

**Final evaluation report of the project:**

***Strengthening the capacity of educational  
Institutions for teaching and applying  
human development concepts***

# **AZERBAIJAN**

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## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ensuing report will provide evidence to support the assessment of this project. The evaluator gives this project an overall satisfactory rating; deems its design as sound and its implementation as professional and strategic.

There are, in fact, some challenges related to implementation, but these were handled skilfully. In particular, there appears to have been times when additional project could have been useful. Other than that, there were no serious challenges.

The HD Course is now part of the permanent offerings of the APA and two other universities are exploring departments wherein it may be offered. The course is not only enriching the students with new knowledge, it has introduced them to a new method of learning through group work and discussions, in other words, active learning. These higher level students in the Masters and Doctoral cycles are also creating new knowledge unique to Azerbaijan employing HD concepts. Through the interviews, the evaluator noted two scholarly articles, three Masters theses and three PhD dissertations that claim to have been informed or influenced by the HD Course.

In the remaining time of the project, advocacy with the ministry of education would be useful to ensure the roll out of the course to as many universities as possible. We are presented with an exceptional opportunity now that there is a new dynamic Minister heading the education sector.

The evaluation did not employ formal surveys but did generate statistical data using the information from the institutions and the UNDP files. The evaluation focused more intently on qualitative information and used a combination of document review and semi-structured focus groups and interviews to collect evidence of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency. In all three categories the evaluator deems the project satisfactory.

A number of recommendations and lessons are compiled in this evaluation. Some are addressed at the UNDP but most are addressed to the APA as it is the sole champion of the project at this point. The APA recommendations focus on sustainability and expansion of HD within the APA and the greater academic community.

The most important recommendation to the UNDP is that it would be useful for the UNDP to inject a small investment in activities related to the HD Lab as well as a time extension of 12 months to ensure the sustainability project results and chief among these is the HD Lab and its centrality to the sustainability and expansion. The HD Lab faces significant risk to its sustainability if the UNDP does not take a lead in rooting it firmly at the APA and assisting in securing the support of the Ministry of Education. This investment, if made, could make the difference between a static HD reading room and a viable and dynamic centre of excellence for HD in the country.

W. A. MAJID

## 2 INTRODUCTION

The evaluator was engaged by UNDP to undertake an overall evaluation of the project which aimed to introduce an HD course in higher education institutions and develop their capacity to deliver this course to students in various departments.

The objectives of the Evaluation include:

- To assess Project relevance to national priorities;
- To assess overall performance against the Project objectives as set out in Project Document and other related documents;
- To assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the Project;
- To critically analyze the implementation and management arrangements of the Project;
- To assess the sustainability of the Project's interventions;
- To list and document initial lessons concerning Project design, implementation and management.
- To provide recommendations for future sustainability of the project

The sections that follow provide these assessments which were developed through document review and analysis and interviews with instructors and students.

## 3 RATIONALE

The project was linked to UNDAF outcome 3, which for UNDP-Azerbaijan falls under program outcome 3.1 Effective Governance: "by 2015 civil society, media and vulnerable groups enjoy an increased role in policy formulation and implementation processes". The indicator 3.1.1 is an annual qualitative assessment of advocacy skills of NGOs and media outlets.

An argument can be made that by integrating the HD course in university education and research and thereby teaching students the concepts of HD and developing new knowledge related to HD in Azerbaijan would result, eventually, in the increasing the role of civil society in policy formulation and possibly, the implementation process. But such an argument would be weak at best and would take several generations of graduating cohorts as well as intensive tracer studies in about 5 years' time to verify. Even then, the causal relationship between the performance of graduates as advocates and the HD course would be tenuous at best because their performance might have been influenced by so many other factors.

Results Based Management helped focus and enhance projects and programs in a way that output management could not have done. However, a project of this nature does not need to fit neatly along the RBM causal chain. A project of this nature actually promotes the mission and prepares the ground for the achievement of all UNDP outcomes in Azerbaijan because HD is itself multi-disciplinary and prepares the students, the future leaders, to enhance competitiveness, remove barriers to trade, address gender disparities, enhance conditions for vulnerable groups, enhance policy formulation and execution, increase efficiency and accountability. These are the subjects addressed in the HD Course and this is the type of influence that this evaluation will reveal in the ensuing report. In other words, this project does not directly contribute to the successful achievement of outcome #3.1, in fact, it contributes to the successful achievement of the mission of the UNDP and all of its outcomes.

As will be seen in this report, students have not only claimed to have gained a better perspective on the world but have gained a better perspective on their country and they are not just gaining new knowledge, they are creating new knowledge through academic research. Does this result not serve the interests of the whole UNDP-Azerbaijan results framework? Of course it does. The interviews with students have revealed that the course has been thought provoking; compelling them to question and debate and importantly, it has introduced new techniques for learning that take student outside of the usual rote process into the inquisitive process.

Despite the absence of a neat link to a programme outcome, this project is based on a solid rationale; one that prepares them to effectively contribute to all of the UNDP programme outcomes for this and the late results frameworks.

