

# **Paper 5: A Process Based Diagnosis of Election of WUA Functionaries in Nepal West Gandak Irrigation System<sup>5</sup>**

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## **BACKGROUND**

This paper is based on a process documentation research (PDR) in Nepal West Gandak Irrigation System, initiated as a collaborative research program of Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), Research and Technology Development Branch (RTDB/DOI) and International Water Management Institute (IWMI). The paper begins with a description of institutional evolution in Nepal west Gandak Irrigation System (NWGIS) to outline the events and processes of management transfer that were initiated in the system beginning November 1992. Second part of the paper attempts to present the process of election of WUA functionaries at different tiers that was completed during April-July, 1998. This section of the paper also explains the organizational restructuring of WUA in NWGIS and the imperatives of organizational change. The last section of the paper attempts to compare the process of election of WUA functionaries that was completed recently with those in the past.

## **NEPAL WEST GANDAK IRRIGATION SYSTEM**

Nepal West Gandak Irrigation system (NWGIS) is a reservoir backed irrigation scheme designed to command 8,700 ha of land in Nawalparasi District in the Western Development Region of Nepal (Fig. 5.1). The construction of the system commenced under Indo-Nepal Gandak Agreement signed between India and Nepal in 1960. The construction of NWGIS was completed by the Indian Government and handed over to HMG/N in 1979. The original construction of NWGIS included a 32-km. long main canal with designed discharge of 8.5 cumecs and branch and minor canals. Below the secondary canal level, tertiary and quaternary level canals and on-farm facilities were not developed when the system was originally constructed and handed over to Nepal. During

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1982-1989, Command Area Development Project (CADP) was implemented in NWGIS. The objective of CADP was to develop the command area with the construction of tertiary and quaternary level canals and farm ditches serving 7-12 ha.

A schematic diagram illustrating the network of canals in NWGIS is presented in Fig 5.2. In the hierarchy of conveyance network eight different types of canals exist in NWGIS based on service area and discharge criteria, Branch canals and water Course off-take from main canal while minors off-take from branch canals. Before CADP, few tertiaries off-taking from branch canal were constructed which have been named as outlet tertiaries (OT). During CADP, some piped outlets off taking directly from the main canal were also constructed which have been named minor canal course (MC) and special farm ditch (SFD). Main farm ditches (MFD) are quaternary level canals Off-taking from branch, minor canals and watercourses. Farm ditches (FDs) off take from MC, MFD, and SFD to convey irrigation water to farmer's fields.

One of the aims of CADP was to initiate participation of the users in the operation and maintenance of the system by organizing them into water users' groups. However, there had not been much progress in initiating organized participation of users during CADP. In 1992, NWGIS was brought to joint Management Program of DOI and the process of management transfer was initiated.

## **EVOLUTION OF IRRIGATION INSTITUTION IN NWGIS**

The institutional development process in NWGIS, with the aims to initiate shared responsibility for operation and maintenance between water users and DOI, began in November 1992 under the initiation of Irrigation Management Division (IMD/DOI). A meeting of farmer representatives, local leaders and officials of other line agencies was called at NWGIS/DOI office at Semari on November 2, 1992 where the need for joint management program and users' participation in the operation and maintenance of the system was discussed and agreed upon. A chronological list of events since this time that led to evolution of viable water users' organization in NWGIS is presented in Table 5.1.

The first task in the early stage of joint management program was to develop organized groups of water users and initiate their involvement in decision making for operation and maintenance. The IMD/DOI developed the strategy to organize the water users in a multi-tiered water users association (WUA) with the participation of users from the entire command area. A team of IMD/DOI personnel conducted series of meeting at several locations in the command area to inform the users about the objective and the process of joint management program. Farmer organizers (FOs) were selected and hired from among the users on a temporary basis who were given responsibility to organize the users in blocks of approximately 500 ha. The FOs were also trained to collect basic data such as number of users served by each of the tertiary and quaternary canals, their land holding size, actual area under irrigation and the area that could potentially be brought under irrigation.

A general body meeting of the users on February 27, 1993 selected a constitution drafting committee with 15 member in the committee representing the entire command area. The DOI personnel worked as facilitator in the process of constitution drafting. Considering the system size and structural complexity, a federated water users organization with a built-in mechanism of users participation from the lowest to upper most tier was felt necessary. Consequently a four tiered WUA was conceived in NWGIS: i) a main committee at the main canal level, ii) branch committee at the branch canal level, iii) tertiary level committee (Toli committee) at the tertiary canal level, and iv) quaternary committee (Uptoli committee) at the quaternary canal level.

The next step was election of functionaries at all tiers of WUA. During March 1993, the election of functionaries at the Upatoli and Toli committee was initiated. On June 18, 1993, the main committee of WUA was formed in NWGIS with the general consensus of the functionaries elected at different levels. The constitution of WUA was registered at the District Administration Office of Nawalparasi District on June 27, 1993 that gave statutory recognition to WUA in NWGIS, in July 1994, NWGIS was selected as a candidate system under Irrigation Management transfer project (IMTP) to support and expand the management transfer efforts of DOI. Under IMTP, works on structural improvement of the system were started together with institutional development support to improve the capability of WUA.

Share system, defining the membership and rights and obligation of the users, was introduced in NWGIS. One unit of share was considered to be equivalent to I kattha (0.033 ha.) of land and the users were required to obtain as many shares as the land holding size to stake claims on irrigation supply. The WUA was given series of training on share system administration. The WUA also developed rules to collect ISF @ 60.00 per ha for each crop. Moreover, all the ISF dues were required to be cleared by the end of Kartik (2nd week of October) for the monsoon crops and by the end of Baisakh (2nd week of May) for the winter season crops. The WUA also made initiatives to generate other financial resources to meet operation and maintenance expenses, such as collection of taxes on the vehicles operated on the canal service roads and collection of taxes from the shops and weekly markets on the canal service roads.

