

Kingdom of Cambodia
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Module 5
On
Establishing and Developing
the Farmer Water Users Community

Prepared by: Ministry of water Resources and Meteorology

Dated: 22 / October / 2003

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**Training Manual for
Participatory Irrigation Management and Development
in Cambodia**

Module 5

**ESTABLISHING AND DEVELOPING THE
FARMER WATER USERS COMMUNITY**

Session 1: Classroom Training

1. *Review of Module 4*

1. Reporter presents brief summary of Module 4, Session 1. This is followed by questions and answers for clarification.
2. Someone presents results of the Working Group Assignment for Module 4, Session 2. This is followed by discussion.

2. *Overview of Module 5*

The objectives of Module 5 are to give participants a clear understanding and help them reach agreement about what should be done by the FWUC Support Team at the provincial and irrigation system levels in order to establish viable FWUC and build their capacity. This Module provides a guide for who does what, when and how at the provincial and irrigation system levels. Module 5 also provides participants who will function at the provincial level with the necessary knowledge to function effectively and guidance about what skills to develop in their new role as facilitators and providers of support to new FWUC.

Module 5 will produce the following outputs:

1. Participants will know clearly the specific functions of the different organizations at the province and irrigation system levels in the adoption, planning and implementation of PIMD, especially the FWUC Support Team;
2. Concept notes prepared by each agency involved at the province level about how the agency will arrange suitable incentives and accountability measures to ensure that their staff work effectively on PIMD;
3. Detailed plans for how the FWUC Support Teams will identify temporary farmer representatives to help with the organizing process;
4. Draft agenda for key meetings with farmers to organize FWUC;
5. Draft two-year work plan for the FWUC Support Team;
6. Summary of module discussion and results of exercises;
7. Report of Working Group Assignment.

3. Incentives for Farmers to Support PIMD

In the beginning farmers may not understand what PIMD is and how it could help them. It is important that the FWUC Support Team help farmers to understand what PIMD is and how it can help them. It may be useful to organize a study visit of farmer representatives to another irrigation system where PIMD has already been implemented with good results.

The following is a list of reasons why farmers should have the motivation to support PIMD.

1. It gives farmers control over their irrigation system and how the irrigation service will be provided.
2. It can improve how water is distributed, through group identification of irrigation service objectives and establishment of new rules and enforcement mechanisms. This should reduce the number of water disputes that arise.
3. It will probably improve the quality of maintenance of irrigation facilities.
4. It will result in better coordination and cooperation between farmers, both for water use and for agriculture and marketing.
5. Through better group cooperation for water, it provides a forum to also work on making improvements to agricultural productivity and profitability.
6. It can help farmers to reduce the cost of their agricultural inputs, through group bulk purchase of inputs via the FWUC.
7. Farmers who organize to cooperate for water management can then cooperate to develop agri-business and group marketing.

Hopefully, the Participatory Rural Appraisals and preparation of a draft Irrigation Service Plan in Module 5 will have raised farmer awareness about the advantages of creating a Farmer Water Users Community. Participants in the training module should discuss which of these incentives exist in reality in their locations and what more might be done to increase the incentives and motivations of farmers to support establishment and development of active Farmer Water Users Communities (FWUC).

4. Functions of FWUC Support Team Members

The FWUC Support Team should consist of at least two members from the provincial office of DOWRAM, a District Resource Person from DOWRAM, one or two staff each from the provincial office of the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (MAFF), the Ministry of Rural Development (MRD), and others as needed. The Team should meet and discuss what roles each member should play on the Team, such as

in preparing the draft work plan, organizing meetings, organizing capacity building events, organizing agricultural extension activities, organizing meetings and information campaigns with local government officers, and so on.

5. *Work Plan for the FWUC Support Team*

Before field work begins, to organize FWUC and build their capacity, each FWUC Support Team should meet to prepare an annual work plan, which should then be reviewed by a member of the National Secretariat. This should be prepared early enough in the year so that funds for implementation can be sought through the National Secretariat and staff can be assigned in advance, to avoid delays.

