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**OBSERVATIONS FROM THE
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT
TRANSFER**

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MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE**

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA

**HELD IN WUHAN, CHINA,
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ABOUT 230 PARTICIPANTS FROM
AROUND THE WORLD:

POLICY MAKERS
SENIOR IRRIGATION MANAGERS
DONOR REPRESENTATIVES
RESEARCHERS

NO FARMERS

OVER 100 PAPERS PRESENTED FROM ALL
MAJOR REGIONS OF THE WORLD --
ASIA, LATIN AMERICA -- AND

THREE PAPERS FROM AFRICA (NIGER,
NIGERIA, SUDAN) PLUS ONE FROM
EGYPT

PRESENTATION BASED ON PERSONAL
OBSERVATIONS EMERGING FROM
CONFERENCE

FIVE TOPICS -- MY PRESENTATION:

1. LARGE NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF CASES
2. WHY COUNTRIES ARE PROMOTING IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT TRANSFER
3. HOW TO CARRY OUT IMT (GETTING THE PROCESS RIGHT)
4. PREREQUISITES TO SUCCESS & IMPLICATIONS OF EXPERIENCE TO DATE
5. IMPLICATIONS FOR THEME OF THIS CONSULTATION -- IRRIGATION EXTENSION

POSSIBLE SIXTH -- IMPACT SO FAR -- NO TIME, ONLY A FEW STUDIES

DEFINITION OF IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT TRANSFER

"TRANSFER OF RESPONSIBILITY AND
AUTHORITY FOR IRRIGATION
MANAGEMENT FROM GOVERNMENT TO
NON-GOVERNMENT ENTITIES"

- * MAY BE PARTIAL OR COMPLETE
AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY
- * MAY -- BUT USUALLY DOES NOT
INCLUDE OWNERSHIP
- * NGO MAY BE A WATER USER
ASSOCIATION, OR OTHER KIND OF
FARMER ORGANIZATION
COOPERATIVE, SPECIALIZED LOCAL
SEMI-GOVERNMENT UNIT, UTILITY

1. NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF CASES

PAPERS FROM NEARLY EVERY COUNTRY IN ASIA, AS WELL AS ABOUT 5 COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA

INCLUDES:

- * DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (AUSTRALIA, USA)
- * POOR AND LESS POOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES
- * FORMER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES (CHINA, VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, LAOS, UZBEKISTAN)

WIDE DIVERSITY IN EXPERIENCES:

- A. COMPLETE TURNOVER OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SIZED IRRIGATION SYSTEMS TO FARMER ORGANIZATIONS -- FARMERS FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR O&M INCLUDING FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (COLOMBIA, MEXICO)

- B. A FEW CASES OF TURNOVER OF LARGE SYSTEMS (MEXICO)

- C. JOINT MANAGEMENT OF LARGE SYSTEMS BY GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND FARMER ORGANIZATIONS (PHILIPPINES, SRI LANKA, NEPAL, INDIA)

D. D E C E N T R A L I Z A T I O N O F
R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y I N C L U D I N G
F I N A N C I A L A U T O N O M Y T O [F O R M E R]
G O V E R N M E N T U N I T S (C H I N A ,
V I E T N A M)

B R I E F O U T L I N E -- T W O C A S E S T O
I L L U S T R A T E D I V E R S I T Y

1. T U R N O V E R O F I R R I G A T I O N
D I S T R I C T S , M E X I C O

- > L A R G E - S C A L E S Y S T E M S , A B O U T 80,
I R R I G A T I N G 3 M I L L I O N H A
- > O N E A C H D I S T R I C T , O R G A N I Z I N G
W A T E R U S E R S A S S O C I A T I O N

- > TURNING OVER COMPLETE RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY FOR MANAGEMENT
- > TO DATE: COMPLETE TRANSFER OF SECONDARY CANALS AND DRAINAGE IN 51 DISTRICTS AND PARTIAL TRANSFER IN 16 DISTRICTS
- > FOR MAIN CANALS AND DRAINS, ROADS, SPECIAL SOCIETIES ESTABLISHED IN FOUR SYSTEMS SO FAR
- > NEW WATER LAW PERMITTING MARKET TRANSFERS OF WATER
- > USERS' FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

MOST AMBITIOUS PROGRAM IN WORLD CURRENTLY

2. IRRIGATION DISTRICTS IN CHINA

> RAPID CHANGE UNDERWAY,
CONSIDERABLE COMPLEXITY AND
VARIETY HAS EVOLVED SINCE EARLY
1980S

> KEY ELEMENTS INCLUDE:

A. INCENTIVES TO OFFICIALS IN WATER
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT UNITS TO
IMPROVE THEIR PERFORMANCE -->

* ANNUAL PERFORMANCE
EVALUATIONS WITH SALARIES
ADJUSTED BASED ON
PERFORMANCE

B. REGULATION ON WATER FEES:

- * PRINCIPLE IS REVENUES FOR O&M SHOULD BE MAINLY FROM USER FEES
- * CEILINGS IMPOSED BY CENTRAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS
- * GENERALLY INADEQUATE TO COVER FULL COSTS AND CAPITAL REPLACEMENT. YET LOCAL UNITS ARE FINANCIALLY RESPONSIBLE

C. DIVERSIFIED SIDELINE ENTERPRISES:

- * IRRIGATION DISTRICTS ENCOURAGED TO DEVELOP OTHER BUSINESSES TO CROSS-SUBSIDIZE IRRIGATION (AND PAY SALARIES OF STAFF)

