

**Government of Georgia
State Inter-Agency Commission
Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration**



**Annual Report on the Implementation
of the National Concept and Action Plan
for Tolerance and Civic Integration, 2012**

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Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration

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Introduction

The National Concept and Action Plan of 2009-2011 for Tolerance and Civic Integration was approved by the decree N348 of the Government of Georgia (8th of May, 2009). By this act, the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration was assigned the task to elaborate and coordinate the policy regarding national minorities in Georgia. The Ministry became responsible to submit the report to the Government of Georgia (GoG) and the Civic Integration and Tolerance Council (CITC) under the auspices of the President of Georgia.

With an end to meet all the afore-mentioned objectives in a coordinated manner, the **State Inter-Agency Commission** was established on the basis of the orders N14 (July 3, 2009) and N7 (January 24, 2011) of the Vice Prime Minister of Georgia, the State Minister for Reintegration.

The Commission encompasses not only the managerial and other staff members of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration, but the representatives of the respective state institutions - Ministries, state agencies and organizations, representatives of Tbilisi City Assembly and three regional administrations of the regions compactly settled by national minorities:

- Office of the State Minister for Reintegration of Georgia;
- Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia;
- Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia;
- Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia;
- Ministry of Justice of Georgia;
- Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia;
- National Curriculum and Assessment Center;
- Teacher Professional Development Center;
- National Examination Center;
- Central Election Commission of Georgia;
- Public Defender's Office;
- Georgian Public Broadcaster;
- Tbilisi City Assembly;

- Administration of State Attorney-Governor in Kvemo-Kartli region;
- Administration of State Attorney-Governor in Samtskhe-Javakheti region;
- Administration of State Attorney-Governor in Kakheti region;
- The Administration of the President of Georgia;
- Office of the National Security Council of Georgia;
- The National Parliamentary Library of Georgia;
- Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia.

The report presents the major activities implemented by the executive and legislative branches in line with six strategic directions of the Action Plan for Tolerance and Civic Integration for 2012 – 1) rule of law, 2) education and the state language, 3) media and access to information, 4) political integration and civic participation, 5) social and regional integration and 6) culture and preservation of identity.

I. Rule of Law

Rule of Law is one of the main strategic directions of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civil Integration. Ministry of Justice of Georgia and its main agencies, as well as the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia are actively involved to work on this direction of the National Concept for Tolerance and Civil Integration. In 2012, Ministries and their main agencies implemented diverse proactive activities in order to ensure accomplishment of the major objectives within this direction:

Public Service Halls

In 2012, public service halls were opened in Tbilisi, Kvareli, Telavi, Gurjaani, Ozurgeti, Gori, Marneuli and Akhaltsikhe. With the help of the ‘Public Service Hall,’ created by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, residents of the regions compactly settled with national minorities are given an opportunity to get unique services swiftly and effectively. Through the creation of this ‘brand,’ all the major structural units of the Ministry of Justice responsible for public services were located in one space, including the following structural units: Service Procedures Development Agency, National Agency of Public Registry, the National Archives of Georgia, National Bureau of Enforcement, Notary Chamber of Georgia, Data Exchange Agency; Ministry of Justice also renders one of the services of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, i.e. issuing certificates for the completion of a general education institution.

‘Public Service Hall’ aims at providing effective and quality services. Residents of the regions compactly settled with national minorities are given an opportunity for obtaining ID, birth and marriage registrations; certification by apostil or legalization of a document; submission of request for obtaining residence card, getting visa and about 300 other services in one space through ‘one window principle.’

Akhalsikhe Public Service Hall was opened on August 8, 2012. The Public Service Hall serves 364 persons a day on average. Since the launching until the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Akhalsikhe served 37, 163 citizens in total.

Marneuli Public Service Hall was launched on September 10, 2012. The Public Service Hall serves 801 persons a day on average. Since opening until the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Marneuli served 63281 citizens.

Tbilisi Public Service Hall was launched on September 21, 2012. Since opening until the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Tbilisi served 510696 persons. The Public Service Hall serves 5491 persons a day on average.

Ozurgeti Public Service Hall was launched on April 13, 2012. Since opening until the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Ozurgeti served 93169 persons. The Public Service Hall in Ozurgeti serves 509 persons a day on average.

Gurjaani Public Service Hall was launched on June 12, 2012. Since opening by the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Gurjaani served 54359 persons. The Public Service Hall in Gurjaani serves 383 persons a day on average.

Telavi Public Service Hall was launched on September 15, 2012. Since opening by the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Telavi served 37413 persons. The Public Service Hall in Telavi serves 486 persons a day on average.

Kvareli Public Service Hall was launched on September 17, 2012. Since opening by the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Kvareli served 13618 persons. The Public Service Hall in Kvareli serves 758 persons a day on average.

Gori Public Service Hall was launched on September 26, 2012. Since opening by the end of 2012, Public Service Hall in Gori served 50790 persons. The Public Service Hall serves 758 persons a day on average.

Meeting with Representatives of National Minorities

Representatives of national minorities had an opportunity to meet with high officials and representatives of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, and get answers from direct sources about the issues of their interest within Ministry's competence. Similar meeting was held between the Council of National Minorities (CNM) under the Public Defender of Georgia and the representatives of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia.

On April 12, 2012, CNM met with Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Chair of the National Security Council. 30 people attended the meeting, including CNM members, representatives of the Public Defender's Office (PDO), NGOs and international organizations. Participants of the meeting had an opportunity to obtain information from the representatives of the Marketing Division of the Ministry of Justice, National Agency of Public Registry, Human Resource Department, Department for International Law, Head of Administration of the Ministry of Justice and representatives of Prosecutor General's Office. Along with presentations of the afore-mentioned representatives, the meeting also included Q and A session, followed by a discussion.

Participants of the meeting discussed diverse issues, including services of Public Service Halls, electronic IDs, access to information in the National Archives, citizenship, and employment of national minorities in the agencies under the auspices of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, issues regarding free legal consultations and other issues interesting for the members of the Council of National Minorities.

Representatives of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia noted down all the questions and issues on which CNM's members requested for further information. PDO's CNM members were provided with answers in a written form shortly after the meeting.

Registration of Roma Population

Service Procedures Development Agency of the Ministry of Justice of Georgia in partnership with the Innovation and Reform Center (IRC) and the European Center for Minority Issues (ECMI) continues its work for the registration of Roma population.

Several meetings were organized throughout 2012 with the participation of Service Procedures Development Agency, Ministry of Justice of Georgia, Innovation and Reform Center (IRC) and European Center for Minority Issues (ECMI) in order to lessen the problem of Roma population registration and coordinate works by major stakeholders. With an end to ensure coordinated cooperation and work, ECMI was assigned to provide Service Procedures Development Agency with the data on Roma population in Georgia. The Agency in its turn became responsible to check the data given by ECMI in line with existing database; the information about those people who were not included in the database was handed to the Innovation and Reform Center in order to ensure legal support to respective Roma people. Representatives of Innovation and Reform Center and Service Procedures Development Agency became accountable for taking field visits in order to obtain necessary information for registration and issuing IDs. As a result and on the basis of collected data, Service Procedures Development Agency would conduct necessary procedures in order to certify birth, solve the issues regarding citizenship and undertake necessary steps for issuing IDs.

ECMI provided Service Procedures Development Agency with the list of 265 Roma people residing in Leninovka and Gachiani in order to check if these persons were included in the registration database. After checking the list of these persons against the registration database, it turned out that 81 Roma people had the problems regarding documentations. Throughout 2012, representatives of Innovation and Reform Center and Service Procedures Development Agency had several field visits in Rustavi and Gachiani. As a result of these visits, they solved the problems of registration and IDs for 18 Roma. Also, they certified legal fact of birth for 13 Roma people, while two Roma were given the official status of non-citizen. Despite the fact that the afore-mentioned representatives gave a prior notice about their visits in the field, it was impossible to meet all target persons. Therefore it was unfeasible to lessen their problems. All necessary works in this regard are underway.

Recruitment of National Minorities in the Agencies under the Auspices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia

Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia carried out diverse activities to foster recruitment of national minority representatives in the agencies under the auspices of the Ministry. The Ministry gives advantage to hiring national minorities, especially in the regions compactly settled with ethnic minorities of Georgia. The following data from 2012 about staffing of national minorities in the policy agencies is the lucid illustration of this effort.¹

¹ Data on the recruitment of national minorities in the Ministry of Internal Affairs is collected voluntarily and based on the willingness of an employee.

Azerbaijani	11	
Assyrian	2	
Greek	2	
Qurds	1	
Ossetian	4	
Polish	1	
Russian	10	
Armenian	35	
Ukrainian	3	
Total:	69	

Brochure “Non-acceptance of Discrimination”

In 2012, the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) in partnership with PDO developed and published a brochure about non-discrimination. The brochure was developed within “Development of Instruction in MIA” project, funded by EU.

Training “Protection of Human Rights – Non-acceptance of Discrimination” in the Regions

Throughout 2012, the training “Protection of Human Rights – Non-acceptance of Discrimination” was conducted in the following regions: Kakheti, Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Mtskheta-Mtianeti. This cycle of training was conducted within “Development of Instruction in MIA” project, funded by EU. Trainings were conducted by the experts from the PDO and the Ministry of Justice of Georgia.

Meeting of the Representatives of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with the Members of the Council of National Minorities (CNM) under the Public Defender’s Office of Georgia

On March 7, 2012, a meeting was held in the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) with the representatives of the Council of National Minorities (CNM). Representatives of the following divisions of MIA attended the meeting: Patrol Police Department, Department for International Affairs, Legal Department, and the Academy of MIA. Also, representatives of PDO (including Deputy Public

Defender), the Head and 15 members of the CNM attended the meeting. The meeting was organized in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between PDO and MIA, signed back in February 4, 2010. The activities and efforts of the MIA regarding protection of national minorities were discussed at the meeting. Specifically, the role of the police toward eradication and prevention of racial discrimination was examined. Special emphasis was also put on the improvement of reaction mechanisms on the cases of violation, and employment perspectives of national minorities in MIA agencies.

Introductory Lectures on National Minorities for the Listeners of the Basic Course of District and Patrol Inspectors of the MIA Academy

On March 13, 2012, the meeting was organized with the Public Defender of Georgia in the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between PDO and MIA, signed back in February 4, 2010. During the meeting the PDO delivered introductory lecture on national minorities for the listeners of the basic course of district and patrol inspectors of the MIA Academy. Also, the Public Defender met national minority representatives working for the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia. Duration of study period at the MIA Academy was extended, which in its turn reflected on teaching process of several disciplines, including criminal law and human rights. More specifically, during the training and retraining of the district and patrol inspectors, special attention is paid to the issues of equity, cases of racial discrimination and necessary steps for non-acceptance of discrimination.

Constitution of Georgia in Azeri, Armenian and Russian Languages

Revised Constitution of Georgia with codified text was translated and published into Azeri, Armenian and Russian languages. The translated Constitution was distributed among local self-governments and NGOs in respective minority regions - Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Kakheti. In total, 500 units of the revised Constitution of Georgia were published.

Meeting with Residents of Marneuli, Tsalka and Tetrtskaro

On May 25, 2012, the meeting was organized with the local population at Marneuli local self-government organized by Marneuli Youth Center and the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration. Participants of the meeting had an opportunity to get information and updates on implemented and ongoing reforms by Ministry of Justice and Prosecutor's Office of Georgia in Marneuli, Tsalka and Tetrtskaro municipalities. Also, attendees obtained information about amendments and changes in Georgian criminal law policy.

