

END OF TOUR REPORT

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IRRIGATION SYSTEMS MANAGEMENT PROJECT
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT COMPONENT
AND
MONITORING EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK COMPONENT

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CHAPTER I

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

1.1 FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

The Agriculturist was assigned in December 1989, the task of continuing the implementation of the Financial Management (FM) package developed by the Irrigation Systems Management Project's (ISMP) Economist and FM Specialist during 1987/88 (vide ISMP - FM Documentation Report July 1989 and ISMP Economist's End of Tour Report - July 1989). More specifically the tasks assigned were:

- Train the trainee FM Assistants in accounting and record keeping
- Train the officials of the D-Canal Organizations (DCO) in book-keeping and record keeping.
- Update the various FM Records in the DCOs where FM was implemented
- Extend the FM package to other DCOs
- Computerization of all FM records

1.2 MONITORING EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK (MEF)

The Agriculturists Terms of Reference with respect to the MEF component are summarized below:

Assist the Expatriate Economist to:

- Develop questionnaires for Data Collection
- Develop training material to train enumerators and assist in the training program
- Assist Project Managers (PMs) in post-harvest data collection
- Train the MEF Assistants and Computer Operators in data input and analysis
- Develop a MEF Report Format that can be computerized
- Prepare Seasonal Reports at the Scheme, Range and National levels

In addition to the above the following assignments were given after the departure of the Expatriate Economist in July 1989:

- Refine the MEF program based on feedback from IMD, ID, DOA and other allied agencies
- Identify personnel for enumeration
- Develop a training program in Data Collection for the enumerators to be conducted in each scheme
- Develop an MEF Seasonal Report Format at the Scheme Level and one at the Range level.

CHAPTER II

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT IMPROVEMENT

2.1 OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

Please see End of Tour report and Financial Management Improvement Documentation Report (July 198/90 by the Consultant's Economist to the ISM Project.

2.2 ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

2.2.1 The ISMP Financial Management Improvement Program

The Financial Management (FM) component was developed in 1987/88 with the major objective of training the DCOs in Record Keeping and in Book Keeping. The major source of revenue for the DCO would be the Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Fee Collection from the farmers. In order to keep good records of the money collected, and disbursed the following registers were developed :

- Specification Register
- Address Record
- Current Year O&M Fee Payment Record
- Five Year O&M Fee Payment Record
- O&M Projects Record

2.2.2 Implementation of the FM Program

The FM Program was implemented in 5 Pilot DCOs in 1988 and in 1989 the program was extended to cover 34 DCOs. Gal Oya Left Bank and Right Bank were planned to be included for 1990 implementation but the FM program was not implemented in these Schemes. (See Table 1).

TABLE 1 - FM IMPLEMENTATION AREAS

NO	SCHEME NAME	Number of DCOs for			Total end 1990	LOP Total
		FM Implementation				
		1988	1989	1990		
1	PSS	1	4	5	10	24
2	MINNERIYA	1	11	4	16	21
3	KAUDULLA	1	8	5	14	22
4	GIRITALE	1	3	2	6	7
5	RIDI BENDI ELA	1	3	3	7	10
6	GAL OYA LB	0	0	5	5	70
7	GAL OYA RB	0	0	3	3	20
TOTAL		5	29	27	61	174

2.2.3 Progress in FM Implementation

The FM Program revolves round the O&M fee collection and disbursement of this money for O&M works. From 1988 O&M fee collections had stopped in all the schemes, due to the disturbances in the island, and although the DCO officers had been trained in FM, the DCOs were unable to practice the FM package fully. Therefore no effort was made in the preparation of O&M fee collection records in 1989 and 1990. On the other hand Address records and Specification Registers have been prepared for all DCOs according to the Work Plan. The effect of the FM program will not be felt until O&M fee collections commence and there is monetary ability in the DCOs.

2.2.4 FM Training Program

One Trainer Training program for 5 FM Assistants and 5 Institutional Development Officers (IDO) were held in July 1988. Since then 3 FM Assistants have left the project and no formal training had been given to the new FM Assistants.

The FM training program for the DCO officers which was initiated in 1988 could not be continued in the extended implementation areas due to the disturbances, and because trained FM Assistants were not available in the scheme except in PSS and Kaudulla.

The new FM Assistants who were selected to fill the vacancies were given a one day training in FM by the Agriculturist and a FM familiarization program for DCO officials was completed in all schemes except in Gal Oya in the 1st quarter of 1990.

