



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization



National Commission  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
for UNESCO  
UNESCO Office in Moscow  
for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus,  
the Republic of Moldova and the Russian Federation



# UNESCO

## Country Programming Document

# THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

## 2014–2017



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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
BR(s)	Biosphere Reserve(s)
CBOs	Community-Based Organizations
CI	Communication and Information
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CLT	Culture
CoF	Co-financing
ED	Education
EFA	Education for All
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
GEF	Global Environment Facility
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HQ	Headquarters
IAs	Implementing Agencies
ICT(s)	Information and Communication Technology(ies)
ILO	International Labour Organization
MAB	Man and Biosphere
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOS	Moscow
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSB	Public Service Broadcasting
RB	Regular Budget
RBM	Results Based Management
SC	Science
SD	Sustainable Development
SHS	Social and Human Sciences
SISTER	System of Information on Strategies, Tasks and the Evaluation of Results
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SWAps	Sector-Wide Approaches
TOR	Terms of Reference
TV	Television
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UCPD	UNESCO Country Programming Document
UN	United Nations
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDESD	United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESS	UNESCO National Education Support Strategies
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
WH	World Heritage

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The UNESCO Country Programming Document for the Republic of Azerbaijan (herein referred to as UCPD), is based on the analysis of the current situation, the country's priorities in the fields of education, including HIV and AIDS prevention, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture and communication and information, and the experience gained in the country. The Document has been aligned with the national development goals and state programmes drawn up in accordance with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); this is also relevant to and complements the current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for the country.



*"The Azerbaijani Mugam" inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2008*

The UCPD is based on results of analytical studies conducted in consultation with the National Commission for UNESCO. This helped identify opportunities for the most effective response to country's needs within UNESCO's fields of competence, in line with the up-coming Organization's Medium-Term Strategy (37 C/4) and priorities set in UNESCO's draft Programme and Budget (37 C/5). Another objective was to identify results that were expected and achieved and main challenges and lessons learnt, and also to make proposals for the future cooperation and partnerships framework with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Activities and projects planned under the UCPD will be implemented through tripartite social partnerships involving the national Government, the relevant UN Agencies, civil society and, where appropriate, the private sector. The UNESCO Office in Moscow will work in close cooperation with the Government of the country, including the National Commission for UNESCO and the relevant Ministries. Partnership with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) will help effectively achieve the UNDAF Outcomes, the Country Programme Outcomes and the specific Programme Component Outputs. Partnership with civil society organizations will be expanded and strengthened by utilizing knowledge and resources they could offer in attaining UNESCO outcomes and outputs. Collaboration with the Offices of the Ombudsman, as previously, will be key in successfully promoting the Human Rights-Based Approach. Gender equality will be maintained and promoted throughout all UNESCO's actions.

Multi-stakeholder collaboration within the country will be essential for UNESCO in successfully contributing to the UNDAF goal of reducing economic, social and political inequality through capacity development, the creation of institutional frameworks, support to the development of policy and regulatory frameworks to promote accountable, transparent, and efficient governing institutions, and the development of measures to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development.

This partnership strategy is to foster the implementation of the UCPD, lay the groundwork for ensuring sustainability of the outcomes to be achieved through the UCPD and serve as a catalyst in leveraging extra-budgetary funds to implement the UCPD beyond the regular UNESCO budget and employing policy/legal/institutional reforms and UN-coherent actions to this end.

To ensure that the programme and projects are effectively implemented, a UCPD monitoring and evaluation system (M&E) will be established. M&E includes a series of linked activities, among them UNESCO M&E tools/RBM under SISTER, periodical reporting and evaluation according to UCPD Guidelines, and regular monitoring of progress in carrying out the activities. Periodical progress reports will be drawn up in consultation with the UNCT countries, serving as a basis for annual and biannual UNDAF progress reports.

## PART I – SITUATION ANALYSIS<sup>1</sup>

The Republic of Azerbaijan is located in the south-western part of the Caucasus. It borders Iran and Turkey in the south, Russia in the north, Georgia in the northwest and Armenia in the west. The capital of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Baku, is situated on the shore of the Caspian Sea in the south of the Absheron Peninsula, covering an area of 2,200 square km.

According to the State Statistics Committee, the population of Azerbaijan has been growing slightly by 1% to 1.4% per year over the past decade. In 2012, it was 9,421,200 people, with 47.1% of them living in rural areas.<sup>2</sup>

Seven percent of Azerbaijan's population is displaced<sup>3</sup>. Most of these internally displaced persons (IDPs) were forcibly displaced during the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan in 1988–1994. While negotiations on the occupied territories in and around Nagorno-Karabakh are still continuing under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group with no tangible result and no final peaceful settlement to the conflict has been achieved, the government of Azerbaijan is committed to promoting the IDPs' economic opportunities and livelihoods, which is critical to their welfare and sustainable development.

After gaining independence from the USSR in 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan became a member of the United Nations in March 1992 and joined UNESCO three months later. On February 21, 1994, the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO was established.

Since 1996, Azerbaijan has seen a period of macroeconomic stability and steady economic development. Once a country seeking international support, Azerbaijan has been gradually evolved into one of the most dynamic and strongest economies in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and a leading regional investor, successfully leveraging its historical role in the oil and gas industry and being committed to future growth.

In recent years, Azerbaijan has been among the fastest growing economies in the world, with average annual GDP growth of 21.1% between 2003 and 2007, peaking at 30% in 2006, which was mainly generated by the oil sector. This impressive performance has been the key factor in Azerbaijan's transition from a «lower-middle» to an «upper-middle» income country.

Azerbaijan's economic expansion somewhat slowed down in 2009 due to the impact of the global financial and economic downturn. However, Azerbaijan was significantly less affected than the other countries in the region, as its long-term energy export contracts and an expansionary fiscal stance have cushioned the negative effects of the crisis. Moreover, there has been a marked shift in the underlying economic dynamics in Azerbaijan since 2010, and the non-oil sector has replaced the oil sector as the main driver of growth, pushing GDP up by 1% to 2.2% in 2011–2012.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, one of the key challenges Azerbaijan is facing in terms of economic development is the need to leave behind its still significant dependence on hydrocarbon exports and go towards growth more strongly anchored in the private sector, the formal economy and the non-oil branches of the economy, which can contribute to expanding job opportunities across the country. To deal with this and other development challenges, a number of far-reaching national policy documents (i. e. strategies and programmes) have been adopted to solidify the legal basis for economic growth. Azerbaijan's main development document, the State Programme for Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development

<sup>1</sup> As of April 2013

<sup>2</sup> State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
<http://www.stat.gov.az/source/demography/indexen.php>

<sup>3</sup> The World Bank Data <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Azerbaijan-Snapshot.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank Data <http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Azerbaijan-Snapshot.pdf>

(SPPRSD), adopted for 2008–2015, identifies several strategic development goals for this period, including those focused on the development of the non-oil sector, improving the quality of and ensuring equal access to affordable basic education and health services, promoting and protecting gender equality and ensuring sustainable environmental management.

Azerbaijan ranks 82<sup>nd</sup> on the 2012 HDI listing, which puts it in the «high human development» category. According to official statistics, the poverty rate is gradually decreasing and was estimated to be below 10% in 2012. Despite this positive trend, however, IDPs, refugees and households with many children remain vulnerable to poverty risk.

