

AZERBAIJAN SURVEY OF LIVING CONDITIONS

Abstract of the Population Point Questionnaires

February 21, 1996

Community questionnaires were completed for 90 of the population points that were included in the Outside of Baku sample and one was completed for Baku¹. Of these, 25 are towns (____), 5 are villages of the town type and 61 are villages. Though the distinction between types of population points is not based strictly on population, the average populations do vary from 32000 to 10000 to 2700 for towns, villages of the town type and villages, respectively.

The predominant ethnic group in 86% of the population points is Azeri. Russians are the dominant ethnic group in 7% of the population points and the second most common ethnic group in one fourth of the population points where Azeris predominate. Other ethnic groups are Lezghin, Tats, Darghins, Armenians, Bashgirds, Turks, Tartars, Avars, Georgians, Shahors, Routors, Saxors, Chegens and Turks.

Forty-four percent of the population points have experienced a net inflow of residents since 1990. While this is true of communities of all three types, it is more marked for towns and villages of the town types where 60 percent reported net population inflow. For villages, 36 percent reported a net increase and 25 percent a net decrease.

Respondents were almost unanimous in thinking that life for people in their population has become worse than it was 5 years ago. Only 2 of the 91 population points report an improvement. A wide variety of reasons for the deterioration were cited. Over one half of the respondents cited unemployment and the shut down of enterprises. Nearly as common were complaints of low wages, late payment of salaries and non-payment of salaries. Forty percent of the communities cited economic problems including a decrease in production, the breach of economic relations, difficulties obtaining raw materials, difficulty selling production and low prices for produced goods. Often in conjunction with concern over low wages, respondents cited high prices and inflation as the reason for the deterioration of life. Food prices were often mentioned specifically. Nearly one-fourth of the communities cited agricultural problems that included difficulty obtaining spare parts, poor harvests, incomplete reforms, difficulty selling produce, low prices of imported agricultural products, lack of state-owned trading facility for marketing produce. The lack of heating fuel, gas, petrol and electricity was cited by 20 percent of the communities. Other concerns included problems with infrastructure (water, schools, transport, communication), the war (7%), the presence of IDPs (4%), lack of the rule of law (4%), lack of land for households, lack of state support, lack of credit, and the lack of banks.

In the two population points where life was reported to have improved, implementation of economic reforms, increase in private housing, land given to newlyweds, increase in private cattle, and help for families of martyrs from Karabach are cited as the reasons for improvement.

¹Only one population point questionnaire was completed for Sumgait, Mingechar and Gandja even though four, two and six sets of twelve questionnaires were completed for those three towns, respectively. There was no population point questionnaire completed for one of the population points outside of Baku.

Infrastructure

The roads in seven percent of the population points are all paved. In 38 percent of the population points most of the roads are paved and in 27 percent, there are no paved roads. Forty-three percent of the population points report that the roads are in bad condition.

The average distance to Baku is 329 km, 280 km if the population points in Naxichevan are not counted. For population points not in Naxichevan, the average time to travel to Baku by personal automobile is 5.4 hours and 6.8 hours by public transport. The average one way fare on public transport is 14400 manat.

In ninety percent of the population points, all of the households have electricity. Only six percent of the population points have no electricity. Eighty percent of the towns and villages of the town type have centralized water but in only half of those are all households on the water pipe grid. Twenty-two percent of the villages have centralized water but, again all households are connected in less than half of those villages. Most populations points (73%) reported insufficiency of water all or part of the time. Over half of the towns and villages of the town type have centralized sewage systems, ten percent have centralized hot water systems, and 73% have centralized garbage collection and disposal. None of the villages have any of those services.

Communication

None of the households in nineteen percent of the population points have phones in their homes, most of the households have phones in 32% of the population points. Twenty percent of the population points receive only one television channel, over half receive three or more channels. Nearly 60 percent of the villages do not receive newspapers from Baku. Among all population points, ten percent receive Baku papers on the day of issue, 40 percent receive them within a week, 10 percent with a week's delay.

