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Ernie Thiessen

M.S., Cornell University, 1986.

Title: Complementarities between Irrigation Development Objectives in Nepal:
The AKWUA Strategy

Irrigation development is recognized as an important component in the strategy for growth in Nepal. An equally important, but often more elusive objective is equity, i.e. that the poorest of the population have opportunity to achieve a significant share of the benefits from development. Whether there are conflicts or complementarities between these objectives depends on whether or not they can both be achieved without trade-offs. Important factors determining the degree of achievement and possible trade-offs between objectives are the policies relating to land and water allocation.

This thesis discusses how the local Water Users' Association at the Andhi Khola project is using "Redistribution when Growth" and "Market Water Share Allocation" in the implementation of their irrigation scheme to achieve both growth and equity without compromise.

The simulation model in the appendix draws from three years of the author's experience working in irrigation development in the mid-hills of western Nepal. The results of this model seem very impressive, indicating that there is a large potential for complementarity using the "AKWUA Strategy" for the particular case study being tested (i.e. increases in both growth and equity compared to conventional development).

Although the projected increases in growth and equity were less in some other hypothetical cases examined through limited sensitivity testing with some of the

*The AHREP Headrace Irrigation Scheme, currently being implemented by AKWUA, a newly registered local Water Users' Association, has developed a strategy to enable both high productivity and equitable benefit distribution (Thiessen, 1983). They are receiving advice and technical assistance from staff on United Mission to Nepal's Andhi Khola Project. Funds from loans to undertake this pilot program are being provided by NORAD and CIDA.