



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 25, 2011

Sayora Khalimova

Public Outreach Specialist, USAID/Tajikistan

Tel: +10-992-37-229-2608

[skhalimova@usaid.gov](mailto:skhalimova@usaid.gov)

## PRESS RELEASE

### **USAID EXCHANGE PARTICIPANTS RETURNED TO DEVELOP INDEPENDENT BROADCASTING**

**DUSHANBE, TAJIKISTAN** - Managers and editors of local independent television and radio stations from Dushanbe and Sughd Region reunited in Dushanbe to speak about their experience on their recent United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-sponsored exchange program.

USAID's Community Connections program sent 10 broadcast media representatives from Tajikistan to Kentucky and Indiana on a three-week professional exchange program. While on the trip, they lived with American families, met with their U.S. counterparts and exchanged ideas on a wide range of issues related to programming content at broadcast stations and producing stories with social impact.

In Kentucky and Indiana, the group met with a cross-section of American broadcasters, both public and private, representing large and small markets in radio and television. Program activities also included practical training on programming, fundraising, and funding mechanisms for socially oriented content, as well as advertising and media sales and the outsourcing of service networks within the U.S. broadcast media system. The issues inherent in programming for smaller markets and low-budget outlets were of major interest to the Tajik broadcasters. With their U.S. counterparts, the Tajik participants generated new ideas for developing original programming relevant to rural communities and developing content with limited resources.

In addition, participants learned about how broadcast stations work with various stakeholders to promote the interests of their communities; discussed innovative strategies to grow TV and radio station audiences, including targeting niche markets; and considered issues related to the management and funding of a local broadcasting station. The program allowed the group to compare the similarities and differences between radio and TV broadcasting in the U.S. and Tajikistan as well as learn about the process of digitalization of broadcast in the United States.

The professional component of the program was complemented by cultural experiences and excursions. Participants lived with American families and enjoyed visits to Mammoth Cave National Park, the Kentucky Derby Museum, the Fair and Exposition Center, Lenape Indian Village, Kings Island, KY Down Under, the Frazier Memorial Museum, and other events.

The Community Connections Program is one of the many assistance projects made possible by the American people through USAID. Since 1992 the American people, through the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe, have provided approximately \$900 million in programs that support Tajikistan's democratic institutions, health care, education, and economic growth.