

THE BOLICK REPORT



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Rainwater and Longing in El Salvador

Once during a visit to El Salvador, a pastor shared a profound request with me that I try to live up to: “Please, don’t show our misery; show our strengths,” he said. It was a reminder to focus on the resilience and strength of the people in our newsletters, not just the hardships they face.

At its heart, this work is about pursuing the vision of ***Shalom*: the flourishing and good life that God desires for all creation.**

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry once said, *“If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up people to collect wood and don’t assign them to tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.”*

For the churches and communities of El Salvador, **this longing is for the liberation of all creation** from the destructive forces, greed, and heartlessness of unregulated industry that degrade their water sources and make their lives harder. This is the longing that leads them to seek innovative, sustainable practices like rainwater harvesting.

My role is training local leaders in effective rainwater harvesting methods. The goal is to put in place demonstration rainwater collection systems that meet an immediate need and serve as a model for families to see as a viable solution they can replicate

themselves. Through these systems, people can recover **autonomy and dignity.**

One place we worked in recently is a remote community with a



school that simply needs water for their bathrooms and handwashing.

At this school, despite the challenges posed by the uneven terrain, a system is

being designed that will collect water from the roof and then pump it back uphill to the bathrooms, in addition to providing water for washing hands and regular cleaning.

The second place we worked at was in San Salvador, with a cooperative that runs a farmer’s market and a training center/urban farm, focused on agro-ecology and sustainable agriculture.



Together, we’ve designed a model rainwater system that will serve as a teaching model at the farmers’ market where many people will see it working. Then they will adapt the model for the gardens to provide

irrigation during the dry months.

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