The second election of WUA functionaries at different tiers was conducted during April-August, 1995. The users participation in the second election was lot more than that in the first election. The election of WUA main committee functionaries in the second election was done through secret ballot.

Turnover of tertiary and secondary level canals to the respective Uptoli, Toli and Branch Committees began from June 1993. On November 29, 1997 a formal ceremony was organized to turnover the entire system to the WUA for operation and maintenance.

Upon turnover of the system to the WUA, it was realized that it would not be possible for the main committee alone to ensure daily attention on the system operation and maintenance. Consequently, the WUA and IMTP/DOI officials realized the need for a separate unit within the WUA to organize and supervise water distribution on a day-to-

day basis at the main, secondary and quaternary canals. At the main canal level, a water management task force (Mool Karyadal) was formed to execute the canal operation and water allocation tasks. Similarly, at the secondary canal level, water management support group (Tewa Karyadal) and at the tertiary canal level, water management service groups (Sewa Karyadal) were formed to execute the water management tasks. Several member of Karyadal at each level were trained on canal operation.

In November 1997, the WUA made constitutional amendments for organizational restructuring with the aims to make the organization of WUA capable of delivering all the administrative, financial and technical responsibilities on a daily basis. The organizational restructuring was imperative because the WUA was expected to take over the entire operation and management functions of the system upon turn-over and that the technical and advisory support of IMTP that had been in place beginning November 1994 was expected to end in July 1998. Following the constitutional amendment, the main committee was replaced by a Board of Directors (Sanchalak Samiti) to be formed by elected functionaries from lower tiers of WUA. Furthermore, an Executive Committee (Karyakarini Samiti) was proposed to function under the Board of Directors to execute the administrative, financial, technical and judicial management functions required for day-to-day operation and maintenance of the system. At the lower tiers of WUA, not much change in the organization were brought except that representation of women members at each level was made compulsory and also some changes were brought in the number of functionaries to be elected at each level.

The WUA initiated the process of third election at all tiers of WUA on November 29, 1997 with the formation of a five-member Election Commission to complete the election process. An Election Rule was enacted by the general assembly of WUA on November 29, 1997 with the provision of rules for the election of functionaries at different tiers of WUA. The election process began on April 2, 1998 with the election of Upatoli level functionaries. The functionaries of the Board of Directors under new organizational structure were elected on June 12, 1998. The election process was completed with the election of women representatives in the Board of Directors on July 25, 1998, formation of Executive Committee on July 21, 1998 and formation of Regional Committee of WUA during July 26-29, 1998.

## **EXISTING ORGANIZATION OF WUA IN NWGIS**

The organizational structure of WUA prior to constitutional amendment of November 1997 and that after the constitutional amendment are shown in Figs 5.3 and 5.4, respectively. As of now, there are 175 quaternary level canals (MCs, MFDs and SFDs) in NWGIS. At each quaternary canal, a Upatoli Committee is to be constituted with seven functionaries including: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, a member to represent in WUA General Assembly, a member to represent in the immediately upper tier of organization to which the Upatoli is connected, a women member and a general member. A total of 175 General Assembly members are to be elected from the respective Upatolis constituted at the quaternary canals. The Toli Committees at the tertiary level canals (Minors, OTs and Water courses in the existing hierarchy of canals in NWGIS) are to be

constituted by member representatives from respective Upatolis within the tertiary, who among them elect: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and a member to represent in the immediately upper tier of organization where the Toli is connected. The Branch Committees are to be constituted by all the member representatives from respective Toli Committees within a Branch Canal who among them elect: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and member to represent in the Board of Directors.

In NWGIS, there are 35 off-takes from the Main Canal with MC, SFD, Watercourse and Branch Canals connected to the Main Canal. From each off-take a member representative is to be elected from Upatoli, Toli or Branch Committee who represent as a general member in the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is to be constituted by a maximum of 41 members and functionaries including 35 member representatives from each off-take from the Main Canal, 3 women members representing each of the four regions of the system who are to be nominated by member representatives in the Board of Directors from the respective regions. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors are to be elected from 175 General Assembly members and 35 member representatives in the Board of Directors from each off-take of the Main Canal.

A flow chart illustrating the representation of the members in the Board of Directors from the lower tiers of WUA is presented in Table 5.2.

In the existing organizational set-up, a five-member Executive Committee is to be formed by nominated members of the Board of Directors. One of the members of the Executive Committee is to be designated as Manager who would be ex-officio secretary of the Board of Directors. Other four members of the Executive Committee, representing each of the four regions of the system, are to be designated as sectional heads of Administrative, Accounts & Store, Technical and Judicial Sections of the Executive Committee.

Before the constitutional amendment of November 1997, the functionaries of the Main Committee included Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer elected from among the member representatives in the Main Committee from each off-take from the main canal. In the Main Committee election of April 1995, there were 171 general assembly members of WUA and total numbers of functionaries in the Main Committee including the member representatives was 31.

## **DYNAMICS OF ELECTION PROCESS**

This section describes the process of election of WUA functionaries at different tiers that was completed during April-July, 1998. The PDR team from IAAS, Rampur observed the election process at all levels of WUA. The schedule of election for different tiers of WUA was as under:

<u>Tier of WUA</u>	<u>Date of Election</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Upatoli Committee	April 2, 1998	Region I and IV
	April 7, 1998	Region II and III
	April 13, 1998	Re-election in those Upatolis where election was postponed on April 2 and 7
Toli and Branch Committee	April 23, 1998	
Board of Directors	June 12, 1998	
Women Representatives in the Board of Directors	July 27, 1998	
Executive Committee	July 21, 1998	
Formation of Regional Committees:		
Region-I	July 26, 1998	
Region-II	July 27, 1998	
Region-III	July 28, 1998	
Region-IV	July 29, 1998	

The Election Commission developed voter lists of respective MCs, SFDs, and MFDs for Upatoli level election based on the criteria that only those users could qualify to vote who had acquired share certificates before Magh, 2054 (2nd week of February, 1998). The Election Commission fixed numerous polling centers and at each polling center election of functionaries for a fixed number of Upatolis was conducted. The election schedule was communicated to the Chairman of outgoing Upatoli and Toli Committees and also to the concerned Village Development Committees (VDCs). The functionaries of outgoing Upatoli and Toli Committees and VDC functionaries were expected to diffuse the information among the users.

