



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

# USAID FAMILY FARMING PROGRAM TAJKISTAN

GUIDE FOR ESTABLISHING STRONG WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS IN  
TAJKISTAN



JULY 1, 2014

This report is made possible by the support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The contents are the sole responsibility of DAI and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.



# USAID FAMILY FARMING PROGRAM

## GUIDE FOR ESTABLISHING WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN

<b>Program Title:</b>	<b>USAID Family Farming Program for Tajikistan</b>
<b>Sponsoring USAID Office:</b>	<b>Economic Growth Office</b>
<b>Chief of Party:</b>	<b>James Campbell</b>
<b>Contracting Officer</b>	<b>Kerry West</b>
<b>Contracting Officer Representative</b>	<b>Aviva Kutnick</b>
<b>Contract Number:</b>	<b>EDH-I-00-05-00004, Task Order: AID-176-TO-10-00003</b>
<b>Award Period:</b>	<b>September 30, 2010–September 29, 2014</b>
<b>Contractor:</b>	<b>DAI</b>
<b>Subcontractors:</b>	<b>Winrock International</b>
<b>Date of Publication:</b>	<b>July 1, 2014</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Doug Vermillion<sup>1</sup></b>

---

<sup>1</sup> This guide was prepared collaboratively by Asoev Saidali, Sharif Sharipov, Ekaterina Zavrazhina, Sherov Bakiev, and James Campbell



# CONTENTS

## GUIDE FOR ESTABLISHING STRONG WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN

<b>PART 1 PREPARATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PART 2 PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>PART 3 USE OF GRANTS BY WATER USERS ASSOCIATION FOR PARTICIPATORY PARTICIPATORY REHABILITATION</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>PART 4: TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS AND CURRICULUM FOR WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS .....</b>	<b>53</b>

# GUIDE FOR ESTABLISHING STRONG WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN<sup>1</sup>

## INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE

The objective of this Guide is to recommend a process and set of steps for an organization to prepare, establish and to develop effective Water Users Associations (WUA) suitable to Tajikistan.<sup>2</sup> It summarizes lessons learned in Tajikistan, by two donor finance projects, which established and trained 97 WUAs. Establishment of WUAs is essential in order to solve existing problems in the irrigation sector and other challenges faced by farmers and other water users<sup>3</sup>.

The content of the guides shares the experience and provides a pathway to organize a development team who can teach and guide the communities to create their own WUAs, to use an approach that benefits from good democratic practices, to use approaches that maximize community involvement in infrastructure improvement and provide training curriculum for a plan for future WUA training and development.

### **This guide is divided into four parts:**

---

- Part 1: Preparations for the Program;
- Part 2: Process for establishment of Water Users Associations
- Part 3: Use of grants by Water User Associations for participatory rehabilitation;
- Part 4: Training recommendations and a curriculum for Water Users Associations

---

<sup>2</sup> This Guide draws on the extensive experience gained under two USAID/Tajikistan projects, the Water Users Association Strengthening Program (WUASP) and the USAID Family Farming Program (FFP).

<sup>3</sup> We would like to thank the generous advice and assistance from Jelle Beekma and Anvar Kamoludinov of Provision of Technical Assistance to the Government of Tajikistan in support of the revision of the Water Legislation and WUAs, funded by the EU. (contract DCI-ASIE/2012/308-208/1).

## PART 1

# PREPARATIONS FOR THE PROGRAM

## WHAT IS A WATER USERS ASSOCIATION?

A Water Users Association (WUA) is a group of voluntarily united farmers and other water users established to ensure operation, maintenance (O&M) and management of irrigation and drainage systems, irrigation structures, efficient and equitable distribution of water, dispute resolution, timely collection of water service fees, well-controlled management of finances, and regulation of internal and external relations. Farmers should use land and water efficiently and increase agricultural productivity through participatory activities that are transparent to all.

One of the most important tasks in the process of establishing a WUA is to identify the essential steps in the community development process. Farmers need to be united in one organization with the Association's members and leaders involved in solving issues related to the operation, maintenance and management of irrigation systems using their own resources.

The legal basis for WUAs is the Law of the Republic of Tajikistan "On Water Users Association" dated March 25, 2011, # 706, the Water Code of the Republic of Tajikistan, the Civil Code of the Republic of Tajikistan and other regulations and instructions of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT).

The objective of this Guide is to indicate how a program or project under the direction of the Government and its collaborating organizations, including international technical assistance agencies, can plan and implement the establishment and development of effective Water Users Associations. This guide outlines how to establish such a program. There are six main steps:

- Step 1: Recruitment of capable staff for the program.
- Step 2: Meetings with different government authorities to introduce the project's purpose
- Step 3: Selection of potential sites for WUAs.
- Step 4: Recruitment of Association Organizers.
- Step 5: Capacity building for Association Organizers in implementation of project activities.
- Step 6: Association Organizer's reports.

Each step is explained below. After each step a summary of key conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for future implementation of establishing water users associations in Tajikistan is provided.

### **STEP 1: RECRUITMENT OF CAPABLE STAFF FOR THE PROGRAM**

---

One of the first important tasks of the program is merit-based recruitment of qualified staff. The following staff members are recommended for a project about the establishment and development of Water Users Associations: a Team Leader, an Institutional Development Specialist, WUA Specialist (Supervisor), Irrigation Engineer, GIS Specialist, Grants Manager, Public Relations Specialist, Accountant and Technical Staff. WUA organizers and regional engineers shall, on a contractual basis, be involved in program interventions after the beginning of activities in selected areas. Project success depends highly on proper recruitment of qualified specialists. While recruiting specialists, the main focus should be on the qualification, organizational capacity, communication skills and work experience of applicants.

### **Specialists should be involved in project interventions in the following ways.**

- Program leadership conducts consultations with higher level organizations to identify the categories and numbers of specialists.
- Job vacancies are announced through the press and websites.
- Announcements are provided by the leadership and Human Resources (HR) Specialist of the program.
- The leadership should be very familiar with the Statement of Work (SOW) of each announced position. The program's success will depend very much on recruitment of proper specialists.
- The main focus when recruiting specialists should be on the qualifications, organizational capacity, communication skills and work experience of applicants.
- The recruitment process may take a month to finish.
- Recruitment of specialists is recommended only after a precise plan for the program's activities has been approved. In the FFP program, although a livestock specialist was highly qualified and had extensive experience, he did not know what to do, how to regulate or how to implement his activities for over six months because there was no precise plan for him in the program. Some regional agronomists did not know how to write weekly and monthly reports.

### **Lessons learned about the selection of project leadership**

- **Good Candidates Are Hard To Find**

Not everybody has access to the press or the internet; so many experienced specialists in rural areas were unaware of the announced vacancies. Mostly the people who applied for these positions work and live in the capital or other administrative centers. Consequently, many of the applicants lacked field experience. There were some cases where highly qualified specialists who lived in regions outside of the program's area, applied for the announced vacancies, but the program's terms and conditions did not meet their requirements so they refused the jobs when they were offered.

- **Transfer of the leader and experienced specialists from the previous project (WUASP) to FFP was a good decision**

The Irrigation Water Management Unit had a precise Module, key steps and WUA establishment plan. The specialists in the Irrigation Water Management Unit were only recruited on the basis of their knowledge, capacity and experience. The team leader had strong leadership skills.

### **Recommendations for Recruiting Good Staff**

- a. Seek specialists by disseminating vacancy announcements, posters and flyers in the streets, and in Jamoat and government offices in program areas;
- b. Pay special attention to the Tajik language proficiency of specialists;
- c. Look for staff specialists with strong training skills, communication skills and good manners;
- d. Good coordination between institutional, technical and grant activity plans is essential;

- e. Conduct specific training and training of trainers for the specialists of the program to improve their knowledge;
- f. Pay attention to the appearance of specialists when they working with farmers in the fields. Men should not wear shorts, commando caps, special clothes like military uniforms, gaudy gold or silver rings and necklaces or intimidating sunglasses. This applies to all technical staff and drivers. Women should not wear transparent, tight or immodest clothing, gaudy gold or silver rings and necklaces;
- g. Try to ensure good communication with rural people. Limit the use of Russian words, terms that are unfamiliar to farmers, slang and inappropriate jokes;
- h. Develop close relationships and good communication with field workers in the program. Demonstrate a profound respect for field workers in the program.

## **STEP 2: MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES TO INTRODUCE THE PROJECT'S PURPOSE**

---

1. Before launching any project activities, it is very important to conduct explanatory meetings with leaders at the District level (Hukumat) and other government officials to prevent misunderstandings, opposition, threats or obstacles.
2. This step may take the form of individual meetings, formal negotiations with government officials, presentations and dissemination of information materials. This step should also include a brief introduction to the “community organizing” methods that will be used.
3. The program’s staff, including the Chief of Party or Director, should hold meetings with the leadership of ministries, other projects and relevant districts. The program’s objectives are introduced and further cooperation is agreed upon. Taking into account the condition of irrigation systems and the specialists’ opinions, the parties should together identify potential sites for selecting WUAs, based on the hydrologic principle of integrated, unitary water flow within boundaries of the unit. The hydrologic principle should apply both on a map and in the practice of managing water.
4. In order to ensure effective meetings with heads of government agencies, program specialists should have a comprehensive knowledge of the program’s objectives, plans, reform process, laws and other regulations and instructions related to the irrigation sector.
5. In order for the program be agreed upon by Ministries, projects and relevant districts, they should also be aware of the reform process and other water sector related decrees and legal issuances and be interested in these aspects.

*Experience under FFP:* During the first year there were some cases where the heads of some districts and the State Water Supply Agencies (Vodkhoz) had no information about the WUA Law. Initially, it took two intensive weeks to finish conducting meetings and to introduce program objectives and further activities have being carried out according to plan. Also, there were some cases that additional meetings were conducted between program’s specialists and the districts’ leadership when needed.

6. The best time for this step is after the precise plan of activities has been approved and the program’s area of work has been identified.
7. Some government officials don’t know the current laws, regulations, and instructions. Some employees from the Vodkhoz impede the progress of reform. Some persons concerned (especially those who collect

water service fees from farmers) agitate against the program among people. Sometimes, the heads of government authorities are replaced in the midterm of program activity and newly appointed leaders have no information about the program's progress, procedures and objectives.

8. Working experience shows that sometimes misunderstandings come out when there is a need to conduct meetings between high-level officials and program specialists. They require a permit and/or a letter from the head of the district (Hukumat). Such misunderstandings may impede the conduct of meetings.
9. It is recommended that in the initial meeting between the program's Chief of Party and the district government head (Hukumat) should be conducted with the participation of senior agricultural sector officials of the district so that they will all have the same understanding of the objectives and the significance of the program. This joint "face- to-face "meeting will make it easier when there is a need to conduct separate sectorial meetings with high-level officials of the district.
10. During this kind of high-level meeting the Chief of Party or Team Leader should always be accompanied by the Institutional Development Specialist, WUA Specialist (Supervisor), Irrigation Engineer and Grants Manager of the program in order to, firstly, explain program objectives and secondly, obtain any necessary information or approvals.
11. It is important that this kind of program is able to, in case of need, conduct negotiations at the level of Ministry of Energy and Water Resources, Ministry of Agriculture and other relevant government committees and departments. The whole initial process of activity in target districts should be recorded.

### **Lessons Learned from the FFP**

--In spite of conducting several meetings to inform officials about the process, some representatives from government and other state bodies complained that they did not know about this process. Taking detailed minutes of meetings will help ensure that the program continues smoothly. This is especially important where there are changes in the district leadership during the life of the program.

-- Distributing information booklet, providing clear explanations of objectives and plans and providing maps of the project area during initial meetings were effective tools for attracting the attention of district leaders, gaining their confidence and securing their future cooperation.

--Some government officials were not familiar with current laws and regulations and instructions. Some officers and staff of the Vodkhoz impeded the progress of the program. Some persons involved, including those who collected water service fees from farmers, agitated against the program. Sometimes, the heads of government agencies were replaced in the middle of project activities and their replacements had no information about the project's purpose and progress.

--Misunderstandings sometimes arose when there was a need to conduct meetings between high-level officials and project specialists. The specialists were often required to obtain a permit and/or a letter from the Chairperson of the district. Some officers also actively impeded the conduct of meetings.

### **STEP 3: SELECTION OF POTENTIAL SITES FOR WUAS**

---

**This step included the following tasks.**

1. Meetings at the level of the District Hukumat and heads and specialists of Vodkhoz, the Land Committee and Jamoats.

2. Selection of potential sites is conducted using the “community organizing” methods and the “hydrologic” principle for boundaries of WUAs. That is to say, identification of the boundaries of potential sites for WUAs is based on the water source and canals. Another requirement is to use a bottom up approach to establish WUAs. This approach works well with farmers and they should always be involved in the process.
3. The GIS Specialist, Institutional Development Specialist and Irrigation Engineer study the intake for service areas, irrigation systems and irrigation structures in potential sites using the hydrologic unitary principle (all users get water from the same primary source). They then identify the boundaries of potential sites for WUA establishment and seek the views of farmers. Statistical data on each potential site should be prepared and displayed on a map of the river basin.
4. The specialists responsible for identifying the boundaries of potential zones for WUAs should have a good understanding of the “hydrologic principle.” They should have analytical skills and also have a solid knowledge of the program objectives, plans, water sector reform, laws and regulations.
5. Heads of dehqan farms, community leaders and other water users should be aware of the reform process and attend meetings held by program specialists. They should be active and involve others in the process.
6. It may take a week to select a potential site for one WUA. This process can be implemented simultaneously for 4 to 5 potential sites within one irrigation system or canal. In this case, the length of time to do this depends on the size of the irrigation system and unexpected situations that may arise.
7. The best period to implement this step is from March to October. Because farmers are in the field, and easier to locate, and identify where they fit within a potential association boundary, in this period which is suitable for study of the area.

### **Challenges Faced In Selecting Sites in the Family Farming Program**

--The FFP project planned to establish 60 WUAs and 5 FWUAs within 4 years (09/30/2010 - 09/29/2014). The FFP’s Irrigation Water Management Unit (IWMU) started its activity after 7 months, on May 1, 2011. Placing of staff, announcements, interviews, recruitment of specialists, presentation of the program at different levels, and the identification, research and selection of potential zones for WUAs and training of trainers for Association Organizers (AO) took two months and 12 days and lasted until July 12, 2011. This means that IWMU started the establishment of WUAs after 9 months of FFP activity. However, FFP’s plan to establish 60 WUAs and 5 FWUAs remained unchanged.

--Potential sites for WUAs were selected after relevant meetings had been conducted at different levels, the parties had agreed with plans, and primary data had been collected. The selection process of potential sites for WUAs was conducted in accordance with the instructions of the Manager of the IWMU.

### **Key Challenges In Selecting Sites:**

- a. Existing WUAs in the region were formed along administrative boundaries rather than hydrological boundaries;
- b. Disagreement with the program approach by leadership of the Vodkhoz, Jamoats and administrative WUAs;
- c. Disagreement with the “hydrologic unitary principle” by administrative leaders;

- d. Debt of administrative associations to the Vodkhoz and Tax Department;
- e. Challenges after transition to hydrologic boundaries, the new land area, new WUA members, contracts, debts, management, etc.;
- f. Some WUA areas embrace not only multiple jamoats, but multiple districts. Although this is common it was a new situation for the leaders;
- g. Signing of contracts by one WUA and the Vodkhoz offices in multiple districts;
- h. Collection of the Water Tariff and Membership Fee at the level of multiple districts;
- i. The legal address of WUAs may be problematic when its service area covers multiple districts;
- j. Selection of Zone Representatives and members of the Board of Directors of WUA;
- k. The destiny of administrative WUAs and their heads and contracts after transition to new structures based on the hydrologic unity principle of WUA boundaries.

**Lessons Learned about the Selection of WUA Sites:**

- a. The WUASP program had been implemented in Qubodiyon and Shahritus districts in previous years. Therefore, when the staff from FFP visited these districts, they were recognized as WUA organizers by government officers and farmers of potential sites in the districts;
- b. In the areas where the WUASP project operated there were groups organized by WUASP that promoted the launch of FFP activities, including meetings, cross site visits, reception of visitors etc.;
- c.
- d. It took as long as two months to make a decision on entering into the first potential sites for WUA establishment;
- e. Involvement of the program's GIS specialist in the activities of IWMU was a correct and timely step. He accelerated the study and identification of the boundaries of potential sites for WUAs;
- f. Cooperation between the complementary program units was problematic. The need for other programmatic units, such as nutrition and agricultural extension units to begin wide scale field activities before the irrigation unit could properly establish enough WUAs, meant there could not be an optimal sequencing of these multidisciplinary activities. An ideal sequencing would have allowed the established WUAs, to be a network of groups, organizations, infrastructure, activities and leadership in place, to be complemented by the other functional units of FFP (agriculture, nutrition, access to credit). Since the institutional process of FFP extended until April 2014, these complementary efforts would not have started until the last two quarters of the project.

**It was also found that:**

- a. Other components could work with groups after they were formed and could achieve the desired results;
- b. WUAs could be strengthened at the same time with regard to both irrigation management and agricultural production, and in fact, this was mutually beneficial;
- c. After conducting individual meetings, group introductory meetings, and informal training, both the WUA leaders and farmers recognized and supported the "hydrologic unitary principle."

- d. During the selection and identification of the boundaries of potential sites for WUAs, the program attempted to carry out all activities transparently and in a manner that was easy to be understood. All persons, especially the leaders, were made to become aware of the process. Activities were recorded.

**The following situations were observed in some potential sites:**

- a. WUAs did not exist;
- b. WUAs existed, but they were (inappropriately) established on administrative boundaries at the level of the jamoat;
- c. WUAs existed on paper, but did not function;

Each of these cases required its own approach and working method. Association Organizers (AOs) studied the existing cases and analyzed them with farmers and program specialists and then chose certain ways and methods to continue their activity.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations were provided for cases **b** and **c** above:

- a. Calling a meeting of the Board of Directors and Representative Assembly for existing WUAs;
- b. Discussing issues related to reorganizing the WUA based on the hydrologic unitary method;
- c. Decision-making on transition to hydrologically based management and a new WUA management structure;
- d. This meeting involves WUA founders and representatives from the Jamoat, Vodkhoz, District Hukumat and the program;
- e. A copy of the Representative Assembly minutes is provided to the program;
- f. The Representative Assembly is organized by the leadership of WUA and AO.

Experience indicates that potential sites should meet the following requirements and criteria:

- a. Heads of potential districts (Hukumat) should send an official letter to the program expressing their willingness to cooperate with the program.
- b. The program should inform local government and other relevant organizations after it has selected a site for WUA establishment.
- c. High-level officials of the district should agree on the establishment of WUA based on hydrologic boundaries;
- d. Farmers and other water users should be willing establish a WUA;
- e. There should be a real need for water management in the selected site;
- f. No other government and/or international project should work in the same zone;
- g. Farmers and inhabitants in the area should actively participate in the WUA establishment process;

- h. The service area of each WUA should include between about 1,500 and 3,000 ha, in order to have adequate economies of scale;
- i. There should be no collective or state farm structure and local government interference in the selected site;
- j. The locations where land reform (breaking of collective farms into individual dekhan parcels) is still going on should not be selected.
- k. A criterion for selection of sites for WUA establishment should be the potential for establishment of a Federation of WUAs.
- l. After selection of a service area for WUA establishment, the program specialists and a representative of the District Hukumat should visit the project site and analyze it on a map.
- m. The responsible ideas of local government officers and farmers should be taken into account within the program's requirements, principles and methodology.

