

# WaterAid Ethiopia Newsletter

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## Newsletter highlights

- Announcing the launch of our new website
- Life is easier with water - the story from Burie
- WASH System Strengthening: Clean water to all
- Our Future is at Hand – Let's Move Forward Together - GHWD 2021
- Partnering to expand access to WaSH through the COVID-19 response
- Capacity building in WASH: A programme to enhance urban WASH systems

# WaterAid Ethiopia Newsletter

## Our work in Ethiopia

WaterAid is an international, non-for-profit organization determined to make clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene normal for everyone, everywhere.

Clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene should be a normal part of daily life for everyone, everywhere, but 58 million people in Ethiopia lack clean water close to home.

Since 1991, we have worked closely with partners and stakeholders to help people break free from poverty and disease, unlock their potential and change their lives for good through improved access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene.

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic, we have also been working towards equitable and sustainable access to water, sanitation, and hygiene. We have also been providing essential handwashing facilities and materials and emergency water tanks to healthcare facilities and COVID-19 isolation centres and intensively rolled out national hygiene and sanitation behaviour change campaigns using various media houses.



WaterAid/ Behailu Shiferaw

# A message from our Country Director



## We are happy to share WaterAid Ethiopia's quarterly newsletter

First, I would like to wish everyone a prosperous and productive Happy New Year! There is no doubt that the ending year has been remarkable in many ways. At WaterAid Ethiopia, 2021 has been an impactful year of adaptation and flexibility.

Even though the coronavirus pandemic and the conflict in Northern Ethiopia has made the year rather difficult, with the dedication of the team and the support of the WaterAid family, government officials and our partners, we were able to achieve incremental gains have been made in ensuring access to WASH for all.

WaterAid Ethiopia is working mainly in Amhara, Harari and the Oromia Regional States as well as Addis Ababa City Administration to make clean water, decent toilets, and good hygiene (WASH) normal for everyone, everywhere.

This newsletter highlights various works of our organization in the past three months (October, November and December 2021) that are aligned with our annual plan. Various partners such as the Government of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian Water Technology Institute (EWTI), Ministry of Health, Ministry of Water, Irrigation and Energy and donors such as Heineken Africa Foundation, H&M Foundation, and many others have been supporting us in our work to take actions towards universal WASH access. I am sure we will be continuing to make such an impactful footprint in our community in 2022 as well.

We hope you will enjoy reading this quarterly newsletter and we look forward to your feedback so that we can continuously improve it along the way.

On behalf of WaterAid Ethiopia, I wish you a glorious 2022.

Warm Regards,

**Yaekob Metena**  
Country Director

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# Announcing the launch of our new website

