

# Social Mobilization as the Base for Successful Progression of IWRM

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Social mobilization is the process, through which all stakeholders are involved in water resources management and decision-making related to governance and proper maintenance of water infrastructure [7] and which can be established in the form of the consultative platform where all stakeholders try to reach overall understanding of their needs and problems in the field of water management and are conducting a regular and comprehensive dialog for co-ordination of collective actions with purpose to reform and improve water resources governance by means of establishing community-based associations for water resources management such as WUAs, CWUU, and the joint governmental and community-based partnerships like the Canal Water Committee (CWC).

Social mobilization is the continuous process, in the course of which field consultants and initiators of social mobilization meet with farmers, representatives of water management organizations and local authorities and other stakeholders to disclose to them the institutional framework of IWRM, measures for improving governance of pilot canals, procedures for establishing community-based associations that will participate in future management of irrigation systems when their role and votes will be of decisive importance, as well as the essence of transferring powers from the state towards water users and the need to keep a role of the government in water resources management. This process is a so-called “bilateral dialog” when opinions and new ideas of all stakeholders are taken into consideration and documented to be the basis for adjustment of the public participation policy.

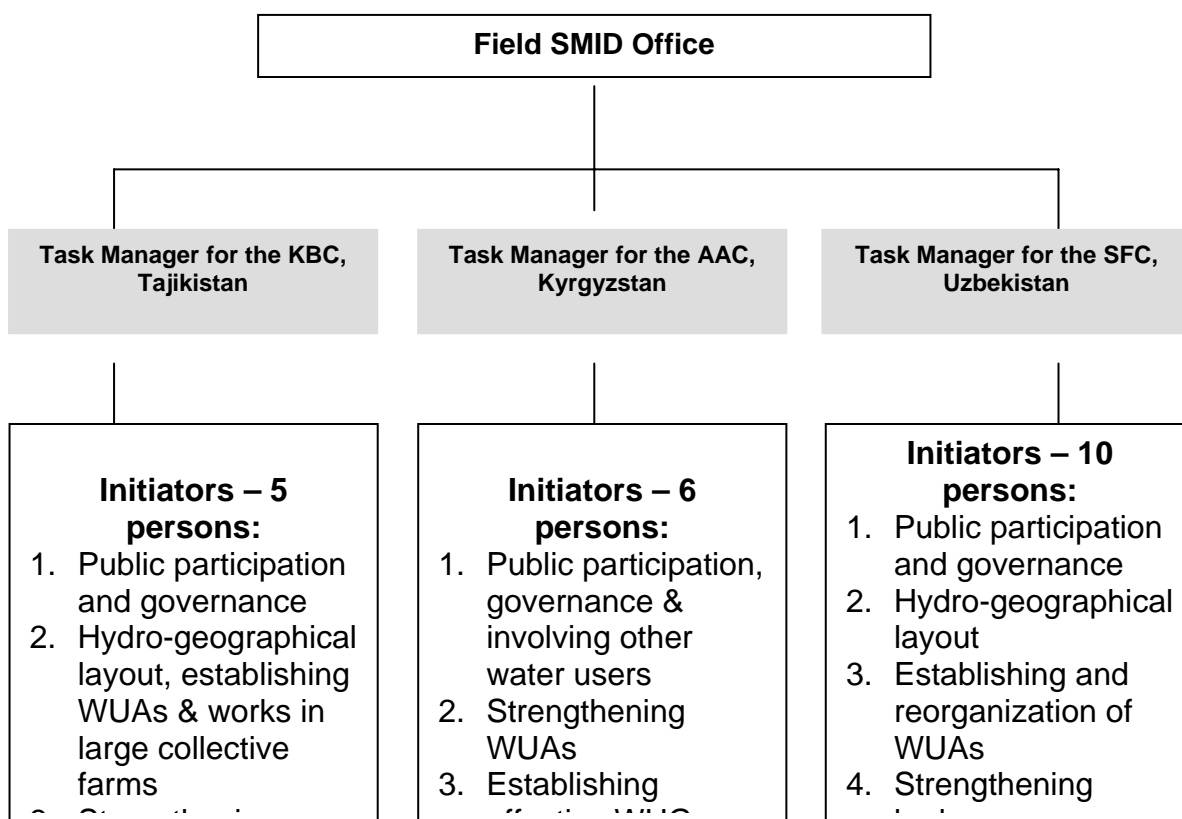
The experience of SMID<sup>1</sup> obtained at Phase III of the IWRM-Fergana Project is presented in this section. A new SMID policy with the more intensive and extended coverage of stakeholders differs from the approach used during Phase II when SMID has included only establishing single community-based organizations such as pilot WUAs, Canal Water Users Unions and Committees. In particular, the measures in the frame of SMID are aimed at strengthening earlier established institutions engaged in water management and disseminating the experience of pilot projects over the extended area with the ultimate goal to provide the sustainability of newly-established organizations.

