



Vision of a Healthy Village

Program Results — Nensebo, Ethiopia

A study evaluating the impact of Lifewater
International's Vision of a Healthy Village
Program for Nensebo Project 3

June 2023

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Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

– Galatians 6:2

From Our Staff

Ethiopia Country Director Kinfe Diriba

Dear Friends—

We successfully ended the third project that began in 2018 in Nensebo, Ethiopia. At the baseline, water, sanitation, and hygiene practices and infrastructure were significantly worse as compared to now. This was due to a lack of proper education, skills, awareness and access to safe water. By the end of this project, Lifewater, together with community members, was able to tackle all those core problems and their root causes. Likewise, the rates of diarrhea in children under 5 years old decreased from 6% at the baseline to less than 1% at the endline. Now, we can confidently say that 83% of the target communities have access to safe water both during dry and rainy seasons. The creation of access to safe water not only ensures clean water, but it also reduces the time taken to fetch water in the dry season from 95 minutes at the baseline to 25 minutes by the endline.

The project activities that were systematically designed to transform people's attitudes toward water, sanitation, and hygiene have brought life-changing results. According to the endline report, 77% of households now use dignified latrines. The majority of the project households (96%) are

now accustomed to washing their hands at the appropriate times. We are also seeing success in communities due to Lifewater's VHV strategy. For example, 52% of households maintained all the Healthy Home elements at the time of the endline.

Your support has brought significant impact on the lives of the communities in a wider sense. I don't have adequate words to thank you for your unreserved support and the desire you have to see the life of other people get changed. My gratitude also goes to our HQ team, the country office team, the Nensebo field team, the community we are working with, and the local government. Without all of us working together, all these results could never be possible. Thank you again. In the following pages, you will also see in detail the impact that the project brought.

Thank you,



Kinfe Diriba
Ethiopia Country Director

Nensebo, Ethiopia

Globally, 1.7 billion people lack access to basic sanitation, 2.3 billion lack access to basic hygiene, and 771 million lack basic access to water. In Ethiopia specifically, over 91% of the population lacks access to basic sanitation and hygiene, and over 50% lack basic access to water.

During the baseline survey of Nensebo project 3 in 2018, staff discovered the following information:

- 6.1% of households with children younger than five years old had at least one child with diarrheal disease within the last week, a dangerous illness that can be fatal for young children. This indicates not only a great need for improved water sources in the area, but the need for a long-term investment in health education to reduce life-threatening illnesses.
- Only 4.2% of people washed their hands with soap or ash and water before eating and after using the bathroom in the previous 24 hours.
- 0.6% of households used a raised drying rack for their dishes.
- Just 3.8% of households used a bathroom with walls, a roof, a slab, a door, and a pit cover, all items critical in creating a healthy and dignified environment.
- At baseline, the median journey time to fetch water in the dry season was 95 minutes.

Between June 2018 and June 2022, Lifewater served 12,115 people with safe water, sanitation, and hygiene.



12,115
People served



“ My understanding about sanitation, hygiene, and safe water use was completely changed. Lifewater transformed our lifestyle. Now [we] have knowledge about safe water utilization and good practices. I also know the importance of Healthy Homes components that we are practicing in our villages.”

– **Community Religious Leader**

Key Results

Preventing the death of children is one of the most urgent missions we face as a global society. Diarrheal diseases, caused primarily by unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene, are responsible for more deaths of children under five years old than malaria, AIDS, and measles combined.

Safe water, sanitation, and hygiene practices can significantly reduce diarrheal disease and save countless lives of the world's youngest in the process.

Under-5 Diarrhea

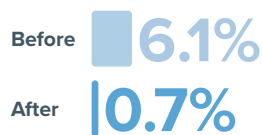
An estimated [297,000](#) children globally under the age of five die each year from diarrheal disease as a result of unsafe drinking-water, sanitation and hand hygiene. We focus on this in Lifewater programs because such diseases are largely preventable with simple sanitation and hygiene practices and access to safe water.

Beginning in 2018, Lifewater staff trained WASH facilitators in Nensebo, Ethiopia to educate their neighbors about healthy habits. These habits include handwashing, using a drying rack to keep clean dishes off the ground, and constructing a toilet to keep feces separate from children and common living areas.