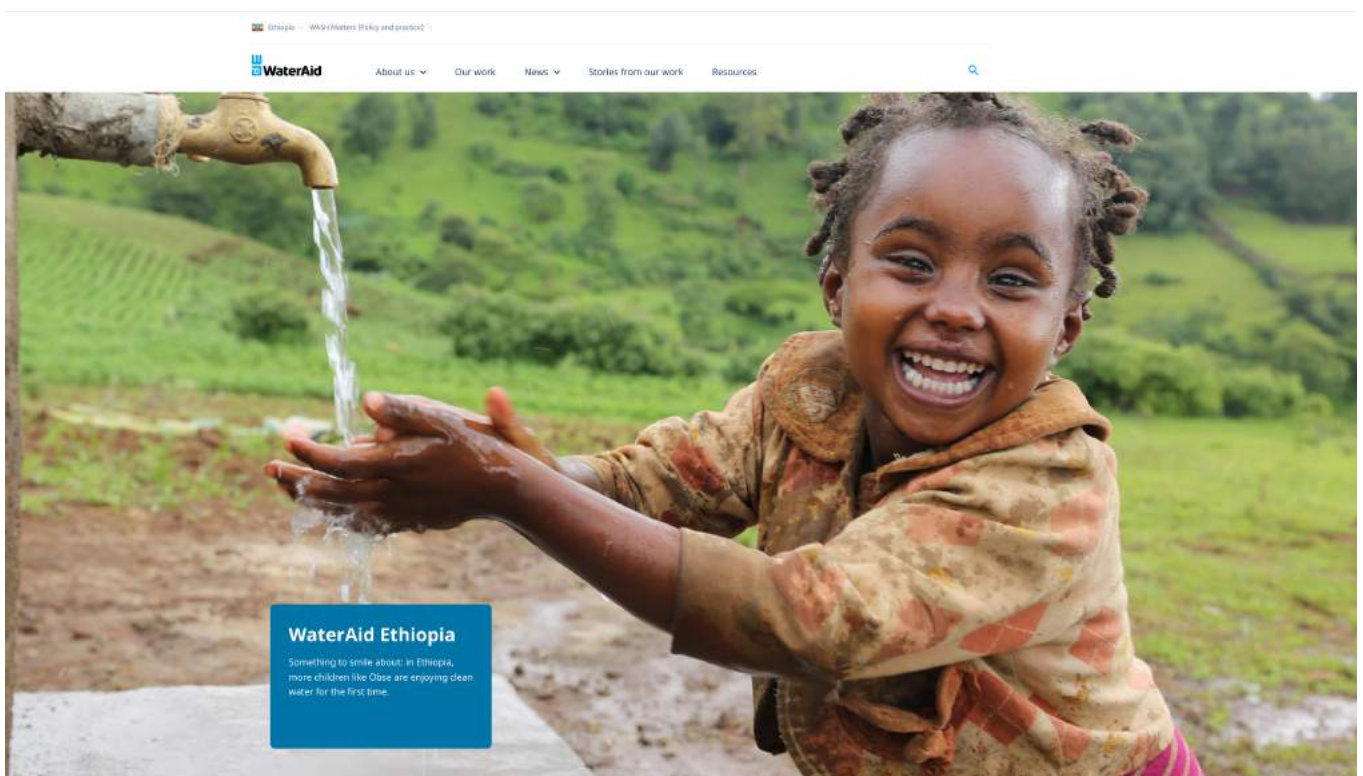
Our new and refreshed website, [wateraid.org/et](https://wateraid.org/et) went live in December of 2021. The updated site includes changes to navigation, with dropdown menus for both mobile and desktop versions. We've also improved the structure of our content, so visitors get more from a quick read. There's a whole host of smaller but impactful changes, all in an effort to enhance our visitors' experience of the WaterAid Ethiopia site.

Our new website aims to provide an easier way to learn about WaterAid Ethiopia's impactful work and how you could play a part in our mission of reaching everyone everywhere with clean water, decent toilets, and good hygiene.

The new website offers access to information about the organisation, our work and other valuable resources.

We will be constantly updating our content with the latest news and events, blogs, newsletters, and reports.

We welcome you to visit our new website and hope you will establish this portal as a useful source of information.



# Life is easier with water - the story of Burie



WaterAid/ Frehiwot Gebrewold

*Helme 65 and her daughter Amaru 7 collecting clean water from a tap installed right by their door.*

Burie Zuriya Woreda located in the Amhara region has a population of 193,010 people. The town is where WaterAid Ethiopia is implementing its Strengthening Systems for Scaling-up of Multi-Village System for Resilience Project with the support of the UK People's Post Code Lottery (PPL) - Climate Action Fund. The project will address the WASH needs of 5,800 men and women and persons with disabilities and marginalized groups among communities (rural and urban) residents of Bure Zuriya Woreda.

Helme, a 65 years old widow residing on the outskirts of Burie town, with her only child Amaru, is one of the people who has been supported by the project. *"I lost my husband years ago and I didn't have a place to live in. I was homeless and lived in a plastic house until people from this neighbourhood built me this house. I currently live with my daughter Amaru who is now 7 years old. I make a living by selling pots made of clay,"* told us, Helme.

Helme faced several difficulties, including a shortage of potable water near her home. Helme had to walk 2 kilometres to a Yeser River to fetch water.

