

**Gəncə Aqrobiznes
Assosiasiyası**



**Ganja Agribusiness
Association**

ANNUAL REPORT 2009

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FOREWORD

Dear friends –

In the last 5 billion years significant changes to the earth are primarily attributable to human beings not catastrophic geological events. An unbalanced relationship between nature and humankind and its development for the past 1.5 million years has produced very negative outcomes. As a result human civilizations have been periodically destroyed on earth.



Extremely strained relations between nature and humankind have shifted the natural balance and have resulted in additional difficulties for the modern man. If man's relation to nature continues along this path, in forty or fifty years it will result in halting its progression and eventually will lead to the destruction of human civilization.

What is the solution? The only solution is to sustain and protect nature without destroying the natural balance in the ecosystems. A significant aspect of the sustainable development concept is the establishment of sustainable agriculture in the world. Organic agriculture is one of the principal objectives of the model for sustainable agriculture. The primary goal of organic agriculture is to carry out the mission of sustainable farming from a social and economic standpoint and to produce organic products. Organic farming as an alternative system is based on the principles for improving soil fertility, applying crop rotation systems, and treating plant diseases and pests - using organic methods. Its principles require eliminating artificial additives to feed, ending the use of mineral fertilizers and herbicides, and ceasing the use of growth promoters for increased productivity.

Organic farming expands to 35 million hectares worldwide

Thirty-five million hectares of agricultural land are managed organically by almost 1.4 million producers. Azerbaijan is the biggest country in the South Caucasus by its population and land mass. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 Azerbaijan gained its independence and went through a broad development process. Azerbaijan's integration in the world as an independent country is essential to its development and progress. Azerbaijan's honourable President Ilham Aliyev has recently declared 2010 as the "Ecology Year" raising the profile of the environment and organic agriculture in Azerbaijan. The organic movement in Azerbaijan is paired with this development as historically significant. Organic production is a model for sustainable agriculture that opens new opportunities to address social, ecological and economic problems existing in our communities. Azerbaijan Republic bears the responsibility for the development of sustainable

agriculture by its participation in many of the UN programs and International Conventions. It is gratifying to see the progress made in this area in the last 10 years. In Azerbaijan, according to statistics provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, in 2006, 20.105 hectares were used for organic production which constituted 0,43% of the total agricultural land. Two-hundred hectares were used for grain crops, 206 hectares for vegetables, 755 hectares for perennial herbs, 10.744 hectares for pastures and hay, and 8.200 hectares for wild fruits and medicinal plants.

GABA being the first to promote the Organic Agriculture Movement in Azerbaijan has the objectives of expanding this movement throughout the country, increasing public awareness of organic agriculture and increasing the work in this arena. Since its initiation in 2000, approximately 1700 farmers have been trained and have moved from conventional farming to organic farming and almost 400 have advanced to the stage of applying for organic certification of their products. Organic agriculture was in response to environmental issues as well as the Azerbaijani farmers still suffering from the reorientation and restructuring process as the result of the conversion of the land from the collective farms to individually owned land in 1996. Access to farm resources especially fertilizers, pesticides, and veterinary products were difficult to obtain or expensive. Development of organic agriculture is seen as an option for Azerbaijan farmers to develop a sustainable agriculture production system in an environmentally supportive and economically sound way. GABA activities are primarily based in the west, northwest and central regions with land area that covers almost half of the republic and 50 per cent of the agricultural products are from these regions.

I would like to express my gratitude to all of our partners and professionals for their work, to our members and supporters who have given their time and support to our work both abroad and at home, and invite their future cooperation with us. I am especially grateful for the commitment shown by our staff as well.

With kind regards,

Amin Babayev
The Chairman of the Board of Directors

GABA PROFILE

Statutory name: Ganja Agribusiness Association
Legal form: NGO (non-governmental organization)
Office location: Javadkhan Street 19, Ganja, AZ 2000, Azerbaijan
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Ganja Agribusiness Association (GABA), located in Ganja, Azerbaijan is a regional non-governmental organization whose mission is to promote sustainable development of the country's agrarian sector through human potential development, knowledge and resource transfer. This organization was established in 1996 by a group of leading scientists and registered four years later by the Minister of Justice of Azerbaijan. GABA has supported small-enterprise development in Azerbaijan since 1999 by means of building the capacity of targeted entrepreneurs with the purpose of their effective social and economic growth through training, information support and resource mobilization.

GABA wants to expand agricultural potential in Azerbaijan in the regions where farmers are already active and where they have started with organic agriculture. GABA provides information and guidance which is adjusted to what these farmers need. Choosing organic agriculture gives farmers the option to set up a good sustainable production system without needing a lot of external input. Many farmers are therefore increasingly interested in organic farming.

The main target groups of GABA are rural populations operating in the agrarian sector as well as processing enterprises located in urban areas. GABA also has a history of supporting Internally Displaced People (IDPs), poor peasants and women through its project development. IDPs were supported with micro crediting through GABA's social fund. Although GABA operates in the areas of the northwest and western regions of Azerbaijan, GABA has a broader strategy to include all of Azerbaijan in its efforts to convert conventional farming to organic farming.

GABA is the primary organization in Azerbaijan promoting organic agriculture. GABA's mission is to work towards a world in which people live in dignity and prosperity, a world where poverty and injustice are no longer present. In 2000 GABA assumed a leadership position by initiating the promotion of organic

agriculture. Currently, there are more than a million people engaged in agriculture, calculated to be about 30 per cent of the working population agriculture and 16 per cent of them are women. The last 4 years have been very productive for GABA's organic initiative, 3 parallel projects in organic agriculture were initiated. GABA is recognized as a leader both in the NGO community and among its partners. The main achievements of GABA are listed below:

- ◆ GABA was the first to provide consulting and information services in the agrarian sector in Azerbaijan (1996);
- ◆ GABA was registered by the Azerbaijan Minister of Justice (2000);
- ◆ In 2002 GABA became a member of the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM);
- ◆ GABA is a member of the Azerbaijan Entrepreneurs Confederation and its representative in the Western region;
- ◆ GABA was the first to create a database on marketing of agriculture products;
- ◆ GABA has implemented 40 projects with the support of different international organizations and foundations;
- ◆ GABA has applied advanced technologies (drip irrigation, raised bed planting etc) and has lead in introducing new crop varieties (potato, maize, wheat) (2002-2004);
- ◆ GABA has created a coalition with several NGO's in the region;
- ◆ AZEKOSERT and the Soil lab were founded (2006);
- ◆ Monthly Journal, *Organic Agriculture* was started and currently has a circulation of 1000 (2007);
- ◆ GABA initiated the opening of the Organic Agriculture field of study at the Azerbaijan Agricultural Academy (now known as Azerbaijan State Agriculture University) (2007);
- ◆ August 25, 2008 President Ilham Aliyev approved the *Law on Organic Agriculture* which was proposed, drafted and sponsored by GABA;
- ◆ A significant number of GABA's staff have participated and passed international training courses in different western countries (Germany, Hungary, Holland, Romania, Poland and the US);

Mission

Ganja Agribusiness Association (GABA) located in Ganja, Azerbaijan is a regional non-governmental organization whose mission is to promote sustainable development of the country's agrarian sector through human potential development. GABA strives to successfully partner with international donors in developing and implementing complex multi-year and multi-phased projects that stimulate organic agriculture, promotion of general development of the society and improvement their living standards, economic integration, the improvement of environmental protection including biodiversity, energy efficiency, agribusiness extension, sustainable rural development and organic education in the West, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan.

