



## 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 poorest country in the world, according to the 2015 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.

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 wells needed. The wells we drill tap the underground aquifers, yielding a plentiful water supply 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 well is drilled in a village, the health of the entire village is dramatically improved and child 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 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 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 microfinance training. This training allows the women 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.

### **About Niger**

- According to the 2015 U.N. Development Index, Niger is the poorest country in the world.
- One in seven children 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.
  - 51% of the rural population has no access to clean water.
  - 96% of the rural population lacks the basic sanitation of even a simple latrine.
  - 60% live below the poverty line.
- 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.

### **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 help the villagers to build latrines, and we educate them on the importance of using them.

#### **The microfinance training we provide to women enables them to start small businesses and:**

- Contribute to the economic welfare of their families
- Feel pride and a sense of accomplishment
- Become role models for their daughters

#### **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.

#### **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 worked there since 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.

### **Our Financial Model**

- 100% of donations go directly toward the funding of wells.
- With the exception of our Director of Operations, we are an all-volunteer organization.

### **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

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