

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

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| Date: | 12/06/2011 | Entry Number: | 1130 |
| Case Study Name: | Irrigation Management—Does Bottom Up Work Better than Top Down in Sri Lanka? | | |
| Author: | Gamini Herath | | |
| Document Type: | Book chapter | | |
| Year: | 2008 | | |
| Language: | English | | |
| Document Location: | http://www.download-it.org/free_files/Pages%20from%208-578b9a1b0584f4a178bdf025d229ce9d.pdf | | |
| Full Citation: | Herath, G. (2008) Irrigation Management—Does Bottom Up Work Better than Top Down in Sri Lanka?.In: Promise, Trust, and Evolution, Managing the Commons of South Asia, Ghate, R., Jodha, N.S. and Mukhopadhyay, P.; Oxford University Press, 2008, pp.191-209 | | |
| Region: | South Asia | | |
| Country: | Sri Lanka | | |
| Ecosystem Type: | Agricultural | | |
| Social Characteristics: | Village community | | |
| Scale of Study: | National | | |
| Resource Type: | Agriculture crop | | |
| Type of Initiative: | Research driven project | | |
| Community Based Work: | Institutional level governance | | |

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| Keywords: | New Institutional Economics (NIE), Irrigation management, Water user associations (WUA), Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT) |
| Summary: | <p>This paper explores the evolution of irrigation management institutions and their impact on efficiency, equity, and environmental issues in Sri Lanka over the past fifty years. It identifies the types of institutional innovations undertaken, and their successes and failures as well as lessons for the future based upon published studies. The paper describes Sri Lanka's experience when it comes to institutional reforms in the irrigation sector—the major schemes (command area greater than 80 ha), minor irrigation schemes (command area less than 80 ha, especially village tanks and <i>anicut</i> schemes), and groundwater programmes. The main focus is on the performance and problems of water user associations (WUAs) and the recent experiences in Irrigation Management Transfer (IMT). The last section discusses the lessons and limitations of institutional approaches to irrigation development.</p> |