## **4 PROJECT ACTIVITIES ANALYSIS (THE FACTS)**

*Activity Result 1: Human Development Lab (HDL) established and fully functional.*

### **1.1 HD Project Assistant hired to be in charge of daily management of HDL(s), promotion of HD networking through HDL(s), and HD website maintenance**

The project assistant was hired in April 2013 because the HD Laboratory was not ready until this time. The partner, APA, proceeded rather slowly with the preparation of the space and even now, some repairs are expected. It would have been inefficient to hire the Assistant at an earlier time.

As of the time of this evaluation, though the Project Assistant is engaged she has not yet taken on the responsibilities at the APA. The position of the Project Assistant requires a strong job description that includes the daily management of the HDL, the promotion of HD networking and the website maintenance. In fact, by the time the project ends, the title of the Project Assistant should be converted to HDL Manager to better reflect the role of this person beyond the life of the project.

The website is under construction as of the time of this evaluation and therefore the evaluator cannot make comments on the Project Assistant's performance of the maintenance activities not on the use of the website and its utility. However, the website content was reviewed and found satisfactory. The link is as follows:  
<http://humandevlopment.az/index.php>

### **1.2 Agreeing with an academic institution to allocate separate space for HD resources/materials**

Agreed with APA, HD Lab is equipped and furnished. Books are purchased

The space allocated by APA for the HD Lab is appropriate. But it is not yet operating as envisaged in the proposal. It requires promotion and exposure: during interviews, students reported that they are not familiar with its location or existence. The students, both Masters and Bachelors levels, were questioned on whether they see a benefit in the HD Lab. There was unanimous agreement that the HD Lab would be beneficial for the students as a source of information, a hub for networks and a venue for other activities related to HD. The students further suggested the availability of Wi-Fi in the centre as well as audio-visual resources to complement the text based resources. Importantly, the students expressed the wish to have the lab operate at hours conducive for their usage; such a request will need to be brought up with the APA administration.

The HD Lab is furnished with the following furnishings and equipment:

- UPS
- Laser Printer
- Scanner
- Multi-purpose copier (printer, scanner, copier)
- Book shelves
- projectors
- Desktop computer
- Chairs

The equipment has been transferred to the APA with the requisite “Transfer of Assets” forms submitted in due order.

Books are being purchased and some are already at the UNDP office in Baku but have not yet been transferred to APA and catalogued. The books were selected mostly from USA sources and shipped to Baku hence some delay in delivery to the HD Lab. The books were chosen with the assistance of experts involved in the development of a similar course in Uzbekistan as well as through a review of the UNDP site of resources.

### 1.3 Establishing HD networks of students, teachers and specialists interested in HD concept and practical applications of HD framework

Despite the relatively high number of students and teachers involved in the HD course there is little evidence of vibrant and effective HD networks of students, teachers and specialists.

However, at the Masters level, there is evidence of joint projects between students as well as joint publications and presentations. At the Masters level we can find two very effective research presentations prepared by the students during their studies but more importantly, 3 PhD and 3 Masters dissertations are being researched now are reported to have been influenced by the course.

At the bachelor level there is no evidence of structured networks or joint activities except in the classrooms. The HD Lab should become the hub of such networks for undergraduate students as it can encourage discussion groups and interdisciplinary debate.

In addition there were attempts to form networks, but these appear to falter at the end of a given activity such as “summer school” for teachers or when the course ends for students. Indeed, by the end of this project, 28 teachers will have participated in 2 summer school sessions and 305 Masters and Bachelors students will have taken the course. With such numbers there is a reasonable expectation that there would be a strong stimulus for a network, however there is little evidence that this is the case.

It may be that the project design expectation for this to be carried by the students might have been too optimistic. The task of developing and maintaining HD networks for students, teachers and specialists should be confided to the Project Assistant. The reason for this is that students graduate and teachers may come and go but the function of the networks must remain.

#### 1.4 Holding series of participatory discussions of best HD cases/presentations (with policy implications) submitted during the HD course (participants would be students, teachers, officials, specialists)

These discussions are typically led by invited speakers who are experts in HD or professionals working in the field of development. The discussions have been held within the context of the summer school and through the course delivery at the APA. There is no output or record of the discussion but since they were within the context of the course delivery and teachers' training we are able to assess their utility through interviews with summer school participants and students.

Discussions with summer school participants and students took place on three occasions: one with summer school participants, one with Bachelor and Masters students at the APA and one with the first cohort of students from the APA.

All interviewees described the discussions as lively, interactive, with much scholarly debate and exchange of opinions. The interviewees expressed their satisfaction with the format which consisted of a short 20 to 30 minutes of presentation followed by open discussion. The speakers were from the WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNDP, Ministry of Communications & Information Technologies, Ministry of Economic Development of the Republic of Azerbaijan Civil Service Commission and the World Bank. Invited speakers were well equipped and prepared to address issues related to the HD course. On this issue, the instructors should be commended in how they have prepared the speakers and the students to ensure that there are lively debates. In fact, all students noted that the course prepared them well to participate fully in the discussions with invited guest speakers.

However, the summer school participants suggested that the speakers make a stronger link between HD and various disciplines to help the instructors make this link in the classroom for the students also.

Instructors noted that they will continue to invite guest speakers to the course to ensure that the students have access to experienced professionals with whom they can discuss and debate issues related to HD.