Objectives

Ganja Agribusiness Association's (GABA's) principal objectives include to lobby organic agriculture and increase consumer awareness of organic products; promote the general development of the society and improve their living standards; build the capacity of targeted entrepreneurs with the purpose of their effective social and economic growth through information support and resource mobilization; conduct business trainings, seminars, conferences on various fields of agriculture; manage agricultural and environmental grants; allocate low interest loan to the member farmers engaged in organic agriculture. GABA names organic and sustainable agriculture, biodiversity and nature conservation, marketing, advocacy and community development as the key objectives. Promoting democratic and market-oriented reforms based on shared values, i.e. respect for human rights, the rule of law, good governance, principles of market economy, education and sustainable development, is an also important part of GABA's objectives.

CHALLENGES AND SATISFACTION

GABA has demonstrated significant developmental progression and now successfully partners with international donors in designing, developing and implementing complex multi –year and multi-phase projects. Talented university post graduate students representing numerous scientific and business specialties are paired with seasoned technical agrarian professionals resulting in the best of practical hands on experience, the application of current scientific knowledge, the discipline of effective project execution combined with energy and enthusiasm. GABA has developed an environment that is conducive to collaboration, teamwork, respect and produces high quality outcomes.

Every human being is entitled to respect and equal treatment and has a responsibility to treat others in the same manner. Based on the principles of “charity, justice and the purity of creation” GABA works towards sustainable poverty alleviation. Thus GABA has made a significant contribution to the organic movement in Azerbaijan. GABA’s work in this field includes educating and converting farmers to organic methods, promoting consumer awareness of organic products, promoting organic products among manufacturing/processing enterprises. In August 2008, Azerbaijan’s President Aliyev signed into law *The Organic Law*, largely due to the efforts of the GABA organization – having initially designed, drafted and lobbied for this legislation.

GABA’s chooses its projects based on the alignment with its mission and skill set. It engages with organizations to enable various groups to realize economic benefits from a series of activities that bring sustainable economic development that builds capacity and strengthens the civil society. It partners within Azerbaijan as well as Europe and the United States are chosen for their complementary and supplemental skills, alignment with mission, shared beliefs, the resources they can bring to bear, their reputation, geographic location, their ability and effectiveness to implement development work. In addition, GABA has conducted various market research programs, is a national leader in organic agriculture production and farming practices.

GABA continues to focus its efforts on the challenges of the country’s new organic movement – converting farmers to organic methods, educating farmers and the greater public on the care of the environment and those benefits realized, promoting consumer awareness of organic products, promoting organic products as a viable alternative or additional product for food manufacturing/processing companies. GABA looks at its own country’s resources and to the western European countries, Japan and the US to model its programs and strategies to push the movement forward.

STRATEGY AND POLICY

GABA employs an array of methods to meet its strategic goals. GABA's first strategy is to minimize the impact to the environment by promoting an alternative to conventional agriculture, addressing a significant source of environmental impact. GABA also anticipates the education of the economic benefits of both organic agriculture (a lower cost structure and higher prices for products) and Agro tourism being a positive inducement. It is noted that 20 percent of the agriculture in Azerbaijan is done by women and their participation will be encouraged in the organic agriculture training. Because agro tourism is a home based business it is anticipated that women would be primary participants.

GABA's second approach is to engage governmental authorities in developing organic environmental standards, measurements and monitoring systems, that are needed to support the organic agricultural activities. GABA has excellent access to governmental authorities and has effectively involved them in prior projects. Its organizational strategy is multifaceted "Through the development of organic and conventional agriculture, help raise the living conditions of the rural population, ensure sustainable development of the agrarian sector and build environmentally sound and socially just society in the rural areas of Azerbaijan."

GABA's names education as a key objective, marketing, advocacy and community development as well. GABA Extension services are staffed with a group of agriculture specialists who provide onsite training and consulting for the farmers. The education objective includes a comprehensive educational program, documentation, collaboration with a number of education institutions and farmer schools. The marketing strategy includes participation in local and international exhibitions fairs, widening the markets from local to national markets, taking advantage of export opportunities and increasing networking opportunities. Advocacy looks for opportunities to support this agricultural sector by lobbying on behalf of farmers rights and campaigns to raise public awareness of their rights and the responsibilities of legal bodies. Community development is frequently the focus of GABA's efforts. Its primary objective is to increase agricultural productivity and economic performance of the community members. GABA promotes capacity building as key as well development is done to support sustainability.

In addition to aforementioned, GABA organization has already started to apply the requirements for ISO 9001:2008. Three employees from GABA were involved in the trainings held by Zygon Caspian Consulting Company associated with the requirements for ISO 9001:2008 standards.

COOPERATION AND NETWORK

GABA serves multiple constituents by its GABA Network. Included in this are the following stand alone organizations: The Amin Credit Union, providing financing and a variety of services to its members; four Business Resource Centers offering consulting services; a soil analysis laboratory for farmers and landowners; a certification body, AZEKOSERT qualifying farmers in obtaining organic farming certification; and a Consortium heading by GABA of NGOs, municipalities and government authorities in the Ganja area who convene on a number of issues including development in the region.

