



Country: AZERBAIJAN
Initiation Plan

Project Title: Promoting rural women participation in the economic and social life

Expected CP Outcome(s): 2011-2015 CP Outcome 1.2: National strategies, policies, capacity to address regional and gender disparities in work opportunities strengthened, with focus on increasing the ability of vulnerable groups to manage and mitigate risks

Initiation Plan Start Date: June 2011

Initiation Plan End Date: May 2012

Implementing Partner: UNDP

Brief Description

The Republic of Azerbaijan is committed to the international norms on gender equality and to the implementation of women's rights. The equality of women and men is affirmed in the Constitution of Azerbaijan and other legal documents including the Law on Gender Equality. Still, de-facto, some disparities are observed in the level of men's and women's participation in economic, social and political life.

The State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs (SCFWCA) promotes programmes that aim at the advancement of women in all spheres of life, changes in traditional gender stereotypes and elimination of discriminatory practices. The aim of this project is to support the activities of the SCFWCA through expanding women's participation in the economic and community life, with a focus on rural areas, as well as build the capacities of the SCFWCA staff in producing qualitative data for evidence-based policy formulation.

Programme Period:	2011-2015
CPAP Programme Component:	Poverty eradication and achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs
Atlas Award ID:	00061827
PAC Meeting Date	11 May 2011

Total resources required	\$ 99,000
Total allocated resources:	\$ 99,000
• Regular	\$ 99,000
• Other:	
○ Donor	_____
○ Donor	_____
○ Donor	_____
○ Government	_____
Unfunded budget:	_____
In-kind Contributions	_____

I. PURPOSE

Achieving gender equality is one of the United Nation's highest priorities and is considered as a necessary precondition for fully achieving human development. While it is true that women are generally the victims of gender inequality, it is also a fact that men have their own difficulties specific to their gender. Gender equality recognizes the individual - regardless of sex - as the central figure of societal progress and enables the nation to set on a long and thorny path to democratization and the nation's sustainable development.

This year launch of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – UN Women – demonstrates the United Nations' intent to deepen the pursuit of advancing women's empowerment and promote women's full and equal participation in all areas of public and social life to achieve the sustainable, peaceful and just society promised in the United Nations Charter.

The legal framework and policies pursued by the Government of Azerbaijan create enabling environment for women to exercise their rights and advance their position in the society. Since independence, Azerbaijan has ratified almost all essential international documents on the protection of women's rights including the UN Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1992) and the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), 1995. The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan enshrines a philosophy of equality between men and women. Azerbaijan also adopted the Law on Guarantees of Gender (Men and Women) Equality (2006) and the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence (2010). The National Employment Strategy also envisions measures to promote gender equality in the labour market including introduction of flexible forms of work for women.

However, in Azerbaijan, like in many other countries, there is a gap between legislative acts and their enforcement. Over the past decade the economic situation in Azerbaijan has been consistently improving and new employment opportunities have been generated, however, women still face both vertical and horizontal segregation in many sectors of employment. Women are concentrated mainly in low-wage sectors, deemed suitable for the 'female nature' such as education, health and social services.¹ Disparities observed in the level of men's and women's participation in economic, social and political life are, to a large extent, accounted for by patriarchal attitudes and the stereotypes regarding women roles and responsibilities in the family and society, which constitute a significant impediment to the implementation of the legal provisions and are a root cause of women's disadvantaged position in public life, the labour market, and other areas.

The United Nations works closely with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children's Affairs in advancing social and economic development in Azerbaijan. In the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2011-2015), advancing gender equality is given special prominence as a cross-cutting objective that is integral to all areas of national development throughout the country, and all three UNDAF outcomes include gender-related components around which UN strives to 'Deliver as One' in Azerbaijan.

The recent CEDAW review has called Azerbaijan to "intensify its efforts, particularly in rural areas, to bring about change in the widely accepted attitudes leading to the subordination of women and the stereotypical roles applied to both sexes. Such measures should include awareness-raising and educational campaigns targeting, inter alia, community leaders, parents, teachers, officials and young girls and boys."²

This proposed project aims to support the SCFWCA in the implementation of the national measures in response to the CEDAW Committee recommendations by promoting rural women participation in the economic and social life. The project includes four components:

Component 1. Expanding Women's Participation in the Economy: Advocacy & Awareness Raising.

