

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

Since the first COVID-19 case was discovered in Ethiopia on 13 March, 2020, WaterAid Ethiopia has been supporting Government actions in combatting the pandemic as it is closely linked to the organisation's commitment to advance WASH. As the pandemic continues to threaten our global community, our work to bring clean water, decent sanitation and good hygiene to everyone, everywhere has never been more critical. Thanks to our supporters and partners such as Heineken Africa Foundation we are working to increase access to these vital needs for the most vulnerable people.

The Heineken Africa Foundation has extended its partnership with WaterAid Ethiopia to support the second phase of the Covid-19 response project initially launched by WaterAid Ethiopia last year as part of its COVID -19 response intervention helping vulnerable communities protect themselves against the spread of the disease.

WaterAid Ethiopia implemented the 2nd Phase Project from May 2021 to March 2022 in Addis Ababa City Administration and Harar Town. The project in Harar town and three sub-cities of Addis Ababa (Kofe Keranio, Gulale and Akaki/Kality), has reached **115,787** people (men, women, children, people with disabilities, vulnerable and marginalised persons) by improving WASH facilities and raising peoples' awareness about essential behaviours.

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 has connected 186 households to water taps in Addis Ababa (16) and Harar (170), providing water to more than one thousand people. This has enabled them to practice good hygiene to help with COVID-19 prevention.

The project has been under implementation since May 2021 and concrete achievements recorded. So far,

- Seven permanent and inclusive hand washing facilities constructed in healthcare facilities (#3), public areas (#2) and schools (#2) of Addis Ababa City (#4) and Harar town(#3). Besides, management models were established for each facility to ensure sustainability and currently serving people as means of preventing exposure to the pandemic.
- Various approaches have been employed to expose target communities using hygiene behaviour change materials. Moreover, loud speaker announcements were made for series of days on COVID 19 prevention protocols in Harar town. These interventions have contributed in raising peoples' awareness on preventing COVID 19.
- Health extension workers were trained on the community hygiene behaviour change package implementation guidelines and about forty-two hygiene (42) sessions focusing on key COVID linked hygiene behaviours were conducted at healthcare facilities, community level and household level in Harar and Addis Ababa.
- We have completed water supply connections to 188 poor households in Harar town(#170) and Addis Ababa and these households(#18) are now enjoying access to safe water and sanitation as means of preventing COVID and maintaining healthy life.
- Workshops were organized on WASH sector co-ordination to COVID-19 response. Key stakeholders and partners from Ministry of Health, Addis Ababa Health Bureau, the Harari Regional Health Bureau, and Harari Water and Sewerage Authorities attended the workshops and their knowledge on sector coordination has improved.





## Clean Water, Healthy Family

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."*

**TOGETHER WE  
CAN MAKE  
WASH  
ACCESSIBLE TO  
EVERYONE,  
EVERYWHERE.**