Cooperation between GABA and Universities:

- Azerbaijan State Agrarian University;
- Georgian State Agrarian University;
- Armenian State Agrarian University;
- Universität Kassel Fachgebiet Ökologischer Gemüsebau am FG Ökologischer Land- & Pflanzenbau;
- Institute for Geography Justus Liebig University (JLU)Giessen;
- Norwegian University of Life Sciences;
- Louis Bolk Institute Agro Eco;
- University Greifswald Institute for Botany, Landscape Ecology and Botanical;

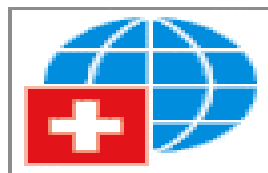
GABA works with a variety of internationally significant organizations whose missions overlap with the mission of GABA. GABA recognizes the importance of working with other international organizations to achieve a sustainable future. Thus the organization actively participates in international agricultural and environmental negotiations with the multilateral institutions to further the interests of the organic agricultural movement in Azerbaijan. GABA is uniquely recognized for taking on this important role. The introduction of the Principles of Organic Agriculture and the recognition of GABA by international institutions are of enormous importance for the further development of organic agriculture.

GABA in International Network:

- IFOAM – International Federation Of Organic Agriculture Movement;
- AVALON – Organic Agriculture Network Of Eastern Europe Countries;
- EaP NGO FORUM;
- APRODEV;
- CACAARI - Central Asia and the Caucasus Association;
- of Agricultural Research Institutions (3 consortiums);
- GFRAS - Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services;
- EUCARPIA - European Association for Research on Plant Breeding;
- ASA – American Society of Agronomy;
- CSSA - Crop Science Society of America;
- SSSA - Soil Science Society of America;

- PUM - Netherlands Christian Employers Federation (NCW);
- International Academy of Science of Ecology and Safety (UN);
- EKOCONNECT;
- Local NGO network;

GABA has had significant and successful project management experience. Since its establishment, GABA has managed and implemented more than 40 projects including organic agriculture, environmental sustainable management, agribusiness extension through the human capacity building, marketing research, creation of agrarian infrastructure, community development, and has provided technical and financial support. GABA working with multiple International Donors has staff and capability to design, develop and implement complex multi-year projects. To support its project and developmental activities GABA has on staff experienced project managers, financial analysts, Extension Agents with decades of Agribusiness experience as well as agricultural specific scientists and PhD's. The project structure will entail the project management of each discreet component, each headed by a Project manager and overseen by a project coordinator. A number of large international donor organizations which GABA has successfully worked with are listed below:



10 Projects in the West, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan

In 2009 GABA implemented 10 projects successfully in the West, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan. Within the context of these projects, GABA worked together with both international and local donor organizations. The emphasis in the projects lay on the introduction of new organic methods, practices, and business opportunities which work in concert with the ecosystem and mitigating negative factors impacting climate change, as well as taking a proactive approach in providing economic opportunity with care of the environment, adaptation of agricultural methods with climate considerations and demonstrates to both the business sector and the government sector effective environmental standards.

GABA brings significant value to the Ganja community, rural communities which are the recipients of project development and the community members. Through Professor Babayev's leadership GABA's activities and projects provide the Ganja population with employment opportunities, the project communities with income as the development proceeds are used locally for project supplies whenever possible and the project beneficiaries with increased capacity to improve their livelihoods.

Working regions of GABA



PROJECTS

Contribution to the Development of Organic Agriculture in Azerbaijan

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ Western, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan

Project Duration

January 2006 – December 2009

Donor organizations

ICCO and EED organizations of Germany

Objectives

Through the development of organic agriculture, help to raise the living conditions of the rural population, ensure the sustainable development of the agrarian sector, and build environmentally sound and socially just society in the rural areas of Azerbaijan.

Total budget

385 000 Euro

Project costs in 2009

132 614 Euro

Azerbaijan is the biggest country in the South Caucasus for its population and area. One of main goals for Azerbaijan today is to remove dependence of economy on oil and assure expansion of economic development to rural areas. Being the third biggest sphere in Azerbaijani economy after oil and construction agriculture possesses biggest share in employment (in 2009, 39,1% of total employed population was working in agriculture, and only 1% in oil sector). GABA is the leader organization promoting organic agriculture in Azerbaijan and is actively implementing activities in the field of organic agriculture. This project also served aforementioned purposes and the results achieved through this project are listed below:

Output-1

- Comprehensive educational program for organic agriculture professionals are developed;
- Highly qualified and organized education materials are prepared and adapted to local environment;
- Collaboration and cooperation with education bodies are established and strengthened;
- Two farmer schools are established;

Output-2

- Public awareness campaigns are carried out systematically such as conferences, TV and Radio programs;
- Interactive website is developed and constantly updated;

Output-3

- GABA management and capacity is improved by the participation in professional development programs;
- GABA management and administration system is strengthened;
- To provide fee-based organizational development services in order to achieve financial sustainability of the organization;

Within the project framework a comprehensive educational program for agriculture professionals in sustainable agriculture methods and theory was developed, organic agriculture at the local and international level was promoted, organizational management systems and efficiencies were improved as well.

PROJECTS

Strengthening Organic Agriculture in the South Caucasus

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ West, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan

Project Duration

January 2006 – December 2009

Donor organizations

EPER/HEKS and SDC organizations of Switzerland

Objectives

Thanks to the production and commercialization of certified organic products, farmers in Azerbaijan can increase their income and improve their living conditions

Total budget

66026.00 Euro

Project costs in 2009

28831.00 Euro

Azerbaijan plays an extremely important role in the Caspian and Caucasian regions, especially in the development of transport infrastructure in the Caucasus and the implementation of the energy projects. It was the region's first country to explore the huge energy potential, to form an absolutely new economic model in the regional development, and to expand political and economic relations between Europe and Asia. “Strengthening Organic Agriculture in the South Caucasus” was also one of its successfully implemented projects which was intended to serve the following five components:

A. PRODUCTION

Through adapted extension and support, organic farmers in Azerbaijan improved their production and apply for certification. Currently the total number of organic farmers (including conversion period) is 171. Organic farmers improved quality of their products, lowered costs through better farm management and certified their production as organic.

B. MARKETING

Through specific actions, the access to the market (local, regional or international) for certified organic products from Azerbaijan is facilitated. 40 farmers signed contract with business partners for the collaboration. Awareness about organic agriculture and certification is raised among public, processors and traders.

C. POLICY DIALOGUE

Thanks to continuous exchange and lobby, relevant authorities and key actors are informed about the challenges and needs of organic agriculture. GABA working with 3 well placed individuals from the:

- Ministry of Agriculture
- State Land Committee
- Agrarian Commission of Parliament.

They lobbied for the subsidizing for farmers and extension work, as well as financing of training programs for organic agriculture. The government agreed to support sending a farmer with Azerbaijani organic products to Germany's International Organic Agriculture Exhibition - BioFach and to establish a program for students from the Ecological Management Faculty of ASAU to work on established organic farms.

