INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT IN WATER SECURITY, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE

USAID Water and Development
TECHNICAL SERIES

INTRODUCTION

Inclusive development addresses barriers and considers the needs and priorities of underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized groups, and people in vulnerable situations. An inclusive approach is vital to effective, sustainable, and efficient water security, sanitation, and hygiene programming. This technical brief summarizes ways that practitioners can incorporate inclusive development approaches into activities, programs, research, and partnerships on water security, sanitation, and hygiene.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Perform rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis** of the local context and barriers to water, sanitation, and hygiene access **before acting and consult with local stakeholders** to ensure investments and partnerships are intentionally designed to address intersecting vulnerabilities and lead to more inclusive outcomes.

- **Build trust with local entities and support local capacity strengthening of diverse leaders, while mitigating risks from their participation or visibility**, to improve the responsiveness and effectiveness of USAID activities.

- **Adapt and target service delivery, governance, financing, and research approaches in the water and sanitation sectors** to meet the needs of underserved and marginalized groups and individuals.

- **Advocate with and on behalf of underserved and marginalized groups and support their advocacy and social movements** for improved water security, sanitation, and hygiene.

- **Protect the rights, safety and privacy of partners and individuals** and honor their experiences, needs, and proposed solutions in meetings, consultations, service delivery, research, and dissemination efforts.

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This brief considers four groups USAID commonly prioritizes with which the global water security and sanitation community has traditionally engaged less frequently, and for which USAID has policies and strategies: persons with disabilities; youth; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI+) people; and Indigenous Peoples. Women and girls, in all their diversity, are more often a priority for water security and sanitation investments, and may be particularly marginalized due to their membership in other communities, such as minority ethnic groups. USAID's existing Technical Brief on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in WASH and USAID's Menstrual Health and Hygiene (MHH) Technical Brief complement this document with more robust emphasis on inclusion of women in water and sanitation programming, and advance USAID's 2023 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Policy. Individual country contexts may require inclusion of other groups, identified through meaningful, free, and informed local stakeholder consultation. Additional groups identified in this way should be reflected in program and research design, planning, implementation, monitoring, and dissemination. Recommendations in this brief are not intended to be comprehensive and programming recommendations for specific individuals, groups, or communities facing discrimination or marginalization should be uncovered through ongoing, context-sensitive collaboration with those groups.

CLARIFYING TERMS

Inclusive development: An equitable development approach built on the understanding that every individual and community, of all diverse identities and experiences, is instrumental in the transformation of their own societies. Their engagement throughout the development process leads to better outcomes.

Marginalization: The process, whether in practice or in principle, in which individuals or communities with certain identities and/or experiences face difficulty or are denied access to social, economic, political, and/or cultural participation in their societies (e.g., exclusion from education, employment, healthcare, political participation, opportunity to practice cultural and linguistic traditions, express religious identity). Groups who face marginalization often experience discrimination in the application of laws, policies, and social and cultural norms and may be subject to persecution, harassment, and/or violence for historical, cultural, political, or other contextual reasons.

Marginalized groups may include, but are not limited to, women; youth; children in adversity and their families; older persons; persons with disabilities; LGBTQI+ people; displaced persons; migrants; Indigenous Peoples and communities; non-dominant religious, racial, and ethnic groups; people of lower castes; people of lower socioeconomic status; and people with unmet mental health needs.

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, transmisogyny, etc.) combine, overlap, or intersect, especially in the experiences of marginalized and/or underrepresented individuals or groups. An intersectional approach recognizes that many elements of a person's identity can impact how they experience the world. In combination with systems of inequality, these intersecting identities can lead to varying degrees of power and privilege that, in turn, create unique power dynamics, effects, and perspectives impacting individuals' place in society, experience of, and potentially access to development interventions. (ADS 201)

THE SCALE OF THE PROBLEM

Access to water, sanitation, and hygiene is deeply inequitable worldwide. Global data trends highlight notable disparities between rural and urban, ethnic minorities and majorities, Indigenous Peoples and non-indigenous peoples, LGBTQI+ persons and others, poor and wealthier households, and those in fragile versus stable contexts. The impacts of COVID 19, climate change, and conflict are exacerbating and deepening inequalities in many regions, across the globe. To achieve equitable access to water resources and water, sanitation, and hygiene products and services, activities must use a multi-pronged approach that addresses the root causes of inequalities, such as unequal power dynamics and historical discrimination in communities. Existing USAID partnerships, investments, research, and participation must also be critically assessed with inequities in mind.

