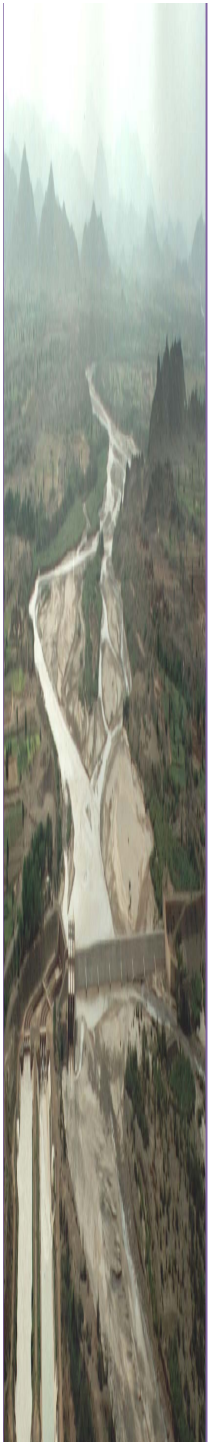# Project Annual Meeting

From Africa to Asia and Back Again: Testing Adaptation in Flood-Based Farming Systems

28 – 30 April 2016, The Netherlands

Strengthening partnership with farmers for high impact on the ground

Eyasu Yazew (PhD)
Associate Professor in Land and Water Development
Mekelle University

1 Phases and focus of SpN: Past

Phase I: 2002 to 2006

The Challenge

Spate Irrigation "largely" dismissed as unreliable systems merely supporting subsistence farming
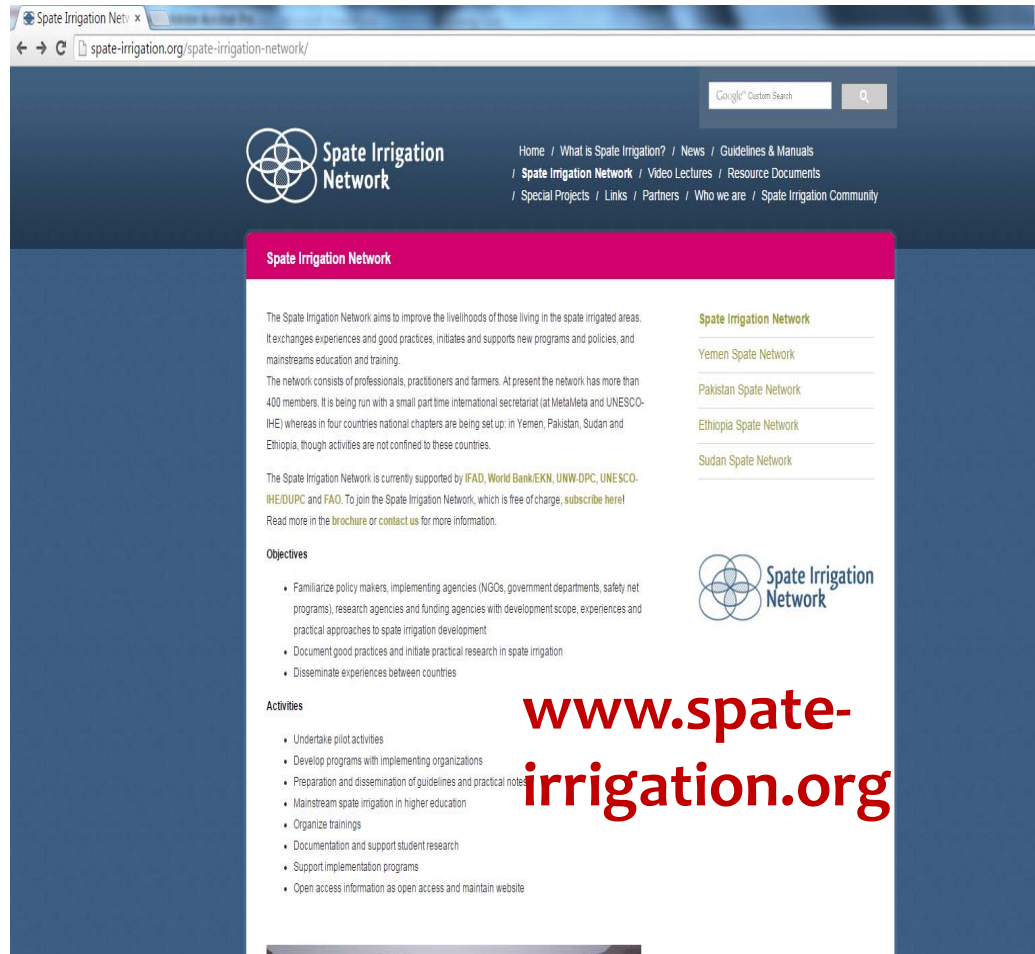
The Approach

