

## MINUTES

### Workshop - meeting:

**"The strategy of the project tasks' accomplishment and sharing experiences"  
in the frames of the project "Water Productivity Improvement at Plot Level» (WPI-PL)**

**17-18.06.2010**

**Tashkent**

**Participants: 34 people**

### AGENDA

**Thursday, June 17:**

- 1. Strategic goals and objectives of the project. Vision of the project regional groups.** *V.A. Dukhovny*
- 2. Vision of the strategy for consulting work in the Uzbek, Tajik, and Kyrgyz parts of the project.** *Sh. Mukhamedjanov*
- 3. Vision of the strategy for working of the information center in the Uzbek, Tajik, and Kyrgyz parts of the project.** *Mohan Reddy Junna and J. Kazbekov*
- 4. Partners' interaction in carrying out consultancy work, conducting training for trainers and training of farmers of Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.** *Sh. Mukhamedjanov and J. Kazbekov*
- 5. Collection and assessment of initial material on demonstration fields and farms.** *L.Averina, I.Ruziev, R. Sagdullaev*

**V.A. Dukhovny** opened the meeting by his report on strategic goals and objectives of the project. In his speech he marked that having a great international experience and development of advisory services in the world, this system was not organized in Central Asia and the organizational forms of such services were not displayed at the state level. Land allotments in Kazakhstan increased to 25 hectares, and in Uzbekistan they increased up to 50-70 hectares. Under these conditions, the system of consultation and involvement of qualified professionals takes great importance in increasing productivity and profitability of farms. Practicing organizational forms is an important point in the project work, and its results will be visible upon the work of each partner organization involved in the project. There are proposals for the development of advisory services on the basis of the WUA. We need to work out and test these proposals and give opinions in terms of their relevancy. Informational basis is a very important part in the work of advisory services. Only reliable and constantly updated information makes it possible to accept the right decisions. Another very important issue of this project is the assessment of the financial sustainability of farms. The results on two projects of recent years IWRM-Fergana and WPI-PL give grounds to assert that financial stability of farmers is a priority objective of the project. In our studies we need to clearly display financial status of farmers through reports of trainers. Analysis and assessment of resources' efficient use is implemented on the basis of financial indications. Also setting up farm schools will be essential point for the project work. Farmers' schools, as well as advisory services should be organized in the places convenient to farmers.

There is a proposal to organize them in the WUA, but other experience is gained at the demonstration plots of advisory services. Project experience is of great importance for other projects, so for example, a series of meetings and workshops to exchange experience were arranged in 2009 for the projects IWRM and RESP, and files and manuals were submitted to these projects for further use.

**Sh. Mukhamedjanov** made a speech focusing on strategy for advisory work. In particular, he noted that basic principles of consultation should be: rendering assistance to farmers in solving their problems, advancing farmers' knowledge in agricultural production, increasing farmers' income, help farmers to get more income at minimal costs, consultations should not be intrusive, the consultants themselves should go to farmers and not to wait until a farmer expresses desire to come to AS, the consultants should not leave farmers without attention, no matter what issues they raise. Experience gained in 2009 showed that the advisory services should be organized in places where farmers frequently come to solve their daily problems. Farmers often come to the WUA where this structure is really working. It is logically to organize Advisory Services and farmer schools at WUAs. Not only hydraulics specialist, but also an agronomist is important to be available at WUA. It is necessary to rely on the management of former collective farms, where all process of agricultural production was managed mainly by agronomist and hydraulic engineer. In WUA, which has the same area as former collective farms used to have, an agronomist and hydraulic engineer will not only manage but also consult on efficient and effective management of agricultural production.

**Mohan Reddy Junna and J. Kazbekov** discussed strategies for the work of information centers in the project. In particular, major challenges of the Information Centre were underlined. They are: processing and transformation of knowledge into clear language understandable for farmers (while keeping a good relationship with research institutes and based on results of their researches); development of training and learning materials for advisory services (depending on the chosen strategy for dissemination of Advisory Services and on the basis of Advisory Services and farmers' needs); training of trainers and consultants-disseminators: how they should conduct consultancy work (which methods should be used in their work); feedback: always to assess the quality and acquisition of materials based on opinions of research institutes, Advisory Service, and farmers and to improve them. And meanwhile the Information Centers should simultaneously understand the scientific matters, understand farmers' problems and have perception on consultancy activities. It was proposed to elaborate a set of documents for each country including the technologies that contain the following types of materials (under coordination of Information Center and aid of scientific research institutes and Advisory Service):

