



Productive Water Points in Dryland Areas: Guidelines on Integrated Planning for Rural Water Supply

Chris Lovell

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Lack of water is the limiting factor for many household and community-based activities for millions of people living in dryland areas. Rural water supply programs tend to focus on only two social aspects: improved access to domestic supply and improved sanitation. Less attention has been paid to how communities prefer to use water to develop their own livelihoods. This is due partly to the difficulties of abstracting sufficient reliable groundwater in dryland areas, and partly to a misunderstanding of why wells and boreholes fail, which leads to a general belief that abstraction should be limited to domestic supply to conserve the resource. When more water is available, not only are basic drinking and washing needs satisfied but also other activities with a high economic value become feasible, such as small-scale irrigation, fruit orchards, livestock feedlots, small-scale dairy units, fish farming, brick-making, etc. Such diversification avoids over-reliance on rain-fed cropping of marginal lands.

This book shows how research in southern Africa has shed light on why conventional wells and boreholes fail, on the potential of the groundwater resource to support production through improved siting and selection of more appropriate well designs, and on the positive impacts and some problems that can emerge at productive water points.

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