



# Youth Engagement Models for Water Supply and Sanitation Projects: Lessons from Dushanbe

The views expressed in this paper/presentation are the views of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Asian Development Bank (ADB), or its Board of Governors, or the governments they represent. ADB does not guarantee the accuracy of the data included in this paper/presentation and accepts no responsibility for any consequence of their use. Terminology used may not necessarily be consistent with ADB official terms.



*Achieve* **PEACE, SECURITY, JUSTICE, CLIMATE RESILIENCE**  
*and* **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT** *for all*

*United Nations Youth Strategy 2030*

**YOUTH** *for an*  
**INCLUSIVE,**  
**PROSPEROUS,**  
**RESILIENT**  
*and* **SUSTAINABLE**

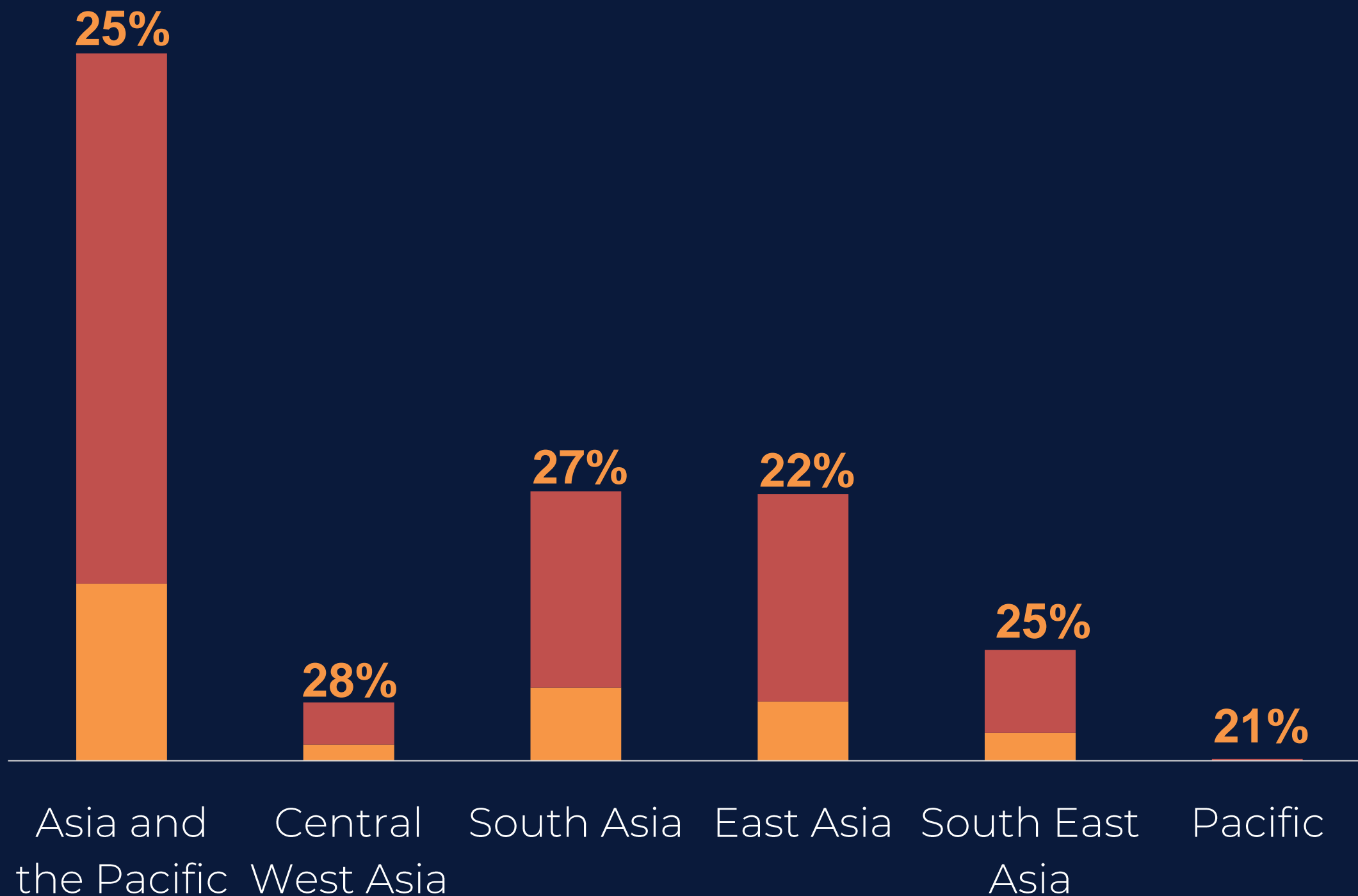
*Asia and the Pacific?*

A large group of young people, mostly in their late teens or early twenties, are gathered in a large, open hall with high ceilings and arched windows. They are all holding onto thin, colorful strings (yellow, orange, blue) that are stretched across the room, creating a complex web of connections. Many of the participants are smiling and looking towards the camera. In the foreground, a person is seen from the back, wearing a white t-shirt with the text "ADB YOUTH FOR ASIA" printed on it in blue. The overall atmosphere is one of community and engagement. The image has a purple tint overlay.

