



UN JOINT PROGRAMME

Building the resilience of communities affected by the Aral Sea disaster
through the Multi-partner Human Security Fund for the Aral Sea

NEWSLETTER

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Needs of the population in the Aral Sea region presented in Tashkent

On November 15, 2017, a presentation of the main results of socio-economic and environmental research and a study of the needs in the Republic of Karakalpakstan was held in the capital.

The event was attended by representatives of local authorities, diplomatic missions, international organizations and financial institutions.

The survey was conducted in August 2017 in 8 districts of Karakalpakstan, most affected by the Aral Sea crisis, covering 1,600 households representing 116 mahallas.

During the event, Tursun Akhmedov, director of the Institute for Social Research, mentioned a number of issues requiring special attention. First of all, he stressed on the employment of the population issue as the level of poverty in the region makes 32.5%. In addition, he marked the importance of improvement of the transport infrastructure, healthcare and education, in particular, the high cost of medicines and the shortage of specialists.



“The socio-economic and environmental study to identify the needs of the population in the Aral Sea region was conducted in the framework of the United Nations Joint Programme in cooperation with the Institute for Social Research under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The survey was organized to effectively mobilize additional resources and ensure coordinated assistance from international partners in line with the State Programme for the Development of the Aral Sea Region for 2017-2021”

Helena Fraser,
UNDP Resident Representative in Uzbekistan



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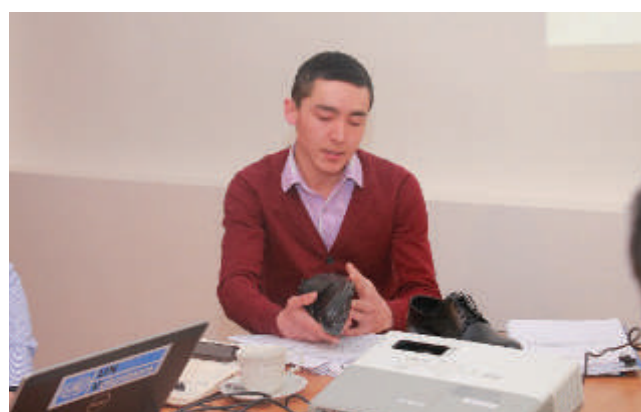


IN THE YEAR OF SUPPORT OF ACTIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP, INNOVATIVE IDEAS AND TECHNOLOGIES

UN Joint Programme: Support to Entrepreneurship Development in Action

Expansion of economic opportunities in rural areas of Karakalpakstan through creation of decent jobs are among the fundamental priorities of the UN Joint Programme in order to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs in a country and local levels. Thus, the support provided for the local entrepreneurial initiatives is an effective tool for enabling the long term sustainability of business projects.

After the launch ceremony, in Karakalpakstan, a contest for the business project ideas was announced in order to identify and support projects that would ensure food and economic security in the region, support women's entrepreneurship, and increase human resources in the pilot regions. 150 applications were received for the consideration by the project, where out of them 18, met the main criteria for further consideration for funding and were submitted to the review committee consisting of the representatives of the khokimiyats of Muynak, Shumanay and Takhtakupir districts, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Economy, the Farmers' Council, the Karakalpak branch of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the Karakalpak branch of the Business Women Association, Women's Committee of Karakalpakstan and leading



entrepreneurs of the region. Based on the results of the selection process, 6 business projects were pre-selected for further consideration for funding for the total amount of USD 65 115.63