II. Education and the State Language

One of the major challenges of civil integration is an incompetence of Georgian language among national minorities. This factor significantly hinders their participation in the political, economic and social life of the country. In order to meet this challenge, Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and the legal entities of public law under its auspices, carry out systematic and coherent policy within the framework of the civil integration strategy for national minorities. The major goal of the civil integration policy is to implement comprehensive activities that would ensure access to education for national minorities, promote state language acquisition and foster preservation of linguistic and cultural identities of ethnic minorities in Georgia. Education policy puts a special emphasis on the implementation of the programmes that will promote Georgian language acquisition among national minorities. Specifically, it attaches a great importance to the development and implementation of the programmes focused on the effective improvement of Georgian as a second language teaching and learning.

Georgian Language Houses in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli

In 2009-2011, the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) ensured the funding of the Language Houses equaling to GEL 22,500 (for each Center) in Ninotsminda, Akhalkalaki, Bolnisi and Dmanisi, in the framework of the “Georgian Language Programme.” The costs allocated from the State were spent on the salaries, maintenance, visual aids, books, stationery and other running costs of the Language Houses.

Since October 1, 2011, functioning of Georgian Language Houses and Centers are administered by the Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration.

In 2011, within the framework of “Georgian Language for Future Success” programme, additional two Georgian Language Houses were opened in Kvemo-Kartli region – Gardabani and Marneuli municipalites, while in 2012 new Language Houses were opened in the village of Iormughanglo of Kakheti region and in Tsalka municipality.

Language House offers courses to diverse groups of listeners: school principals and teachers, public servants, entrants and other social groups. Language House gives an opportunity to listeners to undertake free intensive course in Georgian language.

On the one hand, listeners are grouped according to the level of competence in Georgian language which in its turn is identified based on the pretest, and on the other hand, in line with their occupations.

Ossetian Sunday School

In 2012, in the framework of the 'Minority Languages Protection Sub-Programme' of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, funding for the Ossetian Sunday school (based on Public School №11) was provided. In 2012, in the Ossetian Sunday school, 20 listeners had the possibility to learn the Ossetian language, culture, history, folklore, Caucasian dances and song.

Multilingual Education Support Programme

In 2012, with the initiative of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, MLE teacher standards were developed. Standards were elaborated by both local MLE experts at the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia and international experts Marina Gurbo and Ligita Grigule, funded by OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities (HCNM).

In 2012, methodological resource for MLE teachers (Teachers' Guideline in Multilingual Education) was translated and published. The guideline was developed within 'Multilingual Education Support Programme,' with the funding of OSCE/HCNM.

In 2012, within the agreement signed between the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia (MoES) and textbook publishers, one textbook (approved by the MoES) in all subject areas throughout 1-6 grades were translated into Armenian, Russian and Azeri languages. In these textbooks, 30% of content is given in Georgian and 70% in Armenian/Russian/Azeri languages. It is noteworthy that the Council of National Minorities under the Public Defender's Office of Georgia was also involved in the assessment of translation quality. Multilingual textbooks are utilized at pilot schools as recommended teaching materials.

Programme "Teaching Georgian as a Second Language"

The programme "Teaching Georgian as the Second Language" envisages assigning qualified teachers of Georgian Language to non-Georgian language schools in the villages of Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli and Kakheti populated by ethnic minorities, where the problems of incompetence in Georgian and poor quality of teaching of Georgian language are particularly acute. The situation in terms of Georgian language teaching is quite disturbing in the regions compactly settled by national minorities. The programme aims at improving teaching process of Georgian language in minority regions and at the same time foster professional development of Georgian Language and Literature Teachers.

In 2009-2012, about 1000 contestants participated in the competition of the programme. Out of these, only 86 trainer-teachers managed to pass test and interview successfully. Nowadays, in the framework of the programme, 75 teachers are employed. Newly selected trainer-teachers undertake trainings in "Methods of Teaching Georgian as a Second Language" (50 hours), "Ethnic and Religious Tolerance" (5 hours) and the intensive course for learning Azerbaijani or Armenian languages (50 hours). Only after going through the afore-mentioned trainings, teachers are assigned to the villages of Samtskhe-

Javakheti, Kvemo-Kartli and Kakheti regions, populated by the ethnic minorities. In these villages, sometimes 100% of the population is either Armenian or Azeri. Majority of them does not know Georgian, while a greater part does not have any competence of Russian language as well. Considering the above-mentioned circumstances, a newly arrived teacher to minority regions is required to know the local language on at least basic level to communicate with the community, engage the parents and other teachers in the events. Along with hourly reimbursement, teachers involved in this programme are monthly paid 1000 GEL from the State programme.

The major objectives of the programme is to promote Georgian language acquisition, foster teachers' professional development, improve the learning process of Georgian as second language and ultimately advance civil integration of national minorities in Georgia.

The programme "Teaching Georgian as the Second Language" is implemented in Akhalkalaki, Ninotsminda, Tsalka, Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Gardabani, Marneuli and Sagarejo. Monitoring of the programme was ensured twice (April-May, November-December) throughout the year 2012. Monitoring specialists had field visits and conducted surveys and interviews with school principals and pupils in order to assess teachers' work within the programme. Monitoring specialists utilized surveys and observation forms developed within the monitoring framework of the programme. Monitoring specialists also attended the lessons/trainings of all trainer-teachers. The teachers involved in the programme deliver lessons for 4106 pupils.

Competition of Georgian Language Teachers

In 2012, the competition for the recruitment of Georgian language teachers was announced; as a result, 12 additional trainer-teachers were selected for the programme "Teaching Georgian as a Second Language." In 2011-2011, only certified teachers were selected and placed at non-Georgian schools of Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions.

Alongside with teaching Georgian language and literature at schools, the teachers organize diverse activities (New Year, summer and fall activities, celebration of days dedicated to poets and writers, marking religious and national holidays, exhibitions, competitions, theatrical performances, etc.) that aim at increasing motivation for Georgian language acquisition, fostering involvement in the programme, improving state language learning and promoting integration of national minorities. Upon arrival of a new teacher in a certain village, "Georgian Language Clubs" are established for the learners of Georgian. The Club encompasses entrants, teachers, parents and other community members. Considering high interest to learn Georgian, in some villages it is necessary to form several groups of learners. One of the responsibilities of a teacher engaged in the programme is to conduct trainings for local teachers and promote their professional development. In order to arrange clubs and manage the learning process effectively, Teacher's Professional Development Center handed over the necessary inventory, audio-video equipment, training-visual materials, stationary items and visual aids. 1997 pupils, 715 teachers and 566 community members are engaged in "Georgian Language Clubs."

Twining and School Partnership Programme

In 2011-2012, within “Teaching Georgian as the Second Language” programme, exchange programmes were planned and organized. Armenian and Azeri schools were twinned with Georgian schools in different regions of the country. 30 trainer-teachers established partnership with schools across the regions of Georgia (Tbilisi, Gori, Gardabani, Sagarejo, Chakvi, Zestaponi, Khashuri, etc.) and organized exchange activities. Exchange programme envisages visits to different regions and one week home-stay, attendance at the lessons, joint concerts, performances, cooking of traditional dishes, and visits to Georgian Orthodox churches, Armenian Apostolic churches, mosques and excursions to the places of cultural heritage in the host city. The closing event of the exchange programme is often held in Tbilisi, where the programme participants have an opportunity to visit Teacher House, meet the staff members of Teacher’s Professional Development Center (TPDC) and get more information about “Teaching Georgian as the Second Language” programme. Very often, pupils and teachers from three different ethnic backgrounds (Georgian, Azeri and Armenian) participate in school partnership programmes, which foster intercultural dialogue among diverse ethnic groups of Georgia.

National Olympiads in Armenian, Azeri and Russian Languages

In academic year 2011-2012, the National School Olympiads were conducted in all general education institutions in Georgia, including non-Georgian schools in which Olympiads were organized in Armenian, Azerbaijani and Russian languages. National minority schoolchildren took part in the Georgian Language Olympiad too. In the third round of the competition, winners were announced, including national minority schoolchildren.

School Leaving Exams in Armenian, Azeri and Russian Languages

In 2012, school leaving exams were held at 1470 general education institutions across the whole country, including non-Georgian schools. School leaving exams were conducted through utilization of special computer program. Schoolchildren from non-Georgian schools had an opportunity to pass Georgian as a second language. Also, they had a possibility to pass history, geography, physics, biology and math in their native languages. As a result of school leaving exams, 1621 Armenian, 1675 Azeri and 1672 Russian schoolchildren obtained general school certificate.

Improvement of Access to Higher Education for Representatives of National Minorities through Mitigation System (Preparatory Integration Course) at Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)

The amendment in the Law of Georgia on Higher Education (November 2009), envisaging introduction of mitigation system (the so-called quota system) for national minority students was put into practice in Academic Year of 2010-2011. It was defined that higher education institutions are obliged to provide 5% of available places for each Azeri and Armenian cohort of entrants within the framework of available places defined by the National Education Accreditation Center. Entrants who are accepted at HEIs based on only the results of General Aptitude Test either in Azerbaijani and Armenian languages are enrolled in Georgian language preparatory intensive course. According to the mitigation policy defined by the Law, only national minority entrant can pass one exam (any citizen of Georgia can be admitted to Georgian language preparatory course if he/she passes GAT in Azeri or Armenian). All other entrants took four exams to be enrolled at HEIs in 2011-2012.

After the successful completion of preparatory intensive Georgian language course and collecting 60 credits, a student is eligible to pursue study in the educational programme of his/her interest (if a student obtains state grant for studying at preparatory intensive Georgian language course, during the Bachelor's programme he/she funded from the state with 2250 GEL before the completion of the study). In 2012, the following number of minority students was admitted in accredited higher education institutions (HEIs) as a result of passing general aptitude test (in Armenian or Azeri languages) of Unified Admission Exams:

- 390 entrants accepted at HEIs based on the results in general aptitude test in Azeri language;
- 200 entrants accepted at HEIs based on the results in general aptitude test in Armenian language.

In 2012, the following number of minority students obtained state grant for studying at accredited higher education institutions (HEIs) as a result of passing general aptitude test in Azeri and Armenian at Unified Admission Exams:

- 93 entrants obtained state grant based on the results in general aptitude test in Azeri language;
- 98 entrants obtained state grant based on the results in general aptitude test in Armenian language.

It is noteworthy, that according to the data of the National Examinations Center (NAEC), the number of non-Georgian students substantially increased compared with previous years. In 2010, 247 non-Georgian entrants were enrolled at HEIs, in 2011 – 430, while the number for 2012 equaled to 589 students.

“Georgian Language for Future Success”

In 2012, Teachers Professional Development Center (TPDC) continued implementation of the programme “Georgian Language for Future Success.” The ultimate goal of the programme is to advance civil integration of national minorities in Georgia. The target groups of the programme are schoolchildren, teachers, school administration of non-Georgian schools and the local community (minority representatives) living in Kvemo-Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kakheti regions.

Within the framework of the programme, diverse activities were carried out toward different directions:

1. Allocation of teachers in order to improve the level of Georgian language teaching at non-Georgian schools. LEPL Teacher’s Professional Development Center on the basis of the competition selected and sent 237 specialists with Bachelor’s degree, who assist the teachers of local non-Georgian schools to conduct Georgian language lessons and/or to deliver classes bilingually. On one hand, this initiative fosters Georgian language acquisition among schoolchildren and teachers and on the other hand, improves knowledge of Georgian language among local community members through direct interaction with population and out of school activities.
2. Development of teaching materials of Georgian as a second language. Considering the lack of knowledge or incompetence in Georgian, textbooks were developed according to different levels of Georgian language in line with subject curriculum. Level system gives opportunity to a teacher to use a textbook (based on a certain level of communication) that is in line with the linguistic needs of schoolchildren in a certain class.

