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**TITLE: Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM)
 in Andhra Pradesh–An Overview**

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Abstract

Irrigation aims to timely and adequate supply of water to crops for improving the agricultural production. Each irrigation project envisages to cover a demarcated area and grow specified crops. However, in most of the large irrigation projects irrigation is much below the originally envisaged level and large extents particularly the lower reaches of the command of the project suffer from inadequate and unreliable supplies. Many of the areas do not get any irrigation at all. This performance gap is due to various reasons.

Experience in many parts of the World has shown that this gap could be minimized by improving the operation, maintenance, and management of the system by involving both the water users (farmers) and suppliers (the agency of the government). This is referred to as “*Participatory Irrigation Management*” (PIM).

Obviously farmers in a command area of any irrigation project will be in large numbers, with different concepts, priorities, requirements etc. To bring these varied interests together and enable them to be effective partners in management of irrigation system is both challenging and time consuming. The culture and the attitude of the suppliers (irrigation group) need to be moulded to work with farmers and users have to develop a collective and self-regulative work culture.

The work in Andhra Pradesh for promoting PIM has attracted wide attention. However, it needs to go a long way to make the PIM effective leading to the ultimate turnover of the irrigation system to the local farming community.

This paper briefly describes the efforts made in the State.

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1.0. Introduction

The state of, Andhra Pradesh (AP) is the fifth largest state in India with a geographical area of 27.6 million hectares (m.ha.). It is primarily an agrarian state with about 70 per cent of its population dependent on agriculture. Around 49 per cent of the geographical area is the cropped area (13.5 m.ha.). The mean annual rainfall in the state is 858 mm, received mostly between June to October. Long spells of dry periods during the rainy season affecting crop production, is not uncommon. Consequently, irrigation plays a vital role in agricultural production and has been the largest user of developmental funds. Irrigation potential under various surface sources, which was around 1.17 m.ha. in 1956 increased to about 4.8 m.ha. in the past few decades.

However, the actual irrigated area averages to about 2.8 to 3.2 m.ha., which is about 60 per cent of the potential created. Some of the important reasons attributed for this shortfall are:

- a. Inadequate maintenance leading to poor operation of irrigation systems;
- b. Management and operation of the irrigation system by the irrigation department as per normal administrative procedures; and
- c. Wide cognitive distance between the farmers and the irrigation agency leading to a mismatch of objectives.

In many irrigation projects, the lower reaches of the distributories, majors, minors and even outlets remain unirrigated because of undependable flows and inequitable distribution of water.

Government of AP took a policy decision in 1997, to involve farmers to improve irrigation utilization by promoting participatory irrigation management (PIM). This, calls for building up an institutional framework and provide for the enabling environment, which calls for massive efforts. The first was planned to be achieved through the formation of farmers' organizations called Water Users' Associations (WUAs) spread out in all the major, medium and minor irrigation systems covering the state and latter through a process of capacity building and financial viability. For this instead of adopting the normal practice of "*gradualist*" pattern, "*big bang*" approach is followed.

Promoting PIM through WUAs is very complex since it has to cross through various political, economic, and administrative barriers. The process of implementation has to overcome each of these hurdles. Political will has been one of the important requirements for bringing about a paradigm shift in irrigation management. Initially this process was spread out over a period of about 15 months from early 1996 to March 1997. District conferences were organized in all the 22 districts of the state with farmers and people representatives. This was followed up with several rounds of dialogues with all the concerned. A conference of all the leaders of the political

parties of the state was held to discuss various issues. Though there was initial resistance to the idea, it gained gradual acceptance by all political parties because of one overriding fact – namely the empowerment of the farmers.

2.0. Developing Legal Framework - Reforms

The legal framework for the formation of farmers' organization was provided through the special Act called the "*Andhra Pradesh Farmers Irrigation (APFMIS) Act, 1997*". The APFMIS Act provides the following:

- a. Creation of farmers' organization in all irrigation projects of the State. At the field level these are called Water Users' Associations (WUAs) covering a group of minors/ or small distributories. These are federated at the middle and upper level depending on the size of the irrigation project;
- b. Gives water rights to the WUAs;
- c. Provides functional and administrative autonomy to the WUAs;
- d. Makes irrigation department (ID) staff accountable to the WUAs, requiring ID staff to implement the decisions of the WUA;
- e. Enables WUAs to resolve conflicts by themselves within their area of operation;
- f. Enables proper maintenance and improvement of the irrigation systems by the WUAs based on resources raised by them or from out of the grants given by the Government as a percentage of water charges collected in the area;
- g. Allows access to information on project operations;
- h. Permits preparation of the operational plan for water distribution by the WUA and ensures assured and reliable supplies to all farmers;
- i. Provides freedom of cropping pattern to farmers; and
- j. Contains procedures and guidelines on accounting, social auditing, water budgeting, election procedures, and other administration.