#### **STEP 4. RECRUITMENT OF ASSOCIATION ORGANIZERS**

---

1. When recruiting Water Users Association Organizers (AO) the Manager of the IWMU and the Institutional Development Specialist first prepare the statement of work (SoW) for the AO in view of the program objectives. The functional tasks required to be implemented by the AO are comprehensively stated in the SoW.
2. Merit-based recruitment of AOs is conducted according to program requirements. Job vacancies are announced through the press and websites. AOs are recruited based on specific criteria and qualities. They are contracted employees.
3. Job vacancies are announced by the HR Specialist in coordination with the Manager of the IWMU. The list of shortlisted candidates shall be submitted to the Manager of the IWMU. Shortlisted candidates shall be called in for interviews on a certain day. This day is the most important one for IWMU. The performance and success of the IWMU and program depend highly on how AOs are selected. They are the ones who mobilize farmers and people to establish WUAs.
4. WUA Organizers should have the following qualifications and experience:
  - a. Experienced in a similar line of work, including community development;
  - b. Self-reliant at work;
  - c. A college degree in a related field, including irrigation, agriculture, economics, land management and/or law;
  - d. Strong professional knowledge,
  - e. Working experience in other projects,
  - f. Qualities of being creative, able to take the initiative, a person of high principles, having experience in working with communities, having good communication and analytical skills, capable of accepting critical opinions;
  - f. Fluency in the Tajik language is essential, ability to use Uzbek, Russian and/or English languages are advantageous;
  - g. Residing in or close to the selected sites for WUA establishment, is desirable.
5. Selection of AOs should be conducted carefully. The AO should learn thoroughly the

history, culture, economy, society and agricultural and irrigation situation of the site selected for WUA development. AOs should learn the tempo of life and the intellectual and technical potential of the site and use this information purposefully in the community organizing process.

6. The WUA Organizer is a community mobilizer and trainer. The AO's duty is to develop the knowledge and skills of leaders and farmers. He or she helps farmers identify and analyze problems and plan for their solutions. He or she plays the following roles:

- a. Avoids becoming the WUA's permanent partner;
- b. Does not play a leadership role in the WUA;
- c. Does not represent the WUA to other organizations;
- d. Develops the skills of WUA officers;
- e. Never makes decisions for the WUA;
- f. Functions as a facilitator;
- g. Coordinator between program and WUA.

7. It should be noted that the future of the program depends highly on how well WUA Organizers are prepared. One of the most important tasks of WUA Organizers at the early stage of their activity is to learn and know precisely the steps of WUA establishment.

### **Training of Association Organizers at FFP**

1. The first training conducted for WUA Organizers is called **“Developing Water Users Associations Using the Community Organizing Method”**. During the training AOs develop a good understanding of the community organizing method, including:

- a. How to enter the community;
- b. How to behave, talk and function in selected sites WUA development;
- c. Ways of mobilizing people to establish the WUA;
- d. What are the WUA establishment methods and principles? What is the role of the AO in the program?
- e. The AO's activity in the field, including how data is collected;
- f. Writing reports, planning and strategy of activities;
- g. Legal registration of WUAs;
- h. WUA By-laws;
- i. What are the WUA's working committees?
- j. How to enhance the knowledge of farmers to participate actively in the WUA establishment process;
- k. How to change people's attitude towards problem solving;
- l. How to enhance organizational and management skills of leaders and farmers;
- m. How to enhance the level of managerial, agricultural and legal knowledge of farmers.

2. In the course of training of trainers, AOs are informed that the community organizing method is a continuous process, a method for mobilizing people towards WUA establishment, a method for developing skills for active participation in the organizational process, a positive method for changing people's attitudes and their views so as they don't wait or become dependent upon the AO, but move forward by themselves.

3. The FFP was committed to establishing 60 WUAs and 5 FWUAs within 4 years in 12 districts. The program needed to be coordinated with local governments and there were studies to identify sites for WUA development as well as to identify boundaries and statistical data in irrigation systems along the Kofarnihon river in the Hissor basin and in the Vakhsh basin.

4. Therefore, in order to ensure proper and efficient management of AOs, their selection and mobilization were conducted in several stages. At the first stage, two AOs who had experience in WUASP and two new AOs were involved. Together, they attended a training of trainers session for a week. Cross site visits to those

WUAs established formerly with support of the WUASP project, were organized within the training session for better preparation of AOs. This process continued for AOs into the future as well.

5. AOs were divided into two groups, each group consisting of one experienced AO and one new one and these two groups were assigned to work in the first two selected sites for WUA development. After the first two WUAs had been established, AOs were placed in four new selected sites and thus the activity of the IWMU became the standard operating procedure. The establishment process continued, the GIS Specialist continued to identify the boundaries of new potential sites, new AOs were recruited and trained. They each 'apprenticed' with an experienced AO during the establishment of one WUA, to experience the entire cycle of events before they started their activities in their selected sites.

6. Because farmers are busy with farming activities between March and November, the best time to select and train new AOs is during this period. This period is also a good time for planning, social investigation and conducting meetings and trainings.

7. AOs who were rather young or did not have experience in working with older farmers had trouble mobilizing farmers. It was hard for them to hold meetings at the level of local government officials and heads of state agencies. Most of heads of dehqan farms are educated, experienced and older people. Farmers were hesitant in working with young AOs. The attitude was something like, "Who is this young man that teaches us how to live?"

### **Lessons Learned About AO Recruitment**

1. There were cases where shortlisted candidates pretended to be very interested in the job during interviews, but after two or three months it became clear that they chose this position temporarily while they were not employed. If they found jobs that they liked better, they left the program. It became difficult for the program to fill the suddenly vacant positions with new specialists in a timely manner. The program needed to readvertise jobs, conduct new interviews and , repeat training programs.
2. The program undertook all necessary measures to train and prepare AOs both theoretically and practically over a period of two to three months. Most AOs worked with much interest. But some AOs left the program as soon as they found jobs in other organizations that offered higher salaries and better payment for business trips.
3. Translation of the community organizing method materials, into Tajik in the second year of the program had a positive impact on the quality of training of trainers. This document helped AOs to better understand how to do their job.
4. Association Organizers had a wide range of different degrees and qualifications, such as teachers, agronomists, irrigation engineers, civil engineers, lawyers, economists, philologists, etc. Depending on their situations, AOs shared and applied their different sources of knowledge and experience for development of their strategies and the development of the WUAs. For example, when they had legal challenges they obtained the expertise of the AO who was a lawyer.
5. Moving the projects target zone reduced progress. Initially, the FFP launched its activities in Vose and Kulob districts in the southeastern part of Khatlon region. According to requirements, AOs were recruited from these districts. The program started its activities and established two WUAs. Later, the program closed its regional office in Kulob city and moved it to Kurghonteppa City (KT). However, this resulted in one of the AOs not coming to the new region, so this AO had trouble traveling home during winter because of high costs of travel and accommodation, etc.
6. The Training Module for "Developing WUAs Using the Community Organizer Method" says that AOs should be recruited from near the potential sites for WUA development because the AO from the region

knows the region and the people and the people know him. He knows the mentality and the problems in the community and he wants to develop his hometown. But in contrast, observations showed that:

- a) All AOs who established WUAs in their hometowns faced challenges in the process of mobilizing the community and holding meetings at different levels. The people and leaders did not acknowledge their own representative sufficiently. The attitude of local people towards the AO was more positive in sites where AOs came from other districts or regions.
- b) WUA establishment continued successfully when they were transferred to new districts and had to work as a newcomer to a community.

## **Recommendations**

1. Careful attention should be given to recruiting appropriate and experienced people to become AOs. The position requires considerable wisdom and the ability to take the initiative within complicated environments. It requires the ability to act not as a supervisor but as a facilitator who is building leadership in others.
2. Particular attention should be given to Tajik language proficiency and to training, communication, and social skills of AOs.
3. It is best if AOs are over 30 years of age and have some prior experience as a community organizer. Experience with the FFP suggests that it is better if there is not much difference between the ages of AOs and farmers.
4. It would be better if AO has a degree in one or more of the following specializations: agriculture, irrigation, economics or education and teaching methods. However, when larger AO teams are assembled, a diversity of experience can be helpful.
5. AOs should have experience in community mobilization. It would be better if AOs previously worked in other projects.
6. AOs can be selected without much regard for their place of residence.

## **STEP 5: CAPACITY BUILDING FOR ASSOCIATION ORGANIZERS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

---

1. One of the most important steps toward implementation of project activities is capacity building of the AOs. The following are methodologies for building the capacities of AOs: Formal and informal Training-of-Trainer (ToT) trainings, individual and group meetings, group discussions, thematic movies, role-playing, consultations, cross site visits, internal and external presentations, conferences, and workshops. Each of these methods helps AOs gain a better understanding about essential topics.
2. An experienced project trainer conducts training for AOs based on the list of topics and modules provided by the project. The following ToT training modules were conducted for AOs both in WUASP and FFP:
  - Developing WUAs using the Community Organizer (CO) method. This included four days of theoretical training and one day of practical training, for a total of five days;
  - Organizational and leadership skill development for WUA leaders, for four days;
  - Financial management and administrative activities in the WUA, for two days;
  - Operations and maintenance plan for the irrigation system, for one day;

- Conflict management and resolution methods, for one day;
  - Audit training, for one day.
3. Also, additional training on the WUA Law, WUA by-laws and other legal documents should be conducted for AOs. Organizing cross site visits for AOs was also a good idea that promoted the development of both theoretical and practical skills of AOs at the same time. After having received each ToT, AOs then conducted such training modules for WUAs.
  4. The Institutional Development Specialist is the key trainer for AO capacity building. This Specialist ensures that the AO is well prepared for implementation of project objectives. He or she should have training skills, should know how to be a facilitator, should have sufficient experience, should have speaking skills, communication skills, should have a good knowledge of all relevant topics, and should know how to effectively apply training principles and methodologies.
  5. The need for AO capacity building is endless. It has a beginning, but does not have an end. Of course, the list of training modules mentioned in item 2 above requires a lot of time. These trainings should be conducted sequentially.
  6. After each ToT training, the AO makes a presentation of his training received before the trainer and other organizers. The presentation is usually made a week after the ToT has been conducted or a day before the next ToT. This is a good opportunity to test the knowledge and training capability of the AO and it is a practical exercise for the AO. The result of the AO's performance is discussed by organizers and the trainer (Institutional Development Specialist) and recommendations are provided in this regard.
  7. The first ToT on Developing WUAs using the CO method should be held before the WUA Organizer starts his activities in the field. It takes approximately 125 to 130 days to hold all ToT activities for AOs. Since they are about social mobilization and establishment of the WUA, this means that WUA organizers must participate and deliver the WUA establishment messages and facilitate the community organization steps at the level of WUAs after they have received ToT training and have made presentations and other preparations. Optimally, this is done as an apprentice, paired with an experienced AO.

### **Challenges Associated With This Step**

The FFP experience implementing Step 5 the following:

1. AOs had different levels of knowledge and understanding. There were organizers who previously received a lot of ToTs in other organizations and had working experience, but some received ToT training for the first time;
2. Training materials were in Russian. It was helpful that the material was translated into Tajik in the second year of the program and it was necessary to edit translated modules and slides.
3. After receiving ToTs, it was a bit difficult for AOs who had no previous experience to make presentations on their WUA establishment topics. They tended to present the material too quickly. It would have been better if they had presented the more methodically to impart fuller knowledge to the WUA.
4. Some AOs lacked fluency in the Tajik language.

### **Lessons Learned From AO Capacity Building Efforts**

1. In order to develop their knowledge and skills, AOs should have a strong sense of responsibility and they should attend all ToT events. The AO should also improve his knowledge by studying the materials provided carefully.
2. It would be better if the period between between ToT trainings were more than 21 days. This would enable the AO to apply what he or she has just learned from the previous training before going on to new topics.
3. AO capacity building for implementation of project objectives depends, to a great extent, on how the program's trainers and specialists were selected.
4. Some specialists carried out their activities based on experience gained from ToTs in the WUASP 7 to 10 years ago.
5. Organizers who knew the Uzbek language were assigned to sites where Uzbeks lived.

### **Recommended training topics**

The following training topics are recommended for developing institutional and technical knowledge and training skills for specialists and AOs:

- 1) The process of agrarian sector reform and water management in Tajikistan;
- 2) Legal documents in the agrarian sector and water management in Tajikistan;
- 3) Project proposal writing;
- 4) Fund raising;
- 5) Facilitating group formation;
- 6) Developing verbal communication and presentation skills;
- 7) Activities to attract investment;
- 8) Protection of WUA interests and advocacy;
- 9) Taxation for WUAs;
- 10) Financial management;
- 11) Hydrologic boundaries and soil classification;
- 12) Crop cultivation plans and contracts;
- 13) Irrigation plan and water distribution schedule for WUA;
- 14) Inventory and transfer of irrigation structures in WUAs;
- 15) Mechanism for collection and setting of the Membership Fee and Irrigation Service Fee in the WUA;
- 16) Organizing practical trainings for specialists and organizers;
- 17) Organizing cross site visits to different projects in other regions;
- 18) Editing of translated modules and slides.

## **STEP 6: ASSOCIATION ORGANIZER'S REPORTING**

---

1. In the period of their social mobilization activities in program sites, AOs report to the Institutional Development Specialist (IDS) and the IDS provides reports to the Manager of the IWMD. This process is important for the program and includes the following reports.

2. **Daily activity log book:** The AO should use this book from the first day as an AO in the selected site. The daily activity book includes explanations of daily step-by-step activities of the following:

- a. the Organizer's activities in the social mobilization process;
- b. individual and group meetings;
- c. consultations with farmers;
- d. interviews with farmers, other water users and inhabitants of the selected site;
- e. identification of the list of potential WUA members and other water users;
- f. social investigations and data;
- g. study of the history of irrigation and drainage systems;
- h. condition of irrigation structures;
- i. problems related to management, O&M, delivery and distribution of water;
- j. disputes related to water delivery from the source to the end point of each canal;
- k. problems of lands, seeds and fertilizer usage;
- l. information on crop productivity;
- m. financial aspects;
- n. contractual relations with water supply agencies; and
- o. Government, non-government, and international organizations that have worked in different sectors in the selected project area.

3. **Weekly Activity Plan:** After reporting at the beginning of every working week, AOs develop a plan for implementing their future activities. IDS approve the plan, take a copy of it and monitor and supervise the work of AOs. The Manager of the IWMU and specialists may provide recommendations for the AOs' plan. A special form was prepared for the AOs' weekly activity plan.

4. **Weekly Activity Report:** Based on their daily activity log book, AOs provide weekly reports to the IDS. The IDS analyzes reports and provides recommendations to AOs for their activities.

5. **Monthly Activity Report:** At the end of each month, the AOs provide reports on their implemented activities to the IDS. This report includes a special form consisting of the following four sections:

- a. Narrative report of activities;
- b. List of meetings and trainings conducted;
- c. Problems and challenges; and
- d. Measures undertaken to address challenges.

The report is analyzed and recommendations are provided for planning activities in the next month.

6. **Monthly Activity Plan:** Having submitted monthly reports, AOs next prepare their activity plan for the following month and submit this to the IDS. The AO's monthly activity plan mainly includes the following items: individual and group meetings, meetings with government officials, formal and informal training, meetings of the initiative group, meetings of the By-law Committee, meetings of the Board of Directors, general informal meetings, general meetings of WUA representatives, annual meetings of WUA representatives, cross site visits, presentations, and so on.

7. **Presentation of Potential Sites for Establishment of WUAs:** This is the WUA Organizer's report after completion of social mobilization activities. At the early stage of the AO development activity in the selected site, this Stage, along with preparation of weekly reports, consisted mainly of information gathering and semi-structured interviews in the form of conversations.

8. To reinforce this reporting, the IDS introduced the following changes. Presentations were:
  - a. Considered to be one of the key steps in the AO's activity plan;
  - b. Included in the AO's monthly activity plan;
  - c. Attended by the program's leadership, the manager, engineers and all AOs, and used as a problem-solving, and information-exchange session to discuss individual challenges of a particular WUA;

- d. Made with PowerPoint slides that were shown on the screen.
8. Presentations included the following types of information:
  - a. Overview of potential sites to be selected,
  - b. Social mobilization process,
  - c. Meetings with government officials,
  - d. Individual and group meetings,
  - e. General meetings with farmers,
  - f. Informal training,
  - g. Study of irrigation systems, details of the size, layout, and cropping pattern, in the potential service area,
  - h. Institutional and technical statistical data,
  - i. Functional condition of irrigation systems, problem zones, rehabilitation needs,
  - j. Social, economic, agricultural, irrigation and management problems,
  - k. Pictures of key steps,
  - l. Broad status of dehqan farms in selected sites.
9. Program specialists discuss the presentation together after it has been made by the AO. They give their comments on shortages and evaluate the presentation. If the presentation is not complete enough and lacks information, it will be postponed to another date. Unless the presentation of the potential site to be selected is approved, it is not permitted to conduct a General or Representative Assembly in which the WUA is established.
10. All planning and reporting activities are monitored by the IWMU Manager and specialists and recommendations are provided about the plans. Copies of all AO reports (hard and electronic) are recorded by IWMU's IDS and are kept in the Central Office.
11. For timely implementation of reporting activity, the program specialists developed a precise system to exchange data and reports. AOs have to follow this system while implementing their activities.
12. The program's institutional specialists should monitor the process of timely entering of reports into the system. Every week AOs gather in the regional office to provide weekly and monthly reports and plans. Reports and plans shall be analyzed and summarized as soon as all of them are collected from all zones.
13. Meeting dates are not only for reporting, but also for consultations and meetings with individuals. Presentations are conducted with AOs regarding different aspects of their activities. AOs, engineers and other specialists discuss issues related to potential sites to be selected. AOs also report to the regional accounting unit on different financial activities carried out by them.
14. In most cases the leadership of IWMU and the program visit the regional office to hear reports, and give recommendations and instructions.
15. The best day for weekly presentations and reporting was Friday and monthly reporting is done on the last Friday of every month. Thus, the summary of reports and plans were discussed every Monday at the regional office of the program.
16. The volume of reports and plans certainly increased due to the increase in the volume of work and the number of AOs in the program. Institutional Development Specialists developed new reporting sheets in Excel files to make summarizing reports from numerous AOs easier. This new Excel sheet included all activities of AOs, increased the AO's responsibility towards implementation of functional tasks, and was used as a good means for monitoring AO activities.

17. Observations showed that writing reports, planning activities, making preparations, conducting presentations and training significantly increased the responsibility of WUA Organizers.