6. *Review of Four Essential Principles of PIMD*

The PIMD program will be considered successful if the FWUC become capable of managing and financing irrigation systems and achieving acceptable levels of agricultural productivity in a sustainable way. PIMD must be designed to provide adequate incentives and capacity to water users to motivate and enable them to take over responsibility for managing irrigation systems.

For this, all four essential principles of PIMD are required. Let's review these again. *[The trainer should ask participants to state all four. They should be written on the board. The participants and trainer identify the four principles, describe them and mention what can vary within each one.]*

1) Empowerment and capacity building of FWUC

This means that all water users served by a common irrigation system select FWUC leaders, establish the FWUC, agree on its constitution and rules and approve its basic policies. It means that the FWUC is established as an independent legal entity with the full decision-making authority to manage the irrigation system, based on the principles of 'one irrigation system = one system of management.' And it means that FWUC develop the capacity to manage their irrigation systems, either directly or by commissioning service providers.

[What varies locally? Structure of the organization, what rules it has, policies of the FWUC, size and boundaries of the FWUC, how it enforces its policies.]

2) FWUC defines the water service and selects its service provider

FWUC leaders and members agree on what kinds of water services will be provided by the irrigation system and how they should be provided. The FWUC has the right to choose who will provide its irrigation services and to negotiate the terms and conditions for service provision. It appoints and authorizes the service provider to perform its functions.

[What varies locally? What kind of cropping pattern is desired by each FWUC? How does each FWUC want to schedule water deliveries? What is the schedule of

activities for maintenance and repairs of irrigation facilities? Will the FWUC select its own members to provide the irrigation services or will it hire staff, make a contract with a contractor or request government staff to provide some services?]

- 3) Partnership and mutual accountability between the service provider, FWUC leaders, members of the FWUC, government and other service organizations The service provider serves the FWUC leaders, as authorized. If not, service providers can be removed from their position. The FWUC leaders follow the will of FWUC members, as authorized by them in elections and meetings. If not, FWUC leaders can be removed from their offices. The FWUC, government and other organizations interact with each other as partners, not masters and servants. Arrangements for services, training, etc. are formalized by agreements between the parties concerned.

[What varies locally? The specific rules and arrangements that the FWUC uses to ensure that service providers are accountable to FWUC leaders and FWUC leaders are accountable to FWUC members; the specific kinds of support services that are provided to the FWUC (according to the local needs of the FWUC); the specific terms and conditions for service agreements between the FWUC and service provider.]

- 4) Demand-driven support system based on cost sharing – The government withdraws from direct management of the irrigation system and focuses on regulating the water sector, providing assistance and support services to FWUC and building capacity in the FWUC. New arrangements are created to provide support services on basis of requests from FWUC and based on the principle of cost sharing.]

[What varies? Specific details about restructuring government water sector departments, personnel redeployment, what services are provided to different FWUC.]

Why is it important that PIMD include all four of the above essential principles of PIMD? Because all essential elements are required in order to:

- Produce enough incentives for farmers and government to support PIMD;
- Ensure accountability between farmers, FWUC leaders and government;
- Give FWUC the capability to take over management of their irrigation systems effectively; and
- Build capacity of government and the private sector to provide appropriate support services.

7. Role of Facilitators and Effective Communication Methods

Members of the FWUC Support Team, including the District Resource Person, relate to farmers not as government supervisors but as partners and facilitators. The aim is to help farmer groups become self-reliant in managing their irrigation systems. In the interactions and communications with farmers, the FWUC Support Team should adopt the following philosophy, which was recommended by the ancient Chinese philosopher, Lao Tse, about 700 BC:

Go to the people,
Live with them,
Learn from them,
Love them,
Start with what they know,
Build with what they have,
But with best leaders,
When the work is done,
The task accomplished,
The people will say,
“We have done this ourselves.”

