

2005 RESIDENT COORDINATOR ANNUAL REPORT (RCAR)

Introductory Letter

I. Background Information

2005 was the year of reforms and further strengthening of the Georgian state through strong macroeconomic performance and advances on the road leading to the NATO and the European Union memberships. The government has significantly improved revenue performance and implemented a new tax code in January 2005. The sudden death of the Prime Minister Zurab Zhvania in February 2005 has been a heavy blow for the Georgian leadership but eventually did not harm the democratisation processes, the pace of reforms or the stability in the country.

Among political events during 2005, it is worth highlighting the elaboration by the government of an action plan for a political settlement of the South Ossetia conflict. The first phase consists mainly of socio-economic measures, such as humanitarian assistance to South Ossetia's population and laying the groundwork for the post-conflict reconstruction with international assistance. Politically, this phase involves creating an international format for negotiations on South Ossetia's political status as an autonomous part of Georgia.

During the same period, the Georgian government discussed the development of an action plan for Abkhazia as well but unfortunately its development never moved beyond the initial discussion phase.

Despite of the achievements of the past year, it became clear that more efforts need to be directed towards pro-poor economic growth in the country to address vast income disparities among the population and the needs among the growing number of extremely poor (17 percent of the population). It is worth mentioning that Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth is identified by the UN Country Team, Government, donors and civil society as the Area of Cooperation number one in the recently developed United Nations Development Assistance Framework that covers the period between 2006-2010.

The Millennium Development Goals Progress report for Georgia was timely produced just before the MDG+5 World Summit held in New York in September 2005. It helped the government to assess the advances and drawbacks towards attaining the national MDGs by 2015.

This Resident Coordinator Annual Report is organized into the following sections:

- ?? Completion of CCA&UNDAF process and arranging for pilot joint initiative
- ?? Assisting the government in the production of the MDG Progress Report
- ?? Organizing Conference on Humanitarian Situation and Transition to Development 2006 and producing related Paper with Consolidated Policy Recommendations
- ?? Further team building and strengthened coordination

II. Completion of CCA&UNDAF process and arranging for pilot joint initiative

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) document has been finalised and signed by the Prime Minister in April 2005. The UNDAF is the result of a consultative process between the UN Agencies, the Government of Georgia, civil society and other partners aiming to respond to national priorities and needs. The UNDAF is guided by the principles of the Georgian Millennium

Development Goals Report (MDGR) and is based upon the Common Country Assessment (CCA) completed in August 2004.

The UNDAF describes the United Nations planned assistance to the people and Government of Georgia between 2006 and 2010. As a result of UNDAF prioritisation conducted by the UN Agencies, government, civil society and academia, five inter-related areas of cooperation were agreed upon as being particularly critical for Georgia. These areas are: (1) Poverty and Economic Growth, (2) Governance, (3) Basic Social Services, (4) Volatility and Instability and (5) Environment.

On 28 February 2005, UN Country Team in Georgia convened UNDAF Joint Strategy Meeting where representatives of the UN, Georgian Government, donor community and the civil society participated. The main objectives of the Joint Strategy Meeting included the final endorsement of UNDAF by the government, and the identification of areas of synergy between the UN, Government, donors and other partners.

UN Staff College has identified Georgia UNDAF as a Good Practice in terms of inclusiveness and participatory nature of the processes based on the review by the Global Quality Support and Assurance Reference Group.

Following the UNDAF process, UNFPA and UNICEF among the Excom agencies developed their Country Programme Action Plans (CPAPs) that will be signed shortly. There will be joint signing ceremony organized for CPAP documents. UNDP postponed the CPAP signature pending discussions in this regard with the HQ. WFP also drew from the UNDAF process in developing its expanded Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation.

III. Assisting the government in the production of the MDG Progress Report

The UNCT assisted the Government of Georgia in the production of the Millennium Development Goals Progress Report. UN colleagues from different agencies have taken active part in the preparation of the report and the Consultant has been hired to consolidate corresponding findings and discussions in the document.

