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PRESS RELEASE

STATE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR REVIEWS PROJECTS IN KHATLON

Qurghon-Teppa, Khatlon Oblast, Tajikistan, February 27, 2009. Ambassador Tracey Ann Jacobson and the Coordinator of U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia Daniel Rosenblum visited Qurghon-Teppa for the final evaluation meeting of the "Personal Hygiene and Sanitation Education II" (PHASE II) project, supported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The PHASE I and II projects implemented by the NGO Save the Children taught basic hygiene and nutrition concepts to primary school children, with the goal of keeping healthy children in school.

Representatives from oblast and district hukumats, including Hiqoyatmoh Hakimova, Deputy Head of Khatlon Regional Hukumat, Nurullo Azizov, Deputy Chief of the Regional Educational Department, school principals, high school student-teachers, Village Development Committees representatives, and Save the Children staff joined Ambassador Jacobson and Rosenblum at the meeting.

USAID provided assistance to Save the Children to implement PHASE II at 80 schools with approximately 40,300 pupils in the Khatlon region. Through the project Save the Children trained more than 460 high school students to teach grade school children basic hygiene, and 600 Village Development Committees in long-term behavior change methods. The project trainees have become leaders of change and helped younger siblings and parents to adopt new, more hygienic practices. Additionally, Save the Children built 20 latrines and 12 hand washing stations at selected schools in the Jomi and Khuroson districts.

Rosenblum, who oversees the assistance disseminated by all U.S. Government agencies to the 18 states of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, was in Tajikistan February 26-27 to review a sampling of programs funded by the U.S. Government, which totalled \$30.92 million for Tajikistan in budget year 2008.

The USAID PHASE II project is one of the many development projects implemented in Tajikistan by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Since 1993 the American people through USAID have provided more than \$300 million in assistance programs that support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and the education system of Tajikistan.