# Youth in Asia and the Pacific

# Youth population in Asia and Pacific

(DMCs, age 15 – 29)



There are over **2 billion** individuals under the age of 30 living in Asia and the Pacific, representing **54%** of the global youth population.



# EBR Youth characteristics



Youth resilience and resourcefulness



Natural collaborator



Caring and responsible citizens



Digital skills



Behavioural insights



Disruptive and innovative thinking



# Challenges to Youth Participation



*limited opportunities for youth to* **LEAD AND SHAPE DEVELOPMENT**



*limited youth access to opportunities to* **SECURE QUALITY JOBS**



*limited opportunities to* **ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE AS CITIZENS**



*limited* **GOVERNMENT ASSETS**



# Youth for Asia in a glance

ADB  
YOUTH  
FOR ASIA

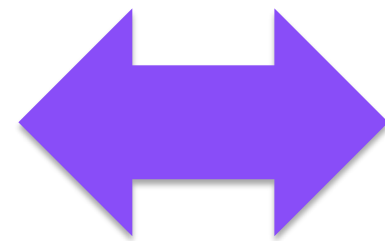


# YfA impact

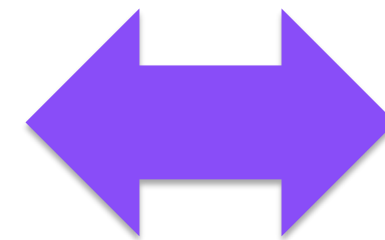
*More young people have the resources and agency to engage as active citizens and take the initiative to lead change in their communities.*



**YOUTH LEADERSHIP**



**ADB PROJECT**



**IFI COMMUNITY**

# YfA operating models



**ACTION**



**INSIGHT**



**VOICE**



Principles for effective youth development

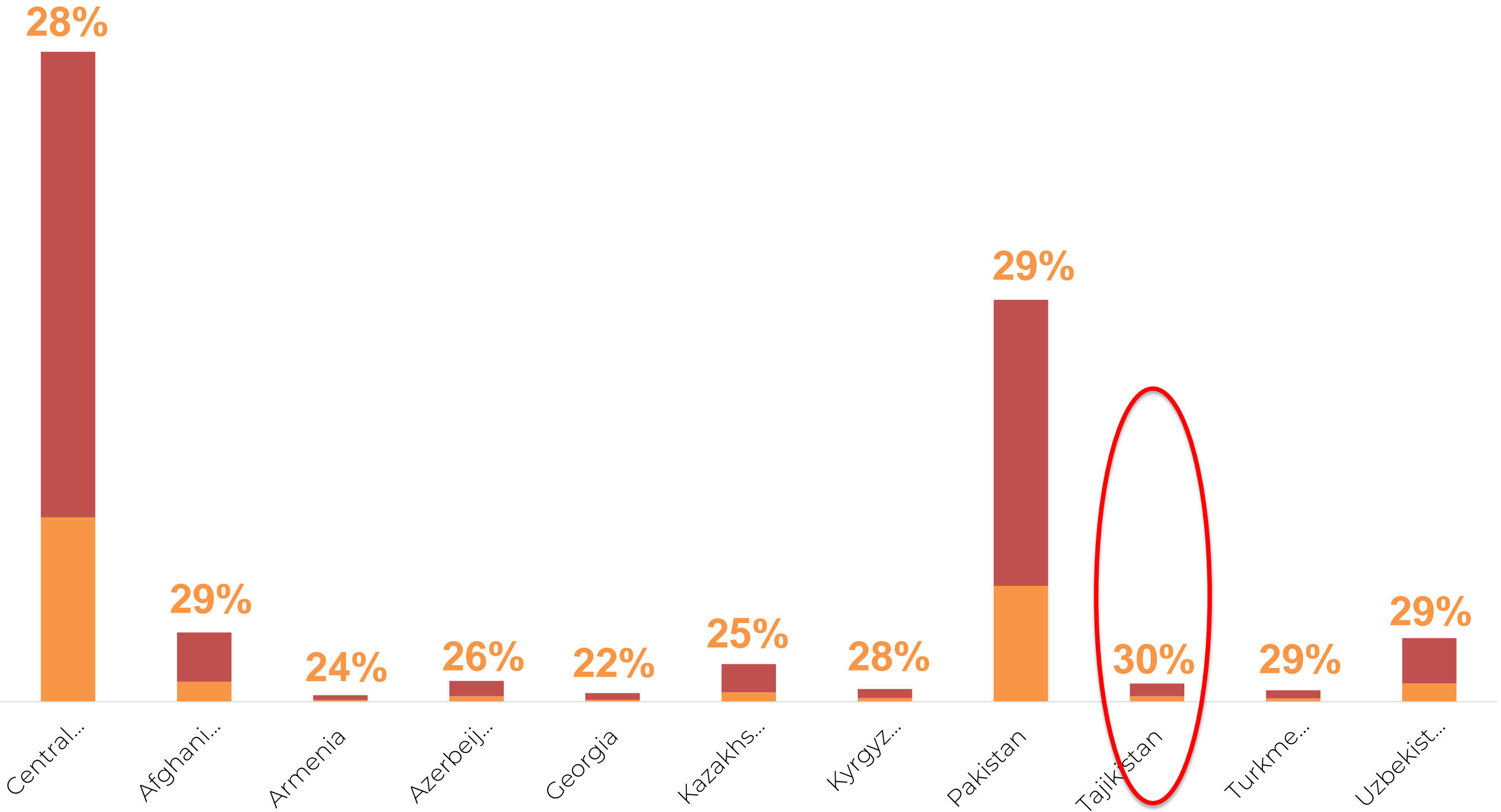
**Cross-cutting themes: Partnerships + Technology**

