

# US Ambassador Susan Elliott Champions Development in Tajikistan

Ambassador Elliott attended the graduation of the University of Central Asia's School of Professional and Continuing Education in Khorugh. Two hundred students received certificates at the ceremony, and a total of 132 students from Afghan Badakhshon received scholarships to study English, IT, bookkeeping, and other vocational subjects. The Ambassador toured the campus and also visited microfinance, water, and agricultural assistance projects in the region.

Ambassador Elliott and the Deputy Prime Minister Murodali Alimardon officiated at the USAID Land Reform Project's closing event in celebration of Government of Tajikistan's achievements in advancing land reform. Through a network of legal aid centers, USAID provided direct assistance to 102,000 people by increasing their knowledge and protecting land use rights.

Ambassador Elliott joined local officials at the inauguration of a water user association that will facilitate reliable access to irrigation water for over 22,000 residents across three districts in Shahritus. Water users associations are groups of farmers who work together to democratically plan water delivery schedules and maintain irrigation systems.



Ambassador Elliott, Deputy Prime Minister Alimardon and Khatlon Region Chairman Ghaibullo Afzal opened the USAID Agricultural Inputs Fair in Qurghonteppa. The fair brought together farmers, agribusinesses, financial institutions, and input dealers to facilitate business relationships and promote trade.

Ambassador Elliott joined the Deputy Minister of Health Saida Jobirova at a World Tuberculosis (TB) Day event. USAID projects fight TB through assisting the National TB Program and penitentiary medical system, supporting outpatient treatment, improving laboratory services, and supporting policies and systems for vulnerable populations.

Ambassador Elliott, Deputy Prime Minister Alimardon, and the Director of the Statistical Agency Bahtiya Muhammadijeva, participated in the presentation of the internationally recognized Demographic and Health Survey preliminary report. The Statistical Agency surveyed roughly 6,700 households throughout Tajikistan and interviewed more than 9,600 women. Tajikistan showed positive improvements in a wide range of population, health and nutrition indicators.

Ambassador Elliott and Tajikistan's Minister of Education Nuritdin Saidov attended the launch of the School Dropout Prevention project to reduce the dropout rate of grade 9 students. This program was collaboratively designed with Ministry of Education officials and school personnel to encourage students to stay in school. Over the past year, the program conducted an analysis of the factors that affect dropout in grade 9 and designed school-level interventions.

Ambassador Elliott joined Rajabali Tagoev, Governor of Yovon, and Islomiddin Narsov, Head of the Education Department in Yovon, in attending the closing ceremony of a 4-day Reading for Children workshop. This USAID workshop equipped 26 master trainers with skills and knowledge on how to teach reading and how to help parents encourage young children to love reading.

Ambassador Elliott visited the Istravshan Family Medicine Center in Sogd Oblast where she met with a group of doctors from the surrounding rayons. The doctors were participating in a USAID training to increase access to quality health care services and increase the use of data for decision-making within the health care system.

