

Equity and inclusion

A rights-based approach



A WaterAid report

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Foreword

Over the past few decades we have seen major strides in global development. More children go to school, child morbidity and mortality have gone down, and income levels have been raised. This progress has been brought about by a combination of political will, better resources, access to markets, technological innovations and public awareness. While these improvements are impressive, they mask the pervasive inequity in development outcomes. Many people, especially the poorest, do not benefit from modern day progress and they are excluded from opportunities that could take them out of poverty.

Gender, caste, ethnicity, age, and disability are some of the key causes for exclusion, which then results in a downward spiral of development. Exclusion and inequitable access to services and opportunities – including water and sanitation – are of major concern for all organisations committed to human development. The World Bank's World Development Report 2006, *Equity and Development* concludes that 'Inequality of opportunity, both within and among nations, sustains extreme deprivation, results in wasted human potential and often weakens prospects for overall prosperity and economic growth'.

WaterAid has always been deeply committed to issues of equity. Since our establishment in 1981 we have chosen to work in some of the poorest countries of the world in Africa and Asia, and within these, to work with people who are marginalised. We have always endeavored to understand the gender dimensions of water and sanitation services, and are now building our understanding of other issues that commonly result in exclusion, such as disability, HIV/AIDS and age.

WaterAid's Global strategy 2009-15 provides the strategic perspective to build on this experience and integrate equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. Our mission is about 'transforming lives of people', so we need to understand how people are excluded from essential services and how this affects their lives. Our first aim is to 'promote and secure poor people's rights and access', which means we must adopt a rights-based approach to issues of equity and inclusion.

We now need a common, coherent and pragmatic understanding of equity and inclusion so we can integrate it into our work and that of our partners. We also need minimum standards and indicators to make sure we are effective. This equity and inclusion framework aims to address these needs. We have developed it by building on our own past experiences, and on the experience of other organisations. It was finalised at the international Equity and Inclusion workshop in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 2009.

Many people have contributed to this work. Louisa Gosling, Equity and Inclusion Adviser, has patiently and with deep commitment guided its progress over the past 18 months, through extensive consultation with WaterAid staff and external organisations. Lydia Zigomo, Head of East Africa region, provided the leadership, building ownership and buy-in within the organisation. Shamila Jansz, Programme Learning Officer, played a key role in capturing and disseminating experience and in organising the Equity and Inclusion workshop. Mary O'Connell (Policy Officer Capacity Building) and Adam Furse (International HR Projects Manager) have been critically and actively involved as members of the Equity and Inclusion core group. Jerry Adams, Head of Programme Effectiveness Unit, supported Louisa in her role as Adviser. This progress could not have been achieved without the active engagement and passionate commitment of all members of the virtual Equity and Inclusion working group, especially the focal persons in country programmes: Artur Matavele, Christiane Randrianarisoa-Rasol, Clarisse Baghnyan, Destina Samani, Herbert Kasililah, Indira Khurana, Juanita During, Mahider Tesfu, Nancy Mukumbuta, Ngabaghila Chatata, Om Prasad Gautam, Pascaline Ouedraogo, Pono Fistone, Quratulain Saddiqui, Rosie Wheen, Sarah Muzaki, Shamim Ahmed, Spera Atuhairwe. The Directors Team has encouraged us over the past year to take this work forward and is fully committed to support this important area of our work.

The development of this framework has been an extremely productive and collaborative process. I sincerely hope it will promote a practical understanding of equity and inclusion, and will guide our implementation of the Equity and Inclusion policy, approved by the Directors Team in January 2010. I am confident that this will enable us to reach out to those who are excluded and marginalised, and help us realise our mission of transforming lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities.

Girish Menon
Director of International Programmes
12 January 2010

Introduction and overview

WaterAid believes that access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation (WASH) is a human right. These essential services underpin human development and transform lives, enabling people to overcome poverty. WaterAid's entry point is one of anti-poverty. We believe that poverty, marginalisation, and social exclusion are inextricably linked.

In order to realise our vision of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation, WaterAid is committed to working with its partners to reach those without access to WASH. This includes the poorest and most marginalised who will remain unserved even when the MDGs are met. This means WaterAid must address exclusion from WASH as it relates to wider inequalities in power relations and in control over water and other resources within the family, community and at institutional levels.

Those who are likely to be particularly disadvantaged include women, children, people with disabilities, older people, people living with chronic illness including HIV/AIDS, people belonging to specific castes, religions, ethnic groups, indigenous groups, and people living in remote or peripheral areas. Other socially excluded groups include people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, displaced people, travellers, pastoralists, illegal settlers or people working in particular occupations, such as manual scavengers. Accordingly, WaterAid aims to highlight at every opportunity the continuing inequalities within WASH service provision and to contribute to the significant reduction of these inequalities.

The framework

The purpose of this framework is to help implement WaterAid's policy on equity and inclusion. It aims to:

- Provide a common understanding of equity and inclusion in relation to WASH
- Explain WaterAid's approach to equity and inclusion
- Establish a common set of minimum standards and indicators as a basis for further work in specific countries or parts of the organisation

The framework has three sections:

1 WaterAid's position and approach

- Equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach
- WaterAid's approach to equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach
- Implications for WaterAid – challenges in putting the framework into practice

2 Standards and indicators for equity and inclusion

- Equity and inclusion standards and indicators for WaterAid

3 Explanation of terms and examples

- Explanation of terms: exclusion, marginalisation, vulnerability and the social model of inclusion
- Examples of marginalised groups in relation to WASH

While the whole organisation is working to become more equitable and inclusive, we need to recognise that there are different ways of getting there depending on country and context, and existing levels of awareness and experience. This framework provides a common platform from which to develop detailed guidance and plans of action in different areas of work. It includes minimum standards to apply in each area, and guidance on areas to work on over time.

Part 1

WaterAid's position and approach

1 Equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach

WaterAid has adopted equity and inclusion as core principles, intrinsic to a rights-based approach, to ensure we address issues of marginalisation and exclusion in order to realise our vision of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation.

Equity is the principle of fairness

Equity involves recognising that people are different and need different support and resources to ensure their rights are realised. To ensure fairness, measures must often be taken to compensate for specific discrimination and disadvantages.

At a local level this means looking at relative disparities or disadvantages within families and communities, understanding exactly what barriers are faced by disadvantaged people in accessing services, and developing ways to overcome these barriers.

