



***“Umid” SSD won new project  
on “Support to Local Initiatives on Regional and Rural  
Development in Azerbaijan” Request for Proposals  
declared by the European Union***



“Umid” SSD submitted “Rural Sustainable Development Initiative” project to the European Union in July of 2013, and was one of the winners of the competition. Thus, on December 02, 2013, Grant Contract was signed between “Umid” SSD and the European Union, on commencement of the project’s implementation from January of 2014. 26-months project will help national economic development with the commercial, high-quality, competitive development of the fruit, dry fruit, berry and dairy sectors, increasing of farmers and young people capacity building living in the area, expanding employment opportunities and creation of service sectors involvement of the central and local authorities, community and the private sector in Guba Khachmaz region.

***Overall objective of the project is advancing the sustainable development of rural areas in Guba-Khachmaz economic zone (Guba, Gusar, Khachmaz and Shabran rayons) through an economic development model that integrates agriculture and non-agriculture sectors.***

As a result of the project implementation - Social infrastructure will be improved in remote areas; Youth’s integration to the urban areas and other regions will be decreased; Income of people will be raised in target communities; New value adding performance fields will be created; Target community members will have improved access to basic services; Minimum 1500 people will raise their skills through consultations and trainings.

***“Umid” SSD’s mission is to foster solution of social, economic, education and agricultural problems of vulnerable people.***

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## Vocational Training and Income Generation for IDPs in Azerbaijan



Different from the previous years, this year the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration of US Department of State supported UNHCR in realization of "Vocational training and income generation for IDPs and refugees in Azerbaijan" project and BPRM had a special role in increasing the number of the IDP youth involved in the project this year. The project was realized on the following activity directions: i) **enhance vocational skills of the IDPs through apprenticeship courses and providing them with JSEP grants;** ii) **Improve computer and internet exploring skills of the IDPs;** iii) **Business trainings and consultations.**



Taking into account the youth's interest towards trades, their ability to learn these trades and the selection criteria, 51 youth from among the 169 applicants were selected for the apprenticeship courses on 12 trades, and successfully completed the courses.

Throughout the project's implementation, 37 out of 51 IDP youth found jobs corresponding to the trades they learned, started their businesses or are currently providing services in their houses. For instance, the internally displaced young girl Ibrahimli Vusale found a job in "Gilan Textile Park" Factory acting in Sumgayit as a dressmaker upon completion of the apprenticeship course. Besides, Fahradoova Khatira, who had completed confectionery course, opened small confectionery workshop and thus started her business. Fikretli Aytekin, who had completed the same confectionery course, stayed to work in that confectionery workshop.



As per the project commitments, Training of Trainers (ToT) was organized in "Umid" SSD's Sumgayit Office on April 10, 2013 with participation of 11 persons for trademasters/trainers involved in the Apprenticeship courses for developing their pedagogical skills. The Training of Trainers was provided by "Umid" SSD's specialists.

Business trainings were organized in "Umid" SSD's Sumgayit Office, "Lachin", "Araz", "Mahruzlu", "Shafag", "Pansionat", "Khalaj", "Ergunesh", "Energetika Sanatorium" and "Shafa" communities for the IDPs willing to start up businesses or extend the existing ones. These trainings aimed at developing the entrepreneurs' durability to rivalry, and building their capacity on making achievements in the market, forming relations with governmental agencies, balancing monthly income and expenses and building their other skills.

In order to improve the entrepreneurs' access to loan agencies, a meeting of the representatives of "Mol Bulak" loan agency with the entrepreneurs was organized in "Umid" SSD's Sumgayit Office. During the meeting, the representatives of the loan agency provided the entrepreneurs with information about the credit terms, and answered the entrepreneurs' questions. As a result of this meeting, the young entrepreneurs applied to this loan agency for receiving credits, and benefited from its services.

52 internally displaced entrepreneurs willing to start or extend their businesses applied to "Umid" SSD with their business plans. Business plans were evaluated for quarterly income and benefit, clients, young entrepreneurs' individual contributions to their businesses in start. 31 Business Plans were provided with JSEP grants.

