

**Government of Baluchistan
Law Department
NOTIFICATION**

Dated Quetta, the 30th April 1981

No. Legs: 1-160/Law/80 - The following Ordinance made by the Government of Baluchistan on 29th April 1981 is hereby published for general information:

Baluchistan Ordinance No V of 1981

THE BALUCHISTAN WATER USERS' ASSOCIATIONS ORDINANCE, 1981
an
ORDINANCE

to provide for the formation, operation and promotion of
Water Users' Associations in the Province of Baluchistan

Preamble

WHEREAS it is expedient to provide for the formation, operation and promotion of Water Users' Associations in the Province of Baluchistan and matters ancillary thereto in the manner hereinafter appearing:

AND Whereas the Governor is satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary to take immediate action;

NOW, therefore, in pursuance of the Proclamation of the fifth day of July 1977, read with the Laws (Continuance in Force) Order, 1977 (CMLA Order No 1 of 1977), and in exercise of all powers enabling him in that behalf, the Governor of Baluchistan is pleased to make and promulgate the following Ordinance:

Chapter 1
PRELIMINARY

1 Short title, extent and commencement

- (1) This Ordinance may be called the Baluchistan Water Users' Association Ordinance, 1981.
- (2) It extends to the whole of the Province of Baluchistan.
- (3) This section shall come into force at once and all or any of the remaining provisions of this Ordinance shall come into force in such area or areas and on such date or dates as Government may, by notification, direct.

2 Definitions

In this Ordinance, unless there is anything repugnant in the subject or context:

- (a) "Association" means an irrigation association (Anjuman-e-abpashi), organised and registered under section 6 of this Ordinance.
- (b) "Association in good standing" means an Association that is not in default of a bona fide legal obligation;
- (c) "Association village" means that area of land irrigated from the source of water developed or utilised by the Association.
- (d) "Board of Directors" means the governing body of the representatives elected by the General Body;
- (e) "Bye-laws" means bye-laws of the Association;
- (f) "Canal Officer" means the Canal Officer as defined in the Baluchistan and Canal Drainage Ordinance, 1980 (XX of 1980);
- (g) "Collector" means the Collector as defined in the West Pakistan Land Revenue Act, 1967 (XVII of 1967);
- (h) "General Body" means the collective body of membership of the Association;
- (i) "Irrigator" means the operator of a separate farm, whether he is an owner of land, tenant or renter, and includes the representative chosen by the joint owners or joint operators of a jointly owned or operated farm;
- (j) "Member in good standing" means any member whose payment of assessment is not in arrears by more than one year, or who is not under conviction for a criminal offence, or is not a minor;

- (k) "Membership" means all the irrigators who are members of the Association and are entitled to participate in the general assembly;
- ✓ (l) "Outlet/tubewell village" means that portion of land irrigated from a particular canal outlet or Government tubewell; and
- (m) "Watercourse" means the main channel from the canal outlet (mogha) and laterals. ✓

3 Ordinance to ride other laws

The provisions of this Ordinance and the rules made thereunder shall have effect notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in any other law for the time being in force.

Chapter 2
PURPOSE, POWERS and FORMATION

4 Purpose

(1) The primary purpose of the Association shall be:

- (a) the operation, maintenance, improvement and rehabilitation of the Watercourse;
- (b) the improvement of water supply from surface or groundwater; and
- (c) the improvement of On Farm Water Management

(2) The secondary purpose of the Association shall be to perform such other functions as relate to the obtaining of other agricultural inputs and economic and social well-being of the membership. ✓

5 Association to be bodies corporate

An Association shall be a body corporate by the name under which it is registered, having perpetual succession with power to hold property, both movable and immovable, and shall by the said name sue and be sued.

6 Formation of Association

(1) Whenever at least fifty-one per cent of the irrigators on a watercourse who are above the age of eighteen years agree to the formation and operation of an Irrigators' Association (Anjuman-e-abpashi), they shall make an application to the Director, Agriculture (Extension)/Project Director, On Farm Water Management through his Field Officer.

(2) Upon receipt of application, the Field Officer shall review the application and convene a meeting for all irrigators in the watercourse command area.

(3) If seventy-five per cent of the irrigators, who are above the age of eighteen years, consent to the formation of the Association, membership of the non-consenting irrigators or those who are not capable of so consenting under any law for the time being in force shall be deemed to have consented to be the members of the Association.

