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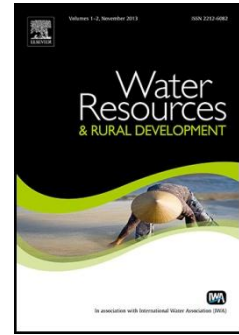
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## **Assessing household willingness to pay for bottled water in rural areas of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam**

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### **Abstract**

We assess the willingness to pay for bottled water in rural areas of Tra Vinh Province, Vietnam, where many households are poor, and many rely on rainwater as their primary source of drinking water. Rainwater is abundant during the monsoonal wet season in the Mekong Delta, yet it becomes quite scarce during the dry season. Households with too few containers to collect and store sufficient rainwater must use groundwater or canal water during the dry season, or purchase water from a local vendor. Much of the groundwater and surface water in the region is polluted, yet households with limited income do not have access to a safe and affordable alternative. The potential health and welfare gains made possible by providing access to bottled water during the dry season are compelling, yet many households are too poor to pay for bottled water service. Many residents also prefer the taste of rainwater, and likely would not purchase bottled water, even at a low price, when rainwater is available. Thus, a commercial water bottling enterprise might not be financially viable in the region, due to inadequate ability and willingness to pay among households.

**Key words:** Rainwater; Sanitation; Tra Vinh Province; Drinking water demand; Water quality

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