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**ENHANCING HUMAN SECURITY OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN  
GEORGIA**

(Policy Study)

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## FOREWORD

The events of August 2008 in Georgia have enormously affected the country's social and political life. Despite the fact that the hostilities lasted for only a few days, they had severe implications for both Georgia's economy and the Georgian people. The inhabitants of the former South Ossetian Autonomous Region, as well as the Gori and Kareli districts and the Kodori Gorge, have been affected the most by the aggression. According to the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, more than 130 thousand people were displaced in the immediate aftermath of the Russian incursion.<sup>1</sup> Fortunately, the political situation stabilised and the conditions for their partial return were created as a result of the active and direct involvement of the international community. As a result, there are 61 thousand displaced persons residing in approximately 500 temporary shelters which were established in Tbilisi and elsewhere in the regions. Notwithstanding the decrease in the numbers of the displaced, however, the problem of ensuring dignified living and housing conditions still remains high on the agenda. The efforts on the part of the Georgian Government and the international donor organisations are not sufficient and the provision of permanent shelter, food, living essentials, quality healthcare services, etc., remain an acute issue.

Against this backdrop, the population which was evicted from Abkhazia, and whose members have been living in unbearable conditions for 15 years already, seem to have been forgotten. Presumably, this might be a temporary phenomenon and could perhaps be explained although the very existence of tens of thousands of newly displaced persons generate new questions: a) can the State cope with relevant problems as the numbers of the displaced are increased? b) will different approaches be applied whilst designing appropriate assistance programmes as the problems related to the displaced persons in 1993 and 2008 are both similar and different? and c) will the emergence of the new contingent of the displaced persons affect the existing State policy towards those displaced from Abkhazia?

At first sight, these questions prejudice the topicality of this present publication. Indeed, the research presented herein was conducted between November 2007 and March 2008 with the displaced persons from Abkhazia as its main focus. The research was based upon a draft action plan of the implementation of the State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons - Persecuted<sup>2</sup> which by then was not yet officially approved.<sup>3</sup> Recalling the recent events shows that a lot of water has gone under the bridge since then. Particularly noteworthy is the approval of the Action Plan for the State Strategy at the end of July 2008 as well as the new version of the Plan being significantly improved as compared to that which was used in our research. Specifically, the implementation of the activities in the new Action Plan are envisaged to be divided between the Government, on one hand, and

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<sup>1</sup> Presentation of the Minister of Refugees and Accommodation of Georgia, HE Ms Tamar Martiashvili, [www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/\(httpInfoFiles\)/11F176EB457B3F39C12574EA004266C5/\\$file/GP10\\_speech\\_Tamar%20Martiashvili.pdf](http://www.internal-displacement.org/8025708F004BE3B1/(httpInfoFiles)/11F176EB457B3F39C12574EA004266C5/$file/GP10_speech_Tamar%20Martiashvili.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix 3

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix 4.



by international donor organisations, on the other. Further, the emphasis is placed upon social house-building, the categorisation of collective centres and offering the IDPs tailor-made housing solutions. Equally important is that the level and sources of funding are identified for all the activities and measures in the new version of the Plan unlike in the previous draft. In spite of the abovementioned, however, the new Action Plan has inherited a number of flaws from its predecessor which have been revealed during our research. Insufficient funding remains the primary deficiency. More importantly, however, it is the new reality of the situation in Georgia following the August events that prompts a substantial reprocessing of the new Action Plan. Obviously, tens of thousands of new IDPs significantly deteriorate the social conditions in the country but it is the IDPs themselves who suffer the most. Presently, as the numbers and the structure of the displaced community have dramatically changed and with the Government being solely occupied in dealing with the newly displaced people, it is recognised that some of these research findings and recommendations now appear irrelevant. Nonetheless, it was deemed expedient to publish the research in its initial form as we believe it still can be of added value for those governmental officials and civil society representatives who bear relations to the problems of the displaced communities. In the new circumstances, as substantial humanitarian and financial resources have been pledged by the international community, new opportunities for the solution of the IDP-related problems emerge. Subsequently, in the fine-tuned Action Plan which is supposed to appear in the near future, the findings of our research will be reflected more amongst others. Undoubtedly, the case in point are those research findings and recommendations which are still of importance now. Most likely, Georgia will have to wrestle with these problems for a long time and, therefore, the analysis of the success stories and failures in the past and the familiarisation with the ways and means of correcting the mistakes is a necessary precondition for effective policy design in the future. Giving this possibility to all IDP-related policy-makers and stakeholders has been the primary rationale behind this publication.

## INTRODUCTION

### Ground for Research

The policy of the Georgian Government towards IDPs (internally displaced persons) is currently inadequate considering the nature and acuteness of the problem which these people have faced over the past years. Approximately 45 percent of the internally displaced people in Georgia<sup>4</sup> live in overcrowded collective centres, some of which have been recently renovated into interim accommodations, whilst others have found temporary shelter in multi-member family living arrangements with relatives and friends. The majority of the IDPs are unemployed and typically without access to qualified medical service and education although there are a number of programmes for assistance and support being implemented. Of particular importance is the programme “New Approach to IDP Assistance” (hereinafter New Approach) which was initiated in 1999 by the United Nations Development Programme, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and the World Bank in tandem with the Georgian Government. The programme was intended to improve the housing conditions of the IDPs through the betterment of government policy and elaborating more adequate programmes of assistance. In particular, New Approach was meant to shift the emphasis from humanitarian assistance to developing and ensuring self-sufficiency. It was proposed to involve the IDPs more actively in the process of the country’s development, to give them opportunity to realise their skills and talent and to not leave them solely at the level of passive consumers of humanitarian aid. Unfortunately, these programmes have provided neither the required nor proper help to Georgia’s IDPs. On the contrary, the laws and programmes elaborated and proposed within New Approach have served to generate rather negative feelings amongst different sections of the society overall.

There was new determination to improve the situation by means of working out a new vision with the view to a more efficient solving of the problems facing the IDPs after the change of government in 2003. Official Tbilisi admitted for the first time that it was facing two equally important problems therein; first of all, creating conditions for the dignified return of the IDPs to their native places and, secondly, helping them to integrate into the places of their factual habitation. Moreover, it recognised that these problems can and must be solved concurrently. In order to apply this approach, the government worked out a “State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted” (hereinafter also State Strategy), together with the participation of international, non-governmental organisations, which was approved in February 2007. Recommendations elaborated within the framework of New Approach were taken into consideration whilst working on the Strategy document and realising the necessity of a multi-component approach to solving

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<sup>4</sup> Compulsory registration of the IDPs began in 2006. According to the Minister of Refugees and Accommodation, there are presently 217,000 people registered (TV news programme “Courier”, 31 October 2008).

the problem became one of the lessons learned from this programme<sup>5</sup>. Evicting people from the collective centres without any further actions, for example, will not mean better living conditions. Increased expenses on transport and public utilities might occur as a result of resettlement with the IDPs risking losing their jobs and their children having to move to other schools. The State Strategy intends to consider all these problems and to propose comprehensive solutions. The “Action Plan for Implementing the State Strategy” proposes specific measures for its individual provisions.

The approval of the “Action Plan for Implementing the State Strategy,” (hereinafter Action Plan) initially envisaged to occur in September 2007, is being suspended. The well-known events of November 2007 which, *inter alia*, were followed by the change of the top management in the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation, affected the approval of the Action Plan. Accordingly, the schedule of its accomplishment as well as, presumably, the entire policy of the government towards the IDPs have also been affected. In the meantime, very little changes have occurred in the everyday life of the IDPs. Results of the research project, entitled “Human Security and Integration Process in Georgia” which was recently carried out within the framework of the International Alert project *Advocating for Human Security through Civic Initiatives*, showed vividly that human sufferings and vulnerability are still common for the IDPs in Georgia and they refer to the process of integration into local communities with fear and anxiety. Prospects for returning to native places are obscure and those who spontaneously returned to the Gali district are permanently put to socio-economic, legal, psychological and other tests on a daily basis. Obviously, this confirms the existence of certain factors impeding the improvement of the general situation concerning the IDPs.

### **Frames and Goals of Investigation**

The goal of the present study was to examine and assess the degree of the adequacy of the policy carried out by the Georgian Government in reference to the IDPs from the point of view of human security. In particular, the problems of the IDPs from Abkhazia living on the rest of the Georgian territory formed the core subject of the study. Quite naturally, particular emphasis was put upon its shortcomings. Time limits, in their turn, preconditioned the framework of the study.

The problem of the vulnerability of IDPs was investigated in the course of the study from the human security point of view in the context of *returning* home and *integration* into communities of their factual habitation. The research findings were envisaged to reveal the defects of the public policy and to propose ways for its improvement and enhancement. In particular, it was meant to elaborate specific recommendations for the Georgian Government and civil society as well as for international donor organisations involved in this sphere.

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<sup>5</sup> The multi-component character was the criterion and condition for financing projects within the framework of the New Approach although eviction as such was not considered whatsoever.

## Methodology and Method of Investigation

From the logical point of view the research process consisted of three phases: a) revealing the defects of the existing policy, b) elaborating and assessing alternative policy options and c) elaborating recommendations for enhancing the efficiency of the policy.

At the first stage of the study, the degree of the vulnerability of the IDPs was defined from the human security point of view by means of inventorying problems related to social conditions, unemployment, accessibility to quality medical service and education, amongst others.

At the second stage, qualitative sociological research was carried out with the method of the *individual focused interview*. The rationale behind the qualitative method of research is the recognised fact that these interviews allow for a deeper comprehension of the particular social phenomena in their entirety and their direct relationship with other phenomena. The lack of formalisation, which is characteristic of quantitative research methods, makes comprehensive coverage of the researched objects impossible and reduces the number of research units to a minimum. On the other hand, however, a refusal from the wider scope is compensated by the depth of the analysis. As for the choice between the group (focus group) and individual (individual deep interview) methods, the preference for the latter has been preconditioned by the circumstances that focus groups are of little use for the study of intricate problems requiring thorough explanation.

A minimisation of the number of research units, as required by the qualitative research method, has preconditioned the criteria for identifying the respondents (sample of research): these were experts representing both public sector and civil society organisations. On the whole, approximately 30 experts from Tbilisi, Zugdidi and Kutaisi were interviewed.

A questionnaire was compiled for the interview which covered all the main aspects of the IDPs' human security (Appendix 2).

As a result of processing, the research material *indicators of vulnerability* were defined both in the context of *return* and *integration*. Later, these indicators served as the basis for the estimation of the adequacy of the governmental policy with regards to the IDPs by means of analysing the Action Plan. In particular, it had to be determined to what extent the Action Plan reflects the problems revealed by our research (*indicators of vulnerability*) and also the effectiveness of the measures provided for by the Action Plan. This, in its turn, was envisaged to help reveal the defects of the Action Plan and, therefore, of the official policy and to define the issues requiring immediate address.

With the purpose of a possible minimisation of mistakes during the interpretation of the primary data, the preliminary research findings were submitted to the expert community in the form of a *discussion report*. The feedback from the experts, as the result of the discussion, was used for fine tuning the conclusions, in particular, for a more accurate placing of emphases in the course of developing policy options. Notably, the results of previous research, including the study “Human Security and the Process of Integration of the IDPs in Georgia.” were used whilst discussing possible policy alternatives.

At the final stage, *recommendations* were elaborated for the Georgian Government and civil society as well as for related donor organisations.

## CHAPTER I. RESULTS OF THE SOCIOLOGICAL SURVEY

The analysis of the answers which were obtained from the respondents during the sociological survey is given below. It should be noted that the aggregated opinions of the experts served as a basis for the analysis of different sets of questions. Furthermore, special emphasis is put upon the arguments in which a similarity as well as a divergence of opinions are observed. The given analysis, on the one hand, is material for measuring *indicators of vulnerability* and, on the other hand, makes it possible to observe the weakest points in the general policy of the government; that is, the Action Plan, in particular, which, in its turn, became the basis for elaborating the recommendations.

### 1.1. Conformity of National Legislation with International Standards

- There is no basic disagreement between experts from the governmental and non-governmental sectors within the estimation of the national legislation for the IDPs.
- All the questioned experts from the non-governmental sector unanimously believe that the national legislation for IDPs does not fully meet international standards.
- Legislative regulations regarding the resettlement of the IDPs have a general character and require immediately being brought into line with international standards.
- The used definitions, to certain extent, contradict international terminology.
- Regardless of the fact that the UN “Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement” establishes the principles of equality of the IDPs in their country with the rest of the citizens and the inadmissibility of discrimination, this principle is absent in the national law.
- The division of the IDPs into two categories according to the place of residence—either in the private sector or in collective centres—is also discriminative as it violates the rights of the IDPs living in the private sector.
- Some of the provisions in the present legislation are vague which precondition the possibility of their ambiguity and misunderstanding. This requires, then, a more precise definition or, in some cases, complete rethought.
- The present legislation needs to be basically reworked. First of all, it refers to the problems connected to the resettlement of the IDPs. The principal norm stipulating the conditions for evicting the IDPs from collective centres is very general and allows the possibility for its ambiguous and subjective interpretation.
- The fact that children have grown up over the past years and are now creating their own families is not taken into consideration during the registration process as the Ministry still registers them as one family which leads to the rights and interests of

the newly made families being ignored within the process of the privatisation of the collective centres.<sup>6</sup>

- The main point is that many problems are conditioned by the inappropriate implementation of the legislation and not by its imperfect nature.

## 1.2. IDP Statistics

- The existing official statistical data of the IDPs remains incomplete despite the compulsory annual registration. It is largely conditioned by an objective reason; that is, the high dynamics of real life in which the search for employment and trying to solve the most burdensome socio-economic problems mean that many IDPs permanently move their places of habitation.
- IDP statistics are mainly in an orderly arrangement although even officials admit to the presence of certain gaps.
- The process of verification has been ongoing for over three years and remains incomplete.<sup>7</sup>
- Some experts from the public sector note that updated data are far from being perfect. They also mention serious problems in the work of the Georgian Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation.
- There is a big discrepancy between the official database and the ones of the international organisations. If the Ministry used to raise the real numbers of IDPs, now there is a vivid opposite tendency towards its reduction.
- Procedures of registration established by the Ministry contribute to the tendencies of reducing the real indices of IDP numbers.
- There is no desegregated data on the IDPs living in the private sectors; that is, the number of people living with friends and relatives in rented flats or how many have obtained their own housing.

## 1.3. Budgetary Financing

- The size of the allowance given to the IDPs is totally inadequate. Monthly, it amounts to GEL 11 (approximately USD 7) for those living in collective centres and whose communal expenses are covered by the Government whilst those living in

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<sup>6</sup> The Ministry changed the principle of registration by families in 2006. Presently, every IDP is registered individually.

<sup>7</sup> Verification took place and was completed in 2005 but it is not regarded as legitimate as the IDPs were not obliged to go through the verification according to the normative act. An annual registration (verification) took place in 2007 and ended on 31 March 2008.

private sectors receive an additional GEL 3 (approximately USD 2) to cover expenses for utilities.<sup>8</sup>

- Financial resources foreseen in the draft Action Plan for achieving the goals set by the State Strategy are definitely insufficient.
- The main problem is not in finding financial sources but in approving a real Action Plan. In fact, one goal of the State Strategy, which is integration of the IDPs into society, requires financial provision whilst the second goal needs political negotiations in the first place .

#### 1.4. System of Management

- All the experts from the non-governmental sector evaluate the system of management as inefficient with many of them, moreover, considering it to be inadequate due to the lack of a comprehensive approach and a purposeful strategy.
- The majority of experts from the public sector are opposed to this idea with only a few of them admitting the presence of certain problems.
- The assessment of the work of the Ministry, including the Minister (now former), is particularly negative. Specifically, it concerns the abuse of power with respect to the process of verification (the suspension of status to those IDPs who did not go through the verification process without any amendments to the existing law or approving a special regulatory act), the frequent violation of their own orders , the issuing of contradicting orders which resulted in the rights of the IDPs being violated and the non-receipt by many of their allowances.
- Contradictory information on a particular problem is often given in different governmental agencies which confirms the absence of co-ordinated work and activity amongst these agencies.
- The Ministry of Economic Development has hitherto not elaborated a list of collective centres entitled to privatisation with this information only able to be obtained through advertisements announcing sale or auction of properties.
- There is insufficient motivation on the part of the officials involved in this sphere. Possible explanations can be that there are almost no IDPs employed amongst the Ministry's staff and that officials often lack professional maturity and proper relevant experience.
- There are dramatically diverging opinions from public sector and independent experts as concerns the assessment of the professionalism amongst officials involved in this sphere wherein the former speaks about the high level of professionalism of the staff whilst the latter claims that professionalism is just an exception and not a common rule.

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<sup>8</sup> The benefit has doubled since April 2008.



- All the experts mark high personnel turnover and offer different explanations for its existence. Independent experts see the reason in that incoming management brings its own personnel. Experts from the public sector explain this by the high professionalism of their staff who is eagerly “enticed” by being offered a higher salary.

