



# IT ALL BEGAN WITH A BET

## Fact sheet

“There is no first, second or third world. We all live on the same planet for which we all share responsibility.”

**Karlheinz Böhm**

On 16 May 1981, Karlheinz Böhm was a guest on the ZDF television show *Wetten, dass...?* Profoundly shocked by reports of the catastrophic famine in the African Sahel, the highly successful actor wagered that he would not succeed in getting “one out of every three viewers to donate one mark (DM), one Swiss franc or seven Austrian shillings to people in the Sahel region”. Although Böhm would have preferred to lose the bet and raise more money, a total of DM 1.2 million was donated. Böhm offered aid to Chad, Sudan and Ethiopia. Ethiopia was the first to respond to his offer of help.

For people in Ethiopia, lack of drinking water is a fact of life. In Germany, each person uses an average of 121 litres a day for drinking, personal hygiene, washing clothes and cleaning. In Ethiopia, however, only four out of ten people living in rural areas have access to clean drinking water — barely enough for personal hygiene or washing. It is women who are traditionally responsible for providing the family with water for drinking, cooking and washing. Walking to and from the water points is an exhausting task and can take up two to four hours of the day.

### access

- Zugang

### aid

- Unterstützung, finanzielle Hilfe

### donate

- spenden

### exhausting [ɪg'zɔ:stɪŋ]

- beschwerlich

### famine ['fæmɪn]

- Hungersnot

### lack of

- Mangel an

### profoundly

- tief, schwer

### rural

- ländlich

### wager

- wetten

## Spotlight

In Kooperation mit



DIE JUNGE INITIATIVE VON  
MENSCHEN FÜR MENSCHEN



Karlheinz Böhm's Äthiopienhilfe

# Fact sheet

Karlheinz Böhm flew to Ethiopia for the first time in October 1981 and, on 13 November 1981, he founded the aid organization *Menschen für Menschen* (MfM). Since then, the organization has been providing help for self-development, the long-term aim being to make Ethiopia independent of foreign aid. In Böhm's own words: "It's not about delivering ready-made development concepts, but about working with local people to find out what they need, so that they can develop under their own steam."

*Menschen für Menschen* works with local communities to create access to clean water, constructing wells, spring developments, agricultural irrigation systems as well as water supply systems for small towns. The systems are maintained and kept clean by members of the community who are trained in the maintenance and repair of the water points and given the necessary tools to do so, contributing to the sustainability of water and hygiene projects.

Clean water keeps people healthy — diseases like diarrhoea or dangerous eye infections can be avoided. With a well nearby, children no longer have to walk hours and dangerous distances to fetch water. This means they can go to school and have better chances for the future, while women have time for education or their own work.

To date, more than 2,680 wells with hand pumps and spring have been installed. Seven supply systems for rural towns have been build, further ones are under construction.

Karlheinz Böhm spearheaded the organization until 2011. He died on 29 May 2014 at the age of 86. *Menschen für Menschen* continues to work in the spirit in which it was established: to offer help for self-development instead of handouts.

## contribute to sth.

- zu etw. beitragen

## diarrhoea [ˌdaɪəˈrɪə]

- Durchfall

## handout

- Zuteilung, Almosen

## irrigation

- Bewässerung

## maintain

- erhalten, warten

## spearhead sth. [ˈspiːhɛd]

- an der Spitze von etw. stehen, etw. leiten

## spring development

- Quellfassung

## steam: under one's own ~

- aus eigener Kraft

## sustainability [səˌsteɪnəˈbɪləti]

- Nachhaltigkeit

## to date

- bisher

## well

- Brunnen

## ETHIOPIA

**Area:** 1.1 million km<sup>2</sup> — three times the size of Germany

**Population:** 108 million

**Capital city:** Addis Ababa

**Life expectancy:** 66 years (men), 70 years (women)\*

## WATER AND HYGIENE

- Four out of ten people in rural Ethiopia have no access to clean drinking water.
- Women, and girls in particular, spend hours every day fetching water.
- Contaminated water causes life-threatening diseases.
- Each year, 59 out of 1,000 children die before the age of five - mainly due to dirty water.

## ACHIEVEMENTS OF MFM'S WORK

**WATER POINTS:** 2,680 (EACH WELL PROVIDES CLEAN WATER FOR APPROXIMATELY 200 PEOPLE)

**WATER SUPPLY FOR RURAL TOWNS:** 7

**WATER RESERVOIRS:** 100

**EMPLOYEES:** ~ 650 IN ETHIOPIA, ~ 25 IN GERMANY

THE ORGANIZATION IS CURRENTLY ACTIVE IN ELEVEN PROJECT AREAS.

## Information:

This year, *Menschen für Menschen* has launched a campaign for children and adolescents aiming to build wells in Ethiopia to fight the water shortage. All details about the campaign and MfM's work can be found here:



[www.highfive4life.de/brunnen](http://www.highfive4life.de/brunnen)



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