



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

TAJIKISTAN

SUCCESS STORY

Donations Help Survive the Winter

USAID cash donations help the poorest families to live through the winter.



Moikhonm Zukurova and her children.
Photo: Mercy Corps

“I want you to give my great gratitude to the American people and to USAID for their support and care for the vulnerable. My family will never forget this.”

Moikhon Zukurova, beneficiary of the USAID Food Support Program.

Moikhon Zukurova is a 50-year old woman who lives with her 75-year old husband, their five children, and the disabled 25-year old son of her husband in the Rash region of Tajikistan. They live in a small mud house that leaks during each rain and is full of drafts. The family has a small household plot where they grow potato and vegetables, but due to lack of irrigation water and very high temperatures during the summer, the harvest was very poor.

The family lives on 120 somoni (\$35) pensions the government provides to Moikhon’s husband and his disabled son. This money is far from being able to provide for even the minimal needs of this large family. The family spends most of the money on the treatment and medication for the disabled son, while the other needs, including the health of the five younger children, receives whatever gets left from it. As Moikhon’s husband takes care of the community center of the village, occasionally, he is able to bring home the leftover food from community events. Once in a while, their neighbors share some food with the family.

To survive the winter, Moikhon sold the family’s only cow and bought some food and firewood. But the money was not enough to repair their house.

When USAID’s Food Security Program, implemented by Mercy Corps, came to Moikhon’s community offering small cash assistance to the most vulnerable households, the villagers identified her family to be among the poorest. The woman was delighted to hear that USAID is planning to provide one time cash-assistance to vulnerable households. “Before, I was thinking that there is no one who can take care of poor families,” said Moikhon. “But, in the meeting I heard that there are some countries that are able to support the poor people during emergency situations.” The USAID program accepted the village vote, and, upon the receipt of the supporting documents from the family, provided \$250 to Moikhon.

“I want you to give my great gratitude to the American people and to USAID for their support and care of the vulnerable,” said Moikhon. She plans to use this money to buy food, clothes for her children, and to pay back the loan she had used to try and patch the leaks in her house before the winter. “It is a great assistance to my family, because I never received anything like that from anybody,” said Moikhon. “My family will never forget this.”