

LELBA

+

 charity: water



**IF YOU WANT TO
CHANGE EVERYTHING.**



**START WITH
ONE THING.**



DEAR LELBA,

charity: water is a non-profit organization that brings clean, safe drinking water to people in developing nations.

We're on a mission to end the water crisis in our lifetime by ensuring that every person on the planet has access to life's most basic need. To accomplish that, we need your help.

THE WATER CRISIS

663 MILLION PEOPLE DON'T HAVE ACCESS
TO CLEAN DRINKING WATER.



OUR WORK OVER THE PAST EIGHT YEARS



17,370
water projects



5.5M
people served



24
countries



How We Work

We're bringing people clean water by investing in a variety of water technologies implemented through sustainable methods and reliable partners.



100% MODEL

Private donors fund our operating costs so 100% of your donations go straight to the field.



PROVING IT

We prove every water project we build using photos and GPS coordinates on Google Maps.



LOCAL PARTNERS

We work with strong, local implementing partners on the ground to build and maintain water projects.



Thanks for joining
us in this mission

\$10,000 INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY

1 COMMUNITY PROJECT

With a gift of \$10,000, you can bring clean water to **250 people**. Our implementing partner, the Relief Society of Tigray, will provide lifesaving water and sanitation services in the form of a hand-dug well.

Our partner will also recruit and train members of the community to conduct sanitation and hygiene education for the schools and to oversee and maintain the water projects.



ETHIOPIA













Our Work in Ethiopia

Ethiopia makes up almost a third of charity: water's portfolio, and we're committed to finishing the work we've started.

In the last few decades, Ethiopia has faced fierce famine, drought, political instability and war. Peace has returned, but the nation remains developmentally weak, and more than 50 million Ethiopians don't have access to safe water. Most rural families survive on less than five liters of water per day and walk up to four hours to collect it from open sources. A clean water project nearby can restore time, health and opportunity to these communities.

29.6% of the population in Ethiopia lives below the poverty line, while **58%** of rural populations lack access to water and **77%** of rural populations lack sanitation.

We began working in Ethiopia in 2007. Since then, we've been working to provide life's most basic need to the people of Ethiopia.



