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TURKMENISTAN

FIRST PERSON

A Teacher Seeks to Inspire Learning

USAID enabled a teacher to adopt modern classroom methodologies



Photo: ACCELS

“Not only the USAID education project shaped me as a teacher trainer, but enabled me to seek continued professional growth as well.”

- Gulya Muhammetnazarova, a teacher trainer at the *Bilgirje* Educational Center in Ashgabat.

USAID’s education project inspired an experienced teacher to revamp her teaching style and start helping other educators to modernize teaching approaches.

Gulya Muhammetnazarova works as a teacher trainer at the *Bilgirje* Educational Center in Ashgabat. This veteran educator helps modernize teaching methodologies in Turkmenistan - the effort that USAID’s Participation, Education And Knowledge Strengthening Project had started in 2003.

Muhammetnazarova started her career as a teacher of history in 1986. She still remembers the challenges she faced while using traditional teaching methodologies which was common and not effective. “These traditional approaches often failed to motivate the students,” says Muhammetnazarova.

Searching for solutions, Muhammetnazarova came across courses offered by USAID’s education program. “I took my first USAID-sponsored course on interactive methodologies in 2005 and immediately, I became a believer,” says Muhammetnazarova. “Interactive methodologies enable teachers to cover all student learning objectives during the lesson.” After that first course, Muhammetnazarova tried to attend all interactive methodology trainings that USAID’s project offered and eventually started teaching those courses herself. “With USAID’s project, I trained teachers in all the biggest towns of Turkmenistan, except Dashoguz,” says Muhammetnazarova.

In collaboration with governmental educational establishments, the project trained teachers from 40 percent of Lebap province schools. “To this day, teachers use those methods and seek consultations with the trainers that the USAID project had prepared,” says Muhammetnazarova.

When USAID’s project ended in 2007, Muhammetnazarova and a group of other enthusiasts established a community organization named “Us-satlyk Merkezi” (Mastership Center) that continues intensive in-service trainings for teachers. Muhammetnazarova also mentors local teachers to sustain improvements in the classroom and increase parents’ involvement in their children’s learning process.

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