### **1.5. International Assistance**

- International organisations have come to provide invaluable assistance to the IDPs with many of them having survived only due to this external assistance. The adequacy of the assistance is proportional to the extent that these organisations are aware of what is being done in the country; that is, if the state policy were more clearly formulated, the statistic data more ordered and the expenditure of financial resources more transparent, it is clear that international assistance would be even more effective. Representatives of these organisations frequently witness that their goals are not achieved and their resources are spent either inefficiently or inadequately and, as a result, they cease their assistance.
- International organisations represent their relevant governments which are interested in the peaceful and democratic resolution of conflicts and in forming normal and civilised relations with Russia. This is why the course of Georgia will be given all-round support although the West will refuse to continue its interventions of assistance if Georgia chooses a different way.
- The opinions of experts with regards to the assessment of the co-ordination of the activities amongst international donor organisations have somehow diverged. One part of the experts believes that the activities of various international organisations are completely co-ordinated whereas there are others who think that problems of co-ordination existed earlier but have actually been solved since the end of 2005. Only very few respondents speak about the insufficient co-ordination of the activities of international donor organisations.

### **1.6. Representing the Interests of the IDPs**

- The divergence of the opinions on the abolition of Article 127 of the Georgian Electoral Code<sup>9</sup> is mostly related to the status of the IDPs. Experts from outside the IDP community believe that it was an absolutely correct decision and point out that the periodicity of elections and the principle of renovation, as a principal requirement of the Georgian Constitution, was violated. Experts from within the

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<sup>9</sup> According to this Article, the deputies of the Georgian Parliament from Abkhazia, elected in 1992, retained their mandate until the Georgian Parliamentary elections were held on the territory of Abkhazia. The article was abolished on 16 September 2004.

community express their regret that there is no longer a single person in Parliament who would defend their interests.

- Experts from the IDP community believe that the level of motivation and interest of the Georgian Parliament has fallen after removing the positions of the Abkhaz deputies and it is for this reason that they consider the abolition of the Article as a mistake.
- Experts note and underline the significance of the passiveness of the IDPs who did not manage or desire to form serious relations with political parties with the view to including their representatives in their lists.
- Opinions about the adequacy of the mandate of the Abkhazian Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia have dramatically diverged. It is true that almost everyone is in agreement that its mandate and resources, including those financial, are rather limited. One part of the experts considers this to be quite natural and notes that it has to be involved only in lobbying and defending the interests of the IDPs before reinstating Tbilisi's jurisdiction. An equal number of respondents are in opposition and claim that the mandate of the Government cannot be confined only to formulating intermediary questions which is, rather, a function of non-governmental organisations.
- All the experts surveyed gave a negative answer to the question of whether or not there are enough IDPs represented in the executive authorities of the governmental and non-governmental sectors as well as those IDP and non-IDP.
- All the respondents gave a negative answer to the question of whether or not the interests of the IDPs are sufficiently represented in the political spectrum.
- The experts believe that interests of the IDPs are more or less adequately represented in the civil sector which is mainly the result of the efforts of the international organisations.
- All of the experts are of the opinion that discussions of the problems of the IDPs in the media are rather "sensational" or, in other words, it is only the acute events which are actively covered with no serious analytical programmes or articles being produced.

### **1.7. IDP Awareness of Corresponding Public Policy**

- All the experts both from the public and the non-governmental sectors unanimously believe that the IDPs are virtually unaware of their rights. The problem of legal education is more acute amongst the IDPs than the rest of the population. This can be explained by the fact that the IDPs are the most vulnerable category of Georgian society and are completely engrossed by problems of survival. The experts explain that despite the active work of the non-governmental sector in this direction, the low level of awareness of their rights amongst the IDPs still remains to be one of the most pressing problems.

- In most cases the IDPs are unable to defend their rights as this ability is correlated with the level of legal awareness. Moreover, they often do not take legal advice at all or do so when the situation is already too advanced for it to help.
- In some collective centres where non-governmental organisations are very active, signs of positive changes can be observed. As compared to other collective centres, there are fewer conflicts both internally and with the third person which, according to experts, is the direct consequence of raising the level of legal awareness. At the same time, however, it should be underlined that these are isolated cases with the overall level of civic self-awareness amongst the IDPs remaining at an unfortunate and very low level.
- The experts from the non-governmental sector note that their work in the direction of legal education is also impeded by the fact that a large number of the IDPs who are occupied in small trade leave home very early and return late. It is only the older people and the children who stay in collective centres during the daytime hours. Further in this respect, it is also mentioned that the situation amongst those IDPs residing in the private sector (or approximately 55 percent of the IDPs) is particularly hard as non-governmental organisations are practically unable to conduct educational work within.
- Many problems arise not only because of the low level of legal awareness but also due to the lack of proper information about implemented programmes, projects and decisions, amongst other relevant issues.
- The experts from the non-governmental sector also provide a negative answer when asked about the level of information amongst the IDPs with respect to the decisions taken by the authorities. In many cases, in fact, the people are quite unaware of the State Strategy. It is true that many know that such a document has been approved but their awareness is limited and more often than not know nothing about the contents of the document. This leads as well to the creation and circulation of absurd rumours regarding the situation overall.

### **1.8. Efficiency of the Information Strategy**

- All the experts admit that a special information strategy for supporting state policy towards the IDPs does not exist.
- Most of the IDPs are aware of the fact that the State Strategy has been approved and the role of the authorities within is rather large. Their knowledge, however, is confined only to the fact that the Strategy has been approved but without an idea of its content and essence.
- Most of the IDPs perceived the State Strategy as a law and not as a general plan in whose framework the Action Plan has to be elaborated. For this reason, the measures taken by the authorities regarding informing the IDPs about the State

Strategy, according to experts from the non-governmental sector, look more like information support for their own activities rather than of the Strategy itself.

- The non-governmental sector has also observed the intent towards the improper informing of the IDPs about the public policy; that is, the information strategy is more of an “anti-strategy” as all the documents, resolutions and other materials about the rights of the IDP are only for foreign consumption without intending to implement them and so it is for this reason that the authorities are not interested in bringing this information to the IDPs.
- Some experts note that there have been certain recent improvements in the situation of informing the IDPs about registration. Information disseminated by television broadcasts tells about the beginning of the registration and the process therein.
- The experts emphasise the necessity of elaborating a special information strategy for supporting public policy. They believe that it is necessary to organise a fixed television programme which will be broadcast twice or three times a week wherein legal experts, officials and other individuals involved will take part.
- The existing forms and methods of informing the population are estimated to be absolutely inefficient. The information given to the population clearly includes moments of PR.

### **1.9. The IDP Attitude towards Public Policy**

- All the experts believe that a prevalent majority of the IDPs share the public policy as regards to the fact that they support a peaceful regulation of the conflict. The people, with very little exceptions, fully realise that any attempt at solving the problem with war and force will lead to catastrophe for both sides.
- The experts from the public sector believe that a great deal of things have changed since the arrival of new authorities. Before, everything was properly labelled—not a Georgian-Abkhazian conflict but a Russian-Georgian war—which the previous authorities did not dare to articulate.
- The army is being built up based upon the Realist principle that “if you want peace prepare for war.”
- According to experts from the public sector, the IDPs realise that it is impossible to solve the problem “with one stroke” and that “the country at first has to stand on two feet.” They further understand that the present authorities, in contrast with the previous ones who gave empty promises, conduct serious work in this direction and so it is for these reasons that they fully support the public policy in the sphere of conflict regulation.

- The IDP support to the authorities is proportional to their hopes about returning home. The loss of hope and disappointment will inevitably be followed by a total unacceptability of the public policy as the patience of even this most patient category of the population also has its limits.
- The respondents from the non-governmental sector have a different opinion in that they are not at all sure that the majority of the displaced people will support the policy of the authority in the sphere of conflict regulation. It is no overstatement that many people are pessimistic and that great expectations were anticipated from the new Government. Nothing, however, has actually changed over the past years in that not a single step forward has been made, there are no results and people cannot see the way out of this situation which now becomes more and more replaced by disappointment, distrust and despair. The IDPs, however, can easily be influenced by populist promises which is why their hopes revive at times but are soon replaced by disappointment.
- Sharing the public policy in the sphere of conflict regulation is wittingly impossible as people are unaware of the strategy and tactics; that is, the specific stages, the plans and activities, amongst others.
- Sometimes the words and, at times, the actions of politicians contradict the logic of a peaceful resolution of the conflict. For this reason, the experts note that the people are confused about the policies of the authorities.
- All the experts give negative answer to the question of whether or not the social programmes, which have been elaborated and accomplished by the authorities, are adequate or not in the opinion of the IDPs.
- The opinions of experts from both the public and non-governmental sectors in fact coincide as concerns the degree to which the economic policy of the authorities makes for providing self-sufficiency of the IDPs. They almost all admit that virtually nothing has been done in this direction.

#### **1.10. Conceptualisation of the State Strategy**

- All the experts evaluate the fact that the State Strategy has been approved as an undoubtedly positive phenomenon. It is noted that the Strategy is the only document in the country in whose elaboration the representatives of both the public and non-governmental sectors, international organisations and the IDPs themselves as beneficiaries took part. This document can be regarded as the only one in which the problems of the IDPs are considered best of all and which gives ways of their resolution. Whilst elaborating the State Strategy, international standards and international experience were maximally taken into account. Nothing of the kind previously existed.

- As for the assessment of the Strategy itself, the opinions of the experts on the whole also coincide in this respect. It is noted that the document gives a good picture of the situation, especially regarding the account of the existing problems.
- Despite this, the majority of the experts note that the document contains a few inaccuracies including terminology, gaps, omissions and outright mistakes.
- Some of the experts from the non-governmental sector note that a part of the document dealing with assistance in returning the IDPs is rather abstract. According to them, the document contains only general phrases about the point that “creating opportunities for returning the displaced population is the priority and subject of permanent concern for the state.”
- There are many complaints about the projected Action Plan which contains “absolutely vague, obscure,” “ineffective” and “formal measures,” amongst others. It is further mentioned that the document definitely needs to be completed.
- The majority of the experts believe that the State Strategy counts upon the temporary integration of the IDPs (according to them, this is what is meant by the term “social integration” which is used in the document). At the same time, however, many of the experts explain that whilst the country has done away with the institution of the residence permit, it becomes difficult to demarcate these two concepts; that is temporary and permanent integration.
- Respondents note the illegal and discriminative nature of the former and widespread opinion that the IDPs would refuse to return home in the case of creating normal conditions of life on the ground. They welcome the fact that the policy has now changed. According to them, the State is obliged to create worthy living conditions for people and the discrimination of any category of the country’s population is inadmissible. The IDPs, as well as all citizens of the country, have the right to decide where to live. The experts emphasise that the given circumstance is considered within the State Strategy as it mentions the term “voluntary return.”
- All of the respondents, including those in the public sector, refused to estimate the degree to which the new State Strategy conforms to the policy of the economic development of the country and the problems of the development of small- and medium-businesses by explaining that specific directions, steps or actions are not assigned within the Strategy.
- Some of the experts from the non-governmental sector also explained that judging the conformity or non-conformity is impossible in the very least due to the fact that the policy of the economic development of the country contains only governmental rhetoric about the necessity of developing small- and medium-businesses. They presume that, as a matter of fact, it does not promote the development of these business enterprises at all.
- The respondents gave negative answers to the question of whether or not the new State Strategy considers the specific character of the youth and added that only the problems of education are taken into consideration.

### 1.11. Readiness of the State for the Organised Return of the IDPs

- The experts unanimously agree that the authorities are not ready for the organised return of the IDPs. There is an opinion that it is impossible to consider returning the IDPs to Abkhazia due to the absence of the people's safety guarantees before Georgia's integration into NATO.
- There is approximately the same estimation about how realistic the State Strategy is regarding conflict resolution. The general opinion of the experts from the non-governmental sector states that the authorities did not give the public any clear vision of specifically formulated ways for the resolution of the conflict. The necessity of a peaceful resolution of conflicts and the inadmissibility of the use of force is emphasised. There is no mention, however, about what will be done in particular and what specific measures will be taken; that is, there is no scheduled or step-by-step plan for conflict regulation.
- Some of the experts express regret with respect to improper statements which some politicians allow themselves to utter and which are absolutely inadmissible. According to these experts, it gives the Abkhaz side the basis for suspicion about the chosen course of a peaceful resolution of the conflict.
- The question of whether or not the authorities are capable of creating proper political conditions for returning the IDPs also receives a negative answer from all the experts.
- When asked about the legal base for returning the IDPs, the experts reply that this is something which still has to be created whilst some consider that it is too early to speak about such a legal base.
- The opinions of the experts diverged with reference to the programme entitled "My House." Some believe that it has more political rather than legal significance as it does not create any legal guarantees for the reclaiming of property. There is even an opinion expressed that the initiative looks more like a "PR" campaign. Further, it is also mentioned that this was not followed by the expression of the political will to consider the IDP's suits in a legal form even though it is only an official court decision which can be the main document for submitting the cases to the European Court of Human Rights. Others, on the contrary, give a positive assessment to the programme and believe that this is just the first step forward and will be followed by more active measures.
- The opinions of the experts also diverged about the problem of whether or not adequate institutional and administrative resources exist for returning the IDPs. Some of the experts give a negative answer whilst others believe that certain resources are available.
- As for the financial resources necessary for returning the IDPs, the experts believe that it will require a significant amount which goes beyond the ability of the state.

They express no doubt, however, that the international community is ready to help find these means.

#### **1.12. Readiness of the IDPs for an Organised Return**

- All of the experts gave a unanimously positive answer to the question of whether or not the motivation for returning to Abkhazia is strong amongst those forcibly displaced. It is emphasised that the desire to return is particularly strong in the older and middle-aged generations; that is, those who had lived in Abkhazia. The experts presume that the desire to return is expressed in the lowest degree within the younger generation.
- Many of the experts underline the probability of the fact that not everyone will return even though the people are psychologically oppressed by the impossibility of returning to their homes and visiting graves, native and sacred places, amongst others.
- The experts consider that the desire to reconcile with the Abkhaz is rather strong with many of the IDPs connected to Abkhazia and the Abkhaz through kinship, neighbouring and otherwise friendly ties. There is the opinion that the people have grown in their mentality over the years and many things have been re-considered and so it is for this reason that the desire to revive relations, at least on the human level, is as strong as never before.
- In the Abkhaz society and in particular amongst its younger generation, the desire for reconciliation is expressed in a lower degree than it is amongst the IDPs which is explained by the active anti-Georgian propaganda.
- The opinions of experts diverged as concerns the subject of the psychological readiness of the IDPs for living alongside Abkhaz neighbours. Half of the experts questioned gave a positive answer and referred to the fact that the Georgians and the Abkhaz helped each other even during the time of war. Another part of the experts presumes that now, when the pain for lost relatives remains a part of life and when the horror of the war is still alive in their minds, it is difficult to give a straightforward answer to this question.
- Despite the natural desire to reclaim their property, most of the IDPs are ready to submit to its partial loss if only they will be guaranteed the safe return to Abkhazia.

#### **1.13. Security of the Returned in Gali District**

- The Gali district is a high risk zone with a heavy and tense criminogenic background wherein it is ridiculous to speak about protecting human rights, freedom and the independent court. As for the latter, it simply does not exist in the



Gali district wherein the militia operates, there is prosecution but no court<sup>10</sup> and where people live simply “at their own risk.”

- The mandate of the peacekeeping forces provides only for disallowing clashes whilst the UN mission plays the role of observers which is the reason that they cannot become warrants for protecting the safety of the people. The attempt at founding a UN office for protection of human rights and freedom in the Gali district proved to be unsuccessful.
- Statistics on the cases of physical violence, kidnapping for ransom, infringement of life and property and the disappearance of people is the highest in the country. Citing the words of representatives of international organisations, it is noted that there is “such fear in some villages, especially those outlying from Gali, that one can hear a pin drop because people are afraid of everyone and everything and hide themselves immediately at the appearance of a car.”
- Some of the experts note that life is easier for people who have joint business with the Abkhaz whilst it is more difficult for those who do not. People try their best to avoid any kind of disagreement with the ethnic Abkhaz as the “truth” is always on their side in any dispute. They are under a double oppression, both by Abkhaz and Georgian authorities, who try to use them for their political purposes.
- Medical service, housing conditions, public utilities and transportation are more or less regulated. More precisely, compared to the main problem such as the physical security of the people these issues seem inessential.
- Funding grants are more or less available and international organisations always try to work in the risk zones although Abkhaz authorities attempt to control this process and impede providing grants to “unwelcome non-governmental organisations.”
- In the Gali district, the problem of providing the right to receive an education in the native language is rather acute according to the majority of experts although the constitutional norm about respecting all languages does exist. Despite the absence of an official ban, Georgian schools nonetheless have to work in kind of “semi-partisan” mode meaning that this involves a degree of illegal or clandestine activity.
- By contrast, one of the experts believes that the problem is not the language of instruction at school but the syllabus. Abkhazian authorities try to impede teaching of Georgian history, geography and other subjects from the humanities but not *teaching* in the Georgian language.
- The majority of the experts believe that there is no trust amongst the population of the Gali district of the local authorities. The experts from the governmental sector thoroughly exclude such a possibility and state that there is only a total fear. The opinion of respondents from the non-governmental sector is somewhat different

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<sup>10</sup> According to the information obtained directly from Abkhaz experts, the court in Gali formally exists since 2001. In 2007, the court investigated 24 criminal and 58 civil cases. For reasons which are well known, however, it is impossible to judge the quality and fairness of the judicial procedure.

wherein some remark that the situation in the Gali district has somehow changed as regards the course of integrating the district's population with the rest of the population in Abkhazia since Sergei Bagapsh was elected. The authorities are trying to restore trust and work in this direction. It is further noted that the formerly existing vivid aggression against the Georgian population has somewhat weakened.

