

Azerbaijan Youth Assessment SOW

June 2004

The team will conduct a two-prong mission consisting of (one) a review of opportunities for youth employment and the preparation for youth to join the workforce, and (two) a review of the Mission's SOs, SO activities and potential new activities through existing SOs for improving the environment for youth and maximizing the participation of youth in those activity areas.

A. BACKGROUND

Azerbaijan's youth movement was monopolized by *komsolmol* in the FSU until the early 1990s. Following the collapse of Soviet rule, numerous problems such as the N-K conflict, IDP/refugee issues, economic breakdown and political turbulence led to a system of broken societal values, inadequate education system, lack of interest by traditional mentors in students, (and lack of knowledge in this transitional environment on how to mentor), and an unstable and too often violent political and social environment. These have impacted on youth views, attitudes and opportunities resulting in insufficient opportunities for the future, growing pessimism, migration and involvement in delinquent behaviors.

As of CY 2000, 75 Azerbaijan NGOs were functioning in the area of children's and youth issues. They represent a wide range of areas including political parties, socio-political organizations and public associations such as students, war veterans, IDP/refugees and young professionals. Most organizations are located in urban areas, with few active in rural sites. One assessment indicated that the youth NGOs have not been very effective in serving youth needs. A Ministry of Youth and Sports was established in 1991, followed by a law on youth policy the same year. The most current youth legislation is the Law on National Youth Policy adopted in April 2002. The policy provides government support to moral and behavioral education of youth, youth employment, annual medical examinations in line with the educational system and youth organizations.

An exceptionally high proportion of the Azeri population is under 29 years of age (55 percent), with 28 percent between 15 and 29 years of age. This "bubble" will not work its way into a more typical demographic balance for at least another decade. The most serious risk factor for this cohort of the population is unemployment.

Trends in the labor market include a transition to self-employment as employees are dismissed from state enterprises and a gradual movement from productive to service jobs. Unemployment and the lack of opportunity for youth to become employed can lead to alienation and radicalization toward religious, political and ethnic extremism. Labor migration, largely among youth, primarily to Russia and Turkey, reduces this risk to some degree. Despite the fact that much of the foreign demand for labor is erratic and seasonal, thereby causing pools of unemployed youth to ebb and flow with uncertainty, opportunities abroad serve as an important safety valve for youth unemployment. There are an estimated two million citizens who work abroad, with about one-third of them migrating on a seasonal basis. Migrant labor remittances also serve as an indispensable source of income for poorer communities. Migrant Azeri workers send \$100 to \$300 a month home and remit \$1.0 to \$1.5 billion a year.

The education system has greatly deteriorated during the past decade. Major reform is needed at all levels, from primary through tertiary education. The World Bank has taken leadership in this sector by initiating a ten-year, \$63 million program in 2003 to improve the quality of education and realign the entire sector with the needs of an emerging market economy and its social conditions. Emphasis is being given to equipping youth with the skills and knowledge necessary to bring increased relevance and employability in the new economy. The Japanese have provided

funding for the building of new schools given the deteriorating physical infrastructure and IDPs and refugees who occupy, i.e. live in, schools.

Youth distrust political, judicial and other state institutions, with police and parliament being the most suspect. Although political parties are distrusted by youth, youth maintain a high rate of interest in parties and political developments. They receive much of their political information from western, European, international radio stations, and a growing segment of Azerbaijan's youth has access to the internet, particularly in Baku.

Another factor diminishing the potential influence of youth on instability is that the youth cohort will further decrease as birth rates continue their trend downward. The birth rate dropped by over 40 percent in the 1990s, and the fertility rate dropped from 2.7 in 1991 to 1.6 in 2001.

The current situation allows for a limited window of opportunity for economic development to advance and spread throughout the country in order to provide domestic jobs and income for a broader base of the population. Transition to an effectively functioning market economy is necessary for this to be attained.

The USAID program in this strategic planning period will work to take advantage of this opportunity by mainstreaming support to youth throughout each of its Strategic Objectives. Community mobilization activities will provide for socialization of youth through teamwork, leadership, discipline, and task orientation as well as a greater sense of worth, all characteristics that will prepare youth for a more stable workplace and career enhancement. Business development activities will strengthen skills and opportunities for the large youth cohort. Increased participation in civil society activities will further stability and cohesion among youth. The impact of this broad-based programmatic approach to supporting youth will be measured, as feasible, in the mission's PMP which will be developed in the fall.

The Mission is implementing the strategy through a number of discrete activities, as follows:

SO 1.3 Accelerated Development and growth of Private Enterprises

FINCA

ACDI/VOCA

IFDC

Project Harmony

Pragma

Shorebank

RABD

SO 2.1 Civil Society Better Organised and Represented

IFES

IRI

NDI

ABA CEELI

CRS

InterNews

WHAM

SO 3.4

Mercy Corps

AIHA
CHF

SO 4.2 Cross Cutting Programs
World learning -Participant Training
Eurasia Foundation

Each of the above activities is or will be undertaken by a contractor or grantee and will work to achieve measurable results that address the Mission's approved strategic plan. Corruption, Youth and Gender are the Mission's cross cutting themes not represented by an SO.

B. TASKS

Desk Review in USA.

Team members will collect and analyse data and resource documents on youth in Azerbaijan from USAID, World Bank, UN, and others as they can find and as listed below. The team will become familiar with the USAID draft 2005-2009 strategy, on-going activities and planned activities. The team will hire two local team members to serve as interpreters/assessors. Potential names and contacts will be provided.

