

HIGHLIGHTS

- **Changes in Entry Rules for Georgian Citizens**
- **Georgia to Perform 20,000 Tests Per Day**
- **Georgia Puts Largest Cities into 2-Months Partial Lockdown, Announces Social, Economic Programs**
- **StopCov fund has accumulated GEL 138 341 491 as of 4 December 2020**

126,904
Total recovered

152,704
Confirmed cases

1,425
Total deaths

1,241
People in quarantine

Source: www.stopcov.ge 4 December 2020

Georgia Situation Overview

- 2 Dec - The Interagency Coordination Council announced changes to isolation/quarantine rules for Georgian citizens entering the country, according to which citizens who arrive in Georgia without a negative PCR test result will no longer have to undergo mandatory quarantine at a hotel, and must, instead, self-isolate for 12 days. Citizens able to provide a negative PCR test result performed in the last 72 hours will only have to self-isolate for 8 days.
- 2 Dec - Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia said Georgia's 2-months-long restriction plan will also include an "intensive testing program," with the government significantly expanding its use of rapid antigen tests and performing approximately 20,000 COVID-19 tests per day in addition to the daily tests conducted by private laboratories.
- The Government of Georgia announced a nationwide multi-phased 2-months-long restriction plan starting from November 28 in a bid to slow a resurgent COVID-19 outbreak, including by putting Georgia's eight largest cities and ski resorts into partial lockdown. To reduce the economic hardships stemming from the partial lockdown, Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia also announced a number of social and financial assistance packages.

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

Mitigation measures taken by the Government of Georgia

Detailed report on measures 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)

WHO

- WHO participated in the 1st International stakeholder's coordination meeting organized by UN RC Office and provided an overview of COVID-19 vaccine deployment and vaccination preparedness in Georgia. Following that WHO has shared with the MoH the joint GAVI, WHO, UNICEF, WB letter and suggested a donor coordination meeting to be convened at the earliest convenience. At the meeting WHO shared the update (for November) provided by country via Regional pandemic vaccine preparedness mechanism. WHO is ready to provide the necessary technical assistance for the development of the National Vaccine Deployment Plan.
- WHO started online training of trainers on Mental Health for Primary Health Care personnel, 30 November-4 December. Altogether 15 will be trained by partner organization Global Initiative in Psychiatry, under the EU DG NEAR supported project.
- Under the same EU DG NEAR supported project, WHO organized trainings on risks and prevention of COVID-19 for 88 long-haul truck drivers and 30 agrarian market vendors in the port city Poti and Khobi open market. Partner organization is International Orthodox Christian Charities.
- WHO initiated purchase of a Sampling/isolation tent for COVID patients to be used by the Emergency Coordination and Emergency Assistance Center/MoH, with financial support from Embassy of Israel/MASHAV.
- WHO continued planning of the "Qualitative formative research to inform policies for engaging health workers to ensure successful uptake of covid-19 vaccination" in partnership with NCDC

UNICEF

- The UNICEF Representative made a video address from Akhalkalaki, where he met with children and young people to discuss the challenges they are experiencing, as well as their vision for the future.
- UNICEF, with financial support from USAID, launched a new initiative to enhance COVID-19 related risk communication among young people.
- UNICEF's partner, Children of Georgia (CoG), provided online psychological support to 410 children and 329 caregivers in small group homes and foster care through group and individual sessions.
- UNICEF's partner, Adjara Organization of Georgia Scout's Movement, provided training on COVID-19 prevention measures to 415 students in 10 rural public schools in Adjara region.
- UNICEF's partner, Global Initiative in Psychiatry (GIP) continued online training sessions on psychosocial issues for students and teachers of Adjara and Gori public schools reaching 952 students and 134 teachers.

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- UNICEF delivered agricultural equipment to 78 households, reaching 251 children and 212 adults in Abkhazia region.
- UNICEF provided food parcels, hygiene supplies and basic medical kits to 398 families in need, including 2,231 children and 989 adults in the Abkhazia region.
- UNICEF handed over 500 boxes of food and hygiene items to the Office of State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality for further distribution to female headed households with many children, thus meeting the critical needs of over 2,000 most vulnerable individuals across the country.
- UNICEF with financial support from USAID, delivered sanitizers to schools near the administrative border line to facilitate a safe learning environment.
- UNICEF Representative co-facilitated the first panel discussion organized by the Child Rights Center of Akaki Tsereteli State University on Child Rights in Georgia and the impact of COVID-19 on fundamental rights of children.
- UNICEF delivered personal protective equipment to the local offices of the Social Service Agency in Kutaisi, Zugdidi and Batumi. This supplies will help the personnel of the Agency to safely continue their work.
- A Memorandum of Cooperation was signed between UNICEF and Batumi City Hall on the decision to join the Child Friendly City initiative. The memorandum outlines specific actions needed for Batumi to become a part of the Child Friendly Cities Initiative and to pay greater attention to meeting the rights of their youngest citizens, including in emergencies.

