



UNITED NATIONS
GEORGIA



Annual Report

2023



Photo: Leli Blagonravova/UNDP

A UN training participant's T-shirt #StrongWomenStrongIdeas says it all!
At the UN, we're working to empower women and build equality in Georgia

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Foreword

On behalf of the United Nations Country Team in Georgia, it is my pleasure to present the results we delivered in 2023, the third year of implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for 2021-2025. Together with our many partners, we supported Georgia on its pathway to achieving its national development priorities and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The current UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Georgia 2021-2025 was co-signed in 2020 by the Prime Minister and myself as the UN Resident Coordinator as a shared commitment to building a more prosperous, peaceful, inclusive and resilient country. The overarching objective of our joint work remains to enhance human wellbeing, capabilities and social equality in Georgia with the focus on the most vulnerable and marginalized people.

Last year, the world continued to struggle with ongoing and emerging challenges, including wars, climate crisis and growing inequality. In September 2023, world leaders convened in New York for the SDG Summit to mark the mid-point of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to reaffirm their commitments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at a time when only about 15 per cent of targets are on track globally. The stakes are high and ambitious transformative reforms are a matter of utmost urgency to bring the goals within reach.

In 2023, the UN supported Georgia in strengthening resilience, advancing key development reforms, upholding human rights, reducing inequalities and fostering climate action, including USD 51 million spent on a wide range of development activities.

We engaged with the local authorities, grassroots organizations and other local actors to support their contributions to sustainable development in the context of the national decentralization reform. The role of civil society remains central to our joint efforts to achieve the goals. We also maintained our presence in Abkhazia where the UN continued to provide needs-based support to vulnerable people from conflict-affected communities in line with humanitarian principles, and in close partnership with international and local NGOs.

It is essential that we work together to reinvigorate a shared sense of purpose in the implementation of Georgia's key commitments to human rights and sustainable development. We look forward to continuing our cooperation with the Government of Georgia, the civil society and other national actors in the spirit of trust and true partnership. I warmly thank our many counterparts in Georgia for their collaboration with the United Nations and invite you to reflect on our joint results and future plans.

Dr. Sabine Machl

United Nations Resident Coordinator
in Georgia


01

Development context in Georgia


3,69 M

Population

(January 2024)


61.0% - Urban


39.0% - Rural

 Birth Rate
Per 1,000
Population - **10.8**


Georgia experienced a strong economic rebound in post-COVID-19 period, despite the regional conflicts and instability. Its real GDP grew by 10.1% in 2022, boosted by remittances, capital inflows and trade. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine led to a sustained inflow of Ukrainian refugees and Russian nationals, accompanied by significant money transfer flows. Strong growth has allowed the government to reduce the budget deficit and improve its external debt position. At the same time, high inflation, especially on goods of primary consumption, risked offsetting the benefits for the population with lower income, increasing the risks of rising inequalities.

Progress has been notable in recent years in areas such as promoting rights of persons with disabilities, child rights and labour rights. However, socio-economic inequalities persist and so does political and social exclusion of parts of Georgian society due to poverty, violence and discrimination, in particular towards women and girls, ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTIQ+ persons and other vulnerable groups.

Georgia’s dynamic economic growth was not accompanied with strong job creation, and productivity growth at the firm level remained limited. Georgia has relatively high inequality,

but it is also one of few countries in the region where Gini coefficient has been decreasing steadily over the past decade, from 40 to 34 percent. If that trend continues, Georgia is on track to reach the EU average Gini coefficient of 30 percent by 2030. Meanwhile, absolute poverty has more than halved from 37 percent in 2004 to 15.6 percent of the population in 2022. However, relative poverty measured as the share of the population under 60 percent of median consumption has remained unchanged at around 20 percent.

Georgian government submitted its application for EU membership in March 2022, and Georgia was granted an EU candidacy status at the end of 2023 with the decision on opening accession negotiations to be taken at the end of 2024. Coupled with the current resilience of the Georgian economy, this provides an opportunity for the Government to invest in social inclusion and alleviate poverty, inequality and marginalization. In conditions of high uncertainty in the region, longer-term sustainability would require not only managing external risks, but also implementing ambitious structural reforms to advance decentralization, human capital development, rural development, green transition, and strengthening human rights protections and good governance.


 **75.02**
SDG SCORE
42 out of 166 (2023)

 **7,5%**
REAL GDP GROWTH
(2023)

 **15.6%**
POVERTY RATE
(2022)

 **48** OUT OF **142**
COUNTRIES
RULE OF LAW INDEX
(2023)

 **0.7501**
E-GOVERNMENT DEVELOPMENT INDEX
Rank 60 of 193 (2022)

 **0.283**
GENDER INEQUALITY INDEX
69 out of 166 countries (2022)

 **0.814**
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX
60 out of 193 countries (2022)

Click on Statistics
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Photo: RCO Georgia

02

UN development system support to national development priorities through the Cooperation Framework

In its third year of implementing the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Georgia 2021–2025, the UN Country Team continued to work together with the Government of Georgia and many other partners towards enhanced human wellbeing, capabilities, and social equality.

The UN supports Georgia in navigating complex development challenges and maintaining focus on protection of human rights, poverty reduction, gender equality, decent work, climate action, improving education and health, strengthening institutions and other key reforms.

Through this work, the UN supports the efforts to protect and empower vulnerable people who have so far been often left behind on Georgia’s development pathway: some categories of children and youth, informal sector workers, older persons, migrants and refugees, people affected by conflicts, family farmers, some categories of women, national and religious minorities, persons of non-dominant sexual orientation or gender identity, and persons with disabilities.

This section describes joint UN results achieved in 2023 towards each of the five UNSDCF Outcomes.

2021 2022 **2023** 2024 2025



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Outcome 1

Photo: Irakli Dzhaneladze/UNDP

Contributing agencies:



By 2025, all people in Georgia enjoy improved good governance, more open, resilient and accountable institutions, rule of law, equal access to justice, human rights, and increased representation and participation of women in decision-making

OUTCOME 1.1. Inclusive national and local governance systems have greater resilience and capacities to mainstream gender, migration and ensure evidence-based and participatory policy-making, map and address inequalities and deliver quality services to all

OUTCOME 1.2. National legislation and policies to eliminate discrimination, enhance human rights and equal access to justice in Georgia

OUTCOME 1.3. Legislative frameworks, policies and governance systems deliver gender-equal results, combat GBV, violence against children and other harmful practices towards women and girls

SDGs impacted



Expenditures in 2023

\$ 7.862.344

\$ 1.086.199

\$ 856.972

\$ 9.805.515

Total expenditures



Contributing agencies:





Photo: Leli Blagonravova/UNDP

In 2023, the UN's comprehensive and collaborative assistance to Georgia contributed to legal and institutional reforms, enhanced protection of human rights, and adoption of inclusive policies that promote the well-being of diverse communities.

Under the good governance portfolio, the UN worked in partnership with the Government of Georgia to advance the public administration reform, enhance citizen-centric service delivery, bolster cybersecurity, and promote data and evidence-driven policy planning. Advancing the Open Government Partnership initiative provided a space for facilitating dialogue between the government and civil society organizations. The UN also supported the institutionalization of policy planning systems within Parliament, requiring all committees to develop annual plans and related reports using pre-defined uniform standards.

With UN technical support, significant amendments were made to the Budget Code and

the Code of Administrative Offenses, empowering local authorities. The UN's assistance in drafting the Integrated Territorial Development Programme 2024-2026 helped Georgia take a crucial step in promoting socio-economic cohesion and territorial development.

Moreover, the UN supported the decentralization of social planning in eighteen municipalities to pilot needs-based, child-centered social programming, and initiated an Intermunicipal Platform on Social Issues in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti region to facilitate the exchange of experiences among municipalities fostering the development of child-centred local services. Collaboration with Geostat enabled public access to municipal statistics in an online portal, promoting evidence-based policy discussions at the local level.

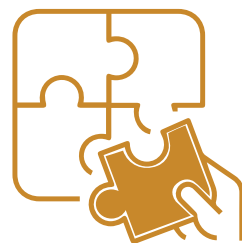
To promote the protection of human rights of all people in Georgia, the UN supported the adoption of the National Human Rights Strategy 2022-2030 and the related Action Plan, fostering dialogue between the state institutions and the civil society. The UN also advocated for a comprehensive approach to human rights and inclusion of all vulnerable groups in the Strategy

knowledge building and the implementation of national policies on reconciliation and civic equality. The UN also assisted in the development of a publication for the Members of Parliament of Georgia, aiming to enhance understanding and support for human rights of LGBTIQ+ persons.

The UN assisted in the development and adoption of the Law on Personal Data Protection, aligning national regulations with the EU General Data Protection Regulation and establishing robust mechanisms to safeguard data privacy.

The UN's collaboration with the Special Investigative Service of Georgia resulted in the development of guidelines for the classification and effective investigation of crimes, such as torture and ill-treatment. Specific guidelines addressing complaints related to tight handcuffing were approved, enhancing accountability and ensuring a more humane approach to law enforcement.

With the aim to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, the UN built capacity of the state agencies and municipal authorities and helped to develop action plans for integration of human rights standards in the local service delivery to



Decentralization reform and implementing the related national Strategy 2020-2025 progressed with the UN assistance in areas such as fiscal decentralization, leading to increased budgets for local governments and transparent municipal practices

 <p>815 healthcare workers</p>	 <p>1532 patrol officers</p>	 <p>Gender-responsive policymaking promoted in all 64 municipalities</p>	 <p>The UN supported the Government in developing integration policies, ensuring access to social protection, education, and legal services for refugees</p>
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and the Action Plan, such as older persons, LGBTIQ+ persons and the homeless people. With the UN support, measures to protect the human rights of older persons, to eliminate child marriage and to uphold the right to housing were included in the Action Plan.

High-level dialogues involving over 370 state and non-state representatives contributed to

persons with disabilities. Another significant achievement was the amendment of the Criminal Procedural Code of Georgia with the UN technical support, removing the discriminatory provisions on questioning witnesses with disabilities in line with the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.



A minibus service launched by the Legal Aid Service, supported by the UN, brought legal aid directly to disadvantaged villages and enabled 115 individual consultations. Additionally, ethnic minority representatives were trained as certified mediators, facilitating the use of mediation for these communities



OVER
12,500

visitors reached through 5 thematic portals with data on persons with disabilities launched together with Geostat

The UN's collaboration with the Special Investigative Service resulted in the development of guidelines and standards for the effective inclusion of witnesses, victims, and accused with disabilities in the investigative process.

The UN helped to increase access to legal aid and mediation services for ethnic minorities.

In the area of decent work and labour rights agenda, the review of Labour Law Reform 2020 Implementation provided a snapshot analysis of the current progress. Social dialogue was strengthened through facilitation of the development of the Action Plan for 2023-2025 of the Tripartite Social Partnership Commission, including promoting tripartite exchanges at the local level in Adjara and Imereti.

Assessment of the Labour Dispute Mediation System in Georgia helped to identify the strengths and weaknesses of existing collective labour dispute mediation mechanisms and developed recommendations for institutional improvements.

To improve the capacity of labour inspection, a study visit was facilitated for Georgian labour authorities to the European Labour Authority in Bratislava, Slovakia. With the UN assistance, the 2022 Annual Labour Inspection Report was translated into English and dissemination was supported in print and through a dedicated stakeholder meeting.

The findings of the assessment of the Georgian Employers' Association conducted by the Danish Industries with the UN support guided the possible pathways towards the adaptation of the Association's governance to the new challenges and opportunities. The UN trained the members of the Georgian Employers' Association on addressing workplace violence and harassment in line with the ILO Convention 190 and the use of ILO's employers' guide on violence and harassment.