A large group of people, mostly young adults, are gathered in a courtyard or plaza. They are holding hands and strings, participating in a community activity. In the foreground, a person is wearing a white t-shirt with the text "ADB YOUTH FOR ASIA" printed on it. The background shows a building with arched windows. The entire image has a purple tint.

# TA 9407 Tajikistan: Dushanbe Urban WSS Project

# Youth population in Central West Asia

(DMC, age 15 – 29)



Tajikistan has more than **2.5 million** youth with the majority living in rural areas.

# TAJ: Dushanbe Water Supply and Sanitation Project

## Outcome:

Inclusive and sustainable access to safe and resilient WSS services in Dushanbe city improved

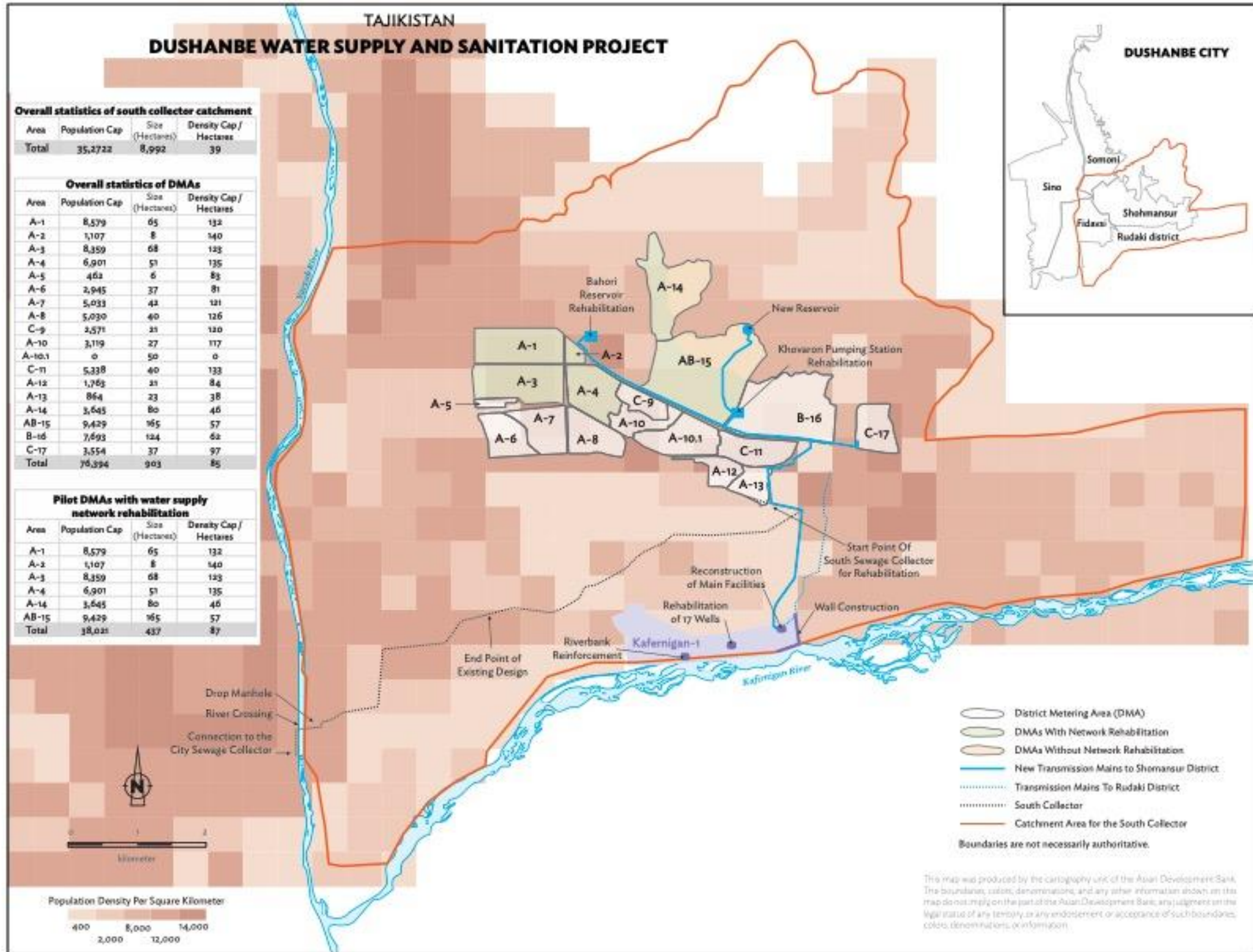
## Outputs:

- Climate-resilient water supply and sanitation infrastructure rehabilitated and expanded - including installation of SCADA system, reducing NRW, establishing 18 district metering areas (DMAs) with smart metering and improvement of distributional network in six DMAs;
- Sustainable business model and institutional capacity developed - including customer care service standards and behavior change communication on water conservation and smart metering.

# TAJ: Dushanbe Water Supply and Sanitation Project

## Core Problems

- Deteriorated WSS systems - built in 1932 and extended in the 1970s, lack of continued capital investment, inadequate O&M
- 83% population has access to piped water - intermittent operations (4–8 hours per day), high NRW, low water pressure and energy efficiency.
- Lack of public understanding of water conservation, combined with low tariffs, led to uncontrolled water consumption and wastage.
- Poor water quality and frequent water contamination resulted in high incidences of diarrhea in children aged 6–11 months and diarrhea-related deaths among children aged 1–5 years.
