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Indicators for the Measurement of Institutional Performance Concerning Water Management — The Case of Uzbekistan and Ghana

BORBALA ESZTER BALINT¹, IRINA FORKUTSA¹, ANTONIO CARLOS REIS DE FREITAS²

¹*University of Bonn, Economics and Technological Change, Germany*

²*The State University of Maranhao, Livestock Farming Research Center (EMBRAPA), Brazil*

Abstract

The constant evaluation of institutional arrangements in any sphere of human endeavour is critical for harnessing possibilities of institutional innovations. This is particularly important in natural resource management, which holds enormous potential for sustainable rural development. This paper aims at elaborating a set of indicators that could measure institutional performance in water management. The indicators are furthermore applied on the irrigation sectors of Ghana and Uzbekistan. For this purpose, a set of indicators capturing formal as well as informal institutional performance is developed. The changes in the organizational structure of the irrigation sector in both Ghana and Uzbekistan are highlighted and indicators for institutional performance are evaluated. The choice of the two countries is motivated by apparent similarities and differences in the irrigation sectors respectively. The similarities include the fact that the institutions of water management are in transition towards private property rights regimes. Moreover, both countries are confronted with the problem of water scarcity and the negative environmental consequences of extensive water use, requiring cooperation at the international level as well as specific institutional arrangements on national, regional and local levels. The major difference is that the irrigation sector in Ghana is dominated by informal institutional arrangements while in Uzbekistan the formal institutions are overwhelming. Given the above similarities and differences, the comparison between these countries gives an indication of the performance of institutions in the transition process starting from two different ends. It also shows the functionality of formal and informal institutions in country specific contexts. The results suggest how institutional innovations could evolve in order to achieve the best possible results with respect to natural resource management.

Keywords: Ghana, indicators, institutional performance, Uzbekistan, water management