

RUNNING WATER

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More Technical Briefs on Health, Water and Sanitation

Edited by Rod Shaw

With an introduction by Ian Smout

Intermediate Technology Publications 1999

NOTE

Technical Briefs Nos 1-32 can be found in *The Worth of Water*, also available from IT Publications.

Nos 33-52 in this second volume of Technical Briefs were prepared by WEDC. Nos 53-64 were prepared by WELL.

WEDC (The Water, Engineering and Development Centre) at Loughborough University in the UK is one of the world's leading institutions concerned with education, training, research and consultancy for the planning, provision and management of physical infrastructure for development in low- and middle-income countries.

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INTRODUCTION

RUNNING WATER is a practical book aimed at fieldworkers who plan, design and construct water and sanitation facilities for low-income communities. These facilities must be appropriate to meet the needs and demands of the women, men and children in the community — otherwise they will not use them, care for them, or pay for their operation and maintenance. But facilities must also be designed to work properly, to be easy to operate and maintain, to be long-lasting, and to be low-cost both for construction and for operation and maintenance. With these requirements in mind, each issue of IT Publications' quarterly journal *Waterlines* contains a Technical Brief on a selected topic, to help fieldworkers whether from NGOs, community-based organizations, governments, utilities or consultants.

From the introduction of the idea in the 1980s, WEDC has been responsible for preparing these Technical Briefs, with Rod Shaw managing the process and designing each 4-page insert. I am proud of this long-term association with *Waterlines* and pleased too that the Technical Briefs have proved popular with its readers. From the beginning it was thought that they would also have an enduring value as reference material. Rather than rely on readers going through years of issues of *Waterlines* to find one which addresses their particular concerns, Technical Briefs have been compiled into books. An earlier collection — *The Worth of Water* — was published by Intermediate Technology Publications in 1991. Subsequent Technical Briefs are gathered here in chronological order, together with a subject guide. The emphasis of each topic is on practical solutions for fieldworkers. Further reading is also listed so that practitioners can seek additional information. IT Publications can supply many of the books

through its 'Books-by-Post' catalogue, and staff from DFID and its partners in qualifying agencies can also obtain copies through the WELL document service.

In high-level international discussions these days there is a lot of talk about creating an 'enabling environment' in the water sector. Practitioners will recognize the importance of this as they work to overcome all the constraints in their situation. But others must also recognize that this is not an end in itself, and ultimately development relies on the work of practitioners to deliver the services which people need and demand — providing support to fieldworkers should be regarded as a crucial part of the enabling environment. *Waterlines* can be seen in this context, and it is pleasing that DFID agreed to support preparation of 12 Technical Briefs through the WELL Resource Centre. WELL is commissioned to provide expertise to DFID and its partners in NGOs, developing country governments and international agencies, and this is one example.

The continuation of existing services is often a struggle but the aim must be to do more than this, improving and expanding services to reduce the huge numbers of people with inadequate water and sanitation facilities. I believe we should be identifying appropriate solutions which are viable in each circumstance and offering people a choice from these. I hope these Technical Briefs will help fieldworkers to identify and detail these viable solutions, and help communities achieve better water supply and sanitation.

Ian Smout
Leader of WEDC
Associate Director, WELL

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