



CASE

(Civic Action for Security and Environment)

Small Grants Programme

Progress Report May 2010

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Executive Summary

CASE (Civic Action for Security and Environment) is a small grants programme by the OSCE that supports civil society organizations (CSOs) through providing small grants for projects that address environment and security challenges. Projects supported under CASE demonstrate cooperation with local stakeholders, including the government, the private sector, and NGOs, and hence contribute to creating an enabling environment for a civil-society response to environment and security challenges. CASE stands out due to its decentralized structure that ensures local priorities are addressed, while enabling the OSCE to exert strategic guidance.

Within the framework of the Environment and Security (ENVSEC) Initiative, CASE currently covers three pilot countries, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan. In each country, CASE brings together representatives of government, civil society, and donor organizations to determine individual thematic priorities for CASE small grants, and to select the most promising projects for support. The CASE Country Strategy determines thematic country priorities, while a National Screening Board selects individual projects. Both are established by a participatory process that ensures national ownership of CASE. Strong local ownership, and a broad focus that addresses cross-cutting issues like gender and youth make CASE successful in attracting civil society organizations even beyond the traditional environmental field.

Total funding for CASE stands at EUR 447,000. The Government of Austria contributed EUR 40,000, CIDA (through ENVSEC) EUR 99,000, the Government of Luxembourg EUR 200,000, and StatoilHydro EUR 108,000.

In all three pilot countries, the institutional set-up of CASE is completed, and projects have commenced or are about to start.

In Armenia, CASE has been supporting eleven projects that are currently being implemented, while five more remain in the pipeline. The OSCE Office in Yerevan expects to issue a second call for project proposals by civil society organizations in June 2010. CASE Armenia is supported through funding by the governments of Austria, Canada (through ENVSEC) and Luxembourg.

CASE Azerbaijan currently supports three projects with funding provided by the Government of Austria and StatoilHydro. A second call for applications was issued in late May and the OSCE Office in Baku expects a second batch of projects to start this summer.

CASE Tajikistan commenced in early 2010, is finalizing its institutional set-up, and will begin selecting projects shortly. Support for CASE Tajikistan comes from the Government of Luxembourg.

Early experience confirms strong synergies between CASE and the Aarhus Centre Initiative. Aarhus Centres provide the link between CASE and the CSO community, while the focus CASE puts on building the capacity of civil society contributes to the work of Aarhus Centres and the goals of the Aarhus Convention.

1. The CASE Initiative

In its activities in the economic and environmental fields, the OSCE has always valued the contributions of civil society actors, and accordingly sought to involve them in its work.

The CASE initiative was developed in recognition of the contribution of civil society to addressing environment and security field, and is designed to build the capacity of civil society organizations to address environment and security challenges in co-operation with their governments. CASE, through small grants, supports outstanding projects in the field of security and environment that are submitted by CSOs. The programme is currently being implemented in three pilot countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Tajikistan.

The overall objective of CASE is to build sustainable civil society capacity and to create an enabling environment for CSOs to be strong partners to their governments as well as to other stakeholders in tackling environment and security challenges.

CASE has three target outputs:

- Increased public and political awareness on the linkages between environment and security
- Strengthened capacity of CSOs in the field of environment and security
- Rendering financial and technical assistance to CSOs on projects demonstrating cooperation in the field of environment with government organizations NGOs, private sector and international financial organizations.

The CASE operational framework is laid down in the CASE Guidelines Document. Commissioned by the Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA) in early 2009, the Guidelines Document is the central reference document for all CASE stakeholders. It defines the set-up of CASE at the strategic and country levels, assigns roles and responsibilities, and sets out the CASE project cycle and monitoring and evaluation framework.

CASE functions in a decentralized way: Its institutional set-up is designed to devolve as much responsibility to local stakeholders as possible, while ensuring continued strategic guidance by the OSCE. At the strategic level, OCEEA coordinates CASE country activities to ensure compliance with the initiative's objective, complementarity of CASE with programmes by the OSCE and other international organizations, and to avoid duplication of efforts. OCEEA also ensures that CASE maintains a regional perspective and that information and experience is exchanged across countries.

At the country level, CASE is implemented as a small grants programme supporting CSO projects in the field of environment and security. The country programme is guided by the CASE Country Strategy that is formulated in a participatory process involving the government and civil society with support of the OSCE field operation.

Based on the thematic priorities spelled out in the CASE Country Strategy, project selection is conducted in a decentralized way to ensure consideration is given to the environment and security challenges of the country, as perceived by its government and local civil society. To this end, representatives of the government, civil society, and the OSCE field operation joined by the UNDP Country Office in the country come together to form the CASE National Screening Board. The National Screening Board evaluates and selects project proposals by CSOs for support through CASE small grants. In its duties it is supported by the OSCE staff and/or team designated (CASE Country Officer) for this purpose in each field operation who has the overall responsibility for CASE implementation in the country. Specifically, the Country Officer supports the formulation of the Country Strategy, convenes and supports the

National Screening Board, assists CSOs in developing their project proposals, disperses funds to selected projects, and conducts project-level monitoring and evaluation.

The CASE Initiative exhibits strong linkages with the ENVSEC Initiative and Aarhus Centre Initiative. CASE has the potential to evolve into the “civil society leg” of the ENVSEC Initiative.