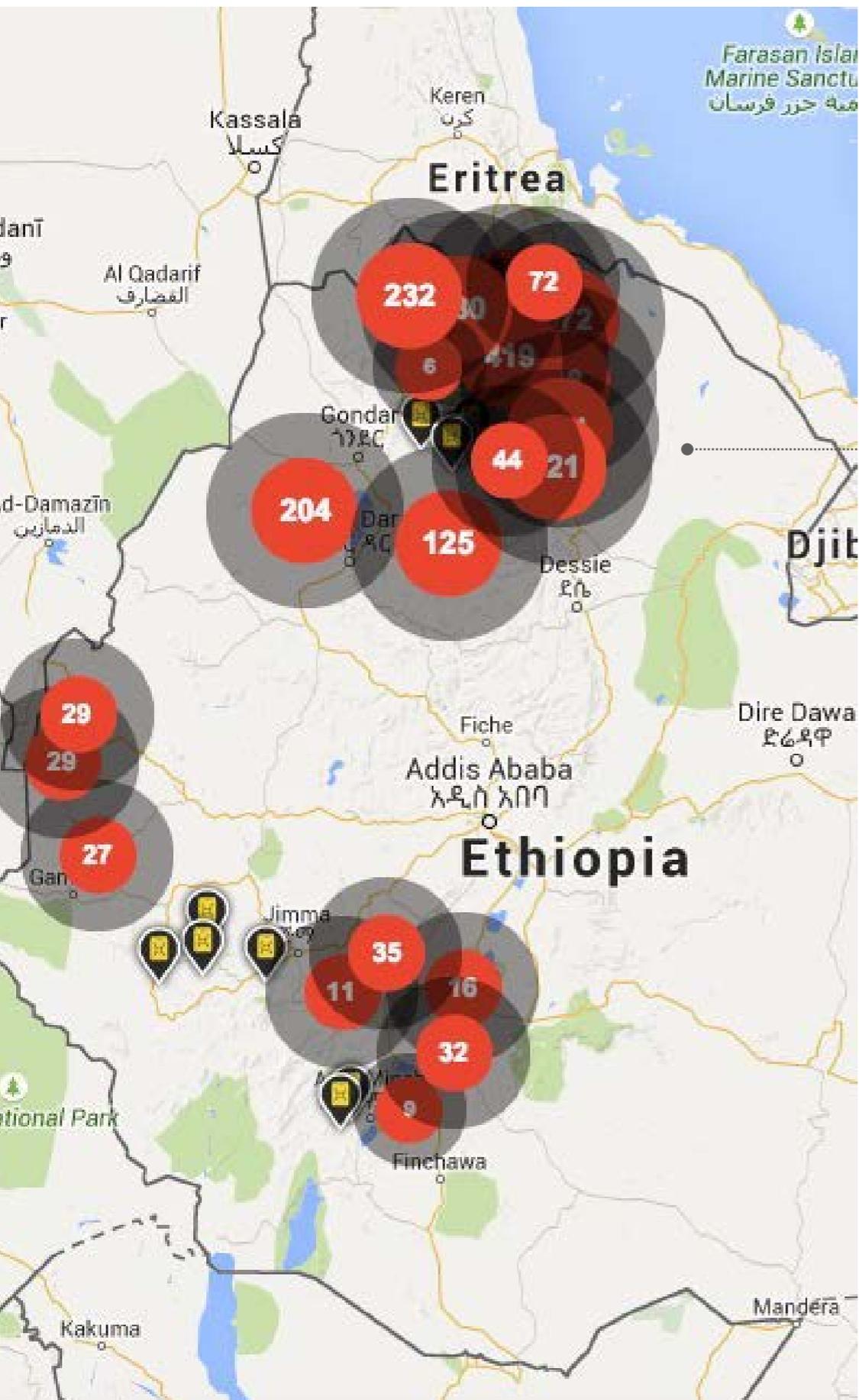
5,064
water projects



\$42M
invested



1,698,017
people served



Tigray, Ethiopia

Tigray is a region of 15,988 square miles in Northern Ethiopia. Subtropical landscape mixed with an extended dry season of nine to ten months make Tigray an interesting place for water technology. We've implemented thousands of water projects over the years, most of them drilled wells and hand-dug wells.

There's plenty of drinking water underground, and with the help of technology, we're able to tap into aquifers to bring the water to the surface. Alongside our local partner, REST, we set a long-term vision of providing full water coverage for Tigray. At last measure, the coverage was approximately 45%.

MEET OUR LOCAL PARTNER

THE RELIEF SOCIETY OF TIGRAY (REST)

Our local partners are experts and professionals with decades of exceptional work and proven progress. They are our eyes, ears and calloused hands on the ground.

Our local partner in Tigray, Ethiopia is The Relief Society of Tigray. Executive Director, Teklewoini Assefa, has been working tirelessly to better life for everyone in Tigray for more than 30 years.

Today, REST is the largest operating NGO in the Tigray region, where it continues to implement thousands of water projects and integrated community development programs. REST is one of our strongest partnerships; together we're tackling full coverage, maintenance and innovation in the water sector.





Keeping water flowing

In March of 2014, we launched Pipeline, our system of local leaders, innovative technology and trained mechanics, all working together to keep water flowing at charity: water projects around the world. The average well is pumped 5 million times a year; that's 13,698 times every single day. Breaks are bound to happen. We've always trained communities to make minor repairs to their water project when basic issues arise, but sometimes complex repairs are needed that require skilled mechanics.

In 2012, we launched an amazing pilot project with Google to develop remote sensor technology with the eventual goal of knowing at all times whether water is flowing at any of our projects at any given time, around in the world. We've piloted these sensors in Ethiopia and we'll be shipping over 3,500 more by the end of this year. Progress is on the way.



The Last Walk for Water

A STORY
FROM THE
FIELD

Story & Photos By

**-SCOTT HARRISON,
CHARITY: WATER FOUNDER**





Meda is a large village of dust and rocks that sits on an Ethiopian plateau and sprawls from north to south over several miles. A steep gorge 100 stories deep cuts the village in half, with treacherous dirt footpaths snaking up and down both sides of the mountains, connecting the two sides. Arlie Spring, one of the village's sources for water, is at the bottom of the gorge. There's no bank in Meda, no post office, and no general store. There are no power lines or cellular towers. There's no place to buy a Coke, a bottle of water, or AA batteries. A dozen eggs costs only six cents and while they are small, they are most certainly organic.

