



Supportive Environments for Healthy Communities

Issue 54 May 4, 2012 | Focus on Self Supply

Self supply is an approach that can help increase rural water supply coverage in areas where it is not feasible or cost-effective to develop communal supplies. Rainwater harvesting, construction and upgrading of shallow wells and household water treatment all lend themselves to self supply or household investment. WaterAid calls self supply the water-equivalent of Community-led Total Sanitation. Despite its potential, self supply is often not formally recognized as a model for service delivery in sector policy and institutions. The resources included below include an upcoming World Bank Webinar, a useful 2012 brief by IRC and country reports from Ethiopia, Nigeria and Uganda.

Please let WASHplus know at any time if you have resources to share for future issues of WASHplus Weekly or if you have suggestions for future topics. An [archive](#) of past Weekly issues is available on the WASHplus website.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **June 12 World Bank Webinar: Self Supply: Supported Household Investment in Rural Water Supply** - Sally Sutton - SWL Consultants & André Olschewski - RWSN/Skat Foundation. ([Registration](#))

GENERAL/OVERVIEW SOURCES

- **Accelerating Self Supply: Summary of Progress in Introducing a New Approach**, 2011. S Sutton, Rural Water Supply Network. ([Full-text](#))
It is becoming clear that household capacity, household priorities and the power of real ownership have already been strong drivers for rural dwellers to improve their own water supplies through their own efforts (self supply). The findings from assessing and piloting self supply acceleration in Ethiopia, Mali, Uganda and Zambia suggest that encouraging household investment can truly offer a viable option alongside conventional highly subsidized community water supplies.
- **An Introduction to Self Supply: Putting the User First**, 2009. S Sutton. Water and Sanitation Program. ([Full-text](#))

Self Supply encourages the incremental improvement of household and community supply through user investment in water treatment, supply construction and up-grading, including small rainwater harvesting and groundwater systems. It is a concept which complements conventional rural water supply funded by government, enabling self-help improvement of supplies where no protected supply is available, or where consumers feel they can support higher levels of service than are presently provided by the public sector.

- **Myths of Rural Water Supply and Directions for Change**, 2011. R Carter Chair, WaterAid. ([Link to presentation](#))

Accelerated self supply recognizes and encourages household and community initiatives and provides promotion and technical assistance but no hardware subsidy. It is the water-equivalent of CLTS.

- **Self Supply: The Case for Leveraging Greater Household Investment in Water Supply**, 2012. IRC. ([Full-text](#))

Governments can encourage self supply first by recognizing the approach in sector assessments and investment plans to enable better targeting of public funds to leverage household investments and fill financing gaps. At the local level, accelerating self supply involves establishing advisory, marketing, and support services, including (micro)finance, help in identifying appropriate options, and promotion of technologies and supply chains that allow for future development. At the household level, acceleration requires better awareness of the costs and benefits of developing one's own supply, which range from return on investment through productive uses (which communal supplies usually cannot accommodate) to prestige, privacy, and time savings.

COUNTRY REPORTS

- **A Market-based Approach to Facilitate Self Supply for Rainwater Harvesting in Uganda**, 2011. J Naugle, Relief International. ([Full-text](#))

This paper looks at the relationship between self supply and market-based development through the example of the introduction of a low cost rainwater storage container in Uganda. The services and products created through market-based development are best defined by the needs of the self supply community: responsiveness to consumer demands; affordability; and availability. This paper describes how the project is using business tools of consumer-led product design, mass media product promotion, existing supply chains and customer service to introduce the *bob* rainwater bag to Uganda.

- **Putting Women at the Forefront in Accelerating Self Supply through Domestic Rain Water Harvesting**, 2011. D Baziwe, Uganda Rainwater Association. ([Full-text](#))

Domestic rainwater harvesting in Uganda is considered a self supply approach. Women

groups from different districts in Uganda have been engaged in promotion of rain water harvesting through building their capacity to construct, operate, maintain and finance the systems. This case points out the efforts of Uganda Rainwater Harvesting Association in empowering women groups to improve access to safe water through rain water harvesting and thereby accelerating self supply.

- **Self Supply Systems: Urban Dug Wells in Abeokuta, Nigeria**, *Water Science & Technology: Water Supply*, June 2011. G Oluwasanya, University of Agriculture, Ogun State, Nigeria. ([Abstract](#))

This paper assessed urban self supply wells and argues that self supply is a coping water supply strategy of not only the rural poor, but also of the unserved in the cities. The paper emphasizes the need to see self supply sources as the third angle, which completes the water supply triangle with the public and communal water systems as the other angles.

- **Towards the Ethiopian Goal of Universal Access to Rural Water: Understanding the Potential Contribution of Self Supply**, 2011. S Sutton, Overseas Development Institute. ([Full-text](#))

The role of government in accepting and accelerating household investment in water supply should be clarified further. Government's role in community water supply development and maintenance is well-established. However, to promote and support small scale private investment in water to improve service and increase coverage requires different roles and strategies at all levels of public service.

WEBSITES

- **IRC – Water Services That Last. Self Supply: The Case for Leveraging Greater Household Investment in Water Supply.** ([Link](#))

Self supply remains largely invisible in sector indicators and its relative importance to the sector is neither fully understood nor appreciated. The trend appears to be changing. Eight out of the 13 countries in this Triple-S study recognise self supply in sector policy (including Ethiopia, India, Thailand, Uganda and the USA).

- **Rural Water Supply Network: Self Supply.** ([Website](#))

Under the Self Supply flagship, the Rural Water Supply Network (RWSN) is encouraging authorities, NGOs and the private sector to recognize that many households and small groups can actually construct, or pay for the construction of wells and rainwater harvesting facilities. Households can also improve water quality by upgrading existing water sources or undertaking household water treatment, or a combination of the two.

- **Stories – Accelerating Self Supply.** ([Link](#))

Stories and videos on Self Supply from 6th International Forum of the Rural Water Supply Network, 2011.

Each WASHplus Weekly highlights topics such as Urban WASH, Indoor Air Pollution, Innovation, Household Water Treatment and Storage, Hand Washing, Integration, and more. If you would like to feature your organization's materials in upcoming issues, please send them to Dan Campbell, WASHplus knowledge resources specialist, at dacampbell@fhi360.org.



About WASHplus - WASHplus, a five-year project funded through USAID's Bureau for Global Health, creates supportive environments for healthy households and communities by delivering high-impact interventions in water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) and indoor air pollution (IAP). WASHplus uses proven, at-scale interventions to reduce diarrheal diseases and acute respiratory infections, the two top killers of children under five years of age globally. For information, visit www.washplus.org or email: contact@washplus.org.

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