There was no one else to watch after Amaru, so she had to bring her daughter along on these long journeys. The river has recently been intensely overflowing. As a result, getting water from it has become practically impossible. Helme and her daughter found collecting water from the river dangerous because of the heavily overflowing river. Helme recalls bad moments, *"During the winter season, I would repeatedly fall into the river due to the overflow. Once though I fell into the river as I was trying to fetch water and my daughter had to jump into the river to save me. Luckily, there were young boys near the beach washing their clothes, they took me and my daughter out. It was a very traumatic experience for my daughter. If it wasn't for those boys, we would not have been alive."*

Thankfully, Helme's difficulties are no longer an issue now that she has access to clean tap water in her front yard. She is among the 5,800 people who are supported by WaterAid through its Strengthening Systems for Scaling-up of Multi-Village System for Resilience project. Helme gladly said, *"It's all over now. I get to walk out my door and get clean water at any time I want. I am overwhelmed beyond words."*



WaterAid/ Frehiwot Gebrewold

*Memuna Malima, 65 at home who fell into a hand dug well located near her village while collecting water and has been unable to move as much since the incident that broke her leg eight years ago*

WaterAid's investment in Ethiopia is intended to contribute towards universal and sustainable access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). A key approach of WaterAid's work is about strengthening the systems within which WASH services and behaviours function. The aim of the approach is to ensure WASH services and behaviours are inclusive and continue to function for long after the end of our intervention.

Under the Promoting Sustainable Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services at Scale (SusWASH) project, WaterAid Ethiopia has developed and is implementing systems strengthening approach in Gololcha woreda (district), in the Bale Zone of the Oromia region.

Memuna, 65 is a mother of four and lives in Buriya Kebele with her children and grandchildren. Like most women in Ethiopia, Memuna is also responsible for taking care of the household chores. One of her day-to-day activities used to be collecting water from a hand-dug water well in her village.

Carrying 20 litres of water in a jerrycan on her back was Memuna's daily chore, and she used to do this more than five times a day. One day, a very sad incident happened which changed Memuna's life. As usual, she went to the well carrying her jerrycan to collect water, and she was standing by the edge of the well to pull jerrycans full of water out of it. However, the edge collapsed and four women including Memuna fell into the well. One of the women died, and the three survived but badly injured. Memuna broke her leg and since then she hasn't been able to do the things she used to and can't move from one place to another easily like before.

Speaking of the bad experience, Memuna says 'I was one of the lucky mothers who survived that bad incident. One of the mothers, who was also a friend with us, died because she fell into the well and she couldn't easily be saved. She was a mother of four. We felt very shocked when we learnt that she died. It was a heartbreaking moment for all of us. The well is so deep, and she couldn't survive.'

Now, Memuna's village has access to clean water and there is a water point near her house. This made life easier for Memuna's family as it was impossible for Memuna to go out and collect water for her family because of her injury. Memuna and her family are very grateful to WaterAid for its support in providing access to clean water in their village.

Through the sustainable water, sanitation, and hygiene services at Scale (SusWASH) project which is implemented in Gololcha District of East Bale Zone, Oromia Regional State from April 2020 to March 2022, WaterAid provided access to clean water for Memuna and the people of Buriya Kebele. The project aims to provide access to WASH services for 25,580 people during its first phase and 17,740 people in the second phase.

## Our future is at hand – Let’s move forward together

Since 2008, Global Handwashing Day (GHWD) has been celebrated every year around the world with different mottos and events. The 2021 Global Handwashing Day was celebrated with the theme “Our future is at hand – Let’s move forward together.”

In Ethiopia, it is estimated that 92 percent (about 100 million people) of the population lacks access to a basic handwashing facility such as water supply and soap (UNICEF/WHO JMP, 2019). Approximately 80 percent of those who lack access to soap and water live in rural settings and are among the most vulnerable groups, including families living in informal settlements, migrant and refugee camps, and in areas of active conflict – of which more than half are children.



WaterAid/ Genaye Eshetu

Audience member Gishu Jafar, 28, taking part in a handwashing demonstration during a hygiene behavioural change campaign, Jara, Bale, Oromia.