FWUC Support Team members should encourage farmer representatives to arrange and conduct meetings, while FWUC Support Team members participate as guests. It is very important that FWUC Support Team members encourage farmers to talk, treat them with respect, and then listen to them.

8. *Steps for Organizing the Farmer Water Users Community*

After all members of the FWUC Support Team, the PIMD Field Worker and the FWUC Assistant have been selected and trained, they may begin their activities to organize the FWUC, build its capacity and transfer management to it. FWUC should be formed based on a hydraulic boundary of an area served by a common water source.

An FWUC should be established where a majority of all water users who own or cultivate the land within the hydraulic unit vote to establish it. Those who vote against establishment of the FWUC should be obliged to join out of deference to the majority or in case of refusal, should be charged a higher price for water. If they refuse to pay for the water service, they should be denied access to water, except where they obtain water from an independent source entirely through their own efforts and expenses.

The following is an overview of steps and tasks proposed for organizing FWUC, building capacity, transferring authority and making repairs and improvements to irrigation infrastructure. Some of these tasks will have already been done in a few pilot systems through the exercises and working group assignment for Module 4.

Step 1 – Hold initial meetings at system or sub-system level

Tasks:

1. FWUC Support Team conducts orientation meeting about PIMD
2. Conduct participatory rural appraisal meetings to identify constraints and opportunities for development of agriculture and irrigation
3. Meeting to plan next steps

The following are suggested discussion topics for orientation meetings with farmer water users prior to establishment of the FWUC.

1. Discuss farmer goals, aspirations & constraints for agriculture & especially irrigation management
2. Discuss options to overcome constraints in agriculture & especially irrigation management
3. FWUC Support Team explains PIMD policy and program and reasons for it
4. FWUC Support Team and farmers and local leaders discuss benefits, obligations and steps in the FWUC organizing process
5. FWUC Support Team and farmers and local leaders plan next steps for organizing the FWUC.

Step 2 – Identify irrigation service area and potential members of FWUC and conduct Participatory Rural Appraisals

Tasks:

- Identify hydraulic boundaries of the prospective FWUC and its sub-units
- Identify names of prospective members of FWUC and each sub-unit
- Discuss and make preliminary agreement about eligibility criteria for membership in the FWUC
- Conduct PRA on Irrigated Agriculture (see section 7.2 below)
- Conduct PRA on Irrigation System Management and Development (see section 7.3 below)

Step 3 – Farmers agree to form FWUC and plan organizing activities

Tasks:

- Meeting to discuss and make decision about whether to form FWUC
- Participatory planning of PIMD activities
- Agree on farmer actions toward establishment of the FWUC
- Election of FWUC Statute Drafting Committee
- Meeting to discuss role and desired characteristics of the FWUC Assistant
- Selection of FWUC Assistant by FWUC Statute Drafting Committee
- Initial training of FWUC Assistant and preparation of their work plans

Step 4 – Farmers prepare and adopt FWUC Statute and By-laws

Tasks:

- Orientation and training for Drafting Committee members about legal, organizational and managerial aspects of FWUC and PIMD
- Committee completes draft Statute and By-laws
- Draft Statute and By-laws reviewed and approved by FWUC Support Team
- Draft Statute and By-laws discussed and revised in general meeting of prospective members
- Revised Statute approved and signed by all prospective FWUC members
- Registration of members

The following is a list of items that are commonly included in an FWUC Statute:

