



Water and Agriculture~ Developing World Solutions



House Water Caucus, SAIS, CSIS

Presented by

Margaret Zeigler

Congressional Hunger Center

November 12, 2009



Critical Importance of Water and Agriculture

- ◆ Food, fuel and finance crises have led to riots in developing countries
- ◆ Water access also has serious security dimensions, both within countries and between countries in vulnerable regions
- ◆ Lack of water for consumption and agriculture is a push factor for rural to urban migration, and for cross border migration

Gender Dimensions of Agriculture and Water Management





Challenges to Consider.....



- ◆ Women and children bear primary responsibility for collecting water and for managing household subsistence agriculture production/irrigation for household plots of food
- ◆ Women in Africa spend *40 billion hours* every year collecting and managing water for household use and for agriculture
- ◆ Women face severe social and economic opportunity costs due to spending so much time/energy dealing with water issues (illness due to water, crop loss, safety issues during water collection, girls drop out of school)

Source: Water Advocates



Further Gender Dimensions

- ◆ Women constitute 2/3 of the 1.2 billion poor people in the world
- ◆ Majority of poor live in rural areas of SSA and SA, overlap also with most of the world's 'water poor'
- ◆ Women tend to be excluded from decision making and training in new water management approaches
- ◆ At the household level, there is little difference between accessing/harvesting water for consumption and for agricultural needs- both are necessary
- ◆ Women's secure access to water for both productive and domestic use is critical to reduce poverty and achieve food security and better health

Source: International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)



The Nexus Between Food Security and Water Security

- ◆ *“Half of the world’s malnutrition is caused by water and sanitation-related diseases.”* Source: Safer Water, Better Health, World Health Organization, 2008
- ◆ Food production and consumption alone will not solve chronic and acute hunger and malnutrition. Water and sanitation are indivisible components of a food secure household.



Promising Programmatic and Policy Approaches



- ◆ Use intersectoral management approach for water and agriculture synergies
- ◆ Pro-poor, community based natural resource management that foster higher participation by women in water and agriculture projects
- ◆ Build capacity of organizations that support these communities (NGO's, local private sector)
- ◆ Ensure that water and agriculture projects are context specific, including suitability to local cultures and religions, and are affordable to maintain by local communities and local government structures
- ◆ Process must be country-led and country-managed for sustainable results



Country Specific Examples



- ◆ The Gambia~Land tenure, women, and rice (IFAD)
- ◆ Niger~Managing rainfall with tassa system (IFAD)
- ◆ Ghana~Irrigation and water resources management (MCC)
- ◆ Nepal and India~Gender responsive water user associations (WUA's)
- ◆ Mali~Micro-irrigation for production of nutritious, high value crops (Winrock)



Suggestions for Congress: Asserting a Lead Role for the U.S. in Global Food & Water Security

- ◆ Current legislation on agriculture in House: The Roadmap to End Hunger (H.R. 2817), The Global Food Security Act (H.R. 3077), and Senate version of The Global Food Security Act (S.284)
- ◆ The Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act of 2009 (S. 624) (H.R. 2030)
- ◆ Obama Administration Global Hunger and Food Security Initiative
- ◆ Eventual Foreign Affairs Act reauthorization and support for USAID's role in water security/food security leadership



Additional Partner Contributions



- ◆ Private sector contributions to new irrigation technologies and water/sanitation services
- ◆ Improved drought resistant seed varieties, nutritional enrichment of staple crops
- ◆ Financial services from private sector for agriculture and water projects
- ◆ Ensure strong participatory role of NGO's, & UN agencies such as IFAD, in pilot programs and scaling up at country level