Finally, as noted earlier, it would be ideal if the HD Lab can also organise similar discussions with guest speakers in the context of the networks at the HD Lab and included students and teachers who are not involved in the course. This would be a simple method of promoting the course and the principles of HD across the whole university.

#### 1.5 Develop exit strategy for sustainability of HDL and HD networks

All elements of a sustainability and exit strategy are in place however they are not codified in a clearly stated document. There is evidence that the HD course will carry on and be integrated into the curriculum; in fact it is already part of the undergraduate, masters programs and also available to PhD students at the APA. The ADA is also considering the inclusion of the program as part of the core curriculum for the Masters of Public Administration Program though this yet remains to be confirmed. Qafqaz University has also included HDC into its curriculum. However, due to administrative changes at the Ministry of Education which moved the all International Relations programs to the ADA has prompted Qafqaz University to explore a new department wherein the course will be taught.

There is also evidence that the HD Lab could be sustainable based on the responses of student during the evaluation interviews.

Nonetheless the project will benefit from a clearly articulated exit and sustainability strategy which will provide documentary designs to carry on the work beyond the life of the project.

The elements of the exit strategy must include:

- Sustainability strategy of the HD Lab
- Sustainability strategy for the course at APA
- Commitment of the APA to support materially and financially the course and the HD Lab.
- Expansion of the course to other academic institutions
- Greater promotion of the course and concept of HD at the ministry of education.

Many of the recommendations made in this report can provide the necessary text for such a document.

*Activity Result 2: Public awareness-raising on Human Development issues is carried out through mass media.*

### 2.1 Printing of brochures, booklets, info-materials on HD and project products

One brochure has been produced to introduce the importance of HD in education and in promoting the HD course. 2000 brochures have been printed and distributed at universities and at the HD Lab.

### 2.2 Press-releases about major project milestones

The project has been active in promoting the HD course and HD Lab but it can go a little further in celebrating those that have participated in the course. The reason for press releases focusing on people who have completed the course is to expose the numbers of people involved (305 students) and the quality of the training. This also gives a forum to the students and gives them a sense of pride in their accomplishment.

To date, 2 Press releases have been issued as well as a news-story and project factsheet found on the UNDP Baku office web-site. The project is also exposed on the AKVO – website at the following link.  
<http://www.akvo.org/rsr/project/678/update/2316/>

It is difficult to ascertain whether additional press releases would have yielded a greater interest in the course it is equally difficult to ascertain whether additional press releases would not have yielded a positive result. However, it is certain that giving the students an official platform would have exposed the students to their peers and parents and might have given the course additional exposure.

### 2.3 Promoting HD concept through media and events

The promotion of HD through the media has been quite successful with an appearance on an hour long prime time show on Public Azerbaijan TV attended by the project team as well as Professor Urkhan Alakbarov who later became the Rector of the APA. In addition to this, Aytan Shirinova, Project Manager, gave two interviews for ANZ TV and Uzbek TV discussing the course and the benefits of including HD in academic programming.



The evaluator cannot comment on the content of the interview as these were not examined. However, the one hour show with its town hall format must have provided for questions and answers and exposed the viewing public, during prime time, to the benefits of HD in academic programming.

There is an expectation to hold one more specific media activity by the end date of the project and to hire a media consultant to provide advice on additional activities including awareness raising within the government and at the different universities. There is also a plan to produce a video and air it on online TV and the HD Course website.

*Activity Result 3: Human development teaching is expanded to other universities.*

3.1 Liaising with public and private universities for including HD course in the list of Masters-level courses

There have been many positive developments on this activity. Originally, the APA, Qafqaz University and the State Economic University adopted the HD course for inclusion in their Academic Calendar. This was an important development and testament to the fact that HD was recognized as an important element of higher education by leading academic institutions.

The most integrated adoption took place at the APA where the course is offered to students from the Bachelor, Masters and PhD levels. At the APA, the course is offered in the following programs:

1. International Security and Political Strategy
2. Political Processes in Azerbaijan
3. Conflict studies
4. Political Processes in the World and the theory of international relations
5. International Policy
6. Diplomacy
7. Governmental Law
8. Government and Municipality Administration
9. Economic Law
10. Staff administration
11. Department of Strategic Studies Administration

The adoption of the course at the APA is extremely important, not only because of the status of the Academy but because of its distribution along the 3 levels of higher education and in the number of programs that offer it as an elective.

The APA offers the course within the undergraduate programs, masters programs and is also offered to PhD students. This means that there is research generating new knowledge that this being impacted by the HD course. The 3 APA Masters students interviewed reported that their graduating thesis will be largely based on knowledge gained through the course.

In fact, the instructors at APA reported that the course has influenced PhD students' dissertations.

Finally, the APA now offers the course as part of extension training provision to government employees. The revenue, if any, from such offerings represent an important contribution to the HD Lab. The project will not likely be able to influence the APA decisions regarding finance, nonetheless it is important to note that the course has a commercial potential.

Qafqaz University has temporarily suspended the course because the International Relations program within which it was offered was transferred to the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy. The instructor from Qafqaz University stated in interview that the university is considering other departments to adopt the course.

The Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy is considering offering the course within the new Masters of Public Administration Program.