On the day of election, the deputed polling officers at each polling center explained the users about the election process and asked the users to elect appropriate candidates through general consensus. Where general consensus could not be reached on candidates, direct election was conducted either by asking the voters to raise their hands in favor of particular candidate(s) or by asking the candidates to draw lottery. This process of election was followed for the election of Upatoli, Toli and Branch Committee level functionaries. The election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors was conducted through secret ballot.

### **Enactment of Election Rules**

The WUA General Assembly approved an Election Rule on November 29, 1997. The new Election Rules has made provision to constitute an Election Commission with a Chief Election Officer and four regional election officers representing the four regions of

the system. The chief election officer is to be appointed through general consensus of the general assembly members while election officers for each region are to be appointed through consensus of general assembly members of the respective regions. While the regional election officers have been made responsible to conduct the Upatoli and Toli level elections in the respective regions, the Chief Election Officer has overall responsibility of executing and coordinating the election process at all levels of WUA.

The new election rule has approved a schedule of five to six weeks to complete the election process at all levels.

- |                                       |   |   |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Week                  | - | Election of functionaries at Upatoli Level                  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Week                  | - | Election of functionaries at Toli level                     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Week                  | - | Election of functionaries at Branch Committee level         |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> /5 <sup>th</sup> Week | - | Election of functionaries in the Board of Directors         |
| 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> Week | - | Election of women representatives in the Board of Directors |

As per the new election rule, all the users in NWGIS who have acquired share certificates and who have cleared ISF dues within due date set by the Election Commission are eligible to vote and qualify for the candidates at any level. The outgoing Upatoli, Toli and Branch level Committees have been made responsible to initiate the process of election of new functionaries at the end of their tenure. Committees at each level have been authorized to select a polling officer from among the users who is not contesting in the election. The polling officer in consultation with the regional election officers is required to conduct the election of functionaries at respective Upatoli and Toli Committee. The names of the elected functionaries are to be notified to the regional election officer of the respective regions within seven days of the date of election.

### **The Election Process**

The Process of third election of WUA functionaries in NWGIS was initiated and conducted entirely by WUA and the role of DOI personnel including those of IMTP/TA team was limited to monitoring, supervision and advisory role only. In the previous two elections that were conducted during March-June 1993 and April-August, 1995, all the process of election at all levels of WUA were conducted by DOI personnel and the role of WUA in the election process had been passive.

In the third election, the Election Commission Constituted by the WUA mobilized the participation of the members of Water Management Task force (Karyadal) and NWGIS/DOI officials to work as polling officers. A training program was organized by IMTP/DOI on March 22, 1998 to train the chief election officer, regional election officers and other personnel engaged in the election process.

#### *Election of Upatoli Level Functionaries*

Some features of Upatoli level election observed in NWGIS are as under:

- To complete the election of functionaries at 174 Upatolis, the Election Commission conducted the election process on April 2 and April 7, 1998. On April 2, 1998 election of Upatoli level functionaries in Region-I and Region-II was completed while election in Region-II and Region-III was conducted on April 7, 1998. The Election Commission on each day of Upatoli level election deputed a total of 23 polling officers.
- In the election of Upatoli level functionaries in the MCs, most of the candidates were found aspiring to be elected for the position of members in the Board of Directors or General Assembly member because of the opportunities with these two positions to reach at higher tier of the WUA. Almost no one was interested to be elected as the functionary of Upatoli.
- As per the regulation of election commission, only those users who had acquired Share Certificates before the end of Magh 2054 (2nd week of February, 1998) could qualify to vote and only those users who had acquired Share Certificates and who had cleared the ISF dues within the due date could file nomination for candidacy. Accordingly, the Election Commission prepared the voter list. At several polling centers, however, the users were found to have been issued Share Certificates in a number of MFDs and hence they had the voting right and right to file candidacy in multiple Upatoli level committees. Similarly, in some cases specific MFD number had not been mentioned on the share certificates issued to the users. This made it difficult to ascertain as to which MFD a particular user belongs. The deputed Polling Officer seemed not to be having clearly defined instruction from the Election Commission. This became a source of dispute between the users and the polling officers and among the users. At several polling centers, the dispute was resolved by the intervention of the Chief Election Officer who directed the users that a user with Share Certificates in multiple MFDs could vote in as many MFDs but he/she could file candidacy and be elected only in one Upatoli.
- The Election Commission had developed a strategy to ask the users to select the candidates as far as possible through consensus. Where consensus could not be reached a process of direct election by asking the voters to raise hands in favor of specific candidates or by asking the candidates to draw lottery. The users however, in many cases were found not in favor of the process of direct election because it could bring unwanted inter-personal disputes.
- As per the election rule, the users were required to elect the functionaries in the presence of the polling officer. In a number of cases however, a list of consensus candidates was found to have been prepared one day ahead of the scheduled date of election. When such a list was submitted to the polling officer, in some cases, other users present at the polling centers on the day of election objected to the names of the proposed candidates resulting in a dispute among the users.



- In the process of nomination of the candidates, the decision making process was found to be dominated by few individuals who were either functionaries of outgoing committees of WUA, village elite or members of local political units.
- In majority of the cases, the users were found to be distinctly divided in to different factions based on political party alliances. The village level leaders of different political parties were found convincing the voters to vote for the candidates of their political parties.
- Despite constitutional provision of compulsory women representation at each tier of WUA, the participation of women users in the election process was very small. In several of the Upatolis women member in the committee could not be elected.