The WUA will have a managing committee, which attends to day-to-day functioning. This body will have a president and managing committee members ranging from 4 to 10, who are all elected members. The operational area of a WUA is divided into segments called territorial units, and members in that area elect its representative for the WUA. The president is elected directly by all.

The tenure of these elected bodies is fixed as 5 years. The president or the member of the managing committee can be recalled by the members after a period of one year by giving a written notice signed by not less than one-third of the members of the farmers' organization. The motion for recall has to be adopted by a simple majority of the members present in the meeting specially convened for the purpose.

To encourage the unanimity among members, government of AP announced an incentive amount of Rs.50000/- for each WUA, which is formed unanimously. Elections were conducted to all the 10,292 Water Users Associations on June 17th 1997.

Around 59% of the WUAs (5763 WUAs) elected their presidents and members of the managing committee unanimously.

In November 1997, 174 distributory committees were constituted after duly notifying the jurisdiction of each Distributory Committee.

3.0. Developing Enabling Environment

Building up of proper environment for effective functioning of the farmers' organization is a long drawn process since many of the deep-rooted procedures, norms, privileges, etc., need to be modified or changed. Irrigation management at the field level has concentrated the authority and money in few hands with vested interests. This, the WUAs need to break it, which is possible only through building up their capacities. This has been one of the major thrust areas to enable the WUA to attend to, not only to the water management but also for proper maintenance of the system, resolve disputes and ensure the sustainability of the WUAs.

In fact farmers in general need to be exposed to their new roles of leadership and decision-making. They need to be made aware of their rights and responsibilities and transparency in the functioning of the President and the managing committee.

A series of training programmes have been organized both for the Presidents of WUAs and irrigation and other concerned agencies within the district / project area. For each course material in simple local language is developed and distributed in large number. In this training programme special emphasis is laid on the four topics: Maintenance, Water Regulation, Financial Management and Monitoring.

Training has been a continuous feature.

4.0. Repairs to Irrigation System

The distribution network in most of the irrigation systems has been in bad condition, because of poor maintenance. The normal grant is Rs.40/- per acre. From this, 85% was to meet the salaries of the field staff leaving very little for maintenance.

During the years 1998-99 and 1999-2000, this procedure is changed and an amount of Rs.100/- per acre was made available for maintenance. These funds are made available to the WUAs at the field level and distributory committee at the next level. The maintenance works are identified and works executed by the WUAs only. This pattern of maintenance brought about three changes. One, the WUA and farmers have a direct say in what to do and where to do the work. The second is that since the WUA themselves executed the work the overall quality of work is much better and lastly there is economy in the expenditure and money used more productively. Above all, a sense of ownership of the irrigation system could develop among the farmers and WUAs.

5.0. Financial Support

The water charges collected in the area of the WUA forms an important component of the resources.

The water charges in AP have been raised by three-fold from Rs.150/- per ha for paddy crop to Rs.500/- in 1997-98.

The government of AP has taken steps to augment the financial resources of the WUA through sharing of water tax. The president of WUA will make an assessment of areas irrigated. Government issued Order (No.115 Revenue department dated 13.2.2001)

stating that fifty per cent of the amount collected, which will be Rs.250/- per ha will go to WUA. This will be a regular annual feature, which will provide considerable financial resource to a WUA.

6.0. Transparency / Accountability in the Working of WUA and Social Audit

One of the essential requirements for the successful functioning of any organization is that it should be transparent in all its dealings and also develop accountability to its members. The general body consisting of farmers' organization provides the forum in which all decisions are taken and also affords an opportunity to review the works taken up. The general body consisting of all members of the WUA meets at least twice in the year and all the activities are explained and approval is taken.

Social audit is a new concept introduced mainly to ensure the quality of the functioning of the WUA. This is to be done associating the locally respected persons. This can generate public debate, help in ensuring transparency and accountability and can be a way to improve the overall functioning of the WUA.

