

Summary of Project main achievements are listed below:

Component 1. Supporting the implementation of the general education curriculum and further curriculum reform

Sub-component 1.1. Supporting curriculum reform and the related sensitization campaign

- New curriculum for primary (I-IV), general secondary (V-IX) and complete secondary (grades X-XI) levels of schools were developed, submitted to relevant bodies for discussion, and released in (www.kurikulum.az) portal in three languages (Azerbaijani, English, Russian) and published Curriculum journal, in printed media and in the Azerbaijan Teacher newspaper for wider public discussion. After the comprehensive discussions, the curricula was approved by the Decree 963 issued by Ministry of Education dated 02.06.2011. Application of curriculums on new subjects was extended to 5th grade through support by Project. Training courses covering the relevant subjects were conducted for all teachers to be working with new curriculums. “Public Awareness Centers” were established in 32 cities and districts to lend on-site support to implementation of curriculum on regular basis. Action plans were developed for these centers established under the reference schools, trainings courses were conducted for 1250 activists of the centers, professional methodical support to educational staff was provided. Training courses under the same subjects were conducted for education managers for effective management of the process of application of curriculums. Dynamic functioning of the Curriculum Portal (www.kurikulum.az) was ensured to enhance the enlightening activities on application of curriculum reforms. Monitoring activities were implemented on regular basis to verify the progress of the process of application of new curriculums, the outcomes were analyzed and disclosed in printed media and were posted on Curriculum Portal.
- In order to develop preschool education curriculum, Preschool education unit was established in Curriculum Center of the Education Problems Institute and work team comprised of 30 people was established by the decree #11/185 dated April 7, 2010 of the Ministry of Education. Draft of preschool education curriculum (3-6 ages) developed in support with the international expert was submitted for public discussion in Azerbaijan teacher newspaper and discussed with the involvement of representatives of pedagogical societies in seminars. Draft of Preschool education curriculum (3-6 ages) in the Republic of Azerbaijan was approved by order # 1329 dated July 10 2012 of the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Study tour was arranged to Finland in 23-28 September of 2012 with the participation of relevant specialists in order to learn advanced experience in the area of application of preschool education curriculum. It was decided to pilot preschool education curriculum at the following rayon and cities in order to test how it will provide reliability of preschool education curriculum and implementation of intended results:

1. Ganja city
2. Sumgayit city
3. Mingachevir city
4. Absheron rayon
5. Gadabay rayon
6. Gabala rayon
7. Oguz rayon
8. Lankoran rayon
9. Yardimli rayon
10. Guba rayon
11. Siyazan rayon
12. Shamakhi rayon
13. Agsu rayon
14. Barda rayon
15. Tartar rayon

For this purpose training courses conducted for 3093 teachers of preschool education institutions of pilot rayons.

Sub-component 1.2. Developing new teaching and learning materials and school libraries

- 500 school libraries selected on the basis of relevant criteria and random selection is under this sub-component. 10 pilot schools were selected out of the 500 ones. The need of pilot schools for repair was identified and 5 out of them were repaired. The area of the libraries in the rehabilitated schools was enlarged and other relevant activities were implemented to turn these libraries into resource centers. Relevant tasks were given to R(C)ED-s and Capital Construction Directorate of the Ministry to implement the same activities in the remaining 495 libraries.
- The catalogue of available learning and reading materials was developed and printed with 1200 issues and sent to 500 schools. The schools selected from the catalogue and ordered the books that they are willing to equip in their libraries. Based on the submitted orders the 452 titles of books totaling 549000 issues were procured from 31 organizations and are being delivered to 500 school libraries. And also, yearly cards (total 784 cards for “Azerbaijani language”, “Informatics”, “Mathematics”, “Life skill” subjects) for fee-based website www.e-tehsil.com (at present, www.oxuyuruq.biz) reflected in catalogue were procured and delivered to 196 general schools having access to internet.
- Trainings conducted for 519 librarians of involved 500 school and after trainings mentoring provided to 500 librarians who were specially active.
- According to surveys received from 160 general education schools conducted to define the level of usage of learning and reading materials at school libraries the usage level was 11% in 2012. Thus the level of usage in 2009 compared with 7.8% growth in 2012 was 3.2%.
- Study tour was arranged to Turkey for textbook assessment groups to take benefit of experience of foreign countries. The staff members were involved in the process of activities in commissions relevant to their specialties (peer groups) and participated in all stages of assessment.