Azerbaijan is committed to international gender equality standards and to protecting girls' and women's rights. The country has significantly progressed towards building a legislative framework on gender equality; however, gender disparities still remain widespread. Women (in particular, among IDPs) constitute one of the most vulnerable groups due to higher unemployment, greater marginalisation in economic activities, and low participation in decision-making processes. Thus, only 16 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women in Azerbaijan. Female participation on the labour market is 61.6% compared to 68.5% for men.<sup>5</sup>

The country has already met or is well on its way to meeting many of the Millennium Development Goals; in particular, it has halved extreme poverty and hunger, achieved universal primary education, eliminated gender disparities in the primary and secondary education systems, and reduced the spread of tuberculosis. At the same time, some indicators, while improving, still require continued attention as they remain below the average for the upper-middle-income countries.

As a sign of the country's rising status in the world and successful diplomatic outreach, Azerbaijan, for the first time in its history, was elected to the UN Security Council for a two-year term in 2012.

**Education:** Azerbaijan has nearly achieved universal primary education and gender equity in enrolment rates, thus ensuring the right to education for girls and women.

The rapid development of the economy has created favourable conditions for reinforcing the education sector. The national budget's allocations for education in 2010 (the latest data available) were 10.0% of the total government expenditure.<sup>6</sup>

In May 2009, Azerbaijan adopted a state programme of reforms in the higher education system for 2009–2013, aimed at integrating the national higher education system into the European education area, adjusting its content to the principles of the Bologna Process (including the introduction of a credit system to the education process), and creating the staff resources in accordance with the labour market demand. In order to ensure the higher education system quality and improve its competitiveness, new mechanisms have been introduced to define per capita budget funding for the institutions.

Azerbaijan has been working also to boost academic mobility under its revised «State Programme on Youth Education Abroad in 2007–2015». As many as 5,000 students are expected to be sent abroad to study by 2015.

Measures have also been taken to revive the technical-vocational education and training (TVET) system in the country. The «State Program for the development of vocational education in the Republic of



*Dance classes*

<sup>5</sup> UNDP in Azerbaijan <http://www.az.undp.org/content/azerbaijan/en/home/countryinfo/>

<sup>6</sup> The World Bank Data <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.XPD.TOTL.GB.ZS>

Azerbaijan for 2007–2012» has been implemented recently to foster cooperation between vocational institutions and employers, upgrade TVET's public status, improve the logistics and infrastructural resources, create a national professional curriculum, elaborate the National Qualification Framework, develop an informal vocational education system for adults, and establish a private vocational education chain.

Furthermore, curriculum reforms have been undertaken at secondary schools to facilitate the development of creative potential in children and young people. Other governmental programmes have been implemented, particularly those addressing the assessment of the learning process and centralised examination systems.

The Government pays special attention to increasing the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in education, especially in secondary and higher education institutions. Azerbaijan recently implemented a state programme for introducing ICT in the educational system in 2008–2012, aimed at improving the legal basis regulating activities of government and local self-government bodies in using ICT in education, developing the ICT infrastructure in the education system, and carrying out complex activities to improve the teaching and administrative personnel's ICT literacy.

**HIV and AIDS:** According to the Country Progress Report on Implementation of the UNGASS Declaration of Commitment on HIV and AIDS (2012)<sup>7</sup>, the total number of HIV infections in Azerbaijan reached 3,267 at the beginning of 2012. However, UNAIDS estimates the actual number of HIV cases in the country at 6,700 and the adult prevalence rate at 0.1%. Men account for over 80% of all the cases.

Supported by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFTAM), relevant UN agencies, the Open Society Foundations, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and in collaboration with civil society organisations, the government of Azerbaijan is promoting a comprehensive response to the epidemic in line with universal principles of access to prevention, treatment, care and support.

According to the Country Progress Report, all schools in Azerbaijan provide life skills-based education. However, the level of HIV awareness among young people (15–24 years old) remains low: in 2006 (the latest data available), only 4.8% of young women and 5.3% of young men surveyed could correctly identify the ways of HIV prevention and misconceptions about its transmission modes.<sup>8</sup>

The National Action Plan on Human Rights Protection in the Republic of Azerbaijan approved by the president in 2011 contains provisions on safeguarding the rights of HIV-positive people.

**Natural Sciences:** Rapid economic development in Azerbaijan has involved an increasingly negative impact on the environment, including unsustainable use of natural resources, pollution of water resources through discharges of contaminated water; biodiversity loss and fish resources degradation; supply of low-quality water to inhabited regions; air pollution by industrial plants and transport vehicles; deforestation; degradation of soil (erosion, desertification, etc.); inappropriate regulation of the industry and housing sectors, including the dumping of hazardous solid wastes; and some other factors.

These problems have prompted the Government to develop an environmental policy having three principal objectives:

- Application of methodologies based on sustainable development principles to decrease environmental pollution and regulate environmental protection;
- Efficient consumption of natural resources and development of alternative and non-traditional methods, such as renewable energy sources and energy efficiency;

<sup>7</sup> [http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourresponse/countryprogressreports/2012countries/ce\\_AZ\\_Narrative\\_Report%5B1%5D.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/en/dataanalysis/knowyourresponse/countryprogressreports/2012countries/ce_AZ_Narrative_Report%5B1%5D.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> *ibid*

- Environmental needs assessment, stronger cooperation with international organizations, and development of national capacities.

In 2010, which was declared the Year of Ecology by the president, various public awareness raising campaigns were organised and e-resources created to promote sustainable development education.

In 2011, Azerbaijan launched the National Strategy on the Use of Alternative and Renewable Energy Sources for 2012–2020, aimed at creating a legislative framework to stimulate the development of a renewable energy sector, which should benefit the national economy and contribute to reaching global goals in dealing with climate change. It is expected to be finally approved in 2013.

**Social and Human Sciences:** Gender mainstreaming is among Azerbaijan’s major challenges: the SPFRSD 2008–2015 lists promotion and protection of gender equality as one of the strategic goals.

As a UN member, Azerbaijan adheres to numerous conventions on human rights protection in bioethics and is actively involved in UNESCO’s activity in this field of bioethics. The establishment of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan’s Institute of Human Rights in 2010, whose primary role is to raise awareness of bioethics among government officials, the scientific community and other target groups, has catalyzed the development of bioethics and medical law in the country.

To raise the general public’s awareness of the matter, the UNESCO Chair launched a scientific and educational TV programme on bioethics on Azerbaijan’s national TV in 2011.

Baku hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) of UNESCO in 2011, which generated keen interest of local communities. Following-up on the IBC session and based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNESCO and Baku State University, the UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum was introduced to the university’s 2011–2012 educational programme to promote bioethics and human rights protection in the national higher education system.

Azerbaijan was the 60<sup>th</sup> State Party to the International Convention Against Doping in Sport, having acceded to it on 23 July 2007. The country is very active in mainstreaming international cooperation through sport and serves as an international platform to address sport challenges. Thus, the Ministry of Youth and Sport of Azerbaijan pioneered the hosting of an extraordinary session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport (CIGEPS) and its Permanent Consultative Council, contributing to the preparation of the 5<sup>th</sup> World Conference of Sports Ministers in Berlin MINEPS V. The outcomes of the meeting offered a solid international catalyst in the development of the Berlin Declaration.



*Extraordinary session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport, Baku, 2013*

**Culture:** Cultural heritage is very rich across the country owing to Azerbaijan’s centuries-old history.

The Içeri Seher architectural complex (the Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah’s Palace and Maiden Tower) was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000. The Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape was inscribed in 2007.