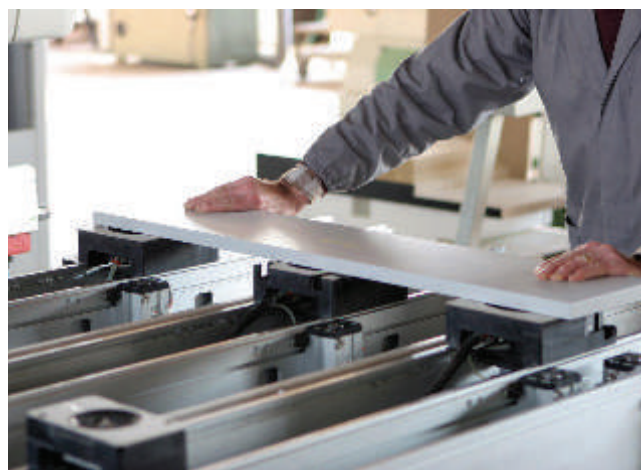
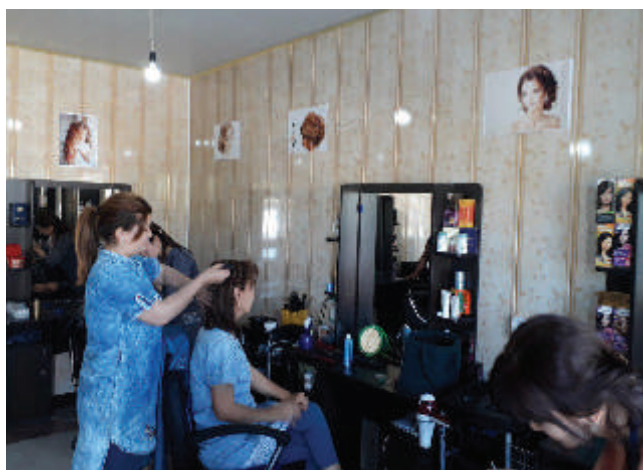
SHUMANAY DISTRICT (Population -54,100 people)

The Programme supported the initiated by Ametova Sayatkhan business project on establishment of Beauty Salon in Shumanay district. The newly launched beauty salon has created 6 new jobs for local women and girls. Moreover, there will be a chance for college graduates to attend master classes in beauty salon premises, which will be conducted by experienced masters, to further support them through practical trainings.

The private enterprise “Elion Sharap”, founded in 2016, presented for the Review Committee the project on establishing the furniture manufacturing workshop. Upon approval by the Committee, the Programme has procured and provided slicing equipment that operates with the modern technology to the workshop.

“The number of women visiting beauty salons is steadily increasing. The clients of the Salon are the residents of the district, mostly women from 18 to 50 years, as well as youth. Our beauty salon provides such services as women’s and children’s haircut, manicure and pedicure, cosmetology services, body skin care, massage, and sale of cosmetics. I hope that our project will ensure the provision of quality service to our community, as well as contribute to highlighting the beauty of our local women”

Ametova Sayatkhan,
director of “Shumanay Malika-Sofiya” project.



The equipment is important in processing wood and other materials, which allows to produce furniture and different types of inventories to neighboring communities. This project has helped to create 4 new job places.

MUYNAK DISTRICT (Population 30,600 people)

Sarsenova Zamira from the “Madeli” community presented for the Review Committee the project on establishing the mini bakery. The project aims at ensuring the food security for the rural population of the Muynak district through providing different bakery products. The enterprise was provided with necessary equipment. Individual entrepreneur

Sarsenova Zamira and her team in mini bakery provides delicious bread and different types of fresh bakery products to the community with over 3000 people including 2 kindergartens, 2 hospitals, and 2 schools. Thus the project ensured the food security of “Madeli” VCC and neighboring communities.

Marat Toksanbaev, who once started his journey into the world of entrepreneurship with a passion for photography in a specialized secondary school, opened a computer repair shop in 2012. In 2014 he launched an Internet cafe “Moynaq kompyuter servis” with a diverse range of services. However, for the large-format printing of documents, signs and banners, it was necessary to go to Nukus, overcoming the distance of 220 km. According to the decision of the Review Committee, the entrepreneur was provided with a large-format printer equipment that enables his company to expand services to the local population.

