

Story from South Sudan

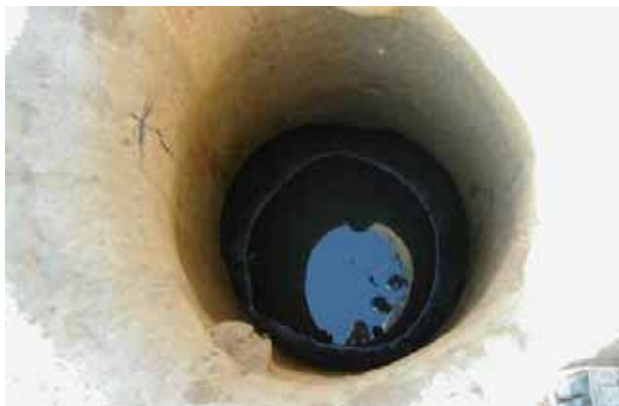
Ajung Majok

The people of his village used to have to walk for 3-4 hrs to collect water. The women used to get up at 3am to fetch water before it gets too hot. They would carry a large bucket (20-30 litres) for 2-3 hrs in each direction. They would make the journey again in the cool of the evening. The children would accompany them with smaller pots (gourds).

SC (UK) drilled a tube well in 1998. Now water can be collected in minutes. There is much more water available and people come from all around to use it.

In the evenings everyone can now collect water to wash themselves.

There is even enough to grow vegetables and tobacco but at the moment there are no seeds. There is no fence because there is a shortage of wood. The men must walk a long way to collect wood and the first priority is repairing their houses.



Photo©Tom Slaymaker/South Sudan

Water Stories

ODI's Water Policy Programme is developing a series of online resources called Water Stories. These are short pieces (up to 500 words) written from a personal perspective and focusing on a current burning issue—whether a personal view on a policy issue or first-hand experience of a water problem. The main thing is that they are based on lived experience and are written in an accessible style.

Our idea is to encourage the immediate airing of experience from the ground level upwards, in order to stimulate debate and information exchange across regions and sectors.

If you wish to post a Water Story in the first instance email it to m.iotti@odi.org.uk. WPP will then inform you if your piece has been selected and will send you a final version for approval prior to posting it on our web page.

We encourage you to include your own photographs to accompany the piece.

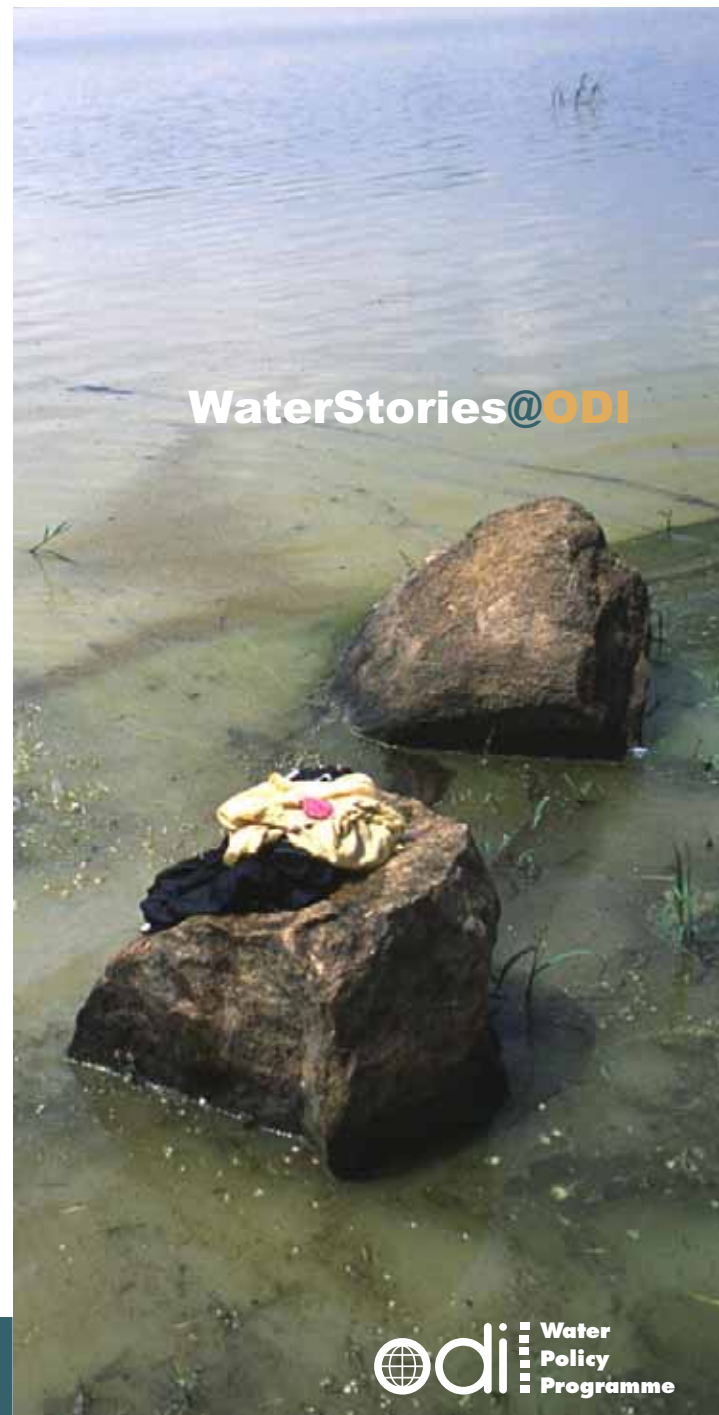
The WPP team reserves the right to edit and amend Water Stories before posting. Copyright of all text and images submitted will rest with ODI.