The course remains available to students at the State Economic University which has signed a MOU with UNDP to teach the course. The HD Course was delivered for one semester. The project trained teachers and when the semester started the project realized that those teachers fired. The project staff and a consultant then stepped in to teach course but there has been no serious uptake since this initial offering.

In February of 2013, the UNDP reached agreement a private university “Odlar Yurdu” to introduce HDC in the autumn semester following the training of teachers at the third summer school. This will in fact increase the number of institutions and expand the reach of the HD Course.

An assessment on the quality of the course, the course content, exercises, case studies and examination can be found in section 4 of this report titled “HD Course analysis”.

### 3.2 Capacity support for the interested and qualified lecturers to deliver the HD courses (thru Summer/Winter school).

Two Summer schools for instructors/professors have taken place in Baku with the participation of 28 instructors/professors in total for both sessions. The summer schools did not offer the same content in that the second summer school built on the first and offered subjects to broaden and deepen the knowledge of the instructors. The course evaluations submitted by summer school participants were taken into considerations for the second session as evidenced by the revised course program and content. One more summer session is expected this year. The topics of the final summer school were not examined by the evaluator.

The evaluator examined the summary evaluation of the June 2011 summer school (attached as Appendix 2) and has observed that in general the course was well received and highly appreciated. According to the course evaluation completed by the participants there was overwhelming satisfaction with the course, material and speakers. The participants’ lists appeared to be appropriate as it was made up of instructors from universities, NGOs and government agencies and think tanks.

It should be noted that among the 28 that attended the summer schools, only a handful are currently teaching the HD course to students. It is not clear however how many of the participants are applying the newly acquired knowledge in their work. Such an investigation is outside the scope of this evaluation.

The evaluator examined the course outline for both sessions of the summer school and has concluded that they are appropriate in that they do prepare the participants to deliver the HD course. Importantly, the course appears to contain a sufficient measure of critical analysis thus endowing the course with a balanced view and equipping the participants with sufficient knowledge to deliver the course.

Finally, the evaluator observed among the topics of the first session sufficient attention to pedagogy to help the instructors teach the course.

The assessment of documentary information was then corroborated through interviews conducted with participants who are currently teaching the course as well as the Associate Vice Rector of the ADA who designed the course and provided training during the first summer school. Comments from these respondents show a high degree of satisfaction. Some of these comments are reflected below:

- The summer school sessions were fruitful and made it easier to teach HD.
- There was a marked improvement of the second session
- The course was very interactive and included significant group work
- Logistically well organized and executed
- The first summer school was held shortly after project launch nonetheless it was very good
- The second summer school provided deeper and broader knowledge
- The involvement of participants from the government, think tanks and NGOs enriched the experience of the participants who were instructors
- The presence of guest speakers provided an element of thought provoking debate

### 3.3 Gain support for HD initiative by national champion(s)

The APA and its Rector represent the key national champions for the HD course. It would be ideal if the Rector of the APA took upon himself the role more actively to promote the course at his Academy and to advocate at the Ministry of Education and through the Cabinet of Ministers for the reversal of the MOE decision to limit the course to the ADA and to support more actively the promotion of HD related research and activities in Azerbaijani universities.

### 3.4 Develop HD Textbook for Azerbaijani context as the main reading material for HD courses

The evaluator examined the table of contents of the textbook and concludes that it is consistent with the expected topics of the course and in the course material. The textbook is being authored by local experts with advice from the program in Uzbekistan and supervision from the course designer.

Having only examined the table of contents, the evaluator cannot make a comment on the quality of the writing or on the case studies that might be found in the text book. However, the HD course designer, the Associate Vice-Rector at ADA suggested that the quality of writing and content is above average. It is important to note also that the textbook underwent a peer review by APA, Qafqaz University and the Center for Strategic Studies under the president of Azerbaijan Republic prior to publication. Despite not seeing the content, the evaluator is confident that the process has been sound and followed standard academic practices.

It is imperative that the textbook contain some case studies relevant to Azerbaijan as exercises even though there are case studies available in the additional readings.

### 3.5 Refine and finalize additional HD reading materials in Azeri

There are almost 200 additional reading materials of which 75 are translated into Azerbaijani and Russian for the use in the courses to supplement the text book. These range from scholarly articles, UNDP and other UN publications as well as case studies and text books from around the world. There is

only one article relating to Azerbaijan. There are two other documents relating specifically to Azerbaijan these deal with Azerbaijan HDI and gender specific article on HD and Gender in Azerbaijan.

Much like the books for the HD Lab, the reading list was selected with the assistance of experts involved in the development of a similar course in Uzbekistan as well as through a review of the UNDP site of resources.

*Activity Result 4: On-going project management, monitoring and reporting carried out.*

4.1 Project staff salaries: Human Development Coordinator and HD Project Assistant

The project appears to be managed well striking a balance between the context and the UNDP guidelines. During the interviews of students and teachers there was general appreciation for the work of the UNDP Project Manager. In fact, behind the list of activities in the work-plan there is a tremendous amount of negotiation, coordination and facilitation all of which appear to have been handled very well by the UNDP Project Manager.