Letikiros Hailu was born in the south side of Meda and inherited an impossibly difficult life from her mother, Chekolech. The difficulties started when Chekolech moved reluctantly to the village 25 years earlier in an arranged marriage. It was her bad luck at the time that her new husband happened to live in Meda, for she'd heard of the severe water problems facing women there. Yet she had no choice but to follow her parents' wishes, and she packed up her things obediently.

Her husband turned out to be a brutal man, beating her daily.

When Letikiros was 4 years old, her mom had had enough of the abuse and divorced him with the support of the village elders, shooing him out of town—perhaps before he could harm her daughter as well.

Letikiros was a special girl.

From a young age, she seemed unwilling to just accept the fate of an ordinary girl's life in Meda. Her friends and neighbors described her as visionary and unique. She was bright. She was beautiful. She was clever.

Gifted or not, like all girls her age in Meda, most of Letikiros' time was spent walking and waiting for water. Her first walk was at 8 years old, and her life would change forever after that moment. She'd now get up early four days a week, grab her clay pot, tie it to her back with a rope, and head to the water source to do her part for the family.

Arliew Spring was the closest source to home, but it involved a dangerous and steep climb down a 700-foot cliff. The rocks were loose and slippery, and women had been known to fall to their death on this path. Once at the dry ravine at the bottom, Letikiros would have to scramble up over giant rocks to reach the spring, which wasn't much of a spring at all.



Only enough water seeped out of the rock to fill a few clay pots every hour, and the source was shared at night by monkeys, whose excrement surrounded the area. Often, Letikiros would arrive at the spring and wait up to 8 hours for her turn. Sometimes, she'd find the line of pots and women so long that her walk down would be in vain, and she'd climb back up the hill and head to the Bembya River for water.