In 2012, Georgian as a second language of elementary V-VI levels was developed. By the end of 2012, VII-IX levels of a textbook for the basic level of general education were elaborated.

Georgian, as second language textbook is based on the principles of modern pedagogy. The cornerstone of modern pedagogy is communicative teaching. The communicative-interactive method is very different from the traditional grammar-translation approach of language teaching.

In addition, the teacher’s guidebook and thematic audio-material for class work was developed. Each level of the Manual was printed in circulation of 20,000 copies and was distributed to non-Georgian schools in conformity with schools’ requirements.

Based on the developed materials, special 4-level computer games were created that are intended for non-Georgian speaking schoolchildren and are in line with the topics of a new Georgian language textbook.

It should be pointed out that in June 2012, LEPL National Centre for Educational Quality Enhancement of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia conducted national assessment “Teaching Georgian on 1st Grades of non-Georgian Schools.” The assessment encompassed 73 schools (7 from Tbilisi, 4 from

Kakheti, 38 from Kvemo Kartli and 24 from Samtskhe-Javakheti) and 1065 1st graders (102 from Tbilisi, 58 from Kakheti, 555 – Kvemo Kartli and 350 Samtskhe-Javakheti). This means that 20% of total number of 1st graders participated in the national assessment (the total number of 1st graders in Georgia equals to 5200). 85, 5% of schoolchildren participating in the assessment demonstrated high level of Georgian language, 12,1% - satisfactory, while 1,5% showed poor knowledge of Georgian. The affirmative results of the national assessment showed that Georgian language acquisition among schoolchildren at non-Georgian schools improved.

Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration

Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration aims at providing public servants (employed at the central and local governments and self-governments) with respective short and long-term professional and educational programmes for permanent professional growth and development.

The School offers to listeners the following short and long-term educational and professional programmes in two stages:

List of short-term courses:

- IT Management
- Financial Management
- Project Management and Monitoring
- Human Resource Management
- Basics in Law and Data Processing
- Basics in Management.

List of long-term courses:

- Georgian Language Course (3 months in a year periodically)
- English Language Course (3 months in a year periodically).

In January-February 2012, 75 Armenian school principals undertook 6-months intensive course in Georgian language. It should be pointed out that since October 1, 2011, Georgian Language Houses in Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli (within the “Georgian Language for Future Success” programme) were administered by Zurab Zhvania School of Public Administration.

III. Media and Access to Information

Georgian Public Broadcaster (GPB)'s two Georgian and one Russian channels took important steps toward improvement of access to information for national minorities. GPB is the only mass media means in the country that has a statutory obligation stipulated by the law to broadcast programs in minority languages; it has to ensure the right of the national minorities living in the country to receive and have access to information in their native languages. Along with broadcasting TV programs, GPB broadcasts the Radio programs in national minority languages in order to bring forward their problems and issues of their interest. Considering the afore-mentioned circumstances, particular attention is paid to daily broadcasting in Abkhaz, Ossetian, Armenian and Azeri languages. Furthermore, Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia and the Administration of the President of Georgia provide funding for printed media in Azeri and Armenian languages.

News program “National Moambe” (National Narrator) in Minority Languages

Taking into consideration viewers' interests and for more efficient dissemination of the information, GPB transmits “National Moambe” through the means of different channels – by the Channel 1 (in the morning hours), by the Channel 2 (in the evening hours, retranslating in the morning hours) and through the regional TV channels. In 2011-2012, the prime time was purchased (prime time from 20:00 to 23:00) for Marneuli on “Marneuli TV” and for Bolnisi on “Bolneli.” “Moambe” is broadcasted in Azerbaijani language on the afore-mentioned channels. “Moambe” is aired in Abkhaz language through Zugdidi's “Odishi” channel, while in Armenian through Ninotsminda TV channel “Parvana,” “Akaltsikhe 9th Channel,” and Akhalkalaki “ATV12.” TV channels are provided with TV productions through special internet service. News section was prepared on a daily basis encompassing 8-10 features; duration for each feature is one minute on average. News program in one language lasts approximately 9-10 minutes. Local TV channels had also an opportunity for retranslation in morning and evening hours. Further, editorials of national minorities had a flexibility to prepare features about the issues of their interest and they embraced this opportunity several times throughout 2012.

TV Company “Pik”

Throughout January-October 2012, TV productions envisaged for national minorities were transmitted through 3rd channel of GPB - Russian language “Pik.” TV channel signed an agreement with Samtskhe-Javakheti TV stations (TV channel “Parvana,” “Akaltsikhe 9th Channel,” and Akhalkalaki “ATV12”) in order to use their frequencies for evening transmission. “Pik” paid these TV channels money for retranslation. Special program designed for national minorities “Regional News” was prepared twice a week, reflecting the issues of their interest. Through this initiative, local journalists had an opportunity to cooperate with the channel “Pik” and prepare features for it. In addition, “Pik” had local groups of journalists in Ninotsminda, Marneuli and Gori. “Pik” provided them with necessary technical equipment, opportunities for professional growth and salaries, despite the fact that they officially

worked for local TV channels. “Pik” also transmitted “National Moambe” in the morning hour that in its turn was provided by national minority broadcaster of GPB’s 1st channel. After “Pik” was shut down, cooperation with regions in such interactive way was hindered. Shutting down of the “Pik” caused a great scarcity in terms of Russian language broadcasting since “Pik” was a source of informational not only one group, but for all ethnic groups living in Georgia.

Radio Broadcasting

The radio transmission is on air on the “*First Radio*” in national minority languages. Nowadays, the radio transmission of Public Broadcaster airs the audio version of the “*National Moambe’s*” news collage. The radio program in Georgian language is prepared once a week except the informational programs in Abkhaz, Ossetian, Azerbaijani and Armenian languages.

Talk Show “Our Yard”

Throughout 2012, 50 programs of “Our Yard” covered diverse topics. The major attention was paid to bringing forward the issues that are relevant and interesting for national minorities, including access to education, women’s rights, role of NGOs in the development of civil sector and for civil integration, problems and conditions of IDPs and agricultural development. In 2012, the plan was developed on how to redesign and change the format of the TV talk show for 2013.

Radioshow “Our Georgia”

The radio program “Our Georgia” is oriented to cover the topics relevant for national and religious minorities, including social, economic, cultural and educational issues. “Our Georgia” is an interactive program and the listeners have an opportunity to call during the program and ask questions live, express their opinions regarding the topic of discussion. Duration of the program is 45 minutes. The program is broadcast weekly (every Thursday). This project is implemented by “Democracy and Civil Integration Fund” with the support of Open Society Georgia Foundation (OSGF).

Data on media programs broadcasted in minority languages for the year 2012:

Format	Name	Length, min.	Quantity	Total, hours
TV News	National Moambe (National Narrator)	45	255	191
Radio News	National Moambe (National Narrator)	45	255	191
TV Talk show	Our Yard	45	50	38

Radio Talk show	Our Georgia	32	45	24
Radio news	Qurdish	30	52	26
Total in a year, hours				470

Printed Media

Armenian-language newspaper “Vrastan” and Azerbaijani-language newspaper “Gurjistan” were published throughout 2012, within the programme “Supporting the Cultures of National Minorities” of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia.

Armenian Newspaper “Vrastan”

52 editions of Armenian-language newspaper "Vrastan" is published annually (out of these, 17 editions are funded by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia). Circulation for one edition of the newspaper is 3000. "Vrastan" is mainly distributed in Tbilisi, Batumi, Ninotsminda, Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Bolnisi, Aspindza, Marneuli, Tetrtskaro and Borjomi municipalities. 70% of the newspaper is covering political issues, while 30% deals to social and cultural issues of national minorities.

Azerbaijani Newspaper “Gurjistan”

The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia also continues funding of the newspaper “Gurjistan.” 52 editions of Azeri-language newspaper "Gurjistan" is published annually (out of these, 17 editions are funded by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia). Circulation for one edition of the newspaper is 3000. "Gurjistan" is mainly distributed in Tbilisi and Rustavi; also, in Gardabani, Marneuli, Bolnisi, Tetrtskaro, Lagodekhi, Gurjaani and other municipalities. 70% of the newspaper is covering issues regarding Diaspora and information about social and cultural lives of national minorities.

IV. Political Integration and Civic participation

National minorities' participation in social-political life of the country is greatly determined by the state language competence. Government of Georgia (GoG), in addition to educational interventions and efforts, carries out diverse activities to ensure electoral rights for national minorities and advance their participation in decision-making processes. In this regard, it is noteworthy that residents living in the regions compactly settled with national minorities actively participated in the parliamentary election of 2012.

Parliamentary Election of October 1, 2012

During the pre-election period and before official announcement of the day of parliamentary election, the following activities were planned and implemented in order to simplify and improve electoral processes for voters representing national minorities:

Establishment of Working Group

In 2012, under the order of the CEC Chairperson, the Working Group was created to support to and simplify the election process for the voters of ethnic minorities. Establishment of the Working Group on ethnic minority issues within the Central Election Commission of Georgia aimed to provide the voters of ethnic minorities with the information on election procedures.

The functions of the Working Group were defined:

- Draw up the action plan for 2012;
- Monitor the action plan;
- Analyze planned and implemented projects;
- Arrange roundtables in Tbilisi and in the regions;
- Develop the action plan for 2013-2014.

The following organizations are included in the Working Group:

- Office of Public Defender of Georgia (PDO);
- International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP);
- United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG);
- Delegation of the European Union to Georgia (EU);

- Eurasia Foundation;
- Civil Development Agency (CIDA);
- Union of Azeri Women (UAWG);
- Union of Demokrat-Meskhs;
- Coalition for Civil Development;
- Civic Integration Fund;
- Public Movement “Multi-ethnic Georgia”
- Akhaltsikhe Youth Center;
- Fund "Multiethnic Resource Center for Civic Education Development"
- European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI);
- Georgian Public Broadcaster;
- The Radio “Imedi”
- Azeri-Georgian Cultural Center “Varlig”
- LELP Center of Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Trainings.

The Working Group on ethnic minority issues developed the action plan for 2012 defining the tasks as follows:

- Provide equal electoral rights for ethnic minorities;
- Raising awareness of young voters and fostering their involvement in the election process;
- Raising awareness of women voters and fostering their involvement in the election process;
- Increase and support involvement of persons with disabilities representing ethnic minorities in the election process;
- Provide translations of electoral documents into the language of national minorities;
- Ensuring access to information for ethnic minority voters via media.

The Working Group determined the activities necessary for meeting the afore-mentioned objectives.

Specifically, the Working Group drew up the following activities to be implemented:

For youth:

- Conduct seminars and trainings (teaching election procedures);
- Simulate/role play voting and election procedures;
- Inform population through engaging youth – distribution of flyers and booklets;
- Organize study visits for youth groups in the CEC.

For women voters:

- Conduct seminars and trainings for local women leaders (teaching election procedures);

- Inform population through engaging women – distribution of flyers and booklets.

For persons with disabilities representing national minority voters:

- Define the needs of the voters with disabilities regarding their participation in the Election;
- Ensure translation of the video clips with sign language for voters with hearing impairment;
- Prepare instructions for District Election Commission Members on keeping the norms of conduct with the voters with disabilities;
- Ensure infrastructural adaptation of electoral districts, arrange temporary ramps.

