

## **Strategic Summary of Coordination Results**

### **Georgia**

**Year: 2017**

#### **Brief description of major development or political and economic events that have had an effect on the work of the UNCT.**

Georgia continues as a strong reformer within the region supporting steady economic growth, increasing productivity and further export competitiveness, domestic stability and decentralized decision-making. However, to further promote the 2030 Agenda, the UNCT will need continue its close focus on the social sector, human rights and conflict prevention.

Higher education, strengthened governance, infrastructure upgrade and modifying income tax rules were high on the Government agenda in 2017. There were several significant reforms enacted in governance and administration.

Firstly, a constitutional reform moved the country further towards a conventional parliamentary system. Parliament will henceforth ratify the appointment of the Government and elect the Head of State. Concerns have been expressed, however, about the impact of this reform on an already challenged democratic pluralism. On a positive note, the constitutional reform is strengthening the possibility of using temporary special measures such as gender quotas to address persisting under-representation of women in political positions – at present only 17 out of 150 members of Parliament are women and even fewer women are elected to municipal and local government.

Secondly, a structural reform saw the executive branch both reduced in size and simplified with a view improving decision-making as well reducing government costs. This change was also not without some challenges: the Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection was merged into both the Ministries of Economy and of Agriculture generating concerns of conflict of interest and a possible negative impact on the Government's capacity to fully meet its international obligations.

The third large reform area was the civil service which, as part of a broader public administration reform will largely be overhauled into a more professional, unified and independent service with greater accountability and responsiveness.

While these reforms were generally seen as positive and timely measures, there are still many challenges, such as rising inequality, unemployment, human rights issues and inadequate quality of education. As the economy continues to evolve, there will also be a greater emphasis on labour rights as well as the need to build a reliable social safety net to protect those at risk of poverty and social exclusion - the poor, the elderly, children, persons with disabilities, refugees, migrants, IDPs, and other vulnerable groups. Additionally, ageing (persons aged 65 are expected to reach 18.9 percent in 2030 and 25.3 percent in 2050) will put further constraints on the state and services such as health care, old-age pensions and social protection.

Economic growth has not resulted in reducing income inequality. Georgia is also experiencing increasing inequality of opportunity and has the second highest income inequality in the region. Unemployment [11.8%, 2016, Geostat] and under-employment – often in rural areas - remain high. 50% of registered employment is currently within the low productivity agriculture sector, which perpetuates low rural incomes and urban migration, particularly among the youth who consider urban migration as the only coping strategy to overcome poverty. This outflow of young people to urban areas challenges family farming.

Additionally, the rights of minorities, freedom of religion, equal access to health care services and health care coverage (especially for children and elderly), gender equality, violence against women and girls and domestic violence, LGBTI rights, intolerance and xenophobia, child marriage, sex selection also remain of concern.

Most if not all these challenges require improving the quality of pre-school, primary and secondary education, including vocational training and setting curriculum and teacher performance standards. PISA results for Georgia are in the bottom 10% for Europe and an “inadequately trained labour force” is named as the main impediment for doing business in the 2017 Global Competitiveness Report.

Finally, in the absence of a political solution in formal negotiations, the territorial dispute over Abkhazia and South Ossetia remains a serious obstacle to building sustainable peace and development, protecting the human rights of the affected populations and ensuring durable solutions for around 275,000 internally displaced persons. The UNCT has a key role to play encouraging conflict resolution through cooperation, confidence-building, developing livelihood, de-isolation and encouraging women’s and youth’s involvement in peacebuilding.

**Highlights on progress on joined up work. Summarize the three most significant achievements in delivering together for development.**

Highlights on progress on joined up work and most significant achievements in delivering together for development are described below.

## **Support to national government in the advancing the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and activities related on the 2030 agenda**

The UNCT provided close support to the Georgian Government as one of the first countries to nationalize the SDGs, including in establishing co-chaired by UN National Inter-ministerial SDG Council and its working groups. The global SDG 16+ Forum Showcase to share best practices from 20 different countries on integrating Goal 16 into national policies has also been supported (led by UNDP). The UNCT appointed three SDG Goodwill Ambassadors in 2017 who participated in an SDG Festival entitled "Future in Focus", in UN Day events and in the Human Rights Day 2017 among other activities.

