

PIM Concept

Issues and Challenges

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Historical Overview

- **Mid – 70s** → Canal Irrigation Reform → user participation at outlet level for water sharing, O&M and Conflict Resolution
- **Mid – 80s** → Experimentation with pilot WUAs – Gujarat, Maharashtra with supported though Ford Foundation, USAID etc
- **Early – 90s** → Handing over smaller and sub-systems to Farmers.
- **From 1997** → Donor funded state level restructuring APFMIS Act of 1997 – Big Bang Approach

WHY PIM?

■ Irrigated agriculture → 70% of water consumption

■ Post Independence Investments under Plans
Surface Irrigation Projects

23 million ha

1952-53



72 million ha

1996-97

■ Problems that Emerged are:

1. Difficult to O&M
2. Poor Cost Recovery
3. Poor utilisation of potential
4. Low efficiencies of water use
5. Low productivity

■ **Desperation to deal with problem of poor performance of large scale public irrigation projects due to**

- Population Pressure

- Food demands etc.

■ **The institutional crisis –**

Poor water distribution systems

Through dilapidated canal networks leading to head/tail and small/big farmer inequities.

- PIM is a response to those problems.

Objectives

Cost Recovery

Increase Water Efficiency

Physical Rehabilitation

Through

Decentralised management by Participation of users.

Equity was not a major motivation

User responsibility cum authority at various levels →

Variety of managerial options –

Maharashtra / Gujarat - bottom up - in Andhra Pradesh
it is top down.

Degree of Success and Gender Mainstreaming

- Small scale WUAs established through intensive NGO input in Maharashtra and Gujarat are still functional but only about 200 in each state.
- By end of 9th plan in 2002 over 37mha of irrigation potential created – not even 1% is under PIM/IMT through all large scale efforts.
- PIM in AP – reversal of control by bureaucracy
 - Witnessed a financially inspired participation till funds lasted

Gender Concerns

- Remarkable instances of women taking the lead in WUAs, however as isolated examples.
- Land based WUA membership – excluded women by and large

- Examples worth emulating
 - ASA from MP – Full voting rights to spouse in WUA
 - Women Sub-committees
- ASA – WUA strategy included
 - Capacity building for Women
 - Gender Sensitization for Men
- MP amended its act to give full voting rights to spouse
- In MP 98 women elected as presidents and 830 as members of WUAs (in Sample study area) but were not active as group members.
- Social and Practical barriers to their participation that requires Pro-active intervention.
- Role of NGOs critical for encouraging Gender Mainstreaming

Two Concepts of PIM

1. Managerial/Bureaucratic

- Division of labour – “Involvement” as distinct from “Participation” of Users
- Coordination between separate divisions
 - Efficiency overtakes Equity
- **Drawbacks**
 - **Land Based – Gender Exclusive**
 - **Agency Based**
 - **Isolated Irrigation Input**
 - **Rules of water allocation violated**
 - **Apolitical and top down**

2. Reorient Governance based on Rights Approach

- Based on equity (Gender and Class)**
- Water requirement derives from Social needs.**
- Planning – Creation – Distribution and Consumption of water are in response to these needs.**

■ Advantages

- Integrated**
- Rules of allocation are socially sanctioned ∴sustainable**
- State meets users on a common platform for shared responsibility**
- Politically nuanced approach as water is contentious issue**

■ Essentials

- Social mobilisation**
- Transparency**
- Negotiated Struggle**

Plugging the Holes - Key Challenges

- Pilots → Scaling up
- Iterative
- Advocacy for Water Rights
- Campaign for good governance → Struggle with Bureaucracy
- Main System Management – Assure Water Supply at outlet.
- Gender Mainstreaming – Critical for Socially Inclusive PIM
- Empowerment of WUAs because social differentiation/power relations/ discrimination reproduce within WUAs
- Inculcate Culture of Grass Root Democratization

Practical Suggestions

- Local Buffers
- Water for Tail before Head
- Crops to be limited by Water —→ Liaise with Agriculture Policy / Department
- Proactive efforts to encourage women as decision makers while planning for water.