

# Fertility management options for women in Azerbaijan

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**Nabat Mursagulova**  
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# Republic of Azerbaijan



**Area 86,600 km<sup>2</sup>**  
**Population 8.3 million**



|                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Population growth rate</b>      | <b>0.52% (2004 est.)</b>          |
| <b>Total fertility rate</b>        | <b>1.8</b>                        |
| <b>WRA</b>                         | <b>2.76 million</b>               |
| <b>Married women of RA</b>         | <b>1.474 million (53% of WRA)</b> |
| <b>Number of refugees and IDPs</b> | <b>1 million</b>                  |

Sources: UN/ESA World Contraceptive Use, 2003 ; 2004 World Population Data Sheet; CIA World Fact Sheet ;  
CDC, Reproductive Health Survey: Azerbaijan, 2001.

Data source: Population Reference Bureau.

# Azerbaijan: Current situation

- ◆ Part of former Soviet Union
- ◆ Oil boom – **Contract of the Century**
- ◆ “**Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan**” (Signed in 1994):
- ◆ Fast growing National Economy
- ◆ Potential for increased investment in health and social sectors
  
- ◆ Conflict with Armenia (1989):

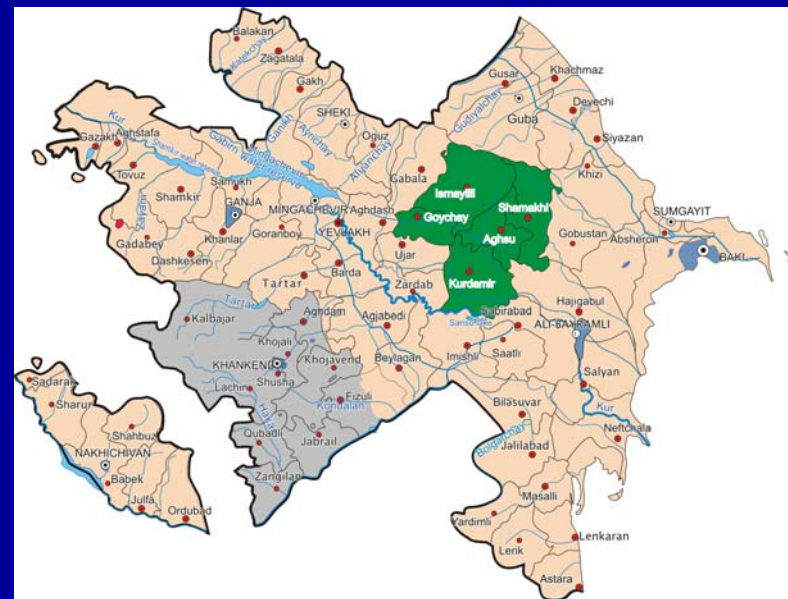


- ✓ 20% of Azerbaijani lands (Nagorny Karabakh and around) are under occupation
- ✓ 1 million refugees (80 % are IDPs)

# Baseline Survey, 2005

**WHY?** To identify barriers to FP service utilization and prepare for project implementation

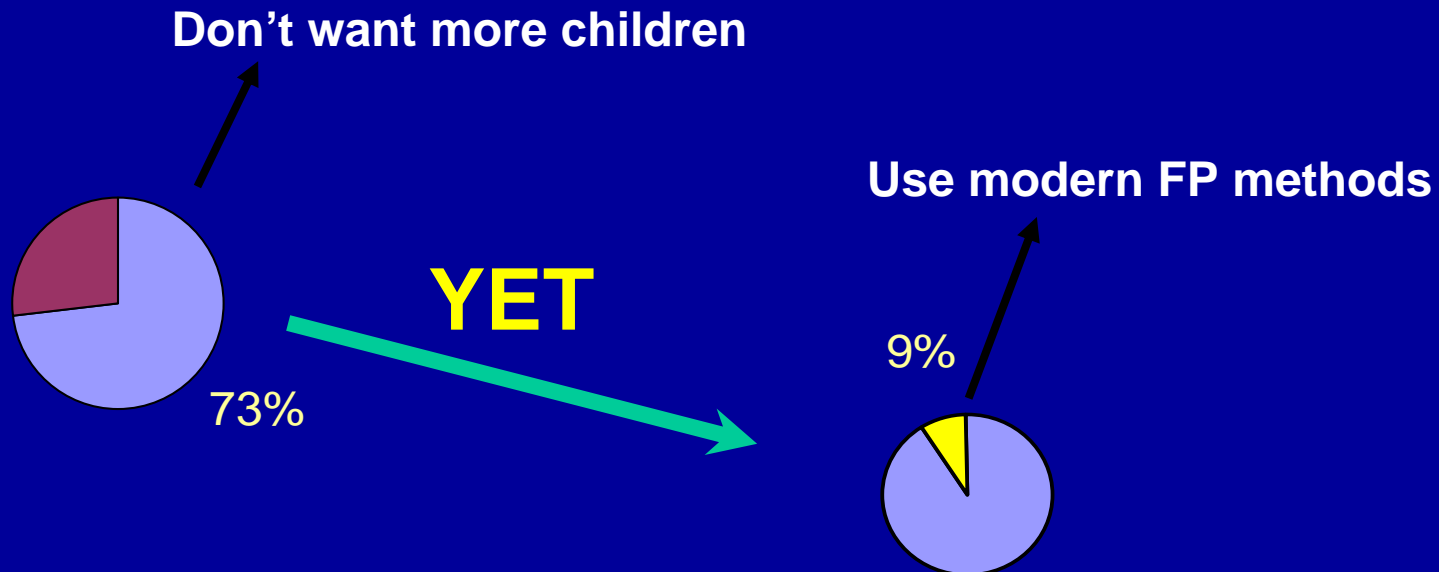
**WHERE?** 5 Central districts, total population almost 426,600:  
✓ Urban -28% (5 main district centers)  
✓ Rural – 72% (257 villages)