At the initial stage, four young orphans have joined the team as designers, an operator and a

“With the help received we now have a large-format printer for development of banners, posters, billboards, and various social advertisement items. There are 7 kindergartens, 16 secondary schools and 2 specialized secondary vocational colleges, 2 banks, state and private shops, government agencies, where there is always a demand in ordering the large format banners for visibility purposes of their work or services”

**Marat Toksanbaev,
director of “Moynaq kompyuter servis”**

deliverer. As the business expands, it is planned to increase the number of employees of this business project.



TAKHTAKUPIR DISTRICT (Population 39,400 people)

Development of tourism potential requires creation of an appropriate infrastructure. A comfortable trip can't be imagined without delicious snacks. So the family enterprise “Borshi”, under the leadership of Esmuratova Marzia, applied with its business idea to the Programme.

The proposed business project aims to ensure food security in Takhtakupir district by processing of sunflower seeds, its accurate frying, as well as its proper packaging. One of the equipment purchased by the Programme gives an opportunity for packaging other bulk products in different dimensions.



12 people are planned to have permanent jobs and develop textile in Takhtakupir district thanks to the support of the Programme. “Tkachixa Taxta” LLC, founded in 2013 was supported to establish a mini textile workshop.

Currently, the newly employed staff of the workshop is undergoing capacity and skill building training, and soon will start to produce products.



New opportunities for entrepreneurs in 2018

UN Joint Programme has been working on expanding employment and improve income generation of rural communities through innovative projects to promote economic, environmental and social security in the region.

On February 28, 2018, the Review Committee meeting on selection of the possible business ideas was held in Nukus, where 18 shortlisted initiators had an opportunity to present their business projects to be implemented in

Muynak, Shumanay and Takhtakupir districts as well as in Nukus city. The proposed business projects suggest to address the development of entrepreneurship in the Aral Sea region, providing the engagement in such spheres as milk processing, establishment of guest-house for visitors, wool processing, bakery production, farming, small-scale men’s shoe production, bee-farming development, husbandry, etc.



Promoting women entrepreneurship in Karakalpakstan

When more women work, economies grow. An increase in female labour force participation—or a reduction in the gap between women’s and men’s labour force participation—results in faster economic growth. Today women make up about 45 percent of all employees in Uzbekistan and country’s Development Action Strategy 2017-2021 opens new opportunities to stimulate more women in entrepreneurship activities.

The UN in Uzbekistan partnered with the Youth Union, the Women’s Committee and Chamber of Commerce and Industry to train 45 women from Muynak, Takhtakupir and Shumanay districts of

Karakalpakstan willing to start a business. The trainings enable participants to learn more about essential stages of establishing a business, review existing forms and methods of market analysis, business planning, receive updated information on available financial resources such as loans and leasing.

Since 2017, the UN Joint Programme ‘Building the resilience of communities affected by the Aral Sea disaster through the Multi-Partner Human Security Fund for the Aral Sea’ works with national partners to expand employment and improve income generation of rural communities through



innovative projects to promote economic, environmental and social security as well as development of the sustainable tourism.



“The training is an excellent opportunity to women of Karakalpakstan who wish to start a business, both theoretically and practically review all the existing opportunities and incentives. Now I am sure that this year in September, I will start a confectionery business – that was my desire. Various discussions and exchange of ideas with participants during the sessions, helped me to know more on existing preferences, taxation issues, how to obtain loans, how to begin a business and ways to identify the target audience through marketing research in our district”

Zulfiya Utegulova,
participant from Muynak.

“I didn’t expect that we will get so many interesting questions from the course participants. They shared their home business ideas, suggested their vision of innovational approach, and asked questions on how to export goods. I believe that this training will help to improve their well-being, create additional work places and contribute to the regions development. Undoubtedly, we will provide a consultative support to our trainees from all the districts so they could start their own business using knowledge received during the course”

Gaukhar Redjepova,
representative of Youth Union of
Karakalpalstan.

Development of social infrastructure — an important factor ensuring the sustainability of communities

In 2017, four infrastructure improvement projects were funded by the UN Joint Programme in the pilot districts after a series of community mobilization activities.

