



The Public Defender of Georgia

Implementation of the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security in Georgia

Monitoring Results

2017

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Table of Contents

Preface	4
Methodology.....	5
Impact Area I: Participation.....	6
Goal 1: Increased participation of women in the security sector.....	6
Goal 2: Increased participation of internally displaced and conflict-affected women and women’s and other civil society organizations in conflict prevention and conflict resolution.....	9
Impact Area II: Prevention	11
Goal 3: Prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and other risks related to human security.....	11
Impact Area III: Protection.....	13
Goal 4: Socially and economically empowered internally displaced and conflict-affected women, girls and their family members	13
Impact Area IV: Effective implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325.....	22
Goal 5: Strengthen accountability for the implementation of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325	22
Conclusion	23
Recommendations	24
Annex I.....	26

Preface

On 31 October 2000, the United Nations Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, which recognizes the special role and needs of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict circumstances.¹

The new international model of war and peace with respect to women is composed of three parts: protection during military confrontations; participation in the process of prevention and avoidance of conflicts; and participation in the decision-making process regarding conflict resolution and matters of peace.

In order to achieve said aims and implement UN Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010) and 1960 (2011), a National Action Plan for the period from 2012 to 2015 was adopted in accordance with the statute of the Parliament of Georgia on “Women, Peace and Security” issued on 5 May 2011. It is noteworthy that the 2016-2017 National Action Plan was adopted as a result of consultations with the appropriate institutions tasked with its implementation, as well as state institutions and civil society.

The monitoring report reveals the results of the monitoring conducted by the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia as well as the subsequent recommendations generated from the meetings held with the appropriate institutions of authority, individuals of particular interest and the conflict-affected population. Thus, the results of the monitoring indicate that the intended effects of the National Action Plan were not fully implemented and did not generate the desired outcome in terms of improvements to human rights and social conditions for the conflict-affected population in any tangible way. This is especially true for women and girls. Therefore, problems still remain that need to be addressed, namely:

- State institutions fail to address the special role of women and girls in the context of peace and security, and the training programmes conducted to increase gender sensitivity among the staff of state institutions remain largely insufficient.
- The monitoring conducted by the Public Defender of Georgia makes apparent the need for the development of a more intersectional plan. Conflict-affected women and girls have special needs that must be specifically addressed by the National Action Plan.
- The process of raising awareness about domestic violence and violence against women, including sexual harassment, remains a challenge. Therefore, the number of reports regarding domestic violence and sexual harassment to the Public Defender’s Office on behalf of the women living in the conflict regions, as well as those who are internally displaced, remains low.
- Conflict-affected women and girls do not receive the appropriate psychosocial rehabilitation and reproductive health-care services.
- Despite the fact that the Public Broadcaster was involved in the implementation process of the National Action Plan, the media did not cover the issues affecting the needs of conflict-affected women and girls. Thus, the beneficiaries were not represented appropriately. It is of paramount importance to dedicate more airtime to such concerns.
- Despite the fact that the National Action Plan contains clauses regarding the conflict-affected women and girls, none of the implemented activities of the reported period concentrated on those women and girls living in the occupied regions.

¹ UN Security Council, *Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) [on women and peace and security]*, 31 October 2000, S/RES/1325 (2000). Available at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/#resolution>.

- Finally, in order to implement resolution 1325 (2000), it is critical to empower conflict-affected women and girls. The 2016-2017 monitoring report illustrates that the process of strengthening the position of women and girls in society is often spearheaded by individual efforts and initiatives. Thus, the State should encourage any initiative as an investment, aimed at both solving specific problems and supporting conflict resolution in general. This would also provide more stability, security and peace on a long-term basis.

We remain hopeful that the recommendations provided in this report will be taken into consideration in the drafting process of the National Action Plan for the 2018-2020 cycle.

Methodology

The responsibility of generating a report on the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and its subsequent introduction to the general public, has been delegated to the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia. The central purpose of the report concerns the degree of success during the implementation process of the National Action Plan, as well as the analysis of coordination and cooperation among the members of civil society, NGOs (non-governmental organizations) and state institutions. The report also generates appropriate recommendations based on the monitoring results, thus allowing the institutions responsible for the implementation of the National Action Plan to provide an adequate response whenever issues are detected in order to improve efficiency in the process of achieving set tasks. The Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office has adopted a specific monitoring methodology for each goal.

The first monitoring stage entailed acquiring information from the appropriate institutions regarding their implementation of the National Action Plan.² The acquired information consequently underwent scrutiny that resulted in the formulation of the second monitoring stage, which entailed meetings and in-depth interviews with the institutions' staff members. As a result, several focus group meetings were held, concentrating on resolution 1325 (2000) and with particular emphasis on the implementation of the National Action Plan. Improvements in the impact areas, covered during the training and seminar sessions, were also assessed and focused on any increased sensitivity on behalf of the staff members towards the special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls. The information gathered during these meetings was then, in turn, examined in both a qualitative and quantitative manner.

The third monitoring stage included meetings with internally displaced women, alongside those residing in the direct vicinity of the demarcation line. The significance of said meetings was then analysed in detail.³ For this

² Information was gathered from the following institutions: National Statistics Office of Georgia; State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking; Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia (The Government of Georgia); Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia; Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia; Prosecutor's Office of Georgia; Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia; Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees of Georgia; Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia; Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality; Ministry of Defence of Georgia; National Security Council of Georgia; State Security Service of Georgia; Ministry of Justice of Georgia; Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia; Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia; The Public Broadcaster; Legal Aid Service.

³ Meetings held during the third monitoring stage include: Gori (16.06.2017; Shida Kartli NGOs focus group, 8 participants); Zugdidi (25.07.2017; Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti NGOs focus group, 4 participants); Tserovani (14.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 11 participants); Prezeti (14.06.2016; Refugee Settlement, 10 participants); Koda (14.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 9 participants); Koshka (21.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 10 participants); Tsitelubani (21.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 13 participants); Perevi (11.07.2017; Satemo Fund, 13 participants); Potskho-Etseri (26.07.2017; Refugee Settlement, 13 participants); Jvari (26.07.2017; Refugee Settlement, 12 participants);

stage, the focus groups were mainly selected according to geographic distribution. Settlements were selected based on the information provided by the appropriate institutions, in terms of the availability of services. In this regard, it is important to note the special needs of the populations residing in the refugee settlements and villages along the demarcation line. The informative meetings provided much-needed insight into the degree of efficiency of the National Action Plan, in terms of addressing the particular issues of the local women and girls. The meetings also allowed for an assessment of the women's level of awareness regarding sexual or otherwise violent, security-related risks, as well as violations of liberties such as the freedom of movement, among others.

It is noteworthy that the monitoring was conducted in the summer of 2017 and, thus, does not encompass the entirety of the effort and activity of the appropriate institutions.

At the same time, during the monitoring process, it was often impossible to assess the indicators of the institutions' efforts due to the fact that many of the activities had no outlined basis or purpose, thus devaluing the assessment of indicators as a valid form of scrutiny. Moreover, the information provided by the appropriate institutions was often conveyed in generic statements only (e.g. "Equal participation is guaranteed", "Principles of gender equality are taken into consideration", etc.), which made it even more difficult to assess the specific actions taken by these institutions during the implementation of the National Action Plan.

The recommendations generated as a result of the monitoring will be aimed at the drafting and implementation of a new National Action Plan, with a particular focus on the needs of conflict-affected women and girls.

