

Clean Water Helps Everyone Grow

Objective:

Students will learn how access to clean water helps families in Haiti grow food and stay healthy, and why water is a gift that should be shared fairly.

Materials:

- Program description and photos provided below, to demonstrate how collecting rainwater helps Haitians prosper.
- Globe or World Map
- Drawing materials

Lesson Outline (30 min)

1. Warm-Up (5 min)

Ask: "What do we use water for every day?"

Make a quick list on the board (drinking, washing, cooking, watering plants).

2. Show Haiti on a globe or world map (5 min)

Ask: What happens when there isn't enough clean water?

3. Slideshow (10 min)

Use the images and corresponding story provided below to explain the process on how families in Gros Morne, Haiti, use the rainwater they collect from rooftops into 500- to 2,000-gallon ferrocement cisterns.

4. Drawing Activity (10 min)

Prompt: "Draw a picture of how water helps people, animals, or plants."

Encourage drawings of gardens, cisterns, animals drinking, or people washing.

5. Wrap-Up & Reflection (5 min)

Ask: "Why is it important to share water fairly?"

End with: "Caring for the Earth means helping everyone have clean water."

MFOH's Rainwater Harvesting Program description with corresponding images

Mercy Focus on Haiti trained local masons in Gros Morne, Haiti, to build ferrocement cisterns next to homes, schools, farms, and churches. These cisterns collect and store rainwater from the adjacent rooftops, providing families with a local source of water.

Families who receive a cistern, help by carrying locally purchased building materials to the construction site. This "sweat equity" gives them a sense of ownership and pride. Each family also agree to care for the cistern and to share the collected rainwater with their neighbors. The stored rainwater is used for washing, cooking, and growing food in their

yard gardens and/or the neighborhood farm. They use an additional household filter or boil the water to make it potable for drinking.

If the families grow more food than they need, they can sell the extra produce at the market. The income helps them buy other necessities for the family and pay for their children's education. Families also share seeds and seedlings so more people in the community can grow food.

This program provides a local source of water so mothers and children no longer have to walk miles to the river or nearest well, but it also creates jobs and improves food security.





