

HIGHLIGHTS

- Parliament extended the state of emergency until 22 May
- A ban on vehicle movement has been extended until April 27
- Government to present the Crisis Recovery Plan on 24 April
- 20,000 PCR test kits from South Korea arrived

107
Total recovered

420
Confirmed cases

5
Total deaths

5,223
People in quarantine

Source: www.stopcov.ge 23 April 2020

Georgia situation overview

The first case of COVID-19 was identified in Georgia on 26 February 2020. Soon thereafter, direct flights from China, Iran and Italy were suspended. Land border crossing points were closed for passenger traffic, only cargo was allowed. The Government mobilized hospitals for confirmed cases of COVID-19, as well as quarantine spaces for suspected cases in different regions of Georgia. Despite the early actions of the Government, the number of confirmed and suspected cases continued to grow triggering the Government to declare a state of emergency on 21 March, closing borders and airports, restricting movement inside the country, banning mass gatherings and maintaining closure of all schools, kindergartens and universities. A nationwide curfew was declared and further restrictive measures were introduced on 31 March. While the several 'hot-spots' remain under the strict quarantine throughout the country, the lockdown was imposed on the country's four largest cities and car travel inside cities was prohibited on 15 April. In order to avoid further community spread, the state of emergency was extended until May 22, 2020.

Coordination arrangements

- The Prime Minister of Georgia has established, and leads an Inter-Governmental Coordination Council to combat the COVID-19 crisis.
- Under the decree signed by the Prime Minister of Georgia, the UN Disaster Management Country Team will be tasked to coordinate international humanitarian support in case international humanitarian support should be requested by the government.

Mitigation and response

Mitigation measures taken by the Government of Georgia

- A nationwide state of emergency was extended until May 22.
- Driving private vehicles was resumed in several municipalities from 6:00 to 8:00 and 18:00 to 19:00, to enable 'essential' agricultural works [effective from April 22 - until April 27, as the driving ban expires].
- The village of Gvankiti in Terjola municipality has been put in lockdown.
- StopCov fund has accumulated GEL 128 835 477 as of 23 April;
- Georgia's diplomatic missions provided assistance to 12,636 citizens abroad. 7, 600 citizens have returned to the country via flights organized by the Government.
- Government will present the Crisis Recovery Plan on 24 April.

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

- **OHCHR** will support Office of the State Inspector through the series of activities on protection of the right to privacy and investigation of allegations of serious human rights by law enforcement officials, in the context of COVID-19.
- **WHO** provides continuous support to the UN agencies on compliance of the essential commodities under consideration for procurement to the technical specifications. In collaboration with National Centre for Disease Control and Public Health (NCDC) and health authorities in Abkhazia, WHO has initiated the adaptation and multiplication of communication materials;
- Under the UNDP Rapid Response Facility, **UNDP** signed a contract with local CSO Charity Humanitarian Centre 'Abkhazeti' (CHCA) to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in IDP Collective Centers and support vulnerable IDP communities. The initiative will focus on the needs of extremely vulnerable individuals and families. CHCA will provide home-care services to unaccompanied and extremely vulnerable elderly persons in targeted collective centers. **UNDP** in partnership with the local CSO Society for Future Generation (SFG) initiated the project to respond to the needs that have emerged during the COVID-19 crisis in Abkhazia.
- Through the USAID-funded Horizons project, **UNDP** finalized an assessment of needs in hospitals and medical laboratories in Abkhazia for ICT equipment designed to improve information flows between medical establishments and facilitate online education and coaching for medical staff. The ICT equipment, as well as basic furniture for e-rooms, will be procured in coming weeks.
- A facility to resolve commercial disputes triggered by COVID-19 shutdown measures was by **UNDP** in partnership with the EU. The project is run by the Georgian International Arbitration Center (GIAC) and the mediation initiative Resolve. Mediation and facilitation will be conducted online. The service is free to all: the EU and UNDP will cover one-day mediation and facilitation costs during the pilot stage of the project while GIAC will fully waive its administrative fee. The project will initially run as a pilot for three months.
- With funding from Sweden, **UNDP** committed USD 40,000 to support two VET colleges in Kachreti and Zugdidi in shifting to short-term vocational training delivered as distance learning. This is designed to enable women confined at home by restrictive measures to develop the skills needed to thrive in private-sector employment.
- Through **UNDP** support, all Government briefings on COVID-19 are now being translated into sign language. UNDP is also providing psychosocial support to professional staff who are required to stay indefinitely at institutions for persons with mental health issues and disabilities that remain under lockdown, as well as training for professionals who can provide remote support to their peers.
- Under a Norway-funded project, **UNDP** provided the Public Defender's Office with PPEs to enable staff to continue performing their mandate in a safe manner.
- In partnership with national broadcaster Rustavi-2 "Midday Show" **UNICEF** promoted 15-day challenge to help parents in care and early learning of their children [#Learningathome #havefunathome]. The latter was extended to another 15-day challenge on relaxation and mental health tips for parents with young kids and positive parenting, at online media portal On.ge and TV broadcaster Mtavari. Positive parenting videos were shared on social media and TV in Abkhazia as well.
- **UNICEF** reached out to young people on TikTok with three videos on COVID-19 safety and mental wellbeing.
- **UNICEF** partner, Children of Georgia, provided psychological support to 100 children and caregivers in alternative care in Tbilisi and regions.
- **UNICEF** in partnership with MAC Foundation is producing a specialized TV programme to support children with disabilities and their parents. A Facebook page in support to parents of children with disabilities was also launched.
- **UNICEF** launched a Shock Responsive Social Protection Feasibility Assessment.
- **RCO** translated into Georgian a book, "My Hero is You" written for children around the world affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. RCO has produced a video on COVID-19-related safety precautions for media.
- **IOM** provided protective clothing and equipment to the Migration Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia and its temporary accommodation center for migrants.
- **IOM** provided reintegration support to 18 returnees. In partnership with civil society organizations **IOM** has conducted a migrants' rapid needs assessment survey. Based on the initial results, migrants lack information on access to COVID-19 medical care and are severely affected by imposed restrictions.
- With support of the EU and in collaboration with Ministry of Environmental Protection and Agriculture, **FAO** will launch a new phase of the matching grant application process under ENPARD, aimed at installation of drip irrigation schemes by increasing the donor contribution up to 75 percent.