6.1. Impact of PIM – (During the First Spell between 1997 – 2002)

The overall objective of PIM is to ensure supply of irrigation water to all the farmers in the entire command in the operational area of each WUA and also improve the productivity.

One of the methods adopted by the government of AP for assessing the impact has been through gathering information directly from the WUAs Presidents and Managing Committee members during the training programmes and workshops. A questionnaire is circulated for obtaining the reaction and impression of the farmers' representative.

Information is gathered from 4,880 WUAs, in the form of "Yes" and "No" answers.

The summary is given below¹:

Particulars	Yes (Percentage)
a. Maintenance of System:	
i. Have you conducted walk through survey for fixing up item of maintenance	84.79
ii. Maintenance works done:	
- Removal of silt	62.02
- Removal of vegetation	61.25
- Repairs of structures and outlets	65.24
- Closing of breaches	65.55
- Strengthening of embankments.	66.14
- Repairs to drains.	31.58
b. Water regulation and distribution	
i. Preparation of operational plan and water distribution	79.63
ii. Getting irrigation water in time.	80.67
iii. Irrigation reaching the tail end areas.	81.12

¹ The data was gathered by IRDAS from time to time during period. A simple one page questionnaire is circulated in different meetings with the Managing Committee members and farmers in a WUA across the State.

iv. Reduction in disputes - in water distribution.	81.72
v. Improvements due to repairs to drains.	54.73
c. Other Items:	
i. Raising internal resources through contribution	11.06
ii. More training's to be organized	85.75

The experience of the working of WUA has shown considerable awakening in the rural side and the importance of the WUA has been on the increase.

Even though the figures appear impressive, the functioning needs to be further improved not only to ensure the benefits to reach all farmers in the command but also the sustainability of the institution.

7.0. Second Spell of WUA

The bodies formed in 1997 completed its term by June 2002. However, before taking action to form new bodies it was thought necessary to have a critical look into the experiences.

In the last week of March 2002 (27th March 2002), a review of the overall progress, performance, and constraints faced by WUAs was done and a letter to all the Presidents of WUAs in AP was addressed by the then Chief Minister of the State. Specifically the following was mentioned in the letter²:

“For ensuring participation of all the farmers to provide transparency in the activities of WUA, it is essential that the general body should meet at least twice in a year, and the managing committee every month. This will provide the required confidence and encouragement to all farmers to be actively involved in the working of the WUA. Many of the WUAs have not organized these meetings regularly. Due to this a feeling that maintenance works are the job of Presidents only is created among the farmers. In addition, many Presidents have been acting as contractors to the WUAs. All this have naturally caused disinterest among farmers.”

“The irrigation systems in the state which were in very bad status have been brought to working conditions through massive maintenance activity taken up by WUA (in the past 2/3 years). Henceforth, the systems will be requiring only minimum maintenance and would not be needing any major repairs. Further, the WUAs need not depend on grants from government. With the share amounts from the water tax and other internal resources they will be in a position to maintain, operate, and manage the system through self-help. As the movement of PIM gains, the confidence of riots is built up and the whole thing will be an ideal platform to promote all round development of the farmers and the society. . . .

“In any society, laws are essential to bring about progress and to overcome the various obstacles. However, it is equally essential that these laws are periodically reviewed based on experience and changes brought about, so that the progress could be effective and meaningful to the society. It is in this context government is keen to review the working of the APFMIS Act 1997 and bring about required improvements and changes in the Act so that more facilities and support could be provided to the farmers and WUAs to function effectively and make them more vibrant and strong

² Note: The letter was originally written in Telugu and is translated into English at our end.

“ . . . For this purpose I am organizing workshops / saddasus in different areas / districts in the state in the next few weeks so that your advice and suggestions are obtained which could be incorporate suitably in the Act”.

7.1. Consultation Process

As indicated by the Chief Minister, in his letter to the Presidents, the consultative process was initiated in April 2002. District level workshops were organized in all the 22 districts. Each workshop was attended by 100 to 150 WUA Presidents in the district.

To facilitate discussions the major issues were listed out.