### **Recommendations Regarding AO Reporting**

--Project leaders, especially the IDS, should develop a plan to monitor AO activities in selected sites so as to improve the quality of reports. It is essential for the project leaders to require AO's Daily activity log book. The weekly activity Plan should contain specific notations about all activities expected and should be constantly being updated whenever a new activity arises. This should include each activity, address, date, topic, participants and/or persons involved. The AO should, likewise, train farmers how to write minutes of the meetings of the Initiative Groups, By-law Committee, Representative Assemblies and other meetings. These will be submitted as reports from the AOs to the program leadership.

--If all the activities from Step 1 to Step 6 have been implemented properly, the project will be ready to begin to establish the Water Users Associations.

## PART 2

# PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS

The purpose of this Guide is to recommend a detailed and effective process for establishing Water Users Associations (WUA) in Tajikistan by a donor funder implementing project. It is a set of 15 steps that should result in the formal establishment and granting of legal status to a WUA. It summarizes lessons learned in Tajikistan, by donor financed projects, which established and trained 97 WUAs<sup>4</sup>.

**The following is a list of these 15 steps:**

- Step 1: Entering the community and social assessment
- Step 2: Organization of the Initiative Group
- Step 3: Organization of the By-laws Committee
- Step 4: Cross site visits for dehkan farmers of WUA potential areas
- Step 5: Informal trainings for dehkan farmers and other water users
- Step 6: Committee of dehkan farms and census of other water users
- Step 7: Organization process for the Water Users Group<sup>5</sup>
- Step 8: Meetings of Water Users Groups
- Step 9: Joint meeting between the By-law committee and Initiative group
- Step 10: Presentation by the Association Organizer about WUA establishment activities
- Step 11: Formal training given to founders of the WUA
- Step 12: Organization and implementation of the founding WUA Representative Assembly; selection of WUA members of the Board of Directors and Committees and handling other initial business
- Step 13: Organization of the WUA Board of Directors, and Management Team handling other initial business
- Step 14: Formal training for WUA leaders
- Step 15: Registration of WUAs with state agencies

Each step is explained below. After each step a summary is made of key conclusions, lessons learned and recommendations for future implementation of establishing WUA in Tajikistan.

This guide is based on two underlying essential principles. First, WUAs should be established based on the principle of hydrologic or hydro-geographic boundaries within an irrigation system or sub-system. That is, they obtain water from the same primary delivery point or points. The second principle is that establishment of the WUA is based on participatory methods for community organizing that establish the WUA from the bottom up.

To initiate these activities, the Institutional Development Specialist (IDS) coordinates the schedule of meetings between the implementing program and district leadership. On an agreed date, the District Hukumat calls a meeting of district government leaders, including the Chairperson and Deputy Chairpersons of the District, heads of the Agriculture Department, the District Land Committee, Jamoats, Tax Department, State

---

<sup>4</sup> It was developed using the extensive experience gained under two long-term development projects, the Water Users Association Strengthening Program (WUASP) and the Family Farming Program (FFP), both of which were financed by the USAID.

<sup>5</sup> The Water Users Group is also referred to as the Representative Zone group in those WUA that have a Representative Assembly instead of a General Assembly.

Water Supply Agency (Vodkhoz) and other people to be identified who are significant for the agriculture sector.

A meeting of the program Chief of Party or Project Team Leader and district government leaders is conducted, in which program objectives are introduced. The program Chief of Party or Project Team Leader and other specialists give a presentation on program goals and objectives. Before starting this presentation, all recruited Association Organizers (AOs) who are expected to enter into the potential area for WUA establishment are introduced to the participants. A presentation is made by showing maps and other key information and program goals and objectives on the screen so that the government officials become familiar with the activities of the program.

## **STEP 1: ENTERING THE COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT**

---

Prior to this step the AO has received his or her initial training and has been introduced to the leaders of relevant government organizations by the program leadership.

1. The AO now enters the community and begins the activities of social investigations and assessment. The aims of social investigation and awareness raising are as follows:
  - a. Increase farmer awareness about equitable and proper distribution of water;
  - b. Learn how to promote regular repair and maintenance of irrigation systems at a standard that will lead to higher productivity of crops and increases in farmers' income;
  - c. Assist in identifying key problems and reasons related to irrigation systems and resource management;
  - d. Help farmers know how they resolve problems related to irrigation systems and water resources management;
  - e. Identify farmer suggestions on practical ways to improve the repair, operation and maintenance of irrigation systems;
  - f. Explain to farmers about their responsibilities so that they will actively participate in the repair, rehabilitation and development of irrigation systems;
  - g. Learn farmer capacities and understandings about how to collectively identify, plan and solve problems related to water management, acquisition and distribution, and O&M of irrigation systems;
  - h. Bring all farmers together into one organization and advocate permanent participatory activities;
  - i. Communicate that the organizing process must awake and empower the creative capacities of people to identify, analyze, think and solve their problems collectively. Further, that the process should be open, transparent, equal, based on realities on the ground and democratic.
2. On the first day of work the GIS, program engineer and Institutional Specialists familiarize the AO with the potential service area for the future WUA within the irrigation system, including its prospective boundaries. Starting from the second day, the AO begins his social investigation activities in the potential area. Social investigation is the process to identify the understanding and opinions of farmers about the desired status and challenges for creation of the WUA, including its organizational, financial, operational and maintenance strengths and weaknesses. This involves both interviewing key informants and collecting necessary data.
3. The key activities of social investigation include:
  - 1) One-on-one meetings of the AO with farmers,
  - 2) Exchange of information between the AO and farmers,
  - 3) Identification of problems and requirements that emerged during the social mobilization process, and
  - 4) Development of a detailed plan for further activities.
4. A "Community Organization" method is used for entry of the AO into the community and for WUA establishment. This method is the means by which a new local organization is created, that is led by, trusted

by, and empowered by multiple villages, joined by a common water source, which acts as a public utility for fair delivery and maintenance of an irrigation system.

The process develops capacities and changes community behavior, but requires time and patience. This process develops slowly, but can be quite effective if done properly. The AO is the key facilitator to make this happen.

5. During the learning process of community entry, AOs must abide by the following principles and do the following things:

- a. Recognize the role and position of local authorities and conduct meetings with them;
- b. Inform local authorities about their presence and what their work will be in the area;
- c. Ensure that their personal appearance, speech and behavior fits in with that of the community;
- d. Be accessible to all;
- e. Do not get involved in local politics;
- f. Adopt a low profile lifestyle;
- g. Do not raise false expectations in people;
- h. Do not make commitments related to the program without clearance from proper authorities;
- i. Do not establish a commercial or business venture within the community;
- j. Be very kind and have a good attitude within the community.

6. Within the step of community entry and social investigation, the AO carries out the following more general activities to build trust and good communications:

- a. Sets up contacts with farmers and other water users;
- b. Meets community leaders to explain program goals and objectives;
- c. Conducts house-to-house visits with farmer families;
- d. Participates in community agricultural activities, meetings and traditional ceremonies;
- e. Is always accessible to farmers;
- f. Creates community awareness about the program;
- g. Learns about problems related to local water management and facilitates their solution;
- h. Encourages member involvement in WUA establishment and development.

7. WUA organizers conduct the following investigations in Step 1:

- a. Prepares a short history of the irrigation and drainage system, development and previous management of its canals and the general functional condition of irrigation structures;
- b. Makes an assessment of problems related to irrigation management, operation and maintenance (O&M) and water acquisition and distribution;
- c. Identifies disputes related to the irrigation system and their causes, and the extent and means to which they have been historically resolved;
- d. Maps soil and land categories and agricultural and environmental condition of lands and how they are currently being used;
- e. Summarizes status and issues related to agricultural inputs, especially seed, mineral and organic fertilizers;
- f. Summarizes agricultural productivity statistics;
- g. Collects financial aspects of water supply services, irrigation management, and contractual relations with water supply organizations;
- h. Summarizes historical farmer relations with government, non-government and international organizations.

In the first two to three weeks in the community the AO carries out his activities in the potential area under close supervision of the program Institutional Development Specialists. The IDS helps the AO apply in practice the knowledge gained from training.

8. Every week the AO reports to the IDS on the results of their activities and information that has been collected. Naturally, there will be shortfalls in this process. IDS analyze all data and gives recommendations to AOs on social investigation practices and additional activities.

9. According to the “Community Organization” methodology, accounting for days off and holidays, takes approximately 90 to 100 days since the date the AO entered the community.

10. Integration and social investigation is a continuous process for the AO. It does not have a definite ending point. As soon as the AO finishes his job in one area, he begins his WUA establishment activities in another new area. However, the best period for implementation of this Step is between March and November, as farmers are in the fields, water problems are obvious and weather conditions are suitable for carrying out different types of activities.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned About This Step**

The following are key challenges experienced under the FFP:

- a. Recruitment is difficult for AOs and Institutional Development Specialists;
- b. Effective involvement is needed by the AOs and IDS in farmer groups and committees;
- c. Accurate statistical data from government authorities is not available in most areas;
- d. Communities’ confidence and support is limited, in during the early stage of the investigation and social mobilization process;
- e. Investigation and social mobilization process is slow during the winter period.

Information from the project introduction did not flow well from the higher officials to the lower ones. Introduction of program objectives was conducted at the early stage but it was only done with high level officials of the program at national and district levels. District leaders did not sufficiently transfer information about program objectives to their lower level officials. This was probably the reason that lower level officials raised many questions during the process of social mobilization and social investigation and it took excessive time to repetitively explain the goal and objectives of the program to each of them. Therefore, at the request of AOs and specialists, the FFP developed and introduced a method of program introduction with the participation of the heads of all agriculture-related sectors. This method facilitated the activities of AOs in the field.

### **Recommendations for Entering the Community and Conducting Social Assessments**

1. Organize repeated meetings between the leadership of the program’s Irrigation Water Management Unit (IWMU) and the district government during the period of social mobilization;
2. Make presentations on program goals and objectives at the level of each Jamoat with the participation of community organizations;
3. Implement social mobilization activities during the irrigation season.
4. Organize of working groups and committees in the WUA establishment process. Experience in the FFP has shown that in the process of WUA establishment and activity, the organization of certain working groups and committees promotes fulfillment of assigned tasks and ensures farmer involvement in this process. Groups and Committees are the key means for capacity building of farmers so that they will:
  - Develop action plans and implement them collectively;
  - Discuss problems and make decisions collectively;
  - Monitor and evaluate activities collectively;
  - Prevent conflicts;
  - Use initiative and develop their own intellectual and technical capabilities;
  - Participate collectively in irrigation system improvement;
  - Maintain irrigation systems after they are repaired or rehabilitated.

5. Organization of groups and committees are divided into two parts, groups and committees that deal with WUA establishment and committees that deal with irrigation system rehabilitation and repairs.
6. Groups and Committees that deal with WUA mobilization and establishment include the:
  - Initiative Group;
  - By-laws Committee;
  - Committee on the census of WUA members;
  - Committee on WUA registration with government authorities and obtaining the legal status for the WUA.
7. Committees engaged in irrigation system repair and rehabilitation include the following:
  - Committee on irrigation system inventory and evaluation;
  - Committee for project proposal writing;
  - Committee for mobilizing contributions for WUA investment;
  - Committee for mobilizing labor resources;
  - Grant Committee;
  - Construction Committee;
  - Committee for preparation of applications and purchase of construction materials;
  - Committee for control of construction materials.
8. Committees play a key role in identification and implementation of tasks and promotion and strengthening of farmer capabilities. Each committee usually includes 5 or 6 farmers. All committees may change their functions and develop in the course of the WUA establishment process. Depending on the situation they might continue their activities until the WUA becomes stable.

## **STEP 2: ORGANIZATION OF THE INITIATIVE GROUP**

---

The Initiative Group (IG) may also be called the Core Group. IG members are recommended and elected by farmers after approximately two weeks of AO activity in the area. If the service area is small and there are only a few dehkan farms, an informal Representative Assembly will be called. But if the potential service area of the prospective WUA is large enough and there are many dehkan farms, it is reasonable to conduct group or village meetings in order to ensure broad participation of people, including women and other water users. There should not be too many members in IGs. It is reasonable to have only 5 to 6 members in them. It is their quality of action not their quantity of members that plays the key role in the success of WUA establishment activities.

1. IGs will be organized in an assembly of dehkan farms after conducting individual and group meetings, social investigations and consultations.
2. Farmers and community leaders help the AO conduct the meeting. As soon as the meeting is called, the AO leads the meeting but with the assistance of active farmers. The following is the agenda and order of the meeting:
  - a. Overview of information about the program and its objectives;
  - b. Purpose of today's farmer meeting;
  - c. Duties and functions of the IG;
  - d. Key qualities and requirements of the IG;
  - e. Farmer statements and discussion of key issues;
  - f. Election of IG members and/or representatives to the IG.

3. After the election is held, the IG conducts its first meeting to elect a chairperson, deputy chairperson and secretary of the IG. The AO meets with IG members to talk with them about their primary duties and plan further activities together.
4. The IG members should be selected based on the following requirements and qualities: truthfulness and honesty, leadership skills, good knowledge about irrigation systems, being educated and experienced, communication and explanatory skills, resides in the potential area of the WUA, and should know the area and its people very well.
5. The IG will be established to implement the following tasks:
  - a. Involve farmers and other water users in program activities;
  - b. Collect primary information about the service area for the prospective WUA;
  - c. Gather information about locations of dehkan farm lands, organizations and institutions in the area;
  - d. Gather information about residential addresses of farmers and leaders;
  - e. Organize one-on-one or group meetings with farmers;
  - f. Promote the process of social investigation;
  - g. Collect information and farmers' suggestions on ways for how to solve problems;
  - h. Let the AO know about farmers impressions on different issues;
  - i. Assist in informing farmers about meetings and mobilizing them to attend;
  - j. Assist in organizing presentations;
  - k. Assist in making a list of dehkan farms and developing a map of the irrigation system or sub-system that is in the WUA service area;
  - l. Assist in dissemination of information, booklets, brochures, instructions, decisions, laws and other legal documents;
  - m. Assist the AO in identifying a group of potential farmers in the area.
6. The IG shall have close cooperation with the WUA Organizer in the above-mentioned activities and issues during the entire period of social mobilization (about 100 days) and WUA establishment.
7. The best period for implementation of Step 2 is between March and November because farmers are in the fields, water problems are evident and the weather condition is suitable for carrying out different types of activities.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned About Organization of the Initiative Group**

Not all IG members became fully active nor did they all cooperate fully with the AO as it first appeared they would. AOs with little experience could not use the IG effectively. Some IG members attempted to force AOs to accept ideas which were against the basic principles of the community organization process.

The performance and effectiveness of activities was good in those areas where qualified people were selected to be part of the IG. Selection of the IG members was relatively good for more experienced AOs and AOs used them effectively. It is very important to involve both new leaders and experienced farmers in the IG.

### **Recommendations**

1. Informal training for IG members should be conducted approximately once every two weeks. Affirmative actions should be taken to involve women more in the IG.
2. Involve heads of villages in the IG as well as representatives of kitchen gardens and presidential lands. This is because the Government supports improvement of livelihoods of the rural population through agricultural activities. Also, the President has instructed that Presidential lands should be allocated for use by rural people for agriculture production.

### **STEP 3: ORGANIZATION OF THE BY-LAWS COMMITTEE**

---

The WUA that is to be established needs a solid legal basis in order to implement its activities. The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on the Water Users Association is the main legal basis for WUA establishment and activity. This Law is of great importance for the WUA, especially in the following matters:

- a. To develop the WUA By-laws;
- b. Proper understanding of the Law helps farmers manage the WUA properly;
- c. The Law is very helpful for protection of rights and in cases where there is a need to apply to the courts;
- d. It is very important for government, non-government officials and others to know the legal rights and functions of the WUA.

1. One of the most important tasks in the WUA establishment process is to develop By-laws, which are the internal rules, regulations, functions and procedures of the WUA. The WUA By-laws Committee is organized and its members consist of 7 to 10 persons who are selected at an informal general assembly of farmers that is called by the IG approximately one month after the AO entered the area. All farmers, heads of villages, representatives from Jamoats, State Water Supply Agency (Vodkhoz) officers, the district chairman and the program Chief of Party or Project Team Leader and water users in the area will all be invited to the Assembly.
2. This Assembly is an important milestone in the process and is conducted jointly by the IG and AO. Due to the fact that this is the first Assembly in the mobilization process, it is facilitated by the AO. The Assembly has the following items on its agenda:
  - a) Introduction of participants;
  - b) Explanation of the meeting's objectives;
  - c) Introduction of the meeting's agenda;
  - d) Brief report by the IG Chairperson on activities implemented so far;
  - e) Introduction of the duties and functions of the By-laws Committee;
  - f) Introduction of key requirements and qualities of members of the By-laws Committee;
  - g) Questions and answers, free statements by water users on relevant issues;
  - h) Democratic selection of representatives of the Water Users Group (or Groups) to become members of the By-laws Committee;
  - i) Congratulatory and guiding speeches by the program and government officials.

In the course of the informal Assembly, the AO uses all the following materials and means: a banner, a board, a flipchart, a chart showing the organizational structure of the prospective WUA, charts of the requirements and qualities, duties and functions of the By-laws Committee, pictures, maps, and other visual aids. The IG takes the minutes of the meeting.

3. By-laws Committee members are selected based on the following requirements and qualities:
  - Be a farmer who owns a farm that is within the service area of the prospective WUA;
  - Be available to attend meetings;
  - Preferably, have a university degree in agriculture, irrigation, economics, law or other relevant subject;
  - Have farming skills;
  - Have knowledge of the WUA establishment area, the irrigation system, water sector problems, location of differences in soils and land tenure, and experiences with resolution of water-related disputes;
  - Knowledge of laws or to be able to work with a lawyer;
  - Analytical skills;
  - Communication skills;
  - Positive motivation.

4. At the informal Assembly, the By-laws Committee members are selected, the first meeting of the By-laws Committee is held. It is to be facilitated by the AO as in previous meetings. The agenda shall consider the following issues:
  - e. Selection of the By-laws Committee Chairperson;
  - f. Selection of the By-laws Committee Secretary;
  - g. Approval of the By-laws Committee meeting schedule (date, time and venue).

It would be reasonable to conduct meetings once a week or twice if farmers are available. The By-laws Committee should function for a little more than a month. Its members should fix the target date for completion of the draft By-laws in their first meeting.

5. Communication responsibility, functions and requirements of the By-laws Committee:

After each meeting, the By-laws Committee (BC) should conduct meetings with farmer groups and listen to and take into consideration their ideas, opinions and suggestions on the developed sections of the draft By-laws. If needed, the BC should take into account the opinions and suggestions of irrigation, agriculture, economic and legal experts. The BC should inform the farmers about the outcomes of its meetings and should consult with them to finalize the draft By-laws. The BC should distribute copies of draft By-laws to water users groups for their review before the Assembly is called. The BC should provide a hard copy of the final draft By-laws to the Assembly. The BC should raise issues to be discussed and resolved in the Assembly.