- To have primary sources – a textbook containing the basics of efficient water use at the field, starting with the basics of irrigation, soil conditions, climatic issues, humidity, and organize irrigation, irrigation requirements of crops, irrigation mode and schedule, etc., i.e. that this textbook should include all issues related to conducting irrigation. Using this textbook, trainers-consultants can put into practice this source in their consultancy work. Form of "technology maps" elaborated by regional group can be taken as basis and the content of the textbook.
- List of technologies – set, catalogue and a list of all technologies. Catalogue of all technologies / innovations (list) on water conservation and efficient use of water at field level should be based on the needs and requirements. The following should be specified in the catalogue: what problems are solved, the essence of technology (positive and negative points), problems occurred while implementing stage, and ways to solve these problems, costs associated with introduction, economic benefits / benefit from the introduction, who should be contacted in case of raising issues.
- To develop a methodology to conduct consulting work for each technology, i.e. to develop a training module for the consultancy work, how to conduct lessons. To include into this package a system of assessment, feedback and monitoring of proposed and adopted technology that will eventually point to effectiveness of our work.

**L. Averina** made a presentation on collection and assessment of baseline material for demonstration fields and farms. In particular, she noted that the goal was to assess effectiveness of project activities on improving water use productivity and to identify directions for further work. Comments were made to all partners for completing forms, and recommendations for further actions were given. She also drew attention of partners to the issue that monitoring of farms was carried out in order to identify and track problems and deficiencies in agricultural farming for development of recommendations and follow-up counseling.

## **AGENDA:**

### **Friday, June 18**

**1. Sharing experiences of partners regarding approaches in consultancy work with farmers and interaction with the IC and Research institutes.** *Tajikistan: S. Isamutdinov and A. Khoshimov, Uzbekistan – M. Mirzaliev (Fergana IC) and A. Kamolitdinov (Andijan IC)*

**2. Exchange of experience of Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan partners on the approach of the Information Center's functioning and interaction with disseminators and Research institutes.** *D. Islamova, Tajikistan SOF; V. Nasonov and A. Abirov, SANIIRI.*

**3. Sharing experiences of partners on approaches of research institutes' activities and the interaction with information centers and disseminators.** *Tajikistan – A. Usmonov, Tajikgiprovodkhoz, Uzbekistan – M. Mirzaliev (Fergana IC) and A. Kamolitdinov (Andijan IC)*

**4. Problems and needs of farmers, the drawbacks in their work and decisions taken to resolve them.** *Tajikistan: S. Isamutdinov, IAC; A. Khoshimov, Zazamin; D. Islomova SOF; Uzbekistan: K. Kabulov, A. Akhunov, A. Khoshimov/R. Jabbarov, M. Mirzaliev (Fergana IC) and A. Kamolitdinov (Andijan IC).*

**5. Assessment of the economic position of farms in Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (in compliance with results of 2009 and early 2010).**

**S. Isamutdinov and A. Khoshimov** made their presentation on approach to advisory work with farmers and partners' interaction in Tajikistan. They noted that one agronomist and one hydraulic engineer were working in each district; they went out together on field visits. Two to three times a month trainers visited farmers and provided individual counseling. They note problems in diary, give their recommendations and implement monitoring on their implementation. One to two times a month trainers undergo trainings in the Information Center.

Tadzhikgiprovodhoz prepared a questionnaire. We have three types of consultations:

1. Individual counseling are based on experience and results of training
2. Group counseling is provided 1-2 times per month through conducting workshops.
3. Mass consultation through the media, newspapers and articles

**M. Mirzaliev** made a presentation on approach of information center's operation and its interaction with disseminators and Research Institute of Fergana oblast. He noticed that we had divided the Fergana oblast into three zones and asked Research Institute to help prepare recommendations based on these three features. These zones are old irrigated lands, newly irrigated ones, and adyr lands.