Impact Area I: Participation

Goal 1: Increased participation of women in the security sector

UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) recognizes the significant role of women in the processes of peacemaking, peacekeeping, security, reconciliation, conflict prevention and control. Therefore, it encourages all States to conduct events aimed at protecting the rights of women and girls, including organizing training programmes and high-level meetings with an increased female presence.

The National Action Plan contains a plethora of activities that intend to increase the participation of women in the security sector. Such activities include the introduction of teaching and training programmes, as well as data collection and analysis, in order to harmonize the appropriate institutions' internal documents with gender equality and anti-discrimination principles. In this respect, a rational human resources policy is the prime indicator of success. The Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as well as the National Security Council of Georgia, were to adopt an appropriate policy in 2017. It would be of interest to investigate the degree of success of those cases.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia and the National Security Council of Georgia did not conduct appropriate training programmes for the staffs of their HR (human resources) departments. According to the

Anaklia (25.07.2017; Satemo Fund, 4 participants); results of the meetings held with the NGOs based in Tbilisi (01.08.2017; Tbilisi; Meeting held with NGO representatives, 5 participants).

information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs,⁴ on the other hand, the staff of their HR department and other structural units participated in a training programme in cooperation with the Women's Information Center. The training included 25 participants from the institution (Activity 1.1.1).⁵ It is also important to note that the task outlined in the National Action Plan to organize a conference to exchange best practices among the HR departments of various institutions, was not realized (Activity 1.1.5).

In terms of introducing a system of sex-disaggregated data collection and analysis within the institutions of the security sector (Activity 1.1.2), no appropriate institution of authority has yet implemented such an arrangement. According to the results of the monitoring, it is apparent that only the Ministry of Defence conducts at least partial data collection. However, the Ministry does not have an online system, which would allow more efficient collection and analysis of the data. The failure to implement this activity once again illustrates that the actions taken with the aim of increasing the participation of women in the security sector are mostly spontaneous in nature. Therefore, as such initiatives are often external to the appropriate institutions of authority, it becomes impossible to analyse statistical data in this circumstance.

One of the activities described in the National Action Plan concerns the encouragement of a workplace culture rooted in the principles of anti-discrimination, gender equality and respect for human rights (Activity 1.1.4). According to the information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, local inspectors and patrol units in the Academy undergo special educational programmes for professional development. Within the framework of these programmes, they take the "Gender Equality" course. In terms of human rights, 1,360 members of staff were retrained in 2016. In the case of the Ministry of Defence, this issue is the direct responsibility of the Gender Equality Monitoring Group.⁶ It is important to note that in 2016, with the support of UN Women, work commenced in the Ministry of Defence on the preparation of a document concerning the prevention of discrimination, as well as the identification of response measures to gender-based discrimination. It is especially important to adopt the document within an appropriate time period and encourage the process of its effective implementation.

In terms of incorporating gender-related issues in the process of drafting, implementing, monitoring and evaluating HR policies and plans (Activity 1.1.3), the Ministry of Internal Affairs has not provided relevant information. Thus, it can be assumed that said institution has not fulfilled its obligation in this regard. The data provided by the Ministry of Defence, on the other hand, shows that their HR policy and plans are being developed in accordance with gender-related issues. In addition, their implementation and monitoring processes are conducted by department leadership, as well as the Gender Equality Monitoring Group. However, it is noteworthy that the letter received from the Ministry of Defence does not specify precise parameters (e.g. "Gender-related aspects are taken into consideration"). Additionally, a meeting was held with the Ministry's councillors on gender-related matters. It exposed issues that remain problematic, namely providing registration codes and creating appropriate full-time positions for said councillors within the Ministry.

⁴ Letter from the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia N MIA 4 17 01412003; 14/06/2017

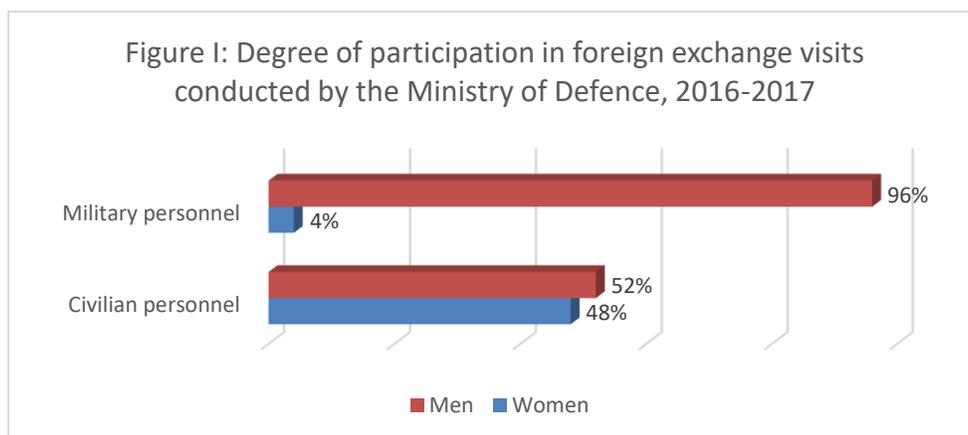
⁵ A training programme was conducted at the Women's Information Center within the framework of the project "Stronger Women for Peace and Development", with the support of the United States Department of State.

⁶ In 2014, the Ministry of Defence of Georgia adopted a gender equality strategy, which entails the prevention and eradication of all forms of gender-related discrimination; the creation of an appropriate atmosphere for the fulfilment of the abilities of both male and female members of staff; and the eradication of gender-based violence on all levels. The Gender Equality Monitoring Group was also established, tasked with cooperating with structural units and figures of authority in the process of implementing the National Action Plan by detecting and providing appropriate responses to any cases of gender-related discrimination within the system of the Ministry.

The obligation of the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia bears a similar purpose, ensuring an atmosphere of gender equality in terms of participation in career development programmes run by the institutions of the security sector (Activity 1.1.6). We were not able to assess the degree of success of the objective’s implementation due to the fact that the relevant institutions did not provide us with the percentage of women occupying decision-making positions (Indicator 1.1.b).

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia, the trainings, visits and teaching modules organized by the institution meet the gender-equality criteria, as the equal participation of women is guaranteed. However, no specific statistics were provided to validate this assertion.

In the case of the Ministry of Defence, according to the information provided in the received letter, both military and civilian personnel of the institution have equal opportunities for personal development. Furthermore, 55 per cent of the participants of the professional development programme held by the Ministry were women.⁷ However, for the purposes of the monitoring, the phrase “equal opportunity for development” can be interpreted as rather vague. It is important to note that the lack of English language skills among the female staff of the Ministry remains the central barrier to their participation in the trainings and teaching modules. Also, the issue regarding the male and female uniforms and equipment has yet to be resolved.⁸ The ratio of male-to-female staff members participating in foreign exchange visits during the monitored time period is as follows:



The participation of women in the decision-making process remains low. According to the National Action Plan, the percentage of women occupying positions of decision-making power had to at least remain at the same level by the year 2017. Unfortunately, however, we have not received relevant information on this matter from the Ministry of Defence. Therefore, it was impossible to assess the percentile indicators. The National Statistics Office of Georgia is considered a supporting institution for this target (Activity 1.1.6). The databases for the years 2014 and 2015 provide statistics for the ratio of male-to-female officers employed by the Ministry of Defence. However, there are no such databases for the years 2016 and 2017.

