The most sustainable way of disseminating a product is through a profitable supply chain. This principle drives complex economic systems throughout the world, but it cannot be ignored in rural economies, where life itself can depend on the supply of such vital products as handpumps and pedal-driven pumps for drinking water, irrigation, and sanitary and hygiene purposes. Experiences in Bangladesh, Kenya and other parts of Africa (see Box 1) provide examples of the importance of successful and sustainable supply chains.

**THE ‘ART’ OF MAKING ALL LINKS IN A SUPPLY CHAIN PROFITABLE**

How can we encourage the development of private sector supply chains that are both sustainable and work to scale? The newly published report on the Workshop on Treadle Pump Supply Chains held in Niamey, Niger, in October 2002, offers important new insights into this problem.

**The Treadle Pump Work-shop: A Profitable Chain of Events**

The week-long workshop brought together over 50 sector specialists from 10 countries to study how treadle pump supply chains (and supply chains generally) can be made sustainable.

The workshop followed study tours to Bangladesh and Kenya and a pilot project in Niger, which will lead to the installation of 4,500 treadle pumps in the country. The Niger initiative is firmly based on the four Ps of marketing (see Box 2), which are essential to the success of any product.
The Report on the Workshop Proceedings

The 56-page report on the proceedings and outcomes of the workshop is now available in French with a summary in English. It is accompanied by an interactive CD, in English and French, which contains all the presentations and discussions. It is in color and contains photos, maps, and graphics. The report is produced by the Water and Sanitation Program - Africa (WSP-AF) in partnership with the World Bank Africa Region Rural Development Unit and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). The report contains:

- Observations on the development of a viable and sustainable treadle pump
- Supply chains in Niger case study
- Dos and don’ts for actors involved in supply chains development
- Key strategic principles in the development of supply chains
- An account of the contributions, discussions, and conclusions of the workshop.

The CD contains:
- Theoretical framework: market creation and supply chain development approaches
- The workshop: summary of proceedings and outcomes
- Three case studies: Bangladesh, Kenya, and Niger
- Specific and generic elements of the Niger initiative
- Examples of supply chains in other products and geographical contexts.

Box 1: Examples from Bangladesh and other countries in Africa

Bangladesh is a challenging market: many of its 135 million people live in densely populated rural areas, and incomes are low. However, a thriving private sector supply chain has produced and sold over 1.3 million treadle pumps.

Case study - Kenya

In Kenya, a different supply chain approach implemented by Approtech is installing 800 Treadle Pumps a month and this country has several years of experience with supply chain that have installed several thousand low cost drip irrigation systems on small farms.

In West African countries like Mali, Benin and Niger treadle pump supply by the private sector is in the process of being developed.
Box 2: The Four Ps +1 of Marketing

• **Product**: What product do people want? What pump designs are most suitable for production, sale, and installation? How can the product be geared to a wide range of clients, some of whom are buying for the first time, while others are looking for an upgrade? What consideration needs to be given to training and extension services?

• **Price**: What can people pay for a pump and parts? What prices will keep suppliers in business?

• **Place**: Where can the product be obtained? How many links are needed in the chain? Does the manufacturer both produce and sell, or are dealers involved? Who installs the pumps and repairs them? Which outlets work best?

• **Promotion**: What methods of promotion are most effective? How can we involve the whole supply chain in promotion? How can we adapt promotion to the specific client, from the newcomer to the experienced irrigation farmer?

• **Policy**: How can policy-makers and governments create an enabling environment so that the market can operate efficiently and target customers can enjoy the product?

What Are the Benefits of Ordering the Report?
More than anything else, the report is a *capacity-building tool*. It captures valuable lessons, and can be used effectively by those interested specifically in the methodology of supply chain development for treadle pumps. Its generic approach also extends its applicability to all aspects of the ‘art and trade’ of supply chain development, and even beyond the water and sanitation sector. All those striving to establish markets in poverty-alleviating products will find vital know-how within the pages of this report.

Anyone wrestling with the problem of establishing viable supply chains, in rural water supply and in other sectors, will find that the knowledge contained in the *Report on the Workshop on Treadle Pump Supply Chains* makes it a practical and useful tool.
HTN, the Handpump Technology Network, is transforming into a global knowledge network for Rural Water Supply Technology. Since 2003, HTN has engaged a partnership with WSP (Africa region) to engage key stakeholders on three critical themes: (i) Low-cost drilling, (ii) effective supply chains, and (iii) water supply solutions for household and small communities.

The member and partners of this network recently committed to sharing the lessons learned from practical experiences, and developing analytical tools and for policy makers and practitioners to improve supply chains. This supply chain initiative is a response to the need to safeguard past investments, and will focus on issues such as innovative procurement, commercial approach, private sector implications and effective end-user participation.