

## World Water Day - March 22

### SSND and Beyond Borders bring WATER to Lagonav, Haiti



#### **March 22 is World Water Day.**

**U.N. Sustainable Development Goal 6** commits the world to ensuring that everyone has access to safe water by 2030. Take a moment and review this short video and read the story of how the SSND Atlantic-Midwest Province Partnership on the island of Lagonav, Haiti is helping Haitians have greater access to water.

In late January 2018, Sister Catherine Sarther, who serves as secretary and on the executive committee of the Board of Directors of our partner in Haiti, Beyond Borders, visited Haiti with a group of Beyond Borders supporters. Together they traveled to the rural community of Tipalmis on LaGonave Island, one of the communities where the SSND partnership assists the most impoverished families generate sustainable livelihoods through the Model Community Initiative Program.

Water access is extremely challenging for residents of Tipalmis, especially during long, annual periods of extreme drought. During this time, it is not uncommon for a family member, usually a woman, to travel two or three hours on foot to a water source, only to wait two or three more hours in line to fill her buckets. This scarcity and difficulty of access causes families to ration water, not only impacting water usage for bathing, cooking, cleaning and drinking but also threatening the family food supply. It also often prevents young girls from attending school.

Two Beyond Borders projects supported by SSND address the interrelated problems of food supply and water. One is the program for school and family gardens where participants learn to improve agricultural skills, develop better nutrition, and generate extra income by selling vegetables in the local market. The other project attends directly to the issue of water by providing training and support for families to use rainwater catchment systems to irrigate family vegetable gardens and to supply household water needs. Recently, SSND Water and Haiti committees partnered with Beyond Borders to obtain a grant from the HOPE Foundation for rainwater catchment kits which include

gutters, pipes, and cisterns to hold the rainwater. Along with a generous gift from a donor, \$25,000 is now available for rainwater catchment systems on Lagonave Island.

The video below shows one of these water catchment systems in Tipalmis. In this video, Sister Catherine introduces David Diggs, cofounder and executive director of Beyond Borders, who talks about the water catchment system. He is accompanied by Freda Catheus, Model Community Initiative Program Coordinator on LaGonave. Some of us will recognize Freda from the Haiti Speakers' Tour last spring. In addition to seeing the water catchment system, the video shows the area which will be turned into a garden and the two workers who were there installing the system.

<https://vimeo.com/257010981/bbeb56f1c1>