#### *Election of Toli and Branch Committee Level Functionaries*

The election of Toli and Branch Committee level functionaries was conducted on April 23, 1998. To constitute the Toli Committees at tertiary canal level the member representatives from the Constituent Upatoli level committees within the tertiary were to elect: Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary and a member to represent in the immediately upper tier of organization where the Toli is connected. Similarly, the Branch Committees were to be constituted by the member representative from the constituent Toli committees within a branch. The Election Commission had fixed thirteen polling centers to conduct the election of Toli and Branch Committee level functionaries. At each polling center, a polling officer was deputed by the election commission to conduct the election process. Some of the observations made in the election of Toli and Branch Committees level functionaries are as under:

- Compared to Upatoli level election, the pressure on the deputed polling officer was much lesser due to smaller number of member representatives from the constituent Upatolis involved in the formation of Toli and Branch Committees.
- At all the polling centers, the functionaries for the Toli and Branch Committees were elected by general consensus except in Manjharia Branch where election through secret ballot was conducted for the position of chairman and member representative in the Board of Director.
- Political Party based alliance was distinct among the member representative constituting Toli and Branch level Committees.

#### *Election of Functionaries of the Board of Directors*

The Election of Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors was conducted on June 12, 1998 through secret ballot. The voters in the election included 175 General Assembly members elected from each of 174 Upatolis at the MC, MFD and SFD levels and the 35 members elected to present in the Board of Directors from the 35 off takes from the main canal. Thus, there were 209 voters. There were three candidates each

contesting the election for the position of chairman and vice-chairman. The Election Commission had prepared ballot papers with the election symbols for the candidates of chairman and vice-chairman. To cast the vote, the voters were required to put *Swastika* mark against the election symbol of the candidate of their choice within the designated space of the ballot paper. Of the 209 total number of voters, 205 votes were cast within the designated time of voting.

The political influence and connections were found to be dominant in the dynamics of the election process. The political connection could be noticed from the selection of candidates to coalition and seat adjustment and campaign program of the candidates. Two reasons that were identified for the dominance of politics in the election process are:

- i. NWGIS is a large irrigation system with 8,700 ha command area covering 22 VDCs. The system is located in one of the densely populated area of Nawalparasi district and includes almost two constituencies for the election of Member of Parliament. If a person were elected as a Chairman or Vice-chairman of the Board of Directors of WUA, it would make the person known to a larger population. This has been the reason that people and political parties consider these positions in WUA as platform in mobilizing public opinion in preparation for contesting election at the district and national level political units.
- ii. The political parties use the election to test their strength prior to parliamentary election. If a candidate supported by a political party wins the election for the position of Chairman or Vice-chairman, it would indicate favorable public opinion for that party.

All the candidates who had filed nomination to contest the election for the Chairman or Vice-chairman had active political affiliation and support of some political party. The district level leaders of different political parties were actively engaged in developing election coalitions and campaigning in favor of their candidates. On the day of polling, district level leaders of different political parties were present at the NWGIS office premises in support of their candidates.

All the candidates contesting election used the strategy of door to door campaigning and for few days before the day of polling, the campaigning continued until late night. On the day of polling some of the candidates had arranged vehicles to transport the voters from their houses to the polling center and back. Some candidates had also made arrangements for food and drinks for the voters, probably, to influence them to cast votes in their favor.

Many people present at the polling center on the day of election were concerned with the politicization of the election process and expenses made by the candidates in arranging transportation, food and drinks for the voters. Their concern was that such expenses would make the election process costly and would not be affordable by general users of the system.

### *Election of Women Representatives in the Board of Directors*

Election of women representatives in the Board of Directors was conducted under new constitutional provision for compulsory representation of women users at each level of WUA. In the Board of Directors, provision of representation of one women member from each of the four regions of NWGIS has been made. These women representatives were to be nominated by elected women representatives in the Board of Directors from respective regions. A total of 5 women candidates from Region-I, 3 candidates from Region-II and two candidates each from Region-III and Region-IV filed nomination to contest the election. While in Region-III, consensus could be reached in electing the women member representative, in the other three regions; election was done through majority votes.

### *Election of Executive Committee Functionaries*

The election of the functionaries of the Executive Committee was conducted on July 21, 1998. The provision of the Executive Committee has been made in the new constitution of the WUA with the aim of creating a unit within WUA, responsible for day-to-day technical, administrative, financial and judicial management functions. The Executive Committee is to be constituted by five members nominated from among the members of the Board of Directors. One of the members is to be designated as Manager and other four members representing each of the four regions of the system are to be designated as heads of administrative, accounts & store, technical and judicial sections of the Executive Committee.

On the day of election of the functionaries for the Executive Committee, the members were aligned in two groups, each proposing name of a set of candidates to be nominated as the functionaries of the Executive Committee. When consensus could not be reached the election was done through majority votes.

### *Formation of Regional Committees of WUA*

In the present constitution of WUA there is no provision for the formation of regional committee of WUA. The need for the regional committee of WUA in each of the four regions of NWGIS was realized by the members of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee functionaries because of a very large system area and difficulty for the Board of Directors and Executive Committee to coordinate, monitor and supervise the irrigation management tasks in each region of the system. It was realized that the regional committees constituted in each of the four regions of the system would be in a better position to coordinate the irrigation management tasks within each region.

The regional committees were to be constituted by the member representatives in the Board of Directors who among them elect a Chairman and all other members would work as ex-officio member of the regional committee. The regional committees in all the four regions of the system were constituted through consensus among the member representatives of the respective regions during July 26-29, 1998.

### *Comparison of the Current Election with the Previous Two Elections of WUA*

The first election of WUA functionaries at all levels conducted in March, 1993 was at the time of management transfer when the users were not adequately informed of the joint management process and their roles in the operation and management of the system. The participation of the users in the election process tremendously increased during the second election of WUA conducted during April-August, 1995. The current election of WUA completed during April-July, 1998 was at the phase when the system has been turned over to the WUA for operation and maintenance and the support of IMTP/DOI has been in the process of getting to be withdrawn.

