



Water, Infrastructure and Climate Change

National Water Resources Management Project in Uzbekistan



Measuring the amount of water in the "Kokdaryo" canal, picture by Saadat Xudaybergenova, Ministry of Water Resources, Republic of Karakalpakstan

Promoting the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) approach remains at the heart of Switzerland's engagement in the water domain in Central Asia. The third phase of the National Water Resources Management (NWRM) project is designed as a logical extension of the long-standing Water, Infrastructure, and Climate Change portfolio of Switzerland in Uzbekistan, building upon key results achieved.

Rationale

Uzbekistan is highly vulnerable to changes in water availability in Central Asia, as it has the largest irrigated area and population. At the same time only about 20% of water originates within the country. The growing water deficit - due to population growth, increasing demand, and climate change - is a key factor that challenges Uzbekistan's development.

To address water shortages, the government is engaged in the reform of the water sector, fostering efficient use of existing water resources through IWRM principles and introduction of water-saving technologies, digitalization, and market mechanisms.

Country:

Uzbekistan

Duration (Phase III):

2024 – 2027

Total Budget:

CHF 2'900'000

Partners:

Ministry of Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan;
Ministry of Agriculture;
Ministry of Construction, Housing and Communal Services;
Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation;
Information Analytical and Resource Centre of the Ministry of Water Resources.

Implementing Agency:

GEF Agency IFAS

Overall goal

The overall goal of the third phase of the NWRM project is to improve the livelihoods and resilience of the rural population through IWRM in Uzbekistan.

The project supports the water sector reform through the development and operationalization of strategic and regulatory frameworks, embracing all water users and multi-actor spaces aligned with administrative changes.

Outcomes and envisaged results

- Competent authorities at the central, basin, and local levels enforce an informed IWRM-based policy, strategic, regulatory, and planning frameworks.
- Water management organizations, providers, and users have enhanced capacities for conflict-sensitive, climate-resilient, and sustainable use of water resources.
- Stakeholders expand and valorize knowledge, practices, and synergies across sectors nationally and at the transboundary level to reduce the rising risks of water scarcity and related hazards.

Expected outputs

- The strategic and regulatory framework is enhanced and operationalized.
- Reform champions and drivers of change in the water sector are enabled.
- Digitalization is expanded and sustainably operated by key partners.
- Essential IWRM functions, mandates, and tasks of responsible authorities are strengthened.
- Water agencies are advanced as functional interfaces between government and water users.
- Local water managers and users are empowered to access modern tools, skills, and practices.
- The knowledge base of practitioners and citizens on conflict-sensitive, climate-resilient, and sustainable water use is improved.
- Water actors are connected to relevant expertise, practices, and collaboration opportunities.

Target groups

Ministries, Information Analytical and Resource Centre (IARC), Inspectorate for Control over Safety of Water Resources and Water Use, 12 Basin Administrations of Irrigation Systems, 13 Ameliorative Expeditions, Water Delivery Services, Drinking Water Organizations, Water sector educational institutions and Farmers and water users.

Previous phase results

Main achievements in Phase I and II are the adoption of the Water Strategy and the submission of the new Water Code to the Government for review and further approval; skills development in the water sector, the development of outreach increase and functions for the TOMCHI application; the empowerment of women and youth through capacity development and institutional strengthening of IARC.

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