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REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT FORUM

SEPTEMBER 2014 - SEPTEMBER 2020

\$11 MILLION

OVERVIEW

The United States Agency for International Development's Regional Water Management Forum seeks to improve regional transboundary water management and promote sustainable management practices. The Forum promotes dialogue on water issues outside of high-level inter-government channels, particularly among academia and community-level water management structures. The Forum also supports access to modern water management techniques and improves water management skills for community technicians, scientists, policymakers, civil society, and local end-users. Information-

based management of current and future water resources is a focus.

The project includes two activities. The Partnership for Enhanced Engagement in Research (PEER) activity establishes a university-led forum to promote improved sustainable management of shared water resources within the context of climate change in Central Asia. The forum will support regional seminars, workshops, and research on transboundary water in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan.

Smart Waters, the second activity, focuses on building a cadre of water managers in Central Asia and Afghanistan to share best practices and manage water resources efficiently to obtain the best economic value from water resources over the long term. It also aims to improve water management at the community level by working in small river basins and sub-basins shared between Afghanistan and neighboring countries. Improved cross-border collaboration and a shared basic understanding of sustainable resource management practices are the expected project outcomes.

ACTIVITIES

- Award up to 22 grants to researchers in participant countries. Eighteen grants have already been awarded in two rounds held in 2016
- Hold bi-annual regional forums over three years for climate change, water security, and transboundary experts and grant recipients. Discussion topics will include cross-border water management and climate change impacts and adaptation in the Central Asia Region
- Create an electronic platform to link regional scientists, engineers and managers studying regional water resources with those in the U.S., identifying common approaches to addressing climate change impacts in the Central Asian region
- Help small river basin councils to develop watershed management plans
- Award small grants to local water user associations to strengthen the governance and operations of these organizations, deepening their ability to sustainably manage water
- Fund up to eight interdisciplinary integrated water resource management Master of Science programs at a Central Asian university
- Provide short-term regional leadership training opportunities related to water governance

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Increased dialogue among countries in the region on regional water resources
- Strengthened capacity among senior staff and decision makers regarding water rights and obligations under international law and international treaties
- Better information and knowledge of water resources among citizens, researchers, policymakers, and decision makers and better understanding of regional water needs.

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