At national and international level it means understanding the dynamics that result in certain countries or regions being favoured over others, or certain sections of the population enjoying greater political influence, and working to direct support to those with least influence or access to services.

Internally, equity means identifying and wherever possible removing the barriers that prevent the recruitment, retention and optimal performance of the best person to do the job.

Inclusion is the process of ensuring that all are able to participate fully

Inclusion is a development issue. The process of inclusion is not just about improving access to services, but also supporting people – including those who are discriminated against and marginalised – to engage in wider processes to ensure that their rights and needs are recognised. For example in planning and managing service delivery, in decision-making, and in holding duty bearers to account through citizens' action.

Ultimately the groups who are marginalised need to be integrated into the political system in order to uphold their rights of access to WASH. WaterAid should support this process in an appropriate manner according to the country context in which it is working.

Equity and inclusion are therefore interrelated. In practice, addressing them requires: better recognition and understanding of the differential needs of individuals and groups; identifying and tackling the root causes of exclusion; promoting and supporting their inclusion in decision-making processes; and identifying and implementing appropriate and sustainable solutions. This applies both to the programme work of WaterAid and to our internal culture and procedures.

Moving from a focus on needs to a focus on rights

A needs-based approach aims to change people’s situation of deprivation or lack of access to services, viewing people as passive ‘recipients’ or ‘beneficiaries’. This approach may satisfy the needs of that group of people for now but there are no guarantees that improvements in access will be sustained.

A rights-based approach is a transformational development process in which people are the drivers and subjects of their own development. Moving to a rights-based approach implies focusing on the relationship between state and civil society.

A rights-based approach is about improving wider systems of governance which determine progress towards our vision of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation. It implies a change in the power dynamics between those without access and the duty bearers. It aims to bring about sustainable and long term structural change in policies, procedures and laws, as well as changes in attitudes and behaviours. There are also incremental benefits in implementing a rights-based approach and considerable potential for multiplier effects by focusing at a number of different levels. For example, ensuring that public water and sanitation budgets address the needs of disadvantaged and marginalised groups and ensuring that public institutions such as schools and hospitals are fully accessible to all.

2 WaterAid’s approach to equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach

WaterAid recognises the right of all to safe water, sanitation and hygiene.¹ This includes those who are particularly poor and marginalised, without discrimination.

Non-discrimination means avoiding discrimination against particular people and groups. It also means taking proactive measures to ensure that government policies and programmes do not exclude certain people and groups by failing to address their particular needs. For example, in Malawi, Bangladesh and Tanzania WaterAid is working with utilities in urban areas to increase their focus on pro-poor service delivery.

WaterAid recognises that to contribute to the progressive realisation of these rights, we must:

- **Understand the reasons why people lack access** to basic water and sanitation in the 21st century (political, economic, social, cultural, etc). Water and sanitation for all is achievable. The fact that billions of people continue to live and die in water and sanitation poverty is a direct result of decisions taken, or not taken, by those in power. It is unnecessary and completely unacceptable.
- **Work with duty bearers to strengthen their capacity** to fulfil their obligations and to increase their accountability and responsiveness to all rights holders. For example, in East and Southern Africa WaterAid uses water point mapping to inform government planning and target investment for greater equity. Our work in West, East and Southern Africa on localising Millennium Development Goals is helping to build local government capacity to plan effectively.
- **Work closely with those who do not have access** to WASH to empower them to claim their rights to WASH. For example, communities and civil society use information from water point mapping to hold service providers to account for resource allocation through citizens’ action.²
- **Apply the human rights principles** of participation, non-discrimination, transparency and accountability; and standards of adequate quantity and quality, equitable distribution, physical accessibility and economic affordability.

Human rights conventions that refer to the right to water and sanitation can be used for advocacy initiatives, where appropriate. This includes UN conventions, as well as regional and national agreements, on the rights of persons with disabilities, the rights of children, the rights of women, of indigenous peoples, of older people and on the elimination of racial discrimination. These can also form the basis for alliances and linkages with other sectors. Alliances with the media can help bring public pressure to bear on decision-makers and ensure the voices of marginalised people are heard.

Mainstreaming equity and inclusion is a means of recognising that rights are universal, and that special measures must be taken to protect, promote and fulfil the rights of the poorest, the marginalised and those in vulnerable situations. It means ensuring that these principles and issues are incorporated in all areas

¹ www.righttowater.info

² WaterAid (2008) Stepping into action. The second report on Citizens’ Action for accountability in water and sanitation

of organisational policy, strategy and action. It will help to ensure that we recognise the needs, priorities and capacities of different people, and that we challenge the barriers that prevent their right to safe water and sanitation from being realised.

This will be a long term process that involves building up our own and our partners’ capacity to address exclusion issues in WASH programmes. We need to ensure the organisational culture is inclusive, and develop the awareness, sensitivity and skills of staff and partners. We can then build on our own experience and that of others who work with marginalised people.

It will involve taking some courageous decisions, and constantly questioning how to realise our vision of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation. To move along this road we need to inspire and challenge, while taking care not to create more resistance.

Applying the approach

WaterAid has to make sure that all our structures, mechanisms and approaches are designed to promote equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach in our programme work, and within the organisation. At the same time, we have to build up our expertise in the specific risks, cultural issues, approaches and adaptations required to work effectively with different excluded groups.

The WaterAid approach to equity and inclusion is to:

- Ensure that equity and inclusion is mainstreamed in its policies and procedures, including:
 - Country sector analysis and strategic planning
 - Programme design and implementation
 - Monitoring, evaluation and research
 - Training and capacity building
 - Leadership and people management
 - Fundraising and communications
 - Policy advocacy
- Develop guidelines and minimum standards that articulate the specific issues around WASH in relation to gender, disability, age, HIV/AIDS, and different ethnic groups, religions, or castes.
- Continue, with partners, to build on and develop expertise and experience of working with specific excluded groups, to strengthen their capacity to demand WASH. Also to work on the supply side with donors, national and local governments and service providers to be responsive to the needs and rights of these groups and to be accountable to them.
- Ensure that internal organisational structures and mechanisms are consistent with this approach.

Applying equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach through WaterAid’s Global strategy 2009-15

WaterAid’s vision is of a world where everyone has access to safe water and sanitation.

- This means that nobody should be excluded through discrimination or because they are powerless to claim their rights.

WaterAid’s mission is to transform lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world’s poorest communities. We work with partners and influence decision-makers to maximise our impact.