**Question** was asked by S. Isamutdinov from Tajik side, who identified to split into three zones.

**Answer:** We have a professional of 40 years experience. In addition, there is an agricultural scientist who knows the territory very well. Therefore it is important that Information Center

should be staffed by scientists, education experts and water engineers. It is not sufficient to consider only water issues, complete range of all issues should be regarded in our work. We operate in 97 farms but as we say “we do not expect farmer’s coming”, we ourselves meet them, using all possible ways to disseminate our developments. So, sometimes we cover 245 farms. Specialists of USAID, GTZ projects visited our demonstration fields. Therefore considering such great interest of other projects as a result of our work, we propose to organize a "basic farm school" at WUA level.

**Comments** of Tajik team - A. Khashimov, Zarzamin: farmer field schools should be independent, we need to organize them in places where farmers mostly attend. Farmer field schools should function also as services, should possess appropriate scientific equipment - moisture, rain gauge, measuring soil moisture, etc. His opinion was supported by representative from advisory service of Namangan oblast, who noted that Pap district had seed farm, which possessed its own field camp, where training for farmers could be conducted, and based on it a farmer school had been organized which was attended by farmers with great interest.

In Fergana oblast Khokims hold weekly farmers’ meetings for which all elders (experienced agronomists and labor veterans) are invited in order to help farmers in proper organization of agricultural production. We have used those meetings to disseminate our approach and communicate with farmers from around the oblast. At these Khokimiyats’ meetings, our discussion of issues, proposed solutions and recommendations on eliminating present problems, aroused great interest not only among farmers but also by the elders and Khakims. Sometimes the agenda discussed issues of increasing yields and water use efficiency, which were raised by our experts. Based on those meetings and interactions with Khokimiyats, we have disseminated more than 3200 sheets this year.

### **Report of Islomova D., SOF**

We are collaborating with the Research Institute, jointly developing information materials and arranging field monitoring visits. They help us in formulating recommendations on topical issues and development of training modules. We carry out joint monitoring and assessment of farmers' fields with trainers from advisory services. Advisory services provide us with materials of baseline information and assist in providing feedback from farmers. For joint assessments of needs and requirements, we developed a database. For operational work with disseminators we consult via phone, e-mail, organize monitoring field visits, and hold regular working meetings to discuss the issues raised (2 times a month). Based on discussions and analysis of baseline information, we conduct training for trainers and prepare training materials adapted to farmers. We have prepared and provided disseminators with very visual and simple statistical database.

Regional Manager Sh. Mukhamedjanov recommended to circulate this approach of analysis and assessment among other partners in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Regional Coordinator Kh. Khodjiev was entrusted to prepare suitable material for experience transfer through the regional group. Sh. Mukhamadaliev noted that the Tajik team led by Regional Coordinator Kh. Khodjiev decided to challenge our assessment of satisfaction from farm households by our counseling and technologies. This approach should be used for all partners. Taking into account successful analysis of baseline material by SOF Information Center, it is necessary to strengthen profile of information center SOF in irrigation engineering issues for its further effective operation.

Sh. Mukhamedjanov also marked that currently opened project website is expected to insert informational base not only for review but also for work online. We can use this website to transmit any information, including approaches and technologies.

The first seminar day was completed with these issues.

The next day, June 18, the first morning report was done by **A. Kamaliddinov, Head of Information Center in Andijan oblast.**

He introduced to attendants the approach that has been used by Andijan Information Center this year. In particular, they suggested to establish farmer's corner at agricultural industry, to use local social organizational conditions. Namely Khokimiyats organize groups to identify and evaluate fields of farms, these groups can be used to obtain information from farms presently uncovered by project, and to develop a set of measures both on guidelines and training for professionals from Khokimiyat groups. We can offer Khokimiyats our services on one hand, and use their groups for assessment and consultation on the other hand. Information Center always tries to rely on factual situation and the original data. On the basis of studied problems of farmers, issues were identified and relayed to SANIIRI.

Further presentations were made by representatives from the Research Institute. Representative of Sogd Branch of **Tajikgiprovodhoz** was granted to speak first.

In particular, this representative noted that searching for materials to define and develop recommendations and approaches, as well as indicators for information centers and disseminators is foundation of the institute work in this project.