In this section the evaluation will address issues of design and effectiveness. The evaluation Terms of Reference requested that the following aspects of the project are to be rated:

- a) Implementation approach; Stakeholder participation/public involvement; Sustainability; Replication approach;
  - b) Outcome/Achievement of objectives (meaning the extent to which the project's development objectives were achieved);
  - c) Cost-effectiveness;
  - d) Monitoring and evaluation.
- a) The implementation approach is sound. The activities were organised in a logical order and were implemented in a reasonable manner. Stakeholder and public participation is also sound as evidenced by the public appearances on media, the adoption of the course at universities, and the number of students that have taken the course. The challenge of sustainability could have been lessened if it had been addressed from the onset of the project. As of the time of the evaluation, there is an absence of a clearly defined exit strategy. Such a strategy should have been negotiated throughout the life of the project. The project is easily replicable in that the HD course, the summer school and the HD Lab are very well designed and relatively easy to replicate should other universities desire to do so. The challenge however is to promote replication in the remaining time of the project as there is a danger that when the project is complete the APA might see the HD Course and HD Lab as a competitive advantage and be reluctant to share its experiences.
- Finally, the project could have benefited from additional project staff, such as a project officer whose role is to support execution of the project. This would have liberated the Project Manager to pursue more aggressively issues related to sustainability and replication.
- b) The project's development objectives have been largely achieved. Every result noted in the proposal's "Quality Management for Project Activity Results" have been mostly met. As noted earlier, only the HD Lab requires some intensive work.

- c) The total value of this project is 238,000USD. With this budget the project has established a HD Lab within the library at the APA; trained 28 instructors with one more set of instructors expected in the summer of 2013; developed a very good HD course and delivered it to more than 300 students in Bachelor's and Master's programs; developed a text book in Azerbaijani and organized a reading list of some 200 articles, case studies and text books of which 75 were translated to Azerbaijan and Russian.

In general, the value of the results indicates strong cost effectiveness. However, the project could have benefited from a budget that detailed the costs of individual outputs such as the total cost of:

- Establishing the HD Lab (inclusive of all material, supplies, consultants, translation and management)
- Developing the course including the delivery in the classroom and development of the reading list (inclusive of all material, supplies, consultants, translation and management)
- Publishing the text book (inclusive of all material, supplies, consultants, translation and management)

As it is now, the budget breakdown along the lines of Local Consultants, Contractual Services etc does not inform the reader of the costs of key outputs. A breakdown along key outputs would allow for a comparison with international costs of such items to demonstrate whether the cost of developing the course, for example, were in line with other universities. While it is certain that such a budget can be developed with relative ease, it is no longer necessary or timely to do so at this point.

Be that as it may, the absence of such a budget is not critical, we can measure this project against projects of a similar nature and conclude, based on past experience and a review of similar projects, that the results were good value for the investment. A good comparison is the project of a similar nature in Uzbekistan. The total value of the project of Uzbekistan was USD\$ 630,705 and included teaching the course, preparing HD reports and preparing policy briefs. The cost of preparing and teaching the course was USD\$311,581 including the development of the resource center. By contrast, the Azerbaijan project cost USD\$238,000 for similar activities. The difference between the two may be attributed to the cost of materials, supplies, events and labour. Nonetheless, the Azerbaijan project merits a relatively high efficiency rating.

- d) The monitoring and evaluation of the project followed the policies and procedures outlined in the UNDP User Guide and UNDP Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Development Results. The evaluator noted effective and timely reporting. However, the project could have benefited from a more dynamic monitoring approach than that afforded by Atlas. In this I mean that the Project Manager could have maintained a record of progress using a Gantt chart along with a summary of results noted in the working copy of the results and resources framework. It is fair to say that all the information related to numbers of people, dates, material, outputs and resources were available to the Project Manager, however these were in separate files rather than available on hand. This is a minor issue in this project given its scope.

## 5 HD COURSE ANALYSIS

The assessment of the HD course was conducted through a review of course material such as the syllabus and course plans as well as interviews with students to measure the effect of the course. Additionally, to ensure appropriate preparation of the instruction staff, the evaluator undertook a review of the test given to instructors at the end of the summer school and interviews with instructors. The evaluator did not observe any classroom teaching.

In sum, the course is found to be sound in that it covers the areas of HD in a systemic, logical and clear manner. Each lesson is organized and prepared by a fairly comprehensive lesson plan and the instructors were found to be sufficiently prepared through the summer school program.

### *Syllabus*

The syllabus is sound. That of the State Economic University provides more detailed information about the course in general whereas the APA syllabus provides only lesson titles, schedule and resources.

The syllabus covers most of basic elements found in such a document with the exception of learning outcomes. Learning outcomes can provide a clear link between the course and programs of study at the university. Also missing is basic information related to credits. Reading the syllabus should inform the student the credit value of the course and the application of those credits.

The course evaluation appears to be sufficiently rigorous for a course of this kind combining quizzes, group work and two written assignments. 10% of the total grade is dedicated to student participation; this represents a reasonable percentage given the nature of the course and its format.

Finally, it is not clear from reading the course which year of study is appropriate for the course. This information is available in another document entitled "Summary of Human Development Course" which appears to be an internal planning or reporting document. In said document, the course is offered at various levels in different universities yet the course does not appear to be adjusted to these different levels. In fact, the evaluator could not detect a distinction between the course as offered to undergraduate and to graduate students. It is possible that this distinction is in the teaching style but such was not evident through the documentation reviewed by the evaluator.