Photo: UNICEF

The UN actively contributed to the child-friendly justice reform, developing a comprehensive policy document for its next phase and strengthening the capacities of justice and child protection professionals. The UN built capacity of professionals in the Juvenile Referral Center, focusing on quality control and monitoring systems, upgrading assessment instruments and strengthening positive parenting programmes. Similar efforts were directed towards the National Agency for Crime Prevention and Probation, including training for professionals involved in the Diversion and Mediation programme.

Recognizing the effectiveness of the Center for Psychological and Social Services for Child Victims of Violence (Barnahus), the UN facilitated commitments from key stakeholders to replicate the service nationwide, with plans to establish a new center in Western Georgia. Additionally, the UN supported the State Care Agency in developing a webpage for the child helpline 111, enhancing accessibility for children with special needs.

In line with the Code on the Rights of the Child, the UN analyzed the regulatory framework for a child's right to a family, developed a handbook for judges, lawyers and social workers and conducted multidisciplinary workshops for 105 professionals to prevent institutionalization and support families.

Positive parenting became a priority area for cooperation with the business sector in promoting positive upbringing methods.

Assistance to Georgia in enhancing its migration and border management policies focused on supporting the alignment with the EU standards, promoting inter-agency collaboration to ensure protection of migrant rights, assisting vulnerable migrants and operationalizing legal migration channels. The introduction of migration governance indicators at the local level addressed challenges related to emigration

and the reintegration of returning migrants, emphasizing the importance of targeted services and community engagement.

The UN's collaboration with the Ministry of Health enabled the development of a draft comprehensive integration policy focused on supporting initiatives for refugees with engagement of municipalities. Business grants and training programmes opened additional economic inclusion opportunities for Ukrainian nationals in Georgia.

Fostering gender equality in Georgia remains a key priority for joint UN support. The National Association of Local Authorities of Georgia approved its second Gender Equality Action Plan for 2024-2025 prioritizing the creation of municipal action plans, combating sexual harassment at the local level and strengthening gender data collection. This effort resulted in 26 municipalities becoming parties to the European Charter for Equality of Women and Men in Local Life.

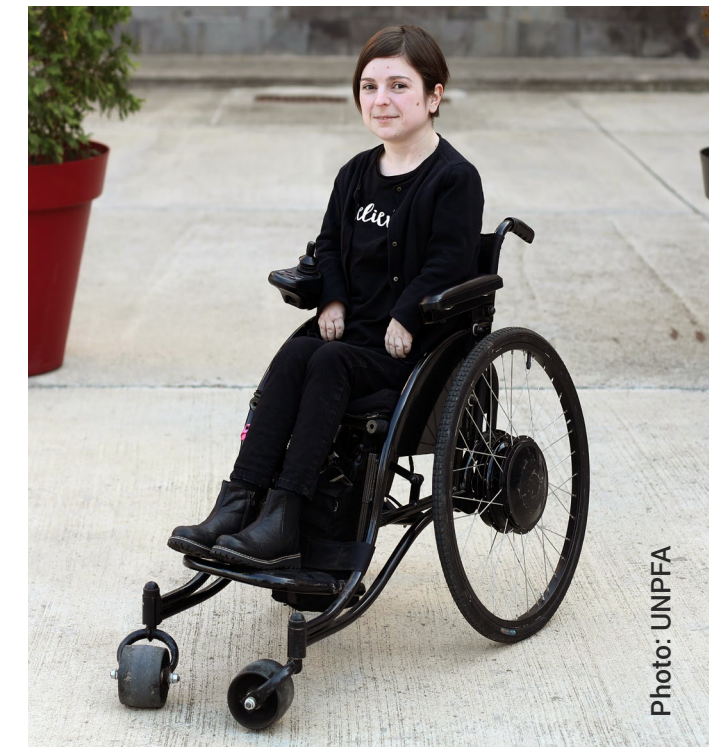


Photo: UNPFA



OVER 1,000

persons benefitted from legal consultations and information meetings conducted in collaboration with the Public Defender's Office



OVER 428,000

parents, professionals, and community leaders engaged in addressing societal norms around violence against children

Compliance with the international labour standards was promoted together with the Georgian Employers' Association at a high-level event in Tbilisi on the practical consequences for employers on the ratification of the ILO Conventions 81 and 190 and the 2004 Protocol of Forced Labour Convention.



Photo: UNDP



Enhanced representation for marginalized groups including women and children with disabilities, victims of sexual harassment and violence, and LGBTIQ+ individuals before local and international courts



Content challenging discriminatory social norms on the Public Broadcaster of Georgia generated over 265,000 views on social media

In collaboration with the Ministry of Finance, the UN developed a preliminary version of the gender tagging methodology, training 46 public servants on its incorporation into Georgia's E-budget system. This initiative will help to ensure a systematic consideration of gender

perspectives in budgetary allocations and financial planning.

The UN provided technical support to the Public Defender's Office in the development of monitoring reports on the effectiveness of gender equality institutional mechanisms, Georgia's gender mainstreaming obligations and gender equality policies of municipalities and monitoring sexual and reproductive health rights of women and girls.

The Civil Service Bureau received the UN assistance in conducting a Gender Impact Assessment of the Law of Georgia on Public Service, which proposed policy amendments to promote women's advancement in leadership positions and to integrate gender into public service operations. Notably, with the UN support, the Bureau became the first public entity to adopt internal guidelines for protecting employees facing domestic violence in 2023.

In March 2023, the Parliament of Georgia, with the UN assistance, adopted the first National Concept for Women's Economic Empowerment, marking a significant step in outlining the country's vision and priorities for a more gender-inclusive economy.

In line with the priorities of the National Youth Strategy 2023-2026, the UN supported the Youth Agency in the development of the National Action Plan 2024 with active participation of Youth Advisory Council representatives.

Through forums, on-job coaching, high-level advocacy, and youth engagement, the UN directly engaged more than 900 politicians and decision-makers, along with more than 300 young people, fostering a more inclusive political landscape and enhanced political participation of women.

The UN also partnered with Geostat to develop the 2023 edition of Women and Men in Georgia report incorporating findings from the Time Use Survey, including data on unpaid domestic

and care work. In addition, the UN collaborated with various stakeholders to develop the third edition of the Country Gender Equality Profile, supporting evidence-driven policymaking and programming for gender equality. Furthermore, the UN partnered with Geostat to develop a comprehensive web portal consolidating child and youth statistics, fostering data accessibility to inform decision-making around children and youth.

The UN also remains strongly committed to combatting gender-based violence, promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights, and challenging discriminatory social norms. The findings of the updated National Survey on Violence against Women were released and provided evidence for further improving relevant policies.

The UN contributed to addressing child marriage by formulating standard operating procedures for social workers, leading awareness campaigns, and engaging with key stakeholders.

The UN also focused on integrating gender equality concepts into migration and border governance policies, emphasizing the importance of improving access to protection services for vulnerable women and girls, particularly in cases of trafficking in human beings and irregular migration. Efforts were made to uphold women's rights in police work through the use of gender-sensitive indicators and improved monitoring and evaluation.

Finally, the UN provided technical assistance and other support to the government to address population ageing, strengthen demographic resilience and to prepare for the Population Census in 2024.



Photo: Women's Information Center

Participants of In Her Shoes role-play exercise in Marneuli

Impact Story

WALKING IN THE SHOES OF VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

Anna Aslanishvili is a civic education teacher at Davitiani school and one of the 1,463 participants who took part in the famous In Her Shoes role-play exercise that put participants in the shoes of victims facing violence. Each of the eight scenarios started with a specific situation, but how it ended depended entirely on the choices the participants made. This activity helped to identify the causes of violence and possible solutions. The immersive experience built empathy and showed how everyone's actions could make a difference in stopping violence. "Participating in the simulation game made me realize how much it helps people to better understand the situation of a victim and relate

to their troubles. In Her Shoes is the best way to raise awareness," said Anna upon completing the exercise.

For two years (2021-2023), the EU-funded project Ending Violence against Women and Girls in Georgia implemented by UN Women Georgia and UNFPA in partnership with the Women's Information Center worked with many groups in Georgia, including civil servants, teachers, police officers, local media, students, and business owners to build their awareness about violence against women. The immersive game In Her Shoes was played over 80 times in nine municipalities across the Kvemo Kartli and Guria regions.



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Photo: Robakidze/UNICEF



Outcome 2

Contributing agencies:



By 2025, all people in Georgia have equitable and inclusive access to quality, resilient and gender-sensitive services delivered in accordance with international human rights standards

OUTCOME 2.1. Improved national capacities for the implementation of policies and programmes that ensure equitable access to and coverage of quality integrated health and nutrition services and the exercise of reproductive rights for all people, particularly, those left behind

OUTCOME 2.2. Improved national capacities for the implementation of policies and programmes that ensure inclusive and equitable access to quality educational programmes that meet international standards

OUTCOME 2.3. Improved national legislation, policy, programs and capacities protect all people in Georgia, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized, against discrimination and ensure equitable access to and coverage of quality social services

SDGs impacted



Expenditures in 2023

\$ 6.932.204

\$ 771.859

\$ 2.128.276

\$ 9.832.339

Total expenditures



Contributing agencies:





Photo: Guram Muradov/WHO



The UN continued its support to providing improved and universally accessible people-centred health services in Georgia. The UN's technical support assisted the ongoing primary healthcare reform process and enabled the introduction of digital health solutions, including telemedicine services for reproductive health, maternal and child health and for the early detection and management of chronic diseases.

With the UN technical support, the national health legislation became better aligned to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to uphold the principles of equality and non-discrimination and to support improved

access to sexual and reproductive health services for women and young persons with disabilities.

To address one of the emerging global public health challenges, the UN supported the elaboration of the Anti-microbial Resistance Strategy for 2024-2030 and the Action Plan for its implementation, approved by the Government.

With the UN technical assistance, a review of palliative care was conducted, and policy dialogue was initiated on strengthening access to Assistive Technologies at the primary healthcare level.

Health Financing Progress Matrix was developed with the UN support to capture shifts in health financing policies and to provide real-time information to policymakers with the aim to promote universal health care. Based on the assessment conducted, the UN shared its expertise to enhance planning capabilities and governance of human resources in health.

The UN also helped to strengthen quality reproductive health services, maternal health and childcare services by refining innovative information management systems, such as Birth Registry and Cancer Screening Registry.

Technical assistance was provided to support the implementation of the Non-Communicable Disease Policy, including tobacco control, to strengthen cervical cancer prevention and screening programmes, ending tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS, and viral hepatitis epidemics. Special attention was given to further strengthening the national capacities for the triple elimination of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, syphilis, and hepatitis B. Through policy support and advocacy, the UN contributed to improved access and availability of integrated sexual and reproductive health and HIV services for key populations in line with the priorities of the National HIV Strategic Plan 2023-2026.

Inputs were provided for strengthening the national immunization programme, including improving the immunization logistics system and developing a plan for the Electronic Immunization Registry.

Technical assistance was provided to enhance the Reference Price Mechanism for medicines to update the Georgian Law on Medical Products to improve access to quality medicines.



Photo: WHO



OVER 28,300

visits were booked online as a result of registration for cervical cancer screening



300

health professionals participated in the 2023 course on interpersonal communication for immunization

The results of the 2022 Mental Health Survey conducted with the UN support provided solid evidence for mobilizing decision-makers and initiating the development of the Child, Adolescent and Youth Mental Health Reform Strategy. Four guidelines with embedded patient pathways on mental health illnesses were developed to improve the quality of services.

