

Pakistan Affairs

(CSS-2023)

Q#03

Having the largest irrigation system in the world, the land of the sub continent served as the main food supply basket for the British power for more than a century, but now Pakistan has to import food commodities. Discuss in detail the causes of this agriculture decline.

Introduction:

Having the largest irrigation system in the world, the land of the subcontinent once served as the main food supply basket for the British Empire, producing wheat, rice, sugarcane, and cotton for over a century. After independence, Pakistan inherited this rich agricultural base, yet today it has to import essential food commodities. Agriculture in Pakistan is decline due to outdated farming practices, inefficient water management, weak policies, environmental challenges, and economic constraints. Reviving these sector is crucial to restore productivity, improve food security, and revive Pakistan's historical role as a leading agricultural nation.

Causes of Agriculture Decline in Pakistan

(01)

Outdated Farming Practices

Reliance on old
seed varieties

Limited use of
modern machinery

Continues mono-cropping
of seed fields

Weak pest and
disease management

Lack of knowledge
of modern techniques

Some measures ~~are~~ mentioned above are
discussed below.

1 Reliance On Old Seed Varieties

Farmers use traditional seeds that produce low yields. For instance, Punjab wheat farmers in 2022 reported 20% lower output when using old seeds instead of high-yield varieties.

Limited Use of Modern

2 Machinery

Most farmers rely on manual labor or bullocks rather than tractors and harvesters. For instance, over 60% of farmland in Sindh is cultivated manually, sowing and harvesting.

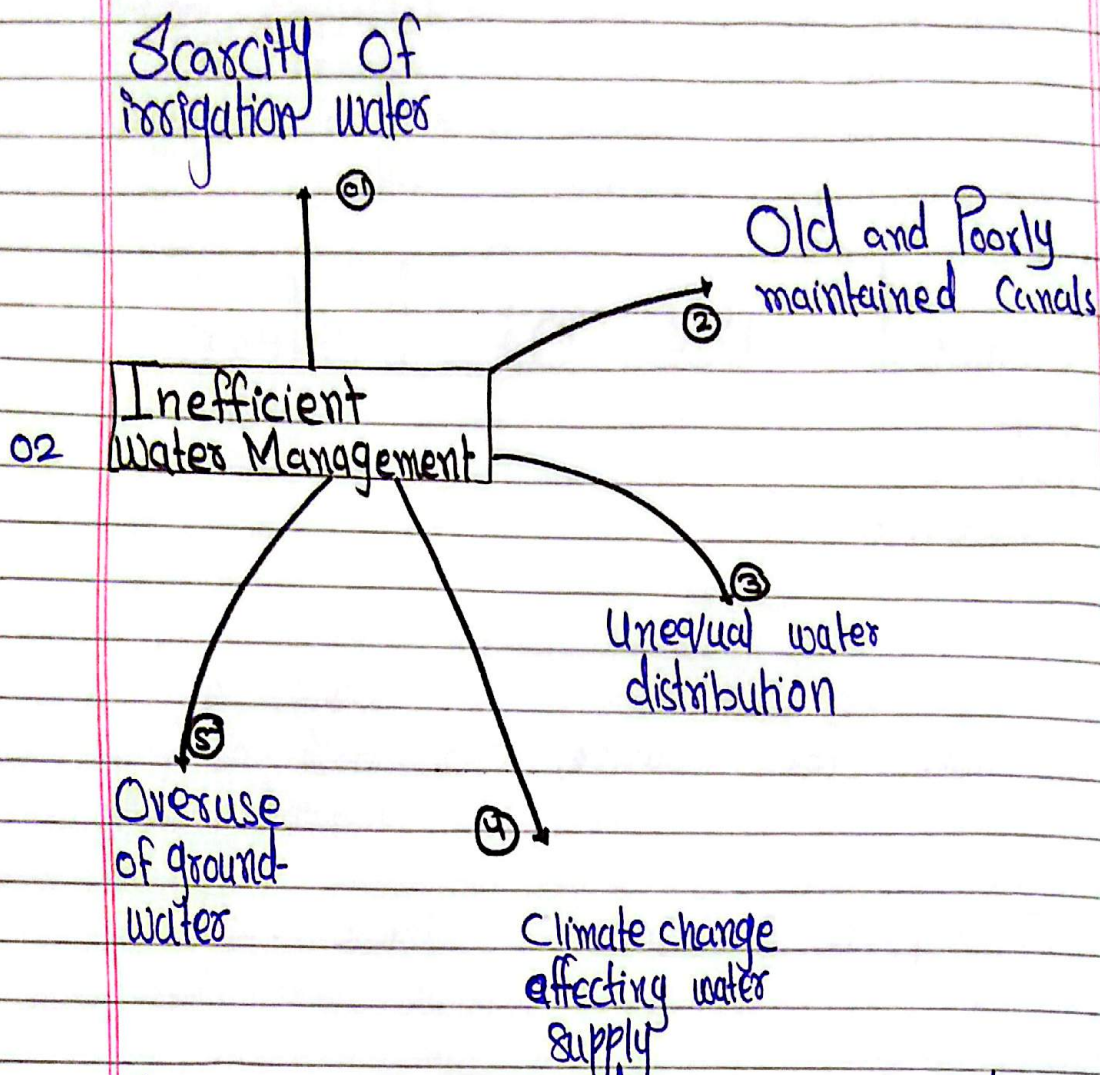
FAO reports in (2021): Manual farming reduces efficiency and limits the area that can be cultivated.

