



## A Final Report for the Blue Planet Run Foundation



*Community members in Al-Mahweet meet to test the quality of water.*

**Project Title:** Safe Water for a Healthy Life

**Project Location:** Al-Mahweet, Yemen

**Grant Amount:** \$15,429

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### Background

Over 45 percent of Yemen's population lives on less than two dollars a day, waging perpetual battles against poverty. One of the challenges facing many poor families is the lack of access to reliable, safe sources of water. In fact, around one third of Yemen's population does not have access to improved water systems and more than half of the population lack access to improved sanitation. The absence of this infrastructure puts people, particularly children, at high risk for diseases such as diarrhea, which can be deadly if not properly treated. Combined with a lack of health care, poor sanitation and unsafe water make Yemen's poorest families extremely vulnerable to disease and death. This is underscored by the fact that, among the poorest 20 percent of the population, some 16 percent of children die before reaching age 5.

In response to this challenge, CARE launched a broad effort across three of the Yemen's 21 governorates to improve: access to clean water; the sanitation of private and communal water points; sanitation and hygiene practices; and the overall health of the community, with an emphasis on children. The Blue Planet Run Foundation's contribution is specifically supporting CARE's *Safe Water for a Healthy Life* project in three communities in the western governorate of Al-Mahweet. This final report for the Blue Planet Run Foundation describes project accomplishments over the past year.

## **Project Activities**

The central objective of the *Safe Water for a Healthy Life* project is to establish household water connections in three communities and to ensure that the infrastructure is maintained by residents in a sustainable manner. Toward this end, we have achieved the following results:

### **Output 1: Three water distribution networks were established**

CARE successfully established three water distribution networks that connect 112 households in three communities, benefiting 1,232 people in total.

### **Output 2: Three water feeding systems were rehabilitated**

CARE rehabilitated three water supply feeding systems, including wells, pumps and generators. These feeding systems pump water from three 20-meter wells to storage tanks. To ensure a steady and sufficient flow of water, CARE deepened each well by at least three meters.

### **Output 3: An awareness campaign on safe water, sanitation and hygiene was conducted**

The importance of behavior change strategies in water and sanitation projects to effect significant improvements in people's health can not be emphasized enough. Infrastructural improvements alone usually do not result in improved health outcomes. Recognizing this, CARE hired a specialized consultant to raise awareness among community members about safe water, sanitation and hygiene. The educational campaign included a month-long training for 26 water management committee members, including 13 women, who are responsible for maintaining the infrastructure and ensuring equitable access. During the training, members learned how to clean and repair water infrastructure, test water quality, safely store water, use water filters and employ good personal hygiene practices. Subsequently, CARE and committee members launched three weeks of community activities in each of the participating villages to raise awareness among residents about sanitation and hygiene. The campaign focused on the importance of:

- Cleaning village public spaces and collecting garbage;
- Cleaning houses;
- Separating animal areas from family living areas;
- Using water filters; and
- Covering all wasted water with soil and sand to get rid of mosquitoes.

At the conclusion of the campaign, the project organized a celebration to reward the communities' hard work and to recognize the cleanest house and village.

#### Output 4: Water management committees were established and trained

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the new infrastructure, CARE helped water management committees to identify roles and responsibilities and establish by-laws. As noted above, the committees are responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the equipment. Project staff also trained 18 members in water supply system maintenance; group management and bookkeeping and financial management.



*CARE has helped communities to form water management committees, which are comprised of equal numbers of men and women.*

#### **Project Impact**

The three water systems are now running well and are regularly maintained by the water management committees. In fact, the committees have contracted an engineer to perform monthly check-ups and regular maintenance on the systems. The committees collect fees from users each month to pay for repairs and maintenance costs. Special arrangements have been made for extremely poor families who cannot afford to pay fees on a monthly basis; for example, some make payments on a seasonal basis.

The water testing conducted during the project demonstrated to residents how contaminated the drinking water was. After five months of the educational campaign, 90 percent of the families were regularly using water filters and enjoying improvements in family health as a result. Monitoring has shown that sanitation in the villages has also improved, and families have adopted improved hygiene practices.

The new infrastructure and behavior changes made possible by the project are contributing to families' health and productive capacity. In this arid country, water is a critical resource for food and income production. By improving water access and sanitation, CARE has helped to reduce the risk of disease and ensure that residents have long-term, reliable access to water for their domestic and income-generating needs.

#### **Expenditure Report**

The Blue Planet Run Foundation's gift of \$15,429 to the *Safe Water for a Healthy Life* project has been fully spent. The table below shows how the gift supported the activities described above.

<b>Item</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Personnel (CARE Yemen staff salaries and benefits)	\$3,972
Equipment (water system equipment)	\$5,903
Materials, Services and Consumables (training costs and office supplies)	\$2,917
Travel and Transportation (staff travel for project activities)	\$1,248
CARE HQ Technical and Administrative support	\$1,389
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$15,429</b>

## **Conclusion**

With the support of the Blue Planet Run Foundation, CARE has helped three poor communities in Yemen to establish sustainable water systems and to improve hygiene and sanitation. Together, these interventions have helped to reduce the risk of disease. Furthermore, the project is providing families with a critical asset in the fight against extreme poverty. On behalf of the more than 1,200 people who are benefiting from this initiative, we thank the Blue Planet Run Foundation for their generous support.

*April 2008*