Moreover, the UNCT is supporting the GoG in monitoring implementation of SDGs, based on a pilot project (led by UNDP with engagement of other Agencies) that seeks to establish modalities for measuring Goal 16. Lessons learnt will be used to support the measurement of other goals. Furthermore, support is provided to establish baselines for the SDGs in Georgia also through the envisioned implementation of a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (UNICEF and UNFPA) and 2018 National Study on Violence Against Women (UN Women, SDG5). UN continues providing technical assistance to GEOSTAT to improve quality and availability of data.

## **Support to government and other stakeholders in building national capacity to implement human rights and other universal UN norms and standards, and progress in advocacy of human rights and other UN system values, standards, and principles**

The UNCT initiated follow-up with the Government, the Legislature and civil society in cooperation with the initiating member states on the implementation and particularly the response of the Government of Georgia on three selected 2nd cycle Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations with regard to passing laws and the signing of treaties including inter alia the ratification of the Istanbul Convention (signed in May 2017 and entered into force in September 2017); addressing the issue of human rights access for the territory of Abkhazia; maintaining close links with key Georgian human rights institutions including the National Human Rights Secretariat and the Public Defender's Office (Ombudsperson), the Parliament Human Rights Committee and Legal Committee, Office of Personal Data Protection; contributed to drafting the Human Rights Council Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on cooperation with Georgia and supported OHCHR in building national capacity on implementing HR norms.

UNCT also supported the elaboration of the Gender Equality National Action Plan (UNDP, UNFPA and UN Women), Action Plan to address the concluding observations of the Committee of the Rights of the Child of March 2017 (UNICEF), National Strategy and Action Plan on Maternal and Infant Health (UNFPA and UNICEF) and the National Action Plan on Ageing (UNFPA). UNHCR facilitated the preparation of the Government's announced reform of social assistance to IDPs from a status- to needs-based system, which was one of the main recommendations of the Report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of IDPs in Georgia.

GTG advocated strongly for quotas as a temporary "fast track" to increase women's political representation. As a result, the Speaker of Parliament and the Majority leader pledged publicly that they will secure the support necessary for the adoption of the quotas legislation.

The UNCT SWAP-Scorecard assessment in Georgia was the first global application of the post-pilot tool and interim guidance. It was coordinated by the UN Women with support provided by the RCO and the GTG.

### **Progress on preparedness, crisis and Post-crisis transition results achieved in cooperation with UN peacekeeping, peace building, political, and humanitarian actors**

"While comprehensive political solutions seem distant, engaging populations in the conflict regions can help break their isolation and thus create a much-needed peace resource" (ICG).

The UNCT continued using its field presence to promote Agenda 2030 to help achieve sustainable development, human rights and sustainable peace within the region.

Led by UN Women, the UNCT contributed to implementation of SCR 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in the context of the Geneva International Discussions on the Conflict in Georgia. The UN presence in Abkhazia increased with the additional presence of UN Women (working in cooperation with UNHCR on reducing domestic violence) and FAO. UNDP and DPA have deployed a PDA to support the UN RC and, in turn, the UNCT (as well as the country teams in Armenia and Azerbaijan). The regional simulation exercise held in Tbilisi mid-year was a successful application of this new approach, which led to several useful insights and concrete recommendations on moving forward. UNICEF convened capacity building workshops on Gender in Emergencies, child protection in emergencies, and education in emergencies, resulting in updated standards.

UNICEF has contributed to confidence building measures through the implementation of the Mother-tongue based multi-lingual education (MTB-MLE) in Abkhazia. During 2017, UNICEF held consultations with stakeholders toward developing a comprehensive framework for MTB-MLE to improve learning outcomes to children from different ethnic groups.

UN agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNWomen, FAO) together with International NGOs continued providing support to improve living conditions and enhance respect of rights and freedoms for the conflict-affected, displaced and vulnerable communities in Abkhazia within the framework of the Abkhazia Strategic Partnership. Assistance is directed to alleviating social, economic and conflict-related hardships, contributing to safe, non-discriminatory and dignified living conditions in line with international human rights standards.