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Central Election Commission of Georgia (CEC) and the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (on behalf of the Council of National Minorities under Public Defender's Office)

On June 7, 2012, Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Central Election Commission of Georgia and the Public Defender's Office of Georgia (on behalf of the Council of National Minorities under Public Defender's Office) was signed. Parties agreed to support and promote civil integration of national minorities. Besides, parties developed common action plan that defined those directions of cooperation that would foster improvement of election environment and increase the trust among voters toward the electoral processes.

Civil integration and protection of rights of national minorities is long-term process, therefore MoU is considered as the basis of this extended cooperation. Joint efforts and activities of the Parties of MoU will be implemented through consultations, sharing experiences, seminars and conferences.

Meetings of the Working Group on Minority Issues

On May 17, 2012 the Working Group held its first meeting on which the functions and future plans of the Group were discussed. On June 5, 2012 the working group members held the meeting defining the target groups and drawing up the work plan for 2012. During the meeting of 4th of July, 2012 the parties defined the issues as follows:

- Activities to be carried out in the regions densely populated with ethnic minorities
- Informing voters via media.

The Working Group organized field visits in Marneuli, village Karajala of Telavi municipality and Akhalkhalaki. The members of the Working Group presented to the representatives of local NGOs, political parties and media the upcoming activities aiming to support ethnic minorities' participation in the Parliamentary Elections of 2012.

Election Period after the Official Announcement of the Election

Cooperation with Stakeholders.

In August 2012, Center of Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Trainings under the CEC announced grants competition in order to promote integration of national minorities in electoral processes. The purpose of issuing grants was to identify and fund those projects that would promote positive social attitude toward election process, increase participation of the voters, foster informed decision-making among voters, and ensure planning and implementation of diverse informational campaigns in this direction.

During the electoral process, the Grant Commission selected and funded 10 Non-Governmental organizations to promote integration process of ethnic minorities in electoral process, including following NGOs engaged in the Working Group on minority issues:

- Civil Development Agency (CIDA);
- Union of Azeri Women in Georgia;
- Coalition for Civil Development.

For the Parliamentary Elections of 2012, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) in partnership with the Central Election Commission of Georgia funded the following Non-Governmental organizations represented in the Working Group:

- “Multiethnic Georgia”
- “Analytical Center for Interethnic Cooperation and Consultations” (ACICC).

To provide young people living in Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kakheti regions with knowledge and to ensure their active involvement in the electoral process, the Central Election Commission of Georgia funded the following NGOs:

- Civic Integration Fund;
- Union of Democrat-Meskhs.

Meetings of the Working Group on Ethnic Minority Issues

During the Meeting of August 20, 2012 the members of the Working Group held a discussion about the grants of CEC Training Centre. The purpose of issuing the grants was the provision of ethnic minorities with knowledge and information for the Parliamentary Elections of 2012. Also, the Working Group discussed issues regarding field visits in the regions.

On September 5, 2012, the CEC and the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) organized a meeting with the representatives of Diplomatic Corps accredited in Georgia. During the meeting, the CEC provided the representatives of Diplomatic Corps with the information about planned and implemented activities toward provision of support and simplification of the electoral process for ethnic minorities in Georgia. Further, NGOs provided Diplomatic Corps with the information about funded

projects regarding participation of ethnic minorities in the Parliamentary Elections of 2012. The CEC monitored the funded projects in Marneuli, Akhaltsikhe, Telavi and the village Karajala.

Translations of Electoral Documents into National Minority Languages

In line with the Action Plan for the Parliamentary Election 2012, documentations for translation and publishing were determined.

The following documents were translated for the Parliamentary Election 2012:

- Guidelines for Precinct Election Commission (PEC) members
(Georgian-Armenian-Russian and Georgian-Azeri-Russian languages);
- Instruction leaflet for the chairman of Precinct Election Commission (PEC)
(Georgian-Azeri and Georgian-Armenian);
- Instruction leaflet for the members of Precinct Election Commission (PEC)
(Georgian-Azeri and Georgian-Armenian);
- Flyer for Voters
(Georgian-Azeri and Georgian-Armenian);
- Data about national minorities in the Unified Voters List;
- Poster describing voting procedures and building (for precinct polling station)
(Georgian-Azeri and Georgian-Armenian);
- Election ballot
(Georgian- Armenian and Georgian-Azeri);
- Unified Voters Lists, version for election commissions (table list)
(Georgian- Armenian and Georgian-Azeri);
- Rules for completing ballot paper
(Armenian and Azeri languages).

Election documentations were translated by United Nations Association of Georgia (UNAG), with the financial support of IFES.

Within UNDP's "Development of Reliable and Sustainable Electoral Institutes and Processes" project, LEPL Center for Electoral Systems Development, Reforms and Training published documentations translated into minority languages.

The Department developed a brochure - "Provision of Equal Electoral Environment for National Minority Voters" in order to inform local NGOs. The brochure was translated into Azeri and Armenian languages.

Informational Campaign for National Minorities

Since August 15, 2012, Georgian Public Broadcaster with the initiative of the CEC was translating and broadcasting daily "Georgian TV Election News Digest" in Armenian and Azeri languages with duration of 6-6 minutes.

"Georgian TV Election News Digest" and CEC election advertisements were broadcasted on GPB's "National Moambe (Narrator) along with sign language translation:

- ❖ 07:00 am – 1st Channel of Georgian Public Broadcaster - in Armenian and Azeri languages;
- ❖ 07:00 am – 3rd Channel of Georgian Public Broadcaster ("PIK" – in Armenian language;
- ❖ 24:00 pm – 2nd Channel of Georgian Public Broadcaster - in Armenian and Azeri languages;
- ❖ 22:00 pm – Marneuli TV company "Marneuli TV" – in Azeri language;
- ❖ 23:00 pm – Bolnisi TV company "Bolneli" – in Azeri language;
- ❖ 07:00 am - Akhaltsikhe TV company "9th Channel" – in Armenian language;
- ❖ 07:00 am - Akhalkalaki TV company "ATV 12" – in Armenian language;
- ❖ 07:00 am - Ninotsminda TV company "Parvana" – in Armenian language;
- ❖ 07:00 am – 1st Radio of Georgian Public Broadcaster – in Armenian and Azeri languages.

Further, two debate sessions among the election opponents of the Parliamentary Election broadcasted on GPB were translated into Armenian and Azeri languages and transmitted through regional TV channels. The banner "Ethnic Minorities" was placed on the CEC website, where the following information was available on Armenian and Azeri languages:

- The election documentation and CEC advertisements, which were translated for the Parliamentary Elections 2012.

With the initiative of the CEC, verification of data was available for Armenian and Azeri voters in their own language at the general list of voters on the CEC website (Georgian-Armenian, Georgian-Azeri).

NUMBER OF PRECINCTS COMPACTLY SETTLED WITH NATIONAL MINORITIES ACCORDING TO DISTRICTS (STATISTICAL DATA).

337 election precincts were arranged at 12 district election commissions in the communities settled with national minority electorate/voters.



Composition of the members of the District Election Commissions according to ethnicity/gender.

For the Parliamentary Election October 1, 2012, the number of members at District Election Commissions (DECs) equaled to 964 (during election period), including 22 members representing national minorities.

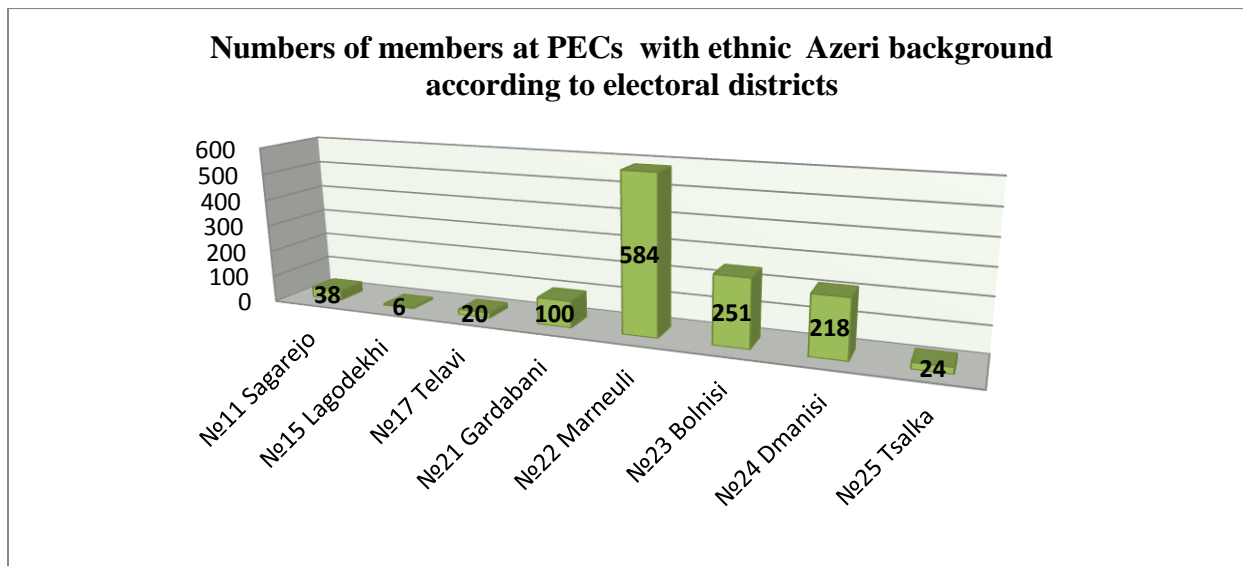
COMPOSITION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE DISTRICT ELECTION COMMISSIONS (DECs) ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY/GENDER:

Position	Female	Male
Chairperson	1	1
Secretary	1	0
Member	8	11
Total	10	12

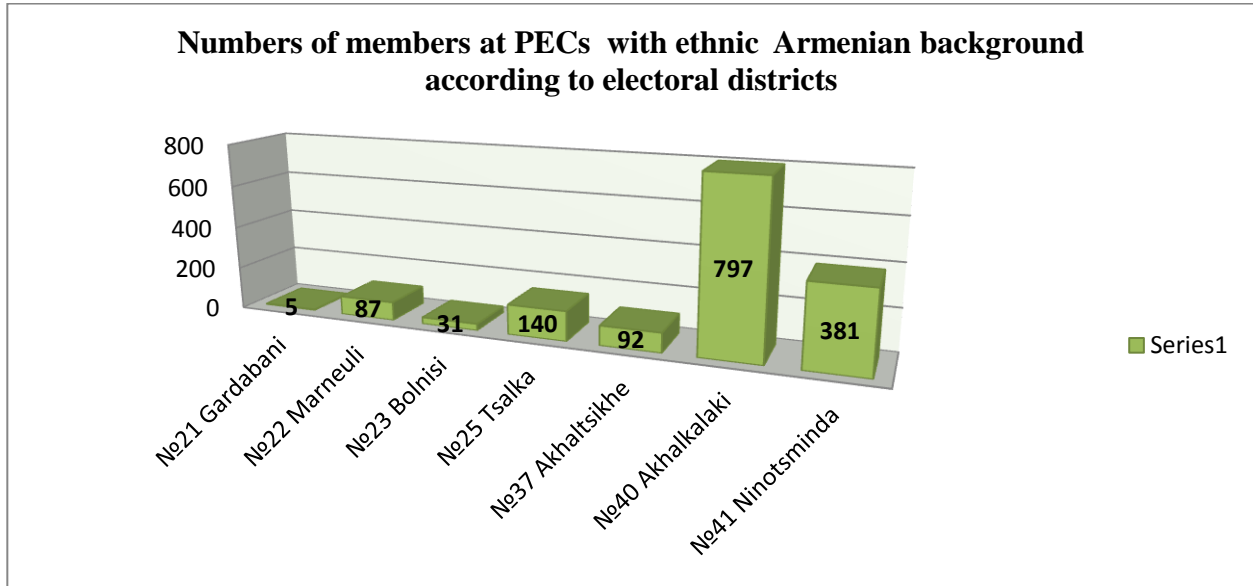
Number of national minorities elected/appointed as the members of Precinct Election Commissions (PECs).