To make the organization of WUA responsive to the current operation and management responsibilities, the WUA has made organization restructuring. The organizational restructuring was imperative because the WUA was expected to deliver all administrative, financial and technical management responsibility on a daily basis after the management transfer. Two of the significant changes brought in the organization of WUA were replacement of main committee by Board of Directors and formation of an Executive Committee to work as a unit within WUA responsible for day-to day operation and management of the system. The formation of regional committee of WUA in each of the four regions of the system was with the aim of decentralizing the power and responsibility for the coordination of irrigation management task.

Another important feature of the current election has been that entire process of election was conducted by WUA and the role of IMTP/DOI was limited to monitoring and advisory roles only. While IMTP/DOI personnel conducted the processes of previous two elections and the role of WUA concerning decision making related to the election process was passive. The WUA in NWGIS has enacted an Election Rule to conduct the election of functionaries at all level of WUA. For the current election, the WUA constituted an Election Commission to coordinate and conduct the election at all levels of WUA.

### **SUMMARY**

The role of the Election Commission in conducting the election of WUA functionaries at all levels had been commendable in terms of mobilizing personnel, making arrangements and coordinating the election process. This could be viewed as an indicator of institutional strength of WUA in NWGIS.

A comparison of number of functionaries elected for one, two and three terms in the three elections of WUA in NWGIS reveals that at all levels of WUA there were larger number of functionaries who were elected for one term and very few were elected for two or three terms. This comparison in one of the branch canal of NWGIS (Bhujahawa Branch) is illustrated in Table 5.3. Similar trends have been observed in secondary, tertiary and quaternary canals.

Even at the main system level organization of WUA, no single person has been elected a Chairman or Vice-chairman for more than one term. This trend illustrates that the level of participation of users in the WUA has increased overtime and the trend to patterned leadership at any level of the system does not exit.

The users of the system were found concerned with increasing politicization of the election process at all levels of WUA and particularly at the main system level election. Influence of party based politics in the election process of WUA in NWGIS may be evolutionary and it may diffuse over time but there is a need for the users to be sensitized such that the political influence may not cause irreparable damage to the institutional development process of WUA.

Table 5.1: Time Line of Evolution of WUA in NWGIS

Date	Event	Outcome
Nov 2, 1992 (2049/7/17)	Meeting of farmer representatives, local leaders and representatives of line agencies under the initiation of IMWUD/DOI at NWGIS office, Semari. A total of 220 people were present	The need of joint management program in NWGIS was agreed.
Dec. 30, 1992 to Jan 6, 1993 (2049/9/15 to 2049/9/22)	Selection of Farmer Organizers (FOs) to organize the process user in a block of approx. 500 ha.	Data need to initiate institutional development were collected. Users were informed of objectives and the process of joint management program.
Feb 27, 1993	A 15-member committee to draft constitution of WUA was established	The committee members drafted constitution of WUA with the support from IMWUD/DOI officials. A four-tiered organization of WUA was proposed.
March 19, 1993 to June 18, 1993 (2049/12/6 to 2050/3/4)	1 <sup>st</sup> election of functionaries at different tiers of WUA	Functionaries at Upatoli, Toli, Branch and Main to committee level were elected. The main committee was formed on June 18, 1993 with the general consensus of elected functionaries at lower tiers.
March 30, 1993 (2049/12/17)	An ad-hoc committee was formed with the members of constitution drafting committee to work as main committee of WUA until the election of functionaries at all tiers and formation of main committee.	Beginning of participation of users in the operation and maintenance of NWGIS.
June 27, 1993 (2050/3/13)	Registration of the constitution of WUA at the District Administration Office, Nawalparasi.	The WUA in NWGIS became an institution recognized by the state.
June 27, 1993 (2055/3/13)	Decision made by the users of Palhi Minor, Bhagatpurwa Minor, Germi Minor, Ragargunj Minor, MC-2, SFD-2, MC-2, MC-25 and SFD-6 to take-over operation and maintenance	Beginning of turnover of secondary and tertiary level canals to WUA for operation and maintenance.
Nov 29, 1994 (2051/8/13)	Beginning of IMTP involvement in NWGIS.	Irrigation Management Transfer Project (IMTP) selected NWGIS as one of the sub-projects to support the management transfer process. A sub-project management committee with the WUA representatives and NWGIS/DOI official was formed on Nov 29, 1994 (2051/8/13).
April 18, 1995 (2052/1/5)	Initiation of process for 2nd election of WUA at all tiers	Decision was made by WUA to request NWGIS/DOI for help in conducting free and fair election of functionaries at all levels.
April 24, 1995 to Aug 21, 1995 (2052/1/11 to 2052/5/5)	Election of Functionaries at all levels of WUA.	NWGIS/DOI officials conducted and supervised the election of WUA functionaries at all levels. The election of WUA main committee was conducted on August 21, 1995 (2052/5/5).
May 4, 1995 (2052/1/21)	Establishment of separate office of WUA within the premises of NWGIS office at Semari.	Initiation of day-to-day involvement of WUA in operation and management of system.

