

ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR IRRIGATION AND DRAINAGE (IRPID)

In order to meet the growing demand for food and to reduce the impacts of food insecurity in various countries, it is essential to intensify research, development and technology transfer efforts across the world. After the closure of the erstwhile International Program for Technology Research in Irrigation and Drainage (IPTRID), which was supported by World Bank and FAO and was active till 2008, ICID conceptualized a renewed International Research Program on Irrigation and Drainage (IRPID) through a network of institutions that addresses the research and technology needs of ICID National Committees (NCs) within their respective countries.

The vision of IRPID is to “Intensify Irrigation and Drainage Research to Achieve Global Food Security”. Its mission is to enhance research activities in irrigation and drainage science, technology, and management aspects in order to develop capabilities of member countries to achieve water and food security; and poverty alleviation while preserving the environment. The aim is to provide regional platforms for NCs to coordinate collaborative research based on their own resources and interests. This collaborative research initiative is expected to generate synergy among member countries to conduct research programs regionally as concerted actions towards their common irrigation and drainage problems; and also assist ICID to fulfil its vision to develop updated knowledge on irrigation and drainage planning and practices worldwide.

The main objectives of the program are to : (a) foster a conducive policy environment for intensifying research and development activities and meet networking needs of members; (b) identify and promote opportunities for National Committees to gain relevance, efficiency and effectiveness within their countries; (c) enhance research and innovations impacts in member countries by fostering increased coherence and convergence among various players; and (d) help National Committees raise financial resources required to undertake these research activities. The coordination and collaboration mechanism for the effective implementation of the program is available at http://www.icid.org/IRPID_Scheme.pdf

An Advisory Committee guides the program implemented through a network of Regional Nodes. The Advisory

Committee will develop a Framework Action Plan for the program, guided by the concept document as was presented in 2010 and keep overall coordination among the Regional Nodes duly supporting their autonomy and maintaining flexibility in fulfilling their roles. It will develop the strategy and action plan for the program; review and monitor the implementation of the program to ensure the quality of outputs and their effectiveness; and help mobilize and allocate extra-budgetary resources through joint activities.

The program is based on the research capacities within the countries and the NCs play a crucial role in the process and facilitate multi-disciplinary inputs. The National Committees will facilitate the coordination among various entities engaged in research and development. NCs are expected to develop an inventory of the research institutions engaged in the agriculture water management within the countries and the region, the projects they are engaged in and the areas of their research interest. Such information would then be made available on central website through a research data base.

The program is already underway with the establishment of regional nodes (RN) in Iran and China in 2011 hosted by Chinese National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (CNCID) and Iran National Committee on Irrigation and Drainage (IRNCID), respectively. The RNs will facilitate collaboration among the various member countries participating as nodes within the Regional Node. Such an approach has been shown by IRNCID, by exploring possible collaboration with counterparts of other global professional organizations at country level and collaborating in a research program to establish a wastewater reuse network, particularly, in safe reuse of water in agriculture sector and urban purposes, including urban agriculture. The National Committees are solicited to establish new Regional Nodes and expand the existing Nodes thereby strengthening the network of IRPID towards achieving the global food security.

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