### *Lesson Plans*

The lesson plans are prepared by individual instructors and adhere closely to the syllabus. They appear sufficiently detailed and clear. What is not clear however is whether or not the students are given the reading list for the lesson prior to the class. In this way, the students can come to class prepared having read the material and can engage in more fruitful debate and discussions. From the interviews with students it did not appear that they do the preparatory readings before class.

### ***Teaching Environment***

This element has to be by far the most innovative and most highly received element of the course. The students were unanimous during the interviews that the format of the course was appealing and created a comfortable atmosphere for inquisitiveness and creativity.

The students reported a high degree of appreciation for group work which is not a usual occurrence in other courses. At the bachelor's level, students enjoyed working in groups during the class time however they were not given any group assignments which would have resulted in group presentations. Such an approach with the Bachelor's would have the benefit of having HD students bring into and take from the HD course to their actual program of study.

Group work at the Master's level is also well received. This is complemented by student led group research which thus far has resulted in a number of research papers and presentations.

All students, Master's and Bachelor's, reported their appreciation for the presence of guest speakers and have expressed a desire to see this continue in the future.

According to the instructors, students appeared highly enthusiastic about the course and its format. They were engaged early on, involved and interested. The classrooms witnessed lively debates and critical discussions despite the novelty of the subject matter and format.

### ***Impact of the course***

According to the teaching staff, the course helped students to think critically and to broaden their perspective on human development issues. This was confirmed through interviews with students who reported that the course challenged their perspectives about the world and about Azerbaijan. It helped enrich their program of study and they were able to assess critically issues in their other courses such as history, political science and economics.

Some of the language used in response to questions was very telling about the impact of the course. Some students used terms such as "opened our eyes", "better able to recognize and evaluate social change", "deepened our understanding of our country." These are the type of results this evaluation spoke of in Section 3 (Rationale) of this report.

The impact of the Course can be most felt during the interview of the first cohort which has now graduated. On Monday April 22, the evaluator met with five such students. Three of these students are teaching at the APA and completing their PhD studies, one is employed in the private sector and one is awaiting admission to a PhD program in Russia.

The former students reported that the Course was a unique experience that not only enhanced their educational experience but continues to influence the way they now teach their courses at university. The students are emulating the teaching techniques in their classes. Furthermore, they echoed the sentiments expressed by current students that the Course broadened their perspective on global, regional and local issues.

The former students acknowledged that the Course contributed to enhancing their Masters level research and continues to influence their PhD research. When learning of the upcoming summer school the former students unanimously expressed their desire to attend.

The former student working in the private sector admitted that the Course is of little utility to his actual work as a marketing manager for a German company operating in Azerbaijan. However, he did admit that the course helped him in securing employment. He reported that his employer was impressed by the Course but we have no way of verifying this occurrence; the direct quote is as follows: "He said the certificate that I received from UNDP for successful graduation helped me to get this job."

### ***Knowledge development (research)***

- Two research papers published for conference (no titles but evidence is available at the APA)
- Two presentations resulting from research: Green Economy and Multidimensional Poverty Index

3 PhD and 3 Masters Theses that have been inspired/or rely on learning from the HD Course, according to students:

- Ethno political conflicts in the era of globalization
- National security issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the contrast of Globalization
- Local conflicts and global security
- Improving economic mechanism of sustainable development in non-oil sector
- The use of alternative and renewable energy as a way of sustainable development in Absheron region
- Innovative regional development: improving financial support of regional development

## **6. EVALUATION SCORES**

In order to give a clearer understanding of the level and the quality of results achieved by the project, the evaluator adapted the evaluation criteria that had been formulated by the similar project implemented by the Uzbekistan Country Office (CO). The rating reflects the judgment of the evaluators based on the document review and interviews conducted to capture the effect of the project on the educational experience of students and its effect on the education institution wherein the HD Course is offered.

The creators of the criteria cautioned that these criteria were established using "a regular likert scale rating. The rating system for this report was established by the authors and does not necessarily represent official UNDP policy. This rating system is based on a qualitative standard scale, and results can therefore be considered an indicative evaluation of compliance regarding what had been established in the project documents, taking into account the performance of implemented activities and the quality of achieved results."<sup>1</sup>

As in the Uzbekistan report, these ratings should be read in conjunction with the analysis provided in the previous sections.

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<sup>1</sup> Marnie, S. and Otter, T. Evaluation Report, Increasing Capacities of Educational and Policy-making Establishments in Promoting and Applying the Human Development Concept, Project ID: 00061558, March 2011, UNDP Uzbekistan. Page 23



## ***Evaluation Criteria<sup>2</sup>***

In an expanded approach to the basic evaluation criteria of OECD/DAC, this section used the following general criteria to evaluate the project:

<b>Relevance.</b>	The degree to which the project is justified in relation to the needs of the beneficiaries and in connection to the UNDAF and UNDP-AZ outcomes.
<b>Progress</b>	The progress towards the project purpose and the overall objective. Example: whether the beneficiaries have access, are using, and are satisfied with the project services.
<b>Effectiveness</b>	The extent to which the project purpose has been achieved as a result of the project.
<b>Efficiency</b>	The cost/time effectiveness of transforming the means into results.
<b>Impact/Degree of Change</b>	The intended and unintended impacts of the project, changes brought about by the Project intervention?
<b>Sustainability</b>	The extent to which the positive effects of the project would continue after the external assistance has come to an end. Will the positive change in the development situation endure/continue in future?

