



SNAPSHOT Providing Education to Children

Access to education is priority for USAID project



Photo: Quality Learning Project

Yryskeldy Kuljabaev, a seven-year-old child from a new settlement, a poorly developed area of Bishkek city smiles for the camera in his community.

Yryskeldi Kuljabaev, a seven-year old boy from a new settlement in the suburbs of Bishkek, completed preschool and is enrolled at a nearby school. Without the support of the USAID Quality Learning Project, he may not have entered school and would have been considerably less likely to succeed there. USAID has helped prepare him in preschool classes to ensure his smooth transition to a new and challenging environment. Yryskeldi also received school supplies, including a uniform and school shoes, which are requirements for attending school.

There are about 40 new settlements around Bishkek that sprang up after the collapse of the Soviet Union and most are very poorly developed. Many children have limited access to basic education and some are not prepared for school at all. USAID improved access to basic education by organizing preschool trainings for needy children in those new settlements in August and September 2010.

Yryskeldi couldn't afford the documents needed to enroll in school, nor the school supplies and clothes. His mother, who is unemployed and disabled, receives 2,000 som (about \$43) per month from the government, which is not enough to support her three kids. Yryskeldi is eager to learn but lacked opportunity. When he started the classes, he was not prepared and had limited skills. He studied very hard at the preschool trainings classes and learned a lot. Now he spends a lot of his time at the local library because he enjoys studying. "When Yryskeldi first came to preschool, he couldn't even hold a pen properly and used dark colors in his drawings. By the end of the course, he had changed. One day he drew a map of the country and its seven regions each with a different bright color," said Yryskeldi's preschool training teacher, Borbieva Gulbudu.

The USAID education project prepared 1,042 children in preschool trainings in 40 new settlements in August 2010 – 723 of whom came from low income families. USAID will continue to support needy children in Kyrgyzstan, to help them gain access to education and quality education, because a small improvement in a child's education can have a tremendous impact on that child's life.