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TAJIKISTAN

USAID Assistance Programs and Key Achievements

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID), through its Mission in Central Asia, has provided more than \$240 million in development assistance for Tajikistan since 1992. USAID programs in Tajikistan are implemented through contracts and grants by more than 40 local and international organizations. Implementing partners include U.N. agencies, for profit companies, and non-governmental organizations. For the past fourteen years, USAID has worked to achieve three broad objectives: facilitate economic growth; build a more open, democratic culture; and improve management of and access to quality healthcare and education.

ECONOMIC GROWTH: USAID provides technical assistance to support Tajikistan in its transition to a market based economy. Assistance focuses on improving the overall environment for the growth of small and medium enterprises through strengthening the legislative framework and reducing business and administrative constraints; developing the financial sector; and increasing access to information, knowledge, and skills for Tajikistani entrepreneurs. It also includes support for economic policy; firm-level consulting to private enterprises; increasing agricultural productivity; stimulating access to finance; training of judges and attorneys in interpretation and proper application of commercial laws; and assistance in strengthening Tajikistan's capacity to manage its energy and water resources.



*SMEs receive consultations in business planning, marketing, and operations.
Photo: CAIP*

- USAID provided direct assistance to over 175 small and medium enterprises (including agribusinesses) to strengthen their competitiveness, through improved financial management, marketing, and business planning. As a result of this assistance firm sales increased an average of 50% and productivity of 39%. Additionally, USAID programs facilitated more than \$5 million in trade deals for Tajikistani firms from 2003-2005.
- Work with the National Bank has brought supervisory standards in closer compliance with international norms which has helped to raise public confidence in the banking system. Deposits increased from 5.5% of GDP in 2004 to 7.5% of GDP by the end of 2005. USAID assistance to foster greater access to finance for micro entrepreneurs resulted in a quadruple increase in portfolio lending of \$7.1 million during 2005.
- USAID has supported policy and legal changes to improve the environment for doing business in Tajikistan and provided technical assistance for developing, improving, and implementing key commercial legislation, including the Civil Code, Joint-stock Companies Law, Administrative Procedures Code, Law on Registration of Moveable Property (Pledge Law), Bankruptcy Law, and others. With USAID assistance, for example, the licensing process for businesses has become more clear, streamlined, and transparent and no longer allows for the ministries and state agencies to introduce new licenses or their own licensing rules and procedures.
- USAID has supported Tajikistan in liberalizing its trade regime and prepare for accession to the WTO. With USAID support, Tajikistan established the WTO Information Center to improve government officials and businesses' understanding of WTO accession issues. Assistance has also helped to

enact several pieces of WTO-compliant legislation, including Customs and Tax Codes and the Civil Code (Part III).

- USAID continues to help Tajikistan to adopt International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). With USAID assistance, Tajikistan developed and adopted a new Chart of Accounts that meets international standards. Over 180 Tajikistani accountants have been certified by the USAID-sponsored Russian language Certified Accounting Practitioner (CAP) program. The CAP courses are now offered at some Tajik universities.
- USAID's assistance led to the 1998 Framework Agreement between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Tajikistan on the Use of Water and Energy Resources of the Syr Darya Basin. Tajikistan's water management organizations now use improved methods for collecting, analyzing, forecasting, and sharing data on transboundary water. Water users associations are being established to enhance farmers' abilities to manage their water resources equitably and productively which should lead to improved agricultural productivity and diversification of the agriculture sector.

STRENGTHENED DEMOCRATIC CULTURE AND CONFLICT

MITIGATION: USAID's democracy program in Tajikistan seeks to promote a democratic culture by strengthening civil society and independent media, while at the same time broadening political competition by improving the skills of democratic political parties and electoral processes. Through USAID's civic education programs, Tajikistan's youth gains a practical understanding of democracy and civic responsibility. Meanwhile, legal and justice reform programs focus on skills development of lawyers, law students, and judges.

- USAID provided technical assistance to a Presidential Working Group which developed the recently approved Local Government Reform Strategy. This strategy is expected to support the establishment of accountable local government in Tajikistan.
- USAID facilitated multi-party discussions on amendments to the Law on Elections from 2003-2004, to improve the electoral framework. All interested democratic political parties received assistance to develop and strengthen their regional structures, improve communication with citizens, articulate policy agendas, and elaborate long-term strategies.
- Assistance has been provided in creating a more modern judicial system, including qualification examinations for judges, establishment of a court administration body, computerization of some courts, and a permanent system for professional training. Tajikistan's first comprehensive legal database, Adliya, developed through a USAID project, currently contains more than 4,300 Tajik laws and normative acts.
- USAID projects assisted in the development of a comprehensive legal and fiscal framework for the NGO sector, and facilitated citizens' participation in the development of new laws. NGO development is supported through training, technical assistance, small grants, and an effort to stimulate corporate giving to NGOs.
- The USAID-developed civics education curriculum for 9th, 10th, and 11th grades is taught at 325 secondary schools. In 2004, the Ministry of Education formally approved the use of the USAID civic education textbook as an optional textbook in two compulsory courses, "Man and Society" and "State and Law."
- USAID-sponsored anti-trafficking information campaigns have reached approximately 20,000 people and more than 560,000 television viewers each year.
- Since 2002, USAID has worked in more than 400 communities in the Sughd regions, Rasht Valley, and Khatlon region to mitigate the sources of community tension. Over 740 infrastructure and social projects benefited more than one million residents by the end of 2005.