OSCE-supported Aarhus Centres exist in all three CASE pilot countries. They serve as a bridge between governments and civil society on issues related to the three pillars of the Aarhus Convention, namely access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making, and access to justice in environmental matters. Aarhus Centres in all three countries play a facilitating role for CASE implementation, among other things through providing a link for CASE to CSOs, through supporting CSOs in developing their projects and in presenting them to a wider audience. At the same time, the focus CASE puts on building the capacity of civil society contributes to the work of Aarhus Centres and the goals of the Aarhus Convention.

2. CASE Armenia

CASE Armenia is designed as a small grants programme to support civil society organizations in addressing security and environment challenges of Armenia. The major objectives of CASE Armenia are to raise awareness on environmental challenges, to build capacity of civil society organizations, and to support through small grants projects of civil society organizations addressing environmental challenges in co-operation with the government of Armenia.

CASE Armenia is funded through ENVSEC, which contributes EUR 99,000 originally donated by CIDA, and through contributions by Luxembourg, contributing EUR 40,000, and by Austria, contributing EUR 12,500.

2.1 Launching of CASE Armenia

CASE was launched in Armenia in 2009, when the ENVSEC National Advisory Group came together to consider the implementation of CASE in Armenia. At this first meeting of the ENVSEC National Advisory Group on 16 June 2009, the CASE Project Manager at OCEAA introduced the CASE Programme and briefed participants on the CASE Programme, the role of the National Screening Board, and the drafting process of the CASE Country Strategy. Representatives of the government of the Republic of Armenia, civil society organizations, academia, and international organizations participated in this meeting that formed the basis for the development of the CASE Country Strategy.

The ENVSEC National Advisory Group under the leadership of the OSCE Office in Yerevan created the CASE National Screening Board. National Screening board Members serve on a 6 monthly rotational basis upon appointment of the government. Currently, the CASE National Screening Board consists of 11 members representing international organizations (UNDP, OSCE Office in Yerevan), the Armenian government (ENVSEC Focal Points, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Territorial Administration, Ministry of Nature Protection and civil society (WWF Armenia, Association of Human Sustainable Development). This multitude of parties serving on the National Screening Board ensures transparency and accountability of CASE Armenia, and avoids duplication of efforts of other programmes.

On 1 October 2009, the OSCE Office in Yerevan organized the first CASE preparatory meeting that included a roundtable discussion focusing on the elaboration of the CASE Country Strategy. A second preparatory meeting took place at the Yerevan Aarhus Centre on 7 October, 2009. Following this each of the 13 Armenian Aarhus Centers held special meetings in their regions to inform local stakeholders about the CASE Programme. Information on the status of CASE Armenia, and selected CASE projects, has been and will continually be made available for the public on the Armenia Aarhus Centre website.

2.2 CASE Armenia Country Strategy

In late September 2009, experts, under guidance of the CASE National Screening Board, and with the assistance of the CASE Country Officer, developed the CASE Country Strategy for Armenia. The Armenia Country Strategy is a framework document based on the CASE Guidelines that identifies all technical and operational issues related to implementation of CASE in Armenia, assigns responsibilities to CASE stakeholders, and establishes country-specific criteria for the selection of projects proposals to be supported under CASE. The County Strategy was developed based on the consultations of the ENVSEC National Advisory Group in June 2009 described above. The document particularly identifies challenges for environment and security in Armenia, and describes the government's approach to environmental governance. Key challenges include the rehabilitation of Lake Sevan, deforestation, industrial waste treatment and private and industrial waste disposal, the environmental situation in the national capital Yerevan, ground erosion in the main agricultural zone of Armenia, the Ararat plain, biodiversity preservation, air pollution in Yerevan and the industrial and mining hubs of Alaverdi, Ararat, Vanadzor and Hrazdan, and water pollution and low capacity for wastewater treatment.

Environmental governance in Armenia is directed by a national legislative framework still in evolution, and the National Environmental Action Plan of 2008. Armenia has also subjected itself to a body of international environmental commitments. To date it is a party to a number of international environmental conventions, including four environmental conventions under the framework of the UN Economic Commission for Europe. Armenia's National Environmental Action Plan, covering the period through 2012, sets both topical environmental priorities and targets for environmental governance, including environmental monitoring, environmental education, public awareness-raising, and research and development.

The Armenian Aarhus Centre Network and the Centre for Environmental Rights have strengthened public awareness on the environment and participation in environmental decision-making. The CASE Armenia Country Strategy envisions a strong role for the Aarhus Centre Network in supporting civil society organizations participating in CASE through the provision of expertise and facilitation of CSO coordination. At the same time, CASE will strengthen the Aarhus Centre Initiative through building the capacity of Civil Society Organizations, and the support of environmental projects.

Despite a proliferation of environmental organizations in Armenia, civil society struggles with an uneven geographical distribution of organizations and general low domestic capacity. 70% percent of all registered civil society organizations are based in Yerevan. Many of them are managed by environmental scientists and academics, and have had significant influence in terms of environmental awareness-raising and the promotion of policies of sustainable development. Capacity needs, however, continue to exist. The focus on capacity-building and sustainability of the CASE framework is designed to address these capacity needs. To

address the skewed geographical distribution of civil society organizations, CASE Armenia prioritizes support for rural projects.

