



Wells Bring Hope Fact Sheet

Mission & Vision

Wells Bring Hope (WBH) is committed to drilling wells to bring safe water and good sanitation to rural villages in Niger, West Africa—the second poorest country in the world, according to the 2011 UN Development Index. Our vision is saving lives with safe water.

The Need

Why do we work in Niger? For one very simple reason: the need is great. 1 out of 7 children die before the age of five, typically from a simple case of diarrhea or other water-borne diseases. 40% of the population has trachoma, which when left untreated, leads to blindness.

Women and girls typically walk 4-6 miles per day to find water for their families. Mothers must enlist the help of their daughters for this difficult task so young girls don't get an education. 85% of women in Niger are illiterate, compared to 43% of men. The tragedy is that while the Niger government recognizes the serious need to provide safe water for its people, they can afford to drill only 10% of the 11,000 wells needed. The wells we drill tap the underground aquifers, yielding a water supply that is plentiful but expensive to access at 250-300 feet underground.

The Solution

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), "No other humanitarian intervention produces a more dramatic effect on life than access to safe water and sanitation." When a borehole well is drilled in a village, lives are transformed instantly and dramatically.

Premature deaths and water-borne diseases can easily be eliminated. When a borehole well is drilled in a village, public health is dramatically improved and infant mortality drops by up to 70%. Girls go to school, often for the first time in the history of the village. When girls are educated, they tend to marry later and bear children later, reducing the chances of death in childbirth and life-debilitating problems like obstetric fistula.

Our efforts to save lives with safe water do not end with the drilling of the well. There is another essential component of the effort to improve quality of life; people must be educated on good sanitation and proper hygiene practices. In villages where we drill, latrines are constructed and villagers are taught the

importance of using them. Before the well is drilled, a committee made up of an equal number of men and women is formed. The committee's sole responsibility is to maintain the well. They receive education in how to handle malfunctions that may occur and learn where to obtain new parts. A maintenance fund is also established, and everyone in the village contributes a small amount of money to this fund. In this way, the villagers are able to maintain the well themselves, thereby giving them "ownership" of the well.

In addition, the women in villages where we work are provided with micro-loans. These loans enable them to start small business enterprises that provide added income to their families, empowering them and improving their quality of life. These women also serve as role models for their daughters who envision becoming micro-entrepreneurs themselves

Since our inception in March of 2008, we have partnered with World Vision and they have been responsible for all of our well drilling and the on-going work in the villages. We have a very productive relationship with World Vision, and we have great respect for their expertise.

Statistics Related to the World-Wide Water Problem

- Nearly 900 million people lack access to safe water. That is one out of eight people on the planet.
- By 2030, 3.9 billion people, half of the world's population, will be living under "severe water stress."
- More than 2.6 billion people, half of the developing world and almost one billion children, lack the basic sanitation of a simple latrine.
- More than 80% of the people who lack access to safe water live in rural areas, especially in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- Unsafe water kills 1.4 million people a year; 90% of them are children.
- A baby dies from unsafe water every 15 seconds.
- Eighty percent of all childhood disease in the developing world is linked to unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene.
- At any given time, half of all the hospital beds in the developing world are occupied by people who are suffering from a preventable, water-borne disease.
- Women and girls in Africa invest 40 billion hours a year walking to get water.
- Every year, 443 million school days are lost to water-related illness.

Statistics about Niger

- According to the 2011 U.N. Development Index, Niger is the second poorest country in the world, ranking #186 out 187.
- Life expectancy in Niger is 53 years.

- One in seven children in Niger dies before the age of five, often from a preventable case of diarrhea caused by unsafe water.
- 85% of women in Niger are illiterate, compared to 43% of men.
- 87% of Nigeriens lack access to adequate sanitation.
- 68% have no access to clean water.
- 61% earn less than \$1 per day.
- 40% of the population of Niger has trachoma, a disease related to unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene, which if left untreated, can lead to blindness.
- Niger needs about 11,000 more wells, but the government can provide only 10% of these, so nonprofits like us must step up to fill in the gap.

Statistics Related to the Solution that We Provide in Niger, West Africa

From our inception in 2008 to 2011, this is what has happened in villages where we have drilled:

- Child mortality drops by 70% as the result of a combined program of safe water, good sanitation, and improved nutrition.
- Access to a safe water source increased from 35% to 76%.
- The percentage of communities that had not experienced a water supply stoppage in the previous two weeks increased from 40% to 75%.
- The number of schools with hand-washing facilities increased by over 20%.
- Increased hand washing led to a 50% reduction in deaths from diarrhea and a 30-40% reduction in school absenteeism.

WHY WE'RE UNIQUE

We continue working with a village for 15+ years after a well is drilled.

- We educate villagers on good sanitation and proper hygiene including:
 - How to keep utensils clean and protect the water from contamination
 - Why hand washing is important and when it is most critical
 - How to keep the faces of children clean to prevent trachoma
- We teach drip farming and show the villagers how to use the grey water.
- We install latrines and encourage their use.

We provide microfinancing to women so they can start small businesses.

- Enables them to contribute to the economic welfare of their families
- They raise goats, chickens, make peanut oil, millet cakes, soap & more
- Feel pride and a sense of accomplishment
- Are role models for their daughters

Each gift is multiplied 5x in impact.

Here's how it works:

- \$5,600 = What we pay for 1 well
- \$5,600 = Matched by our partner, World Vision (\$11,200 = total cost of a well, 250'-300' deep)
- \$18,000 Other World Vision money—given over 15-20 years as they continue to help improve quality of life for villagers
- **\$29,200 = Total value of services delivered to a village**

All water projects are fully sustainable.

- Sustainability is the most critical issue related to the drilling of wells in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Villagers are taught how to maintain the well and are required to set up a maintenance fund. The result is a strong sense of ownership of the well.
- Before a well is drilled, a committee is formed to administer the well. The government of Niger mandates that half of the members be women.
- From the International Water and Sanitation Centre, The Netherlands: 1/3 of all hand pumps installed in Sub-Saharan Africa over the past 20 years, have failed prematurely compared to only 8.5% of the World Vision wells drilled in Ghana from October 1995 – March 2003.

Being partnered with World Vision guarantees us the highest and most consistent quality work in well drilling and maintenance.

- World Vision is highly experienced in West Africa, having started in Ghana in 1985.
- They provide a professional staff of full-time water engineers who are experts in well drilling.
- The staff is made up of locals who act as role models, giving village parents hope for their children's futures.

Statistics Related to Finances/Outcome of our Work

- 100% of donations go directly toward the funding of wells.
- Over the past four years, operating expenses have accounted for an average of 3.4% of total donations. However, operating expenses are funded primarily from a private family foundation and donations dedicated for that purpose.

**Please refer to the [Progress](#) page of the website for the most current number of wells funded.*