A summary of the discussions in these 22 district workshop are:

i. Tenure of WUAs

The present tenure of five years is resulting in showing complacency by the individuals. Hence in the interest of the WUA the period is to be reduced to two or three years. This will provide opportunity for replacement of non-functioning members and help more farmers to be in the WUA for serving their organizations.

ii. Post of Vice-President

Experience has shown that when a vacancy is caused in the post of President due to death, resignation or other reason, the activities of the concerned are crippled since the election to the post of WUA President are seldom conducted within the stipulated period of one month as per Act. The interim arrangements for filling up the casual vacancy are also not prompt and effective. Hence the suggestion is to have a post of Vice-President in the WUA set up so that the Vice President automatically takes over as President for the remaining tenure of WUA.

One more suggestion is that the Vice President can be elected by the TC members.

iii. Gender Issue

There is a suggestion to provide adequate representation to women in WUA set up since the spouse of the male farmer toils equally with the farmer. It is only fair that they are given suitable representation either through reservation.

iv. General Body (GB) Meetings

While the Act stipulates that WUAs have to conduct GB meetings at least twice in a year, most of the WUAs are not complying with this requirement. Even the meetings conducted are ineffective because most of the meetings are postponed in the first instance for want of quorum. The adjourned GB meeting is held with nominal attendance of members, taking advantage of the provision of the rule that no quorum is necessary for a postponed meeting. This is leading to a situation where the farmers are losing interest in their WUAs since they are not even informed of what is happening in their organizations.

Since GB is the supreme body which examines all the resolutions, works taken up, and expenditure incurred, audit report, recall of President, etc., it is essential to ensure convening of GB meetings as per the provisions of the Act.

Same is the situation in respect of Managing Committee meetings.

v. Financial Audit

Farmers' organizations have to get their accounts audited within three months after the end of each financial year by a local experienced person. A Chartered Accountant is to be appointed only when transactions are above Rs.10.00 lakhs.

After audit is done the same is to be presented to the General Body for its approval.

Proper maintenance of accounts and regular auditing are essential for prevention of frauds and healthy growth of the organizations.

Only 2,500 WUAs (30 per cent) have completed auditing of their accounts up to May 2002. This work needs to be given priority.

vi. Execution of Works

As per the rules prescribed in the Act the works as approved by the Managing Committee are to be taken up for execution by the FO itself. It is also prescribed that President or any managing committee member should not execute work directly in their individual capacities. But in reality it is noticed that in many instances Presidents are undertaking works in their individual capacities unilaterally without taking the other members into confidence. Such actions by the Presidents are defeating the very objectives of WUA movement. This practice needs to be checked.

vii. Water Management and Cropping Pattern

The farmers' organizations are primarily meant to promote reliable distribution of water among the farmers.

Efficient water management will not only result in the maximum production and productivity but also results in lot of savings in the quantity of water which can be used for cultivating tail end areas of the command.

The WUAs have to concentrate on this.

Shifting the focus of the FOs from "Works" to "Water Management" is essential so that the FOs will be in a position to discharge their basic duty effectively and farmers, particularly at the tail end areas of the ayacut, derive benefit from the FOs.

For guiding the farmers' organizations on modern agricultural practices, it is necessary to have an officer of the Agriculture department as a Competent Authority, in addition to the existing Competent Authority of Irrigation department.

7.2. State Level Convention

A state level convention was held on May 30th 2002, to which delegates from all the districts attended. The various recommendations emanated from the district level discussions formed the basis for further deliberations. The Minister for Major and Medium irrigation projects who attended the convention appealed to the participants to suggest ways to improve the performance of WUAs. The high point of this convention was that the Chief Minister attended this to provide the required impetus to the discussions.

The Chief Minister in his address indicated that "a sense of responsibility was lacking even after five years after the inception of the programme". He further observed that "WUAs are working like trade unions and fighting for more powers and facilities than recognizing their duties. He also mentioned that 82 per cent of WUAs have not

subjected themselves for financial auditing and that accountability and transparency is a must for all WUAs”.

The correspondent of the local newspaper “Eenadu” dated (30.05.2002) wrote about the discussions in the state level workshop as follows:

“The state government brought about the legislation in 1997 to entrust the management of irrigation project to farmers. However, with liberal grants provided by government the Presidents of the WUA have themselves become contractors and made money by doing various works largely below standard. Some of the department staff also have joined hands in this process. Presidents did not convene the general body meetings nor got the accounts audited as required. In about 40 cases, where funds were mis-utilized, Commissioner, CAD & Irrigation department, utilizing the powers as provided under Section 41 (A) (2), has removed them from their position. Government had appointed Coordinator for each district, in the rank of Superintending Engineer (SE) to intensively visit the WUAs and guide them in their work. However, these officers have not done their job resulting in poor performance of many WUAs”.