1. FWUC Mission Statement (*What is the purpose and scope of the FWUC?*)
2. Basic functions & structure (*What are the basic functions of the FWUC? What is the organizational structure and elected positions of the FWUC?*)
3. Legal status & basis of authority (*What is are the legal status, legal powers and extent of authority of the FWUC?*)
4. Area of jurisdiction (*What are the boundaries of the irrigation system and what irrigation structures are included in the jurisdiction of the FWUC?*)
5. Criteria for membership (*Who are the members of the FWUC and what are the requirements to become a member?*)
6. Basic rights and responsibilities of FWUC (*What are the basic rights and responsibilities of the FWUC as a collective entity and what are the rights and responsibilities of individual members?*)
7. Structure of leadership (*What leadership positions exist in the FWUC?*)
8. Method for amending FWUC Statute (*What is the process for making additions to or other changes in the FWUC Statute?*)

FWUC By-laws are specific operational rules for implementing the FWUC Statute. The following is a list of items that are commonly included in the By-laws of a water users association, or the FWUC:

1. Procedure for admitting and expelling members
2. Leadership positions and functions
3. Procedure for selecting and removing leaders, tenure in office
4. Description of water delivery and maintenance objectives and rules
5. Rules and sanctions about the irrigation service fee
6. Structure of decision making for policy and tactical decisions
7. Procedure for entering into contracts
8. Protocol for forming federations and having external relations
9. Procedure for amending By-laws.

The FWUC Support Team should remember that the FWUC Statute and By-laws should be products of the deliberation of FWUC leaders and members themselves. These founding documents should be based on the local needs and preferences of the farmers themselves, not just on a standard format imposed from above. The above outline is only a guide. Specific contents should be identified and included by the farmers themselves, with the assistance of the FWUC Support Team.

Step 5 – Farmers establish FWUC and select leaders

Tasks:

- Election of WUG Representatives (*This is the field block level.*)
- Election of Secondary Canal Committee Representatives (*if needed*)
- Election of FWUC Board of Directors (*This is the president and other officers at the irrigation scheme level.*)

- Registration of FWUC with MOWRAM and provincial government
- MOWRAM and Provincial Government acknowledgement of Statute and By-laws (*This constitutes the formal legal recognition.*)

Step 6 – Build capacity of FWUC to prepare an Irrigation Service Plan

Tasks:

- Training of FWUC officers in water delivery, scheme maintenance, preparation of Irrigation Service Plans and budgets and financial management (most of which should be task-oriented, on-the-job coaching by FWUC Support Team members and other resource persons)
- Detailed inventory of all infrastructure in the irrigation system and assessment of its current relevance and functional condition
- Together with the FWUC Support Team, prepare an Irrigation Service Plan for current situation (i.e., prior to significant repairs and improvements in irrigation system infrastructure)
- With assistance from the FWUC Support Team, the FWUC defines the agricultural development objectives of the FWUC
- In a general way, the FWUC identifies needs for repairs and improvements of irrigation system infrastructure
- With assistance from the FWUC Support Team, the FWUC prepares a draft Irrigation Service Plan for the anticipated situation after repairs and improvements in irrigation system infrastructure would be made, including estimation of costs for implementing the Irrigation Service Plan and conducting periodic repairs and improvements
- Recruitment or appointment of FWUC management staff
- Additional training of staff and FWUC officers in irrigation management

Step 7 – FWUC adopts and implements initial Irrigation Service Plan

Tasks:

- Final preparation of Irrigation Service Plan and budget by FWUC Board (with the assistance of the FWUC Support Team)
- Calculation of irrigation service fee and determination of charging, collection, bookkeeping and financial management procedures (*Such a fee may be in money, as a share of the harvest, or in contribution of labor or materials.*)
- Discussion and approval of Irrigation Service Plan, budget and fee in FWUC general assembly meeting
- FWUC opens bank account (or makes other arrangements to deposit and manage funds collected)
- Collection of Irrigation Service Fee
- FWUC Support Team assists FWUC (as needed) in implementation of its first Irrigation Service Plan (for one year)¹

¹ The FWUC should have the learning experience of preparing and implementing its Irrigation Service Plan for one year before Step 9 (transfer of authority) is implemented.

(See Module 4, Session 1 for information about the typical structure and contents of an Irrigation Service Plan.)