- It is also presumed that the residents of the Gali district, repressed by criminal groupings, both Georgian and Abkhaz and who are equally fed up with the rhetoric of Sokhumi as well as Tbilisi and also with pre-election campaigns, have more trust towards the person of Ruslan Kishmaria and not authorities in either Sokhumi or Tbilisi. It is also mentioned, however, that he keeps an urban base and so it is already impossible for him to improve a situation in the villages when he only learns about it post-factum. It is for this reason that circumstances have turned out to be heavier in the villages rather than in Sokhumi and other urban centres.
- As for the trust towards Georgian authorities, experts from the governmental sector believe that the population of the Gali district trusts only them. Those experts from the non-governmental sector who were questioned exhibit a less categorical position. Some of them find it difficult to give a straightforward answer to this question whilst there are others who say that it depends upon the situation. Distrust has come from Georgian authorities not keeping their promises although it should be stated that there is an equal distrust of the authorities both in Sokhumi and in Tbilisi.
- All of the experts exclude the possibility of the trust of the Georgian population towards the CIS peacekeeping authorities and refer to frequent cases of the unacceptable and sometimes illegal behaviour of officers as well as soldiers. It is also mentioned that they refer to the Georgian population as the "fifth column" which, in its turn, excludes the possibility of creating the trust of the population towards the peacekeepers.

#### **1.14. Adequacy of Living and Housing Conditions of the IDPs**

- The experts believe that the death rate amongst the IDPs is three times higher and the birth rate two-and-a-half times lower as compared to the other categories of the population.
- The experts emphasise that the living and housing conditions in the collective centres are "absolutely unbearable, wounding human dignity". The Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation, being responsible for the resettlement of the IDPs, has hitherto not managed to provide many people with accommodation and, therefore, had to seize buildings willfully, most of which were not destined for the purposes of permanent inhabitation or residence and which led to the creation of many additional problems.

- Communal costs in the collective centres are borne by the State although the monies earmarked in the central budget for these purposes have not been amended in consideration of the rise of the costs of public utilities.
- Collective centres are not gasified and they lack a system of central heating and so the main load falls upon electricity which means that many of the facilities are in arrears and have their supply cut or suspended for years. Moreover, this also leads to the suspension of the water supply in those centres located in high-rise buildings.
- The living and housing conditions of the IDPs in the regions are even worse than in the capital.
- The living and housing conditions of many IDPs living in the private sector are not much better often times even worse where some of them even “dream of a living space in collective centres.”
- When questioned about the process of repair work in collective centres (as envisaged by the State Strategy), the experts answered that the program has not actually started yet as the Action Plan has still not been approved. Repair work in the collective centres, therefore, is not carried out with the exception of separate cases. It is noted that everything is left without attention to such a degree that it gives the impression that it is done deliberately in order to force the people to solve the housing problems on their own. Only a few experts from the state sector answered that the process has already started and that work on the rehabilitation of collective centres located in former kindergartens is ongoing.
- In fact, the process of the privatisation of collective centres by those forcibly displaced has not started. The Ministry for Economic Development has still not determined which of the collective centres are entitled to be vacated and which ones can be privatised by the IDPs themselves. The absence of such a list is the main reason for the lack of any progress in this direction.
- The experts are grateful to the Norwegian Refugee Council and the Danish Refugee Council for the work which they have carried out in the field of the rehabilitation of the collective centres. They are more devoted to solving the accommodation problems of the IDPs than the State. In this case, however, the lack of a list of those collective centres which are subject to being vacated and privatised by the IDPs themselves is also a serious impediment to this process.

#### **1.15. Adequacy of the IDP Resettlement Policy**

- The experts presume that there has not been a clearly defined and formulated public policy for the resettlement of the IDPs to date. In fact, this process has been developing in a chaotic manner whilst certain governmental agencies have played only the role of observers. Despite the fact that various laws and by-laws have been approved obliging local governing and State agencies to submit a list of those buildings to be vacated to the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation, nothing

has been done in this regard which the experts say attests to the absence of a State approach.

- Repeated delinquencies and violation of human rights, especially in Ajara have occurred in the process of the eviction of the IDPs from the collective centers. This caused a great psychological shock amongst other IDPs living in other collective centres who have waited for their “turn” with fear and horror. The forcible eviction of the people by the police has stopped and the situation has presently calmed down due to amendments made with the efforts of non-governmental and international organisations and also the Government’s sensible behaviour.
- The amount of the compensation given to the IDPs upon eviction from the collective centres (such as in the case of selling the building to a third person) is definitely insufficient not only for satisfying the requirements of legislation for improving the living and housing conditions but also for acquiring any kind of housing at all.
- In the process of resettling the IDPs from the collective centres, no consideration has been taken of the fact that children have grown up for the past years and formed their own families. As concerns the granting of compensation, they are still regarded as one family which leads to the ignoring of the rights and interests of the newly-formed families in the process of resettling the collective centres.
- The main problem herein is that the basic standard conditions for the eviction of the IDPs from the collective centres is rather general in nature and admits the possibility of ambiguous and subjective interpretation. The absence of clear criteria excluding a subjective approach and the possibility for misinterpretation brings about many problems.
- Almost all of the experts are reluctant to give a straightforward answer to the question of whether or not the living and housing conditions of the IDPs have been improved after their resettlement although they unanimously emphasise the necessity of solving this problem.
- Some of the experts consider giving the compensation away as unacceptable and believe that potential investors should purchase or build alternative housing.
- The experts also speak about positive aspects of resettling from the collective centres, both psychological and material. Even if living and housing conditions do not change significantly, it will first allow the people to live without the fear of being thrown out into the street and, secondly, to adopt a sense of property ownership. It will help to avoid or, at least, ease the syndrome of “acquired helplessness” and also to generate the feeling of the possibility of being able to control one’s own life. Possessing immovable property will give the IDPs a chance to obtain a mortgage and take up small-business.
- When asked about the degree to which existing international experience on elaborating and realising the policy of resettlement of the IDPs is considered, the experts answered that some work is being carried out in this direction. Those from

the non-governmental organisations note that there has been careful study about the experience of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran and Kosovo, amongst others and all these have been taken into consideration in the process of working on the State Strategy.

#### 1.16. Accessibility of Education for the IDPs

- The process of closing down the schools in collective centres and their merging with public schools is absolutely necessary according to the experts wherein the inadmissibility of segregation is emphasised.
- Children from the forcibly displaced families are vividly in unequal conditions with the rest of the country's population and their poor material and living conditions in many ways prevent them from receiving a high quality education. Secondly, and as importantly, studying in such a school even deepens the feeling of being a social outcast and, consequently, prevents the integration of the children of the IDPs.
- On the other hand, there are negative sides accompanying the process of closing down such schools. The experts are most concerned about the fact that the army of the unemployed amongst the IDPs will increase even more. The teachers from these schools, like their pupils, are also and obviously in an unequal condition as compared to their peers wherein poor living conditions have impeded their professional growth.
- A unilateral and straightforward solution of the problem is emphatically inadmissible. It has been remarked that there are some schools within the IDP community which are competitive with public schools.
- Presently, the difficulties concerning the material and technical infrastructure of educational institutions forcibly displaced from Abkhazia have almost been overcome wherein particular gratitude is expressed to the Norwegian Council for Refugees. The University passed accreditation, a good library has been arranged and the personnel of teachers and the body of students have already been formed.
- Upon first sight, mention has been made that there is no difference between the forcibly displaced people and the rest of the country's population with respect to the accessibility of receiving an education in Georgian institutes of higher learning. According to the experts, any presence of discrimination is ruled out in its entirety. Despite this, poor living conditions are, to some extent, negatively reflected in the competitiveness of school-leavers<sup>11</sup> from IDP families.
- Most negative consequences were caused by closing down the branches of Tbilisi State University in the regions. Despite the proposal to move to the capital to study, many students from the IDP families have been unable to do so because of a lack of both the means and a place to live.

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<sup>11</sup> This term refers to those high school graduates who are preparing for university entrance examinations.

- No special programmes of vocational training and retraining for the IDPs presently exist however they are entitled to take part within those already in existence and open to the general public.

#### **1.17. Accessibility of Medical Care for the IDPs**

- The experts note the previous existence of special free outpatient clinics which were founded upon the basis of medical institutions which were forcibly displaced from Abkhazia. As a result of reforms in the healthcare system, these clinics were transformed into limited liability companies and came to charge for their services. As the Ministry of Healthcare of Abkhazia contributed to the technical and medical equipment of these clinics, the local population also started to visit them and the IDPs began to receive certain services free.
- The experts from the non-governmental sector remark upon the successful operation of the Ministry of Healthcare of Abkhazia and underline that it can serve as a good example of the fact that high professionalism and hard work make it possible to reach favourable results even in conditions of limited resources.
- 4,160 families are included in the programme of social subsidy. Medical insurance has been given to 82,959 persons within the State programme of poverty reduction.
- Payment for medical treatment in the clinic still remains problematic for those IDPs who did not receive medical insurance within the programme of poverty reduction (they comprise two-thirds of the IDPs) especially in the case of necessary surgery.
- The sickness rate amongst the IDPs is much higher than the analogous parameters of the rest of the country's population. The index of the spread of many illnesses amongst the IDPs, especially psychosomatic and infectious ones, outnumbers the analogous indices of the rest of the country's population.
- The death rate amongst IDPs is nearly three times higher than the rest of the population whilst the index of birth rates is two-and-a-half times lower.
- No full-scale State programme for the psychosocial rehabilitation of the IDPs exists. Whilst a few non-governmental organisations are working in this direction, it is, according to the figurative expression of one of the experts, only "a drop in the ocean."

#### **1.18. Self-Sufficiency of the Activities of the IDPs**

- It does not make sense to speak about the self-sufficiency of the IDPs within the conditions of possessing no movable properties, land or means of producing it. The absence of property stipulates, in fact, the unavailability of bank credits and loans. All of these factors, together with the poorest living conditions, pre-determines for them the feeling of hopelessness and homelessness which is inevitably followed by passiveness, a lack of initiative and the dependability upon external assistance

which, in their turn, create a significant amount of problems both in terms of integration and returning to a permanent place of living.

- The experts do not dispose statistics about the participation of the IDPs in the governmental programme “Employment Programme 2007: Development of Small- and Medium-Businesses.”
- As the experts note, the current public policy does not imply the support of economic activities of the IDPs.

## CHAPTER II. VULNERABILITY OF THE IDPs: DEFINITION AND MAIN INDICATORS

The main conclusion from the analysis of the results of sociological research is that the IDPs belong to the category of one of the most socially unprotected parts of Georgian society. In the relevant literature, the term “vulnerability” is often used alongside the concept of “social insecurity”<sup>12</sup>. Therein, the “vulnerability indicators” are determined with the aim of measuring the phenomenon. It should be mentioned that there are some distinguishing nuances between these two concepts despite their general similarity. Unlike social insecurity, which has to do with existing misfortunes, vulnerability also implies the liability to hazard and the risk of falling into trouble in the future. Vulnerability, therefore, is a phenomenon with several dimensions and aspects. On the one hand, it is understood as the condition of some social groups which lack in their ability to satisfy their most basic needs; that is, the access to food, warmth, shelter, healthcare and education.<sup>13</sup> On the other hand, vulnerability is connected to the absence of a suitable infrastructure, the occurrence of conflicts, discrimination, the stigma of being a social outcast and the uncertainty about the future. In present research, vulnerability is understood in the context of the conception of *human security* which, in fact, involves all of the abovementioned misfortunes although importance and emphasis are shifted to the identification and eradication of the factors (or the hazards) causing these misfortunes. In particular, vulnerability is a condition which is directly opposite to that of human security and implies insecurity (herein of the IDPs) from factors threatening life, income, dignity and revealing and realising individual talents, amongst others.

As the problems facing the IDPs can be reduced to two principal aspects—integration and return—the indicators of vulnerability within the context of human security have to be defined according to these two aspects. In other words, the indicators of vulnerability are defined in consideration of a certain factor’s connection to the aspects of integration and return whilst those factors not having a direct relation to these two aspects are not taken into consideration. Additionally, in accordance with the goals and framework of this research, it is the IDP community in its near entirety—and not separate groups according to geographic, social or demographic features—which is considered to be the subject of integration and return.<sup>14</sup> Special attention is drawn to people spontaneously returned to the Gali district and also to the youth only in isolated cases.

Two groups of vulnerability indicators have been identified following a consideration of the abovementioned and also proceeding from the results of the sociological research.

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<sup>12</sup> See N. Sumbadze, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi, “Working Paper on IDP Vulnerability and Economic Self-Reliance,” UNDP, Tbilisi, July 2003, p. 24.

<sup>13</sup> In social-economic literature such a condition is called “poverty.” Furthermore, the categories of poverty and absolute poverty (destitution) are distinguished according to the degree of deprivation of the access to the mentioned points.

<sup>14</sup> In other words, without distinguishing certain demographic groups from within the IDPs such as, for example, the handicapped, unwed mothers, unusually large families, etc.



These indicators are *integration* and *return*.<sup>15</sup> A short description of each of these indicators follows below.

### 2.1. Indicators of Vulnerability in the Context of *Integration*

1. **Unemployment.** The absence of the means of subsistence is the source of many problems for the IDPs. This absence, in its turn, is caused by unemployment whose rate amongst this group is higher than the average rate in the country.
2. **Absence of immovable and other properties.** As a consequence of forcible displacement, the IDPs were deprived of property (housing, land) and found themselves in unbearable living conditions and without the access to agricultural land for those who formerly worked as farmers creating unequal starting conditions as compared to the rest of the country's population.
3. **Absence of access to adequate healthcare.** Higher sickness and death rates amongst the IDPs as compared to the rest of the country's population point to the presence of a complex set of factors connected to their inaccessibility of quality medical service.
4. **Absence of access to adequate education.** On the whole, the IDPs enjoy equal rights in receiving both secondary and higher education although actual access to education overall is limited due to their difficult living conditions. The problem addresses higher education in particular as school-leavers from the IDP community are at a marked disadvantage in competing for places within institutions of higher learning.
5. **Absence of adequate housing and shelter.** The type and quality of housing affects the economic activity and income of the IDPs. The living and housing conditions in the collective centres are on the whole unbearable although it is presumed that those living in the private sector are settled somewhat better. The problem is intensified by the inconsistency of the resettlement policy, which is often followed by violating rights of the IDP.
6. **Unawareness of one's rights.** The limited accessibility to corresponding legal education as well as the inefficient information strategy of the state have resulted in a lack of awareness of the IDPs of their rights and an inadequate legal awareness overall which is the main reason for the violation or non-observance of the IDP's legal rights in the process of making certain administrative decisions.
7. **Social discrimination.** The absence of the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination towards the IDPs creates conditions for social exclusion. The problem is intensified by the economic failure of the IDPs themselves or by their perception of the rest of the population as being rivals in the process of distributing meagre public resources.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Research to define vulnerability indicators was conducted by N. Sumbadze and G. Tarkhan-Mouravi in 2003.

<sup>16</sup> It must be mentioned that general attitude of society towards the IDPs is positive and the population, on the whole, has a sympathetic position towards their problems.

- 8. Social passiveness.** The inability to properly adapt to changing living conditions as well as the motivational and emotional condition of the IDPs promotes the erosion of human capital by creating a syndrome of dependence (upon assistance from the State, relatives, etc.), passiveness and depression.

## **2.2. Indicators of Vulnerability in the Context of *Return***

### *For the spontaneously returned to the Gali district*

- 9. Physical safety.** Statistics on the infringement of life, kidnapping for the receipt of ransom, thefts and the devastation of property amongst the people spontaneously returned to the Gali district is the highest.
- 10. Lawlessness and inaccessibility to social services.** The Gali district is a zone of high risk due to the absence of the court and efficient human rights organisations. The militia and the prosecution are unable to protect the rights of the local population from criminal groupings. From this point of view, the UN and CIS missions are also inefficient in addition to their not being trusted. The population has difficulty receiving education in their native language.

### *For the rest of the IDPs*

- 11. Unawareness of the return policy.** Owing to absence of proper information about the state's plans on conflict resolution, non- participation in negotiations and in elaborating political decisions, the IDPs are in complete ignorance and uncertainty. They are deprived of accurate information about the factual condition of their property left in Abkhazia and about the dates and conditions of return.
- 12. Despair.** The situation of continued uncertainty and the regular disappointments with respect to the unfulfilled promises of the authorities about returning brings the IDPs to depression and intensifies their feelings of hopelessness.
- 13. Reduction of motivation of return.** Despite the fact that the desire of returning home amongst the people of the older and middle generations is strong, the motivation within the younger generation is relatively low.

## CHAPTER III. ASSESSMENT OF THE ADEQUACY OF THE STATE STRATEGY TOWARDS THE IDPs

The platform for estimating the State Strategy is based upon the analysis of the respondents' answers and *vulnerability indicators*. A comparison of the abovementioned material with the Action Plan provides a sufficient basis for assessing the adequacy of the vision and intentions of the Georgian authorities in relation to the solution of the problem of the IDPs. At the same time, it is important to consider the general context and the dynamics of the existing political situation around the conflict in Abkhazia which, undoubtedly, affects the general tendency and efficiency of the policy towards the IDPs. Most likely, the the Action Plan will be reprocessed in the light of the August events. The Action Plan, therefore, should be regarded as a list of preliminary intentions and not of already planned decisions.<sup>17</sup> Since the events of November 2007, the State policy towards the IDPs has been bearing a spontaneous character and has declaratively become more social in its direction which also needs to be considered whilst estimating the adequacy of the public policy.