The UN contributed to strengthening the healthcare system's response to gender-based violence and violence against women through the development of a protocol for healthcare workers and expanding the pilot on its use in Samegrelo region. Overall, with the UN support, almost 19% of the primary healthcare professionals in Georgia were trained on the use of the protocol.

The ante-natal care regionalization process was advanced through assessment of over 70 facilities, thus completing the coverage of all ante-natal care facilities countrywide. The UN also contributed to elaboration of the

clinical protocols for improving the quality of emergency obstetric care. Introduction of the intra-facility clinical audit process in nine perinatal care facilities led to the better organization of services, increased availability of essential equipment and supplies, and improved infrastructure.

Moreover, telemedicine operating standards, guidelines and clinical pathways were developed, enabling Georgian medical institutions to monitor and measure results and patient satisfaction. Telemedicine approaches in ante-natal care were integrated in the state programme, and their implementation was supported by an on-line training module embedded in the Medical University's continuous medical education system.



200

ambulatories across Georgia received relevant medical equipment from the UN



400

ambulatory doctors and medical personnel were trained on the use of relevant technology



1120

children (592 girls and 528 boys) benefitted from remote child development services piloted at 50 rural clinics

In the field of education, the UN continued supporting improved national capacities to ensure inclusive and equitable access to quality educational programmes that meet international standards.

Early childhood education and care was improved through assisting the national and municipal governments in the implementation of the Law on Early and Preschool Education and Care and supporting the Parliament in generating evidence on the needs of preschool infrastructure and human resources. In addition, four municipalities were supported in the implementation of strategy to identify and enrol children who do not have access to preschool education.

The Parliament approved legislative amendments in the Law of General Education to formalize a new model of the inclusive education support system, developed with UN technical support. As a result of cooperation between partner universities and schools, four school-based Inclusive Education Centres were established to serve as resource hubs for teachers and students to advance inclusive education initiatives.

Education system reforms were further strengthened by providing technical support to the Ministry of Education and Science and selected municipalities in the design of education programmes for children with special education needs and disabilities. Innovative approaches

were piloted in ten public schools, building capacity of 242 educators, establishing school-based parent clubs and strengthening transition practices from general to vocational or higher education for children with special education needs and disabilities.

The UN advocated for the approval of the Catch-up and Accelerated Learning Curriculum as part of the national curriculum, which facilitating integration of out-of-school children into the mainstream education. The UN, in partnership with the Office of Resource Officers of Education Institutions, strengthened school inclusion and safety by building the capacity of social workers, multidisciplinary teams, and psychologists to support the needs of students and through the introduction of restorative practice at seven public schools, with a plan developed to scale up the model.

The UN also continued to support the implementation of the EU-funded Eastern Partnership European School Programme, resulting in a growing number of students.

With the UN assistance, the integration of health and personal safety topics (based on the UNESCO standards) in the formal education system was further advanced, including through expanding piloting the School Doctor's Hour at the elementary education level, capacitating educators and raising public awareness on the importance of such education.

To accelerate the transformation towards more inclusive service models, the UN supported the Government in fulfilling the obligations provided in the Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by enhancing policy documents, integrating the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, including women, in social services and supporting enhanced participation of persons with disabilities in decision-making processes.

The Government has endorsed a 3-year plan to transform the disability assessment and status determination system based on the results of the pilot implemented with the UN support. Communication standards for healthcare providers were updated to align with the human rights standards embedded in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

The UN promoted integration of human rights standards and disability-inclusive budgeting into local self-governance and the development of Action Plans on Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the local level.

With the UN technical assistance, the global best practice of personal assistant service for persons with disabilities was introduced at the local level to support independent living and inclusion.

To enhance the capacity of the system to address violence against women with disabilities, including refugees, standard operating procedures were developed and operationalized with the State Care Agency and 40 social workers were trained to handle such cases accordingly.

With the UN support, the Government was able to further enhance national and local capacities to combat domestic violence, violence against women and violence and harassment in the workplace.



Photo: Leli Blagonravova/UNDP



120

counselors of the inclusive education support system received training from the UN



25

professors from seven state universities were trained by the UN on inclusive education. These professors subsequently reached over 315 teachers across 105 public schools



Capacities of 327 staff from 64 municipalities were strengthened on quality and inclusive preschool education governance, the authorization process and improving access to preschool education among disadvantaged children

A new section of Tbilisi shelter administered by the State Care Agency was opened and a local non-governmental organization was supported in establishing a shelter in an ethnically diverse Samtskhe-Javakheti region.

With the UN assistance, the Ministry of Internal Affairs reviewed and improved the effectiveness of the domestic violence risk assessment tool, resulting increasing use of electronic surveillance.

National technical capacities for ensuring human security were enhanced through providing capacity building and institutional support to the Emergency Management Service in fire safety and civil protection, crisis communication and early warning systems, and approximation to the EU Civil Protection Mechanisms. As part of capacity building efforts, special training in rescuing persons with disabilities was provided to 15 emergency rescuers.



Photo: Vladimir Valishvili/UNDP



Capacity of 40 law enforcement professionals was further improved to effectively respond to domestic violence cases



Saba wearing special blue weighing trousers, which can be hung from the scale's hook

Impact Story

CONNECTING GEORGIA'S PATIENTS TO HEALTHCARE SERVICES THROUGH TELEMEDICINE

Anna is a young mother and spends most of her time at home caring for her baby in a small village. With the help of the UN's telemedicine initiative, Anna does not need to visit the rural clinic in-person. A village doctor has temporarily provided the family with a scale to monitor their child's weight regularly, which Anna reports during call appointments with her doctor.

"For me, telemedicine is excellent; Saba had a problem with gaining weight since birth. It made us very nervous," recalls Anna. "Now I can weigh Saba myself with the mechanical infant scale."

Remote monitoring of the child's development is only one component of the UN-led efforts to

introduce telemedicine services across Georgia. The EU-funded programme worth 4.7 million EUR is implemented jointly by WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF and UNOPS and has provided over 1,700 medical furniture and devices, nearly 9,200 medical supplies, and training on the use and maintenance of equipment to 400 ambulatory doctors across 55 municipalities in Georgia. Rural doctors are also being trained to conduct online consultations using digital medical devices. This to alleviate hospital congestion, enabled remote patient monitoring and provision of preventive diagnoses, among other services, all contributing to making healthcare universally accessible.



Outcome 3

Contributing agencies:



By 2025, all people without discrimination benefit from a sustainable, inclusive and resilient economy in Georgia

	SDGs impacted	Expenditures in 2023
OUTCOME 3.1. Improved competitiveness and social responsibility of private sector	 	\$ 2.323.027 
OUTCOME 3.2. Sustainable and inclusive agricultural and rural development, strengthened food systems and improved livelihoods	  	\$ 3.924.636 
OUTCOME 3.3. Increased productive employment, decent work, skills development and effective national social protection for all	   	\$ 3.454.425 



Contributing agencies:





Photo: UN Women



The UN enabled the introduction of new private sector partnerships for circular economy in 15 municipalities to facilitate plastics reduction and increasing circularity

The UN continued to contribute towards an inclusive economy and development of human capital in Georgia, with the focus on decent work and women's empowerment.

Georgian private sector competitiveness was promoted by the UN support to cluster development in packaging, agriculture (seeds and seedlings), pharmaceutical and fisheries sectors.

The UN assistance to Georgian member companies in these clusters comprised fostering inclusive and sustainable business practices, internationalizing and promoting digital and green transition, knowledge sharing and boosting export to the EU, including through networking with Georgian diaspora entrepreneurs and experts.

On the legislative level, the UN supported the Parliament of Georgia in the adoption of the Law on Food Loss and Waste Reduction and Food Donation. The National Strategy for Agricultural Extension 2024-2027 and the National Strategy

for the Sustainable Development of Aquaculture were developed and submitted to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. The UN also provided technical assistance to draft a Law on Agriculture and Rural Development aligned with the EU Common Agricultural Policy requirements, which is planned to be adopted in 2024.

The establishment of the Export Policy Facilitation Platform is underway. The UN provided institutional training on import, export and food safety risks to the National Food Agency, the Revenue Service, and the Scientific-Research Centre of Agriculture.

Sustainable and inclusive agricultural and rural development was supported by digitalizing performance reporting of the Agriculture and Rural Development Strategy of Georgia 2021-2027. The UN worked with the Government to introduce the State Programme on supporting community-based local development as a bottom-up mechanism for community engagement. Moreover, the UN launched an online foundation course on integrated and inclusive rural development.

System (NAITS), the improvements to its Android application and continued working with the National Food Agency on the development of institutional and legislative pathways for contributions by external stakeholders to NAITS.

The Rapid Assessment of Existing Data Collection and Analysis Tools and Resources for Crop Monitoring was published in 2023, and an inter-agency coordination platform was established between the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture and Geostat to improve data collection methodology.

The UN elaborated the second Country Gender Assessment: National Gender Profile of Agriculture and Rural Livelihoods in Georgia to inform gender-sensitive rural development policymaking. Policy recommendations were elaborated to assist the Government in implementing agricultural and rural development policies by using inclusive tools and gender mainstreaming principles.

The UN contributed to the establishment of pre-stock and stock-planting material facilities in Marneuli, Shida Kartli and Adjara and to the



\$ 163.522

in revenue for 63 small to medium-sized agricultural producers (62% women)



230

returned migrants, migrant households, and other rural population at 11 municipalities received business counselling and referrals from the one-stop-shop Service Hubs, resulting in 88 funded businesses

Agricultural sector was strengthened by the development of the national seedling certification system and capacity building of the relevant government agencies on sapling certification and CAC Standards that guide institutional competencies in implementing the certification system. The UN supported the development of the National Animal Identification and Traceability

provision of vegetative materials and nursery assessments to nine nurseries in the regions. Implementing the Mating Disruption Programme helped to control lobesia botrana, a grapevine pest, expanding to seven grape producers in Mtskheta-Mtianeti and Kakheti regions.



Photo: RCO Georgia

Fruit farmers and winemakers benefitted from training on production of major agricultural products, pruning techniques in vineyards, integrated pest management and organizing seven agricultural markets to showcase produce by 63 small to medium-sized agricultural producers (62% women). This initiative increased awareness of niche products and generated over 163,522 USD in revenue for the participating producers in 2023.

As part of continued efforts to improve the agricultural extension services, the UN established Farmer Field Schools and conducted training sessions on food safety across different sectors, with the focus on environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources, dairy and honey production, and crop farming.

To promote local development, the UN mapped and assessed enabling infrastructure in Guria

and Imereti regions and started developing 25 rural infrastructure projects in partnership with various stakeholders. Public Service Hall is supported in design of five services for increased accessibility for underrepresented groups. The UN also assisted in the establishment of Service Hubs at 11 municipalities as service provision one-stop-shops for rural population with migration background to support their socio-economic inclusion.

To promote human capital development and productive employment, the UN supported the elaboration of a comprehensive concept for integrating youth who are not in education, employment, or training. Services were designed for their integration into educational or employment pathways. A national action plan was elaborated with the UN assistance to foster inclusion of ethnic minority youth in vocational education and training.

 <p>96 women entrepreneurs and 106 aspiring women entrepreneurs improved business skills</p>	<p>994 young women and girls increased their digital skills through 500 Women in Tech programme</p>	 <p>42 potential entrepreneurs received training focused on social entrepreneurship through a partnership with the Youth Agency</p>
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Photo: Irakli Dzneladze/RCO Georgia

Photo: UNDP

With the UN support, reforms were advanced for greater institutional engagement of the private sector in the delivery of vocational education and training, establishing Skills Service Organizations as the new instruments for inclusivity of vocational skills development. Private sector-led improvement of these services led to increased state funding and a 70 per cent increase in the demand for vocational education and training compared to 2022.

