

Concept of block “Public participation and awareness” realization

1. RIVERTWIN project foresees inclusion of governmental bodies, min water users, other interested groups in process of social-economic scenarios development, sustainability and participation parameters definition in water resources management integrated model with regard to specific conditions.

Block “Public participation ...” destination is to facilitate transition to civil society in terms of water and other natural resources management, providing decision making transparency.

Broad public participation is foreseen during all project implementation stages.

2. Block “Public participation...” destination is to involve main water users and other concerned parties in future water management in Chirchik basin and to increase their awareness in transition hydrographic management. Stakeholders should be involved in discussion of approach to the basin hydro-ecologic management and development of perspective water management plans.

Block “Public participation...” foresees stakeholders informing about project tasks, their involvement in discussion of questions, which can impact outputs and strategic planning, development of decision support system for scenarios of maximum reliability selection.

3. Work hypothesis of “Public participation” block is based on integrated water resources management (IWRM) approach, which is oriented at existing planning system replacement and integrated water and land resources planning within watershed. Its goal is transition to hydro-ecologic management with strong inter-sector coordination and broad public participation.

This hypothesis realization is supposed through campaign on public awareness and participation increase, conduction of social, analytical and special scientific research.

3.1. In Soviet period and during the first years of independence public participation was declarative and negligible. As a rule, state institutions were not interested in public involvement in water resources management and civil society establishing.

At the same time, there were no organizations, which can deal with water-ecologic issues at public level and involve interested parties in the process. Population inertia because of economic difficulties was one of main reasons

During last years significant changes took place in public awareness. Many water-ecologic NGOs and political understanding appeared that public participation is topical base for establishing civil society.

3.2. Starting point in public awareness was decision made at political level..

Political decisions in water resources management are, according to GWP, one from “three whales” (along with legal base and financial resources), which facilitates successful IWRM introduction at various levels (local, national, regional). Political decisions should provide:

- definition of government and other concerned parties’ role in social-economic development through IWRM principles introduction. Government plays role of regulating body organizing participation process and resolving conflicts;

- all concerned parties involvement in political dialogue to find out potential conflict of interests in water sector, develop appropriate solutions and preventive measures for their neutralization;

- conducting development policy providing optimal use of financial means and resources in order to maximize society benefit;
- definition of priorities in water management key issues with regard to development goals, inter-sector interests and ecosystems' water demand;
- real re-distribution of authorities between process participants and their transfer to lower hierarchic levels of water management;
- transparency in decision making on water resources management.

3.3. One of IWRM decisive factors is participation of many organizations in water management that inevitably leads to analysis of existing organizational structure. At initial stage, water management institutes activity will be analyzed at different levels within organizational and legal limitations.

In this case, in Chirchik basin (three countries) following vertical hierarchic levels and institutions can be singled out:

A). Regional international level: Interstate Water Coordination Commission (ICWC) of Central Asia and its executive bodies:

- BWO "Syrdarya" (Chirchik basin – part of Syr-Darya basin within Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan);
- Scientific-Information Center (SIC ICWC) (Научно-информационный Центр (НИЦ) МКБК (ICWC decisions' scientific and information provision, scientific and applied research);

B). National (governmental) level: National Water Agencies:

- Water Department of the Ministry of Agriculture, Water Resources and Processing Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic;
- Committee of Water Resources of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
- Water Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan;

C). Oblast and inter-oblast level (conditionally):

- basin water administrations (Kazakhstan);
- Basin oblast water administrations (Kyrgyzstan);
- Basin irrigation systems administrations (Uzbekistan);

Equated to above institutions, in particular:

in Kazakhstan – Republican state enterprises (RSE) "Vodhozs" established on base of former oblast committees of water resources performing administrative-territorial management and large republican water objects operation;

- in Kyrgyzstan –Administration of Aravan-Akbura, Chu and other canals;
- in Uzbekistan –Administration of main canals management in Ferghana valley;
- in all countries – national water agencies and their bodies (for instance, "Selvodzaschita" within MAWR of Kyrgyzstan).