- We emphasise the linkage between inadequate WASH and poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion, how they reinforce each other, and the importance of breaking the cycle. We recognise that we need to pay particular attention to the poorest and most marginalised people.

WaterAid works with partners to influence policy and deliver safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation services that are:

- **Appropriate:** recognising the different designs and approaches needed to ensure access for all.
- **Integrated:** with other interventions/approaches promoting the rights and development of people who are marginalised.
- **Sustainable:** ensuring that the lasting impact is equitable.
- **Informed:** gathering evidence and building on experiences of working with marginalised and excluded people.
- **Transferable:** to promote inclusive approaches to other agencies.

Global strategic aims:

1 We will promote and secure poor people’s rights and access to safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation.

- Work with partners to empower excluded and marginalised people to demand their rights to safe water and sanitation and participate in decision-making about WASH.
- Make sure WASH programmes ensure access to safe water and sanitation for socially excluded and marginalised people, recognising that their priorities are least likely to be respected by those with most influence.
- Ensure that WASH programmes raise awareness of equity and inclusion issues with duty bearers, partners and communities.

For example:

- Ensuring gender issues are addressed by providing gender awareness training in communities, reserving places for women and members of lower castes on water and sanitation user committees, and assessing the impact of improved access to WASH on both men and women.³
- Supporting water and sanitation NGO networks to be accountable by reporting on the contribution of civil society to the sector, with a focus on equity and inclusion.⁴

2 We will support governments and service providers in developing their capacity to deliver safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation.

- Promote a pro-poor focus and awareness of equity and inclusion in the policies and practice of government and service providers.
- Promote good governance and responsiveness to recognise the rights and meet the needs of marginalised people and groups.
- Develop the skills and capacity of all involved in the sector in addressing equity and inclusion.

For example:

- Using research into the causes of exclusion from WASH services to highlight where non-discrimination at policy level is not put into practice because of a lack of implementation mechanisms.⁵
- Producing national equity reports with water and sanitation networks to share at joint sector annual reviews. These analyse the geographical equity of budget allocations and infrastructure, and the social equity of representation in decision-making.⁶

3 WaterAid in Nepal (2009) Seen but not heard? A review of the effectiveness of gender approaches in water and sanitation service provision. www.wateraid.org/nepal

4 Uganda Water and Sanitation NGO Network (UWASNET) Secretariat (2009) NGO Group Performance in the Ugandan Water and Sanitation Sector: Report for the FY 2008/09

5 WaterAid in Malawi (2008) Reaching out to the excluded. Exclusion study on water, sanitation and hygiene delivery in Malawi

6 WaterAid in Tanzania (2009) Out of sight and out of mind? Are marginalised communities being overlooked in decision making? Water and sanitation equity report

- Supporting partners and service providers to develop inclusive water, sanitation and hygiene services for people with disabilities.⁷
- Supporting local government to direct resources in a more equitable and sustainable manner through the Local Millennium Development Goal Initiative in West, East and Southern Africa. This also puts pressure on central government to release appropriate resources to local government, and enables communities to hold local government to account for equitable service delivery.
- Influencing national governments and the Joint Monitoring Programme (JMP) to disaggregate sector monitoring data by gender, age or disability and adopt data gathering techniques to identify who is served and who is excluded from WASH.

3 We will advocate for the essential role of safe water, improved hygiene and sanitation in human development.

- Emphasise to other sectors the linkage between poor WASH and poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion; how they reinforce each other and the importance of breaking the cycle in order to enable human and economic development.
- Influence development actors to give appropriate priority to WASH issues with a focus on marginalised groups using evidence and practice in WASH.

For example:

- Influencing the education sector to recognise the importance of WASH in making schools inclusive, by ensuring infrastructure and hygiene education address the different needs of children with disabilities and of adolescent girls.⁸
- Working with organisations focusing on HIV/AIDS to promote WASH in an appropriate way.⁹
- Research and advocacy for policy change that recognises the importance of WASH in health and the particular vulnerability of certain groups of people to consequences of poor WASH and related diseases.¹⁰
- Supporting citizen monitoring by older people to promote their ability to demand access to appropriate basic services including WASH.
- Work with the media to take voices of marginalised citizens to the decision-makers and to bring pressure on them to act.

⁷ WaterAid in Mali (2008) All people, one goal, all access. Water and sanitation access for people with disabilities

⁸ WaterAid in Nepal (2009) Is menstrual hygiene and management an issue for adolescent school girls? A comparative study of four schools in different settings of Nepal.

⁹ WaterAid in Tanzania and AMREF Tanzania (2009) Water and sanitation for people living with HIV and AIDS: Exploring the challenges

¹⁰ WaterAid (2009) Fatal neglect. How health systems are failing to comprehensively address child mortality

4 We will further develop as an effective global organisation recognised as a leader in our field and for living our values.

- Promote a positive and inclusive working environment that recognises and values difference and diversity as essential for delivering our mission.
- Develop leadership and people management to promote diversity as a guiding principle and promote and enforce inclusive practice.
- Build the capacity of the organisation and staff in the skills, behaviours and attitudes needed to respond to the most marginalised people.
- Continue to develop our understanding, gather evidence and share learning on equity and inclusion through research, monitoring, evaluation and documentation.

For example:

- Carrying out staff training in gender awareness in Nepal.
- Ensuring wheelchair access to WaterAid’s office in Burkina Faso.
- Developing diversity and difference policy and approach in Human Resources.
- WaterAid in the UK has been awarded the “two ticks” certification by the Department for Work and Pensions, demonstrating its commitment to employing people with disabilities.
- The leadership development programme includes diversity as a core area.

Values: Inclusive, inspiring, collaborative, accountable, always learning, courageous.

- **Inclusive** as an organisation and in our work.
- **Inspiring** others to recognise and address exclusion.
- We will **collaborate** with others in order to strengthen our capacity and focus on issues of equity and inclusion.
- We will be **accountable** for ensuring our work is equitable and inclusive.
- **Always learning** from internal and external experience of work with marginalised groups about the issues and how to better address them.
- **Courageous** to challenge discrimination where it deprives poor people of their rights to water and sanitation.

See section 2 for a set of standards and indicators for equity and inclusion.

