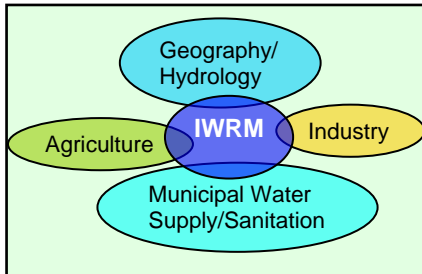


IWRM



Integrated Water Resource Management: (IWRM) is a process intended to coordinated development and management of water, land and related resources in order to maximize economic and social welfare in an equitable manner without compromising the sustainability of ecosystems (FAO, 2005).

Why Integrated Water Resource Management?

Inefficient Sectors vs. Efficient Cooperation: Freshwater is a finite resource, and demand for water is increasing which leaves many nations with high water stress levels. The basis of IWRM is that there are various demands for water (i.e. agriculture, industry and municipal) and efficient use of water resources therefore depends on these sectors collectively working together to manage existing water resources, rather than depending on supply side, top-down, uncoordinated management decisions.



Photo: USBR.gov/lc/hoooverdam

- **Participation:** Everyone is a stakeholder in water issues. Thus, a participatory approach is the best means for achieving long-lasting consensus and common agreement. Governments must help create the opportunity and capacity for their constituents to participate, particularly among women and other marginalized social groups (www.cap-net.org).



Photo: USDA.ers

- **Gender and Participation:** It is widely acknowledged that women play a key role in the collection and safeguarding of water for domestic and – in many cases – agricultural use, but that they have a much less influential role than men in management, problem analysis, and the decision-making processes related to water resources. There is an important synergy between gender equity and sustainable water management (www.cap-net.org).



Photo: USAID.GOV



Learn More: Imagine a single river that runs through a community. IWRM begs the question, how can this river meet the needs of the entire community equally? These needs include electricity supply, industrial processes, fishing and recreating, and agriculture and drinking water. While simple in theory, in practice, river management proves much more difficult.