



Water Resources Management

Revitalization of the Phiring irrigation scheme, Limpopo Province, South Africa



Short project description.

The action-research project 'Operationalizing community-driven water services for multiple uses in South Africa' aims at three goals: demonstrating community-driven planning of water services in six communities in Limpopo Province, generating a knowledge base, and upscaling the lessons learnt at district, provincial, and national levels. The project is funded by the African Development Bank, and managed by the Water Research Commission. The NGO Tsogang and the International Water Management Institute are the implementers.

After one year of implementing the first participatory planning steps of this 2.5 year project, it was found that there is an untapped potential to revitalize the Phiring irrigation scheme. Water, land and storage and irrigation infrastructure is, in principle, available for free to the users, but quite some irrigable plots remain unused. At the same time, a few young farmers return from Gauteng to take up irrigated farming. The envisaged study aims to identify the reasons why only part of the scheme is used, and which obstacles and opportunities the current irrigators see in terms of physical, technical, institutional and social dimensions of issues at plot- and irrigators collective levels. At plot level, this includes: timely water availability, inputs (fencing, ploughing services, seeds, fertilizers, chemicals), cultivation (e.g., labour, plant disease), yields, use of the harvest and marketing. At collective level, issues concern: organization of water distribution, inputs provision and marketing. An important question concerns the current and potential role of government in clarifying ownership of the infrastructure, and in providing agronomic, marketing and institutional support. The study differentiates by gender, class and age.

We look for candidates, preferably from Limpopo Province, South Africa, or from the global South, specialized in irrigation and interested in field work.

Host institute(s): Barbara van Koppen b.vankoppen@cgiar.org (principal researcher poverty, gender and water, based in IWMI office in Pretoria; co-supervision; provision of office space for periods in Pretoria; contacts/literature; assistance in installation of field office; €300/month to compensate research costs). The student/intern is expected to give a seminar for IWMI staff in the Pretoria office.

Country: South Africa **Starting date:** asap, Feb 2018

WRM contact person: Alex Bolding, alex.bolding@wur.nl, Lumen, room C045