



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

## Access to Clean Water

The collection of water in many African communities is seen as women's work.

As a result, women and girls spend a large part of their time carrying water – often across long distances. This is in addition to taking care of their homes – cooking, collecting firewood and caring for their children.

It means there is often little time to think about education, health or a career. This not only affects the dignity of the girls, but also creates a gender imbalance.

A Zambian Human Development Report from 2011 found that 30% of people drawing water in rural areas spend 30 minutes a day collecting water.

Women, on average, carry 15 liters of water per each trip.

Women and children are often forced to walk many miles to collect water from the few water points around their villages – and they are collecting water that will most likely make them sick because it is not safe to drink.

# The Weekly

## Information Resource Bulletin

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- Bring listeners in the project area the latest information on natural resources, the environment and agriculture
- Focus on solutions, what works and what people can do
- Encourage listeners to share both their questions and solutions (African solutions for African problems)
- Raise awareness of issues that need to be discussed to affect public policy.
- Bring the latest solutions and practices that have relevance to this region from around the world
- Identify and link other NGOs working in the region share the project interests and goals
- Give the participating journalists guidance and tips on their reporting on these issues

## The Problem: Lack of Drinking Water

Water sustains life. For a healthy life it is critical to have adequate and clean water to drink.

Zambia has a vast supply of water. In fact, it has the largest fresh water resources in Africa with five massive lakes and plentiful rivers. Zambia's water catchment area is larger than Botswana.

Yet water in Zambia is not evenly distributed. One of the major problems is that most of the population still lack access to clean drinking water and sanitation, particularly in rural areas and unplanned settlements surrounding towns and cities.

Sixty-one percent of Zambia's population lives in rural areas and 39% in urban settings.

More than a quarter of Zambia's population of 13 million people don't have access to clean drinking water – while nearly 9 million people live without access to proper sanitation.

Water-borne diseases are one of the biggest killers in Zambia.

Approximately 87-hundred Zambians, including 66-hundred children, die annually due to poor sanitation and hygiene.

## Activities for Journalists

Harvesting rain water is one option available to communities. In fact, the main source of renewable water in Zambia is rainfall.

Most people don't even consider this option, even though collecting rain water allows an individual or household to store water in drums or tanks during the rainy season for later use in times of dry spells or droughts.

Now is a good time to start thinking about collecting rain water since Zambia's wet season is usually between the months of October and April.

Rain water harvesting is quite simple.

All you need to do is channel the water falling from the roof top to a storage area. There are a variety of storage methods such as tanks and drums -- or you can even build an underground or above-ground structure of clay or brick.

In most cases, the water collection system can be built using relatively cheap materials.

The water can be used for drinking if it is treated with chlorine -- and can also be used to wash clothes and dishes and even for irrigation.

Zambia's Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, together with NGOs, is supporting the construction and rehabilitation of small dams for small-scale irrigation and for domestic use. However, this option is more expensive and you'd need a permit from the relevant authorities such as the Department of Water Affairs.

Then there is a really simple thing you can do if you have running water in your home -- check for leaks in the water line.

**There are a variety of stories that can be created on this topic.**

Are there NGOs or other organizations in your

community that is focused on water issues? You might invite them to come by the station for an interview to discuss some or all of the topics covered in this Bulletin. Is there an organization in your community that focuses on women's issues?

- Do women carry water over long distances in your community? If so, is anything being done to bring water closer to their homes?
- Has anyone built a rain fall collection system in your community? How does it work? Was it built cheaply? Perhaps then can describe for listeners how they built it.
- Are there government projects to alleviate water issues? Are the projects on schedule? If not, why not?

### **Community Engagement**

Urge listeners to send SMS, call or stop by the radio station to talk about water issues. Do they believe the government could do more to alleviate the problem?

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### Useful Links

25 ways to conserve water in the home and yard at [http://eartheasy.com/live\\_water\\_saving.htm](http://eartheasy.com/live_water_saving.htm) (accessed 8th October 2013).

Rakodi Carole (2005) Evaluation of the "Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation (1997-2005)"; Country case study: Zambia. International Development Department (IDD), School of Public Policy, University of Birmingham. For Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) and NORAD.

Good source of information: Vincent Ziba, National Coordinator, Community-based National Resource Management Forum, Zambia; Email: [vinceziba@yahoo.com](mailto:vinceziba@yahoo.com). Phone: 0966-246-924

Zambia Human Development Report 2011; Service Delivery for Sustainable Human Development. UNDP