D. CERTIFICATION

Certification bodies (CB) in Azerbaijan are recognized on international level through the regional EU accreditation of Green Caucasus. AZEKOSERT Certification Body was founded and now is operational in Azerbaijan by offering high quality services (inspections, certification, organic standards training, ISO 65 guidelines and HACCP training).

E. CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Capacities of local partners are consolidated and mechanism of knowledge transfer functioning, mechanism to enhance self sustainability is assessed.

After the project execution period, certified organic farmers improved their farm management (lowering costs) and accessed new markets for their products (increased income).

Organic Agricultural Chain Development in the Southern Caucasus and Moldova Republic

Countries

Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia and Moldova

Project Duration

June 2006 – September 2009

Donor organizations

Avalon Foundation, The Theme-based Co-financing Programme (TMF) of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Partner organizations

Elkana (Georgia), Ecoglobe (Armenia), and ProRuralInvest (Moldova)

Objectives

Developing an organic production chain in the project countries, eventually resulting in higher standards of living in rural communities and increased supply and demand for organically grown products.

Total budget

17317.00 Euro

Project costs in 2009

17300.00 Euro

Although organic agriculture has been in existence for some time in the new independent states of the former Soviet Union, there had not yet been any organic chains from producer to consumer. With the Organic Chain Development Programme, Avalon makes a contribution to sustainable economic agricultural development in this region.

This project places a great deal of attention on training in the area of organic agriculture, the development of the marketing area, policy development, knowledge exchange and a greater awareness among producers and consumers in all of the countries. During the project execution period GABA together with Avalon achieved the followings in Azerbaijan:

- Organic Agriculture Chain was improved in Azerbaijan;
- Ganja Agribusiness Association (GABA) was selected to develop National Organic Program;
- Organic Law was developed and introduced to Azerbaijan's Parliament;
- Market research of organic products was conducted;
- The new organic market called "GANJA SABAT" was opened;
- Organic Agriculture field of study was opened at Azerbaijan Agricultural Academy (now known as Azerbaijan State Agrarian University);
- Nine Organic Farmer Groups were created and converted to organic farming;

- Organic Agriculture Law was adopted by Azerbaijan Parliament;
- Farmer associations, women's organizations and other target groups were educated and trained in organic agriculture, sustainable development and the marketing of these products;

In addition, aspects such as the responsible use of agricultural land and biodiversity are important when it comes to sustainable rural development. Full advantage was taken of media attention and experts gave interviews on radio and television-programme and newspapers, and information stands were set up at exhibitions, where large numbers of folders and flyers were distributed. This last activity was also carried out on a regular basis during local market days.

Poverty Reduction via the Development of Vocational Schools

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ 11 settlements in Bilasuvar district for IDPs from Jabrail

Project Duration

January 2008 – May 2009

Donor organizations

Hilfswerk Austria

Objectives

The goal of the project is to help the students within the community to develop their own career path through a mix of study and practical work

Total budget

49157.54 Euro

Project costs in 2009

19658.39 Euro

The population living in Bilasuvar district is mainly children and middle-aged people. After leaving school the majority of young people leaves the district and moves to Baku, the capital city or some different cities of Russia in search of a living. Such condition in the settlements is connected with absence of working places and educational institutions. Thus GABA decided to sign a contract with Hilfswerk Austria on developing and implementing project in order to address these challenges and fortunately the intended project was completed successfully. Achieved project outcomes are listed below:

- Reconstruction of the vocational school was realized with the participation of the Minister for Education and Jabrail ex-com;
- The training modules of total 678 pages based on international standards was developed by GABA experts;
- Three monthly course of studies were conducted for the selected 20 vocational school teachers;
- 60 students were admitted to the vocational school to study;
- A library with more than 200 books and other information sources was created and also was provided with GABA's monthly journals of Ecological Farming;
- Two vocational school teachers participated in 2 monthly course in Austria to raise the level of their professional skills;

The opening of the vocational school was on the 4th of November 2008. Organizational works connected with the opening were carried out by GABA. The representatives of local executive power and the community members took part in the opening ceremony. The opening ceremony was broadcasted on the regional television.

After opening the vocational school GABA's project management kept contact with the School's teachers and interested in education quality. GABA experts who have great teaching experience in Azerbaijan Agricultural Academy were sent mission trip to Bilesuvar and they gave recommendations to the School's teachers on teaching methods.

Additionally in order to achieve successful implementation of the project and strengthen the relationships, GABA opened its regional branch office in Bilesuvar and provided it with necessary equipments such as computers, copy machine, printer. Through this regional branch GABA carries out extension of new updated agricultural knowledge from the world experience and other advanced technologies to the local farmers directly. The library of the branch is provided with GABA's monthly journal of Ecological Farming. By that way both IDP farmers and also other interested operators benefit from this information resource services of the branch.

PROJECTS

Enhancement of the Capacity and Potential for Sustainable Development of the Eyvazlilar Human Development and Sustainable Income Generation Public Union (EHDU)

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan \ Eyvazlilar, Mashadi Garalar and Jinli Boluslu villages of the Goranboy District

Project Duration

August 2008 – August 2009

Donor organizations

BP and co-ventures, Eyvazlilar EHDU

Objectives

The principal objective of the SEEL program is to improve the quality of life and to increase opportunities for sustainable livelihoods in the target areas

Total budget

\$ 171263.00

Project costs in 2009

\$ 96498.29

The total population of these three communities is slightly more than 2,000 residents – 16% of which are between 16 and 26 years old. The vast majority of households are engaged in the agricultural sector – more than 85% - and the top three crops are alfalfa, wheat and barley, which are used mainly as animal feed.

Eyvazlilar is a primarily agrarian village that relies on animal breeding, small-plot vegetable farming and fruit production. The village has 436 hectares of cultivated land and is populated by 120 families. The land is irrigated by five artesian water wells renovated with the help of the CIP and Save the Children's Community Development Program. Population demographics are 35% male, 33% female and 32% youth (under 25 years). The two neighboring villages - Mashadi Garalar and Jinli Bolusli – have similar issues and demographics as Eyvazlilar.