Component 2. Expanding Women's Participation in the Economy: Employment

¹ Country Gender Briefing Kit, 2011

² Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, 44th session, 20 July – 7 August 2009

Component 3. Expanding Women's Participation in the Community: Empowerment

Component 4. Capacity Building for the staff of the SCFWCA in research for policy guidance.

II. EXPECTED OUTPUT

The Initiation Plan provides a framework for the implementation of the preparatory activities for the development of the fully-fledged project 'Promoting Rural Women's Participation in the Social and Economic Life'. The Initiation Plan covers such activities as development and piloting of the awareness-raising and education materials, assessment of labour market and sociological surveys among the target groups, defining the training needs of the staff of the SCWFCA and preparing the training curriculum/materials, all of which serve the purpose of collecting and analyzing data/information required for the preparation of the full project document.

The Initiation Plan is expected to produce the following deliverables by components:

Component 1. Expanding Women's Participation in the Economy: Advocacy & Awareness Raising.

This component aims to promote the positive image of working women and reinforce values of gender equity and equality through the diffusion of gender-awareness information and training. This component will, essentially, focus on advocacy and awareness raising.

Actions:

- *Develop awareness raising materials and organize a seminar for rural women to improve their awareness of economic rights*
- *Organize awareness raising campaign on the Law on Gender Equality*

Component 2. Expanding Women's Participation in the Economy: Employment

This component aims at improving employability and access to employment of women in the rural areas, with a special focus on vulnerable groups of women and victims of domestic violence, through market-oriented professional skills development, and career guidance and professional orientation based on analysis of market demand.

Actions:

- *Conduct an assessment of the labour market to identify the gaps that can be filled by rural women*
- *Develop manual for rural women on how to start-up the businesses*
- *Design and deliver pilot training courses for women entrepreneurship*
- *Based on the feedback, finalize and publish the manual*

Component 3. Expanding Women's Participation in the Community: Empowerment

This component aims to organize rural women into initiative groups and empower them to become active members of their communities, thereby improving the status of women in the rural areas.

Actions:

- *Conduct sociological survey on needs and interests of rural women in the field of civil society, women rights and activities of the women NGOs*
- *Support establishment of a Women's Education Centre (WEC) to nurture a pool of active and educated women able and interested to participate in the community life*

Component 4. Capacity Building of the staff of the State Committee for Family Women and Children's Affairs

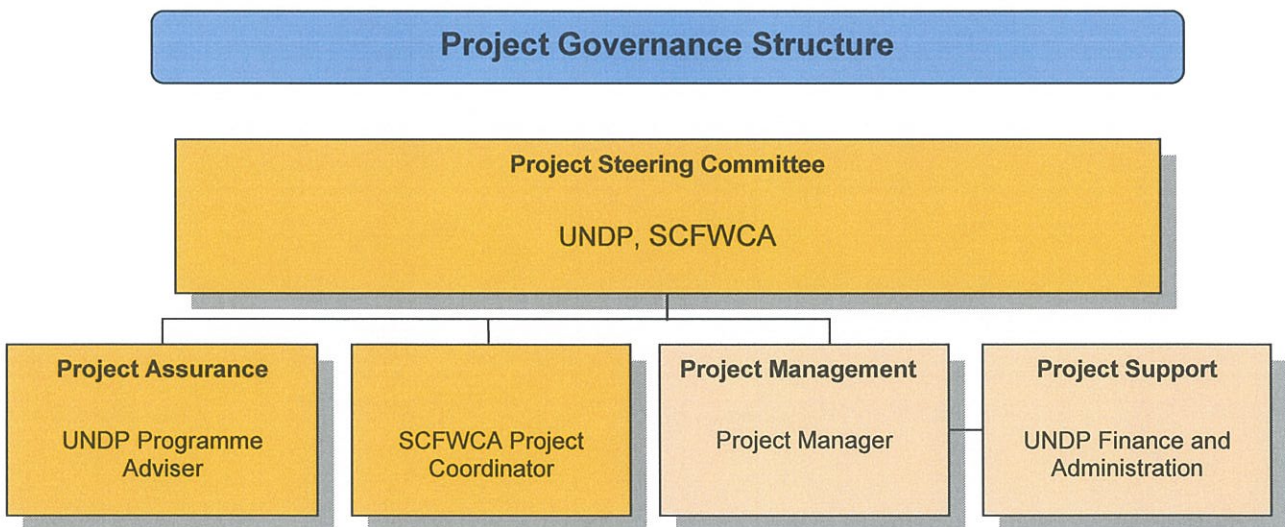
This component aims to increase the capacity of the staff of the SCFWCA in designing and conducting sociological researches on gender issues that would provide valuable inputs into formulation of gender policy, as well as organization of induction courses for the new staff of the SCFWCA.

