

Sustainable Land Management



Afdeyu - when the priests dance

By Felix Nicolier

In the framework of an investigative study conducted by our program in collaboration with the University of Asmara with regard to the planned construction of a dam in Afdeyu, discussions with the village people showed that both local wells urgently needed repair.

Water in both wells was contaminated with cattle excrement, and the pipe for one of the pumps was rusty, making the water undrinkable. With active support from the local people, who contributed stone and building materials, extensive fencing was placed around both wells to keep cattle away, and the pumps were replaced by modern hand pumps.

The renovated wells were officially opened with a small ceremony. The village priests also attended, and they performed a ritual dance - according to the invited guests, this is a rare event, which was underlined by the advanced age of the dignitaries. However, it shows how valuable the water supply is in an area like Eritrea that is plagued by drought.