Economics

Agriculture is the primary economic activity for 83% of the population points. Industry is the primary activity for 10% of the population points. Commerce, service, private farms, gardening, transport and construction were also identified as major economic activities.

In response to the question on the most pressing economic problem, over half of the population points cited unemployment. Low wages, late payment of salaries and pensions and non-payment of salaries were the second most common problem. Again agricultural problems were cited in 25% of the population points including shortage of machinery, spare parts, fertilizer, seeds, fuel, irrigation and investment were common problems. Also cited were the lack of agricultural development, the low livestock productivity, and the non-payment for agricultural produce. Shortage, expense and non-availability of fuel, electricity, gas and heating fuel were cited by thirty percent of the population points. In one population point deforestation due to the lack of heating fuel was causing an ecological problem. Water was cited as a problem in 14% of the population points, shortage of drinking water, unclean water and irrigation were all cited.

Other problems were the bad quality of roads and transport difficulties (12%), high prices especially in comparison to wages, low productivity and lack of productive enterprises, lack of reform and

privatization, low output prices, lack of raw materials, problems with bread supply, chemicals and the expense and unavailability of credit.

Forty percent of the towns and villages of the town type and over one half of the villages reported that most of the male working-age population is unemployed. Less than five percent of the population points reported that less than 10 percent of the working age men are unemployed. Unemployment is higher among population points where agriculture is the primary economic activity. Enterprises are closed in 40 percent of the population points.

In over twenty percent of the population points, most of the households are engaged in independent economic activity but in half of the population points none of the households are engaging in independent economic activity. A wide variety of activities were named including commerce, agriculture, animal husbandry, service, small business, small trade, plots, handicraft, baking bread, car maintenance, gathering wild besom (birch branches), plowing private plots, leasing land from the kolhoz, small manufacturing, producing construction materials.

Eighty-six percent of the population points said that the economy in the population point was worse now than one year ago, seven percent reported an improvement and seven percent said there had been no change.

IDPs

There are IDPs residing in 93% of the towns and villages of the town type but only in 43% of the villages. The percentage of population points with IDPs is highest in the economic/social zones: Southwest of Baku, Near northwest, Central and Apsheron.

In nearly 90% of the population points with IDPs, most of the IDPs live in public buildings. In towns, schools and health centers are commonly cited as places where the IDPs are living. Other places of residences mentioned include: kindergartens, farms hostels, office of the agricultural department, guest house, dairy farm, sovhoz and kolhoz buildings, incomplete houses, tourist bases, administrative offices, livestock barns, technical institute, and railroad cars.

In almost all of the population points with IDPs, the IDPs are reported to receive food aid, free medical services, assistance finding work and children care.

In about half of the population points with IDPs, most of the IDPs arrived 1 to 3 years ago and in the other half, the IDPs arrived more than three years ago. Only one population point reported that the IDPs continue to arrive. Seventy-eight percent of the population points report that some or a few of the IDPs have left. Three quarters of the population points report that the IDPs have left the raion and one quarter said that they moved within the raion. Only one population point reported that most of the IDPs who left had returned to their former residence.

Over 40% of the population points report that most of the IDPs who reside there have managed to find jobs. The most common sphere of work is the agricultural sector.

In almost every population point heating was cited as a problem for IDPs, followed closely by housing poor living conditions, and water. In spite of food assistance, food was the third most commonly cited problem. Late, irregular and insufficient provision of aid was cited by 10% the population points. The

difficulty of travelling to Barda to receive aid was cited in two population points. Unemployment was mentioned in more than half of the population points. Lack of medicine, transport, clothes, furniture, kitchen equipment, land, and seeds were also mentioned. In addition to unemployment, the difficulty of the high cost of living, late payment of salaries, low wages and financial difficulties experienced by the population in general were cited. In fact, twice the response was simply, "They have the same problems as everyone else." In one case the respondent said that IDPs had no problems.

