

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Kindergartens, schools, cinemas and theaters to reopen as well as quarantined town Mestia and the village of Lenjeri in Upper Svaneti.**
- **Government decreases quarantine, self-isolation time to 12 days.**
- **Families to receive one-time assistance of 200 GEL per child.**
- **COVID-19: Gov't helps the Abkhaz and S. Ossetian side.**
- **New state programme to allow foreigners to travel to, work remotely from Georgia**
- **StopCov fund has accumulated GEL 134 334 008 as of 27 August 2020.**

1,196
Total recovered

1,455
Confirmed cases

19
Total deaths

5,806
People in quarantine

Source: www.stopcov.ge 28 August 2020

Georgia situation overview

- Schools, cinemas will resume starting from September 15. Kindergartens, theaters will follow on October 1. In addition, the opening of now quarantined Mestia and the village of Lenjeri in the Svaneti region is planned for September 2. The government has developed recommendations for safe reopening of public schools and kindergartens in order to prevent the spread of coronavirus.
- Individuals will have to spend 12 days instead of 14 in quarantine or self-isolation in Georgia, according to a new decree which came into force on August 12.
- As of August 27, 810,000 children have registered on the special electronic portal (daxmareba.moh.gov.ge) in order to receive financial assistance in the amount of 200 GEL, which is intended for children under the age of 18. Registration in the system will be open until 1 December 2020. The assistance is the part of the anti-crisis plan to help citizens overcome the financial challenges caused by the coronavirus pandemic.
- The office of SMR disseminated information, explaining in detail what kind of assistance the Georgian side provided Sukhumi and Tskhinvali with. The assistance mainly encompassed four directions: Distribution of information materials containing recommendations and preventive measures, including the protocols and guidelines developed by the NCDC; Online consultations with local doctors, giving them relevant advice; Provision of the region of Abkhazia with medical equipment, medications and hygienic supplies; and Provision infected with the coronavirus treatment on the territories under the Georgian jurisdiction.
- 'Remotely from Georgia', a new state programme that allows foreign citizens to travel to and work remotely from Georgia, has started on August 27. Foreigners from 95 countries will be allowed to apply for the programme if they intend to stay in Georgia for at least 180 days.

Coordination arrangements

- The Prime Minister of Georgia has established and leads an Inter-Governmental Coordination Council to combat the COVID-19 crisis.

Mitigation and response

Detailed report on measure taken by the GoG is translated in English and can be accessed at:

http://gov.ge/index.php?lang_id=ENG&sec_id=41&info_id=76497

Response by the UN agencies, funds and programmes (AFPs)

UNDP

- UNDP helped to organize a forum on “Regional tourism in times of pandemic” in Ambrolauri on 21 August 2020, with Swiss and Austrian support and in partnership with the Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure. Over 200 local entrepreneurs, tourism service providers, and representatives of local government and civil society discussed coping strategies to bolster tourism development in western Georgia in the adverse conditions created by COVID-19. The forum was accompanied by a fair of local products which offered entrepreneurs from the mountainous Racha-Lechkhumi-Kvemo Svaneti region an opportunity to showcase their handiwork and network with tourism service providers.
- To support the revival of tourism in Adjara in pandemic conditions, UNDP worked with the region’s Department of Tourism and Resorts to provide 100 tour guides operating in the region with individual protection equipment, including masks, face shields, non-contact thermometers and disinfectant. These supplies will help operate tours safely and at a lower cost. In addition, 50 of the most active guides received sound amplification equipment to enable them to conduct their tours in open space and enforce social distancing more comfortably. UNDP already provided training to guides, tour operators and tourism information centers on general coronavirus recommendations to help them keep tourists safe in Adjara.
- With UNDP funding, the Charity Humanitarian Centre “Abkhazeti” (CHCA) continued its work to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and support vulnerable households in IDP collective centers in the Shida Kartli, Imereti and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti regions of Georgia. Based on quantitative research, 182 vulnerable IDP families received food supplies for a month and 78 women IDPs received psychological counselling.
- Responding to an upsurge COVID-19 cases in Abkhazia, UNDP delivered a new shipment of protective gear and medical supplies to Gudauta Hospital on 15 August 2020. With a total value of USD 28,000, the shipment included 2,000 protective biosafety coveralls; 1,440 N95 respirator masks; 20 infrared thermometers; 10,000 nitrile gloves in various sizes; 4,000 foot covers; 300 liters of hand sanitizer; 250 liters of disinfectant; ten disinfectant floor mats; and 250 liters of antibacterial hand soap. This was the fifth UNDP shipment delivered to Abkhaz healthcare facilities since the start of the pandemic, with funding from

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USAID, the EU and UNDP. The total value of COVID-related supplies delivered by UNDP now exceeds USD 130,000.

