

• EUFRAS networking with Eastern Europe - advisory services motivation to cooperate

**Agro Information Centre
(Aqro Informasiya Merkezi – AIM)**

“Advisory service networking promotion towards Eastern Europe for Agriculture and Rural Development”
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THE CAUCASUS REGION



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Names for first order administrative divisions (provinces and krais) are unofficial personal names.

Names for first order administrative divisions are not necessarily authoritative.

2102-04 STATE, JANUARY



(off-shore)
oil and gas
based
economy in
Baku and its
vicinity.



Agricultural based
rural economy



Cotton, wheat,
vegetables and others



[illegible]

20 % of land territory
occupied by Armenian

Russia, Turkey, Georgia, Iran
Armenia, Caspian Sea

Climate: warm dry, semi desert climate. Warm long summers, short cold winters

Agriculture: only with irrigation

Landowners: 864,500

Farmers' Problems following privatisation

- Cut off from production subsidies
- Break away of traditional market outlets
- Low prices for agricultural products
- Rising costs of farm inputs
- Outdated irrigation network
- Agricultural equipment insufficient, poor quality, high maintenance and operations costs, spare parts are lacking
- Saline, polluted and impoverished soils
- Limited knowledge of new owners



Agro Information Centre (Agro Informasiya Merkezi – AIM)

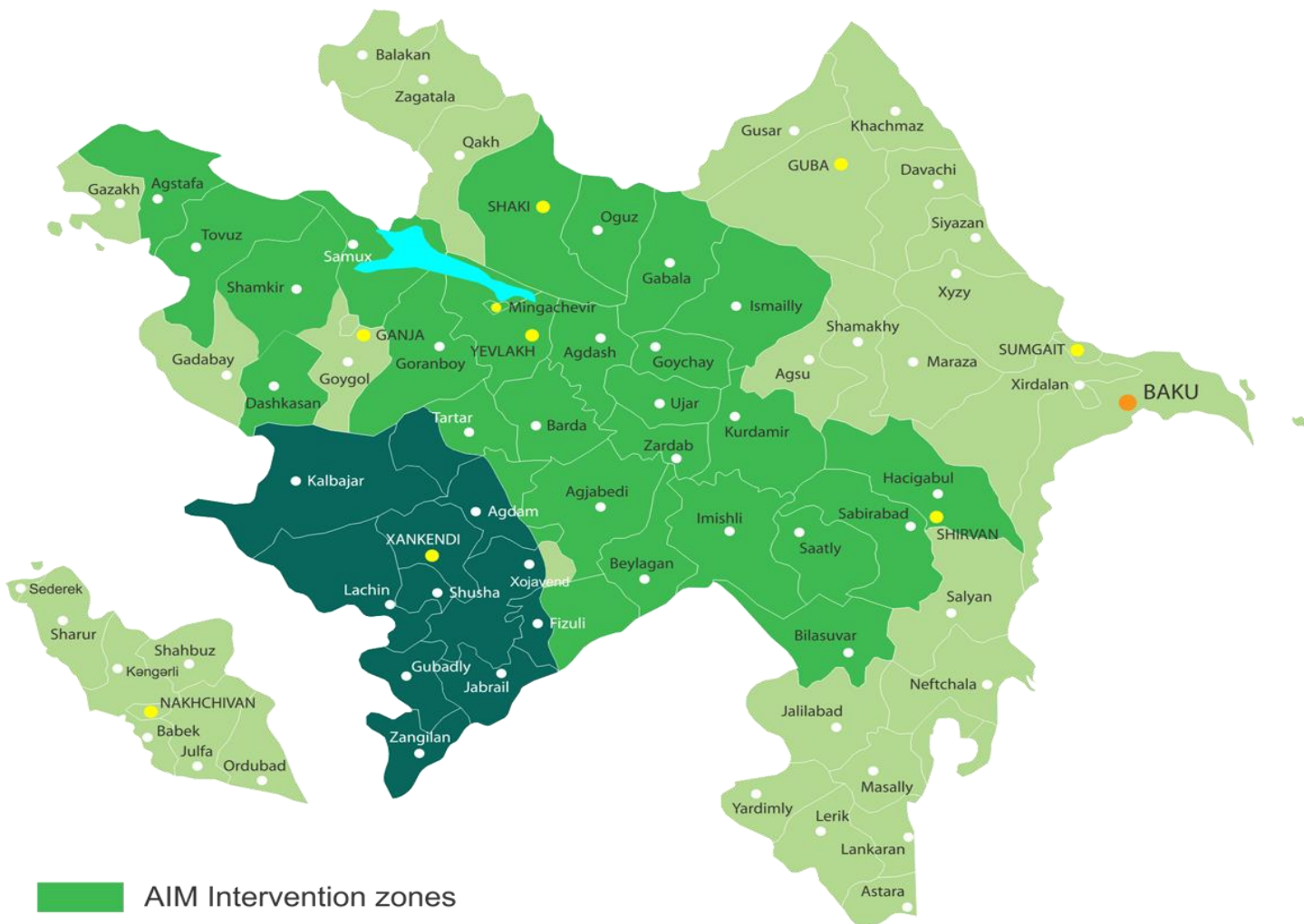
- AIM is a local Non-Governmental Organization
- AIM aims at improving the livelihood of rural population via delivering demand driven extension services and introducing sustainable farming systems
- AIM pioneered the demand-driven village based extension services in Azerbaijan