All three communities suffer from declining agriculture productivity, scarce water resources, low access to agriculture and business information, distant markets for their products and an increasingly disenfranchised youth. Taking all the aforementioned issues into consideration the following results were achieved during the project execution period:

OUTPUT 1 - Increase Agricultural productivity and Economic Performance of targeted beneficiaries

- Drip Irrigation Demonstration Field for 0,7 ha area was initiated;

- Four Demonstration Field Days with the participation of 73 farmers were conducted;
- Fodder Processing Facility covering an area of 100 m² and being able to produce 300 kg of packaged product per hour was established;
- Targeted Agriculture and Business Technical Assistance and Extension Services (extension services for 68 farms) were provided;

OUTPUT 2 - Increase Agricultural and Business Technical Capacity among Targeted Beneficiaries

- Agricultural Technical Training Series with the participation of 98 farmers were designed and delivered;
- Business Technical Training Series for 98 farmers were designed and delivered;
- A Physical and Virtual Technical Resource Center equipped with proper furniture and 126 agricultural books in Eyvazlilar community was initiated;
- Youth Business Plan and Marketing Trainings with the participation of sixty youth were designed and delivered;

OUTPUT 3 - Increase and Develop EHDU Organizational Capacity

- EHDU Financial and asset diversification self-diagnosis (1 self-diagnosis);
- Financial Sustainability and Institutional Development Action Plan (IDAP) such as “An Administrative Policy”, “A Membership Policy” and “A Finance Policy” were established;

Climate II: The Fight Against Desertification in Azerbaijan

Country\Project Locations

Azerbaijan\Bilasuvar district, Settlements of internally displaced people from Jabrail district

Project Duration

August 2008 –November 2009

Donor organizations

Avalon Foundation, The Netherlands

Objectives

To apply practical anti-desertification methods in villages in order to create a positive effect on the daily lives of the local communities.

Total budget

31000.00 Euro

Project costs in 2009

15464.75 Euro

The goal of this project was to restore the vegetation, fertility and soil moisture levels affected by desertification. The measures are designed to fight desertification and the further climate change related to this while at the same time creating benefits for the local population.

This project was implemented in the Bilasuvar region near the border with Iran. There are eleven villages which were set up for internally displaced people (or IDP's) and which currently provide a community to 16,000 residents. Most of the residents do not have work or way to spend their time. Of these residents, at least 1100 have a higher education, yet no opportunities for putting their knowledge and intelligence to use. Agriculture and cattle farming are still done according to centuries-old traditions and are usually done on a small scale.

The region is dry, but with the right techniques and measures, agriculture here can offer a solution for the local community. Within the framework of the project, the following activities were carried out in order to fight the harmful effects of climate change:

- Several local residents were trained to become experts in order to exchange this knowledge with others. For this purpose information booklets and “Ecological Farming” journal were distributed to the new farmers;
- A new forest region was planted using what is known as the “Fukuoka methodology”, in which seeds from shrubs and trees are mixed with clay to form pebbles which are then spread at the foot of treeless hills;

- Tree nurseries are planted for local communities, trees are replanted in areas which require a lot of firewood, and tree clusters are planted to prevent wind erosion;
- The importance of growing grain and vegetable is demonstrated. This meets three important needs: a) cattle feed; b) straw, which is mixed with manure to reduce CO₂ emissions, and c) permanent soil cover, which helps prevent erosion, water waste and desertification;
- Biogas units were installed and composting system was introduced to the selected 12 farms;
- Two ha area of barley and alfalfa were planted, which yields more vegetation and provides the soil with natural compost (humus) and nitrogen. In addition, alfalfa is inexpensive cattle feed and helps prevent wind erosion;

Schools are involved in the activities as well. Demonstration fields were set up for growing barley and alfalfa, and demonstrations were held on manure fermentation. The project “The fight against desertification in Azerbaijan” was implemented successfully.

Development of Kenaf Test Plots in Azerbaijan

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ Bilasuvar and Samukh districts

Project Duration

May 2009 – November 2009

Donor organizations

The Nopal Group (USA)

Objectives

The principal objective of this project is to provide the community members with kenaf management data and experience

Total budget

5000.00 AZN

Project costs in 2009

5000.00 AZN

According to the contract signed with The Nopal Group and Ganja Agribusiness Association (GABA) kenaf test plots were set up in two locations Samukh and Bileuvar regions. In Bileuvar region the size of the kenaf test plot was 2057 m² (36mx57m), soil is heavy loamy and irrigated sierozemic meadow.

GABA's experts periodically visit the kenaf test plots, take notes (phonological observations, measurements of plant height and diameter of stem) and give their recommendations on kenaf management. Four kenaf varieties were tested in these plots.

Table 1

Results of phonological observations done in Samukh test plot

Name of the variety	Sowing period	Getting sprouts	Formation of real leaves	Height of the plant, meter, 15.06.09	Height of the plant, meter, 10.07.09	Width cut measures, cm, 17.07.09	Height of the plant, meter, 06.08.2009	Width cut measures, cm, 06.08.2009	Height of the plant, meter, 14.10.2009	Width cut measures, cm, 14.10.2009
Tainung-2	11/05/09	17/05/09	24/05/09	0.29	1,07	0.70	1.32	1.4	3.41	3.63
Dowling	11/05/09	18/05/09	26/05/09	0.24	0,85	0.62	1.30	1.4	3.15	3.47
Everglades 41	11/05/09	17/05/09	25/05/09	0.26	0,82	0.70	1.35	1.6	2.94	3.36

Table 2

Results of phenological observations done in Bilesuvar test plot

Name of variety	I Sowing	II Sowing	Getting sprouts during the I sowing	Getting sprouts during the II sowing	Formation of real leaves during the I sowing	Formation of real leaves during the II sowing	Height of the plant meter, 18.06.09	Height of the plant meter, 09.07.09	Width cut measures, cm, 17.07.09	Height of the plant, meter, 05.08.09	Width cut measures, cm, 05.08.09	Height of the plant, meter, 29.10.09	Width cut measures, cm, 29.10.09
Tainung-2	08/05/09	13/05/09	15/05/09	20/05/09	23/05/09	26/05/09	0.27	0,89	1,45	1,34	1,6	3.79	3.65
Whitten	08/05/09	13/05/09	16/05/09	20/05/09	24/05/09	27/05/09	0.26	0,85	1,45	1,45	2,2	3.83	3.62
Dowling	08/05/09	13/05/09	17/05/09	21/05/09	26/05/09	28/05/09	0.24	0.78	1,55	1,31	2,0	3.75	3.58
Everglades 41	08/05/09	13/05/09	17/05/09	21/05/09	26/05/09	27/05/09	0.25	0,80	1,30	1,45	2,0	3.66	3.60

According to the test plots results and observations GABA experts concluded the followings:

- Kenaf crop can be successfully grown in irrigated plain and warm areas of Azerbaijan.
- GABA has all kenaf management data and experience and ready to apply its knowledge in practice.
- Tainung-2 is the best adapted variety for Azerbaijan condition according to its growth and green mass among the tested four kenaf varieties.

