

A Source of Peace – Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia

Improving water allocation and abstraction at district and farm level in Batken

Context

The Kyzyl-Kyz Water User Association (WUA) abstracts water from the Isfara river, which originates in Kyrgyzstan and further flows into the territory of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The water is delivered to the WUA through the off-farm network of the district's Department of Water Resources.

During the irrigation season in particular, the lack of transparency in the allocation and abstraction of water lead to frequent disputes over cost accounting between farmers and the Department. Payments by the WUAs for abstraction charges were often delayed, which has a negative impact on the sustainability of water supply.

The off-farm network in Batken district, which was built in the 1970s, lacked the equipment required to accurately measure and control the flow. There are several wells on the territory of the Kyzyl-Kyr WUA, where all measurements were made visually and recorded on paper. The reliability of these data could not be guaranteed as they could not be verified.

Increased transparency of water allocation ensures sustainability of the system and increases mutual understanding between Kyzyl-Kyr WUA and the Department of Water Resources of Batken district.

Project name	Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia
Commissioned by	German Federal Foreign Office (Auswärtiges Amt)
Project region	Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan
Main partners	Department of Water Management and Melioration at the Ministry of Agriculture and Melioration of the Kyrgyz Republic
Duration	November 2010 – September 2011

Objective

The overall objective of the project was to showcase how increasing the transparency of water allocation and abstraction helps build mutual trust and understanding at the grassroots level between water suppliers and users. The farmers should be invoiced on the basis of actual, verified withdrawals. To this end, the project aimed to build technical and personnel capacities for computer-based data collection, analysis and distribution to the relevant authorities. These improvements also aimed to reduce water loss and help increase land productivity.



Rehabilitated hydro-post of Kyzyl-Kyr WUA.



Water specialists from partner organisations use new remote sensing equipment.

Measures

In order to achieve these objectives, modern flow measurement and control equipment were installed and a database workspace set up at Kyzyl-Kyr WUA and within the local Department of Water Resources. Its staff and WUA members received training and a coordination unit was set up to ensure that the hydro facilities are operated properly and continuously maintained.

Results

Installed and operating flow measurement and control equipment functions sustainably and staff of the Department of Water Resources as well as WUA members received training on operating the devices. In addition, the programme also supported the development of a database as part of the reporting system for water management organisations. This database replaced the outdated manual reporting system and the available data makes the water abstraction transparent for both parties.

All project activities are closely coordinated with other initiatives of the Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia Programme. Consequently, the improved data management supports Integrated Water Resources Management in the Isfara river basin extending to national level.

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