Education

Three quarters of the population points report that almost all school-age boys attend school. The figure is slightly lower, 69%, for girls. Only three percent of the population points report that less than half of the children attend school. The lowest percent of population points reporting that almost all children attend school is in Naxichevan, the Far south and Apsheron economic/social zones.

Among the reasons cited for boys and girls not attending school, family difficulties and economic conditions were the most common. The need to work was cited for boys in one-third of the population points where boys are not attending school but in less than one-fifth of the population points where girls are not attending school. Infrastructure problems including no heat in school, lack of school, lack of classrooms, no teaching supplies were cited for about one-third of the population points for both boys and girls. Shortage and expense of uniforms, textbooks, school supplies were cited in more than half the population points. Reasons such as dislike of studying, education doesn't guarantee future, low level of knowledge and local habits were cited for eighteen percent of the boys and forty percent of the girls.

There is some correlation between the attendance and reasons for not attending of girls and boys. The number of population points where some girls don't attend school is twenty seven percent higher than the number where boys don't attend. However, in the population points where both boys and girls are not attending school, the exact same reasons are cited for more than half of the population points.

Ten percent of the towns and twelve percent of the villages report a shortage of teachers. School buildings, desks/chairs and textbooks are reported unsatisfactory in 54%, 78%, and 93% of the population points, respectively. General quality of the schools was reported to be good or satisfactory in nearly three-quarters of the population points and bad in the other quarter. The most commonly cited problem was the lack of heat or heating fuel in the school and that was mentioned in over half of the population points. Nearly as common was the problem of the expense and lack of school supplies, teaching aids, lack of computers and sports equipment were also mentioned. Problems with textbooks were the next most commonly cited problem. Respondents reported that textbooks were scarce, expensive and out-of-date. The poor physical condition of schools or the need for repair were cited in forty percent of the population points. The lack of school buildings, classrooms or places was cited in another quarter of the population points. The low wage and material condition of teachers and the resulting drain of specialists out of education was cited in one-third of the population points. The lack of hot food for children, the lack of financing for schools, the economic situation, the lack of electricity, the expense and scarcity of uniforms were each cited in seven percent of the population points.

The quality of schools was reported to have deteriorated in the last 5 years in 86% of the population points. Reasons for deterioration are very similar to the list of problems citing the low teacher salaries, the lack of money for repair, equipment, textbooks, the lack of hot food and heating in the schools.

Health

The shortage of medicines, the expense of medicines, the fact that medicines are no longer provided for free were cited as problems in 85% of the population points as health problems for adults. The lack of medical facilities including first aid, hospitals, sanatoria and resorts and the poor conditions and lack of hygiene in health facilities were cited in forty percent of the population points. The lack of food, malnutrition, lack of special high calorie and diabetic foods, and the price of food were cited in 20% of the population points. The general state of the economy, lack of medical equipment, shortage of medical personnel and lack of heating were each cited in 15% of the population points. Other problems mentioned include the low and delayed payment of salaries and pensions, lack of transport and ambulance service, the cost of treatment, the wet weather, the lack of preventative care, lack of drinking water and the health problems associated with tobacco production. Nervous illness, cardiovascular disease and respiratory ailments were mentioned specifically.

Health problems of children focused much more closely on the lack of medicine and the lack of food. Lack of food, unavailability of infant food, malnutrition of children and pregnant women were cited in 65% of the population points. Scarcity and expense of medicine were also cited in over 60% of the population points. The lack of health facilities including maternity home, women's consultation and the lack of pediatricist and other health personnel were cited in over forty percent of the population points. Lack of heating, poverty and the poor economic situation, and lack of preventative care or late immunizations were each cited in twelve percent of the population points. Other problems included the hard work women do during pregnancy, the lack of ambulance, the cost of medical treatment, and the lack of clothes. Specific illnesses mentioned include anemia, scabies, rickets, Botkin disease and birth defects.