Д).Rayon level (conditionally):

- rayon water administrations (Kazakhstan);
- rayon water departments (Kyrgyzstan);
- rayon agricultural and water departments (Uzbekistan);
- in all countries – inter-rayon water departments under oblast administrations (for instance, in Uzbekistan – pumping stations, power and communication administration, hydro-reclamation expeditions, etc.).

Note to item 3, 4 of sub-section: "conditionally" (oblast, rayon level) because basin administration command area can include another oblast (rayon).

E). Local level: water users participating in water resources management through associations (WUA), organizations (WUO), cooperatives, etc..

At all hierarchic levels, participation of concerned parties including public representatives is provided through appropriate institutions establishing (for instance, National Water Council, Basin Council, Canal Water Committee, Irrigation System Committee, WUA, etc.).

Global level is not considered above (ICID, WWC, GWP, organizations dealing with adjacent issues - GEF). These organizations determine main directions of water sector development in global aspect.

Participation of national and international regional water organizations is dictated both by globalization and rational natural resources use. Though these organizations' decisions have character of recommendations, their theoretical developments, practical experience, intellectual and financial potential and necessity to observe international water law are very important.

3.4. Public participation concept practical realization should start from lower (local) level. This will promote transition from traditional (administrative – “top-down”) approach to cooperative (through participation of all concerned parties) methods of water resources management.

In case of successful realization of such system, it is possible to count on state policy support by lower level of water management. It is evenly from point of view of necessity to all participants' interests' observance. This approach to water and other natural resources management realization will permit to strengthen citizens confidence to state and its reforms, in particular in water sector, involve people in government objectives achievement and provide population support.

At that, it is necessary to bear in mind that IWRM principles introduction in terms of organizational setup reforming and public representatives involvement in water management bodies is challenge to traditional governance system. Principles of sustainable management are as follows:

- openness, transparency and flexibility in decision making and realization;
 - maximum widening circle of participants in water management;
 - consistency in policy and practical actions;
 - sociability, readiness to dialogue with all concerned parties;
 - evenness in various water users groups' interests account;
 - reporting to certain institutions including public ones;
 - providing economic benefit,
- can't be accepted by conservative managers at once.

For these principles introduction it is necessary to carry out laborious activity in order to change managers' thinking using NGOs.

3.5. In context of goals achievement, main stress should be done on developing proposals on achievement of active public participation and awareness at Chirchik basin level. First of all, institutions' activity should be analyzed (mostly within Uzbekistan because Kazakh and Kyrgyz parts are too small):

-local authorities (oblast and rayon hokimiat, village councils, mahallia committees). Local power is responsible for integration of water-related interaction. They should have wide set of legal, economic and other tools for positive impact on water users in order to ensure sustainable water resources development and all concerned parties participation in water management. .

-civil society, NGOs. These organizations' activity must help to correct local governmental bodies' activity according to their requirements. As a rule, there are specific issues (water and other natural resources management, local ecologic problems, drinking water supply), which should be solved.

-Main water supplies. Circle of water supplies depends on social-economic situation and can include organizations supplying water to drinking, industrial and recreation purposes, performing water pollution and treatment control, sanitary and hygiene activity, ecosystems' preservation.

In general, these organizations activity including water service pricing should be controlled by society. Public can also discuss technical and technologic perfection issues

-main water users, other concerned parties, partnership in water resources use. At various levels they are basin councils or canal committees, WUA, WUO and other public

bodies. Their success in terms of IWRM principles will depend on societal potential availability along with key water users (economic sectors).

One of the important aspects of IWRM principles introduction at this level is partnership establishing, which allows:

- to shift from official relations to confidential ones;
- ensure transparent decision making process;
- provide open dialogue about territory future development;
- guarantee balance of process participants' interests;
- clearly define spheres of responsibility for decision made.

