Ndjodi Ndeunyema

Doctoral Candidate
Oxford University

Ndjodi is currently pursuing a DPhil/PhD in Law, researching on the right to water under the Namibian Constitution and under International Law as a Daube Law Scholar at Linacre College, Oxford University. As a Rhodes Scholar, Ndjodi completed three Oxford masters degrees: the MPhil in Law by Research, the taught BCL and MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice. Ndjodi's MSc dissertation, awarded with distinction, was shortlisted for the top ten John Sunley Prize to celebrate impact and excellence in post-graduate research into penal issues in the UK. Ndjodi read for his LLB and a B. Juris degrees from the University of Namibia.

At present, Ndjodi is Research Director for the Oxford Human Rights Hub and is a founding Editor of the University of Oxford Human Rights Hub Journal. He is Editor of the Oxford University Commonwealth Law Journal and was previously a Research Officer with Oxford Pro Bono Publico, which provides pro bono research to NGOs, international organisations, and courts. He was the 2017/8 President of the Oxford University Africa Society.

Ndjodi served as a legal intern at the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights in Arusha, Tanzania and completed a clerkship at the Constitutional Court of South Africa. During his undergraduate, Ndjodi worked as a research intern and, subsequently, as an assistant legal officer with the Law Reform and Development Commission of Namibia, principally as project officer researching the reforms that led to the Namibian Third Constitutional Amendment. Ndjodi has published peer-reviewed articles in journals and co-authored the textbook on 'The Law of Pre-Trial Criminal Procedure in Namibia' in 2014.

Beyond a Human Right to Water under Treaty Law: Evaluating the Water's Crystallisation as Customary International Law and the (neglected) Role of General Principles of Law

This paper evaluates the basis of a human right to water that is legally rooted in international law. The right to water has been asserted based on treaty law, most prominently in the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights following the 2002 General Comment 15 by the UN Committee on Economic Social and Cultural Rights. The paper will thus identify the human right to water's treaty law basis and address some of the objections to implying the right. The paper notes that, while the assessment of a customary international law human right to water is limited, its importance lies in that it would bind all states including those not party to treaties with provisions establishing a human right to water, and given the potential for human right to water arguments to be asserted in international investment arbitration settings. As such, the paper evaluates the state practice and opinio juris elements that are necessary to establish a human right to water as custom. Recognising the disputed nature of how these two elements general interact to crystallise into a customary norm, the paper's attention is directed to the methodological approach to customary international law. Two approaches are thus evaluated and applied to the human right to water assessment: the sliding scale approach and the reflective equilibrium approach. In the final analysis, the paper turns to general principles of law, which is a dimension that has received laconic attention within the human right to water scholarly literature. The paper thus asserts general principles of law as relevant in the legal construction of the normative content and obligations related to the human right to water as matters of both domestic and treaty law.