6. Tasks for the Association Organizer to facilitate preparation of the By-laws:

- a) Before the BC members are selected, the AO explains to farmers the BC's functional tasks, essence and significance as well as requirements and qualities of potential members.
- b) In order to specify and facilitate further BC members' activities, the AO shall, in the meeting in which BC members were selected, provide copies of the WUA Law and a example guide for potential by-law articles for the draft By-laws to each BC member so that each member first of all becomes familiar with the scope of work, feels responsibility and gets prepared for subsequent meetings.
- c) The AO should attend all BC meetings to encourage effective participation of members of the BC and to facilitate effective procedures in meetings, productive discussions and team work and to provide recommendations if needed. In case of need, the AO should also provide references to relevant laws, regulations and instructions.
- d) The BC members may decide to divide and re-allocate writing of separate articles for the By-laws. The AO should persuade against such an approach because this method discourages collective activity and group discussions.
- e) In the course of meetings the AO should encourage the BC to finish one article of the By-laws at a time and then move on to the next one.
- f) The AO may participate in the discussion of some issues and provide recommendations. But under no circumstances should he force his ideas on the BC. Only the BC has the power to make decisions about their own by-laws.
- g) The AO should attend the discussions about draft By-laws held by the BC and water users groups (WUG<sup>6</sup>), (where for larger WUAs they are subdivided into smaller hydrological sections and representatives are selected for a future board).

---

<sup>6</sup> The Water Users Group is also referred to as the Representative Zone in those WUA that have a Representative Assembly instead of a General Assembly.

- h) The AO shall continue his social mobilization activity during the whole period of the BC activity so as to inform farmers about the results of the BC activity.
7. The BC normally functions for approximately 30 to 35 days between when it was established and when it holds its last meeting. But the BC may continue its activity for a longer time if needed. According to the schedule developed by the BC, advocacy and discussions of draft By-laws are held in each of WUGs. Introduction of draft By-laws may take a week depending on the number of WUGs, which is normally between 4 and 5.

After this the next joint meeting of the BC is called. The agenda will probably include the following items:

- A summary of WUG meetings and submission of final draft By-laws to the WUA Assembly;
  - Preparations for the WUA Assembly;
  - Organizational issues;
  - Approval of a draft “Protocol Decision on WUA Establishment”
  - Approval of the agenda for the WUA Assembly;
  - Inviting WUG representatives to the WUA Assembly;
  - Current problems.
8. The BC activity begins and terminates in accordance with the agreed plan and matters arising during the course of its work. According to the FFP’s experience, the BC activity could be conducted at any time of the year, although more disturbances occur during busy periods of the cultivation or harvest season.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned Concerning Organization of the By-Laws Committee**

During the busy season for farmers some members of the BC are likely to be late for BC meetings and some will not come to the meetings. Others will request permission to skip the meetings, especially during peak cotton cultivation season time.

As the farmers elected to the By-Laws Committee tend to be the most educated and experienced, they are often called to meetings by government authorities.

Sometimes, due to farm work, the BC meeting can be too short, (they may start at 10:00 a.m. but end at 12:30 when they take a break). Some of the participants may come from distant villages, some will not return afterwards. Under the FFP some AOs over managed and led the BC meetings in some areas. But this should be avoided wherever possible. This defeats the objective of making the WUA self-reliant and if fosters dependence. In most areas where the BC members were properly elected and guided in their work, a proper and stable WUA was established. BC members were often elected farmers who they considered were potential representatives for the WUA Assembly and leaders for the WUA. Group partnership started and was strengthened during the period of the BC activity.

### **Recommendations**

1. Because of the important role of women in farming and the rising tendency of men to seek seasonal labor opportunities in Russia, we recommend that efforts be made to involve women in the WUA establishment process and encourage selection of women for the BC.
2. In the process of preparing draft By-laws, we recommend that after each meeting of the BC, each of the WUG representatives in the BC conducts a meeting with farmers of his/her group to discuss issues and take into account the opinions, suggestions and recommendations of farmers.

3. Each BC meeting should be conducted in one of the WUGs, rotating to a different one with each meeting. This can create a foundation for future cooperation, trust and good relationships.
4. Involvement of legal experts and experienced irrigation engineers in the BC meetings will probably make the meetings become more interesting and productive.

#### **STEP 4: CROSS SITE VISITS FOR DEHKAN FARMERS OF WUA POTENTIAL AREAS**

---

A cross site visit is another important milestone in creating a sustainable WUA. Selected members of a new potential WUA visit an existing WUA's service area and the leaders of that WUA. For most individuals, they have never seen a functioning WUA, and many people, particularly local leaders can be either skeptical about the utility of a WUA, or just unclear about how they function in Tajikistan. So seeing and speaking to members of one, very clearly articulates goal organizational the project is encouraging them toward.

1. The following methods are used within cross site visits: individual and group conversations, presentation of both program and WUA activities, a slideshow on steps in WUA establishment, a picture show of WUA activities, and inspections of structures that were rehabilitated or repaired.
2. Within this step AOs make all arrangements for the involved groups from different areas where WUAs are being established to visit experienced WUAs. Institutional Development Specialists are responsible for conducting practical training, for exchange of information among them, and for organizing meetings at the level of several WUAs. Visiting farmers meet with accounting and management staff of the experienced WUA to see how they handle organizational, technical and financial management issues.
3. 4. AOs and program specialists should have sufficient organizing skills and a high sense of responsibility for organizing cross site visits. They should also carefully facilitate this process so that the participants transfer and gain information from each other effectively. All necessary measures should be undertaken to conduct this event effectively, otherwise the cross site visit may be just a trip.
4. Participants of cross site visits meet with farmers and WUA officers and gain insights on many issues, including the following:
  - Steps, challenges and ways to solve problems related to WUA establishment;
  - Record keeping in WUA;
  - Administrative, financial and technical management of WUAs;
  - Signing contracts and collection of the water service and membership fees;
  - Irrigation service and water distribution plans;
  - Dispute resolution;
  - Farmer contributions to and participation in rehabilitation;
  - Training and its significance to develop knowledge among farmers about irrigation system governance, management and financing.
5. Cross site visits within the program may have other types of participants.
  - a. New program's AOs
  - b. Other projects, such as World Bank.
  - c. Cross site visit for government officials, and important way to illustrate the effectiveness of WUA.
6. The process of cross site visits for farmers usually takes a full day and includes the following activities:
  - a. Reception of guests at the WUA office;
  - b. Meeting with leaders and farmers;
  - c. Familiarization with administrative, technical, financial, grant documentation and record keeping;
  - d. Introduction of WUA activities to participants by the host;

- e. Questions and answers sessions on topics related to WUA establishment;
  - f. Inspections of water delivery equipment, canals and water control structures;
  - g. Observation of the progress or results of rehabilitation or construction work on a WUA office building;
  - h. Roundtable discussions around square, rectangular or round tables;
  - i. Testimonials of established WUA leaders including the history of WUA establishment, activities, challenges, successes and plans for future WUA development;
7. The best time for organizing cross site visits is soon after the first meeting of the BC. The participants mainly include BC members. At this time they are engaged in writing draft By-laws and a cross site visit will broaden their perspective and have a positive impact on this process.
  8. The timing for organizing a cross site visit will depend on what activities are going on in the area where the WUA is to be established. Having cross site visits in the winter may be difficult for farmers due to inclement weather. Visiting when they can observe rehabilitation work on the irrigation system and the installation of gates and water measurement devices is desirable.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

The cross site visits gave farmers a powerful impression of the benefits of WUAs and the feasibility of establishing effective WUAs. This process increased the farmers' confidence in the program and its specialists. The most important benefit is that it increased their self-confidence. Cross site visits eliminated the distrust and doubt they felt initially. After the cross site visit the activity of groups and committees improved. Working groups became much more motivated.

### **Recommendations**

1. Creation of a pilot WUA office where a cross site visit is made. Best equipped with all necessary office equipment and supplies and provided with all necessary training was essential. This included training in administrative, financial, and technical aspects and in grant management and record keeping.
2. Visit a location where rehabilitation of irrigation and drainage canals, gates, division boxes and other irrigation structures has occurred. This helped participants gain some experience on quality implementation of technical activities.
3. Women and youth representatives as well as representatives from the Jamoat, Vodkhoz and district authorities should be involved in cross site visits so that they will not impede such innovations in their districts in the future.

## **STEP 5: INFORMAL TRAININGS FOR DEHKAN FARMERS AND OTHER WATER USERS**

---

1. One of the key requirements for establishing WUAs is to conduct informal training during the social mobilization process and investigations in areas for WUA establishment. The purpose is to improve the knowledge of farmers and other water users on FFP objectives, the WUA law, other legal issuances, key steps and methods for WUA establishment, water use rights, functions of WUAs, obligations of WUA members, and so on.
2. AOs conduct these training events in WUA establishment sites. Training is initially conducted at the level of communities and includes government officials, Initiative Groups (IG), members of the BC, Water Users Groups (WUG) and working committees for WUA establishment.

3. Training participants are invited by the IG at the request of the AO. Training participants mainly include farmers but also other water users, local people and heads of different agencies and organizations in the area are invited.
4. In order to conduct this training the AO must be well prepared and have all relevant information, laws, decisions and other materials needed.
5. The following is the list of key informal training topics provided to develop the knowledge and capacity of farmers:
  - a. WUA establishment using the “Community Organization” method;
  - b. Legal documents on WUA establishment;
  - c. WUA establishment based on hydrologic boundaries;
  - d. WUA establishment and resolution of irrigation problems;
  - e. The role of WUGs in the WUA;
  - f. By-laws;
  - g. WUA organizational structure and key duties;
  - h. The first informal trainings are conducted for the IG members in order for them to have a better knowledge of program objectives, the steps and methods for WUA establishment and ways to mobilize farmers.
6. Conducting informal training in areas of WUA establishment begins after a ten-day period from the start of the AO’s activity in the area and lasts until the WUA is officially established.
7. Informal training covers the whole process of social mobilization and WUA establishment. The best time to conduct such training for government officials and other organizations depends on the timing of plans for WUA establishment.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

Implementation of the FFP showed that at the onset of WUA establishment, neither farmers nor local government leaders had information about agrarian or water sector reforms.

At the beginning of activities farmers were not committed enough to attend training events. There was a significant lack of knowledge of farmers about their rights related to association organizing and irrigation system management. There was also a lack of available information about the WUA law.

There was also a negative attitude about establishment of local organizations in the area because historically these had failed and lacked adequate support.

Experience showed that informal training required more responsibility than did formal training. Formal training included specified topics for WUA officers and the AO gets prepared for them in advance. But the situation was quite different in informal trainings, in which the AO has to give brief information about each training topic. Moreover, the participants in such trainings were from different positions in the population and asked a lot of questions.

Where AOs conducted informal training the people got to know the process well so that group meetings and the process of WUA establishment took place successfully, although there were weaknesses in some cases.

### **Recommendations**

1. AOs should have broad information about legal issuances, policies and programs related to agriculture and irrigation, the agrarian reform process, and river basin water management in Tajikistan and other countries.

## **STEP 6: COMMITTEE OF DEHKAN FARMS AND CENSUS OF OTHER WATER USERS**

---

According to the method, in the social mobilization process the AO had to organize a Committee on Census of WUA members. Depending on the size of the service area of the prospective WUA, 3 to 7 persons had to be elected to the Committee. Representatives from the IG and BC, who were aware of WUA establishment process, as well as authoritative persons in the area who had good communication skills, were recruited into the Committee.

1. This committee's function was to conduct farmer-to-farmer, house-to-house and land-to-land visits to explain to farmers the significance of membership in the WUA and to receive their applications for membership. Due to the fact that this Committee's functions were implemented at the same time as other establishment activities, the AO, IG, BC, institutional specialists and FFP leadership agreed that there was no need to organize one more committee. The IWMU specialists called the functional task of this committee "Census of dehkan farmers and other water users" and transferred its implementation to the IG and BC.
2. In order to take the census of dehkan farms and other water users, the IG and BC implemented the following activities. They:
  - a. Attempted to include all farmers in the membership of the WUA;
  - b. Explained to farmers about their rights, functions and obligations;
  - c. Made a precise list of dehkan farms in the proposed service area;
  - d. Determined the name of each dehkan farm, name of heads of dehkan farms, area of each dehkan farm, date of dehkan farm establishment, number of family members, number of dehkan farm stakeholders (men and women), existence of a land use right certificate, and area of kitchen gardens and presidential lands;
  - e. Informed farmers about WUA requirements, rights, functions and obligations using the draft By-laws;
  - f. Distributed WUA membership application forms to potential farmers, collected the completed application forms and submitted them together with a complete list of farmers to the General or Representative Assembly for approval;
  - g. Reported to the General or Representative Assembly on the status of farms in the WUA service area.
3. The AO assist to ensure timely implementation of this process. He or she includes all collected data in the "List of WUA dehkan farms". This list becomes one of the key reporting documents for the IWMU.
4. The IG and BC should be very careful to make this list complete and accurate because it includes essential statistical data needed for the WUA.
5. The process of making this list continues until the WUG meetings are held in which representatives of the WUA Representative Assembly are elected.
6. The best time to prepare the "List of WUA dehkan farms" is prior to the formal establishment of the WUA.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

The first days and weeks of the AO entry into the community may be difficult as the farmers do not share information due to unfamiliarity and uncertainty.

These land tenure records are important in making an accurate list of members and areas of landholdings. Budget sources, operational costs, Water Tariff and Membership fees, internal and external contracts of the WUA, irrigation systems maintenance activities and other things depend very much on land tenure records.

Some farmers only have the district chairperson's decision on allocation of a land plot. They do not have a land ownership certificate and other necessary documents but they have been using the land and paying taxes on it for long time. The list of land ownership is available in Jamoats, especially with land ownership officers, but not all of them provide this document to landholders. Another problem is that the data available in Jamoats is not always consistent with the data of farmers, the district's Land Committee and/or the district Department of Statistics.

Some farm leaders are engaged in labor migration and other family members do not show the documents at all. Incomplete data is collected from some dehkan farms.

The AO, the IG and BC who paid careful attention to this process, facilitated the work of WUA establishment subsequently.

The list of dehkan farms is reviewed and might need to be revised every six months. This is in accordance with the instructions of district chairmen. Large farms are being divided into small farms of less than 5 ha. The number of dehkan farms changes frequently in the area. With regard to this, internal and external contracts, budgets, Water Service and Membership Fees of WUA need to change as well.

### **Recommendations**

1. All records of dehkan farm land ownership should be updated by the WUA at least annually in order to keep up with the changes. The WUA should keep an up-to-date record of who is the lead farmer present (as substitute for those absent on labor migration)—the husband, wife or renter.

## **STEP 7: ORGANIZATION PROCESS FOR THE WATER USERS GROUP**

---

Tajik legislation says that Water Users Group (WUG) members should include owners of specific land plots provided with water from one canal, a pump station, a borehole, a dam or a water distribution structure. The WUG is organized within the WUA service area in hydrologic sub-sections of the WUA within the WUA hydro-geographic service area.

1. The WUG is usually organized while the BC is preparing the draft By-laws. Boundaries of the WUG are based on statistical data, a map of the area and in accordance with the experiences and views of farmers. The number of WUGs in the WUA service area depends on the size and configuration of irrigation canals and the structure and length of canals. It is determined by WUA boundaries, service area and the number of farmers.
2. The head of the WUG is elected by WUG members. The WUG leader's rights, functions and responsibilities are stated in a guide approved by farmers at the WUG meeting. The WUG leader usually is elected to the WUA Representative Assembly.
3. The AO's key tasks in this step are as follows:
  - Help farmers properly identify the WUG boundaries;
  - Provide the WUG Guide to farmers;
  - Explain the rights, functions and responsibilities of the WUG leader and members;
  - Explain process to elect the WUG representative to the Representative Assembly;
  - Conduct consultations and informal training.

4. The key tasks of the IG and BC in this Step are to:
  - Participate actively in the process,
  - Involve farmers in identifying the WUG boundaries,
  - Point out any related problems and make suggestions, and
  - Explain the significance of the WUG to farmers.
5. Depending on the complexity of an irrigation system, it normally takes one to two weeks to organize a WUG. In this period the AO, the IG and the BC jointly collect technical and statistical data and conduct a walkthrough of the entire irrigation system and identify and confirm its boundaries on the map of the WUA service area as they were defined earlier (by the GIS technician). The data collected shall be included in the draft By-laws, which will be discussed and approved at the WUA Representative Assembly.
6. The best time to organize a WUG is the period of developing the WUA draft By-laws.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

In some places it was not easy for program staff to persuade local government officers and others to reject the administrative principle of boundaries (village to village) and to introduce them to identification of the WUG boundaries based on only the hydrologic principle of integrated, singular management.

Another challenge was the frequent lack of access to a map of the potential service area of the WUA. Sometimes this had to be made.

Experience showed that the WUG is a key component in the implementation of all steps of establishing a WUA that is supported by its members. It is also a key unit for nearly all WUA activities. It is essential that the WUG be organized according to democratic principles.

### **Recommendations for WUGs to become more active in the initial period**

1. A separate Article should be introduced into WUA By-laws that explains the purpose, structure and functions of the WUG. In order to develop an active WUG it is necessary to conduct informal meetings and training.
2. The quantity, name and boundary of each WUG should be stated in the WUA By-laws.

## **STEP 8: MEETINGS OF WATER USERS GROUPS**

---

In the final meeting the By-laws Committee, the purpose is to prepare and approve the schedule and agendas for WUG meetings. The agendas for the meetings conducted in the WUG should include the following issues:

- a. Discuss the WUA draft By-laws and possible amendments and
  - b. Elect WUG representatives to the WUA Representative Assembly for the official legal WUA establishment.
1. The first meeting each of the WUGs is called by the IG and BC members. Methods of group discussion, lecture and reading are applied in these meetings. Further WUG meetings are conducted every three months and if needed, an extraordinary meeting may be called by the WUG leader. WUG members are farmers and other water users from clearly identified sub-sections of the WUA service area.
  2. Before attending WUG meetings, the AO should:
    - Familiarize himself or herself with the WUG Guide;

- Get prepared for conducting the first WUG meeting;
  - Learn the WUG rights, functions and responsibilities comprehensively in order to be able explain them to farmers in the first meeting.
3. The AO and representatives from the IG and BC need to participate in all WUG meetings according to the agreed schedule. They conduct the meetings and give recommendations if needed.
  4. In the first issue on the agenda, the BC representatives read all the articles in the draft By-laws and have a discussion about them. A secretary takes the minutes, which includes requests and amendments suggested by farmers and they submit these to the BC.
  5. In the course of the discussion of the second issue on the agenda, IG and BC representatives explain to farmers about the methods of representation at the WUA Representative Assembly, selection criteria for representatives, and the rights, functions and responsibilities of representatives at the WUA Representative Assembly.
  6. Election of representatives from the WUG to the WUA Representative Assembly is conducted through a secret ballot. If there are not many dehkan farms in the service area the leaders of all dehkan farms can be invited to attend the meeting.
  7. The following issues are additional tasks of the WUG:
    - Proper election of WUG representatives to the Representative Assembly;
    - Active participation of the WUG representative in training, meetings, hashars (collective work), planning and implementing rehabilitation works, other planning, signing contracts, fee collection, and so on;
    - Provision of suggestions, requests, and cooperation with the WUA Board of Directors, once they are elected.

It normally takes one week to discuss the WUA draft By-laws and elect the WUG representatives to the WUA Representative Assembly.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

Experience has shown that after a WUA is established and a board is elected, there is a tendency in some places for the WUA Board of Directors and the Management Team to not pay adequate attention to the WUG. This causes the WUG leaders to become less active. It also reduced the value of these groups, who have direct interaction with individual farmers.