Though voluntary participation, strong motivation and equality are constitute a base of partnership, they should be clearly restricted and legally registered (protocol, memorandum, agreement). Suggested approach will allow participants to act within legal limits.

3.6. Under appropriate organization, public can become a real power and state bodies' assistant in water sector reforming. From this position, state support of civil society and its development is very important. Increase of public participants' educational potential of is highest priority. These institutions personnel should have system thinking and be professionals in water-ecologic sphere, have access to necessary information and ability to express their opinion to decision makers in convincing form. Such human potential gives confidence that decisions made will promote water resources development in the region. Otherwise, demagogy will dominate in public participation.

At any hierarchic level there is danger to "chatter" topical issue and to turn process into the channel in interest of some narrow groups. From our point of view, there are several obligatory conditions of sustainable public participation in water management process:

- ensuring equal participation of public institutions;
- both for public and governmental institutions official rules of participation should be worked out;
- enforcement mechanisms and sanctions should be worked out in order to provide "rules of game" observance.

In our opinion, public participation process must be managed.

4. According to objectives and work hypothesis, efforts will be directed at following tasks

solution:

- organization of target groups informing about project tasks and their involvement in elaboration of basin development strategy;
- definition of target and public ranking of society groups according to their attitude to current and future water resources use and state;
- definition of their interests and water-related situation understanding matrix;
- participation in elaboration of Chirchik basin development scenarios and appropriate restrictions;
- analysis of legal, social, economic, ecologic, political parameters of water management and basin sustainable development;
- development of proposals on legislation perfection in terms of public participation in water management;
- understanding of reasons and possibilities of anthropogenic impact and its negative consequences reduction;
- participation in development of proposals on water use improvement without damage to environment;
- development of public awareness in water resources use, water services commercialization according to forecast of basin development;

- elaborating proposals on public involvement in IWRM process and transition to hydro-ecologic management;
- carrying out measures on rights and interests equality assuring: on transboundary waters (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan), water users in upper and lower reaches, various economic sectors;
- public opinion in water management reduction to decision makers.

Within "Public participation..." block another activity can be performed in accordance to

Chirchik basin peculiarity.

5. Block "Public participation..." includes:

5.1. Revealing concerned categories and target audiences of water and nature users for

organization of thematic discussions including mass-media, international organizations and NGOs.

5.2. Assessment of public awareness level in Chirchik basin about water and other natural

resources management and development of proposals on its improvement.

According to item 5.1, 5.2 sociologic inquiries are supposed:

a) among professors of Tashkent Agrarian University and Tashkent Institute of Irrigation;

б) among key water users in typical zones of Chirchik basin.

In result of inquiry, group of students will be selected in order to carry out inquiry for another

project purposes.

5.3. Public opinion definition over target groups in order to reveal:

- shortcomings of existing "status quo" in water and other natural resources use;
- the same related to irrigation and irrigated farming;
- proposals on water and other natural resources use improvement;
- proposals on requirements to natural resources use improvement;
- population will to participate in public basin management;

5.4. Coming information analysis and processing (for appropriate water users category):

- scenarios of water and land use;
- water management organizational setup improvement;
- acceptable organizational model of integrated water management;
- suggested information system of natural resources;
- project educational block (sharing experience, reviews, workshops, conferences).

5.5. Results submission at the following levels:

5.5.1. Scientific: in scientific publications, at conferences, workshops and their proceedings;

5.5.2. Popular: in mass-media; Internet: on appropriate web-sites – about integrated scenarios development;

5.5.3. *Educational*: training concerned persons in water resources management, other forms of knowledge transmission;

5.5.4. *Report*: proposals on public participation and decision making process improvement in basin water resources management.

5.6. Workshops conduction with participation:

5.6.1. Key water users from Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan (BWO level) and other concerned persons from irrigation sector within Chirchik basin .

5.6.2. Natural resources users' target groups representatives.

5.6.3. Non-governmental and non-commercial organizations' representatives.