3,000 residents of the “Berdibay” and “Izbasar” communities in the Shumanay district now have an access to clean drinking water.

The problem of electricity supply was solved for 2,000 residents of the “Aydinjol” community of the Takhtakupir district, where previously permanent interruptions in electricity supply had a negative impact on both households and public organizations.



The new building for primary school pupils has been just constructed

UN Joint Programme has completed a project on construction of a new building for the primary school in the Aday-aul community of Muynak district on the site of the emergency building. A partnership with the Programme

of small grants for graduates of JICA — Japan International Cooperation Agency, allowed to provide the school with a full set of necessary furniture and office equipment.



Modern experience in accounting and calculation of water use in control centers was presented in Karakalpakstan

According to statistics 92% of the total volume in the distribution of water resources by the sectors of the economy, goes to agriculture.

On November 29, 2017, within the joint project with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, aimed at improving the livelihoods and food security of the population of the Aral Sea by improving the efficiency of water resources use, a



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
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Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation SDC
Швейцарское Управление по развитию и сотрудничеству SDC

providing training on accounting and calculation of water use was held. Over 20 dispatchers from 6 departments related to the Lower Amudarya basin management of irrigation systems attended the training.

The topics discussed included the rules for keeping a register of water consumption, the procedure for developing seasonal water use plans and the volume limits for water resources. Practical exercises took place in a hydrological facility on the Kattagar Canal and where the presentation

of methods for measuring water in hydrological posts was also demonstrated.

This training provided an opportunity to improve the skills of the dispatch center staff in managing more effective accounting, as well as calculating irrigation water.



Joint project to improve the operation of the hydrofoil "Razvilka"

The hydro-post Razvilka is functioning since 1982 to keep and uphold the water volume as well as further distribution to major irrigation canals. Its water transmission capacity is 375 m³/s. The hydro-post serves 91,076 ha of irrigated land, out of which 1,972 ha in Nukus district, 29,593 ha in Kegeyli district, 53,122 ha in Shimbay district, 4,275 ha in Karaozek district and 2,114 ha in Takhtakupir district.

Under the joint project with SDC "Sustaining improved livelihoods and food security in areas most affected by Aral Sea disaster through enhancing water use efficiency", renovation works of the "Razvilka" hydro-point building were held. As a result, favorable working environment was created for hydrology technicians and fosters, besides a training



center was established to organize field based trainings and workshops for water management specialists, hydrometeors and Water Consumers Association members, as well as farmers on efficient use of water resources and water saving technologies.



Prevention of pulmonary diseases in Karakalpakstan

38 inpatient and 141 ambulatory polyclinics provide medical care to the population of Karakalpakstan.

Strengthening institutions of primary health care helped to reduce the hospitalization rate by 1.7 times in 1991-2017. According to official data, the incidence of tuberculosis as a whole in Karakalpakstan is twice as high as the average for the country. Most cases of diagnosing the disease were indicated in Muynak, Karauzyak and Takhtakupir districts.

The results of the study also show that the population has only a general idea of respiratory, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal



diseases. Many of the respondents are poorly informed about the types of ailments, the causes of their occurrence and confuse their signs.

In order to improve the medical culture and knowledge about the prevention of the abovementioned diseases, in cooperation

with the Ministry of Health of Karakalpakstan, a number of recommendations and information materials have been developed for dissemination among the population of the pilot districts. The active work of the UN Volunteers plays an important role in improving medical literacy.



New knowledge for better service in healthcare

At the end of 2017, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Uzbekistan and the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Uzbekistan supported the development of the National Family Planning Standard, which is the first national document to guide practitioners in the services of this field. Preliminary review and study of international and national policy and policy documents on family planning was conducted.

From March to April, primary care specialists from Beruni, Amudarya, Kegeyli, Turtkul and Ellikkala districts were invited to



participate in five-day training to increase the capacity in family planning, maternal and child health care, and antenatal care.