3 Implications for WaterAid – challenges in putting the framework into practice

WaterAid programmes have to make strategic choices about the extent to which they should focus on marginalised groups, which groups to focus on, with which partners, and at what cost. They will also have to make strategic choices as to the right balance of work that should focus on influencing the capacities of duty bearers. This commitment by WaterAid represents an understanding that long term change will be incremental and will take time to effect. Some of the implications are outlined below:

Proportion of work to focus on marginalised groups

All WaterAid programmes focus on poor countries and communities with limited access to WASH. Ideally they should all be broadly inclusive and address the different needs of women, children, older people and disabled people within the populations they work with. Some work will also focus on approaches designed to reach specific marginalised groups.

While some programmes have extensive experience in working with marginalised and excluded people and groups, for others it is a relatively new area. Therefore, it is up to the country programmes to take a strategic and realistic decision about how to extend their work to focus on different specific groups. For example, WaterAid in Nepal started with a focus on gender and poverty and then used the developing capacity to develop a broader ‘social inclusion’ approach.

Decisions about which areas to focus on in particular may be based on:

- A rights-based analysis at the strategic planning stage to identify what and whose rights have not been met, why their rights are not realised (who bears responsibility, and constraints and obstacles to meeting responsibilities) and **how** best to change – how should WaterAid work and with whom. This will help decide on the balance between working directly with marginalised and excluded groups in order to build their capacity to hold the duty bearers to account, and/or to work on influencing the capacity of duty bearers to be accountable and responsive to the needs and demands of the excluded groups.
- Opportunities to build on existing work, and on the expertise of existing and potential partners to work with specific groups.
- While taking an overall approach of mainstreaming equity and inclusion and rights, whether there is merit in certain situations to also adopt a targeted approach as in poverty pocket mapping work or explicitly working with particular marginalised groups who are especially stigmatised in particular contexts.

Developing an understanding of rights-based approaches

We need to develop our understanding and further articulation of the rights to water and to sanitation, and our approaches to pro-poor policy making and reform in WASH for urban and rural poor people.

Appropriate use of explicit rights-based language

There are some contexts where it is not appropriate to explicitly use the language of rights and rights-based approaches. For example, in certain fragile states, post-conflict situations, or countries where rights are not respected by the state, it may be counterproductive to overtly call for rights to water and sanitation to be realised. In these circumstances, it may still be possible to use rights-based approaches, by adopting the language of equity and inclusion more directly in the way that WaterAid has articulated in this framework, to achieve the same results.

Choosing partnerships: influencing others, learning from others, influencing with others

WaterAid needs to develop the capacity of existing partners to become more inclusive and to learn from those partners that already have expertise in working with marginalised groups and where appropriate to develop partnerships with new organisations.

WaterAid needs to collaborate more closely with other organisations that are able to promote the ability of marginalised groups to claim their right to safe water and sanitation. This could be at local, national, regional or global level. Work or collaboration with the media which is happening in all regions of WaterAid is also a critical contribution in this regard.

Balancing the need to be cost effective with additional costs of working with marginalised people

Implementation of this framework need not incur significant additional costs. The additional cost of accessible facilities is minimal if planned from the outset,¹¹ and far outweighed by the benefits of inclusion.

Many of the additional costs are small, and some are larger. Examples of costs include: making WaterAid offices are physically accessible, adding support costs for people with special needs to meeting and training budgets, capacity building for all staff in equity and inclusion, increased operating costs in remote or hard to reach areas as well as increased time taken for meetings and research. Developing sustainability options in marginalised communities is also more challenging.

The overall cost per person of focusing on marginalised groups could be higher than the cost of reaching the most easily accessible people and this should be factored into our programming work. We can demonstrate innovative approaches to extending access to marginalised groups but our long term goal should be to influence government and donor policies and practice to ensure progressive realisation of the water and sanitation rights of marginalised groups.

¹¹ Steinfeld, E. (2005) Education for All: the Cost of Accessibility. The World Bank Education Notes.

Don’t let targets steer WaterAid away from equity and inclusion

WaterAid’s ambitious target of reaching 25 million of the poorest and the very poor by 2015 could encourage a focus on the easier to reach and more densely populated areas. Vigilance is needed to keep attention focused on the poorest and marginalised who are often hard to reach and live in less densely populated areas. The same principle applies to the selection of new countries.

Resources and structure

WaterAid must find the best way to resource equity and inclusion in each part of the organisation. Time and leadership are needed. Different WaterAid offices have taken different approaches. In Bangladesh for example, a sub-programme focuses specifically on equity and inclusion. In other countries, the role of equity and inclusion champion or focal point is added to other responsibilities. This area needs to be developed.

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation systems should have the sophistication at project level to disaggregate data by gender, age, poverty and major impairment, and at national or sub-national level by marginalisation, poverty and location. While this information is not always part of WASH sector monitoring and evaluation systems it is often available in other sectors and can be adapted and integrated. Looking back studies should focus more on helping WaterAid to understand who is benefiting and who is losing out at the micro level in our intervention areas so as to inform our approaches. This will provide evidence to influence others to develop equitable and inclusive approaches.

Communications for equity, inclusion and rights

All WaterAid communications and marketing, including terminology, films, photos and publications, should ensure that peoples’ rights are respected and that stereotypes are not reinforced. For example people living with HIV/AIDS may not wish their face or name to be published, photographic captions should explain issues of discrimination and exclusion from WASH, and where possible communications should ensure the voices of people who are marginalised are heard.

Part 2

Standards and indicators for equity and inclusion

1 Equity and inclusion standards and indicators for WaterAid

WaterAid is committed to applying the following standards to its work, with indicators that describe what the organisation should look like when equity and inclusion are mainstreamed. These can be used to assess progress in mainstreaming equity and inclusion.

The standards and indicators are organised here by strategic Aim for ease of use for planning and review purposes, but some of them can also be seen as cross-cutting indicators. For example standard 5 on monitoring and evaluation applies across all the strategic aims.

Standards for strategic Aim 1

1 **Equity, inclusion and rights are understood and applied by everyone in WaterAid. Standards and guidelines are communicated to all staff and partners in an accessible format.**

- The framework for equity and inclusion in a rights-based approach is understood by everyone in WaterAid, is communicated to partners in an accessible way and translated into WaterAid's official languages.
- Guiding principles for inclusive development are developed and applied in programme implementation.
- Tools and guidelines to ensure inclusive design of facilities and approaches are available and used.
- Collaborative knowledge-sharing partnerships with organisations specialising in issues of exclusion are used to increase understanding.

2 **Active and continuous enquiry into who is excluded from WASH, the causes of exclusion/discrimination (eg political, economic, social, cultural) and the impact of exclusion on their lives and livelihoods.**

- All country programmes actively seek to understand who is excluded and the multiple causes of exclusion from WASH in countries where WaterAid works.
- Baseline monitoring and evaluation of country programme work seeks evidence of the impact of access to WASH on marginalised people.