(4) Upon receipt of complete membership list and after ascertaining the facts as mentioned in sub-section (1) or, as the case may be, sub-section (3), the Field Officer shall approve the application, register the Association by entering the name and particulars of the Association in a register to be kept for the purpose, send one copy of the list to the Director, Agriculture (Extension)/Project Director, On Farm Water Management, and provide the Association with a certificate of formation as evidence of legal existence.

(5) The membership list shall be kept current by the Association.

(6) The Field Officer shall examine and approve the membership list, and shall determine that each member is a bona fide landowner or an operator tenant.

(7) Any person aggrieved by the decision of the Field Officer may file an appeal to the Collector, whose decision thereon shall be final.

(8) The list of Associations and names of Officers of Associations shall be sent to the Irrigation, Agriculture, Revenue and other requesting Departments.

(9) The Association shall, within 30 days of the approval of the membership list, convene a meeting of the General Body, elect the Board of Directors, adopt bye-laws and open a bank account.

- (10) The level of formation of an Irrigators' Association shall be at the outlet village or tubewell village. The Association may increase its irrigated area by tubewells, and Associations sharing a common Government or Private tubewell may make provisions in bye-laws for the operation and maintenance of the same.

7 Powers of Association

In carrying out the functions under the Ordinance the Association shall generally have the powers:

- (i) to improve, rehabilitate, operate and maintain the watercourses;
- (ii) to improve the water supply from surface or sub-surface sources;
- (iii) to locate, own, operate and maintain tubewells and lift pumps in the name of the Association;
- (iv) to sanction upgrading and maintenance of farm ditches and field outlets;
- (v) to encourage adoption of improved on farm water use and management practices and other improved land and agricultural input practices;
- (vi) to participate in programmes to improve watercourses, land levelling and agronomic practices, and to lease, own, operate and maintain equipment, structures and other matters associated with improvement efforts;
- (vii) to establish water delivery schedules and supervise water allocation and distribution in the Association village in such a manner so as not to interfere with canal water delivery;
- (viii) to set and collect general and special assessments;
- (ix) to conscript labour for emergency repair of the watercourse;
- (x) to locate, install and maintain drainage facilities for fields;
- (xi) to remove obstructions in the watercourse during realignment, operation and maintenance;
- (xii) to enter into contracts for obtaining loans and grants and setting a repayment schedule;
- (xiii) to insure that all members rights under the laws are respected, and that each member gets his fair share of water in a timely fashion; and
- (xiv) to insure that all members of the Association contribute their fair share of labour, money and other services for improvement, maintenance and operation of the watercourse.

Chapter 3 GENERAL BODY

8 Composition

The irrigators of an Association shall constitute the General body.

9 General meetings

Every Association shall call an annual general meeting of the membership and not less than one other general meeting per year.

10 Special meeting

On request of not less than one-fifth of the members of the Association or at the request of the Board of Directors, the Chairman shall call a special meeting of the membership.

11 Duties of General Body

The General Body shall elect the Board of Directors, make or approve organisational policies, and plan of operation, approve and amend bye-laws, approve assessment and budget, approve selection of ditch tenders and assessment collectors, approve adoption of improvement programmes and leasing, purchasing or otherwise obtaining equipment, pumps, seeds, fertiliser, chemical and other like products and do all other things necessary to carry out the purposes of this Ordinance and the Association's bye-laws.

12 Voting

- (1) All irrigators shall be entitled to vote on issues requiring voting in carrying out the duties of the General Body.

- (2) Each decision by the General Body shall require two-third majority of votes.
- 13 Resolving disputes**
- (1) The General Body may either elect a special body to, or delegate to the Board of Directors the authority to, hear and decide disputes between members of the Association.
- (2) Violation of the decision of the Board or the special body shall only be punishable with a fine, and not suspension of water delivery unless approved by the General Body.

