

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lifewater International Addresses Drought in Ethiopia

Lifewater International, SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA - July 26, 2011

Lifewater International, a not-for-profit global water development organization based in San Luis Obispo, is working to respond to the severe drought in southern Ethiopia. The drought extends over much of the Horn of Africa and is affecting an estimated ten million people.

Lifewater's affiliate office in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, reports that more than three million rural Ethiopians are suffering. Lack of water and livestock deaths have already forced hundreds of thousands to leave their homes in search of sustenance.

In response to the emergency, Lifewater is accelerating its ongoing water development efforts and working with other humanitarian organizations to identify other effective drought relief strategies. Measures being considered include mass distribution of water purification kits, food packets, and sanitation resources.

Lifewater has had a presence in Ethiopia since 2005. Its projects include installing hand-dug and shallow wells, capping springs, rehabilitating damaged community water points, and constructing reservoirs at schools. As part of every project, Lifewater teaches hygiene and sanitation and equips local communities to maintain and repair their water resources. Last year, Lifewater provided safe water to nearly 40,000 Ethiopians.

As experts predict a catastrophe surpassing that of the Ethiopia drought in 1984 (which claimed at least one million lives), Lifewater urges the public to help address the crisis by donating as soon as possible to water and relief organizations.

According to Lifewater Chief Executive Officer Joe Harbison "Communities must receive water soon to avoid increased suffering and death. Children and the elderly are particularly vulnerable in these situations."

Individuals wishing to contribute to Lifewater's response to the drought in Ethiopia can donate by calling 1-888-543-3426 or by giving online at www.lifewater.org/donate, noting "Ethiopia Drought" in the memo section of the online donation form.

Based in San Luis Obispo, California, Lifewater International is a Christian not-for-profit organization that helps communities gain safe water, adequate sanitation, and effective hygiene practices. Since its founding in 1977, Lifewater has served more than 1.5 million people with reliable sources of clean water and has installed nearly 4,000 safe water systems. Lifewater has a four-star rating on Charity Navigator and serves all people in need regardless of race, religion, or tribe.

Contact:

Joe Harbison, Chief Executive Officer
(805) 541-6634

jharbison@lifewater.org



Ethiopian girls gather unsafe drinking water from a pond. The drought is depleting many of these sources. *By David Uttley*



Lifewater installed this hand pump in 2010. *By Esther Havens*