Rural women were provided with business literacy, soft skills, personalized career advice, technical assistance, and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Building the capacity of the private sector to promote decent work and inclusive workplaces, a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion manual and relevant certification programme were developed for the first time in Georgia to improve human

resources management in Georgian companies. In 2023, the UN organized the 6th Women's Empowerment Principles conference with participation of the international financial institutions, angel investors network and venture funds to discuss gender lens investing. The UN participated at the International Festival of Creativity, AD Black Sea 2023 in Batumi, and won awards for its campaigns against gender stereotypes holding women back when choosing their profession in Georgia.

Trainings for 42 potential entrepreneurs were organized in partnership with Youth Agency with the focus on social entrepreneurship. Participants were then supported with consultations and business registration support by certified trainers, resulting in registration of 8 businesses in 2023. These initial steps were showcased at an event in Tbilisi dedicated to stakeholder dialogue on the promotion of entrepreneurship ecosystem and the sustainability of the programme. The UN subsequently developed a draft master plan for the authorities and a draft internal strategy for the Georgian Employers' Association.

Partnerships with the private sector were further strengthened by launching the Junior Tech programme in Tbilisi and Batumi under the UN-supported Business Advisory Council for Children, empowering 50 young individuals with digital skills. Positive parenting sessions engaged 100 employees from various companies.

To improve social protection coverage, the UN engaged in policy dialogues with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs to establish maternity and paternity leave packages, promoting women's economic participation and supporting families.

The Child Wellbeing in Georgia Survey conducted by Geostat and the UN, introduced the Child Material and Social Deprivation Index, promoting data collection in line with a broader understanding of child welfare. With the UN support, the Government aims to analyse various child cash transfer scenarios, focusing on impacts on child poverty and deprivation.

The minimum hourly wage for doctors and nurses in the state health programme were introduced in January 2023, as the first step of the reform informed by the technical assistance by Expertise France and the UN. Video infographics were produced with the UN support of to raise public awareness on the minimum wage reform for doctors and nurses, and the reduction of the list of specific work regimes (48-hour work schedule).

Further efforts to improve minimum wage regulation were supported in the course of 2023 by facilitating deliberations with the social partners.

Jointly with Expertise France, the UN also commissioned a Cost Assessment for the Implementation of an Unemployment Insurance Scheme in Georgia that was delivered to the authorities at the end of 2023.



Photo: UNDP



Photo: UNDP

Nestled in the picturesque Imereti highlands, the tea company Buetea's new production line is dedicated to eco-friendly packaging

Impact Story

EU AND UN PARTNERSHIP SPARKS ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND GREEN ECONOMY IN GEORGIA

Buetea is a small tea company dedicated to revitalizing Georgian tea traditions while adopting modern and environment-friendly production practices. Every year, they carefully make about 10 tons of tea. Buetea is one of 100 small and medium-sized enterprises across Georgia that directly benefitted from the UN-led and EU-funded programme Innovative Action for Private Sector Competitiveness in Georgia implemented by FAO, UNDP, UNIDO, and IOM.

The programme allowed over 1,500 businesses to diversify their product range, access a broader consumer base and sustainable production possibilities and to pave the way for future expansion. One of the programme's most notable achievements is enabling the development of business clusters in Georgia, increasing the opportunities for participating companies and entire business sectors to excel both

nationally and globally. In total, 150 companies in the packaging cluster, including Buetea, were supported in their transition to green and circular economy. The programme also helped to strengthen public-private partnerships across various areas of business development, including waste management, and to create strong connections between Georgian companies and Georgian diaspora business experts residing in the EU.



Photo: Georgian Mountain Tea Association



UNITED NATIONS
GEORGIA



Outcome 4

Photo: Tako Robakidze/UN Women

Contributing agencies:



By 2025, conflict-affected communities enjoy human rights, enhanced human security and resilience

	SDGs impacted	Expenditures in 2023
OUTCOME 4.1. Improved access to essential services for conflict-affected communities		\$ 5.485.426
OUTCOME 4.2. Improved socio-economic conditions, resilience and self-reliance in conflict-affected communities		\$ 6.260.705
OUTCOME 4.3. Strengthening civil society, community resilience, social cohesion and WPS agenda		\$ 2.506.240



Contributing agencies:





Photo: UNHCR

The UN continued its work to assist conflict-affected vulnerable persons across Georgia based on the international human rights standards and humanitarian principles. In 2023, the UN supported communities along the conflict divide in Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti and Shida Kartli regions, assisted the internally displaced persons (IDPs) across Georgia, and provided support to vulnerable populations in Abkhazia.

At the policy level, with the UN support, the Government of Georgia continued to implement the fourth National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security (NAP 1325) 2022-2024. The UN also promoted other aspects of Women, Peace and Security agenda, including increased involvement of over 150 women and civil society representatives in platforms addressing the consequences of conflict, including the Geneva International

Discussions (GID), the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism (IPRM), and the annual Open Day on Women, Peace and Security. The UN also intensified its efforts to promote the localization of Youth, Peace and Security agenda through the civil society driven initiatives.

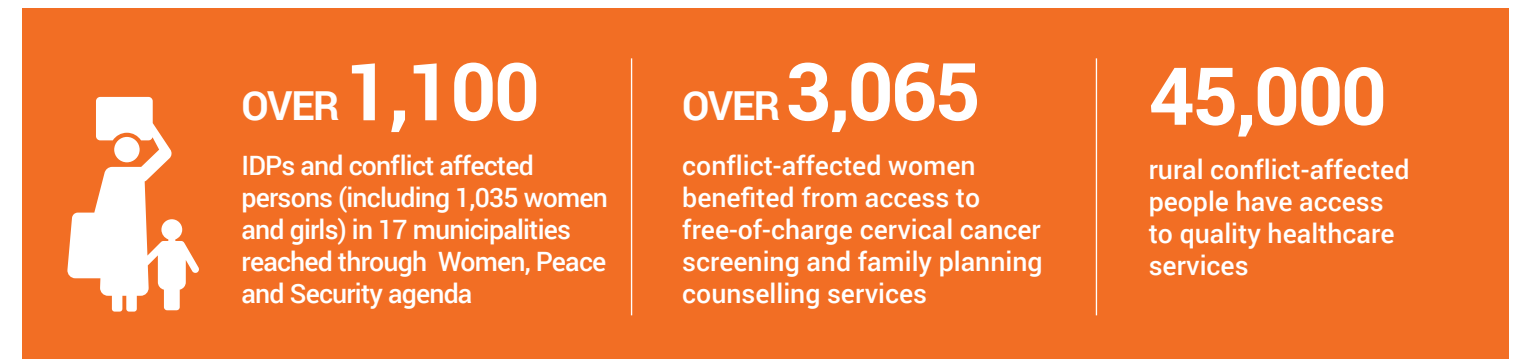
The UN supported a network of IDP volunteers to promote two-way communication with the Government of Georgia to facilitate access to services, including livelihood and housing programmes, through information sessions involving IDP volunteers and state authorities. These meetings helped to explore potential areas for improvement and collaboration in line with the IDPs' needs and challenges.

The UN delivered institutional capacity building to key security sector institutions on gender mainstreaming and Women, Peace and Security agenda, reaching around 500 security and defense sector personnel. In addition, two security sector institutions adopted internal gender related policies and mechanisms, such as gender equality action plan and sexual harassment prevention and response mechanisms.

for the induction of labour were developed, and health referral mechanism was strengthened for high-risk pregnant women. Nine referrals within Abkhazia and seven to the medical facilities in Tbilisi-controlled territory saved the lives of 16 mothers and their newborns.

The UN also arranged mobile lab visits to remote villages of Abkhazia to ensure access of the most remote community members to quality sexual and reproductive health services.

The UN provided essential support to early detection and response to infectious diseases in Abkhazia, including through procurement of various laboratory kits and supplies for testing seasonal influenza and other acute respiratory diseases, COVID-19 and monkeypox, trainings for lab physicians and improving quality management in laboratory testing. The UN also reviewed existing practices of epidemiological surveillance of infectious diseases and identified pathways for improvement. Assistance was initiated to review and improve management practices of non-communicable diseases at the primary healthcare level.



In the healthcare sector, the UN strengthened service provision in Abkhazia by enabling regional healthcare providers to serve remote parts of the population. To improve access of conflict affected women in Abkhazia to quality sexual and reproductive health services, two clinical protocols on postpartum hemorrhage and

In addition, the UN improved access to quality healthcare services for rural conflict-affected communities through six renovated and equipped clinics in Abkhazia.



Photo: Tako Robakidze/UN Women

The UN addressed the dramatically low routine immunization coverage by implementing supportive supervision activities in 50 primary healthcare facilities, resulting in vaccination of more than 450 children. The UN equipped four maternities and the central hospital with IT equipment to facilitate telemedicine and supported referral of critically ill neonates. Among them, 1,040 adolescent girls were sensitized on menstrual hygiene management.

The UN supported 28 youth clubs across Abkhazia and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti regions, engaging 840 students (362 boys and 478 girls) to access diverse sources

of information, strengthening their critical thinking and language skills and engaging on various thematic topics. The UN supported expanded access to digital materials in Abkhaz language and development of a programme for piloting multi-language education in preschools.

Furthermore, 11 community support projects focused on improving the learning environment at community schools and sport clubs in IDP settlements, and enhancing accessibility to medical services, were implemented through refurbishment works and the provision of required assets, thus benefiting more than 10,000 conflict-affected people.

1,138
conflict-affected persons received legal counselling and assistance

536
women received psychological and legal consultations through 4 crisis centers

154
farmers (55 female) benefited from technical consultations



Photo: Irakli Dzneldze/RCO Georgia

The UN continued to support 28 social workers who provide services for families, with a focus on protecting the best interests of children. In total, more than 600 vulnerable families with 2,000 children have been reached with various types of assistance provided by the social workers. The UN supported the functioning of informal community-based child protection mechanisms in 69 target communities and training various child protection professionals. The UN continued promoting positive parenting, reaching more than 376 parents of children through parent study circles and engaging in child rights awareness raising activities.

As part of the awareness raising events within the framework of the campaign in the framework of 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, basic medical screening and individual consultations were provided along with hygiene



5,200

children (2,580 girls and 2,620 boys) from 16 schools have improved access to water, sanitation and hygiene services

kits to 42 vulnerable women and 58 children in nine remote communities.

Community-based approaches to resilience continued to be promoted in Abkhazia. The UN supported three Local Action Groups in Gagra, Gudauta, and Ochamchire and helped vulnerable farmers in improving agricultural practices and introducing innovative technologies. Agri-fairs benefitted livelihoods of 57 (43 female) beneficiaries through the Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development. Additionally, 80 conflict-affected persons were provided with training and equipment for entrepreneurial activities.

The UN further fostered women farmers' socio-economic empowerment in Abkhazia by supporting homemade dairy production. Training was provided to 54 Farmer Field Schools, benefitting 971 members, with 23 farmers successfully producing and marketing new cheese varieties. Ten seasonal and five off-season demonstration plots were established in Abkhazia, training 367 farmers in crop diversification and integrated farm management. The UN also contributed to combating dangerous forest pests and diseases and protecting endangered forest species through annual control plans and in-situ and ex-situ conservation efforts.