### **Recommendations after a WUA is established**

1. If staff, funds and time are sufficient, strengthen the WUGs (and WUA) with more formal training for farmers at the level of the WUG.
2. It should become a regular practice to conduct a formal meeting of the WUG after each WUA Representative Assembly, to confer information directly to farmers and involve the WUG constantly in most WUA activities.
3. It would also improve the sense of connection between the WUG and the WUA if elected WUA officers were introduced in each of the WUG meetings (after the first Representative Assembly) and WUA decisions and plans are discussed, especially at in the beginning and periodically after that.

## **STEP 9: JOINT MEETING BETWEEN THE BY-LAWS COMMITTEE AND INITIATIVE GROUP**

A joint meeting of the BC and IG is called after discussions about the draft By-laws the purpose is to bring to a conclusion the by-laws creation, and prepare for the first formal election process.

1. The joint meeting of the BC and IG is held in the form of an informal conversation, review of progress to date, and planning of further activities.
2. The following issues are the main topics at the meeting:
  - a. Conclusion of the WUG meetings and preparation of the final draft By-laws for submission to the WUA Representative Assembly;
  - b. Preparations for the WUA Representative Assembly (organizational and procedural issues);
  - c. Approval of the WUA Representative Assembly's agenda, date, time and venue;
  - d. Discussion of a draft "Protocol - Decision on the establishment of the WUA";
  - e. Specific tasks of the BC and IG prior the initial Representative Assembly;
  - f. Approval of the Representative Assembly's draft agenda;
  - g. Announcement for the Representative Assembly for establishment of the WUA;
  - h. Inviting WUG representatives to the first WUA Representative Assembly;
  - i. Other current problems.
3. In this process the AO helps members of the IG and BC make preparations, such as to prepare and print out the final draft By-laws, draft "Protocol – Decision on the Establishment of the WUA", other draft decisions, invitations and the agenda for the meeting.
4. In this step the functions of the BC and IG members increase. They must plan each of the further activities and make preparations for them.
5. The BC and IG joint meeting normally lasts for 2 to 3 hours.
6. The BC and IG joint meeting is called after completion of the BC's work and the advocacy of the draft By-laws in the WUG meetings, which are done prior to the WUA Representative Assembly.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

The joint meeting of the BC and IG is an important step in preparations for the initial WUA Representative Assembly. During this step these two groups become more responsible in carrying out their duties and in preparing for future events.

### **Recommendations**

1. We recommend that all the leaders of WUGs and their communities attend the joint meeting of the BC and the IG to help inform and prepare them to support the establishment of the WUA.

## **STEP 10: PRESENTATION BY THE ASSOCIATION ORGANIZER ABOUT WUA ESTABLISHMENT ACTIVITIES**

---

The program should have each Association Organizer prepare a presentation to summarize the communities' progress. This to determine the progress, local appropriateness and adequacy of the social mobilization process. The AO makes a presentation about his activities to the program leadership, institutional specialists and other AOs, to prepare them for any actions they should take prior to the WUA having its first Representative Assembly. Presentations are made at the regional office of the program.

1. This presentation includes the data collected during the social mobilization process and is made using land and hydro-geographic maps of the prospective WUA service area, charts, pictures and slides.
2. This presentation is made by the AO who worked directly in a specific WUA establishment area.
3. The presentation includes information about challenges and success noted about institutional development matters, technical problems and characteristics and key problems and issues on these three essential topics:

**Institutional information:** Information from individual and group meetings with farmers and government officials; meetings of the BC, IG and the WUG; the process of social mobilization and social investigations; informal training; informal meetings and cross site visits of farmers; statistical and demographic data on the population, number of dehkan farms and size and representation in WUGs in the prospective WUA service area, and the status of dehkan farms in the prospective area. Institutional information also includes information about farmers in the area, interactions, support or interference from the Jamoat, Vodkhoz, district Hukumat, Tax Department and other local organizations.

**Technical data:** This may include data on the current condition of water acquisition, distribution and management system; a land and hydro-geographic map of the area; the physical characteristics of the irrigation system; locations of water sources; functional conditions of on-farm canals, gates, offtakes, irrigation structures, pumping stations, off-farm canals; the capacity and length of canals; the total irrigated area; the functional condition of lands; the practices of operations and maintenance (O&M); informal farmer-built sub-systems; different categories of water users in the area; and water tariff payments and other financial aspects.

**Key problems in the area:** This presentation mainly focuses on institutional and technical problems in the WUA establishment area as well as the relationships between the Vodkhoz, Jamoat, Tax Department and district Hukumat and the farmers.

In this presentation the AO expresses his or her ideas and opinions on further steps. The presentation on the results of the AO activities in the area for the WUA establishment usually takes an hour. This includes questions and answers of participants.

### **Key challenges and Lessons Learned**

There are a variety of statistical data sources in each area. It can be a challenge to find the most accurate, up to date and useful data. There should be a standard format for presentations used and followed by all AOs.

A presentation serves as a database for newly appointed leaders in the WUA. These presentations are valuable means for the leaders to introduce the new WUAs to government, non-government and international organizations.

It has been shown that in Step 10 it is very important that participants in the presentation meeting are well aware of the WUA establishment steps; that they analyze, discuss and evaluate every step of the social mobilization process; that they clarify positive and negative aspects of activities; and that they give the AO useful advice.

The information obtained and used in the AO's presentations also can become material that is used in the future for dealing with institutional, technical, and financial issues, and for preparing and signing service contracts. The presentations help to build the capacity of the AOs.

### **Recommendations**

1. Experience suggests that the length of a presentation should be no more than one hour and it should be discussed over the next half an hour.
2. Observations show that some presentations include all necessary data but some others have too many pictures and end without giving some essential information. Standard sample slides indicating the title for each presentation and slide should be prepared to help bring essential uniformity to the presentations.
3. Not more than two presentations should be made on the same day. This gives the opportunity to analyze and evaluate the quality of the presentations and make well-thought-out conclusions and to provide good recommendations.
4. Heads of the IG, BC and WUGs should be invited to attend this presentation at the regional office. This will help increase their sense of responsibility. Program engineers should give a priority to attendance each presentation.
5. We also recommend that slides for the presentation should be printed out and provided to the members of the WUA.

## **STEP 11: INFORMAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING GIVEN TO FOUNDERS OF THE WUA**

---

Conducting the first part of leadership training begins a few days before a WUA formally votes on their board and elect the chairman. This prepares the Representative Assembly members to formally vote for a board and chairman. All instructional modules and reading materials are approved by the funding agency. This training mainly includes the topics of administrative, technical, financial, grant and sometimes irrigation management.

In order to conduct the first WUA Representative Assembly properly and purposefully, a day prior to the meeting, AOs conduct training for WUA organizers on “Developing organizational and management skills for WUA leaders.” This was based on the modules

### **Module I: Overview of WUA Leadership Development Process, see below for details.**

1. These training events promote step-by-step strengthening of WUAs, and using a democratic leadership election process. The participants of these training sessions are mainly WUA organizers and founders and WUG representatives.
2. The following key activities are carried out for the training:
  - Planning and approval of future training by the leadership of the IWMU;
  - Submission of a request by the IDS to the leadership of the program for conducting training;
  - Approval of a request by the program leadership.
3. The WUA Representative Assembly is held and begins its work after this training. The BC will be responsible for conducting the Representative Assembly. The WUA Assembly should:
  - a. Be attended by Representatives from all WUGs;
  - b. Be held transparently for farmers;
  - c. Ensure each member is informed about organizational principles and practices;
  - d. Discuss comprehensively issues of membership in the association, rights of members and the association, functions and responsibilities of the WUA and its officers, working principles and procedures, water supply rights and assurances, financial issues, payment of fees, and so on;
  - e. Discuss the duties of the organization for governance, operation and maintenance of the on-farm irrigation and drainage system, irrigation structures, dispute resolution, timely collection of the water service fee, regulation of internal and external relations, and so on;

- f. Ensure the farmers equal treatment and provision of services;
  - g. Enable each member to speak and express his or her opinion freely;
  - h. Discuss comprehensively the issues given on the agenda and vote on decisions;
  - i. Enable farmers to elect and be elected; and
  - j. Ensure election of leaders according to requirements of the By-laws.
4. Depending on the topic the training process includes interactive methods, group discussions, group tasks, short lectures, problem solving, video clips, slides, and so on.
  5. In this process the trainer-organizer and the WUA leaders are busy with preparatory work. The program's training specialist provides instructional modules, reading materials, stationery, technical equipment, and so on.
  6. A program trainer-organizer is required to have sufficient facilitation skills, deep knowledge of the training topic, clear and understandable speech and good communication skills to conduct formal trainings. A trainer only becomes successful if he or she gets well prepared and uses effectively the methods mentioned above.
  7. Within this step the WUA founders are requested to be very active in training events and apply materials and skills gained from training in daily activities of the WUA.
  8. Training by WUA organizers may take from a half day to two days, depending on the topics. The best time to conduct this informal training for Representative Assembly members is a day before the first Representative Assembly and on the same day as the first Assembly for WUA establishment. Further formal training is conducted once in 20 days or once a month.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

There are a number of challenges associated with Step 11. One of these is the relatively limited capacity of some farmers to receive information about WUA establishment. Some new AOs have a lack of work experience and weak communication skills. Depending on the timing of WUA establishment activities, farmers may be unavailable to attend training due to the land preparation or harvest time of the cotton crop. There may be some interference and disturbance of WUA establishment activities by some of government officials during the harvest time for cotton.

On the positive side, it could be seen that the organizing and managing skills of new WUA leaders developed significantly over just a few weeks of training, coaching by the AO and experience on the job. New knowledge and skills gained from training were applied in WUA activities. Relations among WUA founders, new officers and farmers strengthened significantly and WUA management capacities improved over time.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is important that training events be short and lead to immediate on-the-job activities by the participants. Reading materials for training should be relatively brief and simple.
2. The following topics should be discussed during the training:
  - a. Testimonials of leader groups;
  - b. Role and status of WUA leaders;
  - c. Responsibilities of WUA leaders;
  - d. Planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of WUA activities.

## **STEP 12: ORGANIZATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOUNDING WUA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY; SELECTION OF WUA MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND COMMITTEES AND HANDLING OTHER INITIAL BUSINESS**

---

The first formal Representative Assembly is the official birth of the organization. It is important that it follow an agreed upon process to vote in leadership and numerous tasks that found the organization.

1. The following issues and decisions about the WUA establishment are important tasks for WUA Representative Assemblies:
  - a. Report by the Chairperson of the BC of the WUA;
  - b. Approval of a Protocol – Decision of the Representative Assembly on Establishment of the WUA;
  - c. Naming of the WUA;
  - d. Approval of the WUA By-laws;
  - e. Election of members of the WUA Board of Directors;
  - f. Election of members of the WUA Board of Directors (by secret ballot);
  - g. Election of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors (by secret ballot) The Chairperson may be elected by members of the Assembly or by only the Board, depending on the By-laws;
  - h. Election of members and the Chairperson of the WUA Audit Committee (by secret ballot);
  - i. Election of members and the Chairperson of the WUA Dispute Resolution Committee (by secret ballot);
  - j. Approval of the WUA budget and operational costs (approved by the Assembly);
  - k. Determination and approval of the size of the one-time contribution towards the cost of WUA registration;
  - l. Approval of the WUA annual budget for the fiscal period from January through December in the year, or as decided by the Assembly;
  - m. Election of the WUA Committee on Registration;
  - n. Current problems that need to be discussed.
2. As the first Representative Assembly is dedicated to establishment of the WUA, it may last for 2.5 to 3 hours, largely due to the election and voting process. Further meetings usually finish their work within an hour to an hour and a half. The length of Assembly meetings mainly depends on their agendas.
3. This first WUA Representative Assembly should be able to be held 90 days after the beginning of the WUA creation process.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

Most WUAs face management challenges after the Representative Assembly is held. The WUA Board of Directors recruits the Management Team's members, which would normally include: the Manager, Accountant, Engineer, Treasurer, Secretary and Mirops (who are persons who regulate on-farm water distribution). As the WUA leaders often have insufficient experience and the staff does not get salary, in the first few months, the work of the WUA can be inhibited in its early phase of development.

During the Assembly some farmers suggested that the election of members and chairpersons of the Board of Directors (BD), Audit Committee (AC) and Dispute Resolution Committee (DRC) should be conducted by open voting. The AOs recommend against this, as secret ballot election of WUA officers and staff is required in the By-laws. However, such suggestions were sometimes made by farmers, and needs clarification.

The AO and person conducting the Assembly used to explain the order and rules of elections to farmers. However, farmers, sometimes in order to make the election process easier, suggested making a list of potential candidates on a flipchart, hanging it on the wall and then voting for all of them at the same time. Most participants refused such suggestions. Experience has shown that such suggestions are usually made by people who were inattentive in training or by some parties with special interests.

In some WUAs, former community leaders have tried to interfere in the election process, but the farmers stopped them. In the Assembly, where such problems arose, the AO would refer to the By-laws and prevent

such actions as being anti-democratic and procedurally incorrect. New WUA members should be trained to know how to deal with such challenges.

Most frequently, Assemblies were conducted harmoniously in program areas. Approval of the By-laws and election of leaders occurred according to the requirements of the program, national laws and WUA By-laws.

There are examples of the Chairperson of a District commenting that neither the program officers nor the WUA representatives had invited government officials to the WUA Representative Assembly. The Deputy Chairperson and Head of the Vodkhoz supported this idea. So the Deputy Chairperson of the District and Head of the Vodkhoz were invited to all meetings and they attended most of them.

With regard to the election process procedures of the WUA Representative Assembly, farmers noted that this was the first time in their life that they saw such transparent and democratic elections. Farmers learned the order and rules and used their skills in subsequent elections.

It proved helpful when the AO and farmers discussed together key criteria and qualities for future leaders. The participants of the meeting divided into groups to write down and prepare presentations on key criteria and qualities for future leaders. In the course of the presentation the understanding of farmers towards selection of leaders improved.

In order for the farmers to better understand that they are only able to solve problems in the area if they work as a unified group, on the program's recommendation, the AO showed the training participants a movie entitled, "Stakeholder Analysis: A tool for Conflict Mitigation" (USAID, CFIP, MSDSP), which was dedicated to solving water related disputes in mountainous regions. This movie had a good impact on the farmers' understanding of the WUA and its potential.

Farmers supported the principle of democratic centralism very much. Discussion of the topics of "democracy" and "liberalism" were very interesting to the participants during training sessions.

The following activities were also very important to farmers:

- a. WUG representatives drew the WUA organizational structure on a flipchart;
- b. WUG representative made a presentation on it;
- c. WUG representatives discussed the presentations;
- d. The AO evaluated presentations made by WUG representatives;
- e. The AO explained to farmers the final option of the WUA organizational structure based on the draft By-laws;
- f. Farmers comprehensively discussed the draft By-laws for the last time prior to the Representative Assembly;
- g. Farmers discussed together their new opinions, ideas and suggestions;
- h. Farmers suggested some changes and amendments to the proposed By-laws.

This process strengthened farmers' knowledge about the By-laws and enabled them to review them more carefully together. After farmers made their presentations, the AO returned to the issue of elections again and noted to what extent elections were very important for the future of the Association. The AO emphasized to farmers the extent to which the future of the WUA depended on how today's elections are held.

Experienced AOs and program specialists assisted less skilled or apprentice AOs in conducting their first training.

## **Recommendations**

1. Reading materials in the training modules should be short and easily understood by farmers.

2. Experienced WUA leaders from other areas should be invited to training events to speak to participants in the area where a new WUA is being developed. Among other things, they should speak about the role and status of the WUA leader.
3. It is important that training be held on financial management after the first Representative Assembly, especially concerning costs for operations and maintenance. Farmers would estimate the WUA employees' salary and other primary costs during the training. They also need to determine and approve the Membership Fee, which is for fixed and variable costs at the level of the WUA service area. Fee collection can be started on the next day. In this way actions follow training immediately about how to do them.
4. The Representative Assembly begins its work after a training event is conducted on WUA Leadership Development (modules 1-4, below). Heads of the BC and the IG are primarily responsible for conducting meetings because they had become knowledgeable about the whole process and it had become easy for them to conduct a meeting.
5. During training prior to the Representative Assembly, the AO must explain to farmers how to conduct the Representative Assembly. This includes the following key principles and practices:
  - The Representative Assembly should be conducted transparently and in a well-organized manner;
  - The organizational perspective should be clear;
  - Farmers should be assured that they will be treated equally and be given equal access to services;
  - Members should be enabled to speak and express their opinions openly;
  - Discuss comprehensively the issues given on the agenda and vote on decisions;
  - The process should enable farmers to elect and be elected;
  - Ensure that elections of leaders are done in accordance with the By-laws;
6. In the course of the Representative Assembly some farmers may suggest to conduct elections of members and chairpersons of the WUA Board of Directors, Audit Committee and Disputes Resolution Committee by open voting. The AO should explain the reasons to have secret ballots and should endeavor to prevent adoption of suggestions for open voting.
7. In order to prevent having to face this situation, the AO should try to include an article about secret ballot elections of WUA officers in the By-laws during the activity of the BC.

### **STEP 13: ORGANIZATION OF THE WUA BOARD OF DIRECTORS, AND MANAGEMENT TEAM**

---

The WUA Board of Directors is organized on the same day if possible, or latest, on the next day after the Representative Assembly is conducted.

1. According to the By-laws, the WUA Board of Directors organizes the Management Team, which consists of the following staff members: Manager, Accountant, Irrigation Engineer, Agronomist, Secretary and Mirops. The Manager and Accountant are appointed by the Chairman of the Board of Directors in agreement with Board members. After this, the Manager recruits the Irrigation Engineer, Agronomist, Secretary and Mirops. Tasks and responsibilities of staff members of the Management Team are explained in Contracts between the parties.
2. In the course of training events and meetings with farmers and Board members, AOs pointed out that they should be very careful in recruiting and appointing staff members of the WUA Management Team. This is because they are responsible for the WUA's daily activities and they implement the By-laws in the

WUA's service area. The future of the WUA depends on the proper activities of the Management Team staff.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

In accordance with the By-laws, staff of the WUAs' Management Team were recruited and appointed on a timely basis in all areas. But the work activities of managers started with differing degrees of success.

In some WUAs the rights, functions and authorities of Managers are not respected and the activity of Managers or Board of Directors is not seen clearly and is sometimes apparently thought to be deficient. However, according to the By-laws, Managers are responsible for implementing all management activities of the WUA. This is good, but the weaknesses of these WUAs are that Board Chairpersons in many WUAs do not fully implement their required tasks. Consequently, in some places Managers took over some of the Chairpersons' authority, even including conducting Representative Assemblies.