We are waiting to hear from you!



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Cover Photo©Andy Johnstone/Sri Lanka



WaterStories@ODI

Story from South Sudan

Ayen (13) is lucky as she lives very near to the new water point. She has been sent with her two younger brothers and baby sister to collect water.

The family has a large water pot at a home, Ayen's job is to keep it full so there is always enough for drinking and cooking. It takes four trips to fill it, collecting 4 litres each time. Sometimes her mother comes to collect water too but her father never comes.

Before the pump was installed Ayen's family collected water from a hollowed out pit during the dry season. The water was shared between about 30 households and their cattle. The water is a milky green colour.

The pool is shallow and muddy. You have to boil it and then leave it to stand for some time before drinking it, there are no filters. People often got bad stomach pains, especially small children. The pool dried up from time to time and the families had to relocate to the toxic (swamp).

Now there is lots of water, plenty to drink and enough to wash. She is very happy. She does not go to school. None does round here.



Photo©Tom Slaymaker/South Sudan

Story from Sri Lanka



Photo©Andy Johnstone/Sri Lanka

Hambantota district in south-eastern Sri Lanka is one of the poorest districts in the country and frequently affected by water shortages and drought.

Systems of water management in Sri Lanka are 2500 years old, but the availability of water in traditional wells depends in many areas on effective management of agricultural irrigation tanks. During periods of drought, when the drinking water wells run dry, the local government sends out water trucks or "bowsers" to supply rural communities.

Hambantota district has been selected as part of a major Water Supply and Sanitation Project funded by the Asian Development Bank.

The scheme provides selected communities with a set of water supply options including rain-water harvesting, dug wells, tubewells and piped water schemes. The community must contribute at least 20% of the project cost, plus regular monthly payments to cover operation and maintenance. Requiring communities to pay for water services is a novel concept in Sri Lanka and remains a politically sensitive issue.

Important questions surround the affordability of new schemes for poor households within communities. Although communities may be willing to pay for new services, actual capacity to pay may vary widely between households, especially during times of drought. This has important implications for the sustainability of new schemes.

Story from Kenya

Mukuru Kwa Ruben is an informal settlement at the heart of Nairobi's industrial zone and has been the focus of SecureWater research into water supply problems in poor urban areas.

Settlements like Mukuru account for around 60% of Nairobi's population and all of these settlements have inadequate domestic water supplies. Local residents face many problems but perhaps most striking is the water and sanitation situation. This is a common issue in urban areas where population density creates cramped and difficult living conditions. Effective solutions for supplying domestic water in urban areas are consequently vastly different from those required to supply rural communities.

Crucially, the people of Mukuru have no legal rights to the land they live on and this makes the settlement commercially unviable to large private contractors and legitimising the settlement (i.e. building new homes and implementing a proper infrastructure) would involve massive capital investment for the Nairobi government.

Local entrepreneurs have stepped in and established private standpipes, which are tapped into Nairobi's main water supply network. From these standpipes the water vendors fill 20 litre jerry cans for between 1 & 2 Kenyan shillings. This is equivalent to just 1 or 2 pence but since the average wage is less than £1.00 per day and many people are unemployed, this cost is proportionally very high.



Photo©Andy Johnstone/Kenya

More ODI water stories

Stories from South Sudan

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Akuel

Akuel (21) has come to collect water for her extended family of 16 which includes her two small children, aunts, uncles and grandparents. She has a 20 litre bucket which she is filling. She comes here 4 or 5 times each day. It is about a 3km round trip. She washes herself nearby but must carry water back for the others to use for washing, cooking and drinking.