Students are provided an opportunity to participate in various extra-curricular activities to expand their understanding of democracy and civic responsibility. Photo: IFES

INCREASED ACCESS TO QUALITY HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION: USAID is the largest bilateral health sector donor in Tajikistan. Assistance focuses on building health systems capacity, improving primary health care, and addressing infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis (TB). Given the immense need in the country, USAID health programs have included activities in maternal, child, and reproductive health; drug abuse prevention; and support for community-based health activities. In addition, USAID works on improving health finance, family medicine, and evidence-based pharmaceutical use. USAID's education programs, launched in 2003, are improving teacher training, school management, and allocation of education sector financing.



Thirty-eight communities received assistance in renovating schools.

Photo: USAID

- A major success in 2005 for USAID and its Tajik counterparts was the Government of Tajikistan's approval of a Health Financing Strategy, which aims to create a transparent, legal system for paying for health services. In the long term, the strategy should increase the state health care budget.
- With USAID support the first Republican Training Center for Family Medicine and the Nursing Learning Resource Center were opened in 2001 to facilitate retraining and reforms of medical practices and standards nation-wide; currently, family medicine is taught at four USAID-supported family medicine clinical training centers. More than 1,100 health professionals were trained in primary health topics and emergency medicine through 2003. A number of medical facilities have benefited from over \$26 million in donations of medicines, supplies, and equipment, brought through USAID programs.
- USAID was instrumental in developing the National Reproductive Health Strategy and Plan, which was endorsed by the Government of Tajikistan in 2004. Thanks to USAID initiatives, in 2005, 92% of health facility staff were able to correctly manage deliveries (up from 35% in 2004). Women and communities receive information on safe motherhood, reproductive health, and child health initiatives. To reduce infant mortality, USAID helped pilot the use of the World Health Organization's (WHO's) definition of live birth and provided support in preparation for its adoption nationwide, planned for 2006.
- From 2001-2004, the USAID program screened more than 293,000 children under the age of five for malnutrition in rural populations in 19 rayons (districts). Over 1,300 moderately or severely malnourished children were referred for treatment in hospitals or received supplementary foods.
- USAID's program assisted the Ministry of Health to develop and begin to implement new Infection Prevention Protocols and Standards in 2005; these will improve quality of health services at all levels of the health care system.
- Tajik epidemiologists benefit from USAID-funded training programs and a USAID-established regional network to address outbreaks of infectious disease. USAID's support led Tajikistan to receive a \$5.4 million grant for malaria from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria (GFATM) in 2005. Additionally, by 2004, as a result of USAID assistance, 42% of people knew how to prevent malaria and visited laboratories for diagnosis that enabled proper selection of medication.
- USAID's comprehensive TB control program, through pilot activities, is benefiting approximately 26% of Tajikistan's population. Due to improved diagnostics, by the summer of 2003, the TB case notification rate in USAID pilots increased more than twice, from 74 (national level) to 150 cases per 100,000 people. With USAID's assistance, in 2001, the Government of Tajikistan successfully applied for funding from the Global Alliance Vaccines Initiative, which extended universal Hepatitis B immunization at birth. In 2004, USAID facilitated Tajikistan's application to the Global Drug Facility, which now provides free first-line TB medications to the country. USAID's implementing partner, Project HOPE, was selected as Principal Recipient of the country's \$2.5 million GFATM TB grant, promoting enhanced coordination of the national program.
- HIV/AIDS prevention and control programs assisted the Government of Tajikistan in introducing HIV sentinel surveillance, while comprehensive drug demand reduction efforts are preventing HIV/AIDS spread through injecting drug use (the main means of HIV/AIDS transmission in the country).
- USAID's basic education program has helped 23 Professional Development Schools across

Tajikistan to become professional training and resource centers for surrounding schools. Fifteen hundred teachers were introduced to interactive teaching methodologies and approximately 950 education administrators received training in effective school management. Thirty-eight communities were assisted in addressing the urgent rehabilitation needs of their schools.

- USAID provided technical assistance to the Ministry of Education in introducing a new school finance mechanism that will improve equity and provide incentives for schools to spend funds more efficiently.
- USAID is working closely with other donors and the Ministry of Education on implementation of the \$18 million Fast Track Initiative grant for education in Tajikistan. The Fast Track Initiative is a global partnership between donors and developing countries to ensure accelerated progress towards universal primary education.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE: USAID has provided more than \$43 million in humanitarian assistance to Tajikistan. USAID has financed distribution and monitoring of medical supplies and medicines, food, and humanitarian relief for displaced persons, refugees, and conflict victims; emergency assessment and management; capacity building for the government; and agricultural commodities. Approximately 40,000 people gained access to potable water and some 500,000 were provided food through 1996. USAID-funded United Nations Development Program's activities helped reintegrate over 1,200 former combatants and benefited over 140,000 families through the rehabilitation of schools, clinics, water systems, irrigation channels, housing, and power stations in 1997. Support for private farmers in a war-affected area in the Garm region achieved remarkable results with wheat and potato yields increasing three- to four-fold in just two years from 1998-2000. USAID also helped coordinate and furnish flood assistance and flood prevention programs. Provided assistance also includes food, medical support, and the rebuilding of homes for victims of flooding, earthquakes, and avalanches.



*USAID provides food and other support for victims of natural disasters.
Photo: PCI*

SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES: From 1994 to 2006, more than 14,000 Tajikistanis from government, non-governmental organizations, and business entities have benefited from over 650 USAID-sponsored training programs in all sectors where USAID provides technical assistance. Meanwhile, through the Eurasia Foundation, USAID provides grants and institutional strengthening to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Tajikistan. From 1999 to 2005, the Eurasia Foundation awarded 136 grants to Tajikistani NGOs.

For more information on our programs, please visit our website, <http://centralasia.usaid.gov>.