The methodology of the assessment of the adequacy of the Action Plan is simple. It proposes defining the degree at which the solution of the problem referring to the vulnerability of the IDPs is envisaged in accordance with each of the 13 indicators. An analysis of these indicators is given below according to the following parameters: a) reflection in the State Strategy, b) adequacy of problems and measures envisaged by the Action Plan and c) sufficiency of financing.

### 3.1. Unemployment

**Reflection in Strategy.**<sup>18</sup> The problem is generally reflected in the form of acknowledging the necessity of its solution by means of: a) supporting programmes of the development of small-business and enterprises with special emphasis upon assistance to employment in rural areas (Chapter 5, paragraph 3.3, sub-paragraph "b") and b) assistance to the vocational education of the IDPs within the framework of special State programmes (Chapter 5, paragraph 3.3, sub-paragraph "a").

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.**<sup>19</sup> The task of providing employment for the IDPs is set up indirectly within the framework of a more global problem of "enhancing the self-sufficiency of the IDPs" (paragraph 2.2.3). The corresponding measure (2.2.3.1) is, however, directed towards providing information to the IDPs in respect to the governmental task programme ("Employment Programme 2007: Development of Small- and Medium-Businesses") and not to solving the problem itself. As

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<sup>17</sup> Apparently, in the light of the August events the existing Action Plan, adopted at the end of July 2008, will be further fine-tuned and updated.

<sup>18</sup> For the sake of brevity, the full title of the document will henceforth be limited to Strategy.

<sup>19</sup> For the sake of further brevity, the full title of the document will henceforth be limited to Plan.

for the measures for the vocational training of the IDPs (2.2.1.4), proposing corresponding programmes is envisaged although it is not mentioned who will elaborate these programs and when it should happen.

**Sufficiency of Financing.** The Plan considers financing only the measure 2.2.3.1. by GEL 500,000 which does not respond to the more global problem of providing employment to the IDPs.

**Comment.** The Plan is confined to the problem of informing the IDPs about existing programmes of employment and does not set a goal of creating jobs for the IDPs. Apparently, this problem is supposed to be solved within the framework of the general problem of employment in the country and the specific character connected to the IDPs will not be considered separately. In other words, any expediency of solving the problems connected to the IDPs from the view of *positive discrimination* will be ignored.

### 3.2. Absence of real estate and other forms of property

**Reflection in the Strategy.** Not having a private home, land and means of production is recognised to be the main source of poverty of the IDPs (Chapter 2, p. 1.1). In some parts of the goals and tasks of the Strategy (Chapter 3, p. 2.1.2) it is only the ways of the returning of property left behind in Abkhazia or receiving corresponding compensation after resolving the conflict that are discussed<sup>20</sup> without any mention of assisting the IDPs in obtaining property during their exile in order to promote their worthy integration within the environment of their factual habitation.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The Plan intends to maintain available accommodation and create a programme of subsidising the purchase of living space for the IDPs within the capacity of specific measures (2.1.1.2) although no mention is made of who will elaborate this programme and when. With reference to simplifying the accessibility to land, the Plan intends to equalise the rights of the IDPs with the local population in the process of the privatisation of agricultural lands (2.1.1.4).

**Sufficiency of financing.** The Plan mentions a five-year period for implementing the given programme and envisages the disbursement of a total amount of GEL 420,000 for these needs of which GEL 320,000 will be drawn from non-budgetary sources. Considering market prices, the given sum of money is absolutely insufficient for solving the problem. As for the measures 2.1.1.4, the size of its financing has not been specified.

**Comment.** In the Plan, special attention is attached mainly to becoming the owner of an accommodation whilst the role of other forms of property in the process of the integration of the IDPs within the environment of their factual habitation is ignored.

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<sup>20</sup> Ibidem in brackets it is admitted that under corresponding conditions it is possible even before the final resolution of the conflict.

### 3.3. Absence of Access to Adequate Healthcare

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The inaccessibility to quality medical service is recognised as a serious problem by the Strategy (Chapter 2; p. 1.2) and a number of measures are provided for improving the situation (Chapter 5; p.1). The Strategy, however, does not describe the specific directions which are suggested for carrying out these measures.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The Plan provides for the elaboration of programmes for post-conflict rehabilitation (2.2.2.1) and for the support of psycho-social integration (2.2.2.2). It does not, however, imply measures for the enhancement of the access of the IDPs to a common but quality medical service in order to maintain the general health of the community.

**Sufficiency of Financing.** The level of financing for the measures mentioned in the Plan is not specified.

**Comment.** The Plan focuses upon rehabilitation programmes which is certainly important in itself although it does not provide for an equally acute need for the access to basic medical service.

### 3.4. Absence of Access to Adequate Education

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The problems connected to education are indicated in the Strategy as regulations for the necessity of providing the IDPs with equal rights for the access to corresponding governmental and other programmes (Chapter 3, paragraph 2.2.1, sub-paragraph “b”). It should be noted that, apart from education, the given provision refers to healthcare and, in general, to raising the quality of social service.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The Plan includes several measures for solving the problem of education. In particular, it considers the issues connected to the material and technical infrastructure of schools and institutions of higher learning, the competitiveness facing school-leavers, the access to institutions of higher learning in Georgia and abroad and the desegregation of secondary education (points 2.2.1.1, 2.2.1.2, 2.2.1.3, 2.2.1.6).

**Sufficiency of Financing.** The abovementioned measures are designed for a four-year period whilst their expenses are intended to be covered from the budgetary resources. The amount of financing, however, is not specified.

**Comment.** The list of measures provided for refer to nearly all the aspects of the problem and is, in fact, adequate in light of the present situation.

### 3.5. Absence of Adequate Accommodation

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The presence of unbearable living conditions is recognised by the Strategy as one of the most acute problems (Chapter 2, p.1.3). A solution to the problem is considered in reference to those living in the collective centres. In particular, the problem of the closing down of these facilities and providing the IDPs with adequate compensation (mainly monetary) for acquiring private accommodation (Chapter 3, p. 3.1.2; chapter 5, p. 2.1, sub-paragraph “b”) is taken up to the rank of strategic priority.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The Plan envisages providing assistance to the IDPs in the privatisation of living space in the collective centres of no commercial or other significance (2.1.1.1) and, to this end, the elaboration of a programme of subsidising the purchase of the living space (2.1.1.2). It also contains measures for regulating the calculation of electricity consumption in the collective centres (points 2.2.4.1, 2.2.4.2) and considers conducting an informational campaign to explain the procedures and expected results of the privatisation to the IDPs (p. 2.1.1.3) and to collect information about the positive experience of projects implemented by international organisations on improving their living conditions (2.1.1.5). The measure mentioned in point 2.1.2.3 must be underlined in that it considers elaborating standard procedures for closing down the collective centres and providing the IDPs with protection from arbitrary and illegal eviction.

**Sufficiency of financing.** The size of the financing for the individual abovementioned measures is not specified. The Plan envisages GEL 420,000 for the four-year period of activities which, according to their outline in p. 2.1.1.2, is absolutely inadequate GEL 354 for the measure outlined in p. 2.1.1.3 is also obviously insufficient.

**Comment.** Unlike the Strategy, the emphasis within the Plan is made upon improving living conditions through resettling the IDPs as a result of closing down the collective centres which are entitled to privatisation. Such an approach is unable to solve the problem as, firstly, not all the collective centres can be privatised and, correspondingly, not all the IDPs can receive the means for purchasing their own dwelling. Secondly, those IDPs who live in private sector are ignored within this approach. At the same time, it should be mentioned that the policy towards the IDPs has recently become more humane against the background of the vivid diversion of the orientation of public policy towards social projects. This is expressed in the growth of attention towards social and communal problems and also in suspension of the eviction of the IDPs from collective centres.

### 3.6. Lack of information about one’s own rights

**Reflection in the Strategy.** One of the reasons for the violation of the rights of the IDPs (Chapter 5, p. 3, sub-point “c”)—the lack of information about their legal rights—is not accounted for in the Strategy even though the necessity of raising their level of awareness is mentioned as a means of providing efficiency of the task programmes which are in the process of elaboration.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** Conducting the measures of informing the IDPs and the local population about the goals and tasks of the Strategy is envisaged (p. 2.2.5.1) although the main expected result is thought to be the raised level of awareness of the local population rather than of the IDPs themselves. One more measure is considered whose aim, as previously mentioned above, is informing the IDPs about the procedures of the privatisation of the collective centres (p. 2.1.1.4). In general, the measures envisaged by the Plan cannot be presumed to be sufficient for the solution of the complex problem of raising the level of legal conscience of the IDPs.

**Sufficiency of financing.** Assignations of over GEL 450,000 for the year 2008 are intended for conducting measures envisaged by the Plan which, in fact, is sufficient to achieve and accomplish the intended measures.

**Comment.** Despite the adequacy of the level of financing of the intended measures, the task of raising the legal awareness of the IDPs by means of conducting these measures alone can hardly be achieved.

### 3.7. Social Discrimination

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The problem of the discrimination of the IDPs and their feelings of social isolation is not mentioned straightforwardly in the Strategy. The Strategy does, however, contain a number of provisions about the necessity of creating equal legal, political, social and economic conditions for all the citizens of the country including the IDPs (Chapter 3, p. 2.2.1) which, in fact, is a way towards solving the given problem.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** Specific measures dedicated to solving the given problem are not mentioned in the Plan. Measures for improving the legislation base, however, are envisaged therein. Apart from that and as previously mentioned, the Strategy foresees the elaboration of programmes for the psycho-social rehabilitation of the IDPs and also for conducting explanatory work amongst their community as well as the local population which should lead to a partial solving of the problem (certainly, in case of the adequacy of the amendments made to legislative acts).

**Sufficiency of financing.** An estimation of the adequacy of the budgetary policy towards this problem does not seem possible since the complexity of the given problem requires its

solution by means of various measures, envisaged by the Plan, whose financing is not specified in many cases.

**Comment.** The basis for the solution of the given problem could initially become, on the one hand, making amendments to legislative acts and, on the other hand, raising the legal awareness of the persons who are in charge of both approving and executing administrative and other decisions with respect to the IDPs. The Plan, however, focuses only upon rehabilitation programmes and explanatory work amongst the population.

### 3.8. Social Passiveness

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The syndrome of dependence and sluggishness for the IDPs is recognised by the Strategy as a problem deserving paramount attention (Chapter 2, p. 1.6). With the purpose of improving the socio-economic conditions of the IDPs, the Strategy emphasises the importance of growing economic activity and a spirit of enterprise within and amongst the IDPs (Chapter 3, p. 3.3).

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** Despite the fact that the Strategy recognises the necessity of solving the problem of the social passiveness of the IDPs, the Plan does not envisage conducting proper, specific or purposeful measures. Measures such as informing the IDPs about the employment programme (2.2.3.1) or implementing the programme of psychosocial integration (2.2.2.2) are able to solve the problem only in part.

**Sufficiency of financing.** Due to the fact that the Plan does not envisage the accomplishment of special measures in order to solve the problem, it is impossible to discuss the adequacy of financing.

**Comment.** Because of the fact that the given problem is connected to the whole complex of the social conditions in which the IDP find themselves, its solution should be considered within the context of changing these conditions. For this reason, it is difficult to plan any specific measures for overcoming this intricate and extraordinary problem.

### 3.9. Physical Safety

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The Strategy recognises the protection of those IDPs who have returned to the Gali district from different forms of physical violence committed by criminals and representatives of the local de facto administration as one of the priorities (Chapter 2, p. 1.7). It is also mentioned in the Strategy that they ought to be given all possible assistance from the State in order to provide them with safety and worthy conditions of life as well as to improve their socio-economic situation and protect their civil rights (Chapter 3, p. 2.1.3).



**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The response to the given problem is inadequate in terms of specific measures; that is, those measures intended to improve the criminogenic situation in the Gali district and also to regulate co-operation with the Abkhaz side for solving the problem are not mentioned in the Plan at all.<sup>21</sup>

**Sufficiency of financing.** It is senseless to discuss the amount of financing due to the overall absence of measures. In this case, an inevitable premise has to be fulfilled; that is, the consent of the de facto authorities which does not require any financing.

**Comment.** Because of the lack of corresponding resources, including those political, the State is not ready to solve the problem.

### **3.10. Lack of Rights and Inaccessibility to Social Services.**

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The task of giving State support to the IDPs who have returned to the Gali district to protect their civil rights is also recognised as a priority (Chapter 3, p. 2.1.3). The Strategy further states that the corresponding State structures should provide for the efficiency of social services such as, first of all, in the system of education. Teaching in the Georgian language and through programmes of the Georgian Government is considered to be the greatest problem (Chapter 4, p. 2.3).

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The list of measures for improving the situation of providing protection of the civil and social rights of the local population in the Gali district is quite lengthy and embraces the problems of the support of the local NGOs (1.2.2.2), the financial support of teachers in public schools (1.2.3.1), guaranteeing the study of the Georgian language (1.2.3.2) and the rehabilitation of schools (1.2.3.5). There is some ambiguity, however, how all of these tasks and measures can be done without agreeing with the Abkhaz side.

**Sufficiency of financing.** Financing of the given measures is considered in the budget although specific sums are not specified.

**Comment.** The feasibility of the mentioned tasks is connected to the political aspect of the problem which is either not considered in the Plan at all or goes beyond the competence of the Government.

### **3.11. Lack of Information about the Return Policy**

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The lack of information about the return policy as a fact is indirectly ascertained in the Strategy even though it is not put up to the rank of a problem

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<sup>21</sup> Because of the fact that political negotiations reached a deadlock, however, the experts, including those from the governmental sector, consider it impossible at this stage.

per se. The Strategy reads that the State should elaborate an action plan for creating safe conditions, restoring destroyed houses and factories, helping the IDPs in the restitution of their property rights, encouraging mobility of the socially integrated IDPs, rooting out discrimination and so on (Chapter 4, p. 3.1, 3.2). At the same time, alongside the necessity of diplomatic negotiations with the participation of international organisations, no dates and conditions are mentioned. It is uncertain, therefore, when and on what conditions the abovementioned measures may be implemented.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** Like the Strategy, the Plan does not envisage measures for raising the awareness of the IDPs about the given problem. At the same time, the Plan considers a number of measures for creating conditions for the returning with the participation of various groups of IDPs (youth, elderly people, women) (1.1.1.1, 1.1.2.1). Special attention should be attached to the measure for registering the IDPs' property (1.1.3.1) in which the inventorying and identifying of their immovable property on the ground has to occur upon the basis of satellite generated information. Despite this, however, the mentioned measures, on the whole, are unable to raise the overall general awareness of the IDPs.

**Sufficiency of financing.** An estimation of the adequacy of financing does not seem possible due to the absence of measures in the Plan which are immediately directed towards solving the given problem.

**Comment.** The absence of proper measures for raising awareness of the IDPs about the given problem is mainly caused by the vagueness of the general situation surrounding the conflict and by the inconsistency of the policy of the authorities.

### 3.12. Despair

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The condition of despair amongst the IDPs is mentioned as an undesirable fact although no specific tasks are set for its elimination. In fact, the Strategy's abovementioned provisions deal with this problem only indirectly. Because of the fact that despair, as a complex emotional condition, is the result of the simultaneous influence of many factors, it is not easy to set certain tasks for solving the problem.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** Some of the measures considered by the Plan can assist in improving the psycho-emotional condition of the IDPs. The elaboration of programmes for post-conflict rehabilitation and psycho-social support, for example, and also clarifying prospects for the restitution of property rights can partially withdraw the IDPs from their state of despair. A drastic solution of the problem, however, means that the State's approaches and methods employed in elaborating and accomplishing the policy of conflict resolution requires correction and the role and place of the IDPs in this process needs to be respected.

**Sufficiency of financing.** The assessment of the budgetary policy is impossible due to the absence of specific measures for the elimination of despair amongst the IDPs.

**Comment.** The absence of proper measures for eliminating despair amongst the IDPs, as in the previous case, is mainly caused by the uncertainty of the general situation surrounding the conflict and by the inconsistency of the policy of the authorities.

### **3.13. Reduction of the Motivation for Return**

**Reflection in the Strategy.** The Strategy does not say anything about the problem of the reduction of the motivation for the return amongst the IDPs. At the same time, it sets tasks whose solution, in their turn, may assist in changing the mood of the IDPs. In particular, the task of creating conditions at the transition stage for returning the IDPs (Chapter 4, p.1) and also the tasks of creating proper conditions for returning after the conflict resolution (Chapter 4, p. 3) are dedicated to raising the motivation for the return.

**Adequacy of tasks and measures envisaged by the Plan.** The Plan contains a whole complex of measures for creating conditions for the return of the IDPs. Ten different measures are distributed in three groups as follows: a) encouraging reconciliation between the societies and groups of population affected by the conflict (1.1.1), b) support for creating conditions for the voluntary, safe and dignified return of the IDPs (1.1.2) and c) protection of the property rights of the IDPs (1.1.3).

**Sufficiency of financing.** The financing of the mentioned measures is proposed to be accomplished from existing budgetary sources although the size of the assignation is not specified.

**Comment.** The authorities are undoubtedly disturbed by the reduction in the motivation of the IDPs in returning despite the fact that the problem is not recorded in official papers. Presumably, it is by no means accidental that a complex of measures for creating conditions after returning is one of the groups of measures elaborated in the most detailed manner.

A quick analysis of the Strategy allows us to conclude that it has been constructed on the whole in correspondence with the UN's "Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement." It implies such priorities as: a) the full equality of the IDP against the law, b) the responsibility of the governmental and international organisations for creating better living conditions for and self-realisation of the IDPs, c) affording the IDP an opportunity to have an influence upon the solution of problems that have vital importance for them through civil participation and by using their rights of free choice and d) the safe fulfilment of the unshakeable right for returning to their native homes and also for regaining their property.

