

International Conference

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Regional Study on ICT in Basic Education, Central Asia

Innovative Approaches to Teacher and System ICT Support in Schools. Public-Private Partnerships Experiences from Azerbaijan

The AzNET Project was a joint initiative of the Government, UNDP, OSI-AF (Soros Foundation) and the Azerbaijan Research Educational Network Association (AzRENA). The Project was constituted as a national UNDP project (NEX) and the national coordinator of the Project was the Minister of Communication and Information Technologies and the President of AzRENA, Mr. Ali Abbasov.

The objectives of the PPP were to develop an accessible and reliable ICT network infrastructure, to improve the availability of skilled human resources and to increase the awareness on opportunities of ICT.

The multi-component structure of activities, inherited from donors and significantly improved during 2004-2007, has extended the primary objective of the Project from a network infrastructure development project to a multi-faceted ICT development promotional tool comprising:

- **ICT Networking** – the establishment of a non-profit Application and Internet Service Provider (AISP) for the academic and civil society sectors.
- **ICT Training** – various training initiatives in collaboration with leading IT companies, thus encouraging other PPPs as a sub-component of the main PPP.
- **ICT Toolsets** – development of localized ICT applications and manuals e.g. Free and Open Source Software (FOSS), IT consulting and mobile technical support.
- **ICT Policy** – facilitation of public-private dialogue including ministries, NGOs, hardware and software companies etc., and consultancy capability on ICT-in-education issues.

The sub-components described above have pursued their own specific objectives, but have joined their resources to provide comprehensive solutions on cross-cutting issues. Hence, all activities have been able to capitalize on the know-how and expertise of each of the sub-components.



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In June 2007 the Project was officially closed, and this presentation will provide more details on the actual outputs, results and follow-ups of the AzNET Project. It will also consider the pros and cons of PPPs as vehicles of effective change and reform in the ICT sector with particular relevance to education.

Samad Abasov was born in 1976 in Baku, Azerbaijan. In 1997, he graduated from the Azerbaijan State Economics University with a bachelors degree in Finance and Credit. Since 1997, he has worked as an Internet Trainer and was also the ICT Training and Content Development Manager in Information Program of the Azerbaijan branch of the Soros Foundation. Since 2004 he has been the ICT Training Coordinator in the AzNET Project—a joint project between the Government of Azerbaijan, UNDP, the Soros Foundation and the Azerbaijan Research Educational Network Association. In 2006, he was appointed as the Azerbaijan National Consultant for the ADB-funded RETA for ICT in Basic Education in Central Asia. Since 2007, he has been the Director of the AzNET Program at Relief International and the Head of the Regional Cisco Networking Academy at AzNET. He is a consultant to the Management Group of the State Program on ICT in Education of the Ministry of Education. Samad is married with one daughter.

