

Outcome Story: IWRM-FERGHANA PROJECT

IWMI and its project partner (SIC ICWC) developed and introduced a comprehensive package of integrated water management-based reforms in the Ferghana valley (covering Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan). Specifically, the new institutional arrangements featured integrated governance and management components at:

- Farmer level: bottom-up democratic water user groups (WUGs)
- WUA level: WUA Assembly and WUA Councils;
- Canal level: Unions of Canal Water Users and Canal Water Committees on the governance side and Canal Management Organizations for operational management

Institutional training, tools and skills have been provided along side the establishment of these new structures. The geographic scope of the project and its direct influence comprises an area greater than 100,000 ha, spread over 13 administrative districts in the three countries with hundreds of thousands rural households living off backyard gardens.

Corroborating an earlier external review by the donor, the Swiss Development Corporation, a 2008 impact assessment carried out by the German Development Institute documents a number of major generalizable outcomes resulting from the adoption and use of the project outputs concerned (GDI, 2008):

- General improvement in matching of water supply with demand and equitability of supply to and within WUAs,
- Improved access to and distribution of irrigation water
- Substantial reduction in overall water use,
- More effective water management,
- Participatory decision making among water users
- Greater stakeholder knowledge of water management issues and use and cross-stakeholder understanding,
- Peaceful resolution of water disputes

On a more developmental impact level there is evidence that the above interim outcomes also result—through increased water access, crop yields, awareness and empowerment—in predominantly positive social development trends in all three countries improving people’s nutrition, family incomes, overall social capital and environmental situation (GDI, 2008).

Moreover, acknowledging the successful experience and impact of the project’s institutional and capacity building approach, the ADB has recently commended the SDC for having “the most experience” in WUA training and water management in the Ferghana Valley. According to the ADB, the program implemented by IWMI and ICWC SIC “has significantly improved WUA performance for water management and system O&M, and provides experience from which to scale up a broader training effort” (ADB, 2008: 4). As a result, and based on their “successful experience”, the ADB has approached the SDC for collaboration together with IWMI and SIC ICWC to provide training and other support services in order to strengthen WUAs and improve water management in two key agricultural centers of Uzbekistan—the Ferghana Valley and Zarafshan River Basin with an aggregate irrigated area of 1.5 million ha—as part of their newly launched multi-million project (ADB, 2008: 10).

At a more local level, a recent case study of the Joypas WUA (600 ha irrigated land serving 240 peasant farmers and gardeners in Kyrgyzstan), established by the project in 2006, documents significant gains in crop water productivity while simultaneously, reducing the amount of water needed for irrigation (Jumaboev, 2008). From 2005 to 2007, the amount of water allocated to farmers declined dramatically from 12,900 m³ ha⁻¹ in 2005 to 4,900 m³ ha⁻¹ while crop water

productivity increased from 0.36 kg m⁻³ to 0.76 kg/m³. These improvements, as well as the more generalizable outcomes noted above have been attributed to a large extent to the organization of water users in the Ferghana Valley by IWMI, SIC ICWC and others, the related capacity building efforts together with the introduction of rules and schedules.

References:

1. Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2008. **Proposed Loans Republic of Uzbekistan: Water Resources Management Sector Project**. Report and Recommendation of the President to the Board of Directors. ADB: Manila
2. German Development Institute (GDI), 2008. **MAPP-based Impact Assessment Workshop of the IWRM-Ferghana Valley Project** (by each country). GDI: Bonn
3. Jumaboev, K. 2008. **Case study WUA Joypas of Aravan Akbura Canal, Osh Province of Kyrgyzstan**. IWMI-Tashkent