INTERSECTING VULNERABILITIES: KEY CONSIDERATIONS FOR INCLUSIVE WSSH OUTCOMES

Gender
Man, Woman, Intersex, Trans

Geography
Urban, Rural, Peri-Urban

Income
Middle Income, Upper Income, Lower Income

Persons with Disabilities
Visually Impaired, Wheelchair User, Deaf

Note: the set of categories presented here (gender, geography etc) and the identities listed within each category (woman, rural household etc) are both meant to be illustrative and are not exhaustive.
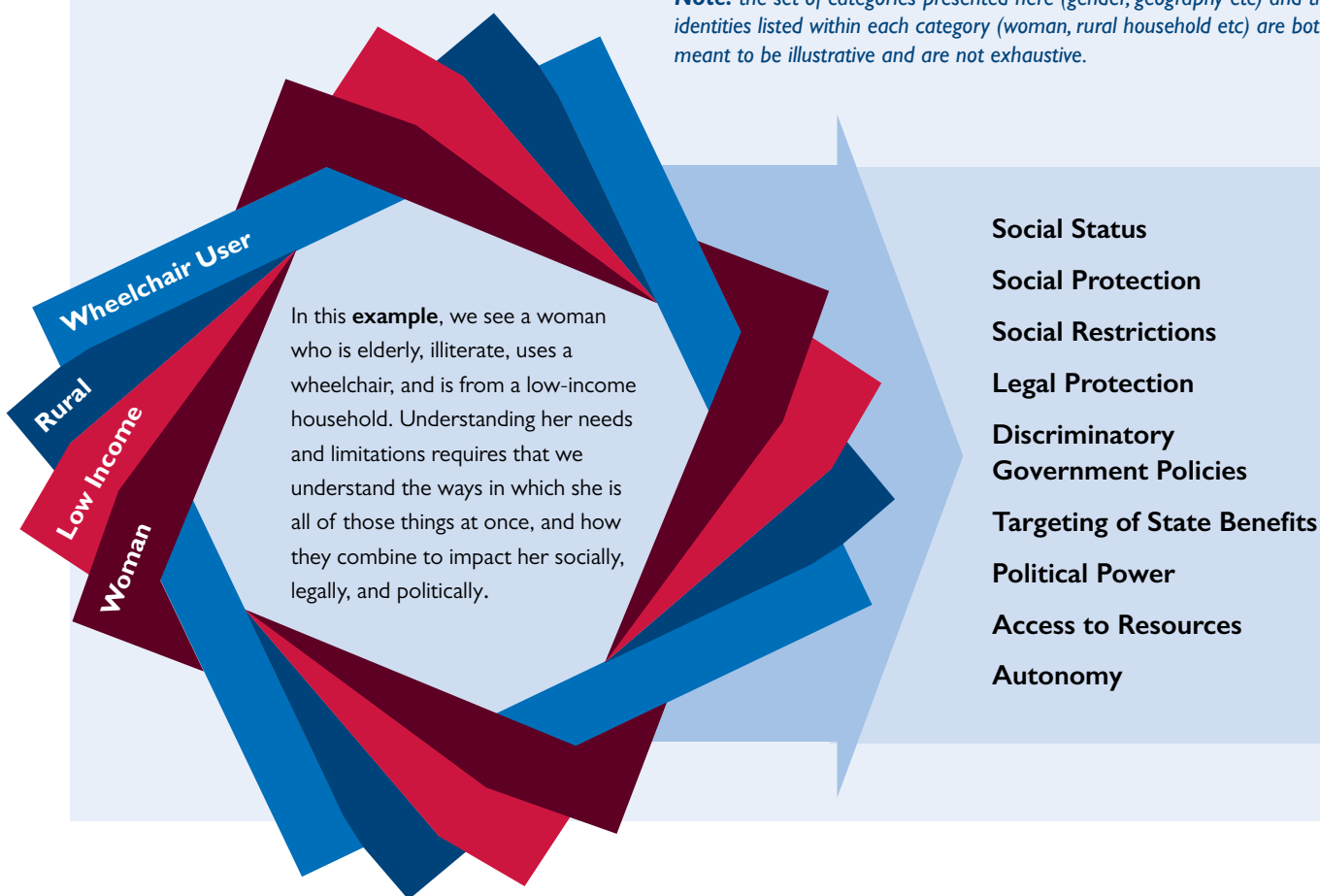
Wheelchair User
Rural
Low Income
Woman

In this **example**, we see a woman who is elderly, illiterate, uses a wheelchair, and is from a low-income household. Understanding her needs and limitations requires that we understand the ways in which she is all of those things at once, and how they combine to impact her socially, legally, and politically.

