

Clean Water and the Right to Thrive

Objective:

Students will learn why clean water is important for health and learning, explore water access challenges in rural Haiti, and understand how clean water connects to fairness and justice for communities around the world.

Materials Needed:

- Program description and photos provided below, to demonstrate how collecting rainwater helps Haitians prosper.
- [Infographic](#) Water Use Around the World
- World Map
- Student reflection journals

Lesson Plan (45 min)

1. Opening Question (5 min)

Ask: “How many times have you used water so far today?”

Then ask: “What would your day be like if you didn’t have clean water at home or at school?”

Introduce the idea that access to clean water is a basic human right and an issue of fairness.

2. 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.

3. Small Group Discussion: Water & Fairness (10 min)

Share this infographic about unequal access to clean water around the world. In small groups, students discuss: How might life be different without reliable water?

4. Class Reflection: The Justice Connection (10 min)

Whole group discussion:

- Why do some communities have clean water and some don’t?
- What do places like Haiti and Flint, Michigan (for example) have in common regarding water?

5. Reflection & Wrap-Up (10 min)

Students journal in response to: “How does access to clean water help people and

communities?" **Exit Ticket:** Write one thing you could do to help protect clean water in your community or around the world.

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