3 Involvement of those marginalised and excluded people is always actively sought in WaterAid and partners' programme design, plans, budget, implementation and monitoring.

- Views of disabled and older people, women, children, and other marginalised groups are always actively sought in planning community programmes (for example, by asking pertinent questions or seeking out older and disabled people who may be hidden away).
- Women, children, people with disabilities and older people are involved in the design and adaptation of WASH technology intended for their use.
- WaterAid is seen to be a participatory and accessible organisation to members of disadvantaged and marginalised groups.
- Budget provision is included in meeting and training budgets to cover support costs and assistance for participants with special needs.
- All work on tariffs and subsidies is assessed in relation to the impact on access to WASH for the poorest and most marginalised in the communities.

4 Our ability to diversify our approaches to meet different needs is demonstrated.

- All WASH facilities for public access (including school sanitation) are accessible to people with disabilities, older people, have separate facilities for men and women and include appropriate facilities for menstrual hygiene management.
- Hygiene communication materials are inclusive and disseminated through a variety of means to be accessible to all.
- Budgets include provision for equity and inclusion aspects.
- Expertise and guidelines on inclusive design for water, sanitation and hygiene facilities are routinely used by WaterAid staff and partners.
- Programmes that focus on specific types of exclusion are developed to increase awareness and capacity within WaterAid and for partners.

5 Knowledge and evidence on equity and inclusion in WASH is gathered and disseminated through research, monitoring, evaluation and documentation.

- All WaterAid country programmes review monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure an equity and inclusion perspective.
- WaterAid reporting mechanisms include equity and inclusion indicators.
- All baseline information and monitoring and evaluation activities specifically seek information about the impact of programmes on vulnerable and excluded groups and data is disaggregated.

Standards for strategic Aim 2

- 6 WaterAid’s country strategic plans address the analysis of poverty, vulnerability and exclusion from WASH in deciding where and how to work recognising exclusion at different levels: geographical, specific social and economic groups, individuals within communities and households.**
 - Sector analysis includes analysis of exclusion from WASH looking at sector actors’ capacity, legislative blockages, resources and attitudes.
 - Strategies are based on understanding of how different communities already address equity and inclusion in WASH access.
- 7 Awareness and focus on equitable and inclusive WASH is raised through WaterAid’s relationships with international agencies, donors, national governments, alliances and networks.**
 - WaterAid champions the importance of inclusive WASH in all sector fora.
 - WaterAid is recognised and valued globally and nationally for its contribution to promoting the rights of excluded and vulnerable groups to WASH.
- 8 WaterAid influences sector actors’ capacities to be more responsive and accountable to the needs and rights of the poor who are marginalised and excluded from services.**
 - Regular discussions and sessions on equity and inclusion are held in country programmes and with other stakeholders that work in the WASH sector.
 - Inclusion is promoted and issues relevant to HIV, disability, gender and age are incorporated in WASH sector capacity building activities.
- 9 WaterAid influences sector performance monitoring and reporting policies and practices to incorporate equity and inclusion.**
 - Poverty and vulnerability mapping provides relevant statistics to inform strategy, policy and advocacy to increase equity and inclusion.

Standards for strategic Aim 3

- 10 WaterAid influences development actors using evidence-based research and evaluations of how exclusion from WASH impacts on development outcomes.**
 - Evidence-based research on exclusion and issue papers are widely disseminated amongst development actors to share and promote lessons learned.
- 11 WaterAid engages in partnerships and networks to share with, learn from, and influence other development actors to promote equity and inclusion in access to WASH.**
 - WaterAid actively seeks out and learns from the experience of other organisations (including disabled peoples organisations, civil society organisations, networks, alliances, donor groups and non governmental organisations) representing or working with marginalised and excluded people and groups at country regional and global level.

- Alliances on securing WASH are secured with partners who promote the rights of people from excluded groups, selecting partnerships strategically to maximise effective WASH inputs.
- Regular discussions and sessions on equity and inclusion in WASH are held in country programmes and with other stakeholders that work specifically with marginalised people and groups.
- WaterAid develops common hygiene messages that are used in WASH and HIV programmes.

12 All WaterAid work demonstrates how integration of WASH in other sectors contributes to more equitable and inclusive development processes and outcomes.

- Analysis of blockages or gaps in how WASH is addressed in other sectors, such as HIV and disability, is included in the strategy development process
- All public policy work and campaigning addresses equity and inclusion as appropriate and relevant to the country context.
- All relevant UN conventions on rights of members of marginalised groups are respected in all our work and used where relevant in advocacy for WASH.
- All work on school WASH promotes inclusion as an essential requirement for human development.

Standards for strategic Aim 4

13 WaterAid produces global and national organisational policies on diversity including gender, disability, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, child protection and other aspects of vulnerability, exclusion and discrimination, where appropriate.

- There is positive progress in developing WaterAid's approach to diversity.
- All staff have access to organisational policies to secure inclusion on gender, disability, age, HIV/AIDS, sexuality, child protection and other areas where needed.

14 Equity and inclusion is understood by all WaterAid staff and included in all training and inductions, taking care that it is addressed in a pragmatic and realistic way relevant to the focus of the training.

- Equity and inclusion is addressed in all leadership and management training and inductions.
- Specific training on aspects of equity and inclusion is provided where required.
- Some training for all staff in disability, age and gender awareness is mandatory.
- Staff are sensitive and confident in working with people from marginalised groups.

15 The workforce demographics are analysed and used to inform recruitment policies and processes. Unjustifiable barriers to employment are identified and removed. Commitment to equity, inclusion and rights is demonstrated in recruitment and induction of new staff.

- Each country has an analysis of its workforce composition according to metrics of gender, age, disability and other diversity metrics relevant to the country (for example including ethnic, religious or caste minorities).
- Each country has a plan to address unjustifiable under-representation, and to report on these.
- Recruitment processes are inclusive.
- Job descriptions all have a reference to equity and inclusion.
- The employment of people with disabilities is promoted across all levels of the organisation.
- WaterAid is seen to be an inclusive and accessible employer by members of disadvantaged and marginalised groups.

16 WaterAid's guidelines on accessibility and representation of excluded and marginalised people are applied to all internal and external communications channels and products.