The total number of national minorities elected/appointed as the members of Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) for the Parliamentary Election in October 1, 2012 equaled to **2774**.

MEMBERS OF THE PRECINCT ELECTION COMMISSIONS (PECs) WITH ETHNIC AZERI BACKGROUND EQUALED TO 1241 PERSONS.



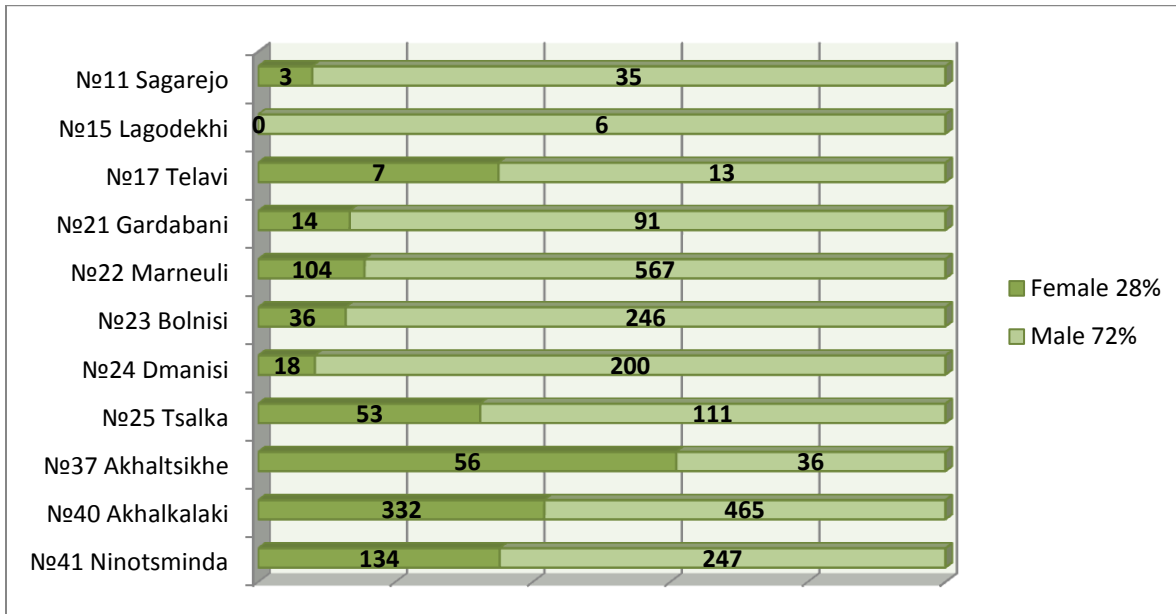
MEMBERS OF THE PRECINCT ELECTION COMMISSIONS (PECs) WITH ETHNIC ARMENIAN BACKGROUND EQUALED TO 1533 PERSONS



Gender distribution of national minority members of the Precinct Election Commissions (PECs) according electoral districts:

Female – **757** members of the commission

Male – **2017** members of the commission



Discussion of the Document with Caucasian Students – “Georgia’s State Concept on Relations with the Peoples of the North Caucasus”

On July 11, the State Ministry for Reintegration organized an open discussion with Caucasian students in the small conference room of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia. “Georgia’s State Concept on Relations with the Peoples of the North Caucasus” and implications of simplification of visa regime for North Caucasians were examined at the discussion. The major goal of the Strategy is to deepen and strengthen cooperation between Georgia and North Caucasian people toward cultural, educational, scientific, commercial, trade, human and other humanitarian directions, which in its turn will be a precondition for the restoration and reinforcement of historical friendship and cultural relationships.

The meeting was attended by the representatives of the Government of Georgia, experts on Caucasian issues, linguists, students of Tbilisi Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), master students and students from the North Caucasus who pursue their higher education in Georgia. The main goals of the meeting were to share information about the document - “Georgia’s State Concept on Relations with the Peoples of the North Caucasus” and to promote building connections between Georgian and North Caucasian students, which in its turn was fostered by the simplification of visa regime for North Caucasians.

Meetings of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration and the State Inter-Agency Commission

On March 1, a meeting between the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration and the State Inter-Agency Commission was held chaired by the Deputy State Minister for Reintegration. The major goal of the State Inter-Agency Commission’s meeting (established with an end to ensure implementation of “the National Concept and Action Plan of 2009-2011 for Tolerance and Civic Integration”) was to examine and approve the final version of NCAP Report for 2011, and determine priorities and directions for the Action Plan for the year 2012.

Field Visits of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration and the State Inter-Agency Commission to Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions

On 17-20 July, 2012, meetings of the State Inter-Agency Commission were organized in Gardabani (Kvemo Kartli) and Ninotsminda (Samtskhe-Javakheti) by the Office of State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration with the financial support of ECMI.

The session was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, (Teachers’ Professional Development Centre), Ministry of Culture and Monumental Protection, Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia and Georgian Public Broadcaster.

Among the participants also were representatives of the municipalities, local self-governments and regional administrations of Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions. The main objective of these

meetings was sharing information on the activities of Inter-Agency Commission; support for civil integration of national minorities; involvement of national minorities in decision-making processes; better examination and identification of local problems and responding to them by relevant governmental agencies. The Office of State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration gave all participants a new edition of the Constitution of Georgia with codified text, translated into Azeri, Armenian and Russian languages and “Short Explanatory Dictionary: 365 Terms in the Fields of State Governance, Law and Human Rights.”

A Meeting of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration and the State Inter-Agency Commission in Grigoleti

On July 26-29, 2012, another session and training of Tolerance and Civic Integration Inter-agency Commission was held in Grigoleti, Guria. Commission session was held within Tolerance and Civic Integration Action Plan of 2012 and with financial support of European Centre for Minority Issues (ECMI). The session was attended by the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia, Ministry of Culture and Monumental Protection, Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Teachers’ Professional Development Centre and Georgian Public Broadcaster. Invited guest of ECMI - Polish expert conducted training for Inter-agency Commission members on "Best European Practices of Government Level Management of Minority Issues."

Newly Appointed State Minister for Reintegration and Deputy Minister’s Meeting with Inter-Agency Commission

On December 27, 2012, the State Inter-agency Commission for the Implementation of the National Concept and Action Plan for Tolerance and Civic Integration held a meeting at the Chancellery of the Government of Georgia. The Commission met for the first time since the formation of the new government. State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration, Paata Zakareishvili and First Deputy State Minister, Ketevan Tsikhelashvili attended the meeting.

The Meeting focused on the importance of state language teaching in ethnic minority regions. The State Minister noted at the meeting that the Government should offer to ethnic minorities not only opportunities for the state language acquisition, but using this knowledge for future employment perspectives. Planned and implemented activities within the National Concept for Tolerance and Civic Integration Action Plan were discussed at the meeting. Discussions focused on access to information for the representatives of ethnic minorities, social and regional integration, as well as the preservation of culture and identity. The members of the Commission presented information about the work conducted by state agencies and organizations.

A Meeting of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration and the Regional Centre for Research and Promotion of Constitutionalism with IX-X Grade Schoolchildren

On December 12, 2012, informational meetings were held with the participation of the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration with organizational support of the Regional Centre for Research and Promotion of Constitutionalism. Presentations about child-friendly versions of the Constitution of Georgia were organized for IX-X graders at Gardabani Public School #3, Public Schools of the villages Karajala and Kesalo (Gardabani Municipality of Kvemo Kartli region). During the meetings, a bilingual edition of "Illustrated Constitution of Georgia for Youth" translated into Azerbaijani language was distributed. The main objective of the meetings was to raise the level of awareness and civic consciousness among pupils studying at Azeri public schools of Kvemo Kartli region, which in its turn is an integral part of the process of civic integration.

Event “Meskhetians Today”

On December 20, 2012, in the conference room of the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia, the State Ministry for Reintegration organized an open discussion on the topic: “Meskhetians Today.” During the discussion, invited experts talked about the problems Meskhetians Deported during the Soviet Regime (not included in the Programme) are facing nowadays. The major goal of the meeting was to inform new generation and society at large about the issues and problems of Meskhetians and increase interest toward this issue. The increased interest about this issue would promote integration of Meskhetians into wider society of Georgia.

The event was attended by the staff members of the Office of the State Ministry for Reintegration, invited experts and students/ youth representing different ethnic minorities in Georgia.

Training in Child-Friendly Version of the Constitution of Georgia in Batumi

The Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration and with organizational support of the Research Center of Constitutionalism held 10-days training in Batumi on child-friendly version of the Constitution of Georgia. Representatives from Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli regions participated in the training.

Examining and Approving 2011 Annual Report on the Implementation of the National Concept and Action Plan for Tolerance and Civic Integration (NCAP) and Developing NCAP Action Plan for 2012

Government of Georgia (GoG) examined and approved the National Concept and Action Plan for Tolerance and Civic Integration (NCAP) for 2012 and NCAP Annual Report for 2011, translated into four languages (Azerbaijani, Armenian, Russian and English). NCAP Annual Report for 2011 was presented to the Council of National Minorities under the PDO and also was distributed in local

governments, self-governments and NGOs in the regions. English version of the NCAP Report for 2011 was presented to the embassies and international organizations.

Meeting of the State Minister for Reintegration with Ethnic Azeri Students

On December 26, 2012, the State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration, Paata Zakareishvili met with ethnic Azerbaijani university students at the State Chancellery Building. The meeting was held within the project “Youth Development Academy,” implemented by Marneuli Youth Center.

Paata Zakareishvili shared with students the information on both directions of the work of Minister’s Office - resolution of conflicts and new strategic visions and upcoming activities for the integration of ethnic and religious minorities in Georgia.

Support to Youth Civic Initiatives

The project envisaged support to ethnic minority youth civic initiatives and promotion of their involvement in civic processes, as well as equipping youth with necessary skills and knowledge through practical trainings and seminars. The major objective of the Project was to support Azeri youth NGOs in Kvemo Kartli region, foster development of youth initiatives and advance cooperation among local youth organizations. The timeline of the Project was March 12-September 15, 2012. Trainings were conducted for a week, engaging 30 beneficiaries. The Project was implemented with the support of LEPL “Children and Youth Development Fund” of the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of Georgia and “Georgian Azeri Students Association.”

Ethnic Azeri Students’ Excursion to Gori

Within this activity, an excursion for ethnic Azeri youth to Gori was organized on August 22, 2012, where the participants had an opportunity to visit the major sightseeing places in Gori and visit territories damaged as a result of the occupation. The main goals of this event were to inform ethnic Azeri youth and students about ongoing issues in the country, to increase motivation and to promote their involvement in civic processes. Up to 150 ethnic Azeri students took part in the excursion.

V. Social and Regional Integration

Diverse infrastructure rehabilitation and other wide-scope economic projects were implemented in the regions compactly settled with national minorities. In this direction, within the NCAP, Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia and local municipalities elaborated the action plan and strategy for the development of the region in 2012, ensuring engagement of the population, including national minority representatives. Further, infrastructure rehabilitation investment projects' implementation and monitoring were ensured in minority regions, as well as development of the 'Village Support Programme' and monitoring of its implementation.