CHAPTER III

MONITORING EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

3.1 OBJECTIVE AND METHODOLOGY

These have been dealt with in the End of Tour Report and the MEF Documentation Report (July 1989) by the Consultant's Economist to the ISM Project .

3.2 ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING TOUR

3.2.1 Post Harvest Data Collection

Data Collection constitutes the following steps :-

- Identification of measurable indicators that would help to improve project management
- Identifying the data requirement to assess the indicators
- Developing questionnaires for Post-Harvest data collection
- Enumerator Training
- Data collection in the field

The Agriculturist's activities began in July 1988, with assisting the Economist in developing and translating the questionnaires to be used in data collection followed by data collection the 4 pilot DCOs in the Polonnaruwa Range and one DCO in the Kurunegala Range for Maha 1987/88. This was followed by the data collection for Yala 1988 in the 5 pilot DCO area in October 1988.

The MEF Program was extended in 1989 to cover a total of 34 DCOs, and in 1990 a total of 62 DCOs were covered.

3.2.2 Enumerator Training Program

The training program in post-harvest data collection was done in April 1989 for 30 Enumerators, in addition 10 Supervisors and MEF Assistants, and 4 trainers participated in the program. The Enumerators were the Krushikarma Vyapthi Sevakas (KVS) of the Extension Division of the Department of Agriculture (DOA). The Agriculturist assisted the Economist to develop, organize and conduct this training program.

In January 1990, the KVSs who were trained in post-harvest data collection were absorbed into the district administration under the Government Agent (GA), and were not available for post-harvest data collection for Maha 1989/90. Subsequently educated youth were selected from each DCO in the MEF implementation areas, and were given a two-day training in data collection. All the Institutional Organizers too were trained. (See Table 2).

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF PERSONS TRAINED IN POST-HARVEST DATA COLLECTION IN APRIL/MAY 1990

SCHEME	DATE	# OF IOs	# OF ENUMERATORS	TOTAL TRAINED
PSS	April 19-20	24	24	48
MINNERIYA	April 25-26	24	32	56
KAUDULLA	April 27-28	24	44	68
GIRITALE	April 21-22	11	14	25
RIDI BENDI ELA	May 3 - 4	10	14	24
GAL OYA (LB)	May 16-17	10	12	22
TOTAL		103	140	243

3.2.3 Computer Familiarization for MEF Assistants

A Computer Familiarization program was completed in October 1988 for the 4 MEF Assistants in the Polonnaruwa Range. This was a 7 - day program covering the following:

- Components of a Computer and how it works
- Memory, Bytes & Bits, Hard Disk, Floppies etc.
- Word Perfect
- Lotus 123
- MS DOS

3.2.4 MEF Data Analysis and Reports

A computer program was developed in 1989 for data input, analysis and to produce the seasonal reports. Post harvest seasonal reports were produced for Maha 1987/88 and Yala 1988.

3.2.5 Refinement to the MEF Program

A Project Review Workshop was held by the Irrigation Support Project for Asia and the Near East (ISPAN) in April 1989 and it was decided to review the MEF Program developed by the Irrigation Systems Management Project (ISMP), based on feedback from the management, mainly on the usefulness of the reports, data collection efforts and the sustainability and expansion of the program.

Subsequently a workshop was held on the 7th and 8th of February 1990 for the refinement of the ISMP MEF Program. There were 45 participants at this workshop which included senior members of the Ministry of Lands, Irrigation and Mahaweli Development (MLLD), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Irrigation Department (ID), Department of Agriculture (DOA), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In accordance with the decisions taken at this workshop, the following changes were effected in the original ISMP MEF program.

1. The number of indicators were reduced by 60% as a consequence the questionnaires were shortened.
2. A Farm Record Book was developed to be maintained by the farmer - in order to obtain more accurate data and to make data collection easier. Farm Record Books were given to the sample farmers to maintain records for Yala 1990.
3. Two G.C.E. (Advanced Level) qualified youths were selected per DCO and trained in enumeration along with the IOs.
4. There would be two MEF Reports at the end of each season - one at the Scheme Level and the other a Summary Report at the Range Level. At the Scheme Level the unit of description will be the DCO so that the DCOs in a particular scheme could be compared with one another and ranked for each indicator. At the Range Level the unit would be the Scheme, and the schemes under the ISMP can be compared for performance.

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CHAPTER IV

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN CARRYING OUT ASSIGNMENT

4.1 STAFFING

From the inception of the ISMP, the FM and MEF components had suffered staffing problems. The FM and MEF components required a full time DD at the Central Level Irrigation Management Division (IMD). Staff changes at the IMD had adverse impacts on the two components.