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- With SDC support, **FAO** initiated procurement of PPE kits for use of veterinarians at the slaughterhouses and in the field, to ensure uninterrupted operations of veterinary and food quality inspection services on the ground.
- **UNHCR** provided cash assistance to additional 70 refugees and asylum-seekers affected by the imposed restrictions. **UNHCR** is providing food assistance to 60 asylum-seekers living in Martkopi Reception Center, at the request of the Ministry of Interior.
- **UNHCR** distributed sanitary and hygiene items to four healthcare facilities in eastern Abkhazia, i.e. Central Hospitals in Gali, Ochamchire, Tkvarcheli and the hospital in Saberio village, as well as six primary health points in six villages of Gali district and Ochamchire Youth House. Masks and gloves were distributed to UNHCR partners who are mostly exposed to individual contact with persons of concern.
- **UNHCR** provided cash assistance to an additional 60 households/ 225 persons in Abkhazia, many of whom have been left without access to pensions and allowances in the Tbilisi Administered Territory due to closure of the Administrative Boundary Line. Many are also affected by imposed restrictions within Abkhazia, hampering access to markets and livelihoods.
- **UN Women** finalized the selection of a local research company to initiate the Rapid Gender Assessment (RGA) of COVID-19 crisis in Georgia. **UN Women** supported two additional women entrepreneurs with the quality check of the produced face masks by the NCDC. **UN Women** purchased 700 masks from its beneficiary four women entrepreneurs for further distribution to civil society partners rendering services to victims/survivors of VAW/DV.
- **UNFPA** supported development of interim recommendations on “Clinical Management of COVID-19 during pregnancy and delivery”.
- **UNFPA** and media portal ON.ge introduced a weekly blog “Fathers and children – adventures from isolation” within the frames of MenCare Campaign. MenCare Georgia activists created Fathers’ Group on Facebook, to encourage engagement of men as non-violent and supportive fathers.
- With hashtag #ContinuedSupport **UNFPA** presents its partners and their work on social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter).

Response by international development partners

- The European Commission announced the adoption of a EUR 3 billion macro-financial assistance package to ten enlargement and neighborhood partners, including EUR 150 million for Georgia.
- The United States has expanded its financial aid to Georgia by USD 600, 000 to help the country handle the coronavirus pandemic.

Important links to follow

The Secretary-General's Message on Human Rights and COVID-19 – <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-04-23/we-are-all-together-human-rights-and-covid-19-response-and-recovery-video-message-the-secretary-general-delivered>

Secretary-General's remarks to the ECOSOC Forum on Financing Sustainable Development in the Context of COVID-19 [as delivered] - <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/statement/2020-04-23/secretary-generals-remarks-the-ecosoc-forum-financing-sustainable-development-the-context-of-covid-19-delivered>

OHCHR COVID-19 and human rights of LGBTI people: <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/LGBT/LGBTIpeople.pdf>

OHCHR COVID-19 and human rights of migrants: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Migration/OHCHRGuidanceCOVID-19_Migrants.pdf

OHCHR COVID-19 and women's human rights: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Women/COVID-19_and_Womens_Human_Rights.pdf

MenCare Campaign, UNFPA Georgia and media portal ON.ge - a weekly blog “Fathers and children – adventures from isolation”: <http://go.on.ge/1iqq>; <http://go.on.ge/1j7v>; <http://go.on.ge/1jri>
MenCare Georgia - Fathers’ Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/519208829022027/>

General:

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- <https://hr.un.org/page/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/situation-reports/>
- <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>
- <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/covid-19-outbreak-readiness-and-response>
- <https://www.who.int/publications-detail/strategic-preparedness-and-response-plan-for-the-new-coronavirus>
- Disaster management and contingency planning: <https://www.preventionweb.net/publications/view/2527>
- WHO Whatsapp Thread for Q&A: <http://bit.ly/who-covid19-whatsapp>

Georgia:

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

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