The UN supported Abkhazia's grape genetic resources management, bringing 330 rootstocks and 297 endemic vines to Gumista.

The UN supported 884 women from Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (403) and Abkhazia (481) in entrepreneurial skills development and community-level leadership through farmer field schools. Access to digital skills and STEM education increased for 300 conflict affected youth (60% female) by providing IT equipment in Sukhumi and Gali colleges.

In addition, the UN supported the economic empowerment of ten ethnic Georgian and Ossetian rural women living in IDP settlements

and along the Administrative Boundary Line leading to increased monthly income for 21 families and the creation of services or products, which serve over 900 indirect beneficiaries from the local communities and beyond.

To facilitate access to public services, the UN contributed to improving the infrastructure of three roads in Abkhazia, benefitting 815 rural residents. To support freedom of movement and improved access to education and livelihood opportunities, the UN provided a free-of-charge shuttle bus, carrying 550-600 passengers daily across the Enguri bridge.



Photo: Leli Blagonravova/UNDP

In efforts to enhance the multi-hazard community-based early warning system in Abkhazia, a meteorological network was expanded through additional meteo-stations and water level gauges in the Kodori river. Multi-hazard risk mapping was completed for Kodori and Basla river basins. Two community-based early warning systems in Sukhumi and Ochamchire districts were established, training 208 community members in disaster response and evacuation planning.

To strengthen civil society in Abkhazia, the UN has been providing continuous capacity development by enhancing local civil society organizations' resilience and promoting dialogue and participation with the focus on women, peace and security agenda. The UN-supported Civic Resource Center in Sukhumi continued to serve as networking hub for local civil society, organizing 60 events for more than 600 beneficiaries.

In addition, over 30 civil society organizations and initiative groups were supported with capacity-building. The first-ever fair for civil society organizations was held in Abkhazia presenting the successful work of over 35 entities and engaging 600 participants to foster awareness about the vital role of civil society in Abkhazia. In 2023, fifteen thematically or geographically diverse social impact initiatives were implemented with the civil society grants (50% to women-led organizations) reaching 4,500 direct beneficiaries.



243



farmers were trained on viticulture, wine making and vineyard management

1,067

people (725 women) enhanced business skills and livelihoods opportunities through vocational training in Abkhazia

> 8,100

people benefited from 5 small-scale environmental protection and flood prevention initiatives

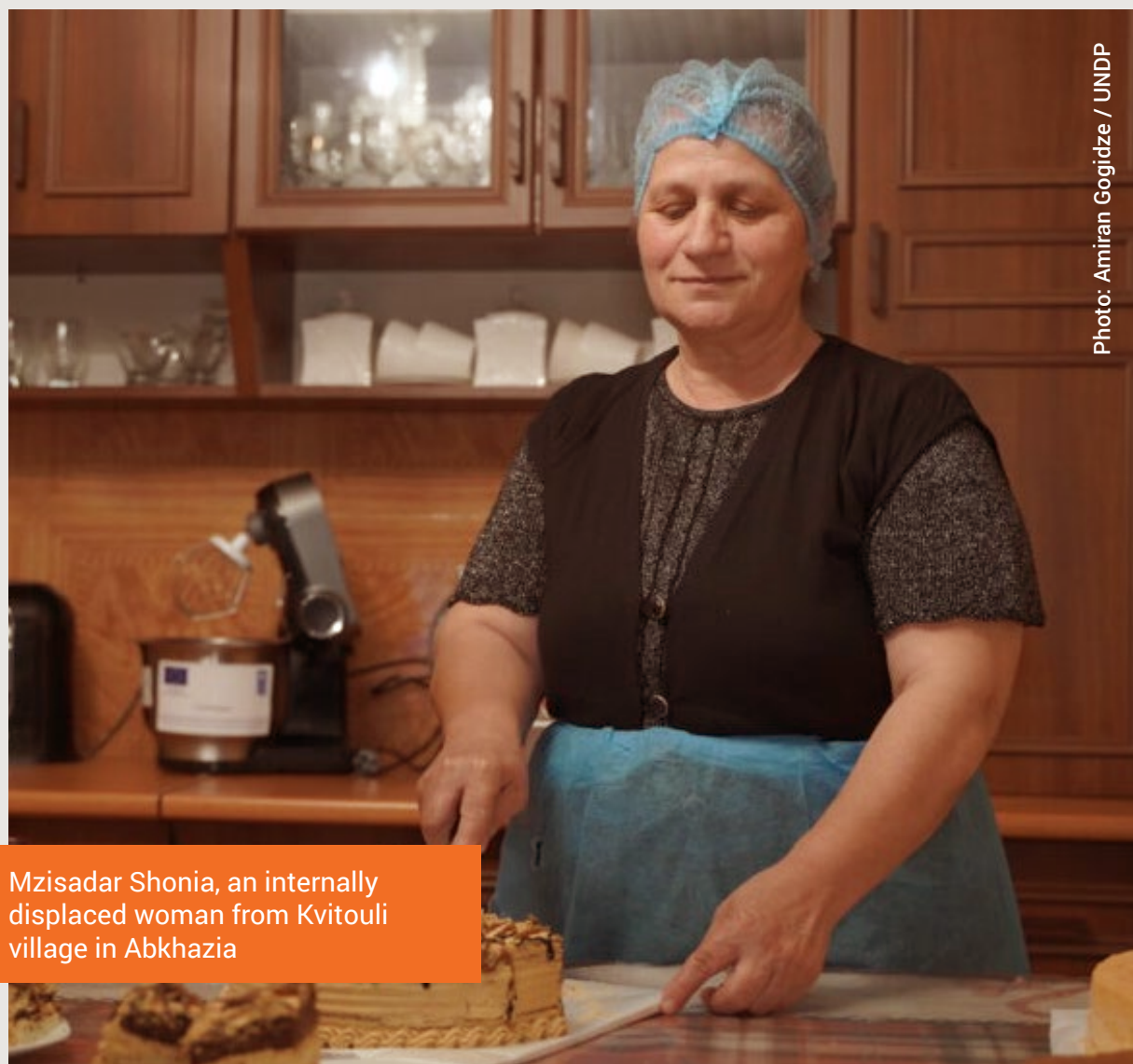


Photo: Amiran Gogidze / UNDP

Mzisadar Shonia, an internally displaced woman from Kvitouli village in Abkhazia

Impact Story

EMPOWERING CONFLICT-AFFECTED WOMEN TO BUILD BETTER LIVES

Women's empowerment remains a cornerstone of sustainable development and peacebuilding in conflict-affected communities. The UN supports women who live alongside the Administrative Boundary Lines to become more self-sufficient and successful, by providing resources for business ventures, earning income and professional advancement. Over the past year, about 1,500 internally displaced and conflict-affected women benefitted from the UN assistance.

Mzisadar Shonia, an internally displaced woman from Kvitouli village in Abkhazia,




received essential equipment for her baking business with the support of Charity Humanitarian Centre Abkhazeti, a grantee of the EU4Dialogue programme. This investment allowed Mzisadar to make more cakes and sell them in nearby areas, thus boosting her income and helping to rebuild her life. The UN's support extends beyond economic benefits. It empowers individuals and lays the groundwork for long-term community resilience.

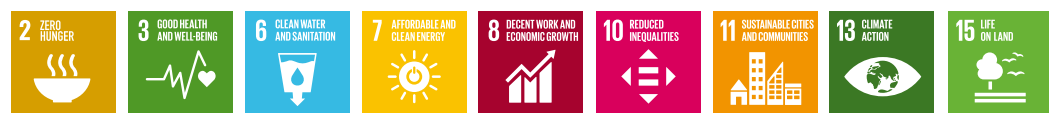
Outcome 5

Contributing agencies:



By 2025, all people, without discrimination, enjoy enhanced resilience through improved environmental governance, climate action and sustainable management and use of natural resources in Georgia

Outcome Description	SDGs impacted	Expenditures in 2023
OUTCOME 5.1. Environmental governance and institutional capacity enhanced to enable rational, equitable and sustainable use of natural/land resources, to ensure conservation of ecosystems and make communities more resilient to environmental shocks		\$ 1.516.258
OUTCOME 5.2. Climate-sensitive, resilient and risk-informed development ensured, without discrimination, in AFOLU, health, water safety, construction, energy and food production sectors to increase adaptive capacities and mitigate impact of climate change pursuing LDN (Land Degradation Neutrality)		\$ 4.213.790
OUTCOME 5.3. Innovative and climate-friendly technologies used for inclusive green economy, energy efficiency and clean energy production to enhance NDCs (Nationally Determined Contribution) and support long-term decarbonization strategies		\$ 1.661.516
		\$ 7.391.564 Total expenditures



Contributing agencies:





Photo: Giorgi Tsetskhladze/UNDP

In 2023, the UN continued its comprehensive support for Georgia in enhancing environmental governance, climate action, disaster risk reduction and management, sustainable agriculture, biodiversity protection, sustainable management of natural resources, environmental health and air quality, and energy efficiency.

The UN's continuous assistance to the Government in meeting its international commitments on climate change resulted in the adoption of Georgia's Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy that defines pathways for Georgia's climate neutrality by 2050. The UN further promoted the development of a roadmap for the Strategy to ensure its implementation.

To create an enabling policy context for environmental governance, the UN continued its

support in complying with the obligations under the Montreal Protocol on introducing a quota and licensing system for ozone depleting substances by making amendments to the relevant regulatory framework. A digitalized monitoring system was introduced to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, enabling the e-tracking of all ozone depleting substances. In addition, 160 environmental inspectors and 60 customs officers were trained to enforce the amended legislation.

Georgia benefited from the UN support on sustainable hydrogen, as recommendations were developed for a coherent system of standardization and certification of hydrogen and were further informed by a stakeholder mapping.

The UN promoted knowledge sharing on resource classification and estimation based on the UN

Framework Classification for Resources, its application to mineral resources and the status of implementation in Europe. Additionally, a workshop on Renewable Energy in Transport strengthened knowledge of Georgian experts on international legal instruments and best practices. At the Government's request, the UN developed guidelines on Strategic Environmental Assessments in spatial planning.

The UN also supported the preparation of a policy brief on ecosystem service valuation, which demonstrated to decision-makers the financial value of increasing government funding for Protected Areas. The institutional capacity of the Government to set-up effective biodiversity monitoring and coordination was improved with the expert support and field survey equipment, and the UN facilitated the first International Summit on Protected Areas in Borjomi to share best international practices.

Moreover, the UN supported the National Coordination Council for combating Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Threats in Georgia to implement and renew the action plans under the related national strategy for 2021-2030.

In addition, the UN continued support to strengthening environmental statistics in Georgia, focusing on air quality and emissions through regional training. A mission was conducted to support Georgia's accession to the UNECE Convention on Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents and to raise awareness on good practices in the field of industrial safety and prevention of accidental water pollution.

The UN worked to enhance the national stakeholder capacities on improving hazard mapping, forecasting, and early warning systems for climate-induced hazards. The UN supported the establishment of a standardized approach for natural hazard assessment and modeling that laid ground for robust environmental forecasting. Multi-hazard maps and comprehensive risk vulnerability assessments were completed for seven river basins in Western Georgia to identify high-risk communities, leveraging international best practices tailored to local context. Four river-basin level risk management plans were finalized in 2023.



Photo: Irakli Dzneldadze/RCO Georgia



OVER 1,200

residents of Machakhela Protected Area received solar energy technologies



31,076

people in 6 municipalities were safeguarded by Emergency management plans

Seventy-nine weather stations were installed and significantly bolstered Georgia's forecasting and early warning systems. Gender-sensitive socio-economic vulnerability assessment methodology was developed and applied for identification of communities in high-risk areas. Also, community-based climate risk management plans were developed for 15 high-risk communities to strengthen their resilience.