We, based on materials of past years, developed standards for water resources development (standard irrigation). We use data of hydro- and geological expedition. Without waiting for participation in seminars of IC /AS, we receive online information and requests from farmers. Only last year we gave 20 related materials, this year we also prepared recommendations and materials for professional advisory services through the Information Center SOF. At the end of the last year, we prepared a questionnaire. Monthly, with IC, we prepare advance mode sheets of agro-technical activities.

Under coordination of Regional Project Manager we conduct monthly meetings with all partners, and carry out weekly working meetings in an informal atmosphere, and try to be on field, closer to farmers.

### **Report of Nasonov, SANIIRI**

Our work in the project is based on following points: development of recommendations based on farmers' needs, conducting search of research materials. In collaboration with IC research results are converted into easy material understandable by farmers. At present, on-demand data of Andijan oblast Information Center Guidelines for irrigation mode of cotton cultivated under plastic film for different-textured soils is completed and submitted to the IC. Irrigation technologies, which correspond to the current size of farms, have been selected and are ready for mailing. The remaining recommendations are being developed. Quite rightly, the remark of IC that the recommendations should be discussed with disseminators and trainers, and specialists should be trained in terms of their application. Interaction of Information Center (IC), disseminators, trainers and research institutions will be largely determined by the problems faced by farmers.

### **Tajikistan. Khalim Khodjiev**

As a result of monitoring for each demonstration plot in 2009, physical and financial costs incurred by farmers from plowing to harvesting and selling grown crops were identified and analyzed. Depending on amount of agricultural work and prevailing rates on them costs of all-agricultural operations in national currency are calculated. The same work is carried out in 2010. As of June 1 in "Buri Kurmas" farm in comparison with 2009 year, 2 additional cultivations and a hoeing (breaking crust) operation were done. Hired labor force has risen from 10 to 15 Somon (50%), fuel and fertilizer have risen in price by 30% and 12%, respectively. Sowing of crops damaged by 10%, backlog growth and development of cotton is 8-10 days. Regarding dehkan farm Shark, the state of crops is good, shoots were obtained without auxiliary watering. Additional hoeing (breaking crust) was conducted. Anticipate the development of cotton as

compared to 2009 on June 1, is 6-8 days. Price hike of petroleum products, fertilizers and labor, is respectively, at 30%, 12% and 50%.

Report of **S.A. Nerozin** was devoted to topics of agro-economic analysis on productivity and efficiency of water and land use. Concerning variable costs he noted that those costs were directly related to growing specific crops in the field. Variable costs include the following costs: for seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, machinery, labor, irrigation water, transport and other costs. Variable costs are defined as product of input prices to its costs in physical terms. Fixed costs are those costs which are almost impossible to attribute to cultivation of a particular culture. Energy costs, the overall transport and equipment not used in the field. Rent. Costs associated with renting, such as land, storage facilities, etc. Taxes: on land, transportation, licenses, insurance, etc. He presented a form of monitoring of fixed and variable costs, and noted the importance of properly filling out forms for proper analysis and as a result of correct decisions.

### **Proposals:**

- Share information; send all materials to all partners throughout each republic on regular basis. We are all interested in what materials are published and available, how do you control pest, what workshops and trainings are conducted, how much progress you have achieved, how climate affects the ongoing work, etc. (Isamutdinov S.A.)
- It is necessary to hold economic calculations of the most cost-effective agriculture. To conduct forecast economic calculation, that is to find calculated effective approaches to increase profits of farms. On this basis, using these estimates as an argument, as economic lever, to give farmers advice on agricultural production. (Sh. Mukhamedjanov)
- It is necessary to organize a school of irrigators, as well as farm school. Now everywhere there is a shortage of good irrigators. There are good irrigators in each republic in every area and they can be attracted as trainers for farm schools. (Kazbekov J.)
- Considering interest of other projects in our experience two demonstrational pilot farmer field schools on the basis of "base WUA" should be organized. (Mirzaliev M.)
- Stressing successful holding of this seminar, its usefulness and importance of sharing experiences and partners' activity it is suggested to hold the next seminar in August of current year. To conduct further seminar at more interactive level, to work in groups with flipcharts, and to merge with partners according to their specificity. (Sh Mukhamedjanov)
- At the next workshop to organize an exhibition of handouts (newsletters, brochures, etc.). Who is producing the above materials, and what kind of materials are being produced, what newsletters, advices, newspapers, etc. (Kazbekov J.S.).