- All messages, film and photographs displayed in all internal and external communications, fundraising and all research and policy documents throughout the organisation that present a view of WaterAid's work with marginalised people do so in a way that is consistent with rights-based approaches.
- All communications conform to highest standards of accessibility (using WaterAid's *Accessibility guidelines*).
- The experience and voice of individuals from marginalised groups are clearly represented in external communications including fundraising materials, media stories etc.
- Ethical standards on consent and privacy are always applied when taking and using photographs and case studies of people from marginalised groups.

17 Leadership behaviours, person and job specifications, performance management and personal development plans reflect a commitment and accountability to equity and inclusion.

- Policies and practices are in place and implemented to support diversity and underrepresented groups in the workforce.
- Performance management objectives include equity and inclusion.
- There is no significant difference in employee satisfaction by gender or disability.

18 Learning about equity and inclusion is actively disseminated throughout WaterAid and to partners.

- All relevant research and programme evaluations are entered and indexed on KnowledgeNet (WaterAid’s database of completed reports, research, evaluations and discussion papers) so that they are easily accessible.
- *The Source* is used to share and promote lessons learned on equity and inclusion.
- Examples of good practice are made available to the public on the WaterAid website.

19 Accessibility audits for offices are carried out.

- Accessibility audits are carried out for all offices by local disability organisations where possible.
- Offices are accessible according to organisationally agreed standards.

Part 3

Explanation of terms and examples

1 Explanation of terms: exclusion, marginalisation, vulnerability and the social model of inclusion

WaterAid is striving to eliminate poverty by increasing access to WASH, realising that the world we live in is not equitable at any level. Power, resources and opportunities are not distributed equally within any group of people. So it is not enough to target ‘poor countries’, poor regions, poor communities, or even poor households. We need to look more closely at each level – who is excluded from water, sanitation and hygiene, where does this happen and why? What are all the different needs and priorities in relation to WASH, and how can these be reflected in WaterAid’s programmes now and in the future?

The purpose of this section of the framework is to understand what we mean when we refer to people who are marginalised, in vulnerable situations, and excluded from WASH.

Exclusion and marginalisation

Some people are excluded from WASH because there are no services in the community, region or village in which they live. Some people are excluded from WASH because they are not able to access services even where they do exist.

Marginalisation is the social process of being confined to a lower social standing or to the outer limit – the margins – of society. Marginalised individuals often suffer material deprivation, and are excluded from information, services, programmes, and policies. People who are marginalised are often not consulted, they have little influence over decisions that affect them, their voices are not heard and it is more difficult for them to claim their rights.

People are marginalised and excluded from WASH as a result of social, economic, political, geographical and/or environmental factors. These factors influence the lives of people very differently.

Social factors are often deep-rooted and have been perpetuated over centuries of socio-cultural norms, practices and traditions. For example, the deeply held belief that results in menstruating women being excluded from religious and social activities in many societies, the belief that epilepsy is contagious, or the tradition that fetching water is a woman’s responsibility or that older women in poor communities are ‘witches’. These factors can be changed by working with men,

women and children to address behaviour, attitudes and beliefs. New technologies can also influence social roles, for example in Zambia introducing jerry cans encouraged men to carry water.¹²

Economic and political factors can change more quickly and their influence on people can vary. For instance, a change in government could result in discrimination against some people and exclusion from WASH whilst relatively improving the conditions of others. These factors are more likely to be addressed through policy and advocacy work – persuading duty bearers to meet their obligations and empowering marginalised people to demand their legitimate rights.

Physical and geographical factors can present huge barriers, resulting in the exclusion of populations in remote areas, individuals with mobility problems, or pastoralists. These factors often require a more technical approach, carefully tailored to the specific context and requirements.

Exclusion can sometimes be unintended and indirect. The more powerful and assertive members of society are often unaware of the needs and skills of the less powerful. For example, if there is no conscious effort to include disabled people and their families in decision-making for WASH programmes, then their concerns may remain hidden. As another example the WASH related labour carried out by women is usually unpaid, and so it is valued less highly than the paid work of men and may be less recognised by communities.

There are also clear cases where exclusion is deliberate, direct and explicit, where those in control of WASH consciously deny access to others.

Whatever the cause of exclusion the result is the same: some people's rights to WASH are denied. People who are marginalised in society and excluded from WASH require specific attention to ensure that their voices are heard and their rights are not denied.

Addressing discrimination and exclusion requires developing the awareness and skills of staff and partners to question their own prejudices and to recognise discrimination in the context of their work. It requires support for disadvantaged groups to become more assertive to demand their rights, and for policy and advocacy work to address institutionalised discrimination resulting in exclusion.

Exclusion is about power. Most exclusion is related to power dynamics at different levels within the society, family, community and institutional structures where we work. We should also be aware of the power relationship between WaterAid and its partners and with other stakeholders such as communities and government. These can all affect our ability to address inequality and exclusion in our projects.

¹² Sally Sutton (2001) Zambia WEDC Conference paper, <http://wedc.lboro.ac.uk/conferences/pdfs/27/Sutton.pdf>

Vulnerability and poverty

People in vulnerable situations are those who are most at risk because they have very little capacity to cope with external threats.

This makes them particularly susceptible to the negative consequences of poor WASH, including WASH related disease, and so they require special attention in WASH programmes. People in vulnerable situations include those who are very young or old, living with chronic illness or living with disabilities, and other socially excluded people.

Poverty, exclusion and vulnerability are inextricably linked. People living in chronic poverty often lack access to safe water, sanitation, hygiene, education, health and social services, and live in areas prone to environmental degradation. All these factors contribute to making people more vulnerable to the consequences of poor WASH, and these in turn push people into greater poverty. Global challenges such as urbanisation, climate change and population growth often have the greatest impact on those who are already in vulnerable situations.

Social model of exclusion/inclusion

The ‘social model’ focuses the elimination of barriers that prevent the effective participation of marginalised people in society. The model was developed by the disability movement but can be applied to other people and groups facing exclusion from WASH. The model identifies three major barriers to inclusion:

- **Attitudinal** (negative views of people by others in society).
This includes prejudice, pity, isolation, overprotection, stigma, misinformation and shame of family.
- **Environmental** (physical, accessibility of infrastructure and facilities, communication issues.) This includes barriers in the natural environment such as rough paths, long distances, steep river banks, and muddy springs. Barriers in the built environment include steps, narrow entrances, slippery floors, high concrete platforms, and visual hygiene education messages that are inaccessible to people with impaired vision.
- **Institutional/organisational** (systematic exclusion or neglect in social, legal, educational, religious, political and development institutions and organisations including WaterAid and its partners). These barriers include lack of policies and strategies, knowledge, skills, information, and consultation mechanisms.