**The SMID policy** for Phase III of the IWRM-Fergana Project and the organizational arrangement of field works related to social mobilization are given in Fig. 4.26. To provide the single approach and efficiency of SMID it was decided to increase the number of field consultants-initiators and to appoint a Task Manager for overall management of project activity and its coordination with all key actors and stakeholders based on regular and comprehensive dialog, implementing project tasks planned for Phase III.

At the beginning of each year, project team has consulted with stakeholders of each pilot canal regarding the matters related to the correct, effective and intense arrangement of SMID activity. All proposals and recommendations were being documented, and then, based on analyzing the proposals on improving project activity, the SMID policy appropriate for each pilot canal was developed. Workshops where each project consultant had the opportunity to express his opinion regarding the proposed SMID action plan (the field and practical experience of initiators was always quite useful) were held after completing the draft action plans in each country that participates in the project implementation. Based on the general action plan that was adjusted after discussions at workshops, each group of initiators has developed their individual plans for a current year that were a tool of monitoring and assessing group’s activity.

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<sup>1</sup> SMID – social mobilization and institutional development



**Figure 4.26 Organizational Arrangements of SMID Field Works**

A strategy of SMID can differ in each country that participates in the project implementation due to local peculiarities, water management set-up and socio-economic conditions, but is built up based on the following integral framework:

***Hydro-geographical layout of potential WUA:***

- Meetings with representatives of WMOs, local authorities and water users for general presentation and specifying the service area;
- Inspection of the service area for identification of problematic sites and visiting local WMOs, local authorities, and primary water users (existing WUAs) and water users;
- Preliminary consultation with water users for outlining the area of potential WUA;

- Drafting a map of potential WUAs along the secondary canals; and discussion and approval of the plan for establishing WUA at the meeting with CWUC members; and
- Involving the CWUC members, chiefs of hydro-operational sites, representatives of District Water Administration and primary water users in discussing this map.

***SMID for establishing new WUAs based on the hydro-geographical principle or re-organizing existing WUAs established based on the administrative principle:***

- Meetings with key parties i.e. managers of primary water users (shirkat farms, WUAs established according to the administrative principle etc.) are organized for presentation of the plan of establishing a WUA that will be arranged according to the hydro-geographical principle;
- Establishing the relations with secondary water users within WUAs established according to the administrative principle and shirkat farms and explanation the essence of restructuring their WUAs and a role of new type of WUAs in solving present problems;
- Developing the plan of restructuring WUAs established according to the administrative principle by means of revising the agreements on irrigation water delivery with neighboring WUAs, solving the problems related to transferring a property of former owners, consultations with local legal bodies regarding the planned restructuring (or with project legal consultants), studying the water users' attitude to restructuring their WUAs and discussing the issues concerning changes in the management staff, fee rates for irrigation services etc.;
- Coordinating the plan of restructuring WUAs established according to the administrative principle with decision-makers (BISA, District WMO, and local authorities) based on the official letters of support and the minutes of joint meetings of two or more WUAs;
- Consulting assistance to directors of WUAs established according to the administrative principle and chairmen of their Councils with respect to restructuring their WUAs in the course of regular meetings;
- Assistance to the group of initiators in organizing the general meetings of WUAs for discussing their restructuring and in gathering the documents necessary for official registration of new WUAs; and
- Assistance to the WUA administration in completing the constituent instruments of the restructured WUA for re-registration (or registration of a new WUA) by the justice bodies.

***Strengthening WUAs established according to the hydro-geographical principle<sup>2</sup>:***

- On-the-job training to improve water resources management in such fields as drawing up the plan of water use and its implementation (i.e. water distribution among water users, calculating crop water requirements, water accounting and assessment of WUA activity in water management);

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<sup>2</sup> At that, only the methods tested in pilot WUAs are employed.