### **Recommendations**

1. The AO and WUA should keep closely monitor appointing and recruiting staff of the Management Team and give aid and advice for the preparation and signing of employment contracts.
2. Surprisingly, 60-70% of the rural population in most WUA areas uses irrigation water for drinking purposes. Taking into account this dependency and the existence of a WUA to manage the irrigation system, there may not be need to organize a drinking water management agency or any other organization to manage this. We recommend that the WUA insert an amendment into the By-laws that includes a Drinking Water Management Committee in the organizational structure of the WUA, where this is needed. Some kind of membership or contractual service relationship should be specified for such water users. This may also be needed for water users for kitchen gardens, livestock and other water uses.
3. We recommend that WUG meetings be conducted after each Representative Assembly in order to inform all WUA members about Assembly decisions, plans, and so on.
4. We recommend that the leadership of the district Hukumat, Jamoat and Vodkhoz be invited to attend Representative Assembly meetings, at least for the first year or two, to provide transparency to, and support from local authorities. In the FFP there were some cases where, although government officials were made aware of the WUA establishment process and were invited to meetings, they complained that the government was not aware of the WUA's establishment. The representatives of Hukumats, jamoat and Vodkhoz must not interfere with the processes, but they can be as observers in order to understand the WUA establishment in their area. FFP held advance orientation meeting with these representatives to make sure they knew the processes, and WUA law of Tajikistan
5. There is a need for a single national concept of community organizers for WUA establishment and development that could be developed by experienced specialists in the sector; it is a specialized NGO skill. The government does not have staff that is experienced with this kind of work. The organizational culture within the government is not consistent with the requirement for facilitators who build organizational self-reliance in the WUA. It is better not to have the government take over the organizing part of this work. Unfortunately local NGOs that have no experience, would not likely to be successful, nor would NGOs engaged in rehabilitation work, since it might not have the understanding of the fundamental purpose and dynamics of water use and management.

### **STEP 14: FORMAL TRAINING FOR WUA LEADERS**

---

Once the board and committee leadership is identified and confirmed, they need more in-depth skills and understanding of the groups they lead. Five modules of training have been development and provide this

detail. The Association Organizer with an experienced specialist in organizational development conducts multiple days of training according to the modules listed below.

The program provides training as indicated:

**Module I: Organizational and Leadership Skills Development**

*AOs and farmers review, analyze and discuss all existing problems in the area that may be related to the governance, management and financing of the irrigation system and they seek better ways to solve them. (Two days)*

**Module II: Financial Management Activities of the WUA**

*WUA AO explains to farmers, policies and procedures to effectively manage and control the WUA finances. Training will cover four main issues, financial income, expenses, budget and financial report (two days).*

**Module III: Grant Management by the WUA**

*Covers the process of the grant application, implementation, responsibilities and requirements to complete an infrastructure based grant. (One day)*

**Module IV: Maintenance and Operation of the Irrigation System.**

*Covers the development of an Irrigation Service Plan, WUA budgeting and operations (one day)*

**Module V: Conflict Management and Resolution Plan.**

*Covers the development of methods and a plan to deal with internal water use disputes (one day)*

---

## **STEP 15: REGISTRATION OF WUAS WITH STATE AGENCIES**

---

The Committee on Registration (CR) organized at the Representative Assembly shall be responsible for legal registration of the WUA in state registration agencies. The CR is normally composed of a Chairperson and two other members. The Committee Chairperson and members should be authoritative and literate as they are involved in completion of legal documents and cooperate with representatives of various government agencies in the process of legal registration of the WUA.

**Functions and tasks of the Committee on Registration**

1. The Committee on Registration (CR) that was organized in the Representative Assembly will be responsible for registration of the WUA with state registration agencies. The CR mainly includes the Chairperson of the Board and the BC and the Manager of the Management Team.
2. The AO assists the CR in filing legal documents. The following are key registration documents that are required to have the WUA be registered as a legal entity:
  - a. A letter from the District Chairperson to the Tax Committee under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (RT) on the WUA location, with a legal address;
  - b. A letter of response from the Chairperson of the Tax Committee under the Government on permission of the WUA to be registered at the District Tax Department;
  - c. Minutes of the WUA Representative Assembly on establishment of the WUA;
  - d. The Protocol for the Decision of the WUA Representative Assembly on Establishment of the WUA;
  - e. A copy of the Representative Assembly's decision on the election of the Board Chairperson of the WUA;
  - f. Copies of passports of the initial set of elected WUA officers;
  - g. A certificate from the Jamoat of the area where the WUA is located with its legal address;
  - h. A receipt of the payment by the WUA of the state registration fee.

3. The CR shall submit all collected documents to the Department of State Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs at the office of the Tax Inspectorate in the district or city that represents the location of the WUA. After the documents have been received, the WUA officers must fill in special application forms provided by the Department of State Registration.
4. After completion of this state registration process, the Registration Department at the Tax Inspectorate provides the Chairman of the Board of the WUA with the following documents:
  - A Certificate of the Tax Committee under the Government of RT on state registration of the WUA;
  - An extract from the Single State Register of Legal Entities;
  - A Certificate of the Tax Committee under the Government of RT on the issuance of the WUA's Taxpayer Identification Number.
5. Post-registration activities are mainly to provide practical support for the following items:  
Obtain a decision by the district chairperson on allocation of a plot of land upon which to construct the WUA office building, if grant funds are available;
  - a. Develop a plan for construction of the WUA office building at the District Architectural Department;
  - b. Obtain approval of the project for the WUA office building construction at the District Chairman's office in order to be able to start construction work;
  - c. Submit WUA establishment documents to the District Architectural Department in order to prepare the sketch for the WUA seal and stamp;
  - d. Submit the sketch of the WUA seal and stamp to the Head of the Executive Office of the District or City Chairperson for approval;
  - e. Submit the sketch of the WUA seal and stamp to the District or City Department of Interior Affairs, register the WUA and obtain permission for making the seal and stamp;
  - f. Submit collected documents to the printing shop to obtain the seal and stamp;
  - g. After the seal and stamp have been obtained, submit documents to the district or city bank in order to open the WUA bank account;
  - h. Register the WUA at the District Social Protection Department;
  - i. Register the WUA at the District Department of Statistics;
  - j. Prepare the WUA letterhead for writing official letters.

### **Some activities of the WUA after registration**

1. After the WUA is registered at the State Registration Department and related agencies, the program specialists will assist the other working committees in the WUA to deal with grant activities and other practical work. The registration fee needed for WUA establishment is paid from a special fund raised by farmers. The rate of contribution towards this cost is determined based on the size of farmers' lands. It will not be likely that special projects will pay for these costs. This work should be organized in such a way that these costs should not be paid by an individual or a group, but all farmers should contribute to payment of this cost.
2. After the Assembly is conducted, the AO should monitor the process of the work of the Membership Committee to collect contributions for the WUA registration fund, the work of Committee on Registration to collect information and file all necessary documents, and the process of the WUA application to state registration agencies. And the AO should provide any recommendations that may be needed.
3. The WUA is recognized as a legal NGO entity after it has been registered at the State Registration Department. All members of the WUA will be required to contribute to the WUA registration fund since the WUA is for all of them and was established collectively.

### **A glance at WUA registration in different periods of time**

From 2000 to 2014 the registration process for WUAs went through three different processes in Tajikistan.

1. **From 2000 to 21 November 2006, WUAs** were registered at the Ministry of Justice based on the Civil Code, the Water Code and other legal documents.
2. **From 21 November 2006 to 19 May 2009**, WUAs were registered at the Ministry of Justice based on the Law of RT “On WUAs”.
3. **From 19 May 2009 to present**, WUAs are registered at the Department on Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs under the Tax Inspectorates in cities and districts of the Republic based on the Law of RT “On registration of legal entities and individual entrepreneurs”.

According to this Law, the authority for registering legal entities was transferred from the Ministry of Justice to the Tax Committee under the Government of RT.

### **Challenges and Lessons Learned**

The process of obtaining the various certificates required from government agencies took a long time and became frustrating for representatives of the WUA.

Farmers had limited access to the heads and specialists of government agencies.

Attempts to submit applications and submission of registration documents to the Tax Committee under the Government of RT and the Registration Department under the Tax Inspectorate were often met with comments by their staff such as, “come later”, “come tomorrow”, “come next week”, “there are shortages of documents”, and so on.

Tax officers frequently did not clarify all shortcomings and obstacles in a direct fashion, or at the onset of meeting. This forced farmers to make multiple visits and prepare documents several times.

WUA officers were sometimes all called to the Tax Inspectorate to give their approvals of signatures even though their signatures were given on all attached documents, such as protocols, copies of passports and copies of land certificates.

Sometimes, tax officer delays in the registration process, caused the dates of protocols and certificates to expire and according to requirements of legislation, farmers were requested to prepare duplicate documents with new dates. In some cases farmers were even requested to conduct another Representative Assembly.

### **WUA Challenges After Registration**

The Tax Inspectorate required WUAs to pay a simplified tax of 4% of the water service fee collected, even though this is collected by the WUAs and passed through directly to the Agency for Land Maintenance and Irrigation ALRI (formally Vodkhoz).

The ALRI requires the WUA to pay for water supplied to it based on estimated standard water requirement of crops, not on the actual volume of water received by the WUA.

Sometimes District Chairpersons demand WUA’s machinery be moved away from their planned work and mobilize them for other work in the district.

It is clear that these obstacles and relationships between the WUA and other government organizations need to be sorted out. It is also clear that WUAs are in need of legal, technical, financial and managerial support services. It is apparent that support services need to be provided either by the government or by some other arrangements, such as by new organization which could network WUAs, then mobilizing a team of specialists that could visit and provide services to the WUA on the basis of requests, on a cost reimbursable basis.

In cases where a WUA was receiving a grant to build an office, they were also required to:

- Obtain a decision by the District Chairperson on allocation of a land plot for construction of the WUA office building;
- Develop a rough design for the WUA office building construction at the District Architectural Department; and
- Obtain approval for the project on the WUA office building construction from the district architect before construction work.

#### **FINAL COMMENT AND RECOMMENDATION:**

---

It is clear from the experience under the FFP and in other projects in Tajikistan that where farmer water users are organized into Water Users Associations and are developed in accordance with a great deal of community involvement and decision making, they can become democratically constituted, can function cooperatively, and can take upon themselves the roles of governing, managing and financing the irrigation systems in which they are located. Surely, it is at least as important to create effective human institutions, Water Users Associations, as it is to rehabilitate the physical irrigation systems.

## PART 3

# USE OF GRANTS BY WATER USERS ASSOCIATION FOR PARTICIPATORY REHABILITATION

This guide was written in the context of widespread needs to rehabilitate on-farm irrigation systems where jurisdiction is giving to a Water User Association (WUA). It maximizes community involvement, ownership and cost sharing, to foster a sustainable on-farm system. It assumes the infrastructure is perceived to be communal or WUA managed, and not a privately owned and operated part of the system.

After a WUA has been properly established and registered it should be assisted to prepare a proposal to be submitted to an available support program that identifies priority works to be done for rehabilitation, repair or full maintenance of irrigation canals and structures that are located within the service area of the WUA. The Program<sup>7</sup> finances the cost of engineering design and materials, but not labor, which is provided by WUA members, other community volunteers, or paid for from WUA funds. The following is a description of the steps to be taken to implement grant making and participatory rehabilitation. The more complicated steps are divided into tasks. These steps are:

- Step 1: Institutional documents are collected for the grant-making process
- Step 2: Situation analysis of the irrigation system within the WUA service area
- Step 3: Selection of rehabilitation actions to be done
- Step 4: Prepare document with photos and descriptions of works to be done
- Step 5: Prepare documents for ordering water control gates
- Step 6: WUA meeting to approve selection of rehabilitation works and budget
- Step 7: Grants Management Training (Part 1 Application)
- Step 8: Pre-award activities and evaluation of grant proposals
- Step 9: Donor approval and Grants Management Training (Part 2 Implementation)
- Step 10: WUA Technical Training
- Step 11: Monitoring, on-the-job training, payments during the grants Implementation process

## STEP 1: INSTITUTIONAL DOCUMENTS ARE COLLECTED FOR THE GRANT-MAKING PROCESS

---

Step 1 includes collecting the following documents:

1. WUA Registration Certificate
2. WUA By-laws
3. Tax Registration number for the WUA
4. Details of the WUA bank account
5. Organizational chart for the WUA
6. Resumes for the Director/Manager, Engineer and Accountant for the Management Unit of the WUA.

---

<sup>7</sup> The Program could be a donor sponsored or government initiative to support Water User Associations.

## **STEP 2: SITUATION ANALYSIS OF THE IRRIGATION SYSTEM WITHIN THE WUA SERVICE AREA**

---

**Task 1.** Divide the area into groups If the WUA is larger than a few hundred hectares it is desirable to divide the area into groups of water users that, in general, do not exceed more than 10 to 15 farmers each.

**Task 2.** Collect background information A schematic or situational map of the irrigation system should be obtained, along with a list of the names of farmers and number of hectares per farm. It is also necessary to distinguish between canals and water control structures that are on-farm versus off-farm or between those that are owned by the State Water Supply Agency (Vodkhoz) versus those that have no current ownership.

**Task 3.** Inspection and inventory The Project Engineer and a local person should make an inspection of all of the canals and water control structures in the on-farm system. The sizes of all gates and water division structures, locations and amounts of concrete, width and lengths of all canals, and functional condition of all canals and structures should be recorded. Canal cross-sections and structures should have sketch drawings done and/or photos can be taken. GPS can be used to measure distances and lengths of canals and the area of the drainage system. This is all done so that there is a record of the condition of structures and the Project Engineer and WUA members can assess which structures are of the highest priority for rehabilitation. It is also done to provide basic information upon which to estimate the potential costs for rehabilitation.

**Task 4.** (Optional) Agreement between WUA and Vodkhoz In case the WUA selects a structure that is on the list of state-owned structures controlled by the Vodkhoz, an agreement must be made between both parties and the Project in order to rehabilitate these structures.

### **Recommendations**

1. In most locations the irrigation season ends in late November and resumes in early or mid-March, although this can vary according to weather in March. The best time to inspect the irrigation system is during winter time because it is easier to measure structures more accurately when water is not running through them.
2. It is important to know how much money is available for a rehabilitation grant to the WUA in order to be able to select how many top priority rehabilitation projects can be done within the budget.
3. The Project Engineer assigned to a the component of an irrigation development project that includes rehabilitation grants to WUAs should have both skills and experience in irrigation and civil engineering and computer knowledge of MS Word and Excel and GIS.

## **STEP 3: SELECTION OF REHABILITATION ACTIONS TO BE DONE**

---

**Task 1.** Identify criteria for prioritizing which rehabilitation works to do The Project Engineer meets with the WUA Board of Directors and any interested members to discuss and agree upon criteria for prioritizing and selecting which rehabilitation works should be done, given the limited budget for it. Such criteria may include:

1. Number of hectares or number of farmers to be effected by the rehabilitation work,
2. Degree of improvement in reliability or amount of water delivered,
3. Effect on improvement of equity of water distribution,
4. Reductions in the rate of siltation within a canal, and
5. Reductions in the cost of annual maintenance required.

Farmers should be encouraged to identify any other criteria of local relevance.

**Task 2.** Short list of rehabilitation works. The Project Engineer and WUA Board officers meet and, with reference to the selection criteria, make a short list of top priority rehabilitation works. The length of the list is based upon an initial estimate of the total cost of all works selected in comparison with the amount of the grant available plus unpaid labor contributions by WUA members. This is only a tentative list because it might change after the final cost estimates are prepared.

**Task 3.** Obtain unit costs for construction materials, equipment rentals and skilled labor. The Project Engineer and WUA officers should have a list, or create a list of construction materials, equipment and skilled labor needed for the rehabilitation works and then they visit local bazaars, construction company offices, hardware stores and other outlets to find out best prices for construction materials, equipment rentals and skilled labor.

**Task 4.** Prepare cost estimates for rehabilitation works. The Project Engineer and members of the WUA Board of Directors visit construction company offices to obtain estimates for the cost of doing each type of rehabilitation work, including repairing or completing building of water control structures or lengths of canals and all other works to be done. The Project Engineer and WUA officers give invitations to at least three construction companies to prepare bids on their costs for doing the rehabilitation works.

All estimates should be based upon an analysis of type and amounts of labor required. They should assume that the unskilled labor will be provided by WUA members and that the normal cost of such labor will constitute not less than 20% of the total budget (other donors may have other cost share requirements). Because of the estimated time between preparation of the grant proposal and completion of rehabilitation works, the budget may need to include the estimated cost of inflation. It is important that all members of the WUA Board understand all aspects of the budget.

#### **STEP 4: PREPARE DOCUMENT WITH PHOTOS AND DESCRIPTIONS OF WORKS TO BE DONE**

---

**Task 1.** Prepare a folder for each rehabilitation work with photographs. In order to facilitate monitoring and evaluation of rehabilitation works it will be useful to have photos of each structure before rehabilitation is done. This will provide evidence about the initial size and shape parameters of the structure and its functional condition.

**Task 2.** Prepare an assessment of works to be done. The Project Engineer will prepare an assessment report that includes the names, locations, description of the intended function, actual functional condition and photos of all structures for which rehabilitation works are intended to be undertaken. This should also include a list of the names of farmers and the number of hectares to be improved by each rehabilitation work.

#### **STEP 5: PREPARE DOCUMENTS FOR ORDERING WATER CONTROL GATES**

---

**Task 1.** The Project Engineer prepares drawings of gates. Since most WUAs do not have irrigation engineers with sufficient drawing skills, training or experience, it will normally be the Project Engineer who will have to prepare drawings for all types and sizes of flat panel gates that will be installed or repaired.

**Task 2.** The Project Engineer identifies and describes specifications for all gates. This will include information about the size, diameters, type and thickness of each type of gate and quantities of each type of gate. The drawings and specifications are necessary to enable the manufacturer of the flat panel gates to make the gates as part of an in-kind overall grant-based procurement, which will save time and money and will help insure conformity to standards.

## **STEP 6: WUA MEETING TO APPROVE SELECTION OF REHABILITATION WORKS AND BUDGET**

---

**Task 1.** WUA meets to finalize and approve rehabilitation works. After the WUA Board of Directors has made their selection of works to be done and has prepared cost estimates a meeting of the WUA should be held to present and describe the selection of works to be done. This should include discussion of the criteria for selection, expected results of each work to be done, and cost estimates. At least 80% of all members should attend this meeting.

**Task 2.** Vote to approve selection of rehabilitation works, the budget and labor contributions of WUA members. WUA members should be invited to provide their comments and suggestions about the proposed priority rehabilitation works and the cost estimates. The estimated number of person days of unpaid labor contributions required by WUA members should be discussed and approved. A vote should be held with a majority vote required for approval. Special care should be taken to not ignore certain priorities that may be especially important to those at the far end of the system, who may a small number of participants.

## **STEP 7: PHASE 1 GRANTS MANAGEMENT TRAINING**

---

**Task 1.** Grants Management Training Part 1 Application. The Unit that manages the grant starts its work with the prospective grant recipient by conducting the Part 1 Grants Management Training. The training is usually conducted by the Grants Manager and Grants Specialist. The purpose of the training is to familiarize the grantee with the project, its main goals, objectives and activities.

**Task 2.** Collect essential information from the grant recipients. During the training meeting the Grants Manager gathers information from the grant recipient that is needed to develop the grant proposals and application. It can be a challenge sometimes to obtain accurate information that is needed for the proposals.

