

# The Vision



A newsletter of *A Vision for Clean Water*

Providing clean water and sanitation to those who need them through education and collaboration

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## The Cost of Water to Women and Girls

We often take for granted our access to conveniences. We get up in the morning, use our modern bathroom facilities, take a shower, have a little breakfast, make a cup of coffee or tea and we're on our way to another day.

Imagine living in a developing country where your home and even your community does not have a piped safe water supply. Your morning looks very different, especially if you are a woman or a girl. Now you wake before the sun rises to walk miles, sometimes not returning until afternoon. You also may choose to sleep near the water supply to be first to draw water early in the morning. You must figure out and plan clever ways to carry the heavy water home. Additionally, there is a dangerous element to water collection. It is not a stroll on a well-lit walkway. Women and girls navigate difficult terrains, carry heavy loads that can cause injury and sadly may encounter gender-based violence while just trying to obtain a resource we humans cannot live without. And, unfortunately the water collected may not be sanitary, causing more danger. The United Nations estimates one million deaths occur each year due to infections or other health problems stemming from unclean births and other waterborne diseases (especially in children).

One of the United Nations' 17 sustainable development goals is access to clean water and sanitation for all. This goal would especially benefit women and girls because in 80 percent of homes without water it is their responsibility to attain it. It is estimated that 266 million hours a day is being spent world-wide by women and children in the quest to collect water. With so much time spent at this task it means a loss of opportunity for them. Education, occupation outside the home and personal pursuits that bring fulfillment are not possible. There are rare positives for women and girls having to spend so much time at this chore. They will surely create strong social bonds.

Additionally, when it comes to implementation of more reliable water resources it is the women who will be most able to aid in the development of these projects because of their experience. This in turn, may provide leadership roles within the community and higher social standing for women in general. We can help by improving ways in which water is obtained for homes in these communities and thereby help relieve this burden that so many face every day around the world.

Submitted by Julia Bazner  
AVFCW Volunteer

To learn more see:  
A Women's Water Crises at  
<https://water.org/our-impact/water-crisis/womens-crisis/>



## AVFCW Accepts the Challenge

For many years A Vision for Clean Water has organized and managed workshops to train people who are interested in learning about the many technical aspects of volunteering and working in water and sanitation projects. We employed a Canadian company, the Centre for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology (CAWST), to provide trainers and supplies at our in-person workshops held local to AVFCW in the Detroit area. CAWST is a globally well-known organization for Water and Sanitation and our training sessions were always very popular, bringing together implementers, academics, regulators and other government folks from different countries to learn and share. In the last year, CAWST has made a change to their training service model, no longer routinely offering direct training to students, deciding to instead focus on providing training materials to those that offer the training themselves, so CAWST is no longer available to us in the same way. Consequently, we are now looking into other ways we may be able to provide this important service and continue our mission of improving water and sanitation globally through education and training.

At first this news from CAWST was daunting, but after some thought and research on what would be needed to do this ourselves we learned some things. We understand that we can benefit from CAWST's support and their open-source online learning materials. AVFCW has several volunteers with science backgrounds who may be able to deliver the training. Also, we have heard from some local water experts who may be willing to share some of their time and expertise to assist with training. Over the years we have focused on several workshop topics, including biosand filter construction, latrine construction, filter selection and field water quality testing. After reviewing what is needed to offer these workshops, we are feeling very confident and excited about this plan. Having people with the training expertise as volunteers in our organization will certainly make organizing much easier and perhaps allow us to hold not only the annual large international training session, but host single day training sessions for local groups who are interested or already involved in water and sanitation projects. This means reaching a larger number of people with the training.

We are still in the investigative stage of this plan. We have lots to do to gear up and get ready. Our international training has usually been held in April, which seems far off. However, if we are able to do it, we would need to get the word out in early winter about this workshop. We need time to get a venue secured, visas for travelers initiated, supplies ordered and all training materials ready. We are still learning, and we are eager and hopeful about this challenge.

### Donate to AVFCW

Make a [donation](#): help install hand washing stations in the Navajo Nation.

[avisionforcleanwater.org](http://avisionforcleanwater.org)

or

190 Paragon, Troy, MI 48098

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