- Institutional improvements (practical assistance to WUA administration in documenting of production activity (the registration book of WUA members and non-members receiving water from the WUA, the registration book of applications for irrigation water supply and their execution, certificates of water delivery and acceptance etc.), in establishing relations with local authorities, tax administration and public utilities, as well as assistance in providing the normative and methodical documents, introducing of advanced methods of management such as developing business plans etc.); and
- Enhancing WUA Council's activity (assistance to WUA Council in documenting its activity: minutes of general meetings, sessions of the Auditing Committee and Council, decisions of the Arbitration Commission, as well as in establishing the working relations with the CWUC and organizing the meetings with water users; settling disputes and conflicts at the Council's sessions etc.).

### ***Establishing WUGs<sup>3</sup>:***

- Identification of problematic areas within the WUA;
- Field inspection of problematic areas and off-takes;
- Meeting with water users and specifying active water users;
- Leading a discussion with water users; and
- Holding the general meeting of water users for establishing a WUG under active assistance of so-called the group of initiators.

### **Social mobilization policies in the region:**

#### ***Kyrgyzstan***

1. Restructuring WUAs in the Aravan – Akbura Canal command area according to the hydro-geographical (hydrological) principle;
2. Establishing WUGs:
  - Formalization of WUGs through signing the agreement on irrigation water supply by a leader of WUGs and the WUA (water users of single off-take authorize a leader of WUG, through signing the general agreement, to receive water from the WUA);
  - Plans of water use are drawn up for each WUG (a single off-take) as the legal base for signing the agreement on irrigation water supply between a WUG and WUA with two principle provisions: an

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<sup>3</sup> Active leaders of WUGs established at problematic sites are the candidates for membership in the WUA Council and are an important actors of the group of initiators engaged in establishing a future WUA

amount of water delivered by the WUA according to the plan of water use and total cost of planned amount of irrigation water supply; and

- Differential payment (according to water volumes) for each WUG (per off-takes).
3. Strengthening existing WUAs.

### *Uzbekistan*

1. Planning the potential WUA layout and arrangement according to the hydro-geographical principle<sup>4</sup>;
2. Establishing new WUAs according to the hydro-geographical principle or re-arranging WUAs according to the administrative principle;
3. Capacity building the existing WUAs established according to the hydro-geographical principle in the SFC command area; and
4. Establishing WUGs within the problematic areas;

### *Tajikistan*

5. Planning the potential WUA layout and arrangement according to the hydro-geographical principle;
6. Capacity building the existing WUAs established according to the hydro-geographical principle in the KBC command area;
7. Establishing WUGs and their formalization; and
8. SMID measures in line with the WUA concept and water management in non-restructuring farms based on IWRM principles.

**Water governance and public participation: A group of local initiators, using working meetings, training seminars and round tables, has initiated the dialog with all stakeholders for selecting optimal options for restructuring the institutional framework of water sector within the command areas of the pilot canals to provide efficient water resources management at all levels of irrigation systems resulting in the rise of water productivity in the long run. All-round social mobilization and measures aimed at institutional development have facilitated the involvement of all types of water users in the process of restructuring the WRM framework in line with IWRM principles. The integration process comprises the following activities:**

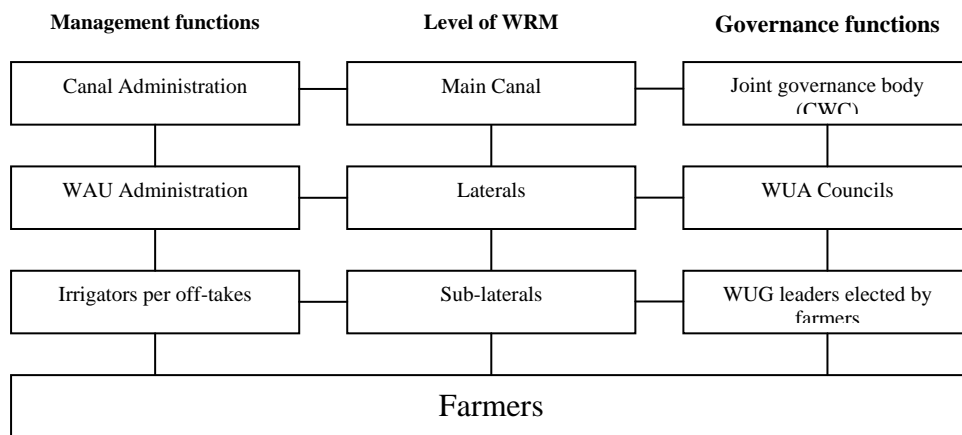
- Top-down integration of different levels of water resources management hierarchy from the main canal, WUAs and WUGs towards farmers (Figure 4.27);

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<sup>4</sup> Discussion and approval of this plan take place at the sessions of CWUC and CA.