These practices and increased access to safe water resulted in an overall reduction in household prevalence of childhood diarrhea in the area. Before Lifewater's project, 6.1% of households had at least one child with diarrhea in the week prior to the survey; after, less than 1% reported the same.

Between baseline and endline, there were also increases in known diarrhea prevention methods, including a greater understanding of the importance of washing hands, using a latrine, washing food before eating, drinking safe water, and keeping surroundings clean. At baseline, only 48% of surveyed community members agreed that washing hands prevents diarrhea. Thanks to Lifewater training, at endline, 98% of respondents said this was an effective method for preventing diarrhea.

Prevalence of Childhood Diarrhea*



*Households with at least one child under the age of five with diarrhea in seven days prior to survey. Comparison before and after VHV.

Improved Health

Between baseline and endline, safe WASH access improved in Nensebo with statistically significant increases in access to safe water, ownership of improved latrines, and handwashing behavior before eating and after going to the bathroom. Our data suggest these changes correspond to meaningful health improvements.

At endline, respondents to the household survey reported their health and the health of their children had improved over the course of the previous year. When Lifewater began working in Nensebo, 67% of respondents reported that their health had improved in the last year. At endline, 96% reported that their health had improved in the last year. When community members experience better health, they are better able to provide for their families and contribute to the well-being of their communities.

Improvement in Child Health*



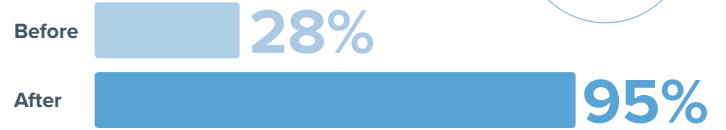
*Percentage of respondents reporting that child health has improved in the year prior to the baseline and endline surveys. Comparison before and after VHV.

Water Management and Use

Between baseline and endline, safe water management and use improved in Nensebo. As community members gained education and knowledge of safe water practices, we saw improvement in the gathering and transporting of safe water which resulted in better health of community members.

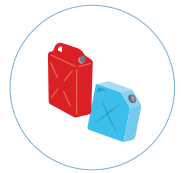
A big change related to safe water happened as a result of improved water storage and water fetching containers. These containers must be narrow-mouthed, covered, and clean. At baseline, only 28% of families were storing their water safely. At endline, 95% of households were practicing safe water storage.

Safe Water Storage Containers*



*Households with safe water storage containers. A safe water storage container is narrow-mouthed, covered, and clean. Comparison before and after VHV.

Using a Covered Container to Fetch Water



House-by-House Data

By surveying households before projects begin and after projects ended, we track important data about village transformation.

Sanitation & Hygiene

Washing hands with soap and water, using a drying rack, storing water safely, using a dignified bathroom, and keeping the home environment safe and clean are all important messages that are shared through Lifewater's Vision of a Healthy Village program.

Washing with Soap or Ash*



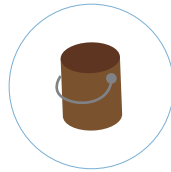
*Respondents who washed hands with water and soap or ash in the past 24 hours at the most critical times. Comparison before and after VHV.

Homes Using a Drying Rack*



*A drying rack is a homemade device to keep clean dishes off the ground. Comparison before and after VHV.

Homes with a Clean Compound*



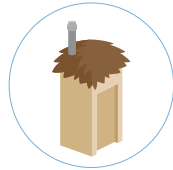
*Households with no observed feces or rubbish in the compound. Comparison before and after VHV.

Latrine Use

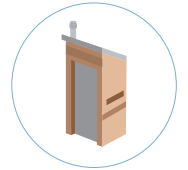
An important aspect of Lifewater’s Healthy Home criteria is having an improved latrine with dignity. In order to be qualified as such, the latrine must have a slab, walls, a roof, a door, and a pit cover. Improved latrines with dignity help ensure not only privacy and dignity for the user but also safety and reduced smell.

In Nensebo households, latrine quality improved from baseline to endline. This helps families and communities gain confidence and stay safe and healthy!

