

Session -5: Adaptation to new environmental challenges at community level

Strengthening of Local level institutions

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Introduction

- Growing number of water related challenges:
 - frequent droughts and floods
 - long periods of water shortage
 - growing demand for water due to higher temperatures
- Growing pressure of new environmental challenges:
 - hardly affecting local communities in dry areas
 - shortage of water resources are limiting the opportunities of income generation
 - reduces productivity of agriculture
 - increases potential of conflicts over the water resources

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Cause and Relationships

- Institutional reforms and changes in agriculture:
 - increased number of agricultural producers
 - de-centralized decision making on land use, cropping
 - weakened coordination of water distribution
- Absence of strong institutional arrangements at the local level:
 - competition for the limited water resources increased
 - Stakeholders who have a “say” on water management at local level multiplied
 - Inability of local level institutions/governance systems increasingly threatens to destabilize peace and stability, especially in transboundary water systems.

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Response: National level

- National level:
 - structures are capable of responding to the new environmental challenges both technically and institutionally
 - national institutions are in need of finding effective instruments to implement national plans/programmes at local level
 - Local level knowledge is although effective and networking is operational requires stronger link with national level processes

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Response: Local level

- Local level governance:
 - *de jure* de-centralized de-facto de-capacitated financially, technically and institutionally
 - setting up strong, inclusive governance systems at the local (community) level will enhance capacities successfully cope with new environmental challenges
 - Current governance on NRM at local level (water users, land users, etc.) are not sufficiently professional, capable and have given sufficient authority to act to avert, adapt to the new environmental challenges

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Responses: Financing

- Funding mechanisms of governance structure at local level is key to the mobilization of stakeholders to act together
- Disregard to the stakeholders role at the local level will reduce efficiency and effectiveness of state policies towards to tackle new environmental challenges
- Provision of supportive framework for the private investments for measures on adapting into the new environmental challenges and water conservation

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“Best practices”

- Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia working for decades on issues of good, effective governance at the local level:
 - Setting up **water governance structures** at local level that will provide participation platforms for local level stakeholders- WUA's, Basin Councils
 - **Basin planning as instrument to cope** with new environmental challenges through systematic, long-term interventions to adapt to the new setting of environmental changes- plans for sub-basins, basins

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