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TAJIKISTAN

CASE STUDY

Municipality Springs to Action

USAID helps a local government reinstitute garbage collection services



Gairatjon Otajonov (on the right) at his bakery in Kokand, the Ferghana Valley. Photo: "Mador" Credit Union

"USAID helped us to implement our plans for better public services. Now the local government and residents can work together to find solutions, and be successful together."

-Muhiba Yakubova, Chairwoman of Isfara.

Challenge

Throughout Tajikistan, local governments confront challenges to provide municipal services to their citizens. The city of Isfara with the population of 38,600 in Sughd Province, northern Tajikistan, was a typical town with dysfunctional services and disillusioned residents. Isolated from the rest of the country by the surrounding borders of Kyrgyzstan, Isfara's local government lacked the financial and technical resources to develop and implement needed services. In particular, solid waste management became a paramount issue: uncollected trash made the streets unsightly, and posed environmental and health threats to residents.

Initiative

USAID's Local Governance and Citizen Participation project has partnered with nine Tajik local governments to improve their performance and accountability to their communities. One of such local governments was the Isfara's municipality. With assistance and trainings from the USAID project, Isfara's local government developed an all-encompassing Service Implementation Action Plan. The plan prioritized community needs, called for the creation of municipal services to address these concerns, and provided for the long-term viability of these services. Also with USAID support, the local government used public hearings, public meetings, group sessions, and civic education to engage city residents and to develop and design a garbage collection service. USAID experts helped detail its budget, the roles and responsibilities of officials and citizens, plan equipment procurement and maintenance, collection schedules and routes, and design a financial recovery plan to ensure the service's sustainability. A \$17,800 grant from USAID helped the city jumpstart its plans.

Results

In June 2008, Isfara debuted its reinstated garbage collection service for the first group of 20,000 residents, something the city had not seen for over 15 years. The service includes individual household bins, community metallic trash containers, and a modern compactor truck, bought with co-funding from USAID and the local government that provided \$10,800 for the initiative. As residents are more and more beginning to pay for the garbage collection, Isfara's local government plans to expand services to the other parts of the city. As soon as the fee collection reaches the next benchmark identified in the city's transparent financial recovery plan for the solid waste management services, the municipality plans to buy an additional compactor vehicle. This equipment will enhance the city's landfill operations and enable more residents to benefit from the improved public services.