At the same time, the document has certain drawbacks as concerns stylistics in the main. In particular, some provisions are written in a narrative form (what is on?) whilst others are written in the style of setting a task (what has to be done?) or as a recommendation (how it has to be done?).

An analysis of the Plan allows us to judge the degree to which the realisation of the principles and tasks laid down in the Strategy have been thought through. It is understandable that the main interest in our research is attached to the problem of the degree to which the aspect of human security is considered in the measures envisaged by the Plan. As is apparent from the analysis given above, the problems are not clearly formulated in many cases and there is the existence of inaccurate formulations. A further problem sits clearly within the vividly insufficient level of financing. Nevertheless, the Plan conforms to the tasks of the Strategy on the whole although it does not consider (or it does not fully consider) the separate aspects of the vulnerability of the IDPs.

#### CHAPTER IV. RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS IN THE EXPERT COMMUNITY

Ideas resulting from the abovementioned analysis of the Action Plan as well as the basic results of the sociological survey have been synthesised in separate assumptions and presented to the expert community for discussion. These assumptions are as follows:

1. **Is the goal of the IDPs' integration insincere?** After the regime change in 2003, the new Georgian Government began to gradually change the attitude towards solving the problems connected to the IDPs. In particular, a departure from the principle of their integration having only a temporary character became the conceptual basis for the newly elaborated State Strategy for solving the IDP problem. Specifically, it determined the elaboration of a complex strategy in full accordance with the UN "Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement" according to which the IDPs should enjoy equal rights and freedom and should not be exposed to any form of discrimination. In other words, the new State Strategy, unlike the New Approach, does not consider integration as a temporary condition and refers to the formerly existing confrontation between these two conflicting tendencies in governmental policy towards the IDP as irrelevant. On the one hand, there is a desire of the Government to improve the living and housing conditions of the IDPs and to concede equal rights and opportunities to them for self-realisation. On the other hand, the Government fears that with the improvement of their conditions, the IDPs will lose motivation for returning to Abkhazia which in itself is the highest political priority. These are the fears that determine the contradictory nature of the "temporary" character of integration laid in New Approach which becomes a sort of compromise against these fears.<sup>22</sup> Correspondingly, the measures directed towards the full integration of the IDPs were substituted for half-measures. At present, it appears that the ground for these kinds of fears disappeared and the new State Strategy is calling for assisting the IDPs in any ways for their integration into the society. In reality, there is hardly any positive change herein as the results of our research demonstrate. The corresponding legislative norms regulating the problems of the eviction of the IDPs from collective centres still have a general character which admit the possibility of their subjective interpretation. In most cases, the evicted IDPs remain dissatisfied despite the existing norm about the inadmissibility of a "worsening of living conditions." Furthermore, there is no principle of equality with the rest of the citizens and the inadmissibility of discrimination in the law about the IDPs. It is remarkable that the authorities are in no hurry to submit amendments to the legislation, saying that the international norms have a character of recommendation, including the UN "Guiding Principles of Internal Displacement," as the respondents have stated. Additionally, deputies from Abkhazia are absent in the Georgian Parliament as a result of the abolition of Article 127 of the Constitution in 2004. Further, representatives of the IDPs are also absent in the executive authorities,

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<sup>22</sup> N. Sumbadze, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi, *op.cit.*, p. 52.

they do not have their own party to advance their particular interests, discussion of the problems referring to the IDPs in the mass media are only occasional and some revival of the issues is noticed only during election campaigns. These facts show that the policy of full integration of the IDPs is overall inefficient and the new State Strategy can easily share the fate of the New Approach. The given situation can be explained by the fact that the abovementioned fear of the probable reduction of the motivation for the returning of the IDPs still exists and real integration is not foreseen as a goal.

**2. Attitude of the IDPs towards integration is, on the whole, positive.** Integration is identified with a dignified life in society and equal rights and possibilities. In contrast with recent times, there is presently a more favourable background for the integration of the IDPs. More resources have appeared for the state to initiate and support projects directed towards improving the social, economic and cultural aspects of the IDPs' security as the country's economic situation has developed. At the same time, fears for integration are still held amongst certain IDPs:

- The fear of losing the status of IDP as a result of integration still remains despite the fact that the State Strategy does not consider lifting it. This is connected in the main to the insufficiency of information.
- The State Strategy considers a wide range of measures for improving the social and other conditions of the IDPs. Nevertheless, some of the IDPs are of the opinion that the process may be confined only to resettlement in which case their situation will only become worse.
- The IDPs living in Zugdidi consider the integration with the Abkhaz as equally important. They fear that they will be deprived of this opportunity as a result of implementing the State Strategy.
- The older generation of the IDPs believes that the younger generation will have no desire to return as a result of integration.

**Topics for discussion:**

How substantive are these fears?

What has to be done to disperse these fears?

To what degree can these fears impede the implementation of the State Strategy?

**3. Despite the importance of the positive attitude of the IDPs towards integration, there are certain important principal factors which can impede the implementation of the State Strategy, as follows:**

- There are still sections within national legislation in need of harmonisation with international norms and standards despite the fact that it regulates the principal aspects of the problems of the IDPs.

- The absence of a common and quality database on the IDPs complicates the process of planning and implementing proper strategies and measures both from the State and from donor organisations.
- The conducted compulsory registration of the IDPs is an important premise for creating a quality database. At the same time, however, the artificial difficulties within this process do not allow a complete registration of the entire IDP community which, in its turn, may influence the objectivity of the final results.
- The absence of co-ordination between the Ministries for Refugees and Accommodation and Economic Development and further between the Government and donor organisations may lead to a reduction in the overall efficiency of the State Strategy.
- The efficient functioning of the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation has special importance for implementing the State Strategy. Additionally, the quality of its internal management, its professionalism and the motivation of its staff does not always correspond to the set goals and tasks.
- The financial sources considered in the draft Action Plan for reaching the goals of the State Strategy are insufficient which means that the importance of the assistance programmes of the international organisations increases against this background. The absence of a clearly formulated policy of the authorities, regulated statistics and a proper transparency of expenditure of the financial sources, however, may reduce the degree of motivation on the side of the international organisations for supporting the State Strategy.
- The solution of the problem of the resettlement of the IDPs is one of the primary objectives. This might not be solved at all or its solution may cause dissatisfaction amongst the IDPs, without a complex approach regarding socio-economic support and improving the legal base all of which may discredit the State Strategy.
- The awareness about the goals and tasks of the policy implemented by the government amongst the IDPs is a necessary condition for not only supporting this policy but for its general success. Despite the fact that representatives of the IDPs took part in the process of elaborating the State Strategy and that the Action Plan contains measures for their awareness raising, the overall level of the knowledge of their rights and responsibilities and about the general direction of the conflict resolution policy is very low.

**Topics for discussion:**

How can the reluctance of the authorities in making decisions on improving the legislation be explained?

What might be the reason for the tendency of an artificial reduction of the factual number of the IDPs by the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation?

How might the artificial difficulties of registering the IDPs be explained?

Is the insufficient co-ordination between the line ministries and other governmental agencies a sign of inter-agency confrontation or the malfunction of management at the governmental level?

Is the insufficiency of the budgetary financing of the State Strategy a sign of the existing disadvantages in the process of budgetary planning or the presence of other more important priorities?

**4. Link between integration and conflict resolution/return is not denied by anyone.** Is integration seen as the obstacle for returning or, on the contrary, can integration contribute to a peaceful resolution of the conflict which would include the returning of the IDPs to their native places? Arguments in support of the first point are as follows:

- The source of the social tension and pressure upon the Government with reference to providing conditions for return will be removed in the course of the integration of IDPs. As a result, it may become an important, if not decisive, factor in reducing the political will of the Government and the international community to regulate the conflict.
- Many of the IDPs will lose the desire of returning to Abkhazia as a result of integration, especially amongst the younger generation. Work, property, a new circle of acquaintances and friends will possibly all have a new importance.

Arguments against this point are as follows:

- Firstly, it is in fact impossible to create rather comfortable conditions for the IDPs so that they will change their mind about returning to Abkhazia in the foreseeable future (within a decade). Secondly, experience shows that economically active and well-to-do groups of the population are more mobile and are ready to move in the case of favourable circumstances. Thirdly, returning, certainly, implies regaining possessions and property in some ways and so not a single economically active person would logically refuse to take this advantage.<sup>23</sup>
- Involving the IDPs in political and economic life will raise the potential of the State and its efficiency, which, in its turn, will facilitate the problem of conflict resolution for Georgia.
- In the case of the regulation of the conflict, it will be easier to return economically active people with good physical and mental health which will prove favourable towards the socio-economic situation on the ground.

#### **Topics for discussion:**

How substantial and rational is the fear of the probable fall of motivation of the IDPs for returning in the case of their successful integration into the society?

How ethical is building a factual policy of “temporary” integration against this fear?

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<sup>23</sup> N. Sumbadze, G. Tarkhan-Mouravi, “Working Paper on IDP Vulnerability and Economic Self-Reliance”, UNDP, Tbilisi, July 2003, p. 54.



**5. Facing the people: do focuses change?** The acute internal political crisis in autumn 2007 and, subsequently, the hot debates during and after the presidential and parliamentary elections had a great influence upon the policy of the State towards the IDPs. This policy in its entirety became deprived of its complex nature and strictly oriented towards social problems. The contradictory and unpopular process of resettlement was suspended and emphasis was put upon repairing the collective centres, giving one-off assistance and raising monthly benefits. For these purposes, the increasing of expenditure on social security and the assistance fund to the IDPs was considered in the budget of 2008. At the same time, there appears to be only a continuation of the “My House” programme in the context of supporting the return of the IDPs amongst the first-rate tasks of the budget for 2008 unlike in the previous year. Also absent is the the task of encouraging the reconciliation of the communities which suffered from the conflict. Further, there is no mention of supporting the improvement of the social conditions of the IDPs returning to the Gali district and promoting the development of civil society therein, amongst others. The problem of accomplishing an alternative long-term resettlement programme is raised to a priority level in the section about returning the IDPs whilst nothing is said about the improvement of their socio-economic conditions oriented towards securing self-sufficiency.

**Topics for discussion:**

Does this mean a changing of approaches towards the IDP?

If yes, what caused such a change and how stable is it?

Additional opinions were expressed as concerns the results of this present research study and the abovementioned assumptions at a roundtable discussion with the participation of over 50 experts from official structures and NGOs. It should be noted that critical remarks made towards certain aspects of the public policy as concerns the IDPs were, basically, accepted by representatives of the governmental agencies. The meeting produced interesting assessments and assumptions as regards the results of our research and prompted possible directions for expanding future work despite the fact that answers to all of the questions posed above were not received due to the limited format of the discussion. Some of the assumptions expressed at the meeting and those deserving special attention are as follows:

- Returning the IDPs to Abkhazia as human capital and not as social ballast is of additional significance for the integration of the IDPs. An integrated person is a creator otherwise, the state will have to invest more in rehabilitation after returning. Integration, therefore, does not contradict the return whatsoever.
- Integration may be a hazard only in the case if it is within an unfriendly environment and so rooting out discrimination is a task of utmost importance as well.
- Information about the category of the IDPs who reside in the private sector is, at best, rather fragmentary and does not allow estimating or making existing problems

more precise in a proper way. Since this category of the IDPs lives in dispersion, they often remain “unnoticed” by the authorities, including statistical bodies and entities of communal services, etc., as well as researchers.

- The Action Plan will be approved in the near future. It remains a mechanism of co-ordination between ministries and between the governmental and international organisations. It is intended to launch new priorities in 2008 such as, in particular, shifting attention onto particularly vulnerable IDPs living in destitution. It is not excluded, however, that new and modern collective centres will be established alongside the process of closing down the old ones. Their numbers may increase as a result.
- Residents of the Gali district often go through difficulties whilst moving to the left bank of the Inguri River which also complicates the process of their registration.
- Refugees of Georgian origin from Abkhazia, living abroad, are deprived of the possibility to participate in the processes occurring here and are cut off from their native culture. This refers especially to young people. As a result, mentality changes and affection for the homeland and a motivation for returning gradually wears off.
- Despite the vivid actuality of the problems of the IDPs, the mass media does not give this reality its due and proper attention.

## CONCLUSION

The political aspect of the regulation of the conflict in Abkhazia is linked to its humanitarian aspect; that is, the returning of the IDPs to their native homes. As for securing normal humane living conditions for the IDPs, this task has not appeared amongst the Government's priorities until recently. Gradually, however, the importance of a civilised attitude towards the problems of the IDPs has started to become more and more recognized. Despite the fact, that the Georgian Government approved the State Strategy, in which there is an attempt to realise the modern principles of securing rights and normal living and housing conditions for the IDPs, there are still gaps from the point of view of human security. Several aspects of the IDPs' vulnerability were revealed as a result of this research and which were not considered in the State Strategy to a proper degree.

In the course of time, the Strategy can be improved through the introduction of corresponding changes in substance although creating a proper political situation is a vital condition for its successful implementation. In other words, there needs to be the presence of a clear political will with respect to turning the Strategy into a fundamental and guiding document for the relevant governmental agencies. In the situation when the Government is carrying out a course of fast economic modernisation whilst at the same time trying to "face" the people, a collision of priorities occurs wherein each inconsistent step may cause a disruption of a solving of the problems put forward by the Strategy.

The overall competence and co-ordination of the State agencies, responsible for accomplishing the tasks set out by the Strategy are also of great importance. Many aspects of the IDPs' vulnerability require making well-checked and sensitive decisions which require a consideration of the specific character as well as the delicacy of the state of the IDPs in Georgia.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### To the Georgian Government

#### *Improving the legislative base*

1. **Make amendments to the “Law on IDPs – Persecuted” in order to reflect the principle of the equality of rights of the IDPs and the rest of the population and the inadmissibility of discrimination.** The absence of this principle complicates the actual protection of the rights of the IDPs. The IDPs are ignored by corresponding State agencies in the process of giving subsidies to certain groups of the population (including war veterans and persons of their equal) for covering expenses of electricity and natural gas.<sup>24</sup>
2. **Make amendments to the “Law on IDPs –Persecuted” in order to reflect the inadmissibility of discrimination amongst the IDPs themselves.** Several forms of discrimination amongst the IDPs occur in practice such as, for example, at their places of residence, whether in the collective centres or in the private sector. Because of absence of data on the numbers and places of residence of the IDPs in the private sector, humanitarian and other assistance often do not reach this particular group of the population.
3. **Make amendments to the “Law on IDPs –Persecuted” in order to eliminate elements of discrimination on submitting compensation to the IDPs in the case of eviction from privatised collective centres.** As the IDPs reside in collective centres that are attractive for potential buyers, the size of the compensation in some cases is sufficient for purchasing property (immovable and therein making a step further towards integration) whilst in other cases it is completely insufficient. This circumstance may become the reason for the increased unhealthy relations between the IDPs.
4. **Make amendments to legal acts, referring to the legal condition of all the groups of the population and which do not have a postscript - “including the IDPs or family of IDPs.”** The absence of such an indication in some of the legal acts is often an impediment for untrained representatives of the local authorities to properly investigate the situation which often becomes an excuse for refusing the IDPs the assistance duly provided for them by the law.

#### *Improving the resettlement policy*

5. **Elaborate the conception of the resettlement of the IDPs.** The policy carried out by the Government is contradictive in nature due to the absence of a conceptual comprehension of the resettlement process of the IDPs. The process of resettlement is often accompanied by errors and there are cases of violations of the rights of the IDPs.

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<sup>24</sup> “Analysis of the Legal Status of Internally Displaced People and the Legislative Acts Regulating the Protection of their Rights and Ways for Solving the Existed Problems”, Research Paper, SPF/NRC 2006, p. 32.

It is necessary to elaborate a general strategy of resettlement upon the basis of the conceptualisation of the resettlement process.

6. **Create the legal base for the resettlement of the IDP.** There is not a single legislative act in existence which regulates the problems of the resettlement of the IDPs from the collective centres apart from a short note in the “Law on IDPs – Persecuted.” In particular, there is no specification of the rights and responsibilities of the owners of the collective centres, the IDPs living there and the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation.
7. **Conduct inventorying of the collective centres.** A gradation of the collective centres according to status (belonging to the State, privatised, or with no status), their attractiveness for investing and the expediency of their giving over to the IDPs residing there has not been carried out. The absence of such a gradation impedes making rational decisions as concerns the privatisation of the collective centres as well as in giving fair compensation to the evicted IDPs.
8. **Specify norms defining the conditions of eviction of the IDPs from collective centres.** It is necessary to specify corresponding entries in legislative acts as well as in the instructions on fulfilment by administrative organs in order to avoid using unclear criteria which can lead to a subjective approach and vague interpretation,.
9. **Create economic incentives for the IDPs subject to eviction from the collective centres.** The setting up of a joint-stock company and submitting a part of its shares within the possession of the IDPs residing therein with the purpose of stimulating the eviction of those collective centres with commercial attractiveness and or located in districts with high tourist and recreation potential is deemed expedient.

*Improving social conditions and public services*

10. **Consider the increasing cost of public utilities whilst appropriating budgetary funds.** Communal bills in collective centres are paid by the State although the resources assigned for this purpose are not indexed considering the rise of the cost of these utilities.
11. **Provide gasification of collective centres not entitled to privatisation.** The collective centres which do not have a central heating system use electricity to heat their homes. Many collective centres become deprived of electricity as a result of outstanding debts with some facilities being suspended or cut off for several years. In high-rise buildings this automatically causes cutting off of the water supply as well.
12. **Study the living and housing conditions of the IDPs living in the private sector and elaborate measures for assisting their improvement.** Due to the fact that the living and housing conditions of many IDPs living in the private sector is not much better and that their personal situations are often worse than in the collective centres, some IDPs see even a small space therein as more desirable.