The FM/MEF Assistants who were contracted by IMD, were very unstable due to the temporariness of the Assistant Post. In fact 4 of the trained FM/MEF Assistants left the project in 1989 and the IMD had to identify new FM/MEF Assistant to fill these positions. These new Assistants did not get a formal training in FM or in MEF.

The KVSs loaned by the Department of Agriculture (DOA) were taken over by the District Administration under the GA in mid 1989. The IMD then selected youth from each DCO and trained them in MEF data collection in March/April 1990. These enumerators were deployed in May/June 1990 for data collection in respect of Maha 1989/90.

4.2 REORGANIZATION OF THE DCOs

The rate of attrition among the DCO office bearers was considerable during 1989, that almost all DCOs had to be reorganized. Most office bearers who were trained in FM had resigned from their posts and the new office bearers had to be trained in FM. This training was completed in the PSS and partly in Kaudulla Scheme. In other schemes FM training was not done for want of trained FM/MEF Assistants. The Reorganization also had its effect in post-harvest data collection for Maha 1989/90 in getting accurate information from the DCO officials.

4.3 COMPUTER USAGE

It was envisaged that the computers installed in the IE offices would be used by both the IE as well as the PM. But it was found that the FM/MEF Assistants were shying away from the computer centres for some reason. The PMs have rely totally on the IE for the FM and MEF work. Since the computer centre is in charge of the IE, it is difficult to see a compromising situation between the IE and the PM where the computers will be used on a time sharing basis.

The Range Level report is mainly for policy makers and planners and would have only those general indicators required by planners at higher level.

Data Collection was completed in all the 62 DCO MEF implementation areas for Maha 1989/90 in the Polonnaruwa, Ampara and Kurunegala Ranges. But Data Analysis was done only for the Ridi Bendi Ela Scheme. The Scheme Level MEF Report for Ridi Bendi Ela has been prepared. Range Level Report to cover all 6 schemes was not prepared as data analysis was not done for the other schemes.

4.4 TERRORIST THREATS

This problem had been there since mid 1988. This had a very big effect both on the FM as well as the MEF components. O&M fee collections were not done since Yala 1988. Although DCOs were trained in FM, they were unable to utilize it as there was no monetary activity in the DCOs. FM training to DCOs as well as MEF data collection were affected by terrorist activities.

4.5 TRAINING

MEF needed data on water delivery, water issues and water utilization by different crops. It was difficult to obtain this data in the first two years, seemingly due to lack of training in these fields and lack of water measuring devices.

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 STAFFING

For the full implementation of the FM and MEF components of the ISMP, it is necessary that an administrative environment is created, in which the scheme level as well as the IMD level staff responsible to these two components can apply themselves fully. The FM/MEF Assistants are unable to dedicate themselves fully to their job due to the temporariness of the Post Graduate level personnel who have a knowledge of Economics are required at the scheme level for the implementation of the FM & MEF components. It is recommended that the FM/MEF posts be made permanent.

5.2 TRAINING

The new FM/MEF Assistants have not been given a formal training in either FM or in MEF. It is suggested that they be trained in using the curriculum already developed by the ISMP. It is advantageous to include the PMs in these training programs.

DCO officials have to be trained in FM. It is recommended that this training program be of 3 days duration using the curriculum developed by the ISMP.

Emphasis should also be given to the training of the ID officials in irrigation water measurement, supported with measuring devices along the delivery canal.

It is also recommended that the computer operators as well as the FM/MEF Assistants be given formal training in computerized data base management including the following soft wares.

- Word Processing
- Spread Sheet
- D - Base

The data analysis for Ridi Bendi Ela for Maha 1989/90 was done manually. The FM/MEF Assistant of this scheme has been trained in data analysis. It is recommended that the other 4 Assistants of the Polonnaruwa Range be trained in data analysis using the trained Assistant in RBE.

5.3 COMPUTERIZATION

Data input, analysis and report printing should be completely computerized for speedy and accurate results. Manual analysis of data at full implementation of the MEF component is very difficult if not impossible. The computer program for data analysis has to be flexible so that alterations could be accommodated when required.

With regard to time sharing of Operation Centre computers between the PM staff and the IE staff, it is suggested that separate computers are give to the PMs.

5.4 MOBILITY OF FM/MEF ASSISTANTS

The FM/MEF Assistants have to visit each DCO frequently at full implementation of the FM components. Their work-load is heavy during MEF data collection and data analysis. They have to cover the whole scheme. It is recommended that they be given better transport facilities.