Actions:

- Develop an induction package for the newly recruited staff of the SCFWCA and organize a pilot training. Based on the lessons learnt from the pilot session, finalize the training package.
- Develop training curriculum and materials for the training in sociological researches and organize a pilot training for the staff of the SCFWCA. Based on the lessons learnt from the pilot training, finalize the training package.

III. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

I. Project Governance. For the purposes of Initiation Plan, UNDP will serve as the Implementing Agency and carry out the activities in close collaboration with the State Committee for Family, Women and Children’s Affairs and other relevant stakeholders. The SCFWCA as the principal Government counterpart will be responsible for the facilitation of all project events, consultant missions undertaken within the context of this project, ensuring appropriate access to the project site, relevant data, records, agencies and authorities. During the Initiation Plan Phase, UNDP and SCFWCA will also seek partnership with other UN Agencies (UNFPA and ILO). Project Governance Structure and the composition of Project Board is as follows:



II. Project Management. Project Manager (PM) will be recruited and tasked with the day-to-day management of project activities, as well as with substantive, financial and administrative reporting. PM will be responsible for project implementation, routine management and monitoring. His/her primary responsibility is to ensure that the planned outputs are produced by undertaking necessary activities in accordance with the project plan and meeting the required standards of quality and within the specified constraints of time and cost.

III. Project Assurance. UNDP will designate a Programme Advisor to provide independent project oversight and monitoring functions, to ensure that project activities are managed and milestones accomplished. The UNDP Programme Advisor will be responsible for reviewing the project reports, produced by the PM.

SCFWCA Project Coordinator will perform his/her duties under the supervision of Project Steering Committee. He/she will be responsible for legally substantiated, planned implementation of

activities implemented by SCFWCA and will keep informed the Steering Committee on project activities.

IV. Project Support. UNDP will provide financial and administrative support to the project including procurement, contracting, travel and payments.

V. Expert support. Local/international experts and/or consultancy companies will be recruited by UNDP as required for the implementation of each component, to develop training/awareness raising materials, conduct of studies and surveys.

The UN Gender theme Group on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women which is playing a coordinating role among the UN agencies on gender issues will be consulted.

The project will maintain broad consultations with civil society and NGOs that are active in gender issues as well as the champions of women's cause in Azerbaijan.

IV. MONITORING

In accordance with the programming policies and procedures outlined in the *UNDP User Guide*, the project will be monitored through the following:

- PM will carry out on-going monitoring and quality assurance, along with the oversight of daily project implementation.
- PM will submit Project Progress Report (PPR) at the end of the initiation plan, using the standard report format available in the Executive Snapshot;
- With inputs from PM, Issue Log shall be activated in Atlas and updated to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or requests for change;
- With inputs from PM, Risk Log shall be activated in Atlas to capture the potential risks on the implementation of both the piloting activities and the future full-fledged project. Risk Logs will be regularly updated by reviewing the external environment that may affect the project implementation;
- With inputs from PM, Project Lessons-learned log shall be activated and regularly updated to ensure on-going learning and adaptation within the organization, and to be included the preparation of the PPR.