Developing Strategy for Regional Development

Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia developed Regional Development Strategy Guidelines. Currently, the processes of development of regional strategies across all regions of Georgia are conducted in line with the guidelines.

Strategy on Regional Development (hereinafter – the Strategy) will be developed by self-government territorial bodies within the territorial boundaries of the State Trustee -Governor's.

The Strategy is a policy document that reflects existing situation and brings forward the mechanisms fostering potential of regional development. Determining action plans, timelines, costs and sources of funding (if this is the case) for specific projects are indispensable parts of the Strategy. Development of the Strategy aims at determining and identifying existing potential of respective regions and proposing recommendations for accomplishing the following outcomes:

- ❖ Effective and wise use of existing natural, material human and financial resources of a region;
- ❖ Encourage investment;
- ❖ Overcome emergencies in certain regions and stimulate socio-economic development;
- ❖ Ensure development of social infrastructure;
- ❖ Maintain, protect and restore environmental and ecological balance.

The goal of the Strategy document is to consolidate information, resources and efforts of all stakeholders, and give direction to the regions for a long-term and sustainable development. The Strategy should encompass all those central, regional and local priorities that are existent in the territory of a certain region. Also, it should reflect all resources allocated toward this direction. Consequently, the Strategy document would have the structure for realistic planning, implementation and monitoring.

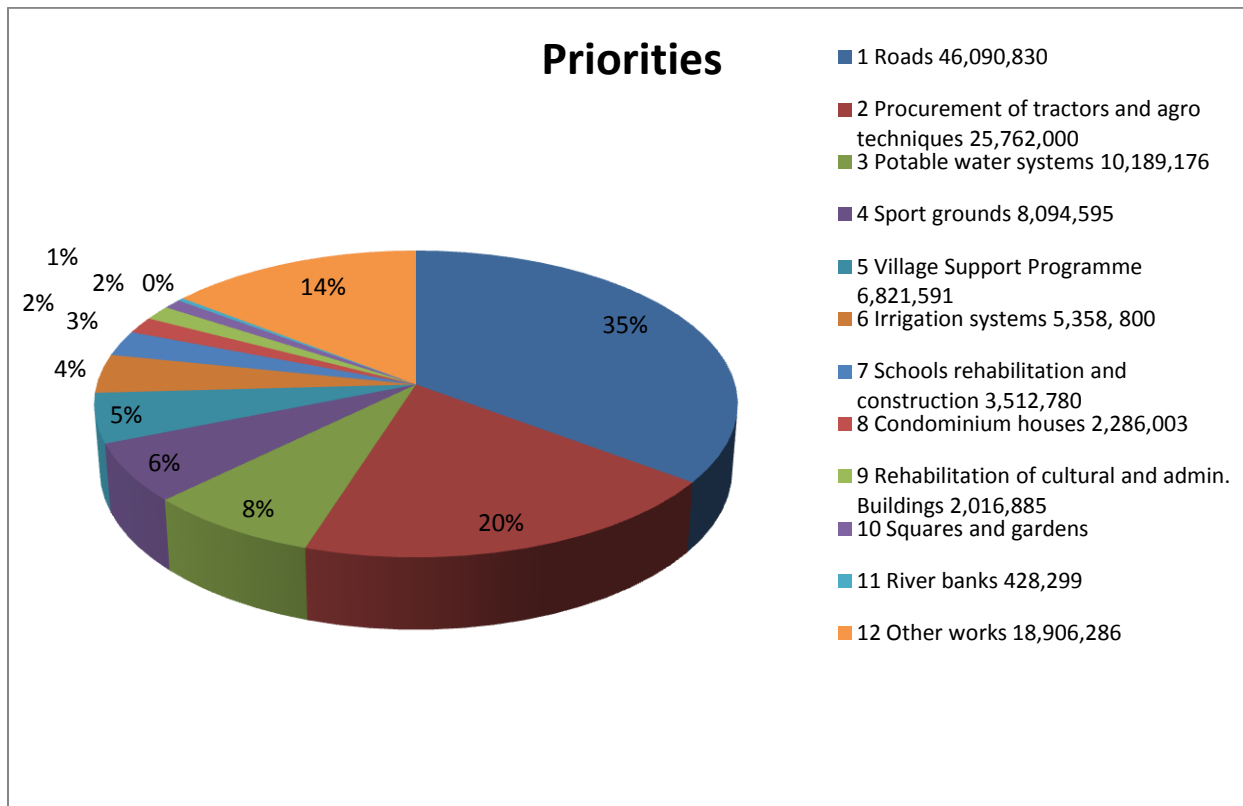
The Strategy encompasses goals and priorities for economic, social and natural development. The Strategy will be developed by Regional Development Councils in partnership with all major stakeholders - government representatives, local experts, private sector and civil society representatives.

During the elaboration of the regional development strategy, it is extremely significant to ensure highest inclusion of local residents in order to make sure that the strategy document considers their problems, visions and developmental priorities to a maximum extent.

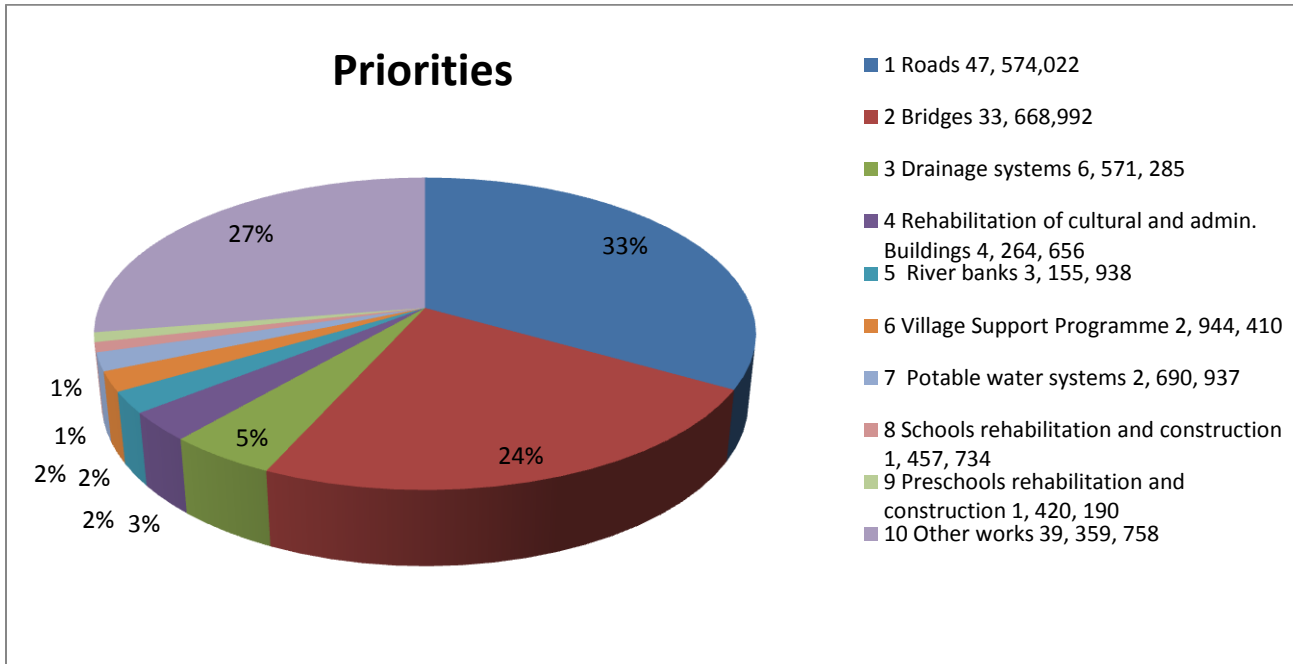
Investment Projects for Infrastructure Rehabilitation

The following works were carried out in 2012 within the Investment Projects for Infrastructure Rehabilitation in the regions densely populated by national minorities:

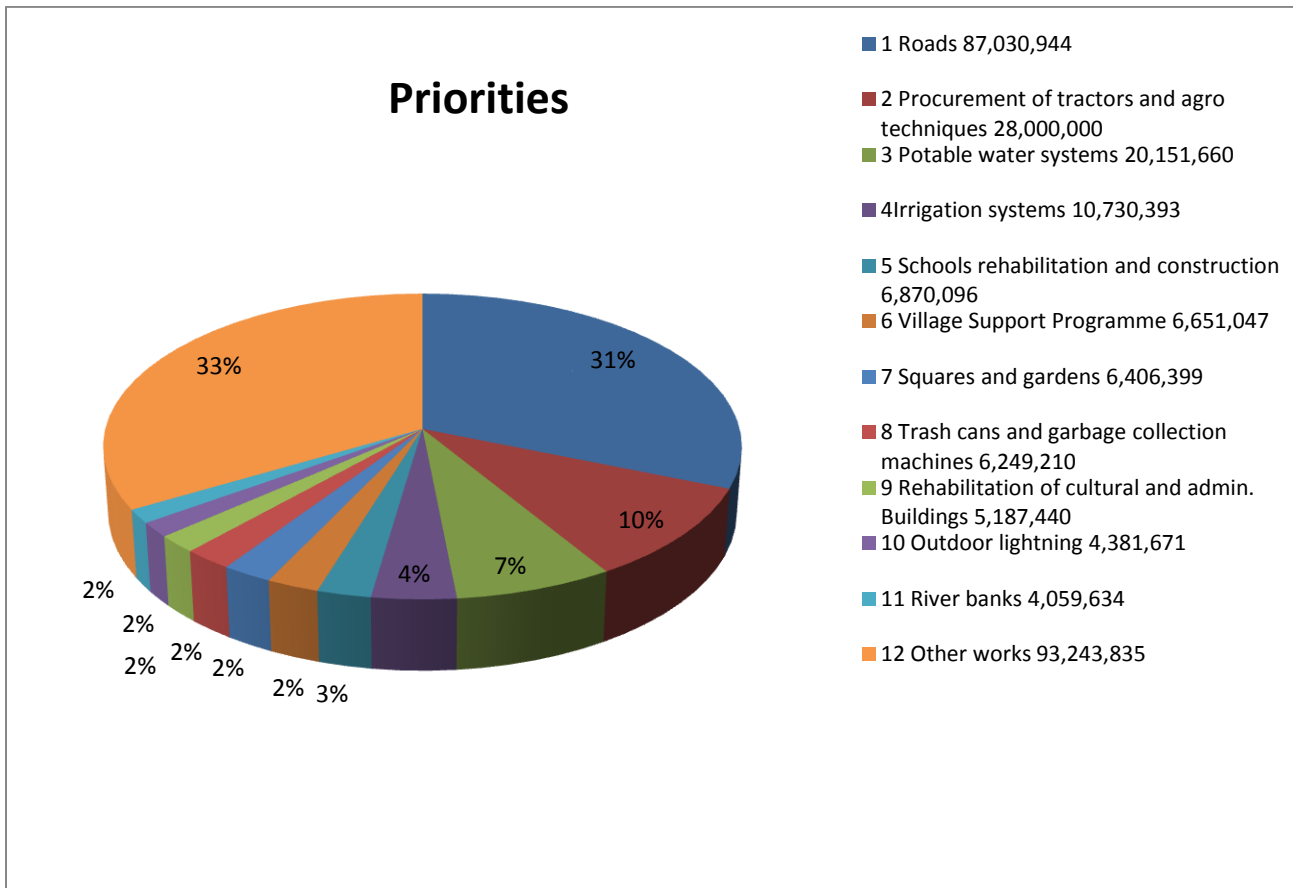
AMOUNT OF PORTFOLIO FOR KVEMO KARTLI REGION IS GEL 132,483,532



AMOUNT OF PORTFOLIO FOR SAMTSKHE-JAVAKHETI REGION IS GEL 113,932,355



AMOUNT OF PORTFOLIO FOR KAKHETI REGION IS GEL 278,962,329



Village Support Programme

In the framework of the 'Village Support Programme,' important works were carried out in the regions compactly settled with national minorities.