- 13. Make use of a multi-aspect approach for solving the problems of improving the social conditions of IDPs.** The solution of the problem of the living and housing conditions of IDPs is envisaged in the State Strategy through their resettlement as a result of the closing down of the collective centres. Such an approach cannot fully solve the problem since not all the collective centres can be privatized and, accordingly, not all the IDPs can receive the financial means to purchase their own housing. It is necessary, therefore, to elaborate programmes on the rehabilitation of the collective centres not entitled to privatisation and build modern collective centres with decent living conditions.

*Facilitating accessibility to social utilities*

- 14. Facilitate accessibility to basic medical service through accelerating the process of providing the IDPs with medical insurance.** The Action Plan focuses upon rehabilitation programmes, which is important in itself, although it does not envisage the equally acute necessity of providing accessibility to basic medical service. Most of the IDPs have not yet received a medical insurance policy in the framework of the poverty reduction programme and, as a result, the cost of treatment in clinics remains a specific problem.
- 15. Accelerate the elaboration and implementation of governmental programmes on post-conflict rehabilitation and psycho-social integration.** Despite the fact that the Action Plan considers the implementation of these programs based upon the existing condition of despair and social apathy amongst a large group of IDPs, its elaboration remains incomplete.
- 16. Facilitate the access of young IDPs to higher education.** Despite the absence of discrimination on entering institutions of higher learning and education, the overall poor living conditions are still negatively reflected in the competitiveness of entrants from the IDP families.
- 17. Accelerate the closing down of schools in the collective centres and merging them with public schools.** The presence of these segregated schools puts the IDP children in an unequal condition wherein studying in these facilities intensifies the feeling of alienation and, consequently, impedes integration. At the same time, a unilateral, straightforward solution of the problem may damage the schools which, due to their quality, are competitive with public ones.

*Improving IDP database and process of registration*

- 18. Accelerate completion of verification of the IDPs.** The process of verification has obviously been delayed which hinders any adequate planning of state programmes on the IDPs.

19. **Assist inhabitants of the Gali district in timely registration.** In order to do so, it is necessary to take joint measures with the UNHCR for unimpeded crossing of the administrative border.
20. **Eliminate the difference between the official database and that of international organisations.** It is advisable that the governmental and international donor organisations operate with similar figures and other various data on the number and social characteristics of the IDP community, their living conditions and other parameters of vulnerability of this category of the population for a better co-ordination of the planning process.

*Raising level of awareness*

21. **Elaborate an efficient information strategy.** The absence of a corresponding explanatory campaign keeps the IDPs uninformed about the motivation and the arguments concerning certain decisions which, in its turn, often becomes the basis for scepticism and a misunderstanding of the policy carried out by the Government. Moreover, the lack of information is seen as one of the reasons for the disappointment within the IDP community.
22. **Intensify the supply of information on the conducted policy in the mass media.** Subsidising the creation of special television programmes, supporting projects on raising the qualifications of journalists and finding means to restore the functioning of corresponding serial publications is seen as advisable in order to raise the level of awareness of the population on the problems facing the IDPs.
23. **Assist in the raising of legal awareness of the IDPs.** The Action Plan does not suggest the elaboration and implementation of special programmes for the legal education of the IDPs. It would be possible to organise regular, one-time seminars and attract specialists from civil society within the framework of such programmes to be held in the collective centres.
24. **Inform the IDPs about the situation in Abkhazia.** Possessing unbiased information on the political and socio-economic situation in Abkhazia is an important factor for the enhancing psycho-emotional state of the IDPs. It is important to provide them with factual information about the property left behind at their former places of residence as well. It is very important to complete the “My House” programme, including the preparation of proper documents and court decisions, in order to create the legal security for regaining this property.

*Raising efficiency of governance*

25. **Give IDPs the opportunity to join the peace process.** The isolation of IDPs from decisionmaking and their lack of participation in the negotiations concerning conflict regulation intensifies the degree of their vulnerability against groundless and populist promises which is often replaced by disappointment and continued state of uncertainty. Co-participation is an important factor which will determine the general success of the policy of the State.

- 26. Raise the motivation of officials involved in IDP problems.** The decrease of the motivation of the officials in the ministries and departments in charge of solving the problems of IDPs is conditioned, alongside other reasons, by the dramatic fall of the IDPs amongst the staff of these organisations. Increasing the number of IDPs within the ranks of officials in the system of the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation, including its regional departments, would prove to be a favourable means of increasing the efficiency of the work.
- 27. Raise the functional efficiency of governmental agencies.** Various agencies provide contradictory information about the same subject which attests to the absence of any co-ordinated work amongst these agencies. Further, there is a lack of a clear differentiation of the responsibilities between the Ministry for Refugees and Accommodation and the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia with an overall lack of resourcefulness and mutual relations and low skills for strategic planning.

*Raising the readiness of the State for organised return*

- 28. Work out a realistic vision of conflict regulation.** Fifteen years following the initial outbreak, the authorities do not have a clear strategy for conflict resolution. The absence of such a strategy determines the inconsistency and, as a result, the failure of the conducted policy.
- 29. Improve the legal base for returning the IDPs.** The foundation document herein is a Quadripartite Agreement on voluntary return of the refugees and displaced persons which was signed on 4 April 1994. In practice, however, it is not realised and will require the creation of certain political conditions for this to take place. At the same time, the “My House” programme can serve as a legal basis for considering suits at international courts on behalf of the IDPs as concerns disputed property.
- 30. Find financial resources for the socio-economic rehabilitation of the places of organised return of the IDPs.** The accomplishment of large-scale social, infrastructural and investment projects will be put on the agenda in the case of a starting of the organised return of the IDPs to places of their former residences. a preliminary needs assessment study should already be undertaken and, no less importantly, the defining of potential sources of financing.

*Providing self-sufficiency of the IDPs*

- 31. Elaborate a governmental programme of employment for the IDPs.** Although the Action Plan considers informing the IDPs about the programme “Employment Programme 2007: Development of Small- and Medium-Businesses,” there is no concrete information available about the initiative itself.
- 32. Develop a system of issuing micro-credits for IDPs.** Speaking about the self-sufficiency of IDPs’ activities is out of place in a situation of not owning immovable property, land



and any means of production. The absence of property determines their inaccessibility to bank credits and loans. It is necessary to regulate the system of issuing micro-credits, especially to those IDPs who live in the rural areas (including the Gali district), as means of improving this situation.

*Securing safety, protecting civil rights and creating conditions for economic activity of Gali district residents*

33. **Securing physical safety.** It is necessary to conduct negotiations with the Abkhaz side with the mediation of UN agencies on creating legal and administrative guarantees for excluding cases of physical violence and infringement of local residents' privacy.
34. **Securing access to education in the native language.** Georgian schools have to work in a so-called semi-partisan mode meaning that this involves a degree of illegal or clandestine activity despite the fact that Abkhaz authorities do not officially ban the conducting of the learning process in the Georgian language. Local authorities respond sharply to the teachers' attempts to use Georgian textbooks in the teaching of history and geography.
35. **Elaborate programmes of assisting the economic activity of local residents.** A good example of this could be finding resources for building a citrus processing factory in Zugdidi which would help to realise the harvest of all the farmers in the Gali district.
36. **Raise credibility and trust in Georgian authorities.** The inconsistency of the policy of Georgian authorities, the ineffectiveness of their activities and, sometimes, their thoughtlessness causes dissatisfaction and, as a result, a loss of trust amongst Gali district residents.

*Improving the State Strategy*

37. **Improve the format and the language of the document.** Despite the fact that the structure of the document is, on the whole, well-thought out, it would be desirable to define in a separate paragraph what types and amounts of resources are necessary to realise the set tasks and to identify their sources.
38. **Elaborate an efficient Action Plan.** The elaboration of a well-thought out, detailed and realistic Action Plan is the determining condition of the success of the State Strategy. On the whole, the Action Plan embraces all the basic directions of the policy towards the IDPs. From the point of view of their vulnerability, however, not all the aspects are considered. In particular, it is advisable to include special complexes of measures for overcoming the social passiveness and despair of the IDPs.
39. **Accelerate approval of the Action Plan.** The suspension of the approval of the Action Plan has negative effects upon the solution of the problems put forward by the State Strategy.

### To Civil Society<sup>25</sup>

40. More intensive work with the IDPs in order to raise awareness, complete readiness and the legal literacy of the community.
41. Reveal local leaders in centres of compact habitation and keep permanent contact with them, especially in the period of resettlement and implementation of integration programmes.
42. Pay more attention to the study of the problems of the IDPs living in the private sector. Due to the fact that this category of IDPs hardly yields to statistical registering and observation, many problems remain “unnoticed” by the government and NGOs.
43. Participate in monitoring of the implementation of the State Strategy.
44. Combine efforts through creating coalition programmes and networking for protecting the rights of IDPs, especially of their most vulnerable layers.
45. Develop mechanisms for work with the government on all the levels. Special attention is given to work with regional authorities.

### To International Organisations

46. Assist in the realisation of the State Strategy in the area where the resources of central authorities are limited due to political reasons. This concerns measures for creating conditions for the organised return and securing the safety of residents of the Gali district.
47. Pay more attention to revealing and solving the socio-economic, everyday and humanitarian problems in the Gali district.
48. Assist the civil community in accomplishing the monitoring of the implementation of the State Strategy.
49. Encourage those non-governmental organisations set up by IDPs themselves in order to improve the situation of the protection of their rights and to increase their information and awareness.
50. Raise the level of co-ordination between donor organisations in the process of planning and implementing projects on solving the problems of the IDPs in order to avoid duplication and reach a cumulative effect.
51. It is necessary to improve informed strategic planning as a means of increasing the efficiency of projects and programmes under implementation. It is also advisable to arrange genuine partner relations with the government.

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<sup>25</sup> The results of the research “Human Safety and Integration Process of IDP in Georgia” were used in the elaboration of these recommendations.

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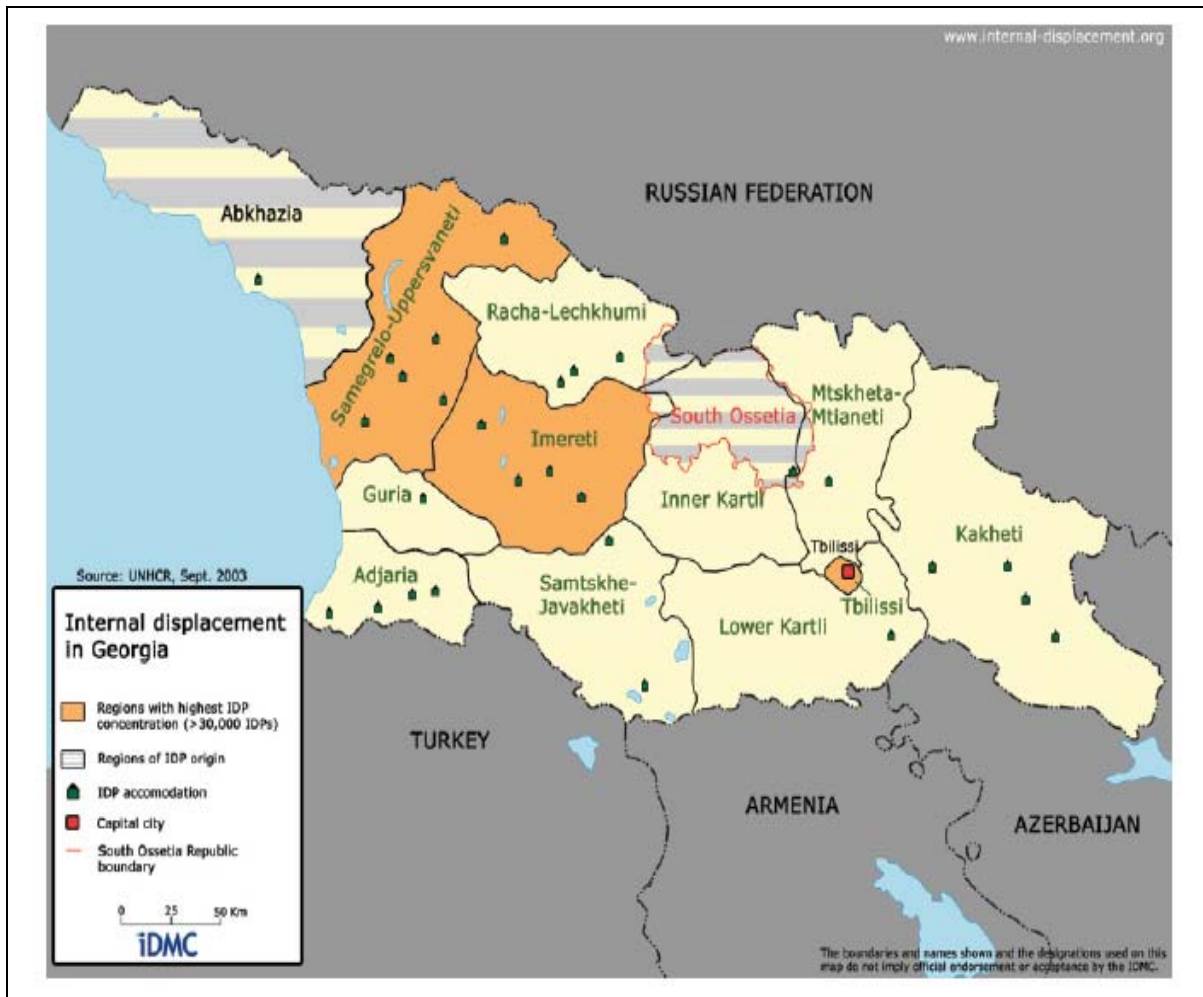
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**APPENDIX – 1**

### **Map of Internal Displacement in Georgia**



## QUESTIONNAIRE

**1. How much does national legislation on forcibly displaced persons meet international standards?**

Is it intended to make changes and supplements to existing legislation?

Do you think that it is necessary to make changes in and supplements to existing legislation? If so, what kind of changes and supplements do you consider expedient?

Do you think that some provisions in the existing legislation are vague and need specifying?

**2. How regulated are the statistic data on the IDPs?**

Which governmental agencies conduct statistical registration of the IDPs?

How accurate is the database of statistical data on the IDPs?

**3. How adequate is budgetary financing?**

Are financial means envisaged by the Action Plan sufficient for achieving the goals?

If it were your choice, which of the measures envisaged by the State Strategy would you finance first?

**4. How efficient is the system of governance?**

Which governmental agencies work on the IDP problems?

How adequate is the distribution of authority amongst the given agencies?

How co-ordinated is the work of these agencies? Are their functions duplicated or contradicted?

How motivated are officials engaged within this sphere?

What is the level of professionalism of officials engaged within this sphere? How well do they know the legislation on the IDPs?

What is the turnover of the personnel?

**5. How adequate is international assistance?**

What is the readiness of international donor organisations in providing assistance?

How co-ordinated is the activity of the international donor organisations?

How harmonised are the humanitarian programmes in rendering humanitarian assistance and development programmes?

**6. How adequately are IDPs' interests represented?**

*There were eight deputies from Abkhazia in the Georgian Parliament until 2004. As a result of abolishing Article 127 and until the full reinstatement of Georgian jurisdiction in Abkhazia, there are no deputies in Georgian Parliament officially defending the interests of the IDPs.*

How correct was the abolishing of the abovementioned article? How adequately are interests of the IDPs represented in the Georgian Parliament?

How adequate is the mandate of the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia? How did the reformation of the Government of Abkhazia promote the improvement of its activities and the rise of political influence?

Are IDPs represented in sufficient number in the executive authorities?

How much are the interests of the IDPs represented in the political spectrum?

How much are the interests of the IDPs represented in civil society?

Are problems concerning the IDP considered well enough in the mass media?

How much do the IDPs participate in negotiations for conflict regulation?

Is the participation of the IDPs sufficient in the elaboration of corresponding public policy, including the State Strategy?

#### **7. How informed are the IDPs on corresponding public policy?**

How informed are the IDPs about their rights?

Do the IDPs manage to defend their rights? If yes, how efficiently and if no, then why?

How informed are the IDPs on decisions made by the authorities?

#### **8. How efficient is the Government's information strategy?**

Is there a special governmental strategy for supporting public policy?

How efficient are the existing forms and methods of informing the population?

How free is the information rendered to the population from unrealistic or populist promises?

#### **9. What is the attitude of the IDPs towards public policy?**

Do the IDPs share public policy (plans) concerning conflict regulation?

According to the IDPs, are social programmes elaborated and implemented by the government adequate?

How does the economic policy of the authorities assist in securing self-sufficiency of the IDPs?

According to the IDPs, are the steps taken by the authorities correct from the legal point of view?

#### **10. How well is the State Strategy conceptualised?**

In your opinion, what kind of integration is the new State Strategy designed for, temporary or permanent?

How does new State Strategy correspond to the policy of economic development of the country including the problems of the development of small- and medium-business?

How does the new State Strategy consider the specifics of the youth?

#### **11. How prepared is the State for the organised return of the IDPs?**

How realistic is the authorities' vision (strategy) concerning conflict regulation?

How capable are the authorities of creating the proper political conditions for returning the IDPs?