- As part of the effort to fight the infestation of the brown marmorated stink bug, UNDP on 18 August 2020 organized a shipment of 20,000 liters of Bifenthrin (Insacar) insecticide across the conflict divide to Abkhazia. The total value of the shipment was USD 206,000. The delivery was arranged under the auspices of the Office of SMR and the National Food Agency of the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture of Georgia. Transportation was carried out by the Joint EU-UNDP Dialogue Coordination Mechanism. The insecticide is intended for use in protecting crops from the stink bug. The COVID-19 crisis has made it harder for local farmers to afford pesticides and fertilizers. The shipment included 500 instruction manuals on proper use of the insecticide. Quantities are specified by district, with Sukhumi to receive 2,000 liters, Gagra, 1,000 liters, Gudauta, 1,000 liters, Gulripshi, 4,500 liters, Ochamchire, 4,500 liters, Tkvarcheli 2,000 liters and Gali, 5,000 liters.
- Through the USAID-funded Horizons project, UNDP launched an online training course on hospital management in the COVID-19 context for Abkhaz medical personnel. A session on “Existing and recommended algorithms for case findings and contact tracing” was conducted on 21 August for epidemiologists from Gudauta Hospital, the COVID-19-designated treatment facility in Abkhazia, and the Sanitary and Epidemiology Service. Heads of both institutions participated. The training was provided through the use of ICT equipment that UNDP installed in 11 different medical facilities in Abkhazia.

WHO

- Preparatory works between WHO and NCDC to develop posters, billboards and videos, also webinars for communication interventions in Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti districts continued under the USAID supported project.
- WHO consultants continued delivering training webinars on IPC issues and laboratories, under the USAID supported project.
- Logistic arrangements have been made for the receipt of the shipped BGI testing kits (40,000) and ThermoFisher testing kits (26,000 under the USAID supported project) and swabs and viral transport medium (26,000) for the designated laboratories.
- WHO, in coordination with UN RC Office and with UNHCR logistical support delivered PPEs, disinfectants, alcohol-based solutions, hand rub and wipes, oxygen concentrators, cold boxes for laboratory samples to Abkhazia (supplies procured under the EU DG NEAR and USAID supported projects).
- Regional trainings for healthcare workers on the case investigation protocols for PHC doctors, ambulance personal and public health centers' epidemiologists under EU DG NEAR funding have been conducted in 10 regions.
- IPC capabilities assessment in 16 hospitals throughout the country (under the EU DG NEAR project) have been completed and the assessment report drafted.

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UNICEF

- UNICEF Representative met with the newly appointed State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality to discuss the challenges created by COVID-19 and future partnerships, and along with the Governor of Kvemo Kartli delivered essential hygiene and food supplies to 82 vulnerable families in Kharajalari village.
- UNICEF delivered a batch of PPE and sanitizers to the Abkhazia region, which was further distributed to health centers in all districts of Abkhazia.
- UNICEF, along with the PMO and the Ministry of IDPs, Health, Labour and Social Affairs, shared the findings of the study – Impact of COVID-19 on Poverty in Georgia, and presented a microsimulation model for estimating the impact of COVID-19 on population and child poverty to NGOs and the media.
- UNICEF, in collaboration with NCDC, continues supporting the Ministry of Education in the safe re-opening of schools, including developing posters and videos and interviews by UNICEF Representative.
- The UNICEF-supported project, Parenting During Pandemic, began on 17 August, aiming at equipping parents in dealing with COVID-19-related parenting stress, and teach them about cyber risks and protection measures.
- In partnership with the Journalism Resource Centre and with financial support from USAID, nine regional TV stations started broadcasting daily 15-minute COVID-19-related news throughout Georgia in Georgian, Armenian, and Azerbaijani languages.
- UNICEF held a two-day seminar in Akhalkalaki for the Youth Center and NGOs on upholding and protecting the rights of the child, including in emergencies.

UNFPA

- An on-line training course for healthcare providers on clinical management of pregnant women affected by COVID-19 has been developed and approved by Tbilisi State Medical University professional board as part of the learning strategy.
- Almost 1,400 vulnerable older people living alone (out of some 2,300 older persons targeted) have received food parcels, personal protective gear, sanitation kits and information materials on COVID-19 specifically designed for older persons. Almost 80% of such impoverished elderly people are women. First round of home-care visits to all beneficiaries have been conducted by the GRCS volunteers in all four target municipalities.
- The staff of all eleven state-funded long-term care institutions are being provided with protective gear and disinfectants to help in prevention of COVID-19. UNFPA conducted visits in four care services (Kutaisi, Ozurgeti, Kareli and Gori) to oversee provision of PPE's and initial monitoring visits of representatives of State Care Agency. During the visit UNFPA representatives also interviewed beneficiaries and staff members to better understand major concerns and challenges during pandemic lockdown and if any improvements are needed.