Date	Event	Outcome
May 4, 1995 (2052/1/21)	A committee constituted by WUA to suggest constitutional amendments.	Constitutional amendment for restructuring to introduce "Board of Directors" and "Executive Committee in WUA organization and to make women participation in WUA compulsory. The constitutional amendment was approved by the general assembly of WUA on November 29, 1997 (2054/8/14).
Oct 7, 1996 (2053/6/21)	A Water Management Task force (Karyadal) appointed by WUA main committee at Main Canal Level to take-up water measurement and water distribution tasks at the main system level.	Beginning of WUA involvement in canal operation, water distribution and supervision of water distribution on a day-to-day basis.
Feb 3, 1997 (2053/10/21)	Decision made by WUA main committee to take over trees along canal bank.	A delegation led by a team of WUA functionaries negotiated with the Ministry of Forest and decision was made to develop a forest utilization plan on August 23, 1997 (2054/5/7)
Oct 7, 1997 (2054/6/21)	A committee constituted by WUA main committee to draft general election rules for the election of WUA functionaries at all tiers.	A election rule was drafted that was approved by assembly on November 29, 1997 (2054/5/14)
Nov. 6, 1997 (2054/7/21)	Main Committee decision to take-over the entire operation and maintenance of NWGIS beginning November 26, 1997 (2054/8/13).	Turnover of the system to WUA. A formal turnover ceremony was organized on November 29, 1997 (2054/8/14).
Nov. 29, 1997 (2054/8/14)	Election Commission formed by the general assembly to initiate the processes for the third election of WUA functionaries at all levels.	Beginning of conducting the election by WUA. Previous ones were conducted entirely by NWGIS/DOI officials.
April 2, 1998 (2054/12/20)	Beginning of 3rd election of WUA functionaries at all levels.	Elections of Upatoli level functionaries were conducted on April 2, April 7 and April 13, 1998 and the election of Toli level functionaries was conducted on April 23, 1998. The schedule for the election of functionaries for the "Board of Directors" is yet to be decided.

Table 5.2: Details of Farmer Representation in NWGIS

Name of the Canal	Area under command (ha)	Upatoli Committee		Toli Committee		Branch Committee		No. of General Assembly Members	No. of Representatives in the Board of Directors
		No. of Committee	No. of Functionaries	No. of Committee	No. of Functionaries	No. of Committee	No. of Functionaries		
MC 1	40.7	1	7	1	4	-	-	2	1
SFD 1	10.5	1	7						
SFD 2	12.62	1	7	1	4	-	-	2	1
MC 2	63.21	1	7						
MC 3	91.72	1	7	1	4	-	-	2	1
SFD 3	12.62	1	7						
Chhibani Water Course (MFD No. 1 to 4)	123.93	4	28	1	7	-	-	4	1
MC4	120.71	1	7			-	-	1	1
MC5	134.44	1	7	1	4	-	-	1	
SFD 4	20.08	1	7					1	1
Bishnugunj Branch	1320.6								
MFD No. 1 to 14		14	98						
OT 1 (MFD No. 1 to 10)		10	70	1	10				
OT 2 (MFD No. 1 to 8)		8	56	1	8	1	21	37	37
OT 3 (MFD No. 1 to 5)		5	35	1	5				
MC 6	45.91	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 7	177.4	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 8	34.2	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 9	87.26	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
Manjharia Minor (MFD No. 1 to 23)	1225	23	161	1	23	-	-	23	1
MC 11	73.4	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
Nandapur Minor (MFD No. 1 to 8)	368.8	8	56	1	8	-	-	8	1
MC 12	27.98	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
Bhujahawa Branch	1150.54								
MFD No. 1 and 2		2	14	-	-				
Bhujahawa Minor (MFD No. 1 to 13)		13	91	1	13				
Gadauri Minor (MFD No 1 to 6)		6	42	1	6	1	9	21	1
Shankarpur Minor (MFD No. 1 to 8)	392.7	8	56	1	8	-	-	8	1
MC 15	21.92	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 16	42.44	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 17	35.93	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 18	37.85	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1



MC 19	23.95	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 20	31.5	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
Piprahawa Branch MFD No. 1 to 4	1096.75	4	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sunari Minor (MFD No. 1 to 6)		6	42	1	6	-	-	-	-
Jaini Minor (MFD No. 1 to 5)		5	35	1	5	1	11	24	1
Piprahawa Minor (MFD No. 1 to 9)		9	63	1	9	-	-	-	-
SFD 5**	8.92	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 21	46.3	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 22	84.15	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 23	38.07	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 24	22	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
Palhi Minor (MFD No. 1 to 5)	189.1	5	35	1	5	-	-	5	1
Germi Minor (MFD No 1 to 5)	248.92	5	35	1	5	-	-	5	1
Bhagatpurwa Minor (MFD No. 1 to 5)	240.31	5	35	1	5	-	-	5	1
Regargung Minor (MFD No. 1 to 5)	246.33	5	35	1	5	-	-	5	1
MC 25	47.28	1	7	-	-	-	-	1	1
MC 26	25.08	1	7	1	4	-	-	2	1
SFD 6	20	1	7	-	-	-	-	-	-
SFD-N 1 & 2**		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	8041.12	174	1218	-	148	3	41	174	35

\*\*Upatoli level functionaries were not elected in these SFDs during this election of WUA

Table 5.3: Number of Functionaries Elected for One, Two and Three Terms in the Three Election of WUA in Bhujahawa Branch of NWGIS.

Level	No of Functionaries Elected for one Term	No of Functionaries Elected for two terms	No of Functionaries Elected for three Terms
<b>Upatoli level Committee</b>			
MFD-1	18	4	-
MFD-2	16	2	1
<b>Bhujahawa Minor</b>			
MFD-1	12	6	1
MFD-2	21	1	1
MFD-3	15	2	-
MFD-4	*	*	*
MFD-5	9	5	-
MFD-6	8	8	1
MFD-7	6	2	3
MFD-8	13	3	-
MFD-9	8	1	3
MFD-10	8	4	1
MFD-11	10	3	1
MFD-12	15	2	-
MFD-13	17	1	-
<b>Gadauri Minor</b>			
MFD-1	**	**	**
MFD-2	17	1	-
MFD-3	15	2	-
MFD-4	4	3	3
MFD-5	10	3	1
MFD-6	12	2	3
<b>Toli Level Committee</b>			
Bhujahawa Minor	23	2	3
Gadauri Minor	14	1	2
<b>Branch Level Committee</b>			
Bhujahawa Branch	18	5	1
<b>WUA Main Committee ***</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>6</b>

\* First and second elections were not conducted at this Upatoli

\*\* First election was not conducted at this Upatoli

\*\*\* In the new organization, the Board of Directors has replaced structure of WUA Main committee