- Mobilization campaigns covering the horizontal integration of economic sectors and allowing to integrate the cross-sectoral interests in the process of governing the pilot canals (industry, water supply, ecology etc.);
- Differentiation of functions related to water governance and management within the single institutional framework established for management of pilot canals.

Information on these activities is disseminated among water users on the regular basis. The Project has practically assisted in formal registration of all CWCs in three countries, as well as in gathering necessary legal documents, mobilization of water users and holding the constituent assemblies.



**Figure 4.27. Differentiating of the functions of governance and management at different levels of the pilot irrigation systems**

To provide the efficient work of CWC, active field divisions of the CWC at nine hydro-operational sites were created initially on the SFC and additionally on the Shakhrikhansay stream in 2007. The Project promotes activities supporting the sustainability of CWC in institutional and financial aspects. In particular, all CWCs have developed the business plans with the project's assistance. In Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, CWCs participate in SMID activity to re-arrange WUAs established based on the administrative principle.

**Table 4.11. Information on Social Mobilization & Institutional Development Activity**

Topic of SMID activity		Pilot Canal					
		AAC		KBC		SFC	
		Number of meetings	Number of participants	Number of meetings	Number of participants	Number of meetings	Number of participants
1	IWRM project: institutional changes	9	245	8	229	12	281
2	A role of public participation in improving water resources management	11	155	13	106	21	387
3	Functions of irrigation canal management and the hydro-geographical principle	8	96	6	72	14	156
4	Canal Water User Union as self-reliant body of water users	3	43	4	37	8	93
5	Difference in concepts «Governance» and «Management»	2	14	3	23	9	72
6	Transferring powers in governance of the canals to joint governmental and community-based body: functions of the CWC	5	56	7	38	10	166

Topic of SMID activity		Pilot Canal					
		AAC		KBC		SFC	
		Number of meetings	Number of participants	Number of meetings	Number of participants	Number of meetings	Number of participants
7	Re-organization WUAs according to the hydro-geographical principle and their membership in the CWC	-	-	6	54	17	189
8	Cross-sectoral integration – involving all water users in water governance	24	83	5	25	4	73
9	Establishing the field divisions of the CWC at hydro-operation sites and their composition	-	-	-	-	20	364
<b>Total</b>		<b>62</b>	<b>692</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>584</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1781</b>

In Tajikistan, since large commercial agricultural enterprises are the founders of the CWCs, activity related to involving WUAs as members of the CWCs is conducted. All CWCs receive the technical assistance in preparing necessary key documents.

Mobilization related to transferring the powers of water governance to the joint body established on the AAC, KBC and SFC was conducted; at the same time options and procedures for transferring governance functions on the pilot irrigation canals were discussed. The IWRM-Fergana Project has promoted creating “the critical mass” of key stakeholders for signing the appropriate agreements and adapting them to local conditions. Agreements on establishing CWCs on the AAC and KBC and transferring to them appropriate powers were already signed. Background of establishing the similar body on the SFC was created; and the mobilization process is in progress. The groups of initiators practically assist dissemination and elucidation of the CWC decisions among water users.

Social mobilization for involving non-agricultural water users were also conducted in the command areas of AAC, KBC and SFC (identification of all water users was carried out for these purposes). The meetings with non-agricultural water users for discussion of their membership in the CWC, provisions of the agreement on water supply with the Canal Administration and methods of payment for water services were organized according to the established schedule. In the AAC command area, the following non-agricultural water users were covered by the social mobilization campaign: the territorial administration of Dostuk



Settlement, administrations of two brickyards, construction company “Zelenstroy” and hippodrome, community committees of residential quarters No 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8. Mobilizing the community committees of residential areas “Bobolashkar” and “Ishkavan” is in progress. At the same time, other water users are also invited for participation in the regular sessions of CWC. In the KBC command area, mobilization activity related to involving the water supply company of Chkalovsk City, as the main water consumer, in the work of CWC was initiated.

**SMID based on the cooperation with local educational institutions:** To ensure the long-term sustainability of the IWRM-Fergana Project’s results it was decided to share the positive experience learnt from the project with local educational institutions engaged in training specialists for the water sector. For achieving this goal, working relations were established and appropriate Memorandums of Understanding were signed with institutions of higher education and technical colleges (Markhamat Hydro-Ameliorative College; Osh Agricultural Institute; Khodjent Affiliate of the Tajik State University). Visits to the demonstration sites and seminars for know-how activity were held; in addition, technical publications and the project reports were handed over to educational institutions; and the working groups of teachers were established for adapting project know-how in their curricula.

