

## **RURAL REFORM AND GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT IN GANSU, CHINA: CAN WUAS HELP?**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Water management reforms to cope with the acute shortage of water in North-west China are complex because of on-going social, political and institutional changes. These profoundly influence the way water management can be reformed, and the impact of and public attitudes to reform. This paper examines the way international concepts of IWRM and WUAs have been implemented and merged with local concepts of a water saving society in the Shiyang river basin in Gansu province. It outlines how WUAs can be set up to make them effective, able to contribute towards efficient and equitable use of water, and help farmers maximise their income from the amount of water consumed, whilst protecting the aquifer. A key part of this work was to define what the WUAs could do, who they related to (and how), and the skills, resources and other assets needed to carry out these functions.

**PALAVRA-CHAVE:** Groundwater, WUA, management, reform, China