In terms of the gender distribution among the leadership of the departments within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, only a third of the 21 departments are led by a woman, and only 12 of the 28 deputy directors are

⁷ Letter from the Ministry of Defence of Georgia NMOD 9 17 00640638; 05/07/2017

⁸ As a result of the meeting held with the Ministry of Defence’s councillors on matters of gender-related issues, it became apparent that the uniforms of the military personnel are tailored exclusively to the male physique, neglecting the needs of the female body.

female. There is a similar situation in the Office of the National Security Council of Georgia, where only two decision-making positions are occupied by women. Apart from the statistical data, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia was tasked with holding training programmes with a particular focus on encouraging the participation of women in the decision-making process (Activity 1.1.7). However, this was not realized during the monitored time period. Although the State Security Service of Georgia did hold such training programmes, however, it failed to provide the information regarding the ratio of male-to-female participants. Therefore, it was impossible to measure specific indicators in this particular respect.

According to the National Action Plan, the participation of women in the Geneva International Discussions and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism had to increase or at least remain at the same level as the year 2015 (30 per cent and 33 per cent, respectively) (Indicator 1.1.c). However, we did not receive the relevant information on this indicator from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Furthermore, according to the information received from the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, only 4 of the 10 delegates (40 per cent) sent to the Geneva International Discussions were women. There was a similar situation with the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism, where only two or three (33 per cent or 50 per cent) of the total six delegates participating in the meetings were women.⁹

It is a positive development that, in accordance with the National Action Plan, there are women participating in such meetings. However, their mere presence cannot be the sole factor in the assessment of said activity. It is necessary to make appropriate use of the mediating platforms in order to inform engaged, influential individuals of the urgent and specific problems of the conflict-affected women and girls. Raising these issues during high-level official meetings will increase the likelihood of success.

Goal 2: Increased participation of internally displaced and conflict-affected women and women's and other civil society organizations in conflict prevention and conflict resolution

The UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security underline the role of the conflict-affected population in the process of conflict resolution. It is noteworthy that an appropriate assessment of the special needs and subsequent provision of services for the conflict-affected women and girls remains problematic. Therefore, within the framework of the National Action Plan, tasks were drawn up to ensure the consideration of the special needs, priorities and recommendations of the internally displaced and conflict-affected women during official talks (Output 2.1) and the general support of people-to-people diplomacy (Output 2.2). Unfortunately, it was impossible to assess the indicators of this activity, due to the fact that there was no outlined basis or purpose.

According to the National Action Plan, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality is the institution responsible for creating the appropriate mechanism for holding regular dialogue between the Geneva International Discussions and Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism and representatives from civil society and NGOs, women's rights activists and internally displaced women, as well as those affected by conflict (Output 2.1). According to the information provided,¹⁰ there were seven such meetings held in the year 2016 attended by all of the relevant parties. Five meetings were also held in 2017.

⁹ Letter from the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality N1315/1.06.2017; N1569/30.06.2017

¹⁰ Ibid.

Unfortunately we were not provided with the information regarding the meetings held in the first two quarters of 2017. Nevertheless, the analysis of the information available from the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia supports our assumption that the special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls were not on the agenda of said meetings. Thus, they were not appropriately addressed.

According to the information provided by the NGOs that attended the meeting held by the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality, the focus of the consultations held with the conflict-affected population mainly concentrated on issues regarding health care, education, transportation and household concerns. Only a single information-exchange meeting regarding the topic of “Women, Peace and Security”, as well as one meeting of the Geneva International Discussions, was held during the monitored time period. It is important to note that the dialogue meetings are generally attended by the leadership of the appropriate institutions, most of whom are men.

For similar purposes, the National Action Plan includes the endorsement of projects aimed at confidence-building (Activity 2.2.2). Therefore, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality has been tasked with the implementation of said projects. According to the provided information, in order to support initiatives relating to people-to-people diplomacy, 84 such projects were warranted. Of those, 17 projects concerned women’s issues, with three projects proposed directly by various women’s organizations. According to the same information, due to the high levels of engagement on behalf of women’s NGOs, the implementation of the third stage of confidence-building and early-response mechanism development has begun.¹¹

According to the National Action Plan, the number of initiatives implemented by women’s NGOs had a target increase of 20 per cent during the monitored time period (Indicator 2.2.a). However, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality did not provide us with the appropriate information.

Therefore, considering the above-mentioned findings, it can be assumed that the activity of creating a mechanism of regular dialogue between civil society, NGOs and governmental institutions has been partially completed. As a result of the analysis of the information available from the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia, it can be assumed that, with the support of NGOs, a certain type of meeting with the local population does occur. However, the internally displaced and conflict-affected populations are usually uninformed about said meetings. It is also otherwise difficult to cover the entirety of the regions under scrutiny due to a lack of resources.

The meetings organized by state institutions with the NGOs are insufficient.

The actual exchange of the achieved results occurs at the meeting of the coordination group, which is responsible for the implementation of the 2016-2017 National Action Plan. However, the meeting must not be the sole active platform for the NGOs to voice their concerns regarding implementation issues. The process of identifying and addressing the special needs of conflict-affected women and girls remains especially problematic.

¹¹ Ibid.

Impact Area II: Prevention

Goal 3: Prevention of sexual and gender-based violence and other risks related to human security

UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security emphasizes the increased risk of acts of sexual violence during times of conflict. Therefore, it calls on all Member States to consider such risks during the implementation of reforms concerning peacemaking, demobilization, reintegration and security. It is also important that victims and those affected receive legal aid and justice through newly created mechanisms, as well as participate at increased levels in decision-making processes.

The National Action Plan calls for the establishment of efficient awareness-raising systems to inform the population residing along the demarcation line about the potential security risks, including those specifically affecting women and children (Output 3.1).

Within the framework of the outlined task, the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality is obligated to hold two annual consultation meetings with the internally displaced population, particularly with conflict-affected women and families, to discuss the security risks of sexual and gender-based violence (Activity 3.1.1).

According to the information received from the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality,¹² during the monitored time period, the institution held nine such meetings with the conflict-affected population, fulfilling the obligation of the activity. However, as made clear by the in-depth interviews conducted with the institution's staff, most of the meetings focused mainly on security issues regarding leftover post-war military materiel and the freedom of movement, neglecting discussion on the specific risks to women and girls. Additionally, during the monitored time period, no enquiries were made regarding the special needs of the women and girls residing along the demarcation line, which, according to the National Action Plan, is the direct obligation of the provisional state commission responsible for addressing the needs of the conflict-affected population residing in said settlements (Activity 3.1.3).

The Ministry of Education was also tasked with incorporating components of civil defence and security and the main principles of resolution 1325 (2000) into the National Education Plan (Activity 3.1.2). According to the information received from the Ministry, these components have been integrated into the "Society and I" and "Our Georgia" modules. An updated draft of the primary-school-level "Citizenship" module, covering global issues related to peace, has also been developed. However, it was not implemented during the monitored time period.

According to the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Defence of Georgia is responsible for increasing the capacity of systems regarding the security sector, civilian personnel and law enforcement, in order to better prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence (Activity 3.2.1). This is especially important for both conflict and post-conflict environments. The primary indicator for measuring progress on this task was defined as a 10 per cent increase in the number of trained employees working in the security and service sectors (Indicator 3.2.a).

¹² Ibid.

