



## **Water in Ethiopia**

*Three Ways of Getting Water: City supply*

### **Commentary**

Gondar Ethiopia, one of the country's largest cities. As little as eight years ago it's water provision was very poor, coming mainly from a few springs and boreholes around the city. The limited water supply was more suitable for a rural village than a big city.

### **Shemlijashe**

We used to fetch water at 5 in the morning, and not get back till 10 or 11. We used to miss school, and we couldn't do any cleaning at home, much less do things like seeing our friends. We used to have problems getting water before they built the dam at Angareb.

### **Commentary**

With the population of Gondar growing, central government built a dam at Angareb, creating a reservoir fed by rivers and streams.

It's been the main water supply for seven years. It provides a quarter of a million town-dwellers with piped water at public points throughout the city, inside compounds, or directly in the home.

### **Shemlijashe**

The situation now is great. I can get up and have a shower before I go to work. There's always plenty of water when I get home at night.

### **Commentary**

The water from this tap comes from the reservoir, but it has to pass through a treatment plant before it's fit to drink.

### **Commentary**

Once it's been cleaned up, the water is piped out of the tapes. Jerrycans, water-pots the people of Gondar. There are 24 water pipes like this dosed around the city but 3 aren't working. They are open three and half hours in the morning and again in the afternoon and there's a charge based on the amount taken. ETHUN:

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In the morning I fill two jerrycans, they cost 1 birr each. In the evening I bring two large ones, they cost 3 birr each.

### **Lemlem**

It's better now than before. Before we had to go all the way to the river, but now thank God we don't have to do that.

Commentary

Despite the relatively new treatment system, people in Gondar still don't have a completely reliable water supply.

Power cuts stop the electric pumps, and sometimes at the start of the rainy season, the water's too muddy and overloads the treatment plant.

### **Lemlem**

Sometimes you come and there isn't any water. This happens maybe two or three times a month, sometimes four or even more.

Commentary

The interruptions are a nuisance, but bigger problems threaten the future of the reservoir.

**Michael**

A lot of silt has been just built up in the structure, and the lifespan of the structure just, you know, already cut by almost one third. So the structure is not going to last as it was designed. So originally, when people thinking about this structure, they haven't - they have never thought about the sustainability of this structure.

**Commentary**

When the people of Gondar got their improved water supply seven years ago it had an expected life of 20 years. But now the reservoir will probably be silted up long before that. So despite this relatively high-tech provision, Gondar's water supply needs better management to make it sustainable in the long-term.

**Michael**

To make sure that the availability of water itself, we have to care for the forests, we have to care for our vegetation covers, because it has got direct link. We easily can pollute our water source, so indirectly we are damaging our life. not only for us, for the next generation as well.