

HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SECURITY

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In the early 21st century, national governments in some countries are facing increasing pressure to keep up with the global economic and social trends related to ongoing globalization. The current stage of development of humankind is characterized by increasingly globalized economic, environmental and, often, social challenges. Some nations' lack of swift response to this highly volatile environment has translated into political tension; several cases have translated into open civil conflict.

The only effective governance response to 21st century pressures has been the adoption of new approaches to national development planning and management. Sustainable development is a key tool in preventing and alleviating 'development without a future' and 'development without equality'. These approaches need to continue being based on the assumption of full responsibility by well-educated and trained civil servants, ensuring that they deliver the best quality and volume of social goods and services at a national and local level.

Practical application needs to change, embracing more innovative concepts and the latest technological innovations. Initially, transformation will be achievable only by mobilizing sustainable development – in theory and practice. The implementation of sustainable national development and training programmes for state employees is inspired by the vision of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev. This envisions transforming rich, non-renewable natural resources into human capital, guided by on-going supportive policies and programmes (1). The creation of a new generation of creative thinkers, decision-makers and practical specialists requires the active involvement of all stakeholders, ensuring that innovative development is guided by the latest science and technology (2).

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It is now clear that the next stage of civilization must be based on ecological principles. The concept of Ecological Civilization was suggested in 1998 (3), serving as the ultimate goal of sustainable development. The successful management of existing environmental, economic and other risks is essential in preserving economic well-being and long-term security for present and future generations. To achieve this goal, it is essential that we use the latest innovative scientific achievements to develop planning and management strategies. Innovation is not merely the application of technologies to production and consumption but covers the improvement of all processes, reducing cost and increasing efficiency - including in the field of administration and management. Innovative management concepts are essential in ensuring that management decisions are well-informed, drawing on past experience and encouraging creative thinking.

The application of this approach should result in the creation of an enabling environment, in which successful management and decision making is exercised by well-trained and qualified public sector administration specialists, using their knowledge effectively and making good use of existing talents and resources. A proper level of knowledge, training and commitment by such a group of professionals is critical to the implementation of the required management and administrative principles. Accountability and transparency are just as important as innovation, lateral thinking and the use of modern technologies. Professionally trained decision makers and managers at all levels hold responsibility for delivering the social contract between the state and its citizens. Specifically, this contract aims to deliver the highest quality and volume of social goods and services, promoting state responsibility for people's well-being. Capacity building and development of capable civil servants will involve ongoing staff training to enhance skills and knowledge; this is the most important task of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

In simple terms, the main objective of these new state policies is to mobilize the use of scientific and technological innovation for national planning and management. This should ultimately translate into sustained development, economic prosperity, and more effective use of social services. It should eventually bring about a more ecologically civilized society and economy. To drive

this vision forward, it is essential that we create the necessary human resource base, experienced and technically qualified. Vision is needed, alongside targeted financial and human resources, to ensure that we overcome the economic, social, cultural and political challenges of today's world.

To promote sustainable development, all levels of management require appropriate training. Meanwhile, public awareness needs to be raised regarding the principles of sustainable development and the path to eco-friendliness. A three-pronged approach is needed, through education, training and awareness campaigns:

- to introduce sustainable development regulation and management principles and mechanisms to decision makers;
- to introduce underlying concepts through graduate professional training across various categories of technical personnel in secondary and tertiary schools; and
- to increase public awareness through media exposure.

Figure 1 shows that a successful education programme must cover all levels of formal education. Effectiveness will depend on the level of public awareness. Moreover, public policies for managing the transition to sustainable development and eco-living must involve all stakeholders at national level.