Azerbaijan also has a rich intangible cultural heritage. Its safeguarding and development have long been among priorities for the Azerbaijani government, which is committed to actively promoting cultural diversity as a major contribution to the treasury of the world living culture. The Craftmanship and performance art of the Tar (2012), the Traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet weaving in the Republic of



Azerbaijan (2010), the Art of Azerbaijan Ashiq (2009), the Novruz, Nowrouz, Nooruz, Navruz, Nauroz, Nevruz (Azerbaijan – India – Islamic Republic of Iran – Kyrgyzstan – Pakistan – Turkey – Uzbekistan) (2009), and the Azerbaijani Mugham (2008) have been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

Azerbaijan has ratified the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property. Action needs to be pursued to increase the country's capacities regarding the preventive action and the fight against the illicit trafficking of cultural property, and public awareness regarding the need to protect cultural heritage must be reinforced.



*“Craftsmanship and performance art of the Tar, a long-necked string musical instrument” inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2012*

Azerbaijan has not yet ratified the 2001 Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage. Efforts have to be made in order to create awareness and capacity-building in the country to study, promote and protect the submerged heritage that defines Azerbaijan cultural identity and social interrelations with Caspian Sea region.

Rich natural resources and cultural diversity provide excellent opportunities for developing various sectors of tourism, making it an important factor in popularising Azerbaijani culture and traditions worldwide. According to the World Economic Forum's travel and tourism report, Azerbaijan ranked 78<sup>th</sup> out of 140 countries in 2013 in terms of its attractiveness and ability to develop further as a tourist destination, up from 83<sup>rd</sup> in 2011.<sup>9</sup>

**Communication and Information:** The information technologies and telecommunications sector in Azerbaijan is developing rapidly along with other fields of the economy. The ICT sector has seen stable development in recent years. The number of Internet users per 100 inhabitants grew from 37 in 2008 to 65 in 2012<sup>10</sup>.

The National Strategy for Information and Communication Technologies Development of the Azerbaijan Republic implemented in 2003–2012 laid the groundwork for developing the ICT sector and expanding and improving the quality of telecommunication and information services. It has created a solid legal framework for forming information society in Azerbaijan and promoting its integration into the global electronic environment.

The president of Azerbaijan has signed a decree declaring 2013 the Year of ICT in the country.

The Republic of Azerbaijan: Fast Facts*	
Human Development Index	0.734 (Ranking 82)
<b>Demography</b>	
Population, total both sexes (thousands)	9,421.2
Population, urban (%) (% of population)	53.9
Population, female (thousands)	4,753.13
Population, male (thousands)	4,668.10
<b>Health</b>	
Expenditure on health, public (% of GDP) (%)	1.2
Under 5 mortality rate (per 1000 live births)	46.0
Life expectancy at birth (years)	70.9

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.weforum.org/issues/travel-and-tourism-competitiveness/index.html>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.az.undp.org/content/azerbaijan/en/home/countryinfo/>

<sup>11</sup> UNDP Statistics <http://hdrstats.undp.org/en/countries/profiles/AZE.html>

Health index	0.802
<b>Education</b>	
Public expenditure on education (% of GDP) (%)	3.2
Expected Years of Schooling (of children) (years), 2011	11.7
Adult literacy rate, both sexes (% aged 15 and above)	99.8
Mean years of schooling (of adults) (years)	11.2
Education index	0.760
Combined gross enrolment in education (both sexes) (%)	70.0
<b>Trade, economy and income</b>	
GDP per capita (PPP US\$)	8,153
Inequality-adjusted HDI value	0,65
<b>Gender</b>	
Gender inequality index	0.323 (Ranking 54)
Adolescent fertility rate (women aged 15–19 years) (births per 1,000 women aged 15–19)	33.8
Shares in parliament, female-male ratio	0.190
Labour force participation rate, female-male ratio (Ratio of female to male shares)	0.899
Maternal mortality ratio (deaths of women per 100,000 live births)	43.0
<b>Innovation and technology</b>	
Fixed and mobile telephone subscribers (per 100 people)	117.1

Despite significant progress on development goals Azerbaijan made in recent years, there are still a number of issues that have to be addressed. In particular, to become a full-fledged Upper Middle Income country Azerbaijan needs to leave behind its significant dependence on hydrocarbon exports and shift production towards higher value added manufacturing strongly anchored in the non-oil branches of the economy. This shift will foster further economic growth and its sustainability and contribute to expanding job opportunities across the country and developing healthy environment in all regions. In this regard, it is vitally important to strengthen national capacities for developing cultural and creative industries. Special efforts should be geared towards increasing work opportunities in regions, with due regard to gender equality frameworks, through mobilization of cultural resources for sustainable development, including heritage and cultural tourism. To reduce the negative ecological impacts from the rapid economic development and active oil extraction in last 10 years, it is necessary to promote sustainable use of natural resources and facilitate measures towards sustainable development with a special focus on innovative/green technologies.

Azerbaijan needs to undertake measures to increase social inclusion of vulnerable groups and to ensure equal access to quality health, education and social protection services. These issues should be addressed, inter alia, through promoting life skills-based HIV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education, through strengthening education system by means of expanded use of ICT and developing early childhood care and education system in a perspective of lifelong learning. Special attention should be paid on overcoming gender disparities which still remain widespread in the country, in particular by supporting human rights-based and gender-sensitive initiatives for strengthening national social science policies on inclusive social development.

Another critical challenge Azerbaijan faces is the need to strengthen the system of governance with the involvement of Civil Society. For this purpose, it is crucial to facilitate pluralism and participation in media, and support sustainable and independent media institutions.

## PART II – PAST AND PRESENT COOPERATION – LESSONS LEARNT

In accordance with the UCPD framework 2011–2013 developed for the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2011 and within the overall UNDAF for 2011–2015, UNESCO implemented the planned activities in the different programme sectors, and the following results were achieved:

### EDUCATION

Education has always been a priority in Azerbaijan and has traditionally been highly rated. Assistance provided by UNESCO was focused on building capacity and creating institutional framework for sustainable socially-oriented growth with a special emphasis on technical and vocational education; early childhood care and education; education for people with the special needs and HIV prevention education, promoting healthy lifestyles and gender equality.

#### **Expected result: Progress towards a knowledge society achieved through increased use of ICT in education, particularly for girls, especially in secondary and higher education**

UNESCO's cooperation with Azerbaijan in the education field is aligned with the 10-year strategy (2003–2013) to reform the compulsory secondary education system and adapt technical and vocational training and education (TVET) to the needs of the fast-evolving market economy. TVET policies and methodologies, including textbooks on hospitality and tourism and on ICT, have been developed under the project «Revitalising TVET in Azerbaijan» supported by UNESCO, the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the governments of Azerbaijan and Japan.



*Seminar of the national experts on TVET*

The establishment of the UNESCO-UNEVOC CIS Regional Network in 2011 involving TVET experts from Azerbaijan provided an additional impetus to sharing knowledge and fostering cooperation to increase TVET's role in attaining the country's educational, economic and social needs. Azerbaijani experts also participated in the International Conference «Universities and Innovation: Networking Cooperation among CIS Universities in Training for the Innovation Economy» organised by UNESCO in Moscow in January 2011.