Based on the considerations outlined above, the CASE National Screening Board identified the following thematic priorities for the CASE Armenia small grants programme:

- Sustainable management of natural resources (water, bio-diversity, bio-security, mountains, etc)
- Tackling climate change
- Combating land degradation
- Natural and man-made disasters
- Hazardous waste and hazardous chemicals management
- Reduction of the negative impacts of mining
- Sustainable use of energy
- Sustainable transportation
- Environmental education
- Strengthening of Armenian CSO capacities for environmental action

These thematic priorities are to be addressed jointly with the cross-cutting themes of:

- Environmental governance
- Social aspects of environmental security, including migration, gender equality etc.
- Role and participation of women
- Role and participation of youth

2.3 Selection Process and Projects Approved

In October 2009, upon completion of the CASE Country Strategy, the CASE Country Officer drafted a call for project proposals that was posted to the Armenian Aarhus Centre website and the website of the OSCE Office in Yerevan. The CASE Country Officer assisted interested Civil Society Organizations in drafting their project proposals and served with support and guidance through the selection process.

At the deadline for proposals, on 16 November 2009, 42 project proposals had been received.

The CASE project selection process falls under the responsibility of the National Screening Board. At the National Screening Board meetings, project managers of civil society organizations are given the opportunity to present their respective project proposals. Subsequently, board members discuss these proposals, and decide whether to approve, reflect, or return for reformulation the project proposals. Decisions are made based on a scoring system that reflects the three target outputs of the CASE projects and applies sustainability, management and budgeting criteria. The CASE Armenia National Screening Board has so far held three official meetings, in December 2009, March 2010, and April 2010.

The First Board Meeting approved 5 projects of the first phase of CASE. At the Second Board Meeting, on 17 March 2010, 6 projects of a total of 16 considered for the second phase of the CASE programme were approved. The third Board Meeting considered some reformulated projects of the second phase. It approved 6 additional projects for the second phase. In total, 17 (out of 42) projects submitted have so far been approved.

Implementation of the 5 phase-one projects started upon dispersal of the first grant instalments between mid-February and mid-March. Of the 12 phase-two projects that have been approved, 6 have started in the period from April to mid-May 2010.

At the start of the project implementation phase the CASE Armenia Country Officer organizes a round table discussion with the grantee organizations, local authorities and other civil society organizations, where the project is presented and discussed with local stakeholders. During implementation, the CASE Country Officer periodically contacts the grantee CSOs to assist them in and monitor their activities.

Information on the projects that are currently implemented is summarized in Table 1 on page 7 of this report:

2.4 Upcoming Activities

For the 6 phase-two projects approved at the April National Screening Board meeting, arrangements are currently being finalized, and implementation will start shortly: The first project, submitted by the “Environmental Lawyer and Economists Young Association” seeks to raise awareness of, provide training, and establish a database on economic mechanisms of environmental management. The second project, submitted by the “Armenian Association of Seismology and Physics of the Earth” will conduct a study summarizing the experience in Armenia on the environmental impact of strong earthquakes over the last decade, and widely distribute its results. The third project, submitted by “Ayrenapasht NGO” seeks to raise awareness in the Aragats-Otn region on soil erosion through public seminars with the participation of civil society and local government authorities in several communities. The objective is to assist in the development of local action plans. The fourth project, submitted by the “Tavush Farmers Association”, seeks to raise awareness on and build capacity for organic farming in the Tavush region through seminars and trainings for participating farmers. The sixth project, submitted by the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus seeks to develop a Local Environmental Action Plan for Kapan City.

The OSCE Office in Yerevan is expected to announce a second call for project proposals for phase-three projects by mid-June 2010. The selection process is foreseen to start in July and implementation of Phase Three will commence shortly thereafter. Phase Three will be designed to focus on regions of Armenia that have not yet been targeted under CASE.

Also in June 2010, the first phase-one projects that had been launched in late February will submit their first interim quarterly technical and financial reports.

The OCEEA will continue to provide guidance and technical support for CASE Armenia, ensure the complementarity of the programme with the other countries involved, and promote it internationally.

Table 1 CASE Armenia Projects, Phase 1 and 2

	Project Location	Project Title	Grantee NGO	Project Objective	Project Activities	Project Duration	Project Budget (EUR)
CASE ARMENIA PHASE 1							
1	Yerevan, Armenia	Actions on Decreasing the Negative Influence of Urban Transport for Ensuring Environmental Security	Consumers Association	<p>Stimulate Yerevan Municipality to review public transportation policy of the Yerevan City by expanding the number of capacious transport vehicles, giving preference to electric transport means.</p> <p>Raise public awareness on ecological and transportation problems and promote public participation in environmental decision making.</p> <p>Promote suggestions for improvement of the public transport related national legislation.</p>	<p>Monitor of transportation streams</p> <p>Conduct public opinion polls to assess citizens' preferences</p> <p>Organize discussions, round tables and press conferences with participation of stakeholders</p> <p>Analyze observed violations of public transport regulations and legislation</p> <p>Suggestions on improving public transport presented by group of experts</p>	10 Feb–10 Nov 2010	6,591
2	Alaverdi, Armenia,	Safe Environment	"Anahit" Women Support Centre	<p>Assess the risks of Alaverdi arsenic graveyard and its impact on the environment and population of the region</p> <p>Raise public awareness on the environmental impact on the region and promote public participation in environmental decision making</p> <p>Encourage Alaverdi Municipality, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the Ministry of Nature Protection and "Valex Group" Companies (ACP) to undertake safety measures</p>	<p>Analysis of incidence of arsenic and other toxic chemicals and its possible impact on environment and public health</p> <p>Analysis of feasibility and safety of land fill construction near arsenic graveyard</p> <p>Public awareness raising on arsenic wastes through public discussions and media appearances</p>	25 Feb- 25 Aug 2010	6,000
3	Kotayk, Lori and Syunik regions, Armenia	Seminars on Pollutant release and Transfer registers (PRTR) and Environmental Information	Scientific and Educational Centre for National Development	<p>Raise public awareness on the PRTR issue</p> <p>Promote involvement of population and business community in the</p>	<p>Assess ecological situation in the three regions</p> <p>With Aarhus Centers of Hrazdan, Vanadzor and Goris, organize</p>	01 Mar- 31 Jul 2010	6,920