In an editorial on June 01st 2002, the paper stated:

“The Presidents themselves have become contractors, and unscrupulous activities became prominent. The main principles have been watered down in the day-to-day working. No general body meetings were conducted for discussions.

There is urgent need to eliminate these defects, to make WUA function effectively”.

The state level convention adopted most of the suggestions as recommended at the district-level and requested the government to initiate necessary action.

7.3. Second Phase from 2003 Onwards – Action by the State Government

The government of AP decided that amendments based on the recommendation of the State Level Convention should be brought about and then only the elections for the new bodies for WUA should be conducted.

In the Government Order No.119 dated 15.06.2002 it is stated that “based on the feedback obtained from the Saddassu (conference) amendments to the APFMIS Act 1997 have to be prepared for bringing more transparency and accountability in the working of farmers organizations. After duly carrying out the amendments, the elections have to be conducted to the farmers’ organizations. This process may take 2 to 3 months and elections. With revised set up in all probability elections can be conducted in the month of July / August 2002”.

Since the tenure of the WUAs formed in 1997 will be over by June 2002, state government initiated action and issued orders for making alternative arrangements. The Order No.119 dated 15.06.2002 stated the following:

“Under Section 34 of the APFMIS Act 1997 the government is empowered to make transitional arrangements by appointing an officer or officers to exercise power and perform the functions of farmer’s organization and the managing committee thereof still such time such farmer’s organizations is duly constituted or reconstituted”.

“In order to make the transitional arrangement government appoint the following officers to exercise the powers and perform the functions of farmer’s organizations and managing committees

“Deputy Executive Engineer of ID	-	Water Users Association
Executive Engineer of ID	-	Distributory Committee”

With this notification, the local officers of the irrigation department took charge of the WUAs within their jurisdiction.

The state cabinet in its meeting held on 1st July 2002 decided to constitute a cabinet sub-committee to critically examine “the functioning of the associations and recommend steps to further streamline them and make them more efficient”³. The sub-committee consisted of five Cabinet Ministers – Minister for Major and Medium Irrigation; Minister for Minor Irrigation and Groundwater; Minister for Agriculture; Minister for Finance; and Minister for Roads and Buildings.

The sub-committee after detailed discussions and examination of various issues submitted two alternative recommendations for the consideration of the Cabinet.

First Alternative

- i. The term of the WUA should be only three years and not five years;
- ii. To provide for checks and balances in the functioning of the President, there should a Vice President to the WUA. While President is directly elected, the Vice President may be elected by indirect election, i.e., by the managing committee only;
- iii. The President and Vice President will jointly operate the WUAs bank account;
- iv. If the position of President falls vacant for any reason the Vice President will take over the position of President; and
- v. The election process for the election of managing committee members should be simple so that the entire exercise is completed in one day only.

Second Alternative

- i. The managing committee of a WUA should be a continuous body, without any dissolution, like the upper house of the Parliament (Rajya Sabha);
- ii. One third of the members of the Managing Committee will retire at the end of 2 years and elections to be held to elect new members in their places;
- iii. The term of the President should be only for 2 years;
- iv. The new President will be elected by the managing committee members only;
- v. The above pattern is to be adopted for the Distributory committee and Project committee; and
- vi. The President will exercise all powers as envisaged in the Act.

The recommendations were examined by the Cabinet in its meeting on 20th September 2002 and approved the second alternative. It also suggested additional items, for providing a Vice President and also for appointing an agricultural officer as additional Competent Authority to the farmers’ organization to assist in adopting scientific

³ This was published in the local English daily “The Hindu” on 02nd July 2002.

agricultural production practices, and to complete the entire election process in one day only.

Earlier a WUA, particularly in some of the major irrigation projects in the delta were having more than 10,000 acres, which became too big to manage. It was decided to re-delineate WUA areas such that the area for a WUA under major projects will be from 2500 to 4000 acres and under medium projects from 1500 to 2500 acres.

Action was initiated to re-notify areas for each WUA and also update the electoral rolls.

An ordinance was issued, incorporating the amendments to APFMIS Act 1997, through Andhra Pradesh Ordinance No.9 of 2002 dated 25th September 2002. These were incorporated as amendments to the APFMIS Act, in April 2003.