The National Environmental Agency's capacity to model and map hazards was notably advanced by the acquisition of high-performance computers and staff training. Emergency planning training and simulation tests for effective disaster response were conducted for 23 Road Department and 108 municipal staff. The UN provided institutional and

capacity building support to strengthen Emergency Management and Civil Protection through the revision of regulatory and vocational education programmes, enhancing capacities of firefighters and rescuers and harmonizing fire safety standards with European best practices.

The UN intensified partnerships with the private sector to enhance sustainable forest management through introducing a platform (www.forestfriend.ge), which allows the National Forestry Agency to mobilize private sector resources for reforestation and afforestation measures.

The UN initiated its support to the National Designated Authority under the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture to assist Georgia in developing a low-emission and climate-resilient agrifood sector. Two surveys were conducted to collect data on climate finance and capacity gaps, and further consultations were facilitated with the civil society, academia, development partners, and public sector actors to design country-specific capacity-building activities.

To increase the capacity of vulnerable farmers to adapt to climate change, the UN helped to disseminate knowledge on conservation agriculture to the farming communities along the Administrative Boundary Line. Ninety-eight conservation agriculture demonstration plots were established. Additionally, four Farmers Field Schools were organized for beekeeping

and twelve for dairy. In collaboration with the National Food Agency, the UN conducted a regional demonstration trial on the use of biopesticides against locusts in Kakheti to promote pest management that protects the environment and human health.

Furthermore, the UN finalized the concept of the National Pasturelands Management Policy, which was validated through national and municipal stakeholder workshops and was used to draft relevant legislation. The first draft of the Law on Sustainable Pasturelands Management was submitted to the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture for review.

In addition, pastureland inventories and multi-factor assessments were finalized for the municipalities of Dmanisi, Kazbegi, and Gurjaani. The UN actively engaged with the local women and men farmers, raising awareness on the controlled grazing system to ensure their active involvement in implementing the pilot pastures restoration plans. Also, the feasibility study on the implementation of a land consolidation pilot was conducted with the UN's technical assistance.

The UN-proposed Environmental Health (Lead) Surveillance System was launched in Imereti and Adjara regions where blood samples of up to 2,000 children were collected and analyzed. In cases where children were identified as having elevated blood lead levels ($>10\mu\text{g/dL}$), household and environmental samples were investigated. The results of the analysis are due in 2024 and will inform subsequent state interventions. Also, the UN launched a new initiative focusing on the impact of indoor air pollution on the respiratory health of children in selected preschools of four municipalities.

The UN also continued to provide technical support to the implementation of the National Environmental Health Action Plan for Georgia in the areas of water and sanitation, chemical safety, air quality and climate change. Twenty-six Georgian professionals, including public health officials benefited from the UN's capacity building online course on contaminated sites and health.



Machakhela National Park is the latest in a chain of protected areas created to conserve the unique Colchic rainforests, safeguarded by the UNESCO. UNDP and GEF have supported Machakhela National Park since its establishment in 2012.

This initiative prioritizes the sustainable management of the protected area, alongside enhanced biodiversity monitoring, energy

efficiency, and fostering sustainable social and economic opportunities for over 3,000 households.

The installation of electric fences is significantly reducing crop damage caused by predators, benefiting both the environment and local communities.



6,062

people were trained on disaster risk reduction and management



\$ 53,000

mobilized for sustainable forest management since the launch of the new platform (www.forestfriend.ge) in June 2023





World Food Day celebration in Zugdidi

Impact Story

FOSTERING SYSTEMIC CHANGE TO REDUCE FOOD WASTE AND LOSS

Food waste and loss increase the risk of food insecurity and negatively impact the environment. In Georgia, thrown-away food makes up a large portion of the trash. Over half (54.7%) of all municipal waste is organic waste according to 2022 study by the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture. Discarded food goes to landfills because of poor infrastructure and a lack of proper policies. While landfills receive millions of tons of food waste every year, almost 10% of the population in Georgia lacks consistent access to food. Lack of profit and VAT tax incentives on donated products did not encourage major producers within the supply chain to donate their food waste.

To encourage food donation and reduce waste, Georgia's Parliament adopted the law on Food Loss and Food Waste Reduction, and Food Donation in 2023 with the UN's support. This new legislation establishes a legal framework for tackling food loss and waste at every stage of the food supply chain and promoting food

donations and redistribution. Food safety, hygiene, labelling, date marking, and taxes are all considered and addressed in the new legal framework. Importantly, donated food can now be accounted for as a charitable donation, not a loss. This law is a major step towards better food security and nutrition in Georgia.

"The adoption of this draft law provides a great opportunity for responding to the interests of the population in Georgia through public-private partnerships. I would like to express my gratitude to the private sector, as well as the Georgian government and our partners for their support," said Khatia Tsilosani, the First Deputy Chairperson of the Environmental Protection and Natural Resources Committee of the Parliament of Georgia.

To move the needle further, in October 2023, during the World Food Day celebration in Zugdidi, the reduction of food waste and donation practices were showcased by exhibiting products suitable for donation.

03

Support to Partnerships and Financing the 2030 Agenda

Partnerships with key stakeholders played a pivotal role in the UN's efforts to support Georgia's national development priorities in 2023. The UN strengthened collaboration with a diverse array of partners, including the Government at both national and local levels, social partners, civil society organizations, academia, the private sector, and the international development partner community in Georgia.

The UN continued to support the effective functioning of Georgia's SDG coordination mechanisms, including the national SDG Council. With participation from relevant government ministries, civil society, UN entities and other international organizations, the Council is a



240 UN partnerships with the private sector in 2023

vital platform for coordinating and assessing Georgia's progress towards the SDGs. In 2023, efforts were mostly directed towards widening the reach of SDG localization, launching the process in 14 more municipalities, thus bringing their total number to 32. Georgia's Prime Minister put a special emphasis on localization efforts in his address to the SDG Summit in New York in September 2023 where he reiterated the commitment for all 64 municipalities to sign on to the SDG Localization Plan by 2025.

The UN Resident Coordinator in Georgia continued chairing the Development Partner Coordination Group, which serves to coordinate the activities of bilateral and multilateral donors, and international financial institutions supporting Georgia. Having this space for a joint exchange and reflection facilitates a shared understanding of priorities, opportunities and challenges, including with regard to meaningful participation in government-led donor coordination mechanisms.

Furthermore, the UN Resident Coordinator served as the chair of the Abkhazia Strategic Partnership, which comprises the UN agencies and international non-governmental organizations working in Abkhazia. The Partnership serves as a platform for information-sharing and collaboration towards joint reporting and improved resource mobilization.

The private sector is a crucial partner for the UN in advancing the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Over the years, there has been a notable increase in UN Georgia's private sector partnerships, rising from 156 in 2022 to 240 in 2023. Much of this work is focused on reducing inequalities, promoting decent work and fostering responsible consumption and production.

An example of successful private sector engagement is the UN's work to leverage

the Women's Empowerment Principles in collaboration with employers. Since 2016, 175 companies have joined the initiative to champion women's rights in their workplaces and services, and to advocate for gender equality policies across Georgia. These partnerships now span small, medium, and large-sized enterprises across diverse industries, such as education, ICT, finance, and hospitality, collectively connecting over 70,000 employees.

Under an innovative partnership formed in 2023, the UN and TBC, one of the largest Georgian banks, will implement joint initiatives on professional development and employment of women, supporting women entrepreneurs, empowering women and girls in information and communications technology sector, and raising public awareness about gender equality and other related issues. Moreover, TBC Environmental, Social, and Corporate Governance (ESG) academy was launched to build capacity of the bank's customers and employees in ESG topics, including diversity and gender equality.

In terms of financing for 2030 Agenda, the latest 2022 Government External Aid Report issued in early 2024 states that the patterns of international financial flows to Georgia demonstrate the coherence and consistency with the major national reform priorities. In 2022, Georgia's cumulative ongoing aid decreased by 4.36% in comparison to the previous year and amounted to 27.8 billion GEL.

In conclusion, partnerships, both traditional and innovative, are indispensable pillars of the UN's efforts in Georgia, serving as catalysts for sustainable development and inclusive growth. As demonstrated by the increasing number of collaborations across diverse sectors and the strategic leveraging of rights-based frameworks, partnerships enable the UN to amplify its impact and effectively address multifaceted challenges.

04

Working more and better together: UN coherence, effectiveness and efficiency

In 2023, The UN Country Team in Georgia continued to deliver as one and enhance synergies by pursuing joint programming, advocacy, communication and fostering business efficiencies.

The UN continued to communicate and advocate together on key development priorities through various communication channels and fora. A special panel discussion From Economic Growth to Shared Prosperity: Reality Check after the SDG Summit and Vision for the Future was organized by the UN in Georgia in Tbilisi on the UN Day, 24 October 2023. The discussion focused on Georgia's progress on decent work agenda,

social protection reforms and decentralization, and discussed forward-looking strategies for social equality. It brought together government officials, think tanks, civil society, academia, the private sector and other stakeholders to facilitate a dialogue on transforming Georgia's economic growth into shared prosperity.

The UN Country Team used platforms like the Tbilisi Women's International Conference to advocate for gender equality and women's role in sustainable development. The post-SDG Summit special panel discussion held by the RCO at the SDG International Partnerships for Impact conference organized by the United Nations Association of Georgia helped to share knowledge on the current state-of-play of Agenda 2030 and promote the urgency of action in key policy areas. The UNCT used the Media and Information Literacy Week events in October 2023 to raise awareness of hate speech along with mis- and disinformation and to highlight the importance of promoting media literacy in formal and informal education.

The UN in Georgia carried out several communication campaigns to raise awareness, promote understanding, and encourage action on priority issues. A month-long campaign brought together diverse groups for activities and discussions promoting awareness and engagement on human rights issues. A social media campaign, roundtable discussions, and a high-level conference were held. In addition, four new Equality Corners were established in the school libraries across Georgia, stocked with books focusing on equality, tolerance and human rights, thus bringing the number of such libraries to 21. The UN also released six joint statements, some in partnership with other development partners, advocating for the rights of women, LGBTQI+ persons, and other vulnerable populations.

The UN Country Team has been actively working to strengthen its joint engagement with the local governments and other local stakeholders. The

Resident Coordinator led three joint UN visits to Kakheti, Kvemo Kartli and Adjara. These visits aimed to review existing UN programmes, assess the evolving needs and challenges faced by these regions, and explore new opportunities to collaborate with local actors in the context of the ongoing decentralization reforms. All visits included town halls with community groups and young people.

Joint communications and outreach also included activities to inform and engage students and educational institutions in achieving the SDGs. Four SDG Spaces were launched at universities in Tbilisi and the regions to raise awareness and encourage sustainable development efforts. Over 2,000 students participated in discussions, briefings, and events related to the SDGs. Two panel discussions with representatives of the academia and the annual Science Picnic centered around SDG 4 Quality Education.

To increase readiness and preparedness for crisis communication, a joint risk communication plan was developed, and a UN Country Team's crisis communication group was established.

Moreover, with the support of the UN Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect, the UN Country Team developed and is implementing an action plan to combat hate speech through its work in Georgia.

The joint planning and reporting modalities enabled the UN Country Team to develop a better mutual understanding of each entity's work and identify possibilities for further synergies. Five Results Groups comprised support the implementation of each of the five UNSDCF Outcomes under the overall oversight of the Steering Committee comprised of senior UN and Government officials. These efforts were further supported by the joint analysis and actions carried out by the UN Country Team's thematic working groups on various cross-cutting issues, such as human rights, youth, gender, communications and others.



