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PRESS RELEASE

U.S. GOVERNMENT REDUCES SCHOOL DROPOUT IN KHATLON

DUSHANBE — The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) celebrated the launch of its School Dropout Prevention Pilot Program in Khatlon oblast. U.S. Ambassador Susan Elliot, Minister of Education of the Republic of Tajikistan Nouridin Saidov, and other Ministry of Education officials attended the event. The launch ceremony, held at Danghara School #2, marked the official kick-off of the school-based activities of the USAID program to reduce the dropout rate of grade 9 students. The School Dropout Prevention Pilot Program continues the history of collaboration between the Republic of Tajikistan and the U.S. government in the education sector.

Ambassador Elliot remarked at the event that, “a student who completes their education has more – and better – job opportunities. Especially young women who complete their schooling grow up to have healthier, more prosperous families, which in turn, benefits entire communities.”

The School Dropout Prevention Pilot Program was collaboratively designed with MOE officials and school personnel to encourage students to stay in school. Over the past year, the Program conducted an analysis of the factors that affect dropout in grade 9 and designed school-level interventions to address those factors. As the program is being implemented, it will also be assessed to determine the effectiveness of interventions. The program will ultimately generate evidence on successful strategies, which can be used for preventing school dropout throughout the country and region.

The School Dropout Prevention Pilot Program is one of the many assistance projects made possible by the American people through USAID. Since 1992, the American people have provided over \$1 billion in programs and humanitarian aid that support Tajikistan’s democratic institutions, health care, education and economic growth.

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