Chapter 4
BOARD of DIRECTORS

- 14 Composition**
- (1) There shall be elected by the General Body, using secret ballot, a Board of Directors consisting of not less than five members in good standing.
- (2) The General Body shall decide and include in the Association bye-laws whether the representatives to the Board of Directors are to be elected from geographic portions of the watercourses (head, middle and tail) or by social group or at large.
- (3) No member elected to the Board of Directors shall enjoy any benefits greater than any other member by virtue of his elected position.
- (4) Members of the Board of Directors shall be elected for two years' term, except in the first election after organisation when one half or thereabouts shall be elected for one year. Thereafter half or thereabouts shall be elected annually. A person shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms on the Board of Directors.
- 15 Chairman and Officers**
- The members of the Board of Directors shall annually choose a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer. If the bye-laws so specify, the Chairman may be and by rotation and Vice-Chairman also appointed.
- 16 Quorum**
- Action by the Board of Directors shall require a two-third vote of the total members of the Board.
- 17 Oath**
- Members of the Board of Directors shall make an oath to uphold the purposes and duties of the Association and, if they be Muslims, to also uphold the tenets of Islam.
- 18 Duties of Board of Directors**
- The Board of Directors shall be responsible for carrying out the purposes of this Ordinance, the Association bye-laws and more particularly shall:
- (i) manage the Association activities in delivery of water;
 - (ii) develop a plan of operation, maintenance, improvement and rehabilitation of the watercourse;
 - (iii) supervise the construction and maintenance of the watercourse and other improvement activities;
 - (iv) employ and discharge ditch tenders, collectors and construction personnel;
 - (v) exercise emergency powers to repair watercourse breakage;
 - (vi) negotiate and contract with government agencies and other institutions for improvement programmes acceptable to the General Body;
 - (v) serve as the communication link between government agencies in dissemination of information and all matters representing the views and requests of the Irrigators' Associations;
 - (vi) maintain the financial and organisational records of the Association; and call a special meeting of the General Body for any matters involving original expenditure and other important issues involving the general membership.

- (vii) serve as the communication link between government agencies in dissemination of information and all matters representing the views and requests of the Irrigators' Associations;
- (viii) maintain the financial and organisational records of the Association; and
- (ix) call special meeting of the General Body for any matters involving original expenditure and other important issues involving the general membership.

19 Duties of Chairman

The Chairman shall be responsible to call and conduct meeting of the Board of Directors and General Body and to otherwise act on behalf of the Association in all other matters. The Chairman may designate a temporary Chairman in case he is unable to perform his duties; provided that if there is a Vice-Chairman, he shall act as the Chairman. The Chairman and the Secretary shall sign all contracts and other obligations of the Association.

20 Duties of the Secretary

The Secretary shall keep a record of minutes of the Association.

21 Duties of Treasurer

The Treasurer shall keep and maintain financial records of the Association. The Treasurer may make deposits in the Association's account, but all withdrawals shall require the signatures of both the Chairman and Treasurer.

22 Assistance to the Board

The Board of Directors may appoint a person competent to perform the duties of Secretary or Treasurer to assist the Secretary or Treasurer in the performance of their duties.

Chapter 5**FEDERATION of ASSOCIATIONS****23 Distributary Associations**

- (1) Irrigators' Associations on each distributary may form a Federation of Associations (hereinafter called the Distributary Association). Such an Association, when formed, shall be called by the name of the distributary concerned.
- (2) When more than half of the watercourses on a distributary are organised into Irrigators' Associations, they may form a distributary Association. Any other Association formed thereafter on any other watercourse on the same distributary shall immediately become a constituent member of the Distributary Association.
- (3) Each Irrigators' Association shall send one representative to the Distributary Association.
- (4) The Chairman of the Irrigators' Association shall act as the representative of his Association to the Distributary Association.
- (5) The members of the Distributary Association shall select a Chairman and other officers as needed.

24 Canal/Karez (or any other source of perennial water Association)

- (1) On each major Canal/or any other source of perennial water, all the Distributary Associations may form a Federation of Association (hereinafter called the Canal/or any other source of perennial water Association). Such an Association, when formed, shall be called by the name of the canal/or any other source of perennial water concerned.
- (2) When more than half of the distributaries on a major canal/or any other source of perennial water are organised into Distributary Association, they may form a canal Association. Any other distributary association formed thereafter on the remaining distributaries shall immediately become constituent member of the Canal Association.