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FAO

- FAO, under the Agricultural and Rural Development Project in Georgia funded by Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) in close collaboration with the Agrarian Movement in Georgia, conducts vegetable and wine grape production, as well as beekeeping training series for the farmers in Shida Kartli and Racha-Lechkhumi effected by the pandemic.
- Children's two football teams were equipped by FAO and ADC under the Agricultural and Rural Development Project in Georgia. Young football players from Plevi community of Khashuri municipality received brand new uniforms and sports equipment.
- FAO and EU, under ENPARD, announce third cycle of agricultural grant competition to support the farmers effected by the pandemic.
- The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Georgia Country Office, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and Liberty Bank initiated series of joint meetings in different regions of Georgia to increase awareness and empower rural women.

UN Women

- UN Women partnered up with IDP Women's Association "Consent" under the project "Maintaining support for the Women, Peace and Security agenda in Georgia, ensuring adaptation and responsiveness to COVID-19 to inform longer-term responses" funded by UK CSSF. Within the framework of this project, IDP Women's Association "Consent" conducted a training in Gori on 18-19 August, on IT skills, cyber-security, privacy, fake news surfing, cyber violence and harassment, as well as GBV/DV during COVID-19, which was attended by 20 conflict-affected women, including young women, from Kareli, Gori and Kaspi Municipalities.

IOM

- IOM started a new, US Government-funded project, to provide direct humanitarian assistance to vulnerable foreign nationals stranded in Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan. Assistance will be tailored to individual needs on the basis of a rigorous eligibility assessment in line with IOM's best practices. Foreseen assistance includes housing, personal documents, food / hygienic items, medical care, and legal support (visa extension assistance, counselling). It is envisaged to conduct a regional assessment to map out stranded and vulnerable migrants in the region and assess the breadth and depth of COVID-19 impact on these groups, delivering monthly situation re-ports and generating a comprehensive evidence-basis on the relevant vulnerable groups' status and COVID-19 related needs in the countries of the South Caucasus. Fit-for-purpose information, education communication (IEC) materials will be developed and disseminated in appropriate languages and through migrant-preferred channels, containing critical information on health, immigration, and socio-economic concerns among the target groups.
- IOM provided cash and medical assistance to respond to the basic needs of vulnerable migrants from Jordan, Bangladesh, Cameroon, Guinee, India, Japan, Jordan, Moldova, Somalia, Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan, who are stranded in Georgia due to COVID-19. Further, IOM supported return of a national of Iran, stranded in Georgia due to COVID-19 via charter flight.

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- IOM, jointly with its partner NGOs in Tbilisi and the regions of Georgia, continues to provide critical assistance to vulnerable foreign nationals in the form of information provision, legal aid and psycho-social assistance in the time of COVID-19.

Response by international development partners

- The USAID will increase support for manufacturing, e-commerce, information and communications technology (ICT), and other innovative sectors, said Georgian Economy Minister Natia Turnava after meeting the USAID Georgia mission Director Peter Wiebler.
- The World Bank has published a [study](#) “Enterprise Surveys Follow-up on Covid-19” on the impact of Covid-19 on private companies.

Important links to follow

General:

- <https://hr.un.org/page/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>
- <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/covid-19-outbreak-readiness-and-response>
- <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-for-the-new-coronavirus>
- Disaster management and contingency planning: <https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/2527>
- WHO Whatsapp Thread for Q&A: <http://bit.ly/who-covid19-whatsapp>
- UNIDO COVID-19 Industrial Recovery Programme, <https://www.unido.org/news/unido-launches-covid-19-industrial-recovery-programme>
- UNIDO's publication "COVID-19: Digital Transformation and Industrial Recovery" <https://hub.unido.org/sites/default/files/publications/UNIDO-COVID-Digital%20Transformation.pdf>.

Georgia:

- Government of Georgia website on COVID-19 <https://stopcov.ge/en>
- National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health [COVID-19 related information, including epidemiology, education materials and regulations: <https://www.ncdc.ge/Pages/User/News.aspx?ID=66254a4e-6c23-49ef-9157-4fcc247db00c>
- Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia hotline: 1505 U
- UNICEF Georgia supported COVID-19 hotline to provide assistance to children and their families: **111**
- Government of Georgia hotline: **144**
- Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs, Emergency and Operative Response Centre: **112**
- COVID-19 Georgia live blog: <https://civil.ge/archives/342486>

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