



Module 3: The enabling environment for establishing successful WUAs

1. Goal

To promote the adoption of good practices that are conducive to the emergence of viable WUAs and lead to their sustainable functioning

2. Learning Objectives

1. Participants will update and increase their knowledge regarding the following aspects:
 - a. Selecting and defining communication strategies for building consensus and support for the establishment of WUAs among farmers.
 - b. Understanding the need for using promoters of WUAs: Constituent Committees(CC), and Social Organizers(SO) and define their responsibilities.
 - c. Reviewing some of the good practices that will promote an enabled environment in the establishment of successful WUAs.

3. Key messages.

1. The objective of an awareness campaign is to inform the water users that a PIM/IMT program is underway and to develop a positive and collaborative attitude among water users.
2. Several communication means can be used for the awareness campaign. It is important to select those more suitable to local conditions.
3. Awareness campaigns must be well structured with clear messages and covering all the main issues that farmers must know about it.
4. The formation of WUAs needs the effort of a group of people in the users community (Constituent Committee or Social Organizers) willing to do the preparatory work for the establishment of the WUA. Their work is very important in preparing the ground for the future WUA.
5. In most cases the CC does not have the required knowledge and must be trained or prepared for the work to be done.
6. Economic motivation for IMT; dissatisfaction with the existing management ;local management capacity and financial and technical feasibility are essential factors for the establishment of viable WUAs
7. The membership of the WUA must be clearly defined before the first General Assembly of the WUA. Normally, landowners are natural members of the WUA but the relationship between votes and landownership needs to be fixed.
8. The first General Assembly of a given WUA is one of the most sensitive milestones of the WUAs. Must be prepared with great care and attention to details.
9. The functions of the Administrative Committee (AC) or Board of Directors (BD) depend much on the existence of technical staff (water provider) to undertake the management task .
10. The president of the Association together with the Board of Directors must provide a vision of the work to be done in the future. Often considerable changes are required in the operation and maintenance of the system.
11. WUAs require financial resources and equipment to initiate operations. This matter needs to be considered and resolved before starting.
12. The Transfer Agreement is an important document that regulates the conditions under which the transfer of responsibilities takes place. It should clearly describe the obligations of both parties (the WUA and the irrigation agency).



13. The transfer agreement often includes a special support plan for the initial period during which the irrigation agency may provide more intensive support services and improvement of the irrigation system.
14. Successful WUAs have in common a number of factors which include:
 - a. Capable leaders.
 - b. Recognized legal status to perform essential functions;
 - c. Clearly defined water rights for the association and its members.
 - d. Capacity to impose severe sanctions when needed
 - e. Development of good relations and fluent communication between the users and the leaders of the WUA.
 - f. Well trained technical staff for the operation, maintenance and administration of the irrigation system.
 - g. Financial viability
 - h. Auditing of the accounts by the water users

4. References

Vermillion, D.L and Sagardoy, J. A, 1999. Transfer of irrigation management Services. Guidelines. FAO Irrigation and drainage Paper No. 58, Rome. Can be downloaded from www.fao.org

Johnson, S.H. Vermillion, D.L and Sagardoy, J. A., 1995. Irrigation Management Transfer. Water Report No. 5. Land and Water Development Division Rome. Can be downloaded from www.fao.org

Capitanata Reclamation Board of Foggia, 1981. Statute Approved by the Regional Council of the Apulia Region, Deliberation n. 209. Foggia, Italy. Available from the IAM Bari.

Sagardoy, J.A. Main topics to be covered in the statutes of a generic water users association (WUA). Not published. It will be available as additional training material.