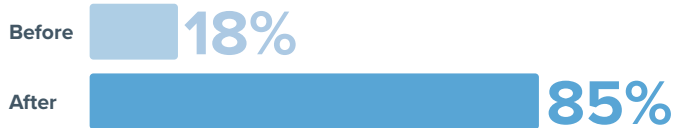
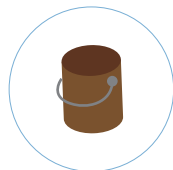
Using a Latrine for Defecation



Households Using an Improved Latrine With Dignity



Latrines That Were Observed to Be Clean



From baseline to endline, 1,775 Healthy Homes were registered in 56 villages in Nensebo!

Community Characteristics

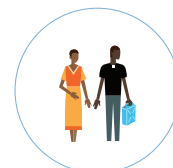
Mothers with young children, school-aged children, the elderly, and people with disabilities struggle to make the journey to safe water sources. Women and girls are the most affected by long walks for water, collectively spending **200 million hours** every day gathering water.

If the walk to a safe water source is too long, they often revert to unsafe but closer water sources, like ponds and rivers. The household endline survey from Nensebo shows that 83% of respondents used an improved water source* as their primary source in the dry and rainy seasons, compared to 26% at baseline.

***Improved water sources** include piped water, boreholes or tubewells, protected dug wells, protected springs, rainwater, and packaged or delivered water.

Safe water has a domino effect in villages. With access to safe water and improved sanitation and hygiene education and infrastructure, many women report successful entrepreneurial pursuits with their new time and energy. Families also have agricultural endeavors like farms and livestock that become significantly more profitable with an adequate water supply.

Median Total Time Spent Fetching Water*



Before  **95 Minutes**

After  **25 Minutes**

*During the dry season. Comparison before and after VHV.

“ Our community members are satisfied with the current water source because when we compare with [our] previous [water source], it is different in the quality, quantity, and time it takes us to bring water. Previously, our children and wives go [to] far and hilly areas to collect water, sometimes they fell and [were hurt], and sometimes they quarreled with [each] other over the queue line. But currently, [there are] no such problems.”

– Community Member

Water Committees

In order for a village to be considered a Healthy Village by Lifewater, certain criteria have to be met. One important element of a Healthy Village is that all water points must have an operation and maintenance plan or be subscribed to a local service provider to ensure proper functionality and upkeep of village water points.

In Nensebo, water committee members are largely responsible for the operation and maintenance of water points. Water committees collect water fees regularly and keep them in a bank account, keep the water source clean, ensure no conflict at the water source, give feedback to users, and encourage and help the community participate in these activities as well. With functional and effective water committees, water points can continue to provide safe water to those who use it for years.

Respondents Who Said Water Point Was Managed by a Water Committee



“ Yes, I personally witness our water committee members are functional. Because they meet regularly, collect fee and they keep the fencing and closed it after users collected the water. The relationship between our committee members and community is good. Our community members positively collaborated with water committee.”

– Community Member

VHV in Schools

Private bathrooms and safe water mean that more children can stay in school. Better education means less poverty and more hope for the future. More children in Nensebo can now spend time learning, playing, and living healthy lives!

School Enrollment

Globally, a lack of bathrooms and safe water at school is a significant reason why many students miss days of school and often drop out as they progress through primary school. The demands are too time intensive, since most students have to leave school to find water or use the bathroom.

In addition, for female students, the challenges of managing menstruation at school are too difficult. Without a safe, dignifying place to take care of themselves, young women miss school during their period. For many, the lack of resources for managing menstruation makes it difficult to continue pursuing an education.

In Nensebo, improved latrines were constructed on school compounds in addition to a safe water supply. As a result, there has been an increase in the number of children in schools on a regular basis due to the changes in the community and the school's WASH conditions.

As well, teachers were trained and school clubs were organized to increase awareness of and encourage discussions about managing menstruation. With proper changing rooms and free menstrual materials, the participation and attendance of female students have increased.

“ The school compound became conducive and attractive for learning and teaching.”

– Local Nensebo Teacher



**We are Christians providing
access to safe water and
improved sanitation and hygiene,
one village at a time.**

Learn more about Vision of a Healthy Village
at lifewater.org/our-process and partner with
us for lasting change today.