [Christian Fellowship and Care Foundation](#) (Nigeria)
- Bubala Mumba, [Zambian NGO WASH Forum](#) (Zambia)
- Jackson Mwemba, [VAREN](#) (Zambia)
- Kassimou Issotina, [Institute Cultural Affairs](#) (Benin)
- MacDonald National, [Association of Youth Organisations](#) (Zimbabwe)
- Harry Chaplin, [Tatirano Social Enterprise](#) (Madagascar)
- Edith Guiochon, [Coalition Eau](#) (France)

### 4.2 Delivery

The Steering Committee has been supportive of the coalition. Some members of the committee have been proactive in suggesting campaigns (E.g. Government Pay Your Water Bills!, Back To School) and publications (Human Rights To Water and Sanitation Advocacy Toolkit). Some have bolstered their suggestions by dedicating time and resources towards the successful delivery of these projects. Others have represented the coalition on webinars organised by the coalition or external organisations.

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### 4.3 Observations

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- Over the past year, there have been several personnel changes on the committee (WaterAid, South Asia and Africa).
- Communication between Steering Committee members and their constituents is insufficient, as is proactive feedback to the Secretariat about what is happening in different regions.
- There have been questions about the responsibility of the committee to raise funds for End Water Poverty. For some members, it is a difficult to raise funds for the coalition when their own organisations are struggling to survive.
- Latin America has not held an election for the past six years and there is only one active committee member from the region. Similarly, the term for members representing Europe came to an end earlier this year. Elections were not conducted due to Covid and the upcoming General Assembly.
- Our membership in North America has expanded with our messages gaining good traction in the region.
- We are sad to announce that Chair Jamillah Mwanjisi will step down from the committee after this General Meeting. Jamillah is taking up a new role at UN FAO in Rome. Jamillah has been there for this coalition through thick and thin over the years. We would like to wish her the best in her new role.

### 4.4 Improvements

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- We suggest Steering Committee members consult their constituents on ways in which they can improve their communication and feedback to the Secretariat.
- We suggest the General Assembly gives the Secretariat and two exiting Steering Committee members the mandate to search for a new Chairperson.
- We suggest that Latin America and Europe conduct election for their new Steering Committee post this meeting.
- We suggest that North America be given the opportunity to elect one representative onto the Steering Committee.



## 5. Looking ahead

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- Both Claim Your Water Rights and Government, Pay Your Water Bills! are gaining traction with our members (especially the former). This campaign has produced tangible victories from Zambia to Pakistan, from Tanzania to Nigeria. There are also signs of potential victories in South Africa, Madagascar, Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Both the secretariat and task team would like to continue these campaigns.
- The coalition is expanding while delivering fantastic advocacy results. The coalition will need to raise additional financial resources to consolidate these gains, support more members to join our campaigns and expand the Secretariat.
- To strengthen our capacity as a campaigning coalition, we might need to diversify our membership by recruiting civil society from different countries with a more activist mindset.
- Our engagement with the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights to water and sanitation has deepened over the year. We propose continuing to support the work of the new mandate holder, Pedro Arrojo.
- In the new year, we could send a survey asking how End Water Poverty can better support our members' advocacy work and why some members do not – or perhaps feel unable to – engage. We would like to define what role our members expect End Water Poverty to play. For instance, if we need to explicitly explain that End Water Poverty is a human rights focused campaigning coalition and therefore ill-equipped to provide funds or technical assistance to organisations who are primarily service providers. This survey could form part of a broader evaluation of the power-dynamics within the coalition that considers to what extent End Water Poverty replicates and perpetuates colonial attitudes and power imbalances as a UK-based global coalition.

## 6. Conclusion

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During the past twelve months, End Water Poverty has provided an alternative voice within the water and sanitation sector. We have been proactive in our response to the pandemic. We have called for governments to urgently protect people's right to safe water and sanitation. We have helped expose the inhumane conditions in which sanitation workers operate. We have come to the defence of the UN Special Rapporteur when private lobbyists tried to silence his report on privatisation. We have supported communities and civil society who are rarely the focus of global development campaigns to deliver life-changing results.

This coalition and its membership have the power to change the WASH sector's narrative by stressing the state's obligation to realise people's rights and provide water and sanitation as public services, not acts of charity.

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