- (3) Each Canal Association shall have a Board of Directors and the Chairman of each Distributary Association shall be the representative to the Board of Directors of the Canal Association.
- (4) The members of the Canal Association shall select a Chairman and other officers as is needed.
- 25 Registry of Distributary and Canal Association**
The Distributary Association and the Canal Associations shall be registered with the Director of On Farm Water Management Project. A copy of the registry and name of the Chairman shall be provided to all other concerned departments.
- 26 Duties and Powers**
- (1) The Distributary Association or Canal Association shall:
- (i) represent its members in issues and problems related to the distributary or, as the case may be, more than one distributary or the whole canal;
 - (ii) represent its respective constituent members to the Department of Irrigation, Agriculture and any other Department;
 - (iii) serve as a channel of communication between the Irrigation Department and the constituent members of the Association;
 - (iv) participate actively with the Irrigation Department in the improvement, maintenance and operation of the distributaries and canals;
 - (v) maintain financial records and minutes of meetings, levy assessments upon member Associations and exercise collection authority on a voluntary basis or in case of default by certifying the amount for collection to the Collector; and
 - (vi) make bye-laws and rules of operation.
- (2) The Distributary Associations or Canal Association may make recommendations and requests:
- (i) for distribution of water into a minor or distributary on a demand or fixed delivery basis.
 - (ii) to the Irrigation Department for construction of bridges, regulators, drop structures, new minor canals, etc, at Association cost or cost-sharing.
- 27 Capital Expenditure and Improvements**
The Board of Directors of the Distributary or Canal Association shall, before committing or making any major capital expenditure of improvements, obtain the approval from membership of their respective Irrigator's Association.

Chapter 6 MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

- 28 Evidence of land ownership**
Membership in the Association as representative of joint owners or as tenant does not imply relinquishment or prima facie evidence of title to land.
- 29 Transfer of membership**
In the event of any transfer of any type of an irrigator's holding to another irrigator who previously was not a member of the Irrigator's Association, the membership in the Association shall also stand transferred.
- 30 Assessments**
- (1) General Assessments shall be to carry out the primary purposes of the Association.
 - (2) Special Assessments shall be to carry out the secondary purposes of the Association.
 - (3) Assessments should be allocated in proportion to cultivable lands in the Association village.

- 31 **Credit**
Credit may be extended to a legally constituted Association responsible for its debts and actions and being in good standing. The Association will have power to encumber the land in the command area without unanimous consent of the landowners.
- 32 **Auditing of Accounts**
The Association shall have the financial accounts audited every year by an auditor selected from the government list of approved auditors.
- 33 **Fines for abuse**
The Association shall adopt a schedule of fines in the bye-laws, which fines shall be either commensurate with the damage caused or, as the case may be, the benefit received, or may be levied in proportion to acreage irrigated on the watercourse.
- 34 **Enforcement of fines and fees**
(1) The Boards of Directors may certify to the Collector the amount recoverable from a member as fines or fees, which the member refuses to pay on demand collectable as arrears of land revenue.
(2) The Collector shall recover the said amount so certified and reimburse this amount to the Association.
- 35 **Acquisition lands**
The Association may acquire lands necessary for location or relocation of watercourses and installation of tubewells on a voluntary basis, with compensation to be paid accordingly for the land so acquired.
- 36 **Contract water and water rates**
The Association or Federation of Associations at any level may contract with the Irrigation Department for the supply of canal water on a contract basis at the outlet, or contract on volumetric rate basis at the minor or distributary canal, as provided in the canal rules, instead of the crop rate basis commonly used. In this case, the Association will collect and pay the agreed rate to Government.
- 37 **Improvement distributary**
Any Association or Federation of Associations which desires to improve the distributary or participate in improvement process on the distributary or canal must first have the approval and supervision of the Canal Officer.
- 38 **Preferential treatment**
The Departments of Irrigation, Agriculture, Revenue and Co-operatives and Credit Institutions shall give preferential treatment to Irrigators' Associations organised and registered under this Ordinance to facilitate their efficient functioning.
- 39 **Preparation of rules**
The Directorate, On Farm Water Management, shall prepare necessary forms to expedite and facilitate formation of Irrigators' Associations and Federations of Associations.
- 40 **Power to make rules**
The Government of Baluchistan may make rules for carrying out the purposes of this Ordinance.

Quetta:

Dated the 29th April 1981

.....
Lt-Gen Rahimuddin Khan
Governor Baluchistan

.....
Fakhruddin H Shaikh
Secretary, Government of Baluchistan
Law Department
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Co-operatives and Water Users' Associations

and the Ordinances for the Provinces

PNWIW (PMU)
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CONTENTS

Foreword	(v)
Section 1 Co-operatives for Agricultural Development	1
Section 2 Water Users' Associations	5
Section 3 Water Laws of Pakistan	11
Appendices	
1 WUA Ordinances for NWFP	17
2 WUA Ordinances for Punjab	27
Pro forma in Urdu	32
3 WUA Ordinances for Baluchistan	37
4 WUA Ordinances for Sind	47
Rules	53
Agreement	55
Bye-Laws	56
Pro forma	57

Section 2

WATER USERS' ASSOCIATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Problems of water supply in arid areas are similar throughout the world; there is more land that can be cultivated than there is water to irrigate it. There are constant conveyance and application losses and disputes between water users.