To this end, the Ministry of Defence of Georgia was tasked with conducting mandatory pre-deployment trainings for security sector staff on the principles of resolution 1325 (2000), with a particular focus on preventing and responding to cases of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict environments (Activity 3.2.2). According to the provided information, during the monitored time period, conferences were held covering issues that included “Gender Mainstreaming in the Security Sector” and the “Implementation of the Principles of the UN Security Council Resolution on Women, Peace and Security in the Security Sector”. A forum on “Strengthening Women for Peace and Development” was also held. During the monitored time period, 557 members of staff participated in the activities conducted by the School of Institutional Building of the Ministry of Defence of Georgia. Of the participants, 201 were women.

The accredited educational programme of the National Defence Academy includes a four-hour lecture on the principles of gender equality. During the monitored time period, 553 members of personnel (including 16 women) participated in the programme. It is important to note that women make up a mere 7 per cent of the total number of personnel.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Defence of Georgia, such trainings are conducted for all military personnel who are due to take part in international missions. Around 4,000 members of the military were retrained during the monitored time period. It is important to note the significance of domestic violence-related training programmes for military personnel scheduled to deploy to peacekeeping missions. However, in order to be able to assess the success of such training programmes, it would be necessary to introduce a mechanism for the qualitative examination of its results.

The Ministry of Defence of Georgia provided information regarding its educational and training programmes covering gender-related activities. Nevertheless, it remains impossible to measure the indicators of the task, as the exact number of security and military personnel retrained in 2015 remains unknown. Thus, it is impossible to examine the change in the percentage of trained personnel compared to 2015, in order to assess whether or not the Ministry had reached the outlined 10 per cent growth. Although the activities conducted by the Ministry can be assessed in a positive light overall, the analysis of the provided information indicated that the specific task of addressing the issue of sexual and gender-based violence was neglected to a certain degree during the outlined processes. Therefore, it is important to focus more attention on completing this task.

As outlined in the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Defence of Georgia conducted two mandatory conferences¹³ for its staff on the principles of resolution 1325 (2000), with particular focus on the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence within a conflict or post-conflict environment (Activity 3.2.2). In 2016, the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia also conducted two training programmes, retraining a total of 40 prosecutors¹⁴ on issues regarding the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) (Activity 3.2.3). The Gender Equality Department attempted to receive information regarding the male-to-female ratio of the participants of this training programme. However, we were informed that the Prosecutor’s Office made no requirement to record the sex of the programme participants. Therefore, we are unable to analyse whether or not there was any balance in terms of gender in this particular case for the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia.

¹³ According to the information provided by the Ministry of Defence of Georgia, a conference was held in 2016 on “Gender Mainstreaming in the Security Sector” and was presented on behalf of the Cadets of the Academy of Defence and the students of the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Another conference “Implementation of the Principles of the UN Security Council resolution on Women, Peace and Security in the Security Sector” was held by the School of Institutional Building of the Ministry of Defence in 2017.

¹⁴ Letter from the Prosecutor’s Office of Georgia N13/36553/5.06.2017; N13/39698/16.06.2017

Despite the recommendations of resolution 1325 (2000) and the subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia conducted no training programmes during the monitored time period on the prevention of and response to sexual and gender-based violence.

The Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia was obligated to complete the same task by means of holding training programmes for members of the media on the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) and gender-sensitive reporting (Activity 3.2.5). To this end, with the support of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia, a training programme was held in 2016. Another training programme is scheduled to take place on 18 December 2018. A seminar for members of the media will also be conducted.

Based on a general assessment, it can be assumed that, in terms of the fulfilment of the activities outlined in the National Action Plan, state institutions overall preferred internally conducted events. This included raising the awareness of the staff, as well as developing their skills. Additionally, the conducted activities mostly neglected the issue of sexual and gender-based violence. Furthermore, the conducted programmes were insufficient due to the actual state of the institutions in question, requiring further action to be taken. Therefore, it can be argued that in terms of public awareness regarding resolution 1325 (2000), no active steps were taken.

Impact Area III: Protection

Goal 4: Socially and economically empowered internally displaced and conflict-affected women, girls and their family members

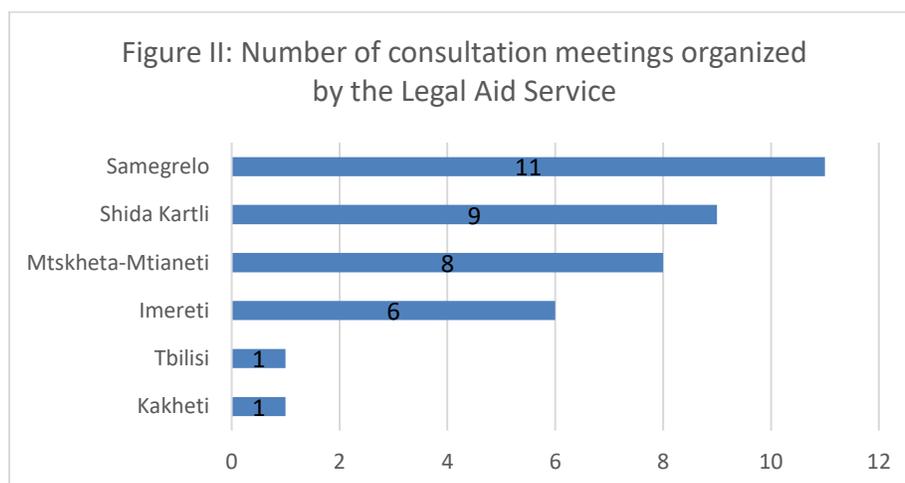
There is a considerable number of internally displaced or conflict-affected individuals in Georgia. However, women and girls make up the most vulnerable segment.¹⁵ The monitoring conducted by the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia showed that the general issues regarding security, homelessness, freedom of movement and the availability of vital resources remain problematic. However, the low level of engagement in economic affairs on behalf of the internally displaced and conflict-affected women and girls stands out as an especially alarming problem.

The main aim of the third impact area of the National Action Plan concerns the improvement of the socioeconomic circumstances of the internally displaced and conflict-affected women, girls and their families. The 12 activities outlined by the National Action Plan aimed at achieving this goal include providing legal aid through consultation meetings, supporting and raising awareness for professional education programmes, providing small grants and a plethora of other activities aimed at strengthening the position of women and girls. Providing appropriate services for the victims of sexual violence is also part of the agenda.

The Legal Aid Service was responsible for the creation of a system that provides free and available legal assistance to the internally displaced and conflict-affected women and girls (Output 4.1). The institution was obligated to organize at least 10 consultation meetings to provide free legal assistance to the women and girls

¹⁵ Special report of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia, “The rights of women and children in regions affected by conflict”. Available at <http://www.ombudsman.ge/uploads/other/4/4459.pdf>.

residing along the demarcation line. According to the information provided by the Legal Aid Service,¹⁶ such meetings were held in the regions as follows:¹⁷



According to the information provided by the Ministry of Justice of Georgia, in order to achieve the same goal, the Ministry organized the venue for the Legal Aid Service (in the form of a community centre).¹⁸ Between 2016 and 2017, 58 consultation meetings were held in the community centre of Mejriskhevi village.

According to the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees was also responsible for providing legal assistance to the internally displaced and conflict-affected women, girls and the members of their families (Activity 4.1.2). According to the information provided by the Ministry,¹⁹ with the support of UN Women, the institution has provided legal aid to conflict-affected individuals both in and out of court.