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				development and implementation of the PRTR policy in Armenia.	public awareness raising activities, and monthly seminars on the PRTR issue Promote the participation of representatives of business community in monthly seminars on environmental and security challenges of the regions Deliver educational and training materials on PRTR		
4	Hrazdan, Armenia	Improvement of the Environment in the Hrazdan Region	"Varvogh Astgh"	Encourage local industry to reduce pollutant releases and improve environmental situation in the region; Encourage a cooperative relationship with local government and private businesses to promote environmental governance; Generate educational tools on environmental issues for the Hrazdan schools to utilize in the eco-education.	Set up database on environmental situation of Hrazdan Collect information on pollutant releases from local industry Organize experts group to present recommendations on waste management and pollution reduction Organize discussions between industry and government to disseminate information on approaches for addressing mining wastes and industrial pollution Publish booklet and DVD on environmental challenges as an educational tool for Hrazdan schools	01 Mar- 31 Dec 2010	8,000
5	Yeghvard, Armenia	Creation of Ecological information network	"Yeghvard", Ecological Youth Organization	Raise public awareness on regional environmental problems and promote public participation in environmental decision-making. Stimulate the cooperation among the population and Yeghvard Municipality to promote environmental governance.	Assess environmental situation in Kotayk region With the Yeghvard Aarhus Center, organize public awareness raising activities, seminars and public discussions involving youth, business community, and Yeghvard Municipality Assist in publishing of regional	10 Mar-10 Dec 2010	5,109

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					<p>weekly environmental youth newspaper "Lusatsir"</p> <p>Conduct eco-education, trainings and seminars among the teachers, schoolchildren and youth</p> <p>Produce film on Aarhus Convention and the Aarhus Centres activities in Armenia</p> <p>Create an environmental information network/database</p>		
6	Goris, Armenia	Public awareness raising on environmental problems	Goris Women Support Resource Centre	<p>Raise public awareness on the importance of the preservation of green zones and recreational areas.</p> <p>Encourage cooperation among population, CSOs and Goris Municipality to develop stronger mechanisms for environmental governance.</p> <p>Promote public participation in environmental decision-making</p>	<p>Organize public hearings on Vararak river pollution problems and irrigation system development</p> <p>Lobby Goris municipality for preservation and protection of recreational areas and monuments</p> <p>Conduct trainings and eco-education among the teachers, schoolchildren and youth</p> <p>Publish newspaper articles on the current situation of recreational areas</p> <p>Organize environmental art exposition in cooperation with the local authorities, Tourism centre, business community and NGOs;</p> <p>Publish a guidebook on places of public importance and historic monuments in the community</p>	10 Mar-10 Oct 2010	3,655
CASE ARMENIA PHASE 2							
7	Alaverdi, Armenia	Assessment of risk of heavy metal pollution of farm products in Armenia	Centre for Ecological-Noosphere Studies	<p>Assess agricultural soil pollution</p> <p>Assess qualitative and quantitative character of irrigation water</p>	<p>Collect and consolidate all available cartographic material and previously obtained research data</p>	01 Apr 2010 - 01 Mar 2011	5,675

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				<p>Assess level of pollutants in farm products</p> <p>Develop and present to government action plan on pollution risks reduction</p> <p>Disseminate information on eco-toxicological state of farm products among local population.</p>	<p>Carry Out Sampling</p> <p>Develop computer database on the outcomes of the analyses, perform statistical analysis</p> <p>Conduct meetings and round table discussions at the Aarhus Centers</p> <p>Publish booklets with assessment information and recommendations</p>		
8	Lori, Sevan Basin, Syunik regions, Armenia	Assessment of security risks of environmental hot spots	"Ecolur"	<p>Raise public awareness on environmental hot spots in three regions</p> <p>Prepare expert assessment reports on threats from hot spots in three regions</p> <p>Highlight threats from hot spots through public monitoring</p> <p>Improve environmental policy through dialogue between local government, NGOs and business community</p>	<p>Gather information on environmental situation at hot spots</p> <p>Carry out public monitoring of ecological and social situation in the hot Spots, in cooperation with local stakeholders</p> <p>Organize round tables at Aarhus Centres to discuss threats identified and possible solutions</p> <p>Publish experts' group conclusions and roundtable suggestions and lobby government for action</p>	15 Apr-15 Dec 2010	6,620
9	Yerevan, Armenia	"Whither Yerevan" project	"Antenna"	<p>Raise awareness on environmental problems of Yerevan city</p> <p>Discuss and develop environmentally sustainable urban growth and development options</p> <p>Present options to the public through a series of 12 radio programs</p>	<p>Conduct interviews with local and international experts, local municipal authorities and population</p> <p>Produce 12 long and 12 short versions of the radio programs</p> <p>Disseminate these programs online as podcasts and distribute CDs to Aarhus Centres</p>	05 Apr-05 Oct 2010	6,153
10	Armenia	Provision of expertise on ISO 14001:2004 EMS standard requirements and implementation benefits.	"Khazer" Ecological and Cultural NGO	<p>Raise awareness of key stakeholders on requirements and benefits of implementation of ISO 14001:2004 Standard</p> <p>Generate expertise on ISO 14001:2004 Standard among staff of</p>	<p>Develop and disseminate awareness-raising materials</p> <p>Organize workshop on identification and elimination of barriers for implementation of ISO 14001:2004 EMS Standard</p>	01 May-01 Sep 2010	5,900