AIM:

- Founded in 1999
- 35 staff members in 4 regional offices
- 45 projects in 27 districts of Azerbaijan
- 331 agricultural advisors trained
- More than 30000 small scale farmers reached

Activity area of AIM



AIM Intervention zones

Occupied land territory of Azerbaijan by Armenians

AIM:

- Successfully implemented fee-based advisory service in a post soviet country
- Provided consultancy services at international level, especially among former Soviet Union countries (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan)



Our activities

- Ensure rural population access to demand-driven extension and information
- Increase climate change adaptive capacity of rural population and mitigation of their vulnerability
- Ensure small scale farmers better access to effective legal and institutional framework
- Improve farmer groups and joint work
- Increase employment opportunities of rural women and youth
- Provide agricultural publications & technical support
- Provide soil, water and feed analyses
- Support with food supply chain and marketing



Our approaches

- strengthen the demand-side for services
- promote direct contracts between farmers and advisors
- offer fee-based service delivery to farmer clients
- motivate advisors to remain functional after financial support during the training phase



Assessing fee based extension

- Paid extension from onset
- Carefull selection of trainees (on average 3 months)
- High-quality training, coaching, and encouragement
- Demand driven extension

Assessing fee based extension

- Support during training and after graduation to establish trust
- Remain with extension (no credit provision, no input supply...)
- No central (expensive) structure but independent, private advisors to keep the fees low
- Qualified and well trained coaching staff

Assessing fee based extension

- Well functioning M&E unit with a wide spread scope (trainers, farmers, AAs)
- Regular feedback from representatives of the advisors and stakeholders before taking major decision on changes



Agricultural/Rural Development Networks

IFOAM (International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements)

GFRAS (Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services)

EUFRAS (European Forum for Rural Advisory Services)

GFAR (Global Forum on Agricultural Research)

Avalon Network



EUFRAS can:

Help the members, especially from developing countries , to increase their capacity in order to:

- become more competitive
- take benefit of the best cases and markets

Become an interactive forum to enable members to exchange their experiences, information and lessons learnt



It can support in:

Increase of innovation capacity

Increase of business

New partnerships and cooperation

Access to funding opportunities



Increase of innovation capacity

- Access to knowledge (information on tools, case studies, good practices and lessons learnt) of the network members
- Perform the role of an advisory partner to provide the needed guidance and services
- News and information on upcoming events, training events, advisory services and institutional support
- Online knowledge-sharing events and portals
- Support services in modern innovations



Support in increase of business

- Advice and updated information on EU laws, rules, standards
- Search of new business partners
- Assist in access international markets



New partnerships and cooperation

- Offer business cooperation and technology transfer services
- Support with opportunities to participate in research programs



We can help to:

- **identify new partners for research and cooperation**
- **get access to relevant data**
- **organize workshops, run online discussions and other network activities**



We intend to:

- Continue the current activities and cooperation with EUFRAS
- Further integrate into EUFRAS and other relevant new networks
- Further develop the cooperation with new partners

Thanks for your attention!



Let's protect the environment for the sake of our Future...