In March-April 2018 UNFPA committed to provide technical expertise in conducting four 5-day trainings including 2 days for visiting selected PHC facilities for practicing supportive supervision at the level of PHC services in selected districts of

Karakalpakstan Republic. Trainings covered the whole Republic of Karakalpakstan, including remote districts. 75 health care specialists, among them leading district obstetrician/gynecologists, leading pediatricians, leading midwives and GP coordinators/trainers became a part of the supportive supervision system to ensure enhancement of the quality of care.



International experience of tourism development, traditional crafts, and promotion of cultural and natural heritage of Karakalpakstan

A two-week practical course on the traditional textile weaving for the young crafts from Karakalpakstan that lasted until 26 May 2018 was held in Nukus.

Earlier from 10 to 12 May 2018, the UNESCO Office in Tashkent held a three-day training on the traditional textile weaving and design for the young craftspeople and designers from Karakalpakstan in a close cooperation with the Karakalpak Branch of the Academy of Arts of Uzbekistan in the Crafts Development Centre under the Karakalpak Branch of the Academy.

About 25 craftspeople and designers received knowledge on the techniques and skills of the traditional textile weaving and innovative design, as well as technology of the natural dying, and the basis of the Karakalpak culture during the training and the course conducted within the framework of the UN Joint Programme.



The training was conducted by the masters on the traditional textile weaving — Rasul Mirzaakhmedov and Tolip Alimov from Margilan, as well as the designer Ms. Bibi Russell (Great Britain/Bangladesh), the international expert on the traditional textile, the UNESCO Artist for Peace.



MPTF — MECHANISM FOR ENSURING HUMAN SECURITY IN KARAKALPAKSTAN

The objectives of the Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) are presented in Brazil

On March 18-23, the 8th World Water Forum was held in Brasilia, Brazil. The leaders of the states, diplomats, development partners, scientists and young specialists took part in the event.

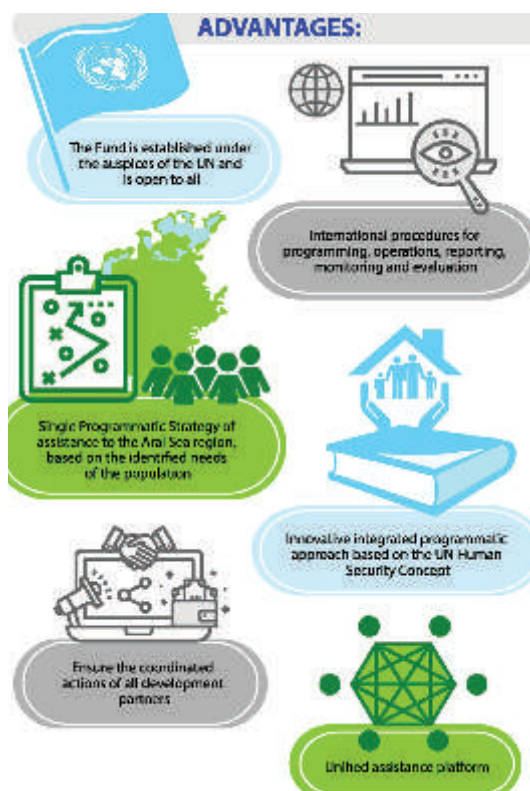
Speakers outlined the main topics for discussion on Central Asia. One of the most difficult challenges of the region is the ecological crisis in the Aral Sea basin. *"Integration processes and rapprochement of countries, political will and support of water cooperation are priority directions in the policy of modern Uzbekistan,"* Shavkat Khamraev, Minister of Water Resources of the Republic of Uzbekistan.