13 UN joint programmes worth over 44 million USD ongoing in 2023



Photo: Leli Blagonravova/UNDP

In terms of joint delivery, thirteen UN joint programmes with the overall budget of over 44 million USD were ongoing in 2023 focusing on different priorities, including better protection of human rights, transforming social protection system for people with disabilities, gender equality, telemedicine, support to conflict-affected communities, rural development and private sector competitiveness. Of these, six joint programmes were launched in 2023, including new initiatives to promote gender equality and enhanced migration governance.

Moreover, the UN Network on Migration carried out activities aimed at building awareness, capacity and coordination of the Government, the civil society and the UN Country Team on the implementation of the Global Compact for Migration and related reporting. In December 2023, the Network's annual event explored the important steps taken by the Government of Georgia to promote and facilitate regular labour migration pathways as a viable alternative to irregular migration and an enabling factor for Georgia's development.

Based on the recommendations of the 2021

UNCT-SWAP Scorecard standardized assessment of the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming of UN joint processes and institutional arrangements, the UN Country Team took steps to drive further improvements towards gender equality and empowerment of women. As confirmed by the results of the annual UN-SWAP assessment conducted at the end of 2023, the UNCT Georgia exceeds minimum requirements for nine performance indicators and meets the requirements for 5 indicators. On establishing a regular mechanism for the collection of staff gender parity data, UNCT Georgia is approaching the minimum requirements, and will strengthen joint action in this area in 2024.

The UN Country Team continued to strengthen its efforts on prevention of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. Among key 2023 results, an internal UNCT-wide survey was conducted on the existing country-level entity-level institutional PSEA checks and balances and their implementation. Survey findings and recommendations served to inform the next actions at the entity and UNCT levels. In addition, a full-day training for the agency focal points was organized in November 2023, covering

topics such as inter-agency coordination, victim-centered approach, risk management and capacity assessment of implementing partners.

A disability inclusion coordination mechanism, the UN Georgia Disability Inclusion Group, was established to drive enhanced action to promote disability inclusion within the UN and in its support to Georgia. In 2023, the Group developed a proposal for a new UN joint programme in this area and is supporting the fundraising efforts. In December 2023, the Group organized a consultation with organizations of persons with disabilities to discuss the issues of common interest, including the implementation of Georgia's Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and UN's initiatives on disability inclusion. The Group also engages in data mapping activities and collaborates closely with GeoStat to improve data collection and disaggregation to support inclusion of people with disabilities.

Finally, the Operations Management Team in Georgia worked to implement the joint Business Operations Strategy in order to increase efficiency gains and introduce quality improvements to the UN common services in Georgia.



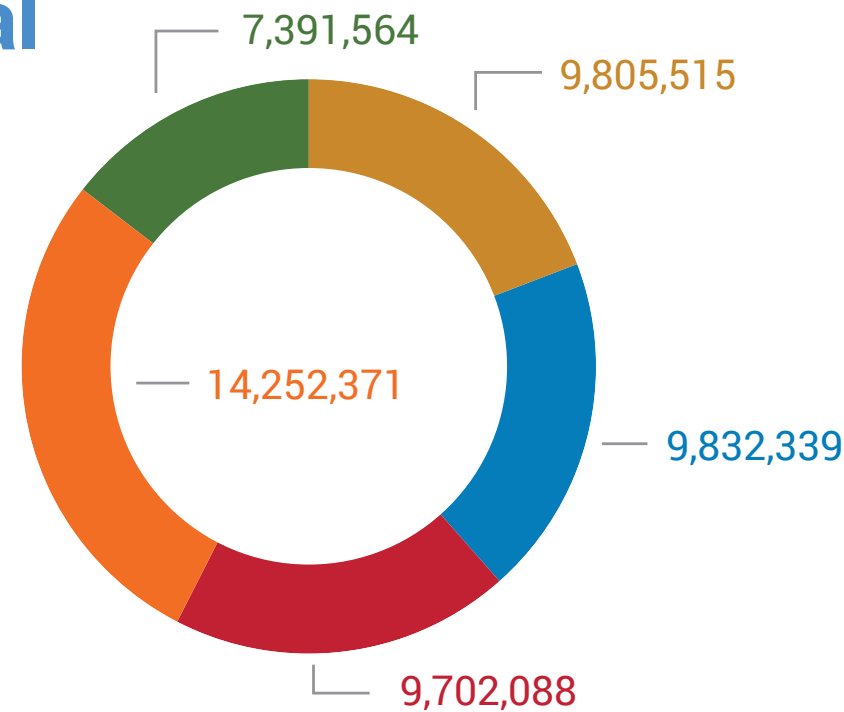
\$ 905,360

in cost-avoidance savings were identified by the annual review conducted for the year 2023

05

Resource Mobilization and Financial Overview

2023 Expenditures by Outcome area of the Cooperation Framework, in USD



OUTCOME 1: \$ 9,805,515
Good governance, human rights & rule of law

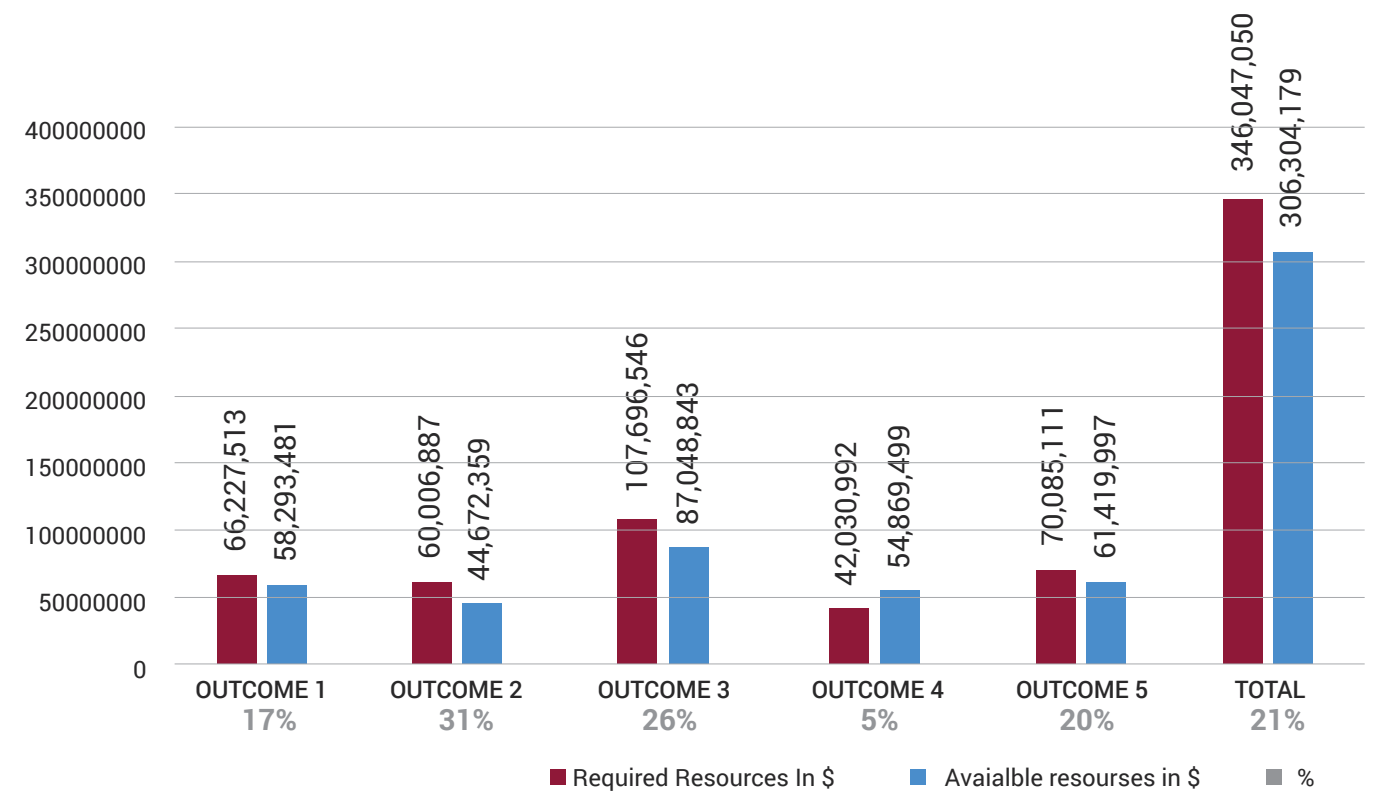
OUTCOME 2: \$ 9,832,339
Health, education and better services

OUTCOME 3: \$ 9,702,088
Inclusive economy & human capital development

OUTCOME 4: \$ 14,252,371
Support to conflict-affected communities

OUTCOME 5: \$ 7,391,564
Climate action, environmental protection and better use of natural resources

Total required and available resources by Outcome area of the Cooperation Framework for 2021-2025, in USD

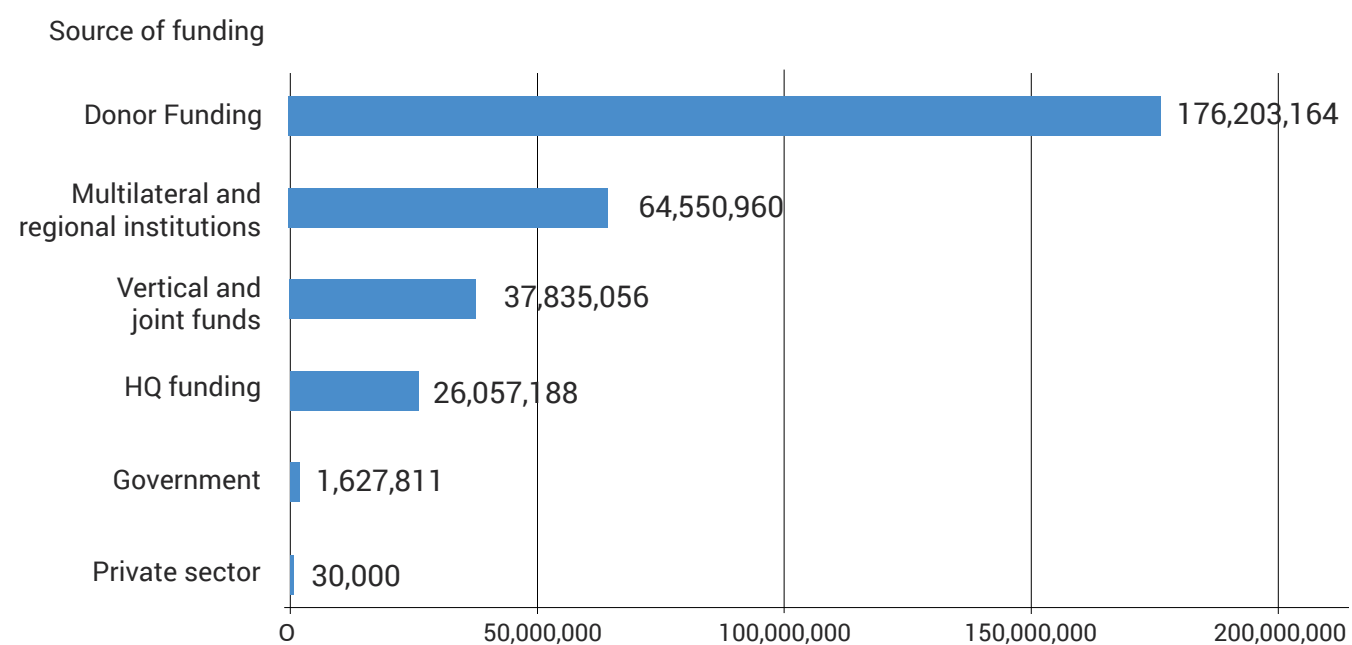



51,000,000 \$
Total financial value of the UN support to the UN Sustainable Development in Georgia in 2023