Step 8 – Prepare and adopt Management Transfer Agreement (or Certification of Management Authority)

Tasks:

- FWUC Management Committee and FWUC Support Team discuss model Management Transfer Agreement (or Certification of Management Authority of the FWUC),
- Draft transfer agreement is prepared, discussed, revised and approved by FWUC Board, FWUC Support Team and general assembly of FWUC,
- After one full year of successful implementation of the first Irrigation Service Plan, the Management Transfer Agreement (or Certification of Management Authority of the FWUC) is signed by the FWUC Management Committee, MOWRAM, and the provincial government authority.

In Cambodia most systems are already being managed by farmers or local government. Even so, an irrigation management transfer agreement, or Certification of Management Authority (COMA) of the FWUC, is useful in order to clarify and make official public recognition that the FWUC has the responsibility and authority to oversee management of the irrigation scheme. A Transfer Agreement or Certification of Management Authority of the FWUC specifies the future division of rights, responsibility, obligations and authority between the FWUC and the government.

The following is a list of typical contents of Irrigation Management Transfer Agreements:

1. Service area and membership criteria of FWUC,
2. Updated inventory of infrastructure and equipment (if any) and clarification of ownership or long-term use rights in the infrastructure transferred to FWUC, Basic rights, authority and obligations of FWUC,
3. Rights, authority and obligations of government toward FWUC (such as to regulate, build capacity and provide support services),
4. Procedure for dispute resolution,
5. Purpose and contents of Irrigation Service Plans (and obligation to prepare them),
6. Purpose, procedure and consequences of Irrigation Management Audit,
7. Protocol for relations between FWUC and government,
8. Terms and conditions for transfer to be revoked,
9. Procedure for amending the Transfer Agreement (or COMA).

Step 9 – Repair and improvement of irrigation infrastructure

Tasks:

- Participatory identification of repairs and improvements needed and simple feasibility study and cost estimation
- FWUC and FWUC Support Team prepare, discuss, revise and approve draft design for improvements and plan for implementation (which includes joint financing)
- For medium-scale repairs and improvements for which the FWUC needs assistance, FWUC prepares its proposal for assistance for repair and improvement and submits it to the Provincial Irrigation Improvement Fund for consideration
- If the proposal to the PIIF is approved, assistance is provided to the FWUC and the FWUC implements the repairs and improvements
- For larger scale rehabilitation or emergency works, special funding and arrangements are made but are always consistent with PIMD principles
- MOWRAM implements its role in construction (phased & contingent upon farmer contribution)
- Repaired infrastructure is tested and FWUC Board signs approval of works

It is important to emphasize that significant repair and improvement of irrigation infrastructure (i.e., that done with government or donor assistance) should only be done after: 1) FWUC's are formed, 2) management authority has been transferred to them, and 3) FWUC's have specified their agricultural and irrigation service objectives. This enables FWUC to be in control of the process and better ensures that physical improvement works will be demand driven and will include matching investments by the FWUC.

Step 10 – Continue capacity building and provision of support services

Tasks:

- Periodic training for FWUC by the FWUC Support Team and possibly private sector entities
- Annual Irrigation Service Audits (to examine performance of FWUC and government)
- Service agreements (where scheme is jointly managed by FWUC and government or contractor)
- Phase out of government subsidy for Irrigation Service Plan budget (if applicable)
- Establishment and functioning of regional or provincial Irrigation Improvement Fund in pilot locations
- Evaluation of PIMD

The following are possible topics for continuing training and capacity building for FWUC.

