

GOVERNMENT OF ORISSA
DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

No.Irrr.-I-WB(FOT)38/2000 38711

date:26.09.2000

RESOLUTION

Subject: Scheme for Pani Panchayat

Government of Orissa have decide to adopt a format-centri scheme in the Irrigation Sector by forming Pani Panchatat/WUAs in all major, medium, minor and lift irrigation projects and also in the drainage Schemes.

The Principal goal of the concept of Participatory Irrigation management (PIM) is to motivate the farmers in the command areas, organize them into Water Users Association or Pani Panchayats, encourage the to maintain the canals, receive water in bulk from Water Resources Department and distribute the water among themselves by adopting suitable cropping programme and rotational use of water.

Under the Orissa Water Resources Consolidation Prroject Funded by the world Bank PIM was tried in four pilot projects in Orissa and the results have been very encouraging. The Aunli Project in the district of Angul has the unique distinction of having the first all-women Water Users Association of the country. It has led to:

- i) greater participation of farmers in maintenance of channels.
- ii) Increased cropping intensity of upto 140%
- iii) Greater cropping diversity with accent on doing non-paddy crops like groundnut etc.

The Orissa Irrigation Rule has been amended vide Notification No. 51010 dt. 29.09.1999 to permit formation of WUA and to have an MOU with WUAs outlining the rights and responsibilities of the WUAs.

Pani Panhayat Schemes

Based on the above experience, the Government have decided to extend the Pani Panchayat Scheme to all the irrigated and drainage projects within the state of Orissa. The scheme will have the following salient features.

- 1) A Pani Panchayat is a Society registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 consisting of all the farmers within the command of a minor/sub-minor canal, or of a Lift Irrigation Point. It will have a Bank Account of its own. The rights and responsibilities of the Pani Panchayat will be governed by an Agreement between the Pani Panchayat and the Deptt. of Water resources

which is incorporated in Form 'W' of Irrigation Rules framed under the Orissa Irrigation Act, 1959. (Annexure-A)

- 2) Water Users' Association or Pani Panchayats will be allowed to be formed in every major, medium, minor and Lift Irrigation Project, Initially, the formation of the Pani Panchayats will be purely by choice of farmers, for which a massive State-wide campaign would be launched to educate and motivate the farmers all over the State. The WALMI and Chief Engineer, Water Services would have the task of undertaking the campaign to form WUAs including training of the personnel. The District Administration will be fully associated in carrying the campaign to every book and corner of the State.
- 3) A Pani Panchayat of a major, medium or minor irrigation project will ordinarily be provided with grant-in-aid equal to the number of hectares within its boundary multiplied by Rs.35/- every year. The grant-in-aid will be admissible after all the farmers within the boundary become members of the pani Panchayat. No grant-in-aid will be paid where farmers are exempted from payment of water rate. When Water Rates are revised in future, appropriate enhancement of the amount of grant-in-aid will be considered.
- 4) The Pani Panchayat will be free to take up improvement in accordance with technical advice tendered and maintenance works with the grant-in-aid as well as with additional resources mobilized by them. The Engineers of DOWR shall provide technical assistance free of charge to the Pani Panchayats. The personnel of Agriculture Department shall render all assistance to the members of the Pani Panchayats on all aspect of crop husbandry.
- 5) Once a Distributary or an entire Project has Pani Panchayat over its entire command, the Pani Panchayats will be allowed to federate into apex committees with representative from each Pani Panchayat. Out of the grant-in-aid of Rs.35/- per hectare, the Pani Panchayat can earmark upto Rs.5/- per hectare the Pani Panchayat can earmark upto Rs.5/- per hectare for the Apex committee for its upkeep.
- 6) The Pani Panchayat will be allowed to take licenses for dealing in seeds pesticides fertilizers and other agricultural inputs.
- 7) All agricultural demonstration programmes within the boundary or WUA will be carried out with the active Participation of the Pani Panchayats.
- 8) The On Farm Development works provided under CADA, externally aided projects or any other scheme can be executed by the pani Pnnchayats if they so wish by entering into a K-2 contract.

- 9) Water Users' Association or Pani Panchayats will be formed in every Lift Irrigation point and the ownership and maintenance of the project will be handed over to them. Once transferred the WUA shall enter into necessary agreement with the Electricity Supply Company for buying power. It shall also maintain the point at its own expense. For these purposes, the WUA will collect Water rates from its members at rates mutually decided by the members. The OLIC will not collect any water rate from the members but will render all assistance to the Pani Panchayats in technical matters.
- 10) Pani Panchayats will be formed also in drainage Projects falling within the ayacut of Major or Medium Projects and maintenance grant of an appropriate amount will be passed on to them as grant in-aid to be decided separately.
- 11) After concept of Pani Panchayats is generally accepted by the people suitable legislation will be considered with a view to empowering the Pani Panchayats to collect Water Rate from the members as in case of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra.
- 12) In future, all requests for installation of new L.I. Points should be preceded by formation of Pani Panchayat by water users. Location of new M.I.Ps, renovation of existing M.I. projects and all System Improvement works will also be influenced by the willingness of Water Users to form themselves into Pani Panchayats for the upkeep and maintenance of the minor and sub-minors.

Note: This Resolution will not apply to Minor Irrigation Project assisted by European Community for which a separate Resolution No. 48049 dt.4.12.99 has already been issued.