



Self-supply **a story of a billion people**

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www.rural-water-supply.net

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Definitions

Self-supply is a service provision and a coping mechanism wherein **private households incrementally** improve water service levels, **largely by their own means**.

Supported Self-supply is an approach where external support is provided (for training, market development, promotion, demonstration, etc.) – by a donor or a government organization, to strengthen self-supply mechanisms.

Incremental improvements



Photo credit:
Peter Morgan



Photo credit:
<https://mcleodwaterwells.ca/>

Some numbers

- **66% of financing in the WASH sector comes from private households (GLAAS, 2022)**
- **Globally, more than 1 billion people rely on self-supply for their water provision (Sutton, 2022)**
- **Nigeria (20% of the whole population), USA (40% of rural population), Bangladesh (45 private tube wells for each public well), more than a third of the rural population in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, India, Indonesia, Myanmar and up to 99% in Pacific Islands**



Livestock watering



2 minutes to collect washing-up water



Honey selling

Pull factors – Supply convenience and multiple uses

Having your own well tends to lead to better food security and more income – a springboard to rural development



More time for the house and children



Brickmaking



Vegetable plot

Debunking some myths

Quality

- 500 million people in rural areas of Asia-Pacific have groundwater self-supply, 96% of whom use an improved source

Safety

- In Asia, groundwater self-supply provides more people with safely managed drinking water than piped services

Supportive environment for self-supply

- Mostly indirectly, support services
- Indirect support from government / NGOs
 - Policy development and integration into existing public support services
 - Private sector capacity building
 - Demonstration, testing and development of technologies
 - Marketing strategy development
 - Establishing microfinance routes – seed money
- Direct support
 - Partial subsidy for construction or full subsidy for upgrading



Highlighting a few messages

1. Self-supply is much bigger than most people expect: >1 billion people rely on Self-supply as primary water source.
2. Households are the main funder in the WASH sector: 66% of sector financing is derived from households (GLAAS 2019, but weak data base).
3. Self-supply is wide-spread around the world. In some areas, Self-supply may be a permanent solution (e.g., substantial parts (>10%) of the rural population in some European countries and in North America).
4. The best way forward is to start recognizing it, measuring it, and establish/strengthen systems to get all households to at least basic service levels (but safely managed is feasible as well through Self-supply).
5. Governments (and NGOs) have a role to play in supporting Self-supply, most importantly through establishing an enabling environment (policies, capacity building, etc.).

A photograph of a woman in a pink shirt and a patterned skirt filling a white bucket at a manual water pump. The pump is a blue metal structure with a handle. The woman is standing on a concrete platform. In the background, another person is partially visible. The scene is outdoors with trees and a clear sky.

SELF SUPPLY

Filling the gaps in public
water supply provision

Sally Sutton with John Butterworth

Self-supply - the book

This well-seasoned sauce book highlights the magnitude of the contribution of self-supply to urban and rural water provision world-wide, and the gains that are possible when governments recognise and support household-led supply development and up-grading.

With limited public finances in low- (and many middle-) income countries, self-supply can fill gaps in public provision, especially amongst low-density rural populations. The book focuses on sub-Saharan Africa as the region with the greatest predicted shortfall in achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal for water.

Go to:

<http://bit.ly/SelfSupply>

Signposting and resources

1. Download the book: <http://bit.ly/SelfSupply>, or read the RWSN briefs (4/8 pages): <https://rural-water-supply.net/en/resources/details/941>
2. Join online discussion group on RWSN: https://dgroups.org/rwsn/selfsupply_rwsn
3. Webinars on Self-supply are upcoming – join RWSN to receive the newsletter: <http://rural-water-supply.net/join-or-support/join.html>
4. More information on Self-supply: <https://rural-water-supply.net/en/self-supply> and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selfsupply_of_water_and_sanitation