In 2007, above-mentioned educational institutions included additional courses covering IWRM topics in their curricula (50 academic hours: 20 academic hours of theory and 30 academic hours of practice); and 50 students of second and third years of study had practical training at pilot sites, working together with initiators and specialists of WUAs. Working relations were also established with Bishkek and Dushanbe Agrarian Universities with signing appropriate Memorandums of Understanding regarding the future cooperation and handing over of project documents and know-how.

Since 2007, mobilization activity related to dissemination of project experience was initiated on the Right-Bank Canal in Kyrgyzstan. Studying the hydrographical net within the command area of this canal is in progress. Contacts with decision-makers concerning establishing the single canal management system are also initiated. At the same time, measures for raising awareness of key stakeholders regarding establishing the CWC are undertaken.

Positive experience of social mobilization obtained at pilot sites is disseminated on two pilot areas of STR<sup>5</sup> (Shakhimardansay and Khodjabakirgansay). According to the project strategy of social mobilization, disseminating of IWRM principles will be arranged at the following levels: the irrigation system (STR and irrigation system), WUAs (and local communities) and grass-root level (disseminating of the projects methods through local consultants).

**Development of WUAs through social mobilization:** If social mobilization activity during Phase II was aimed at establishing single pilot WUAs, then during Phase III social mobilization was addressed to dissemination of experience obtained at pilot sites over the whole command areas of pilot canals where first WUAs were predominantly established by the administrative method. Therefore all mobilization activities were aimed at all-round development of WUAs in the command areas of pilot canals. SMID field teams consisting of specialists trained in the new strategy of developing WUAs were formed for this purpose. SMID strategies differed over countries due to peculiarities of local water management and socio-economic conditions. The mobilization process included such interventions as establishing WUAs based on the hydro-geographical principle, re-organization of WUAs established by the administrative method, capacity building of WUAs including training of their personnel (institutional aspects, water resources management within WUAs, drawing up business plans), strengthening activity of WUA Councils and their participation in works of the CWCs, establishing active WUGs. Members of CWUCs, specialists of the BISA and local administrations, chairmen of community-based committees of rural settlements and villages, WUA managers, personnel of hydro-operational sites and water users (farmers) themselves were involved in

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<sup>5</sup> STR – small transboundary rivers

establishing or re-organization of WUAs according to the hydro-geographical principle. All interventions were jointly coordinated by the provincial executors and field consultants of the SIC ICWC (Table 4.12).

**Table 4.12. Social Mobilization for Developing WUAs**

Social mobilization and Interventions		Irrigation Canal			
		AAC	PMC	KBC	SFC
1.	Number of WUAs established according to the hydro-geographical principle	6	16	5	12
2.	Number of WUAs established according to the administrative principle where the SM is in progress	-	-	5	64
3.	WUGs established due to activity of groups of initiators	26	2	35	18
4.	WUGs established by WUAs	37	7	33	25
5.	WUA development strategy	Re-arranging WUA according to the hydro-geographical principle; Establishing WUGs and promoting of Council activity; Formalization of WUGs through signing the agreements; Training in water management, drafting business plans, and documenting WUA activity.	Mapping of potential WUAs; Mobilization in non-restructured farms; involving the CWC; Establishing WUGs in the problematic areas; Training in water management, drafting business plans, and documenting WUA activity;	Mapping of potential WUAs; Re-arranging WUA according to the hydro-geographical principle; involving the CWC; Establishing WUGs in the problematic areas; Training in water management, drafting business plans, and documenting WUA activity;	

Social mobilization and Interventions		Irrigation Canal			
		AAC	PMC	KBC	SFC
6.	Number of initiators	6		6	10
7.	Service area, ha	9125	18000	8600	96,215
8.	Area covered by SM activity, ha	8647	5600	3245	48,107
9.	Monthly meetings of WUA leaders	✓	✓	✓	✓
10	Number of trained WUA specialists	12	26	6	32
11	Number of trained WUG leaders	54	18	26	24

The principal task of WUA is uniform, equitable and sustainable distribution of irrigation water among water users. The sustainability of WUA depends on proper water governance and involving water users in the process of water allocation. To bridge some institutional gaps in WUA operation, the project has initiated establishing of water users groups (WUGs) on tertiary irrigation canals and at problematic sites. Enormous mobilization activity was undertaken for establishing WUGs. At that, WUGs have allowed properly arranging water distribution, reducing the number of conflicts, improving the contractual relations with WUAs and technical state of on-farm irrigation systems, enhancing collection of fees for water services

The manual covering all issues of establishing WUGs aimed at WUA irrigators and specialists has been prepared based on the project experience. Objectives and tasks of establishing WUGs and their advantages for improving water productivity, as well as procedures of establishing, functioning and developing were described in this manual in detail. The manual contains the recommendations on water distribution within WUGs (i.e. among water users that take water from a single off-take on tertiary irrigation canals) with detailed description of successive steps necessary for introduction of simple methods of water distribution within and between WUGs.