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				five target industrial companies	Provide training to staff at selected companies		
11	Gegharkunik region, Armenia	Production of a film on Environmental Problems in Gegharkunik region	"Blejan"	<p>Raise public awareness on environmental problems in Gegharkunik region.</p> <p>Raise awareness on the Law on Lake Sevan as well as on programmes for restoration, reproduction and use of Lake Sevan ecosystem</p> <p>Develop recommendations to Commission on the Lake Sevan and local government authorities</p>	<p>Produce a film on environmental hot spots around the Lake Sevan</p> <p>Organize film screenings and public discussions</p> <p>Prepare experts recommendations and suggestions on regional environmental problems</p> <p>Conduct training workshops among youth and public on public participation in decision-making on environmental issues</p>	10 May-10 Sep 2010	5,927

CASE Armenia Project Map



3. CASE Azerbaijan:

CASE Azerbaijan is designed as a small grants programme to support civil society organizations in addressing security and environment challenges of Azerbaijan. The major objectives of CASE Azerbaijan are to raise awareness on environmental challenges, to build capacity of civil society organizations, and to support through small grants projects of civil society organizations addressing environmental challenges in co-operation with the government of Azerbaijan.

CASE Azerbaijan is funded by StatoilHydro, contributing EUR 108,000, and by Austria, contributing EUR 12,500.

3.1 Launching of CASE Azerbaijan

The start-up phase of the CASE Programme in Azerbaijan commenced in October 2009 with the constitution of the National Screening Board (NSB) that includes representatives of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan,, UNDP Country Office, Statoil Hydro and the OSCE Office in Baku. The Office will continue its efforts among the NGO community to include an NGO representative within the Board. On 17 November 2009, the National Screening Board held its first official meeting, where the functions of the board were discussed and its work prepared. Specifically, board members reviewed and adapted the CASE Azerbaijan Country Strategy. The Strategy was finalized shortly thereafter by the OSCE Office in Baku, in close co-ordination with the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources.

3.2 CASE Azerbaijan Country Strategy

The Azerbaijan Country Strategy is a framework document based on the CASE Guidelines that identifies all technical and operational issues related to implementation of CASE in Azerbaijan, assigns responsibilities to CASE stakeholders, and establishes country-specific criteria for the selection of projects proposals to be supported by CASE small grants.

In particular, the document identifies challenges for environment and security in Azerbaijan. These include land erosion, degradation, and contamination, desertification and water pollution. The latter is especially dire, given the limited water resources the country disposes of. Azerbaijan's main rivers, the Kura and Araz, are strongly contaminated by both transboundary and domestic industrial wastes. Poor waste management, especially in bigger cities exacerbate soil and water pollution. More than 40% of the country's territory is exposed to soil erosion of various degrees. 1.5 million hectares of land are salinized, and woodlands, covering only 11% of the territory, have been receding heavily in the 1990s, in part due to illegal logging.

In Azerbaijan, environmental governance is built around the "Complex Plan of Measures to Improve the Ecological Situation in Azerbaijan" which covers the period of 2006 through 2011, and the national development strategy, entitled National Programme of Azerbaijan Republic on Environmentally Sustainable Socio-Economic Development, covering the period of 2003 through 2010. The government of Azerbaijan has also assumed international environmental responsibilities. It is a party to all five UNECE environmental conventions.

The Azerbaijan Country Strategy specifically refers to the country's Aarhus Centres in Baku, Ganjah, and Gazakh and assigns them a facilitation role in implementing the CASE Azerbaijan programme. This cooperation will be mutually beneficial, as the CASE programme's focus on environmental awareness-raising and CSO capacity-building, and

multi-stakeholder cooperation will advance the purposes of the Aarhus Centres in Azerbaijan.

Based on these considerations the above CASE Azerbaijan Country Strategy identified the following priority themes for CASE Azerbaijan small grants projects:

- Sustainable management of natural resources
- Combating land degradation
- Natural and man-made disasters
- Management of hazardous wastes and chemicals
- Mining
- Sustainable transportation
- Climate change
- Energy

These thematic priorities are to be addressed jointly with the cross-cutting themes of:

- Support for environmental governance
- Social aspects of environmental security, including migration, gender equality etc.
- Role and participation of women
- Role and participation of youth

3.3 Call for Proposals and Project Selection

The first call for project proposals under CASE Azerbaijan was announced on 11 November 2009 with the deadline for submission of applications set for January 2010. A note of call for proposals was advertised on the tenders section of the OSCE webpage and in the national 'Zerkalo' newspaper. 41 proposals were submitted before the January deadline.

