



IRHA International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance

Alianza Internacional para la Gestión del Agua de Lluvia (IRHA)

Alliance Internationale pour la Gestion de l'Eau de Pluie (IRHA)

bRAINstorming

NEWSLETTER N^o 34 – NOVEMBER 2010

Our newsletter focuses on all activities concerning rainwater harvesting, the International Rainwater Harvesting Alliance (IRHA) and its partners.

Topic of this issue: Training and Awareness Raising



Editorial

Dear Rainwater Harvesters, Readers, IRHA Members and Friends,

This edition of bRAINstorming is looking at why it is important to train people in, and share knowledge of, rainwater harvesting.

Created as a platform for promotion of Rainwater Harvesting worldwide; the IRHA's second pillar is 'Capacity Building and Awareness Raising'. This covers many areas, from training children and teachers on how to use rainwater harvesting for drinking water and sanitation, to showing professionals, NGO leaders and authorities how to implement this vital technology in their region.

For a technology such as rainwater harvesting to spread in a community and further a field, it is paramount that the local people, leaders and decision makers know how to both use it and implement it. It is not enough to simply place a new technology in a village or school, improving the lives of maybe just a few hundred at most, and then leave. For real, far reaching change, more must be done.

This is where training and knowledge sharing comes in. The aim of this Newsletter is to inform you on how the IRHA raises the awareness of people from around the world.

Hannah Price





A Quote:

“The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you”

B.B. King



Blue Schools Programme

Within our Blue Schools programme there is a strong emphasis on training and awareness raising. The teachers are trained to use the new sanitation facilities and then how, in turn, to teach this to their pupils. By training the teachers the benefits are felt down the years, as new intakes of pupils arrive ready to learn healthy habits and behaviours. Then the children themselves, they can take what they have learned with them, improving their living conditions long after they have left school.



Himalaya, India



Dialakoro, Mali

The main point of awareness raising in our Blue Schools programme is the creation of Parent – Authority – Children – Teacher (PACT) Committees, made up of representatives from each group. Among other things, these committees are taught to maintain the new school facilities, such as the toilets and rainwater harvesting systems, keeping them functional once the project implementation is over.

The final aspect of knowledge sharing is the training of local masons to build the rainwater harvesting systems themselves; through both theory lessons and on-the-job training when the systems are constructed for the project. This is extremely important, as once the project is over, the masons are able to continue building rainwater harvesting systems for other buildings and families in the area. The masons are taught to use local materials, keeping costs down, so local people are able to afford the price.



IRHA Training Sessions

Though training within the framework of the Blue Schools programme impacts at the local level, the IRHA also works at the higher regional, national and international levels. To make a different on a larger scale, it is important to train high level decision makers, this includes professionals, NGO project managers and local and national authorities.



The objective is to train people on the techniques and applications of Rainwater Harvesting, encouraging them to use this simple and low cost method to provide a water supply in their region. Once they know more about the technical aspects, they can put into practice what they have learnt and are able to train or inform countless other people. They will also be in the position to implement rainwater harvesting projects on a larger scale within their area of influence.

Training Session in India, 2010

Participants' opinions

“The training is important because I can meet many people from various countries and background[s]. I've got so many [sic] information and experience from them, and also the training equipped me in doing the community development work in Indonesia.”

“The knowledge exchange with international experts is so useful that the gained knowledge will be transferred to my colleagues in my country.”

“I expected to broaden by understanding on rainwater harvesting and I achieved much more on the whole watershed management technique.”

“I'm interested in learning about RWH, improving my knowledge about doing the micro farming and also the Blue School program in order [to] do some mitigation plans for FS in Indonesia.”

“I will share the experience I've got here to my friends and colleagues in Indonesia. I will also encourage the community in solving their problems in their community by keep on doing the micro farming there, I will also share the information about the watershed approach to the government and the community.”

“[I applied] to get more knowledge that I can apply back to project implementations.”



Past IRHA Training Sessions

To date, the IRHA has completed three training sessions, these are:

Rainwater Harvesting in the heart of Micro Farming and Food Security for Watershed Development, India 2010



Our most recent training session, which took place last month, aimed at increasing the number of people capable of carrying out rainwater harvesting projects. They were taught easily replicable techniques, demonstrated with proven examples presented by experienced professionals.