Apart from other SMID activities in all three countries, field teams facilitate monthly casual meetings of WUAs' managers (informal dinners in line with local traditions) on the voluntary basis for all comers. These meetings were initiated in the frame of pilot WUAs as experiment, but later WUA directors supported this idea and continued these meetings. A major purpose of such meetings is to discuss the burning issues with colleagues, to share their experience in solving these issues and to coordinate a mutual aid of neighboring WUAs etc. Such informal dinners are organized in neighboring WUAs in turn. The meeting is started by firsthand acquaintance of visitors with the WUA (a short guided tour) and by a brief presentation of its achievements and critical problems. After that, all participants jointly cook the pilau<sup>6</sup>, and in the process of cooking and during the dinner, participants continue to discuss these problems. The decision on placing at neighbor WUA's disposal of special machinery for cleaning irrigation canals is the telling illustration of the effectiveness of such meetings. Another example is the election of one of experienced dispatchers of the Kuva District Water Administration for rational water distribution among all

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<sup>6</sup> Pilau is the national favorite dish

WUAs established based on the hydro-geographical principle during the periods of water deficit (excessive irrigation water delivered into one WUA can be re-distributed to another one, which needs more water). Initiatives of WUAs' directors related to creating the incentives for planned fee collection (for example, bonuses to WUG leaders who managed to collect 80% of planned fees) are discussed as well

**Water management:** a new method of water rotation between and within WUGs with the complete ten-day cycle was proposed since the ten-day planning of water distribution is employed in Central Asia countries.

Duration of irrigations can be calculated: (1) based on crop pattern and irrigation scheduling; (2) proportionally to farm size receiving irrigation water from an individual off-take. The manual was prepared by us jointly with specialists of the SIC ICWC who have proposed daily water distribution for large plots. This method, earlier tested on the tertiary irrigation canal "Sokolok" (WUA "Japalak"), was widely disseminated among WUG leaders through training seminars. A package of training aids was developed; and the training seminars covering five topics: crop water requirement, methods of irrigation scheduling and planning of water use, irrigation water rotations, water measurement methods, monitoring and evaluation of WUA activity based on evaluation indicators were held.

**Small Transboundary Rivers:** Over the past period, social mobilization activity was aimed at introducing IWRM principles and preparing the basis for involving water users according to the principle "bottom-up" on small transboundary rivers Shakhimardansay and Khodjabakirgansay on both sides of the border like SMID activity on the pilot canals and covered the following levels:

1. Irrigation system – Small Transboundary River and main canal
2. WUAs
3. WUGs

For disseminating the project experience and initiating large-scale social mobilization the following arrangements were implemented:

- Cartographical data necessary for implementing the hydro-geographic analysis and planning social mobilization activity related to adoption of the hydro-geographical principle under establishing WUAs were gathered;
- At present, reconciliation of maps with WMOs and water users is in progress;
- An explanatory campaign and mobilization of key parties for establishing the single irrigation system administrations (ISA: a river and main canal) were completed;
- Identifying of all types of water users that have to be covered by large-scale mobilization with purpose of creating the Irrigation System Users Union (ISUU) was implemented;
- Workshops aimed at raising awareness of key parties regarding a role of river commissions, which in the nearest future will be composed by Irrigation System Committees (a joint representative body consisting of the members of ISUU and ISA), are being held;

- Meetings with WUA specialists and irrigators of local communities to explain to them the IWRM principles and to disseminate the project manuals and booklets were organized;
- Initiators have held a number of training seminars concerning irrigation water management within WUAs (topics: crop water requirements, drafting the water use plan; principles of irrigation water allocation, water measuring and accounting, evaluating WUA activity based on established indicators etc.);
- To provide effective mobilization the pilot WUGs were established in pilot WUAs; and
- Field seminars for farmers were held with purpose of dissemination of the project experience and thematic booklets covering the topics related to rise of water and land productivity in private farms.