## **STEP 8: PRE-AWARD ACTIVITIES AND EVALUATION OF GRANT PROPOSALS**

---

**Task 1.** Pre-award activities. Once the grant recipient's proposal is completed, the Grants Manager and the other grant team members, including the Grants Specialist and Assistant, conduct the pre-award activities. These follow the requirements of the donor, and may consist of checking the grant recipient for any relation to terrorist organizations, acquisition of the "DUNS8" number for the grant recipient, to ensure due diligence in compliance with USAID regulations. Of course, other donors will have different regulations.

**Task 2.** Evaluation of grant proposals Upon completion of all pre-award activities and finalization of the proposal, the Grants Manager calls for a Panel Review Meeting to approve the grant to be awarded to the WUA. The Panel Review meeting consists of three members (the Project Chief of Party, the Irrigation Water Management Manager, and the M&E Manager). The Grants Manager presents the Grants application for the members to review and answers any questions the members might have on the grant and grant recipient. The members of the panel assess the WUA by giving scores to the WUA based on the approved template of criteria and conditions. In accordance with the results of the meeting, the grant is either approved or disapproved by the Panel. If the Grants Manager gets the green light to proceed with the grant, the Grants Manager starts preparing the package of documents for sending them to USAID to get their approval for the grant.

---

<sup>8</sup> The **Data Universal Numbering System**, abbreviated as **DUNS** or **D-U-N-S**, is a proprietary system developed and regulated by [Dun & Bradstreet](#) (D&B) that assigns a unique numeric identifier, referred to as a "DUNS number" to a single business entity. It was introduced in 1963 to support D&B's credit reporting practice. It is a common standard worldwide.

## **STEP 9: DONOR APPROVAL AND PHASE 2 GRANTS TRAINING**

---

**Task 1.** Review of documents and approval by the donor (USAID in this example). All grants awarded by the Project must be approved by donor. In order to get their approval for a grant the Grants Manager compiles a package of documents for the review. These include the grant proposal, a draft Fixed Obligation Grant Agreement (or perhaps another grant funding mechanism), and WUA scoring results provided by the Review Panel members. Depending on the donor it may take 1 week to months to give its approval depending on the size and complexity of the grant.

**Task 2.** Grants Management Training Part 2 Grant Implementation Once approval is received, the Grants Manager and Grants Specialist conduct the Part 2 Grants Training ending with the signing the Grant Agreement with the grant recipient. The other purpose of this training is to explain the implementation, reporting requirements, and deliverables that are included in the grant and payment procedures and. With a fixed obligation grant, units of work or milestones have been pre-determined, and a grantee receives a fix payment upon completion and proper documentation of each unit. Alternatively grants could be on a cost reimbursable basis, requiring the grantee submit actual cost documents, to receive a reimbursement payment.

## **STEP 10: WUA TECHNICAL TRAINING**

---

Technical engineering training is given to the WUA Grant Committee by the Project Engineer. The training is about the construction process of rehabilitation. This includes compliance with construction regulations, labor mobilization, quality standards of work, roles of different parties involved, and discussions use of illustrative photos to document progress.

## **STEP 11: MONITORING, ON-THE-JOB TRAINING, PAYMENTS DURING THE GRANTS IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS**

---

Under the direction of the Grants Manager, the Grants Specialist and Assistant conduct regular monitoring of the achievement of WUA milestones and hold on-site trainings on the job as may be needed. Payments of the grant occur incrementally according to the schedules of milestone completion.

### **Challenges**

It was found that WUAs often had difficulty in submitting all necessary supporting documents, before and after photos specified in the milestone table. One or two were frequently missing interrupting the forward progress. This delays incremental payments as the grants team must return to the grant recipient and make sure that all requirements under each milestone are fulfilled and documented. Typically, a grantee leans the requirements and avoids delays, as the grant progresses.

Grant funds had been diverted for non-grant purposes. It was important to monitor the expenditures of the grantees, as certain WUA leaders could divert expenditures for private purposes, making it impossible to complete the milestone works. Similarly, if funds were used to pay labor, then the amounts were not sufficient to purchase all the materials specified by the engineer, this too could halt milestone completion. Finally, some WUA would not use sufficient materials, typically concrete, per the engineering design, creating weak structures, this required regular field visits by the engineers, as well as, in progress photos, to prove proper size concrete work was completed.

## **Recommendations**

The Grants Unit needs to have a designated finance person to work directly with the WUAs on milestone reporting, to explain and guide the grantees, as they are not capable to fill out the necessary papers themselves in the beginning.

## **PART 4:**

# **TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS AND CURRICULUM FOR WATER USERS ASSOCIATIONS**

In the process of preparing for establishment of Water Users Associations (WUA) and after their establishment, multiple training events were held under the FFP. These were aimed primarily at WUA officers and staff. Also, cross-site visits were done by Initiative Group (the founding organizers in the community who lead the organization process) or other newly-elected WUA officers to locations where successful WUA had already been organized and were functioning.

In this section we describe this training experience, the challenges, lessons learned, and recommendations for an improved program of training for WUA. A review of the variety of training methodologies that are recommended for creating WUAs, followed by a recommended comprehensive list of key training topics, target participants and methods for training.

Lastly, the future challenges to agriculture will present new problems to the WUAs as their responsibility increase. The development of management consultation services is recommended to assist WUAs to create customized, on-site, problem-solving support system, which might be more efficient than simple periodic training courses. These services were not tested during either project, formally. But experience from a number of other countries indicates such a service would be beneficial, it would be analogues to an extension service for WUA organizations.

## **1. TRAINING DONE UNDER FFP**

---

### **Training of Trainers for WUA establishment under FFP**

The following ToT training modules were conducted for AOs in both the WUASP and FFP projects:

- Developing WUAs using the Community Organizer (CO) method. This included 4 days of theoretical training and one day of practical training, for a total of 5 days;
- Organizational and leadership skill development for WUA leaders, for 4 days;
- Financial management and administrative activities in the WUA, for 2 days;
- Operations and maintenance plan for the irrigation system, for one day;
- Conflict management and resolution methods, for one day;
- Audit training, for one day;
- The WUA Law, WUA by-laws and other legal documents, for one day.

After trainers were given training for all aspects of WUA establishment and development, trainers prepared and gave training for WUA Board of Directors, WUG members and other WUA members.

### **Challenges**

The following is a list of challenges experienced under the FFP for its training program for Initiative Group and WUA officers and staff.

1. Lack of appropriate venues for conducting training in villages. Service areas for WUA are mostly between 1,500 and 3,000 ha. This can involve up to several hundred farmers. There are no buildings in village areas that can accommodate so many farmers under one roof. Open-air meeting places such as football fields are subject to disturbances such as rain, bad acoustics and...football games.
2. Less motivation, activity and responsibility of farmers exist at the early stage of activities. There is a learning process required to fully motivate water users to take on the responsibilities of governing a WUA and overseeing provision and financing of irrigation services.
3. Some individuals lose their own interest and support for the WUA after it is established, when it becomes apparent that the WUA may not be in their private interest of getting large amounts of water, not having to pay the water tariff, etc.
4. There was sometimes a distrust of farmers towards non-governmental organizations had a negative impact at the early stage of activities. This was because previous projects by or with non-governmental organizations have not functioned well in most regions.
5. There was often a lack of electricity in the winter season and this made heating the locations of training events difficult.
6. In some places, employees from government agencies, such as the Tax Department or Jamoat, tried to use project training events to push for collection of taxes. This caused farmers to either become inactive during training or to leave or avoid training events.

### **Lessons learned from training**

There were a number of lessons learned from the training program for WUAs.

1. Through the training program farmers learned that they were or they needed to become united into one organization in order to create a WUA that is effective in meeting their needs for irrigation services.
2. Farmers learned to discuss their irrigation problems together, not just to blame others for problems but to find solutions that they could each agree on.
3. The sense of responsibility for maintenance of irrigation systems increased among the water users as they began to see the relationship between investing in maintenance and the ability to irrigated larger areas with greater reliability and equity.
4. The leadership and management skills of WUA officers improved significantly.
5. Farmers' knowledge of financial management improved and they also learned how to apply new skills within their WUAs and dehkan farms. They learned how to develop a budget, an irrigation system maintenance plan and also how to calculate the actual volume of water they needed based on crop water requirements and the service area.

6. With an improved awareness of the benefits of rehabilitation and improved water management, farmers became willing to collectively contribute to irrigation system rehabilitation and adopt and follow procedures for proper water management.
7. After training, record keeping improved in the WUA assemblies, board meetings and committee meetings.
8. Organizing cross-visits to experienced WUAs during the process of WUA establishment was very productive. It increased the farmers' courage and motivation towards WUA establishment, because they saw with their own eyes and heard from experienced farmers how they had achieved positive results with water use and crop production after they had established a WUA.

## **Recommendations**

1. There is a need to organize technical training for WUAs and Water User Groups (WUG) on on-farm and off-farm water management and crop water and irrigation requirements.
2. There is a need to increase the legal knowledge of WUA officers through training. There are a number of priority legal issues about which farmers need general legal knowledge, such as taxation of WUA, optimal method for legal registration of the WUA, and rights and responsibilities of the WUA.
3. WUA officers and staff need training on the installation, calibration and use of water measurement devices.
4. It would also be useful for WUA officers to have some knowledge of how to write proposals for grants or loans.

## **2. SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING METHODS**

---

Research and experience with training have shown that adult learners learn and remember most when they are involved hands-on in doing and participating in what they are learning. By contrast only a minority of what they hear in lectures is learned and most stop absorbing lectures after 20 minutes. This means that training is more likely to be effective if lectures are short and are interspersed with participatory activities for participants of training courses. The following is a series of brief descriptions of the various types of methods that can be used to make training interesting, participatory, memorable and effective.

### **Lectures**

The trainer should prepare an outline for the lecture, not a monolog that he or she reads. Lectures are good for presenting new topics, for short talks and explanations, for giving instructions before participatory activities and field exercises, and for telling stories. They are time saving and economical. They should be kept short and more time in training sessions should be spent using other methods. Lectures should be conveyed like conversations, with eye contact with participants, interjecting questions to participants and inviting some discussion.

The learning effect of lectures can be much improved if visual aids are used, such as: maps of irrigation systems, short films, flip charts, overhead transparencies, slides, white boards, drawing pictures, handouts, posters, and real items, such as a staff gauge, V-notch weir or flume.

## **Discussions**

When the trainer leads a structured discussion he or she has an outline with several questions. This draws participation from the participants and gets them thinking. It also gives the trainer immediate knowledge of what the participants know and don't know.

The trainer should introduce the topic and bring out a series of questions that lead to the main theme or the session. The trainer acts as a moderator, tries to get everyone to participate (including the quiet ones), conveys gratitude for contributions and summarizes the key results of the discussions.

Discussions can be organized as panel discussions where a group of panelists gives short presentations followed by comments from the main group. An open forum discussion can have participants discuss something they all read or another WUA that they visited.

## **Role playing**

This can be an effective way to learn and practice applying a method, such as persuading a farmer to join the WUA, speaking to a government officer about payment of taxes, mediation of disputes, and so on. Participants are invited to pretend as if they were one of the characters and to act accordingly. Everyone else watches and later makes comments and suggestions. Sensitive issues can be dealt with through role playing so that participants gain an understanding about how best to deal with them.

## **Situational exercises**

These are descriptions of short stories or situations, such as the visit by the government officer to collect taxes or you have seen someone stealing water or you are at the tail end of a canal and did not receive water when it was supposed to be your turn. A description of maybe two or three paragraphs is read to the group and then the trainer asks, "What would you do?" Participants may give their answers either in writing or by speaking. People then can evaluate the responses and agree on the best approach to the problem. The trainer draws out the implications of each type of response.

## **Presentation and discussion of case studies**

Report and discussion of case studies are similar to situational exercises but will likely be given in more detail. Normally there is something to be read the night before or participants may read it out loud during the session, perhaps each participant reading one paragraph and then passing the reading of the next paragraph to another participant. The trainer's job is to ask strategic questions about the main themes to be learned from the case study.

## **Problem-solving groups that report back to the whole group**

With this method the trainer describes a problem to be solved that requires a bit of a strategy with some steps of action. The trainer asks the participants to break up into small groups of about 3 or 4 persons each to discuss the problem and work out a strategy and identify steps to solve the problem. A time limit is given to the groups and they should report their results to the entire group after they are finished.

## **Field visits and investigations**

WUA officers and members could visit a successful WUA in another area. This will convince them of the benefits of WUAs more than any lecture. They can ask questions of farmers and find ways to overcome the challenges they face. They can also inquire about their experiences with developing by-laws and doing participatory rehabilitation and measuring water.

## **Group brainstorming and reporting back**

The trainer can also ask participants, either all together or by breaking into smaller groups, to brainstorm about possible options or solutions to a problem in order to get as many ideas as possible, to expand the participants' thinking about something. They may rank the responses from best to worse. All of this is a form of group interpretation and analysis. Trainers should identify and prepare many hypothetical stories and situations to engage participants in a process of analysis that involves principles and criteria already discussed.

The trainer should generate a long list of hypothetical situations to use to get participants thinking and discussing what should be done under the circumstances. The more the better. This will convert the training from a passive listening situation into an active learning environment wherein the participant is much more likely to learn and remember things.

The following is an example of hypothetical situations that could be used for group analysis and discussion:

1. Physical conditions in the field, such as salinization or water-logging
2. Situations in the canals, such as siltation or slipped embankments
3. Situations that might arise during irrigation, such as over-irrigation or water theft,
4. Issues about the WUA by-laws, such as, Should by-laws say something about whether members should only go through the WUA for tax payments? Should the by-laws be more specific about punishments for people who break rules),
5. Election of WUA officers (What are the qualifications relevant for certain positions?),
6. Preparation of an Irrigation Service Plan (What to include in the Operations? How to prioritize works for the Maintenance Section?),
7. Collecting the Irrigation Service Fee (from WUA members and non-members),
8. Relations with the tax authorities (Direct or only through the WUA?),
9. How to measure water discharge at the offtake into the WUA? (type of measurement device, calibration, recording)
10. Assessing the performance of the irrigation service (measures for adequacy of water acquisition at the offtake into the WUA and equity of water distribution among members),
11. Legal registration of the WUA (What is required? How it is done?),
12. Participatory rehabilitation (What criteria to use to prioritize works? How should water users participate in the process?)

### **3. RECOMMENDED TRAINING MODULES FOR WUA DEVELOPMENT**

---

Experience under the FFP suggests that the following training topics are needed for developing institutional and technical knowledge and training skills in WUA. The following is an annotated list of 20 training modules recommended for organizing and developing Water Users Associations. This includes suggested training topics, participants, course objectives, likely duration of the course, expected capacity outcome, and an outline of specific sub-topics.

#### **Training Topic 1: Training of Trainers**

**Participants:** Recruited trainers

**Course Objective:** To give trainers a clear understanding of how they should prepare training courses, sessions and activities effectively and evaluate results accurately

**Course Duration:** Two days

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to prepare and implement training courses effectively, involve participants actively in the sessions, and keep the interest and understanding of participants in the topics of the sessions.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Determining training needs
6. Use of adult learning principles
7. Defining training objectives
8. Prepare planning checklist
9. Designing training content, including reading material
10. Selecting training methods to use: Lectures, discussions, role playing, situational
11. exercise, presentation and discussion of case studies, small breakout group
12. problem-solving and reporting back, field visits and investigations, group
13. brainstorming and reporting back, etc.
14. Developing lesson plans
15. Developing training aids and other support materials for training
16. Providing a proper environment for training
17. Effective communication of training materials
18. Methods for evaluating training
19. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
20. Course evaluation
21. Closing of course

**Training Topic 2:      Establishing a Socially Valid Water Users Association**

**Participants:**                      All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:**                To give participants a full understanding of the purpose, functions and organization of a WUA and how to organize it

**Course Duration:**                2 days

**Capacity to be Created:**        Participants will be able to establish and develop their WUA effectively

**Outline:**

**Day 1**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Description of Irrigation and Drainage System and its parts
6. Jurisdiction of a WUA
7. Awareness of benefits of WUA
8. International experiences with WUA
9. Formation of organizing group
10. First set of training courses
11. Functions of the WUA
12. Rights and responsibilities of members and WUA
13. Questions and answers by participants

**Day 2**

14. How members will participate
15. Boundaries and membership of WUA
16. Organization of the WUA – General Assembly, WUA Board of Directors, possible Representative Assembly, Audit Committee and Dispute Resolution Committee
17. Establishment, charter and election of officers and representatives
18. Preparation of by-laws
19. Legal registration
20. Acknowledgement of Irrigation Management Jurisdiction
21. Second set of training courses
22. Future WUA Federation
23. Questions and answers by participants
24. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
25. Course evaluation
26. Closing of course

**Training Topic 3: Legal Issues: Water Code, Water Users Association Law of 2006 and other Legal Issues Related to the WUA**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a good understanding of the legal basis for the WUA, including its rights and responsibilities

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will have the ability to develop, govern and manage the WUA in accordance with the legal framework and to appeal for support and assistance from the Government as may be needed.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Tajik Water Code
6. What the Water Code means for water users
7. WUA Law of 2006
8. Concepts, goals, and objectives of the Law
9. General principles of the functioning of WUA
10. Establishment, documents and reorganization/liquidation of the WUA
11. Rights and obligations of WUA members and the WUA
12. Questions and answers by participants
13. Organization of the WUA
14. WUA meetings
15. WUA property
16. WUA budget
17. WUA reporting requirements
18. Regulation of WUA and provision of support by Government

19. Labor relations within the WUA
20. Dispute resolution
21. Contracts with third parties
22. Questions and answers by participants
23. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
24. Course evaluation
25. Closing of course

**Training Topic 4: Preparing Locally Appropriate Charters and By-laws for the Water Users Association**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To provide full understanding to participants about the content, criteria and method for preparing locally appropriate By-laws for the WUA

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable the participants to prepare locally appropriate, effective and clear By-laws

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Review of potential topics in by-laws.
6. Purpose and contents of a WUA Charter
7. By-laws rules and procedures for admitting and expelling members
8. Leadership positions and functions
9. Selection and removal process of WUA officers
10. Tenure of positions of WUA officers
11. Measurable definition of desired water and maintenance services
12. Questions and answers by participants
13. Rules and sanctions related to water service
14. Rules, procedures and sanctions related to maintenance, financing, and other services/enterprises
15. Dispute resolution process
16. Protocol for external relations
17. Procedure for amending by-laws
18. Questions and answers by participants
19. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
20. Course evaluation
21. Closing of course

**Training Topic 5: Governance, Meetings and Records of the Water Users Association**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of what it means to govern their on-farm irrigation sub-system, what decisions

are subject to approvals of General Assembly vs. WUA Executive Committee, organizing and conducting meetings, keeping proper records of meetings and events, and submission of reports.