The work of the Georgia Disaster Management Country Team (consisting of the UNCT and humanitarian partners) continued to develop an inter-agency emergency response preparedness framework based on implementing preparedness actions, monitoring disaster risk and contingency planning. The inter-agency contingency plan (IACP) for water-caused hazards were finalised and endorsed; terms of reference for sectors/clusters were developed; the Georgia Inter-Agency Needs Assessment approach (GIANA) which is a MIRA-like assessment toolkit, was developed collaboratively and endorsed and no less than two workshops and a simulation exercise were conducted over the course of the year to familiarise ourselves with the methodology; the DMCT risk assessment and analysis was revisited and updated; Common Operational Datasets (CODs) for Georgia were made available on the Humanitarian Data Exchange (HDX) webpage; information access was enhanced through a new DMCT Georgia web-based platform that includes applications for android and IOs operated mobile phones and tablets.

**Results of joined up approaches: To illustrate the impact of joined up work, describe the results of joined up approaches of the UNCT**

Results of joined up approaches of the UNCT are described below.

**Highlight new partnerships formed in 2015**

The UNCT agencies established partnerships with several new key donors including UK/DFID, DANIDA, Norway and Switzerland.

New and existing forms of co-creation in partnership were developed – South-South cooperation and knowledge-sharing (for example behavioural insight methodology to address violence against women, UNDP together with UN women in both Georgia and South Africa and Georgia’s Public Service Development Agency Innovation Service Lab) and platforms through which regional partners can share (e.g. the UNDP led South Caucasus Sub-Regional Trade Study); helping to establish environmentally-sustainable development paths – e.g. led by UNDP, developing a new relationship with the Green Climate Fund enabling climate change adaptation solutions to be brought to scale – in this case for a multi-hazard Early Warning Systems (EWS) and Swiss Government on related hazard mapping capacity building; developing relationships with multilateral development banks including the European Investment Bank with whom ‘blended’ funding modalities are actively being sought; cross-border cooperation is being continued (e.g. river basin management between Georgia and Azerbaijan and integrated Border Management between Georgia and Azerbaijan); regional government cost-sharing with the Adjara Autonomous Republic; promoting innovative forms of development financing in close cooperation with Georgia's presidency of Innovative Financing Leading group; working with Georgia’s PR to the UN in New York to support sharing of good practice and lesson learned by Georgia in public administration with other countries.

### **Highlight results of joint resource mobilization where possible**

In addition to the existing three flagship UNCT joint programmes (Gender Equality, Human Rights for All and Enhancing Access to Justice) UN Women partnered with FAO in a EU funded project titled the “Gender Sensitive socio-economic empowerment of vulnerable IDPs through co-funding of their livelihood opportunities and promotion of their social mobilization”. The UNDP COBERM programme was expanded to include joint action with UNHCR and UNICEF to support education in Abkhazia. UNHCR and UN Women co-funded joint work with local organisations on “Addressing violence against Women and Girls in Abkhazia” and UNDP has signed ENPARD2 and ENPARD3 agreements with EU. FAO is also participating in ENPARD.

New joint resource mobilisation opportunities are based on a UNCT joint budgeting and resourcing framework including biannual Joint Work Plans, a Common Budgetary Framework providing information on funding requirements, hard pipeline and donors for each output, a Joint Resource Mobilization Strategy and Resource Mobilization Action Plans (RMAP), which provide the UNCT with a working figure on UNDAF funding requirements for the next 4 years. This dynamic approach taken by the UNCT to resource mobilisation strategy and implemented by Sectoral Coordination Groups makes agencies look at opportunities for enhanced joint engagements including joint programmes, joint activities and joint approach to donors including non-traditional donors.

## **Highlight innovations in programme and operations to address key development challenges**

Georgia has been selected as a party to the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC) 2030. Led by WHO, UNCT agencies rallied alongside national and international partners to support new legislation on tobacco control which is described as “one of the strongest tobacco control laws in the ... European Region and beyond.” The new law is a significant boost in public health and SDG achievement in Georgia where 11 000 deaths annually are due to tobacco use and 57% of adult men smoke, with an increasing trend for smoking among women and youth. UNDP further re-enforced the case made by WHO by highlighting the economic costs of smoking on GDP, productivity losses and increased healthcare expenditures.

Amendments were introduced to the Georgia institutional and legislative framework on road safety due to a combined advocacy campaign by civil society, UNECE (a non-resident member of the UNCT) and the UN RCO. 8,000 people were injured and 550 killed in 2016 due to traffic accidents in Georgia which is 2.5 times higher than that of most European countries.