How adequate is the existing legal base (including the "My House" programme) for returning the IDPs?



Are there any adequate institutional and administrative resources for returning the IDPs?  
What financial resources are needed for returning the IDPs and how available are they?

#### **12. How prepared are the IDPs for the organised return?**

How strong is the motivation of returning amongst forcibly displaced persons?

How strong is the desire to reconcile with the Abkhaz population?

Psychologically, how prepared are the IDPs for living alongside Abkhaz neighbours?

How strong is the desire for the returning of property? Are the IDPs going to fight for its return which would, in fact, generate new conflict?

#### **13. How secure is the safety of the IDPs in returning to the Gali district?**

Is the supremacy of law observed?

Are human rights protected, including the inviolability of property?

What is the situation from the point of view of defending freedom of speech?

How independent and unbiased is justice?

How frequent are cases of physical violence?

Is there an infringement of life?

How accessible is medical service?

What are living conditions?

How available are water, sewerage, electricity and means of transport?

How adequate is the size of government allowances?

How available are the grants and micro-credits of international organisations?

How secure is the right to receiving education in the native language?

How regulated is the problem of payment for teachers?

Is there trust towards the local authorities?

Is there trust toward Georgian authorities?

Is there trust towards CIS peacekeeping forces?

#### **14. How adequate are the living and housing conditions of the IDPs?**

According to official data, 45 percent of IDPs live in the so-called “collective centres.”

How accurate is this figure?

What is the situation concerning water supply, sewerage, heating and electricity in the collective centres?

How is the process of repair work in the collective centres, as envisaged in the State Strategy, taking place?

How is the process of the privatisation of the collective centres by forcibly displaced persons, as envisaged in State Strategy, taking place?

What is the current state and prospects of the rehabilitation of the collective centres as conducted by the Norwegian Refugee Council and Danish Refugee Council?

#### **15. How adequate is the policy of resettlement of the IDPs?**

How is the law observed during the eviction of the IDPs from the collective centres?

Will the living and housing conditions of the IDPs be improved after their resettlement from collective centres?

How much is the existing international experience considered in the elaboration and realisation of resettlement policy?

**16. How accessible is education for the IDPs?**

What is the situation about the desegregation of schools of the IDPs?

What is the situation about institutions of higher learning and education for those forcibly displaced from Abkhazia?

How accessible is receiving higher education in Georgian or foreign institutions of higher learning or education for younger IDPs?

Are there any programmes for the vocational training and retraining of the IDPs? If yes, how efficient are they?

**17. How accessible is medical service for the IDPs?**

What is the dynamics of the sickness rate amongst the IDPs?

What level of quality is the medical service for the IDPs?

How adequate are the programmes of psycho-social rehabilitation of the IDPs?

**18. How self-sufficient are the activities of the IDPs?**

How efficient is governmental programme “Employment Programme 2007: Development of Small- and Medium-Businesses?”

How much does public policy consider supporting the economic activity of the IDPs?

## State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons – Persecuted

### Preamble

This strategic document establishes the approach of the government of Georgia towards the internally displaced persons – persecuted, analyzes existing problems and determines two major goals of the state:

1. Create conditions for dignified and safe return of IDPs.
2. Support decent living conditions for the displaced population and their participation in society;

For achievement of these goals, a number of activities will be implemented, which are stipulated generally in the state strategy and will be formulated in more detail in the Action Plan. This document determines the conceptual framework, in the form of guiding principles, on which the activities aimed at achieving these goals, shall be based.

In the process of implementing the strategy for internally displaced persons – persecuted, the state and the local authorities act in accordance with the Constitution of Georgia, the legislation of Georgia and the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (1998), within the framework of internationally recognized human rights and the norms determined by international law.

The respective ministries and agencies, at both the state and local levels, will apply the State Strategy for solving the problems of internally displaced persons – persecuted in Georgia. The Strategy should be widely disseminated among local and international organizations, governmental and non-governmental, which are working on issues of internally displaced persons.

## Chapter I - General Overview

Internal conflicts in the early 1990s in Georgia have resulted in the displacement of the population from Abkhazia (1992) and Tskhinvali region (1989-1992). Currently in Georgia there are approximately 247,000 IDPs from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region,<sup>26</sup> representing about 6 percent of the population of Georgia<sup>27</sup>.

IDPs due to the conflicts in part were accommodated at premises of compact settlement or collective centers<sup>28</sup> (hereinafter referred to as 'collective centers'); others found shelter individually – with relatives or friends, or they rented a flat. Currently, approximately 45% of IDPs live in collective centers, and the rest, 55%, with host families or in rented or purchased flats. Living conditions at the majority of collective centers are difficult. IDP families living in the private sector face similar difficulties.

The majority of IDPs live in areas near the conflict zones – specifically, in Samegrelo region and Gori district - as well as in Imereti and Tbilisi. Others are dispersed throughout Georgia. A special case is presented by Abkhazia, where thousands of IDPs have spontaneously returned to their places of origin or live seasonally (to undertake agricultural works). They retain IDP status due to their situation of insecurity and unclear future. In addition, a certain number of IDPs has spontaneously returned to some villages of Tskhinvali region. A special approach is required for the population of Upper (Zemo) Abkhazia<sup>29</sup>, who have not abandoned their places of residence and continue to live and work there at risk to their lives.

The living conditions and economic situation of many IDPs are disadvantageous. The unemployment rate among IDPs is high. For many, their existence depends upon state allowances and international humanitarian assistance. Difficult social conditions are accompanied by poor health status and limited access to quality social services – education and healthcare (especially in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region).

In planning and implementing solutions for IDP problems, IDPs' interests and needs often have not been adequately taken into consideration; dialogue has not been conducted with them. Activities also have mostly been ad hoc responses to situation-specific problems and

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<sup>26</sup> According to the Law of Georgia in State Budget of 2006.

<sup>27</sup> This Strategy concerns internally displaced persons from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region, hereinafter referred to as IDPs-persecuted. This does not exclude the existence of other categories of internally displaced persons in Georgia, who are not the subject of this document.

<sup>28</sup> "Collective center" is a state-owned or private building where groups of IDPs were accommodated and where they have lived for a long period of time.

<sup>29</sup> Currently persons residing in Kodori Gorge/Upper (Zemo) Abkhazia (territory under Georgian jurisdiction) have IDP status, although majority of them have not actually abandoned their residential homes; consequently, their situation is not compatible with the definition of an "internally displaced person" provided in the legislation of Georgia and the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement. Thus, these persons do not fall within the framework of the Strategy for IDPs. However, as far as their security is not guaranteed and they have to live in conditions of high risk, the Strategy envisages a special approach, requiring the development of a specific legislative basis.

have not focused on the long-term perspective. Since 1999, with the initiative of international organizations, the approach towards IDPs started to change with the aim that humanitarian assistance should be gradually replaced by development and other programs focused on self-reliance. However, until this time, no joint vision has existed for addressing problems related to IDPs.

## **Chapter II - Problems**

1. Failure to resolve IDP issues for years, together with general difficulties in the country, has led to the following problems in Georgia related to the conditions of IDPs:

### **1.1. Lack of material resources and lack of land and other immovable property**

Poverty and lack of material resources are problems widely spread among IDPs, as well as the general population; however, among these two groups, the structure and nature of these problems are different. The majority of IDPs are uprooted from their habitual environment and usual means of production, most notably their land. In general, the lack of real estate - their own house or land - or other means of production represents one of the most characteristic features of the lives of IDPs, and the hindering factor for their achieving self-reliance.

### **1.2. Unemployment**

Following the conflicts, IDPs have experienced a higher rate of unemployment in comparison with general data in Georgia; while in the districts densely populated by IDPs, lower indicators of economic activity have been observed. During the spontaneous accommodation of IDPs under conflict conditions, there were limited opportunities for offering job placements; and due to scarce social linkages and insufficient awareness (especially among IDPs in big cities) as well as inflexibility of the labor market, it was difficult for many IDPs to find stable employment. For those IDPs who managed to find work, this often has been outside of their professional qualifications and they have suffered loss of skills. Other IDPs who could not find jobs have lost their hope and initiative.

### **1.3. Housing Conditions**

The chaotic and incoherent (urgent) accommodation of persons displaced due to internal conflicts and the absence to date of a state policy on housing, which would have significantly facilitated the proper resettlement of IDPs, has made housing conditions one of the most difficult and hard to solve problems facing IDPs. Even now, almost the half (45%) of IDPs are accommodated in collective centers. These buildings have lost their primary function, which in many cases has resulted in their depreciation. Most of these buildings are unsuitable for living. As a result, on the one hand the social welfare of IDPs is at risk while on the other hand, the economic development of the country is hindered as in many cases the half-ruined buildings and their uncared for neighborhoods represent disadvantageous factors for urban development of cities, the revival and management of resorts and industrial infrastructure, and the attraction of new investors, etc. More than

half of IDPs (55%) are accommodated in private accommodation – in purchased houses or flats, but more often with relatives, friends or they rent a flat. The majority of IDPs live in inadequate living conditions, and this can create grounds for additional stress and tension with host families. There is an assumption that the IDPs residing in the private sector are in better socio-economic conditions than those accommodated at collective centers. However, it should be pointed out this assumption about the living conditions of IDPs residing in the private sector is based on a lack of information.

#### **1.4. Health and Education, Quality of Social Services**

There is no strictly reliable information on morbidity of IDPs. However, considering the trauma experienced during the conflict, difficult living conditions and unemployment or inadequate employment which resulted in stress among IDPs and, in some cases, also the lack of access to quality medical services and unhealthy conditions, this indicator (morbidity) should be much higher among IDPs. The lack of material resources of many IDP families and their poor living conditions hinders access by IDP children and youth to quality education, which cannot be fully provided in schools located in collective centers -- buildings that had another function in the past. On the one hand, this has a negative influence on children's opportunity to receive a quality education and on the other hand it enhances the feeling of exclusion among IDP children. Special attention should be paid to the schools in Abkhazia, where in addition to the low quality of education, attempts of repression of the Georgian language by the de-facto administration is a concern. Moreover, often, quality medical services are inaccessible and the reproductive health of men and women is at risk.

#### **1.5. Representation of IDP interests**

Currently the social capital of IDPs (social network of IDPs) does not facilitate their integration; this results in their isolation and lower participation in civil spheres. IDPs also participate less in the creation of formal social structures.

#### **1.6. Syndrome of dependence on assistance and lack of initiative**

Disappointment and desperation of many IDPs results in social passiveness, reluctance of initiative, and dependence on assistance. This is one of the most important problems as regards their social integration as well as their future return to their permanent places of residence.

#### **1.7. Difficulties related to the return and insecurity of returnee IDPs**

Currently, favorable conditions encouraging the voluntary return of IDPs to their permanent places of residence do not exist. However, there are cases of spontaneous return on the part of some IDPs. They live under significant risk not only due to the general criminal situation and the frequent and severe human rights violations by the de-facto

administration, but also because of their unclear future and the threat of renewal of armed violence. Additional problems are caused by their unsatisfactory living conditions and lack of access to social services.

### **Chapter III - Goals and Objectives**

1. The government of Georgia takes into account the UN Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, protects internationally recognized human rights and freedoms, and expresses its political will for peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Georgia, which shall become the grounds for safe and dignified return of IDPs to their permanent places of residence. The government pays specific attention to the socio-economic rehabilitation of IDPs and to the preparation of suitable conditions for their return.

2. **The State Strategy has two main goals:**

#### ***2.1. Creation of conditions for the dignified and safe return of IDPs***

2.1.1. Creation of conditions for the dignified and safe return of IDPs implies creation of conditions so that IDPs' return to their places of permanent residence is voluntary and dignified, and in a safe environment.

2.1.2. All IDPs, who so wish, should be given an opportunity to return in dignity and safety to their permanent places of residence after resolution of the conflict (or, whenever it is possible, before the conflict is finally settled), and should be provided with economic assistance. Their property and other rights should be fully restored; in case of destroyed or inaccessible property, they should receive adequate compensation. The protection of the rights of the returnees should be ensured. Realization of property rights by IDPs is not linked to their return to their places of permanent residence. To support restoration of the property rights of IDPs, the State Strategy also foresees the establishment of joint commissions for identifying on-site and compiling an inventory of the immovable properties of IDPs.

2.1.3. Those IDPs who have spontaneously returned to their places of permanent residence should be provided with all types of support from the government with the purpose of ensuring their safety and life in dignity and improving their socio-economic situation and protecting their civil rights.

2.1.4. Governmental agencies should be able, with the support of international organizations, to implement socio-economic programs and activities of humanitarian assistance in the conflict regions.

#### ***2.2. Integration of the Displaced Population***

2.2.1. It is necessary to create, or to eradicate the hindering factors, for IDPs to enjoy legal, political, living and socio-economic conditions like other citizens of Georgia. It should be pointed out that from the legal viewpoint, IDPs have all the rights as other citizens of Georgia; despite this, however, they are not fully integrated in the society:

- a) In accordance with the Constitution of Georgia, IDPs, like other population of the country, have the right to choose any place in Georgia for their residence;
- b) IDPs have the right to equally benefit from state and other programs of social welfare, healthcare and education, that the government of Georgia or the non-governmental sector offers to any citizen of Georgia;
- c) IDPs have the right to pursue economic activity and to have the same access to economic resources as any citizen of Georgia;
- d) IDPs have the right to participate equally in the public discussion of civil issues and in the process of decision making and to exercise equally their democratic rights of active vote (to elect) and passive vote (to be elected);

2.2.2. For IDPs' integration, implementation of additional activities which consider their specific problems is required; and, if needed, positive discrimination within the frameworks of state programs before the goals of the Strategy are achieved. The purpose of additional programs is to achieve social integration of IDPs through the gradual closure of collective centers, reduction of IDPs' dependence on state assistance, and inclusion of vulnerable IDPs in general state programs. It is envisaged:

- a) To reduce the number of collective centers, to gradually close them, vacating them for rehabilitation, and supporting alternative resettlement for IDPs, with the Government of Georgia using a case-by-case approach in making such decisions;
- b) To provide vocational education and training to IDPs within the framework of state programs, activate their economic initiative and ensure advantageous conditions of economic activities;
- c) To include IDPs fully in state social programs.

3. Strategic priorities are divided into three phases according to timeframe, the terms of which depend on the continued progress of resolution of the internal conflicts:

#### ***First Phase***

Support to ensure safety and provision of basic living conditions for the IDPs who have spontaneously returned to Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region;

Initiation of the process for closing the collective centers:



- a) **In reference to the privatized collective centers**, the government will assist the owners of the buildings in vacating the property in their possession;
- b) **Privatization and vacating the buildings of state-owned collective centers of special importance for the state** in a manner by which the IDPs will be satisfied by proper compensation;
- c) The state will assist IDPs, in cases when they consent, to privatize **the state-owned collective centers, which are not of special importance for the state**, at acceptable prices (privatization of buildings for IDPs will take place at a reasonable price that is less than market price).

Ensure involvement of extremely vulnerable IDPs in existing state programs;

While implementing the activities for improving socio-economic conditions of IDPs, Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region as well as Samegrelo, Shida Kartli and Akhgori district represent priority regions;

Elaboration of a special status for the families residing in Upper (Zemo) Abkhazia (a high-risk zone for life and health), ensuring safety and elementary living conditions.

### ***Second Phase***

To vacate the collective centers gradually;

To improve the situations of vulnerable IDPs, to provide support for their integration;

To support the safe and dignified return of IDPs before the final resolution of the conflicts.

### ***Third Phase***

To ensure the safe and dignified return of IDPs after the resolution of conflicts;

To integrate those IDPs who will not return to their places of permanent residence after resolving the conflicts.

## **CHAPTER IV - Support to the Return of IDPs**

Providing opportunities for the displaced population to return to their homes represents the main priority and the most important issue for the state. Return of IDPs implies both the currently ongoing spontaneous process as well as their organized return upon the final resolution of the conflict or (in the transitional stage) on the basis of separate negotiation.

## **1. Providing conditions for the return of IDPs in the transitional stage**

The government of Georgia continues to work in the direction of gradual return of IDPs until the final resolution of the conflict. With the aim of achieving this, the state conducts negotiations with the parties involved in the conflict and calls upon the international community for assistance. The objective of diplomatic pressure is that the self-declared authorities fulfill their obligations in reference to the safe and dignified return of IDPs.

## **2. Support to IDPs who spontaneously return to the conflict zone**

2.1. Governmental agencies are purposefully working to ensure the safety of IDPs who have spontaneously returned to the conflict zones. For this, they use not only direct negotiations with the parties to the conflicts, but also the assistance of the international community in order to monitor the situation in the spheres of human rights and safety.

2.2. Special importance is given to addressing the situation of criminality in the regions where the returned displaced population is living. For this purpose the government seeks opportunities for internationalization of the peacekeeping forces and the deployment of international law-enforcement forces in the problematic regions (Gali).

2.3. Respective governmental agencies are working to activate social services in the places of spontaneous return; first of all, enhancing the educational system – schools. Negotiations should be conducted to ensure that teaching in these schools is conducted in the Georgian language and according to the Georgian state curriculum. International assistance will be needed.

2.4. More active and coordinated efforts by international organizations are required in order to rehabilitate houses and renew production means in those districts where the spontaneous return of IDPs has taken place as well as to support small businesses and to significantly improve the healthcare of the population.