The general quality of the health service was reported to be bad in only 8 percent of the population points. Nevertheless the lack of medical facilities, poorly equipped facilities, the lack of drugs and the lack of health service personnel were commonly cited problems. Other problems included lack of heat, bad roads, refugees living in the hospital, lack of medical supplies, water and spare parts.

In answer to the question where do most women in the population point give birth, answers were evenly spread across hospital, maternity home and at home. Ninety-nine percent of the population points reported that there had been an immunization campaign in the last five years in that population point. However, ten percent of the population points cited lack of preventative care for children and late immunizations among the health problems of children in the population point. To the question 'Are the most often used drugs available in the local drug store?' 28% responded yes, always, 28% responded only sometimes and 44% responded never available. The never available figure is 10% for towns and villages of the town type and 60% for villages. Over three-quarters of the sample reported a deterioration in the health service in the last 5 years.

Agriculture

Some or most of the households of the population point are engaged in agriculture in all but 3% of the population points. Vegetables and gardening was the most commonly reported crop (74% of the population points), followed by grain (58%) and fruit (18%). Cotton, tobacco, grapes, horticulture, tea and silk are important agricultural products in 25%, 15%, 13%, 9%, 6% and 3% of the population points, respectively.

The lack of machinery and spare parts was the most commonly cited agricultural problem, 78% of the population points. Lack of chemical fertilizer and lack of fuel and oil were each cited in over forty percent of the population points. Lack of water, problems with irrigation and lack of drinking water were cited in thirty percent of the population points. The lack of agricultural supplies including seeds, veterinary medicines and services, chemical pesticides, polyethylene covers, packing materials was a problem in twenty percent of the population points. The late payment of salaries and low salaries were cited in 13% of the population points. Low prices for agricultural produce and delays in payment for produce were cited in 15% of the population points. Eighteen percent of the population points mentioned the lack of land, the lack of fertile land, difficulties with salinated soil or with soil erosion. Other problems cited include difficulties marketing agricultural produce, the lack of agricultural reforms, lack of agricultural processing facilities, and high taxes.

In 70% of the population points, almost all agricultural land is irrigated. Nearly one quarter of the population points reported that there a representative of the Ministry of Agriculture visits the farmers in the population point. Seventy-eight percent of the population points reported that farmers in that population point do not use chemical fertilizers. This is not surprising given the number of times lack of chemical fertilizer was cited as a problem. For chemical pesticides, 81% of the population points do not use them. Also, 81% of the population points reported that they had received less rain in the last 12 months in comparison with the previous 12 months. Thirty percent of the population points reported that residents in that population point do buy and sell land.

Average daily wage for a man planting is 2929 manat, for harvesting 7063 manat, and for weeding 2380 manat. The averages for the same wages for a woman are similar: 2933, 7929, and 2382. The wages are much lower for a child: 1061, 4283 and 687.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS	Percent with institution
Post Office	82%
State telephone service	60
Daily newspaper	31
Hospital	53
Polyclinic	43
Feldsher point	74
First aid	36
Women's consultation	45
Traditional healer	38
Drug store	56
Children's doctor	60
Dentist	63
State creche	4
Private creche	1
State kindergarten	74
Private kindergarten	2
State incomplete secondary school	42
State complete secondary school	87
Private school	1
State gymnasium	2
Prof-technical school	31
Technical school, college, university	18
State employment service	24
State pension institution	25
State allowances institution	29
Ministry of Agriculture representative's office	20
Militia station	32
Fire brigade	29
State bank	30
Private bank	15
Theater	11
Club	85
Public swimming pool	6
Video cassette shop	21
State canteen	48
Cooperative canteen	52
Private canteen	41
State restaurant	21
Cooperative restaurant	10
Private restaurant	9
Cafe	37
Airport	6
Railway station	20
Bus station	29