Azerbaijan was among the 15 countries taking part in the International Conference «ICTs in Teacher Education: Policy, Open Education Resources and Partnership» (St. Petersburg, Russia, 2010). Following the 2010 ICT conference, UNESCO prepared an Analytical Review of Teacher Development Policies and Programmes, which included a review of open and distance learning and ICT, placing special emphasis on the use of ICT in education in Azerbaijan. The use of ICT in education was promoted through a survey of Open Educational Resources (OER) in Azerbaijan and discussions on prospects for promoting OER in the Azeri language at two international conferences. All these conferences facilitated a constructive dialogue between experts and decision-makers, helped countries in sharing their experiences, and resulted in adopting policy recommendations for integrating ICT-based approaches into teacher training and curriculum development.

Decision-makers and education experts from Azerbaijan participated in the International Conference «Universities and Innovation: Networking Cooperation among CIS Universities in Training for the Innovation Economy» in Moscow in January 2011. Involvement of Azerbaijani universities in the CIS Network Open University promoted the use of ICT in higher education and provided more opportunities for building knowledge society through international cooperation in education.

The International Conference «Scientific, Technical and Innovative Development of the CIS Member States: Prospects of Deepening Integration» held by UNESCO in Moscow in 2010 established a forum for ongoing policy dialogue for innovations and reforms in higher education in the CIS, including Azerbaijan. This dialogue, in which Azerbaijani experts took part, was continued at the International Seminar on Innovation and Reform of Engineering Education (Moscow, Russia, 2011). To enhance the quality of teacher training, UNESCO assisted the Azerbaijan Teachers Institute in establishing a UNESCO Chair.

### **Expected result: Alternative Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) Models are introduced and Early Development Standards are practiced country-wide by MoE**

The Azerbaijani Ministry of Education's officials and experts in Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) benefited from participating in the regional conference «Prospects of Pre-service Teacher Training for ECCE: Policy, Quality, Research and Innovations» and the World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education (WCECCE) organised by UNESCO in 2010. Speaking at the WCECCE opening ceremony, Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva, the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation and a UNESCO goodwill ambassador, reaffirmed Azerbaijan's commitment to providing quality and equitable early childhood care and education. These conferences promoted experience sharing and policy dialogue and facilitated the application of innovative approaches to effective ECCE planning and development of quality programmes in this area.

### **Expected result: Comprehensive life skills based HIV education is included into school curriculum and extracurricular activities and delivered in all schools in order to improve young people's awareness on HIV and reduce HIV incidence among them, with a special focus on vulnerable groups**

The situation related to HIV prevention education in Azerbaijan has been assessed and a report drawn up and made available to decision-makers to form a national strategy and practice in the area. Four Ministry of Education officials were familiarised with regional experiences in prevention education by participating in the Regional Conference on Improving HIV Prevention Education (Almaty, Kazakhstan, 2011). The conference participants analysed gaps and developed strategies to implement comprehensive, culturally sensitive, age-specific, and scientifically accurate education programmes aimed at preventing HIV and promoting reproductive and sexual health and a healthy lifestyle among young people. A digest analysing the situation related to prevention education in 10 Eastern European and Central Asian countries and examples of good practices with a CD containing curricula, training and information materials on prevention education was produced and made available to Azerbaijani experts. National experts in prevention education have been provided with access to international and regional technical resources and best practices on comprehensive HIV prevention and sexuality education.

The Ministry of Education and its respective institutions have been provided with EDUCAIDS and other international and regional technical resources for planning, implementing and monitoring HIV prevention education and with UNESCO-ILO Practical Recommendations on HIV Policy Implementation in Education Sector «Education, Support and Protection of Learners and Educators Living with HIV or Affected by Epidemic» for the ECA countries (2012). The Recommendations provide a policy framework and practical advice for protecting HIV-positive/affected learners and workers from discrimination and providing rights-based comprehensive HIV and sexuality education.

## **NATURAL SCIENCES**

Azerbaijan's national priorities in science are defined in the «National Strategy on Science Development for 2009–2015» and the relevant State Programme, which has been elaborated with UNESCO's assistance, taking into account the gender equality component.

## Expected result: National policy and strategy for science, technology and innovation (STI) developed

The «National Strategy on Science Development for 2009–2015» and the relevant State Programme are aimed at developing a national strategy and related policies in science, technology and innovation.

UNESCO has made a considerable effort to support Azerbaijan in evaluating, formulating and implementing these evidence-based policies and in bolstering institutional mechanisms fostering conditions for economic growth, decent work opportunities and safer work environments. The National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO has initiated various events to mark the International Year of Chemistry 2011, including the arrangement of competitions and exhibitions, production of cartoons and postcards, etc. The central event was a roundtable conference on «Azerbaijani Chemistry Women in International Chemistry Year: Problems and Opportunities» organized in cooperation with the State Committee on Family, Female and Children's Problems.

## Expected result: National capacity strengthened to enable long-term transition towards Green Economy, sustainable production, consumption and resource management

UNESCO has also provided support to capacity building in the protection and sustainable use of natural resources and to the development of mechanisms to deal with environmental concerns, particularly climate change, taking into account the gender equality component. In particular, UNESCO assisted Azerbaijan's involvement in its International Hydrological Programme (IHP) activities and backed Azerbaijani experts' participation in a workshop on the application of biotechnology for conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity in the Caucasus and Caspian Region and Central Asian countries (Dushanbe, Tajikistan, 2011). The workshop was based on the outcomes of a regional conference on «Diversity, characterisation and utilisation of plant genetic resources utilising modern tools and methods» organized and hosted by the Azerbaijan National Academy of Sciences. The UNESCO workshop's outcomes have been used to promote and guide biotechnology and conservation initiatives and related science policy reforms in the cluster countries.

## Expected result: Biosphere reserves established to address current emerging challenges

The National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO's fruitful cooperation with the National MAB Committee of Azerbaijan and UNESCO has resulted in the publication of the Committee's proceedings and the organization of consultative meetings with an international expert on the establishment of the first biosphere reserve in Azerbaijan. Speaking at EuroMAB-2011: Sharing Sustainable Futures (Sweden, 2011), Azerbaijani National MAB Committee Chairperson Mr Urkhan Alakbarov offered to lead the EuroMAB group on «education for sustainable development.» The National Commission contributed to the promotion of the «Man and Biosphere» Programme by means of publishing annually National MAB Committee's proceedings, organizing the presentation of the journal «Ecological civilization, sustainable development and the environment» in 2011 and publishing the book for children – the collection of scientific fairy-tales entitled «Magic paint» in 2012.



*Presentation of the journal "Ecological civilization, sustainable development and the environment"*

## SOCIAL AND HUMAN SCIENCES

Acting within the Social and Human Sciences Sector's mission – to advance knowledge, standards and intellectual cooperation in order to facilitate social transformations conducive to the universal values of justice, freedom and human dignity – UNESCO successfully cooperated with the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of human rights, gender equality, youth civic engagement, and ethics of science and technology with emphasis on bioethics and environmental ethics.

### **Expected result: Role of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the sub-regional Policy-Research Network on Human Rights strengthened to develop studies on human rights within UNESCO's area of competence**

Assistance in policy research on human rights, including women's rights, and their linkages within UNESCO's field of competence helped elaborate policy recommendations aimed at improving the observance of human rights. Through cooperation with the National Commission for UNESCO, the Azerbaijani human rights commissioner (ombudsman) and the Institute on Human Rights under the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences, UNESCO has promoted important programmes on bioethics, environmental ethics, international migration and social integration, attaching special significance to women and the youth. Cooperation with UNESCO based on its strategies and regulations as well as on the National Action Plan on Protection of Human Rights in the Republic of Azerbaijan, which was approved by the president in 2006, provided great opportunities for the national human rights institutions to develop new strategies and methods in protecting human rights.

