



## SUCCESS STORY

### From Barren to Bountiful

**After fixing irrigation system, farmers already reaping large harvests**

Twenty farmers from the Tal-Bulak water users association in Osh Province's Aravon District in Kyrgyzstan grew crops on 50 hectares (123 acres) of land that had been left unsown for many years.



Photo: Winrock Intl

In Kyrgyzstan, a rehabilitated irrigation system enables farmers in the village of Kirkidan to grow crops on land that had not been productive for many years.

The previous irrigation system that brought water to their fields had not been repaired or cleaned for more than 15 years. Seasonal floods filled irrigation canals with mud, and for the past decade Tak-Bulak fields had not seen any water. "Each year, we had to spend a lot of time cleaning the mud left after each flood, but harvests were still very low," said one farmer.

Through a USAID water user association program, Tal-Bulak members managed to reverse their fortune. The program gave the association a grant to rehabilitate the irrigation system, enabling association members to build an aqueduct and a flood overpass, and to repair 636 meters (695 yards) of the canal. On once-barren land, 20 Tal-Bulak farmers have already grown 35 tons of wheat, 81 tons of cotton, and 32 tons of watermelons.

***A USAID-funded water program helps a group of farmers in southern Kyrgyzstan restore their irrigation system that will bring water to over 300 hectares (741 acres) of land.***

Some of these farmers have already invested their earnings into their farms. Mamat Ergeshov purchased a tractor that will help him and other farmers to cultivate the land and improve crop productivity. Janybek Ergeshov bought 20 goats and is planning to double his herd. Mamasabyr Maksutov bought a second horse to help with his sheep breeding business. "This year was productive, and next year will be even more so; we will not have to remove so much mud thanks to a new flood overpass," said Mambetali Egemberdiev, one of the farmers who participated in the rehabilitation project.

Mambetali and his neighbors contributed the labor required for the renovation, while USAID paid for the cement and steel required for the work. The association plans to completely rehabilitate the entire system, which will provide irrigation water to an additional 280 hectares (316 acres) of land.