

# Press Release



## ***Menschen für Menschen* Foundation: New water supply inaugurated in Ethiopia**

**(Munich, 15 February 2018)** With the aid of funding by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) the *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation has completed a drinking water supply system for the small towns of Lemi and Robite in the Wogdi project region, about 600 kilometres north of Addis Ababa. The new water reservoir will satisfy the clean drinking water requirements of about 6,000 people. The inauguration of the new water supply point on 8 February 2018 was attended by numerous residents. The costs of the project were borne by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. The *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation was responsible for the installation.

“The new water supply has met with enormous enthusiasm. For the men, women and children of Lemi-Robite the availability of clean drinking water is a promise of a better life. I am thankful and feel honoured to inaugurate the supply system today,” said Peter Renner, Executive Director of the *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation. He continued, “The project could not have been implemented without the funds provided by the BMZ and the cooperation of the local people.”

Until recently, the residents of the two settlements in the Ethiopian Highlands suffered from lack of water. The few water points were supplied from 30-metre deep wells that often ran dry. In their desperation, many people were obliged to walk long distances to draw water from the river or puddles. Diseases were commonplace, and the population was infested with parasites.

Today a huge concrete-lined water reservoir is located on a hill above the town. A pump supplies it with groundwater from a depth of over 70 metres. From here it flows through a pipe system down to the villages, where it pours when needed from numerous faucets at a total of 26 water points (23 public, 3 at schools). In future, the water pipes will even be connected to individual households – a rarity in rural Ethiopia. Previously, only 18.6% of the population of Lemi-Robite had access to clean water – now they all benefit from the new system.

The supply system, which will provide an adequate supply of water to the two communities for the next thirty years, was constructed by *Menschen für Menschen* with BMZ funds. The local community will pay for its maintenance. An elected Water Committee will attend to the maintenance and repairs – and collect a small fee from all the families who use the water. “Our aim is to show the people that this water system belongs to them,” says Adane Nigus, project manager for *Menschen für Menschen* in Wogdi. “That starts with everyone helping to dig the ditches for the water pipes and culminates in a system of self-governance.”

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In cooperation with the BMZ, the *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation has so far constructed drinking water supply systems in four small Ethiopian communities. The total number of wells with hand-pumps and spring developments built by the Foundation is much higher: by mid-2017 the number had increased to 2,369. Even in the most remote regions with development sprawl that is typical of Ethiopia, these water points provide reliable access to drinking water. Where possible, they are supplemented by washing places, shower cabins, drinking troughs for animals and night storage tanks for irrigating the fields. All new water points are accompanied by awareness-raising campaigns for health care.

**More information about *Menschen für Menschen* can be found at:**

[www.menschenfuermenschen.de](http://www.menschenfuermenschen.de)

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## **About *Menschen für Menschen***

The *Menschen für Menschen* Foundation has been providing aid for sustainable self-development in Ethiopia for more than 35 years. Together with the local people, *Menschen für Menschen* dovetails measures in the areas of agriculture, water, education, health and human development in so-called integrated rural development projects. The foundation stone for *Menschen für Menschen* was laid on 16 May 1981 by former actor Karlheinz Böhm († 2014) with his legendary wager in the German TV show “Wetten, dass...?” The Foundation carries the donation seal of the German Central Institute for Social Affairs (DZI). With over 750 full-time employees, almost all of whom are Ethiopian nationals, *Menschen für Menschen* is currently carrying out project work in twelve areas.

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