

Youth group activity

Use this activity to teach children about the power of community and how your support can bring clean water to Yenus and his village, transforming everything for good.



Christmas is one of the most magical times of the year for many of us: spending time with the family, sharing food and exchanging gifts. Christmas, however, is also an opportunity to think about and help those in need: giving a gift at Christmas can bring as much joy as receiving one.

Yenus is 12 years old and lives with his family in Frat, Northwest Ethiopia. Three villages form the very special community of Frat where people live in harmony – Christians next door to Muslims – all helping each other. They have a word, “wenfell”, which means collaboration: they work together and support each other whatever problems they’re facing.

Discuss this with your group: why is your local community so important? And why is it important to help each other?

Yenus is in sixth grade. He loves learning, especially environmental science, his favourite, and wants to be a policeman when he grows up. “Wenfell” is part of Yenus’ character despite his young age: he’s always happy to help others in the community. His father calls him “habibi”, which means very sweet and lovely.

Yenus and his community don’t have access to clean water close to home, and it’s Yenus’ role to collect it for his family from the River Lah. He spends hours every day fetching water which isn’t clean, but it’s the only option they’ve got for drinking, cooking and washing.

Ask the group what they think this means for Yenus and his community? What are the dangers of drinking dirty water? How else could Yenus spend his afternoons?

Explain that around the world, 785 million people don’t have clean water close to home. Children like Yenus are spending hours every day collecting water from faraway sources. Lack of access to clean water can make them ill, and holds them back from studying and fulfilling their potential.

Tell the children about the charity WaterAid: WaterAid believes everyone in the world should have access to clean water, decent toilets and good hygiene. WaterAid is working to bring clean water to Frat so that children like Yenus can have the bright future they deserve, and become whatever they aspire to be.



“I want to be a policeman when I grow up because I want to help other communities in terms of security.”

Yenus, 12, Frat, Ethiopia



◀ It’s Yenus’ role to collect water for his family.



WaterAid

Together with the group, think about ways you can support each other as a community this Christmas. And think about how you could help other children around the world like Yenus?

Here are some of our traditional fundraising ideas (with online variations) and new activities to inspire your group:

- ◆ **Hold a festive collection** in support of WaterAid. For a collection online, you can set up a JustGiving page and share the link with members of your group – that way the money you raise will come straight to WaterAid.
- ◆ **Christmas cards:** invite members of your group to make and/or decorate Christmas cards. You can run this as an online session if needed, and ask for a small donation to participate.
- ◆ **Wellie walk:** venture out for a Christmassy, socially-distanced wellie walk in your neighbourhood. Ask for a small donation to participate.
- ◆ **Christmas lights:** encourage members of your community to create window displays and organise a trail for your group to complete. Ask for a small donation to participate.
- ◆ **Christmas concert:** hold a carol concert or an evening with songs, readings and poetry. Sell tickets to attend (or to watch if you're running the event online).
- ◆ **Hold a virtual movie night** with a family-friendly, festive favourite. Ask for a donation to watch.



▲
"It's hard work collecting water; we usually help each other to pick up the jerry cans as they're very heavy."

Ansha, 12, Frat, Ethiopia



For more stories of Yenus and his community, please visit wateraid.org/uk/Christmas



Until 4th February 2021, the UK government will match all public donations to Future on Tap, up to £2 million, making double the difference in communities across Ethiopia.

