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**TAJIKISTAN**

## CASE STUDY

# Community Gains Access to Clean Drinking Water

**USAID expands potable water distribution in Nov and improves community life**



Photo: Naimjon Nabiev

*A young girl enjoys drinking from a clean water source at a kindergarten in Nov, Tajikistan.*

**“Residents living here hauled water with great effort from long distances and lost a lot of time. Now that water has come to their street they can use that time and effort for something else.”**

Nov is a community in northern Tajikistan that lacked an adequate supply of drinking water for its 15,100 residents. Water was available in the community, but its shallow, hand-dug wells were bacteriologically contaminated. To provide their families with clean drinking water, children took time off from school to transport drinking water from remote areas by cart or donkey.

With assistance from USAID’s Local Development Initiative, the community took action to address their access to drinking water. The Elder Council, local government officials, township staff, water supply enterprise officials, and neighborhood activists teamed up with USAID to assess their local water needs, determine how to access water supplies, and create a financially sustainable system. After analyzing the needs of the community, USAID supplied 400 meters of main line, two kilometers of connecting lines, valves, and 26 standpipes. USAID also arranged for trenching and installation. The citizens of the community donated their own labor to the project, digging trenches and backfilling them after the pipes were laid, as well as installing the standpipes in their neighborhoods.

Today over 3,000 residents and their children now have access to clean, safe drinking water. With quick access to safe, clean drinking water, the potential for waterborne infectious diseases has decreased. Children and their families are no longer required to transport water long distances by hand.

Additionally, revenues from user fees are projected to double, making the system more economically sustainable. The total project cost was \$27,526, of which USAID contributed \$18,100; \$6,858 was matched by local in kind labor and \$2,568 in local funds. The per capita cost for this project was about \$9.00. It is indeed amazing how just \$9.00 a person can transform an entire community.