Simultaneously with the apprenticeship courses, computer trainings were organized for the IDP youth in "Umid" SSD's Sumgayit Office. 214 IDP youth were involved in trainings on MS Word, Excel, Power Point, Outlook Express, Internet Explorer, and 211 youth out of them completed the courses successfully. Alongside with computer courses, free internet service was also organized for the IDP youth in "Umid" SSD's Sumgayit office. 235 IDP youth actively benefited from online textbooks, followed daily news, and actively participated in social networks like Facebook, Twitter etc., and obtained different information useful for themselves through free internet services.



### **Success Story by the parent Hasanova Gulu**

*I lost my husband in Karabakh war. From November of 1993, we settled temporarily in an uncompleted small building of a kindergarten in Sumgayit with my 3 little dependents. And my struggle for life started just from that time. All the family burden, i.e. growing the children, taking care for their health and giving education to them became my responsibility only. I grew my children through working as a cleaner in offices, enterprises and schools. But none of my children was able to receive high education for low financial condition of the family. I saw my son's interest towards repair of mobile phones and desired to give him to a master for learning secrets of this profession. I applied to several masters, but they demanded large amount of fee for teaching this profession to my son, which I was not able to pay. One day our community leader gave me a good news that the local non-governmental organization named Umid*

*organizes on-the-job trainings for the IDP youth without any payment. My son gave his application for the courses and passed the first stage of selection of the youth, and thus, started and successfully graduated from 6-month mobile phone repair course. After several years, my son became a professional mobile phone repair master. And now, my son is functioning as a trade-master in Umid's vocational training program, and teaching his profession's secrets to the IDP youth. Under support of UNHCR and BPRM, my son received a grant and purchased modern noutbook for himself. And now, through this noutbook, he teaches downloading modern programs to the mobile phones etc. easily to the youth. I would like to express my deep gratitude to UNHCR and BPRM, as well as to Umid NGO for all of above, that they did for me and other IDPs like me.*

## **Building capacity of refugee and asylum-seekers in Azerbaijan**



The majority of refugees and asylum seekers registered with UNHCR currently reside in urban areas of Baku and Sumgait. Social monitoring by the UNHCR implementing partner "Hayat" NGO in 2011 have revealed that refugee and asylum seeker families live in conditions which are far below standards for a healthy housing environment and 80% of visited households assessed to be in very poor condition. According to UNHCR reports, the refugees are also not permitted to work, although limited number of people, mostly males, manage to find employment in illegal labor market such as labourers in construction, service men in various workshops, small trade, sale of homemade hand-craft etc. However, such jobs are mostly occasional and reportedly, income is not adequate to meet household needs in full, a fact which makes them still largely dependent on external assistance.



The on-the-job training through apprenticeship method not only provides the refugees with vocational skills, but also make them to adapt to the economy of the host country, to be formed as entrepreneurs and fosters their development. Thus, 30 refugee youth from among the 76 applicants were involved in the apprenticeship courses on 7 trades such as hairdressing, vysagiste, cosmetology, computer repair, Delphy program, nursing, massage.

***Interest towards the Apprenticeship courses is gradually increasing. One of the reasons stimulating this process was provision of grants to the refugees completed the courses and started their businesses during the year. From the other side, organization of new trade fields makes its positive impact. For instance, organization of nursery and massage courses during the previous and current years resulted in increase of number of applications. Confectionery and Cookery are among the most interested trades. But considerable high amount is required for organization of such courses in Baku, that's why these courses are unable yet to be organized.***



Number of the applicants for the computer courses raised by 40% in comparison with the year 2012. The first reason of this is raise of number of the refugees migrating to Azerbaijan during the end of 2012 and during 2013. The project undertook building computer skills of 100 refugees, but actually, 103 people were involved in the computer courses on Adobe Photoshop, Corel Draw, MS Office. Installation of new computer sets resulted in raising new technical resources, and naturally, this resulted in increase of number of the internet users, because a Computer Center active in Refugee Women & Youth Center is a major place providing the refugees' need for internet. In sum, number of internet users was 874 people.

Today's economic status of the refugees in Azerbaijan and limitation of financial assistance by UNHCR directs them to get engaged in entrepreneurship, and from this point of view, a necessity of providing training and consultations on business development arised. As per the pre-project assessment, the refugees and asylum-seekers, engaged or willing to get engaged in entrepreneurship (apprenticeship course graduates), have very limited knowledge on calculation of expenses and stock-taking, marketing analysis, business plan development, registration and tax in an economic environment where they are active. Thus, they were provided with business trainings on Entrepreneurship, Stock-taking and calculation of expenses, Marketing and advertising, Tax and registration, Business plan development in Azerbaijani and Russian.