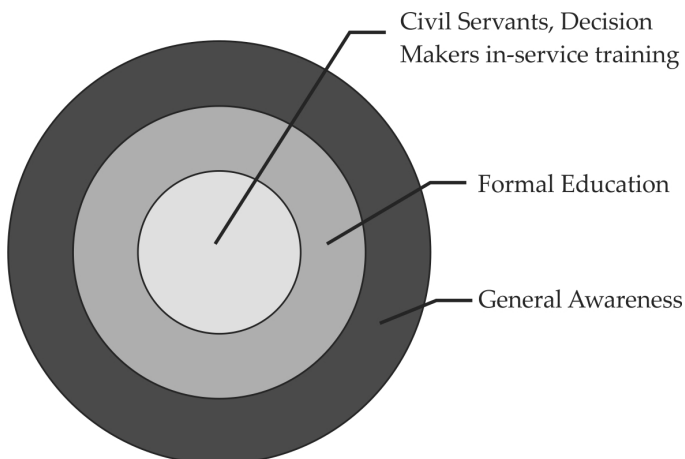


Figure 1. Capacity Building for Sustainability Planning and Management: principal focus groups (education and awareness)

Planning for sustainable development and transition to a green economy requires implementation of a number of managerial measures to improve the efficiency of decision making and implementation processes. In our modern society, the state cannot achieve such goals with government resources in isolation. The participation of the private sector, civil society, academic institutions and the media is equally important. Of particular importance is effective operational co-ordination and synergy between all principal national stakeholders: governmental structures; civil society - including professional unions, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs); and private sector entities.

The government's role in co-operation and co-ordination at national level is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. National Sustainable Development Policy in the Republic of Azerbaijan: partnership and co-ordination for transition to an ecological civilization

Stakeholders	Governmental institutions	Civil society	Private sector	Media
Contribution	Legal environment, science, education, natural environment, international relations, social innovations, etc	NGOs, CBOs (community based organizations), trade unions, community's social enterprises, etc.	Green technologies, social responsible businesses, etc	Improving the knowledge of journalists in the field of sustainable development and expanding public awareness

To ensure gradual transition to principles of sustainable development and ecological civilization, via the use of particular technologies in industry, agriculture, transportation and services,

requires great input from all stakeholders. The implementation of national sustainable development programmes in the Republic of Azerbaijan requires action not only from government agencies but from civil society. The Heydar Aliyev Foundation has played a significant role as a civil society partner, led by its president, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador Mrs. M. Aliyeva. Its programmes have made an important contribution to the development of national human capacity building while raising public awareness of eco-matters. Its campaigns have helped nurture a change in mentality, promoting eco-attitudes, including regarding consumption.

Education plays an important role in human capacity building, especially in promoting general and professional knowledge and skills for those managing sustainable development processes. The successful transition to an ecological civilization through sustainable development and human capacity building envisages educational changes. In Azerbaijan, education on sustainable development (including human development) began in the late 20th century. Training programmes in this field were launched via tertiary education in the late 1990s, with the process extended to secondary education level in the early 21st century, via a pilot project at selected urban and rural secondary schools across the Republic of Azerbaijan. In 2001, based on successful pilot results, the education programme was extended to all secondary schools. According to the national educational strategy, and based on an order from the Ministry of Education, a special education course on sustainable human development was added to the secondary school curriculum. This led to the publication of the world's first textbook on sustainable human development for secondary schools, in Azerbaijan, in 2003. The United Nations Headquarters promoted this 'innovative idea and action' (4) worldwide. Further textbooks, reading materials and manuals on sustainable human development were also developed and published for tertiary education in Azerbaijan, with the subject studied in almost every tertiary schools, regardless of its specialization. As well as being available in the national language, materials were created in English in 2003 and were placed on the United Nations Headquarters' global website as an example of good practice, for emulation globally (5).

State education policy has made these subjects a mandatory part of the curriculum for a number of universities and tertiary schools specializing in humanities subjects, training those involved in planning, management, teaching and some other professional categories. Those at tertiary schools are studying sustainable and human-potential based development in greater detail. In 2010, a special order by the Ministry of Education made eco-education an obligatory element of formal training at all occupational schools.

One of the functions of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan is periodic in-service refreshment training for active civil service personnel. These training courses are organized as short-term training and through comprehensive educational programmes, covering a variety of aspects of sustainable development, including economics, ecology and social security. More specifically, courses cover the improvement of the economic and social environment, the efficient regulation and management of renewable and non-renewable natural resources, protection and management of the natural and cultural environment, and human potential and human capital mobilization.