Main objectives of the Programme:

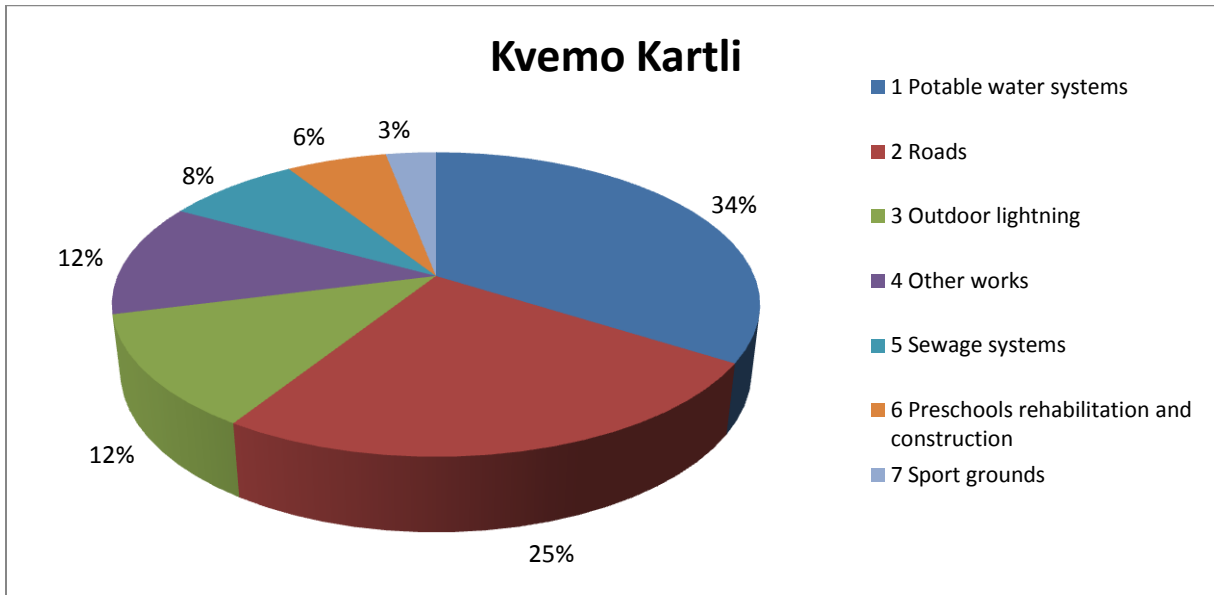
- Directing funds from the Programme for the first-rank and most important socio-economic needs of villages (reconstruction-rehabilitation of local infrastructure facilities, organization of public services and amenities, agricultural works, etc.);
- Strengthening involvement of local population in local self-governance, and solve local problems in line with the priorities determined by local residents;
- Strengthening relations and cooperation between local population and government;
- Increasing level of independence of local self-government and implement effectively responsibilities of the head of territorial body - a Trustee of local self-government entity (hereinafter a Trustee).

According to the Programme, there are following criteria that determine rational usage of funds from the Programme:

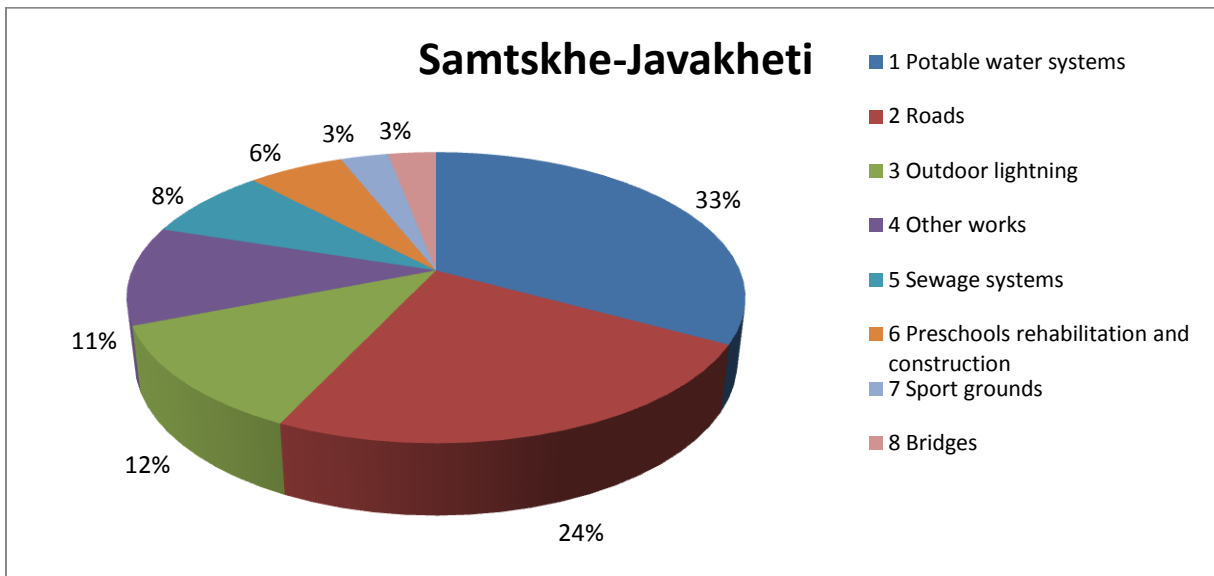
- The envisaged project/s or programme/s should have positive socio-economic effect upon majority of a village population;
- Work, goods or service procured within the Programme should improve material, daily and socio-economic conditions of majority of a village population;
- Respective population should be employed as much as possible to conduct necessary works;
- It is possible to merge and combine funds from the Programme for several villages in order to solve common problem (e.g. potable water or irrigation systems, agro techniques, medical point, etc);
- Reasonability/purposefulness of the funds for a certain village is determined only after a consultation with local population;
- For this purpose, a Trustee organizes a meeting/assembly and public discussion in a village. Upon a decision of the majority of the assembly and considering the amount of funding allocated for a certain village, a trustee determines purposefulness of the funds from the Programme. This decision has to be stipulated in an official minutes of the assembly.

Rehabilitaion and Investment projects conducted within the ‘Village Support Programme’

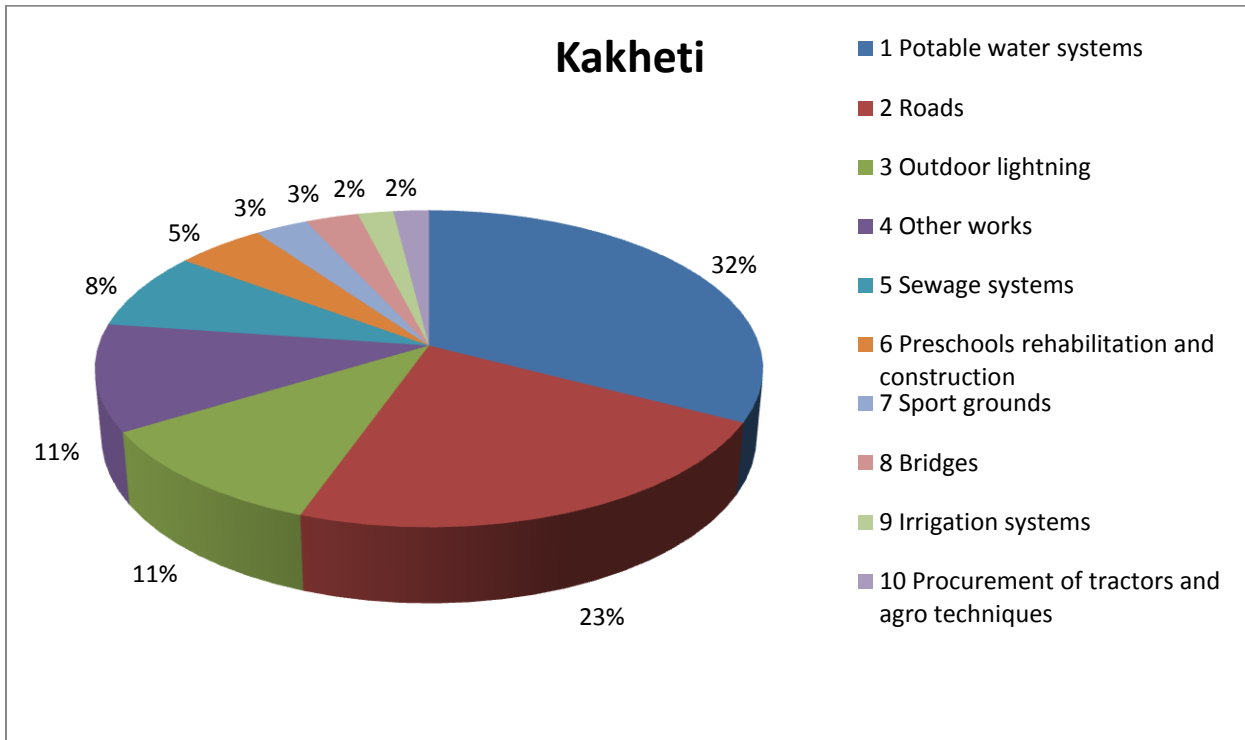
Kvemo Kartli



Samtskhe-Javakheti



Kakheti



Healthcare and Social Welfare

National Health Sector Strategy for 2011-2015 of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia builds on some main principles, among which special focus is made on the provision of equal access to healthcare and development of patient-centered healthcare system.

Provision of equal access - ensure access to health and social services for all citizens regardless of their socio-economic condition, ethnic background, status and religious beliefs. Consequently, all Georgian citizens equally benefit from the state-funded programmes, implemented by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia.

Patient-centered healthcare system - focuses on information provision for a patient, and ensuring security, as well as prevention from irrational use of services.

Informed decision of citizens and knowledge of their rights are directly linked to the publicity of information about medical institutions, health insurance companies and state programmes in the healthcare system.

Health and social welfare programmes, planned and implemented by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia covers all citizens of the country regardless their ethnic, social or religious belongings. However, access to health and social welfare services guaranteed by the state is directly linked to the informational barriers. For substantial part of national minorities, especially living in the minority regions, there is a linguistic barrier that hinders their access to information. This problem is particularly acute for mid-age and senior people. This part of the population does not have an opportunity to read or get information about state programmes available through media news or advertisements. Also, they cannot get timely updates about changes made in the state programme which in its turn substantially hinders their access to the state-funded services. Considering the aforementioned circumstances, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia organized informational campaigns within the programmes through utilization of diverse communication tools in order to inform national minorities and provide them with information in native languages.

Project - “Providing National Minorities with Information about Civic Rights in Health Sector and State-funded Healthcare Services”

With an end to inform population about healthcare services and amounts envisaged by the State Health Insurance Plan, informational banner was developed. The design and content of the banner was approved by the decree of the Minister of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia (N01- 21N; 23.04.2012). According to the Ministerial decree, all licensed medical institutions engaged in state and municipal health insurance plans, became obliged to place the banner in a well noticeable place of the hospitals. In line with Ministerial decree, the banner encompassed detailed information for the beneficiaries of the state programme about the services covered by the state health insurance plan, including:

- Dispensary care
- Urgent dispensary care
- Hospitalization
- Medicines
- List of services that are not covered by health insurance plan
- Number of hotline of the mediation center.