- Incidence of ascariasis (water-borne disease) in Shohmansur district increased from 34 cases in 2015 to 53 in 2016.



# Overview of the project's communication strategy

- Based on and is consistent with other project documents
- Directly contributes to project outputs
- Communication objectives:
  1. Promote social acceptance for new water supply and sewerage systems
  2. Change behavior on water use to prevent waterborne illnesses and overconsumption
  3. Improve customer relations and trust



# Youth inputs to the communication strategy

## Objective

The pilot project aims to mobilize youth led outreach efforts to promote the new levels of services developed and its *impact on health, behavior change and for more efficient water usage and conservation*, and better sanitation practices among various stakeholders.

This active youth engagement will *bring out the voices of the community and promote the potential among citizens for more efficient water usage and conservation*

# Youth Engagement



CAPACITY BUILDING



TRAIN THE TRAINER  
WORKSHOPS



AWARENESS RAISING

# Youth Engagement



BUILDING GOOD WASH PRACTICES IN SCHOOLS

# Highlights

Youth to youth train the trainer workshops/capacity building

Mini Projects in schools promoting behaviour change in water conservation

# Challenges

Limited resources and slow access to stakeholders in awareness raising initiatives

Tokenistic government support and buy in

# Lessons learned

- Get the best fit: mapping of in-country youth organizations critical
  - Tap expertise and interest
  - Engagement of community youth, outside of school, special interest
- Role of YfA: Project Management | Sector-specific technical knowledge and expertise | Capacity building
- Model of youth engagement not necessarily focused on one organization but network of youth organizations



# Model of youth engagements in Water projects



“An ASEAN community that **empowers and mobilizes** its youth to improve water security”.

