

# Press Release



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## UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (USAID) LAUNCHES NEW WATER SYSTEMS IN SOMALI REGION OF ETHIOPIA

### *Over 150,000 Users to Benefit from Access to Safe Water*

**November 18, 2014, Somali Region, Ethiopia** - Today, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Mission Director Dennis Weller officiated the launch of a new water site in the Gubadley *kebele* (district), Somali Region, as part of the USAID WATER project implemented by the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

Through IRC, USAID is partnering with communities and local officials to provide access to safe water for approximately 2,100 beneficiaries in the district. Major components of the water supply system that was constructed in Gubadley include a borehole fitted with a solar-powered pumping system, storage tanks, and a distribution system including two tap stands with four taps each.

The other new water sites under the USAID WATER project in the Somali Region include Waji, Dumale, Sangumare, Tawlane, Maglaad, Higliley, Bundada and Gergion benefiting more than 52,000 individuals; and rehabilitated sites include Fardo, Dodoti, Halijid, Rujjis, Shekosh, Durwale, Wuji Waji, Dirato, Waji II and Horareys benefiting close to 100,000 individuals.

To date, the USAID WATER project has provided improved access to safe and sustainable water sources for more than 221,000 people in the Somali, Afar, and Oromia regions. In addition, the project promotes the use of latrine and safe hygiene practices, and enhances public awareness on natural resource management to prevent rangeland degradation.

USAID's WATER project is one of the agency's key programs for strengthening resiliency in drought-prone regions of the country. Mission Director Weller noted the importance of water for health, hygiene, and livelihoods largely dependent on livestock in these dryland areas: "Bringing water closer to home will improve the lives and productivity of many households, and especially the women in these communities. More reliable access to water also reduces tensions that flare over scarcity of such a vital resource for life and livelihood. The active involvement of the communities in managing these new water schemes will be critical to their lasting over a long time. The American people, through USAID, are proud to partner with the regional government of the Somali Region, with the IRC, and with the communities involved to help transform their lives and advance development with greater and reliable access to safe water."

On behalf of the Somali Regional Water Bureau, Elias Hussein Kelif noted the significance of the WATER project for the region: "The provision of safe water is priority number one through five for the Ethiopian Somali Regional State Government. I cannot say enough about the WATER project, which has constructed nine water schemes that are now serving our people and enabling us to meet our mandate. I pray to Allah that this region continues to receive such support from USAID, and that the IRC continues strengthening this productive partnership and engaging with our staff so that we can continue learning from each other."

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