• **HOW?** Health Facility (79), Pharmacy (61) and Community (1011) Surveys

# Reproductive Intentions (married women)

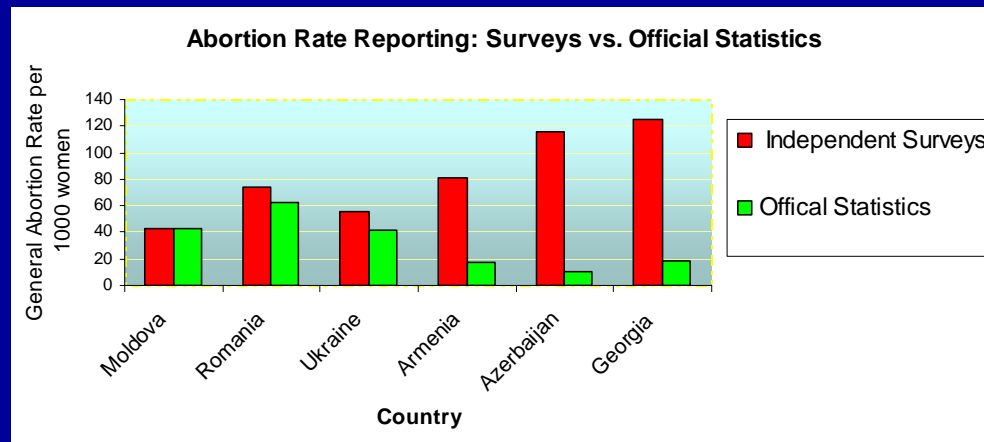
- Average family size is 2.18



- 70.2% know but never used
- 18.8% used but discontinued
- 2% never heard of FP methods

# Azerbaijan: Abortion

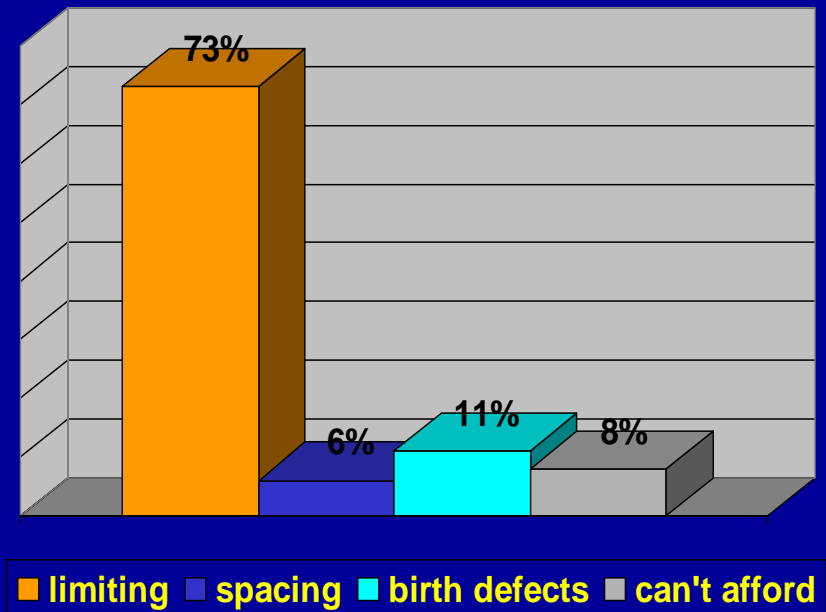
- ◆ Abortion is the primary method of fertility regulation
- ◆ Abortion rate: estimated 116/1000 women aged 15-44 (3.2 per woman)
- ◆ Abortion to live-birth ratio: 3:1
- ◆ Women achieve desired family size at young age, then many use abortion to terminate unintended pregnancies



Source: CDC, Reproductive Health Survey: Azerbaijan, 2001.