On 18 November 2009, the Office officially kicked off the CASE Programme in Azerbaijan with a public event in Baku. About 50 civil society organizations and a variety of media representatives attended. Participants were provided with detailed information about the small grants programme including priority themes, project cycle, monitoring and evaluation, and the application process. At the event, the CSOs were invited to contact the Office for any questions and guidance they may need in preparing their applications. More than 20 NGOs met with the Senior Programme Assistant hired for CASE to receive such guidance and technical assistance at the project proposal development stage.

On 19 November 2009, within the framework of an Aarhus Centres Workshop, the OSCE Office in Baku introduced the Aarhus Centre Guidelines commissioned by the OCEEA and provided information on how the Aarhus Centres could contribute and benefit from the CASE Initiative.

CASE Azerbaijan's approach to grant making has been to support fewer but larger projects with feasible objectives and sustainable impact. This also allows the programme to better identify and integrate lessons learned from the first phase to consecutive programme activities, monitor closely and provide support to on-going projects, and facilitate joint events with the Aarhus Centres.

In line with this approach, CASE-Azerbaijan made three grant awards in the first phase. These projects were selected from 41 proposals evaluated by the National Screening Board on the basis of a set of scoring criteria covering the issues of methodology and implementation, operational capacity of the applicant, budget, and sustainability. The proposals that scored high were discussed in detail by the Board members on 17 February, and short-listed applicants were requested to re-formulate their proposals. Upon their

reformulation, the Board made its final decision at the meeting held on 9 March 2010. Implementation of selected projects started in April 2010.

Aarhus Centres in Azerbaijan are expected to contribute to the implementation of the 3 Phase One projects through lending their facilities for grantee CSOs to hold press conferences and through providing a stage for dissemination of project results. Table 2 on page 15 and the attached project map provide a description of the 3 Phase One projects.

3.4 Upcoming Activities

On 25 May 2010 a second call for proposals was announced for phase two of CASE Azerbaijan. The deadline for applications was set for 14 June 2010. As in the first round, the call was posted on the OSCE Office in Baku web page and advertised in the 'Zerkalo' newspaper. In addition, a note for tender was sent to all the applicants of the first round. The grant ceiling for phase two is AZN 12,000, and the OSCE Office in Baku expects to make four to five grant awards in phase two. Potential implementation of a phase-three batch of projects will depend on the availability of additional donor funding.

To stimulate closer co-operation with the Aarhus Centres on CASE, the OSCE Office in Baku decided to organize a meeting with the regional CSOs in the Ganja Aarhus Centre on 3 June 2010. The meeting will provide an overview of the CASE Programme, present the grant application procedures, and give an introduction to the linkages between environment and security. The event will also provide an opportunity for the Ganja Aarhus Centre to update local CSOs on its activities.

The OCEEA will continue to provide guidance and technical support for CASE Azerbaijan, ensure the complementarity of the programme with the other countries involved, and promote it regionally and internationally.

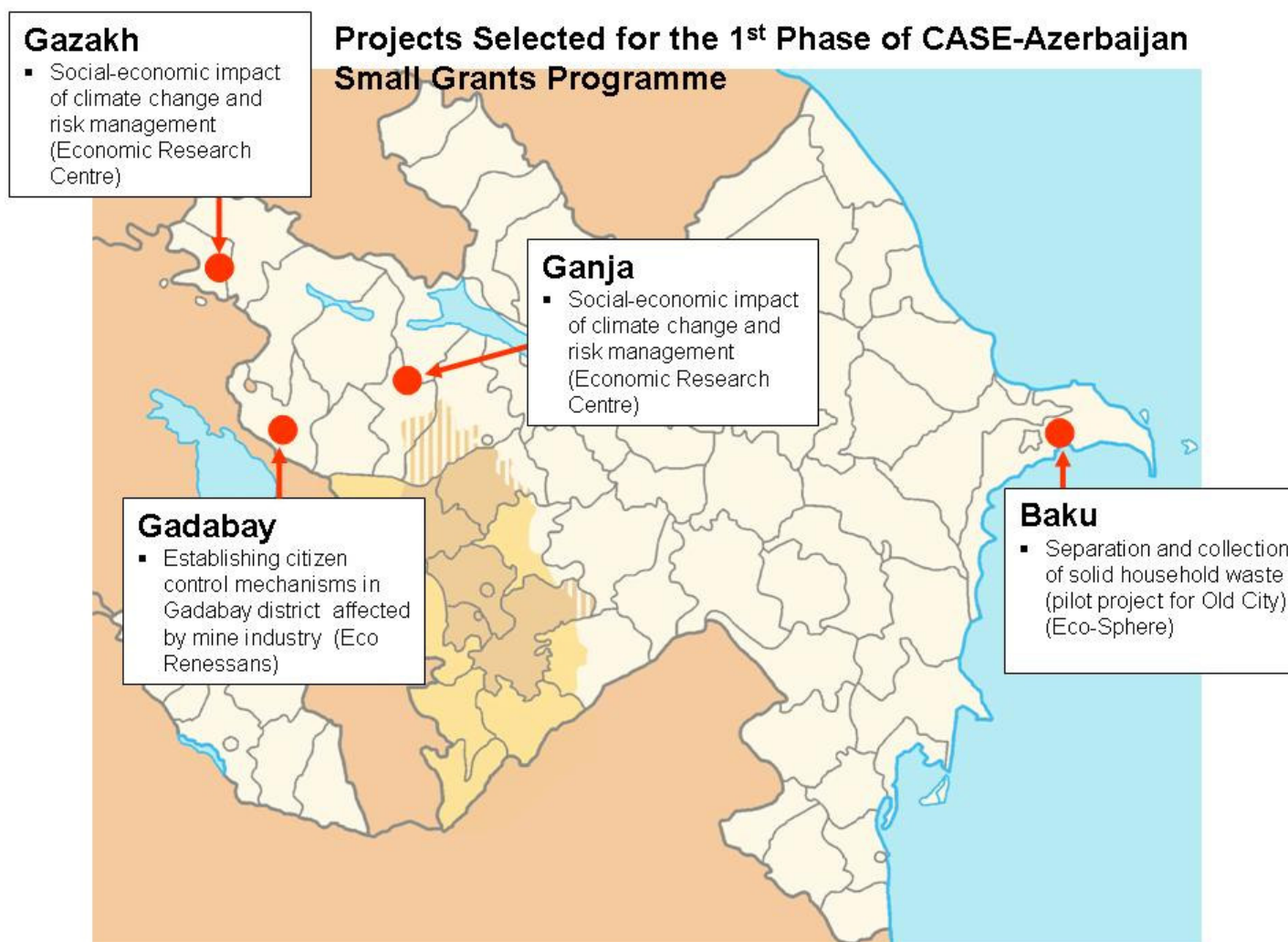
Table 2 CASE Azerbaijan Phase 1 Projects