Social Status

Social Protection

Social Restrictions

Legal Protection

Discriminatory Government Policies

Targeting of State Benefits

Political Power

Access to Resources

Autonomy

FIGURE 1: Intersecting identities can—when interacting with stigma, discrimination, and other societal barriers and marginalization—result in intersecting vulnerabilities. The middle of the figure illustrates the intersecting identities of a low-income, older, illiterate woman who uses a wheelchair and lives in a rural area. The intersection of these identities will influence the constellation of rights, restrictions, protections, and situational vulnerability that she experiences, as exemplified by the list on the right.

While evidence exists on the specific barriers to water, sanitation, and hygiene faced by women and school aged girls, and on broader inequalities, such as between rural and urban populations, much evidence is lacking for other forms of marginalization and intersecting vulnerabilities. However, enough is known about broader patterns of discrimination and marginalization to enable USAID to act.

Inclusive development requires that USAID go deeper to address additional inequities, such as the four illustrative examples highlighted in the figure below (gender, geography, disabilities, and income), as well as others discovered through localized assessments, as appropriate.[1] Inclusive development frequently requires consideration of intersecting vulnerability. Individuals may identify with one or more marginalized groups, while experiencing vulnerabilities from other factors (e.g., persons with disabilities and low literacy, or insecure housing and gender identity). The combination of experiences from different identities, known as intersectionality, can have specific impacts on a person's ability to access and benefit from water and sanitation resources and services and should be explicitly addressed in USAID programs.

The set of identities presented in the above graphic is illustrative, not exhaustive. In addition to the identities listed, additional intersecting vulnerabilities can include the following:

Persons with Disabilities: Persons with disabilities make up approximately 16 percent of the world's population, 80 percent of whom are estimated to live in developing country contexts.[2] They face discrimination, increased incidence of poverty, and challenges associated with built infrastructure and communication tools that are not designed for their use.[3] Lack of access to water, sanitation, and hygiene is cited as one of the greatest challenges experienced by persons with disabilities.[4] In some low-resource settings, more than 25 percent of persons with disabilities do not have a toilet at home, while up to 20 percent of those who do have a toilet at home report that it is not accessible.[5]

Youth: Ninety percent of the youth (age 10-29) population lives in low-resource settings. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), approximately 168 million adolescents (age 10-19) worldwide are not in upper secondary school and 62 million are absent from lower secondary school.[6] Evidence indicates that limited water and sanitation access at home and at school, including limited ability to manage menstruation, contributes to school absenteeism and drop out.[7,8] Youth are also frequently excluded from decision-making positions (e.g., in water user committees), have more limited access to resources (e.g., financial), and face harmful social norms (e.g., age discrimination, gender norms impacting young menstruators). The youth unemployment rate is approximately twice that of older populations, while 96 percent of employed youth work in the informal economy,[9] limiting their access to social safety nets and professional development.

LGBTQI+ Persons: LGBTQI+ persons face stigma, discrimination, legal, social, and economic marginalization, resulting in a higher incidence of violence, insecure housing, and unemployment.[10]

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[1] Other forms of marginalization, such as poverty, insecure housing, or geography, should be considered through an intersectional approach. See the inclusive development text box and Principle 2 in the 2022 U.S. Global Water Strategy and attached USAID plan.
[2] World Health Organization (WHO). (2022). Global Report on Health Equity for Persons with Disabilities.
[3] United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) Fact Sheet on Persons with Disabilities.
[4] White, S., Kuper, H., Itimu-Phiri, A., Holm, R., and Biran, A. (2016). A Qualitative Study of Barriers to Accessing Water, Sanitation and Hygiene for Disabled People in Malawi. PLoS ONE 11(5): e0155043.
[5] UNDESA. (2019). UN Disability and Development Report – Realizing the SDGs by, for, and with Persons with Disabilities.
[6] UNESCO. Out-of-School Children and Youth.
[7] Mason, L., et al. (2013). https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3828248/. PLoS ONE 8: e79132.
[8] Sharma, M., Adhikari, R. (2022). Effects of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene on the School Absenteeism of Basic Level Students in the Government School of Nepal. Frontiers in Education.
[9] UN. (2020) World Youth Report. Youth, Entrepreneurship, and the 2030 Agenda.
[10] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2019). The LGBT Challenge: How To Better Include Sexual And Gender Minorities? Society At A Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators.

LGBTQI+ persons using shared, public, or communal latrines risk violence, humiliation, exclusion, and even arrest; these risks are especially acute for transgender, third gender, and other gender-diverse individuals, whose preferred latrines may not correspond with their perceived gender identity.[11] Transgender individuals in particular may face barriers to legal gender recognition that can, in turn, prevent them from accessing basic services such as water and sanitation or financial products such as bank accounts or loans, which require proof of identity or residence.

