



## Press release

# **Oasis Water Company launches 'Water for Africa 2010' in collaboration with Global Water, to provide clean drinking water to communities that need it most**

**Students from 40 schools across the UAE will be involved with the campaign**

**Dubai, UAE; March 22, 2010:** On World Water Day, Oasis Water Company, the UAE's leading producer of bottled drinking water has launched a six week 'Water for Africa' campaign. The company has made a pledge to work towards providing safe drinking water to countries that need it most, and is encouraging the people of UAE to help. Oasis Water Company is working with its international partner – Global Water to build wells in villages in Africa, specifically in Kenya, Botswana, and Tanzania.

As part of the campaign, the company will introduce special 'Oasis Water For Africa' packaging. Consumers are being encouraged to buy Oasis water during the campaign period - the more people buy, the more wells Oasis Water Company will be able to build. This will be done in partnership with Global Water, an international, non-profit organization dedicated to bringing clean drinking water to the developing world.

Oasis Water Company is already committed to building one well in a Masai village of Kenya, and more wells will be built in Tanzania and Botswana depending on the consumer response. Each well will be able to provide water to over 500 villagers, for their entire lifetime. The current campaign follows the success of its 2008 edition which helped further research initiatives into digging of wells in Africa.

Speaking at the launch of 'Oasis Water for Africa 2010' on World Water Day, Mike Henderson, Chief Operating Officer of Oasis Water Company, said: "World Water Day brings attention to a precious commodity – water, which many of us take for granted. It is easy to forget water's value when it is readily available as it is in the UAE, but for many in developing countries, it is not only scarce but also not available in its purest form. Unsafe water is a silent killer that takes the lives of many people living in poverty, a vast majority of whom are often children.

"These factors have prompted us to launch 'Oasis Water for Africa 2010' to better the lives of rural communities by providing them easy access to clean drinking water through locally sustainable water resources.

"People ask us, why Africa? Isn't there a place closer and more relevant to home? Well, quite simply we have identified Africa because the need there is the most urgent. We at Oasis Water Company believe that Safe Drinking Water is a basic human right. And just like in the UAE, it should be available to all people of the world, regardless of their country. 'Oasis Water for Africa' is a campaign that everyone in the UAE can support and together we can make this project a success. The more you support us, the more wells we can build!" added Henderson.

'Oasis Water for Africa 2010' will work with around 40 schools in the UAE to raise awareness about the campaign and the benefits of clean drinking water. From March 22<sup>nd</sup> to May 9th all participating schools will hold quiz competitions on water and its usage. The winners will be invited to the finals on May 24th. Students will be encouraged to collect as many labels as they can during this period and schools that collect the maximum number of labels will be recognised at a special function marking the end of the campaign.

Speaking about 'Oasis Water for Africa 2010', Ted Kuepper, Executive Director of Global Water, said: "We are delighted to have the support of Oasis Water Company in building wells for the people in Africa, so that they may have access to safe clean drinking water. Projects like these have an immediate positive impact, as provision of clean drinking water is essential in the socioeconomic development of these rural communities. Support from Oasis Water Company and the people of UAE will go a long way in helping them."

According to the latest report (March 2010) by World Health Organization and the United Nations Children's Fund, every year, 1.5 million children under age five die of diarrhoea. And, 80 percent of those deaths, or 4,000 deaths a day, are due to unsafe water and sanitation. WHO and UNICEF say lack of access to water, sanitation and hygiene affects the health, security, livelihood and quality of life for children. Women and girls are more affected than are men and boys because they are the ones burdened with collecting drinking water.

Henderson concluded: "We must respect the water we have and be thankful that it is clean and affordable. For many around the world, it is not. So let us all come together to support the 'Oasis Water for Africa 2010' campaign to make our pledge a reality."

**ENDS**

#### **About Oasis Water Company**

The Oasis Water Company was founded in 1984, as the bottled water division of National Food product Company (NFPC), the UAE's first and largest FMCG company in the beverage and dairy products segment. NFPC was founded in 1971 in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi under the vision and leadership of Faraj Bin Hamoodah, the Chairman, and Fadi Antonios, the President and CEO.

Oasis Water has grown to become the leading producer of bottled water in the UAE. Oasis' unwavering commitment to maintaining stringent international quality standards is what made it the first company in the UAE to earn a place in the International Bottled Water Association and the National Sanitary Foundation.

Oasis Water is also HACCP and ISO 9001 certified. Today the Oasis community is made up of more than 90,000 homes and offices, as well as over 10,000 retail outlets across all seven Emirates. In fact, more than 1,000,000 litres of water are bottled and distributed every day!

#### **About Global Water**

Global Water is an international, non-profit, humanitarian organization founded in 1982 focused on creating safe water supplies, sanitation facilities and hygiene-related facilities for rural villagers in developing countries. The organisation believes the lack of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities are the root causes of hunger, disease and poverty throughout the developing world. Their water projects have an immediate life-changing impact, particularly for women and children, who have the responsibility to gather water for their families every day of their lives in the developing world. Successful Global Water projects utilize water and sanitation as a tool to create sustainable socioeconomic development in these poor rural communities.