Figure 5.1: Map of Nepal West Gandak Irrigation System

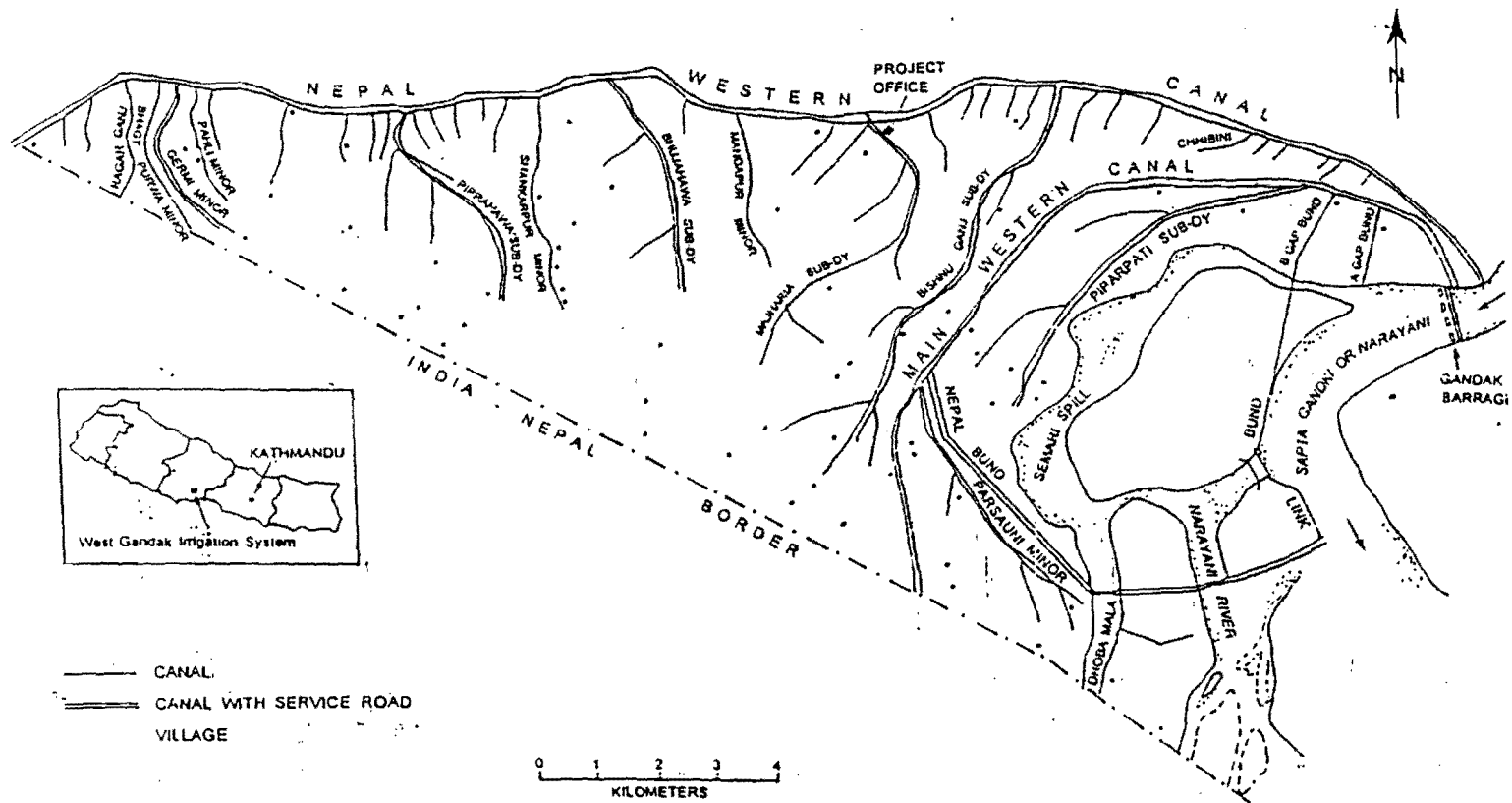
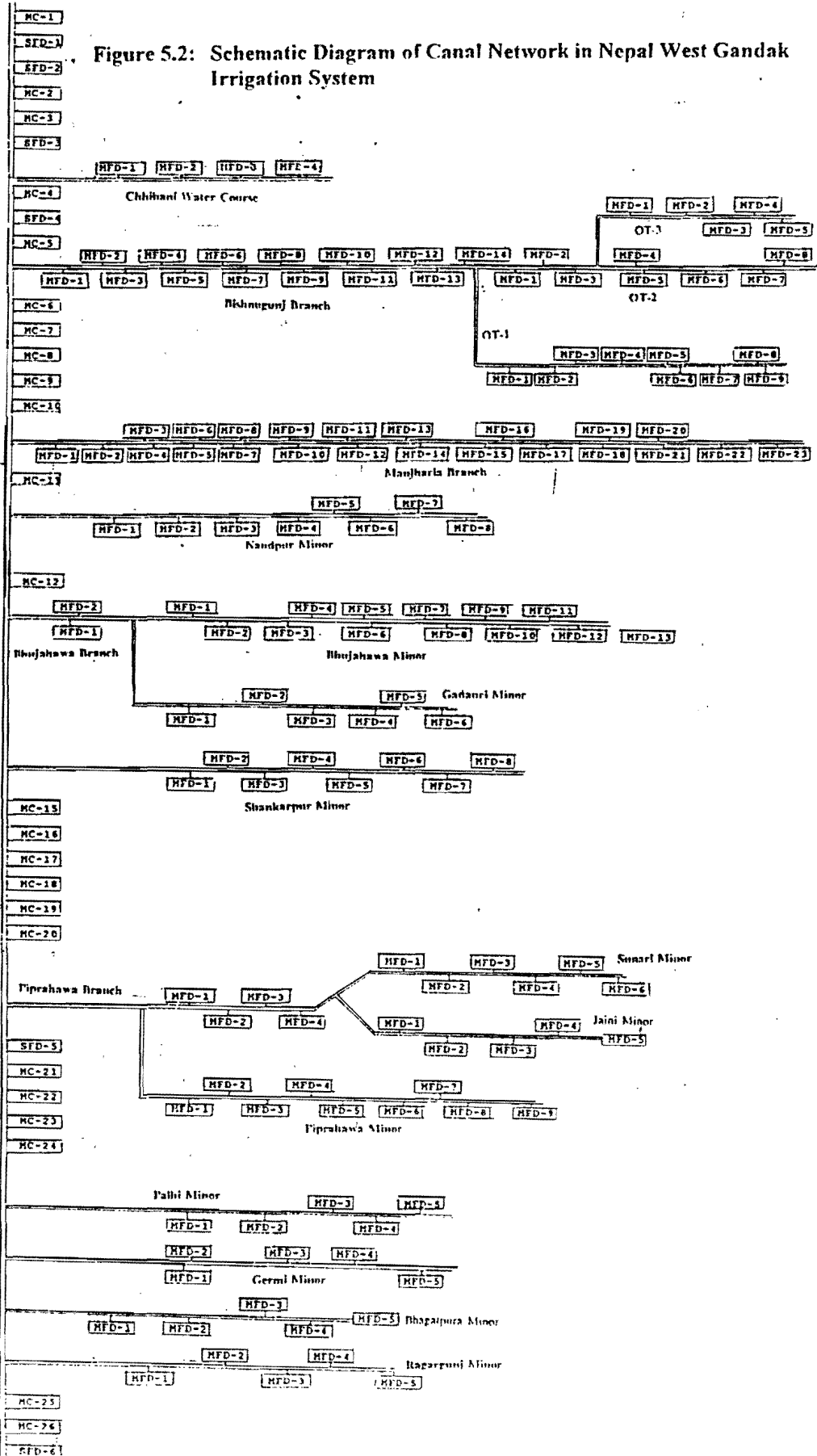
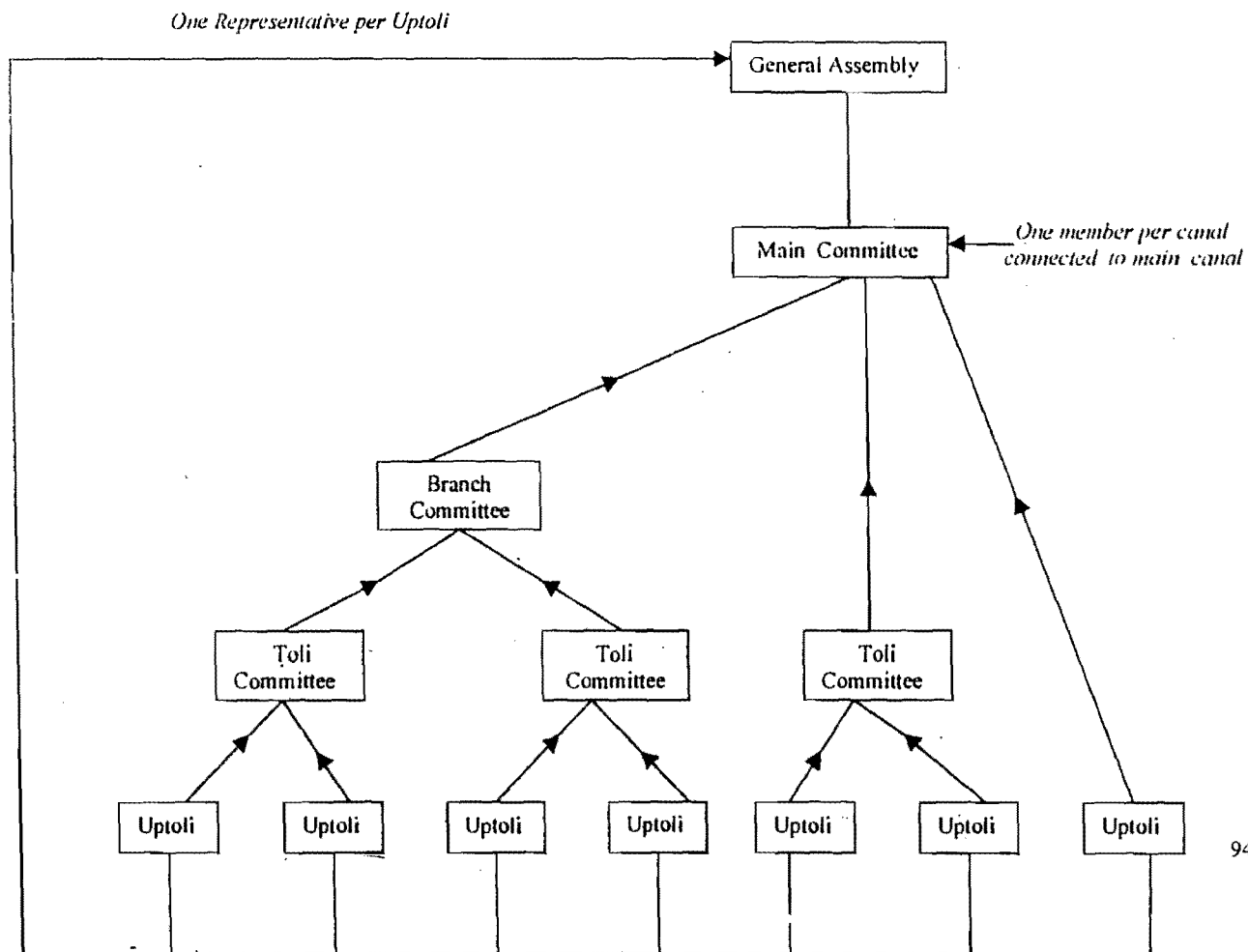


Figure 5.2: Schematic Diagram of Canal Network in Nepal West Gandak Irrigation System



Flow Chart 5.3: Organization of WUA in NWGIS before Amendments in WUA Constitution



Flow Chart 5.4: Organization of WUA of NWGIS as per New Constitution