Increasing public awareness of the basic principles of sustainable development is largely determined by media coverage. With this in mind, special training courses are being held for journalists, including those from electronic editions. Topics have included issues of sustainable development and human impact on the environment, covering ecological and economic security. Such training has been organized and conducted with help from the National Commission of the Republic of Azerbaijan for UNESCO, the 'Man and Biosphere' UNESCO National Committee, the Journalist's Union of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and a number of associated NGOs. Subsequent monitoring has shown that training of journalists has contributed to a significant increase in their knowledge of sustainable development, as well as environmental and long term economic security management issues. Accordingly, public awareness has also risen.

The outcomes of capacity building are reflected in national economic indicators, with development characterized by a significant increase

in GDP over the last decade. According to official international statistics, the country's GDP per capita (calculated with PPP) was US\$1,770 in 1999. By 2003, this had almost doubled, to US\$3,400. In 2010, the figure reached US\$10,900. GDP growth per capita is quite high in Azerbaijan (Figure 2), placing it among world leaders.

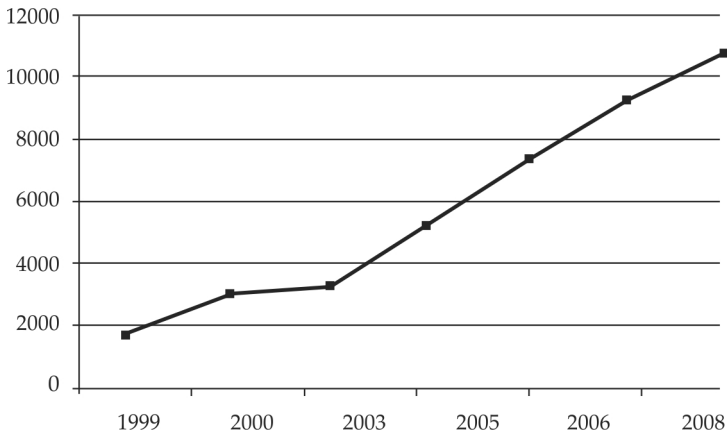


Figure 2. Republic of Azerbaijan: GDP per capita, USD, with PPP (6)

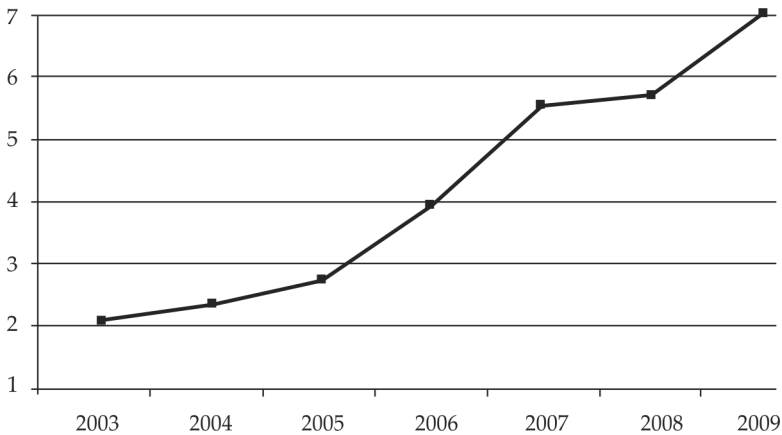


Figure 3. Capacity Building Outcome: Energy and Economic Security: Azerbaijan 2003 – 2009, showing GDP per unit of energy use, USD value, PPP, per kg of oil equivalent (7)

One indicator of success in the area of sustainable development is the efficient use of resources, especially non-renewable. According to international statistics, the value of goods and services produced per unit of energy consumed can serve as an energy efficiency indicator. According to this methodology, the cost of manufactured goods and services provided is determined in U.S. Dollars while the amount of energy contained in 1kg of oil is the unit of energy. These universal indicators allow for international comparison.

Analysis of the energy efficiency situation in the Republic of Azerbaijan is presented in Figure 3; alongside higher GDP growth, there is a considerable reduction in energy consumption in manufacturing goods and in providing services. Data presented in Figure 3 shows a significant increase in energy efficiency, especially after 2003. Between 2003 and 2007, energy efficiency rose by more than half. By 2009, it had more than tripled. Further increases in energy efficiency and energy security are planned through technology improvement and increasing the share of renewable energy production. In accordance with a Presidential Decree, a special state agency on renewable energy has been established to implement a policy of expanded renewable energy production and use.