The cooperation between the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and UNESCO has a history starting from 2005. Since then International Conferences of Ombudsmen were held annually in Baku around June 18, when Azerbaijan observes National Day of Human Rights. The recommendations adopted at the UNESCO-supported International Baku Ombudsmen Conferences in 2011 and 2012 have contributed to developing an appropriate policy response to climate change, related environmental degradation and its implications for human rights protection in the region, including the rights of migrants and ethnic minorities, and protection of human rights in emergencies.

XI Baku Ombudsmen Conference 2013, devoted to the 65th anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, analysed the key role of the new mechanisms of the sustainable development strategies in protection and promotion of human rights. It brought in the limelight the issues of strategic planning and sustainable development programmes based on the UN current and forthcoming priorities, as well as equal opportunities for ensuring of equal rights: non-discriminative gender and age sensitive approach.

Linkages between research and the national youth policy were strengthened through the implementation of the pilot Study on Youth Civic Engagement in Azerbaijan in 2010. The Study focused on the role that national and international mechanisms of cooperation between governmental and civil society institutions play in promoting active involvement of young people of both genders in social transformations and intercultural dialogue, with special emphasis placed on issues pertinent to young women. The Study's findings and recommendations were presented and discussed at a regional conference on «Youth and Social Transformations: Involvement, Initiatives, Mutual Understanding and Partnership» held in Moscow in 2011 to mark the UN International Year of Youth.



*International Baku Ombudsmen Conference  
"Cultural Rights of National Minorities and  
Migrants: Legal Aspects and Implementation"*

The 4th Congress of the Azerbaijani Women organized by the State Committee for Family, Women and Children of the Republic of Azerbaijan discussed the role and the importance of women in the modern life of Azerbaijani society. The discussion was continued at the UNESCO Regional Forum «Gender Equality as a Millennium Value» held in Moscow in 2012. The Forum became a platform for research-policy dialogues on gender equality in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the post-2015 framework. Along with a presentation concerning social and economic difficulties young women experience in Azerbaijan, national experts also benefited from taking part in a multi-stakeholder dialogue on gender equality, women's empowerment, respect for women's and girls' rights, and their engagement in the region's political, economic and social affairs, including with regard to women with disabilities, indigenous women and female migrants.

As a UN member, Azerbaijan adheres to numerous conventions on human rights protection in bioethics and is actively involved in UNESCO's activity in this field of bioethics. The establishment of the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics at the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan's Institute of Human Rights in 2010, whose primary role is to raise awareness of bioethics among government officials, the scientific community and other target groups, has catalyzed the development of bioethics and medical law in the country. The UNESCO Chair has made a significant contribution to raising the general public's awareness of the matter, inter alia, by launching a scientific and educational TV programme on bioethics on Azerbaijan's national TV in 2011.

The National Commission of Azerbaijan cooperated with UNESCO very closely to promote bioethics in the country. The Commission provided support to the translation of UNESCO documents and materials on bioethics and human rights into national language, their publication and presentation at the seminar «Method and Methodology of the Study of the Bioethics», held in Baku in 2011.

Baku hosted the 18<sup>th</sup> (ordinary) session of the International Bioethics Committee (IBC) of UNESCO in 2011, which generated keen interest of local communities and representatives of other UNESCO member-states and foreign partners. The forum of such level got well-deserved recognition of international organizations to assess positive steps and contribution of Azerbaijan in the development of bioethics and medical law in the country. The event provided a new impetus to enhancing bioethical education of professionals, with the UNESCO Chair in Bioethics playing a key role in the process. Following-up on the IBC session and based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between UNESCO and Baku State University, the UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum was introduced to the university's 2011–2012 educational programme to promote bioethics and human rights protection in the national higher education system.



*Eighteenth Session of the International Bioethics Committee of UNESCO (IBC), Baku, 2011*

The UNESCO Bioethics Core Curriculum was also in the focus of the Ethics Teachers Training Course (ETTC), another important component of UNESCO's Ethics Education Programme (EEP), which complements the practical ethics teaching tools developed by UNESCO through focusing on methodology and pedagogy behind ethics education. A group of young ethics teachers, both female and male, had the chance to enhance their professional skills and abilities by participating in the ETTC conducted by UNESCO in Baku in 2012. The course served to build their capacity for expanding and improving ethics teaching programmes in their countries in the near future.

Special attention is paid to the relationship with different intergovernmental committees of the organization. During the last Extraordinary session of the Intergovernmental Committee for Physical Education and Sport, held on 13–15 March 2013 in Baku, lots of important issues regarding current situation in sport have been discussed.

## CULTURE

In the field of culture, UNESCO has focused on supporting tangible and intangible cultural heritage, promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue for peace and development, with women's and the youth's active role, and participating in and supporting cultural policy and cultural tourism development, taking into account the gender equality perspective in Azerbaijan. In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, a number of capacity-building activities, conferences, seminars and studies have been carried out in close cooperation with the Azerbaijani National Commission for UNESCO, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Ministry of Education and involving national experts, including managers, academicians, educators and decision-makers, and the leading cultural, research and educational institutions of Azerbaijan.

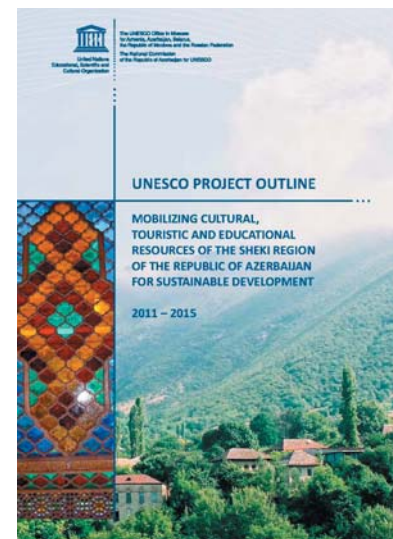
### **Expected result: Decent work opportunities in regions are increased through measures to mobilize cultural resources for sustainable development, including heritage and cultural tourism**

The projects that have been implemented in Azerbaijan called for mobilizing cultural, touristic, scientific and educational resources, and also information and communication technologies for sustainable development. A relevant pilot project was initiated in the Sheki region of Azerbaijan in 2011 with the purpose of making a further impact on other regions. Following case studies, a project document titled «Mobilizing Cultural, Touristic and Educational Resources of the Sheki Region of the Republic of Azerbaijan for Sustainable Development (2011-2015)» was developed and published. The document addresses heritage safeguarding, cultural tourism development and the making of inventories of cultural heritage in the region. Activities envisioned by the project are aimed at promoting decent work opportunities in the provinces in order to mobilize cultural resources for sustainable development, including heritage and cultural tourism.

Special attention has been paid to supporting tangible and intangible cultural heritage, especially with a view to popularising and protecting the Azerbaijani cultural sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, i. e. the Walled City of Baku (Içeri Seher) with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower and Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape. Azerbaijan's leading national culture experts, both women and men, benefited from active UNESCO-supported participation in the First and the Second Regional Expert Seminars of the CIS countries with international participation on «Safeguarding World Heritage in the Context of New Global Challenges». The seminars were focused on foresight activities to improve the quality of World Heritage management through legislation, interdisciplinary research and education in the context of global strategic issues of climate change, urbanisation and tourism impact. Regional and national scientific and informational potential has been sustained in implementing the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention for better management of the World Heritage properties and foresight activities against new global challenges.

