Government initiatives on irrigation

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Mary Jean Gabriel
Department of Agriculture, Land Reform and Rural Development
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Introduction

• About 1.5% of the land in South Africa is under irrigation, which produces an estimated 30% of the total crops.

• 1.6 million ha is under irrigation, about 50 000ha under smallholder farmers.

• Irrigation is power intensive and water intensive.

• 60% of the total surface water in the country.
Introduction – National Imperatives

• National Growth Path – targets 300 000 households in agricultural smallholder schemes

• National Development Plan - increase irrigated areas by 500 000 ha

• National Water Resource Strategy II

• Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme (CASP) and Illima Letsema Programme

• Agriculture and the Agro processing Master Plan
Introduction – Irrigation Strategy

• Increase the contribution of irrigated agriculture to the GDP, poverty alleviation, employment creation and skills development

• Increase equity of access to water

• Contribute to food security and improve socio-economic conditions at household and community level

• Improve planning and investment coordination

• Increase in investment in skills and training of farmers, extension officers and irrigation specialists

• Increase investment in relevant research

• Increase irrigation water use efficiency
Increase equity of access to water

- Coordination Committees on Agriculture – National, Provincial and Local authorities including farmer organisations and traditional authorities
- Collaboration with the Department of Water and Sanitation regarding allocation of water and water use license applications (WULA)
- Provide funds for WULA applications and implementation of irrigation projects through the Comprehensive Agriculture Support Programme (CASP)
Improve planning & investment coordination

• Coordination Committees on Agriculture – National, Provincial and Local authorities including farmer organisations and traditional authorities

• Collaboration with the Department of Water and Sanitation on projects relating to provision of water for agriculture purposes

• Water Use and Irrigation Group – irrigation projects undertaken in the provinces

• CASP Committees – Planning for projects including irrigation projects
Contribute to food security on household & community level

- The use of rainwater and grey water techniques – climate smart agriculture
Increase investment in relevant research, skills and training of farmers, extension officers & irrigation specialists

• Provide financial support on research relevant to the irrigation sector
• Provide financial support to roll out training on new technologies developed by research e.g. Decision Support System
• Invest in training of irrigation specialists
Increase irrigation water use efficiency

• Revitalization Initiatives – changing to more water efficient technologies
• Expansion of irrigated areas – implementation of water efficient technologies
• Piloting the use of wetting front detectors, chameleons to ensure water is used efficiently