The content of the banner was translated in Armenian and Azeri languages. All medical institutions were asked to place bilingual banners in a well noticeable place of the hospitals in the regions compactly settled with national minorities. The banners in Kvemo Kartli region was in Georgian-Azeri and in Samtskhe-Javaketi - in Georgian-Armenian respectively. Within the project, meetings were organized in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti with the staff members of medical institutions, representatives of local government and population. Meetings were organized in Marneuli, Dmanisi, Bolnisi, Tsalka, Akhalkalaki and Akhaltsikhe on such important issues as follows:

- “Support availability and access to healthcare state-funded programmes and health insurance”
- “Provide information about medical services within healthcare state-funded programmes”
- “Protect the rights of a patient – “Informed consent.”

The population had an opportunity to discuss with staff members of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia diverse issues of their interest regarding healthcare services. On the other hand, representatives of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia had an opportunity to get direct information from the population about ongoing problems and respond to their questions. Minister of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia also participated in the meetings together with other representatives of the Ministry.

Structural divisions responsible for the project: PR Department and Health Department. Six meetings with national minorities were organized within the project. The number of medical institutions where the afore-mentioned banner was placed equals to 150. The level of awareness among national minorities increased about the amount of healthcare services, guarantees determined by health insurance plan and the rights of the beneficiaries of the State Health Insurance Programme. Inclusion and participation of population in state-funded healthcare programmes increased.

Project - “Providing National Minorities with Information on State Reforms in Health and Social Welfare Sectors”

In the process of civil integration of national minorities, the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs of Georgia attaches great importance to the provision of citizens of Georgia with permanent information about ongoing reforms, which in its turn, is very important for the successful implementation of the reforms. The major goal of the Project was to inform citizens of Georgia about new stage of the state health insurance. In September 1, 2012 the Health Insurance Programme was launched for children under 6 years, pensioners, students, children with disabilities and adults with severe disabilities. Within the Project, field visits were planned and organized in the regions densely populated with national minorities. Minister, Deputy Minister and representatives of the Ministry and the region participated in the meetings.

In total, nine meetings were organized:

- 2 meetings – with Azeri population in Kvemo Kartli
- 1 meeting – with representatives of regional TV channels in Kvemo Kartli
- 2 meetings – with Armenian population of Samtskhe-Javakheti
- 1 meeting – with representatives of regional TV channels in Samtskhe-Javakheti
- 2 meetings – with Azeri population in Kakheti region
- 1 meeting – with representatives of regional TV channels.

Representatives and social workers of the regional branches of the Social Agency actively participated in organizing the meetings.

Participants of the meetings were provided with presentations, covering such important issues as follows:

- What is the main essence of the State Health Insurance Programme?
- Who is the target group of the State Health Insurance Programme?
- Target group/beneficiaries who will benefit from the State Health Insurance Programme after September 1, 2012;
- Rules for issuing Health Insurance Plan;
- How one can use the services offered by the state health insurance plan?
- What kind of medical costs are covered/reimbursed by the state health insurance plan?
- What is the role of media in terms of information provision for the population of Georgia?

All meetings were followed by discussions where invited guests expressed their ideas and talked about the problems in healthcare and social welfare sectors.

Questions primarily dealt with:

- Social expertise of persons with disabilities;
- Issuing all types of medical forms and prescriptions at dispensary level;
- Costs for chemotherapy and radiation therapy.

Attendees of the meeting had an opportunity to get answers to all questions and issues. The Project was implemented by the Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Affairs. The responsible structural division of the project was the Office of the Minister and PR Department. The Project lasted for eight months in Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kakheti regions.

Within the Project, nine field and informational meetings were organized in the regions densely populated with national minorities. As a result, national minorities are better informed about ongoing reforms in the system. National minorities refer to medical institutions more often. Also, they are more involved in the process of identifying and solving the problems.

Provision of Information about the State Screening Programme to the Residents of Samtskhe-Javakheti and Kvemo Kartli Regions

Under the organizational support of the Office of State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration and with the participation of National Screening Center, residents of the regions were provided with the information about State Screening Programme. Presentations of medical programmes were organized in three regions (Kakheti - Karajala village in Telavi, Samtskhe-Javakheti - Akhalkalaki and Kvemo Kartli - Gardabani municipality).

Local residents were introduced with the details of the programme by a local centre specialist. Informational brochures were distributed in order to increase the involvement of population in this programme.

As it has been reported before the State Cancer Screening program, which has been operating since 2008 in Georgia, provides free medical checks for every citizen of Georgia.

Meeting and Obtaining Information about the Problems of the Qist Population in Pankisi Gorge

On June 14-22, 2012, a staff member of Civic Integration Division of the Office of the State Minister for Reintegration visited Pankisi Gorge within the NCAP, and met with local Ossetian and Qist population to identify their problems.

VI. Preservation of Culture and Identity

2012 stands out in terms of number of interesting projects and activities that fostered national minorities' involvement in cultural life of the country and supported preservation of their cultural identity. The projects envisaging support to national minorities' cultures are worth mentioning, implemented within "Support to Cultures of National Minorities" and "Book and Literature" programmes. Several translations were published and diverse activities were implemented within the "Book and Literature" Programme. This means that the policy of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia is not limited to only one programme in terms of preservation of cultural identity of ethnic minorities in Georgia.

Support to Center of Circassian Culture

In February 15, 2012, LEPL "Center of Circassian Culture" was established by the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia. The main goal of the Center is to preserve and develop traditions of Circassian culture. The Center was supported in terms of implementation of the activities envisaged for the 2nd Quarter.

Opening Circles for Learning Tapestry Weaving

With the support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, circles of learning Azerbaijani carpet and tapestry weaving were opened at Mirza Fatali Akhundov Azerbaijani Culture Museum. Exhibition of finest tapestries was also organized. Within the project, it is important to teach children in minority regions a special technique for carpet weaving and tutor them about this old Azeri tradition. Within the project, seven tapestries were weaved according to Azeri carpet ornaments. Excursion to the village Kesalo of Marneuli municipality was organized for schoolchildren in order to show them techniques of carpet weaving. Five participants of the Project attended on spot the process of threading and coloring with thread.

With recommendations of the Project's teacher, schoolchildren selected oldest (traditional) ornaments for drawing sketches. 10 main sketches were developed. In addition, schoolchildren drew up five sketches with relatively easy ornaments.

Support to Libraries

Marneuli, Akhalkalaki, Tsalka and Ninotsminda museums were equipped with four computer sets (each). Equipping libraries of minority regions with computers would help their communication, foster integration in common informational space and increase the pace of conducting the assigned work.

Support to Heydar Aliyev Tbilisi Azerbaijan Theater

Heydar Aliyev Tbilisi Azerbaijan Theater Performance was supported financially to perform the "Adventure of the vizier of Lenkoran khanate." The performance was dedicated to 200th anniversary of a founder of Azerbaijani drama theater - Mirza Fatali Akhundov. It is noteworthy that this performance was not staged in the theater for tens of years.

Azerbaijani Edition of Vasha Pshavela's "Gogotur and Apshina"

The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia covered costs for the translation of Vasha Pshavela's "Gogotur and Apshina" into Azeri language. Translation was made by Oqtai Kazumov. The book will foster popularization of the Georgian classical poetry and deepen the interest of Azeri people toward Georgian written manuscripts.

Ashugh Poetry Evenings

Ashugh poetry sessions were organized twice throughout the year 2012. The Ministry offered Tumanishvili Film Actors Theater's space free of charge. Governmental support for organizing such event is of utmost importance. It promotes preservation of traditions and at the same time, raises awareness of the Georgian society about such traditions.

Evening Dedicated to Sayat-Nova

With the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, an evening dedicated to Sayat-Nova was organized. Ministry covered the honorarium of the ensemble "Ksovrelebi," participating in the evening. Considering Sayat-Nova's popularity, the evening dedicated to this poet equaled to the national celebration.

Publishing Album of Armenian Painters

With the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, an album of Armenian painters in Georgia was published. The album encompassed works of 22 Armenian painters. It can be said that the album depicted the whole picture of the Armenian painters' creative work in Georgia.

Anthology of Armenian Literature in Georgian

The Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia published the Anthology of Armenian Literature in Georgian language. The Anthology brings together the whole picture of Armenian writing from classical to modern literature.

Promotion of Literary Works of Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian Writers via the Website: www.cau.lib.ge

With the financial support of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, preliminary works were supported at www.cau.lib.ge to promote literary Works of Georgian, Azerbaijani and Armenian Writers via the Website. 6-8 persons were employed for the project. The website would foster systematization and consistency of the format, so that to have complete picture about Caucasian literature.

Multi-Ethnic Art Festival “Under One Sky”

Multi-ethnic art festival "Under One Sky - Dialogue of Cultures" was held, engaging schoolchildren and folklore ensembles from Tbilisi and the regions densely populated by national minorities (total of 175 participants from 15 schools). The Festival was organized with the support of the Office of State Minister of Georgia for Reintegration and contribution of the Ministry of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia.

The festival is organized annually and it aims at deepening intercultural dialogue, sharing traditions and knowledge, and building connections among different ethnic groups of Georgia. In line with the Decree of the Minister of Culture and Monument Protection of Georgia, 11 teachers (national minorities) were awarded with a rank of Honored Teacher and were given one-time prize, amount of 300 GEL. Also, each participant of the festival was awarded with Mp3 Players and certificates.

Tbilisi Multi-Ethnic Festival

The Festival engaged different ethnic groups living in Tbilisi. Ethnic groups presented their folk music, ethnography, customs and traditions, art works, etc. 2-day Festival encompassed degustation of national cuisines and sharing recipes. Tbilisi cuisine turned out to be an amalgamation of different national foods.

The major goal of the Project was to connect and build ties between ethnically Georgian and ethnically non-Georgian youth; build tolerance and cooperation; promote sharing of cultural and ethnic specificities and increase civic consciousness of young people living in Georgia. The Festival was organized on April 20-June 9, 2012. Up to 150 beneficiaries took part in the Festival.

Ilia Chavchavadze National Parliamentary Library of Georgia

Ilia Chavchavadze National Parliamentary Library of Georgia actively promoted and supported cultural and art activities of national minorities in Georgia. Organizations and individuals working on national minority issues had an opportunity to use the spaces and materials in the archives of the library.

Throughout reporting period of 2012, the National Parliamentary Library of Georgia hosted up to 15 events:

- Circassian Language and Culture Day in Tbilisi;
- Exhibition dedicated to the 500th Anniversary of Armenian printed book;
- Circassian Flag Day in the National Library;
- Georgian-Chechen Journalists Forum;
- An event “Roma People in Georgia;”
- Opening of Tolerance Corner;
- An evening dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Prof. Tatyana Dudenko;
- An evening dedicated to the 70th Anniversary of Armenian painter Gayane Khachatryan – “We, Friends Remember!”
- An evening dedicated to the 80th Anniversary of Giorgi Bestauti - an Ossetian poet, translator and public figure;
- Exhibition and Conference on Georgian-Turkish Relationship;
- An exhibition dedicated to the celebration of Circassian (Adighean) Language and Culture;
- Photo exhibition of Armenian photographer Khachatur Vartanyants;
- Placing electronic versions of photographs by Armenian photographer Khachatur Vartanyants in the photo collection of the electronic library “Iverieli”
- A poetry and musical evening of Elina Urumova - a member of Belarus Diaspora in Georgia: the Union “Siabri”
- Presentation of Georgian-Azerbaijani-Armenian-Russian Electronic Dictionary;
- Celebration of Jewish Festival Hanukkah at the National Library.