Everyone involved in providing WASH has a role in reducing all these barriers for all those who are excluded.

2 Examples of marginalised groups in relation to WASH

Everyone has an identity made up of different factors: sex, age, disability, ethnicity, language, religion, and so on. As a result of all the factors and causes outlined above, different people are more likely to be marginalised and excluded from access to WASH in different contexts. In almost all societies this includes women, children, people with disabilities, older people, people living with chronic illness including HIV/AIDS, people belonging to specific castes, minority ethnic groups, indigenous groups, tribes or religions, and people living in remote or peripheral areas. People who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, illegal settlers, displaced people, travellers, pastoralists, or people working in particular occupations are also likely to be excluded in many contexts. Accordingly, WaterAid aims to highlight at every opportunity the continuing inequalities within WASH service provision and to contribute to the significant reduction of these inequalities.

Women

WASH issues have a particularly significant effect on women because of their biological reproductive roles. For example, lack of privacy and safe menstrual hygiene facilities can expose women and girls to infection, loss of dignity, and prevent their access to education. As women age chronic health problems associated with poor health care, multiple childbirth and menopause can be debilitating. Poor household sanitation and hygiene can have a devastating impact on maternal mortality and child rearing. Women may also be exposed to violence or sexual exploitation if they have to travel long distances for water or if they do not have private sanitation facilities.

WASH issues also affect women's and men's gender roles. For example, it is often considered that women are responsible for the care of children, the collection of water and bear primary responsibility for household sanitation and hygiene. As a result women perform most of the unpaid labour associated with water and sanitation. It has long been recognised that WASH programmes are more effective and sustainable when women have a substantial role in their planning and management, although participation in water and sanitation committees can be an additional burden on women's time.

Women often suffer from discrimination and marginalisation in society, and particular groups of women suffer more acute discrimination. In many countries widows are particularly stigmatised and excluded from development activities. Older women can be stigmatised particularly when poverty is acute and accused of witchcraft, leading to violence and expulsion from their homes.

WASH programmes need to address women's immediate practical needs for water, sanitation and improved hygiene. And for long term change – to have a sustainable impact on health and poverty – they should also help to address discrimination against women throughout their lives, and promote their control over their own lives and scarce resources. This means empowering women to claim their rights which are clearly articulated in the UN Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW),¹³ and working with men and women to challenge existing gender inequalities, age based discrimination and social relations.

¹³ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/>

Gender inequalities are common in the workplace in all societies. Policies, mechanisms and training are all ways of addressing discriminatory attitudes and practice.

Children

Boys and girls are also key stakeholders in WASH programmes. Article 24 of the UN Convention¹⁴ on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) explicitly refers to the right to safe drinking water, hygiene and sanitation.

The impact of poor WASH on child health is extremely severe and has long-term consequences. Children in low income settings are particularly vulnerable to diseases related to poor WASH, especially diarrhoeal diseases, worm infection, skin diseases, trachoma, typhoid, and Hepatitis A. Consequences of this disease burden include poor physical and mental development, malnutrition, and premature death, as well as poor education. It is estimated that as a result of diarrhoeal diseases, 400 million schooldays are missed every year worldwide.¹⁵

Children, especially girls, are often heavily burdened by WASH tasks such as collecting water. As a result they miss out on education, which in turn limits their opportunities for economic and social development. Inadequate water and sanitation in schools also acts as a barrier to education. Many adolescent girls fail to attend school regularly when their menstrual hygiene needs are not met.

Children are a diverse group. The short and long term needs of children in relation to WASH depend on their sex, age and specific circumstances. They rarely have a voice in communities and therefore, special efforts to seek their perspective are essential when designing programmes to address WASH issues. Children represent the future. Their health, development, understanding and behaviour form the basis of future generations.

People with disabilities

Women, men and children with disabilities¹⁶ are among the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised groups in society. As many as one in five of the poorest of the poor is likely to be disabled. Poverty both causes and is caused by disability. A lack of access to health services and inappropriate health care combined with hazardous living conditions result in more impairments. As people age in poverty they become more vulnerable to preventable disabilities. A lack of options for independent living and adaptive technologies, lack of access to education, and negative attitudes towards disabled people then limit their livelihood opportunities, causing greater poverty.

There is great diversity in disability. People with different types of disability experience different challenges, discrimination and degrees of marginalisation compounded by gender, HIV and other factors.

¹⁴ <http://www.unicef.org/crc/>

¹⁵ WaterAid (2009) Fatal neglect. How health systems are failing to comprehensively address child mortality

¹⁶ The term “people with disabilities” is used in this framework in line with the International Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Development targets for water and sanitation will never be equitably met unless the needs of people with disabilities of all ages are addressed. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD)¹⁷ (especially Article 9 Accessibility, Article 28 Adequate Standard of Living and Article 32 on International Cooperation) clearly articulates their rights in relation to WASH.

The biggest problems for people with disabilities are obstacles in the environment and in society's perception of their value, not their impairment. This is articulated in the social model of disability, which is now widely accepted by international development actors worldwide. All those responsible for providing WASH have a key role in reducing attitudinal, institutional and environmental barriers.

People with disabilities often need only minor changes to be made to enable them to be included in ordinary water, sanitation and hygiene service provision. Specialist skills and knowledge are extremely valuable, but are not always required. Involving people with disabilities in programme design can help to ensure the WASH provision responds to different needs, for example by considering different water and sanitation technology options, using different ways to communicate hygiene messages, or providing additional hygiene training to caretakers. It is much cheaper to ensure designs are inclusive at the planning stage than to make adaptations later.

WASH programmes can also support people with disabilities to claim their rights by helping increase their visibility, dignity, self-confidence and active participation in policy and decision-making, often by working closely with disabled peoples' organisations.

Making all WASH programmes more accessible, inclusive and user-friendly, benefits everyone in the community, including older people, children, pregnant women, and those who are ill. "Access for all is better for all".¹⁸

People with disabilities also face many barriers to employment which can be addressed by inclusive organisations that provide appropriate support and address discriminating attitudes in the workplace.

People living with HIV/AIDS and chronic illness

Globally, approximately 33 million women and men are living with HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS causes vulnerability and poverty through sickness, the loss of economic productivity, the need for care, and the resulting number of orphans and vulnerable children looking after themselves or being cared for by grandparents. Their marginalisation is exacerbated by the stigma and discrimination often directed to People Living With HIV (PLWH) and their families and carers.