The “Millennium Development Goals in Georgia: progress report for 2004-2005” assesses progress in implementing Millennium Development Goals in Georgia. This report follows on a previous baseline report, which was issued in June 2004. The current report represents a “stocktaking” exercise in preparation for the MDG+5 World Summit held in New York, September 2005. The report covers the period of 2004 and the first half of 2005. It was prepared in cooperation between the Georgian Government, UNCT and non-governmental organizations.

The report has demonstrated that more attention from the side of the government as well as the international community is to be paid to poverty reduction efforts and actions. The report will be published in English and Georgian languages in early 2006.

IV. Conference on Humanitarian Situation and Transition to Development 2006

The UN Humanitarian Affairs Team of the Office of the UNRC, in consultation with and assistance from the UN Country Team, has convened a one-day Conference on 25 November to present and discuss the main elements of the “*Humanitarian Situation and Transition to Development 2006 – Consolidated Policy Recommendations*” document. The UN agencies were actively involved in the document development as well as moderations of three panels at the conference that hosted a wide representation of the Government, donor community and humanitarian actors. The aim of the conference was to present

and discuss major issues of relevance to the international community, assistance trends, needs and unmet gaps, the priority challenges regarding assistance and advocacy efforts. The Conference had Panel discussions and questions and answer sessions that focused on three areas requiring special attention, i.e. Enabling Transition and Effective Intervention, Vulnerable and Beneficiary Populations and Disaster Preparedness and Response. Key recommendations for all three areas included streamlining institutional frameworks, supporting reform processes, especially in basic social services, in parallel with providing well-targeted relief assistance to extremely vulnerable and marginalized individuals. The need to pursue humanitarian assistance and development efforts in twin-track approach in order to promote recovery was once again emphasized at the conference.

Similar conferences, previously named “Humanitarian Situation and Strategy” were organized annually, and related reports launched by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). Based on findings of the external evaluation of this exercise as well as consultations with UNCT and other partners, it was decided to embark on the process for 2006. The document and the process were renamed into “Humanitarian Situation and Transition to Development 2006 – Consolidated Policy Recommendations”.

The Document was prepared based on interviews, consultations, and input from donors, UN agencies, Government officials, and various local and international organisations. It continued the process established by the Georgia Humanitarian Situation and Strategy (HSS) 2003, 2004 and 2005. Like previous HSS documents, the present Document aims to describe and analyse the country’s transitional context and priority areas that require continued attention from the aid community and the Government. It also intends to assist donor agencies and other international organizations, as well as the Government, in their planning, fundraising, advocacy, and other efforts on behalf of the vulnerable populations in Georgia, spurring professional and public debate and action on the issues discussed.

Experience shows that the impact of these documents and the Conferences has raised awareness in priority areas, and has been perceived as a useful exercise for promoting more analysis, information exchange, and planning. The preparation of the Document provides an opportunity to exchange information, coordinate plans and efforts, and develop opportunities for cooperation. It draws attention to humanitarian issues that otherwise may be underrepresented in the policy agenda.

V. Further team building and strengthened coordination

In 2005, the UN Country Team saw a noticeable increase in its collective efforts, both within the UNCT context itself and in working together in related mechanisms on various issues described in this report.

UNCT Meetings/Retreats: During 2005, the UNCT met regularly to discuss issues related to the implementation of the UNCT workplan and changes to it (as needed). A UNCT Retreat was held in January 2006 to discuss UNCT accomplishments in 2005, lessons learned and the way forward. The RC Unit as well as the members of the Humanitarian Affairs Team have successfully supported the work of the UNCT. Issues of interest to the UNCT such as the Common Country Programming process, functioning of the Theme Groups, MDGs, UN week activities or any other relevant topics were jointly discussed and agreed upon at the UNCT meetings.

UNCT Training: There have been several UNCT wide training and learning events organized in Tbilisi in 2005. These are Negotiations workshop, Writing Skills workshop, CPAP/AWP workshop and First Aid training.

In addition to these, one UNICEF staff attended DevInfo training of trainers workshop in Turin in May 2005. A UNFPA staff has attended DevInfo training course on Advanced Database Administration in

Geneva on 10-14 October 2005 (organized by UNICEF and UNECE); In November 2005, four representatives from UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF have attended the Orientation workshop on Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers in Istanbul

During 2005 the UN Coordination Officer participated in the Virtual Development Academy (VDA) Face-to-Face Workshop in Bangkok, Regional Common Services Workshop in Tehran, UNDAF Training of Trainers Workshop and UNDGO-organized Lessons Learned Workshop on Integrating Conflict Sensitivity into UN Planning and Programming in Turin.

