



Chantal Damise and her daughter stand in front of a rainwater catchment system installed in May 2019 at their home in the community of Nan Mango on Lagonav Island.

PROGRESS REPORT ON RAINWATER CATCHMENT SYSTEMS ON LAGONAV ISLAND FOR THE ATLANTIC-MIDWEST PROVINCE OF THE SCHOOL SISTERS OF NOTRE DAME

MAY 2019



PROGRESS SUMMARY

Your support for the purchase and installation of rainwater harvesting kits is facilitating improved health, nutrition, and water access for 29 families in the communities of Bwa Nwa, Nan Mango and Plèn Mapou, who can now store rainwater to use to irrigate family vegetable gardens and meet other household water needs such as cooking and cleaning.

Each kit includes gutters, pipes, cement, metal wiring to hang the gutters, and water storage barrels (200 gallon Tuff Tanks) and is installed by a professional mason.

Beyond Borders and our partners also held two day-long training sessions with families to provide instructions and technical support on how to use the rainwater catchment system for everyday tasks like planting and irrigating backyard vegetable gardens and larger crops, and how to make any repairs that might be needed. Families were also trained in how to plant and care for an organic vegetable garden at home. This training included a variety of techniques to improve the yield produced by their vegetable gardens, including composting, natural insecticides, storing seeds, and transplanting plants.

FAMILY SELECTION PROCESS

In all our work, Beyond Borders seeks to identify and prioritize the most vulnerable families. To do so we use a wealth ranking tool in communities where we work that ranks each family on a scale from 1 to 4, with 1 being the most well-off and 4 being the most vulnerable. The 29 families who received rainwater catchment systems all were from among the most vulnerable, ranked either 3 or 4.

MEASURING IMPACT ON FAMILIES

We continue to develop the capacity and tools to measure the impact of rainwater catchment systems in the lives of families. Our goal is to see at least a 50% increase in household production of nutrient-rich foods for consumption, and to see at least 50% of families demonstrate at least one new sustainable gardening skill.

Anecdotal evidence collected during workshops and home visits with families who received rainwater catchment systems in 2018 found that they were experiencing the following improvements as a result of their new systems:

- Improved vegetable crops in the dry season;
- Decreased hardship to collect water for household usage during the dry season, leading to children arriving on time for school and parents stressing less about water procurement. Households reported experiencing increased time in conversation with children too;
- Increased variety of vegetables raised and consumed in meals cooked at home, including cabbage, bell peppers, Scotch Bonnet peppers, tomatoes, carrots, beets, lettuce, eggplant, watermelon;
- Increased spending power either because families no longer need to use household revenue to purchase vegetables for consumption, or due to new revenue from sales of vegetables; and,
- Integration of new sustainable farming practices.

We anticipate that the 29 families who received rainwater catchment systems in May 2019 will realize similar results. Our partners on Lagonav Island will continue to work with these families to measure impact and provide any support or technical assistance needed to ensure their water catchment systems work well and that their home vegetable gardens are producing.

Personal Testimonies

ROSELINE MOISE

Roseline Moise and her husband Adonis have seven children. “Life was extremely hard,” Roseline said of the time before their water catchment system was installed in April 2019. “I used to have to carry five, five-gallon buckets of water on my head each day. It made my head hurt so much. Sometimes I couldn’t even open my mouth because of the pain. It’s really made a big difference in my life,” Roseline said. She added that she uses the water to cook, clean, for her goats, and to water her vegetable garden, which includes peppers, papayas, eggplants, tomatoes, and lettuce.

CELOUISE CEMESIER

Celouise Cemesier and her husband Moise have 11 children ranging in age from 25 to two-and-a-half-years-old. Their water catchment system was installed in April 2019. “I used to have to take what little money we had and send one of the children to buy water,” Celouise said. “But now, anytime it rains, we’ll have water for our home and water for our animals.” The family uses the water to cook, clean, and bathe, and they’ve planted their first-ever vegetable garden. “It’s so much easier to have water here in our yard. It’s changed our lives,” Celouise said.

CHANTAL DAMISE

Chantal Damise lives in the village of Nan Mango with her six children. Their water catchment system was installed in May 2019. “Going to collect water at the water source was misery,” Chantal said. She had to walk 20 minutes one-way and borrow an animal to carry the water home, or pay exorbitant prices to buy water nearby -- something she couldn’t afford. “Now, our lives have changed. Anytime it rains we can capture water,” she said. Chantal uses the water for her animals, for chores around the house, and she said she’d use it to water a soon-to-be-planted vegetable garden. “I’m planning on selling vegetables too,” she said.

“It’s so much easier to have water here in our yard. It’s changed our lives,”

(right) Celouise holds her two-and-half-year-old daughter. Their water catchment system was installed in April 2019.



Roseline (right) and her daughter (left) stand in front of the rainwater catchment system installed in April 2019 at their home in the community of Plèn Mapou.



Damise Chantal holds up the lid on her new water catchment system, installed in April 2019.

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

We are so grateful for the generosity of donors to the Atlantic-Midwest Province of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in support of rainwater catchment systems for rural families on Lagonav Island in Haiti. Thank you!

Your generosity is changing the lives of 29 families who previously had limited access to water and were forced to travel long distances to secure even minimal amounts of water that were insufficient to meeting their household needs for cooking, cleaning, raising vegetables and caring for animals.

If you have any questions about what you read in this progress report, please feel free to contact Brian Stevens, Beyond Borders' Donor Relations Director, at (305) 450-2561 or b.stevens@beyondborders.net.