¹⁷ <http://www.un.org/disabilities/>

¹⁸ Participant at WaterAid international meeting on equity and inclusion, November 2009

Safe water, sanitation and hygiene promotion are essential in protecting and caring for PLWH.¹⁹ Studies have demonstrated that improved hygiene practices can reduce the risk of diarrhoea by 30% or more, improving the quality of life for PLWH as well as their families. Antiretroviral drugs can prolong life and health and keep PLWH active but these rely on adequate food and at least 1.5 litres of safe water per day to be effective.²⁰

WASH needs to be made accessible to PLWH, but this has to be done sensitively due to the stigma associated with the virus and it is often good practice to identify and collaborate with organisations with whom PLWH feel comfortable. In practice, the best approach is to be inclusive and ensure accessibility for all in the community without any specific targeting. Hygiene education can be used to dispel misconceptions about the transmission of HIV, for example that it cannot be transmitted by shared use of latrines or water points.

WASH also needs to be prioritised in all global, national and community based HIV/AIDS policies and programmes and in health and social protection programmes focusing on PLWH and those affected by the epidemic, including children and families. For example hygiene messages can be included in voluntary counselling and testing, home based care and in prevention of maternal to child transmission.

HIV in the workplace also needs to be addressed by putting appropriate critical illness policies in place and sensitisation and HIV awareness information for staff.

Older people

Many older women and men in poor countries live in extreme and chronic poverty and are excluded from decision-making. They often cite access to safe water and sanitation as a core concern for themselves and their dependent families. The World Health Organisation estimates that between 40 to 60% of older people in the poorest countries are not served by improved sanitation and water supply.

Increased longevity, or ageing, is happening fast all over the developing world, with rates of increase highest in countries where access to WASH is poor. Women tend to live longest of all. Many are affected by chronic illness and disability, especially hearing loss, vision problems, mental disorders and reduced mobility. Both older women and men are vulnerable to both communicable and non-communicable disease and need to practice regular hygiene behaviour.

They are often caregivers and breadwinners. In the context of HIV/AIDS, older women and men frequently act as the main carers of their children dying of the disease and their grandchildren left orphaned. Studies demonstrate that the poorest households are those with older people and children in them, and where older women and men are primary carers of children.²¹ In highly affected countries in

19 Programming guidance for integrating water sanitation and hygiene improvement in HIV/AIDS programmes to prevent diarrhoea morbidity, USAID/HIP 2008. <http://www.hip.watsan.net>

20 Research and Resources Linking Water, Sanitation and Hygiene with HIV/AIDS Home-Based Care. Prepared by the USAID/Hygiene Improvement Project with the WB/Water and Sanitation Program 11/29/2007

21 Subbarao and Kaniki World Bank/IPC 2005/2007 HAI and HIV Aids Alliance Forgotten Families 2004

Africa between 40-60% of children orphaned by AIDS live with grandparents and older carers.²² Many older people are also living with HIV themselves and with increased access to ART, their number will increase.²³

Older people can bring a huge amount of knowledge to family and communities and to the design of development projects. In relation to WASH, this could be water source sustainability, longer term weather patterns, the history of disease within communities, and so on. Their experiences in WASH initiatives need to count and their voices need to be heard.

People living in chronic poverty

Lack of access to WASH contributes to chronic poverty by negatively impacting health, welfare and economic productivity. It also reduces the ability of already poor people to cope with different forms of deprivation and to take advantage of livelihood opportunities where available.

In poor countries most people are poor and many are extremely poor by all measures – income and non-income. The focus on chronic poverty means identifying those who are significantly poorer than others around them and as a result excluded from access to WASH through inability to pay local tariffs or through social exclusion.

Wealth ranking exercises can be used to identify the poorest members of a society using locally relevant criteria that recognise both economic and social dimensions of poverty.

Local safety net mechanisms to help the poorest people may exist through community or religious institutions or government social assistance, but they are often inadequate to meet all basic needs and many people do not have information or confidence to access what is available.

Minorities and indigenous peoples

Minorities are disadvantaged ethnic, national, religious, linguistic or cultural groups who are smaller in number than the rest of the population and who may wish to maintain and develop their identity. Minorities and indigenous peoples are among the most marginalised communities. In many countries they face systematic discrimination with regard to access to health care, education, and employment. They tend also to be excluded from or only symbolically represented in political processes.

With regard to access to water, minorities and indigenous peoples risk being excluded from local decision-making processes. They can face discrimination on account of their physical whereabouts – often on the edges of mainstream society.

²² R Monash et al (2004) Orphanhood and childcare patterns in sub-Saharan Africa: an analysis of national surveys from 40 countries, *AIDS*, 18, pp 55-56 and UNICEF (2007) State of the World's Children

²³ George Schmid (2009) WHO bulletin 'The unexplored story of HIV and ageing'

Also, the segregation may be so profound that members are simply denied access to water. Displaced minority and indigenous communities may also lack access if their water rights had previously been tied to the land they inhabited. Finally, water and sanitation facilities may be designed without taking into full account the needs and practices of minorities and indigenous peoples.

Thus, minorities and indigenous peoples risk being excluded on many levels. They may not be involved in decisions to be taken about the location of water and sanitation facilities. The facilities may be constructed outside the areas where they live. They may be excluded from the facilities. Or the facilities may not meet their particular needs.

Minorities often experience disadvantage and discrimination in the workplace. This may be through prejudiced attitudes and behaviours of individuals, systemic discrimination that results in certain groups achieving higher education than others, and practical issues of language, religious and cultural practices. These need to be understood and addressed in an appropriate way in each context.

Other marginalised groups in different contexts

Other people are marginalised in different contexts. Discrimination and exclusion is often based on political party, caste, occupation, sexual orientation, language or physical location.

In fact, every individual belongs to many different groups according to these factors, and each element of identity may result in more or less advantage or disadvantage in different contexts. For example age and gender may have different implications in rural and urban situations because of different roles, power dynamics and economic relations. But everyone still needs safe water, sanitation and hygiene and everyone has the same rights.

As the causes and results of exclusion are different in different contexts, it is important to understand the different ways in which people are marginalised in relation to WASH in any particular situation in order to make strategic decisions about how best to work towards fulfilling their rights.

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WaterAid's mission is to transform lives by improving access to safe water, hygiene and sanitation in the world's poorest communities. We work with partners and influence decision-makers to maximise our impact.

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