Component 2. Modernization of in-service Teacher Training

- It intends conducting training courses to teachers and facilitators (resource teachers) as well as conducting trainings for trainers due to application of new curriculums on general education and pre-school education and implementing repair and restoration works in 9 (nine) in-service education institutions of teachers within the framework of ongoing Component. It is also planned the trainers trained under Project to provide trainings on application of new curriculums on the basis of the existing financing mechanisms to teachers at repaired audiences of in-service education institutions. However, new Law on Education was adopted during the Project implementation period and it defined the in-service training as a type of Further Education. Document of “Rules of content, conducting of further education and granting relevant education certificates to teachers completing a domain of further education” that would ensure competitive environment in the area of offering of services of the teacher in-service training system and that reflect module-credit based in-service training model was developed and submitted to the Government for approval and approved by decree # 163 numbered dated 06.09.2010 of the Cabinet of Ministers. Based on the new rules “Curriculum framework of in-service training of teachers of general education institutions” was developed and approved by the order # 1668 of the Ministry of Education dated 17.12.2010. Rules for per capita funding of state-ordered in-service training of management and pedagogical staff employed by state education institutions of

the Republic of Azerbaijan and the draft decision for the approval of these rules were submitted to the Cabinet of Ministers. At the request of the Cabinet of Ministers, the submitted documents were reviewed by the Ministry of Finance and the consideration of the new funding mechanism was proposed under the development of “National Strategy for the Development of Education of Azerbaijan in 2011-2021 years”.

- Trainees were trained under the auspice of the UNICEF in the area of application of new general education curriculum, including:
 - 1.**148** trainers for training of primary grade teachers in the area of application of new primary education curriculum
 - 2.**150** trainers for training of education managers in the area of general education curriculum reforms and management
 - 3.**925** trainers for training of subject teachers in the area of application of new general secondary education curriculum
- Program of training courses in “Application of new subject curriculum and active (interactive) learning” (10 days – 60 hours) for primary teachers was developed and **21444** teachers have been trained so far.
- Training courses were conducted for subject teachers to be teaching in grade 5 in 2012 – 2013 academic years with regard to application of general secondary education curriculum. Around **69618** subject teachers participated at these training courses.
- Trainings for **4041** heads of institutions on curriculums on general education and management completed.
- The monitoring activities was completed by training providers for training courses covering during the Project period, by Monitoring and Assessment Unit of the Ministry of Education and by an independent organization of Parent – Teacher Association as well. Annual board meeting on results of conducted training courses was held at Ministry for Education, results of conducted monitoring were discussed and the relevant tasks and instructions were given with respect to related activities.

Component 3. Using student assessment for education quality improvement

- Participation of Azerbaijan in international student assessment programs of PISA-2009, TIMSS-2011 and PIRLS-2011 was provided. Project document intended Azerbaijan to participate in PISA-2012 program. However, it was decided not to take part in PISA-2012 program due to the fact that, the curriculum reforms conducted in education system of Azerbaijan covered pupils under 15 only. Request letter on making the needed amendment to Project Financing Document was submitted by Ministry for Finance to World Bank.
- National Assessment Program was conducted in 2009, 2011, 2012 and 2013. Final report on the outcomes of national assessment of 2009 and 2011 was developed, discussed in collegium meeting of the Ministry and released in the web site. The development of final report on the outcomes of national assessment of 2012 is planned towards the end of the year.
- School based assessment standards in all the subjects taught in general education schools were improved and guidelines for teachers in application of these standards based on rules of conducting of school based assessment in general education schools were developed.
- Draft of curriculum for development of specialists in measurement of education performance in Master level was developed in August and submitted to the chair of pedagogy of Baku State University and Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University.

- Master course in the specialty of “Assessment and Monitoring in Education” was established in Russian section of Baku State University and Azeri section of Azerbaijan State Pedagogic University. 2 and 6 students were respectively admitted to Baku State University and Azerbaijan State Pedagogic University.