Resource Documents on Youth

1. 2003 Human Rights Report, State Department
2. "Assessment of Young People's Health and Development Programme with Focus on Capacity and Effectiveness of Youth Resource Centers," Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Youth, Sport and Tourism; UNICEF, July 2002
3. "Azerbaijan at the Crossroads, Azerbaijan Conflict Assessment," 2004
4. "Azerbaijan: National Employment Strategy (NES) 2004-2009," M. Hopkins et al., September 2003
5. CIA World Factbook, 2003
6. "Concerns of Youth," Kenan Najafov, Azerbaijan International, Winter 2003
7. "Contemporary Social Problems and Gaps in Social Work Services in Azerbaijan: Needs Assessment Report," Social Work Education Report, Baku Education Information Center and Baku State University, June 2003
8. "Former Soviet Union: Portrait of the Next Generation," Dr. Nadia M. Diuk, Azerbaijan Intl, Winter 2003
9. "Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2000: Azerbaijan," State Statistical Committee and UNICEF, 2000
10. Reproductive Health Survey: 2001, ADRA, November 2002
11. Survey of the Economic Activity of the Population of Azerbaijan: Methodology and Analysis of the Labour Market Situation, State Statistical Committee, 2004
12. "Survey of the Economic Activity of the Population of Azerbaijan: Methodology and Major Findings, 2003," ILO, February 2004
13. Survey on Adolescent Health and Development Needs, Ministry of Health and UNICEF, November 1999
14. "Today's Youth: A View from the 1950s Generation," Dr. Mehman Aghayev, Azerbaijan Intl, Winter 2003

15. "Young People And Media In Central & Eastern Europe," CIS & Baltic States, Report Prepared by InterMedia for UNICEF, May 2001
16. "Young People's Health and Development Survey: Findings," UNICEF, May 2002
17. "Youth at Transition Period In Azerbaijan Republic," Country Paper, Mery Gardashkhanova, State Statistical Committee, Baku
18. Global Education Digest 2004, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

Field work in Azerbaijan.

Field study on youth employment and preparation for the workforce. Team members will conduct structured interviews with key informants identified in conjunction with the Mission. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted with the following:

GOAj: MOE, MOH, SPPRED, Regional Development Committee

Industry leaders: BP, RISK, more tbd

Education: Khazar, Western University, Baku State, universities in the regions

Donors: UNDP, INOCEF, SOROS, more tbd

Field Study for the Mission's activities. Team members will conduct structured interviews with key informants identified in conjunction with the Mission. Interviews and focus groups will be conducted with some of the same above and additionally:

Key Mission staff

Partners: CRS, IRI, IRC, Mercy Corps, more tbd

Local NGOs: NAYORA, UMID, more tbd

Field study on youth employment and preparation for the workforce

1. Determine quantity and quality of workforce-related formal and informal education and training institutions for youth.
2. Identify opportunities for addressing workforce development and labor market issues that can be incorporated into USAID's draft country strategic objectives and country strategy.
3. Identify other donor activities that are focused on labor market and competitiveness issues and opportunities for USAID synergy with these activities.

USAID/Caucasus-Azerbaijan's draft 2005-2009 Strategy and SO's listed above:

1. Analyze each of the specific activities listed above in terms of their potential for assisting in improving the environment for participation by youth.
2. Provide a list of clear, well-defined potential interventions of what could be done in the area of youth related to the Mission's SOs.
3. Identify interventions that coincide with existing USAID implementing Partners and interventions for consideration as new activities.
4. Provide the following for each potential option:
 - action recommended
 - rationale for recommending the action

- expected results
- parties involved (government dept, NGO, contractor, etc)
- description of linkages and synergies with ongoing/planned activities
- priority ranking of the potential interventions

Where feasible the team will incorporate gender considerations.

C. DELIVERABLES

Report: 25 pages or less, including a concise executive summary, on Azerbaijan's labor force challenges that identifies workforce development activities and strategies the Azerbaijani private sector and USAID can undertake **within** the constraints of the environment (including a potentially non-responsive GOAj) to increase the number and quality of employment opportunities in urban and rural areas within the Mission's SO 1.3, 2.1, and 3.4. References and a list of people interviewed for the assessment will be included. The report will be produced in hard copy with a spine binding with Youth Assessment 2004 Azerbaijan labeled on the spine. An electronic draft will be sent to the Mission NLT two weeks from end of the GWIT contractor's field consultancy. A final electronic version will be sent to the Mission NLT one week from receipt of the Mission's comments to the GWIT contracted consultant.

Mission debriefing: Debriefing on the assessment's key findings and future program options will be held by the consultant with USAID staff at the end of the fieldwork period.

D. STAFFING AND LEVEL OF EFFORT

The assessment will be conducted by a consultant versed in youth issues related to unemployment, civil society/political activism, and informal/vocational education/ training. The consultant will spend a total of 15 days on this study. Two days will be devoted to reviewing existing studies, demographic and other statistics, and developing interview protocols in the US; approximately 10 days in the field meeting with USAID staff and Partners and interviewing relevant people in Azerbaijan. Two trips (rural and urban) will be arranged in Azerbaijan. Three days will be devoted to completing the write-up of the study and responding to USAID comments on the draft. The consultant will be supported by two local hires who will serve as interpreters/assessment team members for 3 days prior to the site visit and during the 10-day fieldwork.

E. TIMING

The Consultant will prepare for the study in late May and early June 2004 and will conduct the field study in Azerbaijan between June 7 and June 18. A summary of major findings and recommendations will be left in the field and a draft report will be provided within 10 working days thereafter. The final report will be provided within one week after receiving USAID feedback on the draft report.