# Models of Youth Engagement in Water projects



## ACTION

- 1. Student Support Center
- 2. Volunteering for Better Community
- 3. Young Water Ambassador Program
- 4. WaterCorner Event
- 5. School Event
- 6. School WASH Program



## INSIGHT

- 1. Young professional in WASH program
- 2. Women in WASH Scholarships Program
- 3. Water Innovation Lab
- 4. Young Water Fellowship



## VOICE

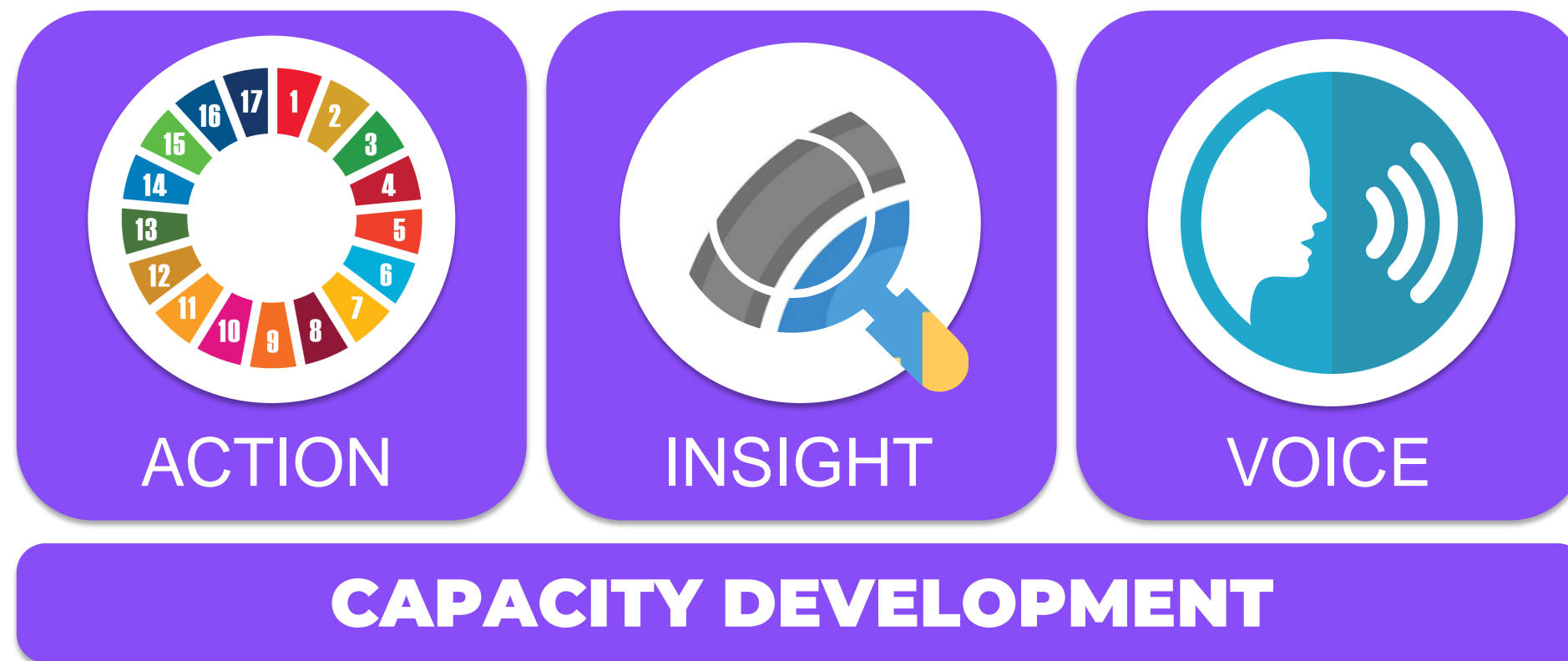
- 1. HealthyStart Youth Engagement Campaign
- 2. Menstrual Hygiene Management Week
- 3. Media Fellowship

Cross-cutting themes: Partnerships + Technology



# YfA typology

- (a) Informs how YfA targets its resources
- (b) Guide internal and external ADB stakeholders in how to engage effectively with YfA to enhance results through youth as partners





**ADB working effectively with YOUTH for a prosperous, inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Asia and the Pacific**

**ADB  
YOUTH  
FOR ASIA**