Countries with more successful irrigated agriculture have adopted some form of Water Users' Associations. They have usually been formed by the spontaneous, independent action of water users and have developed over time until they have become recognised as part of customary law.

They may also be government influenced and induced, in which case they may be formed through some development scheme on a mandatory basis. Or they may be formed through a voluntary organisation of water users. In all cases, a law or regulation provides for their creation. The organisations may be private, or public, simple or complex, single or multi-purpose.

Irrigation System:

Pakistan's irrigation system below distributary or minor canal head regulator is designed to operate at a constant discharge basis and does not respond to irrigation demand. It is not felt necessary, therefore, for the irrigation authority to get involved in water management at watercourse level. The area of watercourse command is the function of recommended application rate, the designed crop intensity and average seasonal crop water requirements.

When the existing irrigation systems were designed, modern theories of irrigated agriculture were not known and the quantity of water required was estimated from the experience of climate soil and theoretical water requirement.

The "Warabandi" System:

Water supplies are distributed on a time rotation basis or "warabandi" with each farmer taking all the water supply by turn in proportion to the area owned. The time allowance in "warabandi" is the water right of a farmer and is carefully protected and regimented by legislation. This makes irrigation an inflexible system. Agricultural

performance or benefits as assessed by present standards cannot, therefore, be accrued. The significance of matching water supply to crop water requirements over a cropping cycle is not realised and the use of water is left entirely to the farmer.

The original design characteristics are still an integral part of the existing irrigation system and have a fundamental effect on system efficiency. Any proposed technical change to improve water management and yields in irrigated agriculture must consider the social, legal and operational factors built into the design. The fundamental problem is that the critical link in the massive irrigation system between investment and benefits is a private irrigation system run by voluntary co-operation between farmers. Either the status of this link is to be changed, so that Government can act to enforce higher standards of water management, or the farmer should be encouraged through incentives to value water and use it more effectively.

The Watercourses:

The deplorable condition of some 80,000 badly maintained watercourses still serving uneven fields in the Indus Basin, requires the development and implementation of an effective strategy. This may take the programme many years to achieve, but the strong determination of Government could hasten the process. The departments of revenue, irrigation and agriculture must all be made to support the farmers' endeavours.

Colossal as the task may seem, determined efforts can be made - perhaps by way of a crash programme on a national basis. It is estimated that the "katcha" improvement of watercourses alone would save at least 10 million-acre feet per annum.

The construction and maintenance of a watercourse is the responsibility of the water users. Even with the Canal Act in his hand, the Canal Officer is reluctant to make water users fulfil their obligations. An active Water Users' Association, however, can play an important role in this respect.

GOVERNMENT ACTS

The Government has created the Canal Act and the Irrigation Act, but ineffective implementation has led to widespread litigation. Farmers have often spent more time in the law courts than on their farms. So time consuming is the enforcement of rules and regulations, that irrigators have been known to take the law into their own hands. Their arbitrary decisions have even led to murder. This only emphasises the need to encourage farmers with incentives to value water and use it more efficiently.

Irrigation Efficiency:

Earlier studies have led to the conclusion that the magnitude of irrigation efficiency is not only extremely variable, but difficult to appraise. Even when the consumptive use of water is calculated accurately, the application efficiency is poor. The diversion requirements should include conveyance losses. Field studies are required to obtain a reasonable estimate of the water application efficiency under different cropping conditions.

Water management within any watercourse command should be considered in detail. The Leiftink report substantiated that irrigation system efficiencies were so low that lined watercourses must become the ultimate objective. Major losses also occur in the field so that an improvement of existing earthen watercourses and the introduction of better cultural practices should go hand in hand. Any basic changes to the existing irrigation system must mean the involvement of farmers in the management of their system.

Institutional Involvement:

To increase institutional involvement changes will also have to be made in the social and legal parameters. The traditional "warabandi" procedures will have to be modernised so that a command area can be operated to match crop water requirements as and when required. The task of dealing with watercourse conveyance losses is easier than field improvement and the adoption of modern cultural practices. These losses involve collective rather than individual effort on a watercourse command.