Legal assistance provided by the Legal Aid Service, 2016–2017

	Beneficiaries served		
	Total	Women	Men
Across all legal assistance cases	4,384	2,778 (63.4%)	1,606 (36.6%)
Between the two meetings held in refugee settlements	120	83 (69.2%)	37 (30.8%)

It is a positive development that the number of legal aid consultation cases in 2016 and 2017 increased considerably when compared to 2015. It is possible to state that, when compared to the data from 2015, the

¹⁶ Letter from the Legal Aid Service NLA 3 17 00011408/13.06.2017

¹⁷ From January to May 2017, 529 refugees were provided with legal assistance, 272 of whom were women. Six meetings were organized with the conflict-affected population. Three additional meetings were held in the regions adjacent to the demarcation line (two meetings in the Mokhisi and Khurvaleti refugee settlements and one in the village of Perevi). Three meetings were also held in refugee settlements in Koda, Saguramo and Zugdidi. According to the provided information, a total of 100 individuals participated, of whom 68 were women.

¹⁸ Ministry of Justice of Georgia N3103/25.05.2017

¹⁹ Letter from the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees N04/07/13891/31.05.2017

indicators outlined in the National Action Plan have been achieved. However, it must be noted that the data from 2017 does not provide us with enough detail to conduct a full analysis.

However, when discussing the general increase in the value of the outlined indicators, it is of paramount importance to also take into consideration the geographic spread of the activity across all regions situated along the demarcation line. Representatives from the Gender Equality Department of the Public Defender's Office visited settlements hosting refugees and internally displaced people, as well as settlements located along the demarcation line. Such meetings revealed information contradictory to the data provided by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees.

Through meetings with the local population, it was observed that the institutions in question not only adopted a negligent attitude during times of crisis but also failed to hold appropriate meetings aimed at informing the locals. As a result, the conflict-affected population has a rather low awareness of their rights, as well as the services they are entitled to receive.

The population of the Kvemo Kartli region, specifically those from Koda, assess the four informative meetings organized by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees (the institution responsible for organizing cooperative activities) in a positive manner. Currently, there is one lawyer from Eredvi municipality working in Koda. Therefore, the local population has the opportunity to receive, albeit limited, professional legal assistance on a wide range of issues. According to the information provided by its participants, only a single informative meeting was held in 2016 by the Legal Aid Service in the Tserovani refugee settlement.

Based on this information, it can be assumed that although the Legal Aid Service was fulfilling its obligations as outlined in the 2016-2017 National Action Plan, the internally displaced population, as well as those residing along the demarcation line, does not feel any tangible improvements in terms of the legal aid received.

Another goal has a similar aim: to strengthen the socioeconomic circumstances of the internally displaced and conflict-affected women, girls and their families by providing them with opportunities to participate in appropriate programmes (Output 4.2). The associated activity intends to achieve this aim by raising the beneficiaries' awareness of existing educational programmes for professional development (Activity 4.2.1). The Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees was given the responsibility of implementing this activity.

According to the information provided by the Ministry,²⁰ 2,053 individuals participated in the training programme "Training for those who seek employment and the State Retraining Programme" proposed by the "Social Service Agency", a Legal Entity under Public Law (LEPL). It is important to note that 156 of the attendees were refugees, including 110 women (70 per cent) and 46 men; thus, refugees comprised 7.5 per cent of all programme participants.

Between 2016 and 2017, 430 refugees participated in group consultations to learn about job market norms. It is important to note that 323 of the participants (75.4 per cent) were women. By comparison, only 44 individuals participated in 2015. Therefore, the total number of refugees participating in the programme rose by 977 per cent.

²⁰ Ibid.

Although the awareness-raising activity outlined in the National Action Plan can be considered fulfilled (Indicator 4.2.b), it is apparent that, based on the analysis of the information received from the focus groups organized by the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia, unemployment remains an unresolved issue for the conflict-affected population. Therefore, the outlined obligations were not sufficiently fulfilled to address the needs of the women and girls, thereby failing to improve their socioeconomic circumstances.

As the cooperating institution of the awareness-raising activity (Activity 4.2.1), the Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia conducted activities aimed at raising the awareness of the internally displaced and conflict-affected population through programmes directed at strengthening the economic circumstances of women. According to the provided information, the institution is also processing appropriate statistical data on the participation of internally displaced and conflict-affected women in the programmes that focused on professional education, retraining and entrepreneurship. Specifically, 11,474 students enrolled in the professional education programmes in 2016. Of them, 6,578 were male and 4,896 female (45 per cent). Between 2016 and 2017, 647 of the 1,347 students with refugee status were female.

According to the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees was appointed the responsible institution for providing the appropriate financial support for the women and girls to participate in the professional education programmes (Activity 4.2.2). According to the provided information,²¹ in 2016, there were 848 students with refugee status in state professional education institutions, 433 of whom were female. The LEPL “Livelihood Agency” provided financial support in the form of transportation or accommodation to 50 internally displaced students studying in vocational universities and receiving social benefits. Of them, 22 were women.

According to the information provided by the Ministry, in the first quarter of 2017, the programme provided financial aid to 95 internally displaced individuals receiving social benefits, 48 of whom were women (50.5 per cent). Furthermore, an amendment was enacted in the second quarter of 2017 to extend the programme to all internally displaced students enrolled in state vocational universities during the 2016-2017 academic year. The introduction of the amendment is a positive development, as the central barrier to the students’ access to education and training concerned transportation. At the same time, however, it is necessary to plan and implement more effective information campaigns aimed at raising awareness on such programmes.

According to the information received from the meetings held with the internally displaced populations of the Tserovani, Koshka and Tsitelubani refugee settlements, information about vocational training courses is usually made available to the local population via the Internet. As a result of the meetings, it became evident that it would be desirable to provide transportation and meet other specific needs of the internally displaced population to give them more opportunities to participate in vocational training programmes. For example, in order for internally displaced, single-parent mothers, as well as those with many children, to be able to participate in said programmes, it is necessary to consider their special needs.

According to the information received from the focus group meeting in the Prezeti refugee settlement, no meetings were held to inform the locals about the vocational training programmes. There is, however, a state-funded college in the village of Jvari, where 6-to-12-month training programmes are available. Due to the lack of employment opportunities, however, employment levels remain low.

²¹ Ibid.

Although the National Action Plan did not specify a target for the activity's indicator, when compared to data from 2015,²² the overall number of students participating in the vocational programmes has increased insignificantly between 2016 and 2017. Thus, it is impossible to measure this particular indicator of the non-outlined activity. In 2016-2017, 430 refugees partook in the group consultations held around the topic of the norms of actions on the employment market. 324 (75.4%) of the aforementioned individuals were women. Therefore, as there were only 44 refugees participating in the aforementioned programme in 2015, there was an 877% increase in terms of this particular indicator in 2016.

Additionally, to better measure the success of this activity, it is important to include an additional indicator in the next iteration of the National Action Plan – not only the number of participants in the training programmes but also those employed as a result. It is also important that the appropriate institution take into consideration the special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls – especially in terms of transportation – when planning the training programmes.