Establishing a network

Create platform for knowledge and experience sharing

Document bright spots – success stories

The Overarching approach

Working in partnership with varied stakeholders "Agents of Change"

Spate Irrigation Network Born in 2002

www.spate-irrigation.org

Familiarize policy makers, implementing agencies, research and educational institutions, donors with development scope, experiences & practical approaches to spate irrigation development

Was all about visibility

2. Establish country bases

3. Don't wait for invitations, show-up at major events with powerful messages!!

Phase I: 2007 to 2011

The Challenge

Where is the technical know-how to develop FBFS?

Where are the credible technical references?

The Approach

Solutions oriented scientific research

Institutionalizing Spate Irrigation

Creating platform for knowledge-sharing platforms

The Approach

Working in partnership with varied stakeholders "Agents of Change"

Phase 3: 2011 to 2015

The Challenge

Embedding FBFS in national policy and strategy documents

Integrate FBFS into national curricula

Strengthened outreach to farmers

The Approach

Invest into local champions

Invest in strengthened country knowledge centers

Engage policy makers and farmers – communication toolkit

The Approach

Working in partnership with varied stakeholders "Agents of Change"

2   The need to transform

- If high impact on the ground is to be achieved, strengthening partnership with farmers becomes mandatory:

  ➢ Rich indigenous knowledge;

  ➢ Better communication and understanding among themselves;

  ➢ Practical solutions to their problems;

  ➢ Two way traffic better than one way;

  ➢ Transforming the network to include farmers, researchers, policy makers, practitioners is vital.

Phase 4: 2015 ... The Journey Ahead – new frontier with our partners

In the existing network, a transformation will be made toward network of farmers/agropastoralists and their organisations, so as to create a broader grass root movement and direct implementation capacity.

3   What should we do in Phase 4

Phase 4: 2015 to 2020

The Challenge

Transform the current network into a farmer owned FBF Network

Active engagement of farmers

Co-conduct solution oriented action research

The Approach

Include core team of farmers into country network

Develop mechanisms for effective engagement

Capacity building: Farmer Learning Centres established

Co-develop scientifically sound and practically relevant research proposals

The Overarching approach

Working in partnership with varied stakeholders (including farmers, researchers, policy makers, practitioners, etc)

4   What promising activities do we have to support this?

The case of Ethiopia

- Database of WUAs and contact information under compilation

- Approaches for effective engagement of farmers under preparation

- Cross-country farmer to farmer field based knowledge and experience sharing program scheduled for 16 – 19 May 2016

- Tailor-made training to selected farmers from one of the potential FBFS areas (Raya Valley) will be organized during 14 – 15 May 2016

  - In preparation for the experience sharing event;

  - Suggestions on training themes most welcome.

- "Community Learning, Research and Innovation Centre" under establishment in Raya Valley

- Internship program of young professionals - will work on consolidating Phase 4 objectives

Lessons from member countries?

5 Required facilities

- Farmer Learning Centres

- Training facilities (Computers, projectors, manuals, etc)

- Communications and engagement tool-kits

- etc

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Thank you