The UN Coordination Officer supported Strategic Planning Retreats in Mongolia and Eritrea as UN Staff College Resource Person. The UN Coordination Officer has also trained and shared experience with the UN Coordination Officer and UN Coordination Associate from Iran during their mission to Tbilisi in February 2005.

The UN Coordination Officer has attended Europe and CIS Regional Meeting of Coordination Officers in Warsaw and also organized a Sub-regional meeting of UN Coordination Officers in Bakuriani, Georgia. Coordination staff from Armenia, Georgia, Iran and Turkey attended the meeting. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled to take place in Iran in summer 2006.

In September 2005 the Humanitarian Affairs Officer attended the annual European/African UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) Refresher Training course in Salzburg. In addition, the Humanitarian Affairs Officer participated in the UNDP/BCPR workshop on Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in Development held in Geneva and contributed in discussions during the preparation of draft guidance note on integrating disaster risk reduction in CCA and UNDAF as well as shared lessons learnt and experience of the UNCT Georgia in similar processes.

Joint Initiatives. Assessment of Domestic Violence Situation in Georgia: In order to assess the existing situation with regard to prevention and response to the problem of domestic violence by state as well as non-state actors UNFPA, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNICEF and the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator jointly commissioned a qualitative research that will analyse all the existing materials and data with regard to domestic violence and collect information from all the relevant stakeholders in the field (NGOs, donors, law-enforcement agencies, healthcare and social workers, media representatives and UN agencies).

Working Groups, Theme Groups and Management Teams: The HIV/AIDS theme group organized training sessions (mandatory for all UNCT staff) within the framework of the HIV/AIDS Learning Strategy. In this regard two different types of training sessions in English and Georgian languages were delivered: (1) training for all UN Staff and interested family members on Basics of HIV/AIDS prevention, and (2) Training for all UN professional staff – heads of UN agencies, Members of UN Theme Group on HIV/AIDS and all programme/project coordinators and officers – on the up-to-date guidance for HIV/AIDS programming (MDGs, UNGASS, UNAIDS policies and programmes, etc.).

Five working groups have been meeting regularly throughout the year to contribute to the UNDAF process. Those were groups on (1) Poverty and Economic Growth, (2) Governance, (3) Basic Social Services [Health and Education], (4) Volatility and Instability, and (5) Environment.

During 2005 a thematic Group on Statistical Data has been established. The objectives of the theme group are the following:

- Coordinated UN support to national statistical capacity in collecting, analysing and disseminating high quality data for MDG monitoring, and improved planning and decision making, and

- Coordinated UN approach towards monitoring and evaluation of UN programming tools including the UNDAF.

Security Management Team (SMT): Security issues remained at the forefront of UN agency concerns in Georgia throughout the year. Biweekly SMT meetings were regularly held in the UN House to exchange information about security incidents and take decisions and actions to strengthen the security of the participant organizations. The SMT includes all of the UN Country Team agencies plus UNOMIG, World Bank, IMF, EBRD and two international NGO representatives. The UNHCR Security Unit closely cooperated with DSS office in Georgia and supported SMT in various activities. WFP provided extensive advice on flight safety issues concerning the use of regional airlines.

During 2005 the SMT procured Tamiflu, antibiotics, masks and protective equipment as part of preparedness measures for possible avian flu pandemic. First Aid training has been organized by DSS for all drivers and Security Focal Points across UNCT. CO detectors have been purchased for international staff apartments and SOPs and Warden lists have been forwarded to all UNCT staff. At the end of 2005, a mission consisted of a DSS representative and an independent consultant came to Georgia to assess potential terrorist threat against the United Nations in Georgia. The threat has been assessed as minimal and the UN premises remain where they are.

