



*Saving and enriching lives in Ethiopia*



## Funds Urgently needed for rebuilding and new construction after conflict



Happy water collection at the repaired WellWishers well:  
village Saz in Kilite Awulaelo District, Tigray

### Conflict and peace: rebuilding lives and resources

The causes of conflict leading to war around the world are indeed complex and varied. Whether these causes are based in ethnic or national rivalries, or the desire of one national group or even one dictatorial figure to subdue and control another to recreate an old empire, it is ordinary folk who end up bearing the brunt of suffering.

We see this in Ukraine every day on our screens, and hope and pray it will end, and opportunity be created for rebuilding communities.

The situation for rural villagers is similar in northern Ethiopia. The coordinated attack in November 2020 on the 6 million people of Tigray by the national army, a rival ethnic militia and

foreign forces from Eritrea has left an enormous toll. An estimated 500,000 killed and schools, hospitals, clinics, factories, shops, churches and homes looted and destroyed. 2.5 million people displaced from their homes. After all this suffering and destruction, it was an enormous step forward to have the national government and Tigrayan representatives come to a peace agreement in December 2022 after two years of fighting.

While the conflict is not totally settled - Eritrean forces and Amhara militia still occupy tracts of Tigray (in contravention of the agreement that the Ethiopian government forces would guarantee expulsion of these two groups) - most Tigrayans are now getting on with rebuilding their lives. A new Tigrayan administration is in place, rebuilding confidence in the future.

As we reported in our last newsletter, our partner, the Relief Society of Tigray (REST) continued its critical life-saving work throughout the war. It is heavily involved in relief supplies of food and agricultural inputs. WellWishers relationship with REST over the last 21 years has, of course, been with its program of village water supplies. Over that period our community of supporters has contributed just over \$5million to provide 1000 water wells serving over 350,000 people. A remarkable effort from our WellWishers community. Most gratifying has been the fact that our support, following on from earlier Community Aid Abroad/Oxfam Australia support, encouraged other international funders to become involved. We are grateful that the US group **charity:water** has enabled REST to expand its work into deep borehole drilling and other methods of tapping water. WellWishers' vital hand-dug wells program with REST continues in those remote village where mechanised development is inappropriate or impossible.

REST, along with 16 other regional and non-government agencies have been active in rehabilitation and/or maintenance of water supply schemes to restore access to water. The report by Tigray Bureau of Water Resources (October 2022) indicates for the year July 2021 to June 2022 a total of 2,216 water points were repaired and/or maintained. REST's contribution to this achievement was significant: 1,129 or over half were repaired/rehabilitated by REST.

WellWishers has agreed to fund REST's scaling up its efforts to speed the restoration and building of water supply services, initially to 35 highly conflict-affected communities in 15 rural districts of Tigray, during the remainder of 2023.

Your gratefully received contributions over the last 18 months have made this possible. THANK YOU!

**Water is everything for women** (this story comes as a local translation from Tigrigna)

Tsilat Yigzaw, a mother of 3 children, lives in Hawzien District, Village Selam, Sub-village Gra Tafo where she has lived all her life. Throughout most of the forty years she has been responsible, as the female head of the house, for collecting water. But over the past five years, since REST constructed a hand dug well, she has enjoyed genuine relief after a hand dug well was constructed close to her sweet home with the cordially collaboration of REST and WellWishers. She testified the problem then and the benefits now.

“Telling the truth, in my late 40 years, water problem was the biggest and the most catastrophic issue in my home. Early in the morning I was rushing to the river to be first of the long queue and having the dirty water. Even then distance was not the critical thing; it took to me two hours for back and forth. The main issue was the quality of the water. Many times, my children getting sick due to the water born disease and then I paid much for medical treatment. This case was made worse for me because I had little money for medicines.

I couldn't believe when professionals came and to study digging the hand dug well near to my home. At that situation, I was also afraid because some of the locals were not happy with the newly constructed well. Ignorantly, they wanted us to claim compensation for the little piece of land we lost to the well. I wanted REST to take it for free! After much discussion, the community agreed to the construction. Thus, since that time I am happy and fetch clean water for house hold consumption in good time. As a result, my children become healthy.”

Tsilat pointed to many of the benefits of the hand dug well in her current life. “Now I can care for my families - forgetting the anxiety of collecting dirty water roaming rivers. I invest my time in my small businesses to build up my household assets. I have time to cook food for my families. Unlike the past, now I and my kids are able to practice good hygiene. I lost for words to say to our supporters because water is life. I believe that concerned bodies heartily help to create access to clean and safe water to alleviate several problems of women because **water is everything for women to live their world.**”

Tsilat explained that during the conflict their water point was damaged by the enemy and the community again faced many water problems. “During the conflict, as our water well was damaged, we compelled to drink from open wells sharing with animals. But after the troops left our village, REST team came and fixed our pump.”



Collecting water from the soak, shared with animals



Tsilat at the repaired pump

**Tax time!** We have an enormous task of rebuilding in front of us. Every dollar you can send will make a difference. Our friends in Tigray have been through hell, let's help them on their journey to a better place.  
**THANK YOU!**

Please note our current postal address (all other contacts remain the same)  
PO Box 27, Brunswick South, VIC 3055

**All donations over \$2 to WellWishers are tax-deductible.**

**WellWishers: Bank of Queensland BSB 124048 or 124001 (either are OK) and Account no. 21658949**

**Contact: Graham Romanes, WellWishers**  
Email: [info@wellwishersethiopia.com](mailto:info@wellwishersethiopia.com)

**PO Box 27 Brunswick South VIC 3055**

**Phone: 0419 559 138**

**Website: [www.wellwishersethiopia.com](http://www.wellwishersethiopia.com)**



**wellwishers**

## DONATIONS

- \$6800 will cover the cost of one well for an entire community, providing clean, accessible and permanent water for about 225 people
- \$2400 will cover the cost of restoring a war-damaged well
- \$150 will provide permanent water for a family
- Donations of any amount are most welcome for our village wells or emergency support!

Name: .....

Postal address: .....Postcode: .....

Email (if you have one).....

My Donation is enclosed: \$. .... (Cheques or Money Orders made out to WellWishers)

**OR** Debit my Visa / Mastercard - donation amount: \$.....

Name on card: .....

CARD NUMBER: ..... Expiry...../..... CCV.....(last  
3 numbers on the back of card)

Signature..... Date:.....

**OR** Donate online (Secure site): [www.givenow.com.au/wellwishers](http://www.givenow.com.au/wellwishers)

**OR** Donate direct to WellWishers account at the Bank of Queensland:

**BSB: 124048 or 124001 (either are OK) Account No: 21658949**

Please leave your name and postcode as reference.

Name for Tax Deductible Receipt purposes if different from bank account or card

Name:.....



QR code for GiveNow

Any other comment: .....

☐

Please send me information about making a Bequest to WellWishers

### MEMBERSHIP:

Membership of WellWishers is for the calendar year

To become a member of WellWishers please complete the form below with the Annual Membership of \$2.20 (payable with unused postage stamps). Your email address would be very helpful for contact purposes.

Name: .....

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WellWishers

Postal address:

Email address:

Telephone:

Website:

ABN:

Honorary Manager:

P O Box 27, Brunswick South, VIC 3055 (a new PO Box)

[info@wellwishersethiopia.com](mailto:info@wellwishersethiopia.com)

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