- > GOVT POLICY -- NO CENTRAL OR PROVINCIAL FUNDS CAN BE USED FOR REGULAR O&M IN IRRIGATION DISTRICTS

- > WIDE VARIETY OF BUSINESSES (HOTELS, PETROL STATIONS, TEA PLANT NURSERIES, TOURIST BUNGALOWS, SOFT DRINKS)

- > SOME DISTRICTS ARE MANAGED BY SMALL LOCALLY CONTRACTED "IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT FIRMS" WHICH GET MULTI-YEAR CONTRACTS TO MANAGE SYSTEMS

2. WHY ARE COUNTRIES PROMOTING IRRIGATION MANAGEMENT TRANSFER?

A. FINANCIAL PRESSURES ON GOVERNMENTS:

* FAILURE TO RECOVER COSTS OR PROVIDE FUNDS

* DESIRE TO REDUCE COSTS AND REALLOCATE GOVT FUNDS

B. POOR PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT-MANAGED SYSTEMS

C. RISING CONFIDENCE IN CAPACITIES OF FARMERS AND LOCAL GROUPS

D. BELIEF THAT IN THE LONG RUN, PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY WILL BE IMPROVED THROUGH IMT

3. HOW TO CARRY OUT IMT (GETTING THE PROCESS RIGHT)

> AN AREA WHICH HAD RECEIVED MUCH ATTENTION IN PAST LITERATURE, LESS AT THE CONFERENCE.

USE OF "CATALYSTS" -- COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS -- HAS BEEN FOUND VERY EFFECTIVE IN MANY COUNTRIES

- * CAN USE TRAINED UNIVERSITY GRADUATES SPECIALLY HIRED FOR THIS

- * EXISTING GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL WITH SPECIAL TRAINING (MIXED EXPERIENCE)

- * USE LOCAL EDUCATED PEOPLE, OR EVEN COMMUNITY LEADERS, AFTER SOME TRAINING

- * "BRICK BY BRICK"

THESE APPLY TO THOSE CASES
WHERE IMPETUS FOR IMT IS FROM
ABOVE

- > CASES WHERE PRESSURE WAS FROM
FARMERS, E.G., COLOMBIA: FARMERS
HAD PAID CAPITAL COSTS AND
BELIEVED THEY COULD DO O&M
BETTER AND MORE CHEAPLY

4. PREREQUISITES TO SUCCESS

VITAL ELEMENTS TO ACHIEVE HIGH PERFORMANCE REGARDLESS OF MANAGEMENT TYPE.

- A. CLEAR WATER RIGHT -- SUPPORTIVE POLICY AND LEGAL ENVIRONMENT
- B. IRRIGATION INFRASTRUCTURE COMPATIBLE WITH RIGHTS, CAPACITIES, AND APPROPRIATE FOR SYSTEM OBJECTIVES
- C. CLEAR RECOGNIZED MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY
- D. ADEQUATE FINANCIAL & HUMAN RESOURCES
- E. ACCOUNTABILITY AND INCENTIVES FOR PERFORMANCE

- F. BENEFITS OF SELF MANAGEMENT EXCEED COSTS, WITH PROPORTIONALITY OF COSTS AND BENEFITS
- G. ORGANIZATIONAL AUTONOMY AND BOUNDARIES
- H. FINANCIAL AUTONOMY
- I. TRANSPARENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING

IMPORTANT ISSUE NOT FULLY ADDRESSED IN MANY COUNTRIES -->

REFORM OF GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

5. IMPLICATIONS FOR THEME OF THIS CONSULTATION -- IRRIGATION EXTENSION

> IN ASIA, RARE TO FIND AN EFFECTIVE IRRIGATION EXTENSION SYSTEM SEPARATE FROM NORMAL AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

* BECAUSE OF LONG IRRIGATION HISTORY, TAKE THIS ISSUE FOR GRANTED IN ASIA -- NOT MUCH USEFUL EXPERIENCE FOR AFRICA.

> DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ESTABLISHING EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT EXTENSION SERVICE:

RESOURCES INADEQUATE

I N C E N T I V E S A N D
A C C O U N T A B I L I T Y P R O B L E M S

- > COMPOUNDED BY ENORMOUS TASK OF REACHING MILLIONS OF SMALL FARMERS
- > "T&V" WITH "CONTACT FARMERS" MIXED SUCCESS AND GENERALLY NOT SUSTAINED IN ASIA.

CONCLUSION:

T W O S U G G E S T I O N S F O R CONSIDERATION

- A. DO EXTENSION THROUGH FARMER ORGANIZATIONS ESTABLISHED FOR MANAGEMENT OF IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

B. DESIGN A "VOUCHER SYSTEM" WHEREBY FARMERS WILL BE EMPOWERED TO PURCHASE EXTENSIONS SERVICES

- * ISSUE VOUCHERS TO FARMER ORGANIZATIONS
- * FARMERS NEGOTIATE WITH EXTENSION SERVICE FOR WHAT THEY REQUIRE
- * FARMERS PAY WITH VOUCHERS (PLUS SOME MATCHING FUNDS)
- * VOUCHERS CAN BE USED BY EXTENSION SERVICE TO OBTAIN FUNDS FROM GOVERNMENT, TO BE USED TO PAY SALARIES
- * OVER TIME, BEGIN CHARGING FARMERS SMALL FEE FOR VOUCHERS --> SHIFT TO SELF-FINANCING OVER MEDIUM TERM

A WAY OF INTRODUCING "MARKET FORCES" IN A CONTEXT WHERE NO MARKET PRESENTLY EXISTS, AND LACK OF PURCHASING POWER INHIBITS DEVELOPING SUCH A MARKET.