The following were the major amendments made in the Act:

i. Section 3

The number of managing committee members of a WUA is fixed to 6 in case of minor irrigation systems and 12 in case of Major and Medium irrigation system (instead of variable numbers).

ii. Section 4

The Section 4 is fully redrafted as it forms the main part of the Act. It says:

“Election of President, Vice President and Members of the Managing Committee of Water Users Association.

1. There shall be a Managing Committee for each Water Users Association comprising members of the Territorial Constituencies as specified in sub-section (2) of section 3 elected directly by the Water Users as specified in clause (i) of sub-section (4) of section 3 of the Act from their respective territorial constituencies.
2. The Managing Committee for Water Users Association shall be a continuous body, with one third of its members thereof retiring every two years as specified in sub-section (3).
3. The term of the office of the member of the territorial constituencies shall, if not recalled or removed or disqualified under the provisions of the Act shall be six years from the date of first meeting of the Managing Committee appointed by the Commissioner:

Provided that at the first election, all territorial constituency members shall be elected at one time. Out of which one third of the members thereof shall retire as soon as may be on the completion of two years, another one third members shall retire after completion of four years and the remaining one third shall retire after completion of six years in office and their term of retirement shall be decided by drawal of lots.

4. The term of office of all the territorial constituency members elected subsequent to the first election against the vacancies of retirement, as specified in sub-section (3) shall be of six years if not recalled or removed or disqualified under the provisions of the Act.
5. The District Collector shall cause arrangements for the elections of a managing committee consisting of one member from each of the territorial constituencies of a Water Users area by a simplified election procedure in the manner prescribed.

Provided that for the reasons to be recorded in writing the Government may, from time to time, postpone the elections.

6. The District Collector shall also cause arrangements for the election of a President and a Vice President of the managing committee from among the members of the Managing Committee of the water users association, in the manner prescribed:

Provided that for the reasons to be recorded in writing the Government may, from time to time, postpone the elections.

7. If at an election held under sub-sections (5) and (6), the President or the Vice President or the Members of the territorial constituencies of water users association are not elected; fresh elections shall be held in the manner prescribed.
8. The President and the Vice President of the managing committee of water users association shall, if not recalled or removed or disqualified by the provisions of the Act, be in office for a period of two years from the date of election or his tenure as member of territorial constituency, whichever is earlier.
9. The term of office of the President, the Vice President and the Members of Managing Committee of all the water users associations formed, subsequent to ordinary election, shall also expire at the time at which it would have expired if he had been elected at the ordinary election, be reckoned from the date as appointed by the Commissioner, as specified in sub-section (3).
10. The managing committee shall exercise the powers and perform the functions of the water users association”.

iii. Section 16

Among the functions, in addition to “utilization of water” the words “encourage, modernization of agriculture in its area of operation” is added.

iv. Section 21

To provide regular support and advice for improving agricultural production, an officer from the agriculture department is appointed as additional Competent Authority to each of the WUA.

7.4. Election Process

With the amendments, fresh elections have to be conducted which required three specific actions. The first one is to redraw the boundaries of WUAs, particularly under major irrigation system, to limit the area to 4000 acres, followed by updating the electoral rolls. The second is the preparation of an Election Manual, indicating the detailed procedures to be followed and third to train the personnel in the process of conducting the election.

The state issued necessary orders to take up first step in November 2002. The irrigation authorities did the redrawing of the boundaries of the WUA. In this process, in the delta areas the number of WUAs under major irrigation, projects have increased by about 50 to 60 per cent. For example, in the Krishna Delta Project, as against the earlier 142 WUAs, due to revision the number increased to more than 250. Simultaneously the local revenue authorities were involved in updating the voter’s list.

The work of preparing the rules and procedures for the election became a long drawn process, since government was keen that it should be simple. A revised “Election Manual” with all the details is developed and issued as “The Andhra Pradesh Farmers’ Management of Irrigation Systems (Conduct of Elections) rules 2003 in Government Order MS (P) No.47 dated 04th April 2003.

The revised election manual provides for a fee structure for the contesting candidates and fixes a timeframe for the conduct of elections.

a. Nomination Fee for Contesting Election

In the revised rules, a fee for contesting to any position in the farmers’ organization is prescribed to bring in some discipline in the election

Any eligible candidate who is desirous of contesting for the post of the member of the territorial constituency, President or Vice-President of WUA or DC; Chairman or Vice-Chairman of Project Committee has to pay a non-refundable nomination fee for obtaining the nomination form from the Election Officer concerned.