PROJECTS

Economic Development of the Khatinli Community by the Strengthening of the Agriculture Sector

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ Khatinli Community in Tovuz district

Project Duration

June 2009 – December 2010

Donor organizations

BP and co-ventures

Objectives

The primary goal of the project is to increase agricultural and business technical capacity of the targeted beneficiaries within the community and utilize renewable energy sources to support the farmers.

Total budget

\$ 255605.00

Project costs in 2009

\$ 37626.80

During the assessment of the community it was determine favorable conditions were present for livestock development. Currently there are 893 head of cattle, 9839 head of sheep, 4789 head of poultry and 31 head of buffalo in the community. Despite the availability of sufficient number of livestock, the community's activities are not sufficiently profitable. The following activities were carried out according to the project components in order to rectify this condition:

Component 1: Introduce an array of new crops to be used on the production of high quality fodder positively impacting the quality and size of the livestock

#	Type of seed	Distribution to number of farmers	Quantity of seeds to one farmer	Total
1	Corn	10	10 kg	100 kg
2	Sorghum	10	10 kg	100 kg
3	Alfalfa	32	10 kg	320 kg
4	Barley	48	100 kg	4800 kg

Component 2: Design and build a processing facility for the production of the high quality fodder

- The construction work for the fodder processing facility is almost completed and the fodder processing equipment has been brought;

Component 3: Introduce a program of artificial insemination for cattle breeding resulting in higher quality livestock herds

- 5 veterinarians were selected;
- The tender for the purchase of the artificial insemination equipment was announced;

Component 4: Facilitate the introduction and use of biogas the resulting organic fertilizer composting

- The biogas demonstration farm was selected;
- The tender for the purchase of the biogas equipment was announced;

Component 5: By providing education, new farming technologies and methods assist the community in upgrading and creating high quality crops and livestock

- The training module was developed;
- The training participants were selected and groups were established;

Component 6: Market sub-sector value chain development through the crop, livestock, storage and information management improvements

- Development of marketing database to improve marketing of the community's agricultural products;
- Questionnaire was developed to collect information from farmers;
- 100 farmers will complete the questionnaire (to date 20 have been completed);
- Data from questionnaire will be loaded into database;
- Data will serve in the community's marketing efforts;

Component 7: Design and build a cold storage facility to provide additional economic opportunities

- The tender process was completed for the cold storage facility (the tender winner is KAF group);
- The construction of the facility is anticipated to be completed by the end of May, 2010;

PROJECTS

Capacity Building in Rural Development for Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees in New Settlement of Agdam District in Azerbaijan

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ Agdam district

Project Duration

October 2009 – October 2010

Donor organizations

Swiss Development Corporation (SDC), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic

Objectives

The primary goal of the project is to provide the target beneficiaries with technical support and appropriate and adapted technologies to grow high value vegetable crops

Total budget

25000.00 AZN

Project costs in 2009

4783.15 AZN

The Government of Azerbaijan is implementing measures to improve the living conditions of families displaced from the Agdam and other regions and temporarily placed in camps and wagons. The main objective is to facilitate a normal way of life by providing the necessary physical and social infrastructures mainly in the Agdam district. As a part of those activities, the project “Capacity Building in Rural Development for IDPs and Refugees in Agdam District, implemented by FAO and financed by the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)” shall reach out to a large number of beneficiaries and providing the grounds for sustainability of income generation for IDPs and local farmers.

The strategy of the project is to consolidate the successful results of the pilot phase to ensure a sustainable income for beneficiaries after the closure of the project. To achieve sustainability the project will, in a very limited way, support directly lead farmers through the application of the Farmer Field School and the Farmer Business School concepts. Implementation will otherwise rely on direct capacity building for Business Development Services.

The project have launched tender in August 2009 and selected partners for the provision of the services. The carried out activities within the project framework are listed below:

- The training for Core Team Trainers was conducted in the FAO Barda office. Within the project area Lead Farmers were identified based on their potential interest and mobilization capacity.
- After the selection of lead farmers they were provided with folders including basic training handouts for farmers, organic farming journals and booklets, and then trained on Farm Field School principles and methodology, as well as growing of seedlings for tomato production in greenhouse conditions including preparation of seedling bed, pest and diseases control.
- In addition to aforementioned activities, total 11 greenhouses were installed within this project.
- Four Farm Business Schools covering 9-20 participants were established in each settlement and village in order to make farming an economic enterprise responding to market demands.

Cooperation with donor organization and the community is going very well.

PROJECTS

Economic Development of the Garadaghly Community by Strengthening of the Agricultural Sector

Country \ Project Locations

Azerbaijan/ Garadaghly Community in the Ujar district

Project Duration

November 2009 – November 2010

Donor organizations

BP and co-ventures

Objectives

The primary goal of project is to provide sustainable income development for the Community members involved in the agriculture sector.

Total budget

\$ 120907.00

Project costs in 2009

\$ 3189.65

Within the project framework the agriculture sector is defined as small landowners, farmers, traders, processors, providers of agroservices and suppliers. The goal of the project will be achieved in combination with tangible benefits and the transference of skills and knowledge. The tangible benefits include fodder crop seeds, vegetable seeds and a Fodder Processing facility. Skills and knowledge to be delivered and transferred to the Community are divided into two categories, agricultural and business. In the agricultural category included are expertise and training to improve the fertility of the soil, methods and strategies to counteract and control erosion and desertification including salinization amelioration, and expertise associated with livestock and crop cultivation. The business category includes finance training for members of the Community to enable effective management of the fodder processing facility.

This project targets improving the living condition of those individuals engaged in agriculture in the Community area. The outputs and key indicators are as follows:

Output 1 - Increase agricultural productivity/capacity and performance of targeted beneficiaries while balancing environmental impact.

Project Director and Community Business Development Coordinator made a business trip to the Garadaghly community in Ujar district in November, 2009. The meeting was held about the project's implementation and together with the community members, a representative of the Garadaghly municipality, local

representative of ExCom of the Ujar district, as well as manager of the Ekinchi Ltd. Were involved in this meeting. Based on the criteria defined in the project, the lists of the farmers who will be provided with the fodder crops, seeds and will participate in the trainings were identified. Within the project it is planned to distribute wheat, barley, alfalfa, sorghum and corn seeds to 80 farmers from the Garadaghly community and the neighboring Alpout, Garabok and Gulebend communities. These farmers will be also involved in two-day trainings on vegetable crop growing.

Output 2 – Increase economic performance of targeted beneficiaries.

