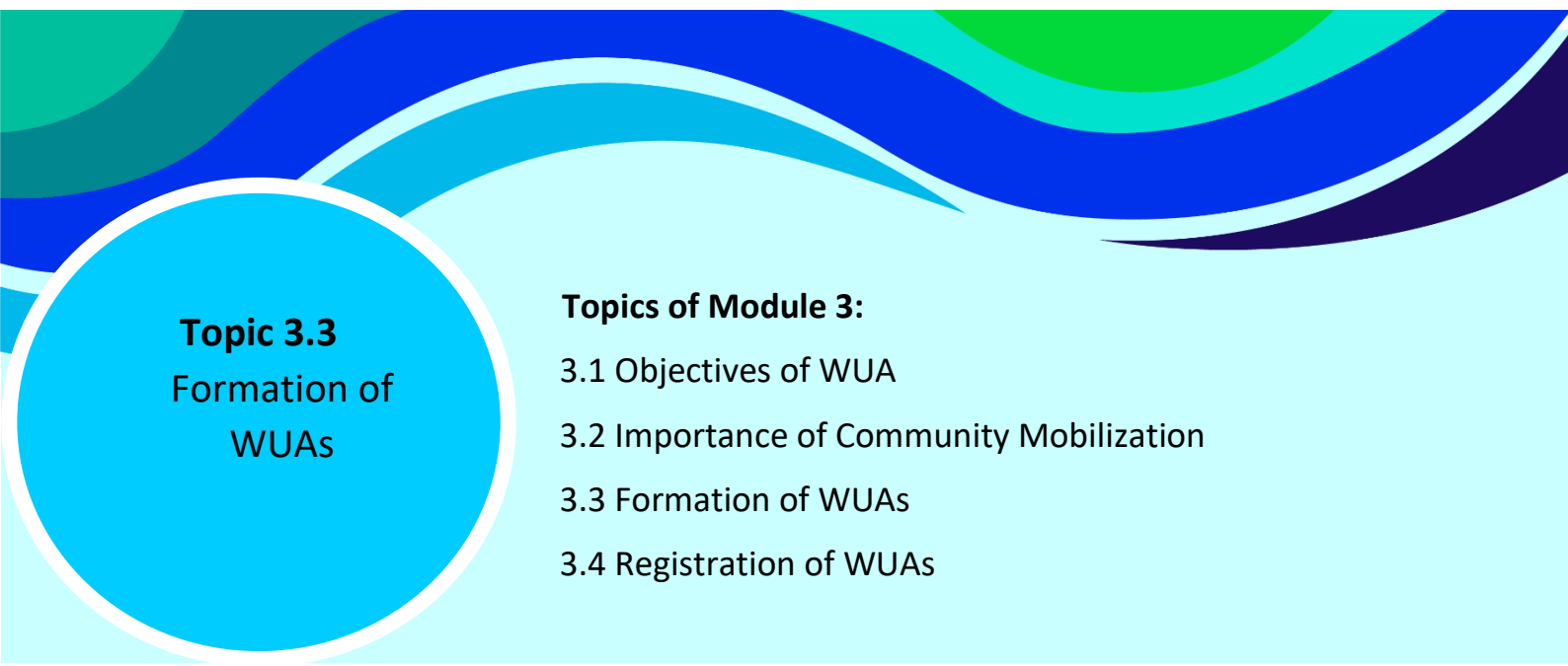


Certificate Course on Participatory Irrigation Management (PIM)

Module 3- Constitution of Water User Associations (WUAs)

Topic 3.3 – Formation of WUAs



Topic 3.3 Formation of WUAs

Topics of Module 3:

- 3.1 Objectives of WUA
- 3.2 Importance of Community Mobilization
- 3.3 Formation of WUAs
- 3.4 Registration of WUAs

1. Formation of Water User Associations:

Prior to promulgation of Participatory Irrigation Act in many States, the WUAs were registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860 or the Co-operative Societies Act, 1960 and water was being managed through them. After enactment of PIM Act many WUAs/ organizations were set up under PIM Act in numbers of States in India. A general procedure to form WUA under various PIM Acts is described below (The readers may look in to the PIM Act of their state for specific information) :

2. Delineation of Command Area of Water User's Association at minor level

- A Canal Officer not below the rank of an Executive Engineer, duly empowered in this behalf, may, by notification in Official Gazette and in accordance with the rules, on hydraulic basis and having regard to the administrative convenience delineate command area of Water Users' Association at Minor Level separately within lands under irrigable command and declare it to be an area of operation of Water Users' Association at Minor Level for the purposes of this Act. The area of operation so declared may include both, the flow and lift irrigation.