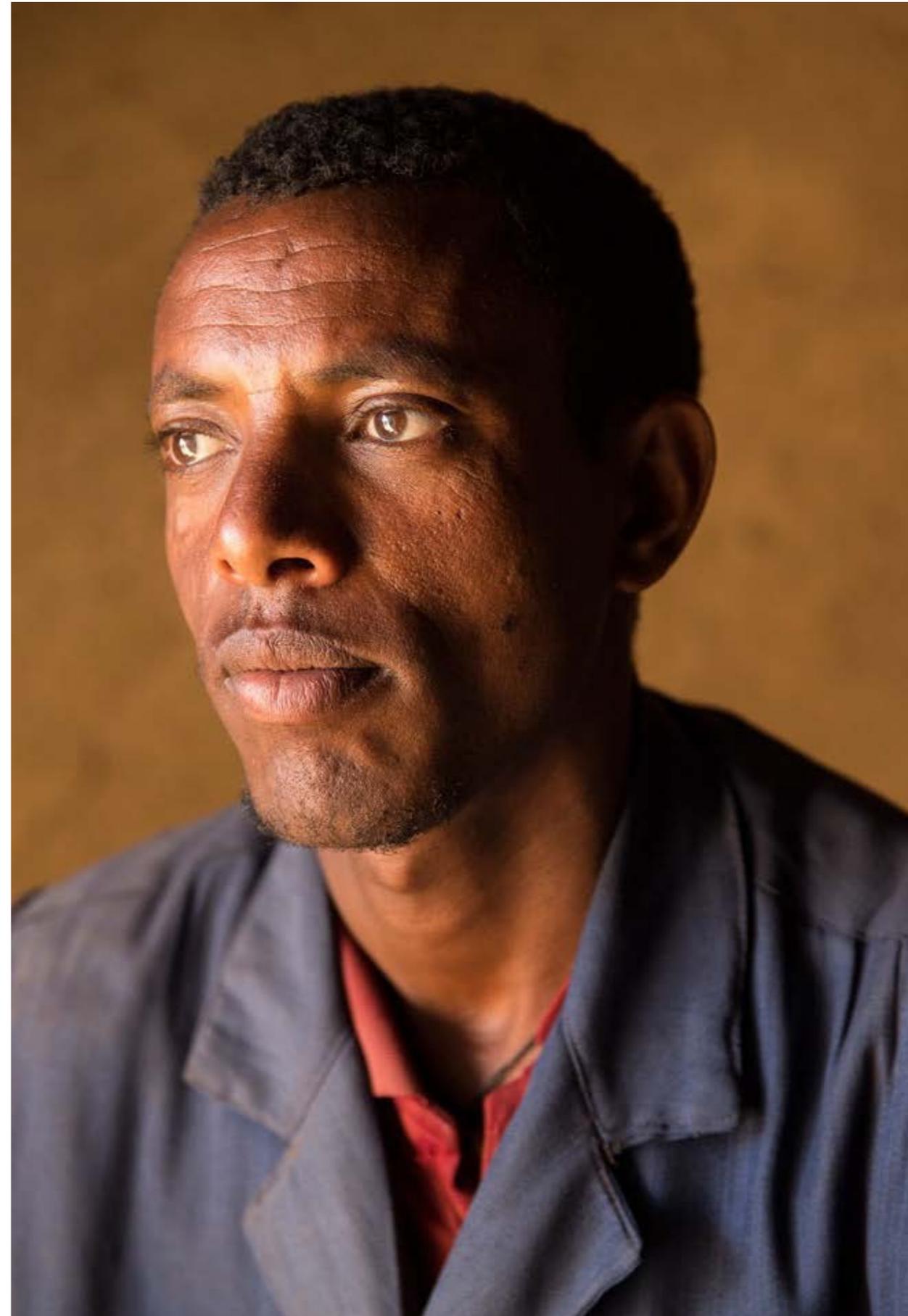
The Bembya River was much farther away. It was a 6 hour round-trip to the West and boasted an even deeper descent, but it also showed a much prettier view as the rocky path led towards the foot of the towering Simien Mountains. Although the water wasn't clean, there was no shortage of it and no waiting time as the river flowed freely through the deep gorge. On these long water walks with her friends, Letikiros would talk and dream about a better life for the people of Meda.

"Things will be changed for us if we work hard and fight to improve our lives!" she would say.

She walked four days a week for water, and attended school part-time the other three days. Since there was no school in Meda then, reaching the classroom in a neighboring village was another 6 hour round trip walk. In order for Letikiros to be able to attend school at all, her mother would pay to rent a donkey each week which could carry four pots of water on a single trip from the Bembya River. But there simply wasn't enough money to relieve Letikiros of her water duty altogether, and she quickly fell behind. By the age of 13, she had only completed the third grade.

Following tradition like her mother, Letikiros was also given to be married at a young age. But her mom wasn't going to see history repeat itself and chose for her 13-year-old daughter a young and handsome priest's servant named Abebe. They were childhood friends, so falling in love was easy. Abebe was thin and tall and walked softly. He had a kind, gentle voice and thankfully bore little similarity to Letikiros' father.

"She was beautiful to me. We were in deep love," he said of Letikiros.





On May 19, 2000, Letikiros set out before dawn for Arlieu Spring. She didn't eat breakfast, probably thinking she'd arrive at the spring before most of the others and have a shorter wait. May is the hottest and driest month in Tigray, and when she joined her friend Yeshareg on the path, they traveled together down the treacherous hill.

Upon reaching Arlieu spring, they quickly found out they weren't the only ones who had the idea to leave before dawn. They waited in line all day before filling up their pots and heading back up the cliff together. They reached the peak around three p.m. and, at the place where the road forked, Letikiros said goodbye and took a right towards her house. It was the last time Yeshareg saw her friend alive.

No one will ever know exactly what went through the mind of Letikiros in the moments that followed. What is known, is that she somehow slipped and fell, smashing her clay pot full of water into small pieces. She must have watched in horror as the water spilled out on the dusty ground and abruptly considered the harsh reality of her situation. More than 10 hours of walking and waiting had been undone through a simple misstep.

Those who knew her well believed she must have been overcome with shame.

She knew her mother and sister were at home waiting for the water.