Lack of Knowledge

3

Of Modern Techniques

Most farmers do not use modern methods like drip irrigation or organic fertilization. Demonstration farms using these techniques achieved 25-30% higher yield.



2)

3)

Some measures mentioned above are discussed below.

(1) Scarcity of irrigation Water

Limited water reduces crop growth. In 2021-22, Sindh received 80% less canal water, damaging wheat and rice fields. WAPDA report 2022: water

Scarcity directly lowered crop yields.

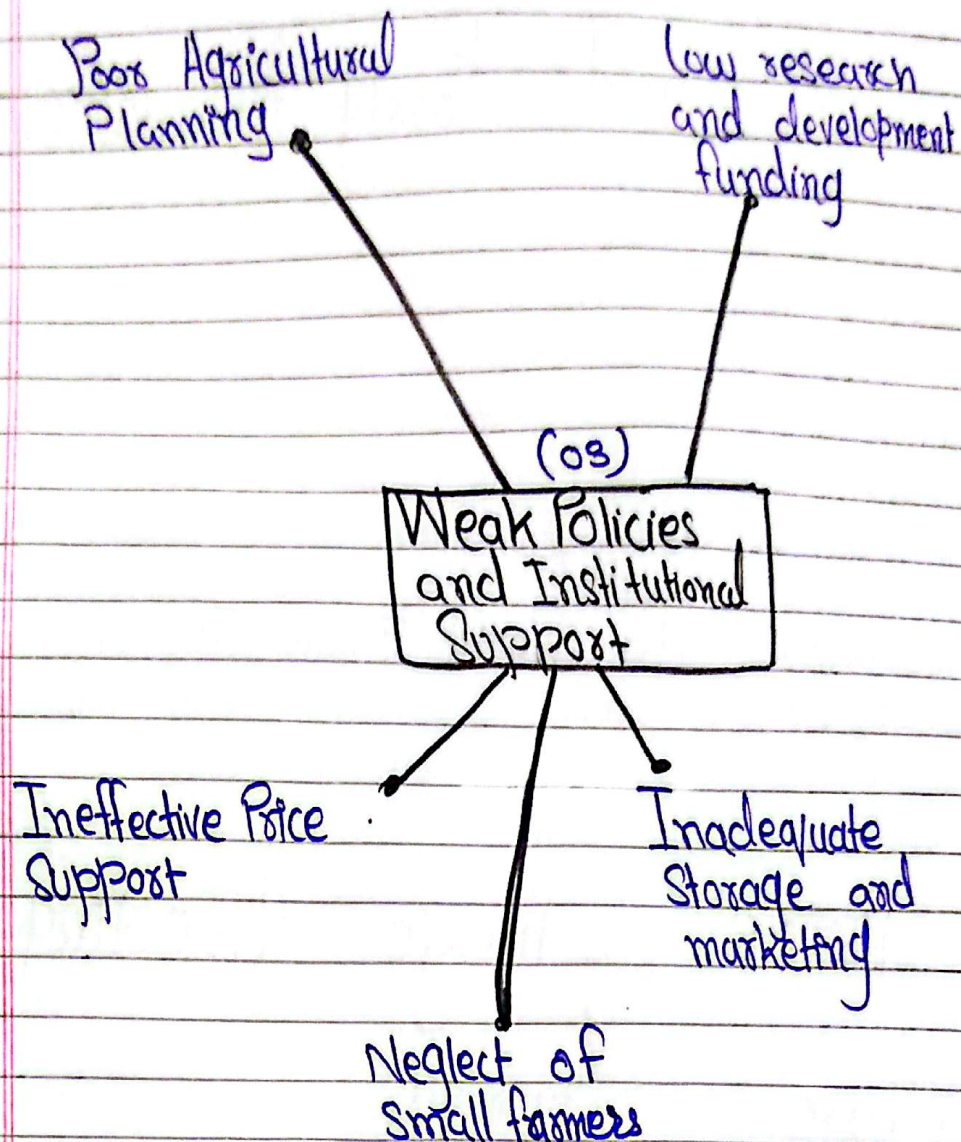
2) Old and Poorly Maintained Canals

Ageing canals through leakage, water waste water through Punjab canals, reducing efficiency. of water due to poor maintenance. lose up to 50%.

According to World Bank Report (2020): inefficient canals significantly reduce irrigation coverage.

3) Climate Change Affecting Water Supply

Erratic rainfall and melting glaciers reduce canal flows and reservoir levels. Pakistan Meteorological Department (2022) confirms unpredictable water availability makes irrigation planning difficult and lowers productivity.



Some measures mentioned above are discussed below

1 Poor Agricultural Planning

Government focuses mainly on wheat and sugarcane, ignoring diversification. Punjab farmers produce fewer pulses and

vegetables. According to the Ministry of Agriculture Report (2021), Poor Planning reduces farmer income and food variety.

2 Low Research And Development Funding

Limited funding restricts seed improvement and modern fertilizers development. PARC lacks sufficient resources to develop high-yield seeds. PARC Annual Report 2020 insufficient research limits agricultural innovation.

3 Neglect Of Small Farmers

Smallholders cannot access credit or insurance. As a result, they cannot invest in seeds or machinery. Small farmers output is lower due to lack of support (State Bank of Pakistan 2021)

Conclusion:

Having the largest irrigation system, Pakistan once supplied food to the subcontinent but now depends on imports. Agriculture declines due to outdated practices, poor water management, weak policies, climate ~~the~~ threats, and economic constraints. Immediate reforms are essential to restore productivity and ensure national food security.