

Enabling Water Management Organizations to Build Efficient Transboundary Cooperation: Case study of Isfara Basin in Central Asia

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Isfara River is transboundary and located in the most populated and vulnerable part of Central Asia region, in the Fergana Valley. The river basin is shared between three countries, namely Kyrgyzstan Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The water resources management in soviet time has been more of an administrative matter between district administrations with only limited oversee from their respective national agencies. After the collapse of Soviet Union, the water sharing became political issue and lead to the centralization of the decision making. This has important implications for the local people who depend from the transboundary waters of Isfara River. The absence institutional system for joint water management between riparian states leads to unequal water distribution and ignorance of soviet time agreements.

Transboundary Water Management in Central Asia (TWMCA) programme, funded by German Federal Foreign office has supported Kyrgyz and Tajik water authorities to develop institutional and technological tools for the water resources management in transboundary small river basins. The core idea behind of the intervention was to enable water management organizations (WMOs) of riparian states to make joint long term water management plans for their respective basins. Although initial results are promising there are still outstanding problems such as sustainability of joint institutions and establishing single basin organization.

Key words: transboundary water management, Central Asia, Isfara, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, IWRM