# Abortion Experiences

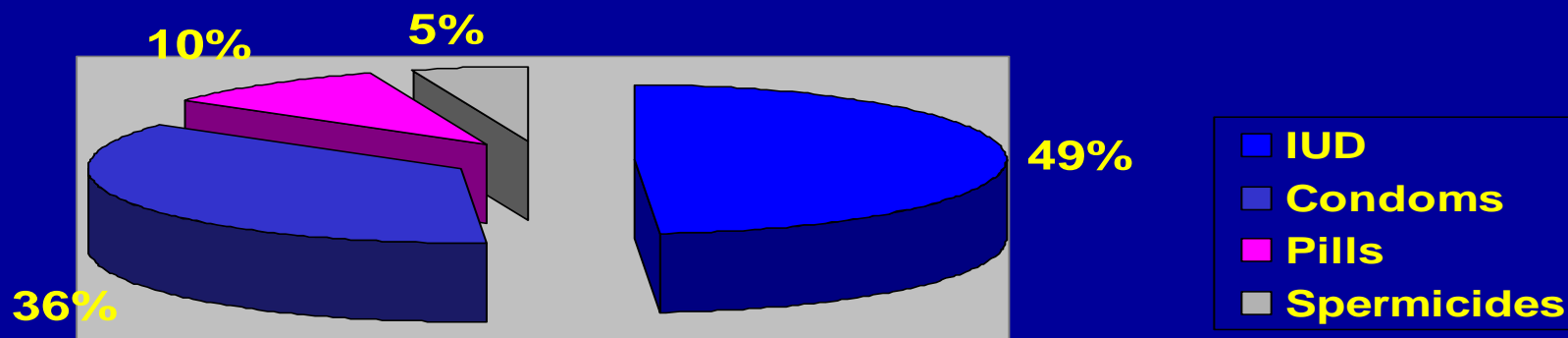
- ◆ 52% of women had an abortion (35% in last 2 years), of whom:
  - 48% 1-2 abortions -
  - 32% 3-5 abortions –
  - 14% 6-10 abortions -
  - 6% >10 abortions –
- ◆ Reasons: limiting, spacing, birth defects
- ◆ Most were using traditional or no method at the time
- ◆ 82% of women were aware abortion is harmful, but said they had no other choice



ACQUIRE/Azerbaijan Baseline Report, 2005

# Current Method Use

- 11% of *married* respondents are currently using modern FP methods (9% of women and 14% of men)
- 37% of men and 33% of women reported using withdrawal and perceived it to be a reliable method
- 43.3% of women reported practicing abortion as a method of family planning



Source: ACQUIRE/Azerbaijan Baseline Report, 2005

# Influencing factors: FP Services

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- ✓ Women are expected to seek FP services from Ob/Gyns
- ✓ Ob/Gyns:
  - ✓ little motivation to provide FP services as abortions are their main source of income
  - ✓ lack correct knowledge about methods
  - ✓ have negative attitudes to modern methods
  - ✓ sometimes openly discourage women from using methods
- ✓ OB/gyns are mainly situated in district centre hospitals only
  - lack of access in rural areas
- ✓ Vertical health care system
- ✓ There is no governmental procurement of FP methods

# Influencing factors: Pharmacies

- ✓ Staff seriously lack knowledge about modern methods (only 1/61 had received training in FP)
- ✓ Staff often have no education in pharmaceutical science
- ✓ Few pharmacies in rural areas - only 5 (out of all 61) are outside district center
- ✓ Little interest to promote contraceptives' because no demand
- ✓ Cost of abortion vs. oral contraceptives
  
- ✓ 62% of Pharmacists said that they are asked about pregnancy termination by clients
- 82% reporting selling Oxytocin without any prescription

Pharmacies are the only source of FP commodities in Azerbaijan

# Influencing factors: Community Knowledge

Almost all (98% women; 89% of men) can name a way to prevent pregnancy:

- ◆ Most-mentioned method among women: IUD (79%), condoms (44%) and OCs (41%). **BUT!** Very few know how to use these methods.
- ◆ Women also mentioned withdrawal (62%) and abortion (79%)
- ◆ Some women (27%) and men (7%) also mentioned traditional methods (e.g. herbal drinks)
- 64.5% of men and women have never used any modern FP method:
  - Don't need FP method
  - **DON'T KNOW** about methods and/or don't trust them
  - Prefer natural methods

Source: ACQUIRE/Azerbaijan Baseline Report, 2005

# Response



**Increase  
community  
demand**



- Peer education**
- Mobilize key influential people**
- Health festivals**

**Strengthen access and  
quality of services and  
products**



- Upgrade counseling and technical skills of providers**
- Involve and improve knowledge of pharmacists**
- Social marketing of quality products**