Indigenous Peoples: In many countries, Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately poor; underrepresented in political processes; suffer disproportionately from lack of basic services, including water and sanitation;[12, 13] and experience a higher burden of disease than non-Indigenous peoples. Indigenous Peoples and other ethnic minorities are often marginalized based on political, economic, linguistic, and social factors. This is in part due to lack of legal recognition and devolved authority to autonomous or semi-autonomous governance structures. Indigenous communities often have highly effective and resilient water governance and resource management approaches, both traditional and/or customary, that are excluded from government policies, budget, and communications. Some Indigenous communities may question the promotion of "good governance" norms by external stakeholders, fee structures for natural resources, or assumptions about livelihoods such as discounting nomadic traditions.[14]

PROGRAMMATIC APPROACHES

This section provides programming recommendations guided by available evidence and relevant USAID policies and strategies. Many common water security, sanitation, and hygiene interventions, such as targeted subsidies or work in informal settlements, contribute to equity and should be recognized as inclusive development. However, this technical brief goes beyond such approaches, focusing on targeted efforts to reach specific individuals and groups that are harder to reach, to push towards Agency goals of equity and inclusion and close gaps in the drive to universal water, sanitation, and hygiene access. This list is comprehensive but not exhaustive, and additional actions should be taken where appropriate and feasible.

Perform rigorous qualitative and quantitative analysis of local context and barriers to water and sanitation access before acting.
Improving the equity of water and sanitation outcomes requires the identification of marginalized groups living in target communities and an understanding of the forms of intersecting vulnerabilities they experience and how those vulnerabilities impact their ability to engage with water and sanitation resources and services. One recommended approach is to develop an Inclusive Development Analysis, which is distinct from gender analysis and helps identify local social dynamics, intersectional identities with particular vulnerabilities, and historical hierarchies between groups, enabling inclusive approaches at all stages of the USAID Program Cycle. Additional stakeholder and systems analysis tools, such as those identified in USAID's Technical Brief on Water and Sanitation Governance or USAID's disability resources, may also be useful.[15]

[11] UN Human Rights Council. (2014). Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation, Catarina de Albuquerque.
[12] Raupp, L., et al. (2020). Sanitation Conditions of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Households in Brazil According to the 2000 and 2010 National Censuses. Ciência & Saúde Coletiva, 25(10), 3753-3763.
[13] Tinoco, M., et al. (2104). Water Co-operation Between Cultures: Partnerships with Indigenous Peoples for Sustainable Water and Sanitation Services. Aquatic Procedia.
[14] Ibid
[15] The 2022 U.S. Global Water Strategy strongly recommends the use of Inclusive Development Analysis and other analytical tools that support more equitable outcomes, including the use of an Inclusive Development Analysis to inform marginalization disaggregates for standard water and sanitation indicators.

USING POLITICAL ECONOMY ANALYSIS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

Under the leadership of the USAID South America Regional Program, Strengthening the Capacity of Indigenous Organizations in the Amazon (SCIOA) supports Indigenous Peoples, conserving biodiversity, and promoting sustainable landscapes objectives in Brazil, Colombia, Peru, Guyana, and Suriname. During activity startup, USAID Peru, Brazil, and Colombia used applied political economy analyses to examine the state of Indigenous Peoples' rights in the face of large-scale infrastructure and extractive projects, as well as their abilities to negotiate with government and private sector decision-makers, during design and approval of these projects. In addition to validating other parts of the original design, such as incorporating gender and youth inclusion in indigenous organizational leadership and decision-making, the political economy analysis led SCIOA to incorporate a series of sub-grants to local non-governmental organizations that already had strong relationships with Indigenous organizations and were viewed as neutral by multiple parties, including government officials, other non-governmental organizations, and the Indigenous organizations themselves. The regional SCIOA activity is now strengthening the administrative and financial management capacity of ten Amazonian Indigenous organizations as a critical first step to improving their ability to directly manage donor-funded projects and is equipping Amazonian Indigenous peoples to better advocate for their rights and economic interests.

Examples of inclusive consultative and analytical approaches:

- **Engage a diverse array of humanitarian and development staff** from USAID and partners, both within and outside the water and sanitation community, to conduct stakeholder mapping of and with marginalized groups.

- **Assess and address factors in the broader enabling environment** that create barriers to water and sanitation services and benefits. This includes laws and legal frameworks, policies and regulations, and social and gender norms that criminalize individuals or communities, prevent legal registration (for individuals or organizations), and/or limit freedom of association, movement, participation, and/or expression, on the basis of identity.

- **Conduct focus group discussions and pause and reflect workshops** to determine how to apply the findings of Inclusive Development Analysis and other relevant tools to activity and research design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

- **Complement climate risk assessments with social impact assessments** to better understand and mitigate potential unintended consequences on marginalized populations and those in vulnerable situations.