	Project Location	Project Title	Grantee NGO	Project Objective	Project Activities	Project Duration	Project Budget (EUR)
CASE AZERBAIJAN PHASE 1							
1	Baku Azerbaijan	Collection and separation of solid household waste	Eco-Sphere	<p>Develop and conduct pilot programme to generate habits of population in Baku old town on solid household waste separation</p> <p>Conduct campaign to decrease use of polyethylene bags and encourage use of multiple-use bags</p> <p>Decrease total amount of non-separated solid household waste</p>	<p>Organize information dissemination meetings at the Aarhus Centre in Baku</p> <p>Conduct training workshops on separation of solid household waste for young volunteers</p> <p>Conduct information campaigns for the Old City population with special focus on women</p> <p>Organize an anti-polyethylene bag campaign</p>	1 Apr - 30 Sep 2010	8,514
2	Gadabay Azerbaijan	Establishing of citizen control mechanisms in Gadabay district affected by mine industry	EcoRenessans	<p>Raise awareness of target communities and local stakeholders about environmental impact of mining industry and public control mechanisms</p> <p>Establish working group and build its capacity to identify and evaluate environmental impact of mining industry</p> <p>Mitigate adverse impact of mining industry through awareness raising about the monitoring results and through stakeholder dialogue</p>	<p>Provide training workshops for the Working Group</p> <p>Facilitate information and experience sharing with other members of Civic Response Network</p> <p>Organize round table with stakeholders</p> <p>Conduct environmental monitoring and process the results</p> <p>Conduct dialogue with mining company on impact mitigation and publish results</p>	15 Apr -15 Nov 2010	9,573
3	Ganja, Gazakh,	Socio-economic threats of climate change and risk	Economic Research Centre	Conduct awareness raising about environmental and	Hold workshops and organize TV talk shows	1 Apr - 30 Nov 2010	9,965

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	Azerbaijan	management		<p>economic impact of climate change and adaptation measures</p> <p>Develop policy paper on adaptation measures, and advocate for adaptation among decision-makers</p> <p>Strengthen risk management capacity of entrepreneurs</p> <p>Mobilize CSOs specializing in climate change</p>	<p>Study and identify the best methodology for Azerbaijan's agriculture and processing industry</p> <p>Develop draft version of policy paper on adaptation measures and hold discussions with experts</p> <p>Present final paper to parliament and relevant government ministries</p> <p>Conduct risk training with business leaders</p> <p>Launch a CSO Alliance on Climate Change</p>		
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CASE Azerbaijan Project Map



4. CASE Tajikistan

CASE Tajikistan is designed as a small grants programme to support civil society organizations in addressing environment and security challenges of Tajikistan. The major objectives of CASE Tajikistan are to raise awareness on environmental challenges, to build capacity of civil society organizations, and to support through small grants projects of civil society organizations addressing environmental challenges in co-operation with the government of Tajikistan.

The CASE Initiative in Tajikistan has benefited from funding by the Government of Luxemburg, which contributed EUR 80,000, and is expected to be officially launched in June 2010.

4.1 Launching of CASE Tajikistan

The OSCE Office in Tajikistan, which assumed the role of CASE country officer, has taken concrete steps for launching the CASE Initiative in the country. On 16 April 2010, the CASE Country Officer organized a meeting bringing together government representatives and NGOs to discuss environmental priorities. At the meeting, the Chairman of the State Committee for Environmental Protection informed the civil society organizations present about the CASE Initiative.

