

We should harvest and use rainwater

With climate change and a growing population applying immense pressure on community water supply systems, they are increasingly struggling to cater to the needs of residents.

Climate change causes prolonged dry spells that lead to the volume of water in lakes and rivers, key sources of water for communities, to reduce.

This causes a crisis, with locals walking several kilometres in search of water, and the life-sustaining liquid costing an arm and a leg.

Factories and other businesses such as agriculture are also affected, reducing product and, in extreme cases, bringing their operations to a standstill.

To mitigate this, we call upon the public and proprietors of businesses to embrace harvesting and storing rainwater.

Besides providing a source of water during the dry spell, harvesting rainwater has several advantages.

Use of rainwater for domestic and commercial purposes can reduce the amount of money spent on bills from using tap water.

Furthermore, tap water is treated with chlorine and other disinfectants to ensure it is safe for drinking. However, while this makes it safe for human consumption, experts say these chemicals can kill beneficial soil bacteria and microbes if tap water is used to irrigate crops.

Experts say rainwater, on the other hand, is naturally soft and free of chemicals, making it suitable for most plants.

However, experts caution against drinking rainwater without proper purification because water collected from roofs can contain pollutants from the air, bacteria and heavy metals from roofing materials.

We call upon the government to encourage and enable more people to harvest rainwater.

Currently, many people in rural areas still live in grass-thatched houses,

making harvesting of rainwater difficult.

Furthermore, many of those who have houses roofed with iron sheets, which are more suitable for harvesting rainwater, do not have where to store this water because they cannot afford tanks, accessories, and the costs that come with setting them up.

We, therefore, urge the government to consider facilitating people in rural areas to upgrade their houses from grass-thatched to iron sheet roofs. The government should also enable citizens to purchase water tanks and accessories.

This can be done through giving citizens soft loans to enable them purchase water tanks and accessories and set them up to harvest and store rainwater.

The authorities should also consider subsidising the cost of water tanks and accessories so that more people can acquire them.

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