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**AZERBAIJAN MICRO-FINANCE ASSOCIATION
(AMFA)**

Azərbaycan Mikromaliyyə Assosiasiyası



Azerbaijan Micro-finance Association

Accelerating development of sustainable micro-entrepreneurship in rural regions of Azerbaijan (ADSMİRRA)

The Project was funded under the European Neighbourhood Instrument (Annual Action Programme 2013), and the implementing partners are Microfinance Centre (MFC) in Poland, National Confederation of Entrepreneurs (Employers) Organizations of Azerbaijan Republic (ASK). The duration of the Project was - 30 months, starting from 01/09/2018 till 28/02/2021.

The overall objective of the project was to support establishment and development of micro-businesses as to support rural population in income generation and job creation. The project specific objective was to strengthen rural micro entrepreneur's capacities to enable them to start or expand own businesses by building their skills, facilitating market opportunities and providing seed capital in the Ganja – Gazakh, Guba – Khachmaz, Sheki – Zagatala and Kur – Araz (Aran) Economic Zones.

A number of activities were conducted including:

- Virtual Entrepreneurship Fair;
- 2nd and 3rd Annual Meeting of Financial Educators in Azerbaijan;
- 9th and 10th AMFA Biennial Conferences;
- Project Launch and Closure Conferences;
- Delivering **24** Financial Education (FE) trainings in Ganja, Shamkir, Gedebeq, Guba, Gusar, Khachmaz, Barda and Zagatala regions to selected **510** persons (327 women and 183 men);
- Delivering **11** Start and Improve Your Business trainings for **159** persons (86 women and 73 men) in project regions;
- Delivering **2** trainings for Cooperatives in Zagatala and Shamkir districts to **50** persons (29 men and 21 women);
- Providing mentorship services during 6 months to **85** project beneficiaries (26 men and 59 women);
- Provision of seed capital to **113** persons (72 women and 41 men);
- Development of the project success stories about **15** project beneficiaries;
- Development of 1 minute video films about **12** project beneficiaries businesses and one 8 minutes and 1 minute video film about project results;
- Development of electronic version of Yellow pages;
- Development of Case Study on lessons learnt on supporting rural start-ups.



Empowering Women for Sustainable Development

The Project was implemented by AMFA within “Promoting the Role of Civil Society in Gender-sensitive Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals” project funded by the European Union (EU), co-funded and implemented by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The overall objective of the project was to support establishment and development of micro-businesses as to support rural women in income generation and job creation. The project specific objective was to create better access to microfinance services for rural people through educating them on money management practices, budget planning, running the business/household finance, debt management techniques, which can lead to improving women economic status and their families or/and to increase their employment opportunities through equipping them with skills and funds needed to start own business in Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and Ismayilli district of Azerbaijan.

Activities helped raising awareness of project partners and increasing their involvement in the project, all necessary know-how in financial education was transferred to selected local trainers, including also, adult learning techniques and social communication.

The following activities were conducted:

- Project Launch and Project Closure Conferences,
- Delivering **15** Financial Education trainings to **390** women including **47** women with disabilities,
- Delivering **5** Start and Improve Your Business trainings for **88** women including **13** women with disabilities,
- conducting of Financial Education Training of Trainers to **17** trainers and certification of FE trainers,
- Provision of seed capital to **78** women (including 13 women with disabilities),
- Development of the project success stories about **11** project beneficiaries,
- Development electronic version of Yellow pages,
- Entrepreneurship Fair.



Entrepreneurship for Youth

The Project was jointly implemented by Junior Achievement Azerbaijan (JAA), Azerbaijan Micro-finance Association (AMFA) and Junior Achievement Estonia (JA Eesti) with the aim to engage civil society to participate in development of the entrepreneurial culture and mind-set among youth, since EE generally addresses active citizenship, social entrepreneurship, venture creation and employability.

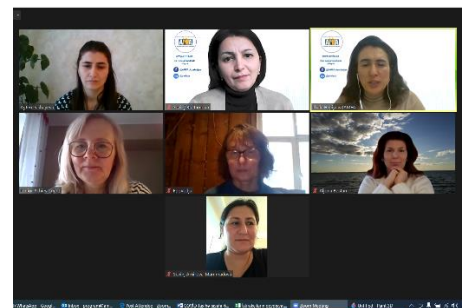
The overall objective of the Project was to strengthen the capacity and participation of civil society in development of the entrepreneurial eco-system through promotion of entrepreneurship education (EE) and provision of financial literacy (FL).

The target groups of the action included policy-makers in education, Civil Society Organizations representatives, **150** teachers and **3000** students of secondary and vocational schools.

“Entrepreneurship for Youth” was implemented over four stages in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education. This included:

- development of high-quality content, teaching resources and tools for delivery of entrepreneurship education and financial literacy based on Junior Achievement programs;
- capacity building and teacher training;
- piloting/testing (student training) and evaluation;
- preparation of policy briefs and recommendations for integration of entrepreneurship education and financial literacy into the educational curricula through the application of best practices.