One of the top commitments of the project was providing support to the successful businesses. The Commission, formed for providing JSEP grants, decided to provide grants for 20 businesses based specially on business plans and assessment results, as well as grant providing criteria. JSEP grants are of great importance for the refugees. This is evident from number of applicants within frameworks of the current and other projects. According to the results of the conducted monitorings, economic welfare of the refugee families, which had received grants, was considerably improved.

*"Umid" SSD conducted an assessment to identify the basic livelihood problems in IDP communities in Sumgayit city in March – April 2012. The most critical needs were the followings: - Lack of awareness about current market needs; lack of knowledge and capacities to start up and manage a business; - Lack of material and financial opportunities for development, income generation and applying to loan institutions; - Limited computer skills and software knowledge.*



### **Success story by the parent Najafov Agarza**

When I lost my working ability, our family's all burden were undertaken by my son Elshad. Clients of the workshop where he worked were very few due to absence of modern and demand-driven equipment in the workshop. We had no finance to buy new equipment for the workshop. In recent days, employees of the local non-governmental organization, which had organized the apprenticeship courses where my son mastered this profession, visited the workshop. After reviewing the workshop's condition, they promised to help financially to my son to purchase the necessary equipment for the workshop. The required documents were prepared and my son developed his business plan jointly with Umid's employees in order to receive a grant. During a short time, the new equipment in amount of 610 AZN were purchased and given to the workshop.



And after this, number of clients of the workshop raised considerably in comparison with the previous months. The greatest financial support to our family during 20 years internally displaced life was "Umid" SSD's support under finance of UNHCR and BPRM. I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitudes to the above organizations and their Top Managers.

### **Success story by the refugee Heydari Parisa**



International and local organizations periodically provided grants to the refugees engaged in entrepreneurship. These grants were used for development of business and entrepreneurship. One of such grantees was Heydari Parisa, the refugee from Iran.

Parisa had personal Woman Saloon in Iran, and she mastered hairdressing in Iran. But after some time, Parisa left Iran for Azerbaijan together with her family. Currently, she lives in Pirshagi settlement of Baku with her family. Her first months in Azerbaijan passed very hard. But after some time, Parisa's husband found a job, and the children were able to attend the school. Parisa herself attended Azerbaijan language and computer courses organized in Refugee Woman and Youth Center. Despite of hard living conditions, Parisa always thought about Woman Saloon and believed that whenever she would be able to get engaged in her profession. After some while, Parisa purchased some needed equipment for herself under financial assistance of his husband. And after a short time, her neighbors started to benefit from Parisa's services at home. Nevertheless, Parisa understood that she could not work always in home condition, and she should improve her capacities in order to tolerate the rivalry and be more successful. Thus, Parisa applied to "Umid" SSD for hairdressing courses, selected for the course and visited a Woman Saloon in the city's center as an apprentice. She listened very attentively to her master, and tried to improve her practical skills. During her spare times, she visited the Refugee Woman and Youth Center to look for necessary materials on Internet. Upon completion the course, Parisa took part in business trainings organized by "Umid" SSD. And after this, Parisa applied to "Umid" SSD with her business plan, and received a grant. Thus, she extended her technical base. Currently, Parisa is providing hairdressing services to the women in her house. Simultaneously, Parisa are contacting periodically with some outside organizations for obtaining necessary materials and equipment.

*"Umid" SSD has continued its tradition of providing humanitarian services for physically and mentally defected children from vulnerable families or without parents, i.e. 14 young masters provided hairdressing and barbers services to 50 members of "SOS" Children Villages, and this made the children very happy.*

*In May, 250 items of "Dream boxes" sent by "RISSHO KOSEI KAI" organization of Japan were distributed among the children in "Khalaj" and "Gaygi" communities by "Umid" SSD's personnel and 22 representatives from Japan.*



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

***“Umid” SSD continues Socio-Economic Development Activities in Azerbaijan successfully***

EAST • WEST  
MANAGEMENT  
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**SEDA messages:**

***Building partnerships***

***Creating economic opportunities***

***Developing capacities***

***Engaging civil society***

Assessments were conducted in 72 communities of Aran and Northern region related to selection of new communities, and a short-list of the communities was prepared. Based on the short-list, 18 communities were selected by the “Project Selection Commission” for involvement in the project. During the year 2013, 36 community-wide meetings were conducted in 18 communities for purposes of providing information about the project and selecting CDC members. Thus, 18 CDCs, consisted of 179 members, were formed in 18 communities of Aran and Northern regions.