Rating is carried out using the following grades:

Highly Satisfactory	in compliance with the Project Document (expected accomplishments) and with high standards of performance.
Satisfactory	generally in compliance with the project document.
Unsatisfactory	partly in compliance but with weaknesses in some parts.
Highly Unsatisfactory	not in compliance.

*Table 1. Overall rating*

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Relevance			X	
Progress			X	
Effectiveness			X	
Efficiency				X
Impact / Degree of Change			X	
Sustainability			X	

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, Page 24 (adapted)

## Details of rating

Sections 3, 4 and 5 provide ample detail to support the rating given on each of the criteria used by the Uzbekistan Project Evaluation team. However, at the risk of some redundancy, it is necessary to repeat some of the qualitative findings noted in the earlier sections. In fact, table 2 provides a handy synopsis of findings which can be extracted from this report for use as a stand-alone document for other reporting purposes.

*Table 2. Rating details*

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Relevance			X	
As noted in section 3, the project falls short of meeting the logical link to the UNDAF and UNDP-AZ outcome three. But this should not be a serious concern because the project does help advance the UNDP mission in Azerbaijan and in the region. The project is relevant to the institutions wherein it is delivered in that it introduced a new teaching methodology and a new multi-disciplinary course to students from various departments.				

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Progress			X	
The project progressed relatively well and participants have access to numerous resources and support. The only lacuna is the delay in opening the HD Lab which resulted from delays in renovations in addition to exposure of the students to the Lab and how it can serve them for networking, as a venue for speakers and for research purposes.				

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Effectiveness			X	
The project's effectiveness is rated as Satisfactory because it has in fact achieved what the UNDP had set to achieve. The analysis of the implementation in section 4 shows that every activity was accomplished and the desired result achieved. The only caveat is related to the HD Lab which has yet to open its doors officially but which is planned before the completion date of the project.				
In sum, the project team achieved planned results, and were mostly compliant with the budget. The baselines were acceptable for this type of project but the indicators though linked to the activity results could have been stronger.				
<b>Indicators:</b>		<b>Actual:</b>		
1) Number of academic institutions offering courses on HD subjects		There are three institutions with the HD Course included in their course offering, however only the APA and Qafqaz is actively delivering the course at the Bachelor and Master's levels. The ADA is exploring including the course in its MPA program.		
2) Number of HD Resource Centers or Labs established		One HD Lab is established and not yet operational. Although everything is in place to begin operations before the end of the project.		

3) Number of public events on HD discussions	Though there have been many events for students and instructors involving invited guests for HD discussions none of these have been public even within the confines of the university. For example accessible to students not enrolled in the HD Course. The recommendations regarding the HD Lad as a hub should address this issue.
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	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Efficiency				X
Compared to the Uzbekistan Project, the efficiency rating is highly satisfactory.				

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Impact / Degree of Change			X	
<p>There is demonstrable change in the students who have participated in the HD Course and the Instructors who participated in the Summer School, however, there is little evidence of institutional change.</p> <p>The HD Course had such a strong impact on the students' education experience, on their outlooks in general and on the way they approached other courses within their respective departments. Importantly, the project's effectiveness was enhanced by the creation of new knowledge with two scholarly papers presented at conferences, three Master's level thesis and three PhD dissertations having been highly influenced by the HD Course.</p>				

	Highly unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Highly satisfactory
Sustainability			X	
<p>There are two issues related to sustainability: 1) will the HD Course continue being offered? And 2) will the universities in general, and the APA in particular, continue to invest in the development of HD related learning? The answer to the first question is a resounding yes. The APA in particular will hold on to the HD course because of its popularity with teachers and students. Furthermore Qafqaz University is seeking a new department in which to deliver the course and the ADA is exploring the course as part of its curriculum for the new MPA program.</p> <p>The second question is a little more complex and is, quite simply, outside the scope of the project. Nonetheless, the ingredients are present and the environment is ripe to advocate for greater investment by the Rector of the APA as he is already the identified champion for the Course and the concepts. A second champion is the Ass't Vice Rector at the ADA, Shamsiyya Mustafayeva. Ms. Mustafayeva indicated her willingness to advocate for the HD Course and concepts.</p>				

## 7 RECOMMENDATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

### 7.2 *Recommendations to UNDP*

1. It would be useful for the UNDP to inject a small investment and a time extension of 12 months to ensure the sustainability of the Course and the HD Lab.
  - i. The emphasis should be on the HD Lab as this is the engine that will drive program growth and expansion of the HD concepts into the academic community and into the work force.
  - ii. This extension will also allow the UNDP-Azerbaijan to Advocate with the ministry of education to promote the course in all public and private universities and investigate the reasons for the lack of interest at the State Economic University.
2. The official opening of the HDL should be widely publicized.
3. The UNDP Project Manager should produce a clear exit and sustainability strategy using recommendations to the APA made in this report.
4. The publication of the textbook is an excellent outreach opportunity. The press release announcing the publication could target universities, ministries and embassies. The press release will provide an explanation of the course and its importance as well as its results thus far.
5. For the final media activity, the project manager must have the messaging clearly articulated. There must be preparation as to what the project wishes to convey in a very specific practical and media savvy manner. Consider including students in a media appearance to show the results of the course on students.