Scientific historical, arts and cultural research on the Içeri Seher complex of Baku has been done, resulting, in particular, in preparing and publishing a monograph on Maiden Tower (Giz Galasy) in partnership with the Içeri Seher State Historical-Architectural Reserve under the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers and the National Commission of Azerbaijan for UNESCO.

The preservation and development of the cultural heritage have long been among priorities for the Azerbaijani government, which is committed to actively promoting cultural diversity as a major contribution to the treasury of the world living cultures. The Craftmanship and performance art of the



*UNESCO long-term Project  
“Mobilizing Cultural, Touristic  
and Educational Resources of  
the Sheki Region of the Republic  
of Azerbaijan for Sustainable  
Development”*



Tar (2012), the Traditional art of Azerbaijani carpet weaving in the Republic of Azerbaijan (2010), the Art of Azerbaijani Ashiq (2009), Novruz, Nowrouz, Nooruz, Navruz, Nauroz, Nevruz (Azerbaijan – India – Islamic Republic of Iran – Kyrgyzstan – Pakistan – Turkey – Uzbekistan) (2009), and Azerbaijani Mugham (2008) have all been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO makes great efforts to actively promote the living heritage in Azerbaijan. In particular, through opening the International Mugham Center in 2008 and organizing annually in Baku International Mugham Festivals, supporting the production of the «Novruz in Azerbaijan» film in 2012, opening of the Carpet Museum in 2013.



*“Art of Azerbaijani Ashiq” inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2009*

Azerbaijani experts participated in the Regional consultative expert meeting and capacity-building workshop «Strengthening National Capacities for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage» held in Minsk, Belarus, 2011. Actual problems concerning intangible cultural heritage have been addressed during the Forum on «Cooperation between museum communities and state institutions in the sphere of the protection and development of the intangible cultural heritage» which was organized in Baku in 2012 by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Azerbaijan and State Carpet Museum in close cooperation with the National Commission for UNESCO of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The issue of the importance of the cultural heritage has been discussed during the International Conference «Azerbaijan 2020: cultural heritage as one of the important directions of the development» (Baku, February 2013).

A number of training activities were carried out to enhance the role of museums as access points to knowledge, with special attention paid to improving the educational content of museums. Public access to museum collections has been promoted under a capacity-building pilot project on mobilizing museum educational resources for preserving and developing traditional Azerbaijani arts and crafts, particularly the carpet-weaving traditions, with a special focus on young men and women. A series of trainings has been conducted under the project for museum workers and school teachers from various regions of Azerbaijan, including 9 trainings in partnership with the ICOM of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani Carpet & Applied Art State Museum. The Methodical Guide on «Museum Educational Programmes for Promoting the Development of Carpet Weaving» has been prepared and released on DVD to promote carpet weaving in the traditional weaving zones of Azerbaijan.

Museum educational resources were mobilized and cultural tourism promoted through the implementation of the long-term extra-budgetary UNESCO/IFESCCO project «Running a Museum – XXI Century», joining together museum workers and cultural authorities, with special significance attached to engaging young people and women. National capacities for integrating international regulations and principles of UNESCO Conventions into national law and enhancing the protection of cultural heritage were reinforced through involving Azerbaijani museum specialists, both men and women, in a number of capacity building trainings and seminars, such as the Second International Seminar on Museum Security and Methods of the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property organized in partnership with the ICOM Russia as part of the international museum festival «Intermuseum – 2011» (Moscow, 2011) and the Regional Thematic Museum Training and First Expert Meeting «Role of Museums in Education and Cultural Tourism Development» (Kiev, 2011).

Capacities of national museum experts from different regions of Azerbaijan were strengthened by supporting their participation in a series of the Regional Thematic Museum Trainings within the framework of the UNESCO/IFESCCO long-term project «Capacity-building trainings in museum

management for CIS countries based on UNESCO/ICOM Museum Studies Training Package». These included, in particular, the Regional Thematic Museum Training «Running a Museum: Policy Formulation and Practice Regulation» (Astana, Kazakhstan, 2012) and the Regional Thematic Museum Training «Place and Role of Museum-Reserves in the System of Preservation and Use of Cultural Heritage» (Chisinau, Moldova, 2012).

At the same time, cooperation and networking between museums have been enhanced and the role of museums as places of access to knowledge fostered through developing the Virtual Branch of the Russian Museum in Baku in partnership with the Museum Centre of the Azerbaijani Ministry of Culture and Tourism and in cooperation with the State Russian Museum in St. Petersburg. Educational programmes using ICT resources, including thematic lectures and virtual excursions in the Azerbaijani, English and Russian languages, have been developed and uploaded on the Centre's website (<http://www.museumcenter.az/>).

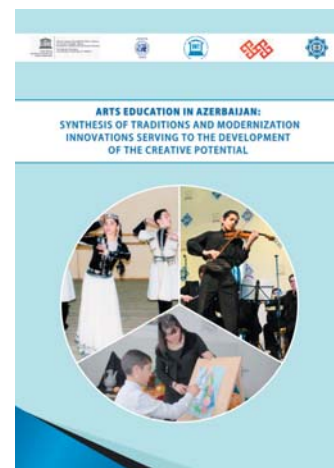
Considering that arts education is widely recognised to be essential for creativity and development, Azerbaijan actively participates in the UNESCO/IFESCCO Pilot Project «Arts Education in CIS countries: Building Creative Capacities for 21<sup>st</sup> Century». A national analytical study on arts education has been conducted, focusing on analysing the existing arts education system, current programmes and the latest trends in this field. Major culture and arts experts of both genders were involved in implementing the project activities. National experts from Azerbaijan also participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> World UNESCO Conference on Arts Education in Seoul in 2010.

Measures to support sustainable development through fostering intercultural and interreligious dialogue for peace and development were initiated through implementing a joint international research project on Interreligious Dialogue for Intercultural Understanding supported by the UNESCO Cluster Offices in Moscow and Almaty as part of the UNESCO/UNITWIN Network. The project resulted in publishing the book «World Religions in the Context of Contemporary Culture: New Perspectives of Dialogue and Mutual Understanding» prepared with involvement of Azerbaijani specialists. Focused on new

perspectives of dialogue and mutual understanding between Christianity and Islam, the monograph is aimed at elaborating fundamental principles of responsible and constructive intercultural dialogue, taking into consideration different spiritual and religious traditions existing in the contemporary world, especially those rooted in the age-old world religions. By the initiative of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the Government



*The national thematic capacity-building UNESCO/ICOM training for CIS countries*



*Arts Education in Azerbaijan: Synthesis of Traditions and Modernization Innovations Serving to the Development of the Creative Potential*



*World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, UNESCO Director-General Mrs. Irina Bokova, Baku, 2013*



*First Lady of Azerbaijan, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva with members of the UNESCO delegation, Baku International Humanitarian Forum 2012*

of the Republic of Azerbaijan regularly hosts such important events like International Humanitarian Forum, which is held annually, and Intercultural Dialogue Forum, which is held every two years. The last Intercultural Dialogue Forum was organized in May 2013 with the participation of the UNESCO Director-General Ms. Irina Bokova.

## COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION

Assistance provided by UNESCO to the Republic of Azerbaijan in area of communication and information was focused on promoting pluralism, freedom of expression and information, and facilitating universal access to information and knowledge, with due regard to appropriate human-rights and gender equality perspective.

### **Expected result: National media produce reports that look at regional disparities and issues of particular concern to women, youth and vulnerable groups, especially at the sub-national level, with particular focus on the impact of climate change on sustainable development in the regions**

UNESCO has worked to strengthen capacity of media professionals, both male and female, to report on climate change, including its gender-specific dimensions, and on green economy advantages. Efforts have been made to enhance the regional media outlets' capacity to report on regional disparities and issues particularly concerning women, young boys and girls, and vulnerable and marginalised groups. With UNESCO support, the Azerbaijani State Committee for Family, Women and Children has drawn up materials and organized a training course for journalists, NGOs and government officials in Baku to improve gender-related reporting and promote gender equality and equity-based approaches, make sure that gender perspectives are better reflected in media content, raise awareness of journalists and media professionals of gender-based violence and cultivate opposition to it via the media. The course's electronic version and relevant resources for journalists reporting on gender-sensitive issues are available on the committee's website.

### **Expected result: Media capacity of women and men based on IPDC media development indicators strengthened**

UNESCO has fostered projects to strengthen media capacity of women and men based on the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC). A project called «Training of Broadcast Journalists to Strengthen Quality Coverage of Climate Change Related Issues» aimed at bolstering free, independent and pluralistic media and communication for sustainable development has been carried out under the IPDC in cooperation with the Press Council of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijan National Man & Biosphere Committee to enhance capacities of media professionals, contribute to media pluralism and revitalise social dialogue by means of advanced technologies. A handbook for journalists titled «Climate Change and Ecological Stability» compiled and published under this project served as the basis for a training workshop for broadcast journalists. A website addressing climate change issues launched within the project contributed to raising the general public's awareness of the matter.

To foster freedom of the press and freedom of expression, Azerbaijan marked the World Press Freedom Day in 2011 by holding a roundtable



*International Symposium on UNESCO World Book and Copyright Day 2013*

conference under the motto «New Frontiers, New Barriers» addressing dramatic changes in the global media environment.

The Copyright Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan organized the International Symposium on the World Book and Copyright Day 2013. The event provides an opportunity to set up a discussion on books as our allies in spreading education, science, culture and information; to reflect on ways to better disseminate the culture of the written word and to allow all individuals, men, women and children to access it, through literacy programmes and support for careers in publishing, book shops, libraries and schools.

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The year 2012 saw the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Azerbaijan's accession to UNESCO. To mark this date, the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO conducted a series of events under the common title «Azerbaijan and UNESCO – 20 years». This included conferences, seminars, workshops, roundtables, exhibitions, contests, and other events on the themes of education and sustainable development, biodiversity, cultural cooperation, human rights and other key subjects within UNESCO's mandate.

With support of UNESCO, the above-mentioned activities of the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO contributed to attaining major goals identified by the national scientific and cultural community. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation in general and its President and UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Mrs. Mehriban Aliyeva in particular were of great assistance in this process, promoting the cultural heritage, *inter alia* supporting International Mugham Festival, Gabala Music Festival, International Rostropovich Festival etc.

## PART III – PROPOSED COOPERATION FRAMEWORK

Proceeding from UNESCO's priorities as set out in the Organization's Draft Medium-Term Strategy 2014–2021 (37 C/4) and Draft Programme and Budget 2014–2017 (37 C/5), Azerbaijan's national priorities, including the State Programme of Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development, and experience gained in the country, the UNESCO Office in Moscow will cooperate with Azerbaijan in 2014–2017 to contribute to the following key outcomes of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) for Azerbaijan (2011-2015):

- developing non-oil based policies in order to achieve better economic status, decent work opportunities and a healthier environment in all regions and across all social groups;
- enhancing social inclusion by providing improved and equal access to quality health, education and social protection services for vulnerable groups;
- strengthening the governance system through involving civil society in compliance with Azerbaijan's international commitments, with special emphasis placed on vulnerable groups.

The UCPD results matrix, shown in the Annex presents a snapshot of UNESCO's planned activities and expected results which would contribute to the achievement of the current UNDAF outcomes and could be reviewed in 2015 in accordance with new UNDAF for the country.

The Organization's actions will focus on the following:

**Education:** Based on the national priorities and goals set in the State Programme of Poverty Reduction and Sustainable Development aligned with the Millennium Development Goals (2008-2015) and building on past cooperation, UNESCO will provide assistance in strengthening an early childhood care and education system in a lifelong learning perspective and bolstering the general education system through the broader use of ICT to foster a knowledge society. To encourage healthy lifestyles and gender equality, significant attention will be paid to an educational response to HIV and AIDS, particularly through promoting life skills-based HIV and sexual and reproductive health (SRH) education.

**Natural Sciences:** the National Strategy of Science Development in the Republic of Azerbaijan in 2009–2015 and the relevant State Programme set a framework and action plan for science, technology and innovation development in the country. Within this framework, UNESCO will assist Azerbaijan in efficiently using natural resources and facilitate sustainable development, with special significance attached to innovative green technologies.

**Social and Human Sciences:** In the area of social and human sciences, UNESCO will support human rights-based and gender-sensitive initiatives to strengthen national social science policies for inclusive social development. This support is expected to be beneficial for elaborating policy recommendations aimed at ensuring equal rights.

**Culture:** UNESCO will particularly focus on strengthening national capacities to safeguard the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in the context of the efficient implementation of the UNESCO conventions and develop cultural and creative industries to underscore culture's key role for sustainable development. Special significance will also be attached to promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, particularly through supporting arts education and the educational role of museums. Efforts will be geared towards increasing capacity



*The national thematic capacity-building UNESCO/ICOM training for CIS countries*

building in the provinces through mobilizing cultural resources for sustainable development, including cultural heritage tourism.

**Communication and Information:** In line with the national priorities and priorities set in 37 C/5, UNESCO will support independent media institutions and promote pluralism and access to the media, especially for young women and men and other vulnerable groups. A broader use of ICTs in education will also be facilitated to foster a knowledge society.

Guided by the upcoming Priority Gender Equality Action Plan 2014–2021, UNESCO will apply a gender equality perspective in all projects and activities that will be realised in the country within the proposed cooperation programme.

## PART IV – PARTNERSHIPS

Activities and projects will be implemented through partnerships involving the government, the relevant UN agencies, civil society and, where appropriate, the private sector. Partnership with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) and individual agencies working in the country will ensure the effective achievement of the UNDAF outcomes and secure their sustainability.

The UNESCO Office in Moscow will work in close cooperation with the government, including the National Commission and the relevant ministries, i. e. the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Economic Development and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Office of the Ombudsman, and will implement the projects in cooperation with relevant groups, including community councils, local NGOs, scientific and academic institutions and specialized associations.

Partnership with international organizations and NGOs is important for UNESCO to leverage the expertise and capacities of national and international stakeholders and maximize the overall impact of UNESCO's activities. UNESCO will also seek collaboration with bilateral and multilateral donors to draw additional resources essential for attaining the UNDAF outcomes and ensuring their sustainability.

## PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

### Country Programme Management

The UNESCO Cluster Office in Moscow, in cooperation with the Azerbaijani National Commission for UNESCO, will be responsible for overall programme implementation, including project identification, formulation, execution, and monitoring. Close consultations with the relevant sectors will be held on a regular basis.

### Resource Mobilization

To complement its regular programme funds, UNESCO will make efforts to mobilize extra-budgetary resources and tap into various sources of funding, such as:

- mutual cooperation and joint fund mobilization strategies with the UNCT working in Azerbaijan and involved in the UNDAF implementation process;
- mutual cooperation with the relevant government ministries;
- strengthened collaboration agreements with donors.

## MONITORING AND EVALUATION

To ensure the effective implementation of the programme and the projects, the UCPD monitoring and evaluation system will be established with the aim of:

- using transparent and consistent mechanisms to help UNESCO assess the programmes' and projects' strengths and weaknesses;
- identifying target groups that should be supported through the UCPD and policies and institutions that should be improved or developed to ensure efficient UCPD implementation;
- ensuring links to the UNDAF Monitoring and Evaluation Plan;
- strengthening the monitoring and evaluation capacities of national actors.

The monitoring, reporting and evaluation will include a series of interrelated activities, such as the UNESCO monitoring & evaluation tools/RBM, reporting and evaluation according to the UCPD Guidelines, and the monitoring of progress in carrying out the activities in question.

A UCPD progress report will be prepared. The projects will be evaluated through a mutual agreement between UNESCO and the Azerbaijani government, in consultation with the United Nations Country Team (UNCT). The monitoring, reporting and evaluation will be done in a manner faithful to objectively verifiable indicators (or benchmarks if applicable) and means of verification within the UCPD results and resources framework.

## ANNEX: UCPD RESULTS MATRIX

UNDAF OUTCOME 1: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
By 2015, non-oil development policies result in better economic status, decent work opportunities and a healthier environment in all regions and across all social groups			
UNESCO programme component	UNDAF Agency Outcomes	UNDAF Outputs	Output targets and indicators
I. Strengthening national capacities to safeguard intangible cultural heritage and develop cultural and creative industries to underscore the central role of heritage in promoting sustainable development	1.2: National strategies, policies, and capacity to address regional and gender disparities in decent work opportunities are strengthened, with a focus on increasing the ability of vulnerable groups to manage and mitigate risks	1.2.6 Decent work opportunities in regions are increased through measures to promote cultural tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Capacity-building trainings to advocate culture as a resource for sustainable development organized and conducted;</li> <li>– Number of decision makers and community representatives trained (at least 60% women)</li> </ul>
II. Work opportunities in regions increased through measures to mobilize cultural resources for sustainable development, including heritage and cultural tourism			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Tourist infrastructure in the field of cultural and ecological tourism developed;</li> <li>– Awareness of local communities about the cultural and natural heritage raised;</li> <li>– Number of local communities involved and trained, with participation of both gender</li> </ul>
III. Promoting sustainable use of natural resources and facilitating measures towards sustainable development with a special focus on innovative/green technologies	1.3: Relevant national strategies, policies, and capacities strengthened to address environmental degradation, promote the green economy, and reduce vulnerability to climate change	1.3.4 National capacity strengthened to enable long-term transition towards Green Economy, sustainable production, consumption and resource management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Key stakeholders, MAB national body and decision makers participated in capacity building activities and when applicable, agreed on joint conclusions and plan of actions: number of seminars/training and course/workshops; number of participants and institutions; set of adopted documents; number of reports; number modules and relevant training materials applied;</li> <li>– Nomination dossier (s) for establishment of BR (s) prepared and UNESCO designate site (s) established: official inauguration; BR strategy and plan of actions;</li> <li>– Policy advice document and strategy focused on introducing green technologies in BR management developed and actions towards green economy at specific sites proposed and agreed: documents adopted by key stakeholders and decision-makers;</li> <li>demonstration project to introduce green technologies developed; sought for a support initiated</li> </ul>



UNDAF OUTCOME 2: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT			
By 2015, vulnerable groups enjoy increased social inclusion, improved and equal access to quality health, education and social protection services			
UNESCO programme component	UNDAF Agency Outcomes	UNDAF Outputs	Output targets and indicators
IV. Promoting comprehensive life skills-based HIV prevention and SRH education to contribute to healthy lifestyles and gender equality	2.1 The National Health System ensures improved, equitable and quality services, in particular for vulnerable groups, in line with international standards	2.1.6. Revised life and family skills training introduced into school education curriculum as part of aware raising aimed at reducing drug use and HIV incidence among young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of policy recommendations and teaching/learning materials and tools developed on HIV and SRH education;</li> <li>– Comprehensive life skills based HIV education included into school curriculum and extracurricular activities;</li> <li>– Young people, both male and female, with a special focus on vulnerable groups, trained</li> </ul>
V. Strengthening early childhood care and education system in a perspective of lifelong learning	2.2 State provides quality and equitable education	2.2.1 Alternative Early Childhood Care and Education Models are introduced and Early Development Standards are practiced country-wide by MoE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of professional consultations and policy recommendations\standards developed on Early Childhood and Education models;</li> <li>– Number of teachers and policy makers trained on ECCE policy (at least 45% women)</li> </ul>
VI. Strengthening education system through expanded use of ICT to foster knowledge society		2.2.3 Progress towards a knowledge society achieved through increased use of ICT in education, especially in secondary and higher education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of professional consultations and policy recommendations developed on use of ICT in education;</li> <li>– Number of young men and women use ICT in education;</li> <li>– Access to ICT in education for males and females measured to become part of the education statistics.</li> </ul>
UNDAF OUTCOME 3: GOVERNANCE			
By 2015, the State strengthens the system of governance with the involvement of Civil Society and in compliance with its international commitments, with particular emphasis on vulnerable groups			
UNESCO programme component	UNDAF Agency Outcomes	UNDAF Outputs	Output targets and indicators
VII. Facilitating pluralism and participation in media, and supporting sustainable and independent media institutions	3.1 By 2015 civil society, media and vulnerable groups enjoy an increased role in policy formulation and implementation processes	3.1.7 National media produce reports that look at regional disparities and issues of particular concern to women, youth and vulnerable groups esp. at the sub-national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Media capacity of women and men strengthened;</li> <li>– Policy maker's capacities enhanced;</li> <li>– Good practices and policies for pluralistic media developed, to enlarge inclusion and participation;</li> <li>– More citizens, especially young men and women, engaged in knowledge societies, empowered by media;</li> </ul>
VIII. Supporting human rights-based and gender-sensitive initiatives to strengthen national social science policies for inclusive social development		3.1.8 Role of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the sub-regional Policy-Research Network on Human Rights strengthened to develop studies on human rights within UNESCO's area of competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Number of professional consultations organized in view of UN forthcoming priorities on sustainable social development;</li> <li>– Set of policy recommendations for ensuring equal rights – non-discriminative gender and age sensitive approach – developed and presented to policy makers;</li> <li>– Key stakeholders, decision makers, human rights institutions, representatives of international organizations and experts, both female and male, participated in capacity building activities: number of conferences; number of participants and institutions; set of adopted documents; number of reports;</li> <li>– Policy maker's capacities enhanced;</li> <li>– Number of government institutions, NGOs and civil societies sensitized.</li> </ul>

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Photo on the front page: Walled City of Baku with the Shirvanshah's Palace and Maiden Tower, Azerbaijan. Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2000



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for Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus,  
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