## **3. Support the return of IDPs after conflict resolution**

3.1. Upon resolution of the conflict, governmental agencies should be ready to support the dignified return of IDPs in a safe environment. The government of Georgia shall implement a specific action plan that will determine the mechanisms for ensuring safety, the restoration of houses and productive means, and the return of property, as well as for support of the mobility of socially integrated IDPs, eradication of discrimination, protection of cultural identity, the creation of adequate living conditions, opportunities for income generation, and participation in legitimate public and political activities.

3.2. A mechanism should be elaborated for ensuring the rights of return for those internally displaced persons who are currently residing in other countries. For this purpose it is necessary to strictly delineate the rights of IDPs to receive state assistance, and the

basic right of an internally displaced person and that of their descendants, regardless of current place of residence, to return to their homes. People-to-people diplomacy also is important in order to support the restoration of trust among communities.

## **CHAPTER V - Integration of IDPs**

1. In order to realize the goal of integration of the internally displaced population, the State Strategy aims at implementing activities for improving the living and social conditions, as well as health and economic status of IDPs, undertaking necessary legislative initiatives in this regard. These programs shall be based on the identification of IDP categories according to their poverty level (the kind of care they require) and their skills (ability to become self-reliant), which requires the elaboration of relevant indicators. In fulfilling these objectives, it is important to plan programs in a way which does not harm the existing social and economic linkages established among IDPs.

### **2. Improvement of Living Conditions for IDPs**

2.1 Effective resettlement of IDPs represents a precondition for the improvement of their living conditions and for their integration as well. The existence of approximately 1,600 collective centers, most of which are unsuitable for living, on the territory of Georgia not only poses a threat to the lives and welfare of their residents, but also hinders the social and economic advancement of the country. Resolving the issue of collective centers will assist in improving the living conditions of IDPs and will address the following significant issues:

- a) Collective centers of public purpose will regain their primary function of social institutions (hospitals, schools, etc.);
- b) Collective centers which have commercial value will be vacated for private investment. Monetary compensations, which will be given to IDPs in exchange for vacating the places they are currently occupying for residence, shall be relevant and adequate to market prices;
- c) The collective centers that are suitable for living and do not have a specific importance, will be transferred to IDPs, if they so desire, for self-privatization (price for the privatization should be determined by considering the social condition of each IDP).

2.2. IDPs shall be protected against illegal eviction.

2.3. State assistance will be provided based on strictly determined selection criteria, according to which IDPs residing in the private sector and those in the collective centers shall be offered specific assistance tailored to their needs. The programs listed below provide for the stable and long-term improvement of living conditions of IDPs:

- a) Use of specialized social institutions, within state programs, for IDPs with limited mental/physical abilities who are in need of special care (different types of shelters for groups of persons with specific health needs);
- b) Social assistance, within state programs, to healthy elderly and other vulnerable IDPs (those without a breadwinner, etc.) without any income (deinstitutionalized care for those who cannot survive independently and will not be able to become self-reliant in the future, though do not need special care);
- c) Financial assistance (ex. vouchers or other forms of assistance) for those IDPs who do not have a place to live or who leave collective centers, to support them to purchase a residence.

2.4. Transfer of residences into private ownership will be especially encouraged, though this option shall not take place automatically. Participation and contribution of IDPs in this process is a precondition for their purchasing of flats.

### 3. Improvement of socio-economic conditions of IDPs

3.1. Improvement of living conditions of IDPs depends upon access to adequate social services, first of all in the spheres of healthcare and education. In order to achieve these goals, the state strategy envisages implementation of following activities:

- a) A survey of the health status and morbidity of IDPs should be conducted. Special attention should be paid to researching the prevalence of diseases of probable high risk among IDPs. It is recommended to elaborate medical and psycho-social assistance/rehabilitation programs for IDPs;
- b) For the extremely vulnerable groups of IDPs (such as people with disabilities, vulnerable elderly people, single mothers and their children, orphans etc.), who do not possess the necessary resources for achieving self-reliance, the State Strategy envisages the timely identification of their needs and their inclusion in existing programs of humanitarian assistance or of targeted care and social and home-care programs, or if needed, elaboration of special programs for them;
- c) Segregated schools affiliated with collective centers should be closed once these collective centers are vacated and IDP teachers should be included in the national program for upgrading their qualification;
- d) In order to increase the effectiveness of IDP-targeted programs, it is necessary to ensure awareness-raising among IDPs, and this requires the development and implementation of informational programs.

3.2. With a view to ensuring the right of IDPs to return to their places of permanent residence while at the same time supporting achievement of their social integration, the issue of IDP status should be dissociated from the receipt of social assistance. IDPs, like other persons in Georgia, may take part in social state programs, determined on the basis of needs, and regardless of the status of the beneficiary. In addition, inclusion of IDPs in social

programs should not reduce the state assistance allocated to them. Before the goals of the Strategy are achieved, IDPs' participation in state social programs can be considered as an additional measure.

3.3. The ability of IDPs to pursue economic activities and initiatives is fundamental to their welfare, for which crucial importance is given to the human and social capital of IDPs as well as their access to material and financial resources. It is important to support economic activities of IDPs that will facilitate their reintegration after their return to their places of permanent residence. The State Strategy envisages implementation of the following activities:

- a) It is necessary to provide support, within state educational programs, for vocational education for IDPs, which can become a tool for the social integration of IDPs, to encourage their motivation for participation in vocational training and to increase IDPs' access to such programs; also, to raise their awareness about vocational training, professional skills-development or other learning opportunities;
- b) It is important to implement programs for supporting the development of small business and enterprise among IDPs, that will encourage entrepreneurship and provide access to start-up capital as well as the acquiring of relevant knowledge and skills; it is necessary to support employment in rural areas for those IDPs who possess relevant agricultural skills; (this should be implemented through the assistance of donors (e.g. grants) and no budgetary/state resources should be used); Abkhazia and Tskhinvali region, also Samegrelo, Shida Kartli and Akhgori district represent priority regions.
- c) In the areas where IDPs are residing in buildings with significant economic potential (e.g. Tskaltubo, Borjomi), there is need to elaborate area-based development programs, which among other activities imply vacating such buildings and restoring their economic functions.

## **CHAPTER VI - Main Principles of Implementation of the State Strategy**

1. Implementation of the strategy is based on the following principles:

### **1.1. *Voluntary Decisions and Free Choice of IDPs***

Taking into account that according to the legislation of Georgia, IDPs make key decisions voluntarily and without pressure, implementation of the strategy should foresee clearly determined mechanisms for appeal.

### **1.2. *Dialogue with IDPs and their participation in decision making***

IDPs participate in the planning and implementing of activities envisaged in the strategy, in an organized manner.

### ***1.3. Coordination and Information-sharing among Governmental Agencies and Stakeholders***

The governmental agencies implement the state strategy in close cooperation with one another and in coordination with international donors. The various programs are implemented in a coordinated manner both within the framework of strategy and in relation to other state programs.

### ***1.4. Planning of Activities based on Reliable Information and Research Data***

Effective implementation of the state strategy requires comprehensive and reliable information. When needed, targeted studies are to be undertaken, on which the action plan will be based.

### ***1.5. Integration of IDP-targeted Programs into State Programs***

The programs intended for IDPs shall be integrated in general state programs. In case of absence of general state programs, it is necessary to plan IDP-targeted programs in a way that will facilitate the integration of these programs into state programs in the long-term. Inclusion of IDPs in state social programs should not reduce currently allocated state assistance to IDPs.

### ***1.6. Sustainability of Outcomes of the Activities Implemented within the Framework of the State Strategy***

Programs implemented within the framework of the strategy should aim to achieve its identified goals in an adequate and sustainable manner. Where self-reliance of vulnerable IDPs cannot be achieved by single or short-term activities, long-term assistance should be ensured.

### ***1.7. Development of Tailor-made Programs for Different Vulnerable Groups based on Categorization Criteria***

In order to plan and implement tailor-made programs, categories of IDPs based on their vulnerability should be defined. Definition of these categories should be according to IDPs' economic abilities, and their social and human capital.

### ***1.8. Ensuring Social Equity in the Process of Providing Assistance to IDPs***

In all cases where IDPs are residing alongside the local (host) population, the specialized IDP-targeted programs should consider the interests of the local population as well. Social equity does not exclude the possibility of prioritizing assistance to IDPs when justified.

### ***1.9. Gender Equality, Protection of the Rights of the Child and Respect for Other Recognized Human Rights***

The State Strategy, in addressing IDP problems, pays adequate attention to ensuring gender equality and equity, protection of the rights of the child, and other nationally and universally recognized principles, and elaborates relevant mechanisms.

### **1.10. *Regular Updating of the State Strategy***

The State Strategy for IDPs should be flexible. Accordingly, it is necessary to update it regularly so that it reflects and considers new developments and trends as well as changing state interests and IDP problems. The State Strategy envisages the elaboration of effective mechanisms for this purpose.

## **CHAPTER VII - Implementation of the Strategy and its Monitoring**

1. To achieve the goals specified in the State Strategy, the government of Georgia – in particular, the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, the Government of the Autonomous Republic of Abkhazia, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Labor, Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, as well as other governmental institutions – will elaborate programs and implement them with the participation of international donor organizations and the non-governmental sector as well. The ministries represent the main bodies for assigning tasks within the programs foreseen by the strategy. Various governmental, international and non-governmental organizations will be widely involved in the financial and technical support and direct implementation of these programs.

2. The main condition for the successful implementation of the strategy is the development of a well-planned, detailed and realistic action plan, reflecting not only the necessary budgetary and non-budgetary resources, but also institutional and other resources, in the short-term and mid-term perspective. The action plan should also specify the following: division of functions and responsibilities clearly among agencies; define the order and schedule of activities; and define procedures for measuring indicators reflecting the effectiveness of implementation of the strategy.

3. Implementation of the state strategy is led by the government of Georgia. To achieve the identified goals, the ministries and donor organizations act in a coordinated manner. The State Commission and ministries will identify legislative gaps and, as needed, undertake legislative initiatives. The leading role, responsibility and coordination function for the elaboration of programs and monitoring outcomes of their implementation is assigned to the Ministry of Refugees and Accommodation, which will closely cooperate with the thematic working groups through the Secretariat of the State Commission. In monitoring implementation of the strategy, much importance is given to the participation of IDPs themselves and of civil society, as well as to the transparency of the process.

4. Based on the results of monitoring of implementation of the strategy, the effectiveness of the activities envisaged will be evaluated annually and the strategy reviewed and updated taking into consideration new developments.

**Action Plan of the Implementation of State Strategy for Internally Displaced Persons –  
Persecuted**

Action Line	Measure
<b>1. Goal : Support the Return of IDPs</b>	
<b>1.1. Objective: Creating conditions for return</b>	
1.1.1. Facilitating reconciliation between communities affected by the conflict (The dialogue between the affected communities is not conducted intensively that would assist to creation of appropriate conditions for return)	1.1.1.1. Conducting dialogue between the communities affected by the conflict (youth, professional groups, elderly group, women)
	1.1.1.2. Preparation and establishment of peaceful education and tolerance manual in the conflict regions
1.1.2. Support creation of conditions for the voluntary return of IDPs to Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region in safety and dignity (The return is not under process at the moment, and the basic rights of potential returnees are not protected)	1.1.2.1. Support confidence building activities, including the ones implemented by international organizations, which aim to ensure physical protection, non-discrimination and protection of human rights
	1.1.2.2. Conduction of dialogue between the parties for the purpose of implementing the four-side agreement of 1994
	1.1.2.3. Conduction of dialogue with defacto administrations in order to give the state agencies opportunity to implement social-economic and humanitarian support programs with the assistance of international organizations as well as with the NGO sector p
	1.1.2.4. Defining barriers (legal, administrative, etc.) for return and reintegration without discrimination
1.1.3. Protecting property rights of IDPs (IDP property rights are not protected in conflict regions. Frequently IDP property is illegally misappropriated and used)	1.1.3.1. Registration of IDP property
	1.1.3.2. Analysis of the results of the ongoing property registration processes, in order to determine whether or what additional measures may be needed to help IDPs register their property rights
	1.1.3.3. Conduction of negotiation with defacto administrations in order to protect the property rights of IDPs from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region
	1.1.3.4. Protecting IDP property rights in international courts



<b>1.2. Objective: Supporting IDPs who have spontaneously (by seasons) returned</b>	
1.2.1. Support the improvement of living conditions of IDPs who have spontaneously returned (In the regions of potential return IDP houses damaged by the conflict require rehabilitation, ones that are totally destroyed require to be rebuilt. Equally important	1.2.1.1. Rehabilitation and construction of the houses in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region
	1.2.1.2. In order to support self-reliance of IDPs implementation of income generating activities and vocational training
	1.2.1.3. Ensuring provision of tailor-made humanitarian assistance
1.2.2. Support the development of civil society (Weak civil society should be strengthened in the region of spontaneous return in order to ensure respect and protection of human rights)	1.2.2.1. Preparation and implementation of the project ensuring provision of information and counseling to returnees (creation of informative centers and mobile groups in the village of Qurta and Zugdidi)
	1.2.2.2. Support the development of local NGO sector
1.2.3. Support the availability of social services for spontaneously returned IDPs (Spontaneously returned IDPs have less access to good quality social services)	1.2.3.1. Financial support of public school staff in Abkhazia (Gali Region) and Tskhinvali Region
	1.2.3.2. Ensuring teaching and raising level of Georgian language in Abkhazian and Tskhinvali Region schools
	1.2.3.3. Professional retraining of teachers in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region
	1.2.3.4. Establishing English language training school in Tskhinvali Region
	1.2.3.5. Rehabilitation and improvement (thorough provision of equipment) of schools in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions
	1.2.3.8. Elaboration of the project for the construction of hospital and the development of human resources for the purpose of drastically improving the health protection in Abkhazia
1.2.4. Rehabilitation of roads, irrigation system, public utilities infrastructure (In the regions of potential return infrastructure was damaged as a result of conflict and needs to be rehabilitated, ones that were totally destroyed need to be rebuilt)	1.2.4.1. Elaboration of infrastructure rehabilitation plan for conflict areas
	1.2.4.2. Rehabilitation of roads, irrigation systems and public utilities in Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region
<b>2. Goal: Integration of IDPs</b>	

<b>2.1. Objective: Improving living conditions of IDPs, gradual closure of CCs and ensuring support of durable housing solutions for IDPs</b>	
2.1.1. Supporting affordable housing for IDPs (Mostly the living conditions of IDPs are very hard, particularly in CCs (approximately 45% of IDPs, the rest in private sector). In most cases IDPs cannot afford to leave CCs and purchase living place or are	2.1.1.1. Direct privatization of those collective centers by IDPs that have no particular importance and should be privatized
	2.1.1.2. Living space purchase subsidy program for IDPs
	2.1.1.3. Informational campaign for IDPs to inform them on procedures and consequences of privatization of collective centers by IDPs
	2.1.1.4. While privatizing agricultural land plots equalizing rights of IDPs who temporarily live there with the rights of local population
	2.1.1.5. Gaining information about the best practices of alternative projects for improvement of living conditions of IDPs piloted by other organizations
2.1.2. Gradual Closure of Collective Centers (At the moment there are about 1600 CCs in Georgia. Conditions there are very bad because of inappropriate care they are taken of. Repairing and keeping them is connected with big costs)	2.1.2.1. Creating database on collective centers
	2.1.2.2. Categorization of state and private owned collective centers: -(CCs having particular value; - CCs having no particular value; - Privatized CCs)
	2.1.2.3. Developing standard procedures for the closure/vacating collective centres (including case with privatization) and safeguards against arbitrary or unlawful eviction (public or private-owned CCs, registered or unregistered CCs, etc.)
<b>2.2. Objective: Improving social-economic conditions of IDPs</b>	
2.2.1. Support accessibility of education for IDPs (Generally IDPs have as much access to education as the rest population of Georgia, though pupils and students from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region need some kind of support. For integrating IDP pupils it is particularly important to close segregated schools that are linked to CCs and offer alternative schools)	2.2.1.1. Repairing schools in border regions of Abkhazia
	2.2.1.2. Improve access of IDP students as well as of students from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions to education opportunities in Georgia and abroad
	2.2.1.3. Support institutes in exile from Abkhazia and Tskhinvali Region
	2.2.1.4. Involving IDP population in training and retraining programs
	2.2.1.5. Ensuring Georgian education and the provision of Georgian manuals to IDPs living abroad
	2.2.1.6. Closure of segregated public schools of Abkhazia and support to those integrated in the Georgian national education system
2.2.2. Developing medical and psycho-social rehabilitation	2.2.2.1. Elaboration of post-conflict rehabilitation program

<p>programs for IDPs (After conflict no psycho-social rehabilitation and integration supporting programs have been implemented for supporting IDPs and other population of Georgia)</p>	<p>2.2.2.2. Elaboration of psycho-social integration supportive program</p>
<p>2.2.3. Increase IDP self-reliance(In most cases IDP population is more dependant on state and international organizations support than other population of Georgia)</p>	<p>2.2.3.1. . State targeted program: "Employment program 2007: employment with the support of small and medium business" ensuring to give out information to IDPs</p>
<p>2.2.4. Support the ensurance of provision of electircity to CCs(The most part of CCs are not equipped with individual meters for electricity, because of this consumers cannot control their consumption of electricity and the debts are being increased)</p>	<p>2.2.4.1 Clarifying and restructuring the existed debts for electricity in CCs 2.2.4.2. Equipping CCs where IDPs will be durably accommodated with equipment registering the electricity consumed by IDPs living there</p>
<p>2.2.5. Supportive measures</p>	<p>2.2.5.1. Ensuring informational campaign for IDP and non-IDP population on the Strategy, the Action Plan and its implementation</p>