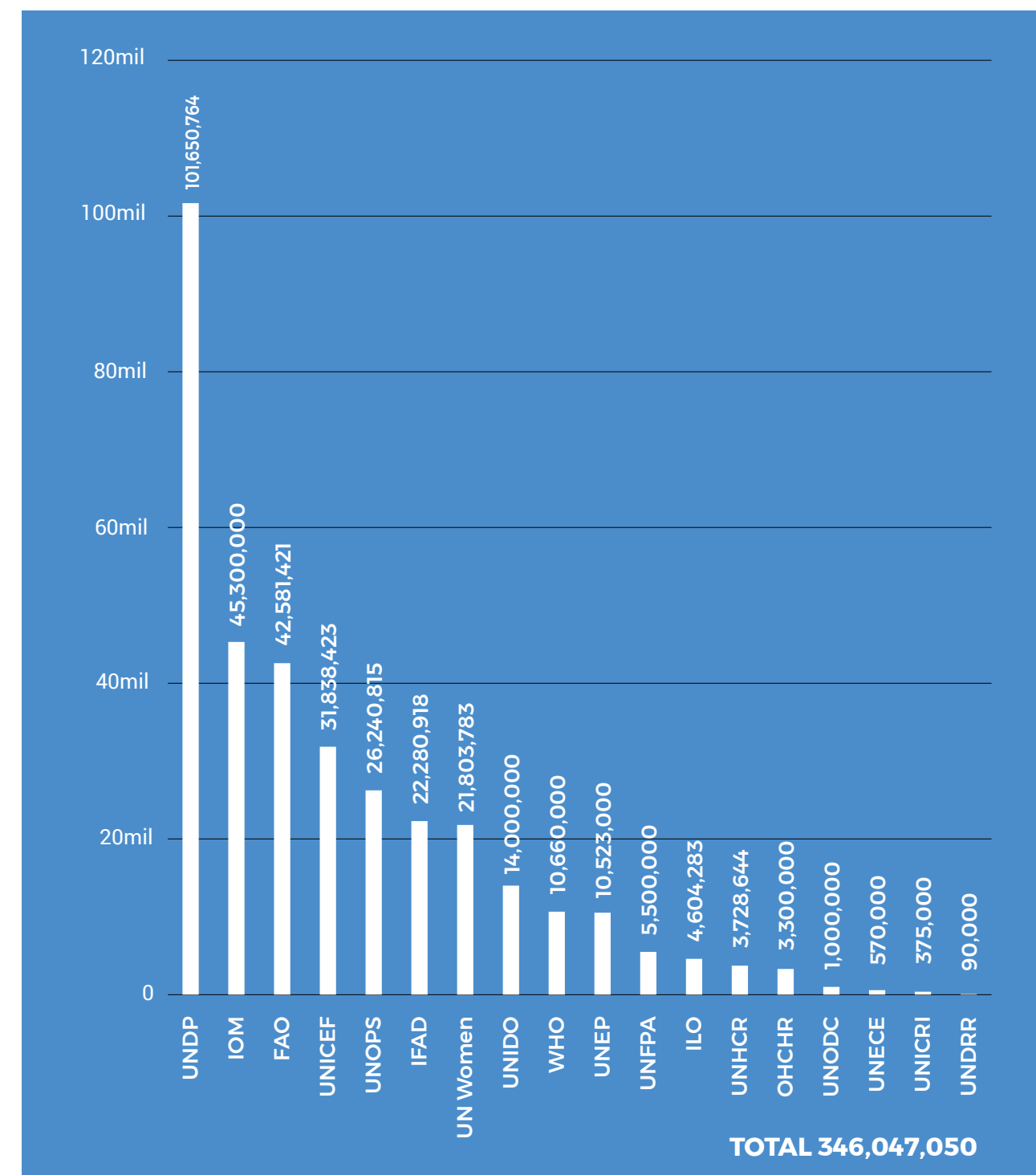
Total financial contributions for 2021-2025 by funding source and outcome, in USD

	Donor Funding	Multilateral and regional institutions	Vertical and joint funds	Government	HQ funding	Private sector	Total
Outcome 1	32,605,095	15,942,349	4,967,252	1,445,722	3,303,063	30,000	58,293,481
Outcome 2	10,963,286	18,931,174	4,204,881	-	10,573,017	-	44,672,359
Outcome 3	61,245,718	18,931,852	2,692,738	182,089	3,996,446	-	87,048,843
Outcome 4	43,225,109	-	5,110,648	-	6,533,742	-	54,869,499
Outcome 5	28,163,955	10,745,585	20,859,537	-	1,650,921	-	61,419,997
Total	176,203,164	64,550,960	37,835,056	1,627,811	26,057,188	30,000	306,304,179

Total financial contribution for 2021-2025 by funding source, in USD



Total planned budget for implementation of the Cooperation Framework in 2021-2025 by UN Country Team entity, in USD





Main donors to the implementation of the Cooperation Framework in Georgia in 2023, in USD

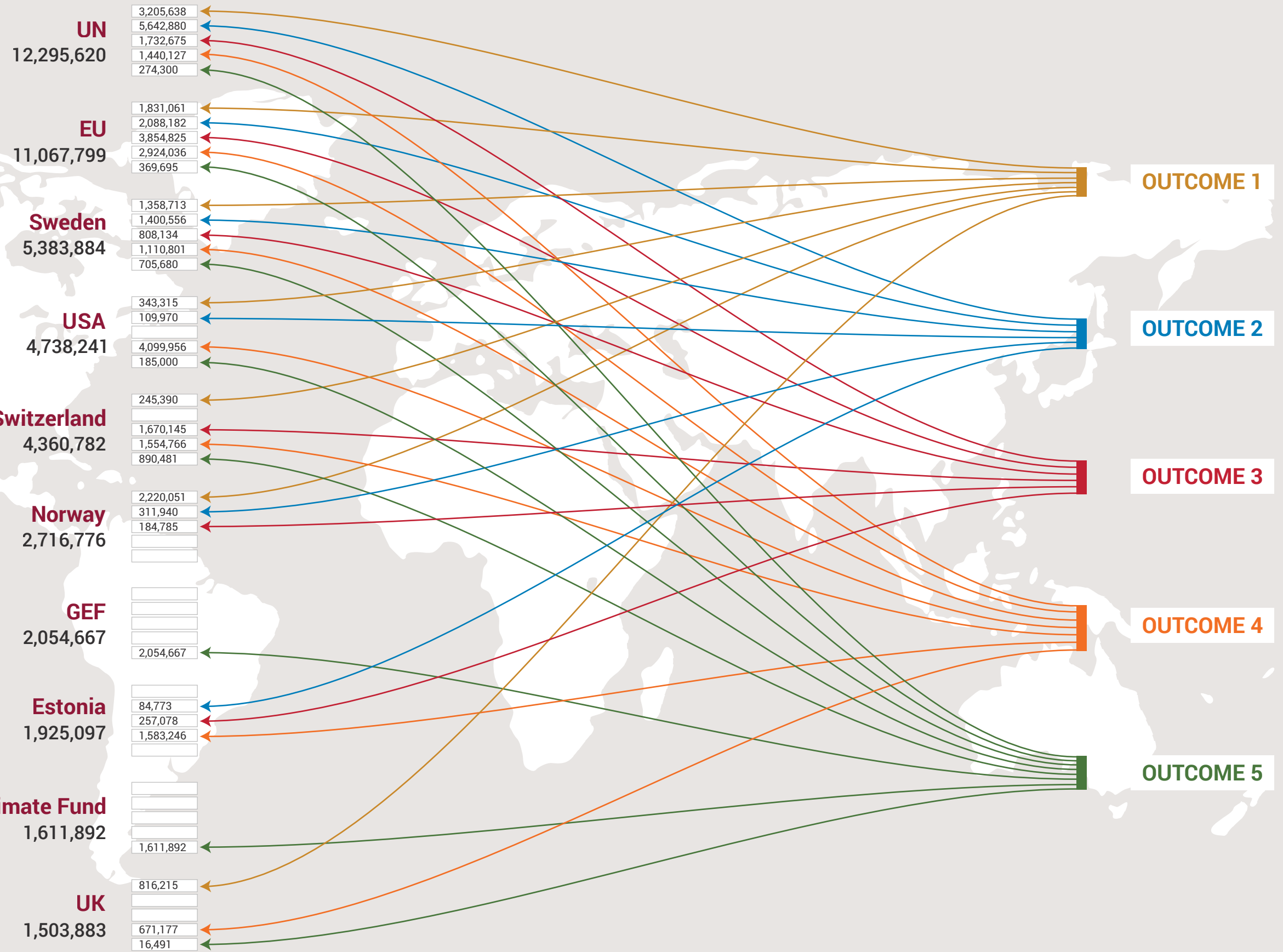




Photo: Bezhanishvili/UNICEF

06

UN Key Focus in Georgia for 2024

Despite the growing global instability, Georgian economy has experienced robust growth in recent years. Together with the unwavering support of all Georgia's development partners, this economic boost offers a chance to channel the country's capacities and resources towards shared prosperity and equality, and to push through the development reforms to uphold human and labour rights, promote gender equality, improve education, ensure comprehensive social protection, foster decent work and boost climate action. In 2024, Georgia will present its third Voluntary National Review, which will allow to take stock of the SDG progress at the national level and to fine-tune priorities until 2030.

Through the implementation of the current UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, the UN Country Team in Georgia provides support to Georgia to ensure that these reforms are not only successful, but also just and equitable, with human rights, gender equality and leaving no one behind embedded as fundamental principles. With sufficient political will, such reforms would improve the lives of the Georgian

people, strengthen the country's resilience against external shocks and show an example of responsible leadership globally.

The upcoming electoral period is an opportunity to bring new vibrancy into Georgian democracy and to enable broader and more meaningful civic and political participation, including by the full use of the new proportional system. In 2024, the UN will be working with the Georgian electoral authorities to support the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Electoral Needs Assessment Mission conducted in 2023.

Leaving no one behind requires participatory policymaking, making sure that everyone's voices are heard and working with all groups to lift up the whole society. The UN will continue advocating for the meaningful engagement of the social partners, civil society, Georgian diaspora, private sector, academia, vulnerable groups and communities in policymaking and will keep partnering with them in the delivery of the UN's support to the development of Georgia. We will reinforce our support to the decentralization reform, to empower municipalities to lead on local development and to foster grassroots

civic participation. We will also continue our assistance to the conflict-affected communities across Georgia.

In 2024, the UN Country Team will seek new internal synergies to enhance joint programming, advocacy, communication, and operational efficiencies and innovations to support disability inclusion, gender equality and environmental protection. The UN will also continue its efforts to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse and tackle sexual harassment in the workplace with a focus on safe and accessible reporting, survivor-centered response, and enhanced accountability for all UN entities working in Georgia and their implementing partners.

Finally, in 2024, we will launch the new cycle for the development of the next UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Georgia covering the years from 2026 to 2030, and we look forward to joint reflections and prioritization of the future priorities with the Government of Georgia and all other partners.



**UNITED NATIONS
GEORGIA**



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