**Capacity Building-Round Tables:** In order to build capacity and activity in the project progress of the CDC members, 69 Round Tables on “Needs Assessment and Conducting Surveys”, “Survey Analysis and Community Needs Assessment”, “Project Proposal Writing”, “Preparation of Project’s Technical Description” and “Discussion of PTD and Estimate” in 10 communities of the Northern region and 6 communities of Aran region.

**Training sessions:** In order to build capacity of the CDC members, 157 training sessions on “Sustainability and Exploitation Plan”, “Long-term Community Action Plan”, “Effective Presentation”, “Holding negotiations”, “Team Work and Leadership”, “Mobilization”, “Community Fund and Community Contribution Management”, “Needs Assessment” and “Project Proposal Writing” in 25 communities of Aran and Northern regions.

**Project’s Technical Description:** Draft manuscript versions of Technical Descriptions of the projects received from 25 communities were prepared, and improved by “Umid” SSD.

**Realization of community microprojects:** Roads with total length of 31230 meters were rehabilitated in 16 communities of Aran and Northern regions, projects of establishment of mobile tent for wedding and funeral were realized in 2 communities within the SEDA project. Total 43,338 people benefited from 18 projects implemented in 18 communities.

**Opening ceremonies:** Opening ceremonies of the microprojects completed in 10 communities were organized.

**Sharing the best practices:**

4 meetings for sharing the best practices were organized in Ashagi Zeyid community of Khachmaz rayon, Alpan and Zardabi communities of Guba rayon, as well as Orujlu community of Imishli rayon and Ashagi Chemenli community of Beylagan rayon. These meetings aimed at transferring the best practices and capacities gained by the communities, which had completed the microprojects, to other Community Development Council members. During these events, the completed projects were reviewed jointly with the invited guests from other communities, the host communities organized discussions around their project realization experiences, projects’ quality and sustainability.

On July 24, 2013, “Sharing the Best Practices” event was organized in Ashagi Chemenli community. The event aimed at transferring the best practices and experiences gained through implementation of “Repair of community roads” project implemented in Ashagi Chemenli community to other Community Development Council members. “Umid” SSD’s personnel and CDC members of Ashigalilar community mobilized by “Umid” SSD participated in the meeting. CDC Coordinator and members of Ashagi Chemenli community informed the guests about their experiences, challenges encountered during the project’s implementation and ways of their mitigation, after which answered the guests’ questions. The CDC members of neighbor communities held discussions around successful realization of the project.



### **SEDA started its performance in the third region:**



*CDC election in Garadaghli community*

SEDA project started to be actively implemented in the third region of Azerbaijan—in Goranboy and Samukh rayons of Ganja-Gazakh region. Prior to the commencement of the project's performance in this region, the project personnel had meetings with the representatives of Goranboy and Samukh ExComs for providing information about SEDA project.

Interest letters, reflecting the communities' interest to get involved in the project, were received from 73 communities of Goranboy and Samukh rayons. As per the initial analysis and assessments, a short-list including 11 communities of Goranboy rayon, and 10 communities of Samukh rayon was prepared.

A meeting was organized in "Umid" SSD's Head Office for purposes of selecting the target communities from Goranboy and Samukh rayons. And thus, the communities were selected for cooperation under the project. Mr. Tim Madigan, EWM's Chief of Party, addressed a "Cooperation letter" to Municipality Head of each of the selected 12 communities. Community-wide meetings with participation of rural ExCom representatives, Municipality and community members were arranged in 11 of the selected communities for providing information about SEDA project. During the meetings, "Umid" SSD's project personnel provided detailed information about SEDA project, its components, goal and objectives, procedures and activity directions, and future cooperation possibilities were discussed. Alongside with these meetings, 6 community-wide meetings were conducted in 6 communities of Goranboy and Samukh rayons for selection of the CDC members through secret voting. After election of the CDC members, trainings and round tables were started to be provided for building their knowledge and capacity.



*Community-wide meeting in Goranli community*

### ***Our slogan:***

***"Give people opportunities, they will create marvels.."***

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