



FIRST PERSON

A Teenager Starts School thanks to USAID

Education camp is a turning point for 13 year-old Mamasabyt



Photo: NGO Councils for Human Rights

Mamasabyt, second from the left, with campmates. The education camp was organized by USAID Quality Learning Project for dropout children from six new settlements around Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

“While talking with Mamasabyt, I learned he couldn’t attend school because he had to earn money to support his family. Attending the USAID-supported camp motivated him to go to school.”

Guljamal Sultanalieva, Director, NGO, “Councils for Human Rights”

Access to school for children in the forty new settlements outside of Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan is restricted by impoverishment and a lack of legal residency. Mamasabyt is one of the many children in this situation. At 13, he was illiterate and had never attended school because he needed to work in the bazaar to make money for his family. To add to his mother’s meager wages made selling bananas, Mamasabyt needed to earn about \$4 per day, which he did by picking up and selling used boxes.

USAID has started providing small grants for NGOs reaching out to kids like Mamasabyt living in the settlement areas. One of the ten participating NGOs, the Councils for Human Rights, organized a Summer Education Camp for 21 school drop outs from six new settlements around Bishkek.

Mamasabyt was able to attend camp. He was shy and reluctant to socialize at first, but he applied himself enthusiastically to learning how to read, write, and draw. By the end of camp, Mamasabyt became more social and communicative with the camp’s coordinators and his campmates, even taking part in a public performance of a traditional Ramadan song during the camp’s closing event. He applied his new confidence to an interview with a local journalist.

Due to this USAID sponsored camp, Mamasabyt achieved basic literacy, became more self-confident, improved his public speaking skills, and was motivated to pursue further school activities. Currently, he attends Accelerated Learning courses sponsored by the UN International Labor Organization in Bishkek School # 43. These accelerated courses were developed by representatives of local special education schools and the Ministry of Education with support from the USAID Quality Learning Project.

Telling Our Story

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