- **Investigate beyond traditional water and sanitation data sources** during desk reviews, for example by reviewing the UN's disability data or UN Women's global data set on gender-based violence, to ensure intersectional considerations are reflected.

- **Consider how different crises intersect with marginalized groups** and how they might experience disproportionate and cascading impacts. Consider multiple types of risks, including but not limited to those associated with climate change, pandemics, and economic shocks.

Contribute to the Evidence Base.

The evidence base on approaches to and the impact of inclusion in water and sanitation is limited and needs to be strengthened through further research and evaluation. While many global and national data sets now include sex disaggregation, national capacity to collect additional or more nuanced data on various marginalized groups is often lacking. In order to close evidence gaps and improve decision making for inclusive water security and sanitation outcomes, USAID and its partners should:

- **Include questions related to inclusive development, empowerment, safety, well-being, and social norms**, along with water, sanitation, and hygiene outcomes, in monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans, surveys, focus group discussions, key informant interviews, and research agendas.[16] These questions should inform and be informed by inclusive development, gender, and/or social impact analyses to ensure focus on locally experienced intersecting vulnerabilities.

- **Incentivize equity and inclusion in research and involve marginalized people and those in vulnerable situations in all research activities** to mitigate structural bias in education, hiring, and professional advancement of researchers that dentify with marginalized groups. Research projects should include individuals from local and marginalized communities as survey designers, enumerators, and data analysts, principal investigators, senior researchers, and manuscript co-authors. This is both because people are generally more comfortable answering sensitive questions from someone with whom they share an identity, community, or characteristic, and also because research designed, guided and implemented by those with contextual insight will provide unique value to research quality.

- **Disaggregate all data** for target-setting and reporting, by sex, age, and disability status, at a minimum. In consultation with LGBTQI+ people and organizations, develop safe strategies to collect disaggregated data by sexual orientation, gender identity, and sex characteristics. Ensure these data are safely collected and stored consistent with privacy protection standards.[17]

Diversify partners and strengthen local capacity to advance equity and inclusion in water, sanitation, and hygiene activities.

Diversifying and localizing partnerships for more inclusive outcomes requires efforts beyond participatory baseline assessments and co-creation workshops during research and activity design. Local leadership, implementation, and capacity benefit USAID's outcomes by enabling the Agency and its partners to learn about and operate within relevant socio-cultural practices, norms, and beliefs, making water and sanitation investments more effective, efficient, sustainable, and equitable.

In addition to following the guidance in USAID's Local Capacity Strengthening Policy, efforts to enhance and diversify local water and sanitation leadership should:

- **Create incentives or requirements for recruitment of leaders from marginalized communities**, including among civil society organizations (CSOs) that are led by and for—as opposed to on behalf of—marginalized groups, to join USAID water and sanitation consortia, consultations, and events. Give special and intentional consideration to include civil society organizations led by and for LGBTQI+ people, Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, and persons with disabilities.

- **Systematically and regularly reach out to CSOs led by and for priority groups** to build trust instead of waiting until there is a potential activity needing their participation and be sure to solicit their input when it is time to evaluate or disseminate results.

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[16] See USAID. (2016). Data Security Guidance: Protecting Beneficiaries.
[17] See USAID. (2020). Water and Development Indicator Handbook for additional guidance.

- **Ensure that USAID-supported activities provide reasonable accommodations and address barriers to access**, such as by considering transportation, sign language interpretation, use of local languages, physical accessibility, or child care. Be mindful of using USAID logos or other signage that could put physical or psychological safety at risk or undermine local ownership of water and sanitation services.[18] Gender-aware accommodations may require that some meetings are gender-segregated or that facilitators are selected based on the cultural context.

Adapt common water and sanitation approaches to better target those left behind.
Many evidence-based approaches supported by USAID's water and sanitation investments can be adapted to explicitly respond to the findings of gender and Inclusive Development Analyses, social impact analysis, and stakeholder consultation. Efforts to adapt water and sanitation approaches to reach those left behind should:

- **Design and construct or rehabilitate latrines and water systems to be acceptable and accessible for the diversity of populations that they will serve**, including gender-neutral latrines; ramps, handrails, and space for persons with physical disabilities to maneuver; water taps that can be easily reached and offer a place to rest heavy loads; and use of large print or braille signage. Using these types of universal design standards[19] is estimated to increase costs of construction by only one to three percent.[20, 21]

- **Deploy targeted subsidies to reach those who are hardest to reach** including household or service provider subsidies and targeting communities or geographies where marginalized people live in disproportionately high numbers, such as residential facilities for persons with disabilities or enclaves of people with diverse gender identities.

- **Incorporate inclusive governance, finance, and markets and institutional strengthening explicitly into activity design** by assessing and responding to legal barriers to women, including LGBTQI+ women, working in water and sanitation jobs, or encouraging adoption of universal design standards and regulations by the national or state government.