UNFPA

- In order to ensure the continuity of critical SRH services, through UNFPA Core Funds and in cooperation with the Implementing Partner – Union Tanadgoma, the Country Office supplied selected PPEs (Gowns, Coveralls, Surgical Masks), Oxygenators (3), and Pulse Oximeters (10) and disinfectants to two maternal and reproductive health facilities in Sukhumi; in total worth to over 8,000 USD.
- UNFPA in partnership with the Georgia Red Cross Society, finalized the distribution of food and hygiene parcels (including protective gear and info materials on COVID-19 risk and prevention) in Kaspi municipality; This will mark end of the 2nd stage of the project “Mitigating COVID 19 impact in Georgia” funded by the UN COVID-19 MPTF and German Government, that envisaged support to total of 4100 vulnerable older people living alone in 7 poorer municipalities (Bolnisi, Dmanisi, Tianeti, Kaspi, Gori, Qeda and Shuakhevi).

UNDP

- UNDP continued its regular deliveries of protective gear, healthcare commodities and hygienic supplies to COVID-19 treatment centers and other medical facilities in Abkhazia. The tenth shipment delivered this year, funded by USAID through the Horizons programme, contained 4,000 medical biosafety suits; 3,000 disposable medical gowns; 3,000 shoe covers; 4,500 head covers; 10,650 masks; 700 plastic face shields; 42,000 gloves; 100 infrared thermometers; 200 mercury thermometers; 30 sensor-activated hand sanitizer dispensers; and 500 liters of hand sanitizer. The goods in the shipment were worth USD 60,000, bringing the total value of COVID-19 supplies delivered by UNDP to Abkhazia this year to USD 663,555.
- UNDP is also working through partners in Abkhazia to distribute COVID-19 protective supplies directly to rural healthcare clinics, local civil society organizations and vulnerable groups such as low-income families, elderly people living alone and high-risk persons. In November, Society for Future Generation distributed 13,000 face masks, 5,000 safety gloves, 500 liters of disinfectant, 60 pulse oximeters and 40 UV lamps.
- With the facilitation of the Dialogue Coordination Mechanism, UNDP also organized the transport of 10,000 doses of quadrivalent flu vaccine to Abkhazia to bolster seasonal flu prevention efforts. The vaccines, with a value of USD 70,000, were provided by the National Center for Disease Control (NCDC).
- UNDP also continued to organize regular consultations between Abkhaz and Georgian medical professionals and the local population, as a way of sharing evidence-based and up-to-date information on COVID-19. Most recently, the local CSO Association for Peaceful and Business Caucasus organized an online consultation on atypical and asymptomatic COVID-19 cases with nine staff from a Sukhumi clinic.
- Under the joint EU-UNDP ENPARD III Abkhazia project, UNDP in November 2020 completed a fifth stocktaking exercise engaging more than 60 beneficiaries and partners (mostly small agricultural firms). The data suggested that the attempted revival of the tourist season in late summer had not brought relief to local entrepreneurs: 69% of those surveyed reported a decrease in revenue in November, compared to 62% in September; and 75% reported a drop in demand in November compared to 66% in September. Furthermore, 75% reported negative effects on their supply chain, compared to 65% in September 2020. The research showed that women-headed commercial activities have experienced greater losses due to pandemic pressures, pointing to a need for tailor-made support for female entrepreneurs in Abkhazia.
- Under the Joint EU-UN programme to improve vocational training in Abkhazia, UNDP organized a session at Tkvarcheli College to brief faculty and management on how to incorporate WHO-recommended safety measures for COVID-19 into their teaching and maintenance routines. UNDP also distributed plastic face shields, information packages and T-shirts bearing WHO recommendations on COVID-19 prevention.
- With UK funding, UNDP supported the Georgia Red Cross Society (GRCS) to create a home care (HC) online learning platform and adapt a HC mobile application. The online learning platform will support the increased workload of the GRCS during the health crisis and provide ongoing learning opportunities for HC staff and volunteers both during and after the pandemic. The platform is currently being tested and developed further for additional content. As part of the same initiative, the GRCS delivered home care services, information and

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counselling to more than 5,000 elderly and vulnerable persons in 30 regional locations through a network of more than 600 caregivers and volunteers. The GRCS also facilitated the process of establishing 150 self-support groups (SSG), each with over 30 SSG members involved in HC.