3. Managing Committee of Water Users' Association at different level and election of its Directors and Chairperson.

There are different tiers of WUAs depending upon type of irrigation project. To understand the concept of tiers we will consider the case of any major irrigation project with command area more than ten thousand hectares.

- At minor level WUAs are called MLA
- At distributary level WUAs are called DLA
- At main canal level WUAs are called CLA
- At Project level WUAs are called PLA

Provisions are made in PIM acts to form above WUAs. Let us see some important provisions of these act for formation of WUAs.

- a. There shall be a Managing Committee for every Water Users' Association at Minor Level, consisting of such number of members including Chairperson and Directors as may be prescribed. Such Association shall have a Secretary having prescribed qualifications and the pay and allowances of such person shall be fixed by the respective Water Users' Association, in the prescribed manner.
- b. The Canal Officer, duly empowered in this behalf shall, make arrangements for the election of Directors of the Managing Committee of the Water Users' Association at Minor Level by direct election from amongst members of such Water Users Association within such time and in manner as may be prescribed.
- c. Adequate representation shall be given on the Managing Committee to the holders or occupiers of the land from Head, Middle and Tail reaches of the area of operation of Water Users' Association; and at least 20% Women members in such manner as may be prescribed.

- d. Such Canal Officer shall make arrangements for the election of the Chairperson of the Water Users' Association at Minor Level in prescribed manner. The Directors of the Managing Committee shall elect the Chairperson in the first meeting of the Managing Committee convened and presided by the Canal Officer.
- e. The tenure of the post of Chairperson, its rotation amongst the Managing Committee Directors representing Head, Middle and Tail reaches of the area of operation of Water User's Association and women Directors shall be such as may be prescribed: Provided that, where a land holder or occupier holds or occupies a land in the area of operation of more than one Water User's Association, such person shall be eligible to take part in the election for the Directorship of the Managing Committee of only one Water User's Association opted by him in the prescribed manner.
- f. The Canal Officer may, for the reasons to be recorded in writing, postpone the election for a period up to one year.
- g. The Directors of Managing Committee shall, unless recalled earlier under any section of PIM act, hold office for a period of six years from the date of the constitution of the said Managing Committee.
- h. The Managing Committee shall exercise such powers, discharge such duties and perform such functions of the Water Users' Association, as provided in this Act and as prescribed.
- i. Notwithstanding anything contained in PIM act, the Canal Officer is duly empowered to keep election pending and appoint an Ad-hoc Management Committee in the prescribed manner.

In case of Maharashtra, Water Users Associations (WUAs) under Maharashtra Management of Irrigation System By Farmers (MMISF) Act 2005 is the most widely adopted model of farmer's organization for irrigation water management in Irrigation Project. Methodological approach is followed in the formation of WUAs, which includes people's participation in planning, formation and registration of water user associations, joint inspection, identification of works, handing over of management, training of members in operational and functional aspects, and dissemination of know-how on on-farm water management.

Remember: Till date, Ten States in India , namely, Andhra Pradesh , Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have their specific PIM Acts. The other states have modified their irrigation acts to include PIM.

Project Authority delineated the command area on a hydraulic basis which is administratively viable and declare it as Water Users Association Area. It has provided basis for establishing a Water User Association (WUA).

Every WUA is consisting of all water users who are landowners residing in the command area of Irrigation Project. These water users are the legal members of proposed WUAs. All the members constitute the general body of the WUA.

There is a managing committee of every WUA. Election of Directors and Chairman of the Managing Committee of the WUA is conducted by direct election and/or by voting.

All the managing committee members on all the minor level WUAs constitute general body of Distributary Level Water User's Association (DLA) and they elect managing committee of DLA. All the managing committee members on particular distributary is called as a Distributary Level Water User's Association (DLA). All the managing committee members of minor level WUAs becomes the member of DLA. At DLA level they again form managing committee.

All the managing committee members on all the distributary level WUAs constitute general body of canal Level Water User's Association (CLA) and they elect managing committee of CLA. All the managing committee members on particular canal is called as a Canal Level Water User's Association (CLA). All the managing committee members of distributary level WUAs becomes the member of CLA. At CLA level they again form managing committee.

All the managing committee members on all the canal level WUAs, Lift irrigation on reservoir, canal, river portion in the command, KT weirs on that river portion of command and river part beyond the reservoir becomes the member of Project Level Association. They all together constitute general body of Project Level Water User's Association (PLA) and they elect managing committee of PLA. All the managing committee members on particular Project is called as a Project Level Water User's Association (PLA).