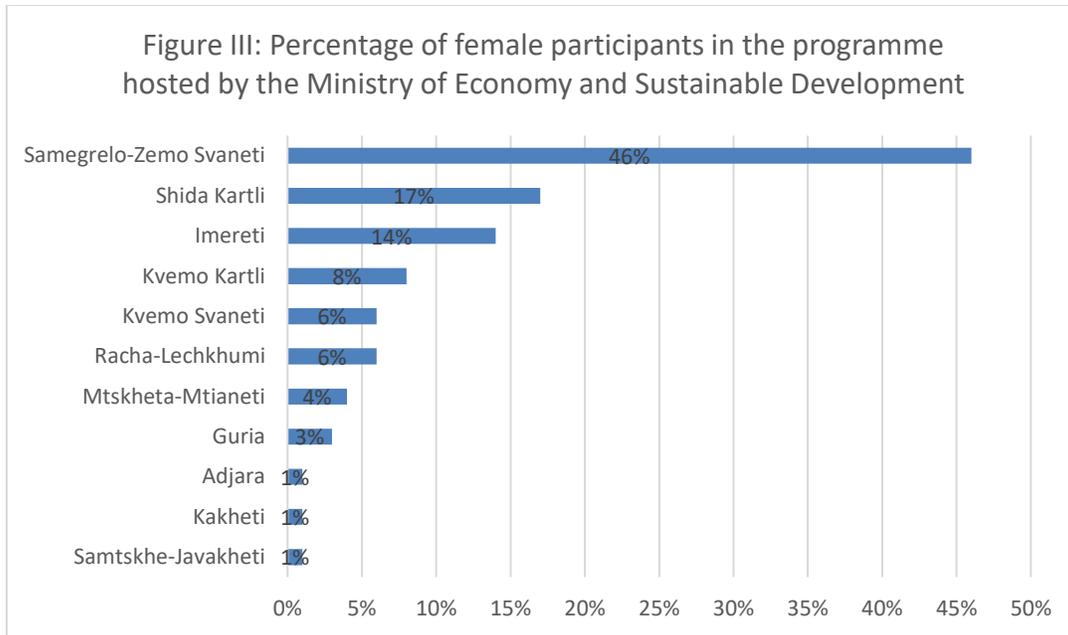
According to the National Action Plan, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees is also responsible for providing small grants to the internally displaced population, especially to women and girls (Activity 4.2.3). According to the information received, in 2016, the LEPL “Livelihood Agency” of the Ministry provided 259 grants, of which 132 (50.9 per cent) were awarded to women. In 2016, 444 internally displaced individuals joined agricultural cooperatives. Of them, 180 (40.5 per cent) were women. Therefore, the data collected during the monitored time period indicates an 88 per cent increase when compared to the 2015 data.

The activities of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia included conducting a training programme aimed at enhancing the attendees' entrepreneurship and business skills, thus encouraging the conflict-affected women to start privately owned small businesses (Activity 4.2.4). According to the information provided by the Ministry, the LEPL “Enterprise Georgia”, as part of the economic system, promotes micro- and small businesses by bringing entrepreneurship-support programmes to Georgia's regions via technical support, internships and consultations.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia,²³ during the period from 2015 to 2016, 4,911 individuals received funding within the framework of the support programme for micro- and small businesses. Of them, 180 individuals were internally displaced. Unfortunately, the male-to-female ratio of those provided with financial aid is low across all regions except for Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti. The figures are as follows:

²² Of the total 10,405 students (43 per cent of whom were women), 565 students had refugee status (5.4 per cent of the total).

²³ Letter from the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia N08/3438/12.06.201



The Public Defender of Georgia stated in his 2015 address to the Parliament that the Temporary State Commission Addressing the Needs of Population Living in Villages Adjacent to Dividing Line (later renamed the Government Commission) had to deliberate on the introduction of agricultural and industrial projects that would be specifically tailored to the needs and abilities of the conflict-affected population. However, there have still been no discussions concerning this issue. It must be noted that in 2016, the LEPL “Entrepreneurship Development Agency” of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia funded 147 beneficiaries residing in villages located along the demarcation line, within the framework of the programme on the development of micro- and small enterprises. The total value of the allocated funds reached GEL 655,649. However, this is a rather small amount of funding for entrepreneurial activity (an average of GEL 4,450 per beneficiary). Additionally, this programme was not aimed particularly at conflict-affected communities.²⁴

The training programme of the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia focusing on enhancing the entrepreneurship and business skills of women cannot be considered a complete success. Therefore, the aforementioned issues remain some of the main challenges faced by the internally displaced population, as well as those residing along the demarcation line.

As evident from the meetings held by the representatives of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia, the internally displaced population and those residing along the demarcation line are informed about the state-funded grant programme. As it turns out, the only challenge is the availability of help for said individuals to draft their projects. Indeed, according to the information collected during this meeting, the initiatives proposed by women – such as the construction of textile factories and greenhouses for berries, among others – are often supported.

Additionally, it must be noted that the local population was not satisfied with the training programme held within the framework of the project “Enterprise Georgia”, as it did not take into consideration their special

²⁴ Report of the Public Defender of Georgia on the state of human rights and freedoms in Georgia (2016). Available at <http://www.ombudsman.ge/uploads/other/4/4494.pdf>.

needs. Furthermore, the terminology employed during the training was found to be incomprehensible and vague. The local population believes that such a low turnout for the training programme was largely the result of the possibility of refunds for the organizers, in case the programme “failed”. This, in turn, did not help to support the skills development of the local population. Therefore, it is important to employ appropriate terminology, suitable for the particular audience at hand. It is also necessary to take into consideration the special needs of the local population.

The meetings held with the local population also made apparent that in Anaklia, there is a similarly low level of awareness and participation in the vocational programmes. According to the local residents, education and training programmes are not prioritized due to the socioeconomic hardships faced by the population.

Therefore, the needs and expectations of the population living in conflict and post-conflict circumstances in Georgia vary from those of others. Thus, it is important to take into consideration the conflict-affected population’s special needs when planning out programmes so that the awareness of said needs is raised.

The Public Defender of Georgia believes that the Government must develop a flexible and encouraging legal and logistical mechanism for providing funds. Consequently, the Government can propose special entrepreneurship programmes²⁵ to the conflict-affected population, tailored to their needs.

According to the National Action Plan, one of the tasks focusing on strengthening protections for conflict-affected women and girls is the introduction of a system of equal access to public services, such as health care and social services (Output 4.3). In order to achieve this aim, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia was tasked with drafting a policy of psychosocial rehabilitation services for internally displaced and conflict-affected women (Activity 4.3.1). However, the National Action Plan does not outline the responsible institution for the implementation of these services. With the financial support of the fund “Open Society – Georgia”, local and international experts drafted the strategic document on the support of psychological health. Additionally, they drafted the 2015-2020 National Action Plan that focuses on the differentiated programmes for psychosocial support. However, this document was not drafted during the monitored time period. Additionally, it is once again impossible to assess the indicator’s degree of fulfilment of the activity outlined in the National Action Plan, as no basis or purpose had been defined for this particular task within the monitored time period.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia,²⁶ a psychiatric state service programme has been operating since 1995 focusing on the needs of the conflict-affected population in any form, including the psychosocial needs of women and girls, thereby improving their circumstances.

As a result of the meeting held with the refugees, the conflict-affected population and those residing along the demarcation line, it became apparent that they are neither informed about nor able to receive psychosocial rehabilitation services. This can be explained by the fact that there is no policy within the National Action Plan that focuses on the particular services for this target group. In addition, there is a stigma attached to this subject.

During the information-exchange meeting held in Gori with local NGOs, it was noted that no such project had been conducted by any organization since 2015.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Letter from the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia N01/34990/31.05.2017

Apart from psychosocial rehabilitation, the Public Defender of Georgia received information regarding other health-care-related issues during the meetings held with the target groups. Namely, the level of awareness among the population regarding health-care services is low. However, during some meetings (such as with the Tserovani refugee settlement), it was noted that the local population receives regular medical examinations, including with respect to reproductive health. They also receive the services outlined in the screening programme that is being implemented in Tbilisi. However, the availability of vital health-care products for the local population remains problematic.