- UNDP provided USD 99,000 worth of masks, gowns and other protective gear to the Government to equip 8,000 non-medical public-sector workers who need to stay safe while performing their duties. The supplies will be distributed to personnel from the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health, as well as to municipal staff in all regions of Georgia who continue to perform their duties despite the new restrictive measures imposed on 28 November 2020. The deliveries are part of a USD 1 million UN joint programme aimed at helping Georgia mitigate the consequences of the pandemic. It is funded by the UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund and implemented by UNDP jointly with UNICEF and UNFPA.
- UNDP completed a study on the socio-economic impact of COVID-19 on persons with disabilities, as part of a broader assessment of Georgia's COVID-19 response led by the Administration of the Government. The study assessed how well the rights of persons with disabilities were protected when restrictions were imposed to prevent the spread of the virus. Topics covered include access to information, health and social protection, rehabilitation services, education and persons in institutions and under quarantine.
- With SDC support, UNDP launched short-term training and retraining courses for a first group of 165 farmers to help them cope with COVID-19 challenges. Drawing on state-authorized short-term training programmes, the subjects covered include farm management, budgeting and accounting; traditional cuisine; primary grape processing; wine making, bottling and ageing; production of grape seedlings and planting new vineyards; production of canned fruit and vegetables; forest restoration and cultivation; the pruning and forming of pome and stone fruit trees; and beekeeping. UNDP plans to conduct similar training for a total of 1,000 farmers from all across the country by the end of 2021.
- Under the EU-funded ENPARD III programme, UNDP launched a call for proposals from NGOs as part of a USD 110,000 competitive grants scheme aimed at developing the digital skills of rural communities and firms. The idea is to help rural areas harness the benefits of digital technologies for post-COVID recovery.

IOM

- IOM provided direct humanitarian assistance - accommodation, food, medical assistance, legal assistance - to 57 vulnerable migrants from Algeria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Guinea, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Palestine, Russia, Somalia, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan to support them during the time of COVID-19.
- IOM provided voluntary return assistance on regular flights to 15 vulnerable migrants going back to Bangladesh, Moldova and Uzbekistan, stranded in Georgia due to COVID-19 and received requests for support in voluntary return to country of origin from 19 migrants from Bangladesh, Cote d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Iran, Iraq Kyrgyzstan, Morocco, Thailand and Uzbekistan who are stranded in Georgia due to

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COVID-19. Further, IOM supported migrants from Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Somalia and Uzbekistan with emergency travel documents.

- IOM supported return of 43 Georgian nationals from Germany (29 persons, among them three severe medical cases and one unaccompanied minor), Belgium (5 persons), Austria (3 persons), Netherlands (3 persons), Switzerland (3 persons). Post-arrival reintegration assistance was provided to 72 cases returned from Greece, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, Finland and Netherlands. Twelve consultations were provided to Georgian nationals in Germany, Switzerland, Netherlands, Austria, Greece and Finland on pre-departure and medical issues and COVID-related post arrival measures.

UNHCR

- ‘Humanitarian corridor’ from Abkhazia to TAT: UNHCR supports the operation of the humanitarian corridor three times a week (on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays) to allow pensioners to access their pensions and buy essential medicines at mobile services across the bridge. UNHCR teams on both sides of the bridge organize and support the pensioners with transport, documents, banking and pharmacy services provided by the GoG through mobile services close to the bridge. Since the opening of the ‘corridor’ on 15 October, over 20 days, 1,250 pensioners crossed and were able to receive pensions and buy urgently needed medicines.
- As of 30 November, UNHCR Georgia has now provided COVID emergency cash assistance to a total of 835 individuals, asylum seekers, refugees, humanitarian status holders and stateless persons; Additional CBI in the context of COVID will again have to be expanded during the next two months of lockdown.
- In response to COVID-19 situation, UNHCR completed a small-scale community support project in Zemo Bergebi village of Gali district aimed at improving water, hygiene and sanitary conditions in the kindergarten and healthcare point. The new facilities ensure access of village population to primary medical services, create conditions and promote practices to maintain health and prevent the spread of viruses and disease.
- Additional CBI support for IDP families in the context of COVID continues.

FAO

- FAO, under EU-funded ENPARD programme, conducted the training on Good Agricultural Practices, in the village Jalabashvilebi of Keda municipality. 21 farmers (18 men and 3 women) attended the training in two groups. The purpose of the training was to summarize all the topics discussed during previous sessions and explaining the practices implemented on the demonstration plot: land preparation, healthy seedling production, plant nutrition, plant protection, IPM, harvest and post-harvest management.
- FAO, under EU-funded ENPARD programme, organized a field day with farmers in village Chiauri, Lagodekhi municipality. The main topics of the meeting were Integrated Pest Management, disease management and the importance of record keeping. 5 Male farmers participated in the meeting.

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- FAO, under EU-funded ENPARD programme, has signed 2 grant agreements for the total budget of \$ 4,375.16. In the same time period 6 grants for the total value of \$ 76,300.99 have been paid.

Response by international development partners

Dec 4 - According to the U.S. Embassy in Georgia, the U.S. Government donated 26,000 PCR Test kits to Tbilisi through the US Agency for International Development (USAID)

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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