- **Increase investments in inclusive and accessible social and behavior change** by pairing governance, finance, or service delivery activities with social and behavior change approaches. These may include shifting harmful norms and addressing taboos related to menstruation or incorporating indigenous languages and cultural beliefs around water.[22]

- **Emphasize the positive public benefits of universal access** to enhance support of inclusive development. This may be accomplished through many approaches, including communications and advocacy focused on protection against diseases through herd immunity or through the creation of a shared sense of ownership and community, among others.

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[18] Martin, D., Brown, J. (2021). "Littered with Logos!": An Investigation into the Relationship between Water Provision, Humanitarian Branding, Donor Accountability, and Self-Reliance in Ugandan Refugee Settlements. Refugee Survey Quarterly, Volume 40, Issue 4.
[19] Universal design refers to the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without need for adaptation or specialized design. While the concept emerged primarily with regard to disability issues, universal design strives to be a broad-spectrum solution that helps everyone, including elderly people, people with strollers, pregnant women, and children, in addition to people with disabilities. Its goal is to remove physical barriers and create a more inclusive environment.
[20] Jones, H. (2011). Inclusive design of school latrines – how much does it cost and who benefits. WEDC.
[21] World Bank. (2017). Including Persons with Disabilities in Water Sector Operations: A Guidance Note.
[22] See USAID. (2021). Water and Development Technical Brief: Social and Behavior Change for Water Security, Sanitation, and Hygiene.

SANITATION ACCESS FOR EVERYONE

As part of the Global Communities Activity under the USAID Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene for Health program in Ghana, the Digni-Loo was developed as an innovative way to increase sanitation access for underserved populations. A durable plastic latrine slab has a number of advantages over the traditional concrete slab: it is easy to clean and maintain; the bowl contains a small flap that opens only while pour-flushing, reducing odors and flies; and it can be reused after the pit is filled, lasting up to 20 years. The Digni-Loo is also easy to install, requiring no special tools or skills and costs a fraction of the cost of a concrete slab. In addition to creating an innovative new technology, inclusive principles were a key component of the activity, with a targeted subsidy program providing a Digni-Loo to the poorest of the poor in project communities. The criteria for recipients includes older persons, persons with disabilities, and widowed individuals who have no external support, among others that the community may identify. Once the community identifies those in need of support, the government's Department of Social Welfare then verifies the selections.

Leverage USAID's influence to advocate with and for underserved, underrepresented, and marginalized people and communities and those in vulnerable situations, and to elevate their goals and their perspectives.

Marginalized groups are disproportionately overlooked as potential household and community leaders, advocates, or spokespeople for water security and sanitation policies and programs. Additionally, despite generally strong demand for water and sanitation at the community level, many countries lack robust social movements that can elevate this demand to local and national governments. USAID can play an important role in facilitating the elevation of marginalized communities in policy and technical decision-making structures, and should:

- **Utilize USAID's influence and convening power** to drive inclusive government-led multi-stakeholder processes and to support advocacy and social movement building that increases accountability and the diversity of voices participating in policy and technical processes.

- **Support traditional authority structures** and autonomous or semi-autonomous governments representing Indigenous Peoples in their efforts to manage and allocate water resources and provide safe drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene services and products, and build bridges between traditional and national governments to support devolved authority and budgets that put Indigenous Peoples in the lead.

- **Invest in strengthening budget tracking capacity** among organizations led by and for marginalized communities to create accountability for clearer targeting of water and sanitation resources.

- **Build the pipeline of water and sanitation professionals and enable growing diversity in decision-making roles** by supporting increased access to education and training on operational and financial management and technical skills. Work simultaneously with water and sanitation employers to create a positive enabling environment for increased employment, retention, and promotion of youth, women, LGBTQI+ persons, and other disproportionately under-employed people.

ENGAGING SELF-HELP GROUPS IN FECAL SLUDGE MANAGEMENT

In 2021, USAID partnered with India's Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Institute, the Odisha state government, and the Odisha Water Academy to train local self-help groups – formed in the community to address local issues – how to operate and manage fecal sludge treatment plants in more than 1,000 cities and towns. The program aimed to support youth, women, and transgender individuals. USAID focused in particular on transgender groups during the COVID-19 lockdowns because many transgender individuals had lost their earnings from working at bus stands and railway stations as travel in the country was curbed. USAID trained more than 30 members of the Bahuchara Mata Transgender Self Help Group to develop their leadership skills and technical skills in fecal sludge treatment, disposal of treated wastewater, reuse of sludge for agriculture, and monitoring the quantity and quality of effluent. The operation and management of fecal sludge treatment plants by the self-help groups supporting transgender individuals was a watershed moment. Thanks to the training, the State Government of Odisha deployed the team to operate the Pratapnagari Water Treatment Plant of the Water Corporation of Odisha in Cuttack, enabling participants to earn a monthly salary. These efforts empowered a population that routinely encounters socio-economic exclusion, helped create a template for strengthened approaches to sanitation elsewhere in the country, and boosted the confidence and dignity of the group, who are now looked upon more highly as role models in their community. Additionally, because the training program imparted knowledge about government benefits, some members of the group were able to get government-issued cards allowing them access to free and subsidized food for low-income citizens.

