Code: TCP/AZE/3202 (D)
Title: STRENGTHENING UTILIZATION OF PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES IN AZERBAIJAN THROUGH ENHANCING CONVENTIONAL PLANT BREEDING AND ASSOCIATED BIOTECHNOLOGY CAPACITY
Country: Azerbaijan
Starting date: July 2009
Expiring date: June 2011
Contact: Regional Office for Europe
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PROJECT SUMMARY

The yield of most crops in Azerbaijan is below their potential. The low yields are partly due to poor, un-adapted varieties. The country's diversity in genetic resources of cultivated plants is extremely rich but the varieties cultivated by the Azeri farmers are either "old", suffer from diseases and stresses or are varieties imported from outside.

The FAO-Azerbaijan study on the status of breeding and biotechnology in the country and the follow-up national consultation in 2007 identified poor country capacity in characterization and use of Plant Genetic Resources (PGR). The root cause of the problem is the limited national capacity in characterization, selection and utilization of PGR in breeding as a result of both limited knowledge and experience of the relevant personnel as well as technical deficiencies in modern equipment for conventional and molecular breeding. The situation is further aggravated by the lack of communication and cooperation between the institutions and programmes working with PGR on the one hand and developing commercial varieties on the other hand.

The proposed project aims at strengthening the national plant breeding and associated biotechnology capacity at two key research institutes in Azerbaijan to enhance the characterization and use of PGR for three or four priority crops achieved through capacity building, transfer of biotechnological tools and modern conventional approaches, networking and the development of National Strategy of Plant Genetic Resources Utilization.

The project will cover the services of three TCDC/TCCT (Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries/Technical Cooperation among Countries in Transition) consultants in biotechnological tools in Plant Genetic Resources (PGR) characterization, in conventional tools in PGR characterization and in strategy development for one week each, of four national consultants for a total of 34 months as well as technical support services from the Crop and Grassland Service (AGPC) for a total of 21 days in three missions. It will also cover the cost of in-country training, contracts, expendable and non-expendable equipment, temporary assistance, official travel and general as well as direct operating expenses.

National Counterparts
Ministry of Agriculture

Funding Source
Technical Cooperation Programme

Budget
USD 385 000