The Project was very important in terms of ensuring that the education system responds to the needs of the labor market through skills development, and this contributing to economic diversification and job creation, demonstrating the contribution that civil society can bring to socio-economic development of the country, and bringing together government and private sector.



Piloting Community Resource Hubs in war affected districts

“Piloting Community Resource Hubs in war affected districts” project was implemented by Azerbaijan Microfinance Association (AMFA) and the State Committee for Family, Women and Children with the financial support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

The overall objective of the project was to contribute to the development of Community Resource Hubs (CRHs) to reach the most vulnerable communities by ensuring well-being of rural households.

The project’s aim was to provide services to the most vulnerable by establishing Community Resource Hubs (CRHs) in three war-affected areas - Fizuli, Aghjabadi and Tartar districts.

The project provided socio-economic support to victims of war, as well as increase income-generating opportunities, provide psychological, legal and business advisory support.

The project provided psychological support to **654** persons, legal support to **831** persons, **275** persons benefitted from the business advisory support, **3** community-based Quick Impact Projects created and the knowledge and skills of **3** Community Resource Centers will be increased.

The project reflected the UN Sustainable Development Goals and accelerated the achievement of the SDG 1, SDG 2, SDG 3, SDG 4, SDG 5, SDG 8, SDG 10 and SDG 11.



Advancing Women Economic Empowerment in Nakhchivan AR

“Advancing Women Economic Empowerment in Nakhchivan AR” project funded by the Embassy of the United States of America in Azerbaijan within the Community Building Initiatives Program was implemented in Nakhchivan AR of Azerbaijan by AMFA in partnership with the Nakhchivan State Committee for Family, Women and Children Affairs.

The objective of the project was to educate women from Nakhchivan AR with the tools necessary to strengthen women’s abilities to increase their entrepreneurship opportunities by equipping them with the necessary skills and financial support to start their own business.

The aim of the project was to create better access to microfinance services for rural people through educating them on money management practices, budget planning, running the business/household finance, debt management techniques, which can lead to improving women economic status and their families or/and to increase their entrepreneurship opportunities through equipping them with skills and financial support needed to start own business.

The following activities were conducted:

- Financial Education trainings to **28** women (including 3 women with disabilities)
- Business Planning training sessions to **28** women (including 3 women with disabilities)
- Provision of seed capital to **26** women (including 3 women with disabilities).

Majority of women who were hopeless found self-confidence and hope for the future in this project. As a result of the trainings conducted within the project, they started to save money, albeit in small amounts, began to look at their businesses as a long-term, lucrative activity, not a short-term one, their low self-esteem and confidence, hope for the future and enthusiasm increased.

Food insecurity which was one of highly stressful factors for women was decreased. 68% of seed capital which was invested to the development of agricultural activities positively impacted nutrition of families, especially of children.

Despite the short-term implementation of the project, there was an increase of at least 5% in the income of project participants.



Supporting women's entrepreneurship during COVID - 19

The overall objective of “Supporting women’s entrepreneurship during COVID – 19” project funded by European Union was to support vulnerable women (poor single parents and disabled women primarily) during COVID 19 crisis through providing access to resources to generate income for daily living including reliable provision of food.

The project specific objective was to strengthen vulnerable women capacities to resist crisis by building their skills, providing seed capital in Ismayilli region of Azerbaijan.

The following activities were conducted:

- Financial Education webinars to 60 women
- Business Planning sessions to 58 women
- Webinar on important safety measures in fighting with COVID 19 to 60 women
- Provision of seed capital to 44 women, out of whom 13 (30%) were women with disabilities or with disabled family members and 21 (48%) women were single parents.

In total 49,810AZN was provided to the project beneficiaries whereas the average size of the seed capital was nearly 1200 AZN:

- 91% of seed capital (45,090 AZN) provided was invested to the development of agricultural sector, out of which 90 % was invested to the development of animal husbandry, 7% to bee-keeping, 2% to planting, 1% to poultry farming.
- 7% of total seed capital (3,820AZN) provided was invested to the development of service activities, out of which 43% was invested to tailoring business, 26% - psychological services, 31% to online teaching activities.
- 2% of seed capital (900AZN) has been allocated to the production businesses, such as producing bakery products.

Since agricultural activities were less affected by quarantine regime caused by COVID – 19 pandemics compared to trade and service activities, the biggest part of seed capital provisioned to project beneficiaries was invested to agriculture.

During the project life 38 start-ups have been established, 6 micro-businesses have been expanded further; 13 new jobs have been created by the entrepreneurs (of which 7 are created by start-ups and 6 are created by expanded businesses) benefitted from the project and 44 families have increased their monthly income through skills and knowledge acquired during the project.