PRINCIPLES

While specific challenges to inclusive development may vary from one population or community to another, the following principles should be applied, where possible, to all USAID activities: do no harm and do nothing about them without them.[23] Below are recommendations for applying these principles in the context of water security, sanitation, and hygiene activities.

Do No Harm

- **Establish and Apply High Ethical Standards:** Secure free, prior, and informed consent;[24] respect privacy and confidentiality; and recognize political, economic, social, physical, psychological, and economic risks to participating. Work with affected people to mitigate risks, and support implementing partners to do the same.

- **Build "Do No Harm" Capacity:** Enable stakeholders to prevent, mitigate, and respond to harm arising in the sector, such as by providing referrals to health, legal, counseling, shelters, and other types of social support. Where needed, engage partners from outside the water, sanitation, and hygiene sector to provide additional capacity or training to water and sanitation stakeholders, such as on gender-based violence response and referral systems and survivor-centered programming.[25]

- **Institute Complaint Mechanisms and Grievance Procedures:** Encourage partners to establish transparent, accessible, and accountable complaint mechanisms and grievance procedures that prioritize the physical and psychological safety of individuals who use them. This includes customer service and human resources policies at water and sanitation service providers, water basin authorities, and other sector stakeholders, in addition to mechanisms specific to USAID activities.

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23 For more information on these foundational principles of Inclusive Development, see USAID's Inclusive Development course.
24 See USAID Guidance on Monitoring Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).
25 Additional resources on the foundations of gender-based violence programming and approaches specific to water, sanitation and hygiene, see USAID's Collective Action to Reduce Gender-Based Violence resources, including Addressing GBV Through Water Security, Sanitation, and Hygiene Programs.

Do Nothing Without Us.

- **Prioritize Inclusive Participation:** Create accountability for a locally-led, participatory approach in which self-identified members of underserved or underrepresented groups, and/or CSOs led by and for members of these groups, are meaningfully, safely, and appropriately engaged in internal and external strategy development, activity design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. This should include adding requirements for participation in grant agreements and contracts, and reviewing procurements to ensure they do not replicate or reinforce typical barriers to participation or harmful power dynamics.

- **Leverage USAID Leadership and Influence:** Encourage partners and host governments to increase and diversify participation in their own processes, activities, and staffing, including through intentional outreach to those least likely to be at the table. Advocate for inclusion of marginalized groups and persons, and be their ally in elevating their voices according to their preferences.

- **Consider Power Dynamics:** Acknowledge and seek to reduce power imbalances in and between USAID partnerships, partner communities, and activities. Carefully choose who leads discussions or activities, who prepares reports, what language and modalities are used for communications, and how, to whom, and by whom information is disseminated. Support partners to do the same in partner-led activities. This includes recognizing and responding to norms around who collects and manages water or uses sanitation and hygiene facilities.

ASSESS EFFORTS TO REACH MARGINALIZED GROUPS

USAID/Indonesia's IUWASH PLUS project supported the Government of Indonesia to target sanitation interventions for the urban poor, including project targets for reaching the households in the bottom 40 percent by wealth (referred to as the B40). To reach the B40, the project developed what they called the 'hotspot approach' that utilized national census data to identify urban neighborhoods with a high density of B40.[26] The project monitored the hotspot approach to ensure the B40 were reached with the activities and achieved its outcomes. The hotspot approach was highly successful as it consistently reached the poor in greater numbers than other common approaches (e.g., previous program reached only 23 percent of B40 households with water services while the hotspot approach achieved between 37 to 46 percent of B40 households by mid project. Similar gains were demonstrated with sanitation services, 52 to 69 percent). The hotspot approach is now being used by the new USAID project IUWASH Tangguh and is being adapted by the Government of Indonesia to better target their grants program to the B40. In this example, it is important to consider that inclusive development often requires making intentional modifications to programming to specifically reach targeted groups and that it is important to measure and confirm that the programming is having the intended outcome.

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[26] See the Urban Sanitation Water Technical Brief for more information on IUWASH methods.