Disaster Management Team (DMT): The Disaster Management Team (DMT) came into being in 2002. It consists of all relevant UN agencies present in Georgia, interested international NGOs, and several donors (i.e., Swiss, and USAID) and is chaired by the UN Resident Coordinator. The ICRC, IFRC and Georgian Government participate as observers. The Humanitarian Affairs Team under the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator manages the DMT.

The DMT has been instrumental in dealing not only with natural disaster contingency planning and response (2002 earthquake, 2004 flood/landslides in Svaneti), but also with contingency planning and response for conflict-related emergencies, e.g., for IDPs from South Ossetia in August-September 2004. In this context it should also be mentioned that the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation with the support from UNHCR carried out IDP verification survey in addition to regular refugee registration.

Together with the usual activities, in 2005 the DMT was mobilized in response to severe floods and landslides that occurred in Georgia in April-June 2005. Series of activities were undertaken under the framework of the DMT that included producing regular situation reports, organizing joint needs assessments, liaison with the central and regional authorities and provision of the immediate relief aid by the UN agencies and other DMT member agencies to the affected population. The DMT cooperated very closely with the IFRC's Field Assessment Coordination Team that was rapidly deployed in response to severe floods. The DMT has also produced paper: *Flooding in Georgia: An Overview of Needs and Assistance Actions* (for more information please see www.ungeorgia.ge) that was widely disseminated to the international aid community.

The DMT also continued its advocacy efforts for the strengthening of national disaster management capacities. For this purpose, the UN Resident Coordinator, in consultation with the Georgian Government, has requested the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Geneva to field the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) team (6-19 June 2005). The main objective of this mission was to assess the institutional structure and arrangements in place for disaster preparedness and response. The mission concluded that improvements are needed in Georgia's disaster management capacities both from legal and institutional perspective as well as coordination and emergency services. The Humanitarian Affairs Officer, being a stand-by member of the UNDAC team, participated in this mission as the national member.

Common Premises and Services: UN House remained premises for the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNIFEM project, WHO, DSS and the DPI Officer. WFP and UNHCR are located outside the Common Premises given the high number of staff compared to the limited space in the UN House.

UNDP continued providing administrative and management services for UN House residents (e.g., two-door entrance with guards and receptionist to control access to UN House, provision of IT and technical support, etc.). UNHCR continued to host the joint SMT 24/7-radio room. Salaries and benefits of the radio operators have been cost-shared by the SMT agencies. Joint inter-agency procurement of fuel, office supplies and vehicle service has been implemented as well. WFP advice has been extended on logistics issues, in particular related to customs clearance and onward transportation of UN imported items.

Office of the UN Resident Coordinator: Georgia UNCT has been visited by a DGO/UK/Netherlands review mission to assess the impact that the Country Coordination Fund (CCF) has on inter-agency coordination and collaboration among UN agencies at country level, with a specific focus on how the CCA/UNDAF process has been used to position strategically the United Nations within the development context of Georgia.

The mission members found that the UN was well respected and was seen as being well coordinated in Georgia. Many external partners gave the UN high marks for its efforts in donor coordination. Several partners also viewed UN agencies as reliable and very useful partners. Many also praised the UN, and in particular the Resident Coordinator, for coordination of security related work and actions.

With regard to CCA/UNDAF process, the mission members found that the UNCT had put tremendous efforts into this process and demonstrated remarkable cooperation and team spirit. At the same time, some of the people interviewed, both inside the UNCT and outside, did mention that the process could have been lighter perhaps and that the DGO has to help UNCTs to find the right balance between effort and quality/utility.

The OHCHR confirmed its intention to have international Human Rights Officer at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia. The Human Rights Officer is likely to be recruited in 2006.

UNAIDS Geneva plans to place HIV/AIDS officer at the Office of the UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia.

Lance Clark has been reassigned as UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative to Serbia and Montenegro. New UN Resident Coordinator/UNDP Resident Representative in Georgia is Robert Watkins.

