



# **Political Economy of Water: A Social Work Response**

**An International Conference**

**December 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, 2013**

**Organized by**

**College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, India**

**(Affiliated to University of Mumbai)**





## From the Conference Desk

Water is a fundamental right of all human beings because it significantly affects the quality of life and enables people, especially the poor, to live with dignity.

Global geo-politics has ensured acute disparities in water wealth, chronic insufficiencies and deteriorating environmental sustainability. Albeit their minimal contribution, the impact of these disparities and insufficiencies is significantly borne by the poor.

Water is a natural resource and has remained with people as common property. However, today, water in all its forms is less a resource and more a precious commodity coveted by all, and with ownership claims by many vested interests. This is evident when governments collude to fulfill private corporate interests and bypass the needs of the marginalized. The water-based ecosystem forming the base of human civilization is under threat with its growing scarcity. Monopolization and privatization of water distribution and unequal consumption has led to water becoming out of reach of the common people globally. The priorities of development further widen the disparities in favor of the affluent. The politics of water is apparent in the inequitable per capita distribution of water to urban and rural areas. The average amount of water required daily is 135 litres. Metropolises get 300-350 litres per day (LPD) whereas towns and villages may get only 100 and 30 LPD respectively. This is also evident when large reservoirs are used to supply water to cities whereas the surrounding villages face scarcity. This inequitable distribution of water results in misappropriation. The situation is further complicated by using fresh potable water for unsuitable purposes such as cleaning and gardening. This wasteful consumption of water denies the marginalized a just share of this natural resource.

A significant number of organizations and governments the world over are working on this challenge and developing sustainable intervention models. There are several community driven approaches where the attempt is to bring water within the reach of people and help establish their ownership and right to it.

The social work profession with the commitment to work with the marginalized and the underprivileged cannot be immune to the challenges posed by the scarcity of water. It is inevitable that the profession joins the various efforts made the world over to tackle this problem head on. This international conference is an attempt by College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan, Mumbai, India, to examine specific nuances of water scarcity and develop viable social work intervention strategies based on the experiences of successful intervention models.

## Objectives of the Conference

1. To understand the issues of water misappropriation and mismanagement in the context of development
2. To analyze the intervention models of both government and non-government organizations
3. To develop a future perspective towards involvement of professional social work

## Conference Themes

1. **Water - A Human Right:** The reducing amount of water fit for drinking and other domestic uses erodes the rights and dignity of the affected persons, especially of vulnerable groups including women, children and indigenous people. Monopolization and privatization have become the bane of the above-mentioned groups. These two processes have reduced people's physical, economic and social access to water and are also raising the spectre of conflict between classes and even nations.
2. **The Politics and Dynamics of Water:** India, like many other countries, is witnessing the privatization of previously community-owned water resources. Both surface water and groundwater are being degraded by biological, toxic, organic and inorganic pollutants. Various technical and policy decisions also impact sanitation and hygiene. In this context, it becomes important to understand the decision-making processes in sectors such as industry, agriculture, urbanization and sanitation. These sectors have far-reaching changes in the



- 3. People-Centred Interventions:** It is important to envisage the role of the community and other stakeholders in the process of policy and decision making. Thus, the conference will examine global and regional intervention models as well as mechanisms for redressal and protection in order to facilitate adequate transfer of information to the affected.

**Convener:** Dr. Geeta Balakrishnan, Principal

**Co-Conveners**

1. Mr. Elvis Thomas, Faculty Member, College of Social Work
2. Dr. Vaijayanta Anand, Faculty Member, College of Social Work
3. Dr. Lidwin Dias, Faculty Member, College of Social Work
4. Ms. Meghna Vesvikar, Faculty Member, College of Social Work

**Advisory Committee**

1. Mr. Rajendra Singh, Tarun Bharat Sangh
2. Dr. Haripriya Gundimeda, IIT, Mumbai
3. Mr. K J Joy, SOPPECOM
4. Ms. Indavi Tulpule, Shramik Mukti Sanghatna
5. Dr. Helen Joseph, Faculty Member, College of Social Work
6. Ms. Anjali Kanitkar, Faculty Member, College of Social Work
7. Dr. Hazel D' Lima, Former Principal, College of Social Work
8. Ms. Farida Lambay, Former Vice-Principal, College of Social Work
9. Dr. Gracy Fernandes, Vice President, Nirmala Niketan Institute

**Registration**

The registration fee will be paid in the form of bank draft and cash only. The registration fee covers only the conference kit and lunch and does not include lodging.

<b>Registration Charges</b>	<b>International Delegates</b>	<b>Indian Delegates</b>
Early Bird Registration: Up to 9 <sup>th</sup> July, 2013	US \$ 300	INR 2,500
General Registration: 10 <sup>th</sup> July - 30 <sup>th</sup> October, 2013	US \$ 400	INR 3,500
Late Registration: 1 <sup>st</sup> November - 18 <sup>th</sup> December, 2013	US \$ 450	INR 4,500
Mode of Payment	Bank Draft	Bank Draft or Cash
Bank draft to be in favor of	Nirmala Niketan Institute, College of Social Work, International Conference	
Name of bank	State Bank of India	
Address	Churchgate Branch, Mumbai - 400 020, India	



## Call for Papers

Presentations will be in the form of posters, videos and papers only. Selected papers will be presented in concurrent sessions. Three-four related papers will be presented in each session. Each paper will be allotted 15 minutes of which 10 minutes will be for presentation and 5 minutes for discussion.

## Guidelines for Abstracts

1. The abstract should include the purpose of the presentation, the nature and scope of the topic, the major issues/problems and a concluding statement.
2. The abstracts must be original and hitherto unpublished.
3. The abstract should be upto 500 words.
4. The abstract must be e-mailed to [water2013@cswnn.edu.in](mailto:water2013@cswnn.edu.in), addressed to Mr. Elvis Thomas or Ms. Meghna Vesvikar in MS Word format, in Times New Roman font, size 12, single spaced and justified.
5. Abstracts will be accepted from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2013. The final date for receiving abstracts is 15<sup>th</sup> June, 2013. Authors will be notified of the acceptance of their abstracts by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2013. The final paper must be e-mailed to the Conference Secretariat by 30<sup>th</sup> August, 2013.
6. All accepted papers will be published in the form of a compilation. Hence, contributors are requested to follow the APA guidelines for references.

## Enquiries

For academic and technical support, please contact the Co-Conveners Mr. Elvis Thomas and Ms. Meghna Vesvikar.

For online registration and further details, please refer to:

Website: [www.cswnn.edu.in](http://www.cswnn.edu.in)

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Phone: 0091-22-22002615, 22067345

Fax: 0091-22-22014880

E-mail: [colsocwk@gmail.com](mailto:colsocwk@gmail.com)

## Conference Venue

**HOTEL ATITHI**

**Adjacent to Santacruz Airport**

**77A-B, Nehru Road, Vile Parle (E)**

**Mumbai - 400 099, INDIA**

**Tel: 0091-22-2618 7941 to 43 | 0091-22-2613 0874 & 75**

**Fax: 0091-22-2611 1998**

**E-mail: [atithi@atithihotel.net](mailto:atithi@atithihotel.net)**