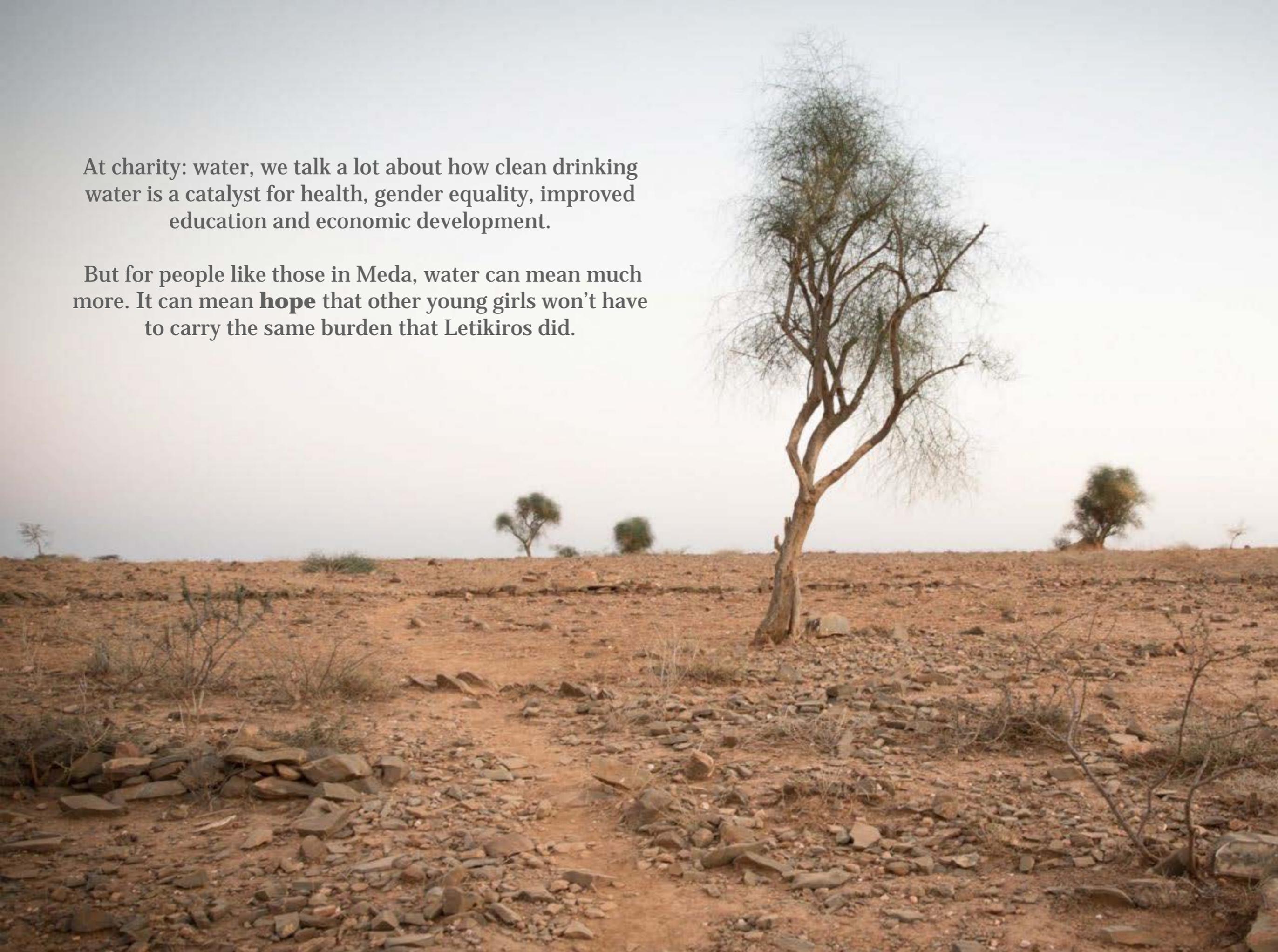
She knew they needed her water to cook dinner.

And now, even the clay pot was destroyed—a valuable asset for the family.

So rather than continue home down the path empty handed, the 13-year-old child slipped the rope from the pot through the branches of a tree, then around her neck and hung herself.