It is necessary to provide medical services for reproductive and psychosocial health that are appropriately designed in consideration of the special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls.

Representatives of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia organized a meeting with NGOs based in Tbilisi that are working on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). According to the received information, the meeting of the coordination council – attended by all appropriate institutions – remains the only effective platform for holding discussions on the outlined issues. As the meeting is attended by a plethora of institutions, it is usually here that important decisions are made concerning the solutions of said issues.

The results of the monitoring show that the meetings organized by the appropriate institutions insufficiently address the issues faced by the conflict-affected women and girls. There are a number of issues faced by the refugees in the conflict and post-conflict regions that are not on the agenda of the appropriate institutions, namely the lack of communication with the local government; the intensity of cases of domestic violence followed by stereotypical assessments and inappropriate responses on behalf of the police; the low level of awareness regarding security issues; and the inconsistent approach of the police patrol units regarding the necessary border crossing documentation. Participation and full representation of women and girls in the processes of public discussions and conflict resolution remains problematic. In fact, the processes of prioritizing and solving the aforementioned issues depend on individual efforts.

Attention needs to be drawn to the fact that many NGOs operating in the conflict regions were not notified of the informative meetings held on behalf of the appropriate institutions. This is a clear sign of a problematic communication process within the implementation framework of the National Action Plan. Additionally, the psychosocial rehabilitation of the internally displaced and conflict-affected women and girls remains the central challenge. According to the information received from NGOs, the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia refused to fulfil its obligation to solve this challenge. In effect, therefore, this task did not have an implementing institution.

Moreover, during the meetings organized within the monitored time period, the local population in several regions pointed out that it was, in fact, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees which usually held meetings that focused on their particular needs. However, according to the 2016-2017 National Action Plan, this was not the responsibility of the Ministry. Nevertheless, there were certain villages where no meetings were held whatsoever.

According to the information provided by the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees,²⁷ in terms of incorporating gender-equality concepts within the internal communication strategy of the Ministry (Activity 4.3.2), a new communication strategy was adopted

²⁷ Letter from the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees
N04/07/13891/31.05.2017

in 2016. It included the principles of gender equality in order to raise awareness among the women and girls with respect to the programmes focusing on supporting the internally displaced population.

According to the National Action Plan, the National Statistics Office of Georgia was responsible for creating a national database to collect sex- and age-disaggregated data on the marital status, level of education and living conditions of the conflict-affected population (Activity 4.3.3). According to the received information, the National Statistics Office of Georgia is collecting said data, but the actual database is still unavailable.

In order to ensure equality in the availability of public services, the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees was obligated to cooperate with local municipalities in Imereti, Kvemo Kartli, Samegrelo and Shida Kartli in order to deliberate on and resolve the problems faced by the conflict-affected women and girls (Activity 4.3.4). During the monitored time period, the Ministry held three such inclusive meetings. According to the received information, meetings were held with representatives of municipalities from Kvemo Kartli, Shida Kartli and Tbilisi and with the direct participation of the municipalities of Adjara and Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti (Zugdidi), as well as all municipalities of the Imereti region. According to the information gathered from the local population at these meetings, the local municipalities' participation in this process was inefficient and weak. Therefore, according to the local population, the next National Action Plan should focus on the local self-government instead, to ensure that more effective and potent activities are conducted.

According to the National Action Plan, the State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking is the responsible institution for providing effective rehabilitation and support to victims of sexually motivated violence (Output 4.4). In order to fulfil the task as outlined in the National Action Plan, the State Fund had to adopt a policy on the rehabilitation and support of the victims of sexually motivated violence that would be in accordance with international standards and best practices (Activity 4.4.1). According to the received information, the State Fund generated guideline principles that act as the framework document for the institution in terms of providing support to the victims of sexually motivated violence.

Furthermore, the State Fund was also obligated to provide appropriate services to the victims of sexual violence (Activity 4.4.2). To this end, amendments were proposed in 2017 to the internal regulations of the State Fund's structural unit (The Crisis Centre for the Victims of Domestic Violence in Tbilisi) in order to expand the staff's qualifications. The amendments included a broader definition of the target audience in order to increase the number of detected cases of domestic violence.

Because this initiative was only proposed at the end of the monitored time period, it is difficult to assess the extent of its awareness among the population. However, the aim is to conduct regular information campaigns aimed at raising awareness on the appropriate services available to the victims of sexual violence.

Impact Area IV: Effective implementation and monitoring of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325

Goal 5: Strengthen accountability for the implementation of the National Action Plan on UN Security Council resolution 1325

An important requirement of the implementation of the National Action Plan is the creation of sustainable mechanisms for monitoring, reporting and awareness-raising on resolution 1325 (2000) itself. The institutions responsible for this task are the Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia and the Public Broadcaster. Considering the implemented activities outlined in the National Action Plan, it is also the responsibility of the Prime Minister's Office to organize progress meetings on the implementation of the resolution (Activity 5.1.1), as well as provide information and annual reports to the Interagency Council on Human Rights.

To establish a sustainable accountability mechanism for implementing, monitoring and reporting on the National Action Plan, the Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia – with the technical support of UN Women – held two official meetings during the monitored time period with the coordination group responsible for the implementation of the National Action Plan (Activity 5.1.2), in order to present the report regarding the completion of the National Action Plan. Information was exchanged on the relevant planned, current and completed events. The NGO “Women’s Information Center” and association of refugee women “Agreement” participated and were actively engaged in both of the meetings.²⁸

In terms of presenting an annual report on the implementation of the National Action Plan to the Interagency Council on Human Rights (Activity 5.1.3), in 2017, the Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia provided the Government with an intermediary report on the implementation of the 2016-2017 Action Plan of the Government of Georgia on the Protection of Human Rights, which includes the National Action Plan on resolution 1325 (2000). Moreover, the report on the completion of the National Action Plan was presented to the Parliament of Georgia, specifically to the Committee on Human Rights and Civil Integration.

The main sphere of focus of the Office of the Public Defender of Georgia concerned drafting the monitoring report on the implementation of the National Action Plan, as well as its presentation to the general public (Activity 5.1.4). It must be noted that the information received from the appropriate institutions and the information voiced during the focus group meetings were often contradictory in nature.

The Public Broadcaster was chosen as the responsible institution for raising the general public’s awareness of resolution 1325 (2000) through television and radio programmes on the relevant issues (Activity 5.2.1). The Public Broadcaster covered issues relating to violence against women, domestic violence and gender-related issues.²⁹ It is important to note, however, that resolution 1325 (2000) itself was underrepresented on television in terms of airtime. Furthermore, there were no radio programmes dedicated specifically to the resolution whatsoever. The Public Defender of Georgia believes that resolution 1325 (2000), as well as all of the subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security, must be analysed. Therefore, there is still a need for appropriate television and radio programmes dedicated to raising public awareness on this subject.

²⁸ Letter from the Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia N17844/8.06.2017

²⁹ Letter from the Public Broadcaster N2150/01/29.05.2017

Conclusion

According to the monitoring results of the National Action Plan, it can be assumed that in comparison to 2015, a large segment of the obligations outlined in the plan was not fulfilled. The segments of the National Action Plan that were indeed implemented consisted mostly of training programmes held internally by individual state institutions, as well as the drafting of policy documents. However, the number of meetings held with the local population that were aimed at raising their level of awareness was low. This, in turn, resulted in low awareness among the local population regarding resolution 1325 (2000) and the National Action Plan, as well as the services and programmes available for the refugees and population residing along the demarcation line.