As a part of transitional arrangement between OCHA and DGO, the UN Humanitarian Affairs Team (formerly called “Transition Team”) was created in January 2005 with the one-year DGO funding to support remaining key humanitarian coordination and information management functions. Placing three ex-OCHA staff in the office of the UNRC after OCHA’s closure was seen as a vital pre-requisite to ensure the continuation of remaining humanitarian coordination functions by the UN. This modality was discussed with DGO, and the creation of a “Transition Team” (now Humanitarian Affairs Team (HAT)) was consulted with and approved by the UNCT. Throughout 2005, the HAT hosted monthly info-sharing meetings for the international community (not only UN agencies) to discuss various topics and projects, published monthly newsletter featuring humanitarian and development updates, and produced bi-annual Directory of Humanitarian and Development Contacts in Georgia.

In early Spring, the UN Resident Coordinator requested UNDG to provide technical assistance for this newly established unit to identify priority issues and actions, especially those beyond the residual humanitarian coordination functions inherited from OCHA, drawing on experience in other countries. Thus, in April 2005 DGO/Tajikistan RC Office mission took place in Georgia. The mission report was produced with the set of recommendations, such as full integration of the Humanitarian Affairs Team into UNRC Office, active participation of the UNCT in identifying and agreeing on coordination functions to fully utilize that the Team's capacity, and suggesting ways for the continuation of these coordination functions beyond 2005. Majority of recommendations have been taken into account when finalizing the Team's ToR and work plan. As per the DGO guidance and advice, the UN RC, in consultation with the UN Country Team, mobilized resources to ensure continuation of these important coordination functions beyond 2005 when DGO funding would come to the end. Towards the end of 2005 the Humanitarian Affairs Team received funding from the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) for 2006.

Increased public awareness and understanding of the work of the UNCT member-agencies: In 2005 UNCT Georgia continued its efforts for increasing public awareness and understanding of the work of the UNCT member agencies in Georgia to address the information gap with regard to the work the UN currently carries out in Georgia and further strengthening of the image of the United Nations in the country. 10 UN observances have been celebrated by the UNCT in 2005 that included: 7 April – World Health Day; 20 June – World Refugee Day; 11 July – World Population Day; 21 September – International Day of Peace; 16 October – World Food Day; 17 October – International Day for the Eradication of Poverty; 24 October – United Nations Day, 1 December – World AIDS Day, 10 December – Human Rights Day; and 18 December – International Migrant's Day. Other activities included:

UN Week: Various activities including UN visibility campaign, seminars, workshops, launch of UN Media Club, UN Model Session, and a peaceful street action took place during the UN week. UNICEF organized Jolly Tournaments within the framework of Health Promotion in Schools through Sport dedicated to the International Year of Sport and Physical Education. UNIFEM in partnership with women's peace network organized a peaceful street action promoting the principles of UN SC R1325, dedicated to the five-year anniversary of the Resolution. UNFPA organized the Youth and MDG conference at the Youth Palace in Tbilisi. The UNCT agencies as well as UNOMIG took part in the UN Week celebrations.

Other PI activities: Other PI activities during 2005 included UN exhibitions, TV and Radio programmes. Most of the activities described above have been planned and implemented with the active involvement of the DPI Officer. In 2005, the DPI Officer continued providing daily summary of Georgian news to the UNCT member-agencies. Improvements were made to the UNCT web-page www.ungeorgia.ge to reflect, among other things, the changes in the UNCT composition.

VI. Concluding Remarks and Way Forward

During our UNCT Retreat in January 2006, the Country Team identified a number of priorities and potential new actions for its work. At the top of the agenda in 2006, of course, will be the further advancement of the Common Country Programming Process and the elaboration of a viable mechanism for the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of UNDAF. A special workshop dedicated to these issues as well as to the identification of joint programme initiatives will be held in mid-February 2006 in Tbilisi. Putting all systems in place for the successful roll out of the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) will also be a priority.

At the same time, our UNCT is interested in the expansion of collective actions related to the MDG advocacy vis-a-vis government and the role of UN agencies in this process. There is a plan to help the government to establish a MDG unit. This Unit would be a center for mainstreaming MDGs in

government development strategy/plans and raising the awareness of MDG importance and especially it's goal 1 for the future of Georgia. A special UNCT Thematic Group on MDGs will be created with the participation of the UNCT agencies, government and other partners.

Avian flu preparedness measures will be continued within the framework of the Disaster Management Team (DMT) and the Security Management Team (SMT) to minimize risks associated with the possible spreading of the H5N1 virus in Georgia.