**Course Duration:** Half day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to support democratic governance of WUA activities, to participate effectively in meetings, to make needed records and to submit reports as needed.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. What is “governance” of the WUA and of the irrigation sub-system?
6. Who makes what decisions?
7. Organizing meetings and agendas for them
8. Conducting meetings and leadership skills
9. Mediating discussion and facilitating consensus and decision making
10. How does a member participate?
11. Minutes of meetings
12. Reporting
13. Questions and answers by participants
14. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
15. Course evaluation
16. Closing of course

**Training Topic 6: Facilitating Group Formation and Developing Verbal Communication and Presentation Skills**

**Participants:** All members of the WUA Board of Directors and each Zone Representative (or Water Users Group Representative)

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of how to mobilize water users into WUG and the WUA and how to communicate with water users and make effective presentations

**Course Duration:** Half day

**Capacity to be Created:** Skills that WUA leaders need in order to communicate effectively with water users, give good presentations in meetings and to facilitate formation of water users into Water Users Groups.

**Outline**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline

4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Building trust with respect, clarity and patience
6. The importance of listening and checking the accuracy of your understanding other peoples' views
7. Giving presentations on principles and options for decision making
8. Identifying members of groups and group roles, functions and identify
9. Adopting group decisions
10. Responding to challenges and criticisms
11. Questions and answers by participants
12. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
13. Course evaluation
14. Closing of course

**Training Topic 7: Preparing and Implementing the Irrigation Service Plan, Part 1: Performance-based Operations**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of how to prepare and implement an appropriate and effective Operations Section of the Irrigation Service Plan

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to prepare an appropriate Operations Section for their Irrigation Service Plan

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Consequences of poor operations
6. Operational definition of a satisfactory standard of irrigation system operations
7. Agreement on crop plan in consideration of irrigation requirements and expected water supply
8. Water allocation
9. Water distribution plan and methods
10. Scheduling water deliveries (priorities, timing, duration of irrigations) and drying
11. How well is drainage functioning? How to make it better?
12. Measuring and monitoring operations
13. Who will do what, when and how?
14. Questions and answers by participants
15. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
16. Course evaluation
17. Closing of course

**Training Topic 8:      Preparing and Implementing the Irrigation Service Plan, Part 2: Performance-based Maintenance and Periodic Repairs and Improvements**

**Participants:**                      All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:**                To give participants a detailed understanding of how to prepare and implement the Maintenance Section of the Irrigation Service Plan

**Course Duration:**                1.5 days

**Capacity to be Created:**        To enable participants to effectively prepare and implement a suitable maintenance, repair and improvement program for the Irrigation Service Plan at a standard that prevents significant deterioration each year.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Consequences of poor maintenance
6. Operational definition of a satisfactory standard of irrigation system maintenance -- Is it “preventative maintenance”
7. What, when and how routine maintenance should be done
8. Estimating volume of work needed for canal cleaning
9. Identifying when a canal or structure is functional, partly functional and not functional
10. How to prioritize periodic maintenance, when and how to do it
11. How to prioritize incidental repairs and improvements, when and how to do it
12. Questions and answers by participants
13. Identify requirements for labor, materials, duration of work, special equipment needed and schedule works
14. Monitoring maintenance and functional condition of infrastructure
15. Keeping an inventory of irrigation assets, updated periodically about their functional condition
16. Who will do what, when and how?
17. Questions and answers by participants
18. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
19. Course evaluation
20. Closing of course

**Training Topic 9:      Preparing and Implementing the Irrigation Service Plan, Part 3: Financing Irrigation Services and Financial Management**

**Participants:**                      All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objectives:**                To enable participants to understand how to make a budget for the Irrigation Service Plan for the WUA, how to set and collect an Irrigation Service Fee and how to record, deposit,

spend funds collected for the ISP, keep careful records, and use receipts

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to estimate costs of ISP activities, prepare a budget, set and collect an Irrigation Service Fee, and use funds properly for the ISP, use receipts and keep good records of income and expenditures

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Introduction to financial management principles and rules
5. Estimation of costs of operations, maintenance and management activities
6. Preparation of a “needs-based budget”
7. Setting the Irrigation Service Fee based upon water service received (volumetric, number of turns, type of crop irrigated, etc.)
8. Collecting, recording and receipting the ISF and other income
9. Questions and answers by participants
10. Opening a bank account, depositing and withdrawing funds
11. Making and recording expenditures
12. Keeping good financial records
13. Finding accounting errors and making reconciliation
14. Monthly and seasonal financial reports
15. Audits by the WUA Audit Committee
16. Questions and answers by participants
17. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
18. Course evaluation
19. Closing of course

**Training Topic 10: On-Farm Water Management**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of best methods for applying irrigation water to their fields

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to use irrigation water effectively and efficiently on their fields so as to optimize productivity per unit of water delivered

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants

5. On-farm irrigation application techniques
6. Furrow irrigation
7. Flooded field irrigation for rice
8. Water measurement and approximations
9. Furrow discharge
10. Infiltration rate
11. Rapid assessment of irrigation adequacy
12. Crop water requirements and irrigation requirements
13. Drainage from fields
14. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
15. Course evaluation
16. Closing of course

**Training Topic 11: Installing and calibrating water measurement devices and measuring and recording water discharge**

**Participants:** All WUA Board of Directors and Management Unit staff

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of water measurement devices and how to measure and record water discharge

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To give WUA Board and management staff awareness of how to select an appropriate water measurement device, how to calibrate it, how to measure and record water discharge into the WUA.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Types of water measurement devices
6. Which one or combination is best for the WUA
7. Essential aspects of installation of the device
8. How to calibrate the device and prepare discharge curves
9. How to measure discharge and use a depth/discharge table
10. Arrangements to measure discharge daily with a Vodkhoz representative
11. Record keeping
12. How to record water deliveries to each field
13. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
14. Course evaluation
15. Closing of course

**Training Topic 12: Dispute Resolution and Use of Sanctions**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of how best to

deal with disputes that may arise within the Water Users Association over water distribution, maintenance, financial management, and use of sanctions for those who break rules.

**Course Duration:** 1.5 days

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to prevent or resolve disputes that may arise within the WUA or between members of the WUA and a third party.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Disputes are to be expected as part of the learning process
6. Potential sources of disputes within the WUA
7. Potential sources of disputes between the WUA or its members and third parties
8. Importance of prevention and rapid resolution
9. Bad ways to respond to disputes and conflicts
10. Good ways to respond to disputes and conflicts
11. Questions and answers by participants
12. Roles and approach of WUA members and members of WUA Board of Directors
13. Role of the WUA Dispute Resolution Committee
14. Who is involved in dispute resolution?
15. The method of mediation and finding a mutually agreed solution
16. Agenda for a dispute resolution meeting
17. Examples of disputes within the WUA
18. Three cases of role playing dispute resolution by participants
19. Solutions based on adjudication
20. Questions and answers by participants
21. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
22. Course evaluation
23. Closing of course

**Training Topic 13: Irrigation Management Audits**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of why Irrigation Management Audits are needed, what is done during the Audit and what will be the consequences of them

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to participate as members of an Irrigation Management Audit team to conduct an audit and identify actions to be taken as a result of findings in the audit.

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Purpose of Irrigation Management Audits (not policing but diagnosing)
6. Who participates in the Irrigation Management Audit?
7. What is examined and on the basis of what criteria? (law, regulations, transfer agreement, service agreements, other accepted principles)
8. Examine the quality of WUA governance (including decision making, selection of leaders, clear roles of authority and responsibility),
9. Examine the quality of irrigation services (including productivity per unit of water delivered, adequacy, reliability, timeliness, efficiency and fairness of water distribution)
10. Examine quality of financial management (including budgets, control over revenues and expenditures, bookkeeping)
11. Agenda for conducting an Irrigation Management Audit
12. Using results of Irrigation Management Audits to identify support services needed
13. Possible use of results to determine eligibility of WUA for special assistance for incidental repairs and improvements
14. Questions and answers from participants
15. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
16. Course evaluation
17. Closing of course

#### **Training Topic 14: Participatory Rehabilitation and Improvement**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a good understanding of the reasons for participatory rehabilitation and improvement and how it should be conducted

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to direct the role of the WUA and its members as effective participants in the process of participatory rehabilitation and improvement

#### **Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. What is rehabilitation and why does it become necessary?
6. Putting off rehabilitation through preventive maintenance and incidental repairs and improvements
7. Criteria to prioritize rehabilitation and improvement works
8. System walk-through and methods to identify and prioritize works for rehabilitation
9. Preparing a grant proposal

10. Deciding how and to what extent WUA members will contribute to rehabilitation (providing views, prioritizing, providing labor and materials, etc.)
11. Participatory design of works selected (with approval by WUA Executive Committee)
12. Participatory construction of works (with labor from WUA members)
13. Approval of completion of works
14. Mini training on how to maintain the works properly
15. Questions and answers by participants
16. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
17. Course evaluation
18. Closing of course

### **Training Topic 15: Establishing a Federation of Water Users Associations**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least members of the WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objectives:** To give participants a full understanding about what are the purposes of the Federation of WUA, why it is needed, its authority and responsibility, how it should function, how it should be established, legal status, what happens to ISF, and irrigation management transfer

**Course Duration:** 1.5 days

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to successfully go through the steps of establishing a Federation of Water Users Associations (or FWUA) and making it function effectively and interact appropriately with the Basin Mirob

#### **Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Description of an Irrigation and Drainage System and which parts are under the WUA, which are under the FWUA, which are under the Sub-basin Mirob or Irrigation Exploitation Unit
6. Jurisdiction of a FWUA
7. Awareness of benefits and responsibilities of FWUA
8. International experiences with Federation of WUA
9. Formation of organizing group to establish a FWUA
10. Procedures to establish the FWUA and prepare charter
11. Functions of the FWUA
12. Rights and responsibilities of member WUAs and the FWUA
13. By-laws of the FWUA
14. Questions and answers of participants
15. How member WUAs will participate in FWUA decisions and activities
16. Boundaries, jurisdiction and membership of the FWUA
17. Organization of the FWUA – Representative Assembly, WUA Federation Executive Committee, Audit Committee and Dispute Resolution Committee
18. Establishment, charter and election of officers and representatives

19. Legal registration
20. Role of FWUA and National FWUA in advocating for water users for taxes, relations with government authorities, and allocation of water fees paid, etc.
21. Questions and answers
22. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
23. Course evaluation
24. Closing of course

### **Training Topic 16: Irrigation Service Agreements**

**Participants:** All WUA members or at least all members of WUA Executive Committee

**Course Objective:** To give participants a clear understanding of how to prepare, implement assessment performance and complete payments for irrigation and drainage service agreements

**Course Duration:** Half day

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to prepare, implement, assess performance of achieving agreed targets of the service agreement and settle payments at the conclusion of implementation of the service agreement

#### **Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Principles of service agreements (transparent, based on priority services, measurable, accountable, incentive-based)
6. Agreed measurable definition of implementation targets for service agreements between the Basin Mirob and the WUA Federation or WUA
7. Format for a service agreement
8. Where payment for services is needs-based, adoption of technical and financial cost norms for agreed services
9. Assessment of implementation of target services
10. Linking extent of achievement of target services with extent of payment for services
11. Questions and answers by participants
12. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
13. Course evaluation
14. Closing of course

### **Training Topic 17: Management Consultations**

**Participants:** Appointed Management Consultation Facilitators

**Course Objective:** To give all participants a clear and thorough understanding

of what is meant by management consultations, what is the role and approach used by the management consultant, and how he or she can be effective doing this.

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** Participants will be able to plan and conduct management consultations, to inspect and identify key challenges, to help WUA officers prepare appropriate action plans and to identify what support services are needed by a WUA

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Definition and purpose of a Management Consultation (MC)
6. Qualifications of a Management Consultant
7. Step 1 of MC: Assessment of performance of the WUA or irrigation system
8. Step 2 of MC: Identification of problems, causes and challenges faced by the WUA
9. Step 3 of MC: Identification of irrigation objectives or operational definitions of satisfactory irrigation management performance
10. Step 4 of MC: Identify alternative solutions to overcome challenges and achieve satisfactory irrigation management performance
11. Step 5 of MC: Preparation of an Action Plan for short and medium terms
12. Step 6 of MC: Preparation of an Irrigation Service Plan
13. Step 7 of MC: Periodic visits and consultations by the MC Team with WUA leaders, staff and members during implementation of irrigation management activities
14. Step 8 of MC: Another performance assessment
15. Questions and answers by participants
16. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
17. Course evaluation
18. Closing of course

**Training Topic 18: The Irrigation Management Transfer Agreement**

**Participants:** All members of the WUA Board of Directors

**Course Objective:** To give all participants an understanding of what is an Irrigation Management Transfer Agreement and how it should be prepared and complied with in the future

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to prepare an Irrigation Management Transfer Agreement together with the Basin Mirob, approve it and live by it in the future

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course

3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Definition and purpose of the Irrigation Management Transfer Agreement
6. Have eligibility requirements for Irrigation Management Transfer have been met?
7. Statement of mission and jurisdiction of the WUAF
8. What is to be transferred to the WUAF and who are its members?
9. Aspects of governance of the irrigation and drainage system that are to be transferred to the WUAF
10. Transfer of authority and responsibility for provision of irrigation services to and by the WUAF
11. Transfer of authority and responsibility for financing irrigation and responsibilities of the WUAF for financial management
12. Questions and answers by participants
13. Transfer of stewardship for irrigation system assets to the WUAF
14. Authority and responsibility of the Government toward the WUAF after transfer
15. Protocol for interaction between the WUAF and Basin Mirot
16. Resolution of disputes related to the WUAF and its members and possibly non-members
17. Irrigation Management Audits
18. Procedure for amending the IMT Agreement
19. Conditions and procedure for revoking the IMT Agreement
20. Questions and answers by participants
21. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
22. Course evaluation
23. Closing of course

**Training Topic 19: Project Proposal Writing and Fund Raising and Activities to Attract Investment**

**Participants:** All members of the WUA Board of Directors

**Course Objective:** To give all participants an understanding of possible sources of funding for WUA rehabilitation and other investment and how to prepare proposals for funding

**Course Duration:** One day

**Capacity to be Created:** To enable participants to have skills and confidence to approach potential sources of funding for rehabilitation, repairs, upgrading, and other works and to prepare effective proposals to grants

**Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. Potential needs for WUA investment
6. Potential sources of funding for WUA investment
7. How to communicate with potential donors and projects
8. What you need to know about each potential donor
9. How to prepare a grant proposal
10. Questions and answers by participants
11. Summary quiz with corrections by participants

12. Course evaluation
13. Closing of course

## **Training Topic 20: Organizing cross site visits to different projects in other regions**

<b><u>Participants:</u></b>	All members of the WUA Board of Directors
<b><u>Course Objective:</u></b>	To give participants awareness about what have been the experiences and capacities created in WUAs that have been established and developed previously.
<b><u>Course Duration:</u></b>	One day
<b><u>Capacity to be Created:</u></b>	To enable participants to understand lessons learned in other WUAs from establishing the WUA and using it improve governance, management and financing of irrigation systems.

### **Outline:**

1. Opening and introduction
2. Objectives of this course
3. Training course outline
4. Views and questions of training participants
5. What is a cross site visit and what are its objectives?
6. What type of WUA should be visited?
7. Key priorities and questions to ask in the cross visit
8. Priority information and lessons learned
9. Reporting results of the cross visit to WUA members
10. Questions and answers by participants
11. Summary quiz with corrections by participants
12. Course evaluation
13. Closing of course

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT CONSULTATIONS**

---

There has been a substantial amount of training done for irrigation development and management in the third world, for agency staff and water users. This training in many situations has been abstract and theoretical, especially for WUA which have barely begun operating. Situations in the field are diverse, changing and require specific strategies to solve problems. WUA need to be able to select priorities, make negotiated decisions and solve the specific problems they face. In many places, in the not distant future, WUA will need a customized, on-site, problem-solving support service more than periodic training courses.

To do this it is recommended that a capacity to have Irrigation Management Consultation Service be developed for future support of Water Users Associations. This will be either an additional methodology or an alternative to training courses for WUA. The consultation services are a series of sequential visits to WUA by experienced irrigation management specialists who examines irrigation management problems and needs in WUA. They assist and enable the WUA to solve problems, identify solutions, prepare and implement their own plans, resolve disputes and obtain appropriate support services. Irrigation Management Consultations should focus primarily on the specific priority problems that WUA are facing. This is a two-way interaction between the Irrigation Management Consultant and WUA officers that creates an interactive learning process. Irrigation Management Consultations have the objective of enabling WUA to become more self-reliant through as their problem solving expertise improves over time. In many cases the consultant will communicate the solutions developed by one WUA to others experiencing the same types of problems.

The Irrigation Management Consultant should be a person with extensive education, training and experience in the management of irrigation systems. They may be hired by a government agency, a project or even by a network of WUA and should operate at the regional level. We recommend Irrigation Management Consultations to be a priority activity of the Government of Tajikistan and to aid agencies and development banks that are working to develop irrigated agriculture in Tajikistan.

Irrigation Management Consultations are likely to involve seven steps.

**Step 1** Assess performance of key WUA or irrigation system metrics. This should include key dimensions of performance such as, agronomic and economic productivity per unit of water delivered, quality of water distribution (including equity), quality of system maintenance, cost recovery, extent of water conflicts and farmer satisfaction with the WUA.

**Step 2 Identify** most significant problems, their causes and constraints faced by the WUA. These could be technical problems, such as, broken down structures, lack of water measurement facilities and knowledge of how to use them, high water losses or inability to prepare an effective Irrigation Service Plan. These could be problems of financial management, such as, lack of knowledge about how to prepare a budget or lack of ability to set or collect an appropriate Irrigation Service Fee. These could be institutional or administrative problems, such as, how to achieve democratic selection of WUA officers, how to resolve disputes rapidly and fairly or how to prepare records of meetings or reports to be submitted.

**Step 3 Identify** and agree upon (WUA officers, representatives and members) irrigation objectives, preferred methods to be used. These may be technical, financial, managerial, socio-economic or institutional solutions.

**Step 4 Prepare** an Action Plan for the short and medium terms. This may include such aspects as operations and maintenance standards, water acquisition and distribution, asset management plans, scheme repairs and improvements, method for calculating a budget and setting an Irrigation Service Fee, methods for resolving disputes rapidly and fairly, identification of needs for capacity building, identification of sources and modalities for support services.

**Step 5 Prepare** an initial or improved Irrigation Service Plan. This is an annual or seasonal plan for services to be provided by the WUA. It should include the following aspects:

- Intended crops and on-farm water requirement plan,
- Method and schedule for water distribution,
- Priorities, methods and schedule for maintenance and repairs,
- Method and schedule for operation and maintenance of drainage,
- Topics and timing of Assembly and Board meetings,
- Use and recruiting of staff and labor,
- Budget, water charge and method of collection,
- Service performance standards or targets,
- Terms for payment of service provider,
- Complaint and response arrangement,
- Performance monitoring and review method.

The Irrigation Management Consultant should help the WUA to prepare this Plan early on, and give continuing though less intensive support for revision and implementation of the Irrigation Service Plan in subsequent seasons.

**Step 6** An important stage of the process is follow-on visitation to evaluate and adjust progress made by the WUAs. The consultant should help the WUA assess whether they followed through on the plan, and if so,

whether adjustments need to be made. The consultation visits should become less frequent as the WUA successfully solves problems more independently and effectively.

**Step 7 After** the second or third year of Management Consultations, the Irrigation Management Consultant can conduct another performance assessment, together with the WUA, in order to see to what extent performance has changed over time and what additional improvement and support may be needed.