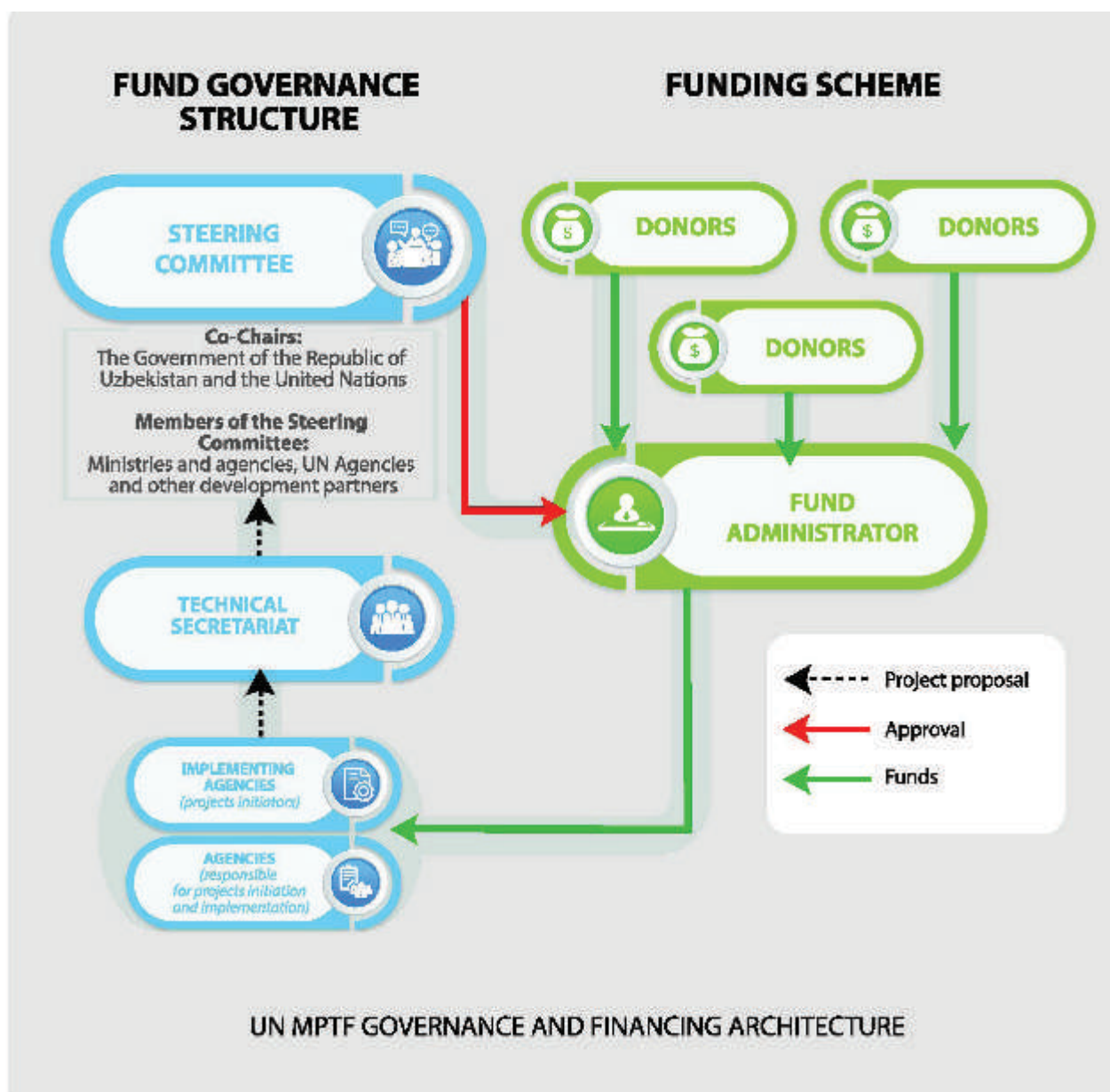
We call on the donor community to join efforts within the MPTF!

In order to promote the establishment of the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea region within the framework of the UN Joint Programme from February to April of this year a series of meetings was held with representatives of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan and potential multilateral and bilateral international donor and financial institutions, including the European Union, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA), etc. During the meetings, the concept of the MPTF and its priority programme directions that were developed jointly with the national and international experts was introduced.