The GHWD event was agreed to be held for one month to increase awareness on the role of hand hygiene as one of the most effective actions in reducing and preventing the spread of infections, including the COVID-19 virus.

WaterAid Ethiopia celebrated the day in Addis Ababa and Jabi Tehnan Woreda, one of its project sites. The celebration in Addis Ababa was spearheaded by the Ministry of Health and supported by various partners including WaterAid Ethiopia.

The event was held at Atse Nakutoleab Kindergarten and Primary school which is among the schools supported by WaterAid Ethiopia through its project dubbed 'System strengthening to realize the SDGs'. In attendance at the event were Yaekob Metena, WaterAid Ethiopia’s Country Director, H.E. Dr Dereja Duguma, State Minister of Health, and other invited guests.



WaterAid/ Mekdim Hailu

Teachers of AtseNakutoLeab Kindergarten & Primary School attending the GHWD event prepared by WaterAid Ethiopia and partners.



WaterAid/ Mekdim Hailu

Yaekob Metena, Country Director for WaterAid Ethiopia at the GHWD event.



The celebration featured a demonstration of handwashing, a performance by Filfilu, one of the most popular comedians in the country, and an appearance by a widely known children's character, Ethiopis. At the end of the event, a delegation of guests including the State Minister visited the WASH facilities at the school which are constructed by WaterAid Ethiopia to serve more than 500 students.



WaterAid/ Mekdim Hailu  
 State Minister of Health Dr Dereja Duguma visits WASH facilities built by WaterAid Ethiopia at the GHWD event.

WaterAid Ethiopia also organized a discussion at one of its project sites in Jabi Tehnan Woreda, Mankusa town as part of the celebration of GHWD. The event was attended by city administrators, health workers, teachers, and students where the importance of handwashing was emphasized and obstacles identified to making hand hygiene a habit. The event included a question and answer session with students and a demonstration of best practices in handwashing by health workers.

It is to be recalled that WaterAid Ethiopia is implementing the 'WASH for coffee producers' project in Mankusa town, located in the Amhara region with the financial support of Operakällaren (OKF) and Allegra foundations.



To date, WaterAid has constructed a multi-village water supply scheme, and built the capacity of health workers on infection prevention and control (IPC), and the provision of IPC materials.

In celebrating GHWD, WaterAid Ethiopia was also part of the print and social media sub-team under the national GHWD celebration committee spearheaded by the Ministry of Health. As part of the sub-team, WaterAid prepared various materials for social media campaigns with the objective of creating awareness about hand hygiene. With the social media campaign, WaterAid was able to reach more than 6,000 people via its platforms on Twitter and Facebook.

Furthermore, in order to reach a larger audience, WaterAid prepared and disseminated a one minute spot for broadcast on Fana Broadcasting Corporate TV which is one of the most prominent television stations in Ethiopia, reaching over six million viewers.

# Partnering to expand WASH access through the COVID-19 response



WaterAid/ Mekdim Hailu

*Yehualashet Woldeyohannes, 60, with a smile on her face speaking about the clean water tap in her front yard.*



Phase two of the COVID-19 response WASH project was launched in Addis Ababa and Harar on 24 July and 24 August 2021, respectively. The project is funded by Heineken Africa Foundation and aims to reduce exposure to COVID-19 by improving key hygiene behaviors and improving access to WASH facilities for target groups in communities and healthcare facilities.

The project which is being implemented in three sub-cities of Addis Ababa (Gulale Akaki/Kality, Kolfe Keranio) and Harar Town, is expected to support 115,178 people (men, women, children, people with disabilities, vulnerable and marginalized persons) by improving WASH facilities and raising peoples' awareness about essential behaviors in preventing the pandemic.

The project has already connected 100 households to water taps in Harar Town, providing water to 560 people. This has enabled them to practice good hygiene to help with COVID-19 prevention.

Yehualashet is a 60 years old widow residing in Harar town, with her two children aged 30, and 35. With her two sons being mentally impaired, Yehualashet is responsible for taking care of them and herself. Her responsibilities include feeding and protecting her children and fetching water from Senga Ber, a place 45 minutes walk from her home. Due to the distance and the expense of the water, Yehualashet and her sons were not able to take protective measures against COVID-19 such as washing their hands frequently.