It focused on several technologies and methodologies which can be highly productive and useful for improving access to water and ensuring food security in poor rural areas.

Consequently, it targeted local and medium level politicians and administrative authorities, representatives of grassroots non-governmental organisations and other NGO leaders and local level water managers.

Organised jointly with the much respected WOTR (Watershed Organisation Trust), it took place in their Darewadi training centre, Maharashtra, India.

15 participants, coming from Africa and Asia, attended; each one learning new knowledge and techniques to take back with them and implement in their home countries.

Rainwater Harvesting for Soil and Water Preservation for Food Security, Kenya 2005

This was run in partnership with WOCAT (World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies), an established global network of Soil and Water Conservation specialists.

The main objective was to strengthen the links between rainwater harvesting and soil and water conservation experiences within an Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach by using WOCAT tools.

The participants were trained to use WOCAT questionnaires to document rainwater harvesting practices and soil and water conservation technologies, in view of future dissemination. Participants could then use the training to improve project formulation and further options for project implementation in their own countries and regions.



Fieldtrips were also arranged, including a visit to the rock catchment project in the Masai region.

Participants and trainers came from as far as Cameroon, Colombia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, the Netherlands, Nigeria, Rwanda, Somaliland, Switzerland and Tanzania.

Training Session in India, 2010

Theoretical work in the classroom



Fieldtrips to see examples of RWH and watershed management



Rainwater Harvesting for Watershed Development, India 2004



Field visit to Darewadi WS project

The first IRHA training session took place in Maharashtra, India; co-organised with WOTR (Watershed Organisation Trust), it was to improve the understanding of watershed development, rainwater harvesting and food security within the context of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM). This included theoretical work in the classroom and several fieldtrips to see successful examples of rainwater harvesting and watershed development.

23 participants from 14 different countries and 5 continents, all engaged in the field of water, sanitation and food security, attended this training session. By bringing together a group of practitioners from many different countries and backgrounds, it encouraged the exchange of knowledge and ideas between the participants, as well as through the formal learning of the training itself.



Upcoming Newsletter

The next edition of bRAINstorming will be an overview of the year at the IRHA. If you have any ideas, articles or pictures that you would like to contribute, please send them to us at:

newsletter-en@irha-h2o.org

Subscribe to the Newsletter

To subscribe or unsubscribe, please email us at:

newsletter-en@irha-h2o.org

Become a Member

The IRHA Members benefit from our extensive network and contribute to increasing the global use of rainwater harvesting.

Visit our website at:

<http://irha-h2o.org/?page=Members>

Join us online and get involved!

If you have any ideas, examples or questions about rainwater harvesting, please feel free to share them with us on our **Facebook** and **Twitter** pages.



We want these to be interactive, so the more contributions the better! In return we will keep you up-to-date on all the activities currently going on at the IRHA.

IRHA Activities and News

Raindrops Geneva Award 2011

We are pleased to announce the launch of the new Raindrops Geneva Award 2011 in collaboration with Photojournale. This year we are looking for **photographs of the benefits that rainwater harvesting can have for both humans and nature**. The final submission date is 30th April 2011, with the top three photographs awarded CHF 1000, 600 and 400. For more information and to read the Rules of the Competition, please visit our [website](#).

Call for papers: Rainwater Quality

The IRHA is introducing a new section to its website, **Topic of Today**: a platform for sharing new scientific and research studies related to rainwater harvesting. Always centred around a specific subject area, experts in the field of rainwater harvesting will be invited to share their knowledge on the Topic of Today! Starting 1st December, the first topic will be Rainwater Quality.

We invite the public to distribute these papers to better spread the word of rainwater harvesting and to send in comments or ideas for future topics.

Prix Suisse de l'Ethique

Launched in 2005, the *Prix Suisse de l'Ethique* aims to promote ethics, sustainable development and social responsibility in the strategies of businesses and public authorities. This year, the IRHA was chosen as a candidate for the award; acknowledging the reputation which the IRHA has acquired. Unfortunately, we did not come away with the prize this time, but left with the feeling that our work starts to be understood and supported by many.

[Read more.](#)