1. How farmer leaders should relate to and communicate with farmers

2. How farmer leaders should plan & conduct meetings, encourage effective discussion, build consensus for decision making
3. Possible contents of the organization's Articles of Association and By-laws
4. Keeping records of meetings and activities
5. Making and implementing a SIMPLE seasonal O&M plan
6. Options for mobilizing resources to support O&M (labor, materials, fee payment)
7. Financial management (collecting fees, bank accounts, deciding how to use the budget, financial record-keeping, measures to prevent misuse of funds)
8. Enforcing rules with sanctions & settling disputes, other legal issues
9. Technical assessment & cost estimation of minor repairs & improvements
10. Preparing a proposal for grant from the Irrigation Repair & Improvement Fund
11. Agricultural extension
12. Development of new marketing channels and agri-businesses

9. *Irrigation Management Audits*

After the Irrigation Service Plan (ISP) has been adopted and implemented, Irrigation Management Audits (IMA) should be conducted annually for each irrigation scheme officially transferred to FWUC management. The IMA Audit should examine compliance of the FWUC and the government with the terms and conditions of the Transfer Agreement (or Recognition of Authority, see below) and extent to which the Irrigation Service Plan is adequate and has been implemented. This will involve technical, financial and organizational aspects of the FWUC and related government agencies. The IMA Audit will examine related government agencies only with respect to their obligations toward regulating the sector, providing financial and technical support services to FWUC and fulfilling of their obligations under formal Irrigation Service Agreements entered into with FWUC.

Members of a small oversight committee in the FWUC, selected members of the FWUC Support Team and an officer from a government auditing department should form the IMA Audit Team. Positive findings from the Audit should result in future eligibility for FWUC to receive assistance from the government for repairs and improvements. Negative findings should result in sanctions, such as temporary ineligibility for FWUC to receive government assistance for repairs and improvements until the problem encountered is rectified.

10. *Suggested Group Exercises for Module 5, Session 1*

Exercise 1: Reporting

The trainer assigns two participants to share the task of being reporters for Module 5, Session 1. They will make a summary written report of the main points identified in the lectures and participatory exercises. They should prepare their report within one day after Session 1 is conducted.

Exercise 2: Role playing the Social Engineer versus the Facilitator

Step 1: After the training topic presentation on the role of the facilitator and communication methods, the trainer arranges a role-playing event where two persons play the role of the Social Engineer approach and two others play the role of farmers.

Step 2: The volunteers get into a discussion of farmer incentives to organize and why they should create a FWUC. Those playing the farmers try to react as farmers would react to the Social Engineering approach.

Step 3: After this, another two participants are selected to play the roles of Facilitators and two others play the role of farmers. The volunteers get into the same discussion of farmer incentives to organize and why they should create a FWUC—but they use a very different communication method (as Facilitators), to which the “farmers” respond differently.

Step 4: Role playing is repeated by other participants for the Facilitator role.

Step 5: The participants discuss the role playing and its lessons.

Exercise 3: Review

Step 1: At the end of Session 1 of Module 5, the trainer asks participants to mention what they thought were the most important points learned in Session 1.

Step 2: The reporters read their summary of Session 1.

Step 3: The trainer asks participants if any corrections or additions should be made to the report and suggestions are made, if any.

Step 4: The reporters note the suggestions and revise the report for Session 1, as needed

11. Summary of Module 5, Session 1

[Reporters present to participants their reports of key points raised in discussions and exercises. Participants make corrections or additions as needed.]

End of Module 5, Session 1

Session 2: Working Group Assignment

This assignment should be done by each FWUC Support Team.

Task 1: Prepare concept notes and draft issuances for each agency involved in implementing PIMD at the province and district levels, about how the agency will arrange suitable incentives and accountability measures to ensure their staff work effectively on PIMD

Task 2: Prepare detailed plans for how the FWUC Support Teams will identify and work with temporary farmer representatives to help with the organizing process

Task 3: Prepare draft agenda for key meetings with farmers to organize FWUC. This includes description of communication methods to be used, topics to be discussed and outcomes expected

Task 4: Prepare a draft FWUC Support Team two-year work plan

Task 5: Prepare and present report to National Secretariat (which provides comments) and subsequent finalization of report

The Working Group will later present this report for discussion at the beginning of Training Module 6.