



## Participatory Utilization and Resource Efficiency of Water (PURE Water)

The Ararat Valley is the largest depository of high quality natural groundwater in Armenia, and it is a vital groundwater depository not only for Armenia but for the region. As a result of poor water resources management, many communities in the valley have limited access to drinking and irrigation water. Demand for irrigation water is now increasing as a result of climate change and growth of fisheries, and over issuance of water user permits also lead to sharp depletion of groundwater resources. Although stakeholders, including the Government of Armenia and civil society organizations (CSOs) recognize the critical situation of water resource management in the Ararat Valley; there is poor public participation and awareness of water resource management processes among residents and water users. Involving residents of the Ararat Valley in the water related decision-making process will lead to quality and informed decisions thus ensuring public acceptance of adopted water related decisions.

The **goal** of the PURE Water project is to increase water productivity, efficiency and quality mainly through citizen participation, as well as foster behavioral change to reduce the rate of groundwater extraction in the Ararat Valley. These goals will be achieved through implementing the following components:

### Component 1: Policy and regulatory improvements to foster participatory use of water

- Identify gaps in the policy-regulatory environment, followed by developing a strategy and a roadmap for improvements agreed upon amongst stakeholders;
- Improve capacity of citizen groups and water users' associations to effectively advocate for transparent decision making in water management with constructive input from CSOs;
- Introduce public consultation mechanism to support the Basin Management Organization of the Ararat Valley and to promote participatory basin planning.

### Component 2: Participation in and oversight of water resources management

- Develop public oversight mechanisms:
  - Introduce consumer feedback tools using information communications technologies
  - Introduce community monitoring schemes for water quality and efficient use
- Build capacities of community stakeholders through targeted capacity building activities in the use of public oversight mechanisms to monitor water resource management.
  - Award community collaboration and watchdog small sub-grants for monitoring activities
- Assist local governments in affected communities to ensure compliance of the local users with the regulatory framework; ensure public access to water-related information.

### Component 3: Public awareness education and behavioral change

- Undertake public awareness and education campaigns
  - Baseline and follow-up consumer and stakeholder surveys
  - Common messaging regarding water resource quality and use
  - Public awareness campaigns using a mix of integrated marketing communication tools
- Implement tailored stakeholder behavioral change interventions
  - Stakeholder mapping, assessment, and analysis for tailored outreach and strategic communication campaign

### Component 4: Small-Scale water infrastructure pilots projects

- Identify small-scale infrastructure pilot projects designed and developed by capacitated community-based organizations and residents leading to increased and sustained community water access.