



## SUCCESS STORY

# Full Spirits Work for Water

### USAID brings clean, safe drinking water to the village of Qizil Namuna



*Qizil Namuna residents take part in a hashar (community volunteering), to dig a trench for a 4-kilometer pipe that would bring drinking water to their community. Photo: Urban Institute*

*“USAID helped bring clean piped drinking water to this village for the first time in our history. And together, we have proved that the local government and citizens can cooperate to make life better for everyone.”*

- Gulomodiv Jamoliddin, Chairman of Novobod township, Khatlon Province

Due to extreme poverty, residents of the 830-person village of Qizil Namuna of the Novobod township, Khatlon Province, in southern Tajikistan, did not have the resources to build a drinking water supply system. People had to haul water by hand from a nearby river. In winter, when the river went dry, they took water from other sources, such as irrigation canals, about 3.500 kilometers (2.2 miles) away. Because fuel supplies are scarce and expensive, people did not boil water or did not boil it sufficiently before drinking. This often led to gastro-enteritic diseases, especially among young children.

In the face of this critical situation, the local government of Novobod township approached USAID for help to improve the lives in Qizil Namuna. An \$18,800 grant from USAID via the Local Governance and Citizenship Participation project provided a launching pad to build a water system for the community. The community came forth offering the labor and worked with village authorities to hand-dig a trench. A 4-kilometer (2.5 miles) pipe soon stretched out from Qizil Namuna to the water main in the neighboring village of Quhon Teppa-Kumsangir. The community also installed a pumping station and five communal stand-pipes in key locations of their village.

Additionally, USAID’s project trained township specialists to maintain and repair the pipe network, while the residents were taught health and hygiene practices. Finally, to ensure that the system was financially sound and sustainable, the local government received technical assistance and training from the USAID project to develop a transparent scheme for user fees. The plan was presented at public hearings and meetings to Qizil Namuna residents, where they had an opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process.

In June 2009, the village of Qizil Namuna celebrated the opening of the new water system and the arrival of clean, safe drinking water in their lives. Within weeks, the township’s health department noted a decline in the incidence of gastro-enteritic diseases in the village.

“USAID helped bring clean drinking water to this village for the first time in our history,” says Jamoliddin Gulomov, Chairman of Novobod township. “We now have proved that the local government and citizens can cooperate to make life better for every one.”