



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation of the European Union to the
Republic of Tajikistan

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PRESS RELEASE

EUROPEAN UNION SUPPORTS CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS IN TAJIKISTAN

The European Union has started funding **3 projects** under the "**Non State Actors in Development**" programme, for a total amount of **EUR 700 000**.

The new thematic programme "Non State Actors and Local Authorities in Development" was introduced in 2007. It aims to support small scale initiatives by civil society organizations (and local authorities) from the European Union and partner countries in the area of development. The overarching objective of this programme is poverty reduction in the context of sustainable development, including the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals. The programme is actor-oriented. It aims at strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations as a pre-condition for a more equitable, open and democratic society through support to their "own initiatives".

The three selected projects are as follows:

A two-year project entitled as "**Enhancing living standards and food safety of rural people through access to improved veterinary services**", implemented by the **Association of Veterinarians of Tajikistan (TVA)**, a civil society membership organization representing veterinary professionals and their livestock-owning clients. The main aim of the project is to reduce rural poverty through sustained delivery of public and private veterinary services thereby reducing disease losses and making livestock more productive. The project will assist TVA to strengthen over 800 Veterinary Field Units (VFUs) through capacity building and training, particularly in livestock production, provision of basic veterinary equipment and funds for clinic rehabilitation, improving partnership with farmers and with the State Veterinary Inspection Service, establishment of 30 new VFUs where appropriate, and supporting national and local veterinary professional associations. The project will be implemented in Khatlon, Sughd, GBAO and DRD regions of Tajikistan. The main beneficiaries of the project will consist in rural animal owners, including female-headed families (about 830,000 families).

The purpose of the project "**Access, self-management and accountability – supporting Water User Associations in Tajikistan's irrigation water reform**" implemented by **Welthungerhilfe** is to complete previous efforts by formally putting operation and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure in the hands of water users. The action will take place in the densely populated lowlands of Panjakent district in Zeravshan Valley. It works with and through 21 Water Users Associations (WUAs) as well as with their umbrella organization, the federation of Water User Associations. These structures represent approximately 40,000 households, which rely on irrigated agriculture for their livelihood. It is anticipated that improved organization, reduced water losses in irrigation channels as well as an enhanced capacity to operate and maintain the irrigation network will lead to a direct and measurable benefit for the population at large (about 140,000 individuals).

Handicap International's new project is entitled "State and Non-State Actors: Capacity-building, coordination and cooperation towards inclusive development in the Republic of Tajikistan". The strengthening of capacities of following four partnering Disabled People Organisations (DPOs) is at the core of this two year operation: National Union of Disabled People of Tajikistan, Women's League Ishtirok, Public Organization of Deaf People of Tajikistan, Public Organization of the Blind in Tajikistan as well as their branches and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) in and around Khorog, Khujand and Dushanbe. Their technical capacities will be further strengthened in disability and inclusion, advocacy strategies, diplomacy & communications skills, organisational capacities and accountability, through training and a learning-by-doing approach. The unity of the disability movement will be further enhanced to reinforce dialogue and effective cooperation with local authorities and other non-state actors (NSA) for the promotion and implementation of inclusive strategies, policies and actions.

The European Union, composed of 27 Member States, is the world's biggest aid donor. Tajikistan gets the main share of bilateral assistance in the Central Asian region (€66 million for 2007-2010 and 62 million for 2011-2013) in support to sector programmes, technical assistance and grants. It focuses on social protection, health and private sector development, underpinned by public finance management. Tajikistan also receives regional and thematic assistance in areas like border management and drug control (BOMCA/CADAP), education (TEMPUS, Erasmus Mundus), water / environment, migration, human rights and democracy (EIDHR), non-State actors (NSA) and SME development (CA-Invest). The total value of EU assistance disbursed to Tajikistan since 1992 is over €550 million.

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