One of the issues discussed in the meeting was associated with the selection of the land plot for the fodder processing facility construction. GABA's engineer developed the construction documents for the fodder processing facility and submitted them to BP for approval. Additionally at the end of December GABA's specialist in composting visited the Garadaghly community in order to select 5 farms for the composting demonstration sites and they were provided with consultations for compost preparation. Everything is going very well for the successful project implementation.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

GABA targets varied audiences in its efforts to promote and improve sustainable agriculture and the care of the environment throughout Azerbaijan. In accomplishing its objectives it uses an assortment of communication strategies including networking, lobbying and consulting. GABA participates on an international level as well, in its promotion of the organic sector. Internationally it works and partners with various social organizations, a number of universities, businesses and with various government representatives.

In 2009/2010 GABA was active in its participation in conference and meetings – both in Azerbaijan and internationally.

In November GABA participated in *The First Eastern Partnership Civil Society Forum* held in Brussels, Belgium. Around 200 civil society organizations including EaP countries and EU member countries took part in the Forum and collaborated in four working groups:

- 1) Democracy, good governance, stability, border management
- 2) Economic integration, convergence with EU policies
- 3) Energy, climate change, environment
- 4) Contacts between people

Azerbaijan was represented in this Forum by GABA together with 20 public unions. GABA being the working group three provided participants with its recommendations for the relevant issues.

GABA additionally was involved to *The 2nd International Conference on the Organic Sector Development* in Central/Eastern European and Central Asian countries held 10-11 September in Tbilisi, Georgia. Organic Services, Organic Federation of Ukraine, The Georgia Agriculture University and “Elkana” Georgian organic farmer association were the organizers of the Conference. The Conference with the participation of 197 representatives from 22 countries played a significant role for South Caucasian Agrarian Universities in developing and implementing scientific research projects in cooperation with German Universities according to signed agreements. GABA’s project manager Vugar Babayev had presentation entitled “Potential opportunities of organic pomegranate production in Azerbaijan” in the section of “Manufacturing organic products” of the Conference.

In September GABA’s two representatives participated in *The Conference on “Organic Chain Development”* held in Sofia, Bulgaria. The conference brought together a range of organic farming stakeholders, mainly from Central and East European countries, the Balkans, the Caucasus and Central Asia. The principal objective to hold this Conference was to find out new members for international organic chain, as well as to conduct discussions and make decisions on organic

agriculture, global climate changes, biodiversity and business problems. GABA was invited to this Conference by the Avalon Foundation. The results achieved from the project “Organic Chain Development” implemented by GABA in cooperation with Avalon Foundation were discussed in the Conference as well. Additionally our representatives got acquainted with the farm engaged in production of organic meat and dairy products in Malo Buchino village around Sofia.

Although much of GABA’s development work has centered on agriculture - plant growing and livestock, trade of agriculture products, matters of ecology, environmental protection, it has also assumed a broader role in working with NGO’s from various regions of Azerbaijan helping them establish effective operations – including the organizational process, policy establishment, management development and capacity building. This development and training was done in recognition of the organizational strengths of GABA.

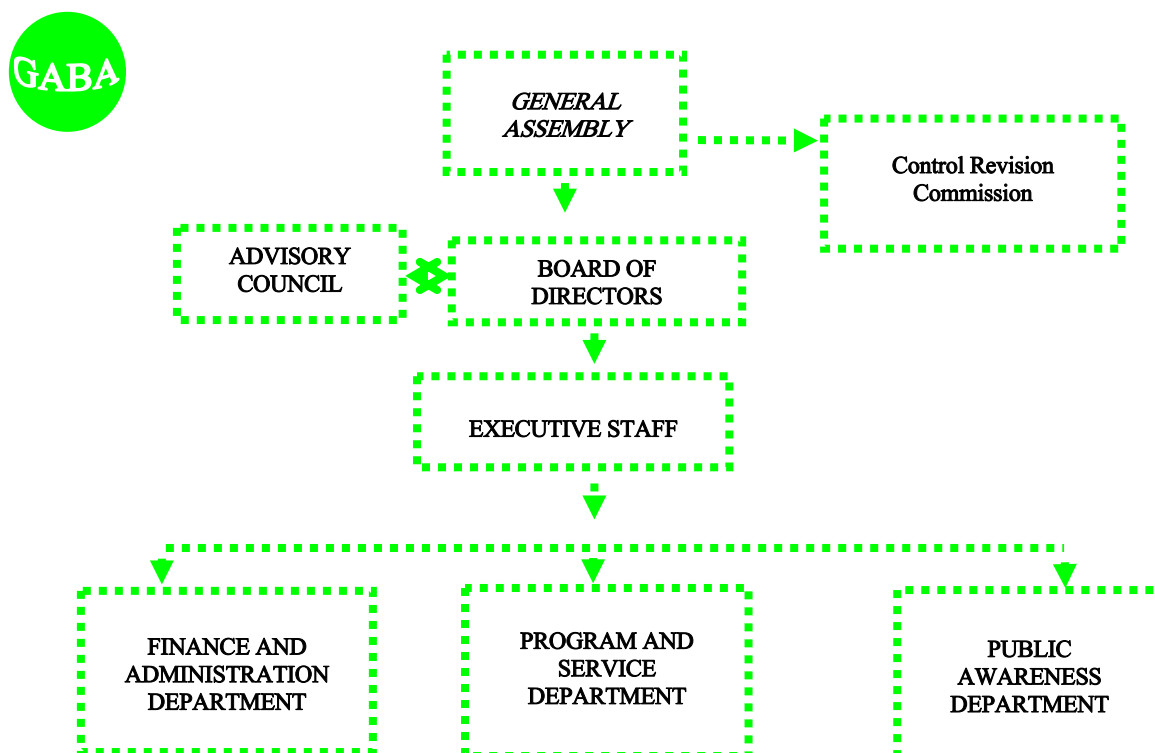
STAFF AND ORGANIZATION

Organization structure

GABA employs 27 people, the majority of which are specialists with university degree in agriculture. Their work includes project management and implementation, management matters, financial administration, and secretarial work. GABA has successfully completed numerous projects within a focused field of agribusiness development in Central, Western and North-Western Azerbaijan.

GABA's Organizational Chart

AN ORGANIZATIONAL CHART FOR GANJA AGRIBUSINESS ASSOCIATION



General Assembly

The Supreme Organ is General Assembly. The General Assembly is called at least twice a year. This is responsible for adopting a Charter for GABA and having amendments and appendices on it. Additionally General Assembly is responsible for choosing the members and the Chairman of Board of Directors, as well as of Finance and Administrative Control Group and ensuring effective organizational planning.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is the highest governing authority within the management structure. Major duties of the Board of Directors include providing continuity for the organization, governing the organization by broad policies and objectives, acquiring sufficient resources for the organization's operation, accounting to the public for the products and services of the organization and expenditures, supporting the executive and reviewing his or her performance. Professor Amin Babayev is the Chairman of the Board of Directors of GABA.

