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TAJIKISTAN

CASE STUDY

BUSINESS FACES FEWER BURDENS

USAID helps simplify requirements for reporting of statistical data by businesses and farmers



A small entrepreneur in a Dushanbe farmers market. Photo: USAID

USAID's Business Environment Improvement Project helped simplify statistics reporting requirements, saving an estimated \$8.7 million in costs a year for 141,000 small businesses and farmers.

CHALLENGE: Data on small and medium enterprises is crucial for the government in any country to analyze the economic business environment and identify strategies and plans for assisting entrepreneurs. Reporting of such data, however, must be balanced between comprehensiveness and accuracy on one hand, and the time used by the reporting entities on the other.

Until recently, Tajikistan's entrepreneurs were heavily burdened by the requirements for statistics reporting. Each quarter, an average-business would spend an entire week to complete these reports, taking away valuable resources from the mainstream work. Small farmers were hit particularly hard, as they not only had more frequent filings, but often had to travel considerable distances to meet this reporting requirement.

INITIATIVE: To simplify statistics reporting, the USAID Business Environment Improvement Project helped Tajikistan's Statistics Committee to develop new reporting rules for small and medium businesses and small farmers. Initial analysis by business associations showed that entrepreneurs were expending time and money for forms that were, in many cases, unnecessary. The USAID project assisted a working group under the State Statistics Committee in reviewing the reporting rules and procedures, their frequencies, and used forms. Together with the working group, the USAID project designed new reporting rules that combined several forms and reduced the frequency of the reporting.

RESULT: Now that the new rules have been adopted, small and medium businesses have to spend one day quarterly on the statistics reporting instead of the former three. Additionally, instead of the previous five forms, they need to fill out only one. Small farmers will benefit even more when their revised schedule begins in 2011: their reporting burden is reduced from 3 monthly forms and 2 quarterly forms to only one monthly form and one semi-annual form.

These changes save considerable time for the over 141,000 small and medium enterprises and farmers subjected to statistics reporting. The country's business associations estimate that the reduced reporting requirements will save over \$8.7 million for Tajik entrepreneurs each year.