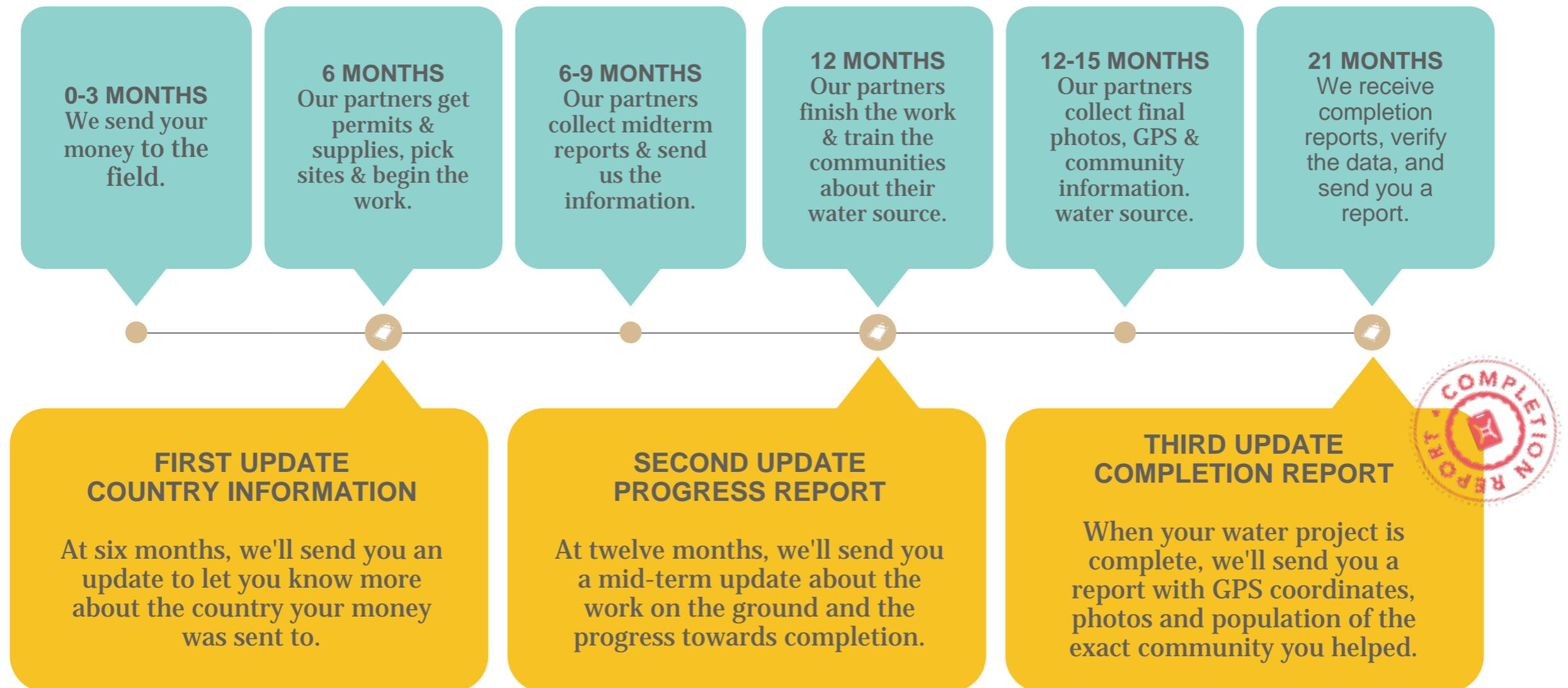
At charity: water, we talk a lot about how clean drinking water is a catalyst for health, gender equality, improved education and economic development.

But for people like those in Meda, water can mean much more. It can mean **hope** that other young girls won't have to carry the same burden that Letikiros did.



Project Reporting

It takes 21 months of careful planning and community training to make a water project successful. Funding an entire water project means you'll be recognized as the official project sponsor. We'll keep you in the loop with updates and send you a detailed completion report when the project is complete.



THANK YOU

Clean drinking water is a catalyst for health, gender equality, improved education and economic development. Your support would allow charity: water to continue investing in clean water projects that address social, economic and humanitarian issues. Thank you for your consideration.

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