### 7.2 *Project Management and Implementation Lessons:*

- Sustainability and exit strategy should have been clearly articulated at the onset of the project and refined through the implementation so that work leads towards outcomes and not only to outputs within the project.
- Key outputs budget should be developed to detail the costs of these – this would help us measure better the cost effectiveness components.
- Project management could benefit from preparing short summary narrative reports to keep a corporate memory of decisions made.

### **7.3 Recommendations to Academy of Public Administration**

#### **HDL Operations:**

- The title of the HDL Manager should be revised to HDL Manager with requisite changes to the job description.
- The APA should strive to fund the role of the HDL Manager after project completion.
- The HDL Manager should undertake some tracer studies and follow-up activities with graduates once they have completed the degree – these graduates, especially at the Masters level can be a source of guest speakers to the students currently taking the course.
- Examine the possibility of providing more information on-line especially for Masters students who may be otherwise engaged during the normal working hours.
- Examine extended working hours for the HD Lab, possibly through the support of student volunteers.

#### **HDL Promotion and Engagement:**

- The HDL Manager should design student engagement programs and follow-up activities with students who have taken the course but not yet graduated. The HD Lab should become the hub for networks and discussion groups.
- The HDL Manager should design activities to promote the HD Lab within the university including for students not enrolled in the course. For example, open invitation to guest speakers and film showing related to HD and Development. This would attract more students to the course.
  - Consider opening the HDL to the wider academic community and general public.
- The HDL Manager should issue a press release at the completion of each course. The press release should contain quotes from students. This further promotes the course and expands its reach.

#### **HDL Cost Recovery**

- The HD Lab should seek partnerships with training institutions to deliver training for a fee thus ensuring a revenue stream to sustain funding for the HD Lab.
- Adjust the summer school course to become a paid public offering to generate revenue to support the HD Lab

#### **Academic Recommendations:**

- It is important to continue the practice of invited professionals to ensure that the students and teachers have relevant current information.
- It is recommended that all lesson plans be handed to students at the beginning of the course and instructed to read material in preparation for every course.
- It is important for the APA to strive to keep HD teachers' knowledge current by supporting their attendance to conferences and participation in training activities.

## 8. LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND INTERVIEWS

### *Documents:*

1. Project document for the project strengthening capacity of educational institutions for teaching and applying HD concepts
2. A report on planned vs actual activities produced specifically for this evaluation
3. Results and resources framework for the Republic of Azerbaijan (2011-2015)
4. Summary of HD course (undated)
5. Transfer of title of assets from the UNDP to the Government of Azerbaijan (APA) 2011 and 2012
6. Academy of Public Administration Syllabus
7. State Economic University Syllabus
8. Lesson plan 1 – Introduction to basic concepts of HD and Lesson plan 3 – Introduction to MDGs
9. List of books being purchased for the HD Lab
10. List of additional readings for the HD Course
11. Compendium of questions contained in the Quality Assurance of Knowledge Obtained by summer school participants 2011
12. HD Textbook table of contents
13. Summer school course agenda 2011 and Summer school course agenda 2012
14. HD teacher training summer school test results
15. Outline of presentation for guest speakers
16. Evaluation Report: Increasing Capacities of Educational and Policy-making Establishments in Promoting and Applying the Human Development Concept, March 2011.

### *Meetings and Interviews*

#### **Professionals and Professors:**

- Nato Alhazishvili, UNDP
- Jamila Ibrahimova, UNDP
- Aytan Shirinova, UNDP
- Vugar Allahverdiyev UNDP
- Mir Agil Seyidzade, APA, instructor (Bachelor's and Master's)
- Muhamad Ali Farokov, APA, assistant instructor (Master's)
- Anar Iskanderov, Qafqaz Univeristy (Master's)
- Nadir Guluzade, Former UNDP consultant on the project and instructor of the course in the first year at APA and State Economic University
- Shamsiyya Mustafayeva, Ass't Vice Rector at ADA, course designer, instructor at APA and co-facilitator of 1<sup>st</sup> summer school
- Ramila Aghazade, Teacher instructor, Preparing PhD APA
- Aygun Babayeva , Preparing PhD, APA
- Ruslan Mirzaliyev , Preparing PhDAPA
- Rustam Shefagatov, Teacher APA
- Isfandiyar Hacıyev, Instructor APA, Preparing PhD

**Students:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Field</b>
Emin Hasanov	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Shaiq Huseynov	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Ismailova Rana	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Ahmad Alili	Master	2	Conflict Resolution
Hulya Mammadli	Master	2	National Security and Political Strategy
Fatima Mustafayeva	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Ilaha Azizova	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Gultan Hacıyeva	Bachelor	1	Ecology
Reshad Abilzade	Bachelor	1	Public and municipality administration
Nihad Alizade	Bachelor	1	Ecology
Rashid Mamishov	Master	2	Conflict resolution
Elbay Mirzayev	Bachelor	1	
Agil Mammadzade			