The fee prescribed for various posts in Farmers’ Organizations are exclusive for that post, and are independent of each other.

All amounts to be received from the contesting candidates towards nomination fee will be in cash only and no cheque or demand draft etc., are to be accepted by the Election Officer.

The nomination fee once paid will not be refunded to any candidate under any circumstances, nor adjusted towards any other amounts payable. (Rule 12b of the Election Manual 2003). The details are as shown below:

Nomination:	
	Fee (Rupees)
Water User Associations (Major, Medium & Minor Irrigation Systems)	
a. Member of Territorial Constituency	200/- only
b. President	300/- only
c. Vice-President	200/- only
Distributory Committee (Major Irrigation System)	
a. President	500/- only
b. Vice-President	400/- only
Project Committee (Medium Irrigation System)	
a. Chairman	1000/- only
b. Vice-Chairman	700/- only
Project Committee (Major Irrigation System)	
a. Chairman	2000/- only
b. Vice-Chairman	1500/- only

b. Election Schedule – Minor Irrigation Projects

A one-day election schedule for conducting the elections to the members of the territorial constituencies, president and vice- president of WUAs is prescribed.

The Election Officer shall select suitable premises for all the voters to sit during the process. The voters shall be requested to sit territorial constituency wise in the same hall or in separate

rooms or places in the same premises. The polling Officer appointed for a Territorial Constituency shall ascertain the identity of voters of that territorial constituency with the list of voters.

Members of the Territorial Constituencies of WUAs shall be elected by the eligible voters of the respective territorial constituencies. The President and Vice-President of WUAs shall be elected by the Territorial Constituency members. (Rule 47 & 59 of the Election Manual 2003).

<i>Elections Schedules for Territorial Constituency Members, President, and Vice President in Minor Irrigation Systems</i>		Timings
i.	Starting time for convening of extraordinary general body meeting for elections and issue of nomination forms	9.00 am
ii.	Cut-off time for allowing voters into the hall or pandal and guiding them to site territorial constituency wise	10.00 am
iii.	Receipt of nominations from contesting candidates for the posts of members of territorial constituencies	10.00 am to 10.30 am
iv.	Scrutiny of nominations, withdrawal of candidature and declaration of final list of contestants (territorial constituency wise)	10.30 am to 11.am
v.	Election of members of territorial constituencies and declaration of results (territorial constituency wise)	11 am onwards till completion of election
vi.	Special Managing Committee Meeting for fixing up of tenures of 2 years, 4 years, and 6 years	2.30 pm to 3 pm
vii.	Election of the posts of President and Vice-president and declaration of results	3 pm onwards (on the same day)
	- Receipt of nomination and announcements of nominations received	10 minutes
	- Withdrawal of candidature	10 minutes
	- Final list of valid nominations	10 minutes
	- Polling, if necessary	15 minutes
	- Counting of votes and declarations of results	15 minutes

c. Election Schedule for Major and Medium Irrigation Projects

Election Schedule for Members of the Territorial Constituencies, President and Vice-President of WUAs in Major and Medium Irrigation systems will be same as described under 2, but will be organized in two days: (Rule 72 of Election Manual 2003).

		Timings
DAY ONE		
Nomination		
i.	Receipt of nominations from the contesting candidates for territorial constituencies	9 am to 12 Noon
ii.	Scrutiny of nominations and publications of valid nominations	12 Noon to 2 pm
iii.	Withdrawal of candidature	2 pm to 4 pm
iv.	Finalization of list of from contestants and allotment of the election symbols	4 pm onwards (on the same day)
DAY TWO		
Polling & Results		
i.	Polling to select the members of territorial constituencies	7 am to 1 pm
ii.	Counting of votes and declaration of results	2 pm to 4 pm
iii.	Special Managing Committee meeting and fixing up tenures of 2 years, 4 years, and 6 years	4 pm to 4.30 pm
iv.	Election to the posts of President and Vice-President and declaration of results	4 pm onwards (on the same day)

d. Election of President & Vice President

The election of President & Vice President will be a continuation of the day-two activity, which will be for one hour (Rule 89 of Election Manual 2003).