Control Revision Commission

The number of people for Control Revision Commission is defined by the General Assembly. This Commission is responsible for identifying nonconformities to GABA's Charter, overseeing and approving the organization's financial statement.

Advisory Council

This Council is made up of foreign experts who define the strategic directions of GABA, as well as advises on the broader international, political and economical environment in which GABA operates, and supports GABA in establishing strong business relations with international organizations. Additionally Advisory Council can help program managers, volunteers and council members perform more efficiently.

Executive Staff

The executive staff is made up of Executive Director and the below Department Managers. The Executive Staff determines and monitors the organization's programs and services, carries out the strategic plans and policies as established by the Board of Directors of GABA, sets the direction and oversees the operations of the organization, interfaces between Board and employees, as well as between organization and community, decides or guides courses of action in operations by staff, manages the projects, and concludes contracts on behalf of the Board.

Public Awareness Department

The department staff is responsible for enhancing the organization's public image and informing the people about GABA's successfully implemented activities via the only organic agriculture periodical *Organic Agriculture* journal which has a circulation of 1000, as well as through booklets, brochures, broadcasts on the radio and television etc.

Program and Service Department

GABA's staff is dedicated to developing and implementing multi-year and multi-phased projects in cooperation with local and international donor organizations in the North, Northwest and Central regions of Azerbaijan. Developing business plans for entrepreneurs and farmers and is experienced in developing questionnaires for regional agricultural and financial assessment, as well as representing the Association at different local and international events, conferences, trainings, seminars etc. are the major responsibilities of this department.

Finance and Administration Department

This department responsibility is directly linked to the strong financial management which is critical to the efficient, effective use of limited funds. The ability to provide accurate, timely financial information enables the organization to comply with the reporting obligations contained in grants and contracts, to meet the requirements of governments and regulatory agencies and to adhere to accounting standards.

BALANCE SHEET FOR 2009

Balance Sheet 2009	
01 January 2009-balance	75157.97
<i>Profit 2009</i>	
- receivables in projects	443292.2
- other receivables	4453.8
Total profit for 2009	447746.00
Expenses	
Payments for salaries	136807.05
Payments for main equipments	5758.82
Fuel and lubricating oil	20000.04
Stationary pen etc.	1844
Basic program expenses	175150.73
Expenses for office procurement	613.47
Bank services	3118.49
Audit	1400
Insurance	158.06
Total Expenses	344950.66

AUDITOR'S REPORT

Management's responsibility

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements and for the preparation of the management board report in accordance with the terms of the Agreement. This responsibility also includes: making the Financial Report available to the AUDITOR together with the books of account and related subsidiary records and documents; providing all other information and explanations required by the AUDITOR for the purposes of the audit, as well as arranging for the payment of the audit costs from the Project Funds after the AUDITOR has presented the Audit Report and the Letter of Internal Control (Management Letter).

Auditor's responsibility

The AUDITOR's responsibility is to examine the Financial Reports of the Projects and give an opinion thereon. The AUDITOR shall plan and perform the work in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards taking into account any relevant local statutory audit and accounting requirements. An audit also includes examining the systems of internal control established by the management, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements. The AUDITOR shall prepare a letter addressed to the Management outlining the observations upon the system of accounting and internal controls, together with a detailed list of any significant weaknesses that come to the AUDITOR's attention during the course of the auditing. The letter will include recommendations as to how these weaknesses may be eliminated and how controls and records might be improved.

Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with the legislation of the Azerbaijan Republic, International Standards of Auditing and Relevant Local Statutory Audit and Accounting Requirements. In our opinion, the Agreement of Cooperation has been adhered to; the Project Funds have been used exclusively in accordance with the Agreement of Cooperation, the letter of Approvals and the Budgets; the Financial Report reflects a true and fair view of the financial affairs of the Projects for the period 1 January 2009 to 31 December 2009.

Pursuant we report, to the extent of our competence, that the management report is consistent with the financial statements.

Ganja, 26 April 2010

Alakbarov Ilham Nuraddin

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2010

GABA's overall mission is to work towards a world in which people live in dignity and prosperity, a world where poverty and injustice are no longer present. Therefore GABA works across a broad base to promote better conditions for sustainable agriculture and nature management in vulnerable agricultural regions of Azerbaijan. Consulting, lobbying, networking activities and communication are important instruments in these efforts. In promoting its objectives, GABA is active internationally in the organic sector at a government level, in the academic world, in social organizations and in the business community.

Within the framework described above, GABA has set the following concrete targets for 2010:

- Prepare and adopt ISO 9001:2008 Certification in order to improve the quality of the rendered services;
- Represent Azerbaijan at BioFach World Organic Trade Fair which will be held in February 17-20, 2010 in Nuremberg, Germany together with the first national Organic Certification Body AZEKOSERT LLC and for the first time exhibit six of its member organic farmers' products at this Fair;
- Promote organic agriculture and increase consumer awareness of organic products in Azerbaijan;
- Constant development of the Quality Management System;
- Promote general development of the society and improve their living standards;
- Render services in compliance with the clients and donors requirements and establish strong relationships with them;
- Implement income generation and community development projects;
- Unite the stakeholders in agribusiness sector;
- Maximum reduction of the negative effects on environment as a result of its implemented activities;
- Conduct local fairs and exhibitions, as well as participate in international conferences, seminars, trainings, fairs etc.;
- Create databases and marketing centers;
- Continue to publish the only periodical *Organic Agriculture* journal in Azerbaijan;
- Publish international magazine – Annals of Agrarian Science.
- Conduct researches on challenges in Organic Agriculture in Azerbaijan and take measures to overcome these challenges;
- Develop and carry out activity plan in order to increase soil fertility and fight against desertification in Azerbaijan;

FORECASTED BUDGET FOR 2010

Forecasted budget for 2010	
01 January 2010-balance	177953.31
<i>Profit 2009</i>	
- receivables in projects	514321.1
- other receivables	7550
Total profit for 2010	521871.10
Expenses/Costs	
Payments for salaries	102059.64
Payments for main equipments	5000
Fuel and lubricating oil	11553.74
Stationary pen etc.	1489
Basic program expenses	445981.82
Costs for office procurement	7718
Bank services	4798
Audit	4400
Insurance	1847.72
Total costs	584847.92

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