

Irrigation has made a major contribution to poverty reduction in the past decades, enabling higher yields and better nutrition. Despite these achievements, large-scale irrigation schemes have usually yielded low returns and attracted negative publicity because of their adverse environmental and social impacts. As a result, the Bank has largely switched its support for irrigation away from new construction toward rehabilitation and policy reform. This evaluation supports the need for reform but shows that there are substantial benefits from further investment in infrastructure. This study analyzes these issues through an impact evaluation of one of the last old generation of projects in which the Bank directly supported creation of a new irrigation scheme: Indias Second and Third Andhra Pradesh Irrigation Projects (AP II and AP III). Together these projects created a new command area, the Srisailem Right Branch Canal (SRBC), and rehabilitated an existing one that had been constructed with Bank assistance, the Sriramasagar Project.

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