<i>Elections Schedules for President and Vice President</i>		Timings (Minutes)
i.	Receipt of nomination and announcements of nominations received	10
ii.	Withdrawal of candidature	10
iii.	Final list of valid nominations	10
iv.	Polling, if necessary	15
v.	Counting of votes and declarations of results	15

e. Election Schedule for the Post of President of Distributory Committee under Major Irrigation System

The election will be held in a specially convened meeting and will conclude on a single day (Rule 102 of the Election Manual 2003).

<i>Election of President and Vice-President – Distributory Committee</i>		Timings
President		
i.	Receipt of nominations for the post of President	9.00 am to 9.30 am
ii.	Scrutiny of nominations and publications of valid contesting candidates	9.30 am to 9.45 am
iii.	Withdrawal of candidature	9.45 am to 9.55 am
iv.	Publications of final list of candidates	10.00 am
v.	Election in the event of contest	10 am to 10.30 am
vi.	Counting and declaration of results	Immediately after poll
Vice-President		
i.	Receipt of nominations for the post of President	11am to 11.30 am
ii.	Scrutiny of nominations and publications of valid contesting candidates	11.30 am to 11.45 am
iii.	Withdrawal of candidature	11.45 am to 11.55 am
iv.	Publications of final list of candidates	12 Noon
v.	Election in the event of contest	12 Noon to 12.30 pm
vi.	Counting and declaration of results	Immediately after poll

f. Election Schedule for Chairman & Vice-Chairman of Project Committee

The time schedule for conducting elections to the post of Chair of Project Committee will be completed in one day. The election will be held in a specially convened meeting and will follow the set pattern: (Rule 115 of the Election Manual 2003)

<i>Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman – Project Committee</i>		Timings
Chairman		
i.	Receipt of nominations for the post of President	9.00 am to 9.30 am
ii.	Scrutiny of nominations and publications of valid contesting candidates	9.30 am to 9.45 am
iii.	Withdrawal of candidature	9.45 am to 9.55 am
iv.	Publications of final list of candidates	10.00 am
v.	Election in the event of contest	10 am to 10.30 am
vi.	Counting and declaration of results	Immediately after poll
Vice-Chairman		
i.	Receipt of nominations for the post of President	11am to 11.30 am
ii.	Scrutiny of nominations and publications of valid contesting candidates	11.30 am to 11.45 am
iii.	Withdrawal of candidature	11.45 am to 11.55 am
iv.	Publications of final list of candidates	12 Noon
v.	Election in the event of contest	12 Noon to 12.30 pm
vi.	Counting and declaration of results	Immediately after poll

8.0. NEWLY FORMED WUAs

GOAP decided to hold election for WUA across the state covering all major, medium, and minor irrigation projects in two spells. In the first spell, elections were held in about 60% of the districts in late 2004. In the balance of the areas, elections were postponed due to severe drought and general elections. However, second spell of elections were held in the rest of the areas in two batches, the first April 2005 and the second in January 2006. Now in all 10,755 WUAs are reported to be in place.

The number of WUAs have increased, particularly under major irrigation system.

Number of WUAs in AP

Irrigation System	First Phase	Revised Phase
	(1997)	(2004-2006)
Major	1729	2229
Medium	434	432
Minor	8129	8094
Total	10292	10755

Since new WUAs have become permanent bodies, WUAs are expected to establish well promoting PIM and be a boon to all farmers.

9.0. STEPS FOR CONSOLIDATING WUAs

Basically a WUA can work effectively only when it has a clear idea about its rights and responsibilities. It should also be fully aware of the legal and administrative

facilities it can rely on for its functioning. In addition, it should be able to have adequate financial support to enable to attend to various items of work.

Of the total irrigated area in AP around 75% is covered by the major and medium irrigation projects, with around 25% of the WUAs. There are 2229 WUAs under major projects and 432 WUAs under medium projects – a total of 2661 WUAs.

Government is concentrating in building up the capacity of these WUAs through intensive training and also pass on the funds to enable them to take up various activities effectively.

The minor irrigation sources have about 25% of the total irrigated area, with around 75% of WUAs.

A separate programme for rehabilitating these tanks is taken up with the assistance of various funding agencies like the World Bank, JBIC, Government of India and capacity building is an integral part of these activities.

The irrigation department of the state has taken up regular monitoring of the working of WUAs and their impact on both improving irrigation utilization and enhancing productivity and production.

A periodical evaluation of the impact and the process of implementation has been planned, to be a regular feature to take up corrective steps.