The fact that the obligations outlined in the National Action Plan were not fulfilled can partially be attributed to the flawed nature of the document itself. On the other hand, negligence on behalf of the appropriate institutions can also be considered a factor. Therefore, in order to increase the efficiency of the implementation process during the next iteration of the National Action Plan, the responsibilities of relevant institutions must be made even clearer during the drafting process.

According to the analysis of the monitoring, it can also be deduced that the obligations outlined in the National Action Plan are usually fulfilled as a result of the commitment of UN Women and other NGOs. Otherwise, the obligations outlined in the National Action Plan regarding the individual responsibilities of state institutions were only fulfilled to a minimum.

Despite the actions taken by the appropriate institutions, the assessed impact of the National Action Plan on refugees and the conflict-affected population is insufficient. The role of NGOs in the implementation process of the National Action Plan is diminished, which, in turn, reduces the level of awareness among the beneficiaries, thus limiting their access to entitled services.

As a result of analysing the data gathered from the responsible institutions, as well as the information received during the meetings held with the local population, it seems logical to assume that not a single institution has appropriately fulfilled its obligations to the National Action Plan concerning the interests of women and girls. Additionally, the tasks that were indeed fulfilled do not adequately respond to the specific needs of the conflict-affected women and girls, especially in terms of their psychosocial rehabilitation and the improvement of their economic circumstances.

Therefore, it is important to consider the feminist agenda and focus more on the needs of women and girls when drafting the next National Action Plan. Additionally, the National Action Plan has several significant defects in terms of participation on behalf of the conflict-affected population. It remains an important challenge that the conflict-affected women and girls do not have adequate information regarding the basics of the security strategy and appropriate procedures, especially along the demarcation line.

Despite the lack of information, local NGOs and community organizations show initiative to encourage people-to-people diplomacy. Unlike in settlements where such initiatives are few and far between, the issues affecting problem-solving and participation are better in those geographic areas where strengthened women reside. It is important that during the drafting process of the next National Action Plan, public participation and initiatives on behalf of women and girls are encouraged and supported. This, however, would be impossible without strengthening the position of the conflict-affected women and girls, as well as improving the abilities of local NGOs.

The special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls, as well as those living along the line of demarcation, remain mostly unresearched. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary to study and take into consideration such needs during the drafting process of the new National Action Plan.

Recommendations

For the Inter-Agency Commission on Gender Equality, Violence against Women and Domestic Violence:

- To organize meetings aimed at informing the internally displaced population and refugees, especially on the specific needs of women and girls
- To increase the role of the local government and conduct regular information-sharing meetings with the representatives of local communities, in order to identify and respond to the issues faced by the local population
- To inform the public on the organization of such information-sharing meetings, so as to reach a higher level of participation on behalf of the local population
- To hold, with the support of the local government, several annual meetings attended by all appropriate institutions in order to actually solve the problems faced by the local population, rather than to simply report on the problems
- To ensure that the needs of the women and girls are discussed during high-level meetings held by state institutions
- To ensure, by providing appropriate forms of transportation, a higher level of participation of refugee, internally displaced and conflict-affected women in the process of developing the National Action Plan
- To plan and implement activities addressing the special needs of the conflict-affected women and girls, as well as those residing in the occupied regions

For the Ministry of Defence of Georgia:

- To introduce registration codes for the Ministry's councillors on gender-related matters, as well as the creation of appropriate full-time positions for said councillors within the Ministry
- To review and refit the male and female uniforms and equipment in order to tailor to the physiological requirements of each sex, thereby ensuring equality in their ability to perform on the job
- To organize training programmes for its staff on the issue of domestic violence

For the Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality:

- To ensure that NGOs and initiative groups provide appropriate information regarding the specific needs of the conflict-affected women and girls
- To introduce to the agenda the specific needs of the conflict-affected women and girls, particularly the issues of freedom of movement and domestic violence, within the framework of the Geneva International Discussions and the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism

- To ensure the participation of the internally displaced population in the processes of conflict prevention and conflict resolution

For the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia:

- To retrain the police force operating in the settlements along the demarcation line on the topics of resolution 1325 (2000) and domestic violence
- To collect relevant data on the gender of police personnel

For the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia:

- To conduct trainings for the staff aimed at improving their negotiating skills
- To conduct information-exchange meetings with officials from other States regarding best practices with respect to the conflict resolution process

For the Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development:

- To support the process of conducting trainings that focus on the specific needs of the refugees, internally displaced population and women residing along the demarcation line – employing terminology suitable for said audience – in order to improve their economic circumstances
- To adopt a programme for the support of agriculture and industry that incorporates the specific needs and abilities of the conflict-affected population

For the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia:

- To adopt a programme for psychosocial rehabilitation and reproductive health for the conflict-affected women and girls
- To ensure the support of qualified psychologists for the internally displaced population, as well as those residing along the demarcation line

For the Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees:

- To conduct meetings aimed at raising public awareness about programmes organized by the State

For the Legal Aid Service:

- To conduct regular visits to the regions in order to hold consultation meetings with the locals and provide them with appropriate information so that the locals can develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities
- To provide legal aid via regular consultations with the internally displaced population, those residing along the demarcation line, and the conflict-affected women, girls and their families

For the State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking:

- To conduct campaigns aimed at raising awareness about the issues of sexual and gender-based violence

For the Public Broadcaster:

- To analyse the significance of resolution 1325 (2000) and the subsequent resolutions on women, peace and security for the Information Policies of the Public Broadcaster
- To plan and implement television and radio programmes intended to raise public awareness about such issues

Annex I

Subjects of the Monitoring:

1. The National Statistics Office of Georgia
2. State Fund for Protection and Assistance of (Statutory) Victims of Human Trafficking
3. The Office of the Prime Minister of Georgia (The Government of Georgia)
4. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia
5. Ministry of Internal Affairs of Georgia
6. Prosecutor's Office of Georgia
7. Ministry of Education and Science of Georgia
8. Ministry of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Accommodation and Refugees
9. Ministry of Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia
10. Office of the State Minister of Georgia for Reconciliation and Civic Equality
11. Ministry of Defence of Georgia
12. The Office of the National Security Council of Georgia
13. State Security Service of Georgia
14. Ministry of Justice of Georgia
15. Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
16. Ministry of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia
17. The Public Broadcaster
18. Legal Aid Service
19. Councillors on gender-related issues of the Ministry of Defence (13.07.2017; Focus Group; 5 participants)
20. Staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (18.07.2017; Focus Group, 4 participants)
21. Gori Focus Group (16.06.2017; Shida Kartli NGOs focus group, 8 participants)
22. Zugdidi Focus Group (25.07.2017; Samegrelo-Zemo Svaneti NGOs focus group, 4 participants)
23. Tserovani Focus Group (14.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 11 participants)
24. Prezeti Focus Group (14.06.2016; Refugee Settlement, 10 participants)
25. Koda Focus Group (14.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 9 participants)
26. Koshka Focus Group (21.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 10 participants)
27. Tsitelubani Focus Group (21.06.2017; Refugee Settlement, 13 participants)
28. Perevi Focus Group (11.07.2017; Community Fund, 13 participants)
29. Potskho-Etseri Focus Group (26.07.2017; Refugee Settlement, 13 participants)
30. Jvari Focus Group (26.07.2017; Refugee Settlement, 12 participants)
31. Anaklia Focus Group (25.07.2017; Community Fund, 4 participants)
32. Tbilisi Focus Group (01.08.2017; Meeting with NGOs, 5 participants)