Component 4. Promoting School Readiness

- School Readiness program of 5 year old children in short learning groups and parents’ awareness program was developed and conducted in Khatai, Goygol, Guba, Shamakhi, Lenkaran and Fuzuli provinces. **687** children and **1319** parents were respectively involved in School Readiness program of 5 year old children in short learning groups and parents’ awareness program. Regular monitoring of UNICEF was conducted during the implementation of both programs and the outcomes were analyzed.

Component 5. Strengthening Education Policy Development and Management Capacity

Sub-component 5.1. Strengthening the institutional capacity at central and rayon levels and supporting the revision of teacher profession policies

- New teacher hiring regulations was developed and implemented. Conducting of teacher recruitment process by using electronic resources and taking centralized computerized examination started. Teacher recruitment web page was released in the official web page of the Ministry of Education.
- Development of management specialists in Bachelor and Master’s level in Azerbaijan State Pedagogical University for 2009/2010 academic year started. Admission plan for master level of education management specialty for 2012-2013 academic year was developed and the implementation of “education program for master level of education management specialty” started. 5 students were admitted to the above mentioned program.
- Accreditation Unit was established in the Ministry of Education. The staff of Accreditation Unit was on study tour in England in order to study the accreditation practice of education institutions and programs.
- Scheme of development and implementation of the strategic plans of R(C)EDs based on those of the Ministry of Education was applied. Implementation of Effective School Project started in 11 pilot districts. The aim of Effective School Project is to help schools to turn as a main force in implementation of reforms and develop as a learning school. The web page of Effective School Project was established in www.sm11.edu.az
- The system of conducting of applied research in Education Problems Institute based on the order of the Ministry of Education was applied. As an initial order of the Ministry of Education 18 research topics to be implemented in EPI in 2011/2012 academic year was approved.

Sub-component 5.2: Expansion of the education management information system

- Data of general education institutions was inserted in the EMIS database every year and new module of doctor of sciences employed by higher education institutions was established. Different analyses were made using EMIS data base at the request of the management and units of the Ministry of Education, as well as report on the duplicated names of pupils in general education institutions was developed. Distribution of responsibilities was defined between EMIS unit and Education System Informatization Directorate of the Ministry of Education.

Sub-component 5.3. School network rationalization and evaluation of per capita funding pilot reforms

- Activities for evaluating funding reforms implemented in 59 pilot schools were carried out and the relevant report was developed.
- Routine discussions were conducted with the Ministry of Economic Development with regard to school network rationalization and implementation of per capita funding reforms across the country and the importance of overall realization of this activity within the country and of the relevant decree of the President was specified. In this regard the draft of the decree of the President “on implementation of per capita funding in state general education institutions and school network rationalization activities” was developed by the Ministry of Education and officially sent to the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development for discussion. Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Economic Development deemed acceptable to delay and review these issues under the “National Strategy for the Development of Education of Azerbaijan which is under preparation. Government included the issues of the implementation of per capita funding in state general education institutions and school network rationalization in “National Strategy for the Development of Education of Azerbaijan in 2011-2021 years, which has not been approved yet.

Sub-component 5.4. Public awareness campaign on education reform

- Web page of the Ministry of Education was updated and specialists were involved to keep the web page regularly dynamic. The Web page of the Ministry of Education became the winner of “National Net” competition. Recent data and photos were placed at a web page of the Ministry Publication, regular interviews were arranged in TV channels, and periodical articles were published in the “Azerbaijan Muallimi” newspaper. 14 enlightening preview trailers dedicated to reforms under SESDP was developed and broadcasted on “Ictimai” TV. Most releases of Open Lesson talk show were dedicated to the ongoing reforms.
- Study tour to the Republic of France was arranged for the in-service training of the staff of the Public Relations Unit of the Ministry of Education and of the “Azerbaijan muallimi” newspaper.

Component 6. Project coordination, monitoring and evaluation

- Beginning from the early days of implementation of SESDP, efficient collaboration with the UNICEF was maintained. As a result of this range of collaboration, UNICEF timely and efficiently fulfilled its obligation for SESDP.
- Project surveys were conducted in 2010, 2011 and 2013 with regard to SESDP performance indicators. Project Progress reports was timely developed and submitted to the Ministry of Economy and Industry and the World Bank.
- Financial auditors’ opinions on SESDP were always positive.