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## ICID Young Professionals e-Forum (IYPeF)

<https://www.linkedin.com/groups/6990321>

### Farmer led Innovations for water efficiency, shared global success stories

#### Background Note for Discussion

15-31 May 2018

#### 1. Introduction

Farmer-led innovations in water efficiency have the distinct advantage in using local knowledge to develop locally specific solutions. It has been defined as the process where farmers assume a driving role in improving their water efficiency for agriculture by improving their knowledge on production technology, investment patterns and market linkages, and the governance of land and water. In the process, farmers exhibit entrepreneurial and risk-taking behavior and interact with a range of other actors. This definition acknowledges that, from a farmer's perspective, this is an intentional development that requires both work and investment. In that respect, it is certainly not 'spontaneous' nor 'unplanned' (Woodhouse et al. 2017).

Supporting farmer-led innovations in water efficiency has additional benefits to the resultant water savings. The process also serves to strengthen the farmers' capacities to seek out and try new ideas, adopt new technology and enable farmers to better adjust to changing conditions. With such innovations taking place all over the world, there is much to be learned from sharing the global success stories of on-farm innovations.

No innovation is permanent: A solution to a given problem does not remain valid forever and the conditions farmers face are constantly changing (Venot et al., 2017). With such a wide range of technology available for improved water efficiency, innovations on farm ranges from very simple to extremely sophisticated water efficiency measures. This discussion is focused on the success stories of farmer-led innovations resulting in water saving from simple practices and technologies to the most advanced. By sharing success stories, we hope to gain a better understanding of farmer led-innovations in water efficiency.

#### 2. Objectives

This discussion topic on "Farmer-led innovations for water efficiency – Global success stories" has the following objectives:

1. Sharing insights and diverse experiences that young professionals have encountered that demonstrate farmer-led innovations.



2. Highlight the views of Irrigation and Drainage Young professionals in a global channel of communication with regard to farmer-led innovations for water efficiency.
3. Bring together Young Professionals to share their experiences and learn from the success stories in the Irrigation and Drainage sector worldwide.
4. Discuss the long-term role of young professionals in Irrigation and Drainage in advancing farmer-led innovations.

### **3. Expected outcomes**

It is intended that the IYPeF e-discussion will explore answers to the following questions:

1. What level of farmer-led innovations have you encountered and how successful are they in terms of water saving?
2. What can we learn from these success stories? How do we apply these principles to encourage more farmer-led innovations?
3. What are some of the challenges faced by farmers in developing innovations and how can they be overcome?
4. How do we advance farmer-led innovations?
5. What is the role of Irrigation and Drainage Young Professionals in supporting farmer-led innovations in water efficiency?

#### **Discussion Mentor**

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#### **Discussion Coordinator**

Mrs. Kathleen Heuvel, Project Manager (Water Use Efficiency-Irrigation Futures), Growcom, Australia.

#### **References**

Venot, J., Kuper, M., Zwarteveen, M. (2017) *Drip Irrigation for Agriculture: Untold Stories of Efficiency, Innovation and Development* New York, NY, Routledge



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*Water secure world free of poverty and hunger through sustainable rural development*

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Woodhouse, P. Veldwisch, G.J., Venot, J.P., Brockington, D., Komakech, H.& Manjichi, A.  
(2016) *African farmer-led irrigation development: re-framing agricultural policy and investment?*, *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 44:1, 213-233, DOI: [10.1080/03066150.2016.1219719](https://doi.org/10.1080/03066150.2016.1219719)

