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TAJIKISTAN

FIRST PERSON

Teacher Embraces New Methods

A teacher uses student-centered methodologies to improve learning outcomes



Egamberdieva at her classroom.
Photo: Creative

“With the new methods of teaching, I can more easily involve every child in the learning process.”

- Manzarmo Egamberdieva, a primary school teacher at School #9 in Vahdatobod Village, Vahdat District

Thirty-two year old Manzarmo Egamberdieva is a passionate believer in the student-centered teaching methodologies, a new approach to teaching that is being introduced in Tajikistan with assistance from the USAID Quality Learning Project. “With the new methods of teaching, I can more easily involve every child in the learning process,” says Egamberdieva.

Egamberdieva began teaching primary grades at the age of 18, immediately after graduating from high school. Tajikistan was engulfed in the Civil War at that time. Many teachers had fled Egamberdieva’s village of Vahdatobod, which was one of the hotbeds of the conflict, and the school administration asked Egamberdieva to teach local children. Even though it was dangerous for a young girl to leave the house by herself, and teachers were not being paid, Egamberdieva accepted the request. After the war ended, she enrolled in a correspondence course and received a degree in primary school teaching.

She never thought that one day she will be training other educators. But today, Egamberdieva is one of the trainers the USAID project uses to modernize and improve the learning process throughout the country.

When Egamberdieva first started learning the methodologies that the USAID Quality Learning Project offered, she found them difficult to accept. The interactive, student-centered methods were completely different from those Egamberdieva used at her school or had learned at the university. But the young woman was adamant to try them out. “I returned to my class and applied what I have learned,” she says. With additional training and guidance from the USAID project, Egamberdieva not only mastered the new methodologies, but also started teaching them to other educators at her school.

“I always liked the profession I had chosen, but now I feel at my best,” says Egamberdieva. “When I have my own children, I will make sure they go to the school that is using child-centered teaching methodology,” she adds.