Azerbaijan CRA (2019) Case Study
Period of Performance: June 11-20, 2019

Practice Area: Community Resilience

Donor/Client: USAID

Location: Lankaran, Sheki, Quba

Enumerators: 15

Surveys: 3,380

Project Objectives

Understand community resilience dynamics, particularly in regions USAID was interested in adjusting programming or creating new programming: Quba-Khachmaz and Sheki-Zaqatala, Lankaran

- *Project Objective 1:* Reassess level of community resilience and the main sources of vulnerability in Sheki-Zaqatala and Quba-Khachm, and conduct a baseline assessment of Lankaran.

- *Project Objective 2:* Update programming recommendations, focusing on specific vulnerable areas as opposed to country-wide programs.

Key Findings

The 2019 CRA revealed that the overwhelming majority of Azerbaijanis, across age, gender, and location variables, identify lack of livelihoods and its associated issues as presenting the largest problem their communities face. While the official rate for unemployment nationally is 6%, more than 17% of Impl. Project's underserved and rural respondents self-identified as unemployed. Youth and women are particularly underserved in current conditions. Particularly, women in rural areas across the country, face deep conservative constraints to working outside the home. They ask for women's only workplaces, and

support for their home-based fruit orchards and vegetable gardens that supplement both their household income and nutrition. Many of the best and brightest youth are abandoning rural communities and heading to either Baku or Russia for work. Between the lack of job opportunities and the under-representation of their voices in local government, formal economy, and society, many face desperate and uncertain futures.

Methodology

- **Pre-deployment assessment**
  The team spent several days in the areas of practice six weeks before surveying to establish the ground network, relationships, and observe and gather contextual information on the operating and cultural environment. A security risk assessment was also conducted, as well as identification of any potential obstacles to the successful completion of the field assessment.
- **Field Assessment**
  Local enumerators conducted large-scale, face-to-face structured surveys (quantitative, smartphone-based), followed by deep dive cross-sectoral investigations (qualitative, interview-based) conducted by the leadership team into the underlying dynamics surfaced by the survey data. The second phase of cross-sectoral investigations are driven by the real-time monitoring of the survey outcomes; their primary objective is to map the cross-sectoral nature and interconnectedness of the problem set, identify community-identified problems' symptoms versus root causes, and analyze which programmatic interventions will have the most impact toward our partners' desired outcomes and objectives.

- **Analysis**
  After all surveying was complete, the team cleaned the data and processed it through state-of-the-art data-processing software to determine the current drivers of vulnerability and how they related to the previous year's data mapping.

Programming Recommendations

- Shift agricultural programmatic focus to high need, high vulnerability communities that are currently underserved, namely rural areas in Sheki-Zaqatala and Quba-Khachmaz. Furthermore, activities that take a long-term approach to address core concerns (lack of livelihoods, water, and business capital) should incentivize community resilience and cohesion instead of being one-off projects.
- Create youth councils or support existing youth organizations, provide training, and connect those organizations to the local government so they can address the marginalization of youth, and can be tied to economic development programs like English language classes.