During the meetings, the Government and UNDP called on donors to support the proposed initiative and take an active part in the joint work to overcome the consequences of the Aral Sea ecological disaster and the social and economic development of the Aral Sea region. Currently, negotiations with the donor community are continuing.



The cooperation of the Government, UNDP and the UN Multi-Partner Trust Fund has moved into the most active phase



Established in 2003 and housed within the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office) facilitates UN coherence and development effectiveness in addressing multifaceted issues — such as humanitarian crises, peacebuilding, recovery and development — and engages in collaborative international efforts on pandemics, climate change and biodiversity conservation.

These complex challenges demand the combined expertise and resources of multiple development partners. The MPTF Office assists

the UN system and national governments in establishing and administering pooled financing mechanisms—multi-donor trust funds and joint programmes — to collect and allocate funding from a diversity of financial contributors to a wide range of implementing entities in a coordinated manner. These funding mechanisms build on the principles of the aid effectiveness agenda, which calls for country-driven, coherent, timely, flexible and result-oriented assistance.

Since 2015, several UN agencies in Uzbekistan have consolidated their efforts in

the Aral Sea region within the framework of the Joint UN Program “Ensuring the livelihoods of the population affected by the Aral Sea crisis” (2012-2016). Based on the successful experience and lessons learned from the implementation of this initiative and at the suggestion of the Republic of Uzbekistan, in 2017 the second phase of the UN Joint Program was launched with the objective to establish a Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region under the auspices of the United Nation.

In this respect, the Government and UNDP in Uzbekistan, with the practical assistance and leadership of the UN MPTF Office, are working together to establish a Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for Aral Sea Region. Currently, the programmatic and institutional frameworks of the Fund being agreed and established, the mechanisms and principles for the implementation of development projects

are being identified, and negotiations are under way with relevant multi- and bilateral development partners to unite efforts and resources on the single platform.

From 5 to 9 June 2018 the Portfolio Manager of the UN MPTF Office, Ms. Mari Matsumoto, visited Uzbekistan to hold a series of negotiations with representatives of the Government, multilateral and bilateral donor organizations on the establishment of the Trust Fund for the Aral Sea region. She also took part in the Central Asian International Environmental Forum “Strengthening cooperation in the field of environment and sustainable development in Central Asia” (June 5-6) and the International Conference “Joint Actions to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis: new approaches, innovative solutions, investments” (June 7-8).



The Coca-Cola Foundation is investing \$100,000 to improve water supply systems in the Takhtakupir district



The water distribution station will be restored in the Takhtakupir district of Karakalpakstan until the end of the year. The new project “Improving Access to Drinking Water Supply for the Rural Communities in the Aral Sea Region”, funded by the New World Program (NWP), a collaboration between The Coca-Cola Foundation (TCCF) and Global Water Challenge (GWC), envisions several activities to restore the water distribution station in 2018.

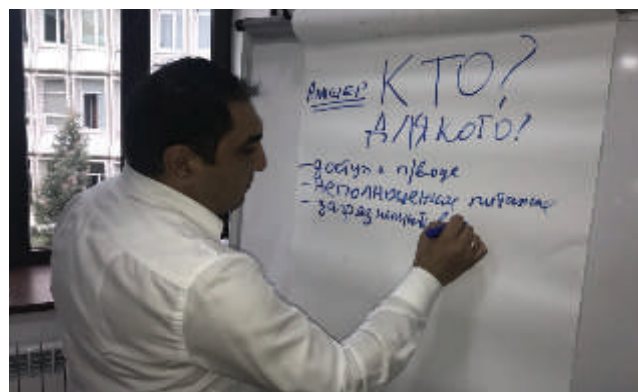
Today only 50.8% of the local population has access to a centralized water supply system, while remote communities have locally-established water sources, including from artesian drills with the depth of 400-500 meters. Currently, residents of the “Makpalkol” community of the “Atakol” Village council of citizens (VCC), including a local school, kindergarten and other social institutions, have access to the drinking water

through a few water hand pumps and from the water tanks delivered to the village. In the framework of the project, it is planned to install new equipment for water treatment, repair of the water distribution station and installation of water pipes. As a result of the project, about 1950 local residents will be able to use pure artesian water. The Coca-Cola Foundation allocated 100 thousand US dollars for the project.

