



Improving Irrigation in Asia: Sustainable Performance of an Innovative Intervention in Nepal

Elinor Ostrom, Wai Fung Lam, Prachanda Pradhan, Ganesh P. Shivaokoti

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Improving Irrigation in Asia is based on a longitudinal study over two decades on innovative intervention for sustained performance of irrigation systems. The work identifies key factors that can help explain the performance of interventions, and explicates lessons for resource management and the management of development assistance.

In 1985, the Water and Energy Commission Secretariat of Nepal and the International Irrigation Management Institute developed an ingenious intervention program for nineteen irrigation systems located in the middle hills of Nepal in an attempt to overcome the prevailing 'best-practices' traps, in regard to assisting irrigation systems. This book highlights the innovativeness of the project lay in its provision of ample opportunities for farmers to make decisions regarding the operation of the irrigation system based on their local knowledge and creativity. The authors of this work, Elinor Ostrom, Wai Fung Lam, Prachanda Pradhan and Ganesh P. Shivakoti provide detailed analysis of these interventions and support the conclusion that farmers can build on an innovative intervention that not only provides physical improvements but also enhances farmers' problem-solving capacity. They argue that to achieve sustainable improvements in performance, the farmers themselves need to engage in collective action over time and support local entrepreneurs who provide leadership and stimulate adjustments to change.

Providing practical policy solutions, this study will prove a fascinating and invaluable read for academics and scholars of development studies, resource management, and irrigation studies, as well as development specialists in international agencies, policymakers in governments and international donor agencies.

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