Her boys also help collect water in small calabashes from the swamp. Her husband has taken the herds to the toxic for the dry season. Akuel collects water for the household from this pump all year round.

She says the water is better than the swamp, it is clear and clean and tastes good. Also you don't have to spend time filtering it and there is less wastage.

Stories from South Sudan

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Ayren

Ayren (13) is lucky as she lives very near to the new water point. She has been sent with her two younger brothers and baby sister to collect water. The family has a large water pot at home, Ayren's job is to keep it full so there is always enough for drinking and cooking. It takes four trips to fill it, collecting 4 litres each time. Sometimes her mother comes to collect water too but her father never comes.

Before the pump was installed Ayren's family collected water from a hollowed out pit during the dry season. The water was shared between about 30 households and their cattle. The water is a milky green colour.

The pool is shallow and muddy. You have to boil it and then leave it to stand for some time before drinking it, there are no filters. People often got bad stomach pains, especially small children. The pool dried up from time to time and the families had to relocate to the toxic (swamp). Now there is lots of water, plenty to drink and enough to wash. She is very happy. She does not go to school. None does round here.

Stories from South Sudan

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Ajung Majok

The people of his village used to have to walk for 3-4 hrs to collect water. The women used to get up at 3am to fetch water before it gets too hot. They would carry a large bucket (20-30 litres) for 2-3 hrs in each direction. They would make the journey again in the cool of the evening. The children would accompany them with smaller pots (gourds).

SC (UK) drilled a tube well in 1998. Now water can be collected in minutes. There is much more water available and people come from all around to use it.

In the evenings everyone can now collect water to wash themselves.

There is even enough to grow vegetables and tobacco but at the moment there are no seeds. There is no fence because there is a shortage of wood. The men must walk a long way to collect wood and the first priority is repairing their houses.

Stories from South Sudan

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Akol (young mother of one)

She is collecting water from the new pump. It is much better, before she had to go to the river.

She would rise early, before the sun, each day to collect water and return in the afternoon. Now it only takes 30 minutes to walk here.

She can collect water easily and has more time to help her husband prepare the farm. Before noone had enough to drink. Now her family has enough. She does not use water for irrigation, just cooking and washing. That is all she needs.

Stories from South Sudan

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Aluel (mother)

Aluel comes to Madhol to fetch water from a pump installed by UNICEF in 2001. Sometimes she goes to an open well (about half way) but it runs dry in the dry season. She walks for about an hour to get here and collects 2 large jerry cans twice each day. On her second trip she stores them at a friend's house and then goes to market. Her three young daughters come to the pump in the evening when it is cool, each with 2 large jerry cans.

Her household of 8 uses 8 jerry cans each day (160 litres) half for drinking, cooking and washing and half for the goats. She does not bring her goats to the pump as it is too far.

Her children and husband wash at home, Aluel washes at the pump. During the wet season there is water in the swamp near her home.

Before the pump was put in her children used to go there for water for drinking and washing. Now there is always water available at home and they can go to school. They are also safe from wild animals and malaria which are a problem in the swamp.

Story from the SecureWater Project

Nattiobanigaripalle village, Chittoor District, Andhra Pradesh, INDIA

by Tom Slaymaker, ODI



Chittoor is a predominantly rural district in a semi-arid part of Andhra Pradesh, India. There is a close connection between water and rural poverty in this drought-prone area. People rely on groundwater sources to provide water both for drinking and for irrigation but water shortages are common in the summer months leading to conflicts over different water uses.

Irrigation systems tend to be controlled by richer land owning castes who can afford to invest in deep boreholes. Poorer farmers who cannot afford to irrigate remain dependent on rain-fed crops and recent drought has forced many to sell their land or migrate in search of alternative sources of income. Water problems in this area are not just about availability.

There is also unequal access to the resource. Families from different castes continue to live separately and relations are not always cordial.

In Nattiobanigaripalle, a new domestic water supply scheme has been implemented by a local government agency, the Chittoor Water and Sanitation Society (CWSS), but only half of the village has been included in the scheme. In the village, land and water resources have traditionally been controlled by the Reddy caste. Landless (Tribal) caste families rely on the Reddys for agricultural work and also for access to water during summer months when shallow wells run dry. Reddy families, however, are unwilling to share their water with Tribal caste families, whom they consider to be unclean. In times of drought, water has become a major dividing issue within the community.

The CWSS proposed a new domestic water supply scheme to benefit the whole community, but the Reddy caste villagers refused to participate in the project because they were unwilling to share the proposed water taps with Tribal caste families, so the pilot programme went ahead without them.

Social divisions such as these pose major problems for local authorities attempting to implement 'community-based' water management projects in rural India and other areas where there are deep rooted social structures such as the Indian caste system.