A major social problem is that water rights belong to landowners. The relative power of these landowners in the local social structure is an important factor influencing water distribution. Landowners seldom plan water distribution for tenants or "haris". Cultivators have no say in the distribution of water, so that they can only do crop planning in consultation with the landowners. Tenants have no protection under the existing laws.

Government Involvement:

Some authorities contend that social groupings of farmers are unable to operate the system efficiently through voluntary co-operation. Vested interests come to the surface and can kill the spirit of co-operation. If water management and irrigated agriculture are to become more effective, Government will have to be involved with the watercourse command area.

Radical changes in laws governing water use are needed to match modern agricultural practices. The existing legislation needs to be updated to cope efficiently with water management, water rates and incentives, including penalties to reduce misuse of water

and to match a changing system with development objectives. Such laws should allow for more decision making by the farmers; they should also bring about a closer relationship between the farmer, the irrigation engineer and the agricultural extension agent.

THE OFWM PROGRAMME

Agriculture is very vulnerable to changing geoclimatic, economic and political conditions all over the world. In Pakistan, where it is the backbone of the country, research and demonstrations have provided technological improvements in three areas:

- reduction of water conveyance and application losses,
- increased production from land levelling, and
- improved agronomic practices and extension capabilities.

These improvements are being made available through the OFWM Programme. The focus is on water and how to help the farmer get the most out of his allocated supply.

Although voluntary participation of farmers should be encouraged through extension methods and education, it has been necessary to give departmental staff the power to discipline water users who deliberately hinder government efforts. At the same time, project staff have to show that they have the farmers' interests at heart and do not just give directions. They must demonstrate that they are striving for the betterment of the farmers so that they more readily listen to their counsel. Many schemes have failed to show tangible and lasting results where the active participation of the farmers was lacking, or where progressive technical assistance was not coupled with financial support.

Research:

A research programme at Faisalabad University determined the social and economic influences that can bring farmers together. It was demonstrated that these associations could work, but that they would have to be formalised. The farmers themselves wished for a legal status and more say in water distribution and its application. To this end, Ordinances were promulgated and Notifications from the Law Department made in each province between February 1981 and July 1982. They are now reproduced in full in the Appendices of this booklet for easy reference, together with examples of some of the pro forma that can be used.

The Role of the WUA:

There is a vital need for a strong institutional structure to represent the irrigators. In 37 countries examined, this organisation is known

as a "Water Users' Association", "Irrigators' Association", "Community of Irrigators", etc; their objectives are the same.

They need to operate, maintain and rehabilitate the water distribution system in as efficient and effective manner as possible and to assist in proper application of water on the farm.

It is necessary to provide water users with an incentive to improve their water use and the mechanism by which they can implement new technologies. This incentive could be in material support for equipment, loans, construction materials and other obvious benefits. The basic mechanism would be the Water Users' Association.

Status of the WUA:

The status of the Water Users' Association in the community of the Command Area is to:

- 1 Serve as the legal device for the water user contracting with the government in order to undertake watercourse and land levelling improvements.
- 2 Provide assurance that the watercourse will be properly operated, maintained and improved after construction of the physical components.
- 3 Provide a vehicle for farmers to gain an important identity in the in the country and an opportunity for them to develop and assume individual and collective responsibilities in the use of the nation's natural resources.
- 4 Enable water users at the watercourse level to gain economies of scale in the use of all resources available to them.
- 5 Reduce the risk of all users by simultaneously spreading the responsibility in a more equitable fashion.
- 6 Resolve disputes over water within the watercourse and seek proper assistance from the Irrigation and Revenue Departments or in the Civil Courts.
- 7 Serve as a channel of communication between the water users and the Irrigation Department.
- 8 Increase the water supply by having tubewells belonging to the Association strategically located throughout the watercourse.
- 9 Expand the benefits of co-operation and collective action into other related activities common to the irrigators, such as obtaining credit and purchasing sprayers, seeds, fertilisers, etc.

Organisation of the WUAs:

Based upon an evaluation of the most efficient means for organising water users and preliminary evaluation of village surveys, it is recommended that the Associations be formed at the lowest possible unit. This would be watercourse level or, where feasible, at the village level if there is only one watercourse serving the village, or where farmers on more than one watercourse are roughly of equal size.

There are in existence in Pakistan many de facto organisations for the distribution of water among local users. This kind of organisation, which exists by virtue of agreed customary practices among the users, should always remain a viable proposition.