In accordance with the project document of the New World Programme one of the activities aimed at improving the access to potable drinking water and the health of the population living in the remotely located community is the capacity building on hygiene and sanitation through the practical training courses. Thus, 27 community members representing different age groups participated in the training on hygiene and sanitation.

The UNDP “Funding Windows” initiative will help in strengthening the capacity of local governments

UNDP “Funding Windows” initiative will allocate US \$ 300,000 to enhance the functional capacity and efficiency of the work of local Councils of People’s Deputies at district and regional levels, as well as strengthening relevant government bodies to implement decentralization policies as a tool to promote effective and inclusive local development.



Specific deliverables include the following:

1. Functional capacities and efficiency of the work of Local Councils of Deputies at regional and district levels in overseeing the implementation of resolutions and degrees adopted by the Central and regional governments is enhanced;
2. Budget decentralization and relevant regulatory framework improved to promote effective planning and local development by local authorities;
3. The quality of public services provision to local population enhanced through deployment of innovative and effective methods and tools, and implementation of demonstration projects;
4. Women empowerment activities are supported for local level gender-responsive development initiatives, enhancing public participation of women and innovations targeting the needs of local women.

Implementation of “Promotion of the Local Development through enhancing inclusive and responsive government institutions in the Aral Sea region” project is planned for 12 months until the end of June 2019.

The FWs catalytic effect will be twofold: (i) contributing to the ongoing joint initiative that addresses the urgent human security needs of the Aral Sea region through amplifying the efforts of the programme into policy making with focus

on enhancing the functional and institutional capacities of local government institutions to make them inclusive and responsive for population needs as well as to deliver streamlined and accessible public services, and (ii) improving technical capacities of local government institutions in evidence-based planning to galvanize donor funds within the frame of the Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for Aral Sea region that is in the establishment process.



Meetings, discussion of proposals, expert opinion

“The Aral Sea problem should be considered from the point of view of people and communities that suffered most from the Aral Sea catastrophe. It is important to take into account the many threats that affect everyday life, livelihoods and dignity. The approach based on the human security concept, in practical implementation, will focus on these points,” said Ms. Shahrbanu



Tadjbakhsh, an international consultant of the UNDP during a working meeting with the members of the Interagency Working Group and representatives of key ministries and departments of the Republic of Uzbekistan involved in the establishment of MPHSTF for the Aral Sea region.

At the meeting held on April 24, 2018, the participants discussed the draft of the Trust Fund Strategy, as well as approaches and mechanisms for its implementation. The proposed Strategy was developed within the framework of the Joint Program on the basis of an analysis of the survey of the needs of the population in the Republic of Karakalpakstan mostly affected from the Aral Sea catastrophe. The Strategy defines key directions of measures, new approaches and mechanisms to mitigate the consequences of the Aral Sea crisis with the participation of interested donors on the basis of a single platform.

It is assumed that the establishment of the Trust Fund under the auspices of the United Nations will attract donors to the Aral Sea tragedy, consolidate joint efforts and use the advanced internationally accepted approaches in programming and project implementation. This in turn raises the dialogue on the development of the Aral Sea region with the international community to a qualitatively new level.

The next day, a session was held on how the Human Security approach can be implemented within the projects of UN agencies operating in Uzbekistan. The meeting participants - project managers, agency program officers, procurement specialists and financial coordinators, discussed the areas of application of the principles of human security and their interlinkage on the examples of different countries..



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