To ensure further alignment with DaO requirements, Georgia Operations Management Team (OMT) embarked on Business Operations Strategy (BOS) exercise by simplifying it and producing UN Collaborative Business Operation Framework (CBOF). CBOF provides efficient operational support for the implementation of Georgia UNPSD 2016-20 and most importantly, includes key performance indicators (KPIS) allowing the measurement of UNCT-wide operational savings per calendar year. Georgia CBOF received positive feedback from peers as well as from DOCO and R-UNDG colleagues when it was presented at the Regional Meeting of Coordination Officers in Bonn (June 2017).

## **Upcoming opportunities for 2016: Indicate potential opportunities for the UN Country Team to support national partners in integrated development policy and programme development.**

A.SDGs

After an initial intensive phase of support to the Government of Georgia in mainstreaming the SDGs into national plans, the UNCT will now concentrate on a joint approach in other areas of practice seen as being instrumental to successfully achieving Agenda 2030. Emphasis during the next phase of SDG support will be placed on the related areas of acceleration, policy integration and better, disaggregated data and evidence for policy-making. Regarding improved data, there will be an emphasis on a mix of data collection methodology through established data collection tools such as UNICEF led MICS (which will provide data for measuring an estimated 48% of SDG targets) and other innovative data collection and analysis approaches (for example, greater use of open data and crowdsourcing development ideas). UNCT will seek to be responding to Government requests for support for national statistical and reporting capacities on Agenda 2030. Two further areas in which the UNCT will continue to support national partners on the SDGs will be in coordination and communication. The UNCT will be working with the Government and international partners to review and re-align existing donor coordination arrangements in relation to the emerging requirements resulting from Agenda 2030. Another priority is the supporting the Government of Georgia on Mainstreaming, Acceleration, and Policy Support (MAPS). While no MAPS mission was undertaken for Georgia in 2017, the UNCT is supporting the Government on landing the SDGs into national policies, identify key priorities, and support in Acceleration and Policy Support. On communication, the UNCT will finalise and more importantly begin implementation of a communication and advocacy strategy supporting Agenda 2030 focused on the Government, the private sector and the population. Finally, in view of the programmes underway by UNCT members in the post-conflict regions of Georgia, work will continue on SDGs in post-conflict situations; using the SDGs as a tool for dialogue and common understanding benefiting from the advice of the Peace and Development Adviser.

## B. Human Rights

The UNCT will continue to monitor progress and support the government in their implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan, the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the concluding observations of CEDAW Committee and the recommendations of the 2nd UPR and facilitate Government follow-up on other treaty bodies. Based on an updated human rights analysis, the UNCT will continue to work with civil society, the Government and national institutions to promote human rights-based policy approaches on a wide range of issues including the rights of minorities, freedom of religion, freedom of expression, domestic violence, LGBTI rights, child marriage, sex selection, fair trial and gender equality. The UNCT will continue to promote human rights throughout Georgia. Led by Gender Theme Group, UNCT will prepare a Shadow CEDAW Report and secure participation on behalf of UNCT in the CEDAW review.



## C. Gender Equality

The UNCT will implement the recommendations of the UNCT SWAP-Scorecard assessment with focus on two 'missing' elements: monitoring and evaluation of the UNPSD (UNDAF) and gender-specific budgetary data at a broad level for planning and monitoring purposes. The MICS survey conducted by UNICEF and UNFPA will generate a wealth of gender-disaggregated data in a number of sectors that will support evidence-based policy making to realize rights of girls, women, particularly for the most vulnerable, and to mainstream gender equity in all SDGs, and support in monitoring national action plans. The UNCT will identify synergies between the promotion of gender equality and the mainstreaming of gender in all the SDGs. For example, the promotion of women in agriculture and trade in rural areas as part of the rural development strategy.

The Gender Theme Group and its Task Forces continue to advocate (and providing demand-driven technical support as appropriate) for the increased participation of women in decision-making, including for relevant changes in the legislation, ending all forms of violence against women and girls, for access to services for survivors of domestic violence, for ending child marriages and harmful practices, and for women's access to productive sources and the social and economic empowerment.