

BRIDGIT WATER FOUNDATION

INCLUSION POLICY

POLICY

BridgIT Water Foundation has established a clear policy and commitment to full representation and inclusion of all people in its projects. The beneficiaries of BWF water projects in developing countries are already poverty-stricken, rural villagers, whose main sources of livelihood are subsistence farming. These marginalized people are the poorest of the poor, with families typically living on \$1-2/day, and without inclusion in development projects, have little hope to break out of the poverty spiral. In fact, it is specifically the poverty, marginalisation, and exclusion that BridgIT Water Foundation's beneficiaries face that lead BridgIT to create projects to help them.

BridgIT Water Foundation's policy on inclusion extends to all beneficiaries of its water projects in the developing world. The beneficiaries of BridgIT's work are not excluded based on any factors. BridgIT includes all peoples without restrictions based on race, religion, ethnicity, indigeneity, disability, age, displacement, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, sexual orientation, poverty, class or socio-economic status. BridgIT Water Foundation welcomes marginalised peoples to benefit from its economic development projects. It is through the advantages of these projects that people are able to consider ways to escape their marginal situations, and consider ways to raise their standards of living such that they can provide better lives for their families.

It is absolutely necessary to include the poorest, most vulnerable and marginalised villagers in BridgIT Water Foundation projects because by providing them with a suitable, accessible, and sustainable source of water, the people (mostly women and children who bear the burden of water collection) can free up time they can apply toward building and/or expanding entrepreneurial businesses. An accessible water resource generates a time resource that can be leveraged to raise family livelihoods, and give the people a chance to graduate from extreme poverty.

Inclusion extends to Water User Committees (WUCs) that BridgIT requires on every water system. All men and women in the villages are eligible to become members of the WUC, and all adult beneficiaries are also eligible to become WUC Board Members, set policy, and ensure that the principle of inclusion continues to guide each project.

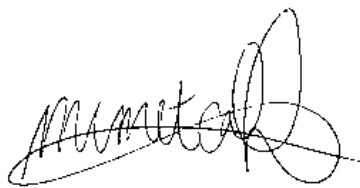
BridgIT Water Foundation always works through local, in-country NGOs that fully understand and embrace local customs, traditions, and practices. These NGOs are given training so they understand BWF's policy concerning the inclusion of marginalised peoples in the water projects. The NGOs are responsible to reach out to all members of a village under consideration for a new well, borehole, or piped water system, conduct interviews with potential beneficiaries, and solicit input.

In this way, all people are given the opportunity to be included in the planning process for the new wells and therefore gain a sense of ownership. This is very important because ultimately ownership will transfer to the people and they will be the ones responsible to manage the self-help project. However, BridgIT will not move forward with any project if there is not full buy-in from all village members that everyone has access to the water system, and exclusion for any reason is not acceptable.

BridgIT Water Foundation conducts Monitoring and Evaluation of its work in two main ways. First, its employees take periodic monitoring and evaluation trips to Africa and Asia to assess the impact of its work. The other way it monitors the effectiveness of its work is by requiring periodic general reports and project specific reports from its NGO partners. In both of these ways, BridgIT Water Foundation assesses its progress to be certain that marginalised citizens are not excluded from participation in its projects. It does this by interviewing villagers during the M&E visits, and it requires its NGO partners to do the same. In addition, BridgIT interviews members of the Water User Committees to be certain that all citizens in the prescribed area are allowed access to the wells and taps.

The typical water well or borehole created by BridgIT Water Foundation, or the typical gravity-fed piped water system, is carefully tested by certified third party water quality consultants to insure that the water is potable and not dangerous for the people. BridgIT would never turn over a system to a village where the water was risky to people's health. However, there is a risk that after the construction of the system, pollutants upstream in a watershed could flow through the aquifer to contaminate a well. BridgIT requires that the Water User Committees monitor water quality over time by performing water quality tests. If there are any irregularities, BridgIT Water Foundation's local NGO partner will evaluate the situation, and make recommendations to BridgIT engineers. BridgIT engineers may be required to make a site visit to assess the risk to all people, marginalised or not, and take appropriate action.

AUTHORISATION



Signature of Board Secretary

BridgIT Water Foundation

Date of approval by the Board: 22nd January 2019