

# Motivation of Membership in Water Users' Association-The Experience of Iran



**Mona Dorani, Mansour Ghanian\* and Omid M Ghoochani**

*Department of Agricultural Extension and Education, Ramin Agriculture and Natural Resources University of Khuzestan, Iran*

**Submission:** March 27, 2017; **Published:** April 17, 2017

**\*Corresponding author:** Mansour Ghanian, Associate Professor, Department of Agricultural Extension and Education, Ramin Agriculture and Natural Resources University of Khuzestan, Ahvaz, Iran, Email: [m\\_ghanian@yahoo.com](mailto:m_ghanian@yahoo.com)

## Abstract

The water crisis and food security are two main problems in the most countries, especially the third world countries. Despite the fact that two-thirds of the Earth's surface is covered by water, but due to the limitation of access to the fresh water, water management and planning is a crucial issue. This is so important that the next world war may be based on water. Iran is located in one of the driest regions of the world and the limitation of water is one of the most important bottlenecks of agricultural development. According to the World Bank, the main reason for the water scarcity in the world is weak management. The several years' experience in Iran showed that there is enough organizational capacity to transfer of irrigation management to the private sector, but this capacity did not use correctly to provide the situation for the farmers' participation in water management and motivating the farmers towards membership in WUAs is in an ideological state. Therefore, this paper which is mainly based on more than 10 years' experience of the authors in the field of water management, tried to show the importance of motivation of farmers in the membership of WUAs and also differences of influencing factors on the motivation of farmers in each region.

**Keywords:** Motivation; Water management; Cooperation; Farmers' organization

## Introduction

The water crisis and food security are two main problems in the most countries, especially the third world countries. Undoubtedly, achieving the food security depends on to the more production in the agricultural sector, but agricultural sector is the most water users in Iran and the most of developing countries and also it is the main economical source for rural families [1]. Despite the fact that two-thirds of the Earth's surface is covered by water, but due to the limitation of access to the fresh water, water management and planning is a crucial issue. This is so important that the next world war may be based on water [2]. Interest and willingness to transfer irrigation management from government agencies to the private sector are increasing around the world, insofar as most countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America have become a national policy. The increasing demand of water consumption in the world on the one hand and limited renewable water resources, on the other hand, is necessary for policymakers to think about in the field, before serious problems raised [3].

## Participatory Management of Agricultural Water Resources in Iran

The irrigation water is the most important and most reliable factor in the food supply, which is especially important in developing countries [4]. Iran is located in one of the driest regions of the world and the limitation of water is one of the most important bottlenecks of agricultural development. According to the World Bank, the main reason for the water scarcity in the world is weak management and inequality in incomes and costs of water management [5]. In this regards, water explosion systems are considered as one of the fundamental pillars of sustainable agricultural development in Iran.

The water scarcity and necessity of efficient water management, over time, is the cause of emerging and developing the multiple exploding systems on a variety of natural and social conditions in rural areas of Iran. So that modification, creation, and expansion of forms of farm organizations, could be effective

in increasing productivity and improve the overall performance and consequently the agricultural sustainable development and balanced development of rural communities, more than any other factor [6]. In Iran, following the 1960's land reform social structures and economic relations of villages have been fundamental changes and therefore, rural cooperatives and other forms of farmers' organizations considered as an alternative of water resource management [1].

### Triggers for Participation

Building capacity, confidence, motivation and encouragement support of farmers, is very important for economic and efficient water usage [7]. Evaluation of the performance of management related to the management of soil and water resources in Iran from 1943 so far showed that the main problems of exploitation management with the development of construction projects, the expansion the tasks of government and ignoring the people in charge of the government administration has begun. Following the shortcomings in public management of water, decided to restore the agricultural water management to the public in mid-1991. In this regards, special attention was placed on other related activities to attract the participation of water users in the operation and maintenance of irrigation and drainage network. This is done more quickly with an agreement between the Ministry of Energy and Agriculture and Plan and Budget Organization and also the promulgation of Article 44 of the constitution.

The several years' experience in Iran showed that there is enough organizational capacity to transfer of irrigation management to the private sector, but this capacity did not use correctly to provide the situation for the farmers' participation in water management and motivating the farmers towards membership in WUAs is in an ideological state. Paying attention only to the economic motivations is not enough for encouraging the farmers in the membership of WUAs, but it needs to identify the influence factors on the motivation of farmers towards membership in WUAs [1]. The experiences showed that the most important reason for non-participation of farmers in water management is the lack of sufficient awareness of the social and economic conditions in the region.

### Conclusion

Transfer of water management to the WUAs and managing the irrigation water the farmers, due to their permanent presence on the farms, can lead to improved irrigation efficiency. In fact, irrigation management transfer should be understood as a process of capacity building, which enables the local community to develop the planning and operational management, to accept more responsibility. But what is certain, this process is very complex and requires a good understanding of the conditions of each area. The process in each region for the region should be pursued and identify factors influencing the motivation of membership in the operation in that area is very important.

### References

1. Ghanian M, Adham Maleki M, Ghoochani O (2013) Identifying the factors motivating farmers to membership in water users associations, case of the associations in the Khuzestan province. The Twelfth National Conference on Irrigation and reduce evaporation, Kerman, Iran.
2. Heydarian N, Adham Maleki M, Ghoochani O (2013) Identifying the inhibiting factors of the success of WUAs in transfer of irrigation management. The Twelfth National Conference on Irrigation and reduce evaporation, Kerman, Iran.
3. Jabery SM, Ghoochani O, Ghanian M (2016) Good governance a new approach to achieve effective management of water resources in agriculture. Journal of research approaches in the social sciences 8: 33-41.
4. Khosravipour BM, Ghoochani O (2016) Identifying the attitudes and behavioral intentions of farmers' towards water users' cooperative. Journal of cooperative and agriculture, Fifth year 20: 89-111.
5. Ghanian M (2012) Strategic Analysis of devolution of management of transmission and operation of irrigation networks to the WUAs; Case of left coast of Ramshir City. The final report of Khuzestan Power and Water organization.
6. Ehsani M, Khaledi H (2003) Understanding and improving of agricultural water productivity in order to provide water and food security of the country. Proceedings of the Eleventh Conference of National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage 674-684.
7. Ghanian M, Baradaran M, Alimirzaee A, Soleymani Haruni K, Pasha S (2012) Participatory management of agricultural water resources and its influencing factors: Case of the Khuzestan Province. Journal of Agricultural water research 27(2): 181-190.



This work is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License  
DOI: [10.19080/PBSIJ.2017.03.555606](https://doi.org/10.19080/PBSIJ.2017.03.555606)

#### Your next submission with JuniperPublishers will reach you the below assets

- Quality Editorial service
- Swift Peer Review
- Reprints availability
- E-prints Service
- Manuscript Podcast for convenient understanding
- Global attainment for your research
- Manuscript accessibility in different formats ( Pdf, E-pub, Full Text, Audio)
- Unceasing customer service

Track the below URL for one-step submission

<https://juniperpublishers.com/online-submission.php>