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SUCCESS STORY

First Turkmen e-Card Catalog

National Conservatory of Turkmenistan benefits from USAID technology program

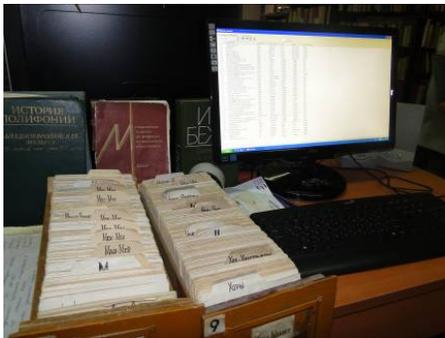


Photo by S. Atayeva

Old card catalog entries are being entered into the new electronic e-catalog system in use at the National Conservatory of Turkmenistan.

The Promotion of Information and Communication Technology in Turkmenistan (PICTT) Program has recently completed an e-catalog system designed for the National Conservatory of Turkmenistan. This e-catalog, the first of its kind in the Turkmen language, is a dramatic improvement over the previous paper card catalog system used to manage the Conservatory's collections.

In 2009, Conservatory teachers received training from PICTT staff in basic computer skills and key software such as Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. PICTT staff also set up and managed an interactive whiteboard display for an academic competition between students of the National Conservatory and the National Academy of Art of Turkmenistan. As a result of their previous cooperation, when the Conservatory's librarians were looking for support to modernize their catalog system, the decision to contact PICTT for technical help was an easy one.

The Deputy Rector of the National Conservatory and past PICTT trainee, Rasul Amangeldiyev, worked with librarians and software designers to capture all of the old system's processes and characteristics for the new e-catalog. Within two months, the code for the e-catalog had been developed and librarians were entering new titles into the system.

"The adoption of an e-catalog helped us to sort out our library once again and to be sure how many copies of books we actually have. Besides, we understood that if our staff will use the e-catalog in their everyday work, the time spent looking for information about a book will be three times less," said Rasul.

Emboldened by this progress, the Conservatory has begun working with new, supplemental library database tools. The key software designer for the e-catalog, Zohrab Abdullayev, said, "I am very happy that the international experience of using advanced technology in education is coming to our higher education institutes...and that we had the chance to create the first Turkmen language e-catalog."