



April 2021

A direct appeal from Jonny Wilkinson, Programme Development Officer, Ethiopia Country Office, regarding the desperate need for clean water in the Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples' Region (SNNPR) of Ethiopia.

Dear Friend,

This isn't something I usually do—writing directly to appeal for help; but seeing first-hand the impact of a lack of accessible clean water on young girls' lives I feel compelled to reach out. As I write this I'm sitting in the Samaritan's Purse Ethiopia Country Office in Addis Ababa and the future of children and whole communities in the SNNP region of Ethiopia is heavy on my heart.

In my role supporting the Samaritan's Purse clean water project in Ethiopia, I have visited Gibe and Gombora; two districts within this region where sadly only 10% of the community can access water that is safe to drink. Most people collect water from natural sources, such as rivers, dams and ponds. As a result, outbreaks of diarrhoea and typhoid diseases are common within the community, with sadly over 75% of health problems in children stemming from drinking unsafe water.

I've witnessed how this lack of clean accessible water disproportionately affects women and young girls.

In Ethiopian culture the back-breaking work of collecting water falls mainly on women and girls, who often have to travel for over five hours to source water. These journeys can often be made alone and sometimes at night—exposing them to the risk of assault, and often causing young girls to miss schooling.

Imagine—for the lack of being able to turn on a tap, your children or grandchildren risk their future. Even if they survive diseases such as malaria and tuberculosis, they face a daily cycle of collecting water into their old age.

***'In our village, children are also supposed to help their mothers with the water collection. Since the whole water collection process can take between five and six hours, it is common here for children to miss their classes at school.'* —Amerach**

You can help to break this cycle of back-breaking labour collecting often dirty, unsafe water.

A gift made today can ensure young girls are able to focus on schooling, rather than being trapped in a cycle of drudgery, and improve their life chances - safe in the knowledge that their families are protected from waterborne disease by having easy access to all the clean water they need.

For the past two years, Samaritan's Purse has been working tirelessly with those in need in the SNNP region of Ethiopia. We've improved access to safe and clean water, established 34 water user committees for communities to take ownership of these water schemes, and conducted surveys ahead of laying water pipes to connect schools and communities to clean water sources. Throughout our work we have integrated biblical values, partnering with local churches to build sustainable relationships within communities. Our aim is to fill both the physical and spiritual needs of those we support.

Knowing that the solutions we are providing really do work, we hope to significantly grow this project and you can help make this happen.

When wells are repaired, new filters are built, and local people are trained in how to maintain access to clean water, overall health improves and long back-breaking journeys to fetch what is often dirty water are no longer needed.

One young girl we have already supported told us that she felt so blessed by the love she and her family had been shown that she was determined to grow up to be a teacher, so she in turn could help others. **What's so encouraging is that it costs less than £15 to provide a young girl like this with access to clean water for life!**

I hope to be able to see so many more children able to dream of a future, rather than feeling trapped in an endless cycle of labour. I hope to see every child in the region have the time to dedicate to schooling, giving them the life chances they deserve. As Jesus said '***I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.***' **John 10:10.** Together we can give this opportunity to thousands more.

Thank you for taking the time to read my message and please do consider making a gift to provide access to clean water to those in desperate need. I will be here to see that it is put to good use.

Yours sincerely,



Jonny Wilkinson,

**Programme Development Officer,
Ethiopia Country Office**

P.S. We hope to provide clean water to nearly 25,000 people in Ethiopia. You could help to make this possible.