With a few months of implementing the second phase of our COVID-19 response WASH project, Yehualashet and her sons are now reaping the benefits of water access with clean tap water at her front yard.

Yehualashet told us, *"It's wonderful to be able to have unlimited water access. I pay 35 Birr a month for unlimited water and it's right next to me. As opposed to how it used to be, to walk 45 minutes just for one jerrican and to pay 5 Birr, this feels like I am living in heaven. We are now able to take care of our personal hygiene and protect ourselves from the Coronavirus. I am very happy."*



WaterAid/Mekdim Hailu



Overall, the project has performed well in the last six months, with nearly all planned activities being on track including:

- Rapid WASH assessments were conducted in Addis Ababa and Harar Towns to understand the local context
- A total of 84 health extension workers trained on the community hygiene package implementation guidelines and on hygiene behaviour education.

The community hygiene package implementation manual and assets were distributed to health bureaus and healthcare facilities to support hygiene promotion activities and reinforce key hygiene behaviours. Around 60 hygiene sessions were held in healthcare facilities, households and at the community level using health extension workers focusing on key hygiene messages in Addis Ababa and Harar Towns. As part of the project, a workshop was held for WASH sector coordination for COVID-19 response and hygiene specialists from the Ministry of Health, the Addis Ababa Health Bureau, the Harari Regional Health Bureau, and the Water and Sewerage Authorities from Addis Ababa and Harari region participated.

The project is expected to benefit 405,787 men, women, children, people with disabilities, vulnerable and marginalized persons in Harar and three sub-cities of Addis Ababa through hygiene messages and WASH facilities.

# Capacity building in WASH: A programme to enhance urban WASH systems



*Attendees of the Phase II: The Cluster Approach Project regional workshop*

With over 1,000 towns across the country, and an urban population set to double in size every fifteen years, Ethiopia is faced with considerable challenges in ensuring adequate and inclusive WASH services in urban areas.

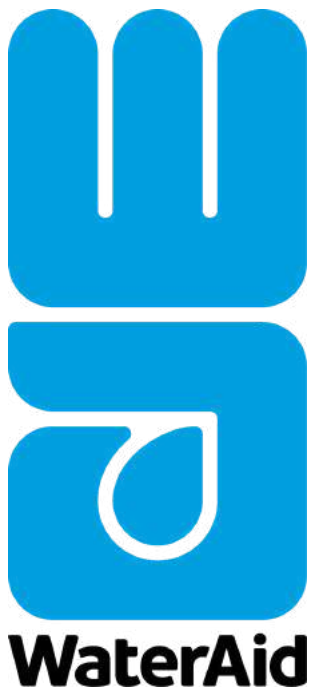
WaterAid Ethiopia has an ongoing urban WASH capacity strengthening programme in 44 small and medium-sized towns across four regions of the country. The country programme and its partners have developed an effective approach for utility performance improvement, particularly in water supply services, and their governance. Under the second phase of the 20 Towns Capacity Building Project funded by Yorkshire, WaterAid Ethiopia continues to build on gains and approaches from Phase I to strengthen foundations for scale and sustainability.

**22-23 September:** The Cluster Approach Project regional workshop was held in Bahirdar city, Amhara region. Over 30 experts drawn from the WASH sector were in attendance representing Amhara Region Water, Irrigation and Energy Development Bureau, Zonal Water Resources Office Heads of Cluster Lead towns, Cluster Lead Town Water Utilities, Amhara Region Water Utilities Forum, Bahir Dar University, Ethiopian Water Utilities Federation, and Ethiopian Water Technology Institute. Over the two-day workshop, eight Cluster Lead Towns from the Amhara region presented their six-month performance report highlighting phase two capacity development plan and implementation.

Participants at the regional workshop also discussed the status of the Cluster Lead Towns towards implementing the project, renewed their commitments to document project learnings, and strengthen services.



**One WaterAid.  
Three goals.**



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