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FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**TAJIKISTAN**

## SNAPSHOT

# From Poverty to Progressive Farmer

### Rural Farmers Tackle Agriculture Problems in Tajikistan with USAID Support



Photo: USAID Family Framing Program

*Zebo Begmatova, above, is the happy owner of a new greenhouse.*

***“Now I can plant tomato, cucumber, greens and other crops with my children during winter, summer, and spring. With honest employment, I have obtained a source of income and improved my living standard.”***

Zebo Begmatova, a widow of 10 years, lives in one of the poorest districts of southern Tajikistan on the Afghanistan border. As a single mother Zebo has had difficulty supporting her two children, ages 12 and 10. Zebo has a small garden, their only source of food, where she plants cabbage, potatoes and tomatoes. She has three chickens that occasionally lay eggs, which is the family’s main source of protein. Zebo does not do this as a hobby. Without any other sources of income this is one of the only ways she can put food on her table.

Zebo’s situation is not unique. In Tajikistan, three-quarters of the population live in rural areas, many with limited sources of income or access to jobs, and have insufficient food to care for their families.

To help Zebo, and others like her, USAID has built greenhouses in some of the poorest and most remote areas of the country. Greenhouses provide food and income to farmers during the winter months, when they normally cannot grow crops and generate any income. Not only do greenhouses help families grow more food throughout the year, they also produce surpluses that can be sold to provide income to families. USAID built 10 greenhouses per setting in four of the poorest areas of southern Tajikistan, in order to offer incentives for produce buyers to come to these rural areas. The scale of this production improves competitiveness for marketing and selling as well as procuring supplies. The site’s production size provides an improved business relationship and network that can lead to greater profit for greenhouse owners.

USAID partnered with families to build the greenhouses together. USAID paid for most of materials and the beneficiaries provided labor. As a poor woman with children, Zebo was selected to participate in this demonstration and became the owner of one of the greenhouses. Zebo was elated after her greenhouse was completed and explained how her family’s life suddenly changed for the better.

Zebo can not only produce food for her family during winter months but now has a steady income source which will help her family.