MEASURING OUTCOMES OF INCLUSIVE APPROACHES

Monitoring, evaluation, collaborating, learning, and adapting is critical to realizing universal access to water and sanitation at the household and the community levels. USAID water security, sanitation, and hygiene activities should incorporate a combination of Standard and custom indicators to ensure that inclusive outcomes are sufficiently monitored. Consistent with Principle 2 of the U.S. Global Water Strategy and the USAID Water and Development Indicator Handbook, USAID and its partners should utilize the "Marginalized People" disaggregate based on the findings of the Inclusive Development Analysis, for all standard people-level indicators capturing access to water and sanitation services. Because other disaggregates for these indicators already capture sex[27] and wealth quintile, people should not be counted as marginalized based only on their sex or wealth, although those could be elements of intersecting marginalizations.

Standard Indicators (not exhaustive):

- Number of human rights organizations trained and supported (DR 4.2.1)

- Percent of female participants in U.S. Government (USG)-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment) (GNDR-2)

- Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations (GNDR-8)

- Number of people with secure tenure rights to land, with legally recognized documentation and who perceive their rights as secure, as a result of USG assistance (EG.10.4-6)

- Number of laws, policies or procedures adopted and implemented with USG assistance designed to promote and improve youth participation at the regional, national or local level. (YOUTH-2)

Sample Custom Indicators: [28]

- Percent of participants who report increased self-efficacy at the conclusion of USG-supported training/programming

- Number of civil society groups participating in stakeholder consultations on water resource allocation plans and management (disaggregated by LGBTQI+, women's rights, indigenous peoples, disability rights, and religious freedom organizations)

- Percent of menstruators who were able to change their menstrual materials when they wanted to while at [home/school/elsewhere] [aligns with JMP M1 and DHS-8, Question 239]

- Percent of women who report not participating in social activities, school, or work due to their menstruation in the last 12 months [aligns with JMP M3 and MICS6-UN16]

- Number of women and girls who report improved safety and security from GBV as they go about their daily activities, including when collecting water and during sanitation and hygiene activities

- Percent of USG supported water/sanitation facilities constructed or rehabilitated using universal design standards

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[27] Note: USAID and partners are encouraged to consider disaggregating by gender, rather than by sex, if privacy and data protection can be appropriately protected.
[28] Other sources for potential custom indicators include World Water Assessment Program 2019 Toolkit on Sex-Disaggregated Water Data (UNESCO) and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics Short Set of Questions on Disability.

SELECTED RESOURCES

Safe and Effective Consultation

USAID Inclusive Development Hub. (2022). Safety/Security-Sensitive and Trauma-Informed Stakeholder Consultations with Members of Marginalized Groups.

USAID Center for Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance. Do No Harm Training.

LGBTQI+ Persons

Park, A. and Mendos, L. (2018). Guiding Principles on the Inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) People in Development Policy and Programs. Swedish Federation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Rights.

OECD. (2019). The LGBT Challenge: How to Better Include Sexual and Gender Minorities?, Society at a Glance 2019: OECD Social Indicators.

USAID Inclusive Development Hub & USAID Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. (2022). Integrating LGBTQI+ Considerations in USAID's Resilience and Food Security Programming Sectors.

Persons with Disabilities and Older People

World Bank. (2017). Including Persons with Disabilities in Water Sector Operations: A Guidance Note.

Dugarova, E., et al. (2017). Ageing, Older Persons, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations Development Programme, HelpAge International, and AARP.

Indigenous Peoples

USAID Central Africa Regional Program for the Environment and U.S. Forest Service International Programs. (2019). USAID/DRC's Participatory Approaches to Natural Resource Management Planning.

International Fund for Agricultural Development. (2019). Policy Brief: Partnering with Indigenous Peoples for the SDGs.

Jun, J. et al. (2020). Indigenous Peoples, Water, and Climate Change. Stockholm International Water Institute.

Youth

International Secretariat for Water and Solidarity Water Europe. (2017). Water Generation Youth Strategy.

Fox, L. and Kaul, U. (2017). What Works for Youth Employment in Low-income Countries? Youth Power.

Olenik, C., et al. (2013). State Of The Field Report: Examining The Evidence In Youth Workforce Development. USAID Youth Research, Evaluation, and Learning Project.

Intersections

USAID. (2010). Guide on How to Integrate Disability into Gender Assessments and Analyses.

Loughborough University and WaterAid. (2012). Accessibility and Safety Audit of Water and Sanitation Facilities.

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Blyth, J., et al. (2020). Out of the Margins: An intersectional analysis of disability and diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, expression & sex characteristics in humanitarian and development contexts. CBM Australia and University of Melbourne.

Patel, E., et al. (2022). Water and Conflict: A Toolkit for Programming. USAID Research Technical Assistance Center.