The most important factor for sustainable development is the protection of nature and conservation of biodiversity. Natural reserves play a vital role so, in line with national policy on sustainable development and ecology, their number is being increased, with existing protected areas expanded and new areas opened. Protected areas in Azerbaijan rose from 478,000 hectares in 2000 to 882,000 hectares in 2010. The dynamism of this growth is presented in Figure 4.

Reforestation is crucial for environmental protection and sustainable development, including sustainable income generation and economic security for those inhabiting settlements near forests. Reforestation activities are an important part of environmental and biological conservation and rational mobilization, as well as regional economic development. According to National Sustainable Development Programmes, Azerbaijan's forested areas are increasing annually, as seen in Figure 5: by more than 50,000 hectares over the past decade (8).

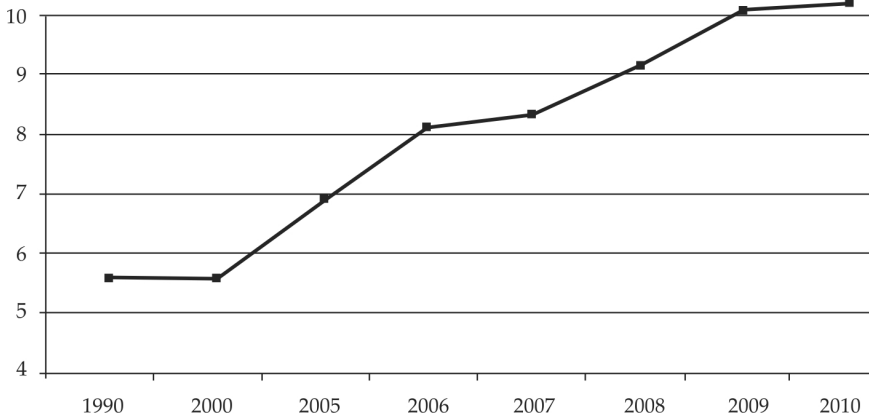


Figure 4. SD Capacity Building Outcome: Ecological Security: Azerbaijan 1990 – 2010, protected areas, share, % (8)

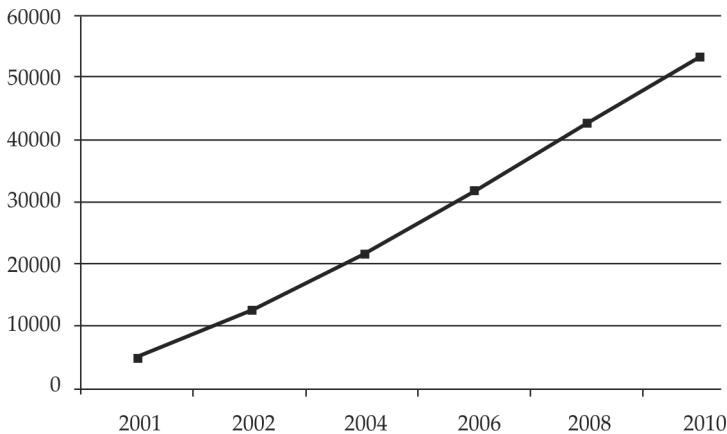


Figure 5. Reforestation: Azerbaijan 2001 – 2010, thousands of hectares - total increase of 53,426 (8)

The use of local renewable resources and traditional knowledge, combined with modern technologies, is important for sustainable regional development. CBOs (community based organizations) and community social enterprises promoting human development and sustainable income generation have been demonstrating such approaches through their multi-target integrated projects. They advocate sustainability, regional development, gender equality and poverty alleviation. Azerbaijan has been the first worldwide

to create such CBOs and community social enterprises, receiving praise from international development institutions for 'innovative ideas and actions' (4).

Clearly, the formation of human capital through education, in-service training and public awareness is essential in promoting sustainable development and the management of various economic, environmental, social and, consequently, political risks.

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