In early May, the CASE National Screening Board for Tajikistan has been officially constituted upon the initiative of the OSCE Office in Tajikistan. The National Screening board consists of 7 members, including two representatives from the State Committee for Environmental Protection, two representatives of NGOs, and one representative each from UNDP and the OSCE Office in Tajikistan and the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation Agency). This multitude of parties serving on the National Screening Board ensures transparency and accountability of CASE Tajikistan, and avoids duplication of efforts of other programmes.

4.2 CASE Tajikistan Country Strategy

The newly constituted National Screening Board has already reviewed and approved the CASE Tajikistan Country Strategy, which identifies technical and operational issues in relation to the implementation of CASE in Tajikistan. The Country Strategy assigns responsibilities to CASE stakeholders, defines the CASE project cycle, and the monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and establishes country-specific criteria for the selection of projects proposals to be supported under CASE Tajikistan.

In particular, the document identifies the main challenges for environment and security in Tajikistan, including radioactive wastes, pesticide dump sites, land degradation, natural disasters, and the consequences of global warming. Tajikistan regularly experiences landslides, mudflows and floods, as well as periodic earthquakes. The country's glaciers are rapidly receding, having shrunk by 35 % over the past 50 years. One long-run consequence of this glacier melt could be severe water shortage.

Environmental degradation has impacted negatively on poverty, food security, and public health, and has been a trigger of environmental migration, which has exacerbated existing tensions in Tajikistan.

The government of Tajikistan has taken several steps to address these environmental challenges, including the development of national action plans. It has also entered into international environmental commitments. Tajikistan has also acceded to the Aarhus Convention. Currently, Tajikistan hosts 2 OSCE supported Aarhus Centres in Kurgan Tyube and Khujand and 1 Aarhus Centre in Dushanbe supported by Tajik Government since January 2010. The CASE Tajikistan Country Strategy envisions a strong role for the Aarhus Centre Network in supporting CSOs participating in CASE. Aarhus Centres are expected to assist with expertise, including in supporting project proposal development, and to facilitate CSO coordination. At the same time, CASE Tajikistan is designed to strengthen the Aarhus Centres in the country through its awareness-raising and capacity-building components, and through the support of environmental projects.

4.3 Selection Process and Upcoming Activities

Based on the priorities and criteria defined in the CASE Tajikistan Country Strategy, the OSCE Office in Tajikistan will shortly announce a call for project proposals by civil society organizations. The first round of project selection is expected to be finalized before September 2010, and project implementation by civil society organizations will start shortly thereafter. The OCEEA will continue to provide guidance and technical support for CASE Tajikistan, ensure the complementarity of the programme with the other countries involved, and promote it regionally and internationally.

5. Conclusion

The CASE Initiative makes an important contribution towards addressing environment and security challenges in the three countries where it is implemented. Through its small grants framework, it raises awareness on environmental issues among the CSO community, builds capacity among grant-seeking CSOs, and supports projects that have a sustained impact on the ground. By encouraging partnerships between the government and CSOs, CASE strengthens the entire environmental sector of its target countries. Its participatory approach to national programming and implementation secures strong local ownership, sustainability, and makes CASE visible and attractive to a wide variety of CSOs. To this end, CASE seeks to build strategic relationships with all major stakeholders: governments, CSOs, and international and donor organizations.

CASE has gotten off to a good start with projects having started in Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the first call for proposals to shortly be announced in Tajikistan. The initiative will significantly expand its activities in the second half of 2010, and with adequate funding can continue to build on incipient successes of mobilizing civil society for standing up to environment and security challenges. To this end, CASE will seek to engage CSOs yet more strongly, through additional calls for project proposals, but also through inviting more local CSOs, international organizations, and private sector actors to serve on the National Screening Boards.

As CASE is looking to expand its activities in the three pilot countries it needs to be mindful of needs and challenges that have arisen and will arise in implementation. While one of the purposes of CASE is to work more with local CSOs, capacity building needs are a major challenge for project design and implementation of CASE small grants. While the CASE country teams work effectively to support CSOs in developing and formulating their projects proposals, many CSOs still struggle with mobilizing the resources to effectively implement

their projects. Many CSOs also exhibit limited understanding of the relationship between environment and security challenges, or in application of the criteria spelled out in the CASE Guidelines. It is part of CASE's mandate to address these issues, and they will be addressed through increased support for CSOs in the implementation stage. This requires reinforced training efforts. The OSCE Office in Baku has already reacted, and will target some of these issues specifically in training workshops held in September and October 2010.

Despite strong efforts from all sides, coordination problems between the governments and CSOs continue to arise and will be addressed by CASE in the upcoming implementation phase.

In order to guarantee the impact and sustainability of CASE supported projects, CASE must make sure that CSOs are representative of the beneficiaries of their projects. In a few cases, however, the population lacked trust in the possibilities for civil society to make a difference on environment and security issues. CSOs need to respond with sustained efforts of awareness-raising and trust-building, in co-operation with governments, OSCE, Aarhus Centres and other partners of CASE at the national level.

CASE procedures are constantly being refined in light of new experiences made. Lessons learned so far will feature in the development of the CASE Communications Strategy. In order to be able to conduct sustained awareness-raising among beneficiary populations, increased training for CSOs as well as government actors, to expand the base of CASE, and maintain the incipient success CASE must be able to rely on adequate and sustained funding from donors.